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IDENTITY, STATUS AND PRESTIGE

By

E. Gerken

IDENTITY, STATUS, AND PRESTIGE

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present some preliminary results of a survey which at present is carried out in three different areas of Busoga. The material is taken from 200 interviews with homestead-heads, 100 each in Busambira (furtheron referred to as B.), a former kingdom some 30 miles east of Jinja which was one of Lloyd Fallers' areas when he did field work in Busoga in 1950-52 (Fallers 1956), and in Wairaka - Wanyange (furtheron referred to as W/W), two parishes some 3-7 miles east of Jinja on Tororo Road. The survey is part of a study on social change in rural areas of Busoga under the impact of industrialization and urbanization (Gerken 1966). Fieldwork is done since November 1965 and includes a time-budget for some 60 farmers, a women-questionnaire with a sample-size of 200 and a survey of homestead-heads the sample-size of which is 400. The interviews for this paper were administered during September, October, and November 1966.

Independent Variable

Influence of an urban center on its surrounding rural areas may be seen in:

- the demand for labour,
- the demand for agricultural products,
- the supply of cultural patterns,
- the supply of new consumer goods,
- the provision of urban services.

If one accepts the assumption that these influences are important for social change in the villages, differences in the pattern as well as in the rate of social change should be observable between rural areas according to their distance from the urban center. Distance, therefore, defined as traffic-time and -cost, was chosen as the independent variable. It was possible to keep other factors more or less constant. Although divided in some 15 kingdoms and more than 60 independent chieftaincies, these units followed very much the same pattern in legitimizing authority, they share the same system of property and, with the exception of the extreme North and North-East have the same language (Fallers 1956, Fallers 1960, Richards 1959).

Approach

Where does social change become manifest in a way that a survey can provide material for description and explanation? In the beginning of my study it seemed tempting to me to take the actions and decisions of individuals as the starting point for two reasons: 1) a majority of processes of social change is brought about by the actions of individuals: individuals quit groups in the village and join other groups

in town, individuals deviate from the norms of one group (Clan) and endure its sanctions to fulfill the conflicting norms of other groups (on the working place) and enjoy their rewards. 2) Changes which might be effected by the "intrinsic logic" of a culture and/or the contact with another culture have importance for the actions of individuals and will probably become manifest in categories of "membership" and "conformity to specific norms" of groups around which these changes centre.

Action might be roughly analysed in three categories: conditions of action (environment), choice of goals, that is the norms and values which govern these choices, and choice of means to accomplish these goals, that is the instrumental norms which allow or forbid certain means of action. The most important part certainly consists in the norms which govern the choice of goals- or, if the norms are already internalized, the motivations for searching certain goals. The concepts of identity and status as a determining factor of identity seem to provide a possible framework inside which they might be described and explained.

The term identity was re-introduced to the social sciences by Erik H. Erikson (Erikson 1956) and was recently applied by Michael Banton to problems of class-, ethnic-, and race-alignment in West Africa (Banton 1965). Erikson defines identity or rather identity-formation as "...arising from the selective repudiation and mutual assimilation of childhood identifications and their absorption in a new configuration which, in turn, is dependent on the process by which a society identifies the young individual, recognizing him as somebody who had to become the way he is, and who, being the way he is, is taken for granted." (Erikson 1956) Identity - formation is not confined to the end of adolescence but is a "lifelong development". It is not a substitute for "self" but is essentially a social term establishing where a person is situated, "... that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of his participation or membership in social relations" (Stone 1962)

I think it is possible to take the concept of identity into role theory in very much the same way as this was done with identification translated as the acceptance of the complementary role in a collectivity (Parsons 1958). Identity, then, would describe a certain configuration of the roles a person integrates in a unique way which links it with groups of people who have some meaning for it, either positive or negative. (compare concepts of membership and non-membership in reference group theory. Merton 1957)

Status with Renate Mayntz may be defined as the sum of:
a) the role expectations placed on a social position, and
b) the prestige the holder of the position enjoys by virtue of holding the position, not by virtue of his personality. Identity is determined by status insofar its formation is dependent "... on the process by which society identifies the individual" (Erikson 1956) which in turn depends on the position which an individual holds in its social relations (in groups, collectivities, and social categories - I shall use these terms in the way they were defined by Merton. Merton 1957) and is expressed in the prestige it enjoys as the holder of that position.

from page 3. + The sample in Busambira was stratified to ensure at least $\frac{1}{3}$ non-farming population.

++ Therefore, and because the total number of this group is yet too small, it will be combined with the farmers' group in the fol-

Operationalization

The devices used in the questionnaire base on the idea that the impact of industrialization and urbanization is mediated through the supply of new social categories and new norms connected with these categories. Besides the traditional groups of ascriptive solidarity in family, Clan, and territorial community and categories like "cultivator on subsistence plus cash-crop level" new groups and categories in friendship, ethnic solidarity, occupation et al. become possible. Reference to these groups and categories will with some probability lead to conflicting role-expectations. These conflicts and their solution or non-solution through adjustment, new interpretation of norms, deviance or change constitute an essential agents for social change.

a) priorities

The questionnaire first tries to establish membership and conformity with at least one norm with as many groups as possible, some 25 altogether and then tries to find priorities between competing norms.

An example for this procedure is a hypothetical situation in which a father faced with the situation of not being able to pay the school-fees for his children is offered, one by one, 5 alternatives each related to a norm of another category: (a) selling a bicycle, (b) giving the groundnut-crop as security for a loan, (c) going to town for a job, (d) selling part of his land, (e) selling the whole kibanja. The frequency with which certain response patterns were chosen, analysed by residence and occupation are shown in Table I.

From 17 possible response patterns only 6 were chosen with some frequency. There is a strong resistance in both areas and in all occupations to give up what is looked at as the very basis of social and economic existence in Busoga: a home with a minimum of land around it (pattern 3-6). This holds true for Busambira where 98% of the respondents have a home of their own as well as for Wairaka-Wanyange where only 43% have a home of their own, the rest having houses somewhere else in Busoga. In fact, those answering in pattern 1 or 2 are not married and have no children and, therefore, following Soga values are not "bataka", persons with full social rights and responsibilities. I think one can interpret this as a clear priority of the norm to have a home before the norm of educating one's children.

A difference in residence as well as in occupation arises if the norm of landownership isolated as it is from the norm of having a home is involved. Here we find 69% in Busambira refusing to sell a piece of land in order to pay the school-fees for their children against only 34,4% in Wairaka-Wanyange (patterns 4 and 5). In occupation there is a difference between farmers (63,3%) and civil servants (37,9%) and industrial workers (38,4%) whereas the figures for "small businessmen" including traders, fish-mongers, village carpenters, and bicycle-repairers, are similar to those of the farmers (56,6%). Possible explanations seem to be that land in the vicinity of the town actually commands a high price (1.000/- for a residential plot) whereas a resident of Busambira would have to sell at least a 1/2 acre (average size of a holding in Busambira: 4 acres) to raise the school-fees for one child per one year in a primary school. For those to a less degree dependent on agriculture for their cash-income - although 68% of them is still actively involved in farming- land might be sold as long as the home with a minimum of land is not endangered. I would like to point to other figure: 29,3% of the residents in W/W do not accept looking for a job in town as an alternative to non-education whereas only 17% in B. do not (patterns 5 and 6). I would argue that people in W/W have a more realistic view of the labour market and the earnings possible than people in B.

b) social position

Factors affecting the social position of a Busoga might be divided into: i those sine qua non conditions of having a home and being or having been legally married (that is having paid dowry and/or been married in a ceremony) without which a man is not regarded as a mutaka. In B. only one respondent had no home and 9 had never been married, 4 of which are younger than 25. In W/W 12 respondents had no home and 29 had never been married, 25 of which are younger than 25 years. Of these 22 give marriage as their immediate goal. ii those variable factors the combination of which defines the social position of a Busoga in his society and/or different sub-societies: occupation, education, religion, membership in a ruling Clan v. a commoner Clan, position of father in Clan, village, and kingdom are the main factors. These factors are by no means independent. The position of the father is often decisive for the place the respondent takes in these dimensions. Having a high position in the kingdom and Clan and thereby having control over land, Clan-funds, and access to the local Government he was able to finance the education of his son. Table II shows the relation of the position of father to occupation and education of respondent.

The relation between Clan-membership (ruling v. commoner Clan) might be seen in Table III. Members of one of the six major ruling Clans (that is those Clans which provide a traditional ruler recognized in the Busoga Local Government Ordinance) provide a considerably higher percentage of civil servants and a slightly higher percentage of industrial workers, to whom other criteria of selection are applied, than members of the other 350 odd Clans.

Religion as a factor of social position; too, is closely related to occupation and education, the most obvious reasons being the long-standing reluctance of Muslim fathers to send their children to missionary schools and the compliance of chiefs with the religion of the early European administrators. see Table IV.

A perhaps more interesting result is that there seems to have taken place a certain polarization of religions between Muslim/ farming and small business/ residence in some distance from town on one side and Christian/ civil servant and industrial worker/ residence near town on the other. The figures presented in Table V suggest that this is not only a result of Christians more likely to choose non-farming and non-rural positions thereby leaving Muslims in the majority in rural areas (only 10% of the adult males in Busoga are accounted as employees. Uganda Government 1965, Uganda Government 1965 a) but to a certain degree also the result of farming and rural population actually converting to Islam. The figures of Table V base on the religion of the father in comparison to religion and residence of the son. A different religion of father and son does not necessarily mean a conversion. Quite often a father joined a religion when his children were already born and left them with a free choice. But even then it seems striking to me that sons who do not opt for a non-farming position and a near-town residence or in any case do not succeed in achieving them should choose Islam against the preference of their fathers. The fathers of respondents in B. form a relation of 46/33/20 between Christians/Muslims/Pagans whereas their sons form a relation of 42/50/7. The figures for W/W show the inverse trend: 64/18/12 and 75/18/1 respectively.

c) prestige

In the pre-test stage of my questionnaire I tried to measure prestige by means of a Prestige-Scale (NORC 1947). Interpretations of similar rankings became extremely misleading as long as no information concerning the criteria of prestige-ascription was available. A preference of a small farmer v. a mechanic in a factory for example may as well be originated in a traditional orientation towards land-ownership, living near the grave of one's grandfathers, living in the community into which one is born as well as in a perfectly rational orientation accounting for the possibly higher profit one might achieve out of a 10 acre farm. I, therefore, chose a dichotomous approach on the criteria of prestige-ascription. The respondents were given three choices each for a pair of a, for an outsider, modern and/or urbanized v. a traditional and/or rural position and were asked to state the reasons for their choice. I tried to keep constant certain factors which in the Soga system of values command some importance: inheritance of land, marital status and age. The pairs were chosen under the perspective of the traditional "stratification", giving an example for each of the three main strata: farmer, commoner-chief, and ruler. (see Table VI)

Reasons brought forward with a certain frequency might be roughly placed on two continua the particularism - universalism dimension of norms of orientation and the ascription - achievement dimension of acquisition of roles. (Parsons 1951)

/or

On the particularistic end I would place mainly those criteria which follow more/less the chief-client pattern. Lloyd F. Fallers has stressed the point that Baganda and, one might well include, Basoga do not have an overall concept of class or a concept of stratum in which to place an individual human being, but tend to see the position of an individual in dyadic relations comparing it to another individual which is either its chief or its client. (Fallers 1964) This is very much the ascription pattern which "traditional" Basoga follow and which in fact is quite sufficient for reasons of orientation in a traditional society. An interesting point is the adjustment of this pattern to a situation with a highly differentiated division of labour or positions related to each other through the market. In the first choice, for instance, between a farmer owning 10 acres and living in some distance from the town and a mechanic in Nyanza Textiles the chief-client pattern may for each choice make a specific adjustment: The positions might be seen as positions in a single production line where a one-sided dependence is assumed. The position at the beginning of the line is superior to the position at the end on the ground that the latter depends on the first. Thereby, the farmer is superior because he produces the cotton which the factory uses and without which the mechanic would not have a job at all. Another possible adjustment is based on the idea that every institution above a certain size quite naturally must be a government department, a view which in the past was more or less justified. In this case the mechanic is placed into the chief's position being a man who is working with the government whereas the farmer has to pay taxes.

On the universalistic end criteria like income, independence in making decisions and permanence of job might be placed. The frequency with which civil servants and industrial workers refer to permanence probably reflects the situation on the labour market with everybody being aware of his possible dismissal. The farmer/ chief/ ruler choice, therefore, does not necessarily indicate a traditional status system.

On the ascriptive end criteria like "inheritance of position", "respected by his people", might be placed. On the achievement end criteria referring to specific performances, "giving advice", "defending our rights" might be placed. Answers referring to qualification were only given twice so that they are not shown in the Table VI.

The figures presented indicate that almost always industrial workers provide a considerably higher percentage of answers on the universalistic end (d, e) and on the achievement end (e) than both farmers and civil servants, civil servants more often than not being more near to the farmers' point of view than to the view of industrial workers. Choice I, d and e combined: IW 64,3%, CS 38,5%, F 45,6% Choice II, d and e combined: IW 46,8%, CS 18,5%, F 25,6% Choice III, g: IW 36,9%, CS 29,7%, F 11,1% These figures, seems to me, can perhaps be interpreted as indicating the breaking up of an overall Soga status system into at least two partial status systems. The discriminating factor between the different populations holding them seems to be not so much residence (rural - urban) but occupation which in turn is related to residence.

d) identity

"The Copperbelt miner is above all else an African as opposed to the Europeans, and an urban industrial worker as opposed to a rural farmer. But in West African cities neither of these identities has been so important as in Central Africa." (Banton 1965)

To raise material concerning identities I used two different sets of questions. +1. I presented a list of 14 possible affiliations and asked for priorities (an elaborate way of ensuring compliance had to be used), furtheron an open question in which respondents were asked to describe themselves,

+ I am indebted to Clife Davis, Martin R. Dornbos, and Marshall Segall for kindly allowing me to study their questionnaire on political identity in West-Uganda.

finally a question about terms the respondent never wants to be called.
2. As indicators for assumed ethnic and religious identities questions about work-mates and supervisors as well as the respondent's evaluation of proposed marriage-partners of his daughter were chosen.

Table VII shows the figures for the first choice analysed by residence and occupation. Striking figures certainly are the preferences of industrial workers and, to a smaller degree, of W/W residents: almost 60% (35%) choose their Clan-membership as the most important part in a description of themselves whereas farmers and residents of B. more equally divide on marriage, Clan, and farming with a preference for marriage 35% (27%). The high priority for Clan-membership in W/W is not related to actual Clan-contact, where indicators of attendance of Clan-meetings (B. 56%, W/W 49%) and knowledge of the name of a Clan-leader (B. 92%, W/W 75%) do not suggest this. Partly, this might be explained with unmarried respondents taking to Clan-membership as a kind of family substitute, partly, in an area with high Clan-intermixture (Table IX) and low population stability (Table X) the Clan-name may serve as an orientation symbol only whereas in stabilized areas the name of the respondent is sufficient and his position more or less evident. But this cannot explain the exceptional high figures for industrial workers. I think they must be seen in the context of ethnic identity.

Farmers and civil servants on their work-place as well as in village-life normally do not compete with members of other tribes. Busoga industrial workers however find themselves a minority in the factories of Jinja (23, 6%, Uganda Government 1965) in a place which they regard as their own, or, at least, share with their brothers, the Baganda (10, 3%). In the open question asking for further descriptive terms 40% of the industrial workers names their tribe whereas no civil servant and no farmer did this. From Fallers (Fallers 1956) one might safely follow that there has not been a strong ethnic identity in Busoga so far, in any case nothing as distinctive as in Buganda. I would argue, therefore, that industrial workers, asked to describe themselves, took to Clan-membership as a traditional way of expressing one's identity in order to express an ethnic identity which being quite new and without an elaborate ideological superstructure has no proper means of expressing itself.

A national identity has not yet developed although in a situation in which Kenyans, Ruandans, Sudanese take away much envied jobs this would have been possible. Kenyans, for example, are normally referred to as Luo, Samia, and Kikuyu. Marriage discrimination also does not indicate a special anti-Uganda discrimination with Luo (B. 76, W/W 66) and Banyaruanda (B. 74, W/W 60) taking as many refusals as Teso (B. 77, W/W 56).

There is, however, a small percentage of answers among industrial workers (15%) related to a racial identity. A class identity is not manifest unless one interprets anti-Asian discrimination which is particularly strong among industrial workers concerning working-place and supervisors as a disguised class-identity. Banton's generalizations about development of class-identities in West Africa (Banton 1965) do not apply in Busoga: no signs of either an intra-tribe class distinction. (The relation ruler - commoner chief - farmer used as it was only for judging relations between individuals did not develop into a class-distinction, partly, I would argue, because the main constituents of such a distinction: control over land, faded away in selling of land for cash which it is nearly impossible to reverse.) Or an inter-tribe class-distinction becomes manifest. A possible explanation for this might be that the radical distinction places all tribes (that is, the majority of their members) into the lower class as far as industrial work-relations are concerned. There is, on the other hand, a high percentage both in B. and W/W of answers like "I am poor" (B. 37%, W/W 15%) mainly given by farmers but without a reference to a class of exploiters except Asian traders.

The results do not indicate identity based on settlement. The place of origin was only named three times in W/W, never in B. This fits in with Fallers' observation (Fallers 1956) that the solidarities mainly centre around family and Clan, to a small degree around the territorial unit. If contact with the mutalla-chief is accepted as an indicator, then the high percentage of those who never had a word with the mutalla-chief in a matter not related to tax-paying (73% in W/W, 50% in B.) supports this view. Even where the place of origin in Busoga has its distinct language (Bulamogi), it was never mentioned. The place of actual settlement was never mentioned neither in B. nor in W/W. It is, therefore difficult to say whether in W/W with its low population stability (Table X) the

stabilized group, that is those who live there since the resettlement of the area in the early 1930s after the sleeping-sickness or are born there, serves as a community into which newcomers care to integrate. Table X suggests that no long-term residence is intended, but also temporal integrations, I would follow from my own observations, are exceptional cases and are not looked for, mainly, I would argue, because the traditional centres of solidarity, Clan and family, did not lose their strength. Easy transport which allows to keep contact even with distant relatives as well as the acquisition of new functions, prevented this.

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ALTERNATIVES TO EDUCATION BY RESIDENCE AND BY OCCUPATION

TABLE I

PATTERNS OF ANSWERS								NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
RESIDENCE AND OCCUPATION	1 a D	2 bcde AAAA	3 bcde AAAD	4 bcde AADD	5 bcde ADDD	6 bcde ADAD	OTHER	
RESIDENCE— B	% 5	% -	% 23	% 52	% 17	% -	% 3	100
W/W	4,2	4,2	46,9	15,6	18,7	10,4	-	96
OCCUPATION— F	% 7,8	% -	% 25,6	% 41,1	% 22,2	% -	% 3,3	90
C.S.	-	13,8	37,9	37,9	-	-	10,4	29
I.W.	-	-	46,1	19,2	19,2	13,5	2,8	52
S.B.	-	-	39,1	34,8	21,8	-	4,3	23

Abbreviations:

alternatives - a to sell a bicycle
 b to give groundnut crop as security for a loan
 c to go to town and look for employment
 d to sell a piece of land
 e to sell the kibanja

A agree
 D disagree

residence - B. Busanbira
 W/W Wairaka - Wanyange

occupation - F farmer
 C.S. civil servant
 I.W. industrial worker
 S.B. small businessmen

EDUCATION AND OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS BY CLAN OR VILLAGE
POSITION OF THEIR FATHERS

TABLE II

POSITION OF FATHER	EDUCATION		OCCUPATION	
	No education or less than P VI	PVI and higher	farming a. small business	civil service a. private industry
has a position	% 45,6	% 54,4	% 50,0	% 50,0
has no position	69,5	30,5	73,7	26,3

OCCUPATION BY CLAN MEMBERSHIP

TABLE III

CLAN	OCCUPATION			TOTAL	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
	F a. S!B.	C.S.	I.W.		
major ruling Clan	% 47,7	% 34,5	% 17,8	% 100	72
other	72,3	12,6	15,1	100	128

OCCUPATION AND EDUCATION BY RELIGION

TABLE IV

RELIGION	OCCUPATION		EDUCATION		NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
	F, S. B.	C. S., I. W.	less than P VI	P VI and higher	
Christian	% 58,1	% 41,9	% 56,2	% 43,8	117
Muslim	73,2	26,8	81,2	18,8	68

RELIGION OF FATHERS BY RELIGION OF SONS (RESPONDENTS)
AND RESIDENCE

TABLE V

FATHER \ SON	CHRISTIAN		MUSLIM		PAGAN		TOTAL NUMBER IN B.	TOTAL NUMBER IN W/W
	B.	W/W	B.	W/W	B.	W/W		
Christian	34	61	1	4	7	10	42	75
Muslim	10	3	32	14	8	1	50	18
Pagan /	2	-	-	-	5	1	7	1
Total Number	46	64	33	18	20	12	99	94

CRITERIA OF PRESTIGE ASCRIPTION BY OCCUPATION

CHOICE	OCCUPATION	CRITERIA OF PRESTIGE ASCRIPTION IN %								TOTAL IN %	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
		a chief-client	b land-control	c respect	d independence, permanence	e income, profit	f inheritance	g service	h other and failure		
I FARMER V. MECHANIC	F	18,5	12,3	-	24,7	20,9	12,3	-	11,1	100	30
	C.S.	26,9	26,9	-	7,7	30,8	7,7	-	-	100	29
	I.W.	-	23,1	-	12,8	61,5	-	-	2,6	100	13
II MUTALLA- CHIEF V. TAYLOR	F	45,6	14,4	-	17,8	7,8	12,2	-	2,2	100	30
	C.S.	37,0	29,6	11,1	7,4	11,1	-	-	2,8	100	29
	I.W.	38,3	12,7	-	19,1	27,7	-	-	2,2	100	48
RULER III V. AGRIC. ASST.	F	19,5	8,5	8,5	33,9	-	18,2	11,1	-	99,7	90
	C.S.	-	-	18,5	33,3	-	18,5	29,7	-	100	29
	I.W.	10,9	-	-	23,9	-	21,7	36,9	6,6	100	43

IDENTITY BY RESIDENCE AND OCCUPATION

TABLE VIII

RESIDENCE	CHOICES													TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	
	I am a(n) ...														
	married man	father	huise... (Glan)	industr. worker	civil servant	trader	farmer	protestant	catholic	muslim	omuswezi	omkafiri	educated man	other	
B.	27	1	22	-	-	1	15	3	2	8	-	1	6	11	97
W/W	20	5	34	4	2	1	6	3	1	2	-	1	7	18	94
OCCUPATION															
F and S.B.	35	5	19	-	-	2	19	6	3	10	-	1	2	12	114
C.S.	6	1	10	-	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	29
I.W.	6	-	27	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	3	48

SIZE OF LOCAL CLAN GROUPS BY RESIDENCE

TABLE IX

RESIDENCE	RESPONDENTS LIVING IN CLAN GROUPS REPRESENTED IN THE SAMPLE				
	1 or 2 times	3 till 10 times	10 till 32 times	33 times	Total Number
B.	44	23	-	33	100
W/W	52	48	-	-	100

PLACE OF RESIDENCE BY LENGTH OF RESIDENCE AND PLACE OF RETIREMENT

TABLE X

PLACE LENGTH	Busambira .	Wairaka-Wanyange
Since birth or before 35	56	3
1936-50	20	18
1951 - 62	18	31
since 1963	4	45
total number	98	97
PLACE OF RETIREMENT		
wants to stay	89	34
goes back to birth-place	-	54
goes to other place	11	12
total number	100	100

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