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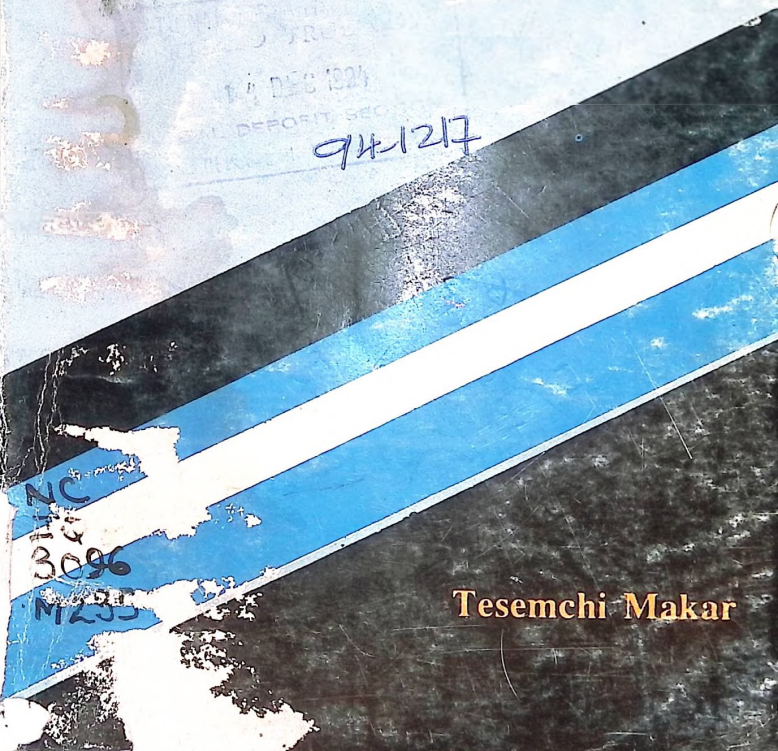


The History of
Political Change
Among the Tiv
 in the 19th and 20th Centuries

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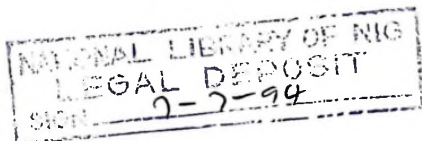
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Tesemchi Makar

The History of Political Change Among the Tiv in the 19th and 20th Centuries



By

Tesemchi Makar

94-1217

Foreword by

Justice A.P. Anyebe.

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Dedication

**This Book
Is Dedicated**

To My Mother, Nyangohol Adaga

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Foreword

By
Justice A. P. Anyebe

THE WORD TIV instantly conjures up a volley of feelings, favourable and unfavourable. On the one hand are the Tiv themselves whose ethnocentrism embodies the feeling that the Tiv is a model, the book and copy for all other human beings to follow. On the other hand, these other human beings the Tiv generally call *atoatiev* or *uke*, do not have very high regard for the Tiv. To them the Tiv do not have much to offer; they are cantankerous, barbaric, fierce brutes who delight in shedding blood, of the Tiv and the *atoatiev*. The learned amongst the *uke* cite as examples the sporadic communal and inexplicable internecine fratricide: *Hoyo, Nyambuan*, (1939) *Haaka, nande nande* (1960), and *atemtyo* (1964). Which of these views is a correct picture of the Tiv?

To answer this question satisfactorily, other preliminary questions have to be answered. Who are the Tiv? Where do they come from? What is their sociological set up? What is the Tiv culture? Judged by their past, what contributions can they make or have they made to the Nigerian set up, politically, socially, economically, and historically?

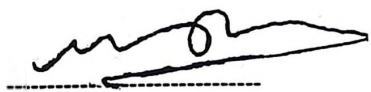
It is these questions that Dr. Tesem Makar, a practising professional historian and educationist, answers in plenitude. The answers are based on materials collected during an intensive seven-year fieldwork on the Tiv by the author in quest of a Ph.D degree from the Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In 1975 he submitted his thesis and became Commissioner for Education Benue Plateau State, a legacy he transferred to Benue State when it was created on 3rd February 1976, the author's year of harvest of academic laurels. For in 1976 Dr. Makar was awarded a Ph.D. in history, by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In 1979 when the military and the civilians changed batons, Dr. Makar relinquished his membership of Benue State Cabinet. In 1989 he became a Commissioner in

Police Service Commission. But the army took back their baton on December, 31 1983. In March 1984 the Commission was dissolved and Dr Makar retired to private life.

Dr. Makar an intense Tiv, is of the Mbagbera clan in Vandeikya Local Government. There he was born three years before the out-break of the Second World War II, a war in which the Tiv reestablished their martial prowess; just as they had done in the 1914-1919 World War I; just as they had done by firing poisoned arrows at the invading British at the birth of colonialism in Nigeria; and sourly, just as they had been unable to do with the Etulo in the late 1890s at the Mbagbera area near Katsina Ala. Whatever the case, whether in battle or in politics, the Tiv have proved themselves adept at fighting. And Dr Makar, being a Tiv, is an able warrior. Except that he bears no conventional arms; his is a war against ignorance. For after fleeing through Junior Primary School, Mbagbera 1944-1949, Benue Middle School, Katsina Ala, 1950, Government College, Keffi, 1951-1956, Dundee College of Education, 1960-1968. Ohio University Athens, Ohio, U.S.A., 1965 - 1967. He then plunged into classroom teaching in Kofar Sauri Primary School, Government Secondary School Katsina, Teachers' College, Wudil, Teachers' Training College, Keffi, Advanced Teachers College, Kano, and Advanced Teachers' College, Zaria.

But was it a coincidence that Dr. Makar began to collect and collate materials for this work while the Nigerian Civil War raged on? No. For so bare is the field of literature on Benue generally and the Tiv in particular that a committed scholar would scarcely await the leisure of peace to document the Tiv. Not that there had not been attempts to tell the world about the Tiv. There had been. But such attempts had been no more than skirmishes by authors who possibly had interests other than the celebration of the Tiv glory and greatness to serve. These pioneer skirmishes Dr Makar has documented in his Bibliography and notations. An appreciable number I have had the burden of reading. But none of these worthy works however compares with Dr. Makar's *The History of Political Change Among The Tiv In the 19th and 20th centuries*. Much of his

theories will be challenged. His facts may be disputed. But all will agree on one point: that there is more to be done; that the more one tries to interpret the Tiv as fascinating specie instead of human beings made in the image of God, the more confusion that is generated in the national cauldron of misunderstanding of various peoples of Nigeria. Dr Makar herein therefore cuts a new path for viewing the Tiv and other Nigerians. Will other scholars follow the blaze? Or even cut an entirely new path? Whatever the answer, a new start has been made. And now is the time to follow the chase, to strike while the iron is hot.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Justice A.P. Anyebe
1994

Preface

The aim of taking *Another Look at the Tiv* through the History of their Political Change In the 19th and 20th Centuries, is two-fold. The first is to show the system of government that existed among the Tiv on the eve of the British conquest. The second is to show how this system suffered traumatic deliberate dislocation at the hands of the British despite protests by the Tiv. The final result was the anarchy of 1960 and 1964 named *nande nande* and *atemtyo* respectively. In official records it is anonymously documented as "Tiv Riots".

The study is in four parts. The first, is, naturally, introductory: the crystallisation of Tiv society by the beginning of 19th century; their history of origin, migrations, and attendant problems and how these affected their social life and government. The second part examines the process and teething pains of consolidation: the Chamba wars, the great dispersal and the emergence of the governmental institution known as *tor agbande*, drum chief. The third part discusses the British conquest followed by imposition of alien rule by foreign people, *atoatiev*; a development so traumatic that the craters created therefrom never healed despite political surgery by the imperial power.

Part four develops the compounding of this Babel that befell the Tiv in the form of christianity, western education and the introduction of "modern politics" emanating from Constitutional reforms that engulfed Nigeria soon after Britain had regained consciousness from the Second World War. The finale is a historical explanation of the political woe that befell the Tiv in the 20th century. The overall aim is to expose the Tiv in such a way that would facilitate the tackling of future administrative problems afflicting the Tiv. This is important because if a part is in trouble the body, the whole body, is sick and can scarcely function efficiently. For those who would doubt that a Tiv problem is a Nigerian problem, one of the reasons the *Five Majors* gave in unleashing the 1966 coup was the "Tiv Riots". The 1979-83 political harakiri that led to the overthrow of the civil^o government as a first item in the 1984 agenda, began in Benue State. Nigeria must therefore concern herself as a nation, with Tiv affairs.

Part One

The Tiv Society in the 18th and 19th Centuries

Chapter 1

Tiv Enter Benue Plains

A proper historical study of the Tiv necessarily commences at the beginning of the 19th century. This is because materials for study which are available before this time: tales of origin and migrations, can scarcely be interpreted and fitted into a chronological framework that would satisfy a historical reckoning. However, a peep into pre-19th century is a valuable guide into the beginning of a construction of 19th and 20th century Tiv history.

Origin

The name Tiv has a dual meaning. Tiv is a culture-group of a people who, by the 1963 Census numbered one and a half million. Tiv also is the name of the father of all Tiv people. The story surrounding Tiv as the founder of the Tiv race is not very explicit.

Tiv is reputed to have had three ancestors: Shon, Takuruku, and Awange. Information about these three ancestors is scanty and confused. For example, four elders from different parts of Tiv, Gambe-Ya, Tombo, Ute, and Ipav, consider Shon as another son of Tiv. An elder at Mkar regard Shon as creator of all things while another elder of Kusuv regards everything about Shon as a fairy tale. Furthermore, an elder at Nanev considers Shon as no more than a term of derision¹. The remaining elders interviewed had never heard of Shon, and to them, if Shon existed he could be no more than a term of art, certainly he could not have been a living soul. Similarly, opinion is divided on the

¹ The names and details of these elders are in the original research thesis lodged at the Library of the Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and at Kashim Ibrahim Library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

relationship between Takuruku and Tiv. Were they brothers or was Takuruku the father or grand father of Tiv?

Some go further and regard Takuruku not only as a female but a wife of Tiv, and that Takuruku was an *ortyotiev*, a foreigner.

On Awange, some elders profess ignorance. However, apart from a lone voice of dissent, all the elders interviewed in the districts of Mbaterem and Tongov claimed that Awange was the father of Tiv.

The debate on Tiv ancestry is as entertaining as it is endless, save in respect of Tiv himself. For a Tiv opinion is settled that he was a hero who broke away from his brothers and moved with his entire family to settle at Swem. Swem has drawn as much debate as Tiv ancestry. Where is Swem? What is the significance of Swem to the lives of Tiv people?

While D.C. Doward regards Swem as no more than a mythical place, another Biblical Garden of Eden¹. Paul Bohannan suggests that Swem might likely be the hill of Ngoh Kedju² in the Bamenda highlands in the Northwestern Cameroons. Another theory is by Akiga Sai: that Swem is a hill located in the subsection of Ikurav-Ya known as Iyon in the southeastern Tiv land. Akiga Sai claimed that he visited this place in 1934.

My investigations led to the conclusion that Swem is a mountain located about thirty-six miles south-west of the compound of a man called Yaro Gusa in the district of Nyieymbashaya². Yaro's compound is located on a mountain a mile away from the Cameroun border.

The Swem mountain, towering three thousand feet above sea level is easily identifiable. It has three ridges and one of its pinnacles is composed of a large prominent rock resting on three huge stone pillars which from afar gives the semblance of a

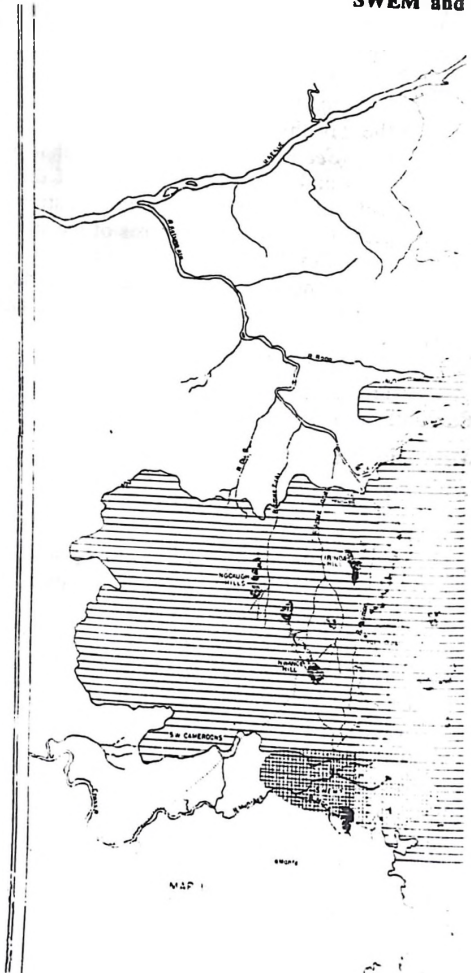
² The distance from Yaro Gusa's compound to the Swem mountain is calculated as follows: From Yaro's compound to Ballin Station is about 10 miles; from Ballin to Bagundu Station, 5 miles; from Bombe to Assaka where Swem is located is about 19 miles. Total 36 miles. En route to Swem one crosses Rivers Noan, Moun, and Afembe. I was not able to get to the physical location but two Cameroonian students of the Theological College, Jos, gave me detailed information on the matter.

round hut. The physical appearance of this rock known in geography as kopje or decaying inselberg, has great significance to the Tiv. On the approach to the mountain the kopje is partly obscured giving the impression of a huge rock suspended in the air. To the Tiv this is one of the mysteries of their ancestral homeland. (See map III) It was here that the two sons of Tiv:Ichongo and Ipusu became aware of their Tivness. The descendants of Ichongo and Ipusu constitute not only the genealogical tree but also the basis of the social and political organisation of the Tiv society. (See diagrams A & B)

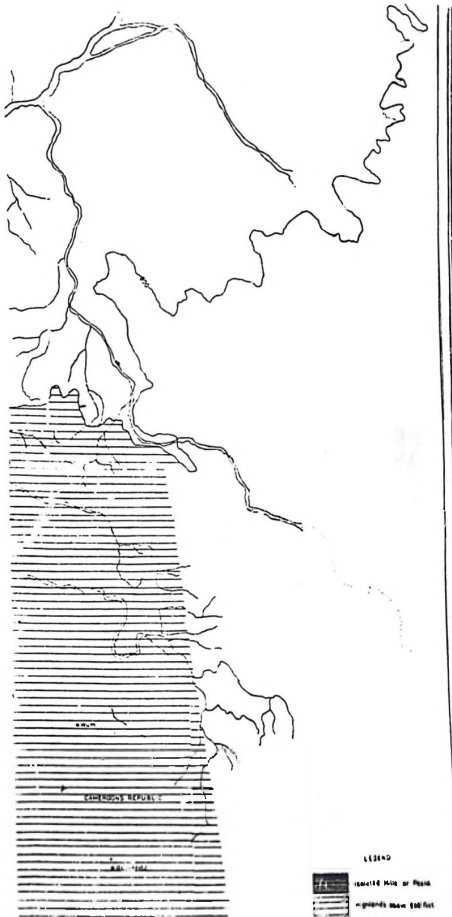
But when and for how long did the people of Tiv live at Swem? What was their pattern of life? The answers to these questions remain buried in the mist of speculation. All that is left is the claim that the Tiv lived together with some *atoatiev*, people of Gbafum (Bafum) in the kingdom of Kom in the Bamenda Province of the Republic of Camerouns, for hundreds of years.

Migrations and Wars

Why the Tiv left Swem may never be known. Population explosion and infertile land on the Swem hill and war with the Bafum are some of the reasons given for the departure. Others maintain that the Bafum were friendly and there could have been no war. The departure is ascribed to the desecration of *ilyum* altar by one Karagbe or kalagbe from Nongov lineage. Karagbe threw the corpse of his son on the *ilyum* altar. The resultant fear by the people resulted in the subsequent departure from Swem Karagbe. This was the serious crime the Tiv would popularly say Kalagbe committed at Swem. He resisted arrest that would lead to his punishment. Those sent to arrest him therefore beheaded him. Karagbe preferred death to the shame of standing trial before the people. Secondly, it was believed that Karagbe by his death had thus chosen to set a precedent on how criminals should be dealt with. From this incident arose a religious cult of an *akombo* known as *Swem Karagbe*. It punishes evil doers who swear falsely. The symptoms of *Swem Karagbe* attack are







Tiv Land



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CAMEROON REPUBLIC
A.S. 1961

LEGEND

-  TIV LAND
-  PROPOSED BOUNDARY
-  RIVER
-  STREAM

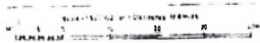
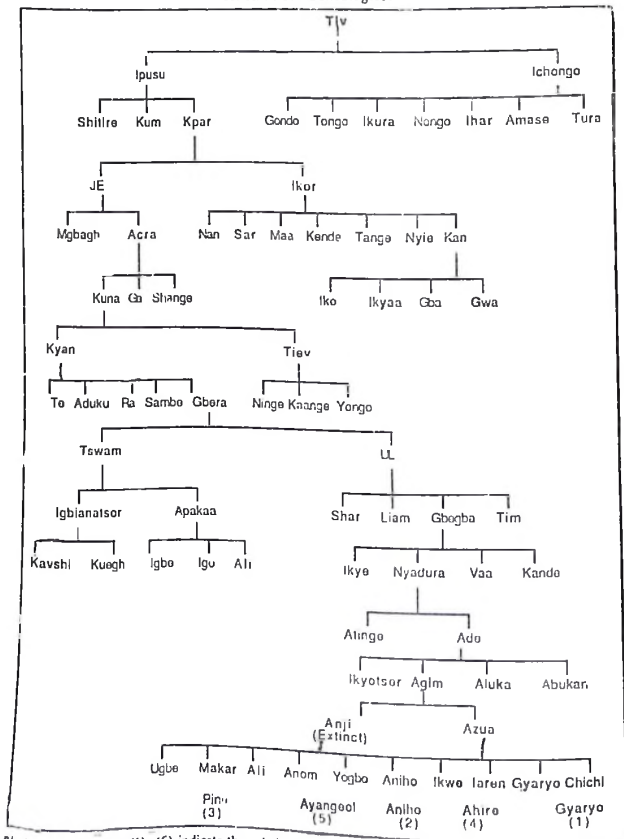


Diagram A

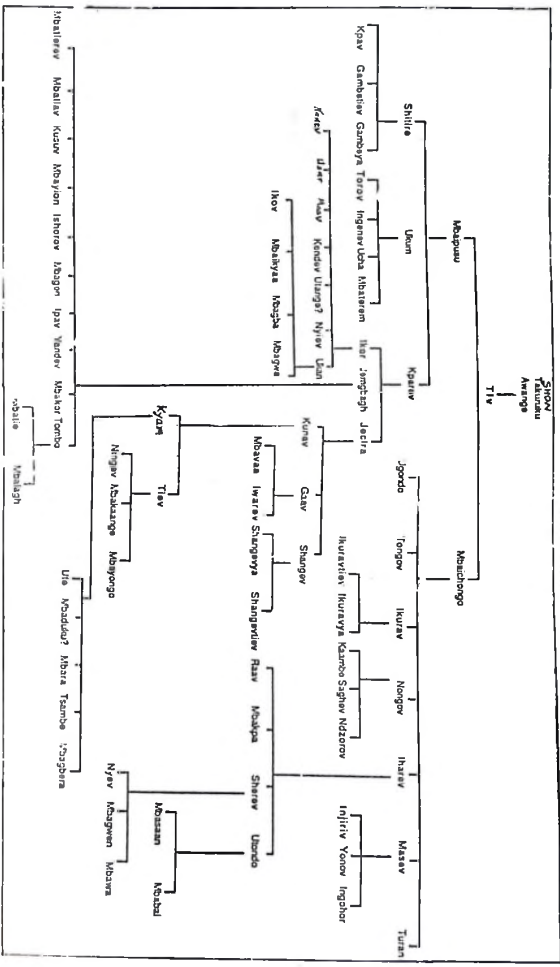
This Diagram shows the Tentative list of Patriarchs who are normally recited in Tiv Genealogies.



Note: Number (1) - (5) indicate the existing family groups in the family of Azua. The names of the persons underlined, namely Gyaryo, Waniho, Pine, Ahire, and Ayangeor are the present leaders in each family. They are listed in order of seniority. Gyaryo is currently the spokesman and leader of Azua family group in all matters.

Diagram B

This Diagram shows the corresponding Segmentary Lineages (Family Groups) that result from the Genealogical Reckoning shown in Diagram A. The Segmentary Lineages are denoted by Prefix. Mbr. U and Suffix. V.



swollen legs. The victim, depending upon the gravity of his offence, might be saved by recanting. For there are certain unpardonable crimes amongst the Tiv: tampering with the community's sacred object called *imborivungu*; and the killing of a person by witchcraft without cause. Swem today remains an object of oath taking in two forms: *Swem Karagbe*, the most potent one concocted by the community's chief priest, *Orsoron tar*; and *Swemchia*, prepared by a less distinguished priest.

Whatever the potency of Swem, from its hills the Tiv people migrated northwards across Bamenda highlands, crossed rivers Moan and Mkomon and pushed farther north until they reached the last chain of hills on the south-eastern frontier of the present Tiv country or the northern frontier of Wum district of Bamenda province in the Cameroons. The last group of hills on which the Tiv remember settling on is *Nwange*, running east to west at about ten miles south of Ikurav-Ya frontier.

At *Nwange* the Tiv met a host of *atoatiev*: Ugee, Utange, Undir, Ukwese, Ulive, Ugbe, and Iyon, the pioneer settlers in the area. The Ugee and Utange made incessant attacks on the Tiv whose presence they resisted intensely. But they lost and the Tiv were eventually compelled to withdraw from *Nwange*.

From *Nwange* the Tiv moved in three broad streams. Kparev and Ukum migrated northwest of *Nwange* and occupied Ngokugh hill of Shangev-Ya in south eastern Tivland. The lineages of Tongov, Ikurav, Nongov, and Turan moved directly northwards from *Nwange* and occupied the plains surrounding the hills of Barakuv, Wo Mondo and Ityoughikegh. The lineages of Masev, Iharev, Ugondo and Shittire moved to occupy the plains around *Ibinda hills*³ which is located today in Tar Ikurav-ya, and about ten miles south of Jato-Aka in Turan.

³ *Ibinda* is composed of two hills: *Ibinda Shittire*, because Shittire people settled there; and *Ibinda Akura*, an Iharev patriarch. Akiga Sai argues that the people did not settle on the plains but on the hills of *Ibinda* (East, 1965). This seems unlikely because the *Ibinda hills* examined by the author in 1972 February, and 1973 April, are bare rock on top. That top could not have possibly accommodated a large number of people. It is possible the people occupied the plains and used the top for other purposes; leisure, rituals, and observation post.

But despite this movement from Utange, the Tiv war with Ugee and Utange continued in contempt of peace initiatives. The Kparev felt the greatest brunt of the Ugee and Utange blows. The most remembered was the surprise attack on the Tsambe people by the Ugee. Tsambe is in Kunav area. The attack was savage. It was on the plains of Ngokugh while the Tsambe were on an organised fishing expedition. The elders of Nyiev and Kunav districts remember that the Ugee began to kill Tiv male children at every opportunity by blocking the children's urinary passage with the straws of raffia palm. Today the Tsambe are scattered in their land because of these attacks. The Utange Tiv wars ended only when the Utange suffered devastating defeats on the plains of Ngokugh and lost hundreds of Utange into captivity. This explains the presence of Utange people in Tivland today. However, Utange elders claim that they migrated on their own to their present habitat just at about the time the Tiv also migrated to their own present homes.

Whatever the position, never again did the Tiv fight Utange. A treaty, *ikul*, came into existence and has never again been violated. But sporadic fighting continued between the Ugee and the Tiv until the 19th century. Peace was never concluded. Enmity between the two continues till today.

This aspect of Tiv travail is important in that the political lesson it taught produced the Tiv society at the turn of 18th and 19th centuries. For example, the settlement of the people on the plains seems to have marked a turning point in their pattern of life. The hill folks with limited opportunities now became a people living on fertile plains. Not that the Tiv abandoned the hills, their natural defence against their enemies, their sentry post, but life on the plains brought new openings documented hereafter.

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- Bohannon, Paul.: *The Tiv of Central Nigeria*, London (1952) page 12.
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East, R.M.: *Akiga's Story: The Tiv Tribe As Seen by One of Its Members*,
London (1965) pages 216-217.

Chapter 2

The Social System At The Beginning Of 19th Century

The Tiv are now on the plains of Katsina Ala river in the south-eastern Tiv or the Turan Ikurav Ya.

Social Groupings

The area unit of occupation was divided into *ityar*-subdivided into a segmentary lineage, *tar* named after a common ancestor. (See Diagram B on P. 9)

Tar is the largest genealogical unit remaining geographically intact which has retained some vague group consciousness and organisation. K. Dewar, an administrative officer in Tiv, observed this as far back as 1936. The group consciousness amongst the *tar* emanates from the fact that a *tar* owes its identity to the fact that the members of *tar* migrated together from Swem, and experienced common difficulties and sufferings in the course of the arduous journeys across hills and vales. They have remained territorially intact. And cohesion has fashioned them into a common tradition and association. Members of a *tar* therefore have certain permanent characteristics. (See the original research thesis)

Altogether there are twelve *ityar* branching out of the two sons of Tiv, Ichongo and Ipusu as follows:

Ichongo Ityar Genealogy

1. Ugondo
2. Tongov
3. Ikurav
4. Nongov
5. Iharev
6. Masev
7. Turan

Ipusu Ityar Genealogy

1. Shittire
2. Ukum
3. Mbaikor
4. Jemgkagh
5. Jechira

A *tar* has several sub-ordinate units charged with social, religious and political functions. There is, for example, *ityo* or *one tembesh* or, common festival ground or *one qenga*, common drum group or what the colonial group called kindred. The average size of *ityo* ranges between five hundred to one thousand people. This was a poll tax collecting unit recognised by the colonial administration. An *ityo* unit consisted mainly of people of common descent, with the same great-great-grand father. *Ityo* was a semi-exogamous unit whose members could engage in casual sexual intercourse, *angbian kwase*, but could not marry. A girl visiting home from her husband had her boyfriend in her hometown. This was the *angbian kwase* relationship which is now on the decline. However, the maintenance of virginity before marriage was most essential except amongst the Iharev people whose girls maintained boy friends, *ikar* before marriage. The boyfriend provided the girl plenty of gifts on her marriage. The *ikar* practice too is on the decline.

The head of an *ityo* was the oldest person in the family groups forming the *ityo*. This was subject to qualifications, such as soundness of mind in the oldest person. In the days of frequent warfare with the *atoatiev*, particularly in the late 18th century, the whole members of an *ityo* lived in well stockaded settlements called *ugar* (singular, *gar*) or *don*. Each *gar* bore the house of the most prominent leader of the settlement: for example, Buruku, Tongo, Vande, Aya Kua and so on.

This organisation facilitated the holding together of the Tiv society for purposes of social control, basic societal behaviour, religious rites and cultural unity.

The Economy

The Tiv economy consisted mostly of farming, hunting, fishing, livestock rearing, and domestic industries such as weaving, smithing, and carving.

Farming and Hunting

Farming and hunting were the dominant occupations. Traditional root and grain crops were added. These include maize, millet, groundnuts, swamp rice, sweet potatoes and a variety of beans. With the increase in population bigger food production was needed, and the plains provided the opportunity for this imperative agricultural expansion.

Hunting, mainly in the dry season, was important because the plains were rich in both big and small game. But hunting remained a part-time venture which provided extra food and depopulated the area of dangerous wild animals.

Group hunting, *ibem*, was often undertaken. *Ibem*, promoted group feeling and identity but it had its dangers. It was prone to accidental homicide as weapons often missed animals and hit human beings. Added to this were dangerous animals, lions, bush-cows, elephants or leopards which could be roused all at once in a game chasing. The result would be that they attacked the hunters indiscriminately. Lives were thus lost. A notable patriarch who lost his life in this process was Kyan, a patriarch of Mbagbera, Tsambe, Ute, and Mbara. An elephant charged at him and trampled him to death during an *ibem* hunting in the plains of Ngokugh hills. Also at the foothills of Wo Mondo, hunters of Iharev were decimated by wild game in the course of group hunting.

These incidents illustrate the pattern of life and difficulties as well as the perseverance of the Tiv ancestors. They constitute a lesson for the present generation to persevere. Hunting, generally was a training in valour, a sparring ground for an informal militia. Quite often in the course of hunting the people met *atoatiev* with whom they engaged in warfare. This was a practical training in martial arts for the hunters. Finally, hunters were the border guards and spies for the whole of the

Tiv land and the *ityo* or *ugar*. Hunters discovered new lands suitable for settlement and farming.

Fishing

Fishing was of various types: collective fishing, *sua yilan*, and individual fishing which could be anything from fishing by women – *sua kohol* to the use of fishing rods *tsue* by men. *Sua kohol* involved the blocking off of a section of a stream by two mud dams. The water trapped within the embankments was then drained off by women using calabashes. The exposed fish were then caught with nets or with hands.

Another method was to poison the water with noxious matter: bark of trees or pods of locust bean tree, *nune*. This killed fish which would float on the water and get picked up by the fishing crew. However, people had their reservations about fish killed with poison. They were not sure of the effect of the poison on their own health if they ate such fish. Fishing, like hunting, thrived mainly in the dry season.

Livestock

Animal husbandry was an important feature in Tiv life. It was a sure investment in the realisation of wealth. Zebu cattle, sheep, goat, pigs, ducks, doves, and poultry were the most common. Also the average Tiv compound had dogs for hunting and for guarding the compound against thieves. Animals generally were not reared for family consumption, meat or dairy. A person who slaughtered a domestic animal for normal family meat would be said to have foreseen his death. Consequently his people refused to partake of the meat cooked for him. They regarded such meal as a trap to get them into trouble.

This is a fundamental belief rooted in religion. Livestock therefore remained valuable property for sale when money was needed. When livestock was ever slaughtered it would be for entertaining a distinguished visitor or for a ceremony – festival or marriage. Livestock has another important function to the Tiv. Fertility of livestock is a spiritual indication of the

prosperity of the land, the people and the owner of the livestock, *tar doo*.

Industries

These were locally manufactured goods for domestic consumption and for trade. An industry was an internal family matter that was undertaken only as a part-time occupation. The industries were basically pottery works, smithing, weaving, carpentry, dying, and leather works.

Pottery

Pottery is an ancient Tiv art that continues to increase in importance despite the introduction of European utensils. Pottery was undertaken normally by women. Different kinds of earthenware were made in different sizes and shapes depending on the purpose of the pot. They were beautified with attractive designs and prints and colours. They were then baked and then coated with some preservative.

Smithing

Smithing was equally important. Metal for the smithing came from the Chamba, Jukun, or Udam. The blacksmith turned out farming implements: hoes, matchets, knives, and arrowheads for hunting.

Weaving

Weaving is an art as old as the Tiv. They had worn clothes even at Swem. The Tiv weave for export into neighbouring non-Tiv territories and for domestic use. That the Tiv exported their cloths into as far as Udam, Bafum, and Jukun territories testifies to the quality of the workmanship in weaving. The cloths were for two purposes: tying round the waist and for covering the whole body. Quite often the weaver also spun his own thread as well.

Carpentry

Carpentry centred on the making of musical, ritual, and ceremonial instruments such as drums, utensils, and household furniture. The tools for carpentry were matchet, hand axe and axe for chopping wood.

It is difficult to classify other objects of industry such as baskets, sacks, and mats that had a bit from weaving and a bit from carpentry. But these articles were most important for carrying, storage and bedding. They are all still in demand today.

Leather works

Tanning was done from which handbags, sheaths for arrows, knives and matchets were produced. There were also leather mats, shields for war, and shoes. Hides and skins of goats were tanned and used for basic musical instruments, bellows, and religious ceremonies. Today leather works has been relegated to the manufacture of bags and musical instruments.

Mining

There were two kinds of mining. There was the mining of clay for pots and there was quarrying. Salt was not mined but imported from *atoatiev* territories. When there was no salt potash was used.

Quarrying consisted of splitting soft rocks to provide grinding stones in varying sizes. This is still practised today for grinding stones are still very much in demand, despite the availability of modern grinding machines.

Beer Brewing

This is a very ancient art of women. It possibly originated at Swem. Beer was brewed for particular purposes: marriage ceremonies, festivals, purchase of a horse, and religious ceremonies. Beer was brewed from three main sources. Beer was brewed from millet, maize, and guinea corn within ten

days. Beer brewed had to be consumed the day it was meant or else it went sour or became unfit for consumption.

Religion

What was the role of religion in the social and political affairs of Tiv people?

Tiv religion has no explicit doctrinal principles but vague ideas about the existence of God and his relation with the people on earth. In this regard the Tiv are at home with other African peoples: the Mende of Sierra Leone, the Nuba and the Dinka of Sudan, and the Massai of East Africa. For example, the Tiv have almost an identical myth about the existence of God in the sky as have the Nuba of Sudan. The Tiv believe that God, the creator of the universe, *Aondo*, used to live near men and became familiar with people. But one day a woman hit him so hard with a pestle while pounding yam that the sky moved away in anger to its present distance. The Nuba say that a woman forced her spoon right through the sky and it went off in anger.

The role of *Aondo* in the affairs of men is a passive one. He is not a superior deity who actively intervenes in the affairs of men. There is no Satan or Devil who stands in opposition to *Aondo*. Possibly the equivalent of Satan is bad *tsav* (witchcraft) or *mbakuv* (what Mbiti calls the living dead). *Mbakuv* is gradually fading into disuse in place of *adzov* or fairies. The Tiv actually have vague ideas about life after death. There is no last judgement; there is no concept of heaven as in other religions such as Christianity or Islam.

Religious belief therefore centres around *akombo* and *tsav* who can mete out whatever punishment they deem fit, including death. They do not live in heaven or hell but on earth amongst men.

Aondo on the other hand resembles all that is beautiful in the galaxy: clouds; sky is *Aondo's* age group while the galaxy is his home. He is the chief factor of all things in heaven since he

lives there. He is an immovable being whom no mortal can reach.

The Tiv religion has no prophets but medicine men, diviners, and soothsayers. There are no temples but sacred places which are used for housing religious objects and initiation ceremonies.

Akombo, the centre of Tiv religion, is difficult to define. Broadly put *akombo* are the unseen forces created by *Aondo* and entrusted to Tiv elders to use it regulate the cosmos so that it would not malfunction. *Akombo* are symbolised in every day objects: pottery, bones, feathers of chickens, stone, grass et cetera set up in conspicuous places. When objects are not so designated, you cannot say that they represent *akombo*. You cannot, for example, chance on any piece of pottery anywhere and designate it *akombo*. *Akombo* must be clearly indicated as such. *Akombo* is often misused by evil men in the society to cause disease and calamities. When this happens a ritual ceremony must be performed to help restore the equilibrium of the natural good life that has been disturbed. *Akombo* is itself intrinsically good although it can, like all good things, be misused to do evil. *Akombo* is also known as *yangenev*. In a way *Akombo* prescribes people's behaviour in several ways. For example, an *akombo* sign on a maize farm prevents people from harming the farm. It serves as a constant visible reminder of what would befall he who harms the farm. To quote Eugene Rubingh "*yangenev* are more than a sign, through its manipulation, further evil is prevented and retribution is contained".

The *akombo* master is a person who has gained the mastery of all the most important *akombo* through initiation. He has thereby acquired all the prerequisite qualifications: age and good reputation in the society. An *akombo* master has the power to cleanse those who have fallen foul of *akombo* either intentionally or through neglect. *Akombo* and *tsav* function to reinforce each other. The two systems regulate the society by

making it necessary for young persons to submit to the dictates of the elders.

Tsav itself connotes a variety of related meanings: witchcraft, power, talent, ability, an enlargement of the ventricles of the heart which the Tiv suppose indicates occult powers possessed by members of the *mbatsav* society.

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Part Two
The Era of Tor Agbande



Chapter 3

Tiv Government At The Beginning Of 19th Century

The nature and function of the system just examined is how the Tiv political institution was in the 18th century. The focus in this chapter will be on the nature and functions of the political institutions of that system.

As a preliminary, it is vital to remember always that government was carried out by consultation between the representatives of each subordinate unit (*ityo*, *ingor* or *tar*). For example, the government of the *tar* was conducted by a council of representatives of the subordinate *ityo* within the *tar*. Thus government was not a representative of the individual but of kinship groups. The persons who represented the family groups were normally the oldest men from such family group. Political system thus rested with the elders who had collective responsibility for all decisions taken.

Councils and Functions

There were four councils with traditional administrative functions: *tar*, *ityo*¹, *ingol*, and *ya* in order of importance.

Each of these councils was autonomous in its decisions.

It had power to refer to other Council matters not within its own competence.

¹ In addition to the present usage *ityo* generally means any lawful assembly of persons comprising elders and youngmen for the purpose of executing any function. For example, when Tiv people in Zaria assemble to discuss problems facing its members it is *ityo* Tiv in Zaria. The function and jurisdiction of such *ityo* would differ from that of any other *ityo* in Tivland which would, in addition, have additional jurisdiction of performing *akamba* rituals. Professor Justin I. Tseayo in his *Tiv Incorporation* appears to have missed this point and wrongly equated *ityo* with *kwagh*.

Ya Council

This is the family or compound assembly headed by the *Orya*. The council dealt with all matters - political, social, and religious. Its decision, unless taken in the presence and with the consent of the *Orya*, could be vetoed by him. He also executed the decisions of the *Ya* council. Supported by this council the *Orya* determined new construction sites, the admission and entertainment, and expulsion of strangers, marriage affairs, dowry its payment or recovery, runaway married women, and recovery of debts. Often these duties were delegated to subordinates: *ordondon* (singular), or *mbadondon* (plural). The *Orya* also determined farming sites. He is the *alpha* and *omega* in all *akombo* affairs for even if he was not an *akombo* master, he was expected to know who was.

The political duties of *Orya* were limited. *Orya* was responsible for the settlement of domestic problems, enforcement of decisions, punishment and expulsion from his *Ya* of all recalcitrant elements not amenable to discipline. He settled criminal matters: minor thefts within the compound, adultery, farm disputes. The *Orya* meted out a variety of punishment. A young offender was flogged for theft while his parents paid fine and returned the stolen goods. The fine was used for ritual reparation of the compound of *Orya* which the criminal had desecrated with the crime. For an offence violated both the code of good social behaviour as well as the spiritual welfare of the people. An adulterous woman had to undergo extensive ritual cleansing or else she became barren or her husband and offspring suffered untold hardship. Those with bad *tsav* took advantage of crimes in the society to perpetuate their own evils. It will thus be seen that political, social and religious matters amongst the Tiv were inseparable.

So vital is the role of *Orya* that he was expected to be fair, kind, impartial, and sympathetic in dealing with his subjects. The failure of *Orya* as a ruler might lead to the disintegration of his *Ya*, the compound leaving him and his wife and children alone. On the other hand a *Ya* which continued to exist and flourish several years even after the death of *Orya* was a sign that the successive *mbayaav* (plural of *Orya*) had been very successful rulers. It was a sign of a successful government and administration of the lowest level of the society.

Ingor Council

Any problem, political or social, or religious, which was beyond the power of the *ya* council was passed to the Ingo: council composed of the elders of *uya* (plural of *ya*). They had close family relationships.

At the *Ingor* Council meeting the most senior elder, *orvesen*, presided. But the problems involving deaths of adults, murder, gaining mastery of an important *akombo*, for example *ibamegh twel*, *swem*, and the possession of indyer drum were all beyond the power of the *Ingor* Council and therefore passed on to the council next in rank, *ityo*.

Ityo Council

This was the largest and most effective and important quasi-government body in any *tar* in the 19th century. It therefore deserves treatment much more elaborate than the other councils. It is true that the *Tar* Council was, in numerical and jurisdictional terms, the largest and most important but then it met only on rare occasions to treat national calamities: war, epidemics, drought, famine and so on. It was the *Ityo* Council that attended to day-to-day problems of the society.

Ityo council was made up of the most prominent elders from the various *angor* groups. At the *Ityo* Council meeting the most influential and respected elder presided. Normally he possessed both political and religious powers. Quite often a man of political weight was appointed who had no religious powers. In such a situation he was assisted by a man of religious prowess - *orsorontar* or *orakombo biam*, himself a leader of an *ityo*. He would act as a co-equal of the political leader.

This religious expert and co-equal of the president of the *Ityo* Council had a unique and very important role. This is because any social wrong or crime was regarded as an evil and a violation of the traditional religious order. A political settlement was therefore followed by a religious settlement. The society was politico-religious hence a man with priestly powers was needed in every segment of government.

The *Ityo* Council tried all major crimes, including murder. Accidental homicide attracted no punishment except the performance of religious ritual to restore the breach that had occurred in the society. The accidental killer provided a goat which was used for the ceremony so that no more evil would befall him.

In premeditated murder the murderer paid compensation of goats or a cow to the family of the deceased who used this to marry a wife who would eventually replenish the deprived family. Alternatively the murderer was handed over to the family of the deceased. There they treated him as they deemed fit. This meant sentencing the murderer to death, a sentence not usually carried out. Why? To kill a murderer would implicate the whole family of the deceased in another homicide - the shedding of human blood spoils the land. To kill a murderer would be a double violation of the religious order, a double opportunity for people with bad *tsav* to do more harm in the society. The most intricate question was when to determine whether or not murder was or was not premeditated. For quite often people with bad *tsav* had preplanned the deceased's death and therefore the physical murderer was no more than an agent of the bad *tsav*. Whose death had not been predestined? If so why sentence the executor to death for doing what the gods had purposed?

Apart from its judicial function the *Ityo* Council deliberated on choice of new market sites. *Ityo* intervened in disputes among age sets whenever the age sets advisor, *wanigba*, defaulted in his job. Misunderstanding amongst age sets was bad for the society because such disputes degenerated into fighting which in turn disrupted cooperative and collective farming activities, dancing, compulsory communal labour such as construction of roads and bridges. The *Ityo* Council also determined the status and residence rights of refugees from *atoatiev* of other parts of Tiv land. If the refugee was of doubtful character or a person whose retention might embarrass or hurt the feelings of the neighbouring *tar* he was repatriated to his *tar* of origin.

Although the Council no longer wield power as before it functions up till today.

Tar Council

This was the highest Council of elders. It alone took care of warfare matters, internal and external. It settled inter-*ityo* disputes by apportioning blame and punishment to the guilty party. This was followed by a ritual where goats involved were cut into equal half, showing the participation of both parties to the affray. External wars were of two kinds: one between *ityar* and the *atoatiev* with whom, for example, the Kparev groups of *ityar* made peace.

The *Tar* Council settled farm disputes. It also determined the qualifications and suitability of candidates for initiation into the highest *akombo* in the land, such as *ibiamagh* or *poor* and the acquisition of the mystery of these *akombo*. Council members had to be physically present at the initiation ceremonies to determine the fitness of the candidate. If in the course of these rites he was discovered unfit, the ceremony was abandoned or postponed indefinitely until such time that the candidate resubmitted his application and it was accepted.

The *Tar* Council also discussed calamities: epidemics such as small pox or yellow fever, drought, famine. The Council was present at the burial or remembrance ceremonies of distinguished elders in the *tar*. It was the *Tar* Council that deliberated on the appointment of *tor agbande* which is discussed later.

Quite often the duties of *tar* council overlapped with and were delegated to the subordinate *ityo* and *angor* councils.

Basis of Political Authority of the Councils

Despite the absence of routine law enforcement agencies the Councils had their decisions readily executed.

How was this possible?

The first factor was the fear of *tsav*. All the elders in positions of leadership reputedly possessed *tsav*. They were therefore obeyed in lieu of the odium of *tsav* being incurred. As had been explained, *tsav* falls into two categories: bad and good. The bad *tsav* kills innocent persons and engages in flesh debt whereby all those who participate in eating the meat of the

witchcraft victim are obliged to repay with their own victim. Indiscriminate killing is thus perpetrated. *Tsav* also harms crops and thus interferes with good harvest which in turn causes famine. *Tsav* could also destroy livestock. It could cause epidemic such as smallpox. Bad *tsav* therefore is responsible for all evil in the society. But *tsav* does not work without excuse, such as disobedience of council ruling. In other words the members of the various councils had the metaphysical power to punish. The matter is made more complicated by people with good *tsav* who try to counterbalance the evil deeds of bad *tsav* by direct intervention in their affairs. Should the man with the bad *tsav* not heed the warning, he would be killed for the good of the society. But killing is killing. And killing decimates the society.

There is no escape from *tsav* because those who have *tsav* have the power of metamorphosis. They could change into any object at any time they desire. How then does any dare disobey a man with *tsav*?

Secondly, the Councils were obeyed because the elders composing them had considerable knowledge in the affairs of men and more. They, for example, had knowledge of the appropriate herbs. They alone could cure diseases. The disobedient member of the society was left unattended to in time of sickness.

Thirdly, elders were obeyed because that was the law, the tradition handed down by the ancestors who would take offence at an affront against their wish. For peace, prosperity and long life, a man obeyed the elders.

The extreme wisdom and knowledge of Tiv affairs displayed by elders at council meetings was the fourth factor that commanded respect and fear and obedience of the elders.

Another source of power of the Councils was that the elders controlled marriage affairs. Without their consent and support none could get married. And marriage was of extreme importance for purposes of procreation.

The sixth source of the power of the elders was that they exerted their authority through age sets, *kwagh* (plural *kwav*,) or *mbakwagh* (plural *mbakwav*), those born within the same range of time. Every person in the land, man or woman, had an age set or age group. The age group had overlapping duties. Basically however they assisted members in various ways - social, economic and political. The social activities included items such as purchase of a horse, organising a dance for the honour of a wife. Economic activities were cooperative farming, contribution of resources by members, such as wealth or cash or foodstuffs to help those in need particularly in time of famine. The conveyance of a member or non-member's property from one area to another whenever the need arose.

The age group or *mbakwagh* also carried out judicial functions by settling disputes between members. Such cases included crimes, for example, adultery, assault, particularly on elders, and refusal to comply with elders' decisions. The question of adultery was restricted to members of the age group and no more. If a member alleged that another member had committed adultery with his wife, the age group would arrest the alleged adulterer and try him. If he was found guilty, he was subjected to heavy flogging or fined heavily. In respect of assault on elders or defiance of elders' decisions, the accused would be arrested, chastised, fined before the elders. He would be compelled to apologise to his Council of elders - *Ityo* and thereafter to obey the decision he had hitherto defied. An age group also functioned as policemen or messengers in the extradition of refugees from justice. An appeal would be made to the corresponding age group of the refugee in the new area where he had taken refuge and he would be arrested and deported.

Finally, the elders had control of all the religious cults and initiation systems. They directed all religious ceremonies. This is important since religion permeated every aspect of the Tiv society. Every political or social act must be followed by a religious ceremony. When the elders therefore withdraw their religious services from a man, that man is as good as dead.

Religion constituted the base of power. And thus elders continued to wield power irrespective of administrative reforms at the turn of the century. An elder, for example, would say, "I am Mbaikye" instead of "I am the most senior (orvesen) in *ityo Mbaikye*". The implication here is clear, namely, that since he has the last say in *ityo mbaikye* he personifies the community.

However, despite this authority the new political developments severely put a strain on the authority of the elders. This is discussed in the next part.

Chapter 4

Chamba Wars: Tiv Dominates Benue Valley In The 19th Century.

The Tiv first met the Chamba or Ugenyi when the Tiv settled at the present Turan - Ikurav-Ya territory. The Chamba then occupied the western bank of the River Katsina Ala. The Chamba secured their territory with a wall, *akpa*, running from east to west and terminating at the western bank of the River Amire Tamen in the West and another river in the east. The wall was made by digging a trench and throwing the dug up earth to the southern side. It was primarily a fortification against the Iukun.

How and when the Chamba occupied the western bank of River Katsina Ala is not clear. However the Chamba elders at Takum are agreed that the Chamba originally lived in the Cameroons at Tibati, whence they migrated to Adamawa. The Chamba are made up of Tikari, Jidu, Pari, Lufum, and what is called the Chamba proper: Pyeri, Daka Nupabi and Poba. Their departure from Tibati in the Cameroun was as a result of constant fight against the Fulani.

In Adamawa the Chamba broke up. Some went to Kassimbila while a group that latter settled in Dongo and Takum occupied the western bank of River Katsina Ala. The Chamba of Dongo were the first to leave the western bank. They crossed the River Katsina Ala and, settled at Januwa, about four miles south of the present town of Takum. Later, the Chamba of Takum, led by their patriarch, Gando, decided to leave the western bank of Katsina Ala whence they met at Januwa, the Chamba of Donga. But a fight broke out between the two groups at Januwa. The Donga group was forced to evacuate the area and settled in the former site of the town of Suntai.

The importance of this era is that no conflict occurred between the Chamba and the Tiv. On the contrary, the two peoples maintained social and economic intercourse in the course of which the Chamba claimed to have taught the Tiv the art of circumcision, fishing, spinning, weaving of cloth, *tugudu* and sack making. They also supplied salt to the Tiv. Salt was obtainable from Mona, about nine miles south of Takum. The most important source of salt supply however, was from Akwana.

However, the peace and cordiality between the Chamba and the Tiv could not last long. This is because the history of the Tiv at this period shows the Tiv as aggressive colonisers whose quest for more land was insatiable. The Tiv therefore became enemies of their neighbours. Consequently, although the Chamba deny this, the Tiv fought them near the River Amire Tamen, the western bank of the Katsina Ala river. On the whole the wars between the Tiv and the Chamba were in three main theatres: the Ushongo wars fought at the foothills of Ushongo hills. This was at the western bank of Katsina Ala river. Then there were the wars fought on the eastern bank of Katsina Ala. The third theatre was on the western bank of Donga. These were the Dikpo and Mdemba wars discussed in the succeeding chapter.

The First Chamba War

As with all great wars the immediate cause of the Chamba Tiv war on the western plains of river Katsina Ala cannot be pinpointed. Akiga Sai said that the conflict arose because a Tiv person refused to return the hunting net he had borrowed from a Chamba. This is plausible for trivialities had, often in history, sparked off great commotions. The Tiv had themselves been conditioned to aggression by their long isolated sojourn on the mountain terrains, and the hostility shown them by *atoatiev*. Ugee and Utange, whom they met on their first descent on the plains of the Benue. The resultant irritability earned the Tiv a bad reputation which lingered on until recently. Disputes during hunting, a necessary pastime of rural people such as the Chamba and the Tiv, sparked off wars. Added to this was the perennial problem of the Tiv quest for land, aggravated by shifting

cultivation. The Chamba were frightened into precipitating a defensive war to drive the Tiv out of danger zone. This persisted until about the middle of 19th century when the two peoples no longer lived close to each other.

The first batch of Tiv to suffer attacks were occupants of the plains in the vicinity of Ibinda hills: Ugondo, Iharev, Shittire, and Masev. They often claimed to have been taken by surprise while they were working on their farms. They were therefore defenceless. However, this is a common argument by people who want to start a war or who want to explain away their defeat. Generally the Tiv never accept responsibility in starting a crisis especially if such crisis involves a conflict against *atoatiev*. The enemies are always to blame, like the Arab/Israeli situation.

However, whoever was to blame in the initial Chamba/Tiv wars in which many Tiv lost their lives while others were carried away as war prisoners is not very important.

The most decisive war was fought at Ushongo foothills where the Chamba attacked savagely. Eventually the Tiv developed an effective resistance to the Chamba raids. The last Chamba attack therefore proved disastrous for the Chamba. They were lured in by the Tiv who encircled and vanquished them with a thick hail of arrows, stone balls and allied missiles. This final and lasting victory never escaped the memory of any living Tiv. For a song was soon composed:

Ugenyi va itiaṽ sha Ushongo oh
Itiaṽ hembra Ugenyi sha Ushongo oh eeh
The Ugenyi came to fight at Ushongo
But Ugenyi was vanquished at Ushongo

When this war was fought who can tell? But a likely dating would put it about the first two or three decades of the 19th century.

The Aftermath

The Chamba Tiv wars, like all other wars, had disastrous consequences for those who bore the brunt: Ugondo, Shittire, Masev, and Iharev. Their human and material resources were drained to the dregs. As a people they were split into several

groups as a result of the confusion caused by the Chamba attacks. For example a section of Turan, though not directly affected, fled the Amire valley entirely and came to join the Shitire people to move north-wards. Thus wars that were fought to contain the Tiv resulted in their dispersal - for example, immediately farther north into the central plains. This dispersal made it necessary for the people of Kparev, especially Kunav and Gaav, to exert more pressure on Udam in their drive to the west and the south. As the Udam moved, more land was available consequently the danger posed by the Chamba invasions was felt less.

Another result of the Chamba wars was that the people reacted to Chamba military power by developing military tactics of their own. For example, wherever the Tiv went, they were armed, whether on the farm or in places of recreation. No more would the Tiv be taken by surprise. Also the building up of arms and ammunition and necessary defence lines became a matter of course. Instruments hitherto reserved for religious rites now became communication equipment in war. Thus horns and *indyer* drums would quickly summon people for emergency.

But the most severe result of the war was the movement of the peoples, the speed of the dispersal from the valley of Amire Tamen. And this is therefore an event worth repeating again and again. Take the case of Ikurav and Shange. A section of Ikurav, like a section of Turan, went northwards to join some section of Kparev on the eastern bank of River Katsina Ala and leaving behind their other half in the original homeland in the south-eastern region. Another movement was by Ikurav-Ya people into the frontier hills where they have since remained. The same movement made a section of Turan hill folks to this day. A section of Shangev went northwards and joined the Masev and Iharev. The split up of the Ikurav and Shangev accounts for the existence of their people in two separate and distant geographical areas today. Similarly a section of Turan joined Shitire but they were too small to maintain a separate identity. They consequently became absorbed into a larger group of Shitire known as Gambe-Tiev: This was not however, a peculiar development for

several other groups of Tiv similarly lost their identity without explanation. But surely one of three reasons must account for this development: Chamba war, unexplained migrations, or civil strife that resulted in migrations. Whatever explanation one offers the wars appeared to have precipitated a political revolution that occurred in Tiv in the 19th century.

Another basic outcome of the Chamba wars was the development of military skills amongst the Tiv. They now learnt to attack their enemies at awkward hours of the day, at the time when people were so preoccupied with other matters that they thought least of war. The Tiv also developed guerilla tactics and learnt to use hides and skins of animals as shields; new and advanced arrow heads, spears, all smeared with devastating poisons. Matchets also came to be used for war. Confidence was thus backed up with newly acquired weapons and skills, the Tiv now put their enemies to flight.

But, it must again be repeated, that the most important of these changes was the new problems created in administration by the wide dispersal of people within so short a time. For example, conflicts arose amongst various groups as scramble for land took on new dimensions. Internal control of the people became difficult. It was in response to this new challenge that an entirely new institution, *tor agbande*, arose. An effective leadership was needed to contain the hostile neighbours of Chamba, Udam and *atoatiev* generally. But first, let us take a more detailed look at the Great Dispersal of the Tiv in Benue Valley, a factor which made the people the most dominant in the plains of Benue.

Chapter 5

The Great Dispersal In The Benue Plains

In the course of the dispersal, the Tiv had to fight their way against various peoples: the Jukun, Arago, Etulo, and Idoma, in the central plains, and the Jukun, Arago, Koro and Migili in other parts. In order to make early records clear it is necessary to explain that the Etulo were called Utur, the Idoma were called Akpoto, while Alago was also spelt Arago.

The Causes of the Dispersal

Two important factors immediately dictated the dispersal. So enormously had the population increased that it could no longer be housed in the small triangle of the present Turan- Ikurav-Ua, the original settlement. Secondly, the dispersion was motivated by the desire to secure more lands for sufficient foodstuffs to feed the ever growing population. These two factors were aided by the defeat of the Chamba which naturally removed the obstacle to the push into the plains in the north and east.

Added to these needs for land acquisition was another important consideration attached to land. The possession of land *per se* became an end itself because the concept of *tar* rested on the possession of land. Land thus became a political consideration. *Tar* means a permanent home, a place of abode. Occupants of *tar* were a political group. You need land in order to have *tar*. It is within a *tar* that a man realises himself. Acquisition of land thus became a matter of fight to finish. The inhabitants of each *tar* controlled its land and organised its political control which has been described earlier.

Land itself, as a means of group identity and expression, is the property of a family group. It is not owned on individual basis. Land is the natural endowment from the ancestors. People outside a family group cannot claim a share of family land. Any

impression, as created by earlier writers such as Paul Bohannan, that "Land is not property among the Tiv" cannot therefore be possibly true. Although the land is a group property, the group cannot sell it. The land belongs to the dead, the living, and those yet to be born. Sale of land, with all the political connotations attached to *tar* would be a violation of the rights of those yet to be born.

Every married male adult was entitled to a piece of land, the size of which would depend upon the size of the man's family. In other words distribution was according to need. Where the land appeared inadequate for one family group that group could borrow from the collateral kinsmen or friends. Prior to the British advent bachelors never owned land or farm. They lived with their fathers or relatives and shared their resources. But the arrival of the British changed emphasis on economy. Taxation was imposed on individuals not on the group and consummable items which attracted the individual made personal independence in money most irresistible. The unmarried adult therefore began to produce crops for his own food and cash.

People who hitherto had been no more than subsistence farmers now increased their holding. But they still practised shifting cultivation. In the main there were the root and grain crops. Yams, cassava, sweet potatoes, cocoyams, guinea corn, millet, maize, beans and bambara nuts took the fields. In the later part of the nineteenth century, groundnuts, rice, and beniseeds were added.

Because of these developments land holding became more and more important. It is therefore not surprising that Paul Bohannan got the wrong impression that the granting of residence rights to a person automatically implied the grant of farm lands to such a person. This is misleading. A person granted residence rights laid no claim to the land save the developments such as crops on that land. The occupier in such circumstances remained as alien and he could not do as he pleased with the land.

Although cultivation of particular crops was not necessarily limited to one particular region, naturally, some crops did better

in one area than it did in another one. For example yams did and do better in the Ukum area.

Factors affecting crop production included the density of population, the nature of the soil and the frequency of its use, as well as the farmhands available to do the manual labour. The farmhand consideration was an important factor because the basic implement used in tilling the soil was the hoe. A solution to the labour force was the raising of a large family. A man therefore married many wives. This in turn led to two very important historical developments. Firstly, the acquisition of more wives led to increase in population of the people which in turn led to greater land hunger and on to accelerated expansion of the people. Secondly, and following upon the first, was the growth of the population which in pursuit of more fishing, hunting, and, farming lands, precipitated the colonisation of the Benue plains. This was carefully and efficiently planned. Later, in the era of the drum chiefs, *tor-agbande*, the acquisitions of the present Tiv frontiers were consolidated.

The Course of the Colonisation:

The Movement South and South-West.

The push to the south from the original settlement in the Turan-Ikurav-ya region by the Kparev, also called Jechira, actually began long before the Ushongo war. It even started before other sections of Tiv began their movement north-east, west, and the central plains. The movement of Jechira people began perhaps in the late 18th century but much progress was not made until the second half of the 19th century. This was because the Udam vigorously resisted the push.

Generally the Jechira moved south in two broad streams.

The section known as Kunav moved directly to the south of Ngokugh hill. They experienced tremendous difficulties in this area. Eventually the Udam were pushed back in stages. And with each push the Tiv occupied their territory. This push by the Kunav ended or reached a stalemate just before the establishment of the British rule in early 20th century.

One distinctive factor that aided the Udam resistance against the push by Kunav was the topography. Undoubtedly the land is relatively open and flat save for the occasional hills in a few districts. But the whole land is undulating, for example in Mbaakon district in Mbara. There were also patches of dense forests in valleys and ridges particularly in the Mbaduku and Mbayongo areas.

The second faction of Jechira, Gaav, had similar difficulty yet they were much more successful than the Kunav.

The explanation lay in their leader, Ashwa Mondo, a warrior of exceptional ability. It is not clear whether or not he became a drum chief. But what is clear is that the military tactics, planning, and execution by Ashwa Mondo drove the Udam away from this rich and fertile sector. The Udam were themselves opposed by their own terrain: there were neither mountains nor thick bush in which to take refuge or ambush the invading Tiv. The only shelter would be the hills on the eastern frontier of Shangev-Tiev and Mbavaa districts. The vegetation is orchard bush with small patches of thick shrubs in some valleys and ridges especially in the southern frontier. The arrival of the British in the 20th century halted the Udam-Tiv perennial struggle and the expansion to the south and south-west.

Two sections of Kparev-Jemgbah and Ukan, occupied the central plains. They were later joined by Ikurav and Ugondo. They moved northwards in three streams.

The first to move were perhaps the Ukan. They first occupied the plains immediately south of Ushongo hills. One section of Jemgbah comprising the Mbagen, Kusuv, Shorov and Utange moved northwards from the region of the south-eastern plains, and followed the course of the River Dura to its confluence with River Katsina Ala. They were ably led by Chire Tali, a warrior and drum chief.

The people of Mbagen occupied the lower part of Dura valley and its confluence with Katsina Ala. The others, Shorov, Kusuv, and Utange, moved north of Mbagen and occupied the lands close to the western bank of Katsina Ala. The Utange who had settled in the same area with the Kussuv around the small

hill of Atanyi or Ikuen later moved and occupied the upper reaches of River Dura. Thus all the territory between the Dura in the west and the Amire Kiriki in the east was occupied by them.

In these movements they encountered little or no resistance except small pockets of Etulo and Jukun who were easily beaten into submission to Tiv power. The other people the Tiv met were the Abakwa who then occupied the Katsina hill on the western bank of Katsina Ala.

The Movement to the Northwest

The other sections of Jemgbah: Mbakor, Mgbayion, Mbatiaiv, Yandev, Mbatierev, Ipav, and Tombo, as well as the people of Ugondo and Ikurav all moved in a north westerly direction through the present land of the Mbagwa. There they settled down for short time and then moved northwards and crossed the River Konshisha. Finally they settled down at what today are the hills of Gboko. Their movement posed a direct and serious challenge to the Udam who at this time occupied the western bank of Konshisha river. Serious fighting broke out between the Tiv and the Udam in this area. When eventually the Udam were defeated they vacated the whole region.

The settlement around Gboko hills was marred by internal strife, the cause of which was uncertain. The settlement itself broke up. Explanations for this development are conflicting.

One version is that a man from Ugondo murdered his friend from Mbakor area. Some people from Ikurav-Tiev however claim that the crime was committed by a person from their own lineage, Agbemaraki, a name so strange and ambiguous that its credibility is straightway questionable. Whoever the culprit was, the peoples of Ikurav and Ipav moved to the east of Gboko hills and occupied the area just vacated by the Ukum: the Mkar hills and its environs. Later the people of Ikurav moved east-wards and crossed the River Katsina Ala to join Ukum and Tongov in the eastern frontier. The Ipav has occupied the Mkar area up to today. The Mbatiaiv moved West of Gboko hills and made their homes while the Mbatierev went to the north of Mbatiaiv. The Mbayion have remained to this day where they had been.

At about 1849, according to K.P. Maddocks, the Mbakor and a section of Ugondo moved to the north of Gboko hills under the leadership of Akusha, a renowned drum chief. The few Ugondo who settled around Asukunya hills in Mbakor were later expelled from the region in the later part of the 19th century. Why there was this expulsion none can say for sure but some conjecture that it was not unconnected with the perpetual enmity between the Ugondo people and Mbalagh on the eastern bank of the Katsina Ala river.

The Yandev people at first moved from the Gboko to Mkar hills whence they later migrated to the north of Mkar hill to make their homes. Similarly, the Tombo who had now joined a section of Shitire-Tiev and Ugondo, followed Yandev people and went further north to occupy the lands just vacated by the Nongov. Later in the century a section of Tombo (Mbalagh), Ugondo and Shitire-Tiev crossed to the eastern bank of the river Katsina Ala. The other section of Tombo, the Mbatie, were left behind and have stayed put in the place up to this day.

The Movement to the North-East

The movement east of River Katsina Ala began early 19th century by Ugondo and Shitire people under the leadership of two legendary warriors Agaku Atoikongo, and Vembe Gbev. There were others as well: Yawo Agya, Agai, Har Agundu, Ayange, and Abuku Zonko. The crossing was at Yoyo confluence. Close to the hill of Mkovur they settled. May it be observed that the importance of settling by hills was that hills still provided refuge and lookout posts in time of attack. Moreover, hills normally had plenty of game that supplemented diet. Consequently initial settlements were around hills where settlements spread to the plains.

The North east is relatively flat although with several flat topped isolated hills. The Katsina Ala valley is itself very broad fertile plain well suited for extensive cultivation. It is basically savannah in vegetation except further north and east when it changes to orchard dense in the river valleys.

The Mkovur hill is an example of the several isolated hills in the region. Ugondo and Shitire used it as a home base where they sent out scouts to survey better lands to the north. Eventually the lands around Dikpo hill were found suitable for cultivation and occupied. Soon the Ugondo and Shitire disputed the ownership of the new territory. The elders gave the verdict to the Shitire to the chagrin of Ugondo who then vacated Dikpo hill for another site, east of Dikpo hill. This was Mtam from where they again moved to the hills of Mdema south of River Donga in the Wukari area. According to Garbosa II. in Labaran Chambawa, the Chamba and Jukun call the Mdema hills the hills of Bishikola. By whatever name it was called, it had abundant fertility and game.

But then the Chamba again began to harass the Ugondo at Mdema by intermittent attacks. The Ugondo fought back but they were so severely defeated that they vacated the area in disorder without taking along their properties they had left in the Mdema caves. They retreated into Dikpo hill to live again with the Shitire.

Only a miracle, according to a legend, saved the Ugondo from total destruction at the hands of the Chamba. For at a big river on their retreat a big snake turned itself into a wooden bridge which the Ugondo crossed. By the time the Chamba came, the green snake, *Ikarem*, had disappeared. Where did this happen? Again opinion is divided. Those at the eastern districts claim the incident was Swem. Others say that it was at Ugondo. However, up to this day the Tiv revere the *ikarrem* snake and would never harm it. But not the Chamba.

The Chamba could not tolerate the presence of Ugondo and Shitire around Dikpo hill. Fierce fighting ensued but the Chamba withdrew when they could not dislodge the Ugondo and Shitire. However, the majority of the Ugondo were still haunted by recent history, their quarrel with the Shitire, their humiliation at the hands of the Chamba. These people therefore recrossed River Katsina Ala and joined the Kparev. The Shitire were therefore left largely alone. Thus the foundation of Tiv expansion to the east of river Katsina Ala was laid. They moved

along with Ukum, Tongov, sections of Nongov, Ugondo, Ikurav-Tiev, and a section of Tombo (Mbalagh) that consolidated the Tiv power in the eastern frontier in the second half of the 19th century. Their movement northwards from the south-eastern plains continued until they occupied the region of Mkar hills.

The remains of ancient stone huts made by Ukum are still found on one of the hills at Mkar today. The Ukum lived there until a civil war broke out between the people of Nongov and a section of Shittire, (Gambe-Tiev) that had followed Ukum and settled on the neighbouring plains. Although this war was disastrous enough to break up their settlement, none remembers the cause. Thence Ukum and Tongov migrated eastward and settled at the western bank of River Katsina Ala.

Soon they were attacked by the Jukun to halt their expansion to the eastern bank of the river. The attacks were repulsed and stopped for ever. Later in the century they crossed River Katsina Ala and settled on its eastern bank. Eventually the Ukum moved in north easterly direction with the Tongov and settled in their present territory.

The Nongov did not follow the Ukum from Mkar. They went north and settled in the present Tombo district. Later they split into three major sections, *ityar*. One section, Kambe, moved northwards along the western bank of River Katsina Ala to its present area. Ndzorov and Saghev crossed River Katsina Ala to the eastern side. Later in the century Ndzorov but not the Saghev, moved further north and crossed the Benue and occupied its northern bank.

Another civil war broke up the Ugondo and Ikurav-Tiev who had followed Jemgbagh people up to the hills of Gboko. They moved east of Gboko hills and occupied the land just vacated by the Ukum.

Later the Ikurav and Ugondo moved eastward following the route taken by Ukum until they reached the western bank of Katsina Ala. They crossed the river at several points. One section of Ugondo and Ikurav crossed around the confluences of

River Ambighir and Loko while another crossed around the Loko confluence.

The Tombo and a section of Shitire that followed Ukum now came to take the same route as they moved north of Mkar hills. They moved northwards and occupied the lands recently vacated by the Nongov.

Later in the century the people of Gambe-Tiev and a section of Tombo (Mbalagh) crossed river Katsina Ala at the eastern bank near a hill, Fidi, situated in the present Nongov territory.

With the arrival of these new migrants, Ukum and Tongov had to move further east. Consequently the settlement made by Gambe-Tiev Ugondo, Mbalagh, Saghev, and Ikurav-Tiev brought to a close the consolidation of the Tiv land in the eastern frontier. The sheer number of the Tiv intimidated the Jukun into offering no opposition to the Tiv settlement. At a later stage however, Jukun rulers made futile attempts to dislodge the Tiv.

Why did the Jukun change their mind? Were the Jukun afraid that they might be absorbed by the Tiv in the course of the Tiv continuing expansion? Or were the Jukun just out to establish political control over the Tiv? There's no art to tell the mind's construction of the Jukun.

However, in the reign of Aku Angyu or Zikenyu some attempts were made to establish political authority over the Tiv living in the vicinity of the Jukun town, Akwana. Reports from the Emir of Wase, Sulaiman B. Bassan, to the second Emir of Bauchi, Ibrahim B. Yakubu, spoke of the endeavours to wage war against the Tiv in the reign of Agbu Manu about 1854-1866. This suggests that the Jukun and their Fulani overlords had not yet succeeded in bringing the Tiv close to the Jukun frontier under their political tutelage.¹ They were still unable to contain their expansion into the Jukun territory north of the Benue.

¹ Bauchi letters, Ciroma's collections, Arewa House, Kaduna. One letter from the Chief of Keana to the Son of the Emir of Bauchi (Ciroma) talked of a raid on Muchi (Tiv) country in 1870s. This raid affected the Tiv living in the Vicinity of Tunga. The chief of Awe accompanied the chief of Keana in carrying out the raid. This seems to repudiate the Alago claim that their people never fought against the Tiv. The Tiv assert that the invading forces were besieged at Tunga where they had camped and a decisive battle took place at Yeyenga, a place still to be identified.

Ashu Manu II, who ruled at about 1866-1871 appeared to have been more concerned with easing the Fulani and Chamba pressure on him rather than paying much attention to the Tiv expansion. But in the reign of his successor, Agudu Manu I, 1917-1902, the Tiv expansion into Jukun territory had become a big threat to the Jukun. Agudu therefore summoned his allies to fight against the Tiv.

There were two areas of the expansion that caused particular concern. The first was the expansion of Gambe-Ya in Shitire south into Jukun districts stretching from Takum to Chenchenji. The second was the expansion of Gambe-tiev in Shitire north into the Jukun districts of Akwana and Arufu.

The Akwana Arufu region was of great importance to the Jukun because if Tiv penetration here succeeded the salt and galena mines at Akwana and Arufu would fall into Tiv hands. And so in the 1880s Agudu Manu appealed to the Emir of Muri, Burba to help him check Tiv expansion into his territory. Whether the combined military expedition was executed or not none can say. What is certain is that the pressure by the Tiv continued and so a big expedition had to be organised in which Agudu Manu I was assisted by the Emir of Muri, Mohammadu Nya (c. 1874-1896). Mohammed made four campaigns against the Tiv and penetrated as far as Katsina Ala which he burnt. These are testimonies of Freemantle. If these expeditions were carried out at all they must have been directed against the Shitire. Why on earth would the expedition burn down Katsina Ala when the Tiv never inhabited Katsina Ala until recently? The settlement at Katsina Ala was composed mainly of Abakwa (Hausa), Jukun, and Etulo all of whom were either pro Jukun or in fact Jukun subjects. Why should Agudu Manu I order the burning of a town peopled by his own subjects?

It is however plausible that Jukun ruler detested intimate relations that existed between his subjects and the Tiv. These relations might have included economic, political and social interactions. The economic relations would be mainly trade while the political relations would be the acquisition of magical powers by the drum chiefs, *tor agbande*. The social relations would be

the help given the Tiv to cross the river to the eastern bank. The Aku was unhappy about the growing independence of the Abakwa generally. It is possible that the Aku was beginning to fear that the Tiv and Abakwa would eventually gain control of the trade routes in the Benue region. Such a menace had therefore to be nipped in the bud. This invasion suggested to Freemantle that territorial acquisition was an item. Any claim therefore that Nya attempted to expand at the expense of Tiv and Jukun would need re-examination.

It is agreed both by J. Freemantle and the Tiv that the Tiv were overcome at Akwana. Not only were the Gambe-Tiev overcome at Akwana but also those who were caught and killed had their heads exhibited on a silk cotton tree which was still standing by 1978 on the outskirts of Akwana town.

Later the Tiv retaliated and burnt down Akwana. The expansion was therefore not checked. At this time the British established their administration in Jukun land.

Agudu Manu I was succeeded upon his death by Ashu Manu II (1902-1915). Ashu Manu II and his own successor, Ashu Manu III (1915-1927) were assisted by the British. Tiv occupation of Jukun land was thus prevented.

Crossing of the Benue

Iharev, Masev, and Shangev-Tiev were perhaps the last batch of Tiv to move far north. They were led by two prominent drum chiefs from Iharev: Gbanyam Wunduikule and Chafu Bume. They took the North Westerly route through the present district of Mbagwa already peopled by the Ukan about whom there was an usual story of romance.

Both Iharev and Masev are said to have lost a considerable number of their most beautiful wives and daughters to the Ukan through whose territory they journeyed. The Iharev and the Masev were, therefore, compelled to coerce the women-folk to disguise themselves by smearing their faces with ashes and bandage their legs to suggest that they had chronic ulcers.

Whatever the authenticity of this tale it shows one thing: that the Ukan had migrated to their present habitation before the

exodus of Iharev, Masev, and Shangev-Tiev to the west and the north. The theory propagated by Maddocks and Downes that the Iharev spearheaded the movement of all Tiv to the north cannot therefore be true. K. Dewar seems to have spotted the falsity of this theory in the mid 1930s when he correctly pointed out how the Kparev, as the early migrants relieved Iharev and Masev of their "More comely wives and daughters".

Leaving the romance aside, we return to the movement from Mbagwa district which went northwards unto the hill of Selagi. After a short sojourn at Selagi they migrated north-west of Selagi hills unto Ikwe and its environs. Here a civil war broke out between the Iharev and the Masev. None is sure what caused the conflict. Some claim it was due to a war between the Tiv and the Idoma over the shooting of wild game.² The Idoma at that time occupied an area just south of the Ikwe hills. Quite often they had conflict over the shooting of game.

On this particular occasion, a Tiv hunter by the name Yongo, shot an animal and it was seized by an Idoma called Agbe on the pretext that the animal was from Idoma territory. This was a regular ploy by the Idoma. On this occasion the Tiv decided to call off the bluff. And on the battle field. The war was fierce, the Idoma were eventually defeated but a great confusion had been created amongst the Iharev. And so Iharev split into four major groups: Raav, Mbakpa, Sherev, and Utiondo.

Raav and Mbakpa were the two major sections. They went West of the Ikwe hills to make their homes.

The Mbakpa occupied the Southern bank of the Benue while the Raav occupied the upper reaches of River Gwer: Gwer vesen and Gwer kiriki. In these locations Dr. V. Baikie saw the Mbakpa in 1854 when he sailed up the River Benue. His subsequent report was very important for two reasons. First this was the first time Europeans were making contact with Tiv in the Tiv country. Secondly, the report gave a useful description of Tiv social and political institutions.

² Freemantle, J.M. (ed.) *Gazetteer of Muri Province Up to Dec. 1919.*

The first information by any European had been from one Koelle who had spoken to two Tiv slaves in Sierra Leone. Yapanda and Disile had also given some information about the Tiv but this was not first hand. Baikie's visit therefore made it possible to place the Tiv country amongst the regions of the Benue much more precisely than Koelle had done.

The Baikie party first heard about the Tiv when they sailed up River Benue and reached Ojogo, a village on the northern bank in Doma or Bassa Country.

It was there Baikie learnt there were a people on the southern bank called "Misi" or "Mitshi" who should be severely avoided because they were "quarrelsome and treacherous", "originally a set of slaves whose masters were the Filatas" (Fulani). Baikie soon concluded that Tiv relations with the *atoatiev* was unfriendly. On 24th September, 1854, the day after Baikie's arrival at Ojogo was a market day at Wantar, a Tiv territory opposite Ojogo on the southern bank of the river. On the warnings to avoid the Tiv Baikie smelled bias.

We were accordingly warned against them which however, we fancied was done out of jealousy as there had been rather serious dispute between the two parties (Ojogo and Tiv at Wantar) only a few months previously when several men had been killed on both sides (Baikie 1854:100).

However, when Baikie and his people sailed towards Wantar the Mbakpa turned them back. Baikie was disappointed, very much so that he changed his mind about the Tiv immediately.

The Tiv now became an-

unfortunate tribe being against everyone, and everyone against it, has rendered it extremely suspicious of any visitors, their rude minds being unable to comprehend anything beyond war and raping ... the Mitshis as far as we could judge, are wilder and less intelligent than any of the African races with whom we had intercourse except Baibai and Djukuns' (Baikie 1854:106) (Jukuns).

Three days later he had discussions with Akpamo, the Tiv leader at Wantar and Akpamo told him that;

he did not know how much about us, but fancied we might be coming to take part against them, and that, at that moment he would not have answered for the conduct of his people (Baikie, 1854:100).

The harsh words by Baikie were apparently true as far as the Tiv relations with *atoatiev* were concerned though he overreached himself in trying to talk about the intelligence of the Tiv at the same time. The visitors, however, took notice of a few important things relating to the political, social and economic institutions of the Tiv. The capital of Tiv was said to be Wum and that each homestead was ruled by a compound head, for example, Akpamo, whom T.J. Hutchinson (he accompanied Baikie) recognised as the chief of Wantar. At this time, although Baikie did not mention it, the other sections of Iharev, Sherev and Utiondo had crossed to the northern bank of the Benue at two main points. Some crossed at River Mu, about seven miles east of the present Makurdi town while other crossed near Abinsi at the mouth of the Katsina Ala river.

These movements were headed by four important drum chiefs Ataku Tsaha, Chafu Bume, and Yongo all of Sherev and Ortaver Anyakpa of Utiondo.

The Iharev contended that at this time the southern bank of the Benue was sparsely populated by the Idoma who quickly withdrew as the Tiv moved in.

Maddocks holds the view that the Sherev and Utiondo got to Abinsi about 1840. there are also Jukun settlements on the mainland in this area.

In the northern frontier the territory was sparsely populated by the Alago, Koro and Migili who quickly pulled back as the Tiv moved in. But the Tiv suffered when the Jukun, allies of Migili or Koro, counterattacked with cavalry and took captives into slavery.

There is no evidence of fighting with the emirate of Lafia until the last quarter of the 19th century when the Tiv colonized some territory belonging to the subjects of the Emir. Mohammed Agwe (1881-1903) had to go to a short war to prevent the Tiv from displacing his subjects, the Koro or Migili on the southern frontier.

Occasionally however, the Alago allied with Jukun to fight the Tiv. These were the Jukuns who lived on the southern bank of the Benue perhaps in the towns of Sufa, Zebu and Chinkai. The Jukun invaders normally came on horses to drive away people from their farms and sometimes to carry them away into captivity.

The Alago on the other hand contended that they were friends of the Tiv whom they even helped to cross the River Benue by the use of a magic charm. They contended that the Koro did not fight them but fought the Migili whose capital then was Jankwe near the present Tiv village of Udei. They hold that the Migili are not Alago but slaves of the Alago monarch.

Time was on the side of the Tiv. And with time they weathered all opposition whether from Alago-Koro, or Migili or Jukun. Tiv became a dominant force on the northern bank of the Benue. They expanded to the north and to the west and came into contact with the Alago proper in the Doma country. They expanded east and shared boundaries with Ndzorov. Apparently these movements were in the second half of the 19th century.

While other sections of Iharev moved northwards from Ikwe, the people of Masev (Njiriv and Ingohov) moved south in two groups and shared a common frontier with the Idoma whom they had pushed further south.

The Yonov at first tried to move south from Ikwe but found the new place unsuitable for cultivation and so returned to occupy the Ikwe hills and its surroundings.

The people of Shangev-Tiev did not accompany Masev and Iharev to Ikwe. They parted company during their stay at Selaggi hills whence they moved directly south and occupied the territory just vacated by the Udam. With the assistance of Kaprev they fought the Udam on the western bank of Konshisha until they were pushed away from the Selaggi hills.

The Tiv also fought the Idoma seriously but only for a short time.

According to Brice-Smith the Tiv southern expansion was halted by the "Okpotos" (Idoma) and other "southern Bassa" tribes. Maddocks maintains, however, that the Tiv were very successful in their fighting against Idoma.

In order to obtain food and seed, they set upon the outposts of the Idoma in the neighbourhood of what is now Makurdi... Tiv seized their farms and settled in their place. This movement went on continuously right up to the British occupation and Sherev got within reach of Okokolo, some 30 miles west of Makurdi (Maddocks, 1936).

There were also, a series of skirmishes against the people of Egedde. According to Maddocks the Tiv and Egedde made a non-aggression pact but it was broken and so the Tiv attacked Egedde and drove them away.

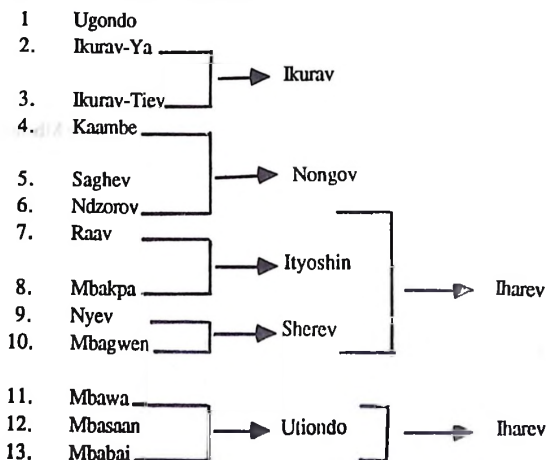
Results of the Dispersal

The dispersal of the Tiv had three important results:

- (1) the depopulation of the original area of settlement, Turan-Ikurav-Ya area.
- (2) the spread of numerous lineages over a very vast territory and, most importantly,
- (3) the problems of internal control arising from the growth of population and the dispersal of the people.

The Grouping of Ityar During the Great Dispersion

A. *Ichongo Genealogy*

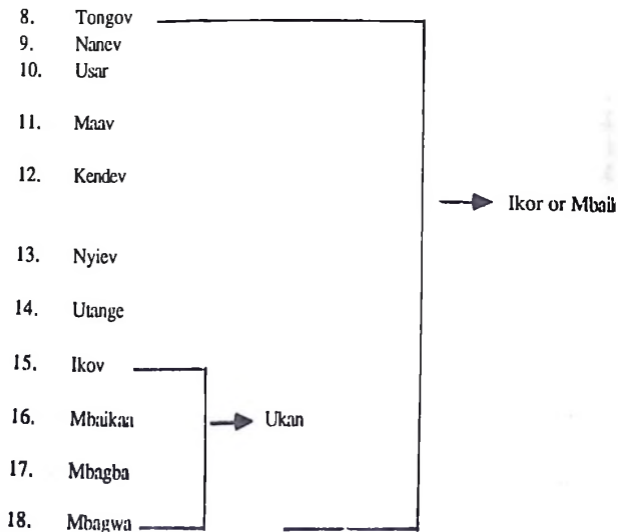


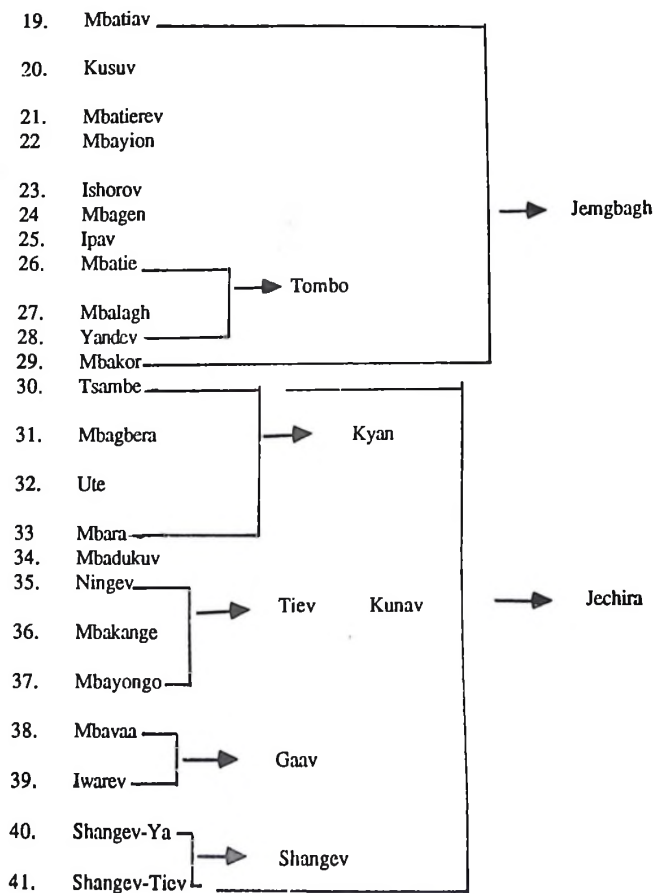
- 14. Injiriv
 - 15. Yonov
 - 16. Ingohov
 - 17. Turan
- } → Masev

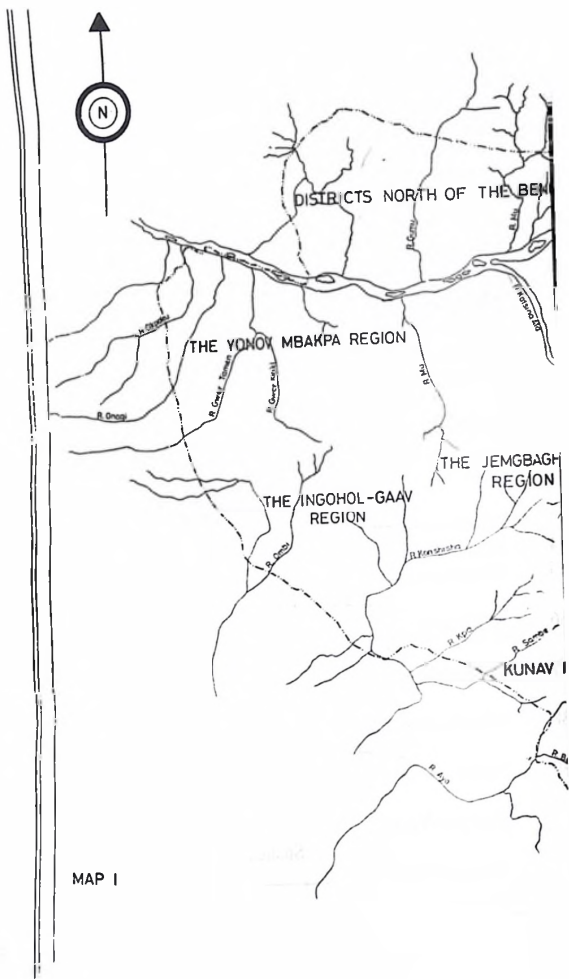
Note: Ityoshin means West. It is not a name of a patriarch as the name of each *tar* or *ityar* would represent.

B. Ipusu Genealogy

- 1. Kpav
 - 2. Gambe-Ya
 - 3. Gambe-Tiev
 - 4. Torov
 - 5. Ingenev
 - 6. Ucha
 - 7. Mbaterem
- } → Shittire
- } → Ukum

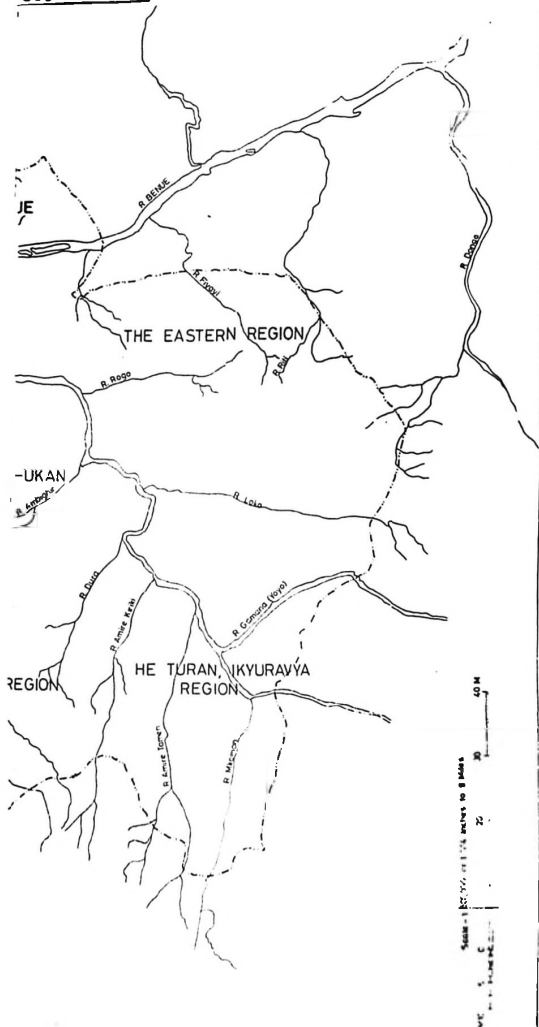


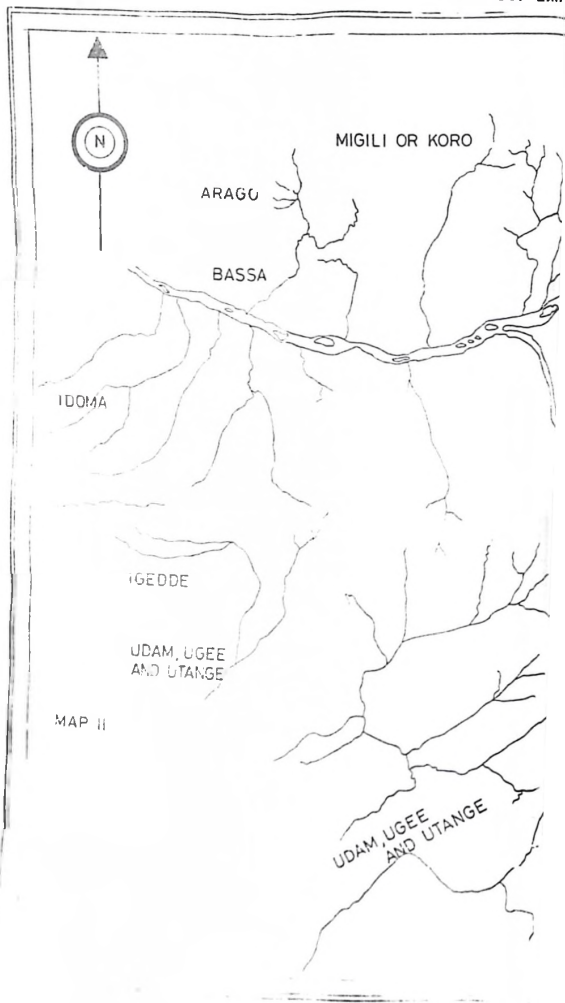




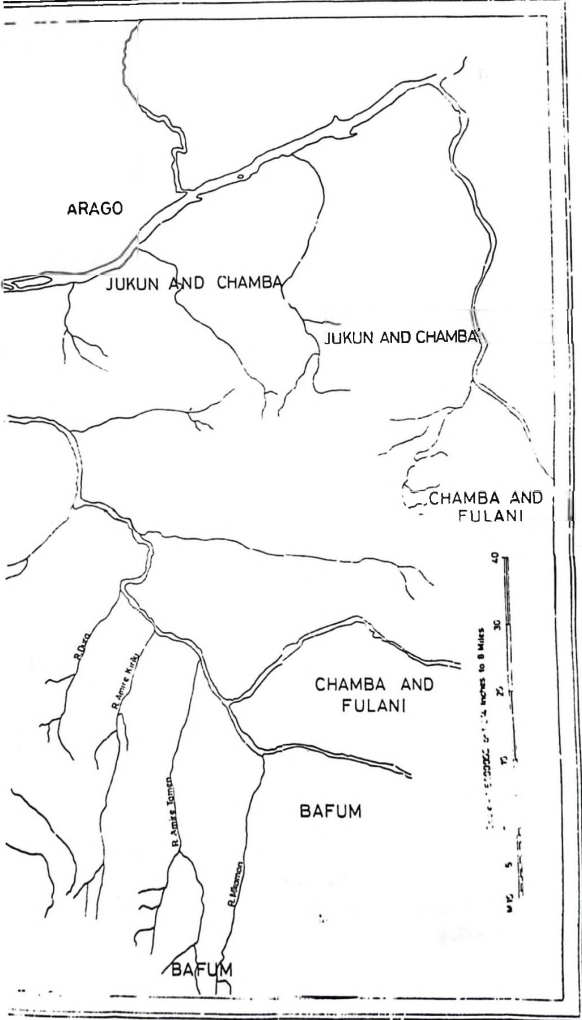
MAP I

COUNTRY TODAY





Their Neighbours



Kparev means ityar nos 9-41. That is, the combination of the major ityar or Mbaikor, Jemgbagh and Jechira.

Consequent upon the great dispersal and the removal of Chamba war threats people around the original settlement settled down to consolidate their homes.

For example the Ikov consolidated their hold on the lands south of the Utange district while the people of Usar and Nanév went west of Ikov. The bulk of Maav, Kendev, and Nyiev regained their original lands south of Nanév district but some chose to remain on the hills in the south. The people of Ikurav-Ya unlike its sister body, Ikurav-Tiev did not evacuate the south-eastern areas. Some of them occupied the plains of Ibinda and the surrounding districts while others chose to remain on the hills. The people of Turan still occupied the western bank of Katsina Ala though some of them chose to remain on the hills. The people of Shangev-Ya remained behind, unlike their sister body, Shangev-Tiev, and occupied the hills of Ngokugh and the surrounding plains.

Why did the Tiv expansion in the middle Benue valley in the 19th century proceed with such ease? Four reasons give the explanation.

Firstly, when the Tiv came the Chamba and Jukun powers were on the decline. The Tiv therefore had not effective challenge. Secondly, the Tiv use of deadly poisoned arrows was feared by their enemies, especially the Udam who would readily abandon his gun in the face of the Tiv bow and arrow. Thirdly, the Tiv routed their enemies by agricultural pursuits. They would first encircle their enemies with farms. The enemy would in turn vacate the area for fear of being absorbed by the Tiv. Fourthly, the rapid increase in population frightened foes by their numbers. (*See maps I & II*)

Finally, the spread of the people over a vast territory created serious political organisational problems. How would families survive the ever-mounting land disputes? A change in administration was needed.

Kparev means *ityar nos* 9-41. That is, the combination of the major *ityar* or Mbaikor, Jemgbagh and Jechira.

Consequent upon the great dispersal and the removal of Chamba war threats people around the original settlement settled down to consolidate their homes.

For example the Ikov consolidated their hold on the lands south of the Utange district while the people of Usar and Nanev went west of Ikov. The bulk of Maav, Kendev, and Nyiev regained their original lands south of Nanev district but some chose to remain on the hills in the south. The people of Ikurav-Ya unlike its sister body, Ikurav-Tiev did not evacuate the south-eastern areas. Some of them occupied the plains of Ibinda and the surrounding districts while others chose to remain on the hills. The people of Turan still occupied the western bank of Katsina Ala though some of them chose to remain on the hills. The people of Shangev-Ya remained behind, unlike their sister body, Shangev-Tiev, and occupied the hills of Ngokugh and the surrounding plains.

Why did the Tiv expansion in the middle Benue valley in the 19th century proceed with such ease? Four reasons give the explanation.

Firstly, when the Tiv came the Chamba and Jukun powers were on the decline. The Tiv therefore had not effective challenge. Secondly, the Tiv use of deadly poisoned arrows was feared by their enemies, especially the Udam who would readily abandon his gun in the face of the Tiv bow and arrow. Thirdly, the Tiv routed their enemies by agricultural pursuits. They would first encircle their enemies with farms. Their enemy would in turn vacate the area for fear of being absorbed by the Tiv. Fourthly, the rapid increase in population frightened foes by their numbers. (*See maps I & II*)

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Chapter 6

The Age Of The Drum Chiefs

Inter Tar Wars

Because of the wars against various peoples by the Tiv the need arose for new leadership to command the wars and to plan and organise the migration and colonisation of new lands. This was carefully planned and efficiently executed. Led by the war leaders the traditional leaders in a *tar* sent out scouts who surveyed the proposed new settlement. Then the fighting men followed and pitched camp near the new settlement. They would set up the *indyer* drum and play war songs. They would then withdraw to concealment to await the *atoatiev* reaction. There would then be either of two reactions: the *atoatiev* would either take flight or put the area of the *indyer* drum under seige and fighting followed.

A new leadership was needed to organise these wars. Moreover, the machinery for settling the inter *tar* problems had become obsolete. The members of *tar* councils could not meet regularly for consultations because if a *tar* chose not to attend an inter *tar* meeting there was no machinery for compelling it to attend the meeting. Moreover, religion was not a potent force in inter *tar* matters because a person could only be harmed by *akombo* or *mbatsav* of his *ityo*. Inter *tar* wars were frequent in the first half of the 19th century. The causes centred around land disputes, who was to occupy newly conquered land, punishment of debtors, inter *tar* murder, forcible abduction of girls, hunting and fishing disputes, ownership and control of natural resources.

An example of war leading from land dispute was that between Mbatierév and Shangev-Tiev resulting in the heavy defeat of Mbatierév whereby one section of Mbatierév, Mbage was almost obliterated. The Mbatieav fought similar wars in different periods of the same century against the Masev in th

West and Mbayion and Mbatlav in the north. Up to this day dispute rages on between the Mbatlav and Shangev-Tiev over the control of Selaggi hills lying between Mbatlav and Shangev-Tiev. Similar wars were also fought between Ukan and Mbara,¹ Ukum and Tongov, Tongov and Shitire. Sometimes wars broke out for example, between Ugondo and Mbalagh until the 1880s, when the pioneer settlers refused to grant new migrants passage through their territory. Also in the first half of the 19th century wars persisted between Nyiev and Turan, Usar and Nyiev, and Ugondo against Mbalagh.

The Nyiev and Turan wars began after the bulk of the people had moved further north into the plains from the south-eastern region. Nyiev were heavily defeated and a section of Nyiev, Iwanev, broke away and joined Mbagen in the lower Dura river. Similarly, the Ityuav defeated Usar who later took refuge in Nanev territory. The Nanev assisted Usar later to defeat Ityuav. Usar and Nanev then entered into a treaty of friendship, *ikul*. In another war, Yahav, a section of Nyiev, drove away Usar into Mbara territory. The initial welcome extended to Usar by Mbara soon became sour. The Usar therefore had to vacate Mbara territory. They then took refuge at Mbagen. The attempts of the Chairman of Mbagen *tar* council, Chire Tali, at about 1860s to bring Usar under his tight control brought some misunderstanding between him and Usar. The Usar were therefore driven off again. They migrated to the southern section of Mbaikaa. Usar consequently suffered political instability and depopulation.

Another cause of inter *tar* wars was the blood feud which was associated with robbery. If people from a *tar* persisted in stealing from a neighbouring *tar* war might eventually arise particularly when the thieves were known and no attempts were made by the elders of the thieves to stop the theft and return the property which had been stolen. Also the killing of a thief without warning to his people could cause the latter to go to war in revenge. The community of the victim took up arms ever

¹ The information was provided by persons interviewed from Ukan and Mbara districts and supported by Dewar, K: *Assessment Report on Ukan and Ikov Clan SNP*. 17/3-24554 1936, N.A.K. and K. Dewar's *Handing Over Notes on Southern Area of Tiv Division* as well as Alford, A.E.: *Kunav North Districts, Benue Province, Reorganisation Report*, CSO.26/4-30904 N.A.I.

before the *tar* or *ityo* councils had time to meet. A war, once begun was difficult to end.

An example was the Utange war against Mbaikaa in the 19th century when an Utange citizen was killed by an Mbaikaa man for reason not clear. The Utange immediately retaliated in a savage attack on the killers people. In the ensuing war the Utange were defeated and their population decimated almost to the point of extinction. To this day the Utange has very low population.

Another cause of inter *tar* war was failure to honour contracts entered into between individuals from different *tar*. In case of agreement involving property, the lender of the property would seize the debtor or any of his relatives or any citizen in the debtor's area and put him in the stocks until the debt was paid. The inhabitants from the *tar* of the detainee would then either go to war or pay up the debt. In the majority of cases the debts were paid and the war averted.

Such a war occurred between the Ukum and Kussuv in the 1880s when an Ukum, Mningem Burya, was put in the stocks for failure to pay debt. Kussuv were defeated in the ensuing war and Burya was released. Peace was made and religious ceremonies were carried out to restore normalcy.

Hunting and fishing expeditions frequently caused inter *tar* wars. The immediate cause could be ownership of an animal shot as game. An animal so shot might not die immediately but could move off into a neighbouring *tar* before dying. The failure of the people where the animal died to hand over the dead animal to whoever shot it might lead to war. According to some Mase and Iharev people, the Tiv fought several wars of this kind against the Idoma in the 19th century.

Trouble over fishing arose from punishment of poachers and dispute over the ownership of fish caught on joint collective expeditions *isuwa zuan*.

Abduction of people's wives or daughters often caused inter *tar* wars. The issue was basic to the survival of families in the exchange marriage system of the people. If persons from one *tar* eloped with girls from another *tar* without the consent of the girl's family, war was likely to break out. And this happened frequently in the 19th century. An example was the Mbayong versus Mbakaange in the first decade of the 20th century. A ma

from Mbayongo seized an Mbakaange girl at Idyegh market and carried her home as his wife.

Added to these inter *tar* problems were the issues of coping with the *atoutiev* as the dispersal to the plains progressed. Wars were fought with the Udam and the Idoma in the south and west, Jukun and Chamba in the north-east, the Etulo in the central plains and Alago and Koro Migili and their Jukun allies North of the Benue River.

Tar councils had another problem: the maintenance of economic connections with the Jukun, Bafum, Utange south and Udam.

The dispersal brought another problem of an entirely different dimension: the rise of some large family groups with tremendous economic and political power in the society. The acquisition of economic and political power naturally put such families in position of influence and respect. They consequently played leading roles in the community. They founded markets which sold scarce goods: salt and iron bars. They had contact with Hausa traders and gained experience in trading and commerce generally.

Armed with economic power these people acquired political power with ease. An example was Aba Kume of Shitire south. He took the title of drum chief and ruled until the establishment of the British rule. The British reappointed him for quite a number of years before he died. But there were exceptions to the rule that economic power brought along political power. Abuul Benga for example, had several wives, children, slaves, and his own private army. His attempt to acquire the title of *tor agbande* failed. However, this family is still a great economic and political force today in Mbagwa area.

The Emergence, Form, and, Status, of the Institution of *Tor Agbande*.

The problems analysed above necessitated a change in administration. Each *tar* therefore had a chief, the *tor agbande*.

The prevailing misconception is that the institution was as copied from the Jukun. Why the name *tor* was used we do not know but the word is indigenous and meant chief or king. It had

been in use as early as about 1820 or before. This is borne out by the interview Koelle had with Tiv slaves in Sierra Leone in mid 19th century. The word *tor* was commonly used among the people and was translated by Koelle as *King*.

The Chamba word for chief on the other hand was *gyana* or *gara*. The Jukun was *kur*. In Tiv *Tor* pronounced with high tone denoted a long wooden pestle, about one yard, used for pounding cereal or yam. Possibly this word was later employed to denote person bearing a wooden staff of office such as *sanda* in Hausa. For both Jukun and Hausa chiefs habitually carried such staff of office. *Tor* could therefore be a Tiv term for distinguished persons in similar status to the chiefs of Hausa and Jukun. However, there is no gain-saying that the Hausa and Jukun influenced the institution of *Tor Agbande*.

The story is told of the first *tor* among the Tiv, Asukunya, who was crowned leader of the *tar* by his host, the chief of Abakwa to whom he had gone with gifts in return for salt the Abakwa leader had sent to him. Although the Abakwa say that Asukunya was a man from Iharev, inquiries among the Iharev and other *ityar* do not support such information.

We know for certain that Tiv were appointed by their *tar* councils in the 19th century as *tor agbande* and some of the *utor* so appointed sometimes went to Aku of Wukari or the Abakwa leaders at Katsina Ala to gain extra religious and magical powers of the Jukun or Hausa. They did not go there to pay homage or tribute. They went there for religious reasons and no more.

The institution of *tor* arose in response to the political exigencies of the great expansion and colonisation in the Benue plains. The development of this institution was more than a local phenomenon. The views of Paul Bohannan that *Tor Agbande* was basically a Kunav affair and that of Dorward that "the Tiv east of Katsina River had begun to absorb the idea of chieftaincy from the Jukun prior to the advent of the British authority but this was strictly a local phenomenon", are not tenable.

Whatever was the origin of *tor agbande* it was the *tar* council of elders that appointed him and ratified his actions.

The significance of his appointment was that he now became a permanent executive official. He presided at the meetings of the *tar* council of elders and acted as the foreign minister of the *tar*. Yet he was subject to their control. He could not rule without

their advice. His decisions taken without the council's consent were subject to veto although such veto was not done in public. Acts of the *tor agbande* were deemed collective actions of the *tar* council. The *Tor Agbande* soon became very powerful and influential as they began to arbitrate issues on behalf of the *tar*. They gained power and influence greater than those of the traditional *orvesen* of the *tar* councils.

This is explained by several reasons.

Firstly, the *tor agbande* was believed to possess unusual powers superior to the *orvesen* or *ter* (father or patriarch) of a *tar*. His powers in warfare and ability in dealing with difficult problems were well known to his people. He was believed to possess both indigenous and foreign religious power - by virtue of the appointment. This would include the destructive magical powers from the Jukun, the supreme masters of magical deeds. Tales about the Jukun instructed the Tiv that some *atoatiev* possessed great power equivalent to or more than that of *mbatsav* in Tivland. Added to the *tor agbande* magical powers was the belief that the holder of such an office possessed considerable *tsav* although he was a secular rather than a religious leader. He had however been initiated into all the most important indigenous cults of *akombo* such as *biamegh*, *poor*, and *twel*; and he had already carried out all the prestigious social acts expected of him.

The elders welcomed the institution of *tor agbande* because it relieved them of the burden of dealing with a variety of ever increasing problems: warfare with *atoatiev*, settlement of inter *tar* land disputes, homicide, abduction of girls and so on.

The elders were however summoned and briefed and entertained by the *tor agbande*. Thus his political power increased and he established a host of offices of followers collectively called *iyor Mbatiomov*. They included policemen (aduger or uduger) messengers (*iyor mba tindin*) a host of domestic servants, (*iyor mba yoron tor*) and drummers (*iyor mba kuhan kwagh* or *agenga*). These offices and names bore direct relationship with the Hausa influence.

Added to all his powers was the fact that a drum chief was also an all season war commander of his community. Where

however, there were outstanding warriors who did not succeed in becoming *tor agbande* they remained war commanders and retained the title of Kur, the Jukun word for chief. He functioned only in war, unlike the drum chief who functioned in war and peace.

A *tor agbande* had a host of responsibilities. He entertained all the leading elders in a *tar*; the entertainment was secular and religious or mystical. In secular entertainment, cows, goats were slaughtered and food and drinking provided. The mystical entertainment was the eating of human flesh by the *mbatsav*. This showed the worth of the leader. The festivity demonstrated his ability to mix with the people socially and humbly. This was why an *ityo* had to approve the candidature of a subject for the office of *tor agbande*. His worth and ability to entertain in all respects, secular and mystical was considered. Thus K. Dewar rightly concluded, the institution of *tor agbande* became "the first step towards the foundation of a magico-religious kingship". Indeed it was an approach to personal authority and the first major introduction of foreign oriented political principle into Tiv politics. The *tor agbande* became the principal convener of all the *tar* council of elders' meetings. He also provided an agenda for such gatherings.

The installation of the *tor agbande* was carried out by Jukur rulers who benefitted materially from the exercise. The candidate for installation had to purchase dress for the occasion and give gifts to the Jukun ruler-livestock and foodstuff and cloth. The cloth were made by Hausa and they included flowing gown special hat and iron tongs. The cloth were made by Hausa Abakwa. They were therefore called *Abakwariga*.

Most of the *ityar* at first had one chief but later the number increased by the appointment of several assistants in the sub *tar*. This brought about decentralization of power. The first *tor agbande* had priority over those appointed after him. A sub clan would not appoint a *tor agbande* without first consulting the other sub clans within the clan. But they all went to the king of Wukari or his agent in Etulo in person to obtain confirmation, as it were, and full powers.

All the sub *ityar* had to be represented at all the various ceremonies involving the appointment of *tor agbande*. Furthermore, the right to appoint the first *tor agbande* was usually conceded either to the most senior sub-*tar* or to the most heavily populated *tar*. The number of *utor agbande* increased as time went on. This was because of the petty jealousy and rivalry that followed *tor agbande* contests after the death of the first holder. Another cause was that some of the first title holders in a *tar* often refused to appoint assistants in the important sub-sections of a *tar*.

The persons so deprived of taking the title normally got their communities to appoint them unilaterally as *tor agbande* without consulting the other sections of *tar*.

Throughout Tivland only a handful of *ityar* did not have drum chiefs in the 19th century.

Drum Chiefs in Southern Ityar

The first drum chief for the whole of *tar* Shangev-Ya was Sariyor, he was succeeded by Ubanguji.

But because of dispute following the death of Ubanguji two drum chiefs were appointed at the same time, one for Morov and the other for Kohov. The last drum chiefs in Shangev-Ya were Agom and Akambe both of whom died a few years before the establishment of British rule in Shangev-Ya in 1912.

In *tar* Nanev two drum chiefs, Wansambe and Kura, ruled in succession but when they died none succeeded them. Similarly, the neighbouring people of Usar had a drum chief, Abo, whose office became moribund after his death.

The *ityar* of Kendev, Maav, and Nyiev (erroneously referred to as *tar* Turan) originally had one drum chief, Adipe,² But soon after Adipe died each of the *ityar* appointed drum chiefs or war leaders of their own. For example, Kendev had a drum chief, Burnger. The Maav had no drum chief but a war leader, *kur* in the person of Samu succeeded by Imbuav and then Kasar who

² This information was supplied by six elders from Nanev. It is also contained in Maddocks, K.P.: *Assessment Report on Kunav Clan*, SNP.17/3-26865 (1936) N.A.K.

held the title until the British rule in 1912. Kasar later migrated Takum district in 1936.

Four drum chiefs appear to have ruled in *tar* Nyiev but whether they ruled in succession or simultaneously in the respective sub *tar* is not clear. The names of the drum chiefs were Akande, Puusu, Aloho, Ugande, Anum Bua and Ning Ikpagher Asunga, some of whom lived up to 1912 when the British came.

The Ikurav-Ya had no drum chiefs but war chiefs, *Kur*. The first holder of the office was Asongu who was succeeded by Agara, Dzende, Iyongo, and Mchiem some of whom lived till the arrival of the British in 1912.

In *tar* Turan several drum chiefs ruled: Ander, Jever, Vande Ordam Ayabegha, Ali Aguji, Gadim, Tongo, Azua, Tor Agoon and Abagi Makar. In what order did they rule? This is not clear. But most of them were alive when the British came in 1912.

The Tombo originally had one drum chief: Shavja followed later by Mkungu. When Mkungu died his succession caused such a dispute that the two major sections of Tombo, Mbatie on the western bank of Katsina Ala river and Mbalagh on the eastern bank split into two and each had his own *tor*.

In Mbalagh, Agia Nafe and Ingeke ruled in succession. Ingeke was succeeded by Ami.

In Mbatie, Gusa was the first *tor*. Two *utor* succeeded him because there was no agreement on one. These were Ihura and Wanigber each of whom ruled in his sub *tar*.

Abari was the first *tor agbande* in *tar* Mbayion. He was recognised as *tor* for both Mbayion and the neighbouring *tar* of Yandev.³ He was succeeded by two *tor agbande*: Aba and Dag because there was no agreement on his successor. There was also another drum chief, Dzeke, who ruled in Mbayion. The elders do not know the order in which to place him. After Dag's death Aba remained the sole drum chief of Mbayion. At this

³ This view is disputed by an elder at Mbayion. According to him Ahokam was the first drum chief for both Yandev and Mbayion. Other views are contained in Rowe, C.F.: (Captain) Assessment Report on Mbayion Clan. SNP.17/3-24379, N.A.K.

time the neighbouring *tar* Yandev began to appoint its own separate chief.

In Mbatlav district, the first five drum chiefs ruled in succession: Ihura, Suwa, Gaku, Atim, and Njoghol. Two drum chiefs were appointed to succeed Njoghol because there was no agreement over his successor. These last two ruled until the establishment of the British rule in 1912.

The first *tor* in *tar* Mbatierev was Agin Kombo who got his title from Shavja of Tombo. The last *tor* in Mbatierev was Ago who died in 1908, four years before the British rule in 1912.

The first *tor agbande* in Mbakor was Akusha followed by Kibough and the last Barkagh who died about 1906.

In the district of Nongov one drum chief was at first recognised for the whole *tar*. Later, each of the major sub *tar* of Nongov, Kaambe Saghev and Ndzorov came to have its own drum chief.

The last drum chief in Kaambe was Gumela who ruled until the establishment of the British rule in 1912.

In the *tar* of Ikov five drum chiefs ruled in succession: Ataku, Ikuve, Chen, Kumbur and Tioka tyever. Kumbur and Tioka tyever ruled until the establishment of the British rule in 1912, but Kumbur refused to participate in the whiteman's administration.

The district of Ukan, like Ukum, though at first regarded as one *tar* became split into three major sections: Mbagwa, Mbaikaa, and Mbagba, each acquiring the status of a *tar*. This was before 1912. The first three drum chiefs in Ukan: Aluse, Adanyi, and Akaa, ruled in succession and exercised authority over all Ukan. Akaa was particularly influential. His reputation was based entirely on white magic and knowledge of the tradition of Tiv. He was the *or akombo biam*, the possessor of the highest religious eminence possible amongst the Tiv. Akaa appointed four assistants: Yeka, Ainyam, Madza, Ajo.

Mbaikaa elders suggested other names: Uji, Atsegha, Ishar Ahura, and Akura. When Akaa retired on grounds of age Mngishim was appointed a drum Chief for the whole of Ukan. But soon he died. When Mngishim died, Abuul Benga of Mbagwa abortively tried to usurp the title but the elders refused to support him. The title was therefore returned to Akaa. Upon Akaa's death no person was recognised as the overall senior *tor*

in Ukan. The ruling *utor* exercised authority in their sub-sections of the *tar* and nowhere else. At the time of the British occupation two drum chiefs still ruled Ukan: Ayange, the successor to Madza, and Agwa, the successor to Ajio.

The *ityar* of Mbagen, Kusuv, Shorov, and Iwanev, originally had one drum chief, the first being Chire Tali of Mbagen. His son, Chia, succeeded him. In Chia's time three *utor* were appointed. Later the number arose to four. Almost all, including Chia, were still living when the British occupation occurred in 1909.

The first drum chief in *tar* Utange was Gyirgya. The number rose to two when another drum chief was appointed among the Ugber. The Ugber had recently migrated into Utange from the Cameroons.

The first *tor* in *tar* Ipav was Akuretsa followed by Ijembe who in turn was succeeded by Mondo. After the death of Mondo, a dispute arose over the appointment of a successor. Consequently, three drum chiefs were appointed at the same time, each with power in his section the *tar*.⁴

In the district of Yandev, Abari ruled as chief for both Yandev and Mbayion. The first native of Yandev to be appointed *tor* was Ikuve. After Ikuve's death, a dispute arose over the appointment of a successor, and so two *utor* were appointed at the same time. These were Agom and Angu, each of them ruled in his sub *tar*. Both were still living when the British came but both refused to work under the British administration.

The first drum chief for the whole Iharev, that is before the Sherev and Utiondo sections crossed to the northern bank of Benue river, was Chafu Bume of Mbaikuran.⁵ Later in the century, almost all the major sections of Iharev on the southern bank of the Benue, a section of Utiondo, Mbakpa, and Raav, came to have their own drum chiefs. Two of these drum chiefs,

⁴ This is the view of two elders interviewed at Ipav. It is reinforced by Maddocks, K.P.: *Assessment Report on Ipav*. SNP 17/3-27558 (1937) N.A.K.

⁵ This information was supplied by six elders from Iharev. The information tallies with colonial assessment reports Dewar, K.: *Assessment Report on Utiondo Clans and Reorganisation of Sherev* (1935) SNP.17/3-24932 N.A.K.; Maddocks, K.P.: *Assessment Report on Raav and Mbakpa Clans*, SNP. 19/3-24380 (1935) N.A.K.

Buruku Haaor of Buail and Akom Aser of Buanyian sections of Utondo ruled till the establishment of British rule in 1915.

In *tar* Masev although the elders are confused about the chronology of the rule of drum chiefs, they are agreed that Dom, Adawura Menge, Orkaa, and Anura, once ruled as drum chiefs in their respective sections of the *tar*.

The first drum chief for the whole of *tar* Shangev-Tiev was Anyia (Anyia) of Diiv. Anyia however refused to appoint a deputy. Consequently two other *utor* were appointed. For example Awuna became sub-chief of Ikurav.

Further appointments in Shangev-Tiev were Abuul Kor, Musa Adegbe, Ako, and Gbemacha Iwa Tali. Other names could not be remembered.

The several drum chiefs who ruled *tar* Gaav included Ife Asuwa, Yira Ako, Ntom Jafa, Alegha, Ate Achange, and Kuji. Gaav elders are confused about the order in which they ruled.

The view is unanimous that the first drum chief to be appointed in the group of *ityar* called Kunav is Abanyam Bai of Mbayongo. The Kunav themselves consist of either major *ityar*: Mbaduku, Mbayongo, Mbagbera, Mbakaange, Ningev, Tsambe, Ute, and Mbara. Abanyam was succeeded by Ijoho. But Ijoho's authority was confined basically to his own *tar*, Mbayongo. As a result several drum chiefs were appointed in the rest of Kunav: Fate Achaku (Ute) Aluka Ade (Mbagbera), Gbagbongom (Mbara), Gaav Songu Dyegh (Mbakaange), and Zugu (Ningev). These people ruled until the establishment of British rule in 1912. Ikaator of Mbakaange tried to revive the title in 1932. The Tsambe and Mbaduku had no drum chiefs because their patriarchs were not recognised as competent to appoint chiefs.

Drum Chiefs in the Eastern Ityar

The Ikurav-Tiev had several drum chiefs in the 19th century, the first for the whole Ikurav-Tiev being Garadza. Succession to him could not be agreed on so two drum chiefs were appointed after his death, Ishan for Ikurav-Nyian, and Awuna for Ikurav-il.

At about 1908 when British rule was being established, Ikurav-Tiev had four drum chiefs. One of them was Ihom Igbe.

The first *tor agbande* in *tar* Tongov was Ichen who was appointed about 1840. On his death there were several claimants to the title and so three *utor* were appointed at the same time. Each ruled his own sub *tar*. They were Adanyi, Inchangba and Tamenku followed by Annyam, Chire, and Awajir. At the time of British occupation around 1907 five drum chiefs were ruling Tongov: Kyaagba, Wanya, Tarka, Apaa, and Afum.

The first *tor agbande* for the whole of *tar* Ugondo was Kwanji.⁶ After the death of Kwanji, two *utor* followed in succession: Dangi and Aigbe. Later in the century Beramc Shange took the title. In the course of time each major subsection of Ugondo had a *tor*.

Shitire North comprises mainly of the section of Gambe-Ya that had migrated to the North (hence Gambe-Tiev). Shitire North first had only a drum chief. The number rose to two, and at the advent of British rule in 1907 it had become four, including Nyiin Diaka who was still ruling when the British came.

Shitire South is made up of two main groups, Kpav and Gambe-ya. Adamako was the first drum chief for the whole of Shitire South. But on his death dispute over his successor made Kpav and Gambe-Ya to have separate drum chiefs: Akosuwa and Agara respectively. In course of time several more drum chiefs arose: Ajiva, Agbe, Abuku, Aba, Afa, Amini, Akaanya, Kon, Donga, and Gbise who were all living by 1909 British occupation. Beside the chiefs there were war leaders, *Kur*.

The first recognised drum chief for the whole of Ukum was Tyanaba. However, on account of their population, Ukum split into four major *ityar*. Several drum chiefs were therefore appointed. They included Kwam Adawura, Awuna, Udza, Naiko, Ala, Ugande, Adugu, Kyado, Akarya, Ayati, Amartimin, Biriji, Dajo, Ikyur, Zaki-Biam, Gbagir, Adii, Akpene, Wander, Maikyur, Nyanko, Gbeji, Gor Alema, and

⁶ This is the view of three elders from Ugondo and Shitire North. It is supported by Maddock, K.P.: *Assessment Report on Ugondo*, SNP.17/2-25486 91935) N.A.K.

Ibu. Most of these were still living when the British occupied Ukum in 1906.

Drum Chiefs North of Benue

Iharev North occupies the northern bank of Benue. They are in two groups: Sherev and a section of Utiondo. The Sherev are in turn subdivided into three major *ityar*: Nyevev, Mbagwen, and Mbawa.

Sherev began to acquire the title of *tor agbande* long before they crossed the Benue. Each sub *tar* had a drum chief.

Two *utor* were thus ruling by 1915 in Mbawa and Nyevev when the British established rule over Iharev. These were Usase and Ude.

Activities of the Drum Chiefs

The most decisive role of the drum chiefs was in extending the Tiv frontiers, particularly in the North and East. Although the Kunav had drum chiefs, their push to the south was very slow. But there could be other reasons.

In the Ugondo war against the Chamba in the Mdema region, in the east, it was the drum chiefs who led the fight. These were Kwanji, Dangi, and Ajigbe, in that order of succession. Kwanji allegedly acquired his magical powers from the chief of Donga. But he and his successors all died in the Mdema region in fighting against the Chamba. Ajigbe, the last Ugondo drum chief to die fighting the Chamba, was a very brave and courageous man who rallied his people against the Chamba. Rather than be captured by the Chamba he committed suicide.⁷

When the Ugondo retreated to Dikpo from Mdema they had no drum chief. Later they had one on recrossing Katsina Ala River around Loko confluence. The drum chief was Beramo Shange of Iyonov. Beramo bought crossing rights from Kwam Adawura of Ukum.

Kwam Adawura and Naiko were the Ukum drum chiefs who made it possible for the settlement of Ukum people in the east

⁷ This is the view of Ugondo elders supported by Maddocks, K.P.: *Assessment Report on Ugondo*.

and the subsequent consolidation of the eastern frontier as a whole.

Kwam Adawura and his followers first settled on the western bank of Katsina Ala before they later crossed to the eastern bank. One of the drum chiefs, Awuna, settled near a pool in Mbalagh district, which is named after him, Ber Awuna. His son, Kyado, became a drum chief and elder in Ukum. Kyado was still alive when Gordon entered Tivland in 1906. He later accepted the title of chief and served under the British. Naiko was a contemporary of Awuna though he was much younger. I was able to interview the youngest son of Naiko in the course of this work. I conclude thereby that the migration of the Ukum to their present home might have taken place in the 1860s.

The Mbalgh and Gambe-Tiev were led by a renowned drum chief, Agia Nafe, in their own movement.

Perhaps as a footnote it may be clarified that when the Tiv moved into the northern bank of the Benue they displaced the Alago and Koro or Migili. These were subjects to the Emir of Lafia who then fought the Tiv in consequence. These resultant wars had nothing to do with any attempt to plough Islam as Professor Obaro Ikime appears to suggest.

The drum chiefs, apart from leading their people in war and in colonizing missions, assisted in maintenance of law and order by promptly attending to the problems of their people. For example, they developed *iye* treaties so that abductions of unmarried girls were legalised. This prevented the conflict that often occurred following abductions. Amongst the Tiv the most traditional and legal form of marriage was the *Kwase Musan*, woman exchange whereby a person could use his sister or daughter to exchange for a wife for himself, his son, brother, or relative. The people without daughters or sisters often found it exceedingly difficult to marry when they were young. Consequently *iye* marriages developed.

Iye is a marriage contracted through elopement. The practice was at first resented by those whose daughters or sisters were being abducted. The peoples of the elopers and the elopee therefore fought often over elopement. Yet the practice

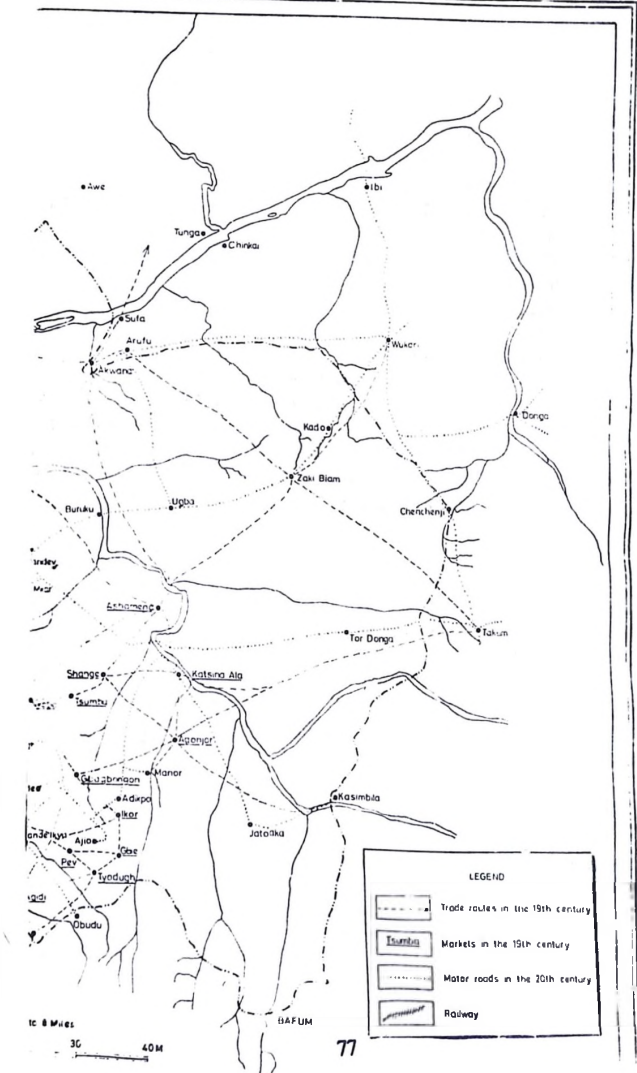
developed and became widespread. The elders therefore took cognisance of this *defacto* situation and legalised it by entering into *iye* treaties with one another. The treaty legally sanctioned elopment between the parties. The development of *iye* treaties was in fact an offshoot of the political, social, and economic revolutions which occurred in Tiv society in the 19th century.

The practice had begun amongst the Kparev. Soon it spread to other areas of Tivland. For example, the *iye* treaties between the Ukan and Mbayion were signed when both Akaa and Dzeke were drum chiefs in Ukan and Mbayion respectively. The idea was soon copied by other drum chiefs and so the practice spread to Nongov, Tongov, Ukum, and Shittire, and to other parts of the Tiv country. Drum chiefs signed other treaties on behalf of their *tar* with other *tar* or with *atoatiev* such as the Igedde, Udam, and Idoma.

Drum chiefs played leading roles in the economy by founding markets and giving protection to traders and making trade routes safe for development of internal and external trade and commerce.

Economic development was an essential element in the political power of the chiefs. The markets in the 19th century functioned on a five day period. They were of two categories. There were the small markets which served the needs of the people in a small community, *ityo*, *tar*, or the neighbouring people in some units of that name. And there were the large markets which functioned as entrepots and attracted people from distant areas. Markets existed all over Tivland but they preponderated in the southern and central Tivland. (See map VII). Of all the markets in Tivland in the 19th century the markets of Ikobo, Tsumba, and Awange were the most important inland markets prior to the advent of the British.

THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES



The Tyodugh market served as an entrepot for imports from Utange south, Udam, Bafum, and Jukun peoples and for export of goods from Tivland. Similarly, the markets of Ubwa Agabi and Awange in Gaav, Shiriki in Shangev-Tiev and Maha in Masev were strategic places for trade with Udam, Igedde, and Idoma in the south. Wanter and Akpamaja in Iharev west area (Raav and Mbakpa or Tyoshin) were the principal markets for both Tiv and *atoatiev*: Basa, Alago, and Migili or Koro.

In 1854 W.B. Baikie observed in Wanter market (which he called Wantoli market) the sale of guinea corn, salt, yams, bullocks, camwood, swords, leatherworks, amongst others. The currencies were cowries, *ibia* or *ijembe-tur*. Furthermore, the village of Abinsi which Baikie claimed was founded about 1809 by slaves from Idah, was in the 19th century, a centre for the exchange of commodities of the "Lower and Upper Benue".

The inland markets of Ikobo, Tumba, and Ashamena, were the basic entrepots for the distribution of external commodities. Traders from northern and eastern districts travelled long distances to these markets to secure scarce commodities. From the south, that is Utange, Bafum, and Udam, in the 19th century were imported camwood, black palm oil, red palm oil, palm kernels, salt, brass rods and iron bars. Salt stood out as the most important of the products. That imported from Udam were of two kinds: those in ball forms and those in sheaths of palm leaves. Only the important persons in the society used salt in the 19th century. Salt was also available at Akwana in the Jukun territory. Salt was stored only by the premier wife who used the same for entertaining the most distinguished of visitors. It was used also during festivals and during the installation of drum chiefs or during initiation into *ibiamegh*. Those who could not afford salt used potash made from *ule* or other branches of trees, stalks of grain crops or herbs.

Also of great importance were kola nuts, which were imported. They were used at marriages, festivals, gifts at installation of drum chiefs. Long distance travellers carried and used kola nut for refreshment. Imported palm oil was used for cooking purposes. The black palm oil served as hair cream for women and ointment for children. Black palm oil was first applied to the head of the children and then to their body as foundation cream before camwood was rubbed.

Iron bars used for making iron tools were imported from Abakwa, Jukun, Chamba, and Udam territories. The supply was however greatly hampered until the last quarter of the 19th century. Some ivory goods came from Udam, Bafum, and Jukun as ornaments particularly for the wives of the wealthy. These constituted the beads. There were also comestics such as galena, imported by Hausa traders. There was also *maa* which came from Udam territory.

Livestock in trade were goats, pigs, and cow. The raising of livestock was restricted only to the well to do in the society.

Goods exported to neighbouring non-Tiv areas were dyed cloths, livestock, and agricultural product. I.M. Chilver points out that-

the indigo - dyed cloths are most commonly known among traders as Dama or in common usage as Wukari, Bikom, or Munchi cloth... other white cloths in circulation were the Munshi blankets entering from the north-west.

Chilver also shows that the Hausa and Benue cloths entered the "grass fields through Takum through Gayama also, and from the southern Adamawa market through Mbemba and Ntem." The main cloths exported and referred to as white blankets by Chilver were *godo* which were very valuable to the people of Agberm whose capital is Wum in the Camerocons. The *Aghem* elders agree that they imported their cloths and some agricultural products from the Tiv and their salt came from Jukun territory. Chilver points out that Bamenda had two sources of salt: Upper Cross River and Akwana. The Udam also bought several kinds of cloth from the Tiv to replace their bark cloths.

To the list of very important goods might be added tortoise, an important commodity for *akombo* rituals and for medicine. Honey was also an important item of trade.

Commerce was very important in the Tiv country in the 19th century. At first the Tiv acted as middlemen between the Tiv and the *atoatiev* traders.

Middlemen were necessary because the *atoatiev* traders feared being molested by some unruly Tiv. It was in the days when distant travelling was difficult and dangerous even within Tiv society itself. Routes to be followed had to be declared safe by the drum chief or the men of influence. The coming of the Hausa, Jukun, and Nupe traders in the last quarter of the 19th

century coincided with the coming of the European traders. But they rarely ventured beyond the immediate environs of the Katsina Ala and Benue banks.

As commerce increased social life improved: fashions of dress changed, entertainment changed and activities to demonstrate prestige increased. Wealth and influence were not the preserve of the drum chiefs. Retention of praise singers, fashioning of better dresses, iron tongs, carriage of well fashioned ceremonial spear and fly-whisk became the order of the day. Drum players were in residence. They played morning and evening before attending to other duties. Whenever the *tor* went on long journeys drummers accompanied him. These displays had political implications. The aim was to enhance political status and rule like *atoatiev* chiefs.

Propaganda thus became a new theory in government. There was deliberate attempt to demonstrate that while some were fit to rule others were not fit to rule. The praise of the government in power became a new vogue. The *utor* were quick to borrow all that enhanced chieftaincy, all that gave the institution a district flavour. Thus the Tiv were being brought into the political framework of the non Tiv societies around them especially the Jukun. This means that the political and social developments in Tivland under the drum chief did not take place in isolation. Another development from the institution of *tor agbande* was the growth of prestigious dances: *amar mirin* or *amar a wan*. These were community dances performed by those persons who wished to show their economic status and social standing in the society.

The dances were also known as *amar akwase* or *amar anyinya* because they were staged under the pretext that the organiser was merely honouring his new wife or celebrating the purchase of a horse. But in reality they were a show of prestige, pure and simple. They were occasions for display of rich clothing. Thus the institution of drum chief provided a stimulus for the development of new community dances: *ishen*, *achaka*, *anigbandev*, chorus as well as individual singing. The importance of dancing in the society, even today, cannot be over-emphasised. It is a whole subject on its own.

There were other developments in this period of Tiv history. Tattooing and use of ornaments were greatly in vogue amongst

the rich in particular. The peoples ambitions rose in economic power which they used to acquire many wives and slaves. *indyer* drums, horses and livestock generally. It was a period for paying elaborate and organised visits to distant relatives in style. The visitor went with a large retinue of wives, musicians, attendants, luggage carriers, and gifts. The route was organised in such a way that it passed through where the traveller took rest at strategic places where he was heavily entertained with the slaughter of cows, goats, chicken and food. Dances were held to honour him while his own musicians played intermittently throughout the whole day. In some cases the visit was crowned by the host offering the visitor his daughter or close relative in marriage. The visits facilitated expansion of friendship and the establishment of cordial inter *tor* relations. Soon such a visit became a must for every *tor* and a man of note to perform.

But the institution of *tor* had adverse effects. Some *tor agbande* soon became autocratic beyond tolerance in the Tiv traditional way of life. An example was Chia Chire of Mbagen.

Chia Chire was not only autocratic. He was also a ruthless *tor agbande*. He ruled with iron hand. He was not satisfied with being contained in his domain. He sought to bring the sister *tar* to acknowledge his authority. He rose to power between 1880-1885. He had his own personal army. And with the aid of this he did as he wished, without let or hindrance. In 1885 he abortively tried to bring the people of Iwanev under the control of the Mbagen. But he was not daunted. He turned to the Jukun for mercenary assistance.

Dankaro and his followers answered the call and swept across Iwanev territory causing considerable damage to people's property by burning and looting. Yet the Iwanev never came under Chia Chire.

This attack confused R.M. Downes who concluded erroneously that the attacks on Mbagen were made under Aku Manu "to punish Mbagen for excesses against Turu." This does not appear to be true. It is not confirmed by Jukun sources.

Another strain on drum chieftaincy was that it brought petty rivalry among some ambitious people with devastating consequences. It brought a craving for political power and caused a number of *ityar* to split into bitter factions. Greed for power propelled some *utor* to attempt colonising weak

neighbouring *tar*. This caused war between Ikurav-Tiev and Kpav in late 19th century. There was also the Ukum versus Tongov war known as the Dajo war, and the Mbalagh versus Ugondo war known as the Gwar war; and finally the Mbager versus Iwanev war just described.

Ikurav-Tiev fought Kpav in the late 19th century because Aba Kume, the drum chief of Kpav, attempted to interfere in the internal affairs of the Ikurav-Tiev. Aba had felt insulted because the Ikurav would not acknowledge his authority over them. He therefore enlisted Jukun mercenary support to subjugate the Ikurav. But all that the Dankaro led Jukun allies were able to do was to burn down a few homesteads.

The Dajo war was fought for a similar reason. Dajo, a drum chief in Ukum was aggrieved because of Tongov's lack of apparent respect for his status. He therefore went to war to protect his honour. The Jukun led Dankaro mercenaries were, as usual, available for hire. But Dajo never subjugated the Tongov.

The architects of these wars were not only drum chiefs but also men of influence. For example, Imoibo of Gambe-Ya in Shittire hired Dankaro and his mercenaries to fight Gbire of Mbaivuur in the same *tar* of Gambe-Ya. Imoibo had felt that Gbire was responsible for the death of his son through witchcraft. He therefore embarked on physical revenge against a metaphysical act. The elders of Gambe-Ya resented the idea of Dankaro and his mercenary followers interfering in their domestic affairs. They therefore rallied round their own fighting men in support of Gbire. Dankaro and his mercenaries therefore had to withdraw.

Ugondo against Mbalagh war in the late 19th century also saw the Jukun mercenaries again in action. This was the Gwar war. It took place because of frontier dispute between Ugondo and Mbalagh. Gwar from Ugondo was disturbed and dissatisfied with Mbalagh's continual expansion on its southern frontier. But he was unable to check it. He got the aid of Dankaro and his Jukun mercenaries. The savage attack leashed on Mbalagh by the Jukun invaders attracted the sympathy of the Kparev who came in support of their neighbour, Mbalagh. The Jukun were defeated and fled in confusion from Mbalagh territory. As a deterrent the Kparev killed a good number of

people from Ugondo. But the enmity engendered between the Ugondo and the whole of Tombo, remains to this day.

Wars of this kind were often organised by private individuals of means such as Abuul Benga of Mbagwa who, allegedly, could have established his own principality in Tiv land had the British not come. Often he used his army to terrorise weaklings.

The development worthy of note here is the readiness of Tiv to use non-Tiv against their own Tiv in furtherance of private ambitions. This suggests that the traditional system of government had become weak. It could therefore be easily disrupted by individuals who had the means to do so. This is born out by the fact that Jukun mercenaries were able to ride into miles of Tiv territory to prosecute wars against the Tiv at the instance of the Tiv. Elders in Mbakor, Ugondo, Tombo, Tongov, Ukum, Shittire South, and Mbaikaa districts explain that the Jukun mercenaries, guided by their Tiv hirers came in the night and attacked at dawn. In a matter of hours they would disappear.

But the hiring of Jukun mercenaries was shortlived because the mercenaries never achieved their objectives. This was partly due to growing indigenous hostility towards *atoatiev* hirers. Moreover Dankaro had died about 1898. And this ended the leadership, effective leadership, for the mercenaries. Another cause was that at this time the Jukun power had begun to decay.

Another development against mercenaries was the anti-*mbatsav* movement which began perhaps in the era of the drum chiefs. It was the most traditional way of reacting to the misuse of the power of *tsav* and *akombo* by the elders. The anti-*tsav* method used was named *Hoyo*, or *Agundo* or *Damkor*.

Of these the *hoyo* movement is the best known of anti-*mbatsav* activities. It was all over Tiv land. According to Akiga, *hoyo* began "the days before the whiteman came". This would mean that the practice possibly prevailed in the 19th century. All my informants who had reached the highest eminence in religious matters confirmed that they witnessed *hoyo* activities when they were children. The *hoyo* movement was essentially an age set movement, an organisation of persons with common fear of *mbatsav*. The *hoyo* movement was carried out under the direction of the elders.

The *Kway* or *Mbakwavy* (age group) normally investigated all cases of sickness of their members. They tried to find out causes and nature of sickness whether it was caused by *akombo* or *tsav*. Through this investigation the elders accused of causing the sickness or disease were caught and brought before the council of elders. Some times they were chained and flogged mercilessly with the consent of the council to make them withdraw their charms. If, eventually, the sick man died the accused must prove their innocence by undergoing trial through the taking of sasswood (*kor*). The innocent would vomit the sasswood. The guilty would die of swollen stomach. The procedure was to first administer the potion on a hen or a cock in place of the accused. This served as a preliminary investigation. A person whose hen or cock died after the potion was held liable for the sickness. If he still maintained his innocence he would take the sasswood. As an alternative to sasswood diviners would be consulted. Sometimes both methods were employed.

It needs be explained that those who administered the concoction of sasswood knew the right potion that could kill. The administrator of the sasswood was therefore informed before hand who had committed the crime alleged. Such person had the deadly potion while the "innocent" had the non-deadly potions.

Hoyo, as far as the elders were concerned, played a necessary function in eliminating the undesirable practitioners of bad *tsav* from society.

The era of drum chiefs ended with the arrival of the British. Before examining the Tiv at the beginning of the British rule, let us mention the Abakwa as a footnote.

The Abakwa People

Their chief is Kukwa or Sangari. Ala was the first Kukwa. He was succeeded by Allah-Sarki, and then Ali. The current Kukwa, Mude Adashu, is reputedly the 35th. Between Ali and Mude Adashu, none remembers the list.

The Abakwa maintain that at the time of their settlement at *Idye* there were several Jukun villages scattered about on the eastern bank of river Katsina Ala under the suzerainty of the *Aku Uka* of Wukari.

The account given by R.C. Abraham in 1936 shows that Ala, the leader of the Abakwa hailed from Katsina. He never

reached Katsina Ala. Abraham maintains that the settlement at Katsina Ala was founded by one Mamman, son of Ala. The list of kings is as follows (1) Mamman (2) Adachi (3) Aji (4) Ala (5) Agyu (6) Ali (7) Bawa (8) Musa (9) Ala Sarki (10) Adashu (11) Adashu (12) Adi (13) Adi (14) Maiyaki (15) Abu (16) Angu who was on the throne in 1936. Mude Adashu now on the throne claims to have been on the throne for forty years. This would then make him the 17th king of Abakwa since their settlement at Katsina Ala.

My own informants maintain that the Tiv first came into contact with the Abakwa in the reign of Ala Sarki, the 9th king on Captain R.C. Abraham's list.

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Part Three

The Era of British Chiefs



Chapter 7

The British Conquest

This Chapter deals with two basic issues: the contact between the Tiv and the British (mainly traders) in the second half of the 19th century; and the conquest of the Tiv by the British.

These two factors changed Tiv political history beyond measure.

The aim of the British officer in Nigeria was "to march troops through Tiv country and open area for trade". But the British government recommended a more peaceful approach.

Before their arrival, the British had already made up their minds about the Tiv: they were cannibals armed with poisoned arrows. Apart from this theory, four factors shaped the British attitude to the Tiv.

The first was that the great difficulty the British had in penetrating the Tiv country frustrated them into neglecting the study of the people's political institutions. Consequently, they introduced changes which were totally unsuited to the people's cultural heritage.

Accordingly, the frustration made the British believe further that the Tiv were by nature troublesome, and that they would succumb to nothing other than force. This resulted in British atrocities against innocent Tiv. Traditional leaders took cover underground and organised passive resistance to the British rule.

Thirdly, the British used ambitious young Tiv to subdue Tiv. They were then appointed to rule in place of the traditional rulers. Who they were and what help they rendered the British will be discussed soon.

Finally, the British believed that the premier and sole occupation of the Tiv would be the seizure of other peoples' lands. And this practice the British considered it their sacred duty to stop. Wars were fought against the Tiv to stop this;

political changes were deliberately made to contain the Tiv within their own bounds.

The British activities were in two phases: before 1900 and 1900-1906.

Before 1900

In 1854 W.B. Baikie contacted the Mbakpa on the southern bank of the Benue. Baikie and his team could not get into Wanter market in Mbakpa but they noted the flourishing trade between the Tiv and the *atoatiev* with whom Tiv relation was not very friendly. After this 1854 visit no European came into Tiv country again until the 1880s, the period of the development of European commercial activities on the Benue.

European trade on the Benue River commenced in 1874 when the West African Company, a British firm opened a trading station at Bomasha. In 1876 the Central African Company and Messrs Miller Brothers followed suit. In 1879 however, the Bomasha station was closed down following an attack on it by the Emir of Bomasha. In the same year, 1879, the Church Missionary Society's Steamer, "Henry Venn" navigated the Benue and sailed past the Tiv country to Yola and back. The expedition was led by J.H. Aschroft. It was to select suitable sites for the opening of the society's future stations. Robert Flegel who accompanied the party reported that he contacted the Tiv and was ready to enter into commercial dealing with them. The Tiv were ready to exchange their livestock and grains for flasks, tin, boxes and cloth. There is however, no record of further contacts between this party and the Tiv.

In 1885 Messrs Wallace and Dangerfield of the National African Company¹ increased their trading activities in the Upper Benue by establishing a trading station at Yola and later at Garau. Following the visit of David McIntosh and Consult

¹ In 1880 the amalgamated firms, The United African Company opened up a new station at Loko. It soon changed its name in 1882 to National African Company. Again in July 1886 when it was granted Royal Charter it became the Royal Niger Company Chartered and Limited. Vide Major M. Macdonald *Op. cit.* p. 451.

Hewit to the countries near the Benue, by 1885 there were at least twenty-one new trading stations opened up between Lokoja and Ibi. Three of these stations were located in three different Tiv *ityar*. The new Abinsi station was removed from the island at the mouth of River Katsina Ala to the mainland on the southern bank of Benue in *tar* Iharev. Tiga, another station, was built on the western bank of the Katsina Ala in *tar* Tombo (Mbalagh) while Palaver (Gbereve and future Katsina Ala station at the advent of the British rule) was built further up the river in *tar* Mbagen.

The coming of the Europeans had some indirect influence on the political and economic situation of the people. A wide range of goods, including salt, a scarce commodity that was in great demand in the land, were brought and sold for sheanuts, benniseed, cotton, pepper ginger, and ivory. Other items brought by the Europeans included irons bars, beads, gunpowder, matchets, flasks, tin boxes, looking glasses, and a variety of cotton cloth. This was the era of gong trade on the river bank. Persons interested in European goods assembled by the bank when the gong was sounded. The peak period of the trade was in the rainy season when the rivers Benue and Katsina Ala permitted sailing of bigger steamers. The Tiv also used the British stations in the non-Tiv territories at Loko, Ibi, and Donga.

These commercial intercourse did not go without fighting between the British and the Tiv due to misunderstanding. There were at least five of such occasions during which the Royal Niger Company was obliged to summon its constabulary forces to Benue to quell such situations. The struggle between the Tiv and the British was due largely to misunderstanding of motives rather than commercial rivalry as happened in the Niger Delta areas.

The first major incident between the British traders and the Tiv was in November 1885, the year the Royal Niger Company completed its iron shore house at Agasha in *tar* Nongov and had it stocked with goods. Some kegs of gun powder got lost from the store. While the company's chief agent in the district Mr. Heyland, was investigating the loss a Tiv man shot him

dead with a poisoned arrow. And this was when Mr. Griffiths was having an "altercation with the Chief of Agasha". Mr. Griffiths was himself shot dead a few months later at Tiga in Tombo district on the Katsina Ala river by a renowned warrior, Ashinya. What caused these incidents? None can definitely tell. Were the killings a head hunting exercise or just to test whether a whiteman was invulnerable? Heyland had been shot while Griffiths was conversing with the Chief of Agasha. And the Tiv do not, generally, commit cold blooded murder. And particularly in the presence of women and at home. An explanation had been offered that Griffiths had been killed for failing to pay for a sheep he bought before taking it away. This is not satisfactory.

Whatever the explanation, the killing of Heyland and Griffiths seemed to confirm rightly or wrongly the impression first advanced by the people of Ojogo, and then by Baikie, Macdonald, and Mockler-Ferryman that the ways of the *Mitshi* had been treachery and malice towards the whiteman. They had held that the Tiv had always been notorious for their lawlessness and treachery.

Another incident was in the vicinity of Arufu, a Jukun town on the southern bank of the Benue. There the Royal Niger Company established a trading station and its chief agent, Charles MacIntosh mined silver and galena. In 1886 MacIntosh had to keep off with bribes some Tiv from *tar* Gambe-Tiev. He was fed up and decided to use force. He attacked the Tiv, burnt down their houses but lost two of his companions, Messrs Lennard and Kinaan, as well as two West African natives in his employment. Soon the mines closed down. Why did the Tiv attack MacIntosh? Nobody knows. MacIntosh concluded that the Tiv were ruthless and truculent.

The company reacted by sending a punitive force against the Tiv in 1886 to revenge the death of Heyland and Griffiths. The forces attacked and destroyed several riverine settlements along river Katsina Ala, the region they believed the company officials had been killed. By 1890 the company had a regular force whose duties included making punitive expeditions and

reprisals against those whom they believed were interfering with trade or making attacks on their stations or personnel. The Niger Company's constabulary military campaigns had Tiv prominently in its feature 1895-1899.

An example was that made in 1895 against a Chamba warrior Kasar or Kachella who had enlisted some Tiv fighters in his robber gang.² Kasar and his gang lived nineteen miles from Takum from where they constantly interrupted the flow of ivory to the company's stations from Kassimbila and Udam territory. In 1895, early June, the company's forces marched to Takum from Ibi. They arrived Ibi on 18th June under the command of Lt. Arnold. They found the defences of Kasar's camp too strong. They therefore made no attempt to attack it. They returned to Ibi on 24th June but resumed the march from Ibi the following day to Takum – and reached Kasar's fortified camp on 30th June. The attack on Kasar's camp was a fiasco. Lt. Arnold was compelled to withdraw.

Another attack on Kasar's camp was led by Captain Festing. The march to Takum this time began on 19th July, 1896 and ended on 22nd July. They were assisted by some friendly Jukun while attacking Kasar's camp.

Despite the brave resistance by Kasar and his men they were beaten on 24th July and Kasar himself was killed while attempting to escape across a stream.

The next expedition by the company was against Dankaro and his Tiv allies. Dankaro was a Fulani warrior who came to serve the Aku Uka of Wukari as a mercenary. Later he turned against the Aku and established his own band of followers. Like Kasar, he was accused of interfering with the company's trade.

In December 1897 the company's forces under Captain Engelbach, therefore, set out from Ibi to Wukari in search of Dankaro who had apparently had wind of their expedition and had taken refuge in *tar* Ugondo. The company's forces therefore returned to Ibi and turned their attention on the Tiv.

² Royal Niger Company miscellaneous papers No. 16009 in Military Museum, Zaria.

Between 9th February and 16th March 1898 the forces under Captain Parker led an expedition to River Katsina Ala to fight *tar* Ikurav-Ya in southern Tivland. According to Dorward they seized about a ton of interned ivory. The Ikurav-Ya had been accused of interfering with flow of ivory from Udam territory. The expedition destroyed sixteen *Uya* in Ikurav-Ya though the people made no serious attempts to resist it.

The forces again sought Dankaro. In August, 1898, a military expedition under sub-Commandant Parker defeated and routed Dankaro who later died in *tar* Ugondo near Ugba village about 1899.

Another expedition was directed against Ikurav-Ya in November and December, 1898 to "inquire in Dama the reported interference with rubber collectors near the town". The expedition destroyed several houses in Ikurav-Ya in March 1898 but found no "interned ivory" to collect this time.

From these campaigns it will be noted that the Tiv were involved either directly or indirectly. They therefore appeared to be the company's main enemy in the middle of the Benue valley. Secondly, the impression came to be that the Tiv were troublesome and lawless. This holding was compounded by the fear of the Tiv poisoned arrows which had already taken a good toll of British and other *atoatiev* lives. None therefore dared moved into Tiv interior. And trade therein came to a standstill. This point is important because it governed the British Tiv relationship in the 20th century.

1900 to 1906

Resistance to Telegraph Line

British penetration of Tiv began about 1900 preparatory to British rule. Three events dominated this period.

The first was the struggle between the British and the Mbagwen in north-eastern Tiv who resisted construction of telegraph line through their territory linking Lokoja to Ibi.

The second was the destruction of the Royal Niger Company's station at Abinsi in 1906 by the Tiv.

The third was the series of military patrols into Tiv country by the British between 1906 and 1914. It was followed by fighting.

Work on the Lokoja-Ibi telegraph line began in October 1899. By 8th January, 1900 the line had reached Akwanaja, a town east of Loko in Doma country, a town only a few miles off the western frontier of Mbagwen north of River Benue.

Lugard had thought that the telegraph line would avoid any Tiv territory. But he was dismally wrong.

The workmen were attacked when they began to clear land in Tiv territory for the poles. The British, assuming that the Tiv were hostile, did not bother to check the cause of the attack. They therefore decided on force against the Tiv. But the attack had been against illegal entry into Tivlands. The British belief that the Tiv would be rapidly overcome was mistaken. The struggle was protracted.

Captain Carroll who was in charge of the army detachment accompanying the workers took it upon himself to subjugate the Tiv with the one hundred troops at his disposal. Using Akwanaja as his base he launched a series of attacks on the inhabitants of Raav in Mbagwen. Several compounds were burnt and looted and the Tiv had to withdraw. They then regrouped and consolidated with the aid of their distant kinsmen. The British had assumed that the Tiv had now been completely vanquished. They were now free to resume work on 15th January, 1900. But the workers were immediately attacked by a wave of Tiv warriors. An officer, Captain Eaton, and several West African Frontier Force (W.A.F.F.) soldiers were killed. This unexpected defeat by the Tiv caused Captain Carroll to retreat with his surviving troops to Akwanaja to take refuge while awaiting reinforcement from Ibi or Loko, the nearest British garrisons. The relief column arrived from Ibi under Major McClintock just in time to rescue Carroll and his troops from danger at Akwanaja.

A punitive military expedition set out in February to March, 1900 to "subdue the Munshi who had been hindering the passage of caravans to and from Nassarawa and Keffi and

generally to bring peace to these region" and "as a reprisal for the destruction of the telegraph line."

The expedition was commanded by Colonel Lowry-Cole. It succeeded only in causing superficial damage and loss. The objective was not attained. The Tiv neither came forward to fight nor to make peace.

The British government was embarrassed and the *Times* of London took up the issue. The Colonial Secretary was immediately queried in Parliament as to the methods used in dealing with the Tiv. Herbert Robert, M.P., raised the issue based on what had already been reported on January 26, 1900 page 5 and February 27, 1900 page 6 of the *Times* of London. Lugard defended the act by brandishing the Tiv a "lawless, treacherous, intractable, unresponsive to anything except extremely severe chastisement." This view of Lord Lugard was based on the biased views in circulation by colonial administrative officers.

The erroneous theory which Lugard accepted was that only force was effective amongst the Tiv. Thus an unnecessarily protracted struggle raged on between the Tiv and the British until it was realised that peace was useful with the Tiv and that force should only be used in extreme cases.

The Tiv resistance halted the Akwanaja to Ibi telegraph line. The Loko to Akanaja sixty mile line already built had to be dismantled in favour of a northerly line from Loko via Keffi, Lafia to Ibi to "avoid the turbulent Munshi country".³

To the dismay of the British the Tiv remained independent and Lord Lugard was compelled to modify his administration in Benue province.

On the 1st of January 1900, the day of the "Protectorate" over Northern Nigeria, the Tiv and all the *atoatiev* in the Benue valley from Mozum to the Cameroon border and including Muri, Bauchi, and Adamawa Emirates were placed under the Resident of the Benue Province, William Hewby.⁴

³ Annual Reports of Northern Nigeria 1900-1901 No. 377 p. 42.

⁴ Northern Nigeria Gazette. Government Notice, No. 27, 31st August, 1900 p. 5.

By August 1900, Benue was divided into two administrative units, the Lower and the Upper Benue. The Lower Benue consisted of all "the Munshi districts north of the Benue and south of the same westward from Katsina Ala river together with that portion of Zaria country lying south of latitude 10°".⁵ It was placed under Major Burdon, now a Resident, with headquarters at Akwanaja.

Major Burdon was specifically assigned the task of trying to cultivate the friendship of the Tiv and the inhabitants of Nassarawa and Keffi.⁶

The Upper Benue consisted of Muri and Adamawa Emirates under William Hewby.

Major Burdon had very little success in cultivating the Tiv friendship. Tension remained. In April, 1901 hostilities reopened between the Tiv and the British.

The reasons for the April expedition were not clear but apparently the British were insistent on avenging the 1900 defeat by the Tiv.

The Tiv gave a stubborn resistance in spite of the British superiority in arms. The Tiv finally capitulated when Major McClintock began a ruthless and deliberate policy of systematic destruction of people's staple food crops and compounds. A truce was made between the British and Raav whose *tar* lay close to Akwanaja. Mbagwen and Iharev were not party to the truce.

The following month another British military expedition was organised on the pretext that the Utiondo, who lived close to the banks of the Benue were harassing the Hausa traders and European shipping on the river. The Tiv strongly denied any acts of harassment or brigandage. This is confirmed by Captain Gordon's report. The more so that the so-called "South Bank Munshi Campaign" of May, 1901 did not even go near Abinsi village where the Utiondo were allegedly interfering with boats plying the river. Instead the expedition was directed against the

⁵ *Op. cit.* No. 15 supra p. 126.

⁶ Annual Report of Northern Nigeria, 1st January, 1900, 31st August, 1901, p. 486.

ityar Gambe-Tiev (South of Akwana) and Mbalagh on the southern and eastern banks of the Benue and Katsina Ala respectively. The expedition, commanded by Captain Eckersley did considerable damage and ruthless destruction of farma crops, compounds and other property. Quite a number of prisoners taken were released.

The British had assumed that the release of the prisoners was a good gesture, a signal to the Tiv to sue for peace. But no Tiv elder was impressed save some insignificant people such as Uga, one of the leaders of Tiv community in Jukun village of Akwana. History regards him as a traitor and a worthless fellow.

An influential and outspoken elder, Shishe Aku, irritated the British for his fearlessness. He was therefore, sent in chains to Ibi. Elders at Gambe-Tiev say that Shishe Aku was actually taken away for seizing a horse for which he had not paid. Although the British did not suppress the Tiv by use of force, yet the Tiv were now beginning to respect the military superiority of this new group of *atoatiev* and their presence in the Benue valley.

For the next three to four years following the May, 1901 expedition, further effort to penetrate the Tiv abated. In 1903 the district officer in charge of Nassarawa reported that the Tiv now showed interest in some trade.⁷ Was the lull in Tiv penetration due to British preoccupation with the conquest of the Muslim emirates? None can say for certain. On paper however, there was administrative change in the Lower and Upper Benue Provinces.

The Tiv were transferred from the Lower Benue Province to the newly created Muri Province, just carved out of Upper Benue. Muri was the headquarters of the Muri Province. The remaining parts of the Lower Benue Province were renamed Nassarawa Province.

In January, 1904 the administration took a dramatic decision and closed Tiv, Idoma, and Igala districts to

⁷ Annual Reports of Northern Nigeria, 1901, No. 437, p. 128.

Europeans⁸ under the "unsettled Districts Ordinance of 1902". None can say for certain why Tivland was closed to Europeans but a report came from the Niger Company's agent, D.A. Fraser at Abinsi that the Tiv were planning to attack the station. Fraser's allegations were soon found to be false. Lugard lost his temper and ordered the withdrawal of a small British garrison stationed at Abinsi since.

The Abinsi Incident 1906

In August, 1905, Wallace who had been the acting British High Commissioner in the absence of Lugard, toured Benue and tried to rekindle British interest in the area through commercial activity. He reported favourably on the desire of the indigenes including the Tiv, to trade with the British. But this image was marred the following year by an incident at Abinsi involving the Jukun, Hausa, and Tiv.

The population of Abinsi village was dominated basically by the Jukun and Hausa with some sprinkling of Tiv. As pioneer settlers the Jukun had established friendly relations with the Tiv in and around Abinsi village: Utiondo, Mbakor, Masev, and perhaps Nongov. The Tiv and the Jukun were therefore potential allies in time of danger.

In 1906 a brawl developed into a serious fighting between the Jukun and the Hausa at Abinsi for reasons which are not known. The Jukun fared badly. They therefore enlisted Tiv support. The Jukun and the Tiv it would appear, envied the economic prosperity of the Hausa. About seventy-six Hausa were killed and about one hundred and thirteen taken captive. That was not all. The store of the Niger Company at Abinsi was destroyed and looted.

This incident had two important effects. Firstly, the British came into the fracas. The force was maximum for its objective: 38 officers, 13 British NCOS, 600 soldiers supported by artillery and maxim guns and 1,000 carriers. Lt. Col., Hasler was in command. The force drove away the Tiv from Abinsi and about a hundred or more Tiv were killed; the official figure of the

⁸ Northern Nigeria Gazette, Government Notice, No. 22, 31st July, 1901 p. 87.

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⁸ Northern Nigeria Gazette, Government Notice, No. 22, 31st July, 1901 p. 87.

men killed was 45 but this is hotly disputed by the informants. About a hundred Hausa were released from captivity although the Tiv were able to retain about fifteen of them as slaves. Furthermore, the troops were able to push about thirty miles south of Abinsi into Masev territory without resistance.

Secondly, the Abinsi incident once again revived the British interest in Tiv region. They now vowed to end the Tiv independence once and for all. But this wish could not be translated into action immediately. Because of the Satiru rising in Sokoto in 1906 the British troops were withdrawn from Abinsi.

The Occupation of the Eastern Districts

In 1906 more and more British officers ventured into Tiv country to gain more knowledge of the country and the people. An example were the journeys of Alexander Boyd who found the Tiv a very interesting people. His mission was to map the Tiv country.

Accounts by Tiv elders show that the British adopted the three methods in gaining foothold in Tivland.

The first method was peaceful. The British sought and got information from the Jukun at the British headquarters in Ibi. For example, it was from the Jukun that Gordon learned about Ugande, an influential drum chief in *tar* Ukum. The British officers cultivated the friendship of particular influential Tiv, stayed in their homes which they used as bases for moving into other areas. Later they moved in to establish British rule and they used force where necessary.

The penetration of the Tiv country was in three phases. 1907-1911 witnessed the penetration of all the regions on the southern and eastern banks of the Benue and Katsina Ala.

The penetration of the southern districts, was in two distinct phases, and the north of the Benue took place about 1910-1914. By 1914 almost all the *tar* in Tiv had been brought under minimal control of the British.

This was no easy task as the Tiv-British relations were marked by suspicion throughout. The Tiv friends never gave the British full co-operation because they were suspicious of

the British. An example was one Gordon who worked mainly in eastern Tivland. He was accredited with opening up Tivland for three basic reasons. Firstly, he appeared to have remained in the area longer than any of his colleagues. Secondly, there is more documentary evidence of his work in Tiv than there is of other officers; a number of Tiv elders in the eastern districts still remember him. Thirdly, he was friendly and comparatively more understanding than his contemporaries. The Tiv gave him the name *Aga Yoon Tar*, bearer of news. This was because he was mild and friendly. But he did use force. The view of Mr. Dorward therefore that Gordon opened up Tiv country without firing a single shot could not be entirely true. He was visited by the drum Chief of Ukum, Ugande-Shange, at Ibi, at his request. Ugande took a cow to him as a present. He briefed Gordon on the internal politics in Ukum and the neighbouring areas. Gordon sought his co-operation to visit Tivland. He offered to assist Ugande against his enemies in return for Ugande's co-operation. They agreed that Gordon would help Ugande against the Ingenev, Ugande's arch enemies. Later Ugande changed his mind after Gordon had finalised plans to move into Ukum territory. Willy nilly Gordon moved into Ukum by pitching his tent in Ingeke's compound without Ingeke's prior knowledge. He offered no reason for the visit. Ingeke was therefore frightened into deserting his own compound. Gordon then was compelled to move into another place, the compound of the drum chief in Mbaterem, Kyado. Gordon had already mapped out all the area he intended to visit. He therefore demanded that Kyado should show him the most direct route to the Benue. Gordon was advised to proceed to the compound of Ali (not a muslim name) an influential drum chief in Ityuruv district, and thence to Benue. While Gordon was on his way to Ali's compound, his carriers were ambushed by the Ityuruv. Gordon's escort therefore shot and killed three persons in retaliation namely, Adigbo, Ijoor, and Mbatamen Kighir. The fourth man Ande, was wounded and his leg was amputated later.

This incident alone is enough to clear Dorward's misinformation that Gordon helped open up the Tiv country without firing a single shot. The news of the killings in Ityuruv spread like bush fire into the neighbouring *ityar* and the people

became so afraid that they made no further attempts to interfere with Gordon's movements.

From Ali's compound, Gordon turned south and travelled to the compound of a prominent man in Ugondo called Mindi. Thence he went on to the compound of a renowned warrior, Ashinya, whose settlement lay on the eastern bank of the Katsina Ala river. From there Gordon returned to Kyado's compound by the same route. But the people took flight in confusion on seeing Gordon. This was due to his deeds against the Ityuruv. Surprisingly Gordon was surprised at this behaviour. He would not inquire why. Instead he arrested Kyado and took him to Ibi for three months' confinement. An abortive attempt was made to arrest also, Kyado's uncle, Amanya. He was chased through the thick bush but the soldiers succeeded only in pulling off his(Amanya's)*injor*.

From Kyado's compound, Gordon, after enough rest, was directed to the compound of Biam-Ala, an influential drum Chief in *tar* Ingenev. Thereafter, he went to the compound of Anyam, a drum Chief in *tar* Tongov. From there Gordon travelled to Katsina Ala village through *tar* Ikurav-Tiev. He arrived when almost all the hunters in Ikurav-Tiev were together for hunting expedition, *ibem*. Gordon ordered that the hunting group be disbanded although the animals had been cornered and were about to be shot. Despite their annoyance and disappointment the people knowing what Gordon had done in Ukum, Ugondo, Tongov, remained calm. Gordon was next directed to the compound of an influential man, in Ikurav-Tiev, *Tor* Targbugh, who was not a chief. Targbugh found the presence of Gordon and his escort in his compound very embarrassing. He therefore directed him to the compound of Agahiande, a young but ambitious man credited with being knowledgeable in the ways of the whiteman. He was prepared to assist Gordon for his own personal gain. He therefore instructed his boys to take Gordon to Katsina Ala village.

The history of the present Katsina Ala on the eastern bank of River Katsina Ala began in 1907. The former site lay on the western bank of the river. The new station was founded by Gordon in 1907 when troops were brought from Ibi to the eastern bank of the river. A government station was then built.

It was necessary to service such station with a market. The indigenes, Abakwa and Etulo were unwilling to move to the new station. Gordon had therefore to seek help from Wukari. From Wukari came two Kanuri leaders, Audu and Bawa with two hundred followers to organise the market. The new settlement developed fast and the importance of the old Katsina Ala village steadily declined.

Katsina Ala village became a base from where Gordon set out organising expeditions to the unvisited *ityar* on the eastern and western banks of river Katsina Ala. He spent about eight months in 1908-1909 at Katsina Ala for this purpose alone. During this period he summoned and spoke to Aba Kume, a prominent drum Chief in Shitire South, Chia Chire, a drum Chief of Mbagen, and their respective followers and spoke to them. Gordon's address to the people was the same wherever he went "We, the British have come to stop fighting in your country. All that we want is peace and trade. We do not want trouble and we have not come to take away your land". It was in Hausa and translated into Tiv by two Hausa followers of Gordon: Muhammadu and Maradu. The Tiv responded by composing songs of co-operation.

However, Gordon and F.A. Ruxton, Senior Resident, Muri Province went on leave and the visiting and bringing of new districts under the British halted for a time. Action did resume in September, 1908 when Gordon returned to his station at Kastina Ala. In 1909 the British established a new garrison at Abinsi on the southern bank of the Benue.

Abinsi became an administrative centre for the extension of the British influence into hitherto unvisited districts in southern and western Tivland. This means that Abinsi and Katsina Ala were the two main bases for organising military expeditions and patrols into all corners of Tiv country. But due to acute shortage of British officers, progress was slow.⁹ By 1910, the responsibility of "opening up" the rest of the country was entrusted to the two officers, Gordon and Ruxton. Ruxton was

⁹ Final Assessment, Muri Province, 1909-1910 SNP.7/11-3645/1910 N.A.K.

assigned the regions on the western bank of the river Katsina Ala. Gordon was to open up all the Tiv districts North and North-east of the Benue and Katsina Ala.

Their brief was to visit the unvisited districts, to speak and explain to the people the rationale for British presence, to establish British authority by force if need be, and to take census of the people as a basis for taxation.

Their arduous task was compounded by lack of adequate knowledge of the areas to be visited, language barrier, lack of communication facilities, and shortage of administrative personnel.

In 1909 the first taxes, equivalent of about sixty Naira were collected in Tiv country.¹⁰ It however affected only the Hausa community at Katsina Ala.

The first taxes collected from the indigenous people were in 1910 from a section of Ukum. Not until 1915 was the majority of districts taxed.

Occupation of the Southern and Western Districts:

The Conquest of the Southern and Central Areas.

The subjugation of the people was necessarily piecemeal. For example, the subjugation of the western districts and those in the vicinity of Katsina Ala in the western bank was completed between 1907 and 1910. Ruxton had taken over from Gordon the responsibility of penetrating all the region on the western bank of Katsina Ala. Ruxton used the services of Chia Chire in pushing into the south eastern sections of 'Tivland and to all parts of the central region. Chia provides guides and names of prominent Tiv.

The districts in central Tivland had been completely subjugated by about 1912 and British nominal authority imposed. Ruxton paid systematic visits to these central districts: Mbakor, Tombo, Yandev, Mbayion, Mbatieriv, Mbatiaiv, and Ukan.

In the southeastern Tivland Ruxton was directed to the compound of Ningir in Ityuruv district in tar Ikurav-Ya. Ikurav-Ya district had been well known to the British because of the past hostility of its inhabitants to the Niger Company. However,

¹⁰ *Muri Province Assessment Report, 1909-1910 SNP.7/10-5757/109, N.A.K.*

Ruxton did not experience hostility this time although Ningir and several other elders declined to co-operate with him. From Ityuruv he visited Nanev, Kendev, and Turan explaining the motives and objectives of the British presence in Tivland. But the elders he sought to appoint as headmen: Agbo, Ibwa, Anum, Tor Igoon, and Ai Aguji, would not serve as British agents. At long last the post of headman in Turan district was offered to Aka Akaakpiashe alias Jato Aka. All the neighbouring *ityar* were put under his command in theory. Jato Aka was prepared to assist the British for his personal gains. His mother was from Bafum in the Cameroons. So he could be readily spared from trouble.

From Turan Ruxton moved to Nanev and Shangev districts where men of ambition devoid of traditional power, Tyodugh and Kwange, were willing to co-operate. They were given the title, headmen. Nanev and Shangev who had suffered loss of men and property heavily as a result of 1912 British expedition, readily submitted to British authority.

From Kwange's compound in Shangev-Ya, Ruxton moved into Ute, a Kunav district. Kwange led them and they, without provocation, destroyed a series of compounds. No elder was prepared to come forward and talk to the British.

Why did Ruxton behave the way he did in Ute? Was it as a result of frustration stemming from the unwillingness of the elders to meet him? Was he misled by Kwange? Or did he just want to instil fear? At the end the elders did not come forward to listen to Ruxton.

In Shangev-Tiev, Gaav, and Kunav districts the story was different. More force was used. The subjugation was by direct military conquest from southern Nigeria. The process began in 1909 and was completed by 1912. The districts were then handed over to Northern administration.

By 1910 the British had established control over the whole of Ogoja, whose people, the Udam, had common frontier with Southern Tivland. By 1907 a garrison had been stationed at Obudu in Udam territory bordering on the south of Mbaduku. From there military campaigns were launched against the Mbaduku and Mbayongo to punish the people for harassing

loyal and law abiding Udam. The relationship between the Tiv and the Udam particularly the Obudu, Ugee, Chikwang, and Bete had been sour long before the British came. This was caused by the insatiable Tiv desire to expand southwards at the expense of the Udam¹¹. The land southwards was fertile and the Tiv longed to farm there. The Udam and the Tiv had therefore for long been in a state of war.

In 1909, Captain Fox, the District Officer in charge of Obudu Station, attempted to reconcile the Mbayongo and Chikwang by holding discussions with Mbayongo elders. The following decisions were taken.

The Mbayongo agreed to grant safe conduct to government messengers between Obudu and Ogoja through Mbayongo.

Secondly, the Mbayongo agreed that the proposed Ogoja-Obudu road should pass through Mbayongo territory.

Thirdly, it was agreed that the British could punish Mbayongo citizens who interfered with free flow of traffic through Mbayongo territory.

Fourthly, Hausa and other non-Tiv traders were to be allowed to trade freely in Mbayongo territory.

Finally, a stop was to be put to slave traffic and killing of people.¹²

Captain Fox now visited Mbayongo about August, 1909 to ratify the agreement. Subsequently, he advised against a military patrol in the process of being sent from Calabar to force open Obudu to Ogoja road blocked by Mbayongo. This patience and diplomacy by Fox brought great understanding between the Udam and southern Tiv: Shangev-Ya, Mbaduku, Mbayongo, and Mbakaange. The Tiv from these areas visited Obudu market without incident.

But soon Captain Fox was transferred from Obudu. And soon new problems cropped up all over between the Udam and the Tiv: Inexperienced British officers worked with rumour rather than facts. An example was Weld, Acting District Officer in charge of Obudu. He believed that Obudu station was in imminent danger of being attacked by the Tiv. He therefore

¹¹ Obudu Patrol - CSO.1/21-1910, Vol. VI January-June 1910 N.A.I.

¹² Commission of Enquiry into Ogoja - Munshi Expedition of 1912. CSO.1/21, Vol. XII (1913) N.A.I.

precipitated the Obudu Patrol of 1910. Weld's source of alarm was one Tiv informant, Ajipuu, from Shangev-Ya now living in Iyon. Ajipuu allegedly told him that at a meeting at Jechira war was being planned against the British. According to Weld the meeting took place in November, 1909, in the presence of one of his trusted spies. There the Jechira leaders swore to resist the construction of the "Dama - Mbaduku road across Aya river. And the "delegation agreed to attack the Obudu station in the dry season". This meeting Kunav elders today deny because they said their trouble lay with the Udam not with the British.

However, Weld did not bother to check the authenticity of the report. He requested military patrol against the Tiv. This the British officers in the south were more than eager to grant. They had heard enough about Tiv trouble. And this was an opportunity to teach the Tiv a lesson once and for all. But the northern officers would not co-operate. The southern officers were given only limited permission: to operate only in the vicinity of Obudu and "render the Obudu-Ogoja road safe and open the Obudu-Katsina Ala road". But ever before Governor Egerton's letter approving limited military campaign reached Obudu, Weld had become impatient. He wrote frantic letters to Lagos urging Mbaduku and Mbayongo to hasten the sanctioning of the campaign on a large scale. His charges were that the Inyanya chiefs had complained to him about the hostility of Mbayongo.

Secondly, that a Hausa trader's goods had been seized by persons of Mbaduku district," a Hausa trader having been held up, his load taken from him and pepper thrown in his eyes by the "Baaduku" resulting in his Excellency abandoning his visit to Obudu".

Thirdly, it was reported that the Hausa traders living at Uchukwang had to leave because "the Baiyonga are commencing to raid and seize people".

Fourthly, that the people of Uchukwang had sought protection from the British against the Mbayongo. Finally, "On 31st January, 1910, some hundreds of the Baduku raided the Obudu farms to the north of the station half a mile away, caught an Obudu boy and sent him with a message to the town that they, the Munchi, had taken over all the Obudu farms as the

latter people had been friends to the whiteman and that in a few days, after dealing with the whiteman, they would wipe out the Dama Obudu". These allegations were contained in a letter dated 21st February, 1910 from Weld.

None can say for certain whether or not these allegations were true. What is true however is that before the authorised military campaign against the Tiv began, Weld himself shot and killed two Mbaduku. He wounded a third on 2nd March, 1910, on the outskirts of Obudu station. His pretext was that he was staving off the impending attack. Weld, like the Royal Company, the British officers in the south, and others, believed that only force could be used against the Tiv. There was therefore a patrol against the Mbaduku and Mbayongo in 1910.

The expedition started on 2nd March when the Udam reported to the District Officer of Tiv advance on the station. The first day of the fight left two Mbaduku dead. On the 4th of March, 1910, a patrol advanced into Mbayar section of Mbaduku and set ablaze the houses, which in the first place had already been abandoned. The burning and looting continued into Mbatende and Mbaadigam sections of Mbaduku. The troops returned to Obudu on 6th March, 1910.

The following day, March 7th, the expedition against the Mbayongo resumed. Troops spent almost a week in Mbayongo but saw no one to fight. The Tiv were aware of the consequences of fighting against superior arms. All the troops did was the killing of two Mbayongo and the taking of a third into captivity. Thus the Tiv were not subdued and Captain Dobbin admitted the failure of the campaign.

"What I am sure is happening is that when a guide volunteers to show us Munshi camp, information is at the same time sent to that camp to the effect that we are coming. I propose going systematically through Mbaduku and Baiyonga farms and ruining their yam crops until we can locate a definite camp, it is the only means we have to punish them".¹³

Despite the failure of the campaign there was some political stability for the next twelve months, uptill April, 1910. G.S. Podevin, Acting District Commissioner Ogoja, expressed

¹³ The Ogoja-Munshi Expeditions CSO.1/21. Vol. XI N.A.K.

satisfaction with this development. He was the first officer from the south to make any favourable comment about the Tiv:

The Munshis cannot be bracketed in the same category as the pagan tribes in eastern Nigeria, they are superior intellectually, physically and socially and represent what would seem to be a medium between Mohammedans, their neighbours in the north and the pagan tribes in the south.

This opinion was based on personal contacts with elders in Shittire south, Turan, Ikurav-Ya, Shangev-Ya, Mbaduku, Shangev-Tiev, and Gaav districts. His knowledge of the Tiv made him predict, quite rightly, that when the Tiv became absorbed into the British administration, delimitation of boundaries would become a problem. That problem today remains.

The Conquest of the Western Districts

The picture of the Tiv in the southern frontier painted by G.S. Podevin was soon marred by a series of incidents which began in April, 1912, and finally precipitated the "Ogoja-Munshi" expedition of July 1912.

Late in April 1912, Podevin himself had reported to Lagos the southward expansion of Mbagben, a sub *tar* in Gaav, and Shangev-Tiev peoples into Yachi and Igedde. Mr. Podevin also complained against one Orbu of Iwarev, a British informant discovered to be a double agent, like "Bakiri" of Mbaduku. Orbu had stubbornly refused to go and see the District Commissioner as he used to do. He had arrogantly declared himself "the District Commissioner for the Yachis and in his own country". Podevin therefore sought military campaign against western Tivland.

But Acting Governor in Lagos, James, refused to sanction the proposal for the war against the Tiv. He insisted the Tiv-

must be brought under control by joint administration on the part of southern and northern Nigeria and steps, I hope, will be taken to achieve this object during the next dry season. It must be, there, thoroughly understood that no punitive measures other than what may be described as acting on the defensive in enabling the friendly Gabus to retain their country against Munshi raids are to be taken".

Yet "heavy punitive measures" were taken in the end against Gaav and Shangev-Tiev in July, 1912. This was brought about by a report that the Gaav and Shangev-Tiev had made an unprovoked attack on Gabu in March and killed a hundred or more persons.

The expedition had been commanded by Major C. Mair. It was began on 5th July, and ended on 8th, short and effective. Gaav and Shangev-Tiev suffered heavy losses in men and property. The leaders of the conquered appeared before Major Mair and conditions of peace were dictated to them. When they delayed accepting the terms they were subjected to humiliating treatment.

Later Lugard instituted an inquiry into how the Tiv had been treated. Major Mair's attitude and behaviour was classical example of how southern officers thought about the Tiv.

The Tiv had had a boundary dispute with the Udam and had gone to war to settle it. But when the British came the Tiv withdrew from where they had conquered since they knew their own limitations in the face of superior British arms. But the commanding officer was not content with a mere acceptance of defeat. He, in addition, demanded that all prominent elders in the district should meet him at his camp at Ishange hill. They refused to do so. He shifted his camp to the outskirts of Ubwa Agabi's compound. Ubwa Agabi was, for personal ambitions, willing to co-operate with Major C. Mair. Agabi's mother was from Udam. Ubwa, at the instance of Major Mair, summoned all the elders and asked them to go and bring tributes in the form of cows, chicken, eggs, and pieces of *tugudu* cloths so that he might reconcile them with the Udam. The elders dispersed without any intention of acceding to this request. But Ubwa Agabi performed loyally.

Major Mair was angry. He asked Agabi to lead him to the compounds of prominent elders. He killed twelve of them and twelve cows. The elders killed were Gbongo, Swande, Ugbaan, Kpanhir, Ahwen, Zur, Anafe, Ibeba, Kanyoon, Ibor, Tor and Kuma. The remaining elders yielded and did Major Mair's bidding.

Next, Major Mair compelled the people into forced labour; the building of roads linking Tiv and Udam, building of barracks at Ukpo. Four elders: Amure, Osaka, Sabo, and "Oparangwa", were taken away as prisoners.

The Shangev-Tiev suffered no less humiliation. They constructed two strong bridges across River Gbadema and "a good road through Tyav country from the north-west to south-east to the bridges and then south to the Iyav-Batur territory".¹⁴

The Tiv resented these severe terms of peace but they were helpless. The British administrative officers from the north were sympathetic. They returned part of the fines and exempted the victims from taxation for one year or two to enable them recover from the effects of Mair's defeat.

The facts of the 1912 military expedition would not have been known had Lugard not set up an inquiry. His suspicions were roused by the very brevity of Mair's report to Lagos:

- (a) Compensation to Gabu
- (b) Construction of an embarkment to mark the boundary between tribes and the Yakoro, Yachi, and Yala countries.

Furthermore, "in connection with (b) above, sixteen miles of straight twenty feet roads have already been constructed from Gakem to Bavaa, and have given instruction to the officer commanding the advance post to extend these roads to mark the boundary between the "Kworiba" tribes and Gabu."¹⁵

This report did not show the atrocities by the troops against the Tiv. Nor did it detail the heavy terms of peace imposed on the conquered. But the Commission of Enquiry set up by Lugard under Lt. Col. Moorhouse with two members: William Edward Boyd Copland-Crawford (Assistant Provincial Commissioner) and Earnest Greenwood (Police Magistrate) made startling revelations regarding the 1912 campaign.

The terms of the Enquiry were:

¹⁴ *Ibid.*,

¹⁵ *Ibid.*,

- (1) To enquire into the condition of affairs in Ogoja country with reference to the conduct of recent operations against the Munshis and others between the dates of June 13th – November 20th in particular.
- (2) Whether the terms imposed upon those who submitted were reasonable, political and duly sanctioned.
- (3) Whether the conduct of the operations and the treatment of the people both during the subsequent operations was characterised by justice and free from any regrettable actions on part of individual whether political or civil.
- (4) To recommend to me (Lugard) the form which the control over the country should temporarily take".¹⁶

The conduct of the enquiry itself was necessarily a one-sided affair in that the indigenes directly involved were not called upon to testify. All the same the findings were remarkable.

The Commission found out that the Gaav were compelled to pay fines of forty-five cows, four hundred goats, eighty chickens and seventy-five pieces of *tugudu* cloths.

Forced labour, as already indicated, was imposed on them.

The Tiv claim that four of their people were taken prisoner was confirmed. However, the prisoners, save Osaka, were released.

Fourthly, the Commission found that at least a hundred or more Tiv were killed in the operation.

The Commission held the opinion that certain aspects of the operations went "beyond the scope of original instructions and were not duly sanctioned". For example, the terms of peace imposed on those who surrendered were not duly sanctioned.¹⁷

Fifthly, the Commission felt that "it was not reasonable to call upon them (Tiv) to rebuild the barracks of Ogoja".

Sixthly, the Commission objected to the arbitrary boundary line selected because they found it unreasonable to oust the Tiv from the land they had held at the commencement of operation. This was because "to deprive a native of his land which he had had the use of for any appreciable time tends to produce feeling of resentment".

¹⁶ *Ibid.*,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*,

The Commission was no doubt right in this respect because it showed that Tiv territory was conceded to Udum by Major Mair by the use of force. The Udum claim that the land had been taken away from them four years before the operation in 1912 was probably an afterthought. To this day resentment between the Tiv and the Udum over this land persists.

Of significance in the report of the Commission is the total absence of reference to the atrocities the troops committed; the killing of twelve elders and twelve cows in Gaav and Shangev-Tiev where Ashwe, Uto, Ajia, Gbem Usher, and Kor's wife were killed without provocation.

The Commission found that of the fines only part were given to the Gabus. Twenty cows and one hundred and twenty-five goats were given to them for their losses. "The rest were used for feeding the troops and carriers. The *tugudu* cloths were used as ceiling materials in the European quarters at Ukpo and Ogoja.

Lugard's comments on the findings show that the war by the southern officers against the Tiv was not justified and that improper use was made of the fines. He rejected the idea that the "Munshis (except perhaps on their southern frontier) had committed any hostile or aggressive acts. It is not, therefore, clear, why their hamlets were burnt and a hundred of them killed". Secondly, he was unhappy that the terms of surrender were executed without reference to government by Major Mair. On the fines he said:

Fines are a part of Revenue and cannot be disposed of in sealing officers' quarters any portion used for feeding troops and carriers must be properly credited to Revenue and issued as a part of the cost of the expedition. Having the Treasurer and Auditor nothing to say hitherto to this go as you please method of dealing with fines.¹⁸

He ruled that the orders sent to Captain Gibb to conduct military operations in Shangev-Tiev was illegal. He noted that "there appears to have been no opposition by the Igava Munshis and it is not, therefore, clear why the onerous terms were imposed on them". Finally, he was anxious to know the fate of Osaka.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*,

The Tiv independence was now at an end yet the British took no immediate steps to bring the Tiv under their rule.

What had happened to Gaav and Shangev-Tiev was a severe lesson to other Tiv. For example, the Mbatlav were so afraid that they were ready and willing to accept British authority. This explains why British rule was so quickly and smoothly established in the central and other southern districts. All the districts in the western and southern districts were placed under the nominal control of southern Nigeria Government before the end of 1912. In 1914 all the districts ruled nominally from the south were returned to Muri province. The Tiv were thus ruled from Muri province with two administrative centres: Abinsi and Katsina Ala.

The Subjugation of Masev and Iharev Districts

Masev and Iharev (North and South of Benue) were nominally recognised as British subjects. There was no proper administrative machinery over them, such as appointment of headman and tax collector. But Ruxton traversed the area and put them under close British surveillance from the end of 1914. But lack of administrative staff in carrying out assessment in Masev and Iharev as well as the difficulties in finding indigenous people willing to co-operate delayed establishment of British rule in these areas. The third factor was that the British feared a repeat of the humiliating defeat they had suffered at the hands of Iharev north over the telegraph construction. They would therefore not venture in the land without extreme caution. But with the capitulation of Masev, and Iharev Tiv resistance was over. In 1915 therefore, British administration began in the land.

Era of Drum Chiefs Ends

The arrival of the British did not end indigenous rule although Dorward and Paul Bohannon erroneously thought so. There were at least seventy-three of the drum chiefs still ruling at the time the Tiv were subjugated. But these were not all.

A few of the drum chiefs naively offered their services to the British and were rewarded with "headman" positions in the early administration. The majority however refused to cooperate with the British. Rather they went underground and would not make themselves known to the British. They feared and disliked the British intensely. Their fear was due in part to their being humiliated, and in part to retain freedom of action to resist the new administration.

They organised the attacks on the British and other traders in late 19th century, they organised the war against the construction of telegraph line, the Abinsi episode 1906, the attack on Gordon's escort in Ityuruv 1907, and the war between Gaav and Shangev-Tiev against the Udam and the British in 1912. Never would a *tor* go to war without the leadership of its *tor agbande*. All the Tiv-British conflict should be understood in this wise.

When, for example, the British appointed new rulers the *tor agbande* and other leaders kept a tight control over them. This weakened early British administration in Tiv. Where there were no drum chiefs, the elders, the power behind the throne, were there. In fact absence of a drum chief is subject to a variety of one or all of reasons.

For example, all *ityar* in Tiv are patrilineal with the exception of a few who are matrilineal and are therefore not politically recognised and qualified to have a drum chief. Up to this day those who cannot identify their ancestral patrilineal line have no political citizenship rights. One or two *ityar* in Kunav belong to the category of those who are matrilineal and therefore have no political citizenship rights.

The institution of *tor agbande* possibly began to decline with the decline of its role in leading fights against *atoatiev* in

the late nineteenth century. But the dangers of *atoatiev* wars were always there. And so the drum chief was necessary. Even if there was no war, the need for the drum chief to maintain trade, social, and political relations with the *atoatiev* was always there. The drum chiefs also continued to adjudicate in internal conflicts within the *tar*.

However, when the British took control by use of force, administration in Tivland, appointment of new drum chiefs, who would virtually exercise no authority, became meaningless. In 1932 for example, when Ikyaartor of Mbakaange tried to revive the institution, the elders would not support him for fear of the British. The elders, realistically, turned their attention to dealing with the new rulers appointed by the British.

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Chapter 8

The Era Of The British Chiefs 1st Phase, 1915 – 1930

The conquest of the Tiv and the imposition of British administration in 1915 began the second stage of political change in the government of Tiv in the 19th and 20th centuries. The first had been the emergence of drum chiefs in the 19th century.

Unlike the institution of *tor-agbande*, a natural development emanating from the traditional leadership, the second stage of government was an imposition. And this imposition lacking root in the traditional set up amongst the Tiv, had serious consequences for the Tiv administration was in confusion. The ruler knew not how to govern the ruled.

The first problem was who to appoint as headmen to establish an effective government that would collect the much needed tax.

Indirect rule practised in the emirates was unsuitable because the British could not readily identify the structure of authority amongst the Tiv. They knew that *tor agbande* existed prior to the British rule. But how did it function, how deep was its roots, and could it be readily revived? These questions the British could not answer. They were further puzzled by the fact that the institution of *tor agbande* was not hereditary, nor did the holder exercise absolute executive powers as happened in the Emirates. Since the power to appoint *tor agbande* lay with the elders the British could not spot who was influential enough for the appointment.

Added to this was the problem of communication. The administrators spoke no Tiv. The Tiv spoke no English. And as late as 1933 Governor Cameron chided an officer in Benue Province, C.R.P. Latham, for his inability to speak Tiv. The

administrators were therefore compelled to use some *atoati* who spoke vulgarised Tiv as interpreters. For example, Gordon, whom the Tiv called Chafangodi, brought Hausa interpreters, Muhammadu and Maradu, as interpreters in Katsina Ala. Naturally, faulty translations often caused misunderstanding. Classical examples of this are found in C.C. Temple's book, *Notes on the Tribes of Northern Nigeria*.

The interpreters were normally Hausa, Nupe, and Yoruba. In the absence of men of influence and authority the British had no alternative but to appoint as leaders those who co-operated with them. They were generally young, about thirty to forty years. Agahiande of Ikurav-Tiev District was an example. According to K.P. Maddocks, Agahiande was "an ambitious man of middle age who lived less than two miles from the government station at Katsina Ala, had made himself useful to the administration and acquired a local reputation for knowing the ways of the whiteman, and it was upon him that the choice of (headman) fell".

Thus were men of no traditional power or authority appointed to run Tiv affairs as agents.

Kucha, headman of Mbayion, "had nominal authority ... it is, however, an authority to be built upon as in all matters of the fetish, he is recognised head". So also did Captain C.F. Rowe say that "the present headman of Mbatirev, is Banyama but his authority is nominal, but he could be made to have more authority with the British support".

Because they lacked traditional authority these new leaders became *tor-butur*, whiteman's chief.

The early British administration was thus necessarily weak. This some of the officers readily admitted. According to Hamilton:

Another cause of weakness in the native administration is that in several cases, owing to the necessity for rapidity of assessment and the lack of proper information, when the district was first visited, outstanding personalities were recognised by the administration as headman, who did not hold the position in the eyes of the natives. Instances of this are Agana of Batsada/Beramo, Moi Tsaba of Baishor/Baiburu and Akuta of

... of a general. It has been found by experience that a *warling* who the natives consider to hold his position by right is more effective than a strongman put in by the administration."

K. Hamilton realised this mistake in early 1917 but there were no attempts to rectify it until the 1930s.

The Early District Heads

Who were they? What was their significance in the British administration? An answer to these questions necessarily begins in the eastern districts, the genesis of British rule in Tivland.

Ukum was the first district under the British. And an influential *tor agbande* of Ingenev, Biam Ala, was the first headman. He was however, never recognised and elevated to the position of district head. The persons officially recognised were given a staff as fifth class chiefs. Biam Ala served from 1907 to 1913 and died as an ordinary tax collecting agent of the British. In the British eyes his past importance and influence made him suspect.

The first recognised District head in Ukum therefore was Afegha who ruled from 1913 to 1920 when he was deposed. He lacked traditional authority but ruled with the authority of the British (Auchinlock, 1913).

The position in Tongov district was about the same. There, Anyam, a famous and outstanding *tor agbande* who had unwittingly contributed to the British occupation of Tongov, was not recognised officially by the British. He was relegated to the background and remained headman until his death. His successor, Naka, was the first recognised District Head in Tongov. Naka was an ambitious man. The British liked him and kept him in power. Other drum chiefs who were young enough for appointment were not spotted by the British in Tongov.

In Ugondo the British enlisted Mindi, an old man they had known before the establishment of their rule. Mindi was not however enthusiastic. He accepted the office half-heartedly and gave it up after a year or two. Despite the presence of other prominent leaders in Ugondo, including, at least one drum

chief, the British preferred Ugba who was duly recognised as the first head of Ugondo. Ugba was an ambitious middle-aged man who was well disposed to the British. His appointment however came to an abrupt end in 1925.

Another middle-aged man, Ayiramo, was made the headman in Shitire-Tiev. Although several drum chiefs were alive none appeared to have been known to the British. Ayiramo was later recognised District Head, a position he held until his deposition⁹ in 1920.

In Saghev or Nongov East district, as it was then called, the British appointed two persons to act as headmen, Gumela, a *tor agbande*, and Tsegem. But soon Gumela died and Tsegem came to be recognised as the first District Head in 1918. He died in 1923 (Rowe, 1913).

In Mbalagh district the British reluctantly appointed Ashinya as the headman. He was the warrior who killed Griffiths in 1895. He was never elevated to the status of District Head. He died after serving for seven years, 1912-1919. His successor, Dekke, was recognised District Head soon after the appointment. He died in 1924.

Two headmen were at first appointed in the district of Ikurav-Tiev: Monkway or Tor Takum, as he was popularly known, and Yaha. Neither became district head. Instead the British appointed Agahiande whom they admired and who had acquired the local reputation of being versed in the ways of the white man. Agahiande became the first recognised District Head of Ikurav-Tiev. He ruled until his death in 1936.

The position in Shitire South district (Gambe-Ya and Kpav), was different. The British had confidence in Aba Kume who had been a *tor agbande* for several years. He was allowed to continue in office. He had been nominally recognised as the head of his people as early as 1909. In 1912 he was officially recognised the first District Head in the whole of Shitire South. He remained in office until his death in 1922.

In Ndzorov district, north of the Benue and Kaambe or Nongov west, two headmen, Ityuruv and Ikua, were appointed in 1910. Ityuruv was later recognised and elevated to the

The appointment of headmen and later district heads in the southern districts did not take place until 1914. This was because all the districts were nominally ruled from the south.

In Nanev district, Adikpo, a youngman, completely devoid of traditional authority was recognised officially as a district head in 1914. Adikpo died in 1920.

In the district of Turan, including Maav, Kendev, and Nyiev, three persons were appointed headmen.

Kogi was appointed headman for Turan, Iyon for Kendev and Maav and Ibwa for Nyiev.

But Kogi was too old. Added to that he disliked working with the whiteman. His position was therefore given to Jato Aka. Jato Aka had been helping him. Jato Aka had also been very useful to the British. In 1914 Jato Aka was recognised as the first District Head for Turan, including Maav, Kendev, and Nyiev.

In Utange North Adzer became district head with the authority of the British but without traditional authority. Adzer died in 1924.

Kwange, otherwise called Nyaga, was the first person to be recognised as the District Head in Shangev-Ya. He had no traditional power but he was an ambitious youngman whom the British liked well.

In Ikurav-Ya two headmen, Kon and Mchiem, were, from the beginning, appointed. Another man, Abagu, was looked upon as head of the "Pagan" council when the area was still ruled from the south. However, the first district head was Zegeinyon who had no traditional authority. He ruled from 1916 to 1926 when he was deposed.

The south eastern region had several living drum chiefs when the British arrived.

The pattern of appointment of headmen in Kunav and Iharev was the worst of its nature. Several districts were combined and put under a youngman who had no traditional authority whatsoever. For example, the whole of Kunav made up of eight *ityar* was divided arbitrarily into Kunav South and Kunav North. Kunav North was made up of Ute, Mbara,

Tsambe, and Ningeve under the control of Moji Ikara who was recognised as the first district head. Kunav South - Mbaduku Mbagbera, Mbakaange and Mbayongo - was placed under Angur as the first District Head (Alford, 1936). Later Ikyaagba Akpeye of Mbaduku succeeded him. Several drum chiefs were at this time alive in Kunav. Yet the British chose persons who had no traditional authority.

In Gaav the first recognised *tor* was Msabe whom Agberagba succeeded. Each ruled for only a short time. Gaav had several drum chiefs and influential men whom the British administration did not, perhaps, know. These Gaav men would rather conceal their identity because of the humiliation their people had suffered in 1912 at the hands of the British.

A similar situation obtained in Shangev-Tiev, the true leaders hid their identity. The British therefore appointed two persons as headmen: Abako and Nyaregh. The first district head of Shangev-Tiev was Abagi in 1914. He ruled so badly that he ended up being hanged in 1926 (Maddocks, 1936; Rowe, 1912).

Finally, the appointment of District heads in Masev and Iharev was similar to that in Kunav. Several districts were combined and put under people who had no traditional power. For example, Masev and Tyoshin (that is, Raav and Mbakpa) were combined as Iharev West in 1915 and placed under two headmen, Dewara and Akuta. Rivalry thus became the order of the day. Until 1922 when Akuta was officially recognised as the first district head of the region. But he had no independence. He was put under the Sarkin Makurdi, Audu dan Afoda. Generally the people appointed here had no traditional power but vaulting ambition. They were therefore of little assistance to the British.

In the Iharev district North of the Benue, the British appointed Kuje as the official District Head. He ruled from 1914 to 1919 when he died. As a matter of fact little was known of this area. Administration in the area therefore continued to be paper work until the 1930s.

From the above analysis three conclusions arise. Firstly, at the inception of their rule the British chose persons who had no power in the eyes of the ruled. Secondly, there were men of power, the drum chiefs, who now had no power either because they were not known, or they refused to co-operate or the British at first distrusted them. The two drum chiefs who were given power did very well, namely Aba Kume of Shittire South and Chia Chire of Mbagen. Yet Biam Ala of Ukum and Anyam of Tongov were, for reasons not known, never recognised. Lastly, the weakness of the early British administration was apparently associated with the manner in which the administration of the districts was carried out. This will now be examined.

Problems arising from Appointment of District Heads: Disorganisation of Political and Social Structure

In creating districts the British concentrated on geography rather than history, tradition, and the social and political connections of the people. Consequently the arbitrary merging of districts upset the social and political order. This was compounded by the intense dislike of the imposed young leaders, *tor-batur*.

Problems arose when elders from different *tar* assemble. They had not been used to each other. Who was then the most senior amongst them? Who should lead the discussions? Answers or lack of answers to these questions were enough to create a stalemate in a discussion. How can politically unfamiliar people be compelled to work together under a most hated and unacceptable chief imposed by the British? Examples were the merging of Masev and Iharev as Iharev West, Mhagbera, Mbayongo, Mbakaange, Ningevev, and Mbaduku as Kunav South, Kussuv, Shorov, and Mbagen as Mbagen, and Maav, Nyiev, Kendev, and Turan as Turan.

What the British did not know was that some of these *ityar*, for example, Masev and Iharev, had been arch enemies of one another prior to the advent of the British. They had no immediate genealogical relationship. They had been operating

as distinct autonomous political groups long before the British came. The merger made the Masev lose their traditional identity and therefore prestige. As far as they were concerned they had become members of a meaningless district named after their enemies instead of sons of Mase, their patriarch. Added to these was the fact that the elders had not been consulted before the merger. Had they been consulted they would have carried out traditional reparation and reconciliation before the merger. This would have involved rituals. But the British were ignorant. For example, the grouping of Nyiev, Maav, Kendev, and Turan as Turan district was greatly resented by the three *ityar*. They would lose their identity and prestige to Turan. Sooner or later, they argued, their offspring will forget their true history and become unable to assert their citizenship rights.

More than these the Tiv resented the British because of the fixture of boundaries between the Tiv and their neighbours. The colonial authorities held the view that the Tiv had only one aim: to grab other peoples' land. They were therefore bent on ending this "munshi menace". According to Lt. Governor Palmer:

the Munshis as a people have been favourably treated by the government ... but the policy we have to carry out is for Nigeria to absorb the Munshis not for the Munshis to absorb Nigeria ... utilisation and expansion must not be made an end in itself, nor can material and financial considerations nor yet pre-existing territorial native units or jurisdiction be waived aside in order to meet the transitory requirements of the migrant Munshis.

Yet, while the aggressiveness and expansion of the Tiv is an undoubted fact of history, the somewhat arbitrary way in which the British attempted to prevent further colonisation of land by the Tiv in the 20th century took no account of the social and economic factors which produced the expansion, and in some cases actually worked to the disadvantage of the Tiv in relation with their neighbours.

The arbitrary fixture of frontier lines had various adverse effect on the Tiv. First and foremost farming was restricted to only land under Tiv control even when fertile lands lay waste in

nearby *atoatiev* territory. The range of crops had also to be limited to only those that would grow in Tiv territory.

Secondly, this had led to land shortage in southern Tiv, the Kunav area. The people's range of staple food crops was therefore limited. Their soils were poor. They therefore tended to grow ancillary food crops. This land shortage had also encouraged these people to migrate into distant *tar* or even into *atoatiev* territory.

Thirdly, these arbitrary boundaries between the Tiv and the *atoatiev* have heightened tension between the Tiv and the *atoatiev* particularly where the latter had gained at the expense of the Tiv as happened between the Tiv and Udam after 1912. The Tiv insist that they had established *de jure* authority over the land given to the Udam after 1912. And this is borne out by the Commission of Enquiry set up following the 1912 campaign by Lugard.

It must be noted that the Tiv do not normally develop ill feelings against *atoatiev* who allow them to farm their lands. The trouble begins when *atoatiev* have vacant land and the Tiv cannot get farmlands. This is the basic cause of Udam-Tiv border clashes on the southern and western Tiv lands.

Amongst those who wronged the Tiv most in boundary demarcation was Freemantle, the Resident, Muri Province 1914, and a Tiv antagonist. He opposed the gradual expansion of the Tiv in the eastern frontier that had gone on since mid 19th century. Yet this expansion had had the tacit approval of some British officers in early 20th century. These included Ruxton and Towe "who felt that the fertile arable land left uncultivated by the Jukun" was now being occupied by a "virile agricultural population". The Tiv consider themselves better farmers than the Jukun.

Freemantle imposed on himself a sacred duty not only to revive Jukun traditional institutions and power but also to prevent Jukun from from being engulfed by the Tiv.

In May, 1917, Freemantle ordered the Tiv to withdraw south and west of Akwana, Arufu, and Wukari, to where they had occupied when Gordon commenced penetration of the

eastern districts. The same policy was extended to the Tiv living close to Takum. And the expulsion of the Tiv from Jukun territory was completed in 1918.

The Tiv meekly accepted Freemantle's policy as the whiteman's way of dealing with the Tiv. They were confident that the land would eventually pass back to them. It was therefore needless disobeying the whiteman at this stage. The Tiv believed that since the Jukun were not good farmers they would surely not hold land for the fun of doing it. Time proved them right. The Jukun now allow Tiv to settle and farm amongst them.

Rowe was the first Resident of the newly created "Munshi" province on 1st January, 1918. He saw the plight of the Tiv, namely, the search for good farm lands. But there was very little he could do since Freemantle was his senior in the administrative hierarchy. At this juncture, D. Cator, the new Resident of Muri province came to Rowe's aid by suggesting that the Tiv be allowed to return to their farm but then they had to recognise the authority of the Jukun's Aku Uka. This was acceptable. The Tiv became the tillers of the land, the producers of cash crops and staple food while the Jukun exercised political control. The Tiv were content particularly that in Jukun territory they paid no taxes as did their kinsmen back home. Smooth Jukun/Tiv relationship continued until the era of "modern politics" in 1959 and 1960. When the 1959 Federal Elections Campaigning heated up the Tiv in Jukun were compelled to pay *aziki* tax or face expulsion. E.H.M. Counsell, Resident Benue Province, was of the opinion that the strain in Tiv/Jukun relationship resulted from irresponsible statements and promises from reckless politicians who frustrated people when their promises could not be fulfilled.

In 1920 Gordon tried to rectify the position by requesting the demarcation of a new boundary which would place all the Tiv in Wukari under the new Province. His efforts were however, frustrated by H.R. Palmer, acting Lieutenant Governor, Northern Provinces.

The Weakness of the Early British Administration

Many difficulties confronted early British administration in Tivland. And this hampered implementation of their policies.

The headmen for example, could not implement their tasks. These were to assist the British in the assessment of the population of the country, to collect taxes, and to explain to the people the objectives of British rule.

But most of the headmen, being devoid of traditional power and authority could do very little without the co-operation of the elders. And that co-operation was not forthcoming particularly because both the elders and the headmen were skeptical of the motives of the whiteman. Neither was actually willing therefore to give the British full co-operation. Also the headmen became lukewarm when neither their reward nor the nature of their duties was made clear to them.¹

To offset this difficulty the British at first tried to do most of the duties themselves, such as the collection of taxes. But they soon found that without the people's co-operation success would be minimal.

However, the officers undertook intensive tours to do tax assessment based on population. They divided *ityar* into lineage groups styled "clans" which were in turn subdivided into "kindreds" then units of "towns" further subdivided into "houses" or compound units.

But this was impractical, for the officers to travel round every district and count people in every compound. They therefore merely took a sample of the number in given compounds to determine the population. After that they relied on the information provided by the headmen. Bell had complained that three quarters of the time of the officers was being absorbed in counting people in Tivland. Yet neither accurate population nor true tax assessment was in sight. This suited the elders. They did not like being counted. They did not like paying heavy taxes. Under-estimation helped these desires.

¹ The payment of salaries to the British agents did not start until the 1920s. See Quarterly Report by Ruxton for Muri Province and Governor Bell's letter of 6th February, 1911, SNP. 7/13-6056/1919.

The headmen themselves were at the initial stage of the administration, puppets of their traditional leaders. This situation changed only after the 1920s.

The situation was thus confused by three groups exercising power at the same time in the society. There were the British, the minimal authority of the headmen, and the traditional authority of the elders. The pull by the British and the elders caught the headmen in the middle. And naturally their leaning lay with the elders. The result was that British power was ineffective.

Taxes were at first paid in kind: indigenous woven cloths — *tugudu*, benniseed, guinea corn unginned cotton, iron bars, pieces of camwood, matchets, knives and so on. The rate for *tugudu* varied from two to four shilings per piece. Only the Hausa settlers paid tax in cash. The first was at Katsina Ala in 1909 when a total of thirty pounds was collected that year.²

The Tiv did not pay tax until 1910 and this was in Ukum district. This was because Ukum was close to Wukari. A section of Ukum, Rumbuv, was already being governed as part of Wukari. It had been paying tax since 1906.

A bag of benniseed weighing about fifty pounds was valued about two shillings. The same weight of guinea corn was worth one shilling, while cotton was valued one penny per pound. Since these items of tax were produced locally collection of tax was not difficult. The majority of people did not risk getting into trouble so they paid readily. They thought they would be let alone in their independence if they gave the whiteman the products he needed. They thought the British stay was temporary and all should be done to keep them at arms length, including the surrender of crops and goods to the whiteman.

Another hurdle the British had was delay in giving official recognition to the administrative appointees. For example, some headmen served for several years without being officially recognised. We have an instance of Ashinya of Mbalagh who served as mere headman from 1912 to 1919 and died without

² *Muri Province Assessment Report 1909-1910* SNP. 10-5757/1909, N.A.K.

being officially recognised. This made such a headman, devoid of traditional power, and not recognised by the British, a laughing stock in his *ityar*. The result was that they were not in a position to help the administration as effectively as they should have done. Sometimes the administration itself created more problems by appointing two or more headmen for the same district. Recognition of any one of them became a problem. It generated local conflict and power tussle between the appointees. This tussle often led to unhealthy results. For example, a struggle between Ame and Amire over the headmanship of Iharev West, caused postponement of appointment of a District head for four years. The tussle was also largely responsible for Ame's eventual migration to the Idoma country. This means that at the early stage of the administration some districts had no official British representative. Consequently, the administration could not function properly in such places.

Dorward seems to have attributed these serious lapses in the early British administration in Tivland, particularly 1914-1919 to the outbreak of the First World War. This was when many experienced officers from Northern Nigeria were recalled to participate in the war.

I disagree with Dorward. What type of experience, for example, did he have in mind? Was it general experience in administration or the experience in understanding and dealing with the peculiar Tiv situation?

The latter experience no British officer could have claimed to have. If any had experience it must have been restricted to one or two *ityar*, and surely not the whole Tiv. The officers who governed Tiv between 1907 and 1915 were Captain C.F. Gordon, F.A. Ruxton, H.M. Brice-Smith, J.B.E. Mackay, C.F. Rowe, F.E. Malthy, A.C. Auchinlock and K. Hamilton. None of these governed or appeared to have understood the Tiv better than his successor. Their several assessment reports cited copiously throughout this work supported this argument. None of these officers attempted to study the Tiv or cultivate their friendship. They relied entirely on the information supplied to

them by the *atoatiev* who spoke vulgarised Tiv. These *atoatiev* had no knowledge of the people's social and political institutions.

Another point is that all through the British administration of the Tiv, shortage of staff had always been a problem. This was pointed out in 1907 by Captain C.F. Gordon. He complained that there were still large parts of Tiv still unvisited due to shortage of staff. He was then an Assistant Resident in charge of Muri Province. In 1910 F.A. Ruxton pointed out that "taxation of the Munshis was limited to the capacity of three officers to assess and collect", a clear case of staff shortage. K.P. Maddocks made it clear that the assessment of Iharev West district was not attempted until 1915 because of insufficient staff. Although the first tax was collected in Iharev West by the British in 1915 no village heads or headmen were appointed before 1918. That was the year Masev, Tyoshin, and sections of Utiondo on the southern bank of the Benue were arbitrarily merged into one district, Iharev West and placed under Audu dan Afoda, Sarkin Makurdi.

The fourth serious lapse was the inability of the early British officers to agree on the policy to be adopted. Nor would they take prompt steps to remedy a known mistake. For example, the advice of C.F. Gordon in 1907 that "the tribe should not be divided by administrative limits" was ignored. He also cautioned against relying on Jukun to help rule the Tiv.

It appears that there is a little chance of the Jukun kingdom being of much use in the administration of the country. The impression given by Jukun elders is one of the absolute indifference ... it might be possible if the Sarkin Wukari were supported by force to persuade the Munshi to obey him, but it would be a very long work and would have many setbacks.

This advice was rejected.

The administrative changes carried out between 1914 and 1926 affecting the Tiv, Palmer's and Freemantle's policies in dealing with the Tiv, showed clearly that the British officers had no common political programme to show how the Tiv people should be governed.

In addition to these setbacks in the administration, was the lukewarm attitude and aloofness of the officers in responding to reports against headmen during the war. None of the mistakes mentioned received any rectification before the 1930s. The point being made here is that although World War I affected movement of Northern Nigeria officers, it was definitely not a major factor in the weakness of the British administration in Tivland at this time.

An example was the refusal to investigate complaints. These complaints were referred by the officers back to the District heads. This meant that the bulk of the cases were still being handled by councils of elders not properly constituted. The idea that the District Officers did not want to get involved in the trivial quarrels of the Tiv simply meant that the officers were not prepared to face their duties properly,

Whatever the position, the British administrative inefficiency and indifference had various effects. For example, the policy of putting some *ityar* under Jukun king encouraged some local nationalism or ethnicity among the Tiv. The traditional leaders opposed alien rule symbolised by the Jukun although Jukun rulers did not oppress the Tiv. This resentment eventually led to the demand for the creation of the office of Tor Tiv in the 1930s. However, the Tiv did not object when British officers from the south made them sit with the Udam, their arch enemies, at conference to deliberate upon the common problems facing their communities. The leaders did not think much of these meetings which in effect favoured the Tiv. One of the Tiv attendants at these meetings, Ikyaagba Akpeye of Mbaduku believed that decisions taken at these meetings were meant for the Udam only. But these meetings were different from putting the Tiv under the Jukun whereby for example, from 1926 to 1932 some eleven *ityar* were paying taxes directly into the Jukun treasury at Wukari.

Secondly, the Tiv regarded being put under Jukun as a humiliation, an assertion that the Tiv were inferior to the Jukun. The Tiv distrust for the British and the *atoatiev* therefore increased.

In 1914 southern Tiv was returned to the control of Northern Nigeria but under Muri Province. In 1918 the administration united the Tiv with other *atouties* south of the Benue, namely, Bassa, Igala, and Jukun to form Munshi Province. In 1926 a Munshi Division was created and included non-Tiv speaking peoples in the southern districts of the Lafia Emirate. This means that the Tiv administration which had functioned in two divisions of Abinsi and Katsina Ala now formed the bulk of Munshi Division with Abinsi as its headquarters. In the same 1926, Benue Province was created and the Munshi Division became part of it.

Why were these administrative changes? Nobody knows. Possibly the government thought that bringing together all the pagan groups in the middle of the Benue would be better.

What is certain is that the changes did not improve the standard of administration in Tivland before the 1930s. The Tiv did not come into contact with the Bassa or other people who were in the same administrative unit with them. A lot of time was wasted carving out divisions and other units instead of studying the people and their political, economic and social organisations. G.C. Feasey, the District Officer in charge of Abinsi Division had cause to complain in 1922 that "at the present time the whole country is perturbed owing to the many changes which have taken place during the last few years".³ Administrative reformations merely on paper cannot, surely improve government. Yet the British would not stop it.

For in 1926 there was another administrative reform in which eleven *ityar* were brought under the control of the Jukun: Ikurav-Tiev, Ikurav-Ya, Turan, Mbagen, (Kusuv, Shorov), Tongov, Shitire North, Shitire South, Ugondo, Ukum, Etulo, and Katsina Ala. There was a strong resentment against this transfer particularly by Chief Agahinde of Kurav-Tiev, Chief Uza of Ukum and Agera of Ute, in Kunav, as well as some British officers, notably C.F. Gordon. Why Palmer, the Lt. Governor, Northern Provinces carried out this reform is not

³ SNP, 17/2-11160 Vol. 1 N.A.K.

clear. It is believed that he was greatly impressed by the ancient traditions of the Jukun and the authority of their rulers following his visit to Ibi in 1921. He was therefore eager to rejuvenate the past Jukun glory at all costs. One of the ways of doing this, he thought, was to put the troublesome Tiv under the Aku Uka of Wakari. Did he think the Jukun would succeed where the British had failed? It was clear he miscalculated. The scheme was a dismal fiasco. The Jukun showed little interest in the scheme. The Tiv were aware that the Jukun had no powers of coercion over them so they treated the Jukun with contempt.⁴ And so in 1933 the eleven *ityar* were withdrawn from Aku Uka's control. A Tiv Division was created the same year bringing together for the first time all Tiv under one authority, one Tribal Council, one common Native Treasury.

Achievements of the Early British Administration

Despite the several mistakes already shown in the first phase of the British administration, it would be absurd to suggest that the administration achieved nothing during the period.

Changes were brought about that directly affected the political, social, and economic life of the Tiv. The changes were gradual and impact became felt in the second stage of the administration.

The appointment of the headmen resulted in the change of status for such people. They became recognised as district chiefs with the title of Fifth Class Chiefs. Eventually their power surpassed those of the traditional leaders. They ceased to be puppets of the elders (as happened within the first decade of the British rule). Instead they exercised absolute power in their districts particularly in the 1920s.

D.C. Dorward assessed the position in a rather ambiguous and contradictory way:

Deprived of the active support of the district officers, the power of the corrupt and oppressive district heads, the officially recognised Native Authorities gradually waned. The people preferred to bring their

⁴ SNP. 17/2-11160, Vol. 1; SNP. 7/5331/1907 N.A.K.

complaints to the British officials, even though they generally had to "dash" or bribe the government messengers before they would gain access to the district officer and then were often referred back to their chiefs. The district officers did not want to become involved in the trivial quarrels of the Tiv, while the Tiv felt they would not receive justice at the hands of the district heads. Consequently the vast majority of the disputes continued to be dealt with by the traditional *ijir* or councils of elders".

This interpretation of facts is not completely acceptable. It is clear from the above quotation that the power of the district heads grew tremendously without being checked by the British officials. When people went to the British officers for justice and they declined to hear them, they were indirectly sanctioning the deeds of the district heads. The argument about getting involved in "trivial quarrels of the Tiv" sounds unreasonable. The truth is that the administrators would just not face up to their duties and responsibilities. The failure to investigate complaints against their agents made the chiefs powerful and despotic. Examples were Abuul Benga of Ukan, Ugba of Ugondo, Moji of Mbara and Abagi of Shangev-Tiev. K.P. Maddocks noted that Gbatar of Nongov was "autocratic and too overbearing and tactless in his dealings with his elders". And Aruse of Masev was an autocrat and as time went on he became more and more high-handed and tyrannical so that the elders now say that he has treated them as slaves". Tseva of Ukum received no less scorching comments. Another reason for the apparent growth of despotic powers of the District Heads was the establishment by Rowe of Native courts under warrant in 1918. This completely deprived the elders of the opportunity to participate in the judicial processes of their districts. It took time before Abuul Benga, Ugba, Moji, and Abagi were brought to book and punished.

In 1925, Ugba, the District Head of Ugondo was sent into exile in Kaduna for committing an offence. He had been appointed District Head in 1918. But he did not do his work well. He allowed his relations to do all that they wanted without checking them. There were many complaints against Ugba's

cousin, Moi Butu, which the British heard about but never investigated till 1925. Ugba's Hausa followers and relations were said to have seized people's property without compensation. In addition Moi Butu, in the name of Ugba, conscripted people to work on his farm. So intolerable was this misrule that some Ugondo citizens decided to migrate to the hills of Mdema in Jukun territory. Ugba reported this exodus to the divisional headquarters at Abinsi. In the meantime he ordered that all property of the immigrants be kept in his compound till they returned. But soon as the properties were brought Moi Butu instructed that they be sold. He kept the subsequent proceeds.

The incidents were reported to the British by the people of Mbamar district. Ugba was found guilty and deported. Paradoxically the news of this deportation was received with mixed feelings. For although he was blamed for not checking his cousin, his deportation created a vacuum in the performances of religious rituals in *tar* Ugondo for he was the most revered master of *akombo* in the area. Having acquired *biamegh* he had reached the zenith in religious matters. He was the *or akombo biam*, performer of the maximum religious ritual in his *tar*. So sudden was his removal that the elders not having consulted before hand could not easily find a successor.

Chief Moji Ikima of Mbara suffered a similar fate to Ugba's and there was Abagi who was hanged.

Abuul Benga of Ukan met a most disturbing end. He was allegedly a cruel man and a notorious slave dealer and autocrat. The official complaint against him was that he seized a man's cow but declined to pay him. He was tried and sent to jail at Katsina Ala where he took poison and died.

Why did he commit suicide? None is sure. But there are tales that the British were getting ready to prefer charges of murder against him. He therefore preferred suicide to further humiliation at the hands of the British. At the time a research for this book was being conducted in the early 1970s a son of Abuul was the District head where his father had once ruled.

The Tiv were satisfied, generally, with the way the British had disciplined the four erring chiefs. They therefore decided to

co-operate now with the British. The importance of all this was that the institution of District Headship had come to stay.

Not that the idea of *tor* was strange to the Tiv. But surely there was now a new form of *tor*, far more powerful than had ever been known. No longer would a *tor* rely on the elders and *akombo* powers but on the whiteman and the use of force. This force was exercised not for the sole purpose of the welfare of the people as had hitherto been the case but to please the British and promote the personal whims and caprices of the British agents. These agents had had no experience in administration. They therefore did no more than the wish of their master and their personal wish. This trend began in the 1920s and reached its zenith in the 1930s.

The new *tor* had an impressive outfit of authority, the size of which depended on the size of his territory. He had tax collectors, one or two policemen, messengers, and Grade D Courts came into being between 1918 and 1920. This brought along court scribes to keep records of court proceedings, cases tried, punishments meted out, taxes and other revenues. In due course prison yards were established in Katsina Ala and Abinsi to confine the convicted. Further a government treasury was established to cater for taxes, fines, and other revenues. This was at Abinsi.

The standard of colonial administration began to improve in the 1920s as indigenous literate men became employed by British officials. These men had been educated at Wannune Training Institute established in 1915.

The Institute had a curriculum similar to that of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) which stressed reading, writing, arithmetic and agriculture, particularly the production of cash crops.

And so the British could at long last communicate directly with the Tiv. Soon they too began to study Tiv language. Communications did therefore improve.

There were other changes: construction of more roads such as Makurdi town to European station 4 miles, Makurdi to Abinsi, 17 miles, Makurdi to Adum (Ankpa Road) 41 miles,

usable only during the dry season. Other trade routes were also maintained: Abinsi to Akwana, 35 miles, Katsina Ala to Wukari, 68 miles, Abinsi to Caa, 43 miles, Abinsi to Keana, 43 miles, Katsina Ala to Kassimbila, 44 miles.⁵

Also trial by ordeal and practices associated were abolished along with some traditional hunting methods considered dangerous such as *ibem* and *toho nanden*. Attempts to ban these had started as early as 1910 without success.

Next the administration now set out to regulate the conduct of people at market places. For example, persons were forbidden to carry arrows, spears, and knives into markets and social gatherings.⁶

Furthermore, the British administration in 1927 established Tiv Central Council at which all District Heads were periodically reminded of their judicial responsibilities to the people.

There was also the Central Council for Abinsi Division made up of eleven District Heads elected by twenty-four chiefs from Abinsi division. The Council also served as a Grade B Native Court with appellate powers over native courts in Abinsi division. The District Officer in charge of the Division was Chairman of the Council. The Sarkin Makurdi, Audu dan Afoda, was the Chairman of the *utor*. He had been made Sarkin Makurdi in the early 1920s and given a staff of office by the Governor in July, 1926. His function was to function as *Emir* over the Hausa settlers in Makurdi. This was later expanded to include control of Masev and Iharev known as Iharev West. The headmen appointed in Iharev Districts were under his authority until 1933. Audu dan Afoda, a Nupe and ex-agent of the Niger Company was appointed to have "an educative effect on the the Tiv". Whatever this "educative effect" means Audu was well known to the Tiv leaders. His appointment prompted a demand for a Tiv to become a *Tor Tiv*.

⁵ *Munshi Province, Annual Report*, SNP. 17/8c186 Vol. 1 1925 N.A.K.

⁶ *Tiv Central Council Rules and Orders Promulgated* GBODIV 2/259 N.A.K.

By 1929 the Central Council was meeting annually. It acted as an advisory committee to the British officers. It also acted as a consultative assembly on matters relating to Tiv as a whole. In effect however, the body was used merely as a platform for dictating British policy to the *utor*. A similar body was established for the Tiv districts in 1929 under Wukari Division.

Abolition of Exchange Marriages

Successive developments took place during this period. Firstly, exchange marriage, or *Kwase Musan*, was abolished in 1927.

The second was the launching of anti-*mbatsav* movement launched by the British against the Tiv in 1929. This was the *namaaka* or *haaka*, surrender your things, whereby implements such as *imborivungu*, used for religious rituals were confiscated. These included *ishiligh*, chain, and *nyinya utu*, night horse. These two developments had devastating effect on the Tiv society. They are still remembered today with nostalgia.

Marriages constituted the strongest ingredients of social cement that functioned to hold the society together. But a brief review of Tiv marriage system must be made to appreciate the total effect of the 1927 Abolition of Exchange of Marriage which the Tiv believe rocked their society to its foundation. There were various forms of marriage.

The most fundamental was *Kwase yamen sha ingor*, an exchange marriage whereby a daughter or sister was exchanged for another daughter or sister in the corresponding family. In addition a pig was given to the bride's family. Should an exchange woman prove more productive this had to be balanced by the giving of more women into the family that collected the less productive women. This often caused friction.

The second form of marriage was by payment of bride price, *kwase kemen*. The bride price was a cow or twenty pieces of cloth, *tugudu*. But this system had to be converted into an exchange marriage, *kwase yamen sha ingor*, within one year or the bride would be returned to her parents. So it all ends in exchange marriage.

The third was also an exchange marriage, *kwase yamen sha tondo ashe*, involving exchange marriage of a woman of a very bad character. Her marriage was preceded by an agreement in which a fowl was divided into two halves by the two contracting parties. Never would she be returned to her parents but she could be exchanged further into another family if she was found unbearable to the original husband. This practice was basically restricted to the Turan.

The fourth form of marriage was another payment of bride price, *kwase yamen sha akundu*. It was similar to the second variety. The bride price paid was normally twenty *tugudu* pieces. Were the marriage to be dissolved this dowry was divided between the contracting parties.

The fifth was marriage by elopement. This prevailed where *iyé* treaties existed between two *tar*. The youths of either *tar* could elope with maidens of other *tar* without resort to war. But as soon as the marriage had been contracted it was changed back into either exchange marriage or marriage by payment of bride price.

There was the sixth form of marriage, *kwase ukorun akor*, where a wife or daughter of another was forcibly seized from a distant *ityar* or *atoatiev*. It was a rare form of marriage practised largely by those who had no other means of marriage or by those who were passionately in love.

The seventh and final form of marriage was those of women captured in war. They became legitimate wives of their captors. Such marriage, when peace returned, was converted into exchange marriage. If however, the woman was captured from *atoatiev* the question of exchange system did not arise.

Added to these systems of marriage was the variety practised by the *Iharev*. Instead of exchanging, the girl would undergo a preliminary marriage in a neighbouring area with an *ikar*, a boy friend, and learn the rudiments of marriage, love making and household chores and then return to her parents. After that she would be given out in exchange marriage.

These marriages had problems. Firstly, there were at times no corresponding brides to exchange. This is now solved by

money economy. Secondly, in case of infertility the fertile woman and her offsprings would be reclaimed and exchanged elsewhere. Thirdly, the *iyé* marriages and forcible seizure of brides could degenerate into inter-*tar* wars that proliferated in the 19th century.

The idea of abolishing exchange marriages came basically from the Dutch Reformed Church Mission established in Tivland in 1911. The DRCM could scarcely convert any to Christianity. They knew not what to do. They considered Tiv traditional marriage systems as basic obstacles and so had to abolish the marriage system. And it was so done (Malherno, 1925).

By the abolition of exchange marriage the elders eventually lost control of the girls. And also the interlocking traditional obligations resulting from marriage snapped. The relationship between the father-in-law and the son-in-law no longer subsisted.

The effect of these became most prominent in the 1950s. Before then the elders still controlled the society and it was taboo to challenge them.⁷ British reforms generally took long to mature and up till today the *iyé* marriage system subsists.

However, when the British abolished exchange marriage, they tried to establish routine procedure for customary marriages. For example, the pre-marriage customary gifts to prospective parents-in-law were laid down: tobacco, a hoe, knife, *tiligh* or the yam fork, meat or fish, salt, *isha* (beads), and camwood. The mother-in-law was to be barred from receiving more than one pound and seven shillings. The father-in-law got cloth and *atumbe* huts made on his farm. The suitor paid five pounds in cash dowry for a virgin and four pounds for other category of women.⁸ While the maximum was fixed the actual amount paid depended on the means of the suitor. Furthermore all the marriages were to be notified to the local courts for recording.

⁷ The Several Ordinances relating to Tiv Marriages were later included in the Native Authority Ordinance, 23rd June, 1949, section 23(5).

⁸ In this wise *Iharev* brides would never qualify for more than four pounds!

Coercion of a woman into marriage was forbidden. She alone, could decide or otherwise, whom to marry. Subsisting *iyé* marriages were to be regulated by payment of bride price. No woman could be given out in marriage prior to her attainment of puberty. Provisions were also made for divorce and custody of children.

But soon the administration found that they could not enforce these reforms. The *utor* would not co-operate in enforcing the reforms which they did not consider important. They and their own kind stuck to the ways of the old. But gradually the British administration improved for the better.

The Namakaa Movement

The British believed that some of the Tiv religious practices were primitive and the antithesis of modern civilisation. They therefore took political action to change them. The crusade was to make the people surrender their "witchcraft equipment" to eradicate witchcraft.

Tales of cannibalism by the *mbatsav* or witches were of common knowledge. People were openly accused of killing by witchcraft at death inquests. What's more, the DRCM were finding it almost impossible to penetrate the Tiv staunch belief in *akombo* and *tsav*. It is possible that DRCM persuaded the British to investigate the ever mounting tales of the *tsav* activities. It was believed that any who had *tsav* and belonged to *mbatsav* organisation possessed some special equipment for witchcraft purposes.

But who did or did not actually possess equipment for witchcraft?

An answer to this could not be categorical. An arbitrary method was used to decide whom the culprits were.

The officers moved from district to district with police and requested each important elder to surrender his witchcraft equipment. If he denied having any the police flogged him after his hands and feet had been tied together. Thereafter they were left in the scorching sun for hours. Some were definitely

innocent. Others, to escape punishment got fake implements and surrendered them to the British.

Namakaa ended abruptly because of the *Saama* incident in Shitire-Tiev or Shitire North.

Oranyi had been accused of killing his cousin, Saama by witchcraft. After Saama's burial, Oranyi allegedly used a magic chain, *ishiligh*, and removed the corpse from the grave and shared it amongst the *mbatsav*. This story was appetising because it gave credence to the belief that the Tiv were cannibals, a theory the administration was determined to prove. Investigations into Saama's death however showed that death was due to natural causes. The theory that his body had been taken out and eaten was also thus disproved. But, ironically, the accusations against Oranyi persisted. However, *namukaa* ended.

The lesson it brought was that rumour should never be a guide for governing people. Patience and understanding should have been the watchword. And religion can never be understood merely by use of force against the people. *Namakaa* never made the Tiv deviate from their religion, the details of which is only understandable to them. For two years after *namakaa* the Resident, Benue province, C.S. Pembleton, had cause to say:

In the same districts (that is the eastern districts of Tivland) the District Officer has followed up his discovery in 1929 of the *mbatsav* organisation by tracing its members in the various family groups. Much further investigation remains to be carried out in similar lines in the western clans with a view, firstly to proving, as now seems likely, that this is the basic social and religious organisation of the tribe, and secondly, to the evolution of a scheme whereby its members may themselves be incorporated in the scheme of administration.

The idea of tracing *mbatsav* members in various family groups is strange because no one would ever openly admit that he had *tsav*.

Secondly, it did not appear that the British were conversant with what went on in the society. For example, they were apparently unaware of the anti-*mbatsav* movement launched by the people between 1926 and 1927. For unlike the *inyambuan*

movement of the late 1930s the 1926 and 1927 movements were not mentioned in the British reports. That 1926-1927 movement was called *kena*. According to the Mbaikaa elders *kena* originated in *tar* Ikurav-Tiev whence, one Abur brought it to Mbagen in the central Tivland. Others, notably elders in *tar* Nyiev claim that it originated from Mbagen.

Kena had two objectives: to provide medicine for a range of diseases and two to check the misuse of power by *mbatsav*.

The *Kena* master possessed necessary knowledge about disease curing herbs for various ailments. The herbs were crushed and made into liquid which was stored in a large pot over which a small roof of thatched grass stood. Beneath the ground of the hut a big pit was dug in which a person sat and played a big drum as the people came to drink from the pot of medicine inside the hut. The pit was covered up with planks so that no one knew the presence of the drummer below the ground. As people drank the medicine the drummer played. They interjected that *kena* was coming on a motor-cycle. Each person who went to drink had to pick up from a container a bambara nut with two fingers. Those who could not do so were termed witches. Those who picked were declared innocent. Another aspect was the massaging of the body in the stream. Generally, *kena* was meant to induce a witch to repent, and be ridiculed so that the witchcraft could be cast away.

Elders of Nyiev believe that *kena* did more against witches than other anti-witchcrafts movement except *hoyo*. *Kena* allegedly cured the sick and purged the witch. The movement was basically confined to the south-eastern Tiv. *Kena* was perhaps a reaction against the 1926-1927 locust invasion which was thought to be the handiwork of bad witches.

Effects of Political Changes on the Economic and Social System

Between 1915 and 1929 the changes introduced by the British were basically political although other changes were begun in the social institutions., such as in religion and marriage.

The effect these political changes had on the Tiv economy was tremendous. The British tried to change the economy to suit their own interest. Their basic aim was to develop lucrative trade and commerce.

The administration therefore encouraged the people to bring their goods: sheanuts, groundnuts, cotton, benniseed, pepper, ginger, and so on to the British trading stations for sale. The growth of benniseed for example, was therefore promoted. Between 1905 and 1910 benniseed production rose from 126 to 308 tons. Export rose in value from £887 in 1905 to £2432 in 1910.

Emphasis was on cash rather than staple food crops. But the development of cash crops did not develop as fast as was envisaged. Internal trade was by barter. Foodstuffs were exchanged for beads and other fancy cotton goods brought in by the Hausa.⁹ New goods promoted taste for better dress which necessitated more farming.

The basic aim was to let the Tiv develop commerce so that they could pay their taxes. But the British companies were reluctant to pay cash for commodities produced by the people. Often they offered prices well below the world market value. They also forced the indigenes to accept over-valued goods. This practice did not help in the collection of taxes because of shortage of coins. Most of the taxes therefore continued to be paid in kind and the administration had much difficulty in disposing of taxes collected that way.

In 1910 the British administration launched a vigorous campaign for the growth of more cotton to secure payment of taxes and to satisfy the demand of the British industry. It was assumed that since cotton growing was part of Tiv culture their response would be positive. The British Cotton Growing Association (BCGA) buying stations and experimental farm centres at Abinsi and Katsina Ala readily supplied cotton seeds to district officers who in turn promptly distributed them. Yet the exercise turned out a dismal failure. The Tiv refused to

⁹ *Nigeria Trade Statistical Abstract 1916 CO 660/4.*

abandon the cultivation of benniseed and their traditional cotton in place of the British cotton.

Several reasons explain this behaviour. The Tiv were generally skeptical of gifts from the British. So, while they valued the bags in which the cotton seeds were kept, they scoffed at the idea of being given free cotton seeds. This was more or less a psychological problem or the impact of the mental coercion from the British on their arrival. Their belief was that a whiteman's gift either had strings attached or was a worthless item. Their cotton seeds could not have been an exception.

The second reason against cotton was that it was normally too bulky to carry. Those far away from the station therefore did not relish the idea of travelling long distances conveying such commodities.

A third factor was that the people preferred their own cotton which was already in use in internal trade. But this the British found unsuitable for machine spinning. They rejected British cotton because they considered it inferior and therefore unsuitable for their local needs. Threads produced from British cotton were not as strong as those from indigenous cotton.

Fourthly, those who attempted to plant the seeds found that they would not germinate. This confirmed the view that a whiteman's gift could not possibly be of any use.

Fifthly, the people found that benniseed tended to yield much more and therefore fetched much more cash than cotton. There was also an intriguing argument that there was more labour required for cotton than that required for benniseed although it would be difficult to see how this could possibly be so.

Sixthly, in the second decade of the 20th century, growth of benniseed became a fashion, the surest way to quick money for payment of taxes. In the late 19th century, particularly around the 1880s the selling of benniseed to the British had been confined only to the Tiv living near Rivers Benue and Katsina Ala. In 1914 the Niger Company began to pay cash, for benniseed. By 1918 virtually all taxes were collected in cash

and no longer in kind. And by 1922 British coinage became available in all parts of Tiv. Benniseed continued its lead as cash crop but the output was not constant. In 1913 and 1914, for example, 1300 and 1500 tons respectively were produced. In 1915 the production was no more than 600 tons. In 1916 it rose to 1,600 tons but fell drastically in 1917 to 200 tons. It never again exceeded 1,500 tons.¹⁰

However, explanations exist for these fluctuations. Drought and war explain the 1915, 1917 and 1918 figures. Shipping was interrupted by German submarines. In 1917 and 1918 there had been an outbreak of yellow fever and British authorities placed Benue under quarantine.

There were other influences on the economy, namely the encouragement given to district heads to develop roads and found new markets¹¹. The government emphasized several times and stated in policy letters by the Chief Secretary the importance of markets. Administrators were therefore instructed to encourage the development of markets to help stimulate economic activity.

Some of the important markets in Tivland today were founded at this time. They include Adikpo, Abuul, and Akpagher, 1915, Abagi, 1917, Wannune and Kyado, 1920, Alirade, Ihugh, and Korinya, 1930s, and Agbo and Gungur, 1940s. With the establishment of commercial interests at Makurdi, Abinsi, Buruku, Katsina Ala, and Ihugh, the distribution of much needed commodities: salt and iron goods for example, became easier and the newly founded markets became the centres for securing them.

The markets became centres of communication and dissemination of information.

The construction of the eastern railway line cutting across Tiv country also stimulated economic activity in Tivland. About 28,000 Tiv became conscript labourers on the line and Resident Carlye thought that these conscript labourers would

¹⁰ *Nigeria Trade Statistical Abstract*, 1916 CO 660/4, 1917 CO 660/7, 1918, CO 660/7, 1919 CO 660/10, 1920 CO 660/10.

¹¹ Letter from the Chief Secretary, Northern Provinces, 2nd June, 1945, No. 36153/54/Makprof. 4/1-2780/S. 15, N.A.K.

increase the wealth of their land. Between January and March 1923, 3000 persons per month; April to July 2,600 persons per month were recruited. In August alone 22,000 persons were recruited but in September the figure dropped down 2,000 per month. In November and December the figures dropped to 1,000 per month.

Although thousands of Tiv labourers worked on the railway and later the Benue Bridge (1928-1931) their earnings did not add any wealth to the society. This is clear from the "Munshi" Province Annual Report between 1923 and 1948. It says in part:

Resident Carlye's anticipation that railway construction would increase wealth to Munshi have not been realised. The elder men, when questioned, state that the youngmen working on the railway spent or gambled away their money as soon as they got it, and the ubiquitous Hausa traders collected the greater part of it. Further enquiries showed that a quantity of fancy clothes and other goods were sold, but that considerable quantity of the labourers' money went to food and the price of which naturally rose during construction.¹²

Between 1920 and 1923 the railway line construction in Tivland was completed. The line north of River Benue to Kafanchan junction with the western line was completed in 1926.

It took about four and a half years to construct Benue Bridge opened on 24th May, 1932. The labourers were therefore, to their joy, retrenched. Some however stayed and continued to cook on the railway as labourers. New avenues, for earning a living other than traditional farm work, was now open in Tivland. This accounts for small communities of Tiv along Railway towns between Makurdi and Kaduna and Ibadan, Zaria, and Kano.

The Tiv now had contact with an entirely new *atoatiev* who greatly influenced them: Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, Nupe, as well as Europeans performing new roles. The Tiv now had a new way of life. According to D.N.H. Beck, the Resident, Benue Province;

¹² CSO. 20/12974 Vol. 1. *Munshi Province Annual Report (1923)*, N.A.K.

a problem of interest of both Tiv and Idoma Divisions is the growing influence of Ibos from the Southern provinces. Their presence is welcome in Tiv, where the influence of this virile and industrious people is daily making itself more strongly felt, the outward and visible sign being mainly the adoption of the southern dress fashion among the younger generations of Tiv, who are taking to shorts and coloured jumpers as to manner born.

These "younger generations of Tiv" were no more than those who had left their homes for the construction sites of the railway and the Benue Bridge. Whatever the position, the Tiv widened their horizon, and embraced the welcome change from the traditional to the new standard of living characteristic of western civilisation.

Agriculture was encouraged particularly by the opening of the Agricultural Centre, Yandev, 1926. Manure was introduced and the planting of trees against erosion encouraged. Nursery farms sprouted as years rolled by. However, no immediate visible change in the prosperity of the people was noticed. In 1926 and 1927 for example, there was famine in Tivland "owing to the failure of the yam crop and the ravages of the yam beetle".

Thus ended the first phase of the era of British chiefs, an era of trial and error, an era of changes at variance with traditional political system, an era that made it imperative to take stock of their political failure and start investigations into the social and political organisations of the Tiv for purposes of effecting change.

How did this happen? What changes were introduced? The answers are in the next Chapter.

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Chapter 9

The Era Of British Chiefs 2nd Phase 1931-1950

Complaints about the British administration in Tiv land were mounting day and night.

For example, at the Tiv Council meeting in Gboko on 10th and 18th November, 1932, the Resident, C.S. Prembleton noted that "Gwajime, an elder of Ingenev deplored the fact that the present officials were not always traditional leaders."

And also Mkovul, the District Head of Ipav, said that in former times a *tor* was selected by the elders. In recent years the tendency has been for youngmen to be appointed without the elders' consent.¹

There were also incessant complaints against the chiefs. At about 1930 therefore the British administration decided to inquire into the complaints and the nature of their traditional system of social and political organisation to help establish an effective government in Tiv. Reforms were subsequently carried out between 1934 and 1950.

These reforms are often attributed to Sir Donald Cameron, Governor of Nigeria at the time, and Captain R.M. Downes whose ideas about district administration in Tiv were put into practice.

Changes in District Administration 1932-1939

There were three main changes in the district administration: creation of new districts, establishment of kindred councils and clan native authorities, and change of personnel in district administration.

The policy of combining lineages arbitrarily into administrative units ceased. In its place traditional segmentation of lineages *ityar* were designated clans. There were fifty-five of them. In the 1950s two or more were added. To appreciate these

¹ Tiv Council Meeting at Gboko 16th to 18th December, 1932 CSO.26/3-24816, N.A.K.

developments it is necessary to go through the details. A total of nine major clans were divided into new districts.

- 1 *Ukum* which had been a single administrative district *tar*, in 1910 was now broken into four clans: Mbaterem, Ucha, Ingenev, and Torov.
- 2 *Shitire South* became two clans: Kpav and Gambe-Ya.
- 3 *Ukan*, like *Ukum*, also became four clans: Ikov, Mbagba, Mbaikaa, and Mbagwa.
- 4 *Nongov* was converted into three: Kaambe, Saghev, and Ndzorov.
- 5 *Masev* which had been formerly merged with Raav and Mbakpa popularly and erroneously called Tyoshin as Iharev West district, became three clans; Njiriv, Ingohov and Yonov. *Masev* was no longer part of Iharev.
- 6 *Iharev* was rescued from its haphazard organisation and became eight districts: Raav, Mbakpa, (Tyoshin), Nyeve, Mbagwen, Mbawa (Sherev), Mbasaan, Mbabai, and Mbadwem.
- 7 *Kunav South* emerged as five clans: Mbagbera, Mbayongo, Mbakaange, Mbaduku, and Ningev. The name *Kunav South*, was dropped. (Alford, 4-30904).
- 8 *Kunav North*, a large district, was disbanded into three clans: Ute, Mbara, and Tsambe. Tsambe was at first merged with Mbara as one district but assumed separate identity in the 1940s. Ningev in (7) above had suffered similar fate by being merged with Mbakaange.
- 9 *Gaav* continued to be ruled for sometime as one district until the 1940s when it became two clans: Mbavaa and Iwarev.²

Another important change was the establishment of kindred councils and native authorities for the clans.

One of the clans, Mbatieriv, may here be examined to appreciate the effect of the changes.

It will be recalled that Mbatieriv consists of two major lineages: Mbakentio and Mbadam which in turn are subdivided into five wards. Mbatieriv has seven kindreds. Each kindred had about three to five elders who constitute the Kindred Council.

² This was done in the 1940s.

Each Kindred Council had a spokesman. The seven spokesmen constitute the Native Authority for the Mbatierev Clan. One of the seven spokesmen became the spokesman for the whole of Mbatierev Clan Native Authority. As K.P. Maddocks points out:

While matters of importance will be brought before a Clan Council consisting of the sum of the kindred councils; this council will be the Native Authority of the Clan. It will be the counterpart of the Tor, to act as its mouth-piece and chief executive.

This arrangement applied to every *tar* except Turan which had a Federated Council. This means that Nyiev, Maav, and Kendev, did not have clan status or kindred council or clan Native authority.

The explanation was that sections of Turan, notably Mbaikor and Nyiev, were geographically separated into great distances. This may be true but there were sections, such as Nyiev and Maav, which could have been given clan status without difficulty.

Generally, the creation of the councils and subordinate Native Authorities decentralised power. The system suited traditional ideas of administration. It established better channels of consultation than hitherto.

Mbatierev Clans Spokesman: Igbagun

Sub-Clan	Kindred	Elders	Spokesman
Mbakwentio	1. Mbasor	Agir, Adegha, Akaadza	Adegha
	2. Mbatseva	Anga, Gyedam, Wandor, Adumeko	Gyedam
	3. Mbabor	Iyoryina, Abana, Yina, Gbo, Igbagun	Jugu
	4. Mbanyam	Agoigo, Ayongor, Jugu	Jugu
	5. Mbavande	Nyaku, Ayangum, Gundu	Gundu
Mbadam	6. Mbakyase	Gbaiko, Abo, Dav	Dav
	7. Mbaijor	Apecha, Kwaghvihi Agbenga	Agbenga

The changes made wider participation possible. Power was no longer in the hands of one person, such as the district head in the earlier stages of British rule. Administrative personnel were no longer the young but the choice of the elders. Four drum chiefs, at least, participated in the new administration: Akaa Ude of Nyeve, Tiokatiover of Ikov, Gbagir of Torov, and Kyado of Mbaterem. There were other *utor* in the helm of affairs: Igbinde (Utange), Tseva (Mbaterem, and later, Kyado), Sankera (Ingenev), Chafu (Ucha), Abayol (Mbagwa), Ikpaikpam (Mbagba), Akume (Mbagen), Kaaungwa (Kusuv), Agbinda (Shorov), Wannongo, and later Usaka (Shangev-Ya), Ikpato (Nanev), Numbe (Mbabai), Kuju (Uvir or Mbasaa), Nyam (Mbadwen), Tyough (Mbawa), Jato Aka (Turan), Agenebe (Kpav), Depin (Gambe-Ya), Kokoiwen (Mbayion), Boagundu (Mbatie) Amarafu (Tongov), Aruse and later Aliade (Ingohol), Ikyari (Njiriv), Aduku (Yonov), Tsuwa (Shangev-Tiev), Korinya (Gaav), Gbaa-ondo and later Uchi (Mbakor), Tor Dwem (Gambe-Tiev), Lan (Mbagbera), Ikyagba (Mbaduku), Adema, and later Agbo (Mbakaange), Agera (Ute), Adeyongo (Tsambe), Washungu (Ikurav-Ya) and Mede (Mbara).

From these names and the *tar* which they represent, it will be seen that traditional and governmental powers were now merged. Dual authority thus vanished. The elders, having regained some lost ground, were content with the new dispensation of power. Their role provided checks and balances in each district. The spokesmen representing several kindreds in a clan could easily veto the arbitrary decisions of the clan spokesman. Complaints were now brought to the councils and authorities with the confidence that justice would be done. Yet Dorward held the view that the reforms were a complete failure. The Tiv thought otherwise.

The Resident, G.S. Pembleton, now suggested the bringing together of all Tiv and the building of a centrally placed headquarters for them. The idea was opposed by some prominent British administrators notably C.D. Lethem, the Secretary Northern Provinces, and the Governor H.B. James who thought that such a scheme would weaken Wukari Native

Authority, or at best prove a dismal failure. But the scheme succeeded because it had the support of Governor MacDonald Cameron. The site was, Gboko, the name of the hills south of the town, and construction work began in 1932. The buildings were completed in February 1934 and opened officially³ on 18th April, 1934.

Here all the central council meetings were held. The meeting actually began to be held in Gboko before the town was officially opened.

Corrupt and autocratic chiefs were removed by being voted out along with their scribes. The Tiv regarded the spokesmen as chiefs while the administration regarded them as no more than mere spokesmen.⁴

The clan councils and clan Native Authorities acted as Grade D Courts as well. They had law enforcement agents: messengers, policemen and scribes. They had jurisdiction over simple matters: petty brawls, stealing. The serious cases were taken to the central council in Gboko composed of all the spokesmen from each clan. It was a Court of Appeal of Grade B status.

It dealt with all matters criminal or civil and matters of customary law save those involving death, witchcraft etc. These were handled by the Provincial Magistrate Court, Makurdi:

The people were satisfied with these new arrangements.

Yet Dorward, unjustifiably attacks these R.M Downes reforms viciously, particularly in Chapter X of his thesis:

Moreover, in 1934, almost at the beginning of the reorganisation, the Government in response to the demands of the elders, had widened the membership of the Clan Councils to include all the kindred elders, not just the kindred *utor* or spokesmen." This proliferation of local government units tended to encourage parochialism and accentuate the

³ *The Annual Report for Benue Province, 1934, Vol.1, SNP.17/3-23595, N.A.K*

⁴ This perception reechoed in the Government White paper on Tiv Native Administration, 1965: "The administration attempted to make it clear that those members of the subordinate Native Authorities and Native Authority Councils were not chiefs but mere spokesmen for their groups with no inherent authority." A White paper on the Government's Policy for the Rehabilitation of the Tiv Native Authority, Kaduna (1965) page 3.

disjunctive proclivities inherent in the lineage structure, while the inclusion of all the kindred elders on the clan councils made it difficult for the district officers to control these assemblies.

The first is that the members were too many since all the kindred elders were later allowed to participate. There is no evidence to support this assertion because at no time were the elders given umbrella liberty to participate in the meetings. Only a few elders were chosen to participate. Even as late as 1937 the last districts to be reorganised still made a limited selection of the elders.

The second argument relates to the first, size: that because of the large size of the assemblies the District officers could not control them.

Since 1915 when the British administration began Tiv country never had more than six District officers. It would have been humanly impossible for a District officer to have been able to hold daily discussions with the elders in every *tar*. But if Dorward meant that District officers were often embarrassed by a barrage of questions from the elders in a particular area while the officers were on tour then that was an entirely different matter.

In such cases the elders had been specifically invited by the spokesmen to meet and honour the D.O. who would then invite questions. Often the questions were stage-managed by the *utor* – who were afraid to ask the questions themselves. The elders greatly appreciated these meetings. The meetings gave temporary satisfaction to the people although the resultant achievements might have been minimal. For certainly the meetings instilled confidence in the administration.

Dorward also argued that the D.O.S reported about complaints of discrimination against the majority by the minority groups. What these complaints were is not known but suffice it to say that amongst the Tiv discrimination is *Kwaghbo*, a wrong, because in traditional belief such practice violates good-brother hood. Dorward need not therefore be taken seriously. Was Ugba not punished even for the wrongdoings of his cousin?

Dorward again argued that co-operation within councils broke down and the minority lineage groups demanded and were usually granted recognition as independent clans.

He cites in support of this argument colonial reports in respect of Mbagen, Sherev, and Utiondo, districts. It is clear

here that Dorward and the colonial officers whose reports he cites are ignorant of the Tiv lineage system.

For example, Mbagen was a large district in 1909, made up of Kusuv, Shorov, and Iwanev. The first two in the 1935 re-organisation wanted their own *tar* or clan. They had had large following prior to the advent of the British. They were only remotely related to the Mbagen. There was therefore no cause for their being lumped together with the Mbagen. The Utiondo and Sherev were in a similar situation. The same reason justifies the split of Ukum. Yet Dorward complained that;

This disintegration of clans led to a further fragmentation of the administrative structure, e.g. Ukum, which got split into Ucha, Mbatercm, Ingenev, and Torov with estimated populations of 5027, 4673, 9247, and 7827 respectively.

This argument does not suggest that Dorward was fully aware of the actual size of Ukum territory. The Ukum territory was large and the re-organisation promoted efficiency in the absence of adequate communication.

Dorward stated the obvious in arguing further that the District officers had difficulty in controlling the elders, "who appeared perversely unwilling to take an active interest in those aspects of native administration which government officials regarded as important". Such as the enforcement of government regulations of exchange marriages, prohibition of mass communal hunting etc. Truly the elders had been skeptical of the British motives. They had therefore withheld their co-operation. But the position had been now changed.

The elders were aware of their position which they now manipulated to restore their traditional way of life. Why should they co-operate with the British in enforcing measures aimed at destroying their own culture? To the Tiv, the British rule was no more than partially good at this time, a partial return to the *status quo*. It was better than nothing. Hence it was acceptable.

Dorward raised the point also that the elders never bothered to attend sittings of the clan native authorities and that the attempts to reward them financially by paying them stipends yielded no fruits.

There were definite reasons for this behaviour by the elders. The elders were still in control of the land and they considered their traditional functions - attendance of *amar* ceremonies, *akombo* rituals, *ijir* gatherings more important than the all British affairs councils.⁵

This was not an attitude the basically "worthless" British coins could change.

Dorward contends further that the failure of these meetings made the D.O. to lean more on the spokesmen who in time became as autocratic as the district heads before them. To some extent Dorward is here correct.

The spokesmen, corrupted by power had now become colonial agents rather than representatives of the elders and the people. But the reaction of the D.Os were premature; the reorganisation had not been given time to settle.

They rashly prevailed on some spokesmen believed to be inactive to appoint some young men to act as "executive officials" and assume duties as spokesmen under the title of "principal elders". They exerted influence on the affairs of the *tor*. They were called the chiefs's feet, *angahar a utor*.

The D.Os possibly did not fully understand the implications of this policy. However, it had three important consequences for the people.

Some of these *angahar a utor* went far beyond their briefs and in the name of the *tor* and blackmailed and oppressed people. A classical example would be Ugba's cousin already discussed. This behaviour confused district administration.

Secondly, the new policy sharpened the craze for power by ambitious persons who acted in this capacity. In the course of time, whenever a vacancy existed they became claimants to chieftaincy titles in their districts. Their qualification, they argued was that they had once acted or performed duties for the *tor*.

Thirdly, as the persons who acted were normally relatives of the *tor*, people began to fight for the retention of the chieftaincy in their families, a fight for hereditary rule contrary to Tiv custom. Yet this has been the pattern of chieftaincy struggles between 1940 and today.

⁵ But if there were meetings instituted and the meetings were not being attended, had the institution not failed?

No names have been suggested by Dorward or any colonial administrator as to who usurped power. However, if there was any usurpation it might have been due to the encouragement of the British or the neglect of such power by the leaders whose power was usurped. Concrete examples of misuse of power by spokesmen at this period is lacking although Akiga mentions some chiefs, for example, Tordwen of Gambe-Tiev and Jato Aka of Turan, as wicked rulers.

But there is no evidence that they misused their power. The elders interviewed in Gambe-Tiev and Turan had nothing against Jato Aka.

It is therefore difficult to accept the idea that Captain R.M. Downes' scheme failed. If the failure is measured by non-implementation of British regulations then that is a different matter. But to go so far as to claim that the failure of the scheme led to dissatisfaction which eventually culminated in the *inyambuan* movement of 1939, would be a great mistake. Captain Downes' scheme was welcome. Other causes must therefore be found for the *inyambuan* cult.

The Inyambuan Movement, 1939

This anti-*mbatsav* movement, *inyambuan* or *ageregenyi* took place in 1939, two years after the district reorganisation had been completed. It is believed to have originated from the Etulo who lived on both banks of River Katsina Ala and by Katsina Ala itself. A cripple, Shiki, was said to have originated the cult.

The aim of the movement, like other anti-*mbatsav* movement such as *hoyo* and *ijov*, was to restrict the *mbatsav* from their misuse of power, to help guard the lives of innocent people, and to render corpses useless for *mbatsav* consumption.

Inyambuan potion was itself a concoction of uncooked eggs, beer brewed and mixed with herbs and moulds of some kind of ants (*O-O*) and hot pepper.

Those who drank *inyambuan* had to confess their witchcraft activities and surrender their witchcraft equipment (if any) or they would die. There is, however, no acceptable evidence of

anybody dying from it.⁶ Those initiated into the cult received its insignia from the master: *akpagher* made of leather (*ikovur*) and a fly-whisk (*tsa*). A person who drank *inyambuan* allegedly became equipped with necessary power of detecting persons with *tsav*.

The movement was second only to *hoyo* as the best known of the *anti-mbatsav* movements. Primarily it was not aimed at toppling the British administration in Tiv but it did disrupt its services in several ways.

The trouble with *inyambuan* crystallised in the detection of *ijebu*, that is a counterfeit human being. Those who drank *iyambuan* became hysterical and deliberately took advantage of that situation to harass those they did not like or those whom they suspected had *tsav*. Consequently, a number of unpopular old men, women, British officials, especially the most hated policemen, tax collectors and messengers were called *ijebu*.

There is no evidence that any spokesman was treated this way. There was however, a breakdown in government functions in some districts because the officials could not move about to work lest they were branded *ijebu* and chased away by the *inyambun* drinkers who hated them. The *ijebu* were best detected at night, the day break of witches. There were however good officials who went about their work unmolested. They included, in the district of Mbagbera in Kunav, Baaki Zege of Mbaikye, a policeman, and Ameendyar Awarga, a messenger. But other officials under *tor* Tsua Adaaku were afraid because of the ill treatment they had previously meted to people.

To prevent *mbatsav* from eating corpses the *inyambuan* adherents delayed burials contrary to tradition. The corpse was instead put near the grave and guarded day and night until it began to decompose. Ashes were then put on the body which was in turn broken up by clubs and matchets to render it inedible to the witches. The corpse was then buried in pieces, a most

⁶ The only evidence of death from drinking *inyambuan* is a report made by District Officer, Underwood from Wukari. Beck: *Annual Report, Benue Province, 1939* SNP.17/3-32056, N.A.K.; Northern Nigeria Provinces Report 7th August, 1940 CSO. 26/4-36217 N.A.I. None of the persons interviewed by me recollected any death from drinking *inyambuan*.

primitive and barbaric way of honouring the dead. One does not doubt however, whether the corpse of a distinguished person could have been treated this way.

The *inyambun* cult, like any other anti-*mbatsav* movement, had a principal master who initiated people into the cult. A man desiring to be an *inyambuan* master first of all goes through the ordinary ceremony. He would then go to the principal master, sacrifice a chicken and pay four pence. After this he ate ritual meat and was then let into the *inyambuan* secrets. After this he could set up his own initiation group made up of a host of officials: police, messengers, pastors, doctors, and missionary sister. The master himself had the title of *tor*.

The rise of *inyambuan* itself as well as this hierarchical structure has caused many to regard the movement as anti-authority or as a revolt against the indigenous men to whom the British had given authority to rule the districts.

Dorward in fact suggests that:

The movement was directed against the clan spokesmen and executive officials, the representatives of the colonial government. Though there were no physical attacks... during *Nyambuan*, the Tiv not only attempted to overthrow the representatives of colonial authority, they tried to establish an alternative organisation of their own.

This interpretation is unacceptable.

The *inyambuan* was a religious movement, anti-*ambatsav*, and a partial demonstration against the increasing missionary interference in the vital aspects of the people's life. In this wise it is possible to conclude that the movement was anti-British or anti-authority since the missionaries were tools of the colonial administration. The movement tried to ridicule the teaching of missionaries and to show that salvation could come from a place other than the missionaries.

The argument that the movement was religious is strengthened by three further reasons.

Inyambuan was not the first anti *mbatsav* movement in Tiv history. There had been *hoyo*, *ijov*, and *kena* long before it, and *ivase*, *kumendur* after it. All these movements centred on

containing the activities of *mbatsav*. Why should *inyambuan* be considered differently?

The second reason is that *inyambuan*, like other anti-*mbatsav* movements before it, was not universal in Tiv land. The effectiveness of it differed from *tar* to *tar*. Iharev said they merely heard about it. Masev was not affected either.⁷ The claim that all government function was halted by *inyambuan* was an exaggeration. Anti-*mbatsav* movements are continuing phenomenon in Tiv.

The third reason is the manner the movement's activities were executed. The execution tended to show that it was basically a religious and not a political phenomenon.

The political traits, if any, were quite mild and distinct for example, from the political outbursts of 1947 Makurdi riots, 1959, 1960, and, 1964, political killings and arson and the *akemityough* when the opponents of the people, including government officials, were openly attacked in their homes and their houses were looted or burnt or both and people's throats were slashed. If the 1939 movement was political what could have possibly prevented the British officials from being attacked and killed?

The officials harrassed as *ijebu* deserved that treatment because of their wickedness. That harrassment was no more than a by-product just as a student's demonstration would end up in destruction of property. In the same manner some people took advantage of *inyambuan* to unleash their long pent-up anger against policemen who, for example, had flogged them for non-payment of tax. Such policemen would have *tsav* since *tsav* liberally means bad traits of behaviour, evil, or generally, misuse of power. The *inyambuan* practitioners therefore tried to overawe the officials to check their excesses in the performance of their duties.

On the other hand evidence suggests that the movement was directed against missionaries. The words used to denote offices

⁷ The administration claimed that the movement spread to Ogoja in the south within five months of its existence: Secretary Eastern Provinces in a letter of 2nd October, 1939 to the Chief Secretary. Lagos, CSO.26/4-26217, N.A.K.

held by the adherent were both secular and religious. *Tor*, *duger* and *masenja* (chief, policemen, and messenger) were secular while *ortwer* (doctor), *ortese* (pastor) and *atese* (missionary sister) as well as the instruction given to those initiated into the cult seemed to be more religious in character. The latter sounded strangely similar to the teachings of the Dutch Missionaries.

The words used in the initiation ceremony by the master as indicated by E.C. Cassaleggio were as follows:

You are a bad person. If you do not throw away all your magic you cannot drink this *inyambuan*. You must throw away the medicine which kills people. If you drink this you will become strong so that nothing will harm you. If any one gives you poison and you drink it, you will not die. If you tread on a snake and it bites you, you will not die but the snake will die...

The leaders of the *inyambuan* gave the people to understand that the offering they brought and the medicine which they drank would give them eternal life.

The Tiv indeed had cause to be uncharitable to the missionaries. Missionaries interfered in the affairs in a way that affected the basic structure of their life. An example was the abolition of the exchange marriage in 1927. The missionaries even taught people to abandon *akombo*. The missionaries often took steps to enforce physically their own teachings. In the 1930s and 1940s a missionary nicknamed Ortese Agee, because of his physical strength, often took a whip with him on Sundays to flog Tiv farmers to make them stop work. Elders of Ipav, living close to Mkar, the headquarters of the Dutch, assert that they suffered most from these floggings. Sometimes Ortese Agee seized their implements. The Tiv strongly resented missionaries for condemning the Tiv way of life and for inciting their children who attended the church to rise against their fathers. The *inyambuan* movement therefore warned the missionaries that ways of attaining salvation were more than one.

Tales are told about the *inyambuan* movement to show that the Tiv are lawless people who would always resent constituted authority. That the Tiv themselves were used to halting the movement testifies to its political nature.

One of the factors often neglected in the study of *inyambuan* just like other *mbatsav* movements is its economic aims. The masters of the cults by their own standards must have found the movements very lucrative. These financial rewards could have been secured in three ways.

Each initiatee paid a fee of one penny. Secondly, all those who desired to get mastery of the cult paid four pence each. Thirdly, the masters often received gifts whether in money, food, or clothings from their customers. Why these gifts were made is not clear. Were the gift made to secure some favour? What favour? What is certain is that some of the masters were able to secure enough cash from the proceeds of the initiation ceremonies to pay bride price for an extra wife or to buy livestock for rearing. These are signs of wealth and comfort but their economic status did not grow more than otherwise. There was, for example, no master who had enough to get the title of *chaghuor*, that is a person of substance and economic power. The fortunes of the masters, if any, were shortlived. The British clamped down on the organisation and some of the masters and their followers were clamped into jail for a year or six months.

The British understood the *inyambuan* cult as the collapse of the Captain Downes' scheme, a failure of the administration in the districts. There was therefore the need to think again.

The inquiries into Tiv Traditional organisation were begun in January 1940 and completed in March 1941 by two officers, D.F.H. MacBride and J.S. Syngé. They produced MacBride's "Tiv Tribal Administration Progress Report of 6th May 1941.

MacBride found that the true leaders of Tiv were the traditional religious heads whose authority depended on traditional succession from the first fathers of the people but that these people had hitherto remained in eclipse for fear of missionaries. MacBride stressed that the true rulers of the people were the patriarchs or lineage fathers who held their positions in the society because of their direct descent from the founder of their respective segmentary lineages. These patriarchs formed a pyramid of authority from the clan to the lowest unit in the land, *va* or compound. The position of the patriarch, MacBride said,

centred on religious cults, the most important being *swem*, the paramount *akombo* for the whole clan.

These findings were neither new nor different from the Downes Scheme. But in February 1942 Mr. MacBride proposed the abolition of the Downes kindred councils and the office of spokesmen. They were to be replaced with a scheme based on the system of lineage fathers or patriarchs. Yet this was no more than restating Downes. Having patriarchs at whatever level, *tar*, *ityo* or *ya* was necessarily centred around the government by elders. The words fathers, patriarchs, spokesmen, mean the same thing. They all refer to people, and the people who had power in the society to determine who is a father or patriarch were the elders themselves. The elders knew who were the *uter*, singular, *ter*, in their segmentary lineages.

Secondly, MacBride's idea that *swem* was the most potent *akombo* could not be true. *Swem* had its role just as *akombo* had.

For example, people swore on *swem* in pleading their innocence in *mbatsav* affairs but should a person be attacked by *swem* manipulation, the *akombo* man was called upon to repair the damage. *Swem* is not a paramount *akombo* like *biamegh* or a fertility cult like the *ilyum* rite, both of which required the attendance of all the elders in the land.

The MacBride scheme was implemented in Tiv⁸ in the 1940s. But the Downes Scheme was still followed although on paper MacBride claimed that this was something new.

Each clan or district had a *tor* or *ter* and every kindred in the *tar* selected its *ortaregh* to represent it in the clan council meetings. A kindred that was too small to have *ortaregh* was represented by its tax collector(s).

The only new element in the MacBride plan was the Intermediate Councils made up of clans having common ancestors. The scheme began in 1942.

Jechira Intermediate Council was the first to be established with headquarters at Vandeikya. It was composed of all *utor* in

⁸ Tiv Intermediate Councils and Courts Makprof. 4/1-5428, N.A.K.

the clans who claimed Jechira origin. The *utor* then elected a senior leader, the *ter*, patriarch or father of Jechira people. It functioned also as a Grade C Court, a more or less appeal court of all the clans within Jechira area.

Other clans which MacBride named Ikwande, Jemgbagh, Ukum, Shittire, and, Tongov; and Iharev, Masev and Nongov had their intermediate Councils with headquarters at Manor, Ambor, Sankera, and Abinsi. Soon titles *Ter* Jemgbagh, *Ter* Sankera, *Ter* Abinsi came into being. The *uter* or chairmen were Feese Akpeye for Jechira, Mkovur Jegera for Jemgbagh, Ge Akpa for Ikwande, Kukwa for Sankera and Agaigbe for Abinsi.

The MacBride plan did not reduce the number of elders participating in the affairs of the clan. And so the District Officers still had to deal with a huge number of elders whenever they toured the districts. The *tor*, *mbatarev*, and tax collectors could hardly restrain the people from meeting the District Officer or from asking him questions.

The most useful development of the plan was that it reduced the functions undertaken annually by the Central Council meetings at Gboko. This included functions of a Grade C Court.

This gave the *Ijirtamen* members enough time to hold adequate consultations on the general welfare and economic problems of the people. No longer were they tied down to petty problems from the districts.

Since the changes did not destroy the Downes Scheme they were readily accepted and implemented by the district authorities. Political stability was thus readily restored. But this was at the instance of the people rather than the handiwork of MacBride. The initiative and experience gained by the people since 1932 made it possible for them to bring things back to normality.

The Appointment of a Paramount Chief, the Tor Tiv

How the demand for this office started is not clear. What is clear is that the agitation was basically political and nationalistic, a local nationalism unwittingly ignited by the British when they put Tiv under alien rulers: Aku Uka of Wukari and Audu dan Afoda, the Sarkin Makurdi.

The Tiv, naturally, protested when in 1926 eleven of their districts were put under the Aku Uka of Wukari.⁹ Not that the Jukun king oppressed them, but all the same they resented paying taxes into Jukun treasury at Wukari.

The anger boiled further when Audu dan Afoda was appointed Sarkin Makurdi and certain districts in Iharev and Masev were put under his control.

To make matters worse the administration tried to enhance the prestige of Audu dan Afoda at the expense of Tiv elders when, in 1927, he was appointed Chairman of Abinsi Central Council of Chiefs. This appointment earned Audu respect and power about which the Tiv, and particularly the *utor*, were most unhappy.

As has been pointed out earlier, Audu dan Afoda was an ex-headman during the construction of the Benue Bridge at Makurdi. The complaints against Audu were that he was a Nupe, others thought he was a Hausa or Yoruba, but surely a non-Tiv; that he was proud; and that he was corrupt, especially in handling court cases. Pressure therefore mounted that a Tiv should replace Audu.

The Tiv were fully aware of the respect accorded non-Tiv rulers such as the Aku Uka of Wukari. They therefore argued that a *Tor* Tiv representing the Tiv should earn the same honour, respect, and dignity.

The western educated Tiv, particularly the teachers and scribes led by Oradi Ugba, Akiga Sai, and Iyorkar Ako, were behind these agitations. They induced their *utor* to press the matter with British authorities.

The first chief to raise the matter with the British was Jato Aka, the District head of Turan. This was at the *Ijirtamen*, the Tiv Central Council Meeting of May 1934. (*Ijirtamen* literally means the Supreme Court -). Jato Aka claimed that the Governor had approved his being *Tor* Tiv when the Governor visited Gboko in May 1933. He therefore wanted the D.O., J.J. Emberton, to confirm it. Jato Aka said that this was necessary

⁹ See files SNP. 17/2-11160 Vol.I and SNP.718-5313/1907, N.A.K.

because he had planned to appoint a school teacher at the Benue Middle School, Katsina Ala, Iyorkar Ako, to be his representative in Gboko and Oradi Ugba as his officer in-charge of financial matters.¹⁰

Although the other *utor* at the meeting welcomed the idea of a *Tor Tiv* they were embarrassed because Jato Aka had not consulted them before raising the problem. They refused to back him. His motion was accordingly defeated.

Governor Cameron later denied Jato Aka's story. He blamed Iyorkar who was the interpreter at the time of his visit and he even demanded that Iyorkar be punished.

Between 1934 and 1936 there was, apparently, no further agitation for the office. Possibly the administration suppressed further discussion in view of the Governor's anger with Iyorkar.

But the issue came up again in 1937. And in a different way: a demand for appointment of a Tiv who would chair all the Tiv Central Council Meetings at Gboko. However, the discussion was quickly closed firstly, because the members were divided on the matter and secondly, the D.O. himself who always presided at these meetings did not like the idea.

But the idea did not die. Between 1937 and 1938 it gained momentum and even a number of people tried to promote their candidature. Foremost amongst these was Oradi Ugba. In 1938 the 'Ijirtamen' positively demanded the appointment of a *Tor Tiv* to represent the Tiv at the Conference of Chiefs in Kaduna. But the administration turned down this demand. The pretext was that the demand did not reflect the majority view of the Tiv people.

In parenthesis it may here be pointed out that the Tiv consciousness of their Tivness had been on since their sojourn in the hills during the early phase of their movement. The Tiv have always been conscious of their separate and distinct existence which, as this study shows, they would fight, and fight fiercely to protect. Tiv nationalism, therefore has been natural and the British played no role in developing it despite Professor Justin Tseayo's claim to the contrary. It is however true that the British

¹⁰ Minutes of the Tiv Central Council Meeting, May 1941. CSO.26/3-28416 Vol.1. N.A.I.

encouraged the politics of ethnicity amongst the Tiv as shown in the examples of Audu dan Afoda and the case of Aku Uka of Wukari. Possibly, Professor Tseyayo regards politics of ethnicity and ethnic consciousness as one and the same thing. Whatever his thoughts, his definitions do not advance them. According to him:

By ethnic consciousness I mean the awareness of and acceptance by an ethnic group of others; the exclusive tendencies of the former, based on awareness of their corporate identity, to treat all other ethnic groups as outsiders (Tseyayo, 1975:22-23).

This "definition" also agrees with what I had earlier said.

Dialectics aside, the political instability created by the *inyambuan* movement in 1939 put off the *Tor* Tiv Agitation temporarily. But soon thereafter, in the 1940s the demand was back.

For example, in September 1944 the *utor* assembled to welcome the Governor, Sir Arthur Richards, to Gboko, confronted him with the demand. And the Governor readily conceded the request.

There was now no going back. But the Tiv were not ready. They were yet to agree on a candidate. The matter was further fanned by the Tiv who had served in the British army during the Second World War. Some had in fact fought in India, the home of demand for self government. A number of these demobilised soldiers found their way into Tiv Native Authority in various capacities as Policemen, Messengers, Prison Wardens, Dispensary Attendants, Physical Training Instructors in schools, and Forest Guards. For example, Makir Dzakpe was the Chief of the Tiv Native Authority Police. These men were in a position to influence District Officers to create the office of *Tor* Tiv. But the leading agitators were the men outside Tiv, the educated Tiv serving outside Tivland. In Zaria, for example, the Tiv Progressive Union (T.P.U.) was vocal in supporting the creation.

The role of the ex-servicemen in this regard must not be over-emphasised as some writers have tried to do. These ex-soldiers were neither violent nor anti-British.

The *Tor* Tiv candidate was selected by the *Ijirtamen*, an assembly of all *utor* and *mbatarev* and elders. Up to March 1945 the debate had not been concluded as the discussion raged between whether an Ichongo or Ipusu should be chosen.

Meanwhile another anti-*mbatsav* movement surfaced: the *Kumendur* cult in 1945. Its origin is not known but apparently it was first noticed in the South-eastern Tivland. It did not spread as *inyambun*. The cult entailed the erection of a fork-like pole in the middle of the compound. A large pot rests on the pole. Over this a small hut was built. The pot contained medicine made from different herbs. Its presence deterred witches from entering the compound. It also hindered people in the compound from going out to practice witchcraft.

Because of the recent *inyambuan* experience and the attendant punishment meted to its practitioners the *kumendur* did not have much following. It was quickly snuffed out. The British however, explained the demise of *kumendur* in terms of political stability and the success of the MacBride Scheme. Yet this was not the end of anti-*mbatsav* movements.

The *Tor* Tiv issue went on unabated. And before the Governor revisited Gboko in September 1946 the candidacy had been narrowed down to two contestants, Makir Dzakpe, The Chief of Police, Tiv N.A., and Gondo Aluor, the Chief scribe, Tiv N.A. They represented Ipusu and Ichongo respectively. On 19th September 1946 Makir Dzakpe was chosen by 25 votes to 11 with 18 abstentions.

Why did Makir Dzakpe win? He was strongly backed by the Tiv World War II veterans in the Tiv Native Authority. Secondly, he had a strong personality. Thirdly, he was shrewd, frank, bold, and outspoken. He was fearless and the people generally admired the way he dealt with the whitemen. Fourthly, he was sociable and given to entertainment.

Gondo Aluor was on the other hand quiet by nature. He therefore lacked the qualities of rallying people round to his cause. Lastly the *utor* from Jechira by diplomacy rallied the support of the *utor* from other sections in favour of Makir Dzakpe.

But before his installation in 1947 as the first *Tor Tiv*, another political crisis erupted in Makurdi. Why was this riot? The answer is not clear.

Problems in Makurdi town had started in 1945 when Audu dan Afoda, Sarkin Makurdi died. The relations between the Tiv and the *atoatiev*, particularly the Hausa, suddenly deteriorated for reasons which were not known. Some attributed it to the behaviour of some Hausa members of the Court in Makurdi. Whatever the reason the Tiv resented the Hausa influence in Makurdi town although they did not object to their presence. The Tiv resented the Hausa control of the court, political power and landed property.

Scarcely could the Tiv secure plots of land or find accommodation in Makurdi when they were in transit. This situation was not however brought about by the Hausa. They had begun to settle in Makurdi in the 1920s during the construction of the Railway line and when work on the Bridge began in 1928. Nobody prevented the Tiv from settling in Makurdi. And the complaints that the Hausa controlled the town was not totally justified because the Hausa were at that time in the majority. It is however true that some Hausa were oblivious of the changing political scene and so the Tiv were refused the right to settle in Makurdi. They would not be given plots. The Hausa controlled court did not help matters. As the situation deteriorated the unemployed World War II veterans exploited it to their own advantage. But what was to be the advantage? This is not clear. Yet they wanted to cause trouble at all costs.

According to a source the trouble began in a drinking place in Makurdi East with the setting on fire at Wurukum of some huts near the Railway station. It was immediately concluded that the "D" day had come.

In the first phase of the fighting the Hausa outnumbered the Tiv who consequently suffered heavy loss of life and property.

The news of the fighting went to the countryside whence people poured into Makurdi to fight the Hausa. Makurdi was under siege. The timely intervention of the *Tor Tiv*, who had not been formally installed, and the Nigerian Police compelled the Tiv to withdraw. But before this some ruthless ex-soldiers infiltrated into the township and massacred defenceless citizens leaving a significant message: political control of Makurdi town

must be changed. The control had to be between the Hausa and the Tiv with the other minorities, Ibos, Jukuns etc. having a say.

Meanwhile, an administrative officer was appointed to run Makurdi with the aid of an advisory council in which both Tiv and Hausa were represented. This development did not affect the choice of Makir Dzakpe as *Tor Tiv*.

The government acceded to the people's choice and on 3rd April 1947 he was declared the *Tor Tiv*. Gondo Aluor, his rival, was officially recognised as the Deputy *Tor Tiv*.

The next three years witnessed no political upheaval. The administration went on smoothly. The *utor* were constantly in touch at the various intermediate councils and at the annual *utor* conference, at Gboko, the *Ijirtamen*. Under the watchful eyes of the *Tor Tiv* impartial justice and the economic welfare of the people was emphasised.

But before this 1938-1950 period ended another anti-*mbatsav* movement, *igyaryo*, emerged in 1948 possibly from *Utange* or *Turan*. The British believed it came from Ugange or Bamenda Province.¹¹

The signs of the cult were iron scissors erected in the middle of the compound or at its entrances or exits. The purpose, as in *Kumendur*, was to prevent *mbatsav* operating in the compound and harming people. The movement lacked followers. And it was easily stamped out. There were no cases of subsequent trials and punishment. The *utor* in whose districts the masters operated summoned them and ordered a stop. This was obeyed.

The Effects of the 1929-1950 Political Changes on the Social and Economic Systems

The effect of the political changes so far described was not great on the economy and social life.

Agriculture still occupied premier place in the economy. The production of the basic crops; yams, guinea corn, millet, maize, cassava, sweet potatoes, and beans were still maintained. There was no incentive to produce these crops for commercial purposes. Despite the increase in experimental or demonstration agricultural farms especially in Native Authority Primary

Schools, the people remained indifferent to the advertised changes.¹²

Shifting cultivation and migration because of land hunger continued and the British became concerned. They advocated the extension of Tivland.¹³

People still produced enough food just for their requirements and for sale to procure some essential commodities: salt, cotton cloths, beads etc. The predominant cash crops were still benni-seed, cotton, groundnuts and soya beans. Production of pepper declined sharply. Tobacco was grown for internal consumption.

The year 1947 was particularly difficult. There was severe drought followed by famine. There was a quick recovery the following year.

The economic status of the people did not change. This does not mean that there were not many well-to-do people, *ashagbaiyor*, as in the time of the drum chiefs in the 19th Century when the well off displayed their riches in prestigious activity; buying of horses, competing against members of the age sets, marrying and celebrating of marriage and the maintenance of livestock, goats, sheep, and cows. The traditional method of acquiring wealth remained the same: farming in which many hands were required. There were no alternative revenue earning employment. Of the 5,000 Tiv labour force that worked on the Plateau tin mines between 1942 and 1943 almost all returned home wretched. About five hundred never returned. They died there.

In addition to death and abject poverty some brought home a wide range of diseases, tuberculosis etc. Later the returning soldiers added to these diseases or became their agent of rapid spread. The elders maintained that this in turn brought sterility in Tiv women, a most dreaded feature.

While some prospered others could not pay their taxes which in 1925 had been raised from two shillings to three shillings and nine pence.

12 The demonstration farms were between 1931 and 1932 established where the *utor* lived Mkovur (1931) Kokojwen (1931), Kuhe (1931) Agara (1932). More were established between 1933 and 1950. as new N.A. Schools were established in the districts. Vide Dewar, K.. Handing Over Notes, Southern Area, Tiv division, Gbodiv. 2/1-552.

13 Munshi Tribe Necessity for Extension In the South West Area, SNP.17/9-C1 N.A.K; Land Use and Migration, Tiv Tribe, (1949). Makprof.4/104545. N.A K

In the 1940s it was raised to four shillings then seven shillings and six pence in about 1950¹⁴. Some had to be flogged by policemen for their inability to pay this apparently meagre sum. The Tiv had their revenge on the police during the 1939 *inyambuan* movement.

More markets were built during the period and domestic trade flourished in agricultural farm products and manufacturers from home industries plus a broad range of foreign products: cotton goods, iron bars, matchets, salt, beads etc. These foreign goods were in the hands of Hausa and Ibo traders. The Ibos were mainly in Makurdi. No indigene dealt in foreign goods till the 1950s. The foreign products proliferated in Makurdi, Abinisi, Buruku, Katsina Ala, Ihugh, Asawa or Obudu market, Tor Donga, Korinya, Wannune, Aliade, Igbor, Udei and others.

The districts had some dispensaries owned by the Tiv Native Authority or the missionaries. Not only were the drugs and dispensaries few but also the people themselves had little faith in the medicine of the whiteman.

People were superstitious about injections and would have nothing to do with them. They rested their faith in the medicine of their fathers.

There was little improvement in preventive medicine. Hundreds still died from small pox. The year 1949 was the black year in Tiv and particularly in Kunav. A number of families were completely wiped out. Children, in addition, died or had permanent injury from measles. Measles caused quite a number of blindness. Leprosy, scabies or crawcraw, yaws, elephantiasis, sleeping sickness and *iba*, most common disease that was finally eradicated in the 1960s.

Leprosy was effectively tackled, thanks to the missionaries. They built a leprosarium, at Mkaand in a number of places. Cerebro-spinal meningitis and yellow fever also plagued the society. For example, in 1931 fourteen people at Mkar leper settlement died from cerebro-spinal meningitis. Quite often, due to ignorance these diseases were attributed to *mbatsav* and sooner or later anti-*mbatsav* movement would follow.

Sometimes writers, J.I. Tseyayo for example, attempt to explain anti-*mbatsav* movements and other social problems in

¹⁴ A number of persons I interviewed had served as agents in the collection of taxes.

Tiv in the 1930s and after in terms of the effects of the Great Depression between 1929 and 1932. This may be correct in respect of other communities in Nigeria but not Tiv. If the depression had any effect on the Tiv it must have been very mild indeed. For example, there was high production of foodstuffs in 1929.

Benniseed, the principal economic crop, reached a record sale of nine pounds per ton that year. In 1930 there was another locust invasion with considerable damage to crops. The British feared repeat occurrence of the 1926 and 1927 famine. As the Resident, Benue Province, reported-

the locust infestation not only affected all aspects of administrative progress but caused a considerable amount of damages of crops, the full effects of which will not be felt until 1931.¹⁵

But the year 1931 came and went without trouble. The farmers had learned from their past experiences (1926-1927) and were inclined to plant more grain and other ancillary crops to make up the losses where necessary.

According to the Resident the province is as a whole more essentially prosperous than it has ever been before.¹⁶

There was bumper harvest and the only question was how to get rid of the surplus food. For, as the Resident observed, "everywhere the people depend for cash on the sale of native foodstuffs in the industrial centres in the north and south and the reduced demand has seriously affected the wealth of the communities."¹⁷

Food prices were exceedingly low. For example, thirty pounds of guinea corn was worth only a penny. But the Tiv managed to get cash through the extended cultivation of benniseed which in 1932 sold at six pounds a ton. 9100 tons were produced in 1932¹⁸. And the scarcity of currency which affected the whole of Benue in 1933 did not affect "the benniseed growing clans of the Tiv Tribe." Although the price fell towards the end of 1933 to three pounds ten shillings per ton the people still kept up production to secure the required cash.

15 Northern Nigeria Province Annual Report, Kaduna (1930), page 16.

16 Northern Nigeria Province Annual Report, Kaduna (1931) page 16.

17 *Ibid.* p. 14

18 Northern Nigeria Province, Annual Report, Kaduna (1932) page 16.

Production in 1933 for example exceeded that of 1932 by 27 per cent.¹⁹ The majority of the people therefore paid their taxes regularly and the Tiv Native Authority was the only division in Benue Province that did not suspend its development projects in the period of the Great Depression.

The Resident admitted that much—

The uncertain financial situation compelled curtailment of the programme of development in all divisions except Abinsi Division where normal revenue was assured and the financial position favoured.²⁰

This was why the construction of the new divisional headquarters at Gboko proceeded to uninterrupted completion in February 1934. (Pembleton, 1936). A locust invasion between 1934 to 1935 did not do much damage. And by the end of 1938 the effect of the depression on the whole of Benue was over. And in 1938 Beck was able to report that:

The province so far has been little affected by the prevailing financial depression though there has been a fall in the quantity of grain and yams exported to the Plateau.

But the production never ceased. It is however possible that the exporters just did not have enough cash to buy the food for example.

Generally, this was a period of ostentation and social innovations, a period similar to the era of drum chiefs. The social revolution thus began in the 19th century apparently reached its zenith in this period. The *utor*, like the drum chiefs, were the kingpins of these social developments.

There were, for example, three kinds of *umar* ceremonies to dramatise the developments.

There was the *Kwaza* dance depicting life in the tin mines of the Plateau.

Secondly, more horses were bought at this period than at any other in the history of the Tiv.

¹⁹ *Northern Nigeria Province Annual Report, Kaduna (1935) page 15.*

²⁰ *Northern Nigeria Provinces Annual Report, Kaduna (1931) page 15.*

The *utor* took the opportunity of the peace and prosperity to gain mastery of the most potent *akombo*. Normally they practised these arts through intermediaries. They now held secular and political power.

The youngmen remained in the grip and control of the elders though a few who were government employees gained some economic independence. But none dared challenge the authority of the elders. This position remained until the 1950s. Western education and Christianity had not taken enough root to shake the traditional powers.

When then did they take root? This will be the next issue to be examined.

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Part Four
The Era of Politics



Chapter 10

The Impact Of Christian Missions And Western Education

The activities and influence of the Christian missions spanned the whole of the colonial rule. What was this influence? How does the influence affect political changes? What was the cumulative effect of these developments on the society? And how did western education, a by-product of Christian missionary influence, affect the new political changes? These issues will now be examined.

The Dutch Reformed Church Mission and the Roman Catholic Missions

The first contact between the Tiv and any organised Christian party occurred in 1879 at Abinsi. It was the party of the Church Missionary Society of Britain which sailed up the Benue in the steamer, *Henry Venn*, to select suitable sites for the society's stations.

The next contact was again at Abinsi, in 1904, the year in which the Sudan United Mission (S.U.M.) party from Great Britain comprising Dr. H.K.W. Kumm, Dr. A.H. Baterman, Mr.J.E.Bust and Mr.J.I.Maxwell stopped briefly at Abinsi on their voyage to Ibi and Wase. Dr.Kumm and his wife, Lucy, had in 1902 founded the S.U.M. to combat the spread of Islam. They had visited Egypt, Libya, and eastern Sudan. After this a British District Officer, C.L. Temple, drew their attention to Nigeria. Mr. Temple was the officer in charge of Bauchi Province in 1902 when he met the couple in Egypt. The name Sudan United Mission was chosen in 1904. In Nigeria Lugard advised the couple to start work at Wase instead of Bauchi. The Wase station was opened in 1904. The S.U.M. became a federation of missions, Baptists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists etc. Each raised its own fund and staff who all cooperated on the field.

From Wase the S.U.M. opened another station in Wukari in 1906. In 1909, Dr. Kumm popularly recognised in Britain and by British officers in Nigeria as the head of the S.U.M. in Africa, visited South Africa to rouse interest in the union of South Africa among the white christian bodies to provide missionaries to serve in Nigeria. Consequently the South Africa Interdenominational Branch embracing different denominations, was formed. This body included the Dutch Reformed Church (DRCM). Three South African Missionaries: Rev. J.G. Botha, Mr. V.H. Hosking, and Mr. Carl Zimmermann, accompanied Dr. Herman Karl Wilhelm Kumm to Nigeria. Carl Zimmermann led the mission party from the white government of South Africa. They travelled up the Benue and opened up their first mission at Mbula. Dr Kumm then left Nigeria for the Sudan.

But Mbula did not go down well with the South African missionaries. They then abandoned the area for a site twenty five miles south of Wukari and opened their first mission station in the compound of Saaitu in *tar* Gambe-Ya in Shitire. This was 13th April, 1911.

This same year members of the DRCM arrived from South Africa to take over S.U.M. work among the Tiv. They continued until 1961 when all their stations passed to the S.U.M. now a branch of the Christian Reformed Church of the United States of America. (Grimely and Robinson, 1960:48).

The Roman Catholics, the Augustinian Order¹, began work in Tiv in the middle of 1919. The important point is that christianity was introduced into Tiv by these two bodies, DRCM 1911-1960, and RCM 1919 to this day. In this study "this day" would mean the end of 1960, the end of my research period.

The missions had a sole objective: to make the people abandon their traditional religion in favour of christianity. But their approaches differed.

¹ There is little information in the archives about the formation of the R.C.M., and moreover the author did not visit any R.C.M stations to check their local diaries.

The RCM for example, hoped to achieve the objective through literacy campaign. Their emphasis therefore was on the opening up of primary schools where the pupils were assiduously made to assimilate catholic doctrines by catechists. RCM fathers followed this up with visits to the schools and the holding of mass on Sundays for the adherents. The RCM did not attempt to challenge directly and openly the people's way of life. The people knew that their children were not being taught to defy their fathers. There was thus no friction between them.

Unlike the Catholics the DRCM openly challenged the ways of life of the people and thereby incurred their wrath. The DRCM regarded the Tiv way of life as the antithesis of Christian faith. They aimed at destroying such life so that Christianity would succeed. The DRCM worried over Tiv family set up: the marriage of many wives, the exchange marriage, the performance of *akombo* rituals and the solid belief in *tsav*. These institutions were most vital yet no progress was made towards destroying them before the 1950s.

The Tiv on the other hand regarded DRCM teachings as a complete rejection of the Tiv way of life and culture and a threat to their family institution. There was no compromise. The teachings about Jesus could not be understood. How could a son of God be born by a lady who was a virgin? This was no more than one of the tales told to children about *alom*, the hare. Christian ideas did not tally with Tiv experience. They were confused about the Holy Spirit. They were confused about the holiness of God. And they dismissed these ideas as tales by the whiteman. Matters were compounded by these bearers of strange tales condemning the vital and most crucial Tiv way of life. The Tiv therefore decided to have nothing to do with these deadly enemies, the Missionaries.

The first problem the S.U.M or DRCM had at Saaitu was communication, they could only talk to the Tiv through Hausa interpreters. The Tiv and the DRCM personnel had fundamental cultural and ideological differences which the Tiv stubbornly refused to bridge. For example, the Tiv would not even work for

the DRCM. The missionaries had therefore to find labour force elsewhere for their minor household chores.

According to E.N. Caassaeggio, the Tiv-

considered all who were not Tiv as inferior even the whiteman. Those who worked for the missionaries were sneered at and humiliated so they had to give up their work... Mr Zimmermann found it a difficult matter to make contact with Tiv. Since they were unwilling to work for the missionaries, he was forced to find another way.

Children of value were made to keep severely away from the missionaries. But the handicapped - the physically deformed, the orphans who had no relatives, children of slaves, could go to the DRCM, they could even go to their schools and attend their churches. A son given to missionaries was reckoned lost. And even Saai, the first Tiv to give his son to the missionaries, gave the one he valued least. According to Cassaleggio.

His gaze lighted on the neglected Akiga. His mother had left Saai, but had left the child with his father. One of his eyes was blind, and part of his foot was eaten away by ulcers, among all his children Akiga was the least value to him.

Little progress was thus made in converting people to Christianity. By 1931, that is after twenty years they had no more than twenty baptised adherents. The success of the two though their missions actually did not begin until the 1950s; their influences really began to be felt in the 1960s.

The Beginning of Western Education

The success in the 1950s came with the development of western education amongst the people. Western education came to Tiv via three avenues: DRCM, RCM, and the colonial authorities.

They opened a primary school at Saaitu in 1911. In 1913 they opened a village school at Zaki Biam. In 1916 about fifty pupils had been enrolled in these two schools. In 1922 the DRCM opened another school in Sevav in Tombo (Mbalagh). In 1923 the Mkar station was opened.

The Mkar settlement had three institutions: a hospital, Leper Settlement, and a boarding school.² Establishment of schools piecemeal continued until the 1950s. Their school curriculum was not elaborate since the basic aim was to educate the masses in writing and reading of their mother tongue. The intention was to make the people literate enough to read the Bible, communicate with the Dutch and comprehend the western values taught them. The teaching of English language and other subjects was not their primary aim although the pattern of school curriculae was outlined in 1915 at the establishment by the British of an Institute at Wannune, twenty-seven miles south of Abinsi on the Makurdi Gboko Road.

The Wannune Institution aimed at providing instructions in reading, writing, farming, and handicrafts. The programme was to turn out people trained in their mother tongue, English Language, Arithmetic to keep administrative financial records, and agricultural techniques, to provide subordinate staff to the administration.

In 1922 the Boarding School at Katsina Ala, successor to Wannune Institute, was opened. In 1930 it became a Middle School when "Government Primary and Crafts Schools were merged into Middle Schools throughout Northern Nigeria". The institution was established after a tour of Benue by the Director of Education Northern Nigeria, Mr.H. Vischer,³ in 1914. But first Native Authority Schools were opened in 1928. These primary schools, later known as junior primary schools, offered four year courses in Tiv language, English, Hausa, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Hygiene, and Agriculture.

The Middle School Katsina Ala became the only Government post-primary institution in the whole of Benue Province. In 1949 Government College, Keffi, began in Kaduna. By 1955 that College was moved to its permanent site in Keffi, Benue Province.

² Annual Report on Education MAKPFOR.4/1-98 Vol.1, N.A.K.

³ Annual Report of the Department of Education, Northern Nigeria Provincial Annual Report, 1928 page 41, N.A.K.

In 1956, about twelve pupils were admitted there from Benue Province. This was a big improvement compared with the previous years.⁴

It is necessary to explain that the Benue Middle School, Katsina Ala, was not, naturally, meant for post primary education of Tiv sons alone. All other ethnic groups in Benue Province sent their children there.

In the 1940s the number of primary schools increased though the enrolment did not improve. People were still reluctant to send their children to schools. The *utor* were given the task by the British of persuading reluctant parents to send their children to school. Quite a number of the *utor* would not however, send their children to school. The bulk of the pupils came from backward families on whom force was used.

The presence and expansion of the RCM became noticeable in the 1930s when the Augustinian Order was replaced by the Holy Ghost Order. In 1931 the RCM had a station at Korinya in *tar* Gaav. Further stations were opened at Naka in *tar* Raav and Udei in *tar* Nyeve. In 1936 the RCM had fifty schools in Benue Province. By 1949 the number had risen to 149. There were therefore several Catholic Schools in different parts of the Tiv, including Gboko, in the late 1930s.

People who attended schools adopted the religion taught there. The people in Native Authority schools were not bound to accept a particular faith, they could be Catholics, Protestants, or even follow the religion of their fathers. People went to Church basically to learn the ways of the whiteman, his language and culture, not religion. Religion and British approach to life were acquired unconsciously in the process.

Effects of Christian influences

Of the effects three were most important: diluting traditional ideas about religion, breaking down family structure, and partially destroying other old traditional institutions and beliefs.

The modification of ideas about *Aondo* for example, made the elder lose control of the young. In addition the elder lost his respect and dignity. The Tiv religion differs remarkably from either Christianity or Islam.

4 Provincial Annual Reports, Northern Nigeria, Kaduna (1965) page 24.

In Islam for example, Allah (God), is more than a creator of all mankind. He is also a holy being who cannot do evil. He is omniscient and omnipotent. There is the idea of Satan or Devil who stands in opposition to God. And there is the concept of life after death and the last judgement. These are doctrines taught by Christians also.

But in Tiv religion *Aondo* is no more than described earlier. For practical purposes *akombo* and *tsav* are the centrepiece of religion. Since *akombo* is given by *Aondo* its rituals must be carried out till death. And the power to manipulate *akombo* is vested in the elders, most of whom were members of the *mbatsav* organisation possessing mystical powers over the affairs of the society. Elders therefore had unlimited powers to control the people. They held the view that they were the representatives of *Aondo* on earth, and everything had to be channelled through them. An elder can therefore readily tell the young: I am your *Aondo*.

The missionaries however presented *Aondo* as an active and Supreme deity with tremendous power to regulate all things in this world and beyond. Through the blood of his son Jesus Christ, he will save all those who believe and worship him. And the believers in Jesus will enjoy a new life after death, in heaven.

Response to these lofty ideas was poor until the 1950s. Eugene Rubingh claims that a breakthrough began in 1935 when in 1936 twenty-five people were baptised into the DRCM. This could not possibly be a breakthrough hence I regard the 1950s as the breakthrough in the DRCM work. Prior to 1950 the few who had been attracted to the missionaries were the dispossessed, a negligible few who could scarcely influence the society. They became servants to the missionaries as kitchen stewards, gardeners, carriers, and messengers. What mattered to them most was their wages. The Bible with its teachings was secondary factor.

There was an exodus of DRCM personnel in 1956 but then its work had reached a zenith. In 1957, 9th January, the DRCM in Tiv now renamed *Nongu u Kristu u Sudan Ken Tiv* (NKST) had between 1500 and 1800 baptised members and four full-time pastors.

The success of missionary activity in the 1950s was influenced by four basic incidents: the increase in the missionary personnel in Tiv Country, the rise of the Bible Schools. The increase in the number of Government and N.A schools, and the people passing out from these schools and the adult literacy campaigns⁵ launched by the colonial authorities between 1950 and 1956.

The Bible or Catechist schools set up by DRCM and RCM were due to the influence of Tiv personnel in the services of these two missions. Such Tiv were anxious that literacy should spread. More schools were built owing to the rivalry between the DRCM and RCM. It was a school building race from which the Tiv gained. The schools were basically designed to teach reading and writing so that these bodies could gain more adherents. The classes were attended by the young or the curious adult.

In the 1950s almost every *tar* in Tiv had a Native Authority school. Even where a *tar* had no N.A. school it had at least one or two DRCM or RCM schools. The number of students passing from the primary schools to Middle school at Katsina Ala in the 1950s was more than double that for the decade before. The disadvantage of the DRCM and RCM schools was that only very few of pupils from such schools were allowed to go to the Middle school. Tiv children were also studying in post-primary institutions outside Tivland: Kaduna College, later Barewa College, Zaria, Government College, Keffi, Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, Zaria, Trade Centre, Kaduna, University of Ibadan which admitted its first Tiv student in 1956, Toro Teachers' College, where all Grades III and IV teachers from Tiv were trained, and so on. Two or three Tiv boys were also in the United Kingdom for post-primary training in the 1950s. Tiv children also underwent commercial courses with commercial firms, for example, the Hides and Skins Department of the U.A.C. in Kano.

⁵ *Provincial Annual Reports for Northern Nigeria*, 1954 and 1956, pages 29 and 30 respectively. See also Gbodiv 2/3-AE/2 General-Mass Adult Education Dept. N.A.K. And Gbodiv. 2/3-AE/1, Ikwande General Mass Adult Education Department, N.A.K. Generally, adult education was hampered by lack of staff to supervise and co-ordinate work in the Province as a whole.

This development in education increased the number of DRCM and RCM followers. Every literate person thought it a fashion to associate with a religious set. Mr Julius Kange, the first Tiv man to be admitted to the University of Ibadan in 1956 influenced a lot of people to Catholicism, his faith to which he was much devoted. Others who embraced DRCM or RCM were not so devoted.

They were merely being modern. And to show this they took apparent Christian names: John, James, Thaddeus, to show that they were in line with the new development. Some did these things unconsciously. The author himself fell prey to this missionary indoctrination. And instead of remaining Tesemchi Makar he became James Tesemchi Makarson. In 1971 he dechristianised this name back to Tesemchi Makar. The missions were happy over the bearing of the names they could readily pronounce in place of Tiv names they could not pronounce properly. The elders however stoutly declined to use the new names of their sons. They stuck to the names given at birth.

Ability to read and write became a fashion amongst age sets. And the craze was for it.

But the number of Tiv Christians was still small. If the DRCM had been between 1500 and 1800 baptised members in 1957 this represents about 0.15 per cent of the Tiv population, about 1 million. The number of RCM followers had been so impressive that it cannot be included in this computation. Whatever their population the Christians exerted influence beyond their numerical inferiority.

The missionaries now also taught through pamphlets. Eventually people began to be pulled away from their *akombo* and belief in *tsav*.

Next the missionaries campaigned viciously against traditional marriage because they believed it was the very anti-thesis of Christian principles and therefore an obstacle to their work. After two years of consistent pressure the colonial administration yielded. In a letter to the colonial administration from Sevav in *tar Tombo* dated 19th April 1925, the Chairman

of the DRCM in Tivland. Rev.M.A. Malherhe supported his arguments for abolition of traditional marriage.

- (1) There is no certified permanency.
- (2) The inability of most young men to obtain wives at a desirable age, and the consequent immorality, seduction and abduction.
- (3) A woman may have several successive husbands with consequent destruction to real home life, which is the strongest guarantee for the tribe's healthy growth and its social and economic development, this fact explains also much of the suffering to which Munshi children are exposed.
- (4) In the soil prepared by much morally corroding marriage custom, immorality thrives to an alarming degree, and this we feel will greatly retard healthy general development of the tribe, and will continue to reflect its distintegrating and disturbing influence on the social relationships of the community as is certainly done in the past.
- (5) We are so strongly convinced of the truth of this statement that we venture to assert that the hope of a better future for the Munshi tribe lies to a large extent in all measures that are calculated to bringing a change in the tribal system of marriages.

Although some of these arguments are tenable but against their contrary views can be offered.

Firstly, immorality in Tiv land has not been reduced although young men have, since the 1960s, married at an early age. Immorality is a worldwide problem. It increases as the population increases.

Secondly, abduction or seduction of girls has not ceased. This is because it is an important element in the people's culture and marriage. Its survival to this day shows that the cultural heritage of a people cannot be easily eradicated even by a governmental decree. A successful implementation of a governmental order depends generally on the readiness and or preparedness of the people to accept it as well as the ability of the authority to command its obedience.

The Tiv society was not prepared to accept the change in their marriage system. And the authority was not in a position to enforce such a change.

Secondly, the argument about the security of children is wrong because the Tiv society, like society elsewhere, provides for the security of children irrespective of the position of their parents. This is done through the extended family system.

Thirdly, the general development of the society has not been retarded, spiritually or otherwise. And despite the increase in the number of christians, immorality has not diminished. The conclusion therefore is that lack of spiritual development or immorality had nothing to do with the Tiv marriage system.

Fourthly, although the country may have a bright future but for now modern development is unlikely because the land suffers from social, economic, and, particularly, political instability. The teachings of the missionaries have, among other things brought confusion and tension in the social and political structure of the people since the 1950s.

The fifth reason is that the missionaries have been directly responsible for the erosion of some vital moral beliefs in the society. Yet they have provided no substitute for such eroded beliefs. For example, missionaries have led many women into attending religious congregations, *mkohol*, bazaars and "irregular" confirmation. These have produced disastrous consequences. Housewives abandon domestic chores and their husbands and children to attend Christian meetings or religious rituals. Their not returning home promptly has, apparently, brought about the breakdown of marriages and juvenile delinquency. In Shangev-Tiev for example, as I found through interviews, the situation deteriorated so much that it led to the establishment of an anti-N.K.S.T. coded *Mkoom u Mbakristu Ken Tiv*, the correction or straightening of the Christian group (NKST) in Tiv land.

Furthermore, the NKST has decried the *sagh akoor* practice in marriages. *Ikoor*, plural *akoor* is the shell of a snail formerly worn as necklace by unmarried girls to show the state of their virginity. Upon their marriage the bridegroom made special payment to the mother for guarding the daughter's virginity. But NKST said this was the worship of an *akombo* called *ikoor*. Hence their opposition to the practice. But the elders argued that the non-practice of *sagh akoor* encouraged immorality in the society.

As had earlier been shown these teachings by the missionaries have tended to make the elders lose their grip on the society. The elders complain that their families have been weakened by these teachings that they can no longer control the wives and children. And without this control there cannot be political or societal stability, they argue. For example, by tradition women do not peep into the grave yet missionaries encourage women to peep into the the grave. The elders believe this practice could produce infertility or unhealthy birth. Yet the elders can do nothing to check the missionaries.

Another point is that christian teaching has produced a strange breed of people who are neither adherents of christianity or the traditional practices: drinking, traditional dances, and customary marriage for example. Some have their feet in both camps. They practice the tenets of tradition or christianity depending on which suits their purpose at a particular time.

The dilution of traditional religious practices and the abolition of traditional system of marriage gave rise to emergence of new concepts, the most important being individualism and egalitarianism. They are concepts which are alien to the Tiv cultural heritage. A Tiv, as the elders emphasise, never thought about "self" but his group, family, *ityo* or *tar*. When a wrong committed it affects, not only the individual but the whole society. When an *akombo* is violated for example, the violator does not undergo cleansing alone but with the whole of his family. In a case of theft, the parents and relatives of the thief must be present at his trial before the elders.

There are several reasons for this practice. One, the culprit is reminded that his behaviour has tarnished the image of his family. Two, the family is reminded of its obligation in proper upbringing of their children. Three, the authority of the elders over their subjects is reemphasised.

But Christianity came and preached individual accountability to God for his deeds on earth on the day of judgement. The traditional theory of collective punishment was totally rejected and individualism was born.

Next the missions taught that all men were equal in the eyes of God": no servant, slave, or master, no class distinctions, no distinctions of the old from the young. All are equal. God, above all, is the supreme father of all. Earthly fathers are temporary. They would not account for the deeds of their children on the last day of judgement.

It will be remembered that the Tiv on the other hand regard *Aondo* as a mere creator of the universe, tucked far away in his kingdom, *tar Aondo* from where he does not bother to meddle in the affairs of men on earth. It is the ancestors and the elders who control the affairs of men, not a "father of all" God who needed prayers. The correct approach to him is *akombo* ritual to ward off *tsav* for an orderly life. Tiv religion itself is vague about life after death though ancestor worship is practised. There is no concept of Heaven or Hell as in the Christian notion.

However, by laying emphasis on these lofty European ideals and religious doctrines and stressing them as if they were demonstrable facts of life, the missionaries unwittingly provided the young with a weapon for breaking away from the control of their parents under the camouflage of religion.

This soon gave rise to the second concept: egalitarianism, a concept born through the teachings of the missionaries and nurtured to fruition in the second half of the twentieth century by Bohannan. Yet egalitarianism remains a concept foreign to the Tiv.

The Tiv, for example, emphasise age sets, *kwagh* or *kwav* or as the Iharev call it *oriyange yam*. And nothing enrages a Tiv more than a claim to the same age with him when your age is below his. A meeting of an age set is not a claim of equality with the elders. It is true that the right to be heard exists since no one, no matter his age, has monopoly of wisdom thus a youngman might *dugh yaritior*. But the right to be heard is not the same as the right to decide, a privilege of the elders. The elders argue that while the right to be heard includes the right to disagree, the so called individualism and egalitarianism are no more than signs of decaying society in which the younger generation no longer listen to their elders' advice. Added to this they lose respect for heritage and culture and are therefore not willing to carry out their obligations in the society.

Yet the disciples of individualism and egalitarianism are found among the educated today. They preach these false doctrines to promote their own inordinate ambition and craze for political power. These groups of persons, concentrated in towns and villages no doubt have a perverted view of the Tiv society before the era of the British. But there is no doubt that the influence of these "new men" is spreading. And with disastrous consequences. This is because they do influence the gullible countryside where tensions readily mount as a result of theories differing from practice. Such tensions could explode as happened in the political arson of 1960.

There is no doubt that the missions have disrupted the social and religious institutions to plant their ideas. In the course of this voyage the missions rendered social services. The issue is whether they could not have rendered such services without dislocating the society. That question may not be easy to answer. But we do see their services: education, health institutions, construction of new markets that function on seven-day rather than five-day circle. Mkar or Ortese market is an example. The christian bodies encouraged the construction of new roads and footpaths in the countryside to facilitate communications.

Yet the nagging question remains. Could these not have been done without disrupting the traditional societal values?

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Chapter 11

The Era Of Politics (1st Phase 1950-1956)

Here let us discuss the momentous political and social changes that the Tiv witnessed in their land in the late decade of the British administration. These changes overlap and the dates dividing them are not watertight. In this chapter let us concentrate on the administration of the *itvar* right up to 1960 and the bringing of modern politics from 1950 to 1956. The next chapter, Chapter 12 will centre on the development of modern politics and its consequences from 1957 to 1960.

So rapid and intensive were the paces of some of these changes that they brought political confusion and anarchy. In a thunderclap speed politics shifted from the old order to the new one. We shall analyse these developments to discern the various trains of events and show their cumulative effects upon the people generally. Thus, we shall avoid the temptation to conclude that the problems in a society could be due to a single cause.

Economic and social changes are important factors in politics. It was the exploitation of the economic and social problems of the people by the politicians that eventually plunged the country into anarchy.

The Economic and Social Problems of the 1950s.

The problems created in the 1950s differed from those of the 1940s with which the elders coped without resorting to violence. The problems were of greater magnitude and of causes more complex than some scholars are prepared to appreciate. For example, as we shall see later, Martin Dent and Justin Tseyayo seem to blame pro N.P.C. officials of the Tiv N.A. and the N.P.C. leaders for all the troubles. At the same time they would not touch the UMBC, a sacred cow.

The next issue is western education.

Western Education and Its Problems

There were problems associated with the development of western education: lack of adequate senior primary schools and post primary institutions to absorb candidates passing out of junior and senior primary schools respectively. Added to this was the question of money. A large number of people were deprived of education because they could not afford the fees. Another problem was unemployment of primary school graduates. As the years went by these problems increased.

In senior primary schools, pupils spent six or seven years to earn the First School Leaving Certificates. The Junior Primary Schools ended in Elementary IV. They included Bible or Catechist Schools some of which did not go beyond Class One or Two. These schools were established by Tiv N.A., DRCM, and RCM, and the new Christian groups: Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians.¹ These were the schools whose graduates hardly found senior primary schools or jobs. Even those who went to primary schools and completed their primary education had the insurmountable task of finding employment. Added to this was the lack of secondary schools to absorb this class of primary school leavers.

In 1956, there were 400 recognised Primary Schools in the whole of Benue Province. Only forty-one were Senior Primary Schools. Of these only three Senior Primary Schools were in Tivland: Central Primary School, Gboko, opened about 1953, Senior Primary School, Mkar, opened in 1953, Senior Primary School, Vandeikya, opened in 1953. The Girls' Primary School, Uavande, was opened in 1957. This position did not change much till after 1960. Up to 1960, there were only three post primary institutions in the Tiv land. One or two others were in the process of being opened. The Post Primary Schools in operation were the Provincial Secondary School, Katsina-Ala, R.C.M. Secondary School at Aliade, and Teacher Training College, (S.U.M.) Mkar. In addition to these, R.C.M. Girl's

¹ The Baptists opened schools at Gboko and Makurdi but not in the countryside. The Methodists and Presbyterians opened schools in Makurdi in the late 1950s.

School, Gboko, (1957), Bristow Secondary School, Gboko, has been opened in Lupwe (1960) in Wukari area from where it was transferred to Gboko in 1962. There was also Government Craft School, Makurdi, which was opened in 1960. Apart from Tiv pupils, students from other areas were also admitted into these institutions.

Those who were in school but could not pay their fees were caught between their new faith and the elders. They had gone to school to acquire western education and to learn about the new God, not *Aondo*, so that they could gain independence from the elders. This intention was now frustrated since the education could not be acquired because of their inability to pay fees, the money for which only elders could perhaps supply. But since they had condemned the elders and their ways, the elders in turn referred their children to the God in heaven and to the christian missionaries to provide them money. These pupils had only two alternatives: to retrace their steps and make peace with the elders or to find employment elsewhere. Finding employment was an uphill task since there were no jobs. Some made peace with their parents but this did not help matters; either because their parents had refused to compromise or the parents just had no money to pay.

They were stranded. They therefore returned home to their people or went into the large towns: Kaduna, Zaria, Kano, or Lagos to escape shame, or they took to stealing while posing as businessmen.

There was another group: those who could not find post primary or professional institutions to absorb them after their primary school. In both groups tension began to build up.

However, impression must not be given that every primary school leaver suffered this fate. There were those who did not. They found post primary schools or got jobs in the corporations: Nigerian Railway Corporation and Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria. But this group was comparatively very small.

Economic Problems

The economic changes that characterised the 1950s also created problems. Crops, including staple food crops: yam, rice, millet and beans, began to be planted on commercial basis by some individuals. Attention was no longer solely on the cultivation of benniseed, groundnuts, cotton, and soya beans. The cultivation was greatly intensified and the people began to produce *gari* for consumption by non-Tiv since the Tiv consider *gari* as inferior food.

The government tried to encourage the people by introducing fertilizer trials, school farms, and agricultural mechanization which began in the Etulo/Mbagen area; the raising of Zebu cattle, and the compost scheme were begun at Mbaakon in *tar* Mbara.²

For the first time some Tiv were recognised as successful businessmen and people of wealth. This was demonstrated by their acquisition of commercial lorries for transporting people and goods. These pioneers include Waya Dzer, Ierkwagh Kajo Fave Uchichi, and Ugor Iwoo. Ugor Iwoo from *tar* Tombo has lived in Gboko since the 1930s. He was a one time president and active member of the Tiv Progressive Union. Ierkwagh Kajo from *tar* Nanav has lived in Gboko for a long time. So also was Waya Dzer from *tar* Mbagbera. Fave Uchichi from *tar* Gaav made his fortune growing yams in *tar* Ukum in the 1940s. They were all members of the Tiv Progressive Union and like the body they have all gone into eclipse save Ierkwagh Kajo who is still an active contractor and businessman at Gboko. Together all these people laid the foundation of the new economic development. They paved the way for new entrants who later challenged the economic dominance of the society by the *atoatie* (Ibo and Hausa). The question, why did the business of these people fail, cannot be answered easily. It could have been due to lack of experience, lack of business acumen or managerial expertise. Those who were in transport did not know how to insure their business property. And they suffered heavy capital losses thereby. Yet another factor could have been that common

² *Benue Provincial Office, Annual Report, 1954-1959, MAKPROP.4/1-5855, N. A. K*

to all businessmen in Nigeria: the tendency to use capital and profits for unprofitable project; marrying new wives, throwing lavish parties, trying to please everyone in the extended family, instead of ploughing the profits and capital back into the business. Whatever caused their failure they became discontented but later found an escape in politics.

The economic prosperity of the average person did not advance beyond the subsistence level of existence. People were still harassed for non-payment of taxes, which to them, had risen very sharply and unexpectedly. In 1950, for example, an adult male was required to pay seven shillings and six pence annual tax but by 1959, it had risen to one pound ten shillings, and in 1960, to one pound fifteen shillings. This rise did not accord with the economic change of the people. So they complained although they paid less than their neighbours as the following table shows. The table is self explanatory.

Taxes and Rates Per Adult Male per Division

Year	Tiv Division	Idoma Division	Lafia Division	Wukari Division	Keffi Division	Nassarawa Division
1953	14:1d.	13:6d.	17:9d.	14:4d.	18:8d.	18:5d.
1954	16:1d.	17:1d.	£1:5:1d.	18:6d.	19:11d.	19:7d.
1955	£1:0:0d.	£1:6d.	£1:8:=d		£1:7:=d.	£1:7:=d.
1956						
1957	£1:7:=d	£1:10:=d	£1:10:=d	£1:7:=d	£1:10:=d	£1:10:=d
1958						
1959	£1:10:=d	£1:15:=d	£1:15:=d	£1:15:=		
1960	£1:15:=d	£1:15:=d	£2:=:d.	£2:=:d	£1:15:=d	£1:15:=d

Markets continued to develop and the same commodities continued to be sold. But foreign goods now increased and included: drinking cups, large pans, buckets, and bush lanterns amongst others. These were items of prestige as many did not have the money to buy these things. Those were the days when owning bicycle was a matter for celebration. No Tiv owned a private car before 1954. The first to own cars were Mede Achii, *tor of tar* Mbara, and Mkovur Jegala, *tor of tar* Ipav. After 1954, some more *utor* and one or two politicians owned private cars.

The first politicians to own cars were the Tiv legislators in the Federal House of Representatives and the Northern House of Assembly. The great age of car ownership in Tiv country came in 1959 with the Federal election campaigns. But at this time, no single person could boast of one thousand pounds in his savings. The exceptions were perhaps some politicians who kept money meant for their parties for themselves. This point is important for the appreciation of the Tiv who claim to be well to do.

Despite the frustrations emanating from education and the economy, the position was as yet not desperate enough to court disaster. The bulk of the people were still unaffected by the changes. They therefore led their normal life and developed new dances and rejuvenated others. *Amar* ceremonies became the order of the day. The *utor*, the centre of these social and cultural activities, had a fashion of bringing with them into intermediate council meeting centres a team of dancers to enhance their personal glory and prestige. Inter *tar* dance competitions were organised and ostentatious display of dressing and traditional music became the order of the day. The *utor* and the elders were still in control but underneath the claim, lay a steady ferment of problems created by the political changes. This became clearest in 1959: problems of tax, marriage by cash, and educated vagabonds not willing to go to farm.

The Central and District (*Ityar*) Administration

When the *utor* pressed for the office of *Tor* Tiv none was sure what power they supposed the *Tor* Tiv would have. Would he be a mere titular head with no power?

However, if we realise that *Tor* Tiv Makir Dzakpe was of middle age and therefore appreciably younger than the average *tor* who participated in appointing him, and also realise that respect for elders was still very strong, it is plausible to conclude that the *utor* wanted the *Tor* Tiv to act as their agent and spokesman and not their master. If there was to be any control the *utor* must have supposed it was mild.

But soon their minds were disabused. For the *utor* found themselves in a position subordinate to the *Tor Tiv* who became the acknowledged political and traditional leader of all the Tiv. His functions made this position clear. His appointment and rise above all Tiv was reminiscent of the acquisition of power by the *tor agbande* in the 19th century: a man appointed to direct all *tor* affairs particularly with outsiders soon usurped the powers traditionally and politically performed by the elders. In the 20th century the changing political conditions necessitated the demand for a *Tor Tiv* to lead the Tiv against outside relations. The *Tor Tiv*, like *tor agbande*, was not imposed on the people. Both were demanded and chosen by the people represented by the elders.

It is necessary to understand this position to appreciate the difficulties which developed in the last two years before the end of the British rule in Tivland.

Along with the office of *Tor Tiv* was the establishment of the inner council in 1949 to help the *Tor Tiv* in his routine deliberations. This avoided the burden of summoning all the *utor* every now and then.

The *Tor Tiv* who resided at the headquarters in Gboko was the *de facto* head of the Tiv Native Authority. He dealt not only with routine administration but with matters that fell within his sphere of power. He maintained contact with all the *utor* through the chairmen or *utor* of the five administrative councils that had operated as early as 1942. He also kept in close touch with the Executive Council and the Tiv N.A. Finance Committee established in 1954, the year the idea of creating portfolio councillors came into being. Ten of these Councillors were appointed, two representing each intermediate council area. The councillors also established their own executive committee. It became the main instrument for formulating and executing policy in the N.A.³

These changes were smooth although it drew resentment from the senior N.A. officials who did not like being

³ Tiv Central Executive Councils, GBODIV.2/6-COU/1, N.A.K.

overshadowed by the Councillors. Sooner or later causes of resentment were removed and mutual understanding prevailed.

The Central Administration functioned well due largely to Makir Dzakpe's personality and consequent cooperation his people gave him. He had a knack for seeking and getting good advice. So he was bound to succeed. Added to this was the fact that his reign *was* short but momentous. Whatever might have been his shortcomings were therefore quickly forgotten as new problems soon arose after his death. It was partly because of this and partly because of the incessant changes that took place between 1956 and 1960 with great and serious effects that people often regard Makir Dzakpe's reign as the age of peace and glory for the Tiv.

Makir Dzakpe died in 1956. But his succession by his deputy, Gondo Aluor, was not automatic. With the development of politics and craving for political power, the office of *Tor Tiv* became a prize which each *tor* as well as others would compete for. For example, a son of Makir Dzakpe, Joseph *Tarhembra Makir*, supported by the Kunav people, offered himself as a candidate to establish hereditary rule. Others opposed this, particularly the Ichongo, and invoked the policy of *ya kwagh na wanigbian*, eat and give your brother. In other words since the first *Tor Tiv* was of the Ipusu, the next one should be an Ichongo, Ichongo and Ipusu being the only sons of Tiv. For two years the contest raged on before Gondo Aluor, an Ichongo, got the office in 1957.

And in that 1957, the demands for the establishment of district councils made in 1952 surfaced again. The demands were accepted and the scheme began to operate between 1957 and 1959. This was the reorganisation of the *ityar* in each intermediate council area into district councils.

Take the intermediate council areas known as Ikwande made up of nine *ityar* in the following table:-

Name of Ityar	Name of District	Headquarters of District Council
1. Turan 2. Ikurav-Ya 3. Nanev 4. Shangev-Ya	Mbaiko	Barakuv
5. Mbagwa 6. Mbagba	Lessel	Tsenebe
7. Mbaikaa 8. Ikov 9. Utange	Mata	Gbatse

As the table shows, in the 1957-1959 reorganisation, the first four *ityar* were combined into one district council: Mbaikor with its headquarters at Barakuv. So also 5 and 6 became Lessel District Council with headquarters at Tenebe. And nos. 6,7,8, and 9 became Mata district council with headquarters at Gbatse. This means that three district councils were established for Ikwande intermediate council area. Each *tar* was allowed to provide two or three representatives to serve in its appropriate district council area. Soon the scheme attracted conflict from the overlapping of their functions with those of the *utor*. Consequently, before the proposal for the enlargement of the district councils' membership and functions could be attempted in 1960, the scheme collapsed.

There was another problem: a protracted disagreement between the Makurdi Town Authority and the Tiv N.A. regarding the status of Makurdi as a Subordinate Native Authority.⁴ The political power in the latter body still remained in the same hands as before despite the riots of 1947. But now there were demands that the President of the Makurdi Council should be a Tiv.

⁴ District Councils GBODIV.2/6-COU/8 for 1958 and GBODIV.2/6-COU/8 Vol.II for 1957-1959 N. A. K.

A compromise scheme was consequently devised in 1958, whereby three members were nominated by the Tiv N.A. to the Makurdi Sub N.A. Secondly, the president of the Council was to be appointed by Tiv N.A in consultation with the Makurdi Town Council and the Benue Provincial Office authorities.

But this arrangement did not do away with the *atoatiev*. They were the predominant inhabitants of Makurdi. They therefore controlled the town. The Tiv N.A. resented this situation. But there was nothing the N.A. could do because the *atoatiev* outnumbered the Tiv and so they always won the township elections. And in fact, in 1958, the Presidency was still retained by Alhaji Ari, (a Hausa or Kanuri).

Another source of conflict between Makurdi and Tiv N.A. was that Makurdi town never had sufficient funds to run its services. The Tiv N.A. bore almost all the burden. In turn the N.A. thought they could intervene in the politics of the town in view of their financial commitment there. The wish of the Tiv N.A. was to abolish the Makurdi Sub N.A. and establish a District Council headed by a *tor*. But the Government would not sanction this.

There was a stalemate in Makurdi. The sub N.A. could not function properly. For example, it could not allocate plots to people.

This was unfortunate because the relationship between the Tiv and the non-Tiv, despite the 1947 riots, was friendly. The Makurdi troublemakers did not live in Makurdi but far away.

The issue, perhaps, was the envy of the position the *atoatiev* had attained in Makurdi after long years of residence there. This accentuated the idea that "the *tar* is ours" and therefore we must control it. None was prepared to consider the merits or demerits of the case of the non-Tiv and the Tiv. It was emotion. For when the issue cropped up in non-Tiv territory namely, Wukari, Shendam and Lafia emirates, the argument became that the Tiv were many and had contributed to the economic development of these regions. And that they should therefore participate in the political decisions of the area. This argument would be unimpeachable if the Tiv would concede the same rights to the *atoatiev* in their midst. The understanding of this fact is necessary for the peaceful co-existence between Tiv and non-Tiv wherever they happen to live.

Modern Politics and Its Impact on People

It is important to examine the participation of the Tiv in modern politics and the effects it had on Tiv society. Modern politics in this context means the development of political parties in Nigeria, as in Western Europe, and their ideology regarding the operation of democratic institutions of government as opposed to the traditional Nigerian systems of government.

The Tiv Progressive Union, TPU, was the first political party to be identified with the Tiv. It was founded in Zaria in 1940, a long long way from Tiv land. But its activities were familiar to the educated Tiv in Tiv land, particularly the Tiv N.A. employees. The TPU did not participate directly in Nigerian politics. But they watched with interest the Western educated Nigerian intellectuals of Northern and Southern Nigeria such as Dr. R.A.B. Dikko and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. They admired the Ibo Tribal Union and its activities which included the grant of scholarship to Ibo students even overseas and the celebrations that followed the return of such students.

In the first decade of their existence, the T.P.U. became the mouthpiece of the Tiv both within and without Tivland. They had promoted the agitation for *Tor Tiv*, organised meetings and wrote articles in the press - *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* - on the subject. It had three objectives: unity of the Tiv outside Tiv land; organisation of self-improvement and development of all Tiv speaking people on social matters such as the acquisition of western education and the raising of funds for the use of the union; to organise consensus of Tiv opinion on some important matters such as the creation of the office of *Tor Tiv* in 1946.

Soon branches of the TPU were founded in Tiv country itself and some prominent and influential businessmen: Ugor Iwoo, Waya Dzer, and Ierkwagh Kajo, became members. In 1944, the TPU decided and allied with one of the Nigerian national parties: National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), a relationship that was maintained until 1955. That year it became apparent that the alliance with the NCNC, the dominant political power in the Eastern Region of Nigeria, was opposed to the creation of the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State (COR)

in the East. The NCNC might not therefore assist the creation of the Middle Belt State. The Tiv therefore regarded the NCNC declared support in this regard as hypocrisy. Nevertheless, the T.P.U. cooperated with the NCNC for more than a decade before the rupture came.

At the meetings in Kaduna in 1949 to discuss the political and constitutional future of Nigeria the Tiv participated. In the preliminary discussions at Makurdi, the following represented the Tiv: Makir Dzakpe, (*Tor Tiv*), Akaa Ude (*tor tar Nyeve*), Ukende (*tor tar Ucha*), Ukum), Ulam (*tor tar Ingohov*) and Makondo (representative of Makurdi sub N.A.), Gondo Aluor (Chief Scribe, representing Nongov, Ugondo, Iharev), Chia Aka (Teacher at Benue middle school), Ikwande, F. Orban Lan (Teacher, N.A. School, Gboko representing Jechira) and T. Ayila Yogh (Tiv N.A. Treasurer) representing Jemgbagh.⁵

This selection followed traditional administration of Tiv. While the *Tor Tiv* attended in his right as father of the land, three *utor* represented their colleagues. Each intermediate council except Ukum-Shitire, was represented by a person who in a way could be described as an intellectual.

In other words the traditional leaders as well as the "educated" represented the Tiv. However, at the meeting in Makurdi attended by all divisions in Benue Province, Gondo Aluor, a Tiv, and Ahmadu Denya, a Jukun from Wukari and an N.A. Councillor, were chosen to represent Benue Province at Kaduna.

The conferences gave birth to the Macpherson Constitution 1951, which created three regional governments: Eastern, Western and Northern. In the Northern Region, a Northern House of Assembly was created. The Tiv had four representatives in it. These were TPU men who later declared for the NCNC. This participation in the European style government was unfamiliar to all, including the Tiv.

⁵ Political and Constitutional Future of Nigeria, The Review of the Nigerian Constitution, MAKPROF.4/1-3722 VOL.II, (1951-1952) N.A.K.

The knowledge of the British constitution was limited generally. Only a few had any suggestions about what the changes were all about. Furthermore, the few Tiv in politics prior to 1956 had little education - western or traditional. Their understanding of current developments was severely limited. This fact must be understood to appreciate the mistakes the early politicians might have made. Unlike the politicians of today, these politicians were severely handicapped. The maximum educational qualification they had was the present Class II Secondary School. Others made do with Primary IV or VI or even less.

Hardly did they understand that politics was no more than a struggle for power and the implementation of certain political doctrines or ideologies. There were not enough literature available in the markets at that time to help people learn about politics even in their homes. The school curricula had nothing about systems of governments from which people could draw idea about politics. The only literature were the *Daily Times* and the *Nigerian Citizen* which often reported what political party leaders said. Under these circumstances, Tiv politicians were content to pluck lucrative dues from politics and remain silent followers.

Another Tiv organisation was also founded in Zaria. This was the Young Tiv Association (YTA) in 1948. Later it became the United Tiv Movement, a body of the youth who had just left Benue Middle School and began work in Zaria. The founders were Ityokyaa Maru of Zaria, Sariyo Ikpamkor of Zaria (President and Secretary respectively) and Tashaku Oradi, Sado Upurugh, Alumuku Abeka, and Bandele Orshi. The United Tiv Movement faded away in 1963.

It had three main objectives. Firstly, to make the Tiv outside Tiv land, especially Zaria, raise fixed dues for self development. For example, the UTM established a provision shop from where members could buy on credit or borrow on short term credit with interest. This functioned well until some members embezzled money or failed to pay up debts because their money had vanished or "undergone chemical decomposition". Secondly, the

Y.T.A. or U.T.M. aimed at securing a consensus amongst the young educated Tiv resident in Zaria on issues concerning the Tiv. An example was the importance of the office of *Tor Tiv*. Thirdly, the movement aimed at the cultural development of the Tiv along with acquisition of European culture and civilisation. In furtherance of these objectives, the organisation maintained close contacts with clubs and other organisations in Zaria such as the Nigerian Railway Club, the Ibo Union. They competed with them in games, football, and European-style ballroom dances.

But the organisation was doomed to failure as it had two hurdles that could not be cleared.

As its first president, Mr. J.I.M. Abuul pointed out, the movement was purely a matter of the young educated persons of almost the same age sets (*kwav*) who did not benefit from the advice of the elder Tiv in Zaria. These elders included Akiga Sai, the editor of the Tiv language newspaper, *Mwanger* (light) at the Gaskiya Corporation, Gbire Gundu, the Chief Clerk, Orahii Wayo, Printer, and Tyotume Nor, Finance Clerk, all of Gaskiya Corporation. Others were Daniel Akiga and Stephen Kwaghve Tion, nurses in government service, and Deem Kpum of the Agricultural Department. Never does an age set exist without an advisor, a senior man, *wanigba*. Yet the young founders of the YTA did not consider *wanigba* necessary hence they had none.

Secondly, since the emphasis was on being young and educated, those who did not hold these qualifications were shy to participate in the affairs of the movement. True, some did join that had not any of these young and educated qualifications but many more could have joined the group.

A third possible mistake is that the organisation failed to cooperate with the T.P.U. with whom it later in fact entered into rivalry. TPU was attacked for joining the NCNC.

However, before YTA dissolved into an ordinary community organisation in 1963, and embraced all Tiv in Zaria, its founders apparently scored two main achievements.

It encouraged young Tiv elsewhere outside Tiv land to emulate its example and organise the Tiv for social welfare. The development of community meetings among the Tiv in all the

large towns in Nigeria today could be credited to the inspiration of the YTA.

Secondly, the YTA encouraged young Tiv school leavers to come out of Tiv land and look for jobs instead of hanging around Gboko or Makurdi to enter the services of the Tiv N.A. They made these appeals in the *Nigerian Citizen*, *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo*, and *Mwanger*. They appealed to the rising elite to widen their horizons beyond Tiv land. Parochialism was to be the thing of the past.

NEPU invited the executive of YTA to attend a NEPU convention in Bida in 1953 as observers. A newly recruited member, Isaac Kpum, was sent to Ilorin to represent the group. From Ilorin, the YTA went to Lagos to see the Governor, Sir John Macpherson. While Isaac Kpum was in Lagos, the YTA heard on radio of the alliance he had made with the Action Group. This was without YTA consent. When he returned, and before he could state his case, YTA expelled him.

In 1953, the TPU became a union member of the Middle Belt Peoples Party, M.B.P.P., that had been organised by a Birom, Honourable Nyam Rwang Pam, Member of the Northern House of Assembly, and Bello Ijumu, a Kabba Yoruba, and the first secretary of the Northern Elements Progressive Union, NEPU. The MBPP was born out of the breakup of the Middle Zone League, MZL that had been founded in Plateau Province in 1950. Its goal was the creation of a separate region but in 1953, there were so many differences among the party leaders that it could not function properly. One group favoured cooperation with the NPC while the other preferred an alliance with a Southern party. There were speculations that the MZL was instigated by an anti-moslem missionary interest who, unable to penetrate the Muslim areas now exploited the apathy among the "pagans" to ward off an imaginary Muslim threat.

But the missionary fear of this threat was genuine and deep-rooted. Ever before the era of politics, Dr R. Bingham, one out of many had threatened to "proceed immediately to Kano City where he would stand in the market within the city walls and preach the gospel to the people". With the constitutional changes

in the 1940s and 1950s, some SIM missionaries became more apprehensive of the threat. And indeed Rev. G. Muir, the head of the S.U.M. complained that "the North will be governed by a body almost entirely moslem and I fear that missionary work by non-natives will be further restricted". And so the gospel according to Moslem threat was spread to the Middle Belt.

And this anti-muslim propaganda has even affected some academic work on the Nigerian Political Parties. For example, Richard Sklar¹⁰ states that the M.Z.L. was founded:

following a private member's motion in the Northern House of Assembly which called upon the government to restrict the activities of the Christian missionaries in the North.

But in fact no such "restriction" was called for. What the government was called upon to do at that time was to ask missionaries not to interfere in the routine work of the N.A.s.⁶ Yet this imaginary bogey of threat from Muslims became an important tool later in the hands of unscrupulous Tiv politicians. Meanwhile, the MZL did not prosper because not many Middle Belters agreed with the bigots of the S.I.M. missionaries and others.

When the MZL broke up, one of the splinter groups became the Middle Belt Peoples Party (MBPP). Mr E. Gundu, one of the founders of the TPU became the leader of the MBPP in 1953.

Following the new Federal Constitution, the Tiv section of the MBPP returned four candidates to the Federal Legislature in Lagos. The MBPP was then affiliated to the NCNC.

It must be here emphasised that the bulk of the masses in Tiv land did not actually understand what was happening. Voting, they indeed voted. But what were they voting for? They did not know. Nor did they know what the people were going to Lagos or Kaduna to do. Nor were the candidates themselves clear about their roles. Almost everybody was in darkness in Tiv land about

⁶ Northern Regional Council of Assembly Debates, Fourth Session, 8th December, 1949, Kaduna.

the new constitutional development in Nigeria. Voting was therefore, limited to the few: the *utor*, the tax collectors and the district scribes, the self-acclaimed leaders of the people as far as *tom batur* (whiteman's work) was concerned. It was they, therefore who taught their elders what to do. The right people were chosen and the elections were free and fair. Whether the candidates thereafter performed creditably is another matter. It was at this time that Issac Kpum contested against his father Deem Kpum and won. But the traditional pressure of the elders prevailed on him to withdraw. The elders regarded the confrontation as *tsav* and objected. He withdrew and the relations between father and son resumed.

The development of politics amongst the Tiv took a new turn when the United Middle Belt Congress, UMBC, was formed in 1955. A number of factors accounted for this.

By 1955, a large section of Tiv were beginning to understand the new changes in the Nigerian political scene. This was as a result of the development of western education, experience gained from local organisations such as the TPU and YTA and contacts with non-Tiv politicians such as Aminu Kano, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, and Chief Obafemi Awolowo. Furthermore people began to associate economic gain with political power. The legislators were paid good salaries which made them live in comfort through acquisition of hitherto impossible luxury goods: cars, radios etc. In addition, ministerial appointments attracted handsome side rewards: lavish receptions and crowds while on tour. The Tiv speculated that there must be something in the new European politics: another way of gaining power and prestige in the society.

The Tiv predominated in the UMBC led by J.S. Tarka from 1957. Before Tarka's leadership UMBC was plagued by differences within the leadership. Some wanted the UMBC allied to the NPC. It allied with NPC in 1955 but the alliance broke up before the 1956 elections. The UMBC ailment was disunity. This was because a large number of Middle Belt people were very skeptical about "separation". Some felt that the idea of creating a separate state would not solve the problems of the

people of the Middle Belt area. Such people therefore preferred an accommodation or an understanding with the NPC that offered better opportunity and security for the people. Others preferred an alliance with the southern parties, such as the Action Group. The UMBC broke with the NCNC in 1955 because the Tiv were convinced that the NCNC merely wanted them as a stepping stone to power at the centre, in view of the NCNC opposition to the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State.

The differences in the UMBC leadership continued to mount despite attempts at reconciliation by its chairman, Honourable H.O. Abagu, MHR¹⁰. It was at this stage that J. S. Tarka took over the leadership of the party. The development of the party under him forms the next chapter.

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Chapter 12

The Era of Politics, 2nd Phase 1957-1960

UMBC Under Tarka, Joseph Sarwuan

In 1957, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka, 25, and former General Secretary of the Tiv Staff Union became president of the UMBC at the Lafia Conference. His election had to do with the Tiv majority in the party as well as his personal qualities.

At the conference the Tiv and the Birom had agreed that the Tiv would provide the President and the Birom, the Secretary. The Tiv had three candidates Achirga Abuul, 46 votes, H.O. Abaagu, 31 votes and J.S. Tarka, 25 votes. But the winner, Achirga Abuul, could speak neither English nor Hausa. This disqualified him. Abaagu who was next in the score declined. And so the office passed on to J.S. Tarka, who as a school teacher spoke both English and Hausa, fluently.

This election was the turning point in the UMBC history and the rising political consciousness amongst the Tiv.

Tarka could not, at this time be credited with charisma but he readily gained supporters and popularity because he was the right man at the right time.

He came when the people were clamouring for a dynamic and outspoken leader who could air the Tiv aspirations at the public and national levels. Tarka worked hard and brought unity to the UMBC. As a Grade I teacher his educational qualification was better than that of the bulk of his followers in Tiv land. Tarka denied being inspired by any Tiv to join politics. Rather, he said, he was inspired by the speeches of Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and others. He said he however joined on his own accord. He concedes that Isaac Kpum helped him as a friend and that it was Isaac Kpum who brought the Action Group (A.G.) into Tiv. The two have fundamental differences on who did what and who did not. Isaac Kpum was the General

Secretary of the Middle Belt People's Party, 1953-1954 and later the Financial Secretary of the UMBC, 1958. He was also the co-editor of the newly founded *Middle Belt Herald*, a local paper published in Jos. He claimed, despite Tarka's assertion to the contrary, to have introduced Tarka into politics.

Isaac Kpum had been a policeman and a catechist and had thereby gained much experience in his dealings with the white Reverend Fathers. He had thereby acquired their western diplomacy, political tactics and manoeuvres in dealing with people. He understood all the political tactics of the day and imparted the same to Tarka who soon surpassed him.

Tarka himself was a man of charm, a refined speaker whose influence in Hausa and English were commendable. His boldness and clarity, his rhetorics, endeared him to the young. This in turn increased his popularity. The alienated young Tiv particularly and the young elsewhere now felt they had a leader who would champion their cause in the search for employment and economic independence. They had found their own version of Zik of the South.

The rise of Tarka had some genesis with the missionaries and the white district officers in Tiv land who encouraged the spread of UMBC. Apart from the Tiv, Tarka had both Muslim and Christian supporters in Southern Zaria, Plateau Province, particularly Shendam, and Benue Province. His rise did not appear to be associated with new political ideologies or doctrines for generally Nigerian politicians have little real interest in political ideology.

When Tarka assumed office the UMBC was still to decide to which of the national parties it was to be allied. Some wanted alliance with NPC or NEPU while others like Bello Ijumu preferred alliance with the Action Group or NCNC. Two members, Bello Ijumu, and Moses Nyam Rwang were expelled in 1957 for negotiating with A.G. and NCNC unofficially. But they were readmitted in 1958.

On 6th May, 1957, a formal alliance was concluded with A.G. and ratified in October the following year at a UMBC convention in Minna. A splinter group led by Abaagu opposed

this alliance. They therefore formed the Benue Freedom Crusade (BFC) which favoured an alliance with the NCNC. In 1959, the splinter group abandoned the NCNC and joined the NPC. This was the foundation of the bitter fratricidal strife between the NPC and UMBC supporters in Tiv. The conflict increased as the years went by. According to an NPC leader, Lushaika Anja of Masev (Injiriv), the decision of the group to join the NPC accorded with the political reality of the Nigerian politics. This, he explained, was that the Tiv would not get the necessary public utility services, pipe borne water, electricity, tarred roads, etc for the economic development needed to improve the welfare of the masses unless the Tiv supported the NPC government. He argued that no southern party had any hope in getting into power in the North to change the status quo. In supporting the NPC government the status quo would be maintained but not to the detriment of the Tiv.

To the Anja group, the creation of a Middle Belt State was a remote possibility or an impossible dream so long as the government in power opposed it. The idea of opposing the NPC was stupid for two reasons, they argued. One, the AG and NCNC were dominated basically by the Yorubas in the West and the Ibos in Eastern Nigeria. In other words each party was being supported by the people in its area of authority. Why then should the Tiv not support the NPC? Secondly, they argued, the NCNC opposed the creation of the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State (COR). How then could they support the creation of Middle Belt State in the North? They regarded the whole affair as a fight for power among the most predominant ethnic groups in Nigeria: Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba. Since the Tiv lived in the North, they reasoned, they were part of the Hausa-Fulani group. They invoked the traditional view that after all the Tiv and the Fulani were friends long before the British came. Cooperation with the NPC was, therefore, a natural development.

The UMBC did not subscribe to this view. They conceded that the NPC government had power and resources to provide utilities as mentioned but they would not come to terms with that party solely on the basis of material benefit. They believed that

the creation of the Middle Belt State was possible and could be achieved by cooperation with southern parties to gain control of the Federal legislature. But this would be possible if the Constitution was changed not just by two parties cooperating. For chapter I section 4(1) and 3 of the 1960 Constitution of Nigeria provided that:

Parliament may alter any of the provisions of this constitution, or (in so far as it forms part of the law of Nigeria) any of the provisions of the Independence Act, 1960 shall not come into operation unless each Legislative House of at least two Regions had passed a resolution signifying consent to it having effect.

a) A bill for an Act of Parliament under this section, not being an Act to which sub-section (3) of this section applies, shall both be passed in either House of Parliament unless it has been supported on second and third readings by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all members of that House.

Thus these sections would not easily satisfy the UMBC ambition. It is possible that the East and West would in their houses pass the requisite resolutions. But it is doubtful if a bill for an Act of parliament would have succeeded because of the NPC majority in the Federal and Northern Legislatures.

Secondly, as for the creation of new states or regions chapter I, section 3 provides that:

Alterations to section 3 of this Constitution for the purpose of establishing new regions out of other territories shall be effected only in accordance with the following procedure:

- (a) proposal for the alteration shall be submitted to each House of Parliament and, if that proposal is approved by a resolution of each House of those Houses supported by the votes of at least two thirds of all the member of that House, the proposal shall then be submitted to the Legislative House of all the regions; and
- (b) if the proposal is approved
 - i) by a resolution of each legislative house of a majority of all the Regions; or
 - ii) by a resolution of each legislative House of at least two regions including any Region comprising any part of Nigeria that should be transferred to the new Region under the proposal. Parliament may provide for the alteration.

It is necessary to set out this provision in detail for three reasons. **Firstly**, if this was the position known to both parties why did it not feature in their campaign? Why were the masses not properly informed about the possibility or impossibility of creating the Middle Belt State?

Secondly, it is alleged that the A G allied with the UMBC so that Ilorin and Kabba would be merged with the West instead of joining the Middle Belt State. But how would the A G and the UMBC make the NPC consent to such an idea? Or would the A G have secured 3/5 of the votes of adults in Kabba and Ilorin provinces? It appears the A G wanted to use UMBC to reduce NPC power in Lagos. And the UMBC aim was getting into power by all means. Once in power they could shelve their election promises by pleading oppression by NPC or betrayal by A.G or any other excuse. Why then did the UMBC continue to promise a Middle Belt State when they knew it was not possible? **The reply** is that the cry for Tiv independence was rightly seen to have great potential for emotional appeal, however forlorn a hope it might logically be. And in the emotionally charged atmosphere generated by the UMBC electioneering, it could have been difficult for the NPC to quote the Constitution without being laughed at.

Another vexing problem before the 1959 election was the appointment of the deputy *Tor Tiv* in 1959. The controversy over the appointment of the deputy *Tor Tiv* illustrates another classical mistake the British made in their study of Tiv society.

There were two conflicting issues: political rivalry and the selection of a candidate on merit and in accordance with the principle of eat and give your brother.

The political rivalry was between the NPC and UMBC supporters, each party had its own candidate: Akaajime Ako for the UMBC and Bendega Ukpada for the NPC. Both candidates were Ipusu. But neither they nor their supporters seemed to have known or considered this fact. This happened because the British, probably, thought that the people grouped as Ikwande were Ichongo.

And so Bendega Ukpada who came from *tar* Shangev-Ya was wrongly thought to be an Ichongo. In the end he won and became deputy *Tor* Tiv. But his opponents felt that it was wrong, that the NPC had manipulated power to the detriment of the policy of eat and give to your brother, hence both *Tor* Tiv and deputy *Tor* Tiv were Ichongo. Both contestants believed this. Thus, political passions sharpened.

What was the role of the *utor* or the traditional leaders in this matter? Why did they not explain the position to the people? The people interviewed were still afraid and would not discuss the matter with the writer. The actors were still very much around. The *utor* and the elders were bullied from the path taken by their forefathers. And they thereby lost their respect, prestige and power in the eyes of the politicians. And when arson erupted in 1959 and 1960, the elders could not restrain their subjects.

The Federal Elections 1959

1959 was fateful for every Tiv. The political confusion that came out of that year has haunted the Tiv till today. The success of the UMBC in that year's Federal election in Tiv land in securing all the seats made a large section of the north to regard the Tiv as betrayers of the Northern solidarity. It also sharpened political passion among the Tiv themselves. The ambition of the Tiv NPC leaders, their political plans for the economic and social development of a Tiv cooperating with the NPC government, the hopes they had for securing ministerial appointments should they win, were all gone with the winds. They had been defeated at the polls.

On the other hand the UMBC who won all the seats were still in opposition and could not possibly create the Middle Belt State. The labour of both parties were thus in vain.

The NPC particularly regarded their defeat as a tragedy for the Tiv. An opposition could not possibly serve the Tiv interest.

The campaigns preceding the elections in 1959 had exposed every Tiv directly to the problems of Nigerian politics.

The campaigns went on from house to house, day and night. Each party made extravagant speeches and promises. They

raised the hopes of the masses, particularly the alienated groups earlier discussed in Chapter XI. These restless groups became the dedicated agents of the NPC and UMBC. The party agents toured the countryside to explain the voting procedures, the identification of party symbols, and behaviour of the people at the polls. The *utor* and their subordinates: scribes, tax collectors, messengers, policemen etc. and the elders in all *ityar* came under the direct influence of the politicians. Each party brought pressure to bear on the *utor* and their people. Influences of money and promises possibly played some part with the *utor* and others.

Mede Achii, Ibinda Adasu, Feese Ikyaagba, Avaan Ako, and Mmenger Debam complained that they were forced to retire because they were accused of helping the UMBC in the 1959 elections. But a large section of elders declined to compromise their position.

The UMBC electioneering was quite unscrupulous in stirring up ethnicism and religion against the NPC. A campaign song went like this:

Are you a Tiv or a Hausa person?" Do you want to do sallah or remain as you are?

Two or three implications can be found in this campaign tactics.

The first was the use of ethnicism. The NPC was reduced by UMBC into a Hausa party meant for only Hausa and not Tiv who would only join NPC out of foolishness.

Second, was the use of religion. The Tiv generally tolerate other peoples' religion but they adhere strictly to their own. The UMBC president, J.S. Tarka, told me in 1971 and 1972 that he had always been utterly opposed to this sort of thing that he had strong feelings of friendship and respect for the Hausa and Fulani and that dragging people's religion into disrepute would create anarchy. He said that in 1959, he was preoccupied with the central administration of the party and that what his subordinates did in the countryside was often not brought to his notice. Martin Dent agrees that Tarka was "usually an extremely reasonable man" and "was not himself blinded by tribal or

religious prejudice". But he points out that UMBC invoked religion in politics probably because, Tarka "did not exercise much disciplinary control over his followers". And secondly, "he found that this sort of propaganda paid, and quite naturally wanted to carve out a Middle Belt State of which he could be premier". If Mr Dent's views are correct then they contradict Tarka's views about religion as mentioned earlier. Such tactics may pay in votes but as Dent rightly suggested they should have a limit "if national unity is to be preserved".

Surprisingly and most importantly NPC lacked financial resources that would match that of the UMBC. According to M. J. Dent.

the local NPC organisation in Tiv lacked dynamism and had neither the funds nor psychology for an appeal to the masses. Its supporters tended to be important people who considered such an appeal to be beneath their dignity.

But did the NPC have adequate funds from its parent body? Nobody knows. The UMBC warned its supporters against being lured by silver and gold into remaining in perpetual bondage to the NPC rulers. They argued that the Tiv had remained without the amenities promised for years and could still therefore exist without them.

The NPC made little effort to refute UMBC arguments effectively.

The elders who were readily susceptible to material influence could scarcely restrain their subjects from being indoctrinated by politicians. Quite a number accepted the role of being father of one party or the other in their *ityar*. Others stayed aloof saying that they did not understand the issues involved.

This was the beginning of a new political era in Tiv society. The problems outlined at the beginning of Chapter XI reasserted themselves and the tensions became intensified. They eventually culminated into the *nande nande* episode of 1960.

Ideology and political doctrine did not feature in the campaigns. The political questions were the creation of the Middle Belt State and the teaming up with NPC to improve the economic and social condition of the Tiv. But instead of debating these issues the two parties concentrated on abusing each other.

Family gossip and personal interest took the place of policy discussions. Relations were strained between family and family and within the family itself.

Tiv politicians naturally lacked the knowledge, understanding and experience which would enable them to handle political problems in the British style. At the same time they lacked training or even interest in the traditional political ways of their forefathers. They had their feet in both camps (British and Tiv traditions.) This confused them more than anything else. And in this confusion, personal interest more than all else swayed them. The young politicians are often prone to invoke concepts of individualism and egalitarianism and end up by saying that *M ye hen awe mtse ga* — "I do not depend on you for livelihood".

This view the elders loathe and condemn as a sign of a decaying society that shuns social and traditional obligations. Yet the ideas predominate among a large section of persons regarded as penniless adventurers who have nothing to lose but everything to gain.

1960: The Year of *Nande Nanae*

The bitterness engendered between the NPC and UMBC by the 1959 elections never abated until the first military coup *d'etat* of January 1966. The party cleavage permeated all society in its affairs. Several dances or songs were devised to ridicule the UMBC or the NPC as the case was.

The subsequent division brought by the parties interrupted normal activities and social gatherings. Where farming or dancing was done it was strictly along party lines. Members of opposing parties would not dance together.

The stage was now set for ignition. A single spark and a conflagration would erupt.

This incident was provided by the tactless, arrogant, and sometimes stupid behaviour and action of some NPC supporters in the services of the Tiv N.A.

The first incident occurred in *tar* Mbatie in 1960. It led to the outbreak of widespread arson and looting, popularly known as *nande nande* -burn and burn, an event that Tiv history can never forget.

The *lor* Mbozie, Iyer Agalikpaga, a staunch supporter of the NPC, did not hide his hatred for UMBC.

He put UMBC members in his *lor* under constant surveillance and would not even allow them to hold meetings or social functions. The power of the *lor* to break up meetings held without his consent was justified by traditional law as well as the law of the Tiv N.A. The NPC held meetings without interruption.

It must be mentioned however, that the UMBC members in *lor* Mbozie were defiant of the *lor*'s orders and authority. They held allegiance only to the UMBC leaders. A showdown was therefore in the offing.

Even wives of some UMBC members were prevented from crossing River Kanning Ala at Buruku market. Early in 1960, the same *lor* ordered the breaking up of one of the UMBC women's social organizational conferences. Instead of dispersing in peace the UMBC decided to accept the challenge.

A fight took place and members of the NPC were beaten up. As tension grew all blames for social ills were put on the NPC: failure to go to secondary school, payment of taxes, disorganisation of family system.

An incident at Yandev on 13th August, 1960, gave the final signal which ignited *wande wande*.

The *lor* of *lor* Yandev, and staunch supporter of the NPC, or Ako, sent his officials to collect taxes but two of his policemen and several tax collectors were beaten up. The UMBC apparently regarded all *lor* as enemies. They therefore set out to obstruct their performance of official duties. They would not therefore allow *lor* Yandev to govern them.

A rebellion against traditional authority by the young had begun. They were no longer willing to accept advice except from their political leaders, unless such leaders happened to be elders as well. This was why an alleged wrong by the *lor* Yandev would not be ventilated through the traditional mechanism or the law courts. Anarchy was at the corner. And in the end neither NPC or UMBC could hold its supporters in check.

The August 13th incident led to a series of incidents in other parts of Tiv land. The situation in Yandev itself was very serious.

More policemen were sent from Tiv N.A. on 20th August 1960 to arrest the rioters but they were not successful. Several of them were beaten and three were shot with arrows.

The *Tor Tiv* intervened, The rioters listened to him but they also demanded the presence of their *tor* who fled to Gboko. They wanted him arraigned before the *Tor Tiv*. But the *Tor Tiv* feared for *tor* or Ako's life and would not bring him. The rebels concluded that their allegations against Ako were correct. This fanned the flames of revolt. The burning and looting soon spread to other parts of Tiv and continued till the end of October though minor and sporadic incidents took place down to November and December, 1960. Apart from a minor incident at Wukari all the acts of arson were confined to Tiv territory.

The Wukari trouble was no more than a by-product of the problems in Tiv country. The trouble started when an NPC convention was held there. NPC members passing through Tiv territory were attacked and beaten. Some UMBC members tried to incite the Tiv at Wukari to riot on the ground that they had no political rights in Jukun land. The Jukun avoided any confrontation but kept a close watch on the new Tiv migrants from whom some chiefs collected *aziki* tax to keep them in check or expel them from Jukun territory.

In Tiv land itself many important and staunch NPC members had their properties destroyed. For example, Akume Ugba and Jiji Aluor lost almost everything over night. Their homes were burnt to ashes and their livestock destroyed or seized by the rioters. It is utterly impossible to discuss all that happened during the political arson of 1960. That these things happened is a matter of common knowledge. I saw the burnt buildings and cars in the course of my field work in 1972. The destruction was dreadful. Even solidly built houses were demolished or rendered unfit to live in. The police could not contain the rioting. Law and order broke down in some *ityar*, and the youngmen in such areas became masters in place of the traditional elders. The majority of the important NPC supporters flocked to safety in Gboko or wherever there was a police post. Stopping the rioting was difficult and the Nigeria Police took sometime to stop it. But there were few deaths. Property was the target: looting, burning, and flogging people.

The Aftermath of the Riots

The 1960 riots had serious and protracted consequences for the Tiv society. Apart from the already noted damage to property, unity and trust amongst the people were also destroyed; just like the inter *tar* wars of the 19th century. But while the inter-*tar* wars were centered primarily on land disputes and family survival, the problems of 1960 were centered generally on the personal interest and ambitions of their authors. The welfare of the masses mattered but little. Consequent upon the riots, reforms were embarked upon that stripped some traditional leaders and *utor* of their powers in the society. This in turn created a vacuum which is yet to be filled. The rioting brought no gain to the trouble makers. Nor did it solve their problems. Their frustrations remained. Many were tried and about five thousand were convicted and given prison sentences ranging from one month to two years¹. In addition all adult males in Tiv, except those who sustained losses, were surcharged an extra tax of two pounds fifteen shillings to help pay for the damages that had been caused by the disturbances.² The total tax for the year 1960 alone was therefore four pounds ten shillings. Furthermore the Tiv N.A. was discredited. A Divisional Officer was appointed sole administrator to rule the whole Tiv. But the institutions of the society had been disorganised. So, this did not solve the problems. Therefore, more problems arose in 1964 whereby the Tiv resorted to slashing of throats and the breaking of heads of their brother Tiv. This was the *atemitough* that will be discussed in the next chapter.

References

- Dent, M.J.: "Minority Party - The UMBC" in *Nigerian Government and Politics*, London 1966) pages 473-474
- Tseyayo J.I.: *Aspects of National Integration in Nigeria: The Tiv Case*, Ph. D Thesis University of Sussex (1973) pages 225, 228, 231-232, 234-235, 237. A number of the UMBC/AG alliance and NPC songs between 1955 and 1966 had been well documented by Tseyayo. His translation of the songs may not be acceptable to all Tiv speaking people however.

¹ Provincial Annual Reports of Northern Nigeria, Kaduna (1960) pages 26.

² Riot in Tiv Division, Clans of: GBODIV.2/27-PUB.48, N.A.K.

Chapter 13

The *Atemitiough* of 1964 and the Coomassie Report

It was in the year of great confusion, *Nande Nande*, 1960, that the British granted independence to Nigeria on 1st October. But this did not end the political upheavals in Tiv land; the political arson that had occurred between March and August, 1960, was no more than a rehearsal of what February and March, 1964, held in stock: the worst political anarchy in the history of Tiv. The characteristics were the burning and looting of property, and maiming and breaking of peoples' heads. This was the *atemitiough*. Yet a full historical account of this tragedy has to wait. This is because sources are not yet available: written material, oral accounts are bound to generate extra emotion because the actors are still very much around. Yet a sketch has to be attempted so that the significance of the tragedy can be related to the political history which is the subject of this study.

As noted earlier, following the 1960 fiasco a Sole Administrator was appointed to run Tiv N.A. His duties included the restoration of law and order, reconciliation of the warring partymen and assisting the *Tor* Tiv to regain his authority, and confidence over his subjects.¹ For the reputation and prestige of the *Tor* Tiv were at the lowest ebb. This had been so since he assumed office in 1957.

His position was just untenable. Allegiance of his subjects to him was completely divided. He was trying to do the work of the elders as well as his own at the same time. His apparent sympathy for the NPC made things worse.

The administrator, Mr. M.J. Dent, assumed duties on 15th September, 1960. He set out at once to reconcile the factions. Enquiries were made into the complaints against the *utor* in the

¹ A White Paper on the Government Policy for the Rehabilitation of the Tiv Native Authority, Kaduna, (1965) page 9.

ityar. How this was done is not known but fourteen *utor* were subsequently suspended while others were retained on probation. The NPC were angry and aghast. They thought that the administrator had acted unilaterally. And they complained against him. He organised peace meetings between the NPC and the UMBC but neither would budge. The NPC in particular considered the administrator pro-UMBC. They reported him to the Northern Nigerian Government. An instance, Isaac Kpum, (now broken away from J.S. Tarka for bringing in Ugba Uye to contest election in Kunav Constituency), cited against Mr. Dent was that while Mr. Dent declined giving him permit to hold a rally, he gave permit to the UMBC to hold a rally at Agwabi, 23 miles on Gboko-Wukari road.²

Barely a month later, the members of the NPC Divisional Working Committee: Isaac Kpum, Jime Akaakar, Wuam Gambe, and others made another written report accusing Mr. Dent of non-cooperation and taking unilateral action.³ The substance of their complaint was that Mr. Dent had dismissed some "corrupt" Court Members, and had set up an Advisory Committee for political and other matters in Tiv Land. He had also suspended and later demoted Jingali Damkor, the District Head of Mbagbera to kindred head, and, finally, he appointed, as acting District Head of Mbagbera, one Atesehongo Kaaka, allegedly the local leader of the Action Group. Furthermore, the NPC men held the view that the expatriate administrative officers in Tiv were doing all they could to discredit the dissolved Tiv N.A. According to them "the expatriate administrative officers are against us."

Despite this, the Advisory Committee composed of three members from each party, some *utor* and a TPU member did some good work but under severe criticism due to the political

² Nigeria Political Parties in Benue Province 1955-1963, MAKPROF.2/60-PLT/5 Vol.1, N.A.K. Also contrast Tseyayo, J.I.: *Conflict and Incorporation In Nigeria*, Zaria, (1975) page 161.

³ NPC letter No. NPC.20/TDS.WC/45 dated 24th December, 1960, MAKPROF.2/60-PLT/5, Vol.1, N.A.K.

nature of its composition. The main duty of the committee was to assist the Sole Administrator to organise the District Councils and the Tiv N.A. Police. The committee had one consensus opinion, that is, it was opposed to the independence of the Makurdi sub N.A. Why should the non-Tiv control the sub N.A.? Ethnicity was involved so there was consensus of opinion. This illustrates the traditional readiness of the Tiv to suspend all troubles between them and unite to fight a common enemy, especially if the enemy was a non-Tiv.

Proposals were made and accepted to establish district councils that would help improve local administration. The construction of the Councils' headquarters was begun and the government policy stipulating the functions of the councils was also gazetted. There were sixteen district councils in all. Four district councils headquarter offices were completed. Four were under construction. Each building cost three thousand and one hundred pounds. Where the construction was done was declared a settlement area.

But the reforms remained on paper. They were not implemented. The headquarters built were not used save as hideouts for rioters in 1964.

The police were reorganised by being removed from the control of the *utor*. But then the effect was that they functioned without the support of the District Heads. Attempts were further made to make administrative officers act as Port-folio councillors who presided over the finance and establishment committees of the Tiv N.A. The attempt failed. The Coomassie Commission of Enquiry attributed the failure to the shortage of administrative officers. But the Tiv N.A. employees held the view that the failure was due to the ignorance of the administrative officers about Tiv culture as well as the perverted view they held about their duties. Some preferred domestic gossip to their work while others held the Tiv in contempt. Cooperation of the Tiv was thus not forthcoming. And the Coomassie Report said so:

The sole Native Authority had also lost the cooperation of the most of the Tiv Native Authority Staff who were being irresponsible and ill-disciplined.

A body composed of G.L. Gunderson, U. Ndayako, and G.W. Fairhelm of the Administrative Management consulting service Institute of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, conducted an "organisation survey on Tiv N.A." in April 1964 and confirmed this "irresponsibility and indiscipline" of the Tiv N.A. Staff. They stressed that;

the most obvious problem involves the over-all organisation of the Tiv N.A. administrative structure. There seems to be very little effective control, coordination and direction from above... Nevertheless, the result has been duplication, disunity and misunderstanding among the departments and their employers, resulting in a general lowering of the quality of N.A. services... A related finding was the large amount of time, effort, and financial resources of the Native Authority that are spent on the collection of taxes. In addition to the department heads, it seems that all the resources, financial and otherwise, of Districts, village and clan administration are almost exclusively devoted to tax collection. (Gunderson, et.al, 1964:3-4).

In spite of the human and other resources committed to collection of taxes, little tax was collected at the beginning of 1963, but the Coomassie Commission superficially attributed it to "lack of cooperation of the clan, kindred heads and the tax collectors." But the failure to pay tax was due to the mounting tensions that burst out in 1964. To compound the problems some *utor*, instead of finding out why taxes were not being paid, resorted to illegal dismissal of the tax collectors. But the dismissal could not be, and was not, a revenue yielding venture.

In June, 1963, the Premier, Sir Ahmadu Bello, visited Tiv and discussed the reestablishment of the suspended Tiv N.A. A new Advisory Council was set up that November to advise on the reconstruction of the Tiv N.A. The UMBC declined to participate because although they were in the majority, they were given fewer seats than the NPC. The Tiv N.A. was not reestablished, and the sole administrator continued to have difficulties in trying to rule the land.

Aemitiough, February, March, 1964

The immediate causes of these 1964 disturbances cannot be readily pin-pointed for lack of evidence and due to the fact that the authors are still very much around.

The Government was taken by surprise and they scarcely knew what to do to restore law and order.

The Coomassie Commission of Enquiry suggested several reasons for the 1964 *atemitiough*: exploitation of the existing tensions by the UMBC; the rivalry and misunderstanding among the *utor*, for example, *tor*, Gbargbar (pro-NPC) versus *tor* Mkovul (pro-UMBC); the general rivalry and struggle for power between the UMBC and the NPC; the poor organisation and control of the Tiv N.A. and functions; and the natural urge of the Tiv to react violently against authority and abuse of power.

But these suggestions do not really get to the bottom of the matter. What is required is detailed analysis of the people involved and their problems.

According to the elders, the architects of the 1964 and 1960 riots were mostly the dispossessed group, the penniless adventurers who have nothing to lose but everything to gain; those who have not been properly absorbed into society because they were empty - they lacked the substance and quality of a natural Tiv man who has been properly brought up and has been taught to respect his people and their cultural heritage. The well brought up normally conform with the traditional codes of their fathers. They loathe *kwaghbo* and violation of good conduct. The dispossessed are the opposite. They have roots in the society. All they do grind against the norms of the society. They cherish *kwaghbo* because it serves their personal interests. They are not interested in understanding the communal or collective existence of the masses. They emphasise individual interests against that of the society.

The Dispossessed and their Problem:

The dispossessed are found among the elders, the middle-aged, and the youth.

Among the elders there are three categories of the dispossessed. The first are the greedy lured by money and the spoils secured by the youth. The second are the alcohol addicts who cannot maintain a proper stable family. Thirdly, there are the envious, those who cannot acquire wealth but envy others of their own acquisition. It was from this group that UMBC "fathers" emerged in various *ityar* or *ityo*. They acted as consultants to the youth on vandalism thus giving the youth traditional mandate to intimidate, punish, and kill people. It was the same role they played in the 19th Century in the sasswood tests. Just as the elders then decided who should be punished or killed before the sasswood was administered to a group of persons so did the UMBC fathers decide who should be punished or killed.

Often this class related to the family system. Some had no family. They had been deserted by their wives and children, or they had no children at all, or their son had failed or their daughter or relative was in college but could not find employment. Such a problem frustrated and disillusioned the elders. Such an elder readily found an escape value in politics.

Poverty was another bane amongst a large section of the elders. They could neither pay their tax nor secure the requisite standard of living. They were therefore jealous of the better off. Such an elder easily fell prey to the politicians to achieve what could not in the normal societal process be achieved.

Amongst the middle-aged, the dispossessed included the ex-servicemen, who having been demobilised from World War II were unemployed vagabonds in the land. The role they played in the 1947 Makurdi riot they repeated in the 1964 *atem-itiough*. The training they gave to the rioters made it impossible for the Nigeria police to succeed in suppressing the riots. This group also included the lazy adult who, like the demobilised soldiers, would not farm and could not succeed in other

enterprises. They included the unsuccessful motor park touts and petty traders. People in this group often drank heavily and were restless. Their companions were the prostitutes. Often they went to the market without any commodity to sell. They readily took to politics and got the dispossessed elders committed to their aspirations. They paid no taxes. They were always on the move visiting *tar* after *tar* and enjoyed the status of *orvanya*, visitor, which exempted them from tax payment. In time of trouble they readily returned home to lead their people and confuse the authorities.

The dispossessed youths were in two categories. The first being the unemployed primary school leavers. They had no desire for higher education but employment. Some felt that they were too highly educated and civilised to handle a hoe. They became perpetual wanderers posing as businessmen without capital. In this group of the dispossessed could be found the youths with ambition for higher education for which they had no money to pay. There is also the school dropouts. They are the party thugs, messengers, "policemen" or prosecutors for their bosses: the UMBC leaders. There were of course the curiosity seekers. Those who went merely to see but got caught up in the political web. Quite often it was they who got killed in riots or got arrested by the police.

The architects of political troubles in Tiv land were the "intelligentsia" of the land: UMBC and NPC leaders, and the Tiv N.A. employees. They manipulated the masses for their own interests which differed with time. For example, in the 1960s their craze for political and economic power made it impossible for them to reconcile their political differences. Furthermore, so divergent were the interests of the N.A. employees - from tax collector to Administrative Secretary that each employee found it difficult to remain neutral and perform his duties properly.

The problem of the N.A. employee was security of tenure. He might get dismissed or promoted depending on which party came to power. This fear weakened the administration.

Another development made the whole situation very inflammable: the extra tax imposed in 1960 and the growing

resentment against payment of any tax at all. The restless were also poverty stricken. How could they pay tax? Next, the masses were misinformed about the use made of taxes: that tax money was taken away by the NPC government or shared among the most senior Tiv N.A. officials. But these are minor problems. The real problem was the general disorganisation of the traditional society brought about by the various political changes already discussed.

This situation was exploited by both parties. The UMBC encouraged the dispossessed not to pay tax. The NPC instructed the N.A. officials to seize the property: farms and livestock for example, of those who could not pay their taxes. But a large number did not even have property to be seized save those of their relatives. The property seized was auctioned at the lowest prices to secure the required cash for payment into the N.A. Treasury. What's more, the pro NPC *utor* and court members were prone to intimidate and punish very severely the UMBC members brought before their courts and found guilty. Also both parties tried to stir dissension and disunity among the *utor* generally. An example was the issues between *tor* Gbargbar of Mbalagh and *tor* Mkovul of Ipav.

Disturbances began at Uga market in *tar* Mbalagh on 9th February and led to the assassination of Gbargbar on 11th February along with his brother, Faga Apinega. Also killed were Iyorfa Aneke, a farmer, Anongokor Agaigbe, a retired policeman. Gbargbar's scribe was not killed but he had his wrists cut to the bone - *izer un agogo* that is, they gave him a watch to wear. He was not killed possibly because he was not from Mbalagh. All the same, he had to be punished for being an official of a bad man whose excesses he failed to contain.

The Mbalagh trouble is often associated with the Gbargbar - Mkovur misunderstanding. On 8th February, 1964, *tor* Gbargbar summoned a meeting of all the Jemgbagh *utor*. Mkovul, of course, would not attend. He was the most senior *utor* as well as the *Ter* Jemgbagh. It was he therefore and not Gbargbar who could summon such a meeting. On 10th February therefore, Mkovul summoned all the elders in his *tar*, Ipav, and told them that he had been insulted by Gbargbar. On 11th February, Gbargbar and his brother were killed. This was

discovered on 12th February, 1964. Apparently both Gbargbar and Mkovul had violated the Tiv tradition.

Firstly, for Gbargbar to summon a meeting of all Jemgbagh *utor* per se was not illegal. His mistake was that he did not obtain prior permission from Mkovul. Secondly, Mkovul's decision not to attend the meeting was correct, but at the same time it was an indication that he wanted trouble not peace. He should have attended the meeting and complained against Gbargbar for acting outside his powers. This would have drawn apology and humiliation of Gbargbar and peace would have prevailed. Alternatively, not having attended the Gbargbar meeting, Mkovul should have summoned another meeting of all *utor* in Jemgbagh and reported Gbargbar. Why did he report Gbargbar to *tar* Ipav only when *tar* Ipav had no disciplinary powers over Gbargbar, a *tor* in another *tar*? What else could have been Mkovul's intention but to create friction between his subjects and the subjects of Gbargbar?

Although, Gbargbar's death could not be linked with the action of Mkovul yet, Mkovul was arrested charged with the death but acquitted and discharged. But who killed Gbargbar? The question is not possible to answer now. It has however, been suggested that the killing must have been by Gbargbar's own people since the Ipav could not have crossed into Mbalagh to do the killing.

Another question is what role did the rest of the *utor* play in the Gbargbar/Mkovul conflict?

Under normal circumstances, Tiv tradition demanded that as soon as the *utor* summoned by Gbargbar knew that Mkovul had not been invited or had not sent a representative they should have dispersed. Alternatively they could have investigated what happened and settled the matter. What they did however, nobody knows.

But what everybody knows is that with the death of Gbargbar, *atem itiough* had been born. J.I. Tseayo paints the picture thus:

In their own struggle not to lose control and influence with the people, who otherwise might have capitulated under the autocratic rule of the NPC, the UMBC middlemen countered the oppressive measures by instigating the general revolt throughout Tiv land. In doing this they indicated widespread control over the entire countryside, and sent the Tiv N.A. officials running to the main town, Gboko, for police protection.

The Coomassie Report seems to link it to the address of J.S. Tarka at the annual conference of the UMBC at Agasha between 4th and 6th February, 1964.

Tarka allegedly took the opportunity to "exploit the existing tensions".

What Tarka actually said at Agasha can not be precisely known. Persons present and interviewed by me denied that the UMBC leader talked about *atem itiough*. Whatever happened at Agasha, the trouble that erupted three days later began in *tor Tombo* (Mbalagh) the hot bed of Tiv politics where *nande nande* was inaugurated in 1960. The people of Tombo are known for their inability to tolerate injustice. Often they resort to violence for redress. Ashinya, a renowned warrior from Mbalagh, Tombo, was one of the first Tiv to kill a European in the 19th century when he shot Griffiths in 1885 for taking away his sheep without paying the correct price. The Tombo also fought several wars against Ugondo in the 19th century for bringing Jukun mercenaries to interfere in the internal politics of the Tiv.

Is it therefore surprising that the Mbalagh in February 1964, resorted to violence against *tor Gbargbar*?

The Coomassie Report linked Gbargbar's death with the rivalry between Gbargbar and Mkovul. This may not be correct. For the stories relating to the chain of events in Mbalagh between 8th and 11th February, 1964, are very difficult to piece together.

According to Atume Idyu who was Gbargbar's scribe and who talked to and travelled with me from time to time during my field work, Gbargbar's death was due to his subjects' dislike for him. He frequently used his power to punish them. Some of

the complaints against Gbargbar, he said, were greatly exaggerated while a few were true. Atume Idyu said that he could not prevent his *tor's* severe measures because he did not want to appear disloyal or pro UMBC. He said he did not realise the position of things as he does in hindsight. He did not see the coming danger. Nor did his *tor* Gbargbar. When trouble erupted at Uga and Nege markets on the 9th February between UMBC and NPC, Gbargbar expected protection from Gboko but it came a day late. Although, the Coomassie Report denies this, Atume maintains that the Tiv N.A. Police did not act promptly although Gbargbar sent instructions to Gboko in good time.

Other dispossessed followed the Mbalagh example and began to persecute their opponents. They beat, maimed and killed people, and burnt and looted houses. Their victims who were lucky were given an option of fine which was paid in hard cash or in livestock or both depending on their means. This they did to enable the UMBC "fathers" cleanse them from the *baja* (NPC) pollution. For example, one Kyekye Gbuushu, an *ortaregh* in the Mbajor sub *tar* was convicted and jailed six months at the complaint of a subject he had wronged. But instead of being sent to jail he was, in Gboko, carried shoulder high around the town and sent back to his sub *tar* where he nicknamed himself, *or hembaityo*, he who is above his *tyo*. This so annoyed his enemies that they resorted to jungle law by beheading him.

Atem itiough manifested mob hysteria. The worst reports came from Makurdi where one Peter Walu and Alhaji Ari established an inquisition for the trial of Kparev generally. Persons of Kparev origin were caught, tried, and sentenced to execution by having long nails hammered into their brains.

But Walu and Ari, unlike the killers of Gbargbar and Kyekye, were unlucky. Specific crimes were proved against them and they were sentenced to death. In 1966, the Military Government commuted their sentences to life imprisonment.

In the face of *atemi tiough*, the Police were helpless and the Army and the Air Force had to assist in detecting the rioters' camps and in bombarding them.

One of the most outstanding and most feared rioters, Tondo Agende, and his followers, were killed from an aerial bombardment in *tar Mbativ* in 1964.

The Coomassie Report

The most important development following *atemi tiough* was the Coomassie Commission of Enquiry appointed in May 1964.

to examine its background and to recommend a system of local government that will be capable of providing the services required for it as well as command the support and loyalty of the Tiv people.

Although the Commission's findings and recommendations are remarkable, they appear to be based on the writings of Paul Bohannon, particularly *The Tiv of Central Nigeria*.

One important recommendation of the Commission deals with the power structure in Tiv society and the nature of the local government required in Tiv land. The report insists that:

Emphasis must be placed on the diffuseness of power and decentralisation, and the system of local government should accord as far as possible with the indigenous social structure ...

In 1948 an administrative officer wrote:

Abuse of office in default of constant checking by seniors and age-mates is a vice to which the Tiv are especially prone.

This is true today but the traditional checks have been greatly weakened or are non-existent.

I did find that the colonial administration disrupted some of the most vital institutions of Tiv society and thus left a vacuum in the traditional power structure. Elders no longer exercised power as in the pre-colonial era. But this exercise of power is necessary for the control of the subjects. They require authority to deal with vital issues that affect the lives of the ordinary folk in the land such as marriages and marriage disputes, land disputes, appointment and dismissal of *utor* in the *ityar*. Elders should have original jurisdiction in these matters which should

go to the law courts on the recommendation of the elders. The recent policy of choosing a few elders in a *tar* to function as court assessors or advisors to the *utor* is contrary to Tiv culture. The policy alienates elders. The assessors are often easily coerced into reaching decisions by the courts. What's more, these elders regard the court members or judges as "peevish young men" who know next to nothing about Tiv custom. To advise a person on what he does not know, they argue, is a formidable task. This tends to encourage bribery and corruption and thus multiply problems in the country. The elders hold that current marriage problems and land disputes proliferate because power has gone to youngmen who do not appreciate the traditional set up.

Evidence, I found support the view of the Coomassie Report that "the system of local government should accord as far as possible with the indigenous social structure". The British had made blunders in this respect and recent political changes have been effected by government negating the principle in the Coomassie Report.

Another important recommendation is about the *utor*. The report says that:

In the Tiv context a chief tends to act as a focus for stresses and exercises power. In Tiv context, therefore, it is essential that the executive functions, judicial functions and authority should not be exercised by the same man.

The *tor* is, surely, the mouth-piece and executive representative of the elders in a *tar*, like the drum chiefs in the 19th century. His power is not however absolute. He is subordinate to the elders and he consults them on all important issues before taking decisions. When the *tor* decides without consulting the elders, trouble results. The emphasis should be on collective responsibility. Power should be shared on the policy of *ya kwagh na angbian*. This calls for the principle of rotation in making executive appointments.

The Coomassie Report made a very important observation about education:

Education has greatly affected the traditional checks being of a supernatural nature, now exercise little if any control over the educated elements. Education is giving rise to unemployment which forms fertile ground for politicians.

This observation is true except the claim that the traditional checks were of a supernatural nature.

The issue of education and unemployment should be seriously considered. Between 1967 and 1970, a large number of the unemployed educated youths were absorbed into the Nigerian Army following the outbreak of the civil war. But now, it appears, the situation is returning to the 1960s, unemployment and lack of post primary institutions that would absorb the youths. It is a danger spot to watch in Tiv land.

I disagree with the Coomassie Report on the following conclusions about politics, resentment of authority and the use of force in the society.

Political parties are completely contrary to the Tiv political structure, and one or the other must go. As it is impossible to prohibit party politics, the political structure must be modified. Political parties in Tiv exploit local tensions and so it is necessary to install safeguards. The Tiv resent authority and persons holding authority. So any party in power is liable to lose its support. When in opposition it is likely to gain support.

While the idea of installing safeguards is very important, these recommendation are rather vague and of little assistance. What should be the safeguards? Should politics be a weapon of coercion against the elders or compromise traditional authority in the control of the subjects? Certainly not. Political activity is not anything new to the Tiv. The main trouble with modern politics particularly in Tiv land is that it is practised at the expense of the traditional power of the elders. And it is fallacious to hold that "the Tiv resent authority and persons holding authority".

The problem arises when the holder of authority violates Tiv norms unchecked. This could be by his using power for his own selfish ends and no more for extreme individualism or the personalisation of power is an unpardonable offence among the

Tiv. Hence the belief that persons with good *tsav* usually took steps to kill those with bad *tsav* who misuse their power.

The report also claims that The Tiv will never respond to force but can easily be persuaded by the use of reason.

This may be true but it is laconic. The Tiv had themselves used much force on other people in the 19th century to occupy where they now are. They used the same force against each other in the inter *tar* wars of the 19th century. They used force where necessary in punishing their own subjects. In the early 19th century, the Tiv were greatly humiliated by the British use of superior force. The Tiv therefore appreciate force. And the traditional view is that force should be used as a last resort so that a person is not humiliated. To treat a man like a slave or a woman is greatly resented by the Tiv. The belief is that since force prolongs problems, understanding is better alternative solution to problems. Force could be used to punish the wrong doer who is not repentant. Such people must be punished to prevent *Kwaghbo* and to help emulate the traditional good conduct of the ancestors. The force used in such case is for the benefit of the society not the glorification of the individual. To the Tiv, the preservation of the community is more important than the fate of a single individual. Trouble begins when force is used for personal motives.

The Government of Northern Nigeria in a white paper released in 1965, accepted the Coomassie Report. But the recommendations had not been implemented when the first military coup *d'etat* occurred on 15th January, 1966.

Before the coup, the *Tor* Tiv had attempted to reconcile his warring subjects. For example, on 1st January, 1966, he summoned all the NPC and UMBC leaders to his palace where he made a passionate plea for reconciliation. He declared his neutrality and promised that thenceforth he would treat all his subjects alike. When I spoke to him in 1972, he asserted that he would do anything that would restore peace to Tivland. He was intending to visit all *ityar* to meet his subjects.

But the *nande nande* and *atem itioogh* had ruptured the society into embarrassing pieces, family against family, brother against brother, son against father and so on.

The *nande nande* and *atem itioogh* brought about a general distrust of the political leaders by the elders and a large number of the enlightened Tiv, the would be elites of the 1970s. The bulk of the political leaders had been discredited. They fell from grace. Their influence steadily deteriorated till the coming of the military in 1966. The *utor* and other traditional leaders who fell prey to politicians lost their prestige, respect and integrity amongst the generality of the people. And the military government (Benue Plateau) in her endeavour to reduce the influence of pro UMBC or NPC chiefs and to insulate them from politics, compelled many to retire from service in January, 1969. In the process many influential *utor* who might otherwise have helped the regime to bring permanent peace to Tiv were swept away.

Hence political instability still haunts the Tiv today despite apparent signs of tranquility and stability in the land. Later problems still exist.

The 1966 military coup affected the Tiv profoundly. What would the Tiv do when the army hands over power?

Hitherto little attention has been paid to such issues. The Tiv have suffered neglect in the study of their historic evolution. And without such studies how do you govern the Tiv? To some extent this study had tried to bridge this yawning gap of neglect.

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- Tsayo, J.I.: *Conflict and Incorporation in Nigeria*, Zaria, 1975 page 208.

Abbreviations

A.G	-	Action Group
B.F.C.	-	Benue Freedom Crusade
C.O.R.	-	Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State
D.R.C.M.	-	Dutch Reformed Church Mission
I.U.	-	Ibo Union
M.B.P.P	-	Middle Belt People's Party.
M.Z.L.	-	Middle Zone League
N.A.	-	Native Authority
N.E.P.U.	-	Northern Elements Progressive Union
N.C.N.C.	-	National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons
N.K.S.T.	-	Nongo U Kristu U Sudan Ken Tiv
N.P.C.	-	Northern People's Congress
R.C.M.	-	Roman Catholic Church
S.I.M.	-	Sudan Interior Mission
S.U.M.	-	Sudan United Mission
T.P.U.	-	Tiv Progressive Union
Y.T.A.	-	Young Tiv Association
U.A.C.	-	United Africa Company
U.M.B.C.	-	United Middle Belt Congress
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Glossary

Some of the words whose meanings are given in the text, when first used, are not included in this glossary, some words have been used in both singular and plurals forms, the plurals are indicated in the brackets.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| aaikor | - | accident. |
| aba (mbaaba) | - | a large pot. |
| abcen | - | clouds. |
| abida (mbaabida) | - | name of a particular kind of bead. |
| abume | - | a kind of snare for catching grass-cutter. |
| abun-ahi | - | groundnuts. |
| achaka (mbaachaka) | - | name of a particular dance |
| achakpum (mbaachakpum) | - | fruits of a certain tree used as arrow-heads by children. |
| achika (mbaachika) | - | a type of cloth worn by women. |
| achikong kong | - | a kind of indigenous beer made from millet or guinea com or both. |
| adogon | - | zigzagging in reference to the railway line. |
| afya (mbaafya) | - | a kind of cap worn by distinguished people, e.g drum chiefs in the 19th Century. |
| afyaregh | - | name of a particular gravy soup. |
| aga-hiande
(mbaaga-hiande) | - | a wooden pole of about 6 feet to 8 feet used for levelling down grass or com. |
| agber-azenga
(mba-agberazenga) | - | a small bush mouse. |
| agbur (mbaagbur) | - | ridges for planting cassava, etc. |
| ager (mbaager) | - | name of a kind of soup. |
| agom (mbaagom) | - | name of a bead |
| ahwa (mbaahwa) | - | a wooden spoon. |

- aho-pue - an indigenous kind of beer whose preparation lasts for ten days.
- ajo (mbaajo) - name of a kind of drum.
- akombo - (passim) general name of religious cults represented by objects in which the beliefs of the people are centred.
- akombo-gbande - name of an *akombo*.
- akombo-iwa - name of an *akombo*.
- akongo - compound surroundings.
- akpakem (mbaakpakem) - small sheaths made of palm-leaves used for the storage of salt.
- akpekpa (mbaakpekpa) - the indigenous bread.
- akpem (mbaakpem) - a kind of cloth used by men of substance.
- akweshi - black oil.
- amar-kwase - to organise a dance for the honour of a woman (housewife).
- amar-mirin - to organise a dance.
- amar - dance.
- amar-wan - dance (to organise a dance).
- amar-nyinya - horse dance.
- angbian kwase - a girl friend.
- angbian (angbianev) - a relative.
- anger (mbaanger) - a kind of cloth worn by men of substance.
- apav-bagu - a kind of gown worn by men of prestige.
- ashisha (mbaashisha) - a kind of cloth worn only by women.
- ate - reception hut.
- ateiwa (mbaateiwa) - blacksmith's hut.
- atem-itiough (mbaatemitiough)- smashing of head.
- atsaka (mbaatsaka) - sweet potato.
- ayashi - an indigenous beer made from guinea corn or millet or both.
- bar - salt.

bashi (ubashi)	- small brass rods about 12 inches in length used as currency.
chii-iyol	- to bathe in a pool for religious cleansing.
damkor	- name of anti- <i>mbatsav</i> movement
dev	- brown or red clay used in decorating pottery works.
dzaan	- kind of cloth worn by women.
fada (ufada)	- reverend father.
grinya	- a kind of dance copied from the people of Udam.
gbagir (ugbagir)	- cloth used by men of prestige.
gbum (ugbum)	- a kind of bead.
genger (ugenger)	- a kind of gravy (soup).
gbaaye (ugbaaye)	- <i>prosepis oblonga</i>
gbande (agbande)	- a clay plate for serving soup.
gbenger-ikar	- a blade for the large hoe.
gbenger-abya	- a blade for the small hoe.
gbenger-ivaan (agbenger avaan)	- an arrow head.
godo (ugodo)	- white indigenous cloths used as blankets.
hoyo	- name of anti- <i>mbatsav</i> movement the same thing as <i>damkor</i>
halakata	- name of a musical instrument.
hunda (ihunda)	- door.
ibem	- collective hunting.
ibia	- name of an ancient currency or small hand axes - similar to <i>ijimbe tur</i> - used as currency.
icha	- a kind of dress worn by young girls.
icham (atsam)	- a song.
iche-bar (atse-bar)	- ball of salt.
icheghel	- melon.
ichigh	- name of an <i>akombo</i> or medicine for drinking.

ichor	- . <i>raphia vinifera</i> .
idyo	- an area between the river confluence.
indyer (ander)	- a religious instrument made of a large tree trunk about 6' long with a slit on top.
igase (agase)	- <i>pennisatum spica hum</i> .
igambegh	- a weaving instrument.
igo	- pig.
igbe	- name of an <i>akombo</i> :
igbur (agbur)	- a stool.
ihumbe	- a collective farming group.
iho	- deer or small antelope.
ijir	- an assembly of men for litigation.
ijinga	- a weaving instrument.
ijembe (azembe)	- axe.
ijembe-tur	- a small hand axe.
ijev	- civet cat.
ijomon	- a kind of cloth won by women.
injur	- a portion of hair left prominently on the head after a hair cut to show a person's prowess in warfare or in religious matters.
ikav-ambi-ikondov	- general name for all the weaving instruments.
ikul	- treaty of friendship.
ikuran	- small brown bush mouse.
ikyar	- a kind of snare or term used for friendship.
ikoor (akoor)	- snail/shells.
ikarem	- green and harmless snake.
ikeve (akeve)	- coconut.
ikureke	- maize.
ikegh dam	- duck.
ikpine	- name of particular tree.
ikonugh	- chair or snare used in catching fish.

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ikpam	- buffalo.
ikovur-ki-nduur	- shooting the gun.
ilyev (alev)	- bean.
ilyum	- name of <i>akombo</i> for fertility.
imborivungu (amboravungu)	- a sacred religious object believed to be the head of an ancestor (A fetish).
imine (amine)	- millet.
inom	- a kind of kola.
inyam	- meat.
inyon	- bird.
inyon-ivinen	- a kind of dance.
ipaven	- general name for a section of a <i>tar</i> .
ipaven-genga	- a segment of a <i>tar</i> that uses a common drum in dancing activities.
ipir (apir)	- a kind of snare for catching bush mouse.
ipungwa (apungwa)	- kind of fruits found in river valleys.
isase (asase)	- a kind of wild fruit (cashew tree or nut).
ishamtoho	- rice.
ishom (asom)	- machet.
itiav (atyav)	- war.
itiough kitaregh	- the east.
ituurugh (atuur)	- okra.
ityegh	- pot.
ityough	- hand axe.
ityumbe	- a hut.
ivambe	- antelope (of zebra - buffalo family)
ivende-iver-aver	- it has been pre-planned or predestined.
iviha	- grass-cutter.
ivo	- goat.
ivom (avom)	- heap or a cultural ceremony.
iya (uya)	- compound.
iyangenev	- another name for <i>akombo</i> .

iyange	- sun.
iyange wan nomso	- the sun is male child.
iyē	- courtship or elopement.
iyiav	- foodstuffs.
Iyough ki honon	- to set up a snare.
iyongo	- sheep or a cup of calabash.
iyough	- yam or house.
iyor mba hemen tiav	- those who lead in war (war leaders).
iyor-mba-tiomov	- officials.
iyō-mba-yoron tor	- chiefs stewards.
iyor-mba pupur	- whitemen, i.e. Europeans.
iyor-mba-nyian	- red men, i.e. Europeans.
iwange (awange)	- spear.
kakaki	- name of musical instrument (trumpet).
kenghen waningo	- wait for your brother.
kena	- name of anti- <i>mbatsav</i> movement.
kende mku	- to perform an <i>akombo</i> rite known as <i>mku</i> .
kiriki	- small.
kor	- seize, i.e. to be attacked by <i>akombo</i> .
kosu	- name of a drum.
kpagh	- camwood.
kper-uhaan	- a net used as a snare.
kpande	- a wooden bed.
kua-ya	- domestic brawl.
kuha-ukiren	- doping the water.
kukwa	- title of Abakwa chief.
kulugh (ukulugh)	- tortoise.
kung-kung	- a name of a drum.
kur	- title of a Jukun king.
kwaghbo	- anything that is evil or bad.
kwase-musan	- woman exchange.
kwase-yamen	- woman purchase, meaning the same as <i>kwase-musan</i> .

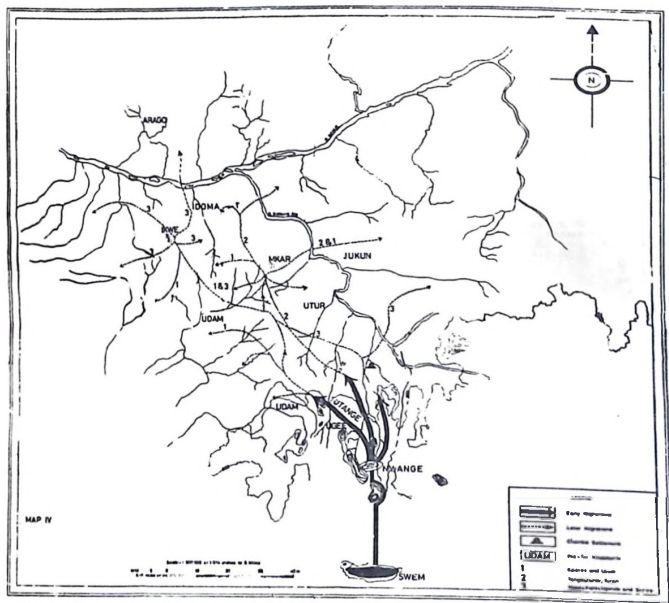
- kwase-ukemen sha akundu - woman married by the payment of twenty pieces of *tugudu* cloths.
- kwase-ukemen - to marry a woman by the payment of dowry.
- kwav - just as *kwagh*, i.e. age-sets.
- kwaza - tin; used to denote the conscripted labour carried out on the Plateau mines.
- kwaza-dance - name of a particular dance.
- lua - a kind of bead.
- mba-yo-akombo mom - they eat common *akombo*, i.e. the people of the same *ityo*.
- mbatsav - an organisation of people with *tsav*.
- mgbindem - a kind of snare.
- mngishin - garden eggs.
- mkohol - congregation, church gatherings etc. When people converge together for evangelical work.
- mku - a name of *akombo*.
- mkungun - pigeons.
- monde - coco-yam.
- mtsem - potash.
- mzembe - pear.
- mzough - an assembly of people.
- naha - to stir.
- nande-nande - burning burning.
- nune - locust bean.
- nyinya - horse.
- nyinya utugh - night horse.
- nyombor - cucumber.
- co-ol - an ant hill.
- orakombo - a master of *akombo*.
- orakombo biam - a master of *akombo biam*.
- ordondon (mbadondon) - the next in line in order of seniority.
- orsorontar - an *akombo* master who performs *akombo* rituals for the people to help restore normality.

orvesen	- an elder or any senior person.
orya	- head of compound unit.
pendaityo	- a senior wife in whose hands the husband's properties are entrusted.
pito	- name of indigenous beer copied from Jukun.
ruam	- general name for food.
shamya	- another name for groundnuts.
sha-kurun-utamen	- on the highway.
swem	- name of <i>akombo</i> .
swem-karagbe	- name of <i>akombo</i> .
swende	- an <i>akombo</i> connected with murder.
swem-chia	- an <i>akombo</i> for pleading innocence.
taav	- tobacco.
tarwase	- our land.
tashi	- a kind of indigenous beer made from guinea corn, millet or both.
tato unduen	- going for hunting (this is an individual affair).
tembe shor	- festival ground.
tile jigh-jigh	- stand still-still.
tiligh	- a fork-like pole used in supporting the pot for the preparation of <i>ruam</i> (made of flour).
toho nanden	- setting fire on a reserved area.
tojir	- mascara.
toragbande	- the drum chief
tor	- chief or leader.
tsav	- an abnormal development of the liver which makes a man inherit certain characteristics whether good or bad or both.
tsuwe	- hook.
tugudu (utugudu)	- native woven cloth in narrow stripes.
tukule	- another name for tobacco or <i>imbo-rivungu</i> .
tur	- fig tree.

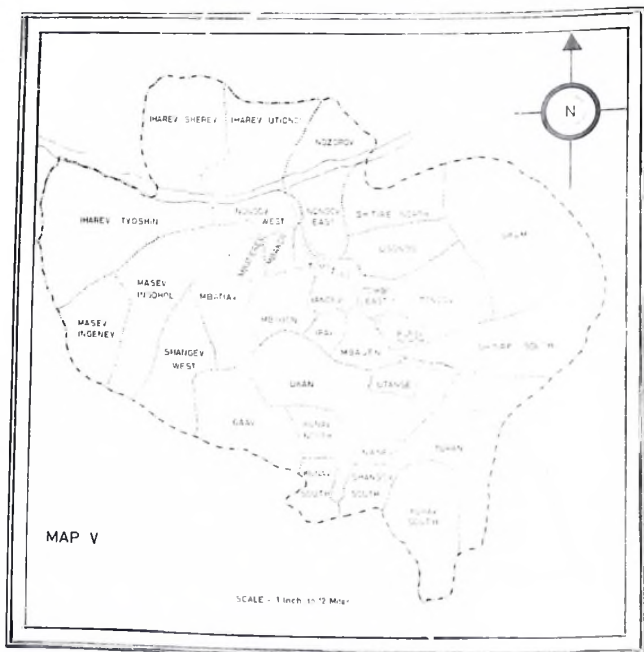
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twel	- name of <i>akombo</i> .
ule	- palm-tree (or leaves).
uma	- life.
uwer	- moon or a snare for catching fish.
vambe	- a silk cotton tree (or its leaves used for making of gravy soup).
vanger-gbilin	- empty chest.
verun gbenda	- see him off. It is a slang which means to kill an <u>enemy</u> .
vesen (mbavesen)	- senior.
waifan	- to curse.
wua	- guinea-corn.
wuaitia	- to pay a fine.
wunaigbanjor	- a name of <i>akombo</i> or a sacred hut for housing <i>akombo</i> known as <i>igbanjor</i> .
wuna poor	- a sacred hut for housing <i>akombo</i> known as <i>poor</i> .
ya-ikpindi	- to enter into flesh debt.
yar	- bush-cow (buffalo).

Tiv Expansion



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Incidents of sporadic communal and inexplicable
inter-cine fratricide like the *Hoyo Nyambuan* (1939),
Haaka, Nande Nande (1960) and *Atemtyo* (1964) help to
buttress the prejudiced view of the Tiv as cantankerous,
barbaric and truculent 'brutes' who delight in shedding
blood. But what is the correct picture of the Tiv?

To answer this question satisfactorily and to put any
assessment of the Tiv in proper perspective, basic and
fundamental questions have to be answered: Who are
the Tiv? Where do they come from? What is their
sociological set up? What is the Tiv culture? Judged by
their past, what contributions can they make or have
they made to the Nigerian set up, politically, socially,
economically and historically?

In *The History of Political Change Among the Tiv in the
19th and 20th Centuries*, Dr. Tesemchi Makar, a
practising historian, provides in plenitude, answers to
these questions based on materials collected during his
intensive seven-year field work on the Tiv. It is an
outstanding pioneer effort in the scanty field of
literature on the Benue region generally and the Tiv in
particular. His facts may be disputed, but all will agree
that a lot of work has been done, and that there is more
to be done.

Born in 1936, Dr. Tesemchi Makar holds a Ph.D in
History from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He was a
Commissioner for Education in Benue State.



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