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ECONOMIC PROCESSES AND POWER STRUCTURE:
The Impact of Colonialism in Buganda

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One of the most abundant sources for the study of the impact of colonialism, in Africa on systems of social stratification is to be found in the work of the E.A.I.S.R. in Buganda. (1) A major theoretical conclusion of this research has been summarised by L.A. Fallers:

"It is perhaps not going too far to assert that the emphasis in African systems of stratification is primarily political..One aspect..is a tendency for economic structures and processes to be overshadowed by - or, perhaps better, contained within - political structures and processes"(1967:144)

He then points out that colonization by states whose own economic systems were capitalist meant "an ever-increasing commercialization of land and labour" and the differentiation of an economic order of institutions from the political. However, he considers that the encapsulation of economic structures and processes by the political is likely to continue in Africa, principally because the commercialization process takes place not through laissez faire capitalism but under a considerable degree of state control. Together with such factors as continuing kinship links between the "elite" and "masses", this means that "classlessness" will be a feature of "modern" as well as "traditional" African stratification systems (1967:149). (2) The studies of Buganda, mainly under the direction of Fallers and A.I. Richards, are intended to demonstrate this hypothesis; so an examination of this data may be considered particularly appropriate for a reconsideration of the hypothesis itself.

The major problem with the literature on Buganda is a failure to analyze the structure of economic relations, and a consequent over-emphasis on cultural aspects of social organization in discussing political change. Wrigley and Fallers discuss the increasing differentiation of occupational roles in terms of changing evaluations of status, as if the status hierarchy were identical with the structure of economic relations. This is the result of their conception of "class", as they use it to interpret the relationship of occupation and the stratification system. Thus Fallers considers "class" as referring to:

"broad groups of occupations similarly evaluated in the stratification system and sharing similar subcultures"(1964:120)

Wrigley's "economic classes", based on an assessment of income, reject the idea that they could be based on economic relations:

"If the population of present-day Buganda is to be classified in economic terms..it is only in a very limited and abstract sense that any such classification is now possible"(1964:52)

On the other hand, Worsley considers that the figures for class differentiation given by Wrigley (in Hunter, 1962) are the "statistics of latent revolution" so obviously that they "hardly require comment" (1965:220) In this paper my purpose will be to reexamine the E.A.I.S.R. data in the light of Worsley's question: what kinds of property-based classes were there, and what were their power relations.

I. STRATIFICATION IN LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY BUGANDA

The natural environment of Buganda was more suitable for agri-

would be in the less fertile regions.

In the precolonial period, these conditions permitted a clear division of labour between men and women, with the latter doing most of the routine work of subsistence food production. Hunting and fishing, done by men, provided only a minor element in subsistence. There were relatively few cattle in Buganda, compared to neighbouring kingdoms, and herding did not have the symbolic significance attached to it in the latter. The division of labour between the sexes remained important in the colonial period after cash-cropping had been widely adopted: in the main, men produced the cash crops. During the precolonial period, men spent their time freed from subsistence production in the service of a patron chief.

The domestic unit was composed of a man, his wives and children, and sometimes one or two other kin. Each such unit was independent in food production, with its own banana groves and fields for other crops. Each unit of land was held by an individual client of the chief, and households did not cooperate in cultivation (Wrigley, 1964:22). However, the extreme measures taken to preserve the individual client's land rights - such as the death penalty for attempts to steal land - probably reflect less the idea of "private property" as Wrigley thinks (*ibid.*) than the chief's assertion of his power to allocate holdings and discipline or protect his clients.

Besides the role of women as cultivators, the most important occupational distinctions lay between (1) men without political office ("ordinary men", bakopi, Fallers 1964:68), whose role included principally military and labour services (in spheres other than cultivation), and (2) political officials, who organized these activities and redistributed wealth which they received as clients of the kabaka. Apart from beer, goods produced by women lay outside the tribute system (*ibid.*:109); when I write of wealth I refer to goods produced by men or gained in raiding, and to the ability to dispose of labour (this refers to rights attached to political office, and to slaves taken in war). It should be stressed that 'wealth' in this sense was neither convertible nor a form of capital; the power to distribute wealth and land was attached to political office. Receiving wealth and land from a patron chief was an benefit of clientship; and relative wealth was an important component of the distribution of prestige, which was thus also under political control. Men appointed to political office were thereby 'appointed' to high status and wealth, and lost it on dismissal. There was no differentiated economic order of institutions providing an alternative source of power, and thus no power structure of economic classes. Distinctions between persons in the field of wealth did not derive from economic processes.

The patron (3) lived with his wives and immediate retinue within his own enclosure, marked off by a reed fence from his surrounding clients' homes. An 'ordinary man' made himself client (omosajja; musenze) to such a patron chief (mukama; mwami) (*ibid.*:121-2; Southwold 1964:212-4). The lowest-ranking political officials, entitled to receive a share of the kabaka's tribute (Fallers 1964:60) were those in the village (kyalo) - the village chief and, in some cases, his assistants (batongole). A mutongole had at least five clients, according to Kagwa (*ibid.* p.160). But Southwold (*ibid.* n.7) stresses that this was the minimum figure, with an average of around twenty clients each. A chief's subjects were his clients through receiving an allocation of the land under his jurisdiction. They served as his warriors and political supporters, and benefited from his distribution of goods received in war or from the kabaka. The patron gave his clients a means of contact with the higher-ranking chiefs, and thus the possibility of political advancement. In particular, a patron might introduce a

"bakopi men probably contributed as much to the support of the nonproductive superstructure as they did to their own households" (1964:83)

But neither they nor their wives ever laboured in the patron's banana groves, or otherwise provided for his subsistence. That was done by his own wives. The contrast with the situation of clients in Rwanda is instructive. Baganda clients differed in two crucial respects. (1) They were not members of a "closed status group" (4) or caste which was excluded from patronage of members of a higher caste, as were Hutu in Rwanda. (2) In notable contrast to the Hutu in Rwanda (Gravel, 1968: 165-7), the Baganda client could leave his patron (a named process - kusenguka) without great difficulty and, apparently, was ready to do so (Southwold, 1964:213-4). In order to satisfy their superiors' demands and avoid dismissal, village chiefs had to be careful not to alienate their clients (ibid:214). Chiefs competed for clients. As Southwold says, in the resulting situation

"The musenze lacked constitutional checks, not because his position was too weak to obtain them, but because it was too strong to require them" (ibid).

This was the reverse of the position of the Hutu in Rwanda, who were too weak to obtain them.

Land was the most important of the goods redistributed by the chief. A man who wished to cultivate and settle on the land under a chief's jurisdiction had to become his client by the same process of rendering goods, services, obedience and military support as did the chief to his own patron. He could not be the client of any other patron than the one from whom he held the land, and the latter was necessarily his political chief. The right to allocate land, and thus to establish a clientage, was exclusively limited to political authorities. A man who was dismissed from political office also lost his land and clients. The land grant can be seen in its aspect as a token of the patron-client relationship in that the chief had no interest in the economic activity carried out on it, and exercised no supervision, so long as the client paid his dues and services.

It has been pointed out by Mukwaya (1953:6-7) that the most useful analytical approach to land tenure in precolonial Buganda would examine the distribution of several different kinds of rights among persons and categories of persons, with allowance for overlapping. In Buganda persons might achieve rights of different kinds by combining roles, and there was much variation because of the insecurity of those rights and the kabaka's frequent intervention. So Mukwaya isolates 4 main kinds of precolonial rights over land: (1) obutaka (clan rights) (2) obutongole (rights of the kabaka and his chiefs) (3) obwesengeze ("individual hereditary rights") (4) abibanja (peasant rights of occupation').

(1) Lands held by clan rights were places where ancestors were buried. This established the clan's claim either that the land was held from before the arrival of the first kabaka, or that it was a grant from a kabaka. Clan lands were not contiguous blocks larger than a few villages, and often smaller than that. They were scattered throughout Buganda, though there tended to be a concentration around the original nucleus of the kingdom (Fallers 1964:35-7). Their ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{inhabitants} were rarely composed in the majority by members of the clan claiming the obutaka rights, because the political power of the state had made mobility possible within a wide area, and made ties of clientage more important than those of descent - so that if a patron was transferred to another chiefship his clients usually went too. Furthermore, the kabaka some-

applied not only to administrative chiefs, but also to officials of the palace. The point here is that these lands were granted personally by the kabaka, and not attached in any formal or hereditary way to the office. All these grants included political rights, but only at the lowest levels could they be delegated by anybody other than the kabaka. They were instantly revocable by the kabaka, and returned to him at the holder's death. The holders had the same power over the officials they appointed (with the kabaka's approval).

(3) The kabaka might give permanent, hereditary rights of tenure of a small estate to a favourite; most of the chiefs received such land, which carried no permanent political rights and was free of labour obligations by its peasant occupants to the chief.

(4) All bakopi could hold land from a political chief as their patron (see above). The tenure to which a client sought security was under the political protection of the patron; his actual holding might move from one part of the patron's land to another.

Thus the kyalo was the basic political unit (Southwold 1964:212) under its chief, who was usually directly appointed by the kabaka (Fallers 1964:175). The inhabitants of the kyalo comprised neither a localized descent group, nor a group of persons bound to that particular piece of ground. They were the chief's clients, bound by ties of political allegiance. But the introduction of the mailo system of land tenure in 1900 (see below) and the later fragmentation of the estates, turned the kyalo into a "collection of independent peasant families each owning its own piece of land" (Southwold 1965:95) By the 1950s many landlords, great and small, were absentees - a survey of 685 landlords in 2 subcounties in Busiro and 1 in Kyagwe found respectively 26%, 28% and 18% were absentees (Richards 1966:163)

The economic function of the chiefs as redistributors of tribute and war booty was formally ended in 1900. From 1888, groups of the kabaka's chiefs had competed for power in a civil war which was only settled in 1897. The settlement was consolidated under British overrule in the Agreement of 1900, in a way which institutionalized the power of the victorious groups of chiefs against rivals and against the kabaka - mainly by creating private property in land (mailo tenure) and distributing it to reinforce the new political power structure (Fallers 1964:163)

II. LAND AND POWER

In the 1900 Agreement the kabaka, his close kin and the great chiefs received the ownership of 1,003 square miles of land (clause 15; Low & Pratt, 1960:359-60) Initially, about a thousand lesser chiefs and clients of the kabaka, chosen by the great council (lukiiko) received another 8,000 square miles (ibid). However, many other chiefs and clients managed to establish a claim to a mailo allotment, since they were clients of those who already had them (ibid:115-22), and in the end 3,945 chiefs of all ranks shared the total 9,000 square miles (ibid.) The British Protectorate Government took the remaining 10,500 square miles of forest, waste and other uncultivated land (ibid:359)

It was only over a long period that political rights and duties were differentiated out from land ownership; after the mailo allotments the landowner continued to be responsible for the maintenance of law and order, the collection of taxes and the political representation of his tenants at the lower councils. These duties required attendance on the estate or, where holdings were not contiguous, the appointment of stewards. Mailo was different in other ways, specified in the 1908 Land Law, from ordinary English freehold: (1) mailo land could only be leased or transferred to another person of the Uganda Protectorate, unless there

tenants paid them dues as landlords, and were not thereby exempt from taxation in the now-differentiated political system. Nevertheless, for at least the first generation the personal biographies of the mailo holders provided, as intended by the British, a continuing association of land and power.

The ownership of mailo land was increasingly closely defined, by registration ordinances of 1908 and 1922, and a land law of 1939. Thus legally enforceable rights in land became much curtailed in respect of the number of possible claimants - although this development may be exaggerated if we forget how limited the claims of the bakopi were in practice in the precolonial period (see below). Much more important was the creation of economic classes in different relations to the means of production, i.e. landlords and tenants (see below). The position of the peasants settled on the mailo owners' land was not legally defined until 1928. In the intervening period mailo owners continued to act as patrons, though now as economic rather than political protectors. However, this meant that they had considerable political authority on their own estates, which they used to extract tribute in goods and labour. With the introduction of a cotton cash-crop, and the rising world price in it after the First World War, this 'tribute' had an economic value. Landlords tried to increase their demands, and the structure of power between the economic classes began to be reflected in overt political relations.

Besides the ordinary mailo holdings, there were also the lands held by the (colonial) Crown and the kabaka. Because Crown lands were largely uncultivated, and not administered differently from mailo land, tenants did not move to them in any numbers, as can be seen from the small proportions of the population there in 1950 (Mukwaya 1953:17). In the 1900 Agreement the kabaka received 350 square miles of mailo land attached to his office and 150 square miles as a private person. Over half the official mailos were in the one county of Kyagwe, and much of the rest in Kyadondo, Bulemezi, Busiro and Buddu. Like the other 416 square miles of official mailos attached to other political offices, the kabaka had only their usufruct while in office. It seems that the kabaka's private estates were administered in the same way, and also could not be sold. The kabaka's tenants (31,000 population on his private estates in 1950) had the same rights and obligations as elsewhere except for paying a small extra tribute (ibid.)

The original allotments, even aside from the special amounts received by the kabaka, his close kin and the great chiefs, were large. At first, mailo was allotted in units of one square mile, and no original allotment was for less than a quarter of a square mile. This is reflected in the survey of 1953 (Richards 1954) of two areas in Busiro and Buddu counties. At the time of first registration in about 1920, when some fragmentation had already taken place, the bulk of mailo land was held in estates of one square mile or more (Mukwaya 1953:29): in the Busiro area, where there were a great many different claims and some difficulty in securing contiguity of estates, 71.24% of mailo land was held by 17 estates in this way (with 32.05% in two estates of more than two square miles); in the Buddu area, where mailos more often began as single estates, fragmentation was about the same as in Busiro, and 84.42% was held in 23 estates of over one square mile (with 38.23% in two estates of over two square miles). In both areas together, there were 98 estates held by 78 persons, and this accounted for 1.62% of all estates in Buganda in 1920 (Mukwaya 1953:29) By 1950 there had been considerable fragmentation of holdings, and there were 487 estates held by 687 registered proprietors. In Buganda as a whole, the 6,050 estates of 1920 had become shared by about 50-60,000 persons (ibid; Wrigley 1964:49), though Fallers estimates that 60% of these persons owned less than 10 acres (1964:144).

of land held in the category of estates over 600 acres declined considerably from 57.62% to 33.8%, but that in the 300-600 acres category remained constant at 26.33% (1920) and 26.42% (1950). These figures support Mukwaya's statement (1953:32) that the great estates did not disappear dramatically; rather, small pieces were sold and the estates tended to stabilize at a large size in each generation (*ibid*). The sales did not necessarily indicate declining economic power, often being the means of raising cash for investment in more rewarding sectors of the economy (see below). And as landowning became relatively less directly important in mobilizing political support, as it became available to a larger number of people and as economic criteria took on greater significance, the amount owned (and not the mere fact of ownership) was an important element in the social status and distinctiveness of the elite. This can be seen in the behaviour of the owners of the large estates. In 1950 in the sample areas, 75.3% of the land was owned by 13.2% of owners, at an average of 427 acres each; while 24.7% of the land was owned by those with less than 100 acres (86.8% of owners at an average of 21.4 acres each). Among the larger landowners there was a greater hereditary element in the means of acquisition of their estates: only 15.6% of those estates over 100 acres had been acquired by sale, as against 64.25% of those under 100 acres. Most of the large estates were acquired by first registration or inheritance, and there were only two cases of transfer by gift as against 123 cases in the smaller estates category (Mukwaya 1953:30-31).

Inheritance did not itself lead to the fragmentation of the larger estates because of the widespread practice of leaving the whole or most of the estate to a single heir. This applied to half the estates in the sample which had changed hands since 1920, i.e. 40 out of 80; a further 18 were unchanged. On 20 of these estates the main heir received more than two-thirds, and the rest was shared among 53 other heirs (*ibid.*) Multiple ownership drawn from a single dynasty was also very common in Buganda (Richards 1966:102). But it appears that below a certain size of estate there was roughly equal division among heirs. So in so far as inheritance led to fragmentation of estates, it did so mainly among the smaller holdings. Moreover, gifts of small holdings of mailo were made to clients and close kin, just as in the precolonial period the higher chiefs had distributed lesser political rights to their followers, with the kabaka's approval. Gifts to close relatives from a large holding probably helped to maintain the main estate for a single heir. All gift-acquired estates were politically tied closely to the interests of the larger estates, and this acted against a polarization of their interests emerging as political conflict (*ibid.*).

Most land transfers in the category of estates under 100 acres were by sale. Among the more important motives of the great landowners for sale were those involving some kind of long-term investment, as in raising capital for commercial and construction investment, or for educating the children. Land was also bought as an investment in higher social status, greater political opportunities (Richards 1963: 273) and to some extent, profit from rent (Wrigley 1959:52), rather than in agricultural production. In Richards' 1954 sample, landlords on average cultivated only 6 acres as against the average tenant's 2½ to 3 acres (p.37). Thus those who bought land were not an aggressive entrepreneurial class challenging the dominance of the landlord class, but rather the latter's imitators. Nor did they buy land simply in token quantities while their main economic interests were elsewhere, for the normal method of buying was to acquire as much as possible with the money available (Mukwaya 1953:35). There were even very few entrepreneurs exploiting the difference between land prices as charged to different categories of kin, and the 'economic' value of the land; perhaps only eight such speculators in Buganda, according to the Registrar of Titles (*ibid.*:40). The British Administration also limited

Lukiiko (Low & Pratt 1960), virtually ended the economic content of the landlord-tenant relationship. This legislation and the interest in landownership for social and political, rather than economic, reasons reinforced each other in limiting conflicts of economic interest between landlord and tenant. The dues paid by a tenant were fixed, and soon had only 'nominal' value (Southwold 1964:215-6). They consisted of: a busulu of 10 sh. p.a., and an envujo of 2 sh. per brewing of beer, plus a scheduled payment on cotton and coffee cash crops of 2 sh. per acre in five counties and 4 sh. per acre in the others. There was little scope for economic exploitation of landlordship. As long as a tenant had a ticket to show he had paid his busulu he could only be evicted by a court order for failing to cultivate for over six months; the court could grant compensation for improvements by the tenant; the tenant had rights to trees and pasture; tenancies were heritable; changes in the ownership of mailo land could not affect the tenant's standing. Few landlords could live from rent alone, or raise capital on their land, and most landlords soon did not hold fundamentally different positions in economic processes from most Baganda tenants. But wherever landlords attempted to exploit their position the conflict emerged (Richards 1954; Gutkind 1963:179). Non-Baganda could not establish rights to cultivation by living on vacant or rented land, as Baganda could. They only had security of tenure in their huts, so long as they paid the rent (which was not fixed). And in areas where landowners could see the value of exploiting the land themselves, particularly in the best coffee regions and those around towns, conflict emerged between Baganda over such issues as boundaries; the growing practice of landlords demanding an entry fee for a holding; their keeping some holdings for migrant cotton cultivators who, as temporary residents, were not protected by the Busulu and Envujo law from high rents (up to 50 sh. per acre in 1950); attempts by the tenants to avoid the landlord's right of reversion if they moved away. (Mukwaya 1953)

While the main reasons for the acquisition of land were political and social, its value in these fields also declined. The owners of smaller mailo holdings of less than 100 acres (86.8%) had little chance of capitalizing politically on the association of power with landholding except at the village level, for they were unable to fill the patron's role adequately. Mukwaya estimates (1953:74) that the most such a landlord could earn from rent would be equivalent to an unskilled labourer's wages of about 500 sh. p.a. A landlord could not increase his income by farming all the land because the tenancies were protected; nor could he raise rents fixed by law. He could only resort to unpopular pressures: by renting land to immigrants, demanding entry fees or trying to enforce reversionary rights even in temporary absences. These measures were too irregular to ensure an income. Southwold found that by the 1950s the muluka chiefs (the lowest level paid officials) were receiving authority from office and not landownership, and few could live off their estates; that their unpaid assistants, the batongole, were increasingly difficult to mobilize; and that

"the distinction between chiefs and peasants, which was formerly made on the basis of the ownership of land, is disappearing as more and more people acquire land; and consequently even at the lowest levels the authority of the chiefs is becoming more purely bureaucratic" (1956:95)

This signified that the dominant status group (see below) had ceased to rely purely on landholding to legitimate its status and political power. Following the land reform of 1928, landownership ceased gradually to define an economic class. More slowly, it lost its "traditional" status as the only means of the mailo system of individ-

III. THE GENTRY: STATUS AND CLASS

It is necessary to examine here the part played in the economic power structure by symbolic patterns of group organization. I have emphasized the extent to which access to the capacity to act as a patron was controlled by political rather than economic or cultural processes in the precolonial period. It is necessary to qualify this in respect of status stratification, while emphasizing that this was not "closed" by descent as in Rwanda either in ideology or to anything like the same extent in practice. There was an element of inheritance, nsikirano (Fallers 1964:169) in accession to some political offices - mainly the bataka offices and the kingship itself. But such succession did not go automatically to a particular heir, and even quite distant collaterals were eligible. Though this ideology may not have been extensively practised, at least in regard to the kingship (Southwold, 1966), there were invariably several possible claimants from among close agnatic kin. Moreover, the kabaka had to approve all successors to political office. It remains, though, that there were strong elements of agnatic linkage in succession to political office; it was one relevant factor. Fallers refers usefully to "dynasties" of chiefs, such as that to which Sir Apolo Kagwa belonged (1964:171). The chances of a man of bakopi status becoming even one of the lowest-level chiefs were very limited, although they always existed (ibid:175). Fallers considers that:

"throughout the nineteenth century..there had existed an elite class of persons with great power and wealth - an elite class in Marx and Weber's sense of a category of persons occupying an 'objectively' advantageous political and economic position" (1964:176-7)

While I think that the term "elite class" can be extremely useful, my usage differs from Fallers (5) in an attempt to keep clear the analytical distinctions, pointed out by Weber, between the status, political and economic orders of stratification. I think that Fallers' use of "class", in reference to a situation in which no differentiated economic power structure (in, as I see it, Weber's sense) can be analyzed, begs important questions about the sources of power in precolonial Buganda (see above). Although there was in the nineteenth century an elite status category, not a class, it could not control its own recruitment. As Fallers himself says, it lacked nonpolitical symbols, a subculture giving a sense of common identity (1964:163) which could become more important than status distinctions between political officials. This 'problem' was only overcome when some political officials took up the 'new religions' of Islam and Christianity in the later nineteenth century (Wrigley, 1959b; Gee, 1958; Welbourn 1961)

The convert elite which seized power from the kabaka Mwanga in the civil war, under protection of the British, established itself as an economic class of landowners after 1900. Only then can we speak of an "elite class". Initially, the 3,945 chiefs who received mailo allotments were in a much stronger position politically than the chiefs under the precolonial kabakas. The creation of private rights in land, and the continued association of economic with political patronage, meant that for the first time power could be derived from sources not ultimately controlled by the kabaka. Wealth could be accumulated, and in the form of land ownership automatically gave political power. Persons outside the first group of chiefs might eventually acquire some power by this means. But for a time, the initial recipients of mailo benefited from a new security, and moreover did not suffer from the competition of rivals since they monopolized the means to power. They were not only an "elite class" but also formed a dominant political group.

Fallers argues that this group, which he calls "the gentry" (1964: 176), constituted an oligarchy for the first twenty-five years of the colonial period and then disappeared fairly rapidly when the British

"the new elite had more than a quarter-century in which to consolidate their position without the intervention of the Kabaka in Buganda Government affairs. More important, the royal power was not during this period exercised in appointment to office. The cohesiveness of what had now become something very like a gentry reached its peak around 1920-5 and thereafter probably began to recede. One immediate reason for this was that Kabaka Daudi Cwa had meanwhile come of age and begun to assert his traditional authority..More broadly, British officials began during this period to intervene more and more in Buganda government affairs in the interest of what they considered good government...Some of the interventions of the administration, furthermore, served to undermine the foundations of the whole elite class, for by this time British colonial administrators had come to be more interested in promoting the welfare of ordinary folk than in maintaining the power and dignity of their rulers..The Busulu and Envujo law of 1928, for example..Generally speaking, Uganda Government policy has moved in a similar 'democratizing' direction ever since..The gentry, in short, came into existence in the wrong century. Before it could consolidate its position, it encountered the opposition of 'welfare state' conceptions of public policy which were threatening the dominance of gentry classes everywhere in the modern world" (1964:187)

This argument identifies the elite class as 'gentry', exercising power through the monopoly of land when land ownership carried political rights. Its demise apparently followed the recognition and enforcement of political rights from other sources, such as the kabaka's favour or administrative ability acquired through 'western' education.

However, we should not assume, as Fallers does with his statement about 'democratization', that the dominance of an elite class ended at the same time as the "gentry" lost their monopoly of power. This would be to confuse cultural and structural processes. From the perspective of analysis of the Bugandan political system over time, the clear-cut domination of the 'gentry' status group does not appear to be discontinuous with the forms of stratification which preceded or came after it. Far from "existing in the wrong century" it may be regarded as having provided the political conditions within which the elite class could consolidate its position as a privileged economic class, and thereby guarantee its advantage when the criteria for recruitment to political administration altered. This rather reified expression of the analysis may be justified if I point out that the most important political condition provided by the gentry status group (and the convert one from which it sprang) was that it provided subjective consciousness and a mode of organization and agency to the dominant economic class (which is itself only an analytical construct).

The precolonial chiefs had acquired symbolic organization through Christianity and Islam. But with the spread of these religions, the elite had to find other ways of maintaining its distinctiveness (cf. Cohen 1969:201-11). This was achieved by the adoption of a "British" life-style, including 'gentlemanly' manners and status-symbolic possessions such as brick houses, tea-drinking, wearing watches etc. (Fallers 1964:183). The new educational system, beyond the reach of most of the non-elite, played a vital part in the indoctrination of this new form of distinctiveness and ideology. As Richards says:

"the first Ganda landowners began feverishly to realize their assets in order to secure a quasi-European standard of living as to housing, furniture, clothing and education. They sold part of their new estates...Peasants began to buy land..but the

had access to the amounts of cash required - as intended by the missionaries (Fallers 1964:183). The leading schools of each denomination were Mengo High School (Anglican) and Namilyano (Catholic); later, they were, respectively, King's College, Budo and St. Mary's College, Bisubi (ibid). Recruitment to political office was restricted by this mode of entry (Low 1962:22). Places were fewer than those which had been offered in the precolonial chiefs' courts; and the missionaries encouraged the chiefs to send only their own sons (and often only those by their "ring Wives"). However, chiefs continued to finance kin other than their own sons, so that in the elite sample of 1957-8 (Fallers 1964:201) it was found that 81% of those who had only primary education were neither sons nor grandsons of original mailo allottees; 66% of those with secondary education; 63% of those with higher education. In the absence of other evidence, it is curious that Fallers should take this as evidence of the way education had opened access to his 'elite' category. That about one-third of a very broadly-defined category (of doubtful relevance - see below) were the direct descendants (sons or grandsons) of original mailo allottees speaks of a considerable inheritance factor, particularly in a society in which equality of collaterals was a strong value not entirely removed by the Christian emphasis on the "ring wife" (ibid:202). The inheritance factor was probably considerably higher in what I am calling the elite - those who defined themselves as a group in action, rather than Fallers' abstract unit. This group was what Fallers refers to as a

"relatively cohesive and hereditary inner elite..chiefs, civil servants, ministers, landowners and leading politicians are much more closely related to the 1900 elite than are..(other categories of his "modern elite")". (1964:202 & n.64)

The elite of 1900 remained a distinct status group and passed its status to its children. The functions of the education system in this process are clear. In 1956, when there were about 300,000 children of school age in Buganda, there were 70,000 primary places; 4,000 for secondary and technical schools; and 200 post-secondary places; a few persons studied abroad (ibid:139). Even in the 1957-8 sample of 298 "elite" members, nearly half went to King's College, Budo or St. Mary's Bisubi; and in certain political categories the proportion was much higher: 9 out of 10 party leaders; 4 out of 7 nominated Lukiiko members; 7 out of 8 Legislative Council members; 15 out of 19 county chiefs; 37 out of 56 Buganda civil servants; 12 out of 15 Uganda civil servants; 5 out of 6 ministers.

By the time the "gentry" criterion became less important in recruitment to major offices the elite class was still objectively advantaged, both in holding office and in access to the new means of recruitment; and it was made distinctive and disciplined by new status criteria. By the time the bakopi tried to buy higher status by acquiring land, it was of only local significance, no longer providing admission to the highest status group. By then the elite class monopolized the greatest wealth, power and status by other means. I suggest that the prominence of a "gentry" class in 1900-25 as a dominant political group in Buganda may be traced primarily to the increasingly antagonistic economic relations between its members and their tenants manifesting themselves in their political relations. While political conflict took this form, and status groups remained so undifferentiated, the dominance of an elite class was clear to all. This clarity, as a factor in political behaviour, disappeared with two developments in about the same period: (1) land reforms reduced the immediately-obvious conflict of interests between landlords and tenants

IV. ECONOMIC POWER STRUCTURE IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD

I intend now to analyze the structure of economic power relations during the colonial period, in order to show what conflicts of objective interests there were, and how they were related to perceived conflicts. The Agreement of 1900 had established two economic classes with different relations to the means of production: (1) landlords, living by tribute (rent) and sales - they lacked a way to exploit the land directly, apart from its use as a capital asset through sales, until cotton became established as a cash crop; (2) tenants living by peasant production (cf. Wolf 1966:10).

With the introduction of the cotton cash crop the opportunity for the landlords to establish a new base in the processes of production by exploiting their holdings seemed to be available (Richards 1963:272). However, they did not have the political or economic power to turn their client-tenants into plantation labourers, as happened in the Eastern Province of Uganda (Wrigley 1964:35), although they did try to divert the new labour services demanded by the British to their own estates (Powersland 1957:20). Tenants could too easily move or find other employment. Land was not scarce: in 1921 there was only an average population density of 45 persons per square mile on fertile land. Conversely, labour was scarce, and there were relatively many employment opportunities outside cultivation, as for example small traders and cotton-buyers, clerks, carriers, labourers, drivers, artisans. Without the means to compel their tenants to work on their behalf, landowners remained essentially unproductive (Richards 1963:272); it was only from the 1920s that this was offset to some degree by the importation of immigrant labour. Their tenants individually cultivated a small amount of cotton and, later, coffee besides the subsistence crops grown by women. Other Baganda did not rely on landownership or cash crop cultivation alone, and took advantage of the growing variety of non-agricultural employment opportunities.

This situation is often analyzed as the background to the distinction which developed between landowning and political office holding. The number of landowners grew considerably (see above), and possession of a large estate was no longer necessarily associated with political office. Wrigley states:

"A clearer distinction could now be drawn between the official hierarchy of administrators and the economic class of landed proprietors. The aristocracy as a whole had gained new administrative functions which to some extent replaced the old role of leadership in war, but it had lost its former direct control over the production and distribution of wealth" (1964:37)

Such an analysis fails to recognize the extent to which the larger landowners used their land as capital for acquiring the means to retain political power and take advantage of the new elite employment opportunities. Landownership, as I showed above, did not offer the means to control production and distribution of wealth; it could only be a resource in the pursuit of political power if converted into cash to pay for education or commercial investment.

The great landowners retained their economic position and, even in the 1950s, some Baganda could afford to live from rent (Wrigley 1964:50), which is not to say that they limited themselves to that. Except in their case, the amount of land actually cultivated became a more significant element in economic power than the amount of land owned, or whether it was held in ownership or tenancy. Cotton developed rapidly as a cash crop after its introduction in 1904, with the value of the total crop in Uganda rising from £1,089 in 1905-6 to £165,412 by 1910-

cultivators, which ensured a market for locally-manufactured goods. The rise in urban population as local industries became established, provided a more diversified market for cultivators. This upward economic spiral is in notable contrast with the precolonial "vicious circle" of low income and productivity described by Ehrlich (1956). Cash was used to pay taxes (from the Hut Tax made as part of the 1900 Agreement onwards), rent, and sometimes hired labour for construction or the fields. A cash income became necessary for setting up a household, with a plot and a wife, and most young Baganda had to find wage employment at some period of their lives (Southwold 1965).

While most cultivators held only two to three acres of food crops, and one to three acres of cash crops (ibid:110; Mukwaya 1953), there existed after the Second World War some much larger cash farming units of over 100 acres, with the bulk of such holdings in the 10 to 30 acres range. Analytically, we may now distinguish three economic classes. (1) Those capitalists who lived by rent or employed labour on a regular basis in commerce and industrial or agricultural production. Richards (1954) restricts the use of the term "agricultural capitalist" to those farming with hired labour on 100 acres or more. This quantitative criterion gives too static an analysis of economic relationships and its relevance to empirical processes is not clear; I do not use it. (2) Those farmers who produced cash crops with their own labour, while their women cultivated subsistence crops. They might irregularly employ an extra labourer. Stinchcombe (1967) would call them "family smallholders". (3) Landless labourers.

Although there may have been overlapping and marginal cases, as one would expect in a situation of relatively high economic mobility, these three 'ideal' relations to the means of production represent the significant discontinuities. Even Wrigley, who considers there was a continuum, admits that by 1956 there was a "class" who owned little more than their banana grove, and depended considerably on wage-earning for their cash income. By this time land had ceased to be a 'free good' and there were high initial payments for tenancies (1959:79). Professionals, traders, skilled and semi-skilled workers formed significant occupational categories but cannot be seen as distinct classes because they were cross-cut by differential property relations, or formed only part of a wider class (cf. Bottomore 1964:chap.IV).

Baganda traders comprised more than half the African traders of the Protectorate in 1953 (6), while Baganda were only a quarter of the total population. But only 20% of these traders made £249 or more net profit, and an almost equal proportion (18%) made a loss (Fallers:1964:145). As Fallers says: "Shopkeeping remains largely a side-line". Thus most traders fall into the second or third categories outlined above. Only a few were themselves regular employers, and thus "commercial capitalists". There were 85 Baganda directors of 36 limited companies in a variety of activities including publishing, food processing and marketing, and construction. The leaders of the bigger cooperative societies for processing and marketing should be considered as salaried professionals. There were 379 societies in 1954 (ibid:147).

The professionals varied greatly in their class affiliations. Religious officials and teachers were recruited from all classes, with a noticeable tendency for the more prestigious and well-remunerated jobs to be held by those with more capital to invest in extended education (ibid:139), i.e. those from my "capitalist" class. This applied to all the professions. Those from capitalist class families were much more significantly represented in those occupations requiring the greatest capital investment: the law and medicine. Top politicians and journalists were drawn from the foregoing professional occupations, together with direct recruitment from the landlord and agricultural capitalist class. Thus in 1956 the leaders of the three main existing

of public and municipal services - about a quarter of all Kampala employees - and commerce, transport and domestic service (Elkan & Fallers 1960:243). Because of their better education and strategic position in their own homeland, Baganda wage-earners tended to be in the better-paid jobs, as white-collar and skilled workers (Elkan 1960: Table 7 pp.44-7) But though they formed the most stable labour-group (Elkan 1956), they tended to regard the town and wage-labour as temporary phases, and to retain their links with the rural areas. Elkan and Fallers comment:

"Many Baganda town workers 'commute' daily from rural holdings, where their wives cultivate both food and cash crops. Others maintain an urban lodging for use during the week but return every weekend to a rural home many dozens of miles away"(1960:249)

Thus Baganda wage-earners do not simply fall into the class of the landless, as most immigrants do. In 1950, between 55-75% of immigrants worked in agricultural labour, and most of the remainder went to unskilled urban labour which Baganda avoided (Richards 1954:94).

We may arrive at a crude estimation of the proportions of the rural population in the different classes by examining carefully Wrigley's description of the characteristics of his 5 categories of agriculturists, divided analytically by wealth (n.d. quoted by Hunter 1962:99; & Worsley 1965:220). His categories are:

Large Farmers.....	2%
Well-to-do Peasants.....	19%
Middling Peasants.....	27%
Poor Peasants.....	32%
Landless Labourers.....	20%

Large Farmers may employ as many as 100 labourers, though 12-20 is more common. The Well-to-do Peasant "generally employs one or two porters (i.e. labourers) fairly regularly, and one or two more occasionally, but he nearly always does at least some manual work himself". The Middling Peasant "rarely employs regular hired labour".

Thus we find at most 21% in my capitalist economic class, and undoubtedly most of these will be more like the family-smallholder class; 59% or more in the family-smallholder class, comprising Wrigley's Middling and Poor Peasants and, as I suggest, many of the Well-to-do Peasants category; and finally, 20% in the class of landless labourers.

Wrigley himself attempted to identify "economic classes" in Buganda in the late colonial period (1964:52-60), and concludes that: "there is very great economic differentiation but hardly any clear-cut stratification" (1964:60). There are two important, but analytically distinct, points confused here. (1) There were economic classes in the sense used by Marx and elaborated by Weber, as I have shown; (2) Consciousness of class was inhibited by the existence of cross-cutting status groups. These have often been referred to as the 'objective' and 'subjective' criteria for class respectively. (7) They should not be confused in an attempt to analyze a single scale of stratification, as this obscures significant questions about the sources of power.

Wrigley fails to recognize this distinction when he identifies "economic classes" in Buganda by different levels of income and possession of certain critical items, such as a car. He is, in fact, thereby analyzing one aspect of social status in Buganda - which, as he says, was not clear cut subjectively. The lack of clarity in the status stratification system, and its non-identity with the economic class structure, is significant in the study of political change in Buganda; particularly so if we are to explain the apparent identity of political interests perceived by Baganda of the different economic classes in the decade before independence. Classification by an analyst into strata

not those of economic class:

"1,076 Protectorate Government civil servants; the Buganda government civil servants who made 500 sh. or more per month; the 3,354 teachers, 289 Christian priests and Muslim sheikhs, and 54 doctors and lawyers; the 85 company directors, some 1,200 traders who made more than £250 per year net profit, and the 2,500 (more or less) owners of more than 10 acres of mailo land with five or more tenants." (1964:187)

Fallers admits the arbitrariness of this grouping - even so, it is difficult to see its value in analysis. The first category includes drivers, carpenters, a cobbler, different grades of clerks and jailers besides senior officials (1964:132-4). Most of the teachers, priests, traders and landowners would be part of local rather than national elites. More than half the teachers taught in vernacular grades (Apter 1961:372). Between the top status grouping and the mass of about 300,000 peasants and unskilled workers, Fallers places about 50,000 persons in a 'middle group' comprising about 20,000 'substantial' farmers and landowners, 25,000 skilled workers, and about 5,000 lesser traders. Again, this 'hierarchy' has no demonstrated empirical reality in social interaction.

The significant point about the economic classes as I have analyzed them is that it is clear that from soon after the passing of the Busulu and Envujo Law in 1928 (see above), very few Baganda made their livelihood by exploiting the labour of other Baganda. (1) Only the very largest landowners could afford to live from busulu and envujo, for these fixed dues soon became unrelated to the economic value of the land in production. These landowners and their families often took employment in other sectors of the economy, but were notably unsuccessful in establishing themselves in commerce. According to Wrigley:

"there have been a number of ambitious ventures into wholesale distribution and large-scale produce marketing, mostly led by men drawn from the upper ranks of society, men of property and education...with very few exceptions these have been total failures". (1964:50)

Differentiation of occupational roles among the landlord class therefore centred on professional and higher administrative careers. The degree of overt conflict engendered by an aggressive new class characterised as "employers" was precluded. (2) Baganda without their own land to farm seldom became agricultural labourers; they migrated to the towns where they worked on their own account as petty traders or as employees of Europeans and Asians in a great variety of occupations (see above). Elkan and Fallers found that Baganda usually worked in town until they had enough money to buy a substantial plot or set themselves up in a small business; and that all assumed that they would eventually become self-employed (1960:248-50). Landless persons who worked for Baganda employers were mostly immigrants (Richards 1963).

Thus the development of economic classes in Buganda after 1900 did not, after the initial period in which a landlord class exercised power directly at the expense of their tenants, mean that conflicts of objective interests between Baganda in terms of the economic power structure were perceived as more important than other interests - notably in status - which they had in common. (cf. Stinchcombe 1967; Weber 1970:186). Such conflict did exist between Baganda employers, on one side, and immigrant landless labourers and temporary tenants. Baganda of all classes were strongly united against non-Baganda: the Asian and European employers and middlemen; the British colonialists; petty Asian trade competitors; competing African immigrant labourers

the population (Richards 1954:95). Between 1931 and 1948 the African population of Buganda increased 49.6%, but there was a particularly noticeable rise in the immigrant (particularly the Banyarwanda and Barundi) populations. The latter two groups produced 42.8% of the increase; other immigrants 33.3%; and the Baganda only 23.9% (ibid:116). By 1959 the Baganda proportion of the Buganda population had declined from 66% to 55% (1,006,101 out of 1,834,128: Southwold 1965).

Richards (1954) describes 4 main ways immigrants entered cultivation in Buganda: as (1) paid labourers or "porters"; (2) tenants under the protection of the Busuku and Envujo Law; (3) as other kinds of tenants, mainly seasonal; and (4) as land buyers. A sample of 3 counties - Busiro, Kyagwe and Buddu - showed that an average of about 60% of immigrants were settled as customary tenants (ibid:130), though they had to pay a large entry fee and take up previously uncultivated ground. About 12% were seasonal tenants, paying well above the customary sum; more like a real rent. Some became tenants on Crown land, at ten shillings for temporary occupation; or tenants on the plantation on which they worked; or on one of the three ex-soldier settlements in Buganda. Those who were "porters or unstated" in the sample varied from 22.6% in Busiro to 44.2% in Buddu (ibid:133), whereas most Baganda were landlords or customary tenants. Non-Baganda landbuyers were very rare, partly because of Baganda feeling against giving land, residually associated with political rights, to non-Baganda. In 1951, the Great Lukiiko tried to pass an amendment to the 1908 Land Law extending prohibition of land sales to anyone who was not a Muganda.

Hostility between Baganda and the whole category of non-Baganda (abanamawanga) was considerable (ibid:222). The main opposition to immigrants came from the Baganda tenants with whom they competed, according to Southall's Alur informants (ibid:156), not the landlords who profited from their presence; and in the urban areas the landlords and petty traders clashed over the admittance of competitive but rent-profitable Asians to previously restricted districts (Gutkind 1963:215, 223,227). The hostility was expressed through the symbolism of Baganda distinctiveness. But despite their shared hostility, landlords and tenants retained different attitudes because of their different economic situations. Chiefs and landlords continued to give out plots to immigrants because of their increasing difficulty in attracting servants and labourers (work which Baganda would not do), and in securing an income from fixed dues of diminishing value. Baganda tenants opposed this competition and demanded the expulsion of aliens who were undercutting their standard of living, though they did not oppose the employment of immigrants as porters alone, i.e. work they were not competing for (ibid:197). So there remained conflicting class interests as well as cohesion under the symbol of national unity among Baganda.

In this paper I have analyzed the changing economic power structure in Buganda under the impact of colonialism, in order to show where conflicts of objective interests lay. Unlike Fallers and Wrigley I did not find a growing "classlessness"; and I tried to show that their finding was the result of a conceptual confusion of economic and status forms of power, which Weber showed should be kept analytically distinct. On the other hand, I found that the economic class structure pointed to by Worsley in fact requires a good deal of comment to explain the continuing "latency" of class conflict. Worsley's assumptions hide the importance not only of the particular nature of an economic class structure - particularly the types of economic processes in which power relations are formed - but also of cultural-historical variables in political change. The impact of colonialism in Buganda cannot be understood without analysis of the economic power structures it generated. It is a significant failure in the E.A.I.S.R.

dependence. Similarly, analysis of the historical nature of the economic power structure is necessary to understanding of the success of the strategy at the time of independence.

NOTES

1. Notably Richards (1954), Mukwaya (1953) and Fallers, ed. (1964). This paper is based on research done in London in 1970 for an M.Phil. thesis "Social Stratification and Political Change in Two East African Kingdoms", while I was receiving a grant from the Social Science Research Council of U.K. It is based wholly on published sources available in London.
2. Recent studies seem to indicate that such kinship links are often abandoned if an elite, local or national, finds that their advantages are outweighed by their disadvantages (e.g. Lloyd 1966; Long 1968)
3. The most comprehensive and reliable data available on the precolonial patron-client system is found in Fallers, ed. (1964), and it is on this source that I rely mainly in the following analysis.
4. i.e. one with "status by descent" (Weber 1970:405)
5. I use the term "elite class" to express the idea of an economic class, which is an analytical category, whose constituent persons have considerable awareness of their mutual, diffuse and often exclusive interests because they also constitute a status group - in this case, the elite status group.
6. 6,683 African traders were resident in Buganda in 1953 (Fallers 1964:145)
7. As Weber points out the importance of this distinction:

"Since it is quite a general phenomenon we must mention here that the class antagonisms that are conditioned through the market situation are usually most bitter between those who actually and directly participate as opponents in price wars... It is not the rentier, the shareholder, and the banker who suffer the ill-will of the worker, but almost exclusively the manufacturer and the business executives who are the direct opponents of workers in price wars. This is so in spite of the fact that it is precisely the cash boxes of the rentier, the shareholder and the banker into which the more or less 'unearned' gains flow... This simple state of affairs has very frequently been decisive for the role the class situation has played in the formation of political parties" (1970:186)

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