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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ  
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A PRE-COLONIAL HISTORY  
OF THE TIV OF CENTRAL NIGERIA  
C.1500-1850

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Dalhousie University

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## ABSTRACT

This study attempts, insofar as it is possible, to reconstruct the history of the Tiv of Central Nigeria prior to the Europeans. The thesis answers the question who the Tiv are, and gives an explanation of the way they integrated other groups into Tiv nationhood. The construction of early Tiv history is based largely on the oral traditions. Most of the oral sources have been cross-checked with their neighbours' accounts and with the few available written records.

For pre-colonial historians - and this is also true of all historians - an adequate system of chronology is a basic necessity. This study constructs a chronological framework using genealogies of over three hundred Tiv families which have been compared and checked with the genealogies of their neighbours. Once established, the chronology permits the reconstruction of the processes and trends in Tiv history.

The thesis re-examines the concept of Tiv ethnicity by which the Tiv are assumed to have descended from an ancestor "Tiv". The accepted belief is that the descendants of the Tiv increased numerically through birth and have remained unchanged through time. But this thesis argues that the ancestors of the present Tiv people came from different ethnic groups incorporated into the present Tivland. By

C.1600 a group of diverse people were calling themselves Tiv. Marriage of foreign wives, Tiv language, culture, and social structure have been important elements in this process of assimilation.

The study concludes by looking at the numerical and geographical expansion of the Tiv. Their expansion is the result of a combination of social, political, economic, and religious factors. The movements of the Tiv brought them into contact with other non-Tiv ethnic groups such as the Abakwariga, Idoma, Jukun, Alago, and others. Such contacts brought advantages and disadvantages to both the Tiv and their neighbours.

### ABBREVIATIONS

B.V.P.P.	Benue Valley Project Papers
E.A.J.	East African Journal
I.J.A.H.S.	International Journal of African Historical Society
J.A.H.	Journal of African History
J.A.S.	Journal of African Society
J.H.S.N.	Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria
J.R.A.I.	Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute
N.A.E.	National Archives Enugu
N.A.I.	National Archives Ibadan
N.A.K.	National Archives Kaduna
S.J.A.	Southwestern Journal of Anthropology
T.H.T.	Tiv Historical Text
U.J.	Uganda Journal

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I would like to thank certain individuals for assistance that I received in the preparation of this thesis. My first thanks go to Dr. J. B. Webster. When I first enrolled at Dalhousie University, I wanted to study some aspects of the colonial period of Nigerian history. I had planned to research the pre-colonial history of the Tiv after my graduation on a part-time basis. Professor Webster suggested, however, that if the history of the Tiv was worth writing, I should devote full-time to it.

When I embarked on the writing of this thesis, Professor Webster was seconded to head the Department of

History at the University of Malawi. In spite of the inconveniences of distance, he continued to give much of his valuable time to reading the chapters and advising me on the organization of the material. I owe him a debt of gratitude for his supervision, criticism, and insights. I am also deeply grateful to Dr. J. E. Flint for his valuable suggestions and encouragement at every stage in the writing of this thesis.

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For practical reasons it would be impossible to individually thank all those who helped and advised me during the period of fieldwork in Nigeria. I was fortunate to be able to have valuable discussions with Dr. A. C. Unomah, and Dr. J. Morrison of the University of Ibadan, Dr. A. Adefuye of Lagos University, and Professor R. Gavin, then of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. To all my informants I would like to express my sincere thanks for their kind cooperation which involved many of them in physical



hardships and personal sacrifices. I will also fondly remember the excellent hospitality I enjoyed with all of them. Indeed, without their cooperation in sharing their knowledge of the past, and their 'yams and chickens', this thesis would never have been written.

I am very sincerely grateful to my late father, Baba Levi Orkar Chi, who not only gave me my basic education but also lived just long enough to become one of my best informants. He, like many of my other informants, did not live to see the completion of this work. I owe Mrs. Audrey Hill much gratitude for typing this thesis in record time.

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Any errors that I may have made in this thesis are my own.

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY AND PRONUNCIATIONS

The orthography used in this thesis is the one which literate Tiv use for writing in their own language. Tone markings are omitted. I have also followed the spellings found in the anthropological and historical literature, and on maps, even when I disagree with the orthography.

The interchange of the 'r' and 'l' sounds in the language cause some difficulties. The main difficulty is between the presence or absence of the letter 'r' which is sometimes written as 'l'. I have chosen, where possible, to write the letter which represents the sound which the great majority of the Tiv pronounce in the word. I have not altered the way in which literate men write their names.

The sound 'ch' is represented by 'c'. The exception to this is the spelling of some old names such as Ichongo (which could be written Chongo, Icongong, Congo). In all cases the phonetic spellings were arrived at only after listening closely to the pronunciation of the word by a number of different informants.

## GLOSSARY

- Abiem - Serval
- Agase - Millet (Pennisetum spicatum)
- Ajir - Lawsuit
- Akombo - Fetishes, magic articles for producing fertility
- Aku - Title of the Jukun chief
- Anyam - Leopard
- Aondo - God
- Atoasha - "The people up there" - in the north
- Awange - Spears
- Ayande - A type of shrub (Marantochia flexuosa)
- Ayu - A manatee
- Azenga - A type of grass. But Anyam-aze-nga is a leopard.
- Dyelegh - Naked
- Gar - A fence or a town
- Gbaaye - A tree known as prosopis oblonga
- Iba-Kpie - Yaws
- Ichongo - Circumcised
- Ikagh - A bundle. Ikagh-toho - A bundle of grass.
- Ikarem - A harmless green snake. Literally, a friend.
- Ikpe - A hoe or a bottle
- Ikpindi - A flesh-debt
- Ikuma - Depending on the tone, it could mean 'it is enough'; 'pubic hair'; 'to inject'.
- Ima - Finger guard used when throwing an arrow.

- Imongo - A relaxed meeting for chatting
- Indyer - A special drum
- Inja - Character or custom
- Ipaven - A lineage or segment
- Ipusu - Uncircumcised
- Kapa - A kind of knife that looks like a hook
- Kem Kwase - A marriage system whereby the bride-price for a wife is paid bit by bit.
- Kpagh - Camwood powder
- Kpamberakpa - The name of an insect
- Kpe - To die
- Lagh - Eczema
- Liev - Bean
- Lobi - Another name for Makurdi town
- Mbaiyongo - People who quarrel
- Normnger - Hippopotamus
- Nyamnger - An animal in the water
- Otse - A title of the Ufur chief.
- Poor - A type of magic article
- Swem - (1) A mountain in the South-East of Nigeria  
(2) The pot on which oaths are sworn
- Tar - A word referring to land, territory, and the world
- Tsav - Witchcraft
- Tor Agbande - Drum chiefs
- Twere - A fetish for the crops
- Uke - A non-Tiv
- Wankwase - A young woman

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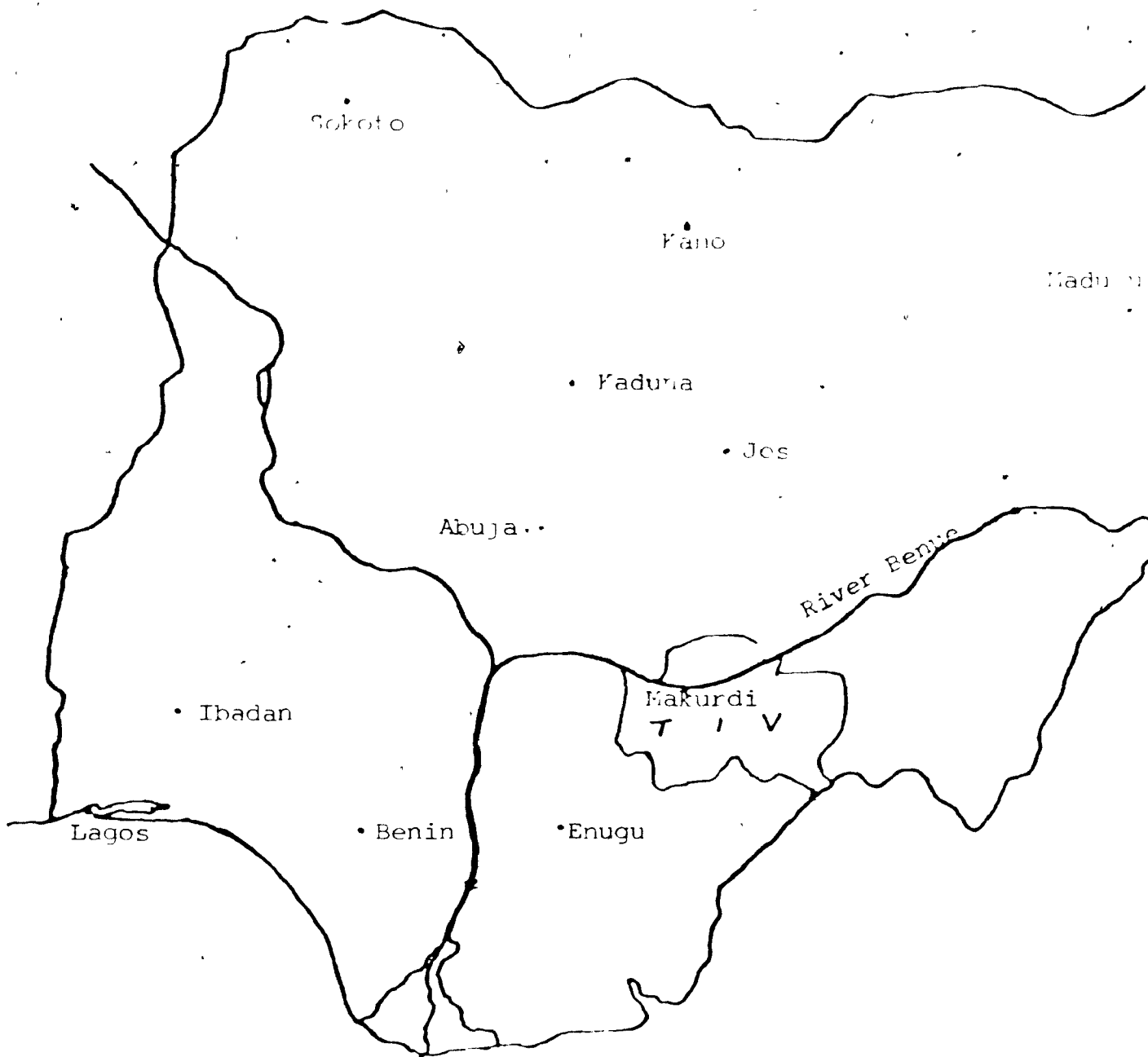
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NIGERIA SHOWING TIVLAND AND SOME MAJOR CITIES



## CHAPTER I

### Research Methodology

Most scholars writing about the history of African people during the first decades of this century either ignored their pre-colonial history or treated it scantily or with great scepticism. To them Africa had no history beyond that of the period when the white man first set foot in that part of the world. When European historians wrote about Africa they usually confined their narrative to the activities of their own people. It was the history of Europeans in Africa. The major exception to this were those working in Islamised regions such as the Hausa states, Borno, and the Swahili coast of East Africa. Here European writers usually found written chronicles which corresponded to the type of documents which they were accustomed to in their own lands. Even here, however, they tended to see history largely in terms of fair-skinned immigrants arriving to create dynasties, organize states, and thus begin history as they narrowly conceived of it. If the history of Africa was not merely that of European activities, it was the history of the activity of immigrant races in Africa.

During the past two and a half decades the situation described above has been greatly changed. Pre-colonial African history has emerged from obscurity as an accepted

and recognized field of historical study. Many traditional histories have been published. However, much of the history that has been written about pre-colonial Africa deals with kingdoms or states. For example, many of the studies conducted in the northern states of Nigeria have tended to concentrate on the drama of empires or states rising, expanding, or falling. But such preoccupation with states like Kanem-Borno, the Fulani Empire of Sokoto, and the Hausa Kingdoms has provided an incomplete and one-sided view of the history of the northern states of Nigeria.

Furthermore the states which have drawn the greatest attention have been those where a wealth of documents about them have been available as in Borno and Kano or where an early researcher either African or European collected and published extensive traditions of their histories. Johnson's collection of Yoruba traditions forms the major foundation of most of the extensive modern historical studies on the Yoruba states. What Johnson has been to Yoruba history, Kagwa has been to Buganda, and Nyakatura to Bunyoro. Nadel's early work on Nupe has stimulated a number of later studies on that kingdom.<sup>1</sup> Where documents were few and published collections of oral traditions scarce, however, even major African states

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<sup>1</sup>S. Johnson, The History of the Yorubas From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate, ed. O. Johnson (Lagos: C.S.S. Bookshops, 1921). Sir Apolo Kagwa, The Customs of the Baganda, trans. E. B. Kalibala, ed. M. Mandlebaum Edel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934). J. Nyakatura, Abakamaba Bunyoro-Kitara, (Quebec: St. Justin, 1947). S. F. Nadel, A Black Byzantium, (London: Oxford University Press, 1942).

such as Kwararafa have been neglected by the modern generation of historians working in Africa. In summary, the modern generation of historians prefer to work on centralized states, those with ample written documentation and published collections of oral traditions. The people who form the central focus of this thesis - the Tiv - have few if any of these aids for the reconstruction of their history.

Although the Tiv were without a formal or highly-structured political system, they have a history. If the story of their emergence as a separate group, their early development, their migrations and settlement is not found in the archives of Europe or Nigeria, the historian cannot argue that therefore these events did not occur or there was no history. As an historian, he must utilize whatever sources are available to penetrate the past and reveal it. In this chapter, the sources available for Tiv history will be surveyed, the methods used in collecting Tiv traditions and the problems connected with writing pre-colonial Tiv history will be discussed.

The Tiv are by no means an unknown people within modern Nigeria. It would be a mistake, however, to say that their pre-colonial history is adequately known. No attempt has been made to discuss at any length the pre-eighteenth century Tiv history, but a fairly substantial number of authors have included varying amounts of historical material in their writings. These sources include European travellers' accounts and the observation and records of oral tradition

collected by early colonial administrators, missionaries, and anthropologists. All these sources have limitations of relevance, reliability, and accuracy.

The earliest documentations of the Tiv are in the writings of Clarke, Koelle, Baikie, and Adolf Burdo.<sup>2</sup> Although these accounts can be correlated with oral sources referring to the same period, they do not provide anything more than hints to minor events of little significance to the Tiv as a whole.

Clarke was a Scotsman who worked in Jamaica from 1829 to 1839, and in Fernando Po and the Cameroons from 1841 to 1847. Although some of his vocabularies were collected in the West Indies, it is likely that the vast majority of these Niger-Benue vocabularies were collected in Fernando Po. Clarke called the Tiv "Appa". He listed numerals and ten words in three versions. This was the first appearance in print of three neighbouring languages - Igala, Igbira and Tiv. The versions provided by Clarke were in many cases different dialects of the languages.

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<sup>2</sup>J. Clarke, Specimens of dialects in Africa, (Berwick-Upon Tweed: 1848/49), pp. 67-8, 101, 120, 123, 335. On Clarke see P. E. H. Hair, "An Introduction to John Clarke, 'Specimen of dialects'" Sierra Leone Language Review, V (1966), pp. 72-82. S. W. Koelle, Polyglotta Africana, (London: Church Mission House, 1854). W. R. Baikie, Narrative of an Exploring Voyage up the Rivers Kwora and Binue in 1854, (London: John Murray, 1856). A. Burdo, A Voyage up the Niger and Benue, (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880). For other reference to the Tiv see S. A. Crowther, The Countries on the Banks of the Niger and Binue, (London: Church Missionary House, 1855), pp. 61, 63-65, 67, 71, 76. T. J. Hutchinson, Narrative of the Niger, Tschadda and Binue Explorations, (London: Longmans, 1855), pp. 90-91, 99, 150.

Sigismund Koelle, a German missionary living in Freetown, Sierra Leone, was able to collect substantial word lists of roughly one hundred and fifty languages, principally of West Africa but also including some belonging to the Bantu family. He secured a Tiv vocabulary from a liberated slave in Sierra Leone. It is closely allied to the speech of today and much fuller than that provided by Clarke. Although he probably did not begin systematic work on the Polyglotta until 1850, he collected the vocabularies in 1847.

The travellers Baikie and Adolf Burdo passed along the borders of Tiv country. Baikie's reference to the Tiv, reproduced below, seems to reflect the worst prejudices of the neighbouring peoples towards the Tiv. Unfortunately Baikie's initial picture of the Tiv as cannibals and rude savages clung to the image of the Tiv people until the time Europeans actually began to set up an administration among them.

Just opposite to Ojogo, on the southern side of the Binue, lived a strange tribe named "Mitshi" of whom we had heard once or twice further down the river as Misi or Mishi, and who were described as a lawless set of cannibals. During one of our visits to Ojogo we met several of them, who had come by canoe, and whose appearance certainly justified the accounts which had reached our ears. Wild in look and ruder in dress, greatly tattooed and carrying constantly with them their bows and arrows, these men seemed perfect impersonifications [sic] of savages. Yet, when spoken to, though at first rather shy, they entered freely into conversation with us; but they were unwilling to tell us much about themselves. . . . The Mitshis, as far as we could judge, are all wilder and less intelligent than of any of the other African races with whom<sup>3</sup> we have had intercourse except the Baibai Jukus.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Baikie, Narrative, p. 102.

Two other groups were responsible for most of the investigations of Tiv history. One was the administrative officers in the colonial service of the British Government. They lived and worked among the Tiv. During their leisure time they collected data, including oral traditions. Even though their methods were obviously not up to the best of modern professional standards, their work has been invaluable to this study.

An early British administrator among the Tiv, Captain Downes, wrote The Tiv Tribe which records some migration traditions and movements of the Tiv clans.<sup>4</sup> His account also contributes to our knowledge of Tiv contact with other groups such as the Idoma and the Udam. Only ten pages of Downes' book are of direct historical significance. The remainder is a description of Tiv culture. In the same year that Downes produced his book, Captain Abraham, an anthropological officer of Northern Nigeria, compiled The Tiv People.<sup>5</sup> The book contains fifteen pages on the history of the Tiv, from their origins to the 1930's. The remaining chapters concentrate upon ethnology and traditional customs. Although Downes' and Abraham's books are strong on culture and weak on history, they help in our understanding of the political and social institutions of the Tiv.

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<sup>4</sup>R. M. Downes, The Tiv Tribe, (Kaduna: Government Printer, 1933).

<sup>5</sup>R. C. Abraham, The Tiv People, (Lagos: Government Printer, 1933).

Paul and Laura Bohannan form a category by themselves. Both anthropologists worked among the Tiv for twenty-six months between 1949 and 1953. They have published prodigiously on the Tiv, so much so that any mention of the Tiv brings the Bohannans name to mind. Between the two of them, five books and over twenty articles have been published on the Tiv. As might be expected, all their works tend to be more anthropological than historical in orientation, emphasis being mainly on religion and culture. Nevertheless, their research findings provide an essential background to historical thinking and historical research.<sup>6</sup>

The Bohannans have also put together Three Source Books on the Tiv.<sup>7</sup> These were published in 1966 and together make up about four hundred and eighty pages. The material represents information given to them by Tiv elders, descriptions of events they witnessed in Tivland, and reproduction in full or part of district officers or missionary reports on

<sup>6</sup> A selected list of their works includes: L. and P. Bohannan, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, (London: International African Institute, 1953). L. and P. Bohannan, Tiv Economy, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968). L. and P. Bohannan, "Tiv Markets", Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences, New Series, XIX. 7 (May, 1957), pp. 613-21. E. S. Bowen, (L. Bohannan) Return to Laughter, (1954; rpt. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1964). L. Bohannan, "A Genealogical Charter," Africa, XXII. 4 (Oct., 1952), pp. 301-15. P. Bohannan, Tiv Farm and Settlement, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1954). P. Bohannan, Justice and Judgment Among the Tiv, (London: Oxford University Press, 1957). P. Bohannan, "The Migration and Expansion of the Tiv," Africa, XXIV. 1 (1954).

<sup>7</sup> P. and L. Bohannan, Three Source Books on the Tiv, (New Haven: Human Relations Area File, 1966).



various aspects of Tiv life. From the point of view of history, the most important section in the source books is a report on migration and history by K. Dewar, an administrative officer with some anthropological training. He knew the Tiv language and was well regarded by the Tiv themselves. He wrote this report in 1932 and was killed in the Second World War. Dewar's migration versions differ substantially from others. They are particularly interesting in that they focus largely on relations between the Tiv and their neighbours, especially in the nineteenth century. Relations between the Tiv and neighbouring peoples are particularly important, especially for dating purposes, because Tiv history is much more difficult to date than that of the neighbouring chiefly societies.

The Bohannans claim that Tiv traditions are designed to explain modern Tiv social relations and not to convey what Europeans understand by history. The major problem for the historian is to attempt to sort out what are the facts of history from the later myths. Certainly there is some validity to the Bohannans' claim, for Tiv traditions do include mythical or aetiological elements. In other words unhistorical stories have been substituted for events and patterns of developments which have been simply forgotten or deliberately suppressed from general recollections. For example, all the clans of Tiv are explained as descendants of the children of Tiv, the supposed founder of the ethnic group, but it seems more likely that large numbers of Tiv-speakers today were not

originally Tiv-speakers. Assimilated groups have thus welded their genealogies onto the family tree of Tiv. The foreign origin of these people has been purposely forgotten in the interest of ethnic unity. In the present study, the problem was partially solved by collecting traditions of the same event from the Utur and Abakwariga who are within Tiv country as well as from the Tiv themselves. The common elements within these traditions have been considered the facts of history, because it is unlikely that in two or three separate and disparate groups the original story could have been moulded and adjusted in the same manner.

The Bohannans argue that the pre-colonial history of the Tiv cannot be written. Given their numerous publications on almost every aspect of Tiv culture, presumably they would have written about Tiv history had they thought it possible. Their argument tends along two lines, first that the Tiv tradition is concerned with explaining present relations rather than past events and second that Tiv traditions are unreliable because there are numerous versions of the same event. The historian believes that present relationships are the result of historical developments. History, like oral tradition, is an attempt of a people to explain how they came to be the way they are at present, where they came from, and how their present organization came about. Distortions, fabrications, fancy justifications and pure myth fill the published history books of the world. Oral traditions are neither more nor less subject to the same distortions and faults.

Conflicting versions of the causes, significance, and even the events of some major historical development are essential to any historian. Variants of traditions are essential to historical analysis. To the historian they represent different interpretations by different individuals or groups and probably suggest how the event under discussion affected the group concerned. Variant versions of one event do not create a suspicion that the event was mythical. In a dispute, it is to be expected that different groups will perpetuate different stories of its causes, events, and consequences. It is at this point that the skill of the historian must be employed. For him, the first prerequisite is to know which groups reported which versions and how these groups were related to, or allied with, individuals or the event in question. Neither Akiga nor any of the anthropologists who worked among the Tiv provide this information. A documentary historian who employed many documents in his work but failed to reveal the authorship of any would receive severe professional criticism, but only recently have precise citation standards come to be demanded in work with "oral documents". This is why, for the modern oral historian, all the traditions collected and published in the past have so often to be collected all over again.

None of these writers on the Tiv ever footnoted their sources. They never tell the reader what individual provided the story they narrate, nor do they tell his clan, his political affiliation or even his administrative district.

A field researcher, laboriously interviewing elders over a vast area and among a populous people, may work for months or even more than a year before he comes across the particular version of a tradition recorded thirty to fifty years ago by an earlier writer. This is why the use of secondary sources is difficult and can be misleading.

What worries the modern historian is when he can find only one version of a tradition, a version which is universally reported. One should be more suspicious of the traditions of centralized states, whose citizens have been educated to accept one royal and official history, than where diverse versions exist. It is correct to say that traditions are subject to distortion, but as McCall rightly puts it: "If we were to throw out everything subject to distortion, historians would have few documents of any kind. The task is to find out how to detect distortion."<sup>8</sup> The best way to do this is to collect the traditions of all the clans and then try to determine the role of each clan in the event under discussion. It is only human to slant the details of an event to one's group or clan in a favourable light. Distortion is a problem for those working in centralized chiefdoms and it has been the naive acceptance of royal chronicles by modern historians which has triggered the present concern over distortion.

Besides anthropological written sources there are the so-called "Intelligence Reports", by district officers in the

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<sup>8</sup>D. McCall, Africa in Time - Perspective, (Boston: Boston University Press, 1968), p. 59.

various districts of the former Tiv Division.<sup>9</sup> These reports contain a brief history and a detailed description of the administrative and judicial organization of each district. They were meant to create proposals for the re-organization of the districts along more traditional lines. These reports are now deposited at the National Archives in Ibadan, Kaduna, and Enugu. They are especially valuable as eyewitness impressions of Tiv life in the first decades of this century. The notes in them about local histories and customs are very uneven but they represent the earliest written collections of oral tradition made before modern changes had begun seriously to affect the preservation of tradition.

The most important source for the history of the Tiv is Akiga's manuscript.<sup>10</sup> Akiga, born of Tiv parents, was an evangelist when he collected Tiv traditions. Before his death in 1959, he served first in the Gaskiya Corporation as editor of a Tiv news-sheet, then for five years as a member of the Northern House of Assembly, and afterwards with the Tiv Native Authority in the field of Literature and Adult Education.

The extracts which have been translated into English

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<sup>9</sup>Originally these Reports were made out in four copies. One copy was retained in the divisional office of origin with the District Officer, one by the Resident of the Province, another copy was sent to the Regional Headquarters, and the last copy was sent to the Federal Secretariat at Lagos.

<sup>10</sup>In these untranslated manuscripts, which are now at Ibadan University, Akiga has recorded traditions which he collected from all parts of Tivland, over a period of almost twenty years.. Benjamin Akiga Sai, "The History of Tiv" (MS in University of Ibadan Library, Ibadan).

and reproduced in Akiga's Story, and "The Descent of the Tiv from Ibenda Hills" form only about a half of the original manuscript.<sup>11</sup> Akiga's Story contains accounts of Tiv traditions, institutions, traditional ritual beliefs, and administrators. It traces the movements of the Tiv from their original homeland to the Ibenda Hills. "The Descent of the Tiv" is a detailed account of their wanderings and migrations which brought them to their present homeland.

As an amateur historian or chronicler, Akgia presents the traditions as they were told to him. Like many amateurs, he does not record various versions of any one incident; he seems to accept certain traditions, while rejecting those which appear to contradict the ones he has accepted. There is no indication of what his criteria of selection were, which groups provided which traditions, or even whether upon occasion he fused various versions to arrive at the one he reports. This, of course, leaves him wide open to critics such as the Bohannans, who collected contrary traditions or variants of Akiga's tradition and proceeded to discredit oral tradition as a source of history. Rupert East<sup>12</sup> helped Akiga to publish his book and the fact that it was entitled

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<sup>11</sup>B. A. Sai, Akiga's Story, trans. R. East, (London: Oxford University Press, 1939). "The Descent of the Tiv from Ibenda Hills", trans. P. Bohannan, Africa XXIV. 4 (Oct. 1954), pp. 295-310.

<sup>12</sup>Dr. Rupert East, a graduate of Oxford University, translated and annotated Akiga's Story. Dr. East was formerly Assistant Director of Education in Nigeria and first Chairman of the Gaskiya Corporation.

Akiga's Story, rather than a History of the Tiv, suggests East's bias because Akiga makes it clear he considers that he was writing the history of his people.

In spite of the criticism, Akiga remains a basic source for Tiv history. His history is to the Tiv what Johnson is to the Yoruba, Kagwa to the Baganda, or Nyakatura to the Banyoro.<sup>13</sup> Akiga's history may be considered the official history of the Tiv, if such a history can be said to exist in a non-centralized society. It is like the royal chronicle in a kingdom and may well be permeated with distortions, but any new version of Tiv history must begin with it. One example of distortion is that Akiga accepts uncritically the widespread Tiv tradition that the land they now occupy was uninhabited when they settled on it. On the other hand, neighbouring peoples talk about being displaced and driven out by the Tiv. The historian should be aware of the bias of settlers; even the British settlers in Kenya after 1900 argued that the highlands were unoccupied when they arrived. To say anything else would raise the question of the legitimacy of land ownership. The historian does not deny the validity of all British documents on Kenya merely because one suspects their claim to be "first" settlers. Neither need Akiga be dismissed because he reports this widely-held Tiv tradition.

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<sup>13</sup>S. Johnson, The History of the Yorubas; J. Nyakatura, Abakamaba Bunyoro-Kitara; Sir A. Kagwa, The Customs of the Baganda.

Various other recent historical records may also be noted. The Department of History at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, has introduced research essays as part of the degree structure for history honours students. The undergraduates spend part of the summer holidays of their second year collecting data from the Archives and from the field. They are then expected to present their long essays in their third year for grading. Some of these essays on some sections of the Tiv are available at Ahmadu Bello University library. Given the fact that the students are given little training in techniques before going into the field, one is amazed and pleased at the quality of the research they produce.<sup>14</sup>

Finally the latest and most scholarly history of the Tiv available, "A History of the Tiv People in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries circa 1800-1960" and for which the author, Tesemchi Makar, received the Ph.D. degree from Ahmadu Bello University, is a work of outstanding merit.<sup>15</sup> Its publication should end the long isolation of the Tiv from the mainstream of West African history. It is excellent in its coverage of the recent past. Probably its greatest contribution is the chapter on "The Era of the Tor-Agbande (chiefs) in

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<sup>14</sup>An example of this is J. W. T. Gbor, "Traditions of Tiv Origin and Migrations with special emphasis on the Eastern Tiv frontier to C. 1900" (B.A. Hon. Dissertation, June 1974, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria).

<sup>15</sup>T. Makar, "A history of the Tiv People in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries circa 1800-1960." (Ph.D. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1976).



Tivland".<sup>16</sup> Makar argues very convincingly against most other published sources that this institution should be regarded as a natural political development, largely springing from within Tiv society from prevailing conditions in the nineteenth century.

The completion of Makar's work, coming as it did close to the completion of the field work of the present writer, caused a major change of focus in this study. In Tiv society as in most others, traditions of the nineteenth century are the richest and fullest. Much, if not most, of the field data collected by the present writer was concerned with the nineteenth century. To avoid extensive overlap with Makar's work, the writer decided that his own research must focus on the period prior to 1850. This required a second period of field work a year after the completion of the first fifteen months of interviewing. It is to be hoped that Makar's work and this one taken together will change the image of the Tiv as a people whose history is impossible to write according to modern critical and analytical standards.

Having looked at the literary sources for the study of Tiv pre-colonial history we must now turn to the principal sources for the study of pre-colonial Tiv history, the oral traditions<sup>17</sup> of the Tiv themselves. In order to counteract

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<sup>16</sup> "Tor-Agbande" literally translated means Drum Chiefs.

<sup>17</sup> Oral tradition can be defined as "history handed down by word of mouth, the source material being the spoken rather than the written word." B. A. Ogot and J. Kieran eds. Zamani, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House (hereafter E.A.P.H.), 1968), p. 10.

the scorn occasionally still heaped upon oral sources and most African pre-colonial history, the explanation of methodology in dealing with oral sources takes on an added importance.<sup>18</sup> An attempt will be made here to give some account of field work methods.

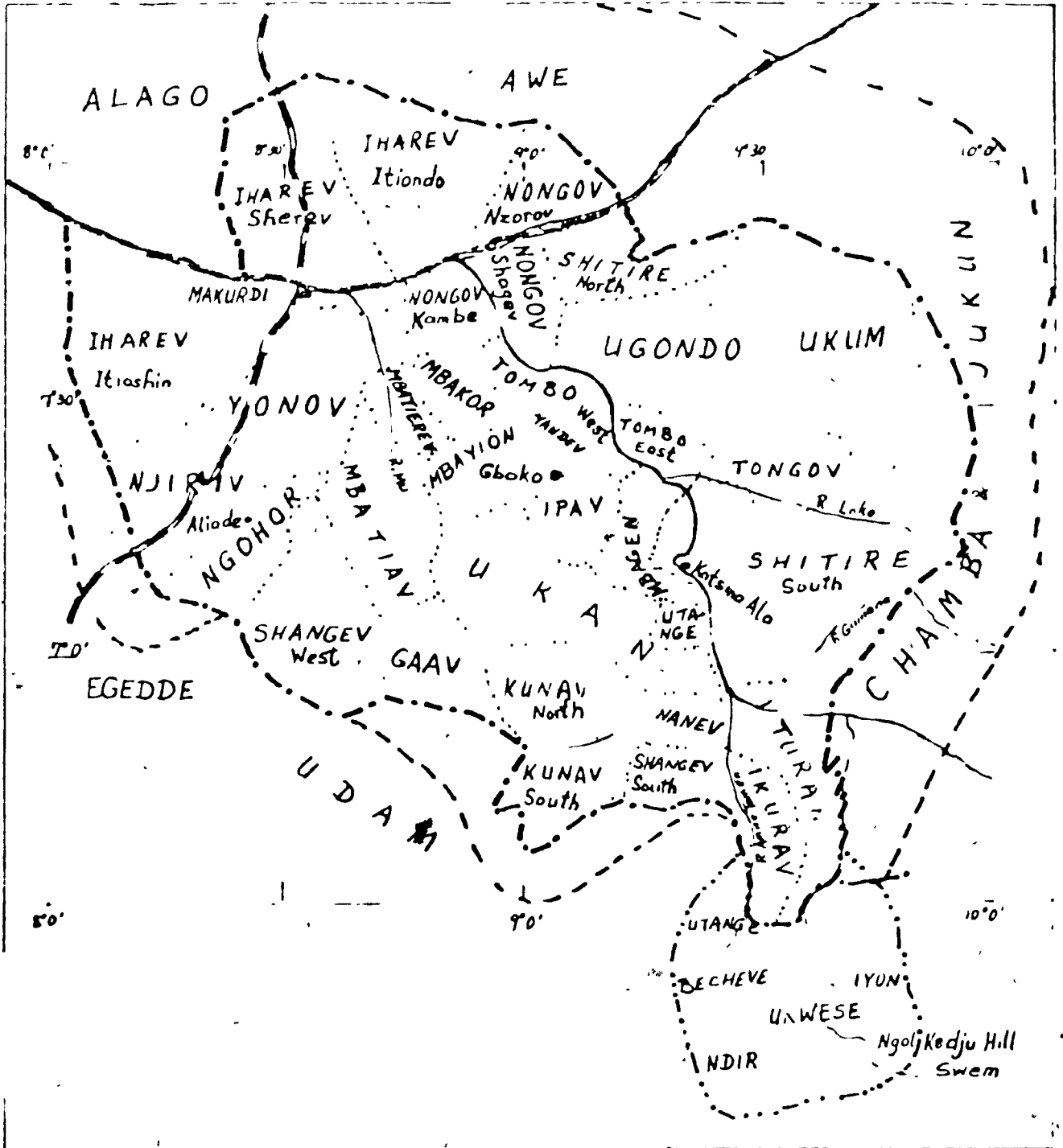
The present writer attended Dalhousie University during the 1973-1974 academic year, making preliminary preparations for field work by reading the published literature on the Tiv and their neighbours. This pre-field preparation also included a training programme in techniques of working with oral traditions.<sup>19</sup> The writer was fortunate to study

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<sup>18</sup>This is by no means a formal apology for writing history on the basis of oral traditions, but just as historians working with written sources specify their documentary sources and take note of the circumstances in which they were written, so too it has been with historians working with oral traditions. Cohen, Lamphear, Karuigire and others have all devoted a chapter each in their books to how they collected their data. See D. W. Cohen, The Historical Tradition of Busoga, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 28-69. J. Lamphear, The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 17-60. S. R. Karuigire, A History of the Kingdom of Nkore in Western Uganda to 1896, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 1-32.

<sup>19</sup>Good practical discussions of the methodology of collecting oral traditions can be found in J. Vansina, trans. H. M. Wright, Oral Tradition; A Study in Historical Methodology, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963). J. Vansina, "Recording the Oral History of the Bakuba - 1 Methods." Journal of African History (hereafter J.A.H.), 1, 1 (1960), pp. 43-51. J. B. Webster, "Research Methods in Teso", East African Journal, (Feb., 1970), pp. 30-38. B. A. Ogot, History of the Southern Luo Volume 1: Migration and Settlement, (Nairobi: E.A.P.H., 1966). D. Cohen, The Historical Tradition of Busoga. P. D. Curtin, "Field techniques for collecting and processing oral data," J.A.H. IX, 3 (1968), pp. 369-384. Many other historians who have published their works based on oral tradition discuss their methods.

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field methods under Professor J. B. Webster whose previous field work experience is extensive. The field work course was helpful insofar as it exposed the writer to a wide range of methods employed elsewhere in Africa, but every society is unique and no one method can be lifted in its entirety from one society and transformed to suit another. For example, the method of dating the Tiv as employed in this study is unique; Tiv clans are not totemic but they do have one national totem. The Tiv system of ancestor reverence -- primarily concerned with unnamed ancestors -- does not help the historian to penetrate the earliest historical period. Chronicles, royal or otherwise, so common elsewhere, do not exist among the Tiv. Extremely few of the techniques of methodology now so common in African pre-colonial history had any relevance whatsoever to the Tiv.

The terminology describing African political systems is less than satisfactory. The centralized states such as the Hausa, Jukun, Nupe, and Igala are fairly well defined. Then there are ethnic groups composed of a multiplicity of tiny chiefdoms or chieflets such as the Idoma which might well be termed segmentary. The Idoma, like the Lugbara, have been called stateless but this term is misleading since the small political units of both might easily be looked upon as miniature states, as the term "chiefdom" (and even more "chieflet") tends to suggest. In any case both the Idoma and Lugbara do possess hereditary leadership. The Tiv fall in a category which might be termed acephalous, and truly acephalous in that

no political unit of any type is discernible among them nor was there, at least prior to 1800, any form of hereditary leadership, either political, religious, social, or military. Nor would the individual who exercised authority in one crisis necessarily provide the leadership in the next crisis even if it occurred a few months later. The Tiv had leaders, but there was no continuity of leadership within even the small area where people felt obliged to settle their disputes according to agreed rules and without resort to force.<sup>20</sup> It is well known among historians that the greatest details are remembered by those few people who have positions of prestige and power in a traditional society, such as chiefs, traditional councillors, keepers of royal graves and relics, and their families. In this sense, there is an advantage in collecting traditions where there was a highly organized or long-lasting kingdom. Historians working with societies very much like the Tiv could find only very few tribal-wide traditions existing among the people they were working with. Godfrey Muriuki

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<sup>20</sup>R. Horton, "Stateless societies in the history of West Africa," in J. Ajayi and M. Crowder eds. The History of West Africa, Vol. I, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p. 72, lays down four points relative to a stateless society: (1) In a stateless society, there is little concentration of authority. It is difficult to point to any individual or limited group of men as the ruler or rulers of the society. (2) Such authority roles as exist affect a rather limited sector of the lives of those subject to them. (3) The wielding of authority as a specialized, full-time occupation is virtually unknown. (4) The unit within which people feel an obligation to settle their disputes according to agreed rules and without resort to force tends to be relatively small.

points out that Kikuyu traditions were "largely free, informal and widely diffused, vague and unhelpful". Under such circumstances Muriuki placed more emphasis on the traditions of clan and lineage. John Lamphear admits that among the Jie traditions that are tribal-wide "are often vague" and he had to turn to individual clans and subclans.<sup>21</sup> Tiv society is similar to that of the Kikuyu and the Jie. Since there were no chiefs, interviewing was mostly of the survey type embracing large numbers of elders, and piecing together rather fragmentary information.

In the first phase of the field work, from July 1974 to October 1975, three hundred and nineteen interviews were conducted, some with individuals and some in groups, with a total of eight hundred and five elders. The interviews were spread unevenly among the ten super-clans of unequal size. The Kparev super-clan, the largest with all its sub-clans, was counted as a single clan since it was so regarded by informants. Each interview was named and recorded as a Tiv Historical Text. Thus in the footnote the first interview would appear as Tiv Historical Text Number 1 (T.H.T. No. 1) followed by the date and the name or names of those interviewed. Chart I is an alphabetical listing of all Tiv super-clans referred to in this study, showing the number of interviews done and the number of genealogies collected. As the

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<sup>21</sup>G. Muriuki, "A History of the Kikuyu to 1904" (Ph.D. London University, 1969), p. 15. J. Lamphear, The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda, p. 26.

CHART I

## NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED IN PHASE I OF THE PROJECT

Super-clans	No. of Informants	No. of Interviews	No. of Genealogies
1. Iharev	117	23	35
2. Ikurav	64	28	29
3. Kparev	253	134	126
4. Masev	62	26	33
5. Nongov	15	4	6
6. Shitire	47	16	26
7. Tongov	27	7	9
8. Turan	80	36	36
9. Ugondo	24	4	3
10. Ukum	94	28	31
11. Other people	22	13	14
TOTAL	805	319	346

CHART II

## NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED IN PHASE II OF THE PROJECT

Ethnic Groups	No. of Informants	No. of Interviews	No. of Genealogies
1. Tiv	113	27	44
2. Abakwa	22	4	2
3. Iyordaa	22	4	4
4. Utur	43	7	10
TOTAL	200	42	60

CHART III

## SUMMARY OF WORK IN THE TWO PHASES

Phase	No. of Informants	No. of Interviews	No. of Genealogies
Phase I	805	319	346
Phase II	200	42	60
TOTAL	1005	361	406

chart indicates, at least four interviews were carried out in each super clan.

The second phase of this project took place in the summer of 1976. During this phase forty-five interviews were conducted in four different ethnic groups with two hundred informants. Chart II attempts to show the breakdown of the interviews.

As the two charts show, the coverage of Iharev, Ikurav, Kparev, Masev, Turan, and Ukum was extensive. The coverage of Shitire was adequate, but the coverage of Nongov and Ugondo was thin. Further researchers must plan to visit Nongov during the dry season.

A Tiv himself, the writer was already familiar with many features of Tiv culture.<sup>22</sup> There was no problem in understanding the values, social organization, and the pattern of land settlement of Tiv society. Even more important, an interpreter was unnecessary. The language in which the interviews was conducted is the mother tongue of the writer who had a command of the language and idiom which often surprised the elders. According to them, many of their "sons" who had attended formal schools no longer spoke good Tiv. Intonation was a problem, however. The Tiv make use of a three tone

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<sup>22</sup> It has been stressed that "it is absolutely essential for the historian to be acquainted with the language and with the culture of the people he is studying. He must either be himself trained in linguistics and social anthropology, or must confine his studies to areas already explored by anthropologists and linguists". Vansina, Oral Tradition, p. 75.



system.<sup>23</sup> These tones are, however, not indicated in any way in written Tiv. One example will suffice. One elder's name was Ikuma meaning "it is enough", another's was Ikuma with a different tonal arrangement and means "pubic hair"; yet a third was called Ikuma meaning "to inject". It becomes rather embarrassing if one calls "it is enough" by the name "pubic hair". This was a common problem and ultimately signs had to be invented to distinguish tonal arrangements.

A letter of introduction was sent from the State Military Governor's Office to the then three district officers working among the Tiv. No letters were sent to the individual district heads, chiefs, and local leaders. It did not seem wise to appear too closely associated with government administration. A repeated question which arose was whether the research was associated with the government. This was a logical suspicion since the elders knew that previous European researchers were either government officials or sponsored by the government. Furthermore, a rumour was circulating at that time that the government desired new proposals from the elders in order to reorganize the districts along more traditional lines.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>The Bohannans say that the number can be increased to five if rising and falling tones are counted singly instead of as composites. L. and P. Bohannan, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 11.

<sup>24</sup>The old organization has been abolished since August 31, 1976.

Every elderly Tiv is supposed to know history and a great majority of them do, but obviously some were better versed than others and some kind of selection process was necessary. Almost every informant supplied names of other "good" informants. Since Gboko was once the administrative centre of the Tiv there were many people living in Gboko from all over Tivland. It was an ideal place to prepare a list and discover how to find the informants. Unlike some other African societies, the Tiv have no specialists charged with preservation of tradition. Every man is expected to have received traditions from his father. However, in each community there were some elders who knew more than others. These "experts" were well known and were always pointed to by other individuals.

It was not too difficult to gain an informant's consent and confidence. Before every interview I introduced myself as Ngusha Orkar of Masev but presently stationed at Mkar in Ipavland. Many informants had either gone to Masevland to work on the railway or had passed through that area to Makurdi (Lobi). They had much to tell of their experiences. For some informants, their mothers were from Masev, for others, their wives came from Masev. Sometimes a whole lineage claimed that their great great grandmother had been from Masev. They also knew Mkar where my wife was working at the hospital. They were proud to see one of their own "sons" doing what only Europeans had done in the past. The formal introduction normally proceeded as follows:

I am here to visit with you and have a chat (imongo). Such a visit is not a bad thing or a new thing among the Tiv. In the past, according to our Tiv custom, young people sat with their parents or elders and listened to traditions. Today this is neglected by those who move to towns and those who go to school. The result is that we young people of today are ignorant of our past. In addition our history is dying with the elders. Many of the educated Tiv would like to do what I am doing now but they hold jobs and receive only a few weeks each year for their vacation. As a student on holiday I have the time to do this urgent work. Once our traditions are recorded, our children can read their own history wherever they may be.

The reaction of the informants varied. The majority accepted the whole idea and expressed joy that at last one of their own "sons" had "come to his senses" and was going to write their history for posterity. Many of them complained that they had tried to talk to their sons without success. According to them the young people usually said that they were not interested in "yesterday" but only in "today". Some informants were more sceptical. They suggested that I was trying to obtain information for the government. Some believed that I wanted to publish the information and make a great deal of money. In the end, only five informants out of a total of one thousand and five refused to talk. The more stubborn and suspicious were usually convinced by the following argument:

In school, Tiv students study the history of Europeans, Americans, Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba but not the history of the Tiv because it is not written in a book. There is nothing wrong in studying the history of other people, but it is wiser for one to know his own history first.

Another aid in gaining the confidence of the informants

was personal contact with the teachers in the primary and secondary schools and with educated young people in various places. The elders believed and said openly that neither their teachers nor their "sons" would bring trouble on their heads. Sometimes, the teachers and friends even assisted in explaining the object of the research. Occasionally elders were reluctant to be interviewed arguing that there were others who knew more than they did. Surprisingly enough those who were expected to "tell me everything" often did not know as much as those who professed ignorance. Many of the "experts" held a reputation of being articulate and being knowledgeable about modern Tiv politics. Such experts were sometimes annoyed with the questions. The questions were not intended to show their ignorance nor to embarrass them but they viewed them as such. Many onlookers were disappointed with their experts who could not answer the questions, questions which they claimed they had never been asked before. It was obvious that an interview in front of a local audience often exposed the weaknesses of an elder who previously had enjoyed a reputation of great knowledge in the community. It was something like an "A" student failing a public oral examination. Something had to be done to retrieve the dignity of the man and preserve the respect which his compatriots and social equals had for him. Normally the following explanation achieved this end. The writer explained that:

There was no elder who knew "all" and that if I could find such an elder I would sit down with him and collect all of the information I wanted.

It would not be necessary to travel from one elder to another. Furthermore some of the things their parents had told them might not have been told by other parents to their children. Therefore it was necessary for them to give me their own individual versions of what they knew about the past.

In the methods course at Dalhousie I had been warned that informants should not be paid because this might lead them to invent history and charge for it by the hour encouraging others to do the same. This would also create problems for others who might in the future wish to carry out further research. On very few occasions did informants request compensation. This delicate problem was dealt with as diplomatically and as politely as possible. I explained that:

Elders should be willing to talk about the past without demanding money. It was not a Tiv custom for one to be paid for the information he provided. Furthermore, even if it were a Tiv custom I was still a student and could not afford to pay the hundreds of elders which I had to interview.

Aside from cash payments, however, there were ways more in keeping with Tiv traditional behaviour and often just as expensive and usually more time consuming, in which one could indicate one's concern for the well being of the society as well as demonstrate that a researcher was not only interested in his own selfish pursuit of facts and knowledge. The writer usually carried "small medicines" such as aspirin to help those who were ill. On countless occasions the seriously sick were carried to hospital. The word of these things quickly circulated and many communities accepted me as part of them and not just another data collector. One extreme example occurred when a boy was bitten by a snake in the middle of an

interview. I took the boy to a dispensary and then to Wukari General Hospital twelve miles away only to discover that they had no anti-snake serum. We then drove directly to Takum Christian Hospital about forty miles distant. To my surprise news of this spread far and wide and helped to establish rapport with later informants. On some occasions after spending several nights at an informant's home, some parting gifts such as packets of sugar, soap, or matches were offered. This is a common courtesy and accepted in Tiv custom.

It seems wise to pause and note at this point that three hundred and sixty interviews in fifteen months is not a record by any means. Researchers have been known to conduct an average of one per day or even more. The time spent in organization and preparation, explanation and justification, establishing confidence and rapport, travelling the vast distance and the problems of organizing group interviews (to be discussed below) occupied an enormous amount of time. These demands of the assignment interfered seriously with what a Westerner might refer to as efficiency. But it would seem appropriate to issue a warning that efficiency in the sense of regularly scheduling morning and afternoon interviews with rapid dashes between one village and the next might in fact turn out to be the worst kind of inefficiency. Success in later interviews may well depend upon one having listened politely and for a respectable length of time to an earlier elder talking pure nonsense or dispensing completely irrelevant information.

As noted earlier, the Tiv are an acephalous, egalitarian, and individualistic society where every elder virtually has his own version of history transmitted to him by his parents. They do not have formal traditions consisting of memorized narrations recited word for word. Rather Tiv traditions are informal. Traditionally, the Tiv took decisions through seeking consensus in a meeting of elders, it was therefore necessary to call elders together in groups in order to conform to the traditional Tiv pattern and collect reliable history. The original plan for one community was as follows:

1. A group interview of all the elders of a single sub-clan.
2. Individual interviews of two or more outstanding informants who had been identified in the group interviews. Normally, this would occur on the second day.
3. The third day would be given over to individual interviews with elders or middle-aged men of kindreds not represented in the original group interview.
4. A final group interview on the fourth day of all the elders of the sub-clan to clarify conflicting evidence or raise new questions which came out of the information supplied on the three previous days.

This pattern of interviews had been successfully carried out among the Iteso, an acephalous society in East Africa which seemed to resemble the Tiv more closely than any other of which this writer was aware.<sup>25</sup> But the method was very difficult to apply among the Tiv. Sometimes a date would be set for a group interview with six elders. If two or three

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<sup>25</sup>J. B. Webster, "Research Methods in Teso", p. 35.

showed up they refused to be interviewed until all six were present. For example, on a pre-arranged day for a group interview at Biam of Iharev, only three of the five elders arrived at 2 p.m. Since there were no motorable roads to the two missing informants' homes it was not possible to collect and bring them to the interview. Therefore a new date was arranged. On the evening before the interview the writer was assured that this time all five of the elders would be present but this time only one elder arrived as arranged. Biam's home was about seventy miles from the centre of the researcher's operations. Such disappointments were repeated on several occasions. Death, diseases, a visit to a sorcerer or repairing an "akombo cult" were among the several unexpected reasons why elders absented themselves. If someone died in that community, all elders had to be present for the rituals. The general feeling that nobody should be interviewed unless everybody was present affected the work seriously. Individual interviews were therefore more successful. But even these interviews were never really individual since the old men always invited one or two other elders to be present. In addition there were always many onlookers.

During the group interviews, each elder was interviewed personally first. His name, clan, ancestry as far back as he could remember, and anything he knew about his ancestors was recorded. Following this, questions were thrown open to be answered by all present. The advantages of such group interviews were many. Since each elder spoke out publicly



about his own family history, he could not easily give false information without being embarrassed by the others. By and large, the entire group knew at least a little about each of the families represented. Occasionally, other members of the group spoke up to help an individual who had forgotten or become confused. During the question period, they assisted each other. This was quite healthy, since it helped them to remember detailed information likely to be lost in a private interview. The evidence collected in group interviews in fact is a result of team-work.

Group interviews occasionally were with as many as ten elders and upon one occasion with as many as forty-four. Group interviews proved useful for discussion of apparent contradiction or re-examination of certain points, such as clan lists. Names could be re-checked with informants adding whatever they knew about clans other than their own, corroborating or refuting information obtained in neighbouring kindreds. It was a quick way of collecting genealogies.

Occasionally a strong personality imposed himself on a group. However, since there is no previously agreed version of Tiv history, the elders normally engaged in a lively debate before consensus was achieved. During such debates, they would request that nothing be written down until they had achieved consensus. On some occasions, it was never reached. Sometimes arguments became totally irrelevant to the group and created ill-will among members of the group. The writer recorded all divergent views as well as the consensus when

and if it was reached.

Group interviews usually ended with singing. Some of these songs were of little value but others, especially war songs, contained historical data. Songs provide a fairly stable record of important events of the past. For example, many of the lineage groups that fought the last war against the Chamba (Ugenyi) on a mountain called Ushongo still sing the following: "Ugenyi came to fight at Ushongo. Ugenyi were defeated at Ushongo".<sup>26</sup>

The experience of having been a teacher helps a researcher to control and maintain a degree of order in a group interview. But too much control can interfere with the flow of debate and lose information which might only be revealed in a heated exchange. Individual interviews, of course, were much easier to conduct and control. Most of these interviews were with a single elder or together with his younger brother or his immediate neighbour. A Tiv elder feels more at ease if he has a partner who will at least agree or disagree with what he has been saying even if the partner does no more than nod his head at the appropriate times. It was always stressed that they were not expected to know all the answers to the questions and should not be ashamed to say that they did not know. The partners were very helpful. For one thing, if it was difficult to follow what an elder was

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<sup>26</sup>"Ugenyi (Chamba) Va Tiav Sha Ushongo Itiav va hamba Ugenyi Sha Ushongo." Tiv Historical Text (hereafter T.H.T.) No. 129. 9/5/75 interview with Zaki Ngutswen of Gambe-Tiev of Shitire Super-clan.

trying to say, the partner might explain. Occasionally the partners were more articulate and knowledgeable than the main informant. The partner might also interrupt the main informant politely and apologetically whenever he disagreed with him. This was acceptable and the main informant appreciated this, confirming that that was why he had asked the partner to attend so as to correct or remind him of events and details which he might have forgotten.

All the interviews tended to be informal. Each person's genealogy was recorded. The informant was then asked to recast what he knew about their pre-colonial ancestors. In most cases they would only talk about five minutes and then ask to be questioned about particular areas of interest. Those who attempted any more lengthy dialogue talked about the system of marriage before the arrival of the Europeans, the good old days when the youths were obedient to their parents, and about the excitement of hunting parties. Most of the information was collected through the question and answer method. Basically the questions were on family genealogies, migrations, settlements, political institutions, trade, marriage, and relations with the non-Tiv. With time, although the basic outline remained the same, questions were reorganized and rephrased.

Many friends and teachers in rural areas helped to introduce the writer to individual informants. Sometimes, however, it was possible to appear unannounced at a village. In the introduction, mention was made of those who had

recommended the informants as knowledgeable and provided their names and addresses. There was no objection to this.

In fact, some informants were proud that their reputation for historical expertise had travelled so far. This made it easy to establish intimate relations with them. The whole atmosphere was that of cooperation and frankness, and this homely atmosphere made it possible for the informants to open up and speak freely. Sometimes they remarked that the interview was in their home so they could tell the truth and there was no fear of victimization. The innumerable visits to homesteads were the best form of introduction. Such contacts led to the formation of valuable acquaintances and sincere friendships. Since intimate relations were formed with a number of elders, fruitful discussions could begin with them at any time. They asked for return visits on several occasions. Often this was done with particularly good informants while three or four visits were paid to some exceptional elders. At one time an elderly lady and her friends at Tse-Gbagir discussed history until 3 a.m. before retiring. To the writer's surprise the lady woke him up again at 6 a.m. to tell him more about the past. At Sankara, Tsafa Amaichigh was also fond of beginning his interviews at 6 a.m.

Most of the interviews were with men. A few attempts were made to interview women but on the whole these were not very successful. If the elderly male relatives were absent, some women agreed to be interviewed, or if an old lady's son encouraged her she might be willing to be interviewed.

At Tse-Gbagir the old men ultimately admitted that there was an elderly lady who knew more than they did. When she was brought forward, she proved to be competent. Therefore several visits were scheduled for her home to collect more traditions. Some of the ladies knew more than the men but they were never invited to participate. Yet if a question was asked which the men could not answer one man might go inside the house and collect the answer from the woman. It would have saved some time had she been invited into the interview. The majority of the female informants had been married and had left their fathers' homes when they were very young. They could not remember very much about the history of their parental homes.

The greatest problem of the entire research was that of chronology. It was extremely difficult to compare the relative sequence of events as laid out in different interviews. Ralph Herring has argued that the history of acephalous societies is almost impossible to write unless it is a team project, and the researcher in the acephalous society constructs his chronology through reliance upon his colleagues working in neighbouring societies where some kind of dating structure is possible.<sup>27</sup> It was fortunate for this research that Professor Webster organized the team research project in

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<sup>27</sup> Dr. Ralph Herring did his research in Labwor, an acephalous society in Uganda. In my conversation with him he told me that he discovered that without the history of Uganda, it would have been impossible to write the history of the Abwor.

the Benue Valley in 1974.<sup>28</sup> Before beginning field work this writer was able to visit Awe, the Benue Valley Project headquarters, for a few days and participate in the interviewing process with other members of the team. Later during the field work the research team met on a number of occasions and discussed inter-ethnic contacts in particular. Certain societies near the Tiv, the Jukun, Idoma, and Alago, possess chiefs and at least one researcher of the project was working among each of these people. Their histories could be dated by the generational principle, the dynastic generation being cross-checked with official and commoner genealogies. It is ironic that while the Tiv are probably more genealogy conscious than any of their neighbours and can recount genealogies further back in time than most other African peoples, their genealogies are quite distinct from and cannot be related to the sequence of events in their history. The complicated problem of dating Tiv history must be left to a separate chapter of this thesis.

The second field work phase in 1976 was primarily devoted to interviewing neighbours of the Tiv - Abakwariga (Abakwa or Mgbakpa), Utur (Etulo), Iyordaa, and Utange<sup>29</sup> areas

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<sup>28</sup> Professor J. B. Webster organized and coordinated the Benue Valley History Project in 1974 and 1976. Researchers worked among the Idoma, Igala, Tiv, Alago, Abakwariga, Hausa, Jukun and other ethnic groups in the Benue region. The Project will be referred to hereafter as (B.V.P.P.).

<sup>29</sup> The Utange referred to here are now part of Tiv, they speak only Tiv. The Iyordaa are a mixture of many ethnic groups. They speak Tiv and their individual languages.

outside the scope of the Benue Valley Project. These peoples were organized in chiefdoms and events in their history could be dated by the standard generation principle. Furthermore, the Tiv experienced closer and more frequent historical contact with these ethnic groups than they had had with either the Jukun or Alago.

Among these neighbouring peoples the techniques of interviewing and the methodology were very different from that used among the Tiv. In this new situation the techniques originally learned in the field method course at Dalhousie were far more applicable. Because of the lengthy struggle to create a technique appropriate to the Tiv and the long immersion in Tiv culture, however, the adjustment to the entirely new circumstances was as difficult as the earliest attempts to collect oral tradition. After a long period of learning to "think Tiv" both culturally and methodologically, the adjustment to not "think Tiv" was not easy. Now the generation principle, the collection and analysis of totems and ancestor spirits had to be applied. This writer now suddenly became an "expatriate" with language problems, uncertainties of correct norms of politeness and behaviour, and problems of understanding cultures quite different from his own which he had been studying so intensely for such a long period. Finally there was the problem that the research among these people was not for its own sake, but rather for a better grasp of Tiv history. This limited the scope of the research and occasionally annoyed the people being interviewed.

The Abakwariga or Abakwa are normally associated with the town of Katsina Ala but the majority of them do not live in the present town but rather on the western side of the Katsina Ala River near the Utur people. The present Abakwa people claim that Mallam Ala left the Hausa state of Katsina after his younger brother Diko had been crowned as the king of that state. Mallam Ala led the people to Awe then to Alufu and finally to Waka (Wukari).<sup>30</sup> With the coming of the Jukun at the time of the fall of the Kwararafa confederacy, there was a dispute between the Abakwa and the Jukun. Since the Aku (Chief) of the Jukun wanted to eliminate the Abakwa, he sent them to a site between the Katsina Ala River and the Dura stream. During the dry season they moved to their second site which was near Chio Chile of the Mbagen Tiv. The well they used at this site is still called after their name. As a result of the arrival of the Chamba they moved to a third site where they remained until 1960 when they moved once again to their present site.<sup>30</sup>

Another Abakwa tradition states that a certain Mallam Audu, a holy man of Katsina, had been insulted by the king. He migrated to Awe, accompanied by some one hundred friends and disciples. He had a particularly beautiful wife, and the young men of Awe were warned to behave themselves. One of them neglected the warning and was in consequence at Mallam Audu's request, supposedly, destroyed by the hand of God.

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<sup>30</sup>T.H.T. No. 320. 24/7/76 group interview at Abakwa.



When a second Awe man was supposedly killed by God, the chief of Awe - presumably a Jukun, - decided that Mallam Audu's wife was proving too expensive an attraction and invited Mallam Audu to take his followers to Wukari. At the palace of the Aku of Wukari, the son of Aku was attracted to Audu's wife. When the son died as a result of his contact with Audu's wife, the Aku sent Audu with some Jukun to the left bank of the river to form an outpost of the Jukun Kingdom. The new settlement was given the name of Katsina Ala because the founders were natives of Katsina and, it is said, because one of the settlers was a Mallam Mohamman Ala. At first this village was quite isolated but before long the Utur arrived from the south and settled in the same neighbourhood. Inter-marriage took place between the Hausa and Jukun men and the Utur women and resulted in the formation of the mixed settlement of Abakwa.<sup>31</sup>

Both versions of the tradition point to an origin in Katsina Kingdom and to a settlement in Awe which had been confirmed by research in Awe. Both also point to the well-known dispute between the Abakwa and the Jukun when the Jukun took over the Abakwa town of Chika and renamed it Wukari. Possibly because the interviewer was a Tiv, it was not reported that the Jukun wanted the Abakwa as a first line of defence against the advancing and spreading Tiv on the western borders of the Jukun Kingdom. The traditions differ largely in the matter of

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<sup>31</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "An Intelligence Report on Katsina Ala Town in Tiv Division". (1936).

names of leaders. Clearly there could have been two migrations but at the same time it is unlikely that the same individual led them from Katsina through Awe, Arufu, Chika and to Katsina Ala. It seems more likely that there was a considerable time span between the migration from Katsina to Chika and that from Chika to Katsina Ala.

Upon the coming of the British in 1907 a body of troops was brought from Ibi to the east bank of the Katsina Ala River and a government station was built. A market was needed for the provisioning of the troops but the Abakwa from the left bank and the Jukun from Wukari alike refused to leave their homes so two Kanuri men (previously slave traders) who were living at Wukari were persuaded to come and start a market. The village they founded took the name of Katsina Ala and the original settlement became known as Old Katsina Ala.

Like the Tiv, the Abakwa were generous and very cooperative. Less than one hundred adults who pay taxes live in Abakwa town. There are about ten Tiv families living among the Abakwa. Since the Abakwa are a chiefly society, it was thought more appropriate to work through the chief before moving to the common people. A total of two weeks was spent with the chief at his residence. Only four formal group interviews were conducted among the Abakwa people. There are three royal lineages in Abakwa, and the chief made sure that all three were present at the four interviews. Other titled men and commoners were present but they did not contribute much. Unfortunately it was not possible to hold individual

interviews with those informants who were at the group interview, nor with the commoners. Although all the twenty-two informants present could speak some Tiv, the interviews were conducted in the Abakwa language with the assistance of an Abakwa interpreter. The Abakwa were very pleased with the process, complaining that previous researchers had come on a "hit and run" basis.

The elders in Utur were very helpful. Although they recounted a monolithic origin, there was no evidence to substantiate their view. The Utur as we know them today are the result of a complex mixture of diverse ethnic groups from many directions. Some writers refer to the nine divisions of the Utur as family groups. Others talk of the three main lineages and some sub-lineages. These are Agbatar, Agaji, Ugye, Angbo, Agyea, Ukpashera, Ugburube, Chafu, and Mbashinko. But through questioning it was discovered that the above names refer to geographical divisions. Since the Utur are divided into a multiplicity of clans, by using their totems as a methodological device twelve family kinship or ethnic groups were spread throughout some or all of the nine geographical divisions. For example, the Ukpana clan of the crab totem lived in both the geographical areas of Ugburube and Ugye. Twelve Utur clans, with their totemic symbols and spirits worshipped, are listed on Chart IV.

Another helpful source among the Utur was information about their ancestor spirits. Eight different spirits were identified, although it was claimed that each kinship group

had its own unique spirit. For example the Mgbakpa revere Ashama, and claim to have come from Kano via Chika. Webster claims that Ashama was an Abakwariga spirit<sup>32</sup> and this seems to be confirmed among the Utur both by their migration story and by the family name Mgbakpa. This further strengthens the suspicion that the Tiv group of a similar name was also, at least partly, of Abakwa origin. The Ugbani clan revere the spirit Aku, a typical Jukun spirit, and there is sufficient other evidence to confirm a Jukun origin for them.

The different groups within Uturland with their own chiefs developed a system of centralized control or a kind of confederation. There was a hierarchy of two levels with the Otse (chief) at the top and tributary chiefs at the bottom. The chief is chosen only from Ozi, Ukwe, and Okaku family groups. The number of tributary chiefs and title holders corresponds with the number of family groups.

The Utur would form a fascinating study for doctoral research. Their confinement to a small region, diverse origins, and the large number of historical techniques which might be used among them would greatly contribute to the history of the Benue area. They form a study of assimilation and ethnic formation, and are relatively easy to conduct. They speak a dialect of Idoma, some of them having been cut off from this parent stock by the thrust of the Tiv to the banks of the Benue. Their development could be contrasted with that of the Idoma

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<sup>32</sup>J. B. Webster, "Spirits of the Kingdom: Crocodiles and the Hippos, Manatee and Fishes," B.V.P.P., 1975.

CHART IVDistribution of Totems and Spirits Among the Utur

<u>CLANS</u>	<u>TOTEMS</u>	<u>SPIRITS</u>
1. Ageda		Agashi
2. Apwa		Agashi
3. Ashawa		Agashi
4. Eke	Evil-smelling tree-cat; crab tortoise; land-monitor; agbera-zenga.	Agashi
5. Gyabi		Agashi
6. Mgbakpa	Land-monitor, wild-cat, bush-buck.	Agashi
7. Nyaka	Crocodile; evil smelling tree- cat; land-monitor.	Ashama
8. Okaku	Leopard; serval	Ugoro
9. Okwe		Agashi
10. Oloyi		Agashi
11. Ozi		Agashi
12. Ukpana	Crab; agberazenga	Ukuma
13. Ugbani	Wild-cat; evil-smelling tree- cat; python, crocodile, manatee, red-crab.	Kyakyo Aku
14. Unogu		Ogiriya Agashi

described by E. O. Erim of Dalhousie in his recent study.<sup>33</sup> While each clan or ethnic group has its own chief, the Utur developed a confederal system with a central chief, the Ótse.

It must be added that it was not easy at first to move from one ethnic group to the other. The Utur tried to prevent me from seeing the Abakwa. Likewise, the Abakwa did not want me to interview the Utur. The question of whether the Mbágen of Tiv, the Utur, or the Abakwa arrived at the present site first was a contentious issue. In moving from one group to another the writer had to handle the situation with care, and this delayed the work. By the time good contacts and trust had been established in all these communities it was time to leave.

Some comment on the use of terms is necessary especially in discussing an acephalous society. Divisions among the Tiv have to be given a standard nomenclature throughout this work. Through the colonial period and after changes were introduced in Tiv administration. Terms like clans, sub-clans, kindreds and the like were employed. Initially there were thirty-four clans, then fifty-two and finally fifty-eight. By 1952, the smallest unit was the tax collecting unit. The more inclusive lineages contained two or more tax collecting units and were called kindreds or sub-clans. The clan contained several kindreds or sub-clans and several of the clans formed a sept.

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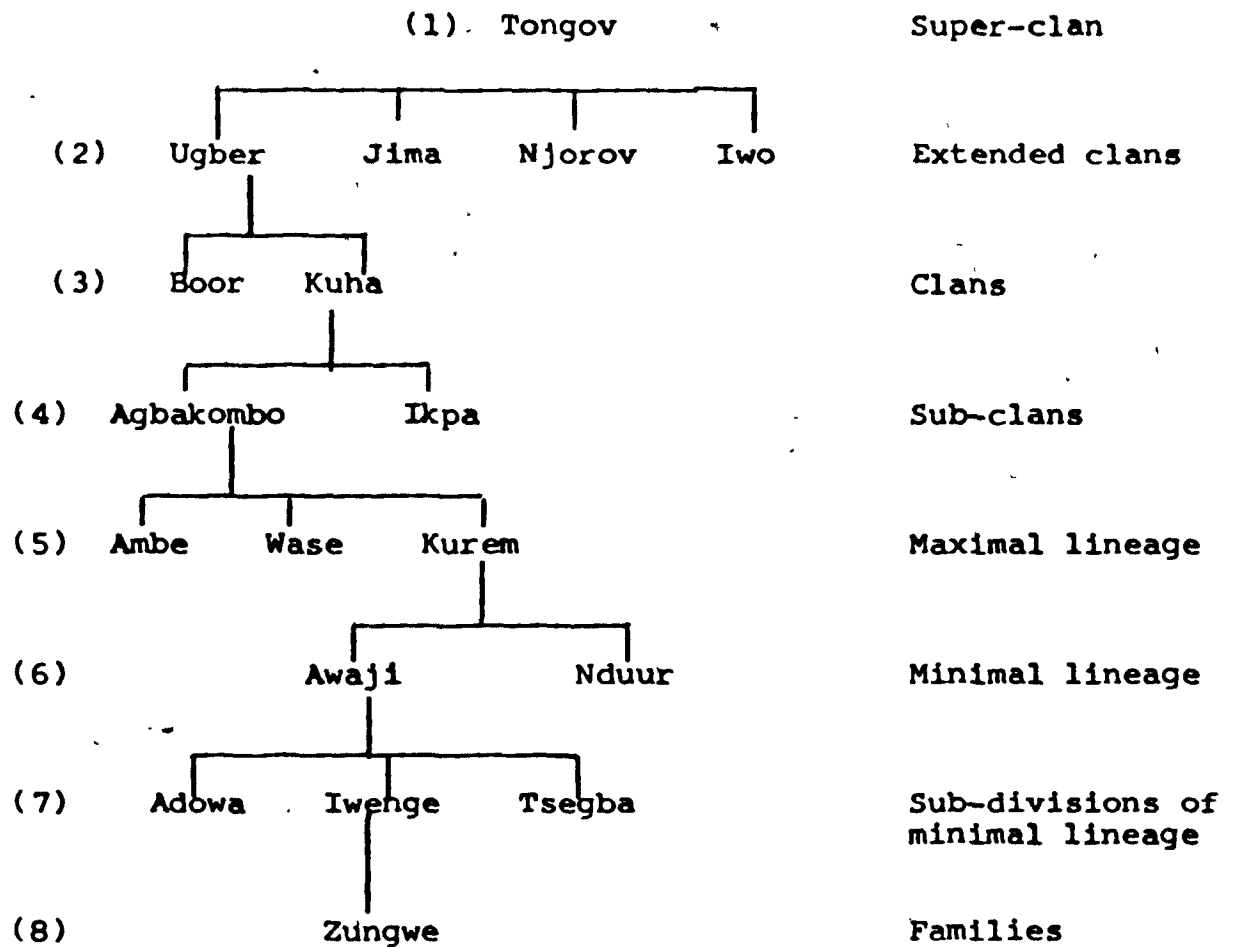
<sup>33</sup>E. O. Erim, "A Pre-colonial History of the Idoma of Central Nigeria." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1977).

In the present work, which focuses primarily upon the pre-colonial period, colonial and modern terms are avoided as much as possible. Terminology has been chosen to reflect traditional organization. A family is a social group whose members usually live together and engage in economic cooperation. It normally includes two or more adults of both sexes responsible for rearing and educating the children who are born to the female or females of the family. Family life in Africa is usually classified into two types. First, a man, his wife, and child or children constitute a nuclear or elementary family. Second, there are variant forms of extended or joint families. Such a family consists of units from two or more adjacent generations, linked by descent ties, living together as a joint family. The Tiv family is a patrilineal extended family formed by sons who remain in their father's family group, bringing their wives to live with them, so that their children also belong to the group.<sup>34</sup> The following chart (Chart V) represents the genealogical tree of the Zungwe family (No. 8). Zungwe himself being the grandfather after whom the family has been named. Zungwe probably lived at the close of pre-colonial times.

A second major order of Tiv social organization exists in the form of lineages. A lineage is a unilineal

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<sup>34</sup>A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde eds. African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 5.

CHART VTHE TONGOV GENEALOGY AND TERMINOLOGY



descent group, the members of which believe that they are related to one another through descent from a common ancestor and are able to trace their descent to known forebears. Several extended families form subdivisions of a minimal lineage (No. 7).<sup>35</sup> Several subdivisions form a minimal lineage (No. 6) a term denoting the smallest lineage to be associated with a territory. Two or more minimal lineages form a maximal lineage (No. 5). A number of maximal lineages form a sub-clan (No. 4). In anthropological terms, the same definition used for lineage could be used for a clan, except that in a clan the common ancestor is more distant. In clan societies in East Africa a man and wife always belong to different clans. This is due to the rule of clan exogamy, which is the requirement to marry outside one's clan. Each clan is often identified by a totem name such as Fox, Bear, Wolf, Leopard, or Monkey.<sup>36</sup> The usage of the term in Tiv by administrators does not comply with usual anthropological use of the term. The term "clan" was applied to a number of lineages that formed a unit for the "drum chiefs". Two or

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<sup>35</sup>The Tiv word translated by Bohannan as lineage is "Ipaven". Ipaven is also translated as segment. A man of Adowa (No. 7) can say that Mba Awaji (plural of Awaji) is his segment just as well as he can say that Mbakurem (No. 5) is his segment; or Mba Agbakombo (No. 4) or Mbakuha (No. 3), or MbaUgber (No. 2) or Tongov - all are segments, lineage, or Ipaven to which he is affiliated. See L. and P. Bohannan, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, pp. 20-21. P. Bohannan, Tiv Farm and Settlement, pp. 8-9.

<sup>36</sup>For example in Nkore, the Basingo clan has a leopard totem, S. R. Karuigire, A History of the Kingdom of Nhore, p. 72.

more sub-clans form a clan (No. 3). Several clans form an extended clan (No. 2). These extended clans form a super-clan (No. 1), a term used to represent all the ten grandchildren of the hero-ancestor Tiv. The chart shows Tongov super-clan both as a genealogy and as a spatical division. Tongov was reportedly one of the ten so-called grandsons of the hero-ancestor Tiv. The spatial divisions of the ten super-clans may be seen on Map 3. . The Tongov super-clan is located to the east of Tivland and is one of the smallest geographic areas. It is sandwiched between the super-clans Ugondo, Ikurav, Shitire, and Ukum. The Tongov super-clan occupies one continuous compact area like most of the other super-clans. The exceptions are Ikurav and Shitire which occupy two geographical regions each.

This thesis will attempt to show that the pre-1850 history of an acephalous society such as the Tiv can be written if the researcher is prepared and has the energy and stamina to carry out a large number of interviews with samples of informants from all major divisions of the people concerned, laboriously cross checking his information between super-clans, extended clans, clans, lineages and even families. He must then be prepared for at least a sampling of informants among major neighbours of the people concerned. He must compare the information gained within and without the ethnic group. He must also familiarize himself with field methods employed elsewhere but be prepared to develop his own methodology as he proceeds.

## CHAPTER II

### CHRONOLOGY OF THE TIV

There is no doubt that the need to establish a firm chronological base for the pre-colonial history of the Tiv is one of the most pressing problems which a researcher working in this area has to face. Chronology is so vital to history that it cannot be ignored. To some people chronology is the factor that "distinguishes history from legend."<sup>1</sup> To them, dating is the basis of history. It is almost impossible to interpret events, far less their causes, if one does not know when they happened. The historian has to be sure that the event which he takes to be a cause occurred before the event which he takes to be an effect. This does not mean that a historian must always necessarily know absolutely when events occurred but a mere knowledge of the "order in which things happened is not good enough either. The closer one can date the Tiv, the easier it will be to discuss the interaction of the Tiv with neighbouring peoples. Chronology thus becomes a basic requirement in any attempt to place historical events in perspective. Yet this is one of the major problems which faces a historian using oral traditions as a source of

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<sup>1</sup>N. Dyson-Hudson, Karimojong Politics; Oxford, 1966.

evidence.<sup>2</sup> In trying to get a time scale upon which to set up a relative chronology, historians have used different methods. In chiefly societies or those based on an age organization, a time scale is often provided by the passage of successive reigns and dynasties or generation and age sets.<sup>3</sup>

The problem with the Tiv as a stateless society is that there are no dynasties upon which a chronology might be constructed. The Tiv lacked any institutionalized positions of authority in the precolonial period. There was no office of authority above the head of the individual compound, a group of homes with a population of about twenty adults and representing, in its male members, the smallest segment of Tiv society. Neither did the Tiv possess generation, age set organizations which recently have become useful to historians

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<sup>2</sup>It is safe to say that African chronology which was at first given a mixed reception is now accepted by the majority of historians as a "developing science". The pioneering historians in this field included Roland Oliver, "Ancient Capital Sites of Ankole," Uganda Journal, 23 (March, 1959), pp. 51-52; B. A. Ogot, History of the Southern Luo. Note however that a few authors still maintain suspicions of the chronology of oral tradition. See D. Henige, The Chronology of Oral Tradition: Quest for a Chimera, (London: Clarendon Press, 1974); G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, Chronology of African History, Oxford, 1973, p. xiii.

<sup>3</sup>M. S. Kiwanuka, A History of Buganda to 1900, (Longman, 1973) is an example of a time scale expressed through a kinglist or royal genealogy. See also W. D. Cohen, "Survey of Interlacustrine Chronology", Journal of African History (hereafter J.A.H.), XI, 2, 1970 and S. R. Karugire, A History of the Kingdom of Nkore.

working in chiefless societies.<sup>4</sup> In a society like the Tiv, one has to use private or family genealogies combined with the controversial "national charter" for dating purposes. This internal technique can then be cross checked against available external data of the type produced by other researchers working in neighbouring societies in the Benue Valley Project. This evidence is discussed in the latter half of this chapter. There are virtually no guidelines in the literature for the dating of a society such as the Tiv. This chapter is therefore an attempt in that direction.

There is, however, a school of thought that would question the use of traditions in general and genealogies in particular for dating purposes. Following Malinowski, many anthropologists have tended to the view that traditions about the past express the reality of the present more than they record what actually happened in the past. They describe these traditions as "charters" validating the present by attributing a respectable antiquity to their origins. In stateless societies, where the basic social and political groups are said to be kinship groups, anthropologists have been particularly sceptical of the historical content of genealogies. They argue that without exception, lineage societies manipulate their genealogies.<sup>5</sup> To them "tribal

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<sup>4</sup>J. E. Lamphear, "When the Ngitome Speared Their Oxen; Problems in Reconstructing the Chronology of the Jie," in J. B. Webster (ed.), Chronology in African History, Dalhousie African Studies Series, Longman (in press).

<sup>5</sup>I.M. Lewis, "Historical Aspects of Genealogies in Northern Somali Social Structure," J.A.H., III, 1 (1962).

genealogies are historically true only in the sense that a parable is true".<sup>6</sup>

In describing the political organization of the Tiv, Laura Bohannan says that Tiv genealogies are deliberately manipulated to represent not the past, but the present balance of political relationships. She characterizes Tiv genealogies as a "charter" which is "at once a validation and mnemonic device for present social relationships".<sup>7</sup>

The Bohannans argue,

Tiv genealogies would be useless for dating purposes, since they "collapse" at about the fourth to sixth generation from living elders ... the recent portions, used in personal kinship relations, are more or less accurate; between is a limbo state into which it is seldom necessary for Tiv to inquire.<sup>8</sup>

Elsewhere Paul Bohannan states that genealogies are only sociologically true, not historically true.<sup>9</sup> By this he means that the Masev superclan is historically incorrect to declare that Masev -- the clan founder -- had three children who founded three clans as Chart VI shows:

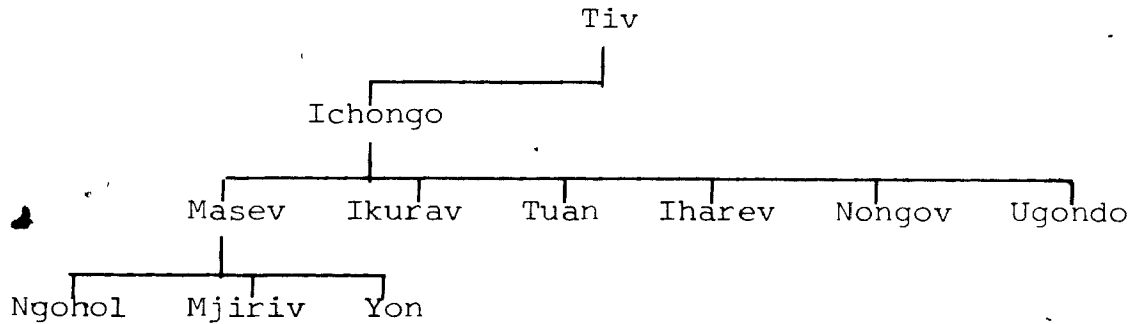
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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>L. Bohannan, "A Genealogical Charter".

<sup>8</sup>L. and P. Bohannan, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup>B. A. Sai, "The Descent of the Tiv from Ibenda Hill", p. 309.

CHART VITIV SUPER-CLANS

If we were to accept this position, which would imply that dating from genealogies is impossible or invalid, the only sources presently accepted for dating purposes would be archaeological remains, eclipses, and documentary sources. For the Tiv pre-colonial period, however, these sources are non-existent. Archaeology has not even provided evidence of the existence of the Tiv two hundred years ago. There is no mention of eclipses in Tiv traditions and documents only begin to refer to the Tiv from c. 1850. /

Fortunately, it is not necessary to take the extreme position of the Bohannans. Tiv genealogies are available and can be checked for errors. The polished genealogies may provide clues as to when events took place. By these means something of a chronology may be inferred, at least in broad outlines. The Bohannans assert that one cannot treat Tiv genealogies as genealogical trees but rather as

representatives of political fusions.<sup>10</sup> The writer would be the last to argue that Tiv genealogies are perfect as given. So, before attempting to justify the use of genealogies for dating purposes, an attempt will be made to understand the complex nature of Tiv society. A brief outline of the social structure will be attempted, and the method which was used in purging the genealogies then explained.

The first thing to be noted is that almost two million Tiv believe themselves to be descended, over traced generations, from a man named Tiv, the original ancestor. The writer proposes to call this chart of clan fissions ending with true genealogies the "Tiv National Charter", an outline of which we shall return to later in this chapter. (See also Chart No. VII.)

The Tiv organize themselves into what anthropologists call a segmentary lineage system.<sup>11</sup> They formulate this organization in terms of genealogies running patrilineally from themselves back to the hero-ancestor, Tiv. Each of the ancestors in the genealogy lends his name to the social group

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<sup>10</sup>B. A. Sai, "The Descent of the Tiv from Ibenda Hill," p. 309; L. Bohannan, "Charter," p. 303.

<sup>11</sup>M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (eds.), African Political Systems, Oxford University Press, 1940, p. 6. These authors define a lineage system as "a segmentary system of permanent, unilateral descent groups which establishes corporate units with political functions" and "which primarily regulates political reactions between territorial segments." Although these authors pioneered the identification and analysis of these systems, their rather crude classification has long since been furthered by such works as Middleton and Tait's book, Tribes Without Rulers.



of his agnatic descendants. The genealogical descent lines bifurcate in each generation; the members of each segment, at whatever level, occupy a territorially homogeneous area of land. A few examples will illustrate this.

A typical Tiv compound today would have a compound head. Diagram I below shows that "a" to "h" are living compound heads. The compound head of "a" and "b" are claimed descendants of "1", while "c" and "d" are claimed descendants of "2" and similarly "e" and "f" of "3" and "g" and

DIAGRAM 1

GENEALOGICAL RELATIONSHIP AGAINST SPACIAL RELATIONSHIP

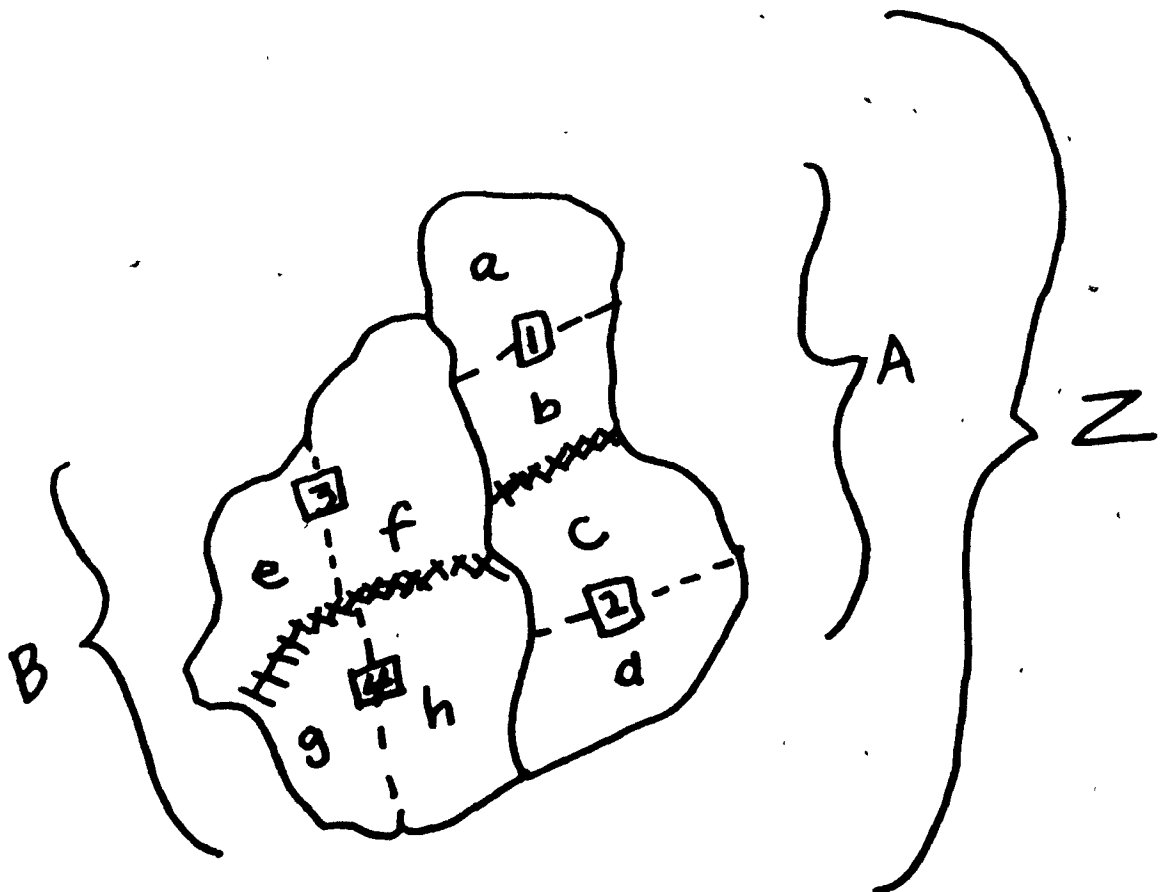
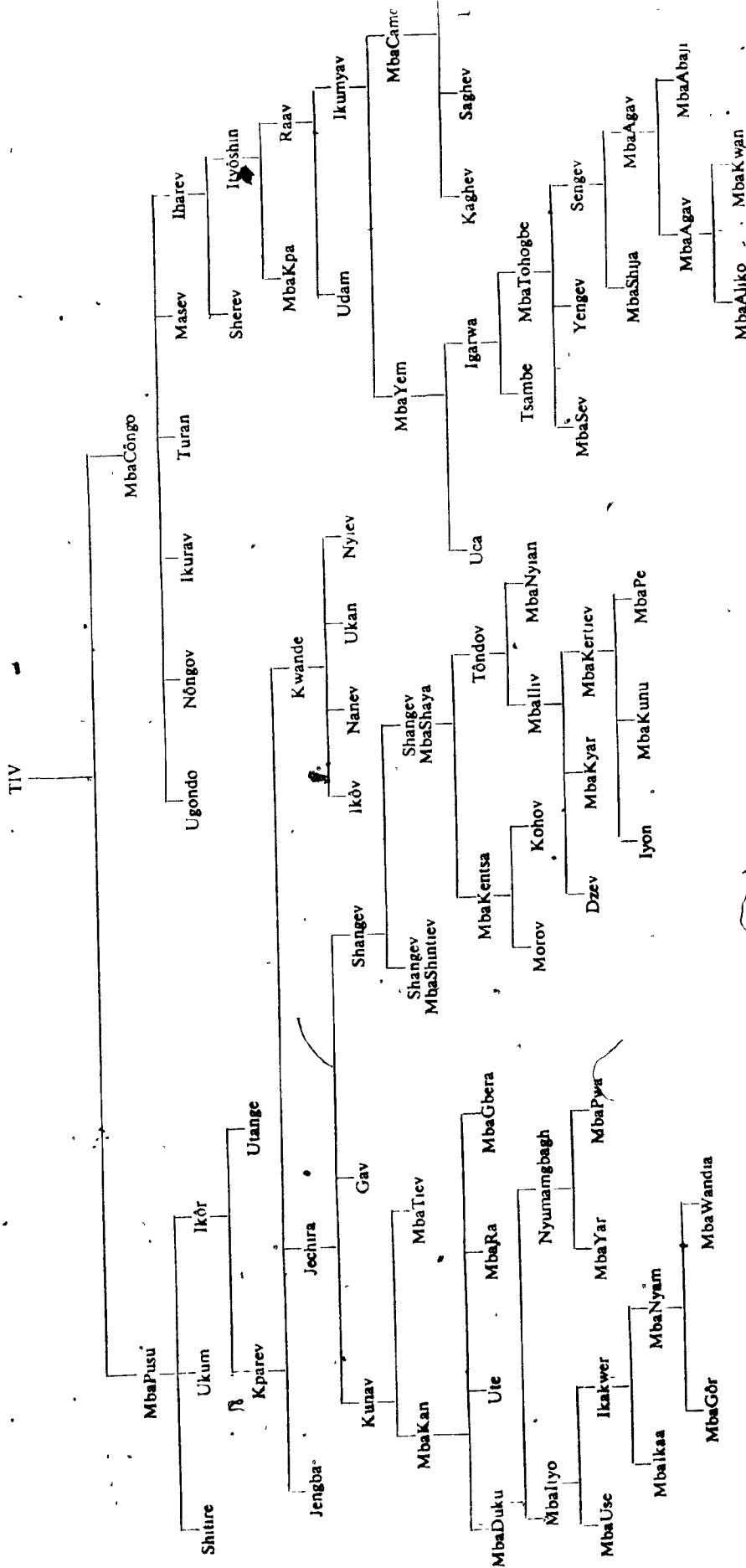


CHART VII

A PART OF THE NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL CHART OF TIV LINEAGES



Source: Adapted from P. Bohannan, Tiv Farm and Settlement, 67.

"h" of "4". Segments "1" and "2" supposedly are "brothers" and the sons of "A", while "3" and "4" are also "brothers" and the sons of "B". Again "A" and "B" are supposedly "brothers" and the sons of "Z". The process continues including more and more living peoples as the eponymous ancestor is at a greater distance until all Tiv are included as the descendants of Tiv.<sup>12</sup>

There is almost a one-to-one correlation between lineage and territorial segments, the eponymous ancestor of the segment associated with a minimal territory; that is, a territory which has not yet further segmented is usually from three to six generations removed from the oldest living people of today. Such a segment, including wives and children, may number from less than 200 to more than 1,300 people. Diagram I also shows the genealogical relationship against the spacial relationship. The father or founder of compound "a" was a brother of the founder of compound "b". Each is a minimal segment today, and each has his own territory. The two minimal segments taken together are all descended from "1" and are known by his name -- the children of "1". The territory of lineage "1", which is made up of the combined minimal territories "a" and "b" combines with the territory of lineage "2", made up of the combined minimal territories of "c" and "d", to form territory "A". All the members of "1" and "2" come from a single ancestor "A".

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<sup>12</sup>For a detailed account of Tiv social organization see L. Bohannon, "Charter".

The process is extended indefinitely right up to the apex of the genealogy, back in time to the founder, who begot the entire people, and outwards in space to the edges of Tivland.<sup>13</sup>

A genealogy is very important to every male Tiv. By reference to his ancestors a man's relations with others are defined. By genealogical reference, a Tiv traces ties of kinship and marriage, claims a space to live and farm, argues his case in a moot, conducts matters of magic and ritual, and decides against whom he will fight on any given occasion. In short, as Bohannan puts it, "Genealogies are a key to Tiv social organization."<sup>14</sup> The present writer does not dispute, and indeed has confirmed, Bohannan's interpretation of the social significance of Tiv genealogies.

If genealogies are thus as important as this there must have been attempts by some groups to adjust their genealogies for political, social, and economic reasons. This is why the genealogies can partly be called "charters". It can be argued, however, that because of the importance of genealogies families and groups have taken the greatest care in the correct preservation of them and that they can be assumed to show the segmenting pattern of the Tiv, even if in some cases they do not represent father-to-son genealogies.

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<sup>13</sup>I rely heavily here on Paul Bohannan's account in "The Migration and Expansion of the Tiv".

<sup>14</sup>L. Bohannan, "Charter", p. 301.

About four hundred genealogies were collected by this writer. In each case, the writer tried to purge the various lists of their defects. Some informants coming from two different lineages traced descent from a common ancestor but by a widely divergent number of generations. Occasionally it was discovered that informants who provided short genealogies had a poor grasp of history in general. Such informants were not just poor at recalling the genealogies but they did not have detailed information on any other subject either.

Upon other occasions elders whom a researcher would normally class as well-informed were only able to recall a short genealogy. In many of such cases they represented immigrant groups who recalled their ancestor only back as far as the one who led them into the area. They would then merely call that immigrant ancestor the son of the hero-ancestor of the Tiv segment or clan amongst which they had settled. Far from invalidating Tiv genealogies in general, such short genealogies merely help the historian to date the arrival of immigrant groups. For example, if nine genealogies within any segment trace back ten to twelve generations to the segment founder, while one traces back only four or five, the weight of evidence falls in favour of the nine informants.

Given the difficulty in Tiv society of detecting immigrant groups, a genealogy which falls widely away from the norm gives the researcher what may be his initial clue as to which groups were aliens. If the number of generations given

by various informants back to the hero-ancestor were widely scattered over a range of generations one might be suspicious. But in many cases a clear pattern such as the one above emerges. The attitude of the historian should be to explain and find the cause of the exception, not use the exception to overturn the evidence of the majority. As many genealogies as possible have been tested by the present researcher in this way and an average achieved has been used for dating purposes.

The Tiv National Charter and individual clan charters seem to indicate that most of the ancestors had only two or three sons. The question at once arises as to why all the forefathers had only two or three children each. It was discovered that occasionally an ancestor (1) had four children, "A", "B", "C", and "D" but since "C" was not a forceful personality he and his descendants had been absorbed into "D". Thus the children of "C" were eventually known as the children of "D". A casual question would receive a casual answer from an informant; there were only three children to start with and thus three groups in existence at the present. But further questioning revealed that there were four children to start with but only three groups at present. In some cases the children of "C" had moved to a different geographical area. If "C" had become afraid of his brothers because of their witchcraft he had the option of moving to his mother's kinsmen. This led the people to say that ancestor "1" had only three children. In the new geographical setting "C's" children would be absorbed into

another and separate clan. In a third case when "C" died without an issue his name was eventually forgotten. Once the informants had taken the writer into their confidence, this kind of evidence was revealed to him.<sup>15</sup> But since four sons would normally be very few by Tiv standards a further explanation of the pattern of reckoning is required. A man might well have twelve sons and yet only two or three segments would emerge from him.

In order to understand the relationship between genealogies and segments or clans one must understand the various methods by which children could be counted. It was not unusual for a man to marry three wives. If such a man had two children from the first wife, four from the second and three from the third, it would be said many years later that he had had only three instead of nine children.<sup>16</sup> In other words, the nuclear family of the mother would ultimately form a new segment. The three new groups would either bear the names of their mothers or the names of the first born from each mother or the natural leader among the sons of each mother.

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<sup>15</sup>This was brought to my attention in an interview with Lamve Malu, Tiv Historical Text (hereafter T.H.T.) No. 14, 22/8/74 with Afya District Head, Ukum.

<sup>16</sup>T.H.T. No. 6, 25/7/74 with Tsafa Amaichigh, Ngenev District, Ukum. Tsafa also gave another example. Amaichigh had about twenty-seven wives and over forty children. If Amaichigh had taken a daughter born to him by his eighth wife and exchanged her to get wife number ten, then all the children of wife number ten would have been considered the children of wife number eight. The marriage system will be explained later on in this chapter. It is sufficient to mention here that before 1927 marriage was done by exchanging sisters, daughters, nieces, and cousins.

When a man had more than two or three wives there entered a complicating factor. For example when a man married his fourth wife she was placed under the charge of the first, the fifth wife under the second, and so on. The children of the fourth and the fifth were automatically grouped with the children of the first and second wives respectively. As such, later generations would claim that the ancestor-hero had had only three male children when in fact he might have had as many as twenty.

The names of daughters were never included in the list of a man's children. It was argued that a daughter was bound to marry and leave the segment. In some cases where a daughter was never given in marriage but had children, either her name was included or the name of her first son was included.<sup>17</sup> It should therefore be borne in mind that sometimes what a genealogical charter shows is the prominent groups and these prominent groups maintained their histories and their place within the national genealogy.<sup>18</sup> This is not a phenomenon peculiar to Tiv history. History records the deeds of the successful. Groups which lose their identity in any society are not likely to figure prominently on the pages of history books.

Another argument likely to be raised by the sceptic is that of collusion, a conspiratorial theory which suggests

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<sup>17</sup>T.H.T. No. 215, 15/8/75 with Zaki Agurebe of Mbera, Kunav.

<sup>18</sup>Tsambe is a good example of this.



that somehow the Tiv got together and decided upon a national charter. The kind of writer who suggests such an absurdity is also the type likely to discuss the acephalous Tiv as being very isolated from each other because they lacked a central royal court with the bureaucratic paraphernalia which normally went with it. Traditions place the founder-heroes of the super clans of Iharev, Turan, and Kunav as contemporaries. Despite the great geographical distance which separates these super clans the genealogies stretch back approximately the same number of generations. The Turan genealogy is two generations longer than the Iharev and Kunav, the latter two being the same length. Readers should be reminded that the number of generations has been calculated from the average of a large number of genealogies stretching back to the same ancestor. They are not based on only one or two examples.

Collusion would appear to be out of the question. Few if any Tiv show much interest in the number of generations; their main concern being the relationships described. The difference between eighteen and sixteen generations (as in the Ipusu genealogy) is not unusual, and upon further analysis, tends to support the accuracy of these genealogies as dating devices. One explanation for such differences can be that assimilated groups have been grafted on to the Tiv family tree. The foreign origin of these people is then forgotten in the interest of unity. Such additions to the national charter do not in any serious manner temper with the generational structure. It is time-consuming but usually not too difficult

to detect defects in a genealogy and to see when genealogies have been manipulated and even created to fit the realities of the socio-political situation.

Carefully purged genealogies can be dated in terms of generations. In an effort to define a generation it must be remembered that several concepts are involved. An age-set generation has recently been conceived as the period of time between the opening of one age-set and the opening of the next. Jacobs, working with the southern Paraniotic-speaking pastoral Masai, used their last twelve age-sets as a firm basis for reconstructing a reliable chronology going back about three hundred years.<sup>19</sup> Lamphear used a similar tool, the generation-set, to reconstruct a reliable chronology of the Jie stretching back about two hundred years.<sup>20</sup> A dynastic generation is a period between the succession of the first ruler in one generation and the succession of the first ruler in the next.<sup>21</sup> Pre-colonial historians have made use of dynastic generations in chronological reconstructions in many kingdoms. Finally, there is a genealogical generation. This is simply the time that elapses between the birth of a man and the birth of his first surviving son.

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<sup>19</sup>A. H. Jacobs, "A Chronology of the Pastoral Masai," Hadith I, Nairobi, 1968, p. 20.

<sup>20</sup>J. E. Lamphear, The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda, p. 32.

<sup>21</sup>D. H. Jones, "Problems of African Chronology," J.A.H., XI, 2, 1970, p. 166.

The historian dealing with dynastic generations is interested in the pattern and mode of succession. Those dealing with the age-set, study the structure and the dynamics of the particular generation set system. With genealogical generation there is a great need to achieve a clear understanding of factors that might affect the length of a generation. With the Tiv it must be remembered that their system of marriage made them marry late. In the first place, the Tiv believe that all their male children should be circumcised. The practice of circumcision was one step towards getting married. Circumcision was part of Tiv life. An uncircumcised man was scarcely considered a man and certainly not a true Tiv. Tiv boys were not circumcised at birth, but had to wait until they were between eighteen and twenty years old. By that time they were old enough to dig the main yam-heapline (dece) by themselves. This was considered a sign of maturity. Although a few were able to marry when they were between twenty-five and thirty years old, the majority married when they were between thirty and thirty-five years of age.

Elderly informants state that in "the good old days" when the Tiv married, "before the Europeans came and spoiled our land" marriage was by exchange.<sup>22</sup> There were other forms

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<sup>22</sup>Most elders said that the bride-price marriage had proved unsatisfactory as it had given women the opportunity of ignoring their husband's authority. Today they were one man's wife, tomorrow another's. Divorce is rife. The elders wished the government would allow them to resume the practice of exchanging sisters, daughters, nieces, and cousins.

of marriage, marriage by capture, marriage by purchase, and kem marriage (payments that were cumulative and persisted over the length of the union). The Tiv did not recognize these latter forms as true marriages, however, for after the death of the husband the children ran every risk of being considered slaves. Exchange marriage was the basic and standard form by which a woman became a full member of her husband's family. The children of such marriage had rights of inheritance.

Theoretically, a man took his sister and gave her to another man who in return gave the first man his sister as a wife. In many cases, sisterless brothers had to wait until a niece or a cousin was old enough to be used in the exchange marriage. This system of marriage -- which the elders believe guaranteed the stability of the marriage -- was abolished by colonial authorities in 1927.

The majority of the Tiv people who were interviewed had married by exchange. Many of them had their first sons before Gboko town had been built in 1930. They were, therefore, about thirty when they had their first surviving sons. The average span of time between the birth of a man and his eldest surviving son was on the order of thirty years <sup>23</sup> and sometimes more. The Tiv generation has therefore been calculated at thirty years. A thirty-year generation is not unique. The Idoma, we are told, married late due to the fact that

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<sup>23</sup>The average is slightly above thirty but for this work the thirty-year generation has been adopted.

"bride-price was expressed in terms of prolonged agricultural service by a prospective in-law to his would-be father-in-law."<sup>24</sup> E. O. Erim uses thirty years per generation. Other researchers working independently in the Benue region and among the neighbours of the Tiv had also arrived at a thirty year genealogical generation length.<sup>25</sup> Chilver and Kaberry, who constructed a chronology of the Bamenda grassfields, concluded that thirty years was a reasonable generation for Bali-Nyonga chiefdom which is located next to the Tiv.<sup>26</sup>

As noted earlier, the first step taken in constructing a core chronology for the Tiv was to collect genealogies. These were then purged and compared with other genealogies in order to establish their credibility. For an example Chart VIII shows a sample of a genealogy and suggests possible dates. On this chart living men's names have been underlined. The genealogy shows father-son relationships.<sup>27</sup>

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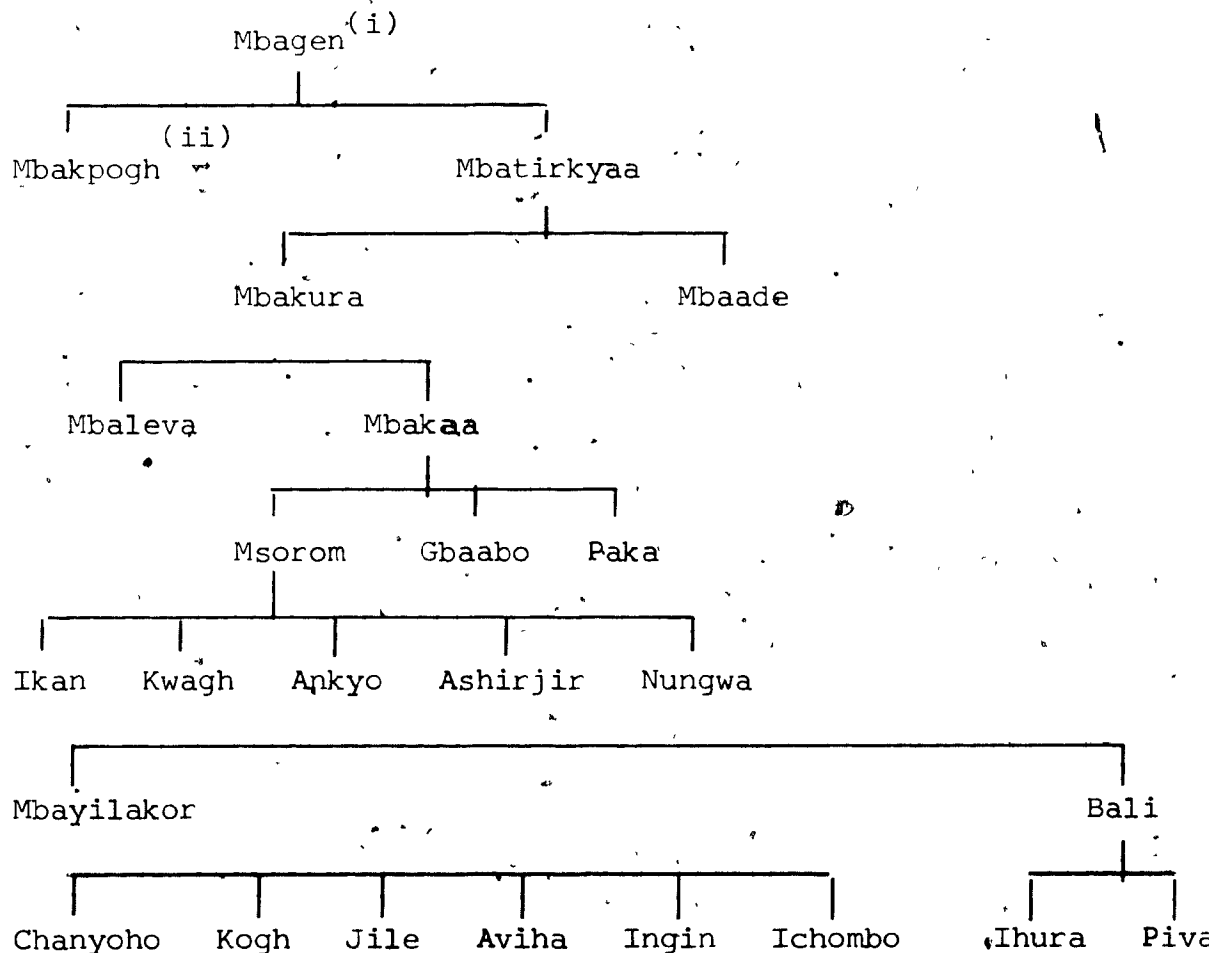
<sup>24</sup>E. O. Erim, "A Precolonial History of the Idoma of Central Nigeria," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1977), p. 65.

<sup>25</sup>R. A. Sargeant worked among the Igala and J. B. Webster conducted his research among the Jukun.

<sup>26</sup>E. M. Chilver and P. M. Kaberry, "Chronology of the Bamenda Grassfields," J.A.H.; XI, 2, (1970), pp. 249-57.

<sup>27</sup>T.H.T. No. 335, 6/8/75. Group interview at Mbagen. At this interview, first, the genealogies were collected and neither Tsue nor Nduer mentioned Tiv as an ancestor. Then the Charter or divisions were collected.



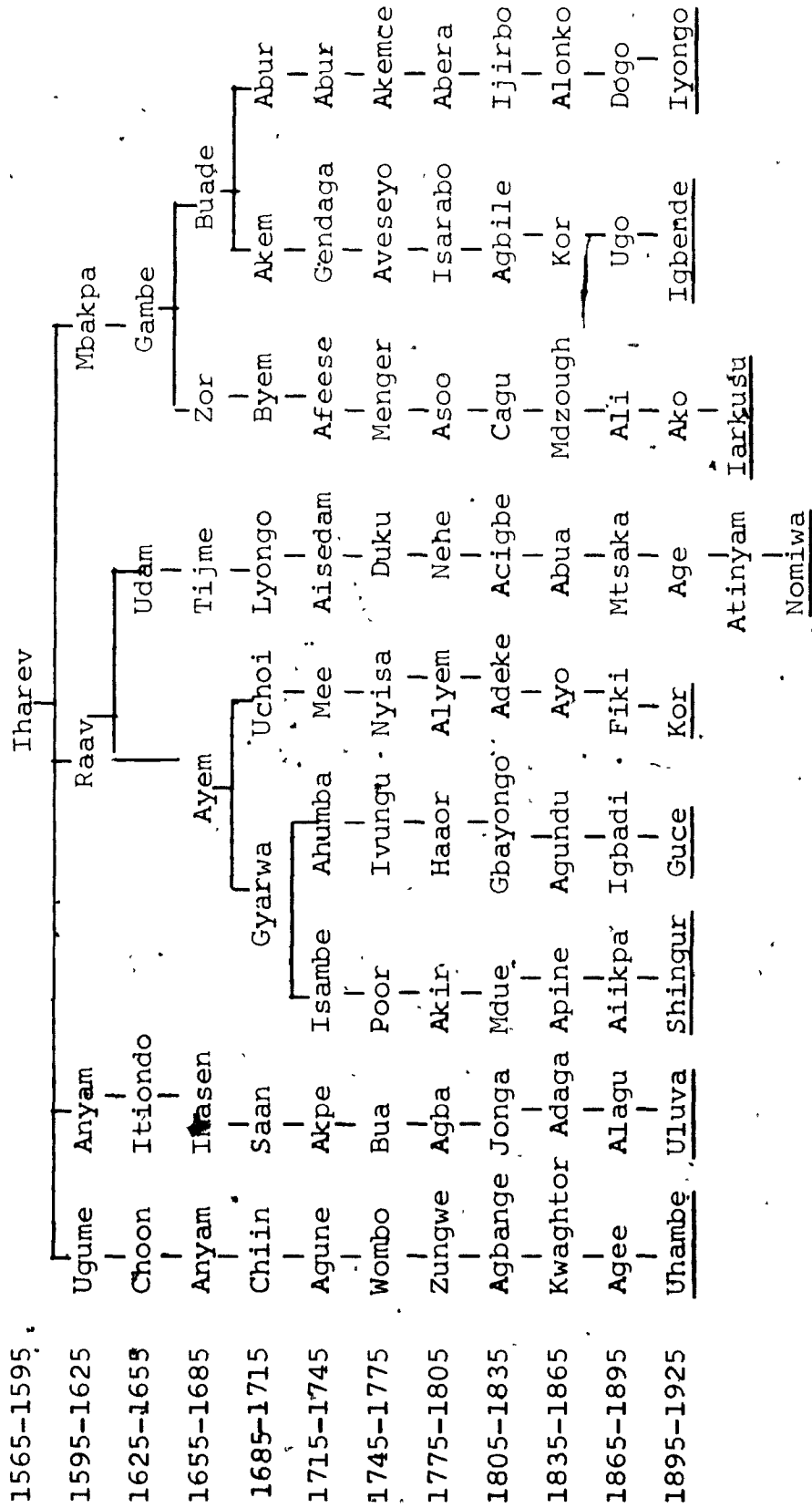
CHART IXA PARTIAL GENEALOGICAL CHARTER OF MBAGEN

NOTES: (i) Mbagen refers to the people and the land. It is believed their ancestor was called "Gen". Therefore, Mbagen means those of (belonging to) "Gen".

(ii) Both Kpogh and Atirkyaa are believed to have been the wives of Gen. Those from Mbakpogh can marry from Mbatirkyaa and vice versa. In such a marriage they can play the drum.

CHART X

DATING IHAREV



T.H.T. 84 T.H.T. 97 T.H.T. 106

T.H.T. 109



CHART XIDATING IKURAV

1595-1625

1625-1655

Ikura

1655-1685

Menev

Lie

1685-1715

Nyough

Usambe

1715-1745

Chile

Wen

Kyambe

1745-1775

Kose

Agen

Kombo

1775-1805

Abun

Atsaasa

Ikyo

1805-1835

Ayo

Agune

Kwer

1835-1865

Atsa

Agbuur

Ayande

1865-1895

Anfiese

Mzough

Iku

1895-1925

Teghtegh

Bagu

Aligba

Iwer

Akpena

Hwande

Iorhenen

CHART XII

DATING KPAREV

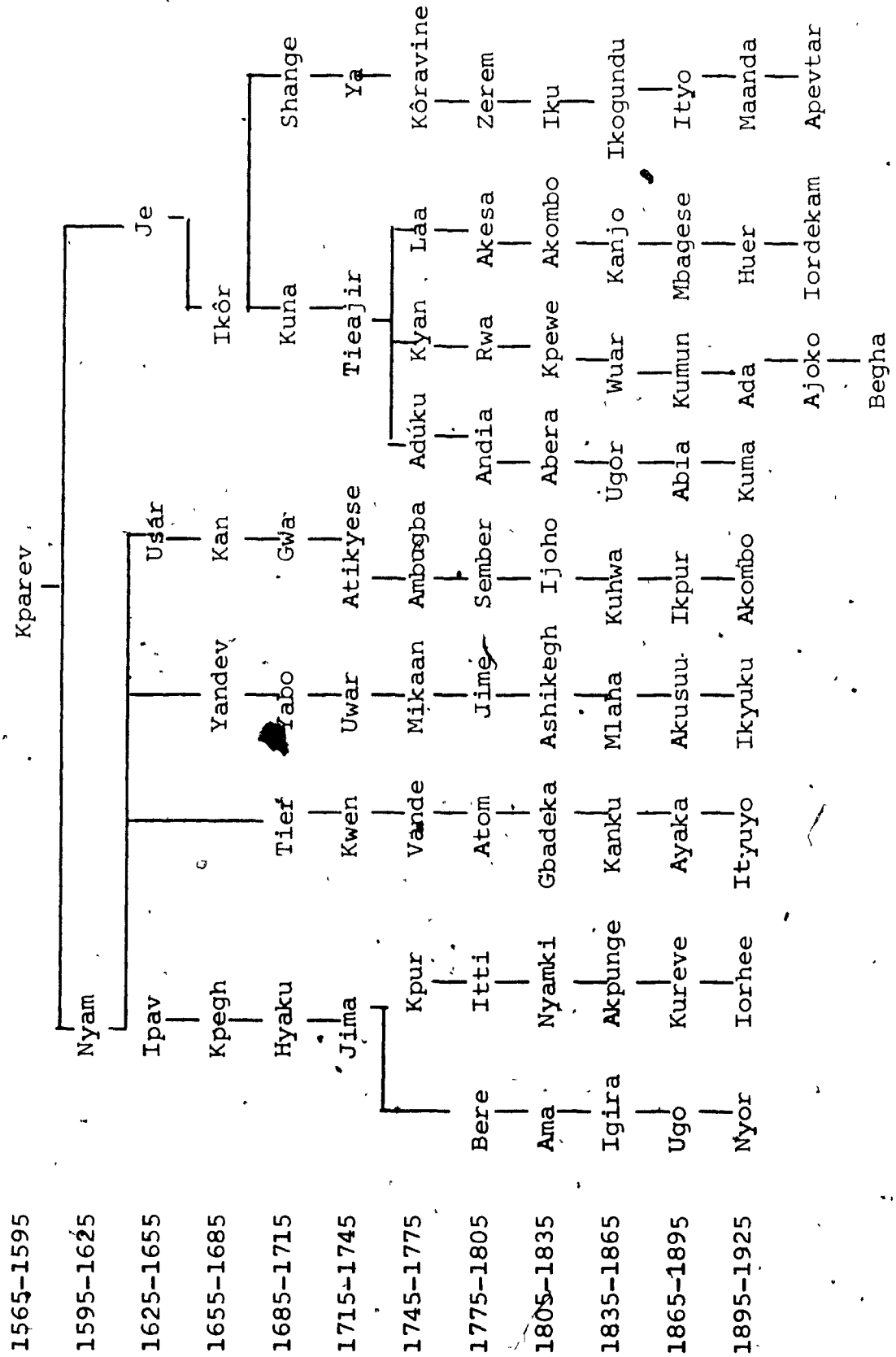


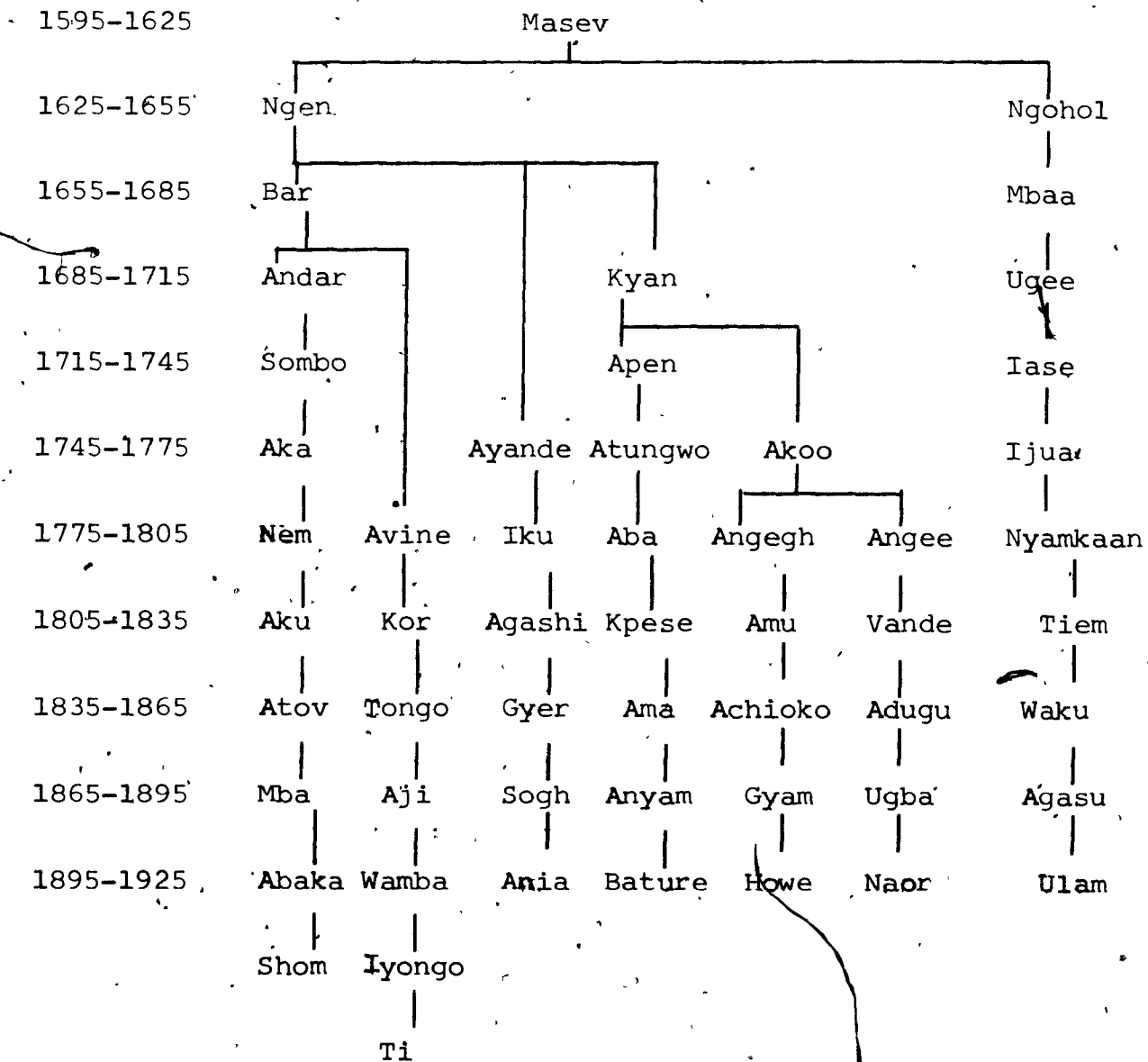
CHART XIIIDATING MASEV

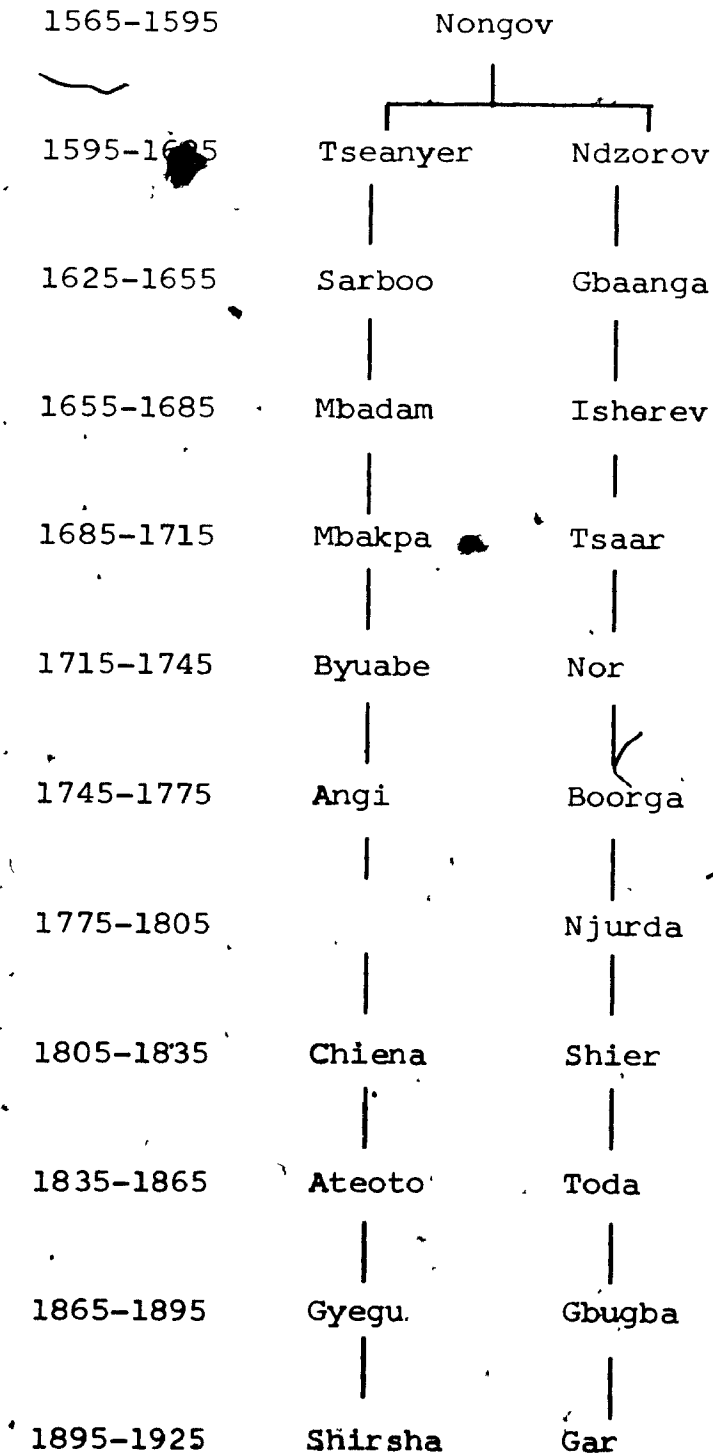
CHART XIVDATING NONGOV

CHART XV

DATING SHITIRE

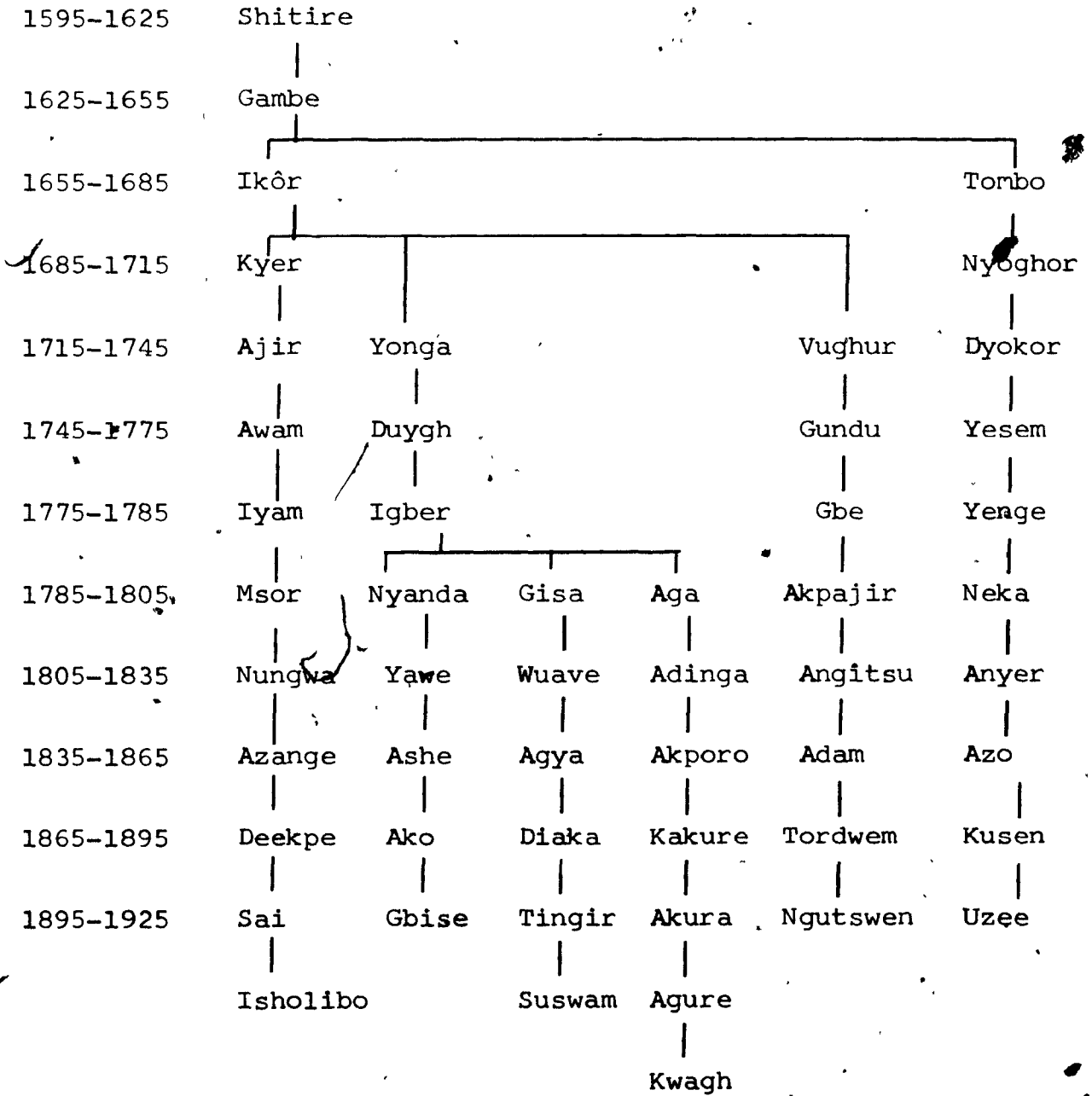


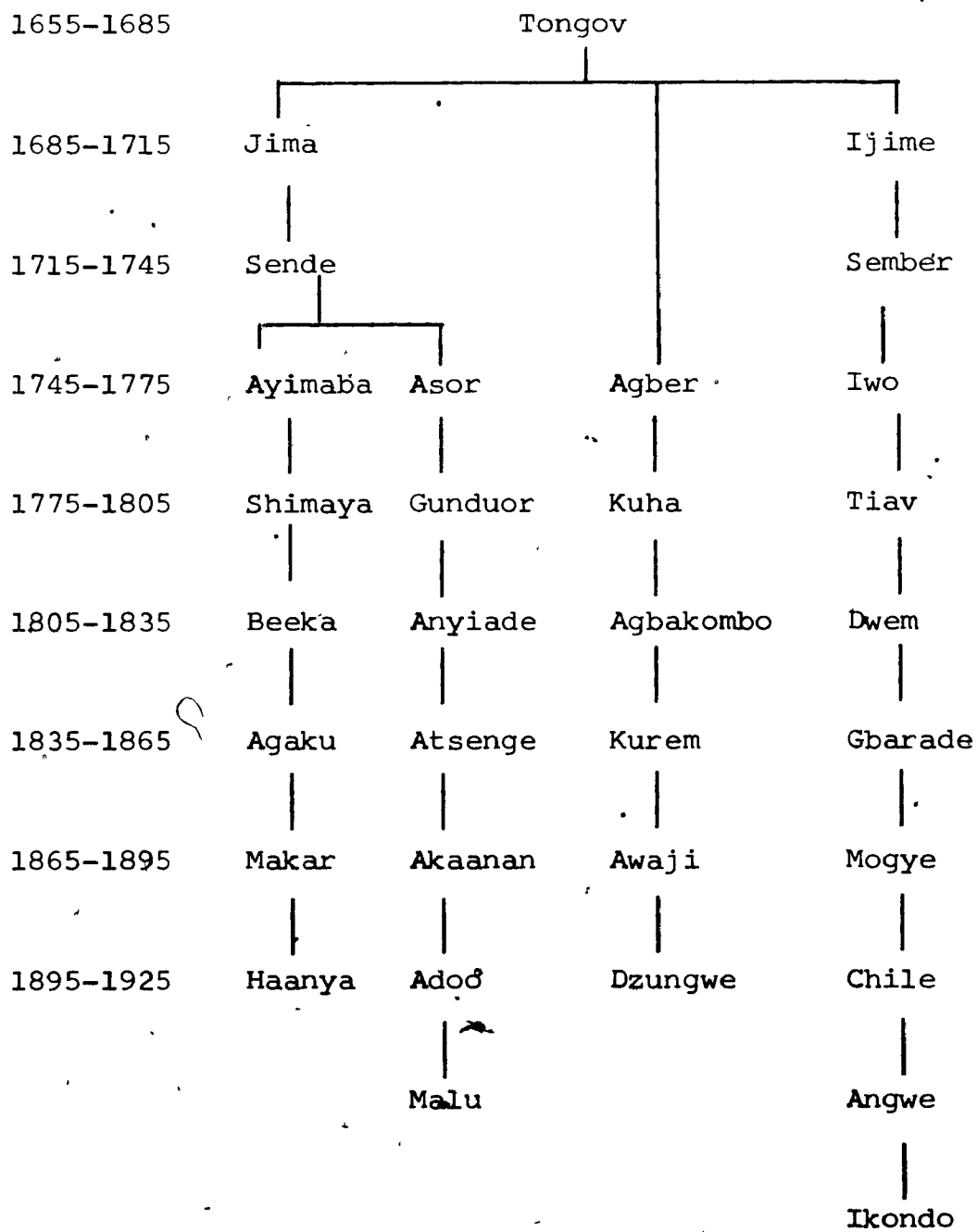
CHART XVIDATING TONGOV

CHART XVII

DATING TURAN

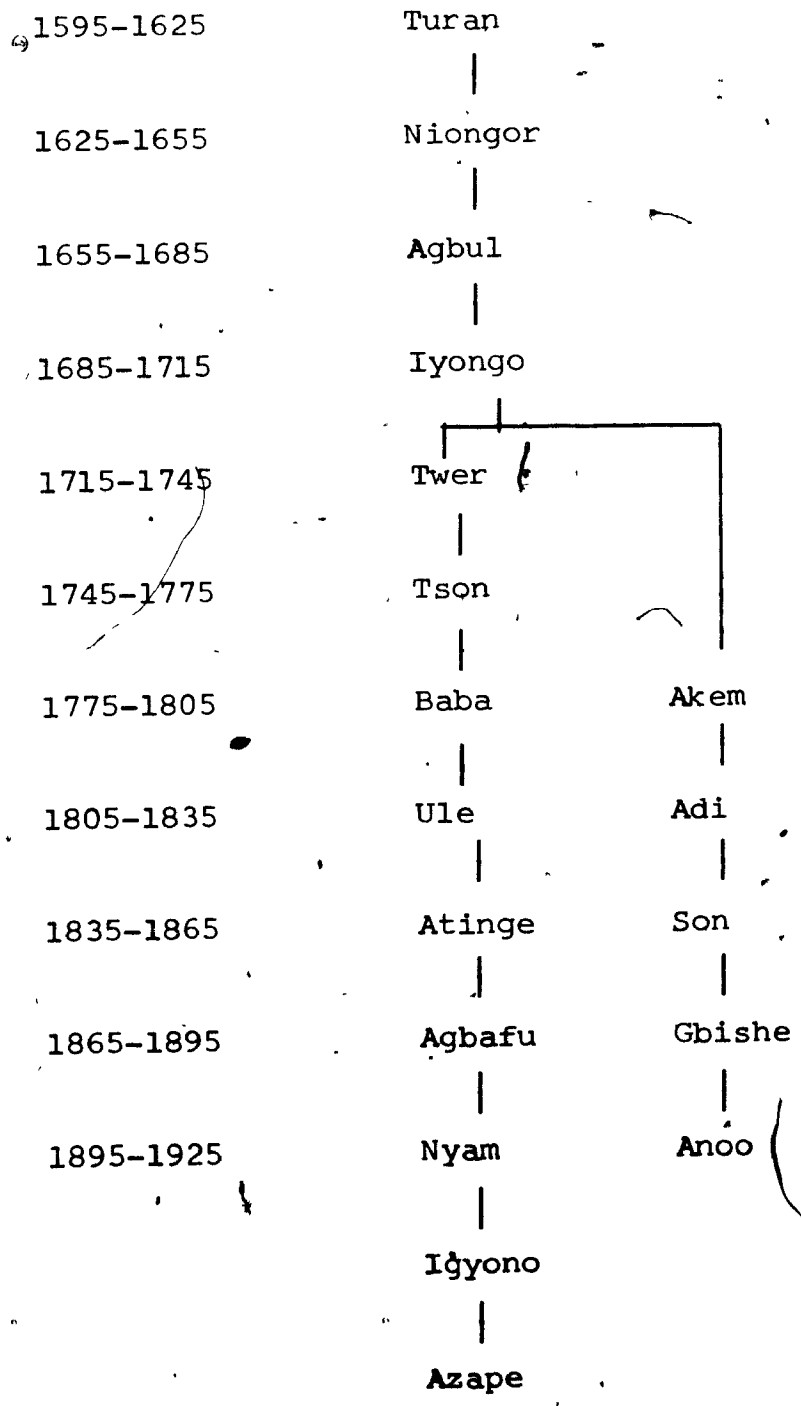


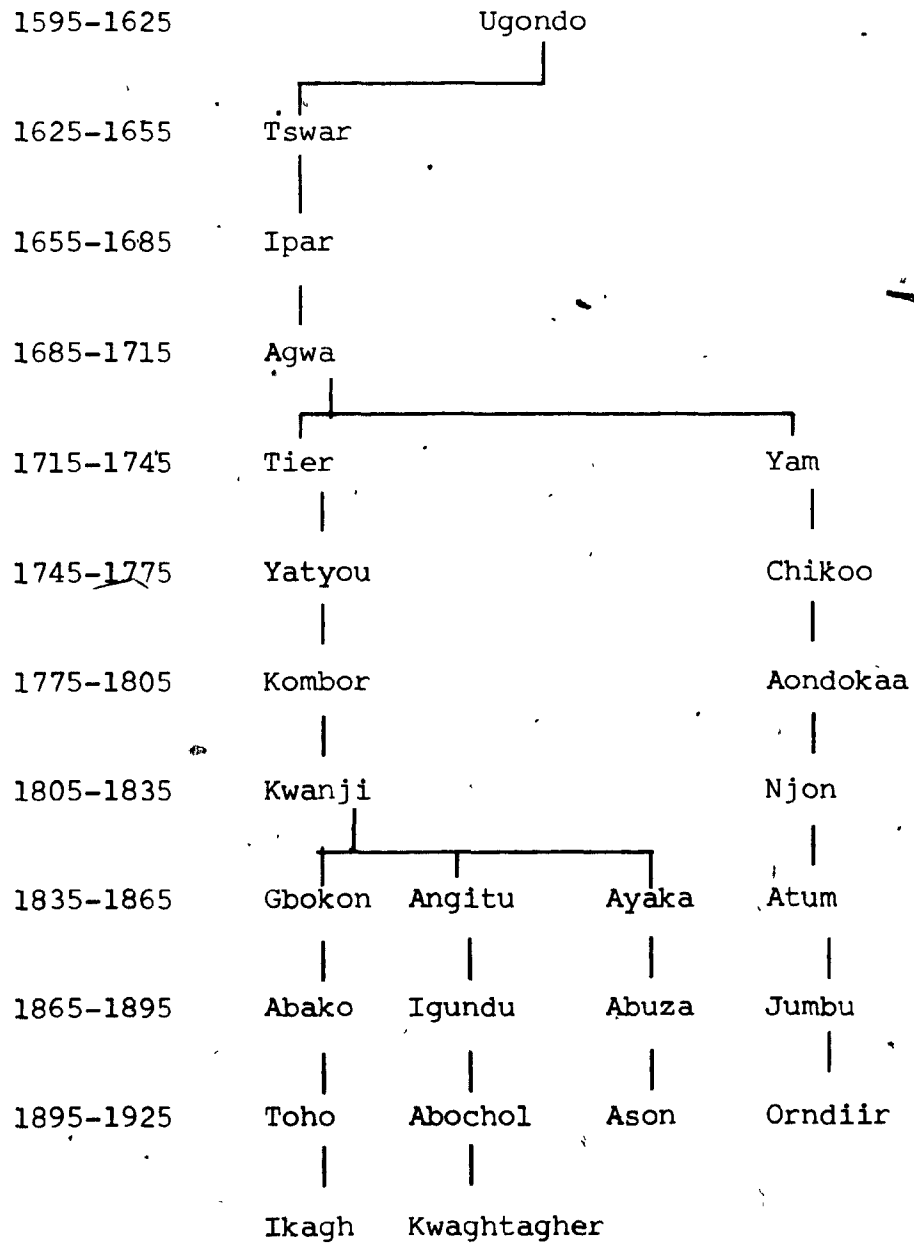
CHART XVIIIDATING UGONDO



CHART XIX

DATING UKUM

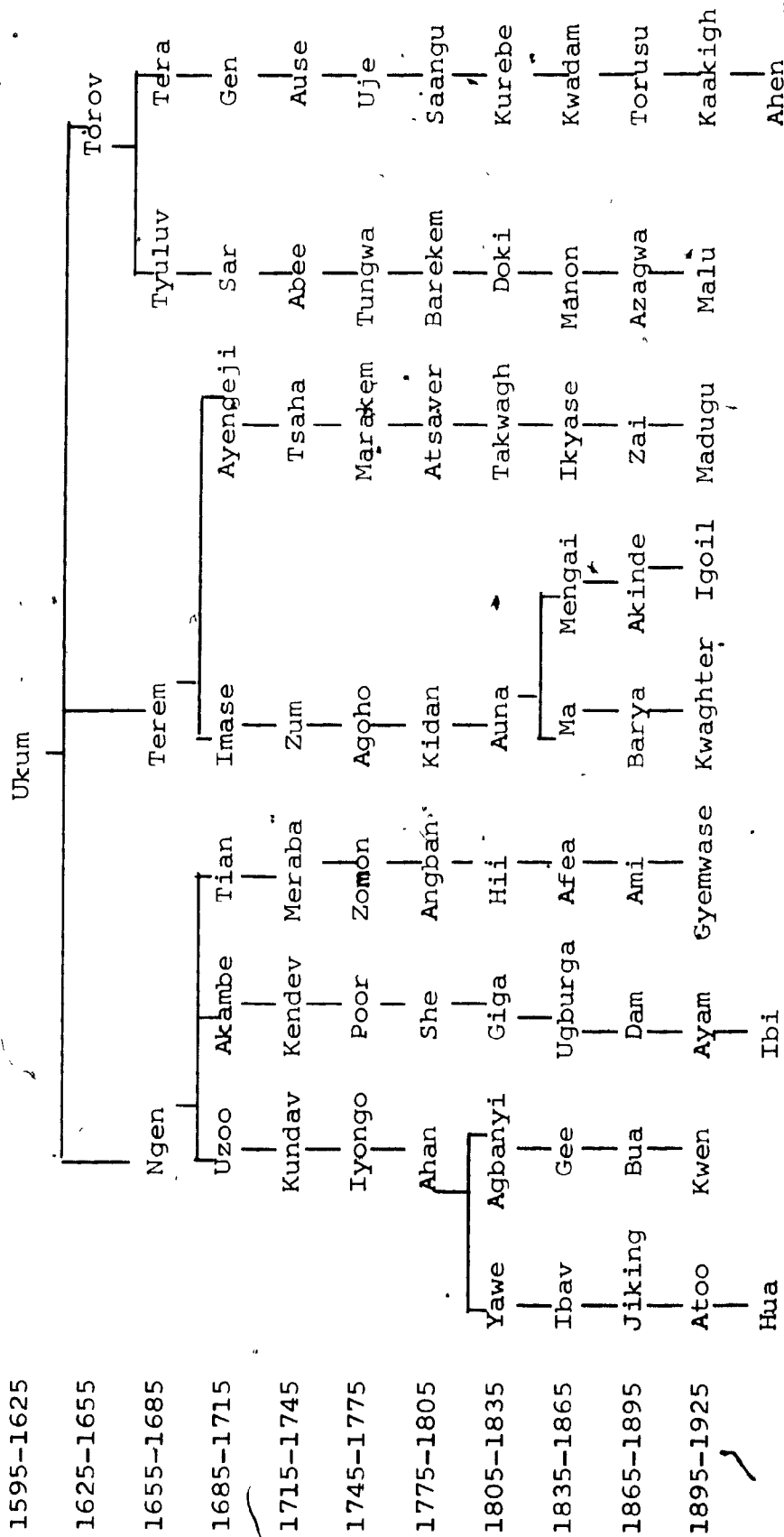
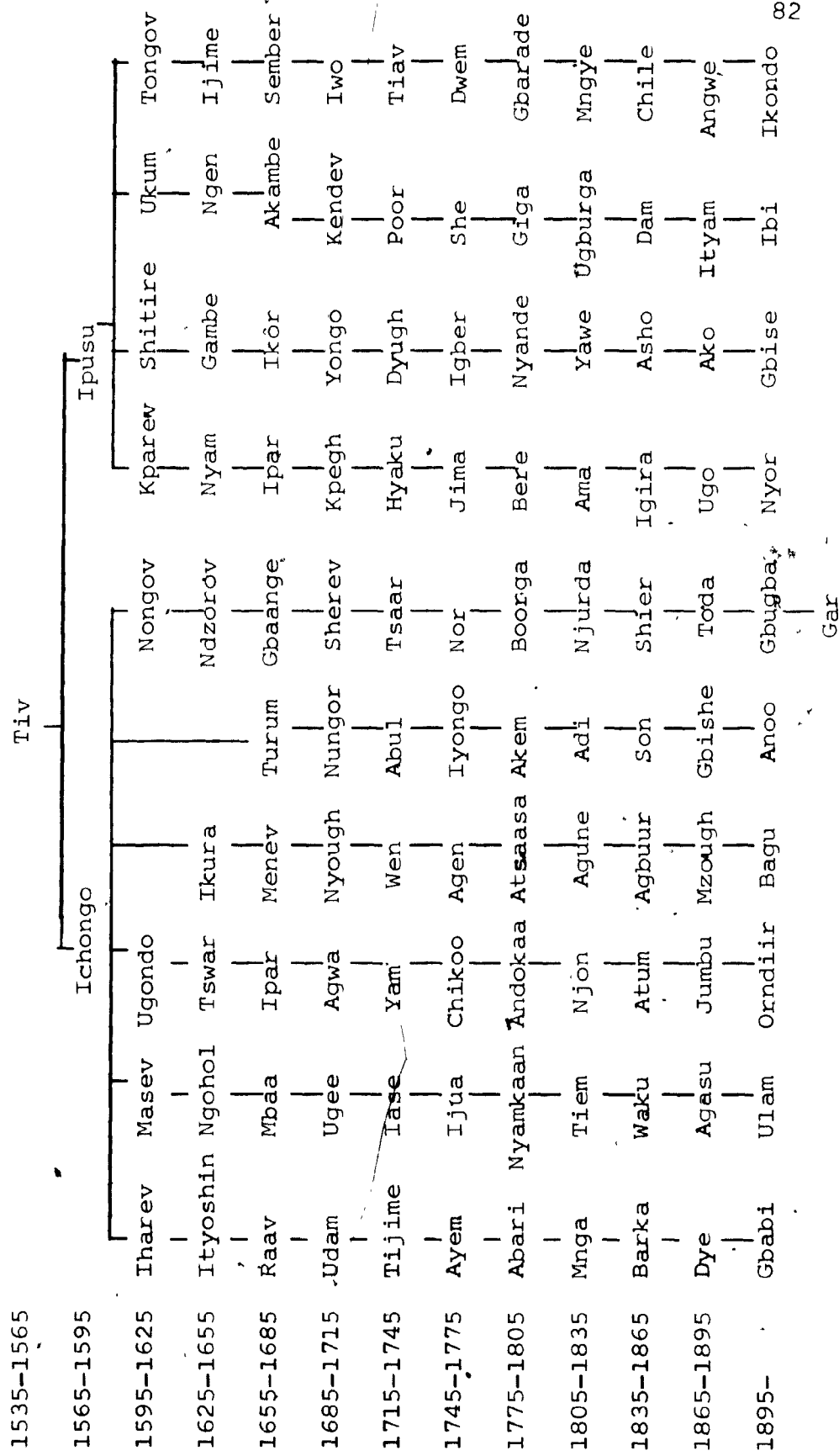


CHART XX

DATING TIV



In contrast, Chart IX is a genealogical-cum-segment charter. In Chart VIII Tsugh is one of the six children of Agen, but in Chart IX, Tsugh does not appear. This is because Agen had two wives, Kpogh and Atirkyaa. All of the six sons fell into two segments named after the two wives. Thus Tsugh and Ade fall within the Mbatirkyaa, the children of Atirkyaa. It should also be noted that Chanyoho (Chart IX) is one of the eight modern maximal segments, that is they represent the smallest territorial sections now recognized. The informants claimed however that when Chanyoho becomes too big, it will be divided according to the wives of Chia (Chart VIII).

Significantly, Chart VIII which is a genealogy, and Chart IX which is a charter, roughly match. This is an important -- absolutely vital -- point in support of the argument that Tiv genealogies are not completely useless for dating purposes.

Charts X to XVII show the dating structures for the ten individual super clans based upon the evidence collected from each super clan. Each chart shows an average number of all who traced their genealogies to the founding ancestor of the super clan.

- a) Six out of nine genealogies place Iharev c. 1565-1595.
- b) Five out of nine genealogies place Kparev c. 1565-1595, and three others place him one generation later, c. 1595-1625.
- c) All seven genealogies place Masev c. 1595-1625.

- d) Two out of five genealogies place Nongov c. 1565-1595, and three others place him one generation later, c. 1595-1625.
- e) Four out of six place Shitire c. 1625-1655, the other two place him c. 1695-1725.
- f) One out of two place Turan c. 1595-1625.
- g) All four place Ugondo c. 1595-1625.
- h) Three out of three place Ikura c. 1625-1655.
- i) Four out of four place Tongov c. 1655-1685.

By tradition the ten super-clans descended from ten grandsons of Tiv. The genealogies suggest that Iharev, Kparev, and Nongov emerged c. 1565-1595; Masev, Turan, and Ugondo emerged in the next generation; Shitire, Ikura, and Ukum emerged c. 1625-1655, while Tongov emerged last, one generation later (see Chart XX). What the historian might say about this was that differentiation of the Tiv began c. 1550 and that the ten great divisions or super-clans had emerged a century later. It was probably during this century of differentiation that their consciousness as an exclusive group was born. They then looked back at the earliest and most renowned of their early leaders -- Tiv -- and began to identify with him and look upon themselves as the children of Tiv. It was only natural for the people to look upon the ten super-clans as descending from the sons of Tiv. After c. 1650, the segmentation into two or three became a set pattern of Tiv history. The fact that ten segments emerged from Tiv's sons makes this early period unique.

The Tiv were never an island to themselves. Therefore, their history must be evaluated in the light of the history of their neighbours. Outside contacts help us to date Tiv movements. The Tiv tradition states that they met the Fulani and learned circumcision from them just prior to their differentiation into super-clans.<sup>28</sup> Since this began c. 1565 one can assume that they met the Fulani in the generation before that (c. 1535-1565) just when the Fulani were entering the region.<sup>29</sup> This is an important early correlation and justification for the Tiv chronology being proposed.

The field research carried out by other members of the Benue Valley Project provides cross references that make it possible to place the Tiv in the regional chronological framework of the Benue Valley. J. B. Webster's study of the Jukun shows that the powerful empire of Kwararafa started to disintegrate about 1600.<sup>30</sup> With the collapse of the empire, there were fewer obstacles to the descent of the Tiv groups from the mountains to occupy the plains. By genealogical

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<sup>28</sup>B. Akiga Sai, Akiga's Story, pp. 21-25. See also T.H.T. No. 3, 24/7/74 interview with Tsafa Amaichigh at Sankara of Ukum Super-Clan.

<sup>29</sup>A. Boahen, Topics in West African History, Longman, 1964, p. 43. The Fulani are known to have originated in the lower basin of the Senegal and the Gambia. They infiltrated eastwards and southward into the regions of Ghana, Mali and Songhai between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, into Hausaland and in the fifteenth century and by the sixteenth century they had penetrated as far east as the Cameroons.

<sup>30</sup>J. B. Webster, "Animals of the Kingdom," in the Benue Valley Project Papers, No. 6, 1975.

calculations, it has been shown that segmentation and differentiation of the clans was taking place between c. 1598 and 1655. It seems that this was the time when the Tiv began to spread out from the mountains, occupying the plains below. The spreading process was likely to promote the clan differentiation for which this period is noted. Thus the removal of the Kwararafa obstacle, the descent from the mountains, the spreading out on the plains, and the differentiation of the clans all seem to correlate in time. It may be concluded that these factors were in a cause and effect relationship.

By genealogical calculations, Erim found that the ancestors of the Idoma people left their cradleland -- the Middle Benue River region -- about ten or eleven generations ago, that is between 1595 and 1655.<sup>31</sup> These Idoma groups claim to have left this cradleland because of attacks by the Tiv. This would suggest that by the seventeenth century a large number of Tiv settlements had already been established in the Benue Valley. According to research among the Alago, about a century later, or c. 1760 to 1787, Tiv mercenaries were becoming active north of the Benue River. The Osana of Keana, Ozegya Adi, is reported to have used Tiv mercenaries from the Iharev super-clan in his attempted centralization of the Alago Kingdom of Keana.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>E. O. Erim, p. 66.

<sup>32</sup>R. A. Sargent, "The Middle Benue Region: Migration and Societal Transformation," Benue Valley Project Papers, no. 9, 1975.

There are other tie-in references linking the Tiv and neighbouring peoples. One such is between the Tiv and the Abakwariga or pagan Hausa in Katsina Ala. Chart XVI shows the regnal list of the Abakwariga chiefs of Katsina Ala. According to Abakwariga tradition, Mallam Ala led a group from Katsina in Hausaland to Waka, the pre-Jukun settlement, later named Wukari by the Jukun. They left Waka because of Jukun pressure and migrated to their present site near the River Katsina Ala.<sup>33</sup> A district officer, recording tradition in the early thirties, claimed that Mallam Ala led the Abakwariga to Waka while his son, Maman, led them to their present site.<sup>34</sup> Present informants claim they have never heard of Maman. The present royal family claim to descend from three brothers, Adasu, Usman and Katiti, said to be either children or followers of Mallam Ala. It seems that Mallam Ala led them out of Katsina and as far as Waka. Probably three separate and non-related groups moved out of Waka when the Jukun took over in that town and named it Wukari. These three groups were led by the so-called brothers Adasu, Usman, and Katiti. In any case Adasu is clearly a Jukun name while "Usman" points to Abakwariga or Hausa origins. It has been shown in neighbouring areas

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<sup>33</sup>T.H.T. No. 320, 24/7/76. Group interview at the official residence of Sangari Abakwa.

<sup>34</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "An Intelligence Report on Katsina Ala town in Tiv Division," 1936.

that families representing distinct ethnic origins could share the throne. There is a case north of the Benue where this occurred between Jukun and Abakwariga.<sup>35</sup>

Working in a stateless society, one often looks with envy upon those doing research in chiefdoms, especially when it comes to chronology. However, the regnal list of Katsina Ala is a disappointment. The generations are anything but clear. None of the informants could recall more than three ancestors roughly stretching back to the generation c. 1840-1870, and to the seventh king on the regnal list, Ala Sarki (see Chart XXI).<sup>36</sup> From evidence internal to Katsina Ala the first nine sangari, or kings, cannot be related to those from number ten to number seventeen or Maude, the present holder of the title.

External tie-in references, however, suggest that the three "brothers" left Waka c. 1810-1840. For example, from the Kwararafa regnal list Webster estimated that the Jukun established themselves in Waka c. 1787-1812. He asserts that between c. 1780 and 1814 a wave of Jukun ruling groups claiming origin in Wukari moved into the region north of the Benue river. These included those of Akiri c. 1774-1801 and Wuse, Kekura, and Rugwaru c. 1787-1814. He believes that there must have been a major upheaval in Waka-Wukari which forced

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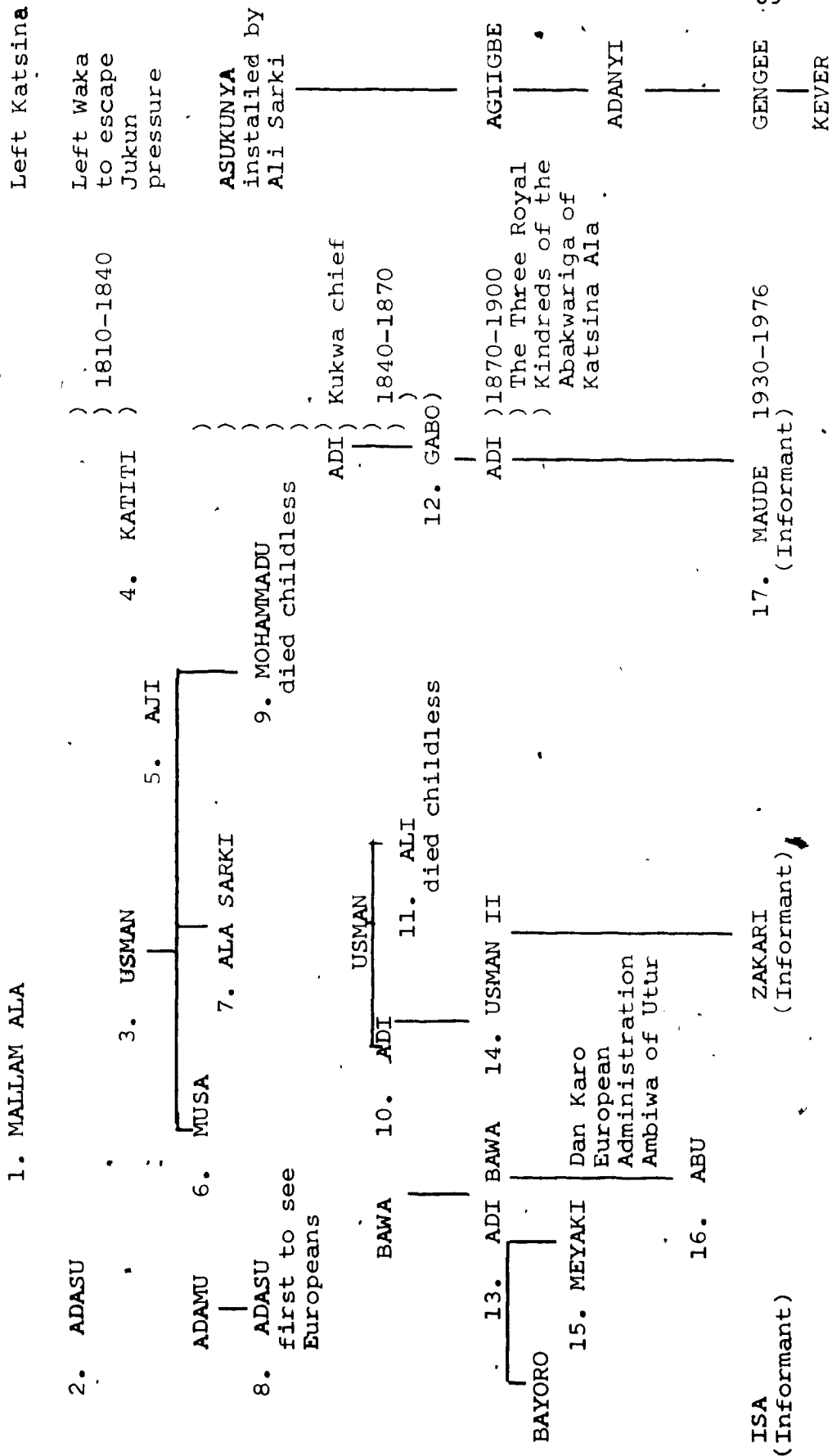
<sup>35</sup>J. B. Webster, "Spirits of the Kingdom" in the Benue Valley Project Papers, no. 7, 1975.

<sup>36</sup>See T.H.T. Nos. 320, 322.



CHART XXI

THE SANGARI OF KATSINA ALA (ABAKWA)



out these Jukun settlers.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, all of the genealogies of the Madakis of Katsina Ala, except one, fit into the genealogical structure of the chiefs from c. 1810 forward as they have been dated on Chart XV.

Turning to Tiv-Abakwariga correlations we find that an Abakwariga group went to settle among the Utur. They claim to have been the descendants of Sangari Ala Sarki. Whether they were actually related to Ala Sarki as they claim or merely sent out by him as claimed by Abakwariga of Katsina Ala their genealogy does go back correctly to the generation of Ala Sarki c. 1840-1870 (see Chart XXI).<sup>38</sup> Furthermore a Tiv song claims Ala Sarki installed Asukunya as the first Tiv chief. The Abakwariga confirm that this was so.<sup>39</sup> The Tiv genealogy of Asukunya matches in the number of generations those calculated for Ala Sarki. (Again see Chart XXI). Here we have an ironic case where a Tiv genealogy helps to date an Abakwariga chief. Nevertheless the correlation is significant.

Finally, Mbagen elders of the Tiv and Abakwariga

<sup>37</sup> J. B. Webster, "Animals".

<sup>38</sup> T.H.T. No. 112, 17/3/75 Interview with Adam of Utur.

<sup>39</sup> T.H.T. No. 320, 24/7/76 Group interview at the official residence of Sangari Abakwa.

The Tiv song: Ala Sarki 000 Yio, 00 00 Yio,  
Yila Tor Meraba Wei Meraba Yar Ikule  
Tor Kuma Asukunya, 00 Ayio,  
Tor Kuma Asukunya.

elders agree that Chile c. 1835-1865 (see Chart VIII) was the man who assisted the Abakwariga in settling at a new site after they had crossed to the south of the Katsina Ala river.<sup>40</sup>

Within the Abakwariga regnal list the generation c. 1840-1870 looks very strange, since during that thirty years seven Sangari (Nos. 7 to 13) reigned. However, number 8, Adasu II, was said to have been the first Sangari to see the Europeans, which could not have been before the 1850's. Number 15, Meyaki, had been a drummer to Dan Karo in the 1880's and was ruling when the Europeans set up their administration about 1900.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, there are late nineteenth-century cross references between the Utur and the Tiv. Chart XXII shows the three royal kindreds of the Utur and Chart XXIII contains a number of Utur commoner genealogies. During the reign of Ambiwa (c. 1890-1920) the Utur fought Dan Karo. Tiv informants confirm that Ashamena of Kusuv led the Tiv in this war. For Ashamena's genealogy see T.H.T. No. 57. In addition it was Ambiwa who first invited the Europeans to the land of the Utur, a fact confirmed by both Tiv and Abakwariga informants.<sup>42</sup>

In beginning research into Tiv history, one is

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<sup>40</sup>T.H.T. No. 349, 17/8/76, Nduer Korna.

<sup>41</sup>T.H.T. No. 326, 29/7/76. Group interview at the official residence of Sangari Abakwa.

<sup>42</sup>T.H.T. No. 55, 20/11/76, Adikpo Kaaungwa of Kusuv-Kparev.

CHART XXIII

THE THREE ROYAL KINDREDS OF THE UTUR

	BEJI	THE OTSE OF UTUR	
1. UKWE			1626-1650
2. UJI			1650-1674
			1674-1698
	3. UKAKU		1698-1722
4. USHEGBA			1722-1746
	5. AGBAKI ZUMBE (led to (Contemporary) Nanev site)		1746-1770
	6. ABE (led them to Leke site)	Tiv War	1770-1794
	7. AGEDA (Commoner went to Jukun)		1794-1818
	8. ADUGU (led them to present site)		1818-1842
	9. AGBO		1842-1866
10. JENAGUJI (contemporary of ADASU II)			1866-1890
	UKANGBA	11. AMBIWA Pan'Karo Europeans	1890-1920
	13. AGISHI (lengthy reign)	DOKO	
TSEKEGYE (over 80 years 1976)	14. OGYE (50 years 1976)	ADI (40 years 1976)	
UVINA (living 1976)	TATINDI (living 1976)	IGIRA (living 1976)	
		TABE	1920 - ?



overwhelmed by the Bohannans who devoted most of their lives to study the Tiv. When they argued so forcefully that the Tiv could not be dated it took considerable courage to attempt the impossible. Nevertheless, the evidence in the present study demonstrates that the genealogies of the Tiv not only explain territorial segments but also are historical evidence and help to explain how the present came to be. One genealogy may have been manipulated or distorted to prove a point but genealogies established in many different places separated by vast distances could not all have been manipulated in the same direction.

Even now, how the next fission will occur and what the names of the resulting new segments will be is well known in each segment. Once fission occurs the people will recall their genealogies back as far as the founder of the new segment. The charters are not records of fathers and sons but they do nevertheless represent generations fairly accurately.

The national genealogical charter or any segment's charter is the official history of the Tiv and has the same functions as a royal chronicle. It is how the people see themselves and want to be seen by others. It may have all the faults and defects of a modern state paper or royal chronicle but it has a democratic quality about it since its manipulation or distortion would require the agreement of thousands of people, unlike state papers or royal chronicles. Its major concern is to show centuries of continuity, a

perfect pattern of a chosen people descended from one "Adam". Neither is this unique to the Tiv. Just as with a royal chronicle, the national charters of the Tiv can be shown to reveal facts which it seeks to conceal.

However, if the Tiv had to be studied in isolation without reference to neighbouring peoples, one might hesitate to argue too strongly in favour of the chronology established in this chapter. But there are well scattered tie-ins and cross references to other peoples from the mid-sixteenth to the early twentieth century. The majority of these correlate amazingly well. The Tiv can be dated and therefore their history can be written as it is hoped that the following chapters will show.

### CHAPTER III

#### TAKURUKU, TIV, AND IKAREM: LEGENDS AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE TIV PEOPLE

The Tiv, well over two million people, form the largest non-Muslim ethnic group in the northern states of Nigeria and are the largest ethnic group in Benue State.<sup>1</sup> They live on both banks of the River Benue about one hundred and fifty miles from its confluence with the Niger. Their homeland - Tivland - stretches from approximately 6° 30' North latitude and from 8° East to 10° East longitude. Although some Tiv settlements are found beyond these meridians to the north and east, Tivland proper contains over three quarters of the Tiv population.<sup>2</sup>

The early and later history of the Tiv has been considerably influenced by the natural environment. The present dispersed positions of the super-clans can best be understood by examining the geographical situation of their ancestral and present homeland. Traditions point to geography and environment as crucial factors in the life of the Tiv people. It is therefore necessary to mention the major elements and factors of the environment upon which both the

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<sup>1</sup>Before the National census which was conducted in November, 1973 it was estimated that the Tiv were about one and a half million. This new figure is based on estimates of the results published in 1974.

<sup>2</sup>L. and P. Bohannon, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 11.



early and likewise the modern Tiv have lived and derived their livelihood. The Tiv occupy an area of some 9,000 square miles. At present they are bordered to the east by the Hausa-speaking Abakwariga, the Jukun, and the Chamba, to the north by such groups as the Alago and Ankwe, to the west by the Idoma, and to the south by the Udam.<sup>3</sup>

Their land is cut across by both the Katsina Ala and the Benue rivers. Other sizeable rivers include the Mu, Loko, Mkomon, Amire, Konshisha and Dura. There are many streams throughout the country. Tiv songs, proverbs, and traditions show that several rivers and streams were crossed in the early part of their history. Akiga describes some of these rivers:

They left mount Yavwua and descended to a river called Muanawuha. This river has a very strong current. Even today cattle bought by the Cepe people are carried away by the river. ... They moved again to river Muan. This river is not far from river Muanawuha.... It was here that the Tiv first came into contact with the Chamba. ... Then they moved to Mkomon.<sup>4</sup>

The above description mentioned that the first Tiv contact with the Chamba took place near river Muan. This river became a place of interaction between the two groups. They fished and learned methods of fishing from each other. When they fought it was over fishing. When they left the Chamba to go to Lake Awuna, it was because of a dispute

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Sai, MS.

over fishing. Whenever a group moved, they moved to a river or a stream.<sup>5</sup> An informant stressed that these rivers were exploited to the fullest:

Our people obtained fish from the shallow water of lakes Awuna and Naiko, in small ponds and in small streams. Women from different villages often came together and baled water out of a deep pool in order to catch fish. Collecting fish by hand after the ponds were cleared of water was common. Traps were also used to catch fish. Some traps were combined with a dam made of wood and grass which blocked the passage of the fish and left only narrow openings leading to the traps.

The land is fairly low, about 600 feet above sea level. Most of the homes today are situated in undulating, well-watered and open country. Here the waving grass fields take the place of the dense forests of Southern Nigeria. Where it adjoins the Cameroon mountains the land rises to a height of some 3,500 feet. Some of these mountains are as high as 6,000 feet, and much of the early history of the Tiv is centred around them. The names of these mountains including the ones on the migratory route are significant and informative to historians. The prominent ones among them are Ichembe - Ukum, Tongov, and Ibenda-Shitire. (See Map 3). The mountains bear the names of some of the lineages of super-clans. The names suggest that at one time or another certain Tiv lineages with their leaders lived on or near these mountains. Thus, although the Ukum super-clan is over 100 miles away from their one-time settlement, the mountain still

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> T.H.T. No. 133, 13/5/75. Interview with Igoil Akinde of Ukum.

bears their name. As can be seen, there are certain difficulties associated with such identification of geographic localities by the name of the clan that lived there. It would have been more natural if the clans had taken the names of the mountains. In this way one could have said that "the Ukum still bear the mountain's name". The method of naming mountains and rivers by the name of a clan or a leader creates possibilities of name duplication or of changes in the name of any particular place. No clan lived in one place permanently and as such each clan carried its geographical name wherever it went. For example, the word "Ukum" today stands both for the people and the land where they live. Likewise, "Mbagen" refers to "the place of the sons of Gen". Traditions show that in the past a group would settle on one of the mountains, expand through natural growth and immigration, and finally disperse when the group became too numerous. This explains why certain groups belonging to a particular super-clan are living separate from the main homeland of the clan. Today, these mountains form a natural boundary along the entire south-eastern edge of Tivland.

There are only two seasons, the dry season from late October to March, and the rainy season from April through September. During the dry season the green savannah grasslands dry up. Most Tiv migrations took place during the dry season when the big streams dried up and people were able to walk across the river beds. Through many centuries, the Tiv



had been moving in search of more and more land until they came to occupy their present homeland. During these movements they came in contact with other people and intermingled with them. Throughout the year it remains hot during the day but cools down to a reasonable extent during November as a result of <sup>the</sup> Harmattan, dry winds from the Sahara. Rainfall is plentiful and reliable in most parts of the land and the soil is rich. Before the arrival of the Europeans almost everybody in Tivland depended upon the land for a living. The grassland also provided an environment for collective hunting. A few days before the day for collective hunting the man who had "reserved the bush" invited hunters and other people in the community for propitiation of the gods and for feasting. On the day of the hunt, the hunters began encircling the bush.

When the two horns of the circle met, the leaders set fire to the bush as a signal, and when the owner of the ikagh saw the smoke, he lighted his ikagh six times and each time extinguished it and finally set fire to the bush. As the animals rushed out, maddened by the heat and smoke, the hunters shot those which were fleeing from the flames and speared those which were overpowered by the heat.

One of the interesting themes of history is the interaction of people with their environment. The Tiv ancestors not only crossed over the rivers and streams but also were able to fish. When they came to the grasslands they adapted their methods of hunting and farming. In doing so, they succeeded in dominating their environment.

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<sup>7</sup>Abraham, The Tiv People, p. 226.

The language spoken by the Tiv gives us a clue to their origins. According to the classification of African languages devised by Joseph Greenberg, there are three main language families in Africa: (1) Afro-Asiatic, (2) the Niger-Congo family, comprising most of the languages of West Africa together with Bantu, and (3) the Nilo-Saharan family.<sup>8</sup> Greenberg's classification makes Tiv an independent language of the Niger-Congo family of languages.<sup>9</sup> He places Tiv within the Benue-Congo sub-family of the Niger-Congo group. Although Johnson and Talbot classified Tiv among the semi-Bantu languages,<sup>10</sup> Greenberg argues that the term semi-Bantu has proved more or less meaningless:

There is no more justification for the term 'semi-Bantu' than let us say, a term semi-English to describe German, Dutch,<sup>11</sup> Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic.

Abraham, who, it is worth remarking, made the most

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<sup>8</sup>J. H. Greenberg, The Languages of Africa, (Indiana University Press, 1906), pp. 8-9, 46, 130.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>10</sup>Sir Harry Johnson, A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages. (London, 1919). A. Talbot, The Peoples of Southern Nigeria, (London: Oxford University Press, 1926). Note also that D. Westermann and H. A. Bryan, Languages of West Africa, (Oxford University Press, 1952), classified it as Benue-Cross. See also Robert G. Armstrong, The Study of West African Languages, (Ibadan University Press, 1964).

<sup>11</sup>Greenberg, The Languages of Africa, p. 7.

complete linguistic study of the Tiv language,<sup>12</sup> classified it as Bantu.<sup>13</sup> He pointed out that its vocabulary is more closely related to the Nyanza group of Bantu languages in East Africa than to the West African so-called "semi Bantu" languages.<sup>14</sup> His classification is not based on vocabulary alone, but also on examination of grammatical structure. This makes his classification more attractive than the others. The traditional claim of the Tiv is that they originated from the Nigerian Cameroon border, which is claimed by some historians as the cradle-land of the Bantu people.<sup>15</sup>

What is intriguing about the linguistic evidence is that the Tiv language seems to be closest to the Nyanza (Uganda) Bantu, and Jar, a small group on the Jos Plateau in Nigeria. Abraham compares sixty-seven words in Nyanza Bantu, Tiv, Ekoi, and Jar. He does not say why he chose the words he did or where he obtained the words, how complete his search was, or even which he is referring to by the term

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<sup>12</sup>The Tiv speak of themselves as Tiv (singular - Ortiv, meaning a Tiv man), their language as Tiv, and their country as Tivland. See the map of Tivland.

<sup>13</sup>Abraham, The Tiv People, pp. 6-13.

<sup>14</sup>Abraham does not indicate the particular Nyanza group to which he is comparing the Tiv.

<sup>15</sup>M. Guthrie, "Some Developments in the Prehistory of the Bantu Languages", J.A.H. III, 2 (1962), p. 281.

"Nyanza Bantu". The significant fact from his list, if there is one, is that the words which are similar, relate mostly to a fishing and hunting society with the possible exception of "banana" (an Indonesian plant), none refer to agriculture or pastoralism. Of the sixty-seven words, those referring to the following are virtually identical in Nyanza and Tiv:<sup>16</sup>

horn	animal	axe	charcoal	blood	beard
meat	bird	bow	day	bone	ear
fat-oil	buffalo	arrow	night	heart	eye
egg	crocodile	ground	dream		foot
	dog	oil palm	god		heel
	fish	salt	child		navel
	guinea-fowl	banana	husband		
	monkey		mother		
	snake				

All Bantu groups in the inter-lacustrine region could be referred to as Nyanza Bantu. This, indeed, seems to be what Abraham has done. Within the Ugandan area alone, however, there is a fairly wide dialectical difference among the various Bantu groups. If Tiv is related to some of them, it might be supposed that it must be to those which had a heavy proportion of peoples coming from the west and north of the Congo forests such as the Banyoro and who, like the Tiv, are now patrilineal and seem to have been so for many centuries. The Tiv are unanimous in claiming that they came from the east and not from the south which would have been the case had they migrated from the Congo region. Their region of origin they call Swem.

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<sup>16</sup>Abraham. pp. 11-13. Abraham arranged the list alphabetically. The above arrangement is mine.



All peoples have myths which seek to explain the origins of the world and mankind and the Tiv are no exception. Many historians now believe that such myths represent the first dawn of group - or ethnic - consciousness of a people. In all such myths, before the emergence of group consciousness - the first man - there was god.

As among other people the Tiv myth of origin begins with Aondo or "god". This much of the myth is common to most of the Tiv, but thereafter the accounts diverge. One tradition says that Aondo had a wife called Takuruku.<sup>17</sup> From these parents came the first children, Tiv and Uke (meaning foreigners). Keeping in mind that we are discussing the emergence of Tiv consciousness, presumably as they emerged as a distinct group within the Bantu world, this consciousness arose as they came into contact with foreigners, as when they met non-Bantu peoples of strikingly different culture or language. This would seem to suggest that the Tiv

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<sup>17</sup>I tried in vain during my field research to find the meaning of Takuruku in Tiv. I was told by one informant that in Hausa it means an old man. When I suggested that it was a Hausa word borrowed by the Tiv, he denied it. Although most Tiv words have a meaning which can be explained, they argued that this is one of the few that do not have a meaning. Historians working with other ethnic groups discovered that in most cases the meanings of the foreign words are not known. It could be that Takuruku is a foreign word or a word belonging to the original inhabitants of Tivland. It could also be a repetition of the Bantu root "inkulu" which means "great" or "old". Kulu or kuru are found throughout Bantu in the sense of "great" or "old". The Zulu Unkulunkulu too is a repetition of the root "inkulu". The Zulu use it for deification of the great departed. In Rhodesia we find Unkulunkulu and in Malawi Unkurukuru.

emerged at a point in time when they first contacted peoples not related to the Bantu world in which they had formerly lived.

As the myth relates, the Tiv attribute the creation of the world and man to Aondo the Supreme Being. This deity is the force behind nature and is immanent, in particular the sky is God and God is the sky and the word "Aondo" has both these meanings; there being no other term for God. This same concept is found in all other Bantu groups. In the Bantu mind, we are told, "god", "sky", "rain", and "water" are merely different facets of the same idea and show everywhere the worship of a sky deity, the giver of rain.<sup>18</sup> The Tiv say that Aondo first lived on earth but when a woman who was pounding yams in her mortar struck him with her pestle he retired to heaven. Thereafter he continued to send rain to this world.<sup>19</sup> A look at Johnston's classification of languages shows that the Tiv word for rain (Wura or Ura) occurs one hundred and forty-eight times in Bantu groups in the sense of "rain"; thirteen times as "god"; fifteen times as "sky" and twice as "water".<sup>20</sup> This first myth of origins strengthens the argument made earlier that the Tiv descended from pre- or proto-Bantu.

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<sup>18</sup> Abraham, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>19</sup> T.H.T. No. 21, 26/8/74. Mr. Bako of Acha District of Ukum Super Clan.

<sup>20</sup> Abraham, op. cit., p. 43.

A second myth of origins was collected by one of the early missionaries, Strijdom. Rubingh quotes him:

Everywhere in their land the following story is told regarding the origin of man. Takuruku, they say was the first man. His wife was named Olenolen. He had three children; namely, (1) the Whiteman (2) Uki (that is the progenitor of all the other black races) and (3) Tivi.<sup>21</sup>

This myth, like the one above, shows the beginning of Tiv consciousness. It shows clearly their contact with the non-Tiv. It is interesting to note that when the Tiv look at different ethnic groups today, they conclude that there must have been a single ancestry in each case. The mention of the "Whiteman" suggests that this is a later myth, resulting from contact with 'whites' like Arabs or Europeans.

Another tradition holds that the original deity was Takuruku and he created Aondo who in turn created man.<sup>22</sup>

A fourth tradition, however, makes Takuruku a brother to Aondo and the first progenitor of man. According to this tradition, collected by Abraham:

Takuruku came to live in the world with his wife and for a long time his diet consisted entirely of fish; one day, however, Aondo came down from the sky on a visit to his brother and said "I am going to explain to you a new kind of food, and

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<sup>21</sup>E. Rubingh, Sons of Tiv. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1969), p. 59. J. Strijdom's book, De Soedan, was published in Stellenbosch in 1919. Since the missionaries started their work in Tiv in 1911, he could not have collected his material earlier than 1911. I did not come across this tradition during my field research.

<sup>22</sup>Rubingh, op. cit., p. 59. I never came across this tradition during my interviews.

taking from a bag slung over his shoulder some maize grains, he offered them to Takuruku who ate them and finding them tasty, thanked Aondo and asked whether he had any other food of the same kind. Aondo returned to the sky and brought a maize-cob, and telling Takuruku to break off a branch of the tree gbaye (gba 'Aye.) (prosopis Oblonga), showed him how to fashion a wooden hoe and taught him farming and the way to plant seed. . . Aondo then returned to the sky, but the crops of Takuruku failed to thrive owing to lack of rain, so Aondo told him to come to him in the sky and he would advise him what to do. Takuruku, however, replied "No, I shall not come. I am greater than you and it is for you to come to me." Aondo refused to do this and the crops withered from lack of rain, while Aondo said "It is your own fault; I told you to come to me but you refused. Had you done so, your crops would not have died. Still, I am ready to help you again." He then gave Takuruku some more maize seed and later agase millet (pennisetum spicatum), followed by yams, guinea-corn and bulrush millet. However, Takuruku was in no better position than before, because he still lacked knowledge of rain; rain remained the secret of Aondo and he still jealously guards the secret, but he sent down rain for Takuruku's crops, on condition that the latter should acknowledge his precedence.<sup>23</sup>

A few points may be noted.<sup>24</sup> This fourth myth clearly deals with the introduction of some agricultural products. Though details about the earliest history of agricultural products are obscure, it seems that part of the myth represents the introduction of maize or Indian

<sup>23</sup> Abraham, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>24</sup> On the interpretation of myth, see: Steven Feierman, The Shambaa Kingdom A History. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974).

corn.<sup>25</sup> Maize was among the plants domesticated in America before the first Europeans arrived and little is known of its early history. The distribution of the plant throughout the world following the discovery of America is better known. It is believed that West Africa obtained maize from America in the sixteenth century.<sup>26</sup> There is therefore a problem of chronology with the above myth. Many Tiv elders argue that they received beans, cocoyams, millet, and guinea-corn from God "right from the beginning." According to them yams and

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<sup>25</sup>The Tiv word for maize is ikureke. My explanation of the Tiv word as it appears is that ikur refers to an ethnic group other than one's own ethnic group. Generally, akur-a-ior refers to uke or foreigners. The word itself indicates that maize, unlike some of the crops, was not domesticated by the Tiv but they obtained it from foreigners. This is an indicator of early economic contacts between the Tiv and foreigners.

<sup>26</sup>For more information on the origins, spread and significance of plants, see J. M. Dalziel, The Useful Plants of West Tropical Africa (London, 1937). G. P. Murdock, Africa, its peoples and their culture history (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959). J. D. Fage, "Anthropology, Botany, and the History of Africa" (Reviewing Africa, its peoples and their culture history, by G. P. Murdock), J.A.H., Vol. II, No. 2 (1961) pp. 299-309. J. D. Clark, "The Spread of Food Production in Sub-Saharan Africa," J.A.H., Vol. III, No. 2 (1962) pp. 211-28. M. P. Miracle, "The Introduction and Spread of Maize in Africa," J.A.H., Vol. VI, No. 1 (1965). O. Davies, H. J. Hugot and D. Seddon, "Origins of African Agriculture," Current Anthropology, Vol. IX, No. 5 (1968), pp. 478-509. T. Shaw, "Early Agriculture in Africa," Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 6, (1972) pp. 143-91. T. Lewicki, West African Food in the Middle Ages (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974). J. R. Harlán, J. M. J. de Wet, and A. B. L. Stemler, eds. Origins of plant domestication in Africa (The Hague 1976).

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maize were cultivated much later on. By their reckoning, cassava, sweet potatoes, and ground nuts are "recent." This information carries more weight since it is supported by other evidence. It was in the seventeenth century that cassava and pineapple were obtained by West Africa from America, and in the eighteenth century guava and groundnuts were introduced by the Portugese and other Europeans. The Tiv welcomed these valuable additions to their food supply. Maize in particular was widely cultivated in several varieties. The plant was not only planted far away on the farm, but also in the gardens near the compound. It had the advantage of being a short season crop - capable of maturing three to four times during the rainy season. Furthermore, it could be grown even on non-virgin land. Often it was interplanted with other crops and harvested before these crops were ready. This method of interplanting enabled Tiv farmers to avoid what was happening in other places. It is reported that the large-scale influx into West Africa of South Asian and American plants increasingly displaced the cultivation of many local edible plants such as millet.<sup>27</sup> In the case of the Tiv, this new crop helped to reduce the hunger that usually occurred when everyone was waiting for the harvest of millet and other crops.

A careful reading of the above tradition also leads one to the conclusion that the early source of staple food

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<sup>27</sup>Lewicki, West African Food, pp. 20-21.

for the Tiv was freshwater fish. The introduction of cereal crops was quite a revolution. When the Tiv are asked to name their first crop, they say millet. It would appear that Tiv agriculture, like that of the other Bantu, first developed into a grain-based economy. It is true that the most popular food today is the yam but the grains (guinea-corn and millet) are given the place of honour by the elders because they were their first crops. This also supports the view that the Bantu emerged in a savannah rather than forest environment or rather that they became agriculturalists in such an environment.

There is still one more point worth remembering. Unlike Aondo, Takuruku is known to be a human being (see first myth or version). Although the tradition presents him as coming from heaven, it stresses that Takuruku was the first man. Takuruku possibly was one of the leaders of the early Tiv and not necessarily the father of all Tiv. Takuruku has since then been remembered, especially at the death of an elder. When an elder dies, the ceremonial drum made from a tree trunk is beaten to warn the ancestors of the coming of their brother to the upper heaven and announces to distant people that an elder has died.

Gbum Gbum . . . Gbum - Gede - Gede - Gede  
 Takuruku Takuruku  
 Takuruku Anyamazenga<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>"Anyam" leopard, "Azenga" a type of bush. Thus "Anyamazenga" means "a leopard of the bush" but Anyamazenga is another word for Abiem which means wild-cat or serval cat.

Stand up straight.  
 Takuruku stand up wait for your brother  
 He is coming to the heaven of the great above.<sup>29</sup>

According to a tradition from some informants of the eastern Tiv region, Takuruku's father was Nyamazenga. Takuruku married Aliwe<sup>30</sup> and their son was called Tiv. It was from this son that the ethnic group got its name. It is also generally held that Tiv had a brother called Uke.<sup>31</sup> When Takuruku was about to die, he, as in the Biblical story of Isaac,<sup>32</sup> called Tiv his favourite son and told him that he was going to bless him the following day. The next day,

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<sup>29</sup>T.H.T. No. 143, 22/5/74. Mr. Jorhonen Hwande of Ikurav at Home. Also see R. M. Downes, The Tiv Tribe, Government Printer, Kaduna, 1933, p. 21.

Gbum Gbum . . . Gbum Gede, Gede, Gede

Takuruku Takuruku

Takuruku Anyamazenga tile jigh jigh

Takuruku tile jigh jigh Keghen Wangou

Nguva sha kumun u tamen.

Note that when the drum is beaten, the name of the deceased elder is mentioned.

<sup>30</sup>J. W. T. Gber, "Traditions of Tiv Origin and Migrations with special emphasis on the Eastern Tiv frontier to c. 1900" (B.A. Hon. A.B.U. Zaria, Dissertation, June, 1974) pp. 4-5.

<sup>31</sup>T.H.T. No. 164, 29/5/75. Mr. Akpagher Sue of Gwanev.

<sup>32</sup>Often in the past researchers believed that when stories of African oral tradition resembled the oral tradition of the Old Testament it reflected nineteenth-century European missionary influence. Few historians now assume this. If a tradition only emanates from the late nineteenth century a historian might be able to prove such a connection. But in Africa and elsewhere there are Adam, Isaac, and Moses figures scattered throughout oral traditions. No one has come up with a satisfactory explanation of this. The Isaac-Takuruku tradition is a handy stereotype used to explain or hide an unpleasant usurpation, the actual circumstances of which are now lost to us.



Tiv went hunting very early in the morning in order to bring some meat to his father who was at the point of death. While he was gone Uke his brother deceived his father and received the blessings from Takuruku. On his return Tiv became furious with his brother. Takuruku too was disappointed but it was too late. He then gave Tiv a hoe. According to tradition, since Uke received the first blessings his descendants today are rich and 'educated'. The descendants of Tiv became farmers. After Takuruku died and before he was buried it is claimed that Tiv cut off his head. The Tiv believe that even today the skull or its dust is kept by the most respectable person among them.<sup>33</sup> This idea was of central importance to early Tiv thought and life because they believed that any Tiv who touched the skull dust of Takuruku in times of trouble would overcome any problem.<sup>34</sup>

In the above tradition we see the well-known use of ancestors as intermediaries among the Bantu peoples, frequently typified by the honoured preservation of some portion of the bodies of ancestors. According to Tiv belief:

departed ancestors are thought of as an integral part of the tar (world or country) connected through their tsav (witchcraft) with the affairs of men. The retention of the skull to be brought

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<sup>33</sup>Gbor, op. cit., pp. 4-5. The elders do not reveal who this person is, where he lives, nor how he is chosen.

<sup>34</sup>This means that whenever something went wrong in the world (tar) the elders brought the skull at night in order to set the world right or "repair the world" as they say it.

out at night ceremonially for purposes connected with the tar, which it is said to be, is not just merely the exposure of a relic, it had the special significance of being the actual presence of the ancestor himself, that is, the repository of his soul.<sup>35</sup>

Webster has suggested that ancestors become spirits and over the passage of centuries spirits may become dieties.<sup>36</sup> It would appear that both Aondo and Takuruku passed through both stages. If the man Tiv represents the birth of Tiv ethnic consciousness then it is obvious that this occurred at a point when the people came into contact with a completely alien group represented by the brother Uke. The traditions also suggest that in this process of contact the foreigners secured some kind of advantage as symbolized in the stolen blessing.

Some informants agree that Tauruku was the first father but they add that it was his son Awange who became the father of Tiv.<sup>37</sup> No informant gave a clear explanation of this. Awange also means spears. Some informants declared that spears were introduced by the Iharev and

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<sup>35</sup>R. M. Downes, Tiv Religion, (Ibadan: University Press, 1971), p. 48.

<sup>36</sup>J. B. Webster, "The Manatee", Benue Valley Project, Paper No. 20, pp. 5-6.

<sup>37</sup>'Awange', means spears, the singular is "Iwange". T.H.T. No. 100, 28/2/75. Mr. Ishima Zeiyol of Utyondo, Iharev.

and Kparev super-clans. Thus they are referred to as Ihar-Awange and Kpar-Awange.<sup>38</sup>

Almost all the traditions, whether they say that it was Awange or Takuruku that fathered Tiv, claim that Tiv begot three sons: Poor, Ichongo (circumcised), and Ipusu (uncircumcised).<sup>39</sup> When Poor died leaving no issue, his brothers ate his body to incorporate his power in themselves. Ichongo and Ipusu kept one of his bones in a lidded basket<sup>40</sup> to keep Poor's memory fresh. Since they did not consider this bone sufficient to ensure prosperity, they decided to sever his head and preserve it. Nobody was allowed to look at it except themselves. To enhance the efficacy of the relics, whenever a woman miscarried the blood was poured over them. Unfortunately, the house in which the relics were kept caught fire and the head and bone were destroyed. The descendants of the two brothers substituted two other heads. Initially they used the head of a manatee (a mammal) because of its resemblance to a human

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<sup>38</sup>T.H.T. No. 34, 10/10/74. Group interview at Apir, Masev.

<sup>39</sup>T.H.T. No. 2, 23/7/74. Group interview at Tse-Gbagir, Ukum. The meaning of Poor is not known.

<sup>40</sup>Abraham, Op. Cit., p. 66.

head.<sup>41</sup> After a short time, they replaced the manatee with a man's head modelled out of clay.

In connection with the above tradition, it must be added that the Tiv believe that in the process of creating the world, the creator made a series of forces which they call Akombo.<sup>42</sup> These forces are manifest in the emblems that represent or symbolize each force and also the diseases that each creates. These innumerable cult-emblems were employed to secure the desired object, to ward off diseases, to cure illness and to repair some lack, such as paucity of game animals or sterility in women. The cult-emblems include pieces of wood, calabashes, iron bones, sticks, pots, handicrafts, wax, stones, cowries, beads, plants, and corn cobs. The greatest of these Akombo was the Ibiamegh (or Akombo-Ibiam).<sup>43</sup> This akombo was in its origin undoubtedly directed to procuring the good will of the ancestors

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<sup>41</sup>The Tiv name for this mammal is ayu. A manatee (ayu) lives only in warm coastal waters or large tropical rivers. A manatee can be as long as fifteen feet with a rounded shovel-like tail. It uses its flippers as hands. It has no front teeth - it does have cheek teeth - but a bristly upper lip, divided and mobile, the two halves being used for grasping and plucking underwater vegetation. It has hairless skin and a rounded head with a distinct neck and nostrils. The manatee not only looks like a human being, it is said that in the early days they reminded European sailors of mermaids because of their human-like methods of nursing their young. For more information on the manatee see Webster, "The Manatee".

<sup>42</sup>Akombo can be translated witchcraft.

<sup>43</sup>The meaning of the word itself is not known.

and their favourable cooperation in the affairs of mankind. Only a person who had gone through initiation became a master of the Ibiamegh. Only such a person could propitiate the akombo-ibiam. The candidate for the initiation had to attend an initiation ceremony which began at a roadside, followed by a drinking party in his village. The ceremony was concluded with a visit to a wild plum tree, where the candidate cried out:

Mother, mother, you have borne a son indeed!  
 I have eaten hot peppers!  
 I have taken women both dark and fair!  
 Today I have finished the Ibiamegh!  
 I have come to the wild plum tree!<sup>44</sup>

The master of the ceremony then declared him to be a man of Ibiamegh. After this ceremony, the person initiated had only one more goal - the initiation to the Poor which was the final stage in the cult of the Ibiamegh. For initiation the candidate gave a cow to those who had already been initiated and he brought chicken and sheep to be slaughtered so that their blood could be poured over the stakes of the Poor (the sticks on which the Poor stood). Last of all, but not least, at night he had to bring a head of a human being. In most cases the Tiv went to their neighbours like the Udam and Ugee in order to kill them and cut off their heads.<sup>45</sup> At the end

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<sup>44</sup>B. Akiga Sai, Akiga's Story, trans. by Rupert East, (Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 198.

<sup>45</sup>The Kunav who live near the Udam claimed that they cut heads off of the neighbouring Udam for such occasions; the Shangev at Home claimed that they cut off the heads of the Ugee, and the Masev claimed that they cut the heads of the Akpoto.

of the initiation ceremony the Poor-bin was built in the center of the village. It was built of mud on six posts, each of which represented a human victim. A person who had been initiated became a custodian of the Poor-bin. When the custodian died his head was cut off and put in the Poor-bin. It is believed that Ichongo and Ipusu had separate shrines or "Poor-bin."

Traditions relate that Ipusu was born when Tiv had no idea of circumcision. When a foreigner arrived after the birth of Ipusu he circumcised Tiv. The foreigner also taught him how to circumcise and gave him a razor to use for the purpose. His second son who was born after this event was circumcised and named Ichongo.<sup>46</sup> When Tiv died, all his children and grand-children were called Tiv's children. Eventually, the term "Tiv's children" was dropped when they became many and the whole ethnic group came to be called "Tiv".

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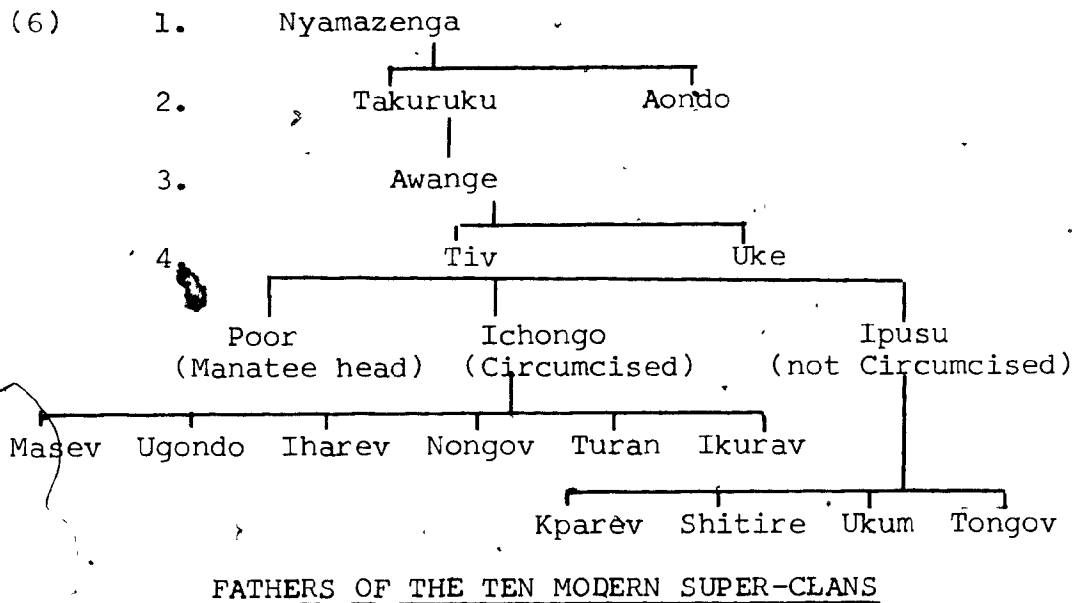
<sup>46</sup>No previous writer has speculated as to who was the circumcizing foreigner. The traditions refer to him as an "Uke" meaning foreigner. Rupert East says that the name Uke was given by the Tiv to the first people they met from the northern districts of Nigeria, such as individual hunters and the like. According to him it was afterwards that the term was extended to include all races who wore clothes and appeared to have relatively advanced culture, such as the Chamba, the Jukun, and the Hausa. Then the term was also applied to the Europeans. He argues that the primitive tribes were never called Uke but "Atoatiev," those who remain on the farm. The tradition which Dr. East recorded is likely from somewhere along the southern fringe where the "primitive" foreigners may still be seen while most of the Tiv are now concerned with the "advanced" foreigners on east, north and west. It could be that it was either the Fulani or the Akpoto or the Jukun who taught the Tiv circumcision. The Tiv are thus divided into the circumcised and the uncircumcised, but these terms have no actual significance, as all Tiv are today circumcised.

The majority of these various traditions show that Takuruku begat Awange who in turn brought Tiv into being. Tiv begat Ichongo (circumcised) and Ipusu (uncircumcised or foreskin). Traditions say that Ichongo had six children; namely, Iharev, Ikurav, Nongov, Turan, Masev, and Ugondo. Ipusu had four children; namely, Kparev, Shitire, Ukum, and Tongov. To attempt to present the details of the mythic Tiv genealogy here is scarcely practical, but the following diagrammatic representation expresses in a very concise form what the traditions present.

DIAGRAM 2

TAKURUKU AS HE APPEARS IN VARIOUS TRADITIONS

- (1) Aondo (M) + Takuruku (F)  
           ┌───────────┬───────────┐  
           Tiv                    Uke
- (2) Takuruku (M) + Olenolen (F)  
           ┌───────────┬───────────┬───────────┐  
           Whiteman      Blackmen      Tiv
- (3) Takuruku (deity)  
       |          created  
       Aondo  
       |          created  
       Man
- (4) Takuruku brother to Aondo  
       Takaruku got food from Aondo
- (5) Nyamazenga  
       |  
       Takuruku (M) + Aliwe (F) Aondo  
           ┌───────────┬───────────┐  
           Tiv                    Uke

TAKURUKU AS HE APPEARS IN VARIOUS TRADITIONS (continued)

The first four names, Nyamazenga, Takuruku, Awange, and Tiv seem to be mythical.<sup>47</sup> Nyamazenga might be the hunting period when this group ate the animals they killed and the wild fruits and vegetables they found. It could be that Takuruku represents the introduction of food production, the period when agriculture and stock raising were introduced. Before metallurgy was introduced the cultivators used 'ikpe,' a digging stick or a wooden hoe. The coming of iron spears (Awange) was a major technological advance. Blacksmiths began making iron hoes for farmers. The technique seemed to have spread to only a few blacksmiths. Since the use of iron hoes spread slowly, the change to farming with proper hoes was very slow. These Bantu groups faced life with new

<sup>47</sup> See footnotes 18 and 25 for the meaning of these words.



courage and success. As a result a separate ethnic consciousness developed. The first four names on the preceding chart therefore seem to symbolize great revolutions in Bantu society which probably occurred over a period of many centuries.

It would appear that "Tiv" on the national genealogy represents a substantial group of people - the Tiv - rather than one man. When the traditions claim that he had three sons, this really suggests divisions within the group. The Tiv ethnic group today is divided into two great sections Ichongo and Ipusu, the Ichongo section being comprised of six maximal or super clans and the Ipusu of four. The word 'clan' is used for want of a better word, since these units recognize a common father but are not exogamous and there is some evidence to suggest that there may be a degree of biological relationship within each.

While today there are two great divisions among the Tiv, it seems that centuries ago there were three. The eating of Poor by his two brothers suggests that the Poor division was eliminated and incorporated into the other two. The akombo and Poor-bin may be relics of the Poor people within the other two groups today. Since modern Tiv are unable to provide a meaning of "Poor," it suggests that the Poor were the first alien group to be assimilated and absorbed by the proto-Tiv. It is quite possible that the elimination of the Poor as a coherent group occurred during the division which occurred over the issue of circumcision

and which gave rise to the two modern divisions, the Ipusu and Ichongo. It must be kept in mind that despite the nomenclature of circumcised and uncircumcised, all Tiv today without exception practise circumcision. Clearly this was not always so.

The location of the six Ichongo super-clans today - and particularly that of the Iharev - suggests that during the migrations the Iharev were ahead of the Ipusu clans. The Ichongo clans were the vanguard of the Tiv migration pushing into an area populated by people all of whom were circumcisers. It seems that they first borrowed the custom and later passed it to the Ipusu - especially the Kparev - who were coming behind. The Ipusu must have adopted the custom much later, for the nomenclature of circumcised and uncircumcised to have been so permanently impressed upon the society despite the modern reality. It seems likely that at least the Iharev and Kparev super-clans had emerged before the circumcision issue arose. This is why it is impossible to argue that Ipusu and Ichongo were historical sons of Tiv.

The Iharev super-clan of Ichongo (circumcised) are known throughout Tivland as those who introduced iron to the rest of the Tiv. Since they had iron first, they were the first to possess spears. This further confirms that the Iharev were ahead of the other Tiv in the migration. They secured both iron spears and the practice of circumcision from their contact with and absorption of aliens, probably

the Akpoto or proto-Idoma and Igala.<sup>48</sup> With their military superiority which the iron spears gave them, the Iharev achieved numerical predominance and the largest geographic area occupied by any of the ten super-clans.

The Kparev super-clan of the Ipusu apparently came behind the Iharev and probably secured iron spears from them. The Kparev also grew into a numerous people occupying a large area. Once the Iharev and the Kparev became masters of the spears they conquered other peoples who fought with bows and arrows. The Iharev conquered or incorporated other groups who were possibly also moving out of the hills and may have been related in dialect and culture. These became the five super-clans of Masev, Ugondo, Nongov, Ikurav, and Turan. They adopted the circumcision practices of Iharev and the myth of the common fatherhood of Ichongo and before him Tiv. The Kparev did the same for the Shitire, Ukum, and Tongov.

There are few signs of totemism among the Tiv and this is surprising since most Bantu groups and nearly all the

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<sup>48</sup>In 1956 there was a find of evidence of iron smelting at Katsina Ala, 130 miles southeast of Nok, situated in Tivland. See E. Huxley, Four Guineas: A Journey Through West Africa (London: Chatto and Windus, 1957), pp. 242-244. It could be pointed out that the terracotta figurines which were found in the Nok Hills by Mr. Fagg had been estimated to be rather more than 2,000 years old. The Iharev might have been in contact with the "Nok culture". Oliver and Fagan argued that iron was in regular use by at least the third century B.C. in the "region on and immediately to the south of the Jos plateau in Northern Nigeria". R. Oliver and B. Fagan, Africa in the Iron Age. C.500 B.C. to A.D. 1400 (Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 63.

modern neighbours of the Tiv probably developed as a result of their absorption of previous inhabitants of the new land into which they were spreading. It seems most likely that these peoples had been totemic. It is worthy of note, therefore, that the few possible totemic references in Tiv early history are linked with alien elements. Takuruku, the leader and chief-like individual, was called the leopard. The leopard is often associated with chiefly leadership but it is also a common totem among the Ibo. Too little is known at this time about the distribution of leopard totems in the Niger-Benue-Cross river area for any further speculation to be useful.

A little more is known about the manatee<sup>49</sup> whose skull was used as a symbol of the conquered Poor people. Webster argues that a manatee group probably came to power in Kwara-rafa about 1600 and that it probably originated south of the Benue in areas where it could be contacted by the Tiv. In the mid-seventeenth century a migration out of Kwararafa and along the southern shores of the Benue river probably carried sections of the Manatee people to Idah. Ibo groups coming out of Benin were said in one tradition to have been assisted across the Niger by the Manatee and in another by people from Idah. Thus it seems perfectly logical that the Poor were a section of the Manatee people and possibly simply Jukun

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<sup>49</sup>Ikenna Nzimiro, Studies in Ibo Political Systems, (Cass. 1972), pp. 11-12. R. Sargeant, Personal Communication, April, 1976. J. B. Webster, "The Manatee", B.V.P.P., No. 20, pp. 5-6.

whose linguistic affinities suggest that they migrated to the Benue area from the upper Katsina Ala or Cross river area, in fact from the same general region as the Tiv themselves.

Some traditions narrate that the Tiv were at an early time situated in the southeast, south of a large river and near a large ethnic group which they refer to as Iriko.<sup>50</sup> When there was a dispute and they were harassed by their enemies, a snake - called Ikarem - suspended itself across the river and formed a bridge on which the Tiv crossed. According to this tradition, when the Iriko attempted to cross the snake untwined its coils and they fell into the river and perished. For that reason the Tiv look upon the ikarem as a helper and it is taboo to kill it.

It is worth mentioning that the story of ikarem helping the whole of the Tiv ethnic group is sometimes used for an individual lineage group. For example those super-clans which live on the eastern side of the Katsina Ala river have traditions of the green snake helping them across. These clans include the Ugondo, Ukum, Shitire, Tongov, and Ikurav Tiev. The Iharev super-clan say that their leader Gbanyam Wundukule became an ikarem and suspended himself across the river Benue for them to cross. The Ugondo in the Masev super-clan area too have a tradition that when they left Mdema the

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<sup>50</sup>Downes, The Tiv Tribe, p. 2. Captain Downes did his interviews among the Turan super-clan.

snake helped them to cross the river Donga; the Chamba perished when they attempted to follow.<sup>51</sup>

Sargeant also collected the story of the Iharev crossing the Benue on the back of a snake but upon further questioning he was told that they had been ferried across by the Banu (Jukun-speaking fishermen) in their boats.<sup>52</sup> It is difficult to understand why the Tiv should prefer the snake tradition rather than admitting Banu assistance but the legend does explain to descendants the taboo against the killing of ikarem. This taboo may stretch far back into Bantu and beyond that into Benue-Congo history because in the interlacustrine region there was a snake cult in Buganda prior to 1300 and one which persists among the Bakongo of the Ruwenzori mountains. Neighbouring Jukun also have a python cult and since the Banu were Jukun there is some historical sense and reason in identifying the snake with them.

Although the real significance of these legends about crossing the river by the help of an ikarem is not clear, there is every indication that the different clans crossed the

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<sup>51</sup>T.H.T. No. 3, 24/7/74. Mr. Tsafa Amaichigh of Ukum.  
T.H.T. No. 116, 25/4/75. Mr. Kpar Dongo of Shitire  
at Home.

T.H.T. No. 82, 30/1/75. Mr. Igba Kipen of Isherev,  
Iharev.

T.H.T. No. 34, 10/10/74. Group interview in Ugondo  
of Masev super-clan. Note that this is an offshoot of the  
big Ugondo super-clan now settled near the Ukum. This off-  
shoot is about 30 miles away and is included in Masev super-  
clan area.

<sup>52</sup>Sargeant, R., T.H.T. No. 15, 7/8/74. Awe District,  
Kuma compound. His informants were Koho, Gafa, and Zende of  
Iharev super-clan.

rivers they mentioned during their migrations. The legend surely gives an idea of the direction of migrations. It could be that they used dug-out canoes, calabashes, and logs. Some might have walked across the rivers, since they crossed the rivers during the dry season. One group admit that although the traditions say that it was an ikarem that helped them, in reality, it was a solid rock.<sup>53</sup> According to the informant, Adiolobo, the leader of Ugondo led the way, walking on a solid rock. The Chamba who came after the Ugondo had crossed did not know the whereabouts of the rock. Many of the Chamba perished.

It is common knowledge that if one knows the path one can cross the Benue from the southern side to Tunga without going into more than knee-high water. On the other hand many have also drowned using this route presumably because of the shifts in the sandbars of the river bed and because anyone using this route must be intimately familiar with it. One must suppose that the Tiv who crossed successfully were very familiar with the respective river while their enemies who chased them were not. Surely Tiv scouts had crossed back and forth many times prior to any major migration being undertaken.

After examining the ikarem traditions, Downes concludes that the people with whom the early Tiv lived must

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<sup>53</sup>T.H.T. No. 34, 10/10/74. Group interview. Ugondo of Masev super-clan.

have been the Ekoi, a tribe of Bantu origin, living to the south of the Cross river.<sup>54</sup> It is not clear from his account whether Downes found a similar snake tradition among the Ekoi. The Tiv and Ekoi could have lived together somewhere else. The Tiv migrated west, the Ekoi south. It does not mean that the Tiv had to live south of the Cross river.

It is not entirely unusual for a political entity to adopt an animal symbol or totem, the closest example to the Tiv was the crocodile, the national symbol of the Kwararafa confederacy. Webster has referred to such as political totems as distinct from kinship totems. It is unusual, however, for an ethnic group which never formed one political unit to respect a single totem such as Ikarem. The Tiv had a number of important trappings of a centralized state - their national charter or genealogy and the Ikarem symbol - despite the conciliar system of their traditional government. The Tiv achieved a national consciousness and feeling of unity to a greater extent than many peoples who lived in highly centralized states. This constitutes the greatest claim to uniqueness of the Tiv people.

This chapter has sought to explore and interpret the traditions and legends relating to the dawn of history and the birth of ethnic consciousness among the Tiv. There is no way of dating this period. One might guess that the events took place between 1000 and 1500 A.D. Certainly by 1500 A.D.

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<sup>54</sup>Downes, The Tiv Tribe, p. 2.



all ten of the super-clans had been founded. Presumably the declining power of Kwararafa between c. 1600 and 1720, when control over Idah was lost, gave the Tiv the opportunity to expand and take over their present homeland. In the process of expansion, strangers and Tiv alike were absorbed into one of the ten super-clans. There are no traditions of clan fragmentation. Much of this early history is legend and one has to engage in the risky task of imaginative interpretation. But it seems clear that the legends are not merely creative literature but contain historical truths if the researcher is astute and perceptive enough to discover them. Like other ethnic groups, but possibly to a greater degree than neighbouring groups in the Benue region, the Tiv are determined to see themselves as one pure ethnic group, biologically descended from one man called Tiv. Consequently, Tiv traditions seek to ignore their interaction with other peoples, a large and important aspect of the history of any people. The legends, however, carefully analysed indicate that aliens played many vital roles in the early history of the Tiv.

## CHAPTER IV

### SWEM: TIV ORIGINS

The last chapter dealt with what might be called Tiv pre-history, where legend and allegory were mixed with historical tradition and where men and gods directly interacted with each other. Coherent Tiv history begins at Swem, possibly around the beginning of the sixteenth century if one calculates from the national genealogical chart which was discussed in greater detail in Chapter II. Swem, which the Tiv refer to as their original home, is not remembered only in mythical traditions but creates a number of historical traditions. The description of the events around Swem, as the Tiv themselves see them, is necessary. The Tiv have their own version of the past. They believe that they all originated from Swem and that they are distinct and unique people marked off by a common culture which originated at Swem and they believe that their common language, experience, history, institutions, and descent make them "one". In essence Swem traditions provide ideological foundations for their sense of "oneness". As a result, the majority of Tiv informants began with the basic premise that "We all came from Swem."<sup>1</sup> To all intents and purposes, traditions

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<sup>1</sup>T.H.T. No. 287, 13/9/75. Interview with Adevanger Gu of Njoov. Adevanger lives on a major route to the original home of many Tiv people. What he said was repeated throughout Tivland.

surrounding Swem are supposed to establish Tiv as a people of single origin and validate their institution and norms. This interior history of Tivland concerning Tiv society at Swem is, of course, itself the product of the historical development of the region. There is, therefore, another history of Tivland, one in which this interior history is not ignored, but which sees the interior history of Tivland as part of a more general process of change, integration, and unification of diverse people.<sup>2</sup> This other history can only be reconstructed through the careful analysis of a large body of tradition or evidence of the past which includes the interior histories - and the application of rigorous historical methods to the problems of the Tiv past. This chapter is devoted to discussing the events or traditions surrounding Swem.

No one is sure where the original home of the Tiv actually was. Both Downes and Abraham assert that about two hundred years ago the Tiv were located in the Sonkwalla Hills.<sup>3</sup> According to Downes, posts of the hard wood used by the Tiv in the construction of their houses and bins can be seen today in the hills of Ogoja and in the Cameroon Hills. There are also various groups of people living in

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<sup>2</sup>The question of assimilation of diverse peoples will be dealt with fully in Chapter V.

<sup>3</sup>Abraham, The Tiv People, p. 13.  
Downes, The Tiv Tribe, p. 2.

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these areas who are acknowledged as related groups by the Tiv. Akiga and many informants, however, say that the first home of the Tiv on their arrival near what is today the border of Nigeria and the Cameroons was on a mountain in the east or in the direction of Wankwase-Hungwa-Dyelegh (woman-descended-naked).<sup>4</sup> Although there are many hills in that area the Tiv believe that their home was on a hill which they call "Swem" far to the southeast of their present location. It has been identified, by the Bohannans, with Ngol Kedju hill on maps of Nigeria and the Cameroons.<sup>5</sup>

Dewar, a former District Officer in Tivland, suggested that the Nigerian Bantu might have migrated from the Congo as a single body and that they were gradually pressed into and through the Cameroons by the Kongo, the Bete, and Pangwe rivers. He argued that when the Bantu came up against the Cameroon mountains they split up, emerging from the mountains at regions corresponding to those occupied by them at present. According to him there were three groups, a southern one in the Calabar region, a central one in the Benue region, and a northern one on the plateau. He accepts the Tiv notion that they all descended from one ancestor and argues that the ancestor, Tiv, was born at Swem of parents belonging to the

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<sup>4</sup>The Tiv have a tradition that is reported throughout Tivland that in the beginning a naked woman descended from the east. Whenever they see clouds in the sky from the east, they expect rainfall.

<sup>5</sup>See the map.

Benue Group.<sup>6</sup> According to him, the Tiv lived at Swem until the decline of Kwararafa at the end of the seventeenth century, before they began to occupy Tivland.

Since Dewar has discussed the movements of the Tiv in relationship to Jarawan Bantu and the Jukun, it is proper to state here that modern writers on the region have a different interpretation. Ballard says Jarawan Bantu (probably the Jar) may have spread from the Wurkum Hills near the Benue River to the Jos escarpment in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.<sup>7</sup> Webster argues that Kwararafa's capital was relocated south of the Benue about 1600.<sup>8</sup> If Kwararafa's power collapsed north of the Benue river about 1600, this would have allowed the Jarawan Bantu to spread or the Jarawan expansion may even have contributed to the collapse of Kwararafa.

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<sup>6</sup>K. Dewar, "Notes on the Tiv Tribe" in Paul and Laura Bohannon's Three Source Books on the Tiv, (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1966), pp. 1-2. These three Bantu groups noted by Dewar probably are related but given what is now known of possible Bantu movements, it is no longer necessary to postulate that Bantu came from the Congo region. It seems that the Bantu settlement of the heavy forests of the Congo was a late development. Furthermore the first crops of the Tiv and most other facts about them suggest that they have always been a savannah rather than a forest people.

<sup>7</sup>J. Ballard, "Historical Inferences from the Linguistic Geography of the Nigerian Middle Belt", Africa XL 1, 4 1971, pp. 294-305.

<sup>8</sup>J. B. Webster, "Chiefs and Chronology: Jukun Colonies in the Benue Valley" in B.V.P.P. No. 4, 1975.

Between c. 1600 and 1700 Kwararafa was in a state of decline and the collapse of its military power may very well have paved the way for both the expansion of the Jarawan north of the Benue and the Tiv to the south. The two peoples might have been moving at about the same time, or the Jarawan may have been slightly in advance of the Tiv since Kwararafa had abandoned much of the north almost a century before it lost control of Idah and presumably much of the area now occupied by the Tiv and Idoma. After 1600 many groups of Gara (proto-Idoma, -Igala and -Alago) were leaving the modern area around Wukari and migrating along the Benue River towards their modern locations. These people seem to have been displaced by the Abakwariga and Jukun, the former coming from both the north and south. The seventeenth century was an age of great dislocation and population movements. The instability on the plains allowed peoples formerly living in the mountains, the Jarawan in the Wurkum hills and the Tiv at Swem, to enter and expand over the plains.

Swem, the traditional cradle of the Tiv and their spiritual centre, is found far to the southeast of their present settlement. Every informant in Tivland agrees that Swem is their original home. Although they say that all Tiv migrated from or through Swem to their present location, there are indications that other people did not come from Swem. One tradition indicates that some people originated from Mount Selagi, others from Iwokungun, and others from

Ngokuv.<sup>9</sup> In fact there were multiple origins for different Tiv groups. This is why many of the informants do not know where Swem was located. Some say it is in the area occupied by the Turan super-clan, others say that it is among the Ikurav-Ya super-clan. Some linguists argue that the most ancient location of any language group is where dialectical differences are greatest. The Tiv language is remarkably homogenous over the whole of modern Tivland. However, the greatest dialectical diversity occurs on and around the Obudu Plateau and this has led Ballard to identify Swem with that region. Obudu is:

A fertile hilltop extending roughly 6 miles in length and up to half-mile in breadth, capable of supporting a large population. Its foothills on three sides at present occupied by the Utange, Becheve, and Ndir, all linguistically related to the Tiv, and none of these has traditions relating to the ancient 'fortifications' still found on its promontories. . . . Here the linguistic distribution alone would raise the Obudu Plateau as a strong contender for the title of Swem.<sup>10</sup>

The majority of the Tiv know of the Obudu Plateau and call it Mount Nuange. It is unlikely that this is Swem. Informants claim that to get to Swem one has to go through the country of the Ukwese and Undir<sup>11</sup> to a group called the Iyon who

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<sup>9</sup>L. and P. Bohannon, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup>Ballard, "Historical Inferences", p. 298.

<sup>11</sup>The Ukwese are neighbours of the Tyuluv, Njoov, and Ikurav-Ya. Some of them migrated into Tivland about two generations ago. They speak both their own and the Tiv language. The Undir live both in the modern Cameroons and

presently live in the Cameroons. The Tiv believe that the Iyon were one of their earliest clans which split off from the parent stem.<sup>12</sup> They, however, do not place the Iyon on the national genealogy. A few informants argue that Swem was a forest:

The Tiv originated from Swem forest. It is a place of meetings. There are many things like food and meat. Whenever there is famine we go back to Swem to bring more food.<sup>13</sup>

Akiga has this to say about Swem:

Swem is a mountain in the country of Ukwese and Undir. . . . The mountain is magnificent to look at, more so than any other mountain in Tivland and the neighbouring lands. It is not larger

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in Nigeria. Almost all of them are bilingual but they sing only in Tiv. The following list shows similarities to Tiv words:

<u>English</u>	<u>Tiv</u>	<u>Undir</u>
two	har	ufar
three	tar	tar
four	Njiin	Nyi
five	utan	utangen
six	utaratar	utareutar
man	or	unor
fire	usu	ogusu
tree	kon	kon
yam	yough	iyanegh
come	va	va

<sup>12</sup>Boogundu of Iwanev argues that "the Iyon" are Tiv and call themselves "Tiv". T.H.T. No. 163, 29/5/75. Boogundu is not the only one who says so. When you ask, informants say "Iyon Ikorakpe, Njoov Ikorakpe, Kunav Ikorakpe etc." They do not say "Iyon Tiv", nor "Iyon Ipusu" but Iyon Ikorakpe. Many clans both in the Ipusu and Ichongo divisions claim that Ikorakpe was their father. For example, the Ikurav say that they are the sons of Ichongo but also claim that Ikorakpe was their father. When the inconsistency was brought to their attention they could not reconcile it. For a discussion of Ikorakpe see Chapter V.

<sup>13</sup>T.H.T. No. 298, 19/9/75. Minde Yaga of Tyuluv-Nyiev.



than other mountains in size but it is formed of one huge piece of rock. There is no vegetation on the rock which is on the top.<sup>14</sup>

Many informants claimed that Swem was a mountain at the foot of which grew a shrub known to the Tiv as ayande (*marantochlea flexusa*).

Makar identifies Swem to be a mountain thirty-six miles southwest of the district head Yaro Gusa in the direction of Nyiev-Mba-Sha-Ya. Gusa's compound is located on a mountain about one mile from the Cameroons border. According to him the mountain has three ranges about three thousand feet above sea level. One pinnacle is composed of a large rock resting on three stone pillars which from a distance looks like a hut. Furthermore, as one approaches, the three stone pillars are not visible and it appears as if the rock was suspended in the air.<sup>15</sup>

Swem Ikaragbe is the full name of the area referred to as the cradleland.<sup>16</sup> There are several versions of how Swem came to be known as Swem Ikaragbe. The first, related by Akiga,<sup>17</sup> says that Ikaragbe was a man from the Nongov

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<sup>14</sup>Sai, MS, Chapter 3.

<sup>15</sup>Makar, "A History of the Tiv People", p. 17.

<sup>16</sup>Ikaragbe is a name with no meaning. "Ikar" could be a hoe or a friend depending on the tone. "Agbe" means hoe hafts.

<sup>17</sup>Sai, MS, Chapter 3.

super-clan who had eaten human flesh from his father's lineage group.<sup>18</sup> After he had given all of his family to his father's lineage group in payment of the debt (the human flesh he had eaten), he ran away to Utyusha.<sup>19</sup> His kinsmen sent two men, Kpamberakpa and Anyangere,<sup>20</sup> together with other people to bring Ikaragbe back to Nongov to be slaughtered. At first the Utyusha tried to prevent the Nongov people from taking Ikaragbe. The Nongov messengers then demanded a Utyusha man for a substitute. Ikaragbe then gave himself up to his kinsmen. On their return Ikaragbe asked them to stop at a forest. He put some ashes, pieces of Gbaaye wood, an iyandegh plant, and an axe of heaven<sup>21</sup> in a little pot. He rested his head upon it then told his kinsmen, "Now take

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<sup>18</sup>This will be explained fully shortly. It will suffice here to say that Ikaragbe killed someone in his lineage group before running to Utyusha.

<sup>19</sup>Utyusha comprises Nanev, Shangev at Home, Turan, Nyiev, and Ikurav-Mba-Sha-Ya. Akiga defines the word as "the agnates up there" (atoasha). Since they are bounded by non-Tiv they picked up their customs. They would sell their daughters for cattle. They would sometimes even catch a child to buy (exchange for) a bag of salt or a bar of metal. Bohannan, "The Descent", p. 308.

<sup>20</sup>Kpamberakpa - a name of an insect.  
Nyamagere - could mean an animal from the water. Variations refer to him as 'Normnger' which means a hippopotamus.

<sup>21</sup>Gbaaye refers to the tree prosopis oblonga. Iyandegh is a singular form of ayandé which is marantochlea flexusa and an axe of heaven refers to a thunderbolt or stone celt.

me away and kill me. If a Tiv does evil he shall not escape his fate, (to whatsoever land he may flee". On their arrival the Nongov rejoiced, danced and sang:

Kpamberakpa has caught a man for me!  
Hee ee e!  
Anyamagere has caught a man for me!  
Hee ee e!

Ikaragbe was beheaded. Some days later, Kpamberakpa and Anyamagere became sick with swollen legs and died as a punishment for their murder of Ikaragbe. For although Ikaragbe had done something wrong he had begged for mercy, 'dressed' the Swem and laid upon it, yet they refused to spare his life. It was therefore the Akombo on the Swem that killed the two men. And so will the Swem kill every man who kills without pity.

Another version was recorded by Dewar.<sup>23</sup> A long time ago before the Ugenyi (Chamba) invasion, when the Nongov were inhabiting the present Kunavland and the Iharev and Masev were beyond them in the area that is now occupied by the Mbatiev, a Nongov man, named Ikaragbe, owing a Kunav man a flesh debt, by having eaten human flesh with him, stole the

<sup>22</sup>T.H.T. No. 143, 22/5/75. This was sung by Zaki Iorhonen of Ikurav-Mba-Sha-Ya.

Kpamberakpa kor or va nama!  
Hee e ee!  
Anyamagere kor or va nama!  
Hee e ee!

<sup>23</sup>Dewar, "Notes on the Tiv," p. 7.

head of a revered ancestor called Tievajir and gave it to the Kunav man in place of a life.<sup>24</sup> He then went and lived with the Uge, a non-Tiv group, who at that time occupied a high mountain called Harga. Later on, the Kunav people gave a great dance and invited both the Uge and the Nongov. After the dance, the Nongov returned to their home with Ikaragbe. On the way Ikaragbe plucked a yandegh stem. When the people were assembled Ikaragbe, knowing that his life would have to be given to redeem the head of Tievajir, raised up a pot of earth and ashes covered with ayande leaves and said to the Nongov "this is my Swem" meaning that the thing is finished. Then he laid down on the ground and, placing his head upon the Swem, slew himself. This act, it appears, was intended to signify that when his life had been given and the head of Tievajir redeemed the debt would have been repaid and the account settled. There would be no need for the Nongov to seek repayment for Ikaragbe's life. To this day in Tivland, the oath "Swem" is a sign that the matter is settled and that there is no more to be said or done. Thereafter, the ayande grove whence Ikaragbe plucked his ayande stem was known as "Swem Ikaragbe" or else simply as 'Swem'.

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<sup>24</sup>Tievajir is a combination of two words. Tiev which can also be spelled itiev, tyev, or ityev means a farm. "Ajir" refers either to a type of cloth or lawsuit. It is believed that Kuna had two sons Tievajir and Kyan. According to this tradition, Ikaragbe stole the head of Tievajir from the Nongov and gave it to the Kunav.

According to a Kparev informant,<sup>25</sup> Ikaragbe stole something and ran away. Kpamberakpa and Nyamagere looked for him and found him somewhere in the east. He then followed them. On their way home, Ikaragbe stopped and took some ashes in a pot. On their arrival the Tiv were invited to a gathering where Ikaragbe broke the pot with the ashes in their presence.

Most traditions connect Ikaragbe with the Nongov, but there is a tradition linking him to the Iharev super-clan.<sup>26</sup> Ikaragbe of Iharev is said to have contracted a flesh debt and fled to the Kparev super-clan. The Iharev sent Kpamberakpa and Nyamagere to bring him back. On their way home Ikaragbe, who was a magician, filled a small pot with ashes and planted some leaves of the shea tree in it. He then laid his head on it and asked his kinsmen to kill him. When they asked him what he meant, he explained:

This is my command. In all the Tiv clans if a man eats human flesh secretly he has eaten ikpindi. This he must pay and go on paying until he dies. If you cease to do this the earth will not bring forth her increase, in hunting you never achieve a kill, you will see no results, you yourselves will not be fertile.<sup>27</sup>

When he finished this explanation he was killed by Kpamberakpa and Nyamagere. They took his body home. Then famine and

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<sup>25</sup>T:H T No. 39, 17/10/74. Interview with Uka Udum of Kunav.

<sup>26</sup>Downes, The Tiv Tribe, p. 47

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

sickness fell on Iharev. The elders were forced to return to Ikaragbe's Swem before the time of trouble came to an end.

Before an interpretation of the above tradition can be attempted the meaning of ikpindi must be explained. The Tiv believed that the mbatsav or witches were responsible for the death of individuals. It was even believed that a man with 'tsav' power could kill his brother in order to eat his flesh. If another man from a different lineage group joined him at the feast he would demand that that man too must kill his brother for a second feast. In other words if "A" killed his brother in order to eat him and "B" accidentally joined "A" in eating the meat, "A" could claim that "B" owed him a person or literally "a flesh debt". This debt was called ikpindi. Downes describes ikpindi as:

A debt contracted with the Mbatsav into which people enter, or more often are ensnared involuntarily, by which they become obligated to give "lives" from their own families in turn with others for consumption by the tribal company of the Mbatsav (witches). . . . Tiv have often told me how the Mbatsav kill people and cut up bodies and eat them in constant orgies, of how a man or woman may be given a portion of this "meat" to eat unawares and in this way be entrapped into the company of this horrid body with continuous and irrevocable obligation of providing a body from amongst his own relatives in turn with those of others. This flesh debt is called ikpindi.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Downes, Tiv Religion, pp. 36-37.

Looking at the various versions of Ikaragbe it is clear that while the basic structure and actors are always the same there are important variant details. The story is always located at Swem but in one it involved the Nongov and Utyusha, in another the Nongov and Kunav, and in a third the Iharev and Kparev. In the first version Ikaragbe was killed by his kinsmen despite his plea for mercy, in the second he committed suicide, and in the third he requested to be killed by his kinsmen. The second version is the only one to mention the sacred head of the ancestor Tievajir.

Clearly the major intention of the tradition is to explain the origin of the ikpindi custom. All versions make it clear that Ikaragbe's behaviour came as a surprise to the people. Since Ikaragbe's name is meaningless in Tiv one can presume that he was an alien and since he appears in the three different settings one might assume that Ikaragbe represents not one man but a foreign element within Tiv society. One tradition claims that the Tiv migration from Swem began because of problems the Tiv encountered with a numerous alien people who invaded Swem. It seems that it is possible to assume that the two traditions are in fact saying the same thing, Ikaragbe merely represents the troublesome foreigners. The cannibal custom may have begun in the period of stress and tension between the Tiv and the aliens. The action of the Tiv killing a number of the foreigners, or

rather the introduction of the death penalty for cannibalism was enough to break up the settlement.

It is also noteworthy that tendencies to witchcraft are present in all societies in all ages but witchcraft may grow to major proportions as a weapon of conformity especially in a multi-ethnic situation where a new fusion of people is occurring. Two alien groups may live in harmony side by side as long as one does not threaten to absorb the other. Once strong tendencies to fusion arise, conservative forces within each society may turn to witchcraft in order to protect the "purity" of the respective group. Thus the tradition of Ikaragbe may represent both the tension and hostility which accompanies inter-ethnic mixture and the forces of reaction which often arise as a consequence.<sup>29</sup>

The story of the origin of ikpindi could be an allegory for important political events which occurred at Swem. It could be that the Nongov were the indigenous people around Swem mountain. They probably became so numerous that the other super-clans started to refer to them as "the Nongov lineage group". Ikaragbe is likely to have been a leader of a group of alien intruders known as the 'Agbem'. The Agbem people of Wum district in Bamenda have a common border with the Turan and Ikurav-Ya today. The Agbem claim they migrated

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<sup>29</sup>Witchcraft also thrives in a society which is strongly conformist, so much so as to be repressive of individuals within the society.



from Munshi country but do not refer to a specific geographical area. Wum families which claim such a migration were Wondo, Zango, Kwo, Choraghe, Zange, Foy, Mangha, and Su. McCulloch argues, without adducing evidence, that the migration took place three hundred years ago.<sup>30</sup> Makar quotes the people of Agbem as saying that they had known the Tiv for a long time and that they had been on friendly terms with the Tiv.<sup>31</sup> It would seem that Kpamberakpa and Nyamagere were powerful leaders in the Nongov group. Apparently they managed to overcome the alien group, probably the Agbem, and killed their leader Ikaragbe.

According to traditions, the "Swem" has been kept and used for the purposes of oath-taking or as a very strong talisman to ensure health since the time of Ikaragbe. It is still dressed by filling a little pot with ashes, on top of which pieces of ayande plants and pieces of gbaaye wood are placed. Then the stone celt or an "axe of heaven" is set on top. Last of all, a piece of raffia is tied round the neck of the pot with a knot at each side. There is also a Swem for the women. This was, and is still today, dressed in a calabash.<sup>32</sup> The act of swearing consisted of picking up

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<sup>30</sup>McCulloch, Peoples of the Central Cameroons, (London: 1954), p. 20.

<sup>31</sup>Makar, "A History of the Tiv People", p. 24.

<sup>32</sup>Most of this discussion of institutions and practices is in the past tense, but this does not necessarily

the pot and repeating such statements as "This is Swem, if I swear falsely, Swem will catch me." The pot was then touched on the head, belly, and feet before placing it on the ground. It was believed that if the witness had taken an oath and then testified falsely, his feet and belly would swell, his head would ache, and he would die.

The Swem was also used when illness occurred. In such cases arrows and a knife were also put in the little pot in addition to what was mentioned above. When a man had a chronic illness he attributed it to tsav.<sup>33</sup> The sick man then swore on the Swem and sometimes broke it, declaring that he never contracted a flesh-debt (ikpindi), so that if his illness was due to bewitchment such bewitchment was illegal. It was believed that the Swem would seize the man who was killing the innocent.<sup>34</sup> The founder of a new market also swore the Swem. He would say "If any man spoils this market by Tsav the Swem shall surely seize the sorcerer."<sup>35</sup>

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mean that what is described no longer exists. In the Nigerian courts today, non-Christian Tiv do not use the Bible when taking an oath. They use 'Swem'.

<sup>33</sup> Tsav is the power by which a man can achieve that which is beyond his normal faculties - to accomplish witchcraft is one of its manifestations. Tsav has a mystic potential alike for good or evil which depends on the host.

<sup>34</sup> Sai, MS, Chapter 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

Swem mountain is to the Tiv what Mecca is to the Muslim. In olden days each lineage group sent a representative to Swem mountain. It was believed that the elders made a pilgrimage to Swem mountain during the dry season. Only the elders with tsav could go to Swem mountain. When birds flocked together and flew across the sky at the beginning of the dry season, it was said that it was the elders who changed into birds in order to fly to Swem mountain. When they met there, they set right the land. On their return, the good elders brought prosperity to their people. Women bore children, hunters were successful in their hunting, and crops grew well. But the elders with evil in their hearts brought with them misfortune, diseases, and famine. Some informants say that it is known all over Tivland today that at night, sometimes, all Tiv mbatsav (plural of tsav) hold meetings at Swem "in spirit", leaving their sleeping bodies behind in their houses. In this way, Swem represents the spiritual unity of the Tiv.

The ayande and iron play an important part in the building or dressing of Swem pot. It is therefore relevant to discuss them fully. The ayande plant has been particularly sacred to the Tiv. It normally grows to a maximum height of four or five feet, with straight cane-like stems separating at the root. The stem, when cut, remains green for several months and if planted while still green will take root. Because of its fertility and tenacity of life

it has come to be regarded by the Tiv as the emblem of life and of male vigour. The base of the stem is used for various complaints and as food for infants. The ayande also plays a most important part in most farm fertility cults or akombo as they are called. The ayande were used both as flags of truce and as a summons to war. When the hostile clans were attacked by a common foe, the ayande would be sent round by the elders as a sign that the parties concerned had not only declared a truce but combined against a common enemy. Every village to which ayande had been sent was compelled to obey the summons. Thus ayande became an enforcement mechanism.

Since the Tiv had no strong centralized government they used the above tradition of common origin from Swem as a tool to integrate newcomers into their society and to maintain their society as a whole. The main purpose of the tradition is clearly to explain their origin as a people. This is why "Swem" traditions are widely known. They speak of the birth of the Tiv nation and by so doing establish who the Tiv are, where they came from, and how they came to live in their present country.

The Tiv stress that originally they did not possess iron. They used wooden hoes, (ikpe) and bows and arrows made entirely of wood. It seems possible that the knowledge of iron-working came to the Tiv in the early sixteenth century. This seems to coincide with what Wrigley calls the period of "later Bantu ascendancy" when "the military

organization and ethos arose from the full exploitation of the iron spear."<sup>36</sup> This also coincides with the beginning of Tiv expansion from Swem and the two events may very well be connected. The Iharev super-clan were the first Tiv to smelt and forge iron. Their smiths introduced iron weapons and tools. They smelted iron from the ore and forged knives, axes, hoes, and other tools. They guarded their secret and the rest of the Tiv feared and respected the Iharev. Eventually they introduced to other Tiv groups the building of domed furnaces and how to work with bellows in order to produce iron.<sup>37</sup> The Kparev super-clan was the next group to learn the art of iron-working.

Among the Tiv magic power was ascribed to iron. Later on in the nineteenth century, when the Tiv started to create chiefs, they kept as symbols of authority a complete set of smithing tools, including the hammering bar, tongs (an implement with two pivoted arms), anvil, poker, hammer, bellows, and the nozzle of the bellows.<sup>38</sup> A man who aspired to be considered a "man of prestige," and every man before he could become a smith, had to propitiate the akombo called Iwa (smith).

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<sup>36</sup>C. Wrigley, "Speculations on the economic pre-history of Africa", J.A.H. 1, 2. 1960, p. 203.

<sup>37</sup>T.H.T. No. 89, 14/2/75. Interview with Uhambe of Isherev Iharev.

<sup>38</sup>Abraham, The Tiv People, p. 99.

Failure to do so would bring down on him the wrath of this powerful akombo and lead to pains in the back, failure of the delinquent to obtain offspring and destruction of his house and farm by thunderbolt.<sup>39</sup>

Iron is also a means of establishing the solidarity of the living and the dead. The ancestral spirits, to whom sacrifices are made, are the important elders of a family who thus continue to rule the lives of their descendants in the area in which they lived. The Tiv consider that iron is a sure method of securing this conjunction between the living and the dead. Thus they employ iron in company with other akombo like Twer<sup>40</sup> to ensure the participation of the household ancestors in procuring prosperity, and also to ward off the ancestors' displeasure shown by their manifesting themselves to their offspring in dreams.

The emblem of a chief or 'man of substance' was a pair of tongs worn around the neck and there was little doubt that the real function of a chief before the arrival of the Europeans was not so much to rule as to form a symbolic bridge between the living and the dead. In fact, the chief using iron was the one who focused the powers of the ancestors for the benefit of future generations.

According to tradition, the Tiv came into contact with the Fulani when they were still in the area of Swem.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid:

<sup>40</sup> Twer is an akombo of the crops.

Fulani evidence suggests they had reached the Cameroons in the mid-sixteenth century. Tradition indicates that there was an arrangement between the Tiv and the Fulani by which the former did farm work in return for protection.<sup>41</sup> The Tiv were in such close contact with the Fulani that they came to know their real name Pul, which is the true root of the name by which the Fulani called themselves. The term widely known as the "Fulani" is but a Hausa corruption of Pul. At first there was intermarriage but later the Tiv did not want their daughters to marry outside their tribe and the Fulani also did not wish to have their daughters marry black men. This led to a separation between the Tiv and Fulani.<sup>42</sup> Before the separation the two agreed to regard each other as cousins and to set aside a month in which they could exchange gifts of money and clothes. Rupert East states that this was the month of "Muharram" and argues:

The fact that this custom still survives between the Tiv and the few isolated Fulani with whom they occasionally came into contact is another strong proof of an earlier connection. For the Fulani today look upon all the pagan tribes of the Benue Valley as slave peoples, and would not normally be at all disposed to give them the status of "cousins".<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>T.H.T. No. 1, 22/7/74. Group interview at the official residence of the chief of Ngenev District of Ukum in Katsina Ala Division.

<sup>42</sup>Sai, MS, Chapter 1.

<sup>43</sup>Sai, Akiqa's Story, p. 25.

Akiga Sai indicates that it was after the Tiv left the Fulani that they decided to take to cicatrization of their faces in order to set themselves apart from other ethnic groups. The Tiv say that they did not originally use cicatrizations as an identity but they called themselves "Tiv" right from the beginning. The early records by aliens refer to them as Mitshi throughout the nineteenth century. The colonial officers referred to the Tiv as Munshi and used Hausa as the language of administration among the Tiv. In the late 1920's and early 1930's the British realized their mistake and started to refer to them as Tiv and established a separate Tiv Division in which the Tiv began to be administered in their own language.

It is believed that the name "Mitshi" is a corruption of "Mbitse" or "Mbichi" ("stranger settler"), the Jukun term for the Tiv. The name Munshi is said to be the name known to Hausa. According to the Hausa, some of their traders disappeared in Tivland. When the Tiv were asked, they replied in Hausa "Munshi" ("We have eaten [them].")<sup>44</sup> The Tiv however argue that the name was applied to them during their early contact with the Fulani. According to Ahura Kpire, the Fulani left their cows with the Tiv. On

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<sup>44</sup> Laura and Paul Bohannon, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 9.



their return, the Tiv had eaten some of the cows.<sup>45</sup> The main problem with this interpretation is that instead of the Fulani using a Fulani word, they used a Hausa word. Today, the Tiv say that only the Fulani are qualified to call them Munshi because of their early connection near Swem.

When the Tiv are asked why their ancestors left Swem many reasons are given. Msa Datsu of Ukan represents those who feel that it is the character of the Tiv to keep on moving.<sup>46</sup> Man's history is a story of movement, of a constant restless striving for something better. It is therefore the nature or character of all mankind and not only the Tiv. A second reason supported by various accounts from many informants is that the tremendous migratory surge began at Swem when they encountered problems with numerous alien people such as the Bamenda.<sup>47</sup> Traditions are less explicit about other groups but mention is made of "Bush people" such as the Undir, Ukwese, and Ugbe. Some of the traditions state that when the Tiv prevented their daughters from marrying outside their group there was opposition.

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<sup>45</sup>T.H.T. No. 314, 26/9/75. Interview with Ahura Kpire of Kunav.

<sup>46</sup>The word the Tiv used is "inja" which has been translated as "nature" by the Bohannans. In other words, they argue "it is our nature". The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 54.

<sup>47</sup>T.H.T. No. 3, 24/7/74. Interview with Tsafa Amaichigh of Isherev Ukum.

Faced with the hostility of these people they began to leave.<sup>48</sup> When referring to the problems with alien peoples, several informants emphasize that it was because they ate Fulani cows that they had to go.<sup>49</sup>

The most powerful factor that impelled emigration according to Agurebe Mede was an extraordinary increase in the population. "We were too many for Swem."<sup>50</sup> This population problem went hand in hand with the inability of producing enough to feed the population. This factor pushed them to leave their "home" to go to the "farm". This phenomenon of leaving to go to the farmland indicates that the causes of migration were located both at Swem and in their new destination.

Neither the push at "home" nor the pull from the "farm" functioned alone. Restless striving, problems with alien peoples and increase in population might have been reasons enough, but there was also reason for hope in the new farm areas where there would be prosperity. This hope alone could have been a powerful factor at the time when the old dominant economic order of mixed hunting and farming was giving way to the new one of predominantly farming.

Of the possible multitude of other causative forces,

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<sup>48</sup> Akiga, MS, Chapter 1.

<sup>49</sup> T.H.T. No. 202, 11/7/75. Group interview at the home of Kyomke Amue of Shangev-Ya.

<sup>50</sup> T.H.T. No. 216, 15/8/75. Interview with Zaki Agurebe Mede of Mbera, Kunav.

besides population and economics, the most important was probably religion. The whole question of Swem, Ikaragbe, and the 'ikpindi' suggests that the motives were fundamentally religious. Swem as a place is known as a place of plenty. But through tsav power there are some people, it is believed, who go to Swem and bring famine, locusts, or epidemics. Any punishment for a wrong doing is tied in with akombo of Swem. The religious disagreement at Swem caused the people to move.<sup>51</sup> Although the traditions say that the movements from Swem took place all at one time, it is more likely that the migration was not a single movement. It must have been a complex series of movements, with some groups leaving Swem for religious reasons.

Since the migrations from Swem did not all take place at once, the reasons and combinations of reasons must have been many. The only factors applicable to all were causes at "home" and hope in what might be elsewhere. It was possible to "descend" because Kwararafa's strength was weakened. In the words of Ukpi Yawe "the land was empty".<sup>52</sup> They peopled the empty spaces as they descended from Swem.

The history of the origins of the Tiv is closely connected with Swem which is located to the southeast of the present Tivland. When different people say that it is

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<sup>51</sup>T.H.T. No. 100, 28/2/75. Group interview at the home of Ishima Zeiydl of Utyondo, Iharev.

<sup>52</sup>T.H.T. No. 179, 16/6/75. Interview with Ukpi Yawe of Msayion, Kparev.

a mountain, a rock, or a forest, it could be that they are all referring to the same thing - a mountain with a unique rounded rock on the top and with a thick forest of ayande around it.

Many historical events took place at Swem and these have led to many myths to the extent that even groups whose ancestors were never at Swem claim today that all Tiv "descended" from Swem and argue that representatives go to Swem every year. The Tiv elders do not visit Swem physically as the Muslims visit Mecca but they look to Swem spiritually or by faith. After all, Swem was a place where some religious practices, culture, and food originated. It was also at Swem that new elements of people possibly joined the original group. It was a home where all who followed the accepted norms became Tiv "sons" and "daughters". They were driven away from this beloved home, however, by historical forces or combinations of forces to what they themselves regarded as "farmland". These heroic achievements or adventures which took place during the decline of the Empire of Kwararafa gave them a sense of unity. The stage was set first for the intermingling and incorporation of more aliens; and second, for further expansion. These two themes will be dealt with in the remaining chapters.

## CHAPTER V

### PATTERNS OF ASSIMILATION

This chapter is an attempt to examine the assimilation of other peoples into Tiv culture. All Tiv today claim direct origin from one ancestor. The myth of unitary origins is preached everywhere. They cite several reasons why they hold this monolithic view: they speak a homogeneous language; they have a common culture and religion; they have the same traditions and identify with the same ancestors. Their basic assumption is that their ethnic group is pure and they talk of a "pure Tiv tribe". One of the most difficult problems in this area is to sort out the ethnic situation. Everyone in Tivland vociferously proclaims that they always were what they are now. This is understandable because few people ever admit they were anything ethnically different from what they are at present. Yet it is only those historians, political scientists, and others who assume a static African society who will believe that the Tiv have maintained 'pure blood'. On this vexing question we will do well to accept the words of Sutton:

A tribe is a tribe because it feels it is one. It must possess a common culture, and particularly a common language. It is not necessarily a highly organized political unit. Tribes, moreover, are fluid groupings, some members are lost, others absorbed, through the continual process of migration and interaction with neighbours. There

is no such thing as a 'pure' tribe, derived from a single founding ancestor.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that all Tiv today feel as one, that they have a common culture, language, religion and a national totem (Ikarem), only proves that the Tiv are one ethnic group as Sutton says; it does not prove that they spring from a common origin or are "derived from a single ancestor".

The British administrators stated in all their accounts that the Tiv had a common origin, and this myth of a unitary origin was supported by Akiga Sai.<sup>2</sup> The main reason for this interpretation was the nature of the traditions recorded by Akiga Sai. In this interpretation the Tiv were backed up by the anthropologists who worked among them.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note that although the traditions collected by the anthropologists clearly assume that all Tiv descended from one ancestor, there are distinct indications in the traditions themselves which are contrary to the basic assumption. One example will suffice. Bohannan states in his book that although traditions claim that all Tiv originated from the Sonkwalla Hills, which are located about one

<sup>1</sup>J. E. G. Sutton, "The Settlement of East Africa," Zamani, ed. Bethwell Allan Ogot and J. A. Kieran, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968), p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>Sai, "The History of Tiv", MS. See also A. L. Auchinleck, "Assessment Report" Makprof 1149, National Archives Kaduna, (hereafter NAK), 1914.

<sup>3</sup>The two Bohannans are a good example. Laura and Paul Bohannan, The Tiv of Central Nigeria.

hundred kilometers southeast of Gboko, others state that it was Swem Hill, which is about fifty-two kilometers further southeast from Sonkwalla. Other traditions say that the hill was Ibenda. Furthermore,

There are several hills in Ikurav Ya (including Bar) which are said to be this original home. . . . while other equally knowledgeable elders in the southern area claim that it was Iwo - Kungun in what is today Takum District. . . . A few people in Kunav assert that this original settlement was on Ngokuv, . . . but the majority say that the settlement on Ngokuv was at a much later date and involved only one large segment of the Tiv, Jechira. People to the north and west, in Masev and Iharev, insist that the original hill was Selagi.

To the present writer the above confusion is a clear indication of waves of migration and assimilation. It might be postulated that the original core of each super-clan lived on a different hill. The coming together of these ten groups and their association as descending from the sons of Tiv may have been the symbol of the birth of Tiv nationality. The Tiv experience is different from that of the Idoma. A historian of the Idoma comes very close to claiming that the Idoma were the creation of the British.<sup>5</sup> In other words the Idoma are a very recent amalgam, a conglomerate, a still imperfectly formed nation. Because of that, it is relatively easy for the historian to trace the various strands which

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<sup>4</sup>Laura and Paul Bohannon, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup>E. O. Erim, "A Pre-colonial History of the Idoma of Central Nigeria." (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1977), p. 38.

went into their formation. The Tiv are a very homogeneous people today, the process of assimilation or fusion having been completed some time before the arrival of the Europeans.

The Tiv today speak one language and form a single ethnic group. But we cannot push this back to the "beginning". We can suppose that there were a number of groups that migrated to the hill areas between 500 and 1000 A.D. These groups of Bantu origin lived there for many centuries. In the early part of the sixteenth century, the groups became conscious of themselves as a unique people and began to identify as Tiv, probably taking their name from a prominent leader. This initial group expanded naturally and by assimilation. They did not all come by one route as it has often been claimed by informants. This may partly explain why the Bohannans collected some traditions which state that all Tiv came from Ngokuv.<sup>6</sup> The group which came from Ngokuv may have spoken a different language.

The major group that assimilated into Tiv culture might be called the Ikorakpe group.<sup>7</sup> Chart XXIV shows all the groups interviewed by the writer among the Tiv who claim that Ikorakpe was their ancestor. These genealogies are

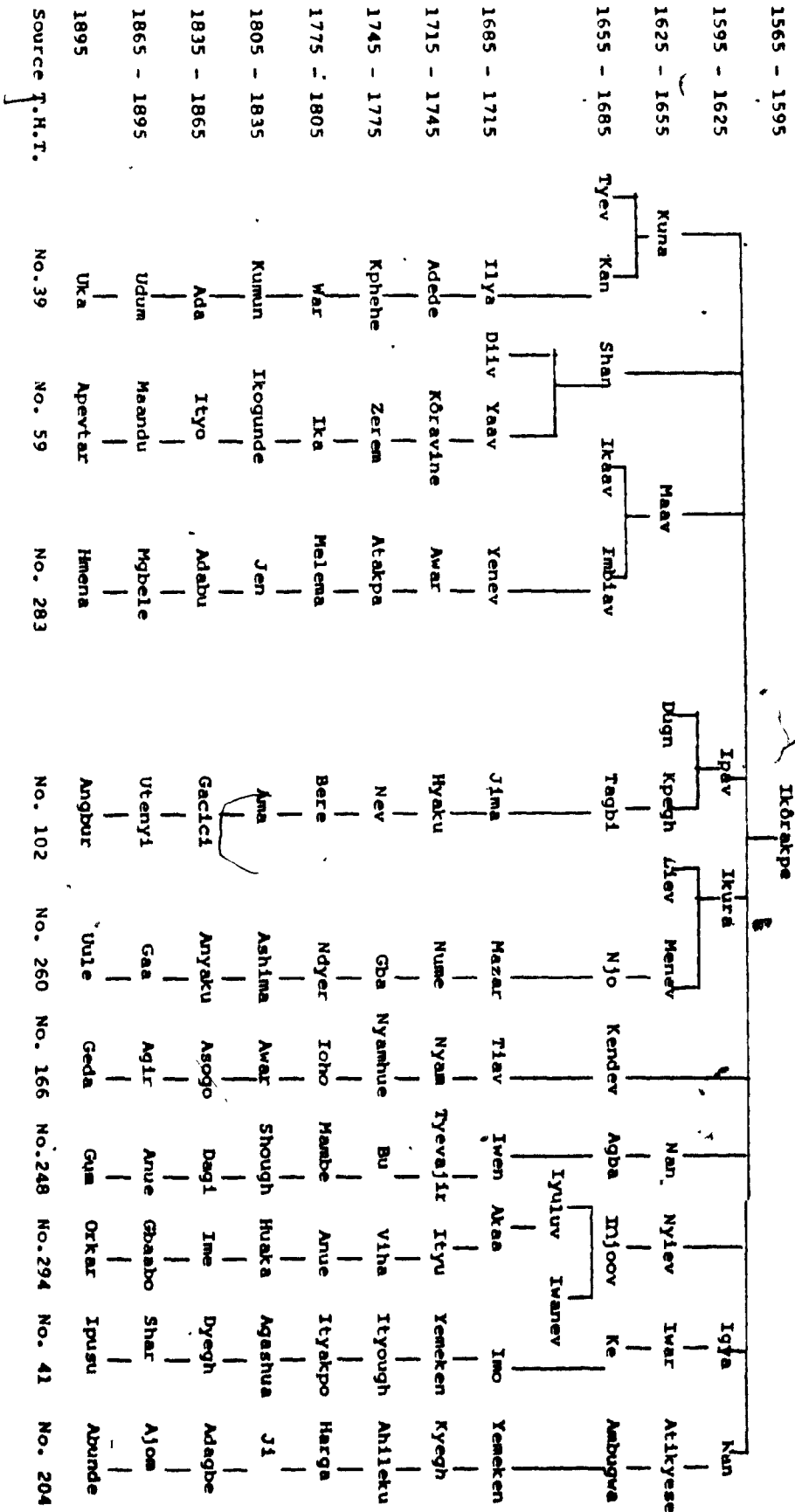
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<sup>6</sup>Laura and Paul Bohannan, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup>Ikorakpe is the full name. Ikor is a short form that is used by all Ikorakpe groups. For example, Ikuna Ikor, Nan Ikor, Iga Ikor. The meaning of "Ikör" is related to hunting, but could also mean "becoming fat". "Akpe" refers to "dying".



CHART XXIV  
IKORAKPE GROUPS



Source T.H.T. No. 39 No. 59 No. 283 No. 102 No. 260 No. 166 No. 248 No. 294 No. 41 No. 204

recorded from the living person back to Ikorakpe. The average of the generations from the living informant to Ikorakpe is eleven. Given the differences in dates suggested by the genealogies the easiest way of achieving a relative date for Ikorakpe would seem to be to accept an average which would place Ikorakpe about 1595-1625. Of the ten genealogies collected which extended back to Ikorakpe, four place him 1565 - 1595, four place him 1595 - 1625 and two a generation later. Thus it seems fairly certain that he lived between 1565 and 1625 and probably in the generation 1595 - 1625.

It may be argued that the Ikorakpe group moved in at different times. This would suggest that Ikorakpe was a group name. It might very well have been the name of an individual and later applied to a group.<sup>8</sup> However, the traditions make it clear that Ikorakpe was an individual. Ikorakpe seems to me much like Kintu, who D. Cohen treats as both a man and a movement.<sup>8</sup> The Ikorakpe assimilated into the Jechira group of Kparev, and into one group of Jengbar of Kparev, and the Ikurav and Masev of Ichongo. Map IV indicates from which direction the Ikorakpe must have come, into which people they assimilated, and possibly the areas they settled.

While many Ikorakpe show up on the map among the Ikurav, very few do among Masev. The map also seems to show more Turan than Masev descending from Ikorakpe.

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<sup>8</sup> D. W. Cohen, The Historical Tradition of Busoga (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).



There are a few groups among the Turan - namely, Maav, Kendeu, Iyuluv, Myiev, and Iwanev - who claim to be Ikorakpe. But it is known that they belong to the Ipusu and they were grouped with the Turan who belong to Ichongo for modern administrative purposes only. At a first glance on the map, one would say that perhaps the Ikurav were the earliest group to arrive on the border of the present Tivland. The Ikorakpe group then came and passed through Ikurav. However, the Ikurav argue that the Kunav and other groups of Kparev were ahead of them. In other words, they are the late comers, or so they say. Their traditions reveal that during the early migrations they went northwards as far as the present border of Ukan and Utange north. It was there that they fought the Ugee and some of the Ikurav fled across the River Katsina Ala. They now form the group known as Ikurav-Tiev. The majority of the Ikurav retreated to their present site.<sup>9</sup> The phenomena of assimilation have doubtlessly taken place. Most of the Tuav of Ikurav reluctantly admit that they are assimilated groups. Some of these groups moved from the Undir and Iyon into Tuav as recently as the nineteenth century.

There is every indication that the Ikorakpe group was not able to penetrate the remaining Ichongo groups - the Ugondo, Nongov, Iharev, and Turan. Earlier, a tradition was reported which looked like the last attempt of the

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<sup>9</sup> "Ikurav North District, Reorganization." File 31322, CSO 26/4 National Archives Ibadan, (hereafter NAI).

Ikorakpe group to conquer the Nongov.<sup>10</sup> Because the Nongov were victorious, the Ikorakpe made no further attempts. Presumably thereafter the Ikorakpe became fully assimilated into various Tiv super-clans and no longer acted as a distinct element within the society.

It would seem that the Ikorakpe were more successful with the Kparev of Ipusu. Although the details about their assimilation are not available, the Kunav informants give us an idea of how it happened. The traditions suggest that Kunav -- the son of Ikorakpe -- had two children, Tyeve and Ikaan.<sup>11</sup> From his first wife Tyeve had Aduku and Bu. From the second wife, Iyongo and Ikaange. While on a hunting trip Ikaan was killed by an elephant. His brother Tyeve took over his wife and Agbera was born. Tsambe, the only daughter, did not marry because of the many sores she had, but she bore many children and they are called after her. Tsambe are today a sub-clan. Although Ikaan had only one child of his own, Ijia or Mbera, for administrative purposes Mbagbera, Mbera, and Ute are called Mbaikaan. Ikaange, Nengev, Iyongo, Tsambe, and Mbaduku are called Mbatyev. An attachment occurred when Tsambe did not marry but stayed in the home of her father. When she had many children, they were called after her and after her father. Although the Tiv are

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<sup>10</sup>See Chapter III of this thesis.

<sup>11</sup>T.H.T. No. 314, 26/9/75. Ahura Kpire of Pin Kunav.

patrilineal, in this case it was permissible to use Tsambe's name.

A fifth son of Kunav Ikorakpe, called Lagh, captured an Udam, Kerkede and his wife. The children of Kerkede were Kan and Agir. They, together with the son of Lagh, Iber, were eventually called Ningeve. The word Ningeve refers to a vegetable which it is believed Kerkede was picking when he and his wife were captured. The interesting thing is that, instead of calling the group Lagh after the person who captured them, his children plus those of Kerkede are called Ningeve. The Ningeve have illustrated another principle on which an attachment could occur. The descendants of a man and woman were captured in the bush and although the man was an Udam, he became attached to Kunav when his line became numerous. Another good example of this is that of the Ute. It is believed that Tyev and Ikaan caught Ute and his wife while on a hunting trip. They too are now attached to the Kunav. It was possible then for a lineage that was not an agnatic kinsmen of Kunav to move in as a small "stranger" group. Later these small groups grew and were attached to Kunav.

Although many informants refer to 'Nan Ikor' or Nan, son of Ikorakpe, there are three accounts which suggest that the majority of the Naneve were Kunav. The first tradition comes from Kunav. According to one informant,<sup>12</sup> Bu was the oldest son of Tyev. Bu married from Naneve land. His

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

children were Uwer and Kwen. The children of Uwer were Igyaribough, Yaga, Inyam, and Genger. Kwen had only one child, Atsagher. In Kunavland, Bu killed Takuruku the son of Kaange. The hostility that followed forced Bu to migrate to Nanevland.

Another version says that the original or the indigenous people in Nanevland were Usar.<sup>13</sup> While still in the neighbourhood of Swem, the Nanev were attacked and defeated by Tyuav, a section of Ikurav, and were driven into Usar territory. The Usar allowed them free passage and when the Tyuav pursuers asked where the Nanev were hiding the Usar denied having seen them. This failed to satisfy the Tyuav, who had followed hot upon the Nanev tracks. As the Usar refused to give way, a fight ensued in which the Tyuav were soundly beaten. The Nanev were very grateful for this assistance and as a sign of their appreciation they made a pact of non-aggression with Usar and swore to become "as brothers". For this reason, Usar, who are a sub-clan of Nanev today, do not intermarry with the rest of Nanev.

The traditions say that after a short period of peace the Usar were attacked by the Yahav of Nyiev. Their old friends the Nanev failed to come to their assistance and they were defeated with heavy losses and driven northwards. They fled first to Mbara of Kunav but before long they

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<sup>13</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "Intelligence Report on the Nanev District. Tiv Division" 31503, C.S.O. 26. NAK. Maddocks was one of the A.D.O.'s in the early 1930's.

quarrelled with their hosts and fighting broke out again. They were once more overwhelmed and this time sought sanctuary in Mbagen. Here, too, their quarrelsome disposition showed itself. Lacking any other enemy, they began to fight amongst themselves until the Mbagen, disgusted with this behaviour, drove them forth. Their next move was southwards to Mbaika. Having failed to find peace anywhere, the Usar moved back among the Nanev where they now reside. By this time the treaty of friendship seems to have worn rather thin. The Usar were attacked by the rest of Nanev. Having alienated all the neighbouring clans the Usar now realized that there was nowhere for them to go. Making the best of a bad job, they came to terms with the Nanev and patched up the old treaty.

The story of the Usar demonstrates the great pressures which Tiv society brought to bear upon aliens either to conform to the norms of the society or be driven out. Through an act of kindness the Usar first became linked to Tiv society through a pact of brotherhood to the Nanev super-clan. However, when the Usar were attacked by the Yahav, another Tiv group, the ties of 'brotherhood' were not strong enough for the Nanev to come to their assistance against brother and fellow Tiv. Obviously the Usar were allies of and artificial brothers of the Nanev but they were not yet considered Tiv. Thereafter they became wanderers among the Tiv, quarrelling with first the Mbara and then the Mbagen and finally with the Mbaika. Presumably their acculturation proceeded during this period of repeated movements and in



time they were Tiv enough to settle in peace with their original allies the Nanev. Obviously the Tiv were reluctant to accommodate alien cultures. The Usar either had to become fully Tiv or be driven out of Tiv society entirely. The Usar demonstrate how the Tiv assimilated various peoples but maintained a homogeneous society in the process.

Among the present Nanev there are two main sections or clans, Mbagba and Mbayo. Traditions say that Nan Ikorakpe, the founder of the super-clan, had a son named Ikan.<sup>14</sup> One day as Ikan was out hunting he came across an Utar named Azumbe who had fled from his clan. Ikan took him home and made him his slave but later Azumbe fought so well in battle against the Chamba that he was given a wife and his freedom. He remained with Nanev, however, and it was his son Gba who founded the Mbagba clan among the Nanev.

The story of the other clan, the Mbayoo, of the Nanev, is as follows. According to traditions, amongst Ikan's children was a daughter named Vase. One day Bur of Mbayongo, a sub-clan of Kunav, walked into the compound of Ikan and told him that he had lost his way. Ikan befriended him and guided him home, and to show his gratitude Bur returned later with presents. The friendship was finally sealed by the marriage of Vase to Bur, their son being Yoo, from whom Mbayoo clan takes its name. The descendants of Ikan's other

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<sup>14</sup>T.H.T. No. 247, 29/8/75. Dankor Alior of Nanev.

children, known as Mbaikan, were few in number while the Mbayo multiplied very rapidly. As a result the former group has to a large extent become submerged into the latter, and the word Mbayo is often used to denote both groups.<sup>15</sup>

The Nanev super-clan therefore in its earliest traditions suggests that it descends from Ikorakpe very much mixed with Utur and Kunav Tiv, the latter of whom may also have been partially Ikorakpe. While the traditions do not help to explain how the Ikorakpe group became Tiv, they do emphasize the willingness of the Ikorakpe to take in strangers from the Utur, Udam, and Usar. One wonders in fact if the Tiv language and culture did not predominate in this region originally because it was initiated by a conglomerate of multiple ethnic groups, Ikorakpe, Utur, Udam, Usar, and Tiv. The traditions make it appear as if the Ikorakpe were the catalysts of this multi-ethnic conglomeration and that the language and culture they were spreading was Tiv. This is all the more remarkable since the interaction was occurring in the second and third generations (c. 1625 - 1685) after the death of Ikorakpe. This might mislead one into supposing

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<sup>15</sup> T.H.T. No. 248, 30/8/75, Gum Anne of Mbayo - Nanev. A variation or another version of the above account is that the Mbakyanfa are the real Nanev. Bur of Kunav came to Mbakyanfa and Ivase, a daughter of Mbakyanfa, made porridge for him. His dogs killed many bush rats. Ivase prepared warm water for Bur and gave him carmwood. Bur impregnated Ivase and she delivered Yoo on their return to Mbaiyongo land. Later Yoo returned to Nanev.

that the Ikorakpe were the original proto-Tiv speakers. But this is difficult to conceive of since the Ikorakpe group only exist within about one-third of the overall Tiv population and they are confined geographically and not sprinkled throughout the whole of Tiv land. When one combines this theory of multi-ethnicity with the traditions which point to the numerous hills as origin points, it seems plausible to assume that the ancestors of the modern Tiv were of various, even if related, Bantu cultures each clustered on and around its own hill. The proto-Tiv speakers may well have been the most numerous and they certainly were the most dynamic in insisting upon their language and culture. However, it seems difficult to believe that such an amalgam could have occurred without considerable external pressure.

One of the many ethnic groups which entered into the Tiv amalgam were the Obanliku whom the Tiv call the Ugee. In past centuries the Obanliku were probably more numerous and widely distributed than they are now. Today the Obanliku live in the Cross River State of Nigeria. They border on the territory of the Ikurav, super-clan of the Tiv. The Ugee claim to have been indigenous people around Swem Hill and, while recognizing a vague relationship with the Tiv, claim that they descended from Oma or Omar whom Dewar identifies with the Jukun creative divinity Ma. However, Dewar collected traditions from the Tiv which claim that the Obanliku or Ugee descended from Ikorakpe. Since the people themselves must be trusted as to their origins as against

their neighbours, it seems likely that the Obanliku descended from Oma but that Ikorakpe came out of that group. This is what probably gave rise to the Tiv tradition which connects the Obanliku and Ikorakpe.<sup>16</sup>

Little is known of the early contact between the Ugee and Tiv. It is known, however, that there was a definite blood feud between them and they were always liable to hunt one another's heads or engage in general warfare.<sup>17</sup> In spite of warfare and head-hunting expeditions there seem to have been intervals of friendliness between the Ugee and Tiv, a situation typical when assimilation, absorption, and rejection are proceeding simultaneously between two peoples. There were treaties between the Ugee and some sections of the Tiv. In addition there are references in Tiv traditions to the Ugee attending dances given by the Tiv and there appears to have been a certain amount of intermarriage and trade.<sup>18</sup> There are clear indications that some of the Ugee have gradually assimilated into Tiv society and that they are widely spread among the Tiv super-clans including Kparev, Masev, and Ikurav, to mention a few. Attempting to find out

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<sup>16</sup>K. Dewar, 'Social Organization, Migration and Mythical History,' Laura and Paul Bohannan, Three Source Notebooks in Tiv Ethnography (New Haven: Human Relation Area Files, 1958,) pp. 3-4.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid. See also T.H.T. No. 255, 2/9/75. Agile Imbor of Ikurav-Ya.

<sup>18</sup>Dewar, p. 5.

why they answer to this name brings a variety of answers. Some have argued that it is just a name,<sup>19</sup> that there is no connection between them and "Ugee Mba Abi" or Obanliku.<sup>20</sup> However, the Tiv do not know the meaning of Ugee and therefore it seems likely that it is of alien origin.

Two lineage groups require further comments.

The first is the Ugee-Mbalagh. The most striking point is that on the Tiv border with the Obanliku (see the map IV) there is a Tiv lineage called Ugee-Mbalagh. They are situated in the extreme south of Tivland amongst the foothills of the Cameroon Mountains. They belong to Ikurav super-clan which is hemmed in on three sides by ranges of hills. By 1935 it was reported by a district officer that many of the Ugee-Mbalagh, like other groups of Ikurav, lived on the top of hills but in accessible positions. The official version of Ugee-Mbalagh's history is as follows: Iyoomee, a Tiv, went to Obanliku land and married an Obanliku lady who had a disease called Iba-kpie (Yaws). The lady delivered a baby boy and they named him Ugee Alabe. Since Iyoomee and other Tiv people did not know what the lady meant by Alabe, they decided to call him Ugee-Mbalagh.<sup>21</sup> This is, at least, how the Ugee-Mbalagh view their history.

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<sup>19</sup>T.H.T. No. 88, 10/2/75. Shirsha Ahungwa of Ukan.

<sup>20</sup>Ugee - Mba - Abi are non-Tiv but are on the border of the Ikurav, Nanav, Shangevya, and Kunav.

<sup>21</sup>T.H.T. No. 250, 2/9/75. Ashiekaa Yaaya of Ikurav.

The history of these peoples, however, can be viewed from other perspectives - those of the other Tiv lineage groups - and such traditions, the author has found, present a useful counterbalance to the official accounts of the Ugee-Mbalagh. By judiciously using these accounts in conjunction with those of the Ugee-Mbalagh, a more accurate reconstruction of history is possible.<sup>22</sup> Ikurav super-clan is not comprised of genealogically related lineages. Present sources do not establish clear links joining all lineages within Ikurav to a single founder. The few reliable genealogies collected indicates that around 1685 - 1715 lineage groups migrated from the Obanliku and assimilated into Tiv society. These groups were not necessarily blood kin. Upon their arrival the lineage units maintained close social relations and retained their original name, that of "Ugee". Since they became Tiv, it was necessary to add 'laqh' (eczema, an inflammation of the skin) to their name to differentiate them from Ugee-Mbaabi, Obanliku. At the arrival of the Europeans, the whole of the Ikurav district became part of the Obudu District of Ogoja Division. No mention is made of Ugee Mbalagh in the records. Ikurav was transferred in February, 1914, to the Katsina Ala District of Muri Province. By 1935 Ugee-Mbalagh, with a population of five hundred and sixty-five, was included as one of the

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<sup>22</sup>Unfortunately, the author could not interview in Ugee - Mba - Abi territory.

kindreds of Liev (a sub-clan of Ikurav). Their spokesman was Abebe.<sup>23</sup> The mainstream of the Ugee-Mbaabi (Obanliku) were noted for their bravery.<sup>24</sup> It could well be that, since these immigrants were small but powerful, they decided to retain their name to this day. Informants within as well as outside Ugee-Mbalagh would either laugh if you asked them why the people are called Ugee, or they would say that they do not know.

In the Masev super-clan, the Ugee apparently did not attempt to disguise their migration story. They presented their story in this way: Ikyaan, their ancestor, was born and bred near Garlgongo stream where the Obanliku are still living in the mountains. At the death of his parents, he moved together with his Akombo to Masev in Tivland. He then settled between the Yonov and Njiriv lineages. When a Njiriv man invited his kinsmen and the Yonov to go hunting, they found Ikyaan in the bush. The Yonov wanted to sell him into slavery but the Njiriv accepted the foreigner. When two dogs died, Ikyaan Ugee used his medicine and brought the two dogs back to life. Later on he healed a lady with a wound and she decided to become his wife (a tale which may be compared with the story in Ugee-Mbalagh).

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<sup>23</sup>"Ikura South, Reorganization." 30941 CSO 26/4 NAI.

<sup>24</sup>This is why one Ugee lineage when asked why it was so-called replied that it was because it was noted for its bravery but could not link the word 'Ugee' with any Tiv expression for bravery.

To the surprise of some young listeners at the interview, the informant concluded by saying that originally they were not Tiv. To prove their case, they argued that all who are Ugee in Masevland have eight generations in their genealogies. According to them, if an Ugee recounted a genealogy of less than eight generations, then the person must be untruthful. The Ugee-Mbalagh genealogy goes back eight generations.<sup>25</sup> (See Chart XXV).

Ikorakpe has been dated to c. 1595 - 1625 and there are hints that he came out of the Obanliku, the indigenous people around Swem Hill which many Tiv also claim as an original homeland. The Ikorakpe group fused with numerous others, the amalgam all becoming Tiv. Thereafter a century of interaction -- sometimes peaceful, sometimes violent -- followed in which the Obanliku at least gained respect and became known to the Tiv as Ugee, a name associated with bravery. It does not appear that the Ikorakpe group spread away from the hills ahead of the Tiv. Both movements seem to have occurred during the same or adjacent generations. A century after Ikorakpe, a new out-thrust of Ugee occurred into the area being settled by the Tiv. This was eight generations back c. 1685 - 1715 (see Chart XXV). Whether this was caused by Tiv-Obanliku conflicts, aggression from people further to the southeast or the retreat of the influence of Kwararafa in the plains it is difficult from

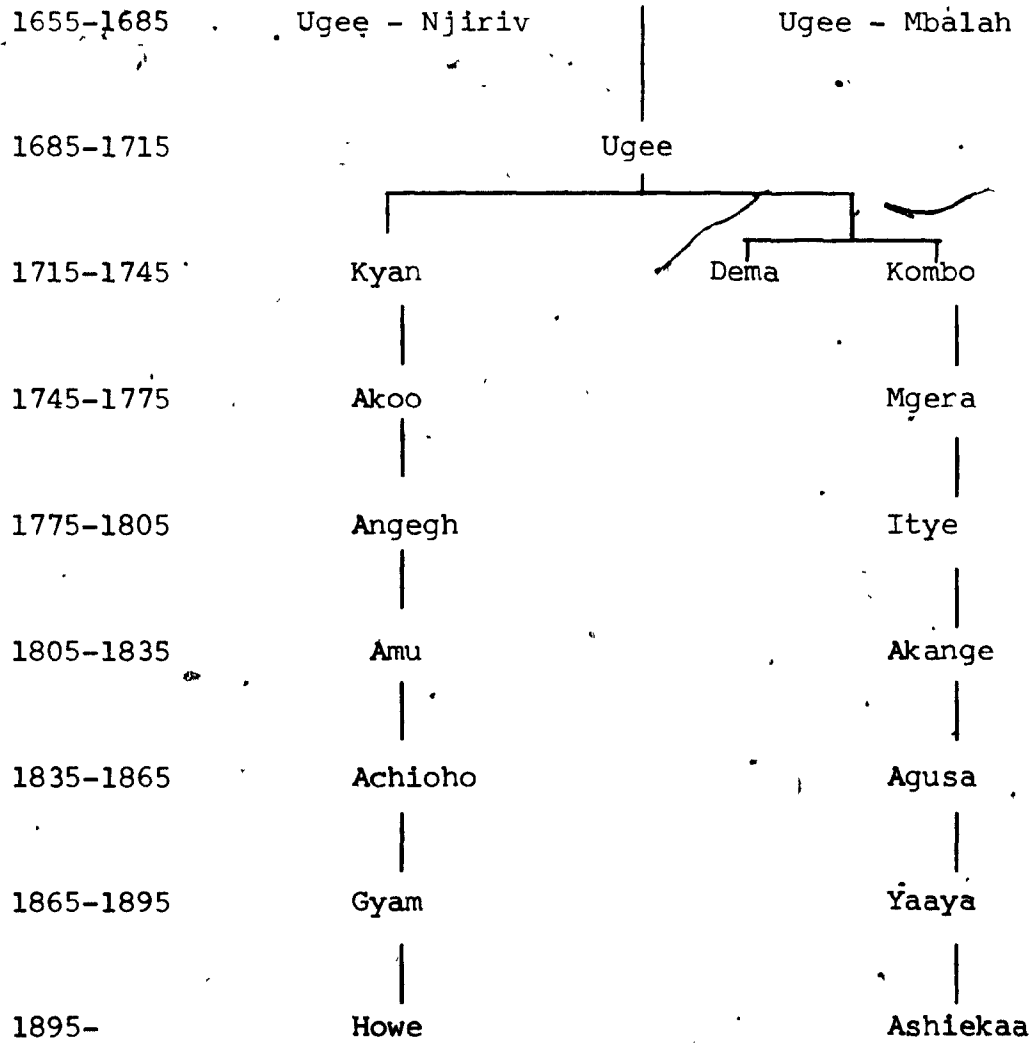
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<sup>25</sup>T.H.T. No. 343, 13/8/76. Group interview at Howe Gyam of Njiriv, Masev.



CHART XXV

GENEALOGIES OF SOME OF THE UGEE GROUPS



Source:

T.H.T. No. 343

T.H.T. No. 256

available evidence to say. What is clear is that the Ikorakpe-Ugee represent a sizeable alien assimilated element within modern Tiv society.

Another ethnic group almost wholly absorbed into the Tiv are the Utur, a remnant of which live along the Katsina Ala River. The extent of their absorption is indicated by the fact that the census of 1936 recorded only six hundred and twenty-seven Utur males. In that same year the resident of Benue Province reported that the Utur "are treated in the same way as the Tiv, into which they are to a large extent becoming absorbed".<sup>26</sup> As recently as 1976, an informant said that many of the Utur had left for the Mbagen country and assimilated into Tiv.<sup>27</sup> They are bounded on the southwest by Mbagen, on the north by Kusuv, and along the east by the Katsina Ala. Some of them are across the river. In 1919, Rowe and Ruxton described them as a "riverain tribe, living on the lower swamps of the Katsina Ala River in the Munshi Division of Muri Province."<sup>28</sup> According to these writers, Utur together with Alago, Igbira, and riverain Jukun were nicknamed by the Hausa as Koto. The Utur claim that they originated from the Udam Obudu (Damagudu) country in

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<sup>26</sup> 'Report on Utur District'.

<sup>27</sup> T.H.T. No: 334, 5/8/76. Adam of Utur.

<sup>28</sup> O. Temple, Notes on the Tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd. 1965), 2nd ed., p. 356.

Southern Nigeria.<sup>29</sup> By about 1700 it seems likely that the Utur had been surrounded by the Tiv. Despite this a remnant of them maintained their language and some of their unique culture. But assimilation proceeded apace and all Utur today can speak Tiv and have adopted many Tiv customs.

It seems probable that as many Utur as Obanliku have been assimilated by the Tiv. However, the writer did not discover any name such as Ugee or Ikorakpe, with which Utur groups might be singled out within Tiv society. Without such hints the researcher will only accidentally stumble upon the truth of a Tiv man's origins. As with the many Ugee groups all except one either feigned or were genuinely ignorant of their origins among the Obanliku. Without such a hint among the Tiv of Utur origin, this line was difficult to pursue. This chapter has already recounted the one clear story of Utur assimilation where Ikan, the son of the founder of Nanev clan, brought home as a slave (or adopted son as the descendants claim), an Utur man called Azumbe who married a Tiv woman and his son, Gba, founded the Mbagba clan among the Nanev.<sup>30</sup> A variation of this tradition collected among the

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<sup>29</sup> As dealt with elsewhere, there are many origins of the Utur. Some originated from the Jukun and Idoma. The process of assimilation of peoples of diverse origins and different cultural heritages have been taking place. They have now achieved a cultural solidarity that makes them point to a unitary origin. See "Report on Utur District" NAK, SNP 17 27327. See also Chapter I of this thesis.

<sup>30</sup> "Intelligence Report on the Nanev District. Tiv Division", NAI 31503 - CSO 26.

assimilated group itself states that Azumbe had a quarrel with his Utur kinsmen. He moved to Nanev where he married a Tiv woman and had many children. In fact his children are more numerous than the rest of Nanev.<sup>31</sup> More than this cannot be said until a name, a distinguishing custom, or food taboo is found which will identify the descendants of the Utur among the Tiv.

The Becheve or Utange Mbashaya, as they are known to the Tiv, form a good example of a people assimilated into Tiv culture in the last two centuries. Since this assimilation is a relatively recent phenomenon, it is not yet complete and may thereby be examined in more detail than those alien groups whose assimilation is so complete that they can be only identified with difficulty. The Utange like a number of Tiv super-clans are divided into the Utange Mbashaya (those at home) and the Utange Mbashintiev (those on the farm). "Those at Home" live in the Obudu District of the modern Cross River State. They adjoin the Tiv in the southeast. "Those at home" are given this name by "those on the farm" who have migrated and settled within Tivland proper. Those Utange in Tivland very much desire to be looked upon as Tiv and thus they employ the full Tiv terminology both to themselves and their relatives at home. "Those at Home", however, are less concerned about a Tiv identity. For easy clarification "those at home" will be referred to as Becheve,

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<sup>31</sup>T.H.T. No. 350, 18/8/76. Igbudu Akange of Nanev.

while those among the Tiv or "on the farm" hereafter will be called Utange.

There has been considerable academic argument about whether the Becheve Utange are Tiv or not. According to Maddocks, the Becheve, though cut off from Tiv influence, claimed to be Tiv, speak Tiv and have similar customs. He reported that a long vocabulary compiled by another assistant district officer shows that although "there are slight variations from 'standard' Tiv and a sprinkling of Becheve words are now used, the difference is but small". Maddocks added that other writers at different times classified the Utange as Asumbo and Boki but Mr. Hatch "who spent some time amongst them was convinced that they were Tiv." Maddocks therefore, argued strongly that the Becheve are Tiv.<sup>32</sup>

To the present writer, the Utange groups that have assimilated into Tiv argued that the Becheve are Tiv. But the Becheve claimed to the writer that they are not Tiv. They say that they are sons of Ikorakpe and, as such, they are related to the Tiv. The writer found that their language sounds like a Tiv dialect. The dialect is so different that the Tiv cannot understand the Becheve, although all Becheve understand and speak Tiv.<sup>33</sup> Bohannan states that

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<sup>32</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "Intelligence Report on the Utange Clan of the Tiv Tribe in the Tiv Division of the Benue Province." NAK SNP 16, 27780.

<sup>33</sup>T.H.T. No. 346, 16/8/76. Gbinde of Utange.

"The Utange Mbashaya live in a remote hilly region of Obudu Division; they say they are not Tiv."<sup>34</sup> It would seem that although the Becheve are Tiv-speakers, they are not Tiv.

Unlike the Becheve, the Utange Mbashintiev (those on the farm) who live in central Tivland consider themselves Tiv. They are situated about seven miles south of Katsina Ala. They have an area of about sixty square miles. They are bounded on the north by Mbagen, on the east by Ikov, and on the south and west by Mbaika. The greatest length of the area is about eleven miles and the width does not exceed six miles at any point.

It is not certain why the Utange migrated to Tivland. Could it be that they moved from the mountains into Tivland to enjoy the plains? It is not likely that a large group like the Utange could have migrated to Tivland just because they wanted to move to the valley. They must have moved because of a specific situation. The dominant view of the history of this area is that their movement took place because of the Ugenyi wars. It is clear that only the initial migration was precipitated by the Ugenyi wars. After that several groups and individuals migrated to the Utange to meet and stay with their "brothers". As late as 1931, a leader from the Utange went to the Becheve and disseminated intensive propaganda for their migration en masse to his own country. A considerable migration took place.

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<sup>34</sup>Paul and Laura Bohannon, Tiv Economy, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 180.

- Since the government discouraged it and since some of them found on their arrival that the promised land was not flowing with milk and honey, they returned to their homeland.<sup>35</sup>

The early writers on the Tiv stated in clear terms that the Utange were not Tiv. Akiga argued strongly that in the case of the Utange it would be fruitless seeking to prove a pure Tiv origin extending back to Tiv. He reminded his readers of the Utange non-Tiv origins and stated that although the Utange are friends of the Tiv, they are not Tiv. According to him, the friendship started when some Utange men settled among the Tiv and married their daughters. When the Ugenyi war took place, the Utange moved along with the Tiv. Since it was dangerous in those days to travel long distances, the Utange could neither return to nor visit their homeland. Since the arrival of the Europeans, it became safe for the Utange to visit the Becheve. To strengthen his argument Akiga stressed that it is impossible for one to argue that the Utange are Tiv. For the Becheve are not Tiv.

We know that among the Tiv clans there are some that split in two groups: Mbashaya (those at home) and Mbashintiev (those on the farm) but they are all Tiv and speak only Tiv. The examples of such clans include Shitire, Ikurav and Ishangev.<sup>36</sup>

Akiga was not alone in interpreting the history of the Utange in this way. Abraham, who collected his traditions

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<sup>35</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "Intelligence Report on the Utange", NAK SNP 17, 27780.

<sup>36</sup>B. Akiga Sai, "The History of the Tiv," MS.

from Tiv elders, reported:

The Utange clan are foreigners . . . who helped the Tiv on their first migration when the latter were opposed by the people styled mba iyongo . . . and it is for this reason that certain Tiv clans do not intermarry with Utange, as stated later.<sup>37</sup>

Later in his book, Abraham repeated that the Utange are non-Tiv and added that they "are still regarded as inferior to the Tiv although they are now indistinguishable from them in speech and customs."<sup>38</sup>

An alternate view is advanced by most authorities. Temple, in his notes on the Tiv, stated clearly that the entire population of Utange (fifteen hundred and seventy-five in all) descended from a daughter of Ipusu. He concluded that the Utange were Tiv.<sup>39</sup> The Bohannans argued that the Utange considered themselves as Tiv and should be regarded as Tiv.<sup>40</sup> Downes said that the Utange are Tiv but added that "the Utange are said to have been the only Tiv clan which cut off heads of Tiv enemies, [referring to Tiv clans], the other clans only cutting off those of foreigners."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>R. C. Abraham, The Tiv People, (Lagos: Government Printer, 1933), p. 25.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 210.

<sup>39</sup>Temple, p. 297,

<sup>40</sup>P. and L. Bohannan, Tiv Economy, p. 180.

<sup>41</sup>R. M. Downes, The Tiv Tribe, (Kaduna: Government Printer, 1933), p. 6.



Maddocks reported that in the course of a war with Mbaika of Tiv, some of the Utange cut off the heads of their slain enemies. This, in Tiv eyes, he said was an unforgivable crime and put the Utange beyond the pale. According to him this is why the Utange were despised by all other Tiv who even called them "foreigners". He attacked those who stated that the Utange are not Tiv at all but had merely become similar in characteristics through living in close contact with the Tiv. He was of strong opinion that the Utange are Tiv. He was influenced by the fact that "Their appearance, markings, customs and language seem to be identical with those of the Tiv."<sup>42</sup> As quoted earlier, Maddocks argued that since the Becheve living in the hills of Obudu are Tiv those living among the Tiv must be Tiv.

It would seem that the Utange represented the last major intrusion of foreign peoples into Tivland. By then the Tiv had provided mechanisms for assimilating people like the Utange into the Tiv system. The first was marriages between the Utange and some of the Tiv clans. The second was the alliances and treaties that were 'signed' by the Utange Mbashintiev with certain Tiv clans. These treaties were vital to the survival and security of the Utange and are still remembered today. Akiga reported that the Utange 'signed' a treaty with some of the Kparev. According to him:

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<sup>42</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "Intelligence Report on the Utange." NAK SNP 17 27780.

The early Tiv people were merciful. It was due to the mercy of the elders, otherwise the Utange would have left Tivland a long time ago. People in the past respected the leadership of the elders. . . . It was at the suggestion of the elders that the Kparev clans signed treaties with the Utange. It was because of the treaties that the Utange were allowed to stay. Now it looks as if the Utange are Tiv . . . Now they are the same with the Tiv, every Tiv magico-religious practice is performed by the Utange. For this reason, those who do not know conclude that the Utange are Tiv.<sup>43</sup>

In a period of political uncertainty, the different treaties that the Utange signed proved very useful. One example will suffice. It was reported that a Kusuv girl was lost in the bush and a search was made, without avail, by all her clan. When hope of her recovery had been abandoned, she was at last found by the Utange and returned to her family. The Kusuv were so grateful for this that they made a pact of eternal friendship and brotherhood with them. This brotherhood made it impossible for Utange and Kusuv to intermarry. The friendship was honoured by the Kusuv during the big war in which the whole of Kparev, with the exception of Kusuv, took up arms against the Utange. It is said that the slaughter of the Utange was so great that the clan, which had previously been a fairly large one, was reduced to a mere handful of men and only escaped complete extinction by coming to terms with Mbaika and obtaining peace.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Sai, "The History of the Tiv," MS.

<sup>44</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "Utange". See also T.H.T. No. 346, 16/8/76. Group interview at Gbinde of Utange.

There is a general agreement today among the Tiv that virtually all of the early Utange settlers were not Tiv but became Tiv after living among the Tiv. It is impossible to know exactly when this process of assimilation was completed. It might be argued that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the majority of the Utange had been "Tivised". In other words the assimilation into the Tiv system was completed before the arrival of the Europeans.

The Utange are today as much Tiv as any other group in the society. In language and culture they are Tiv and they are seeking to link their genealogy to a daughter of Ipusu. In time one might expect that this would be accepted as orthodox Tiv tradition. However, the time lag is not yet sufficient for the new orthodoxy to have totally overshadowed other traditions of their alien origins. The Utange like many others before them have passed through a series of stages in the assimilation process. They are now in the very last phase. The Becheve or "Utange at home" have also rapidly moved towards becoming Tiv; language and culture being two powerful ingredients in the determination of ethnicity. However, in the final analysis a people are what they feel they are. (Is this not a major premise of Canadian identity?) The Becheve do not consider themselves Tiv, but rather cousins to the Tiv, because like many Tiv they descended from Ikorakpe. If we can get away from strict tribalization of people and the desire to draw hard lines between and among them, we can easily understand the

position of the Becheve and accept them as they wish to be accepted.

Having looked at the assimilation of the Utange, let us now turn to a group whose identity is more difficult to pin down. There is a phenomena among the Tiv of the "Reds" and the "Blacks". Among the Kunaṽ, Ugondo, Iharev, and Ikurav there are some groups that are designated as the "Reds" and others the "Blacks".<sup>45</sup> When asked why some are called Red and others Black, the explanation given is that in the past one section was blacker than the other. Since the Tiv believe in their unitary descent, one would have expected that they would all be black. A brief discussion of the terms red and black is therefore a sine qua non.

Insofar as European (and North American) cultural symbols of colour are concerned, black represents the unknown, red represents blood, and white represents purity and truth. There are several other associations with various colours in European thought. When one turns to the Tiv one is struck both by the relative poverty of terms and by the lack of precision in their definitions of colours. The Tiv have only three basic colours: red, white, and black. Red is seen as related to blood. Certain things are described as appearing as "red as blood". But red is also used to

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<sup>45</sup>T.H.T. NO. 214, 14/8/75. Zaki Mede of Mbangur, Kunav.  
 T.H.T. No. 142, 17/5/75. Orndiir of Ugondo.  
 T.H.T. No. 99, 27/2/75. Angur Yav, Utyondo. Iharev.  
 T.H.T. No. 143, 22/5/75. Iorhenen Hwande-Ikurav.

describe the colour of the skin. Any light-skinned man is called "red". The Europeans, according to the Tiv, are not whitemen but redmen. The Ibo and the Fulani are other groups that are called redmen. Although some of them are very dark-skinned, most of the Ibo and Fulani that the Tiv have met are redmen.

To the writer, this is an indication that assimilation of the red took place. It could be that the red represents one ethnic group and the black another ethnic group. With the exception of Ikurav, the assimilation must have taken place only five generations ago. Although it is possible that the "reds" represent the Ibo, it is more probable that it was the Red-Fulani that assimilated into the Black-Tiv. There are traditions that the Tiv came into contact with the Fulani and intermarriage took place. One might argue that the Fulani today are colour-conscious people and would have had nothing to do with "black men", but even today the Fulani take Hausa wives. When the Fulani call themselves "white", they are really making a "cultural" distinction not a racial one. In their early contact with the Tiv they married Tiv wives and even spoke Tiv.

Traditions recall:

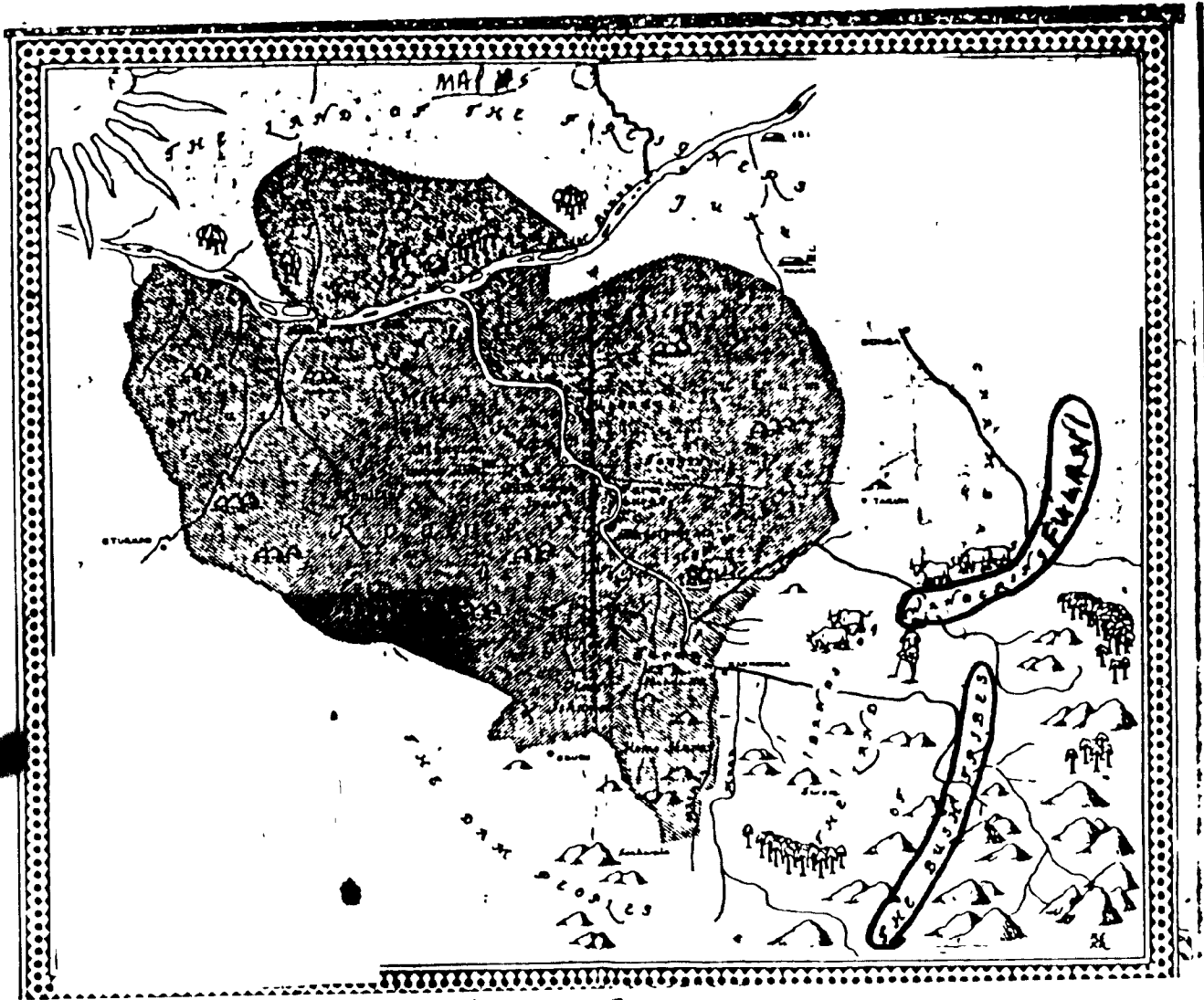
When the Tiv left the mountains, they met the Fulani. They moved along well with the Tiv and never troubled them. Whenever the Tiv met any foreign group that wanted to attack them, the Fulani would attack and drive the enemy away. . . . Since the relationship was so intimate, intermarriage took place.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>B. A. Sai, "The History of the Tiv," MS, pp. 2-3.

MAP 5

TIVLAND SHOWING THE POSITION OF THE FULANI AND THE BUSH TRIBES



Source: Adapted from B. A. Sai, Akiga's Story

During a discussion between the Tiv and Fulani elders the Tiv stressed that since their blood and that of the Fulani was now mixed, they and the Fulani would be alike. Tiv elders said:

Our daughters have borne children to you and your daughters have married our sons and borne children to us. Your blood and ours is now intermingled and we shall never forget this fact. For we look alike.<sup>47</sup>

Another tradition of early Tiv-Fulani contact reports that during the period when they were living together, the Fulani allowed the Tiv to herd for them but the Tiv ran off with the cattle. A variation of the tradition states that the Tiv killed and ate the cows.<sup>48</sup> This story of the Fulani interaction with the Tiv seems to have been early in the sixteenth century. There is nothing unusual in the Red and Black names, except that in the case of the Ikurav no informant knew the meaning of the name "Menev" given to the Reds nor "Liev" given to the Blacks. (See their genealogies: Charts XXV and XXVII.)

There are, however, some problems with the above interpretation. The first is the location of these groups. Geographically it would seem logical that the Fulani should

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid. See Map V for the position of the Fulani and the "Bush Tribes".

<sup>48</sup>T.H.T. No. 356, 23/8/76. Group interview at Adi of Kunav. See also Laura and Paul Bohannon, The Tiv of Central Nigeria, p. 9. J. W. T. Gbor, "Traditions of Tiv Origin and Migrations with Special Emphasis on the Eastern Tiv Frontier to C. 1900". B.A. (Honours) 1974. pp. 30-31.

be among the Iharev, Ugondo, and Ikurav. It is, however, difficult to see why there were Fulani as far south as Kunav. Secondly, some of the Reds appeared nine generations ago and others only five generations. Could it be that the Red and Black split came later among the Ikurav but they have pushed the date back to the beginning of the super-clan? Furthermore, while there are a few differences in names, there are no remaining traces of colour differences. The red groups are not noticeably lighter in complexion than their black brothers. Finally, it is almost unbelievable that a phenomenon which emerged just before and after 1800 among the Iharev could not be elaborated upon by the elders. Could it be that the informants, for modern political reasons were hiding the events? In the area north of the Benue (in one of my research areas) despite Tiv anger when the Fulani let their cows wander among Tiv crops, the Tiv had a greater tolerance for the Fulani nomads than did the other ethnic groups, Jukun, Hausa, or Alago. The Tiv were virtually the only ethnic group with which the Fulani fraternized. Yet, publicly, no Tiv in the twentieth century would wish to admit to Fulani origins. During the nineteenth century  Jihad  of Uthman dan Fodio, a Fulani, the Tiv successfully kept Islam out of their country. In the 1960's the Tiv rebelled against a Hausa-Fulani dominated government of the Northern Nigeria. This rebellion was suppressed by the Federal Government which was in the control of a Hausa-Fulani dominated power. Certainly no Tiv would now admit that his ancestors were Fulani.



The red and black phenomenon is still poorly researched, since the present writer was not able to pursue the subject much further. The possible significance of these divisions did not become apparent until the fieldwork for this research had been completed. Nevertheless it would be less than courageous not to speculate upon the evidence now available.

The red and black division which is the earliest in time (c. 1595 - 1625) occurs among the Ikurav (see Chart XXVII and the map). The Ikurav live in the far southeast of modern Tivland and close to the early Tiv settlement area before the collapse of Kwararafa permitted the Tiv to expand northwest to the Benue River and beyond. This is possible because c. 1595 - 1625 Kwararafa had not begun its decline and if the Fulani met the Tiv it would have had to be in this area. Two other genealogies from the Iharev and Ugondo show the red-black division stemming from the generation c. 1775 - 1805 (see Chart XXVII). This is hardly surprising since Iharev and Ugondo lie on the moving frontiers of Tiv expansion to the north and northwest. These two super-clans were the ones who pioneered the crossing of the Benue in about the same generation as the red-black divisions occur. The area they were moving into clearly was occupied by Fulani herdsmen at that time. This is the area where Fulani and Tiv are still interacting. It is less easy to explain the Kunav red-black division c. 1805 - 1835 (see Chart XXVI) given the location of the Kunav far to the southeast (see the map).

Unfortunately we only possess four genealogies which include the red-black division. This is not even a representative sample of the phenomenon. However, it is possible that prior to the  Jihad  movement of the early nineteenth century, the Fulani wandered freely among the Tiv. Once jihadist forces began regular raids into the Tiv country, the Fulani herdsmen may have been no longer welcome among the Tiv farmers. If a more extensive survey of the red-black phenomenon showed the colour divisions in every Tiv super-clan, then this latter theory might well be supported. If, on the other hand, the Kunav group have a unique history, then the other suggested pattern might well hold, that the red-black divisions come earlier in time towards the south-east and later in time towards the northwest. This would lead one to believe that Tiv-Fulani intermarriage occurred as the Tiv frontier expanded to the north and northwest. Finally, Fulani connections have not been popular among the Tiv since the jihadists began their raids in the first half of the nineteenth century. Nor did the colonial period, or the post-independence period do anything to allow the Tiv to forget their hostility to the Fulani. Thus once the red skin colour differentiation had disappeared, it would not be surprising if the red-black divisions were more quietly forgotten, so that even a complete survey of this phenomenon might not provide a basis for assessing the degree of Tiv-Fulani intermarriage. Given the power of the myth of one

CHART XXVI

RED AND BLACK AMONGST NGUR OF THE KUNAV

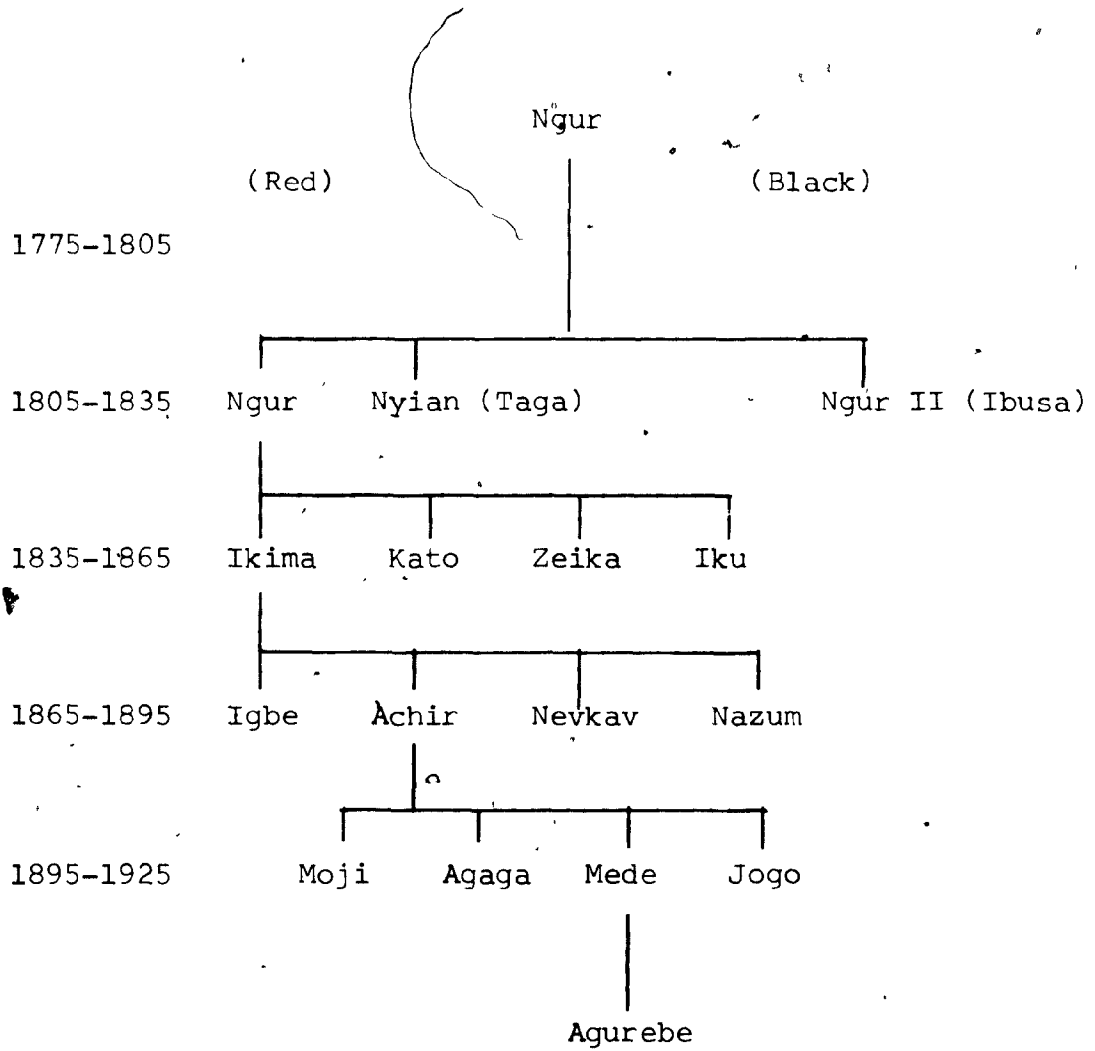
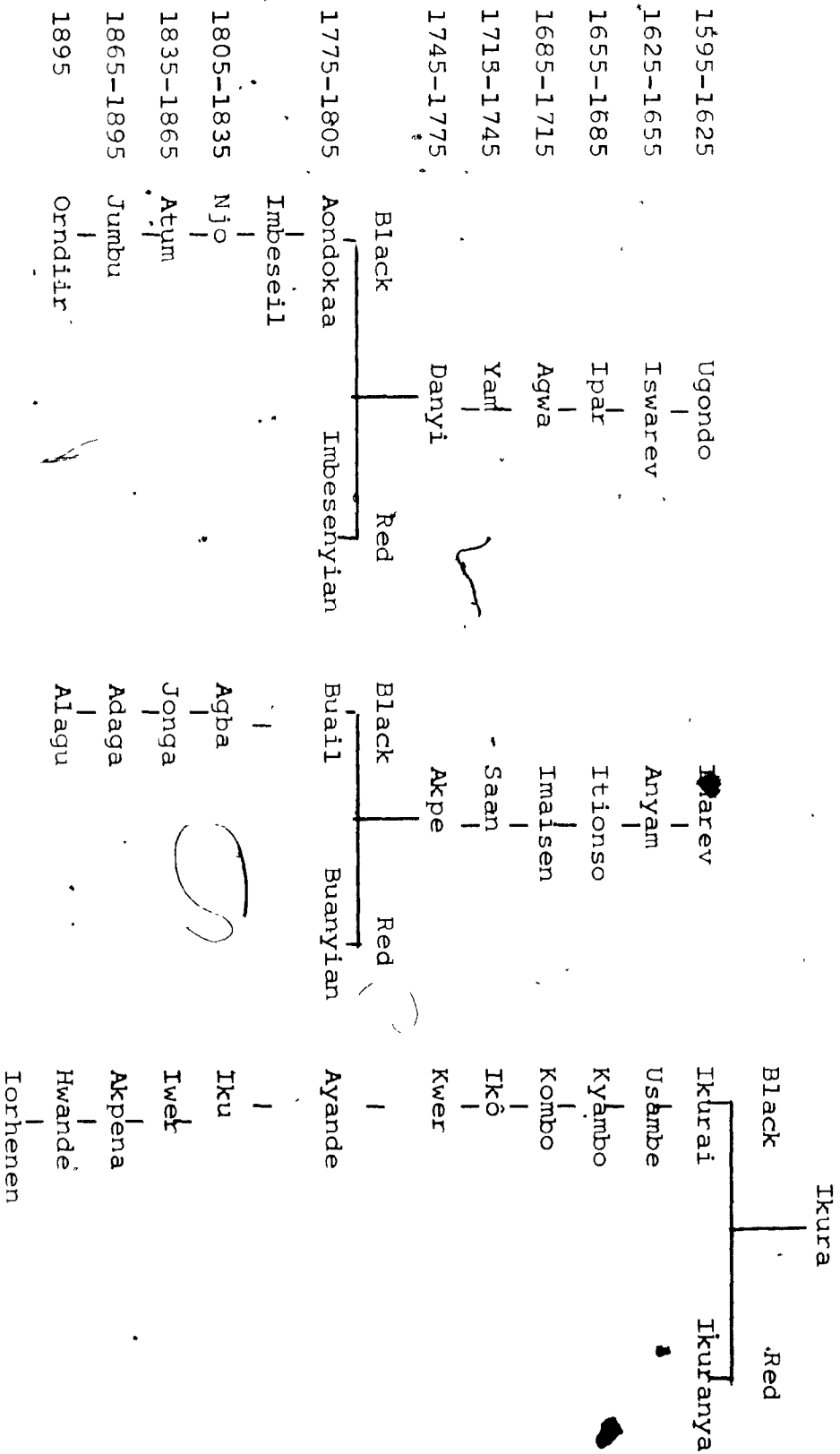


CHART XXVII

RED AND BLACK GROUPS



people derived from a single ancestor, Tiv, the people are prepared to forget facts which run contrary to the national consensus.

The Abakwariga, who have maintained a separate identity, are settled in Tivland near the Katsina Ala River and between the Utur and the Mbagen Tiv clan. Since they were for a long time under Kwararafa and an important political force within that empire, the Abakwariga have been much influenced by Jukun culture as well as by the Utur and their later neighbours, the Tiv. Some Abakwariga have become Tiv. The major Tiv group descended from the Abakwariga are the Mbakpa clan in the Iharev super-clan. As the map indicates, the Mbakpa are physically separated from the main Abakwariga group along the Katsina Ala River. It will be necessary to speculate first upon how the Abakwariga came to be along the Katsina Ala River and second how the Mbakpa became Tiv.

The Abakwariga's traditions of origin and migration firmly relate them to a group of Abakwariga which migrated from the Hausa kingdom of Katsina to the far north. Their traditions relate that their ancestors left Katsina during a dispute over the throne. They claim that they have had thirty-five kings but can only recount seventeen.<sup>49</sup> Genealogically dated, these seventeen would suggest a late

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<sup>49</sup>T.H.T. No. 320, 24/7/76. Group interview at the Palace of Sangeri Abakwariga.

eighteenth-century settlement in this present area. The thirty-five would suggest a mid-seventeenth century date if one accepts that the pattern of succession among the first eighteen "kings" was similar to that of the last seventeen. One can only assume that the leadership which emerged to begin this dynasty was associated with the man who led the exodus from Katsina. It is impossible on present knowledge to link the traditions of this group of Abakwariga with those of Katsina. Palmer, in his account of Katsina, divided the dynasties of that kingdom into three. First, the Habe chiefs of the Durbawa dynasty of seven chiefs ruled from about 950 A.D. to 1445. Secondly, the Habe of the Wangara and Durbawa dynasties "of whom there is authentic record of thirty-five chiefs", reigned from c.1445 to 1807. According to Palmer, before 1807 the rulers alternated between the Durbawa and Wangara dynasties.<sup>50</sup> One possible explanation is that during a dispute between the two dynasties -- possibly in the mid-seventeenth century -- Mallam Ala led a group out of Katsina. This migration may have taken place during the expansion of Katsina during the seventeenth century. According to Palmer's account:

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Kingdom (of Katsina) probably reached its greatest extent, including as it then did Maradi and Zamfari and the land down to Birnin Gwari.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Temple, p. 472.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 473.

This group of Abakwariga left Katsina and settled in Waka, later known as Wukari after the Jukun had taken over that city as the capital of Kwararafa. Since Abakwariga have been associated with Kwararafa from its foundations, we cannot be sure whether Waka was founded by this group of Abakwariga or whether Mallam Ala and his followers already found it in existence, it having been founded by earlier groups of Abakwariga. The present traditions have it that Mallam Ala led them from the Kingdom of Katsina to Waka and that either he or his son led them out of Waka to Katsina Ala. This seems unlikely because it was a century and a half between the migration from Katsina and that from Waka. Akiga merely records that the Abakwariga came from Waka. According to him, they settled near the River Katsina Ala long before the Shitire crossed the Katsina Ala. This confirms the accounts of the present elders of the Abakwariga which state that their ancestors settled at Katsina Ala before the Utur and Tiv.<sup>52</sup>

The influence of the Jukun on the Abakwariga can be noticed especially in the names of their chiefs. Names such as Adasu, Aji, Adi, and Angyu are Jukun in origin. The Abakwariga of Katsina Ala seem to have returned to Waka for the confirmation of their chiefs by a council which included

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<sup>52</sup>Sai, "The History of the Tiv," MS.  
T.H.T. No. 320, 24/7/76. Group interview at the Palace of Sangari Abakwariga.

both Jukun and Abakwariga. This has been taken to mean, in the case of Keana as well, that the Katsina Ala chiefs recognized the paramountcy of Kwararafa. With the decline of Kwararafa and the coming of the Tiv, the greatest influence upon the Abakwariga has been the Utur and the Tiv. The Abakwariga were principally noted for their weaving, dyeing, cloth making, and tanning.<sup>53</sup> They were also traders and it would seem that those who assimilated into either Utur or Tiv society were originally settled among these people in small trading communities.

If the traditions of the Mbakpa of Iharev and their genealogies can be trusted, a number of Abakwariga settled among the Iharev super-clan some time in the early to mid-seventeenth century. In tracing their movements, Akiga stated that they followed the Benue to Akpena and Alufu via Abinsi.<sup>54</sup> They could have gone to Akpena while some settled down. A tradition of the Mbakpa gives a strange reason why they are called Mbakpa. According to this tradition, they were first called Mgbekpa, which is also a Tiv name for a small pepper which is very bitter. It is argued that although they were few or tiny in size like the pepper, they were very successful in wars. This explains why they

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<sup>53</sup>David C. Dorward, "Precolonial Tiv Trade and Cloth Currency," The International Journal of African Historical Studies, Vol. 9, No. 4, (1976) p. 582.

<sup>54</sup>Sai, "The History of the Tiv," MS.



were called Mgbekpa. However, upon the arrival of the Europeans, they argued, the whiteman had a difficulty with the word "Mgbekpa" and decided to refer to them as Mbakpa.<sup>55</sup>

Genealogical information presents a picture largely consistent with the above accounts. Chart V shows that the assimilation must have taken place in the eighteenth century. The chart also shows that the assimilations did not all take place at the same time. Some assimilation took place late in the period of jihad violence. For example, the assimilation of the Bija group took place about 1775 - 1805. Their traditions recall:

Bija our father was born at River Gwer. He moved with his children to River Nagi. We fought against the Uke known as Mgbekpa. They, the Uke, used to fight on horses. Whenever they were victorious they placed their chief over us. Our father Bija died at the settlement at River Nagi. We then moved to a walled town of Gaambe near Akpaku Stream. All of Gaambe people were in this walled town. When the Uke stopped coming we spread according to lineage groups. That is Mbapa, Mbabuande, Mbapuu and our lineage Mbabija.<sup>56</sup>

Surely the Bija traditions show that the Mbakpa were Uke and

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<sup>55</sup>T.H.T. No. 339, 10/8/76. Uchiliki of Iharev. See also Downes, p. 7.

"The Abakwariga, Hausa-speaking people who have lived intermingled with the Jukuns for several centuries, are known to Jukuns as Bakpa or Mbakpa and, as Meek says: "The port of Calabar was locally known as Atakpa". The Ekoi, to whom the Tiv claim kinship, were also called 'Akpa', and all the foreign settlements in Ogoja Province on the river banks, composed of Hausa and Abakwariga peoples, are known as Abakpa. This seems to indicate that Jukun settlements, or those of their agents, existed down to the Cross Rivers and suggests the Old Slave route to the coast."

<sup>56</sup>T.H.T. No. 341, 11/8/76. Aigyu of Mbakpa Iharev.

CHART XXVIIIIHAREV - MGBAKPA - GENEALOGIES

1625-1655			Mgbakpa	
1655-1685	Mgbakpa	Gaambe	Mgbakpa	Mgbakpa
1685-1715	Gaambe	Abur		Ibien
1715-1775	Ibem	Buande		Afeese
1745-1775	Afeese	Akeme		Zor
1755-1805	Zor	Abeka	<u>Bija</u>	Gberakor
1805-1835	Asough	Ijirbo	Ilabe	Shima
1835-1865	Atai	Dogo	<u>Awuna</u>	<u>Adi</u>
1865-1895	Atulu	Alonko	Akwaya	Kpabena
1895-1925	Bar	Iyongo	Ahee	<u>Alega</u>
1925-				<u>Uchiliki</u>

Non-Tiv names are underlined

therefore probably Abakwariga especially given the reference to horses. There are additional indications that other Uke/Abakwariga groups entered Mbakpa in the early part of the nineteenth century. There are two villages today that are called "Uke villages". The informants from one of these villages said that they are called 'Uke' because during the time of war, their ancestors would run very fast and attack the enemy as the Uke did.<sup>57</sup> This would seem like a clear case of assimilation. It is moreover interesting to note that the meanings of the first three names of Uchiliki's genealogy (plus his name - see Chart V) are not known to the writer. It seems they are non-Tiv names. Names like Adi are definitely not Tiv names. There are many Tiv people who have adopted non-Tiv names, but to have four generations of foreign names casts doubt. It should be recalled that given the bitter experience of the Tiv with the Muslim Hausa during the nineteenth century, no Tiv today wishes to be associated even remotely with Hausa origins. While the Abakwariga were not Muslim then, most of them today are so. Today "Abakwariga" is another name for Hausa. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries distinctions probably were far clearer. Abakwariga were associated and integrated with a number of ethnic groups, a situation which dramatically changed with the Sokoto  Jihad and the Islamization of the Abakwariga.

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<sup>57</sup> T.H.T. No. 339, 10/8/76. Uchiliki of Iharev.

Another possible clue to the question of assimilation of other peoples into Tiv culture comes from the neighbours to the south. The various ethnic groups in the Cross River State bordering the Tiv are collectively known to the Tiv as the Udam. Of the Udam people with whom the Tiv came into contact the most important were the Bete, Yakoro, Yache, and Egedde. A Jukun dialect is said once to have existed among them. After all, the Jukun emerged from this area and they had an important trade route running via Udam country and the Cross River to Calabar. It is reported that the Bete in particular were for a long time living on the Obudu Hills as neighbours of the Tiv and Ugee, who eventually drove them westward to their present habitat on the southern border of Kunav. Both Dewar and Bohannan felt that it is unlikely that the Bete or their Yakoro neighbours ever occupied present Tiv country, though the southern fringe of the Kunav salient was taken from the Udam in comparatively recent years.<sup>58</sup>

It is generally believed by most Tiv elders that the process of assimilation by the Tiv and Udam have taken place in the southern part of Tivland only. The Udam have left a deep mark on the customs, beliefs, and economy of the Tiv. There was a considerable interaction both peaceful and hostile between the Tiv and the Udam during the pre-colonial period. Throughout Tivland there are pockets of Udam communities or villages here and there. These communities,

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<sup>58</sup>Dewar, p. 11.

for all practical purposes, have become Tiv and are accepted as Tiv. They also remain as a link between the Tiv and Udam "at home". Referring to such a community in Ipavland, the elders stressed that the Udam among them were accepted as Tiv but will never be given positions of leadership.<sup>59</sup>

Marriage is normally a key factor in assimilation. While Tiv men freely married aliens, the society was less pleased with the marriage of Tiv women to aliens. Clearly a stage arose, however, where the alien men were considered Tiv enough to permit them to marry Tiv women. There was a real reluctance among Tiv to give their daughters to Udam men. The Tiv argued that the Udam circumcised not only males but females also. They also said that if a Udam married from the Tiv, a day would come when the Udam husband would kill his Tiv wife and cut off her head at the time of an important burial. There were, however, many marriages between Tiv men and Udam women. A marriage from the Udam strengthened ties between the two groups. A person who married from the Udam could go back and forth without fear. It also meant that he could trade by bringing Udam commodities to the Tiv markets and vice versa.

There were instances where the Tiv used such contacts as a means of incorporating some of the Udam into the

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<sup>59</sup>T.H.T. No. 53, 16/11/74. Nyôr Ugo of Ipav. Note that this informant had an Udam wife. The writer was able to penetrate into Udamland through his help.

Tiv culture. A clear case took place three generations ago. A Tiv from Mbara-Kunav married an Udam. When his brother-in-law came and visited them, he decided to stay in Tivland. He was given a Tiv woman and they were married. (This is a refutation of the general claim that Tiv did not wish their daughters to marry Udam men.) His descendants today trace their ancestors to the Udam man and then plug their line into the Mbara genealogy.<sup>60</sup> They are by every definition Tiv. Thus, many marriages with the Udam facilitated assimilation. This process has continued in other places in this century. The immigrants spoke their own language and that of the Tiv, but their descendants now know no other language but Tiv.<sup>61</sup>

Kwararafan authority certainly extended over much of the territory now occupied by the Tiv. It seems that it was the decline of that authority coupled with the westward drift of the Idoma which allowed the Tiv to take over their present homeland. In modern times the only Jukun remnant left are those who are clustered along the Benue and Katsina Ala Rivers. These riverain Jukunawa, as they are sometimes called, subsisted on fishing. They exchanged some of their fish for Tiv grain. They also acted as ferrymen. Early

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<sup>60</sup>T.H.T. No. 215, 15/8/75. Zaki Agurebe of Mbara Kunav:

<sup>61</sup>The Idoma (Akpoto) are sometimes called Udam. There are indications that some of these Udam too were incorporated into the Iharev community. This might explain why one section in Iharev is called the Udam.

researchers in this area noticed that the Jukun intermarried with the Tiv.

Intermarriage has taken place with Munshis [Tiv] as Mr. Maltby says 'probably thro fear of molestation if refused so that a bond of relationship and friendship has been formed and remains unbroken . . . The Munshi has assimilated the Jukun, who have frequently adopted similar clothing and tribal markings' so that many are now indistinguishable from Munshi.<sup>62</sup>

As early as the nineteenth century, Crowther reported the mixing of the Tiv and the Jukun:

In fact the congeries of petty peoples and mixtures thereof, coincident with easy river communications, as now existent on the Benue and Katsena Rivers, is now almost inextricably mixed and unrecognized.<sup>63</sup>

By intermarrying and mixing with the Tiv, the Jukun lost their identity. First the boundaries between these Jukun and the Tiv disappeared. Crowther obtained information that there was no specific boundary:

I wanted to know the boundary between the Mitshi (Tiv) country and that of Kororofa but he (Njoro) said, by inserting his ten fingers between each other, that they were thus mixed together as one people - here is a Djuku (Jukun) town, there is a Mitshi village.<sup>64</sup>

The influence that the Jukun had over the Tiv was lost during this process of assimilation. It is reported that

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<sup>62</sup>C. F. Rowe, "Assessment Report on the Riverain Jukunawa of the Munshi Division", NAK 1913. Makprof 110/8/12.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

such influence was entirely lost;

. . . in the decadence of the Jukun and their assimilation by the Munshi. In fact, the virile Munshi throughout all their extensive movements appear to have quietly 'assimilated' rather than in any case 'conquered' all with whom they have come into contact.<sup>65</sup>

Apart from these Jukun, there are the Iordaa, which is a term given to all the non-Tiv living along the Katsina Ala River near Uga. They live between the Tombo and Kusuv. These people include the Agatu, Igbira, Nyifon, and a few Jukun. The Igbira here are known in the literature under the Hausa cognomen of Kwotto.<sup>66</sup> The interaction between the Iordaa and the Tiv has been going on for at least two centuries. Some of them have been integrated into the Tiv nation. A small core that remains has been partially integrated and dominated by the Tiv. Yet, there are still cultural diversities, especially in religious beliefs. Each group (Igbira and Nyifon), while speaking fluent Tiv, has maintained its own language.

In the absence of solid evidence to the contrary, it seems logical to assume that the super-clans which descended from the ten grandsons of Tiv represent ten different groups which came together under an outstanding leader called Tiv. This was probably the greatest age of assimilation when Tiv ethnicity was born. This period,

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Temple, p. 155.



however, is beyond the reach of oral traditions and the historian of that tradition. What is meant in modern times by "pure Tiv" are those who can trace their biological connections back over the centuries to one of these grandsons. The birth of the Tiv nation was probably a lengthy process, but by the sixteenth century it had occurred and the national charter of Tiv and his ten grandsons had become the symbolic explanation for the major event. What is discussed in this chapter is the assimilation of alien peoples since the sixteenth century and during the period of Tiv expansion north and northwest to the Benue River and beyond. Assimilation and territorial expansion are still today major features of Tiv history.

The Tiv were stateless, they were never united into one political unit. Nevertheless they possess a language with few dialectical differences, a culture without noteworthy variations from one subdivision to another, and a national charter as a framework for their national history. In other words they possess a unity far greater than many peoples who have lived under centralized chieftainship for centuries. Breaking, amending, or correcting the national charter of the Tiv seems far more difficult than doing the same for the normal royal chronicles of centralized societies. Nevertheless, progress can be made in analyzing this charter to show the assimilation of aliens which has occurred in Tiv society since 1600.

The major group which has assimilated into Tiv society were the Ikorakpe who according to their genealogy descended from the ten sons of Ikorakpe. The Ikorakpe are scattered throughout many of the ten Tiv super-clans, of which only the Nanev super-clan seems primarily of Ikorakpe origin. It would seem that Ikorakpe or the Ikorakpe came out of the Obanliku (Ugee) who were the indigenous inhabitants around Swem Hill which many Tiv also claim as their indigenous homeland. The numerous traditions of the Tiv indicate that assimilation proceeded through violence, intermarriage, and blood brotherhoods of all the assimilated groups. Today the Ikorakpe are the assimilated group most generally accepted by the society at large as true Tiv.

Large numbers of Utur and Utange have also been assimilated into Tiv society. Unfortunately no special name or other distinguishing mark point up the modern descendants of the Utur. One must depend entirely on the few traditions available. Unless the researcher suspects that he is dealing with a Tiv of alien origin, his informant will seldom voluntarily give this information. The Utange are easier to deal with than other assimilated groups since those in Tiv society claim to be Tiv but they also claim a relationship to the Becheve who are outside Tiv society and claim they are not Tiv. The Utange in Tiv society employ the usual Tiv terminology calling themselves "those on the farm" or those who have gone ahead and the Becheve "those at home" or those from which they originated. Here is a clear case of an alien group

fitting themselves into the Tiv pattern of organization and into the Tiv national charter by linking their genealogy to a granddaughter of Tiv.

The Tiv have assimilated nomadic Fulani and Abakwariga, a name associated historically with non-Muslim Hausa. Because of nearly two hundred years of hostility between these two peoples and the Tiv, tracing their assimilation is very difficult. No informant would admit to Fulani or Abakwariga antecedents. However, certain clans have split into red and black divisions and combined with traditions of the interaction of Fulani origin. The earliest such fusion occurred around 1600, the latest around 1800. The Abakwariga Tiv so far discovered are centered in the Mbakpa clan in the Iharev super-clan. They probably originated as a trading community in the empire of Kwararafa and in the eighteenth century became absorbed into Tiv society. This is when Tiv names begin to appear in their genealogies.

The last group in time to be assimilated were the Udam and most Tiv of Udam origin are not regarded as real Tiv by the society at large. Other small groups include a conglomerate of small ethnic groups along the major rivers. Through fishing and ferrying a remnant of them have survived the cultural onslaught of the Tiv. The Tiv argue that they are unwilling to give their daughters as wives to such people. This may be the ideal but the practice was frequent and the more the Udam became Tiv, the more intermarriage accelerated.

Even in ethnically unified societies it is usually possible to identify which cultural elements were derived from separate ethnic groups. Thus the heavy concentration of Ikorakpe in the central southeast might be expected to have introduced certain unique cultural elements into that section of the Tiv not present in the Tiv of the northwest. But such differences are minor. Aliens were assimilated totally in the pristine meaning of that term. There was no cultural fusion. Tiv society was a melting pot, far more so than the American society for which the phrase was invented.

## CHAPTER VI

TIV EXPANSION AND MIGRATION

Historical studies of the movements of African peoples are no longer in their infancy. Most of the historical references to the pre-colonial histories of African peoples include the accounts of their migration and expansion. Many early accounts of migration would suggest that an entire ethnic group came from a certain area or direction. Statements such as "the Yoruba came from the North East and possibly Egypt" used to be common. Such migration accounts were often bedevilled by the desire of researchers to find unified or single origins in Egypt, among Hamites, or from Kush or Ethiopia. Research into the origin of the Bantu still tends to follow these lines.<sup>1</sup> Later historians began to

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<sup>1</sup>Johnson, The History of the Yorubas. Johnson discussed the possibility of an Egyptian origin only briefly. J. O. Lucas, The Religion of the Yorubas, (Lagos, 1948). This theory is developed and argued by Lucas fully. For Hamitic theories see C. G. Seligman, Races of Africa, 3d. ed. (Oxford University Press, 1961 [1957].) For the discussion on the Bantu see H. Johnson, A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages, (London, 1919). Greenberg, "The Languages of Africa," pp. 6-7, 20-33, 35-38; Guthrie, "Some developments in the pre-history of the Bantu languages," pp. 273-82; C. Wrigley, "Linguistic Clues to African History," The Journal of African History III No. 2 (1962): pp. 269-71; M. Posnansky, "Bantu Genesis," The Uganda Journal XXV No. 1 (1964): pp. 86-92. G. Murdock, Africa its people and their culture history, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), pp. 271-74, 290-91; G. Huntingford, "The peopling of the Interior of Africa by its modern inhabitants," R. Oliver and A. Matthew, eds., History of East Africa, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 80-82; R. Oliver, "The Problem of the Bantu Expansion," Journal of African History VII No. 3 (1966): pp. 361-76.

differentiate between the origin and migration of ruling versus commoner groups. This was a step forward but it still normally lumped the mass of commoners together into some kind of tradition which appeared widely spread among the people.<sup>2</sup> In modern times there is a tendency to record a mass of migration detail, recording the tradition of every kinship or social group, to the point of total confusion.<sup>3</sup> It must be remembered that migration normally continues at all times. It is a never-ending process. But there are, in addition, decades or generations when migration is greatly

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<sup>2</sup>Some of the older material on the Idoma are a good example. See S. Crowther and J. F. Schon, Journal of an expedition up the Niger and Tshadda Rivers - - - - 1854, (London: Church Missionary House, 1855), p. 66. R. G. Armstrong, "The Idoma Speaking Peoples" in Peoples of the Niger - Benue Confluence (International African Institute, London, 1955). The view held by these authors can be contrasted with the complicated migrations which Erim finally worked out recently. See Erim, "A Pre-Colonial History of the Idoma of Central Nigeria". The idea that there was a single dynasty governing the Igala throughout their history and a single migration is also suggested, see M. Clifford, "A Nigerian Chiefdom," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute LXVI, 1976. Clifford suggested that the Igala monarch originated from the Jukun while Boston suggested Benin origins. See J. S. Boston, The Igala Kingdom, (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1968). The Alago is another good example of the single migration theory. Most literature says "the Alago came from Idah," obviously making the royal chronicle applicable to all Alago. See Temple, Notes on the Tribes, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>The history of Uganda in particular often over-reacts by carrying detail to extremes. As a result hundreds of Niotic traditions of migrations, for example, are recorded so that the reader has no clear picture of migrations at all. See J. P. Crassolara, The Lwoo, three volumes, (Verona: 1950-1954). Also certain sections of J. B. Webster, "The Overview" in Webster (ed.), Uganda Before 1900: Vol. 1 Migration and Settlement c. 900-1900, in press E.A.P.H.

accelerated. B. A. Ogot avoids a multiplicity of migration detail and concentrates upon three or four major periods of migration acceleration. He brings out the great complexity of Luo migration but nevertheless leaves the reader with a clear picture of the major Luo migrations. Since the publication of Ogot's History of the Southern Luo Peoples: Migration and Settlement, historians have built up an impressive library on the theme of migrations and settlements.<sup>4</sup> As was discussed in full in Chapter IV there are numerous examples in Tiv literature of the single migration theory. All the literature known to the author claims that all the Tiv came from either one hill or another.

The history of the Tiv is a story of movement, of the conquest of the land from nature and from neighbours, and of adaptation to new environments. Like most African peoples they have benefited from expansion. For it must be remembered that non-migratory people who do not expand often remain almost static as, for example, the San of South Africa. Among the Tiv expansion and migrations are among the most interesting themes of their history. According to Makar, expansion remained the dominant theme and reached its zenith in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Other scholars working among the Tiv have attempted to define and explain the

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<sup>4</sup>B. A. Ogot, History of the Southern Luo Volume 1: Migration and Settlement, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967).

<sup>5</sup>T. Makar, "A history of the Tiv People in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, circa 1800-1960" Ph.D. A. B. U. 1976, p. 38.

movements of the Tiv. Bohannan's useful definition of expansion called it the attempt to move in such a way that a Tiv lineage's territory was enlarged. He differentiated migration expansion from disjunctive migration which brought about separation of groups in space/affecting the geographical position of lineage territories. Bohannan's emphasis understandably was on the colonial period.<sup>6</sup> Expansion of a lineage's territory is that type of migration which proceeded every year, generation by generation; it was the normal expected behaviour in Tiv society. Disjunctive migration on the other hand was less normal and usually required unique pressures and reasons. Because of this, disjunctive migration and its causes are normally more often recalled and remembered in traditions. This chapter picks up threads in the pre-colonial period and attempts to undertake a historical reconstruction of Tiv migrations before the twentieth century. The purpose here is to provide a descriptive account of the expansion of the Tiv, their interaction with other peoples, and the results of this interaction.

Before the migrations of expansion can be discussed it is important to bear in mind once again the early Tiv settlers who may have consolidated themselves c. 1600 in what is today southern Tivland. By that time the Tiv already existed as a self-conscious ethnic group. They were a

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<sup>6</sup>P. Bohannan, "Tiv Migration and Expansion," *Africa*, VII, No. 1, (1954), p. 2. On this same theme see Bohannan's article based on Akiga's account of the "Descent of the Tiv from Ibenda".



homogenous, lineage-organized ethnicity living in the Cameroon mountains. The Tiv created an ethnically homogenous society into which ever increasing numbers of immigrants could be absorbed. As it was pointed out in the last chapter, all the newly absorbed immigrants lost most of their unique identities, adopted the Tiv way of living, and operated within the Tiv code of ethics. This assimilation of non-Tiv increased the growth of the Tiv at the expense of other groups. This is partly why the Tiv are relatively more numerous than many surrounding peoples and have expanded to occupy such an extensive area.

Some scholars have a notion that to belong to a dominant group is usually attractive and relatively easy.<sup>7</sup> The arguments hardly hold. The French Canadians do not find the dominant English culture of North America attractive. Furthermore no minority group anywhere in the world, that still exists, has found a dominant group attractive. To push the point further, the Canadians do not find the dominant American society attractive enough to join as one community. Minorities which exist today are a problem and therefore are studied and many theories abound. Minorities which have become assimilated into a dominant culture are no longer a problem and therefore have been much less studied, so there is much little accepted literature. What makes one society

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<sup>7</sup>M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, African Political Systems, (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), pp 9-10.

expansive and assimilating and another more or less static and closed, or what makes the same society expansive in one century and relatively closed in the next, is a major problem of pre-colonial African history.

The Luo were great assimilators, yet often they formed no more than ten percent of population mixes which later became primarily Luo. This indicates that numbers do not necessarily provide the answer to assimilation.<sup>8</sup> This is the reverse of the French Canadian situation mentioned earlier and makes sense. The French Canadians did not assimilate the English Canadians, but dominant groups can often be so arrogant and intolerant that they repel other peoples.

In attempting to understand the Tiv situation, Canada provides a good comparison. We may consider two Canadian examples, the French Canadians and the Ukrainians of Saskatchewan.<sup>9</sup> The French resisted assimilation, the Ukrainians fairly readily embraced the culture of their new homeland. The French Canadians lived in a large block of territory while the Ukrainians lived in small settlements interspersed with English and other communities. The Idoma to the west of the Tiv might well represent the French Canadian example. Once the Tiv expanded up to the Idoma bloc, that expansion slowed down. There is little expectation

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<sup>8</sup>J. M. Onyango-Ku-Odongo, and others. The Central Luo During the Aconya. (East African Literature Bureau).

<sup>9</sup>In Saskatchewan the English are in the minority, outnumbered by the Ukrainians and other ethnic entities.

that the Tiv could have penetrated Idomaland to the point that the Idoma would have been assimilated. However, north of the Benue the situation was more akin to that prevailing in Saskatchewan.

If we look at the Tiv north of the Benue we see them in the pioneer phase of their settlement. One may therefore project this situation back in time and suppose that Tiv penetration of other societies south of the Benue c. 1600 resembled the twentieth-century situation north of the Benue. Jukun, Alago, and Hausa north of the Benue live in villages where trading, salt production, iron work and other crafts preoccupy their time. Farming is subsidiary and concentrated around the urban centres. The Tiv also live in villages, but they are less urban in that their major preoccupation is farming. Moreover they are often kinship clusters, one family to a village. Crafts, salt production, iron work, and markets were not really a part of these villages. An urban centre is more than a number of people living close together, it is also specialization of occupation and diversity of kinship. Hausa, Alago, and Jukun villages were urban centres while Tiv villages were kinship clusters. Large tracts of unused and unoccupied land lay between the Hausa, Jukun, and Alago villages north of the Benue and it was into these areas that the Tiv moved and settled, until they formed a numerically superior group.

For a trading community, it is essential to learn the language of the major customers. Many Hausa and Jukun

understand and speak Tiv north of the Benue. Fewer Tiv comprehend Hausa and those who do probably do so because Hausa was the language of the colonial administration for sixty years in the area. What incentive would pre-colonial Tiv have to speak Hausa? The Asian traders of East and Central Africa more often speak the local vernacular of their African customers rather than English, the language of administration. The absorption of Hausa trading communities into Tiv culture south of the Benue is clearly demonstrated in the case of the Mbakpa clan. Such assimilation of Hausa was clearly much easier prior to the jihad of dan Fodio, an event which besides identifying Hausa culture with Islam gave Hausa society a pride and cohesiveness which prior to that time it had not possessed. Hausa pride and Hausa nationalism were further strengthened by the prestige associated with being Hausa or at least speaking Hausa during the colonial period.

It is now almost impossible to believe that the area north of the Benue will ever become a homogeneous linguistic region, but it is conceivable that given a longer period of pre-colonial conditions that might have been possible. It is important to note that the situation was already multi-ethnic when the Tiv began their expansion; since they infiltrated among and between the urban centres of the other peoples, their language was the one spread over the largest geographical region and therefore on the way to becoming a lingua franca. In Saskatchewan, as north of the Benue, the

drift of population in the twentieth century has been towards the towns which favoured the spread of English in the former and Hausa in the latter. This trend, which is taking place north of the Benue, is reversing the linguistic trend of the nineteenth century.

It is therefore suggested that the area south of the Benue in the seventeenth century was multi-ethnic, as so much of Kwararafa was (and the region was part of Kwararafa). It seems also possible that the people lived in village clusters and that trading and the slave trade were active, since the region lay astride a major trade route to the south from Kwararafa. With the decline of Kwararafa and the slave trade the trading network may have suffered stagnation. The villages could no longer thrive and grow. This would therefore provide an ideal opportunity for the infiltration of an aggressive agricultural community. Furthermore, in the balance of potential or actual military power, the Tiv had advantages over the fragmented political structure north of the Benue. With the decline of Kwararafa, every village was left an independent entity under its chief. Despite their acephalous republicanism, the Tiv could and did react as a bloc against hostile action against any of their settlements. This seems likely to have occurred south of the Benue as well. After the retreat of Kwararafa, a similar political fragmentation would have occurred. Certainly the traditions of Tiv expansion provide no evidence of any large political units which they encountered or major wars which they fought against

a unified opposition. Where this did occur north of the Benue, it was later in response to the Sokoto caliphate, which was in the mid-nineteenth century seeking to extend its hegemony over that region.

Apart from language, there were certain features which demonstrated that a person had acquired a Tiv identity. These features included specific items of custom, style of dress, settlement patterns and houseform.<sup>10</sup> To be Tiv, a person had to adopt Tiv technologies, modes of economic organizations, beliefs and practices. The genesis, structures, and functions of these features will not be dealt with here. It suffices to say that once a person became a Tiv he was expected to adopt all the basic values held by the Tiv. Such values, as Akiga has pointed out, helped 'foreigners' such as the Utange to assimilate into Tiv culture.<sup>11</sup> For the Tiv ethnic group to continue, it depended upon what Fredrik Barth calls "the maintenance of a boundary"<sup>12</sup>. Some anthropologists argue that such a boundary persists despite a flow of personnel across it. Furthermore, they argue that social relations are maintained across such boundaries. They contend that the ethnic boundary that defines a group are social boundaries, though in fact they have territorial

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<sup>10</sup>F. Barth, Ethnic Groups and Boundaries, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969). Barth provides this list of features that make people identify with a particular group.

<sup>11</sup>B. A. Sai, "The History of the Tiv," MS.

<sup>12</sup>Barth, p. 15.

counterparts.<sup>13</sup> George De Vos contends that "boundaries are basically psychological in nature not territorial".<sup>14</sup> In the discussion of Tiv expansion, it must be borne in mind that while new groups were assimilated, the Tiv maintained their ethnic boundary by some basic institutions. Tivhood became the very basis for interactions. It seems that where the ethnic boundary is also territorial - as with the French Canadians - it more easily leads to a closed society, where it is not, as with the Tiv, it more readily paves the way for an open society.

In summary, Tiv language and culture spread first because the Tiv did not occupy one block of defined territory up against other ethnic blocks. The Tiv interspersed among and between the villages of the indigenous people. Interspersed habitation and intermingling led to assimilation. Secondly, it was the interrelationship between indigenous villages and the surrounding and numerically predominant agricultural Tiv which led to the spread of the Tiv language, and later of Tiv culture.

From what has gone before it must be obvious to the reader that during the expansion of the Tiv their ethnic boundaries were more psychological than they were territorial.

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<sup>13</sup>Barth, pp. 9-115.

<sup>14</sup>G. De Vos and L. Romanucci-Ross, eds. Ethnic Identity: Cultural Continuities and Change, (Palo Alto: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1975), p. 6.

However, on the west they came into contact with the Idoma whom they could not infiltrate, or at best infiltrated very slowly. The ethnic boundary between the Idoma and Tiv became territorial. On the east the same phenomenon occurred. The Tiv encapsulated the Abakwariga in Katsina Ala and continued their spread among the Jukun. Here too the ethnic boundary gradually became harder and more defined. With the opportunities for expansion much reduced on the west and east, Tiv expansion moved north. Given a couple of centuries of pre-colonial conditions, the Tiv might well have eroded the Abakwariga of Katsina Ala, so that in time its inhabitants, like those of the Mbakpa, might have become assimilated, attaching their genealogies on to the national charter of those descended from the hero-ancestor, Tiv.

The fact that some peoples are extremely language-proud and that others are less so can no longer be questioned. In the European context, the French and English are examples par excellence of peoples who are reluctant to learn a second language. Often these peoples feel that their own language is the most expressive of all languages and that all other peoples have a duty to learn it. The major problem is why some people are like this and others not. It seems that the feeling of linguistic arrogance increases when a situation arises where one or more linguistic groups come to feel that their language is somehow superior simply because alien people speak it, when in fact the imitation is only because it is logical in the situation. Given a slightly different



situation, another language might have been imitated.

In any case an expanding people, once developing dominance in a given area, may become proud and linguistically and culturally tenacious. An expanding people do not of necessity become politically dominant. Many politically dominant groups have lost their language and most of their culture, the Fulani in the Sokoto Caliphate, the Luo, and the Babito dynasties in the interlacustrine areas are examples. Any situation of imperialism -- that is where one dominant ethnic group rules over others -- is not one which necessarily leads to the permanent widespread use of the politically dominant language. In the long term such a situation often results in the revival of the non-dominant languages as facets of nationalisms which destroy the imperial structure. This may have been what occurred in the Kwararafa confederacy. The Jukun language today is not as widespread as the territorial limits of old Kwararafa. In fact, in the original heartland of Kwararafa the Jukun language today survives only in a few small enclaves. This is probably also true of the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. Alien monarchies who ultimately assimilate into the language and culture of the indigenous people seem to have been more common in history, as for example, the Norman kings of England, the Fulani and Babito. Readers need hardly be reminded of the decline and disappearance of Latin, the language of imperial Rome.

Other factors play a role in language dominance.

Some linguists even suggest that languages with the fewest "sounds per signal" tend to spread the fastest. Some languages are easier to learn and speak. Certainly "ease of learning" is a reason which has been put forward as to why Luo predominated over the Paraniotic and Sudanic languages in the interlacustrine region. In the Benue valley, Jukun is thought to be difficult, Hausa and Tiv easy. This factor then partly helps to explain why many people came to speak Tiv.

It is also clear that the language of the majority does not always dominate. When Swahili was developed many coastal languages in East Africa died out. In a multi-ethnic situation - large numbers of small groups speaking difficult languages - the language of a new arrival often spreads as the lingua franca, especially if the new language group spreads itself in between the other languages. The spread of English in the Warri region in Nigeria and of Swahili in Tanzania are good examples of the rapid spread of new languages in very complicated linguistic situations. What is necessary is that the new language is spread either by traders as in Tanzania or by Tiv farmers between villages of difficult languages. In such a situation the new language group need not be numerically dominant. It is its distribution rather than the number of speakers which is the crucial factor. However, in the Tiv example the new language group might have become more numerous than any one of the indigenous languages but a smaller percentage when viewed against the entire population.

To explain the point further let us again use East Africa as an example. Swahili moved into an area of East Africa characterized by numerous small language groups. The need for a lingua franca was obvious and this need intensified with the growth of long-distance trade in the nineteenth century. Even in East Africa Swahili did not spread amongst the larger ethnic groups such as the Baganda who were great in number. The need was not there, or at least was not as clear. Had the Omani Arabs taken over East Africa as a colony, Swahili might have come either to be associated as a degraded form of Arabic, and therefore looked down upon, or as the language of the imperial conquerors and therefore to be discarded as an act of nationalism. The Benue area resembles Tanzania in that there were many linguistic groups and the need for a lingua franca was there. In the nineteenth century with the increase in trade in the Benue, Hausa, the traders' language, began to assume the role of Swahili and became a major rival to the Tiv language.

The assimilating people are likely to be more tolerant and receptive to alien peoples if the former are passing through a period of change from one kind of society to another. On the Canadian prairies, the English-speaking settlers were having to make major adjustments in their lives and culture to cope with the climate, geography, and economic patterns of the new pioneer region. The prairies were quite unlike anything in Britain or even in Eastern Canada. The English society was therefore more open to alien ideas and

peoples than the same English had been in their cities and towns in Britain where their society was more sufficient unto itself and closed to outsiders.

The Tiv must have gone through a major economic and social change in moving from their closely settled villages of the mountains, from which they claimed to have come, into the open plains of sparse settlement and large farms. Much has been made of the changes which took place in Afrikaner society as it spread out from the narrow coastal strip near Cape Town with its small farms cultivated intensively, into the wide plains of the interior of Southern Africa. From having lived in closely packed settlements the Boer changed into ranchers where every man was king and wanted to be so far removed from others that he could not see the smoke of his neighbour's campfire.<sup>15</sup> Something similar must have occurred among the Tiv as they adjusted themselves to the wide plains south of the Benue. During this phase of advancement the Tiv had short-horned cows, which uniquely belonged to them in this area. All the non-Tiv groups surrounding the Tiv today agree that these cows were introduced by the Tiv.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> E. W. De Kiewiet, A History of South Africa: Social Economic, (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 19.

<sup>16</sup> J. Morrison, Assakio Historical Text, p. 20. These texts collected during Morrison's fieldwork among the Assakio can be found in Dalhousie Library. Morrison also found these cows among the Plateau people. It is impossible to date or account for the origins of these cows. When asked, the elders say that God gave them the cows in the "beginning". For Udam accounts see T.H.T. No. 52, 14/11/74 interview with Inaku Ejim of Ukpaa, Udam.

Again, like the Boers they possessed in cattle a commodity highly prized among the surrounding peoples, but unlike the Boers they did not have neighbours who possessed cattle, so the concomitant struggles over cattle did not occur.

The Tiv elder's desire to be independent, own vast fields and cattle, and be far enough away so as not to see his neighbour's smoke was much like the Boers' ambition. It has been argued that as the Boers spread out from their densely settled coastal strip, there was a real danger that they would lose much of their distinctive culture and adopt African culture, especially since their occupational change from farmers to ranchers brought them closer to the life-style of the Africans. There was, in addition, considerable inter-marriage. In part at least their nationalism was spurred by the reaction against their growing Bantu-ization. However, Boer nationalism was primarily the product of their Christianity, the mineral revolution, and British overrule. Given these vast differences which arose in the nineteenth century, further comparisons with the Tiv appear futile. The important point is that early Boer communities on the high veld showed definite signs of moving towards open assimilating society.<sup>17</sup> In the eighteenth and nineteenth

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<sup>17</sup>It is reported that "however loudly the frontier farmers proclaimed their non-Africanness, they were steadily becoming 'Africanized' as they became less 'European'". Furthermore, we are told that at first the Dutch described themselves in terms of their economic activity. They called themselves Boers which means farmers. But in their new situation they "adopted pastoral habits not unlike that of their African neighbours". D. Denoon, Southern Africa Since 1800, (London: Longman, 1972), p. 46.

centuries Tiv society was in flux and more likely to tolerate and welcome aliens than earlier when it had been a relatively closed society in isolated mountain enclaves or later in the colonial period when a large bloc of Tiv existed and their ethnic boundary had become primarily territorial.

Finally, given the ethnic intermingling, Tiv traditions of hospitality opened the way to the welcome of non-Tiv into the family and the society. In fact, the increase and elaboration of Tiv hospitality may have been a concomitant of their outspread and the greater isolation of their homesteads. It may also have been the result of the greater food production which was possible as they took over <sup>the</sup> plains. In a region where there was little market for surplus agriculture, it was distributed through more extravagant hospitality.

This thesis has shown that there were many different origins of the Tiv. This process continued to provide a demographic excess. Under such conditions, the Tiv spread outwards, extending Tiv territory southwards, northwards, northwestwards, and eastwards. The period between 1750 and 1850 saw a great deal of territorial expansion. (See map.) It is fair to ask why this process of expansion was taking place among the Tiv. It is probable that the causes of the different migrations were numerous and complex. None of the contributory factors can be regarded as the single major cause but a postulation of some reasonably valid generalization about Tiv expansion and migration is necessary for a proper interpretation of Tiv history.



In the pre-colonial period agriculture was the dominant mode of production among the Tiv. Some farmers kept cows, goats, pigs, and lambs. All farmers kept chickens. A few farmers supplemented agriculture by hunting. Agricultural land was a valuable commodity and led inevitably to conflict among the Tiv lineages and with non-Tiv neighbours. There is enough evidence to indicate that there was a population increase during the latter half of the eighteenth century. As population rose, there was always a tendency toward movement to new farm lands. Soil was the foundation of the Tiv's economic life. A young adult, as a member in his patrilineal group, was entitled to virgin land in the locality in which he had been born. If a young man wanted land for farming, he approached the village head through his father. The village head then went out with the youth to look for "green land". Green land usually possessed black soils rich in humus, a sign that the land would be good for farming. Once such land was found the two would tie knots to show that the land now belonged to the young man and no one else should take it. This same individual would return to the village head each year asking for more virgin land with good soil. Under the method of shifting cultivation or rotation of crops, there was always a great demand for more land. Land became a scarce resource and led inevitably to movement. When the Tiv elders were asked why their ancestors were always on the move, they all agreed that lack of farmland was the main cause. As Tsafa put it:



In those days people wanted to farm near their homes for fear of enemies. Whenever the land was used up, our ancestors had to move to a new place.<sup>18</sup>

As this indicates, the Tiv at first lived in walled towns for "fear of enemies". Why in the eighteenth century did the fear of enemies decline so that the walled towns could break up? An understanding of what was occurring in Kwararafa vis a vis the Tiv is necessary. Kwararafa had organized cavalry troops which were a threat not only to the Benue Valley but also to Kano, Zaria, Katsina, and Bornu. By mid-eighteenth century Kwararafa was no longer a significant force nor a threat to her neighbours.<sup>19</sup> The military umbrella, provided by Kwararafa over most of the area now occupied by the Tiv, was removed. This allowed the Tiv to move out of their large walled settlements. The new economic opportunities associated with the wide plains probably explain the rapid population growth noted earlier.

In connection with the question of farmland, it must be mentioned that there was never a marked boundary around the whole of Tivland. Even when the British colonial administrators arrived it was difficult to demarcate and impose boundaries on the Tiv. As the groups continued to move, each

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<sup>18</sup>T.H.T. No. 3, 24/7/74 interview with Tsafa Amaichigh of Isherev-Ukum.

<sup>19</sup>O. Temple, Notes on the Tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, 2nd ed., (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1965), p. 173; J. B. Webster, "Animals of the Kingdom," in the Benue Valley Project Papers, No. 6, 1965, p. 15.

advance led them to plant their outposts along a river or a stream.<sup>20</sup> Eventually, as newcomers came, these communities needed more farmland and decided to move. It is therefore improper to talk of a crowded Tivland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Overcrowding was never a question of the whole but only of specific areas.

Although a search for more fertile land was the most prominent reason given for moving, there were other factors. Some groups moved for reasons which may be termed socio-political. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Tiv lived in several walled towns (gar). Two examples here will suffice. Some Ukum and Shitire people were in a big town, Garikomom near the Katsina Ala river, about 1689 - 1715. Based on the genealogies of the Ukum, they were at Garikomom for about four to five generations. They left the settlement about 1805 - 1835 and crossed the river Katsina Ala at several points including the crossings at Lake Awuna and Lake Naiko.<sup>21</sup> The informants say that their ancestors left because of a lack of farm land. They say that due to population congestion some lineage groups were driven out of Garikomom and they crossed to new sites.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Most of the Tiv settlements were built near a river or a stream.

<sup>21</sup>T.H.T. No. 2, 23/7/74 group interview at Gbagir of Ukum.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

A second major gar was that of some Ugondo at Asukunya hill. The writer visited the hill during his research and surveyed the ruins of the houses and the wall that had been built around the settlement. The writer counted a total of about five hundred homes which suggests a population of five thousand in this Asukunya settlement. In contrast the population of Tiv settlements today run between one to two hundred people. The Ugondo had wells on the slopes of the hills and could use these wells even when surrounded by enemies. The Ugondo argue that it was not easy for their forefathers to decide to leave; they would have preferred to stay. According to them, they left for two reasons. First, they were frequently involved in bloody feuds with Mbakor, of Kparev. Secondly, the increasing population made it impossible to remain on the hill.<sup>23</sup> This movement led some Ugondo to settle among <sup>the</sup> Masev super-clan, others crossed <sup>the</sup> the Benue and became a part of Iharev super-clan, while the majority crossed the river Katsina Ala to their present settlement.

The Tiv do not organize themselves under kings or chiefs. The elders of a settlement were in charge of making laws, the resolution of conflicts, the allocation of land, the regulation of hunting, and the settlement of marital disputes. When an individual and his group felt wronged in the

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<sup>23</sup>T.H.T. No. 141, 16/5/75 interview with Ikyah Toho of Ugondo.

settlement of disputes, they might decide to trek away to a new area. Depending upon the hostility which had been generated the group might move only a few miles away (expansion migration).<sup>24</sup> While the excuse for their departure might be unfairness in the allocation of land, or discrimination in a dispute over a woman, the real reason was often the desire of young men, especially those in their early thirties, to become independent. They were seeking to free themselves from the oppression of a gerontocracy, where little authority or prestige came to a man until those older than himself within his family had passed away. Frequently a man could see that his chances of ever exercising such authority were almost nil, as for example the younger sons of an elder who were younger than the oldest children of their elder brothers. Such men, as they approached thirty years of age and who were ambitious, were looking for excuses to leave and create new settlements where they could exercise the authority and receive the prestige which they might never enjoy if they remained in their natal villages.

It has been shown among other gerontocratic peoples that those prone to migrate were usually between 25 and 35 years of age, married to one wife, and with only one or two

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<sup>24</sup>This is one reason why some lineage groups are scattered all over Tivland. A few examples will demonstrate. The Isherev lineage group can be found in geographical areas like Masevland, Iharevland, Ukumland, Nongovland and other places. The main Ugondo super-clan is found in Ugondoland and in the "Ugondo-at-home" area. But there are other Ugondo lineages in Masev, Iharev, Kusuv, and Mbagen.

children. Normally there was a small group of such men who migrated away, age mates whose rank within the hierarchy of the gerontocracy was similar, and who often had been hunting partners. During hunting expeditions such potential migrants had spotted out land which they felt would be good for a new settlement. Once this stage had been reached their resentment of their inferior social position increased and they were prepared, if necessary, to create a crisis within their natal village or magnify any judicial decision which went against one of their number into a reason to depart.<sup>25</sup>

As one or more factions of such discontented young men formed in a village, the elders often turned to Tsav,<sup>26</sup> their command of supernatural powers, to control them. Belief in the existence of spiritual beings such as spirits, ghosts, and petty gods was part of the culture of Tiv society. But there was also animatism, which is the belief in impersonal supernatural power. It was believed that there was a Tsav power. This power was conceived to pervade the universe but was concentrated more in some objects and persons than in others. The elders were believed to possess more of it than ordinary folk. Thus fear of Tsav often became a reason for migration.

A small group of relatively young men moving away

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<sup>25</sup>J. B. Webster, and others, The Iteso during the Asonya, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1973).

<sup>26</sup>The word refers to mystical powers, a certain witchcraft potential and special ability.

from their well-established and populous natal village were likely to compromise and ally with the indigenous people in the new area into which they moved. In fact in their hunting expeditions young men often created friendships and won an acceptance among the indigenous people, so that when they arrived with their families they were expected and received a welcome. Certainly such groups of migrants, insecure and needing hospitality and peace, were likely to be more open to the indigenous people than those in long-established Tiv villages. This is what was referred to earlier as the greater **openness** of a society in a state of migration expansion and dispersed settlement.

As suggested earlier the nature of Tiv expansion depended upon the pattern of indigenous settlement. If the indigenous people were dispersed and relatively populous, as presumably the Idoma were, it was difficult for the Tiv to infiltrate among them. Presumably Idoma chiefs also claimed rights over the land. Expansion could be halted or greatly slowed down when the Tiv began to encroach upon the Idoma. Consequently the internal factors which propelled Tiv migration would build up within the society, until the Tiv employed force to dislodge the Idoma. Hence the reference in Idoma traditions to wars against the Tiv. However, usually Tiv expansion moved peacefully, suggesting that most indigenous people were organized in nucleated settlements, each being independent of the other and under chiefs whose authority extended over the land located only a few miles

from the village. This was the pattern north of the Benue. Here the Tiv moved in without official reference to anyone, but presumably with a certain good will of the closest indigenous inhabitants. In fact, two indigenous villages in a state of hostility might well have welcomed a belt of Tiv settlers between them as a buffer against aggression from each other. The Tiv moved in, on land which no chief claimed. In fact, in the Wuse area the Tiv are more integrated with the Hausa and Wadu because they were brought in as a counter-balance to the jihadist forces from Wase.<sup>27</sup> Certainly the Tiv expansion south of the Benue must also have been facilitated by such local political rivalries.

It is possible that certain indigenous people may have become more nucleated in their settlements because of the Tiv presence. Even if the Tiv were not warlike, they were aggressive, boisterous, and independent-minded in their social behaviour. They therefore often created a sense of respect, if not fear, among their neighbours especially when these qualities were combined with the unusual physical endurance for which the Tiv are noted. One learns not to trifle with a Tiv, even if, as with the Jukun and the Hausa, there is a marked feeling of condescension that the Tiv lack many of the "civilized graces". Once the Tiv were established the indigenous people were not likely to move closer to them. They kept a respectful distance. Nor, if the present pattern

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<sup>27</sup> Personal communication from Professor J. B. Webster.

north of the Benue is anything to go by, did the Tiv establish themselves close to the villages and towns of the indigenes.

One of the results of the Tiv contact with other peoples was warfare. Before actual wars are considered, an attempt should be made to describe Tiv military practices. The military technology in pre-colonial Tiv evolved gradually. At first, the weapon that was used by those who settled on mountains was rolling rocks. Many rocks were placed around the settlement. As soon as an invading force arrived and tried to climb, the rocks were rolled down against that force. Other weapons included bows and arrows made wholly from wood. These poisoned wooden arrows were used for a long long time. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Tiv had absorbed indigenous people who were iron workers. As such they replaced the wooden arrows with iron tips. They invented the use of Kapa (a hook) and Ima (finger-guard used when shooting arrows) which made shooting arrows move with much more force. With iron, other weapons were made. These included spears, short stabbing knives, swords, and cutlasses. They possessed a secret deadly poison which was applied to the arrows. Such arrows, if thrown with the help of a Kapa, could kill elephants. Unlike some other groups in Africa, the Tiv had no standing armies, nor armies with regiments based upon age grades. In the preparation for war, a messenger would be sent with an ayande plant as a flag, to pass the word around. Whenever there was an emergency the indyer drum was played to call people to gather in one place.



The major expansion of the Tiv was towards the north and west. The Tiv groups that expanded to the north included a section of Iharev and a section of Nongov. By the middle of the eighteenth century the Iharev group had left Mount Selagi and were moving towards the Igbor mountains. Since they were numerous, they divided into four sub-clans at Igbor, the Utiondo and Sherev clans moved northwards and some individuals had started to cross the river Benue before 1800. The majority however did not cross the river until the first decades of the nineteenth century. Most of the Utiondo crossed at Abinsi and the Sherev some miles further west. The other two clans Raav and Mbakpa stayed on the south bank. The Nongov group were not in the company of the Shitire, Ukum, and Ugondo, following the west bank of the Katsina Ala river.<sup>28</sup> The Nongov first settled at Mkar mountain for a short time before moving to the Gboko hills. They had a quarrel with the Shitire which led them to move towards the east crossing the river Katsina Ala. At their first settlement after crossing, the three sections of Nongov separated. The Kambe and Ndzorov left the Saghev and moved northwards, crossing the Benue and settling near the Iharev.

It is believed that the indigenous people north of the Benue were the Kworu, Kwena, Bassa, and Wadu. Most of these people today have been absorbed by later immigrants. The immigrant group that arrived first were the Alago and

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<sup>28</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "Intelligence Report on the Nongov Saghev Clan" 29719, C S O 26/3 NAI.

Jukun.<sup>29</sup> They settled in this area around 1500. By the middle of the eighteenth century a second group, the Kamberi from Bornu via Kwararafa, arrived and settled at Keana, Awe and other places. Ultimately they came to centre around Lafia. They were followed in the beginning of the nineteenth century by the Katsinawa who fled from the Islamic jihads and settled at Abuni, Tunga Nkasa, Awe and other places.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century, villages north of the Benue were spaced about ten to twenty miles apart, each of a different ethnic group, each under its own chief and entirely independent. The situation was very complex with a great deal of tension and ample room for political manoeuvring. Certain peoples north of the Benue looked upon the Tiv as potential allies in the power struggle already in progress. No group used the Tiv more than the Alago. As early as c. 1760 - 1787, when very few Tiv had settled north of the river, Tiv mercenaries were fighting for Ozegya Adi, King of the Alago kingdom of Keana.<sup>30</sup> From that time forward the Tiv became a larger and larger factor in Keana's politics of survival.

The important question here is to determine the historical circumstances which led to the rise of the phenomenon of Tiv mercenaries. It should not appear surprising that

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<sup>29</sup> Robert Sargent, "The Tiv-Hausa War: The Combat and Combatants, c. 1850-1879", Benue Valley Historical paper No. 8.

<sup>30</sup> A. Adefuye, "Ozegya Adi, Obanseriki of Keana: His Life and Times", B.V.P.P. No. 2.

mercenary soliders emerged from a chiefless society. As one thinks of mercenaries in Africa, one remembers the Ibo mercenaries of the Aro, the Langi mercenaries who fought for Bunyoro-Kitara, and Iteso mercenaries in Basoga chiefdoms. Ibo, Langi, and Iteso were acephalous in political organization. In fact mercenaries are seldom associated as coming from chiefly societies.<sup>31</sup>

It was easy enough for ambitious young men, restless because of the lack of future prospects in a Tiv village or being leaders of a faction of discontented, to turn to a mercenary life and recruit other Tiv in similar circumstances. In addition, if they found out that they had military abilities, they were on the road to a prominent place in history. One such leader among the Iharev, Gbanyam Wunduikure, became so famous that the Iharev still remember him in songs.<sup>32</sup> It is believed that he possessed a magical lamp which he used when he climbed Mount Ikwe to look far off for new sites for settlements. The lamp was supposed to discover and point out the poor or dangerous spots to be avoided. His two sons Chafu and Bume were brave men and led many Tiv to cross the Benue, initially as mercenaries, later to be converted into settlers. Among the Nongov, Gbayange and Agbede were highly respected warriors. Many of the Iharev warriors came to the

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<sup>31</sup>J. B. Webster and A. A. Boahen, History of West Africa. The Revolutionary Years 1815 to Independence, (London: Longmans Green and Co. Ltd., 1967), p. 177.

<sup>32</sup>T.H.T. No. 82, 30/1/75. Igba Ikpen of Isherev Iharev.

court of the Osana of Keana and to the King of Doma while Nongov warriors went to Aji the Jukun King of Awe, (c. 1760-1787).<sup>33</sup> It is safe to say that the majority of the Iharev did not cross the Benue until the reign of Osana Onyatiko Olegya (c. 1814-1841). However, before mass migration, a few Tiv traders had gone to Keana, Awe, and other centres north of the Benue. Since all traders had to go to the Osana or other chiefs to pay tribute, the Osana had the opportunity to use them as mercenaries in his attempt to consolidate and protect his kingdom. Since these Tiv were heavily armed to protect themselves on the trade routes, they had weapons to use when employed as mercenaries.

With the mass migration across the Benue came the end of the era of mercenaries and the opening of a new era, when Tiv settler armies fought with the Alago and later in battles to clear the land for their own expansion. The first violent confrontation took place when the Katsinawa forces from Jangarigari attacked the Nongov settlements along the Benue river. The Katsinawa desired to capture slaves and spread the cause of Islam. The leader of the Katsinawa was Anga Yaki. The Tiv gathered their men to undertake a battle of revenge. An informant in Nongov reported that:

When all the fighting forces had gathered on the fixed day, the great war leaders, Nyam, Chafu and Gbayange led the warriors into battle. When they approached Jangargari, with the

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<sup>33</sup>R. Sargent, "The Northern Tiv: Migration, War and Societal Transformation", B.V.P.P. 12, p. 2.

army divided up under the great warriors, someone climbed a tree and sounded a horn for the attack to begin.<sup>34</sup>

The Tiv were successful in destroying the Katsinawa settlement of Jangarigari. Many of the Katsinawa were killed. The significance of the success was that Nongov unity was strengthened. It also brought cooperation between the Nongov and Iharev. Moreover the Nongov could now expand many miles north of the river Benue, towards the present day town of Awe. This expansion continued until the Tiv became the dominant group in this area.

The second battle to be considered is the one at Tunga Nkasa. On the one side were the Iharev allied with the Alago of Keana of Jija. On the opposite side were the Katsinawa from Tunga Nkasa. Sargent has suggested a number of reasons for this war. According to him although the Alago welcomed the Tiv settlers, the Katsinawa farmers did not. Furthermore, the Alago were afraid that the Katsinawa would seize their salt industry. The Alago had faith in Tiv military power and welcomed the Tiv both as suppliers of foodstuffs and defenders of Keana. Sargent believes that "the Alago monarchy in fact advocated the combined attack on Tunga Nkasa, but withdrew its troops during the course of the battle".<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

The incident which triggered this battle involved a war of succession when Ibrahim the chief of Tunga Nkasa died. His son Yarima asked Agise of Dwem of Iharev super-clan to guard the royal regalia during the succession struggle. Yarima was hoping to replace his father as chief. However, the elders of Tunga Nkasa chose Abubakar Angulu to succeed. When Agise was approached for the regalia he showed his disapproval by refusing to return it. Later, when Atobaji of Iharev visited Tunga Nkasa, he was beheaded. The Tiv took up their arms and attacked Tunga Nkasa. There was resistance from Abubakar Angulu and his men. Many of his people were killed. The remnant fled with him to Adudu, Kanje, and finally on to Baure. The warriors fought and defeated the Katsinawa at Adudu and Kanje but suffered a defeat at Baure by the Katsinawa, who by this time had secured rifles from European traders on the Benue. Chief Angulu received permission from the Emir of Bauchi and settled at Tsohon Tunga, a place chosen because it was near the Benue river and close to the source of guns.<sup>36</sup>

Thus the Tiv first allied with the Alago kingdom of Keana to assist it against a Katsinawa group which had settled in or near the Kingdom. This removed the threat to Alago authority and allowed the Tiv more room for expansion. However, the Iharev Tiv had been living in amity around Tunga Nkasa and it was their involvement in Hausa politics which

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

led to the war. Clearly they favoured Yarima as chief; when he lost, the Tiv refused to hand over the regalia to his successful rival. The beheading of Atobaji was because the Tiv had destroyed the royal regalia. The result was the destruction of a number of Hausa villages and the opening up of a large region to Tiv settlement.

The attack that was initiated by the Nongov after Jangarigari was against Abuni which had assisted Jangarigari. Although Abuni entered into an alliance with Kanje, the Tiv were victorious. The remnant of the Katsinawa fled to Kanje. The Nongov warriors entered and sacked Kanje and took with them a daughter of the Sultan of Sokoto, who was a trading caravan leader. She became a wife to Aka, one of the Tiv war leaders.<sup>37</sup> To rescue this princess, Alhassan of Awe mobilized the Islamic centres of Lafia, Keffi, Nasarawa, Bauchi, and Awe. In the ensuing battle Alhassan and many of his forces were killed. This victory of c. 1879 gave the Tiv a warrior reputation which lasted until the arrival of the Europeans. The Tiv became the numerically dominant element in the new region now open to their settlement. Later the Katsinawa re-established Kanje, Abuni, and Jangarigari without Tiv opposition. The Tiv had established respect and they had no basic objection to the Hausa villages whose markets were popular with them.

The last incident to be considered is that of the Kamberi of Lafia. Lafia was founded by Anini, an Alago, in the

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<sup>37</sup>Sargent, p. 21.

late eighteenth century.<sup>38</sup> In the early part of the nineteenth century Kamberi immigrants deposed Anini and appointed one of their men as the new chief. Although the Emir of Bauchi claimed suzerainty over Lafia, Keana regarded Lafia as its tributary state. To throw off Keana's sovereignty, Lafia attacked Keana and stole the prized carved doors of the Osana's palace. The king of Keana turned to his friends, the Iharev, for help.<sup>39</sup> The Iharev invited the Nongov to join them and marched on Lafia to pacify the area for Keana. Lafia was defeated and the doors returned to the Osana's palace. As Sargent reports:

Today these doors hang at the entrance to the Osana's palace as a major source of pride, and any Alago man<sup>40</sup> is more than ready to tell their story.

The nineteenth century shows again and again how different chiefdoms effectively utilized the Tiv military capabilities. When Doma became prey to the raiding expeditions of Makama Dogo of Nassarawa it was sacked on several occasions. "In desperation Doma invited the assistance of the Munshi (Tiv), and with their aid the besieging forces were routed".<sup>41</sup> When Osana Eladoza Onyatiko wanted to reduce

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<sup>38</sup>O. Temple, Notes on the Tribes, p. 512.

<sup>39</sup>R. Sargent, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>O. Temple, Notes on the Tribes, p. 514.



the political influence and prestige of the state of Doma the Iharev were invited against Doma. After the defeat of Doma, the Tiv captured slaves and opened up large areas for their own settlement.

About the same time as the Iharev and two sections of Nongov settlements emerged on the northern side of the Benue river, many other Tiv groups were moving from the western side of the Katsina Aia river across to the present eastern Tivland.<sup>42</sup> The lineages that moved across the river included the Ukum, Shitire, Ugongo, Tongov, Ikurav-Tiev, Tombo-Tiev, and Saghev of Nongov. These groups did not all cross at the same time nor at the same place. For example, the Torov of Ukum crossed at a place near Lake Awuna, which was named after the leader of the Torov. The Ngen and Mbaterem of Ukum crossed near Naikyo.<sup>43</sup> Traditions of the groups that crossed indicate that there were two kinds of peoples which led in the process of migration.

First, there were warriors who left their families and started a new settlement. After experimenting with the new site for some months, they returned to their home villages and encouraged everyone to move to the new site. One of these leaders, Agia, led the Tombo to Mount Fidi. Agia has become a legendary figure. It is believed that if one

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<sup>42</sup>Genealogies indicate that the mass crossing did not start until during the first decades of the nineteenth century.

<sup>43</sup>T.H.T. No. 2, 23/7/74 group interview at Gbagir of Ukum.

goes to Mount Fidi today, it is possible to find Agia's footprints where he placed his spear and where his wife placed her big calabash. Agia is still remembered for his kindness in the following song both by the Tombo and other Tiv groups.

On this earth, the most important thing  
is kindness. Go and tell Aondo Gbuusu.  
Go and tell Hiinyo, it is kindness.  
Agia was with the Tombo on the farm.  
That's why they are called - The Tombo  
of Agia. But it is because of his  
kindness. If someone would know me,  
I too would be his friend.<sup>44</sup>

Prior to the arrival of the Tiv groups on the eastern side of the Katsina Ala river, a complex of peoples were in the present land occupied by the Tiv while the uninhabited land was claimed by the Jukun. The ethnic groups included the Akere, Nyafa, Abuni, Agatu, Abakwariga, Chamba, and Jukun. Many of the non-Tiv groups had lived under Kwararafa. However the Kwararafa confederacy began to decline at the beginning of the eighteenth century. This decline put a stop to Kwararafa's offensive activities. But the confederacy was still strong enough to force many of the Tiv groups to expand only westerly or northwesterly. The few that attempted to encroach upon the Jukun homeland found "many of the Jukun and could not penetrate the land. Many of the Tiv returned to Ikuen

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<sup>44</sup>T.H.T. No. 127, 9/5/75 group interview at Kwagh Agure of Gambe-Tiev-Shitire. "Shawon yo, Kwagh cu Ka mfe tso. Za yo, ikaa Aondo u Gbuusu, Za 'yo i kaa Hu Nor, Kamfe. Agia in a Tombo Shin Tiev maniiyor iyeve er Tomba mba Agia kpa ka mfe tso. A luer Or Afam yo, mo kpa me lu or unan."

mountain for refuge."<sup>45</sup> However, in the early part of the eighteenth century many of the Tiv groups were able to break through into Jukun territory.

When the Ukum crossed, some of the lineages met with such resistance that they were forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of the king of Wukari. The Shitire and Ukum came into contact with the Jukun during the reign of Zikenju (1820-1854). Each new advance made by the Tiv had to be accompanied by a further payment. Some sections of the Ukum, such as the Isherev argue that they never fought the Jukun.<sup>46</sup> But the Kendev of Ukum were attacked and defeated by an Uke group. In the struggle that followed, this Jukun group was defeated at a battle near the river Loko.<sup>47</sup>

There were two main battles that took place before the 1860's. As the Ugondo/Shitire were attempting to control areas on the western bank they came into conflict with the Chamba. At Mount Mdema, which is about three to four miles west of the present Donga town, the armies of Donga defeated the Ugondo and pursued them until they met the Shitire at Adikpo mountain. To this day the Ugondo sing about this battle:

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<sup>45</sup>T.H.T. No. 19, 23/8/74 Ahen of Ukum.

<sup>46</sup>T.H.T. No. 9, 17/8/74 Tsafa Amaichigh of Isherev-Ukum.

<sup>47</sup>T.H.T. No. 11, 20/8/74 Bon Yongo of Kendev-Ukum.

Our mdema fell, the Ugondo fled to the farm Guruoo, the people fled to the farm, because the Ugondo were defeated.<sup>48</sup>

The second battle involved the Ugondo and Shitire on the one side and the Chamba on the other. Before this, the Ugondo had fought against the Shitire. But now, the two Tiv groups united against the Chamba. As a result of this war, the Ugondo re-crossed the Katsina Ala river to the east bank. They moved along the left bank and made their way first to the hills called Gboko and then to the Asukunya hills. It was from the Asukunya hills that they once again crossed the river to the west bank. This movement was not completed until the beginning of the present century. Again as the result of the war, part of the Shitire known as the Gambe crossed the river Katsina Ala and turned northwards. Not all the Gambe left. The ones which did depart made their way first to Mkar mountains, then to a place near the confluence of the Katsina Ala to Mount Fidi and spread over the territory they now occupy. There were several battles against the Jukun around Akwana. Constant raids by both sides led to almost continuous hostility. This was brought to a head when the Jukun executed a number of Tiv captives and displayed their heads on a tree outside the town.<sup>49</sup> There was

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<sup>48</sup>"Mdema wase yohol, ior haa atev, (2) Guruoo ior haa tievaoo, Mdema yohol."

<sup>49</sup>K. P. Maddocks, "Intelligence Report on the Shitire North District." 30745, CSO 26 MAI.

another motive. The Tiv wanted the salt mines which were under Jukun control. The Shitire then organized a full-scale attack on Akwana and drove out the Jukun; but they soon allowed them to return again as the Shitire did not know how to extract the salt. The Shitire argue that, thenceforward, they and the Jukun lived in peace and amity.

In the present southwest region of Tivland the non-Tiv groups, apparently, did not put up much resistance. There were many small ethnic groups without a corporate identify. In most cases the Tiv groups in the southwest carried out their migration tactic of moving to the farm. By that method, they would first find new farmland and farm there for a while. Eventually they would move their villages onto the land. From the new land they would recommence the tactics of raiding and looting their neighbours' villages and farms till the latter either moved farther south or became Tiv, leaving them in possession of the land. Both the Kunav and Gaav groups helped each other in battles against the Udam. The Tiv agree that they were not always victorious. The Shangev-Ya fought those Ugee on the border with them. They fought because the latter "did not want the Shangev to expand".<sup>50</sup> The major battle that the Shangev remember lasted for six months. The captain of the Ugee, Uterebe, was captured by the Shangev and slaughtered. His blood was sprinkled on the indyer drum. The Ugee sent Anaasu to see the Shangev

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<sup>50</sup>T.H.T. No. 200, 10/7/75 interview with Imborvungu of Shangev ya.

leaders. These leaders included Nyifuusa Uzer, Akuleyanga Dabu, and Antsoo Alokper. Anaasu, dressed in ayande, smeared himself with Kpagh (camwood powder) and negotiated the cease-fire.<sup>51</sup>

Having looked at how some Tiv contacts with other peoples resulted in war, we are in a position now to see how other contacts resulted in alternative relationships. One of the major results of such contacts was more peaceful contacts. Trade in salt was the major factor in the Nongov/Iharev and Alago relations. Such trade contacts and the relative importance of exchange cannot be ignored. The Nongov/Iharev informants state that expeditions were sent out to bring salt after having established friendly relations with the Alago. Some individuals went to the Osana. In fact the trade in salt was primarily done on an individual basis. As Adefuye has pointed out:

It was not cooperatively organized like that of the Hausa caravan. Individuals often set out on their own or with friends to try their trading fortunes in Keana. On the way they might meet other traders going to the same place and trek along with them. The Tiv were heavily armed anticipating highway robbery.<sup>52</sup>

The Nongov/Iharev traders brought yams and other foodstuffs to exchange for Keana salt. The Alago had salt but did not have fertile soil to grow the foodstuff grown in

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ade Adefuye "Keana: The Gift of Salt", B.V.P. P. No. 11, p. 9.

the countryside by the Tiv. It was reported that "the Tiv established a reputation for good farming" so much that "relations between them and Keana" became very cordial for many years.<sup>53</sup>

Some Tiv individuals became famous during this interaction. For example, it is reported that a certain Tiv woman, Wan Akara (the daughter of Akara) who lived during Ozegya's time c. 1776-1789, used to supply firewood to the Keana salt distillers. Wan Akara camped at a site where the present Keana market is situated. She employed many others to help her in the collection and transportation of firewood. Her wealth brought her status and she was remembered long after her death.<sup>54</sup>

There were signs of reciprocal Tiv influence on Alago's culture. Some of the Alago farmers adopted Tiv farming techniques, pottery methods, and house construction. This was possible because like the other Tiv groups the Iharev did not seek the ejection of the Alago, but rather peaceful penetration. Outsiders who witnessed the good relationship between the Tiv and Alago envied them.

In the western part of Tivland, as in its northern part, the same trade in salt had been recorded. Before the Tiv crossed the river Katsina Ala, a hunter who went across the river got lost while wandering in the bush and came

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

across a village owned by the people of Nyafa and Akele. The first reaction of the Akele was hostility and the desire to kill the hunter. The eldest in their midst prevented them from doing so. During the meal time, the hunter tasted salt in the stew but did not know what it was. Prior to this contact, the Tiv groups had no mineral salt. They used some ashes known as "muan mtse" as an ingredient for their stew. The hunter was shown what mineral salt looked like. Upon returning to Tivland he introduced mineral salt to his people. This inspired a group, which was led by the hunter, to return to Akele for more salt. They bought the salt in a sack made from raffia. The salt was taken back to Tivland and distributed. When the salt was finished, these traders returned for more. The Akele people asked the group who their chief was. When the group said that there was no chief among the Tiv groups, the Akele people instructed them that it was impossible for people to live peacefully without a chief. They were asked to crown the person who took the remaining salt in the sack after it was distributed. The Akele people crowned that Tiv man.<sup>55</sup> The informants cite this as an explanation why later on, whenever a person was selected to be chief among the Tiv, this person had to go to Akele before proceeding to Waka. On his return, drums were played and many goats were slaughtered for feasting. After the feast, either the chief himself or his wife was carried on a bed

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<sup>55</sup>T.H.T. No. 19, 23/8/74 interview with Ahen of Ukum.



around the compound six times. The song which is sung upon such occasions indicates the influence of the Abakwariga (Mgbakpa) and the Jukun.

Hoo, oo Water Mgbakpa, Water Katsinaoo  
 The chief brought sweet water  
 Hoo oo, water, Mgbakpa, Water Katsinaoo  
 - - - Yaa Ya Kabi toto, Yaa Ya.<sup>56</sup>

The introduction of salt, and subsequently chieftancy, made it possible for the Tiv and the Jukun to live peacefully. When Bakie visited this area in 1854, a leader from the Tiv told him that "The people of Kwararafa were much mixed." He expressed it by inserting the fingers of one hand among those of the other.<sup>57</sup> It must be borne in mind that although Kwararafa declined c. 1700, there was a revival after that and it was not until c. 1830 that Wukari was abandoned and the Aku re-located the capital at Wuse north of the Benue. This was a period of Tiv advance. From 1830 onward there was a steady decline of Kwararafa. The Chamba attacks in the nineteenth century forced the Jukun into retreat. Then Dankaro, a Hausa adventurer, related to the House of Sokoto, was hired by the Wukari authorities to hold back the Tiv advance. Ultimately, Dankaro joined the Tiv against the Muslim towns. On several occasions he allied with one Tiv group

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<sup>56</sup>T.H.T. No. 5, 25/7/74 interview with Madam Amaichigh of Ukum. "Hoo, oo Lua Mgbakpa Lua Katsina oo. Tor hembe lua dadi, Hoo po Lua, Mgbakpa, Lua Katsina oo oo lua. - - - - Yaa ya kabi; toto yaa ya ka bila."

<sup>57</sup>Dewar, p. 18.

against another.<sup>58</sup> As the Tiv expanded eastward into the western and southwestern regions of Kwararafa, they intensified their trade with the Jukun. More markets were built before 1854. Under such circumstances the Jukun did not make any attempt to resist the encroachment of the Tiv until the year 1871 when Agudu Manu came to the throne.<sup>59</sup>

In southern Tivland, the relations between the Tiv and their neighbours were not good enough to enable free travel and free trade. Before 1850 the markets in Kunav were at Gbagbongom and Abwa. Through marriage ties some Tiv men had Udam wives, and some of the Udam came to these markets. The Kunav traders attended markets like Nege in Tombo and Ashamena in Kusuv regularly and bought pigs, goats, and some produce. These were brought to Kunav and Gaav markets where they were exchanged for salt, camwood powder, palm oil, and iron bars from the Udam. This encounter brought new products from the Udam through the Kunav, Gaav, and Shangev to the rest of the Tiv.<sup>60</sup> While the Udam admit that they learned from the Tiv some of their crafts, such as the making of pots, the Kunav adopted the Girinya dance from the Udam. There was a custom whereby an Udam would cut a Tiv head off

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<sup>58</sup>R. C. Abraham, The Tiv People, (Lagos: Government Printer, 1933), p. 19. After Dankaro set Wukari at defiance, he established himself over the Jukun of Akwana. T.H.T. No. 126, 8/5/75 interview with Suswam of Gambe-Tiev.

<sup>59</sup>Dewar, p. 19.

<sup>60</sup>T.H.T. No. 52, 14/11/74 interview with Ikpaka of Udam.

and produce it at the Girinya dance. Only those who previously had killed a man could participate in the dance. The Tiv adopted this practice and it became one way of securing revenge whenever a Udam killed a Tiv. This dance did not spread from the Kunav to the rest of the Tiv. The contact with the Udam also brought to the Kunav the use of Kola nuts which hitherto had been unknown to them. Kola nuts became an important item in customs such as initiating a wedding. It also was employed in showing hospitality to visitors.

Such were the first two decades of the nineteenth century in Tivland. It was an era of change but also of continuity. Migrations continued but at a faster rate. Indeed, it was an era of mass migrations. It was an era when the Tiv carried a stronger conviction of identity. Their contact with many non-Tiv brought advantages and disadvantages to both the Tiv and their neighbours. It created opportunities for mercenaries and wars. It created wealth, wealth not only enjoyed by a few traders but by many of those who enjoyed salt, palm oil, kola nuts, and other products brought to the Tiv community.

This chapter has sought to show how the Tiv took advantage of the decline of Kwararafa to expand over the broad plains south of the Benue in the eighteenth century. The large settlements customary in the mountains were abandoned for a dispersed settlement on the plains where kinship clusters were normally never more than two hundred people. This expansion was facilitated by the settlement pattern of

the indigenous people who were organized in villages each with its own chief with only the farm land close to the village being claimed by the chief. This left wide open spaces between the villages for the Tiv to penetrate and infiltrate. Upon some occasions the Tiv were invited to settle to facilitate trade or for defence against hostile neighbours. Upon others they had to fight to establish their right to settle. This was particularly the case among the Idoma on the west, and Jukun on the east, and among the Hausa north of the Benue river.

Despite their acephalous political organization, the Tiv could bring up many soldiers from a wide geographic area, depending upon the strength of the enemy forces and the nature and degree of the threat as perceived by society. Thus the Tiv were able to rout the numerous and well-armed forces of the Sokoto Caliphate occupying many Hausa towns and driving the Hausa forces out of a very extensive region. However, the Tiv were not opposed to alien villages in their midst. Both north of the Benue and east of the Katsina Ala river, they allowed Hausa and Jukun to resettle in their villages under their own chiefs. What the Tiv required was recognition of their right to settle on the unoccupied land. Through their military prowess they earned the respect of the alien village chiefs. There was no question of Tiv paying tribute to these petty chiefs, tribute payment however was made to the Jukun king of Wukari for the privilege of settling.

This chapter has also given attention to the question

of why the Tiv were able to assimilate people of many other cultures, so that the traces of this **diversity** of origins are very difficult to detect in modern times. Partly it was because of the multi-ethnic nature of indigenous society, partly because of the way the Tiv were able to spread among the other groups, and partly because Tiv is an easy language to learn - the Tiv being slow to speak any language other than their own. Furthermore the open plains offered economic opportunities, which in turn led to a rapid increase in Tiv numbers which often gave them numerical dominance over any other single group. Finally, the Tiv were undergoing rapid change in the transition as they adopted a new settlement pattern on the plains. This led them to create a society which was open to aliens and hospitable to foreigners. In the pioneer days at least they were often dependent upon aliens for their day-to-day welfare. This promoted inter-marriage.

Once the decline of Kwárarafa opened up the possibility of small groups moving away into virgin lands from their natal villages, the sometimes oppressive rule of the gerontocracy induced many young men to move out and seek new lands where they could form the prestigious and authoritative ruling group. Migrations were the expected procedure for the young and ambitious. Quarrels were manufactured and disputes exaggerated, insults were imagined and the work of the Tsav power of the elders used as excuses for factions of young men to move away from their parents' homes. The Tiv had no chiefs, at heart every Tiv was a chief.

## CONCLUSION

The pre-colonial history of the Tiv is intricately interwoven with the ethnically pluralist environment of the Benue Valley of Nigeria. Numerically, the Tiv have become the dominant group in the area in modern times. The Tiv have both shaped and been shaped in inter-action with their neighbours. This thesis answers the question of who the Tiv were, gives an explanation of the way in which they have absorbed a variety of immigrants, and developed a powerful ethnic identity. It is intended that this study of ethnicity in Tivland will contribute in part, to the study of the problem of ethnicity in African societies.

Ethnicity remains a powerful factor, not only in Africa, but throughout the world. It is both an integrative and disintegrative force. Throughout the world ethnic groups generally feel themselves bound together by common ties and are often regarded as distinct by other members of multi-national societies to which they may belong. There is an ethnic presence in Western Europe, in Communist countries, and in North America, despite the passage of centuries, in spite of the loss of ethnic languages, and despite the absence of many ethnic institutions. The Québécois, the Basque, the Scot, among others, stand as examples.

It is difficult to think of modern ethnic groups in Africa in isolation from political boundaries. The arrival

of British, German, and French administrations in Africa created artificial boundaries of colonial states including regional boundaries which are still recognized today, although it is difficult to see how natural boundaries could have been created regardless of what criteria had been applied since the European idea of fixed rigidly demarcated boundaries was a concept alien to most African societies. The accepted method for establishing the boundaries was mainly a result of arbitration between the foreigners and politically important or dominant groups. This often produced natural boundaries but in many cases the allocation, delimitation, and demarcation of boundaries were often determined in distinct sections during bilateral negotiations among the European powers with scant attention to African political or ethnic realities. Despite these international and regional boundaries, ethnic groups have persisted across these boundaries. It is important to note that Barth has argued that an ethnic group has what we might call a natural boundary which is consciously maintained by cognitive criteria and along which interaction with other ethnic groups is standardized by using selected cultural traits to signal differences.<sup>1</sup>

However with a few major exceptions such as the Somalia in the Horn of Africa, the division of ethnic groups by international boundaries, has not been a major problem as

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<sup>1</sup>Fredrik Barth, Ethnic groups and boundaries, p. 24.

yet in Africa. Frequently in African countries, and in Nigeria in particular, ethnic groups have sought to be incorporated within one single administrative unit within a state and to dominate the governing machinery of that unit. This has been the case with the Tiv who are all located within Nigeria but who have agitated in the past to be incorporated within one administrative unit. However, because of the great inter-settling of various ethnic groups, in bringing the Tiv together administratively, many other ethnic groups must be divided and separated from kith and kin. Thus without vast displacement of population as has occurred in Europe and is at the moment occurring in the Indo China region of Asia, natural boundaries, that is those based on the criteria of ethnicity, are impossible to establish.

In spite of a great deal of cultural change among the Tiv, their ethnic consciousness has persisted and grown. The question arises as to how an ethnic group maintains its identity and yet makes itself attractive to other groups. It seems rather contradictory to talk of ethnic segregation and ethnic assimilation at one and the same time. There is no doubt that the price of assimilation could be the disappearance of the ethnic group as a separate entity and the evaporation of its distinctive values.

Nevertheless, since numbers count in history, it is frequently those ethnic groups which assimilate most while maintaining their identity, which become the historically important people.



A nation-state is one which consists of one ethnicity since "nation" usually is interpreted as "ethnicity". There are few such in Africa, Rwanda, Swaziland, and Lesotho being the major ones. The nation-state was the ideal in Europe ever since the Napoleonic wars and the history of Europe until at least 1945 was dominated by the working out of the principle of identifying each state with a single ethnic element. The unification of Italy and Germany, the breakup of the big multi-ethnic empires such as the Hapsburgs, Czarist, and Ottoman etc. were major events in this historical development. While the Scots and Basques represent only the tail end of this process in Western Europe, the Soviet Union could easily fall victim to such ethnic forces in the future.

In contrast to the building of multi-ethnic states in Africa in the twentieth century, pre-colonial African people attempted to bring together distinct small groups through the process of assimilation. At the same time these numerous small independent groups retained their consciousness of being Tiv. Some similarities with the numerous German states of the eighteenth century might be obvious. However the ruling houses of the German States, which were often promoters of separatism, were not a factor among the Tiv who remained "acephalous republicans". The Tiv serve as a case study. Thus an attempt has been made here to show their early beginnings and how they developed into the largest population in the Benue Valley.

Oral traditions have been used to explore the growth

of Tivness, and how the Tiv became a centre of attraction. Although there were no memorized traditions or professional 'historians' like the griots of other parts of West Africa, the writer found the free traditions of the Tiv very helpful. The survey of the sources for Tiv history in Chapter I suggests how far Tiv traditions can be reliably used to reconstruct the past. Tiv traditions, like literary documents, are susceptible to bias and distortion, but these have been checked with written records left by early European traders and administrators. Some traditions have been compared with those of Tiv neighbours. But because of the diffuse nature of Tiv settlement and their lack of centralized institutions, it was impossible for the Tiv to standardize their historical traditions. Thus the best check upon Tiv traditions is comparing those from one region with those in another.

To study the processes of the creation and change of a dynamic ethnic group over a period of more than three hundred years before the imposition of European rule a chronological framework was needed. The attempt to establish one involved several problems. Although the Tiv had age-grouping which could be called age-sets, these were useless in determining generational structure. None of the age-sets had a totem or a symbol. One set was not identifiable from another. Most important of all the Tiv themselves do not use these sets in their recounting of their history as do the

Masai and Jie of East Africa.<sup>2</sup> Nor were archaeological data available. No extensive archaeological diggings have been carried out among the Tiv, although elsewhere in Africa such diggings have contributed to dating.<sup>3</sup> In a very similar way, the records of literate Muslim invaders have been helpful to other African historians. Muslims, however, did not reach Tivland until the nineteenth century. There were, therefore, no Arabic references which could help recall a series of events in a chronological sequence. In East Africa eclipses or droughts helped in dating events, but the Tiv had no remembrance of either which might place events in sequence. Finally, I have shown that as a kingless and chiefless society, the Tiv possessed no regnal lists which have been such valuable dating devices all over Africa. Even worse but obviously in line with the republican and egalitarian nature of the society, events are described in oral traditions without in most cases any reference to the leaders or great men who participated. In spite of all these handicaps, the clan genealogies of the Tiv and their neighbours along with recorded internal and external events made it possible for

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<sup>2</sup>Jacobs, "A Chronology."

Lamphear, "When the Ngitome Speared Their Oxen."

<sup>3</sup>It was only after writing of this thesis had been completed that the archaeological work done in the Benue Valley was brought to my attention. This work however does not in any way help in my dating.

See D. Calvocoressi and Nicholas Davis, "A new survey of Radiocarbon and Thermoluminescence Dates for West Africa," J.A.H., 20, 1 (1979), pp. 1 - 29.

the writer to reconstruct at least a skeletal outline of the past of the Tiv. It is little wonder that given these handicaps, earlier writers had claimed that the writing of Tiv history was impossible.<sup>4</sup>

From their early formation Tiv political and social institutions have been undergoing a process of evolution, always changing yet displaying a great deal of continuity with the past. The Tiv ethnic identity discussed in this study was a dynamic phenomenon which adjusted and adapted itself to external pressures and to the demands of the different environments that they encountered. Far from being stagnant, the Tiv experienced continuing change in the pre-European period. What set the Tiv apart was their religion, their language, their distinctive culture and their genealogical charter. These symbols forged the Tiv into a meaningful group and contributed to the Tiv ability to survive as an ethnic unit.

Religion served (and serves today) as a symbol of Tiv ethnicity. The different political units served as units within which religious beliefs and practices functioned. By means of their akombo 'Swem', information which might have disappeared for good, was preserved. The people remembered that during the settlements at Swem Mountain there were mbatsav and the people of akombo with their religious powers.

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<sup>4</sup>The cut-off for this thesis is 1850. The white traders who arrived in Tivland in the 1850's were not significant in themselves as far as Tiv history is concerned but they foreshadowed a new age. Other writers have dealt with the period from 1850 onwards.

These powers helped to hold early Tiv society together. Despite the changes that have occurred, many of the Tiv in the 1970's believe that these same mythical powers continue to hold their society together. In 1976, this researcher met young Tiv men in the Nigerian Army who were consulting Tiv elders for instructions and "prayers" in order to receive "good luck". Although elders complain that young people today do not give them full respect, Tiv communities in general respect their elders. Whenever the elders come together, it is believed that some of them are members of mbatsav and it is believed that they have been on pilgrimage to Swem mountain. The elders go through rituals behind a wall of impenetrable secrecy.

To this day the Tiv have maintained their identity in the spiritual realm. The introduction of Christianity however, has brought some disunity into this pillar of Tiv society. Considerable numbers of Tiv people have been converted to Christianity, but the majority still reject Christianity. Tiv Christians have been partly successful in proving that a person can be a Christian and a Tiv at one and the same time. They feel that they are Tiv, and Tiv elders show some tolerance to Christians and partially accept them as citizens. Yet they know that these citizens cannot perform some of the Tiv rites. The tension between religious tradition and changes that are taking place have not destroyed ethnic bonds, and some Tiv would argue that Christianity has introduced a creative tension into Tiv

society and ethnicity.

Only in a multilingual environment is language a really powerful symbol of ethnic identity. In their contacts with other groups in the mountainous area and later in the valley, the Tiv were marked off from different groups by their speech. Language was indeed the surest badge of Tiv ethnicity. Not all people who spoke Tiv were Tiv, but all Tiv spoke Tiv. To this date, the Tiv display great pride in their language. Many Tiv have literally refused to learn Hausa or other languages for many generations. Today, however, Tiv who live in towns especially Christians, have learned and employ other languages. Yet these changes have not made such people less Tiv. Learning English or other languages is no longer considered an obstacle to being Tiv. It is acceptable that such people need another language for their work or livelihood. The new threats to Tivness, new religions, languages and inter-mingling which occasionally lead to inter-marriage, appear in fact to have strengthened the determination of the Tiv to preserve, safeguard and even build up the sense of Tiv identity in modern times.

Equal to language in the Tiv sense of identity was their social heritage - the ways of acting and the ways of doing things which were passed down from one generation to the next. Tivness involved the culture or shared behavioural norms and patterns that differed somewhat from those of their neighbours. These ranged from ethical values, musical tastes, folk recreational patterns, dress, manners, patterns of

emotional expression, and facial markings. Culturally, the Tiv were separated from other groups and emphasized their uniqueness especially in multi-ethnic societies.

In addition to religion, language, and culture, the sense of belonging together by descent was very strong. As this study will show, the Tiv trace their roots to a man called "Tiv." As "sons" of Tiv they can hold property in common and act corporately. To be a Tiv or to assimilate into Tiv society, it was necessary to be able to trace oneself genealogically back to the hero-ancestor, the original Tiv. To be Tiv a person had to be a son or daughter of a Tiv by birth or by "adoption." In other words, the Tiv believe that all members of their group were descendants of a common ancestor. Since families lived in a village and lineages lived in a defined area, the pattern of residence produced strong lineage identities. These in turn brought about ethnic identity. Strangers who came to live in such communities for a period of time were included in the family tree as adopted children, or became linked to a minimal lineage genealogically. Individuals who were enticed to cross over and live within Tiv ethnic boundaries, were forced by social pressures and the social structure to identify with all the Tiv genealogically. Otherwise they had no right to land anywhere among the Tiv. This did not require faking ancestors, it merely meant claiming that one's ancestor was not an immigrant but rather a son of a Tiv man who had welcomed the immigrant. Thus the immigrants merely plugged their own

genealogy into that of the resident Tiv. It did not disturb the chronological pattern, it merely faked the biological relationship. Many would recall for a century or more that the relationship had been faked but this hardly mattered if the new family conformed generally to Tiv cultural norms.

Becoming Tiv meant adopting Tiv cultural traits. It was possible for an incoming group, like some of the Utur groups, to possess religious and linguistic characteristics similar to those of the Tiv and still identify themselves as distinct on the basis of different cultural traits. But the Tiv regarded their own cultural traits to be superior to those of other groups. One example is that of farming. The Tiv believed that their ideas and methods of farming were far superior to those of other groups. Immigrants who failed to adopt Tiv ways of farming were alienated. This threat of alienation forced immigrants to adopt Tiv methods. The fact that the Tiv were always in search of virgin land for their farms often forced other ethnic groups to compete with the Tiv. Through the process, the Tiv usually imposed their will upon the others. Subtle force and occasionally blatant force was a normal part of this process of assimilation. Some immigrants who would not conform returned to their homelands. The degree of assimilation varied from one place to another. Some assimilated groups never completely abandoned their previous culture. In such cases while the new group linked themselves to an established Tiv lineage, they generally formed a new lineage which was not totally absorbed within



the older lineage but rather ultimately came to be identified as a new clan. This justified the cultural variations which existed between this clan and the others.

Another means of assimilation used by the Tiv was that of marriage. Even though the Tiv claimed that those around them were quite dissimilar culturally, they were willing to marry non-Tiv. This appeared to have been one of the factors which brought about enduring harmonious relations between the Tiv and some of their neighbours. Some of the relatives of the non-Tiv moved to Tivland to live in the village near their sisters. They became part of the strong lineage identity.<sup>5</sup> Oral traditions readily recall the non-Tiv women since they mattered less in a patrilineal society. Their offspring were unquestionably Tiv. They do not recall the non-Tiv men since they had to link themselves genealogically to the national tree in order to justify marriage to a Tiv woman.

The fragmented political structure among the Tiv made it easier for small groups and individuals to assimilate into Tiv culture. Segmentary society made it possible for the immigrant groups to participate at the local level. Some of

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<sup>5</sup>The Tiv reckon descent through males, from father through son (patrilineal). Married couples therefore live in or near the husband's patrilineal kinsmen (patrilocal residence). The kinsmen of the wife are treated with great respect. Marriages that involved non-Tiv always opened the way for the in-laws to trade, visit, or live with the Tiv.

the immigrants akombo were accepted and incorporated by the rest of the Tiv. There was a tendency of some immigrants to perform their own akombo for the rest of the Tiv. For example, there was a type of akombo performed only by Ugee clans. Further research might demonstrate when certain akombo were introduced and by which immigrant groups.

Assimilation was not an inevitable outcome of ethnic contact. Some Utur have maintained their language and other major cultural and social attributes. Although they live in a segregated land, it could be that since they had an established and numerous society during the period of the Kwararafa empire, prior to the arrival of the Mbagen of Kparev, they were largely able to maintain their social and cultural unity. Further research is needed in order to determine how the process of assimilation itself changed through time. It is sufficient to state that there is a clear indication that the process of assimilation has not always been the same. Especially during the early period of Tiv formation, different patterns of assimilation seem to have existed. Early immigrant groups, such as the Ugee, retained some distinctive rituals and cultural traits. The assimilation of immigrants in the nineteenth century was more complete. One possible explanation is that in the earlier centuries, the Tiv were taking over a rather heavily populated area, recently under Kwararafa authority. It was difficult for Tiv settlers to penetrate into density populated cores. The older groups were incorporated involuntarily. It must be recalled that thousands

of people moved away from this Tiv advance. However, in the nineteenth century, assimilation was largely of people who voluntarily moved into areas of Tiv settlement. They were prepared to assimilate and did so much more thoroughly than those in earlier centuries.

The incorporation of non-Tiv resulted in expansion, migration and vice versa. The geographical expansion of the Tiv correlated with their social structure. Tiv migration has been a complex phenomenon, changing from time to time. But one constant factor which can be noted is that their expansion resulted in contact with other peoples. Occasionally this expansion meant fighting the non-Tiv, but there were also commercial relations and social interaction with neighbouring groups. On their arrival, the British colonial officers tried to freeze boundaries which had been fluctuating during the pre-colonial period. A 'Munshi (Tiv) wall' was built on the southern Tiv border. But the Tiv did not abandon their migratory habits. They 'jumped' the wall and continued to move in all directions. By 1976 when nineteen states were created in Nigeria, the Tiv were found not only in Benue state but also in the Plateau and Gongola states, and in all the major towns and cities of Nigeria.

The writer is confident that this study of Tiv identity and Tiv assimilation is a significant addition to the writing of the history of the Benue Valley. But the implications of the findings also reach beyond the regional emphasis. First, this study raises important methodological

issues of political and social history among the acephalous peoples in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. There are over twenty million acephalous people in Nigeria.<sup>6</sup> Historians studying such groups from oral traditions must be ready to collect traditions and genealogies from as many informants as possible. Such data seems likely to project the conclusions of this study to a universal dictum: there is no such thing as a pure clan or a pure ethnic group. A group may claim direct descent from one ancestor, and may claim that it has been moving from one area to another as a unit over time, but data collected from the group and their neighbours proves the opposite.

Second, the study contributes to the literature on ethnicity. With the exception of the role of trade, most studies are on contemporary ethnicity.<sup>7</sup> This study is on ethnicity in the past. Ethnicity constitutes a moving rather

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<sup>6</sup>This thesis has focused on the Tiv and has raised several questions and attempted to provide some answers of a wider application. The basic processes dealt with here may not be directly applicable elsewhere, but it is hoped that the methodology and concepts evoked here may be useful to other historians working elsewhere. Not all questions have been raised. Further research should look at, among other things, how slaves were assimilated in this acephalous society.

<sup>7</sup>Philip D. Curtin, Economic Change in Pre-Colonial Africa, (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1975). See especially his Chapter II, "Trade Diasporas and the Senegambian Juula." Most studies on ethnicity focus on urban settings in colonial and post-colonial periods. But there is no reason why these insights could not be applied to the pre-colonial context of Tiv ethnicity.

than a static pattern of identities. The Tiv ethnic group maintained a distinct identity, but it was a changing one from one generation to the next. Other ethnic groups were 'Tivized'. They became Tiv by acquiring the Tiv language, religion, culture, and linking themselves into the national genealogical charter.

Finally, ethnicity is both an integrative and disintegrative force. The Tiv proved that they had the potential ability to use the integrative aspect of ethnicity. Through their contacts with other groups, the Tiv managed to integrate them into Tiv ethnicity. The Tiv have become part of a new nation - Nigeria - with many cultures, participating in a new process of assimilation. This new experience can be viewed optimistically as similar to that which the Tiv have experienced on a small scale for many generations. Despite the Nigerian Civil War, which portrayed the negative force of ethnicity, the assimilation of the Tiv may stand as a practical example of how to integrate small groups into a larger unit. Since Nigeria is a conglomerate society, the question of national cohesion is one of paramount importance. I do not wish to suggest that Nigeria, as a modern nation, will or should employ all the same methods in trying to unify the country that the Tiv used. But the loyalty that helped bind together disparate groups in Tivland could also help bind together all Nigerians.

## SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

### PRIMARY

#### A. ORAL EVIDENCE

##### I - THE TIV HISTORICAL TEXTS

Oral traditions provide the bulk of the evidence used in this reconstruction of the pre-colonial history of the Tiv. Accounts of some of these traditions have been compiled by early colonial officials, but I systematically collected Tiv traditions in the course of field research in 1974 - 1975 and during the summer of 1976. During the two periods, a series of three hundred and sixty-four formal interviews were conducted with one thousand and five informants. I also collected a total of four hundred and six genealogies. The interviews constitute the Tiv Historical Texts (T.H.T.).

The present work on the Tiv pre-colonial history is part of the Benue Valley Research Project (B.V.R.P.). The project is the first attempt by professional historians to document systematically the pre-colonial histories of the Jukun, Tiv, Hausa, Alago, and Kanuri who occupy the Benue Valley. The traditions of these groups were collected between June 1974 and September 1976 and have been typed, bound, and indexed into ten volumes. It is intended that the three hundred and sixty-four interviews among the Tiv

will be typed and bound into volumes as a continuation of the Benue Valley series. In due course, copies of the Tiv Historical Texts will be deposited at Killam Library, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. The director of the Benue Valley Research Project, Dr. J. B. Webster, will have copies of these texts. Dr. A. C. Unomah, the assistant director of the project, will make copies available at the Africana collection of the Ibadan University Library, Ibadan, Nigeria. Thus these oral traditions on which this history is written will be available to the reader.

Each interview session is numbered serially and contains the following particulars: the date of the interview, the name or names and estimated age of the informants, and the place of interview.

(i) TIV HISTORICAL TEXTS - JOHN ORKAR

C 1500 - 1900 A.D

T.H.T. 1 - July 22, 1974. Group interview with Ikpavu Mata (80), Akesa Baku (65), Anyinuku Amaichigh (75), Beba Ukere (70), Kwen Bua (70), Maamo Alabar (75), Mbagir Agbaibu (77), Swende Adi (70), Tsafa Amaichigh (70), Gyemwase Ami (75) at Ngenev, Ukum.

T.H.T. 2 - July 23, 1974. Group interview with Apeghan Iho (60), Bako Abenga (70), Orgbyo Gbagir (55), Anga Zonto (60), Tsehe Yajir (65), Avir Nor (64), Tachia Ihor (65), Kondom Indor (70),

Kwembe Agir (75), Yanumbur (75), Ahen Iwambe (nee Kaakigh Torusu) (80), Joseph Lamve Malu (44) at Afya, Ukum.

T.H.T. 3 - July 24, 1974. Interview with Tsafa Amaichigh (70), at Isherev, Ukum.

T.H.T. 4 - July 24, 1974. Interview with Gyemwase Ami (75) at Mbatian, Ukum.

T.H.T. 5 - July 24, 1974. Interview with Madam Amaichigh (40), Isherev, Ukum.

T.H.T. 6 - July 25, 1974. Interview with Tsafa Amaichigh (70), Isherev, Ukum.

T.H.T. 7 - July 25, 1974. Interview with Gyemwase Ami (75), Mbatian, Ukum.

T.H.T. 8 - July 28, 1974. Interview with Tsafa Amaichigh (70), Isherev, Ukum.

T.H.T. 9 - August 17, 1974. Interview with Tsafa Amaichigh (70), Isherev, Ukum.

T.H.T. 10 - August 19, 1974. Interview with Tsafa Amaichigh (70), Isherev, Ukum.

T.H.T. 11 - August 20, 1974. Interview with Boiyongo Gbaa (85), Kundav, Ukum.

T.H.T. 12 - August 20, 1974. Interview with Hua Atoo (75), Kundav, Ukum.

T.H.T. 13 - August 21, 1974. Group interview with Ahen Iwambe (80), Orgbyo Gbagir (55), Afya, Ukum.

T.H.T. 14 - August 22, 1974. Interview with Chief Joseph Lamve Malu (44), Torov, Ukum.



- T.H.T. 15 - August 23, 1974. Group interview with Atuluku Akya (80), Utange Atuluku (50), Dajo (45), Boiko, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 16 - August 23, 1974. Interview with Ibi Ityam (70), Kendeve. Ukum.
- T.H.T. 17 - August 23, 1974. Interview with Ikyereve Tortem (90), Isherev, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 18 - August 23, 1974. Interview with Madam Kukighir Adam (70), Zaki-Biam, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 19 - August 23, 1974. Interview with Ahen Iwambe (80), Afya, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 20 - August 26, 1974. Interview with Ahen Iwambe (80), Afya, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 21 - August 26, 1974. Interview with Bako Abenga (70), Torov, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 22 - August 27, 1974. Interview with Ngugban Lamana (64), Zaki-Biam, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 23 - August 27, 1974. Interview with Ahen Iwambe (80), Afya, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 24 - August 27, 1974. Interview with Pastor Daniel Kuman Abenga (48), Afya, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 25 - August 28, 1974. Interview with Ahen Iwambe (80), Afya, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 26 - August 29, 1974. Interview with Mrs. Yana Sai (70), Mkar, Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 27 - September 2, 1974. Interview with Mrs. Yana Sai (70), Mkar, Ipav, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 28 - September 20, 1974. Group interview with Tyoor Abata Ahua (50), Naga Aguta (55), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 29 - September 21, 1974. Interview with Mr. J. Mbaakar Indiõhwere (62), Mkar, Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 30 - September 26, 1974. Group interview with Usar Jiba (73), Iyorzyaa Jigba (70), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 31 - September 28, 1974. Interview with Akombo Ajla (70), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 32 - October 2, 1974. Interview with Gbajur Igyer (65), Mbagen, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 33 - October 2, 1974. Interview with Bgajur Igyer (65), Mbagen, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 34 - October 10, 1974. Group interview with Imande Yough (68), Uvor Mkema (55), Ugera Akpehe (50), Naor Adom (50), Asema Ugo (45), Sarwuan Agbaikyor (45), Usange Agba (45), Ukombo Nyikwagh (50), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 35 - October 10, 1974. Interview with Ugo Bina (90), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 36 - October 11, 1974. Interview with Igbe Ande (75), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 37 - October 11, 1974. Group interview with Amenaiho (75), Iyorgyer Tseke (60), Tor Ihyande (55), Ugbede Agee (55), Tyona Uzege (50), Yonov, Masev.

- T.H.T. 38 - October 14, 1974. Interview with Gbajur Ingyer (65), Mbagen, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 39 - October 17, 1974. Interview with Uka Udum (85), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 40 - October 17, 1974. Interview with Nor Achubu (55), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 41 - October 17, 1974. Group interview with Ipusu Shar (60), Udo Ityungu (55), Gaav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 42 - October 18, 1974. Interview with Isaiah Roma Annyon (40), Gaav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 43 - October 18, 1974. Interview with Andiar Begha (50), Mbawuar, Kunav.
- T.H.T. 44 - October 18, 1974. Interview with Andiar Begha (50), Mbawuar, Kunav.
- T.H.T. 45 - October 19, 1974. Interview with Levi Orkar Chi (61), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 46 - October 21, 1974. Interview with Gbajur Ingyer (65), Mbagen, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 47 - November 7, 1974. Interview with Mbakuy Mkovor (55), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 48 - November 7, 1974. Interview with Iorheer Kureve (65), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 49 - November 8, 1974. Interview with Yooso Kperanya (55), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 50 - November 9, 1974. Interview with Nyor Ugo (65), Ipav, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 51 - November 14, 1974. Interview with Namhe Temanya (70), Gakem, Udam.
- T.H.T. 52 - November 14, 1974. Interview with Inaku Ejim (65), Ukpaa, Udam.
- T.H.T. 53 - November 16, 1974. Interview with Nyor Ugo (65), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 54 - November 20, 1974. Interview with Nyager Alishi (95), Shorov, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 55 - November 20, 1974. Interview with Adikpo Kaaungwa (55), Kusuv, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 56 - November 21, 1974. Interview with Adikpo Kaaungwa (55), Kusuv, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 57 - November 22, 1974. Interview with Atsaka Agbatar (55), Kusuv, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 58 - November 23, 1974. Interview with Peter Ityuyo Ayaka (54), Mbatierov, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 59 - November 25, 1974. Group interview with Apevtar Maanda (85), Zangir Mkem (75), Ashir Tongo (75), Azua Giga (70), Iliongo Ataver (65), Ujo Tongo (73), Anumbe Abwa (60), Shangev-Tiev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 60 - November 25, 1974. Interview with Ulam Agasua (85), Ngohor, Masev.
- T.H.T. 61 - November 30, 1974. Interview with Atonde Nyam (55), Shangev-Tiev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 62 - November 30, 1974. Interview with Atonde Nyam (55), Shangev-Tiev, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 63 - December 2, 1974. Interview with Ijer Ligo (65), Mbatierrev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 64 - December 9, 1974. Interview with Ikyuku Akusuu (70), Yandev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 65 - December 17, 1974. Interview with Tsavza Warda (65), Mbatierrev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 66 - December 18, 1974. Interview with Hurugh Agure (70), Mbatierrev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 67 - December 18, 1974. Interview with Lua Ambaka (75), Mbakor, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 68 - December 19, 1974. Interview with Lua Ambaka (75), Mbakor, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 69 - December 19, 1974. Interview with Madam Teseve Ayaka (75), Mbatierrev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 70 - December 20, 1974. Interview with Lua Ambaka (75), Mbakor, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 71 - December 20, 1974. Interview with Swem Tseke (65), Mbakor, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 72 - December 20, 1974. Interview with Akpela Indyer (70), Mbatierrev, Kparev.
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- T.H.T. 74 - January 3, 1975. Interview with Atongo Abuku (64), Mbaiku, Masev.
- T.H.T. 75 - January 3, 1975. Interview with Mbatsav Ju (66), Mbaiku, Masev.

- T.H.T. 76 - January 3, 1975. Interview with Jatau Adaura (95), Ngohol, Masev.
- T.H.T. 77 - January 23, 1975. Interview with Mgba Adingechi (45), Shangev-Tiev, Kparev.
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- T.H.T. 84 - January 30, 1975. Interview with Uhambe Agee (77), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 85 - January 31, 1975. Interview with Dabu Udei (70), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 86 - February 1, 1975. Interview with Tor Tiv Gondo Aluor (63), Ugondo.
- T.H.T. 87 - February 1, 1975. Interview with Asombo Nguhar (65), Mbayion, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 88 - February 10, 1975. Interview with Shirsha Ahungwa (73), Ukan, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 89 - February 14, 1975. Interview with Uhambe Agee (77), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 90 - February 15, 1975. Interview with Ikegh Akura (70), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 91 - February 15, 1975. Interview with Ikaragbe Adeishor (55), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 92 - February 15, 1975. Interview with a Jukun, Agbo Asea (55), at Yerawata.
- T.H.T. 93 - February 15, 1975. Interview with Madam Gyawa Kyogen (60), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 94 - February 15, 1975. Interview with Madam Kuzua Ukera (65), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 95 - February 17, 1975. Interview with Asoor Kyogen (70), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 96 - February 17, 1975. Interview with Nyiutsa Num (72), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 97 - February 24, 1975. Interview with Akošo Agaigbe (54), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 98 - February 25, 1975. Interview with Ortoo Kwange (50), Mbayion, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 99 - February 27, 1975. Group interview with Angur Yav (80), Uluva Alagu (70), Ortese Begha (70), Ukaa Jijingi (80); Utyondo, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 100 - February 28, 1975. Group interview with Ishima Zeiyd (60), Mzough Kuuku (70), Utyondo, Iharev.

- T.H.T. 101 - March 1, 1975. Group interview with Bam Gbagir (85), Ado Akera (65), Kyu-Kundu Abenga (63), Ornguga Ature (60), Utyondo, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 102 - March 6, 1975. Interview with Angbuur Utenyi (70), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 103 - March 7, 1975. Interview with Nduur Jagera (80), Ipav, Kparev.
- \*T.H.T. 104 - March 12, 1975. Group interview with Gbabi Dye (80) and twenty other elders at Gbabi, Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 105 - March 12, 1975. Interview with Ishu Kpande (65), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 106 - March 13, 1975. Group interview with Shingure Ankpa (85), and six others at Shingure, Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 107 - March 13, 1975. Interview with Abu Tsee (35), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 108 - March 13, 1975. Interview with Kpelan Daakye (85), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 109 - March 14, 1975. Group interview with Nomiwa Atinyam (80), Ikura Vev (75), Ityotswam Agwaya (73), and eight others, Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 110 - March 14, 1975. Group interview with Nyautu Kube (80), and eighteen others, Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 111 - March 15, 1975. Group interview with Yaji Mkpehe (70), Kor Fiki (55), Ingure Tegu (60), Meenu Injor (53), Ityoshin, Iharev.



- T.H.T. 112 - March 17, 1975. Interview with Adam Agbo (60), Utur.
- T.H.T. 113 - March 21, 1975. Interview with Tor Bam Gbagir (85), Utyondo, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 114 - April 24, 1975. Interview with Rev. Joseph Elisha Isholibo Sai (64), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Sha-Ya.
- T.H.T. 115 - April 25, 1975. Interview with Rev. Joseph Elisha Isholibo Sai (64), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Sha-Ya.
- T.H.T. 116 - April 25, 1975. Interview with Kpav Donga (64), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Sha-Ya.
- T.H.T. 117 - April 25, 1975. Interview with Kwaghembe Buryakogh (80), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Sha-Ya.
- T.H.T. 118 - April 25, 1975. Interview with Ndur Adi (65) Tombo, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 119 - April 26, 1975. Interview with Gbise Ako (80), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Sha-Ya.
- T.H.T. 120 - May 1, 1975. Interview with Kurungu Gbajimba (70), Ndzorov, Nongov.
- T.H.T. 121 - May 1, 1975. Interview with Alapu Sarki Asede (65), Ndzorov, Nongov.
- T.H.T. 122 - May 2, 1975. Group interview with Adure Abari (72), Kyuan Gaga (70), Ndzorov, Nongov.
- T.H.T. 123 - May 2, 1975. Group interview with Tsav Kagi (65), and six others, Ndzorov, Nongov.

- T.H.T. 124 - May 2, 1975. Group interview with Shirsha Gyegu (75), Tyovenda Kwen (73), Ndzorov, Nongov.
- T.H.T. 125 - May 3, 1975. Group interview with Zaki Iyordye Akaahena (55), Gar Gougba (70), Utime Gbugba (65), Neior Iyo (63), Ndzorov, Nongov.
- T.H.T. 126 - May 8, 1975. Interview with Suswam Tingir (70), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 127 - May 9, 1957. Group interview with Kwagh Agure (80), Shinyi Baaka (64), Ten Girkwa (60), Tsahave Ongu (75), Yua Akume (70), Ngushatse (55), Tahav Iyordye (50), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 128 - May 9, 1975. Interview with Igba Iyuwa (85), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 129 - May 9, 1975. Interview with Zaki Ngutswen (70), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 130 - May 10, 1975. Interview with Mallam Mohamadu Abuni (60), Arufu.
- T.H.T. 131 - May 12, 1975. Interview with Madugu Zai (85), Mbaterem, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 132 - May 13, 1975. Interview with Madugu Zai (85), Mbaterem, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 133 - May 13, 1975. Interview with Igoil Akinde (55), Mbaterem, Ukum.
- T.H.T. 134 - May 13, 1975. Group interview with Malu Tsaha (77), Kwaghohdo Saarmaya (75), Jimin Anyoko (73), Uker Ihoon (65), Utilē Gbondo (63), Kperbee Dura (60), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.

- ✓ T.H.T. 135 - May 14, 1975. Group interview with Kurungu Yaaco  
 (75), Gbinda Nyajo (73), Shaakera Bojer (60),  
 . Abuur Norsua (60), and eleven others, Gaambe,  
 Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 136 - May 14, 1975. Interview with Takwagh Gongoro  
 (55), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 137 - May 15, 1975. Interview with Ihagher Agaku  
 (72), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 138 - May 15, 1975. Group interview with Utile Ihyor  
 (80), Gwa Ikyaan (73), Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-  
 Tiev.
- T.H.T. 139 - May 16, 1975. Interview with Uzee Kusen (60),  
 Gaambe, Shitire-Mba-Shin-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 140 - May 16, 1975. Interview with Asom Buza (60),  
 Tswarev, Ugondo.
- T.H.T. 141 - May 16, 1975. Interview with Ikyagh Toho (75),  
 Tswarev, Ugondo.
- T.H.T. 142 - May 17, 1975. Interview with Orndiir Jumbu  
 (57), Tswarev, Ugondo.
- T.H.T. 143 - May 22, 1975. Interview with Tor Iorhënen  
 Hwande (50), Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 144 - May 22, 1975. Interview with Javera Akuta (70),  
 Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 145 - May 22, 1975. Interview with Abotyö Zuaga (60),  
 Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 146 - May 22, 1975. Interview with Abera Ihinga (65),  
 Liev, Ikurav-Ya.

- T.H.T. 147 - May 23, 1975. Interview with Bayol Gatie (65),  
Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 148 - May 23, 1975. Group interview with Bagu Mzoou  
(55), Aligba Mzoou (75), Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 149 - May 23, 1975. Interview with Gisa Torkon (60),  
Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 150 - May 23, 1975. Interview with Kpeakor (65), Liev,  
Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 151 - May 24, 1975. Group interview with Ver (72),  
Mue Ukohol (70), Tegtegh Atsan (70), Menev,  
Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 152 - May 24, 1975. Interview with Agbo Abenga (60),  
Menev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 153 - May 26, 1975. Group interview with Anula  
Kumbur (80), Swem Waato (60), Ikov, Kparev.
- ~~T.H.T. 154 - May 26, 1975. Group interview with Orbiam  
Choron (70), Iornumbe Anee (65), Ikov, Kparev.~~
- T.H.T. 155 - May 27, 1975. Interview with Pagher Mue (72),  
Ikov, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 156 - May 27, 1975. Interview with Kaun Gadin (90),  
Mbaav, Turan.
- T.H.T. 157 - May 27, 1975. Group interview with Mbakighir  
Akan (90), Anar Mbakighir (70), Niongov, Turan.
- T.H.T. 158 - May 27, 1975. Interview with Anoo Gbise (70),  
Niongov, Turan.
- T.H.T. 159 - May 28, 1975. Interview with Azape Igyono (70),  
Niongov, Turan.

- T.H.T. 160 - May 28, 1975. Interview with Abagi Maka (83),  
Yaav, Turan.
- T.H.T. 161 - May 28, 1975. Interview with Kighir Ander (65),  
Yaav, Turan.
- T.H.T. 162 - May 29, 1975. Interview with Shagba Atogbon  
(70), Niongov, Turan.
- T.H.T. 163 - May 29, 1975. Interview with Boogundú Andye  
(61), Iwanev, Turan.
- T.H.T. 164 - May 29, 1975. Interview with Akpagher Sue (80),  
Iwanev, Turan.
- T.H.T. 165 - May 29, 1975. Group interview with Huma Abaa  
(75), Akaazua Agbamu (73), Maav, Turan.
- T.H.T. 166 - May 30, 1975. Group interview with Zaki Unongo  
Kwaghngise (78), Geda Agir (85), Ikpen Agashi  
(70), Atenger Ihugh (65), Kendev, Turan.
- T.H.T. 167 - June 2, 1975. Interview with B. Ula Lisa  
(83) of Tongov at Gboko, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 168 - June 2, 1975. Interview with Ayem Chugh (85),  
of Ikurav at Gboko, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 169 - June 5, 1975. Group interview with Atsaar  
Atsonka (75), Tsetim Maguugu (70), Mnguan Atinge.  
(65), Mbanyam, Ikurav-Tiev.
- T.H.T. 170 - June 5, 1975. Interview with Mbawan Azagbia  
(65), Tombo, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 171 - June 5, 1975. Group interview with Uehe Ngibo  
(70), Ngodi Ngibo (68), Monkwagh, Ikurav-Tiev.

- T.H.T. 172 - June 5, 1975. Interview with Kume Dodo (70),  
Gboko, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 173 - June 6, 1975. Interview with Ikondo Angwe (84),  
Mbaiwo, Tongov.
- T.H.T. 174 - June 6, 1975. Interview with Zungwe Iwenge  
(85), Ugber, Tongov.
- T.H.T. 175 - June 6, 1975. Group interview with Gholon Dajo  
(80), Ahina Agena (50), Jima, Tongov.
- T.H.T. 176 - June 7, 1975. Group interview with Haanya Makar  
(83), Kuee Mngye (70), and four others, Jima,  
Tongov.
- T.H.T. 177 - June 7, 1975. Interview with Malu Adoo (64),  
Jima, Tongov.
- T.H.T. 178 - June 7, 1975. Interview with Adekua Akaa (75), of  
Tombo. Jima, Tongov.
- T.H.T. 179 - June 16, 1975. Interview with Hosea Ukpi Yawe  
(64), Mbayion, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 180 - June 16, 1975. Interview with Iyange Akume  
(65) of Gaav. Gboko, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 181 - June 16, 1975. Interview with Utsa Nyagba  
(70), of Mbaiyongo. Gboko, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 182 - June 18, 1975. Group interview with Iyenge  
Adanyi (70), and four others. Mbayion, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 183 - June 18, 1975. Interview with Kiishi Iton (83),  
Mbayion, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 184 - June 19, 1975. Interview with Ayua Yeka (65),  
Gaav, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 185 - June 19, 1975. Interview with Bello Agbenge (75), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 186 - June 19, 1975. Interview with Gbaka Ado (70) of Kunav, Gboko, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 187 - July 3, 1975. Interview with Akumbe Ajio (70), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 188 - July 3, 1975. Interview with Orjime Iiv (65), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 189 - July 3, 1975. Interview with Joshua Taverishima Mhambe (60), Kusuv, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 190 - July 7, 1975. Interview with Shir Gaando (70), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 191 - July 7, 1975. Interview with Vange Dzerikegh (75), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 192 - July 7, 1975. Interview with Tsen Chi (70), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 193 - July 8, 1975. Interview with Zaki Zeka (70), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 194 - July 8, 1975. Interview with Ande Aga (80), Yandev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 195 - July 8, 1975. Interview with Kyado Agyo (90), Yandev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 196 - July 8, 1975. Interview with Chur Chafu (85), Yandev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 197 - July 9, 1975. Interview with Wayo Mbuar (66), of Kunav, Gboko, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 198 - July 10, 1975. Interview with Kenti Mende (60),  
Shangev-Ya, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 199 - July 10, 1975. Interview with Doki Paaihya (65),  
Shangev-Ya, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 200 - July 10, 1975. Interview with Tor Imborvungu  
Ajaver (63), Shangev-Ya, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 201 - July 11, 1975. Interview with Zamber Anyaku (80),  
Shangev-Ya, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 202 - August 11, 1975. Group interview with Kyomke  
Amue (70), Tamen Apevnor (65), Shangev-Ya, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 203 - August 11, 1975. Interview with Aba Burya (65),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 204 - August 11, 1975. Interview with Abunde Ajom  
(60), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 205 - August 11, 1975. Interview with Igbuur Igber  
(60), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 206 - August 12, 1975. Interview with Kange Abende  
(70), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 207 - August 12, 1975. Interview with Aba Burya (65),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 208 - August 13, 1975. Interview with Madam Mbaduku  
Yongo (75), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 209 - August 13, 1975. Group interview with Ipevnor  
Agune (80), Akoso Ugande (75), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 210 - August 13, 1975. Group interview with Kagbeda  
Anyoko (75), Akende (73), Shagu (71),  
Kunav, Kparev.



- T.H.T. 211 - August 14, 1975. Interview with Jugu Aberaga (64); Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 212 - August 14, 1975. Interview with Huabo Abende (90), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 213 - August 14, 1975. Interview with Gbagir Nyoto (88), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 214 - August 14, 1975. Interview with Mede Achir (81), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 215 - August 15, 1975. Interview with Zaki Agurebe (60), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 216 - August 15, 1975. Interview with Mede Achir (81), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 217 - August 16, 1975. Interview with Jonathan Tarkaha Angou (55), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 218 - August 16, 1975. Interview with Orga Agu (75), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 219 - August 18, 1975. Interview with Aya Kpensuen Nduur (75), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 220 - August 19, 1975. Group interview with Orya Ji (80), Vor Amua (65), Nongo (55), Mnenge Ugbangya (60), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 221 - August 21, 1975. Interview with Mowou Usaka (75), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 222 - August 21, 1975. Interview with Atser Igyuve (67), of Kunav, Mkar, Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 223 - August 21, 1975. Interview with Iyordyam Ugo (55), Ipav, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 224 - August 22, 1975. Interview with Msa Datsu (63),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 225 - August 22, 1975. Interview with Akombo Ikpur  
(75), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 226 - August 22, 1975. Interview with Shaiyongo Njoko  
(80), Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 227 - August 23, 1975. Interview with Boager Aewaga  
(90), Mbagen, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 228 - August 23, 1975. Interview with Zaki Gbor Asema  
(55), Mbagen, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 229 - August 25, 1975. Interview with Tsakaka Iortsa  
(70), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 230 - August 25, 1975. Interview with Akombo Ikpur  
(75), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 231 - August 25, 1975. Interview with Agon Ahula (70),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 232 - August 25, 1975. Interview with Itemba Ihwa (80),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 233 - August 26, 1975. Interview with Uzu Kper (100),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 234 - August 26, 1975. Interview with Vagba Adndo (55),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 235 - August 26, 1975. Interview with Mansula Itiaer  
(60), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 236 - August 27, 1975. Interview with Uzu Kper (100),  
Ukan, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 237 - August 27, 1975. Interview with Yaji Akou (73), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 238 - August 27, 1975. Group interview with Abuul Wachihi (73), Igber Udum (80), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 239 - August 27, 1975. Interview with Atogbon Ityo (103), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 240 - August 28, 1975. Interview with Naomi Aliban Maga (80), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 241 - August 28, 1975. Interview with Atogbon Ityo (103), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 242 - August 28, 1975. Interview with Tsav Zanande (60), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 243 - August 28, 1975. Interview with Abuul Wachihi (73), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 244 - August 29, 1975. Interview with Iyortyer Kur (65), Ukan, Kunav.
- T.H.T. 245 - August 29, 1975. Interview with Agbende Mgena (75), Turan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 246 - August 29, 1975. Interview with Tav Kon (90), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 247 - August 29, 1975. Interview with Dankor Awor (105), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 248 - August 30, 1975. Interview with Gum Anue (90), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 249 - August 30, 1975. Interview with Naomi Aliban Maga (80), Nanev, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 250 - August 30, 1975. Interview with Gum Anue (90),  
Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 251 - September 1, 1975. Interview with Alu Kur (85),  
Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 252 - September 1, 1975. Interview with Huabo Abende  
(90), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 253 - September 1, 1975. Interview with Peter Utakwa  
(50), Utange (Becheve).
- T.H.T. 254 - September 2, 1975. Interview with Zaki Akor  
Atsete (60), Utange (Becheve).
- T.H.T. 255 - September 2, 1975. Interview with Agile Imbor  
(70), Menev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 256 - September 2, 1975. Interview with Ashiekaa Yaaya  
(60), Menev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 257 - September 2, 1975. Group interview with Buter  
Gande (65), Anyam Ibem (60), Menev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 258 - September 3, 1975. Interview with Amough Kpelan  
(80), Menev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 259 - September 3, 1975. Interview with Ashiekaa Yaaya  
(60), Menev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 260 - September 3, 1975. Interview with Uule Gaa (85),  
Menev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 261 - September 4, 1975. Interview with Zaki Atoga  
Sugh (60), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 262 - September 4, 1975. Interview with Vembera Ade  
(60), Nyiev, Turan.

- T.H.T. 263 - September 4, 1975. Interview with Madam Hannah Ateem Chiga (60), of Ikurav, Mkar, Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 264 - September 5, 1975. Group interview with Kumbur Sela (70), Deva Ihyande (65), Huer Wabaa (50), Aunde Gboo (75), Chiwan Asua (70), Ukera Gyase (65), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 265 - September 5, 1975. Interview with Chirve Tseke (75), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 266 - September 5, 1975. Interview with Iorbee Antsoo (80), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 267 - September 6, 1975. Interview with Philip Aernyi Kungur (59), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 268 - September 6, 1975. Interview with Bature Anyam (68), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 269 - September 6, 1975. Group interview with Kuave Achin (70), and four others. Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 270 - September 8, 1975. Interview with Iorember Gbor (75), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 271 - September 8, 1975. Interview with Philip Aernyi Kungur (59), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 272 - September 8, 1975. Interview with Rev. Andrew Ashaver Apam (50), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 273 - September 9, 1975. Interview with Ashav Tema (50), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 274 - September 9, 1975. Group interview with Igber Angitu (70), Ujii (63), Yonov, Masev.

- T.H.T. 275 - September 9, 1975. Interview with Anchongo Zwar  
(76), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 276 - September 10, 1975. Interview with Shom Abaka  
(75), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 277 - September 10, 1975. Interview with Ndiar Ager  
(70), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 278 - September 10, 1975. Interview with Zaki Ti  
Iyongoikyo (75), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 279 - September 11, 1975 - Interview with Ndiar Ager  
(70), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 280 - September 11, 1975. Interview with Ede Achagi  
(77), Utur, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 281 - September 11, 1975. Interview with Siki Jinagwizi  
(80), Utur, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 282 - September 12, 1975. Interview with Tor Iorhenen  
Hwande (50), Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 283 - September 12, 1975. Interview with Amena Mgbele  
(65), Maav, Turan.
- T.H.T. 284 - September 12, 1975. Interview with Igbabee  
Nenge (70), Maav, Turan.
- T.H.T. 285 - September 13, 1975. Interview with Chafa Anum  
(65), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 286 - September 13, 1975. Interview with Batur Asema  
(59), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 287 - September 13, 1975. Interview with Adevanger Gu  
(55), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.

- T.H.T. 288 - September 15, 1975. Interview with Akuto Labari (55), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 289 - September 15, 1975. Group interview with Akertiav Sue (75), Apase Sue (61), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 290 - September 15, 1975. Interview with Apev Abende (60), Injiiov, Turan.
- T.H.T. 291 - September 16, 1975. Interview with Unongo (Abande) Tsehe (78), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 292 - September 16, 1975. Interview with Atooa-Kaa Imondo (65), Injiiov, Turan.
- T.H.T. 293 - September 16, 1975. Interview with Abul Ugbe (49), Iyon.
- T.H.T. 294 - September 17, 1975. Group interview with Orkan Gbaako (67), Zaki Atookaa Imondo (63), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 295 - September 17, 1975. Interview with Ikombom Apev (40), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 296 - September 18, 1975. Interview with Aemberga Akanger (55), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 297 - September 18, 1975. Interview with Minde Yaga (80), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 298 - September 19, 1975. Interview with Minde Yaga (80), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 299 - September 19, 1975. Interview with Ityo Adeke (60), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.
- T.H.T. 300 - September 19, 1975. Interview with Aga Kighir (75), Nyiev-Ya, Turan.

- T.H.T. 301 - September 22, 1975. Interview with Akorga Akume (45), Tuav, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 302 - September 22, 1975. Interview with Madam Ngoya Ingyor (95), Tuav, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 303 - September 22, 1975. Interview with Utsaha Ihom (77), Tuav, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 304 - September 23, 1975. Group interview with Nomikya Una (68), Ijov Aban (50), Aur Tso (48), Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 305 - September 23, 1975. Interview with Anaember (Ishoho) Akura (78), Liev, Ikurav-Ya.
- T.H.T. 306 - September 23, 1975. Group interview with Atakpa Msachanga (68), Wende Juaga (60), Utange (Becheve).
- T.H.T. 307 - September 24, 1975. Interview with Samuel Mai Yashi (65), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 308 - September 24, 1975. Interview with Oragba Anum (75), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 309 - September 24, 1975. Interview with Kanshio Ahav (90), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 310 - September 25, 1975. Interview with Samuel Mai Yashi (65), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 311 - September 25, 1975. Interview with Kanshio Ajav (90), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 312 - September 25, 1975. Interview with Dankor Awor (105), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 313 - September 26, 1975. Interview with Gbekua Igbetar (85), Kunav, Kparev.



- T.H.T. 314 - September 26, 1975. Interview with Ahura Kpire (65), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 315 - September 26, 1975. Interview with Madam Timbir Ortiev (85), Mkar, Ipav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 316 - September 27, 1975. Group interview with Azever Jayi (90), Sorkumbur Adem (68), Taver Ishima (66), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 317 - September 27, 1975. Group interview with Tarnongo Tsenke (50), Iorkyem Bar (55), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 318 - September 27, 1975. Interview with Tsee Dum (88), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 319 - September 28, 1975. Interview with Tsee Dum (88), Ukan, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 320 - July 24, 1976. Group interview with Sangari Maude Adi (70), Zakari Usman (60), Isa Bayoro (55), Abakwa.
- T.H.T. 321 - July 24, 1976. Interview with Tyondon Iyongo (65), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 322 - July 26, 1976. Group interview with Sangari Maude Adi (70), Zakari Usman (60), Isa Bayoro (55), Abakwa.
- T.H.T. 323 - July 27, 1976. Group interview with Sangari Maude Adi (70), Zakari Usman (60), Isa Bayoro (55), Abakwa.
- T.H.T. 324 - July 28, 1976. Interview with Adi Amazama (70), Utur, Kparev.

- T. H. T. 325 - July 28, 1976. Interview with Kyausu Gebe (64), Utur, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 326 - July 29, 1976. Group interview with Sangari Maude Adi (70), Zakari Usman (60), Abakwa.
- T.H.T. 327 - July 31, 1976. Group interview with Adi Amazama (70), Dyuku Mkem (75), Memze Mgba (70), Utur, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 328 - August 3, 1976. Group interview with Dyuku Mkem (75), Memze Mgba (70), Una Agishi (65), Agbo Ngefu (75), Utur, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 329 - August 3, 1976. Group interview with Azahan Kuku (76), Akuku Sua (74), and the whole village Iyordaa, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 330 - August 3, 1976. Group interview with Adaba Diaka (68), Abe Diaka (66), Kor Sanker (64), Iyordaa, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 331 - August 3, 1976. Group interview with Amenger Jibo (80), Chia Jembe (75), Shirya Uga (73), Iyordaa, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 332 - August 3, 1976. Interview with Samuel Torhamba Gaaki (55), Tombo, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 333 - August 4, 1976. Interview with Ngyebiere Abena (58), Iyordaa, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 334 - August 5, 1976. Interview with Adam Agbo (60), Utur.
- T.H.T. 335 - August 6, 1976. Group interview with Tsue Chia (80), Nduer Korna (75), Ikuran Ande (80), Mbagen, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 336 - August 7, 1976. Interview with Adam Agbo (60), Utur.
- T.H.T. 337 - August 9, 1976. Interview with Bar Atuluku (77), and Tarkusu Ako (70), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 338 - August 10, 1976. Interview with Aba Ayila (80), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 339 - August 10, 1976. Interview with Uchiliki Alega (60), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 340 - August 11, 1976. Group interview with Iyongo Alonko (90), Boyi Iindi (60), Zaki Igbende Ugo (55), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 341 - August 11, 1976. Interview with Aigyu (Ahee) Akwaya (65), Ityoshin, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 342 - August 12, 1976. Group interview with Philip Aernyi Kungur (59), Bature Anyam (68), Aga Tsesao (75), Vanger (Akase) Ikoho (75), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 343 - August 13, 1976. Group interview with Howe Gyam (65), Alagudu Shagi (60), Ajii Huer (60), Saave (Zaria) Igbise (55), Akpetsav Shima (55), Njiriv, Masev.
- T.H.T. 344 - August 14, 1976. Interview with Hanseza Kajiva (75), Isherev, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 345 - August 14, 1976. Interview with Ingbian-Kor Ada (85), Utyondo, Iharev.
- T.H.T. 346 - August 16, 1976. Group interview with Tsavnande Gbinde (77), Imondu Gbinde (75), Oryoo Jombo (70), Sambe Bea (65), Utange, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 347 - August 17, 1976. Group interview with Kanjibo (Akpa) Nor (90), Agera Akume (65), Ikumbur Nor (60); Utange Kparev.
- T.H.T. 348 - August 17, 1976. Interview with Wega Ayongo (60), Utange, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 349 - August 17, 1976. Interview with Nduer Korna (75), Mbagen, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 350 - August 18, 1976. Group interview with Igbudu Akange (75), Ukaha Angyo (73), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 351 - August 18, 1976. Interview with Tijime (Saaior) Kyaan (68), Nanev, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 352 - August 19, 1976. Interview with Shatswam (Harga) Kura (89), Iyatiev, Ugondo.
- T.H.T. 353 - August 20, 1976. Group interview with Igyongo (Maakye) Agbor (78), Ahemen Orbee (70), Ahilega Ibo (70), Tswarev, Ugondo.
- T.H.T. 354 - August 20, 1976. Interview with Mkaa Syem (65), Tswarev, Ugondo.
- T.H.T. 355 - August 21, 1976. Group interview with Andokali Tahwa (85), Demeungwa (Nyajo) Tsoki (88), Aligba (Doda) Tsoki (86), Nauke Achaku (81), Kandor Ajo (77), Igbondo Aondogba (92), Aondoka Ajo (75), Navoki Ajo (73), Atsenafe Tsoki (71), Daudu Dankor (79), Diaka Ashaku (90), Adede Aberawa (83), and twenty others. Utur.
- T.H.T. 356 - August 23, 1976. Interview with Ahura Kpire (65), Kunav, Kparev.

- T.H.T. 357 - August 24, 1976. Group interview with Kunav Abia (73), Agi (Ajai) Akaji (70), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 358 - August 24, 1976. Interview with Upur Ikyaghgba (65), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 359 - August 24, 1976. Interview with Ibinda (Ityshom) Adasu (100), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 360 - August 24, 1976. Interview with Igbatim (Amegh) Awarga (85), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 361 - August 25, 1976. Group interview with Iordeharen Hue (60), Gwar Azande (70), Antiev Gbor (75), Kunav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 362 - August 27, 1976. Group interview with Tyo Ado (75), Anyam Angura (75), Agura Kpeji (70), Ikondo Enger (68), Mbatlav, Kparev.
- T.H.T. 363 - August 27, 1976. Interview with Anja Sogh (75), Yonov, Masev.
- T.H.T. 364 - August 28, 1976. Group interview with Norma (Maidoki) Akutsa (85), Naor Ugba (60), Tyulmande Shon (62), Njiriv, Masev.

(ii) TIV HISTORICAL TEXTS - R. A. SARGENT

The Arabic figures in the right-hand margins refer to pages in the Benue Valley Research Project Field Notes Volume V.

Tiv Historical Text No. 1., June 25, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with  
Chief Dooga and Zever of the Nongov  
Clan

- Tiv Historical Text No. 2., June 28, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Zever  
and Ijen of the Nongov Clan p. 5.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 3., June 28, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Zever,  
Dooga, Tango, Ijen, Imbor and Mbatsav  
of the Nongov Clan p. 6.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 4., June 29, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Gaar,  
Utime, Iorkan, Chia, Akuntu, Adamu  
of Nongov Clan p. 10.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 1., June 29, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Atoba  
and Gere of the Iharev Clan p. 15.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 6., June 30, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Koko,  
Adua, Zende, Gafa, Ayegh, Ornguga,  
of the Iharev Clan p. 21.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 7., June 30, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Akupusgh  
of the Iharev Clan p. 26.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 8., July 1, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Gaar,  
Orkar, Tsepav, Mbananmen, Ugema, Ikaan  
of the Nongov Clan p. 30.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 9., July 2, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Iorumbur  
Compound, Iharev Clan p. 33.

- Tiv Historical Text No. 10., July 4, 1974,  
Kuma Compound, Iharev Clan (interview  
conducted by C. Uhondo) p. 37.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 11., July 5, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Awe,  
Akaaza and Angahar of the Iharev Clan p. 38.
- Tiv Historical Text, No. 12., July 6, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with MbaKuur  
and Nyom of the Harev Clan p. 39.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 13., July 6, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Aukpusgh  
of the Harev Clan p. 44.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 14., July 7, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Anuku,  
Ugba, Kuna, Ukor, Ikooch of the Harev  
Clan p. 46.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 15., July 8, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Kuma  
Compound, Koko, Cafa and Szende of the  
Harev Clan p. 50.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 16., July 9, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Gaar,  
Orvan, Orkar, Mbatsav of the Nongov Clan p. 55.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 17., July 11, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Ihuman,  
Dogo of the Harev Clan p. 59.

- Tiv Historical Text No. 18., July 11, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Anuku and  
Ugba of the Harev Clan p. 65.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 19., July 14, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Ladi (The  
Production and Consumption of Bekati in  
Awe District) p. 67.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 20., July 15, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Akpusugh  
of the Iharev Clan p. 69.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 21., July 16, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Ihuman of  
the Harev Clan p. 72.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 22., July 16, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Anuku  
of the Iharev Clan p. 77.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 23., July 17, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Gaar of  
the Nongov Clan p. 80.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 25., July 24, 1974,  
Awe District. Interview with Abinyi  
of the Iharev Clan p. 84.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 26., July 24, 1974,  
Keana District. Interview with Degh,  
Targure of Harev Clan p. 85
- Tiv Historical Text No. 27., July 27, 1974,  
Keana District. Interview with Abingi,  
Dugh and Torjev of the Harev Clan p. 87.



- Tiv Historical Text No. 28., July 27, 1974,  
Keana District. Interview with Demekaa  
of Iharev Clan p. 88.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 28., July 27, 1974,  
Keana District. Interview with Ti oor  
of Harev and Atumbu of Masev Clan p. 89.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 30., July 28, 1974,  
Keana District. Interview with Utsehe  
of Harev Clan p. 90.
- Tiv Historical Text No. 31., July 30, 1974,  
Keana District. Interview with Kanwa  
of Harev Clan p. 98.

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Assakio Historical Texts, July 24, 1976.

(Interview No. 3 with Osakyo (Chief of Assako)  
in Council. Interpreter Mary Iyigu.

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19701 Intelligence Report, Ogoja Province  
29698 Intelligence Report, Abinsi town and its environs  
29719 Intelligence Report, Nongov - Saghev Clan  
29821 Intelligence Report, Masev - Ngenev Clan  
29822 Intelligence Report, Masev - Ngohor Clan  
29926 Intelligence Report, Ocheku District  
30264 Intelligence Report, Tongov Clan  
30265 Intelligence Report, Yandev District  
30266 Intelligence Report, Mbakpa and Raav Clans  
30267 Intelligence Report, Mbalagh Clan  
30268 Intelligence Report, Mbaion Clan  
30329 Intelligence Report, Egedde and Ito Districts  
30354 Intelligence Report, Ukan District  
30370 Re-organization Notes, Akwiya Clan, Idoma Division

- 30398 Intelligence Report, Mbagen District
- 30459 Intelligence Report, Utiondo District
- 30630 Intelligence Report, Oturkpo District
- 30667 Intelligence Report, Okwoga District
- 30680 Intelligence Report, Shitire North District
- 30710 Intelligence Report, Tacum District
- 30720 Intelligence Report, Ugondo District
- 30745 Intelligence Report, Shitire South District
- 30770 Intelligence Report, Ukum District
- 30902 Intelligence Report, Mbatierev District
- 30941 Intelligence Report, Ikurav South District
- 31067 Intelligence Report, Katsina Ala Town
- 31148 Intelligence Report, Turan District
- 31322 Intelligence Report, Ikurav North District
- 31347 Intelligence Report, Sherev District
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23320 Some Pagan Tribes of Nigeria by C. K. Meek, MSS  
26207 Exchange Marriage  
28416 Minutes of the Tiv Central Council Meetings,  
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29073 Notes on Witchcraft among the Tiv  
30430 Administrative Reorganization in the Northern  
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31067 Administration of Katsina Ala Town  
36217 Nyambun Movement in Benue Province  
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3. Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna (NAK)

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- 221 Transfer of Headquarters, Tiv Division.  
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- 235 'Hoyo', Matters related to Witchcraft.

## (ii) Records of the Provincial Office, Makurdi / MAKPROF

- 337 Exchange Marriage
- 552 Handing Over Notes, Southern Districts,  
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- 593 Inspection Notes on Katsina Ala Elementary  
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- 613 'Hoyo'.
- 701 Reorganization of Tiv Division and  
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the Minutes for the Tiv Central Council  
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- 773 Dutch Reformed Church Mission, General  
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- 1057 'Hoyo'
- 1108, Vol. I. Roads in Tiv Division
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- 1315 The History of Benue Province,  
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- 1401 c. Notes on Procédre, Tiv Division,  
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