

ISBN 91-7106-122-3

© Holger Bernt Hansen and Nordiska afrikainstitutet 1977

Printed in Sweden by  
Uppsala Offset Center AB  
Uppsala 1977

## ETHNICITY AND MILITARY RULE IN UGANDA

A study of ethnicity as a political factor in  
Uganda, based on a discussion of political  
anthropology and the application of its results.

Research report No. 43

Holger Bernt Hansen

ETHNICITY AND MILITARY RULE IN UGANDA

A study of ethnicity as a political factor in  
Uganda, based on a discussion of political  
anthropology and the application of its results

- The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies -

Uppsala 1977

## PREFACE

This book is the result of a larger research project mainly concerned with the problem of religion and politics in Uganda. The manuscript was finished in the middle of 1976, and the intermediate period has been taken up by the translation and printing process. Accordingly this book does not take into account books and articles which have since appeared, neither does it cover some of the more dramatic events in Uganda's recent turbulent history, e.g. the Israeli raid on a hijacked airliner in Entebbe Airport in July 1976; the clash with the Church of Uganda ending with the tragic killing of Archbishop Janani Luwum in February 1977; and the renewed purges among the Acholi and Langi from February 1977. It seems, however, justified to add the comment that these later tragic events do not contradict the interpretation of the military rule offered in the second half of this book, but rather confirm the significance and importance of the ethnic and religious factors in explaining the behaviour and continued existence of the Amin régime.

It should be emphasised that the intention of this work has not been to present a day by day, not even a year by year account of the military rule in Uganda. The work starts off by discussing the concept of ethnicity in an attempt to make it manageable and operational in a concrete political analysis. Having arrived at a particular definition of the concept of ethnicity and after establishing a scheme of analysis the main objective has been to show that the ethnic factor is of great importance in explaining and interpreting the military rule in Uganda, and that it helps to achieve results and conclusions difficult to obtain in any other way.

My research work in Uganda which started in the latter part of the 1960's was first made possible by a grant from DANIDA (the Danish International Development Agency). A travel grant from DANIDA allowed a month long visit to Uganda in 1972 and made it possible to enter the topic of military rule. This part of my research work has later been supplemented by two brief visits to Uganda. Collection of some of the material and the writing of the manuscript have been carried out while I held a senior research fellowship at the Institute of Political Studies, University of Copenhagen. I express my gratitude to DANIDA and my institute for assistance and working facilities.

A special word of thanks goes to my advisor during my period as a research fellow, Professor, Dr. Phil. Ole Karup Pedersen, whose encouragement and great help during various stages of the work proved decisive.

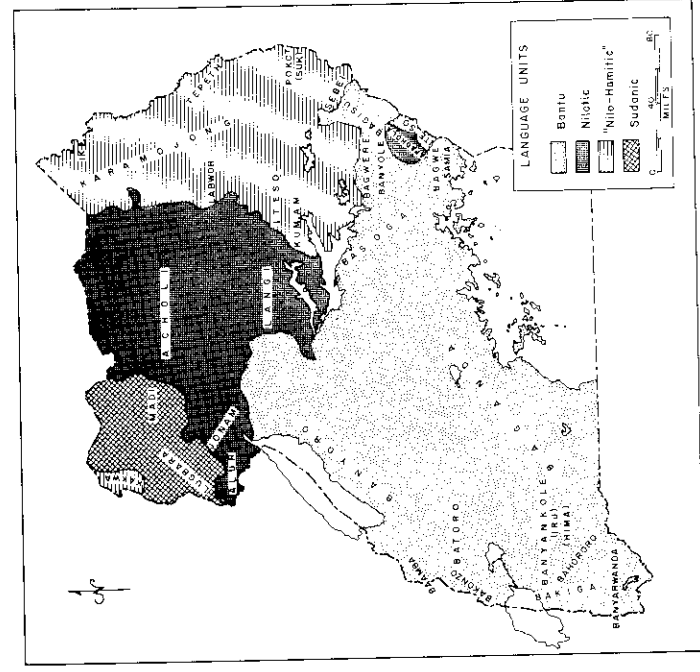
The translation into English was made possible by a grant from the Danish Research Council for the Humanities which I gratefully acknowledge. Mr. Geoffrey French kindly undertook the task of translation. Our close cooperation and his strenuous efforts in difficult cases to reach the best possible solutions have been much appreciated. I extend my gratitude to the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, for help during the work and for the printing of the manuscript.

Finally, I am most grateful for the information received from Ugandans inside as well as outside Uganda. Many of them today belong to the great number of people who have disappeared in Uganda over the last years.

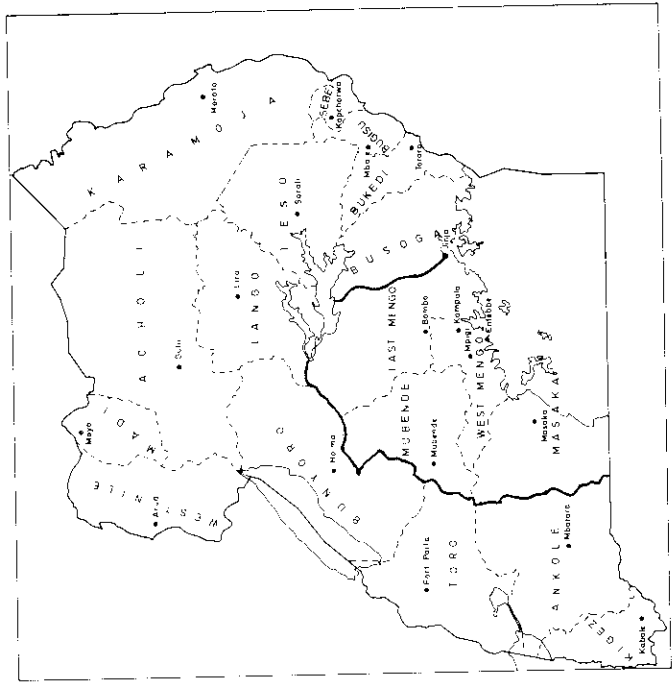
Copenhagen, November 1977

Holger Bernt Hansen

CONTENTS	Page
Introduction	
Chapter 1: General reflections on ethnicity and military rule	11
Chapter 2: Political anthropology: formulating the problem	15
Chapter 3: Political anthropology and the concept of the tribe	18
A) The use of the concept of tribe	19
B) Application of the findings of political anthropology	26
C) Criticism of political anthropology	31
Chapter 4: A scheme of analysis for establishing ethnic groups	32
Chapter 5: The emergence of ethnic groups in Uganda	35
A) Establishment of the arena	35
B) Establishment and maintenance of boundaries between the groups	37
C) Politicisation of the groups	52
Chapter 6: Evaluation of the analytical scheme employed	59
Chapter 7: From independence to military coup: the Obote period	62
Chapter 8: Formulation of the problem of ethnicity and the military	71
Chapter 9: Composition and status of the army prior to its seizure of power in 1971	74
Chapter 10: The army in power: the Amin régime	93
A) Policy and actions of the Amin régime	95
B) The basis of the Amin régime: internal developments in the army	107
Chapter 11: Final conclusions	120
A) Appraisal of the situation in Uganda after five years of military rule	120
B) Evaluation of the conceptual apparatus employed	127
Notes	132



Map 1. Ethnic and language units in Uganda (reproduced from Nelson Kasfir, *The Shrinking Political Arena*, 1976, p. 88)



Map 2. Districts and district capitals of Uganda, 1967-1971 (reproduced from Nelson Kasfir, *The Shrinking Political Arena*, 1976, p. 89)

The ten largest ethnic groups in Uganda, computed according to the population census of 1959 (from D. Rotchild & M. Rogin, Uganda, p. 363, cf. note 2)

Tribe	Population	Percentage of African population
Baganda	1,044,878	16.2
Iteso	524,716	8.1
Banyankole	519,283	8.1
Basoga	501,921	7.8
Bakiga	459,616	7.1
Banyaruanda	378,656	5.9
Lango	363,807	5.6
Bagisu	329,257	5.1
Acholi	284,929	4.4
Lugbara	236,270	3.7
Batoro	208,300	3.2
Banyoro	188,374	2.9



## INTRODUCTION

The literature of recent years on political developments in Africa gives a prominent place to the two themes of military coup/military rule and ethnicity, this not being a uniquely African feature in fact but reflecting a tendency noticeable in much research by political scientists.<sup>1</sup> However, it is comparatively rare for these two phenomena to be viewed conjointly in an African context, which may seem surprising considering how often ethnicity has been used as an explanatory formula in other situations. The reasons for this are multifarious, but a good number of them are to be found firstly in the tradition which has gradually evolved in political science and political anthropology respectively in regard to division of labour, selection of topics for research, and formulation of problems, and secondly in the conceptual and theoretical apparatus, where ethnicity in particular is a much-disputed and imprecise concept and therefore difficult to apply analytically.

This book proposes to establish such a correlation between military rule and ethnicity through a study of the events in Uganda. Ethnicity will be employed as an analytical category, which means that it will be necessary to consider in detail how the concept is applied, especially in political anthropology. That discipline bears a major responsibility for the popularisation and somewhat diffuse connotation of the concept, but it may at the same time help to make it capable of being used in an analytical situation. These problems of political anthropology and the whole definition of concepts will occupy the first main section of the book, the principal aim being to achieve a major clarification of the concept of ethnicity and to verify how the concept can be tested in the political analysis of a sequence of actual events.

The hypothesis underlying the approach to the problem here set forth is that in the case of Uganda specifically it will be a fruitful means of explaining both the basis and the behaviour of a military régime if we bring in the ethnic factor as a variable and test how far it can take us, especially in a field where the material available is scanty and where at the same time it is almost impossible to gain access either to documents or to individual people. More concretely, there is inherent in the hypothesis an assumption that this method of analysis will make it possible firstly to get underneath the over-

bearing, shrill and totally unpredictable personality of President Amin, the head of the military régime, and to see him instead as a vehicle of the different forces at work in the society, and secondly to place the military régime as such into context as a natural extension of, rather than a break with, the political development preceding it.

The particular justification to be pleaded for basing such an analysis on just Uganda is the wide measure of agreement that to a notable degree Uganda is the reflection of a heterogeneous ethnic pattern, with a very high level of politicisation of the ethnic groups. This agreement prevails both among scholars<sup>2</sup> and among the most important actors in the arena of national politics. One of the main planks in the platform of Milton Obote, the former prime minister and president, was the struggle against tribalism,<sup>3</sup> and another former leading politician characterises the situation in retrospect as follows: "Perhaps the politicians' appeal to religious, tribal and ethnic loyalties for support best demonstrates that religion and tribalism were maintained as the twin problems of national unity and national consciousness."<sup>4</sup> The second main section will therefore attempt to clarify in some detail the importance of the ethnic factor in the political development of Uganda, as a preliminary to the detailed testing, in the third main section, of the extent to which a correlation can be established between ethnicity and military rule in Uganda.

In regard to terminology, several terms may be used in the literature for the same phenomenon without its always being made clear whether any significance is to be attached to the difference. It may be said in very general terms that tribalism is used in a very negative sense by African politicians. The use of this term in the literature often contains a suggestion of stress on the aspect of political structure and organisation, and in this the affinity with the traditional political anthropology of Africa may be perceived. It is in order to avoid this that the term ethnicity is now coming into more frequent use as being more expressive of a common identity and more capable of being employed in comparative studies. A still longer step in the same direction is observable in the term cultural sub-nationalism,<sup>5</sup> where the intention quite clearly is to bring African phenomena into line with the corresponding European ones. It may be added, finally, that the term traditionalism may sometimes be encountered in use as an omnibus term comprehending all the other groupings mentioned.

However, the stress here is on value-judgments, and the word is often being used in a Weberian sense as the antithesis of modernity/rationalism.

## 1. GENERAL REFLECTIONS ON ETHNICITY AND MILITARY RULE

In order to isolate and fix the connotation of the concept of ethnicity while also highlighting some of the situations to which it has been applied in African studies, it seems expedient to sketch briefly a few broad outlines of the researches of political scientists and political anthropologists in recent decades.

The following two questions will be posed with regard to political science:

(a) how has ethnicity been dealt with, and what role has been assigned to ethnic groups; and

(b) arising from this, why has not a correlation between ethnicity and military rule been attempted?

(a) The following negative statement was made recently in answer to the first question: "...leading theoreticians of 'nation-building' have tended to ignore or slight the problems associated with ethnicity".<sup>6</sup> What this alludes to is the long series of books on political development published in the 1960s. Although expressed in over-emphatic terms, what is being said is that a crucial starting point for much political science research in Africa has been its taking of the nation as its unit, i.e. the new national states that were created from a multitude of disparate units; consequently, its aim has been to study how national integration has been or could be effected under the given conditions. The theory of mobilisation, in particular, has concerned itself with political parties, ideologies, one-party systems, communication with and mobilisation of the masses, the creation of national institutions, etc.<sup>7</sup>

The perspective adopted was that of the national élite in the national capital, striving to shift the primary loyalty of the various traditional groups along vertical lines from the local to the national level. These loyalties were often characterised as centrifugal forces hindering the work of the national institutions or at worst placing insuperable obstacles in the way of national integration. This integration may occur on many levels and by many different means, but in the process itself there is a tendency to evaluate the relationship between the traditional identities as opposed to that between the

corresponding modern identities as a "zero-sum-game". Even when David Apter, in his work on Uganda, follows the social anthropologist to his basic unit, the rural village, to find out what future the traditional system of authority may have in a modernised state, his thinking is influenced by the strivings of the national élite, and his answer assumes that the alternatives are either national integration or anarchy.<sup>8</sup>

Nation-building for the politicians and national integration for the analysts: these were the supreme perspective, and the ethnic groups were to be subordinated to this objective.

(b) Military coup and military rule appear as the chronological and logical next step in the process of national integration. The military seizure of the political arena is analysed both negatively and positively, using the criterion of national integration. Negatively, in the sense that attention is heavily concentrated on the causes of the military coup, which are found in the inadequacy and bankruptcy of the recently-studied national institutions. Positively, the military are judged to be the most national, closely-welded, disciplined, modern and effective structure,<sup>9</sup> which, through its possession of the means of coercion, has every chance of accomplishing national integration, far more so than its logical predecessor, the whole nation and not merely fractions of it.

At the same time the army is considered to be the organ which actually succeeds in setting the process of modernisation into motion. This view lays stress on the ethical and puritanical attitude characterising the army - especially the officers - as a body, and this is often contrasted with the corruption of the previous régime.

Such a judgment of a military régime is based upon the so-called organisation model, according to which the structure, resources, morale and integrity of the armed forces compared with the fragmentation of civil society invest them with a vast potential for political leadership and the promotion of social and economic progress. The fundamental premise contained in the model is that the special military excellences can be transplanted to civilian life.<sup>10</sup>

Even if it has to be allowed, according to this model, that there are ethnic groupings and conflicts in the armed forces, and that in

particular the recruiting pattern displays a degree of skewness in these respects, it is urged as a telling argument that the organisational structure exercises a highly socialising influence such that the ethnic factor in the situation cannot be ascribed any great weight. The overseas training and education of officers especially is often cited as a strongly socialising element.

Underlying this positive - and somewhat western-orientated - assessment of the organisation model is the conception of the military as an organisational unity. It is also worthy of remark that even if the role of the military as a nationally integrating and modernising organ is rejected, and even if in the coup situation itself and in the analysis of its causes a negative assessment of the military is arrived at, an effort is still made to retain the concept of the unity of the military. This applies, for example, to the theory of the élite, which regards the officer corps as representing the initiative and dynamic power of the entire military body and which explains a coup in terms of an intraélite conflict, generated by officers' ambitions or feelings of dissatisfaction, in which control over the means of coercion is the decisive factor. From another point of view it is argued that in a general sense the army's own interests are always involved in coup situations,<sup>11</sup> this being expressed most graphically in the remark that it quickly finds out that it is "the best organised trade union in the country".<sup>12</sup> Finally, the hypothesis of the military coup as a class action presupposes a high degree of conscious common interest as opposed to other classes of society.<sup>13</sup>

The ideas considered here leave scant room for the inclusion of any evaluation of the ethnic factor. However, the emphasis has shifted in recent years from the coup situation itself and its causes to an analysis of the exercise of political power by the military, and with this shift the organisation model has come under severe criticism. This criticism will be put into concrete terms below in the course of an examination of the Ugandan army's composition and conduct, and in particular the question will be raised whether its ethnic links with the rest of society break the pattern of unity here assumed.

The criticism of the organisation model, and not least the occurrence of the numerous military coups, have shifted the perspective away to some extent from the various facets of the theme of national integration. At the end of the 1960s this was expressed concretely - and with

a certain sense of hopelessness - in the suggestion that even had the best lenses of political science been employed and focused upon the integration process, the state of affairs would still have had to be summed up as one where "the most salient characteristic of political life in Africa is that it constitutes an almost institutionless arena with conflict and disorder as its most prominent features".<sup>14</sup> It was especially the unpredictability attending the numerous military coups that encouraged the conclusion that the political conflicts bore no relation to the variables generally applicable.

The situation in general terms may be described in David Easton's terminology as one where central or national authorities are incapable of exercising authority over the territory to which they are entitled on paper. Parliaments, parties, a military apparatus and other national institutions may well exist, but they cannot get their decisions implemented or are simply ignored. They only have to do with part of the total allocative function, the remainder being handled via other structures.<sup>15</sup>

In this way interest is drawn towards the subnational systems, as they are termed, existing within the individual states. A persistent dualism is discovered in the political processes, and at the same time the assessment and description of the relationship between the so-called residual sector and the new sector as a constant-sums mechanism is abandoned. A.R. Zolberg introduces in its place the term "syncretic societies", to underline the dynamic, often tense and constantly-shifting relationship between the two sectors.<sup>16</sup> However, as very little is known about this residual sector, and as the latter is essential in order to arrive at a more general understanding of African political phenomena, interest must be diverted from the national to the local perspective on the micro-level. There is all the more reason for it to do so inasmuch as political anthropology has detected an increasing politicisation of the so-called primordial ties concomitantly with political independence.

All this suggests a growing need to study the political processes at the local level of society. In doing so, however, we encroach upon a field which traditionally has belonged to political anthropology, because the latter has taken as its starting point "politics around the village pump",<sup>17</sup> where the chief actors were not the national élite but local people, often with roots in a traditional

structure. Therefore there is a need for some knowledge of the traditional structure, but this has to be supplemented by bringing into play the discipline of political history, because the current local processes cannot be understood unless account is taken of the changes which the societies experienced under the influence of the colonial era.<sup>18</sup>

A vital point now is what constitutes these local societies or sub-systems; and here we come back to the concept of ethnicity - or tribal groups, to use another term - because it is frequently applied as a criterion. The question then is how useful it will be to employ the tribal models of anthropology,<sup>19</sup> especially when both the interaction with the centre and the processes of historical change are to be taken into the reckoning. In a wider sense it is a matter of how division of labour and genuine collaboration between the two disciplines are to function.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. POLITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY: FORMULATING THE PROBLEM

Political anthropology, regarded as a branch of social anthropology, is one of those disciplines that appear mostly to be at war with themselves (at any rate in an African context). The battle rages on every front, from terminology, over which for example there are fierce debates about whether and if so how the concept of tribe and its derivative of tribalism can be used,<sup>21</sup> via the question of the real aim and content of the discipline to the problem of its continued existence. There are two arguments in particular that raise the latter issue: firstly, the discipline is attacked as being heavily compromised through its being aligned to serve the colonial system; secondly, there is the pragmatic view that the discipline is on the point of becoming unemployed because its true object of study, "the primitive society", is on the point of vanishing.<sup>22</sup>

On top of all this there is David Easton's categorical assertion that such a sub-discipline as political anthropology cannot yet exist.<sup>23</sup> His argument rests upon the crucial absence of any broad theoretical orientation towards politics. Political institutions are most commonly regarded as an independent variable, of interest primarily for their effect on other social institutions, rather than as a focus of interest in themselves. One consequence of this has been that the analytical distinction between politics and other forms of social behaviour has

been confused to such an extent that there is no means of determining what is to be included within a political system.

This is not the place in which to recapitulate the whole of this debate, but Easton's criticism does at any rate draw attention to a glaring defect of political anthropology, viz., that either precise definition of the central concepts has been omitted or they have been given such a broad connotation that real precision has been lacking in the use made of them. The whole of the exceedingly complex and almost labyrinthine debate that has gone on within the discipline in recent years seems to have revolved largely around differences over the interpretation and application of the central concepts.

The consequence of this in the practical situation is that only at great cost it is possible to get help from this discipline in arriving at a serviceable definition of the concepts of ethnicity and tribalism. One ends up by being told by one side that the concepts of tribe and tribalism are so misused and misleading that they ought to be abandoned,<sup>24</sup> while from the other side it is asserted that the concept covers perfectly tangible realities, as when it is voiced by African politicians, for example; thus there is no question of its being abandoned but of its being used correctly,<sup>25</sup> especially by that profession which lives under "the tyranny of day-by-dayism" (journalism).<sup>26</sup>

In order to get these concepts into sensible proportions and render them suitable for use as analytical tools, therefore, it is necessary to proceed pragmatically and selectively. To this end I have chosen to utilise a work in the province of political anthropology which has had an inspiring effect on the work being done on ethnicity in other disciplines as well and which at the same time has been quite crucial in formulating the approach to the problem in recent years. It involves a break with a traditional school of political anthropology, a matter to which I shall revert later.

The work referred to is Clifford Geertz's essay from 1963 under the title "The integrative revolution - Primordial sentiments and civil politics in the new states".<sup>27</sup> Having reviewed a number of instances, Geertz concludes that new states are particularly susceptible to sub-national movements and groupings based on "primordial attachments": language, culture, religion, race, common ancestry through lines of



decent and possible common social and political systems covering a specific territory. In contrast to phenomena such as class, party, trade union etc., these "primordial ties", which can function jointly or in varying combinations, become politicised to such a degree as to offer an alternative definition of what a nation is, or at any rate to stand as a manifestation of people's primary loyalty, capable of cutting across the demands of national organs and accounting for immobility on the part of the latter.

The explanation of the special stimulus lent to these "primordial sentiments" by political independence is to be found, according to Geertz, in the fact that the society now contains a valuable new prize to struggle for, often in competition with other similar groups. There is a new power centre with which to establish one's relations, and to do so in such a way as not to fall under the domination of other similarly-based groups. Thus, both aggressive and defensive attitudes are involved.

Geertz points out that the solution to these tensions and conflicts between centre and periphery and between different segments of the periphery is not to be found in a denial of their existence or in their repression, but in "the integrative revolution", i.e. "the political normalisation of primordial discontents" by "domesticating" them and, for example, by channelling dissatisfaction into genuine political forms of expression ensuring that the legitimacy and authority of the national institutions are not called into question over and over again. More intense awareness of ethnic unity is not necessarily incompatible with a growing loyalty to the larger unit, the nation, provided that each of them can be meaningful and that they do not manifest themselves in excessively severe conflicts of interest.<sup>28</sup>

According to Geertz, it is essential to stress the view that, in principle, primordial attachments are not automatically operative within the modern national system being predominantly inward-directed towards their own tradition. They will have to be demonstrated as operative in relation to the central system or under the direct or indirect influence of a corresponding sub-national unit. A catalytic factor is therefore needed, and only after that will it be possible to establish that the traditional structure functions instrumentally in specific situations. It means at the same time that they are to be

seen primarily as functions of the situation and problems of the present and not as a legacy from the traditional past. This can be expressed more specifically by saying that the objective ascertainment of social or cultural categories does not of itself signify political groupings. A politicisation of ethnicity has to take place.<sup>29</sup> Put into concrete terms, tribalism is a dependent variable rather than a "primordial force",<sup>30</sup> or "... paradoxically, then, tribalism implies its opposite, the supertribal state".<sup>31</sup>

### 3. POLITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE CONCEPT OF THE TRIBES

Geertz's formulation of the problem is such as to take a contemporary situation rather than the traditional system as its point of departure, and there may be grounds for singling out two facets for special attention: firstly, establishment of the actual politicising process; secondly, observation of the significance of the concrete situation and therefore of the relative character which can be imprinted on these political groupings.

However, to make use of Geertz's formulation of the problem and the thesis embodied in it requires answers to a number of questions, in whose solution traditional political anthropology has been heavily engaged. These questions can be grouped as follows:

- (i) what are these sub-national units composed of, and can the frequently-used term "tribe" be employed as a relevant starting point?
- (ii) as an extension of this, what concrete role is played by the traditional pattern, the "primordial ties"? When, for example, is it simply a matter of an objective dimension that can be described on the basis of certain demonstrable characteristics, and when is there a transition to a subjective dimension where the individual members become conscious of this basis so that it acquires influence over the group's behaviour in political respects?<sup>32</sup>

These are central questions to be elucidated before it will be possible at all to use the concept of tribes or ethnic groups within a given political unit. At the same time it is essential to have the answers to them in order to determine the content of a concept such as ethnicity and thus make it capable of being used analytically. Therefore some of the results of the work done in these fields by political anthropologists will be reviewed below with an eye to the question how far they can be applied to the situation under discussion here. This is to be seen at the same time as one feature of a more general

problem. Indeed, the work done on the concept of tribe by political anthropologists, and their applications of it, are often taken as a base-point by scholars from other disciplines, whether by using the conceptual apparatus, interpreting a specific sequence of political events, or establishing a link between the traditional political system and modern political developments. The exposition that follows is accordingly also to be regarded as comprising some reflections on this use of political anthropology, with particular reference to its application in concrete political analysis.

#### A) The use of the concept of tribe

Political anthropology has to a large extent used the concept of tribe as the basic unit. It is necessary conceptually not to identify tribe with tribalism. Where tribe, as will appear below, is assumed to rest upon certain objectively ascertainable phenomena tribalism is to be understood as a kind of mobilisation around common cultural values and an emergence of awareness of certain common interests corresponding to what has been termed above the subjective dimension. This is equivalent to saying that in this context tribalism signifies "the sense of ethnic loyalty and identification". This connotation, as will be shown later, is not identical to a second, qualitatively different and more purposive definition: a commitment to traditional patterns of culture or a traditional way of life.<sup>33</sup>

In regard to tribe, there is some measure of agreement that the following characteristics must ordinarily be encompassed by the definition: "... variously conveys the sense of a people under its own government, with a homogeneous culture, speaking a common language, occupying its own territory, and having a common history, but too few in numbers to provide the base for a complicated governmental structure. A 'tribe' is too small to be a 'nation'. It shares with 'nation' the implications of common language, common culture and a common descent."<sup>34</sup>

According to this definition, special weight is attached to the criteria of language, cultural traits and descent as the basis of the existence of groups, while very little is said about the role played by the political structure. This again reflects the fact that anthropologists employ the term tribe in two different senses, depending upon which criteria are being taken as the primary ones.

The term can be utilised, firstly, in an inclusive sense in which the emphasis lies on the homogeneous cultural unit (Buganda and Kikuyu, for example); language particularly is then the crucial factor. Secondly, there is the restrictive use, in which "tribe" is reserved for a group bound together by a single political structure. In this case Buganda is still a tribe, whereas according to this definition Kikuyu becomes, in Evans-Pritchard's language, "a congeries of tribes" which refers to the broader cultural unit of which the tribe forms one segment. The tribe becomes, in other words, an organised political unit - "a localised political community".<sup>35</sup>

Two consequences of this dual use of a central concept will be pointed out. In the first place, apart from being illustrative of the discipline of political anthropology, it helps to explain the confusion which has so often accompanied the use of the term tribe. There has been a tendency, not only among the practitioners of the subject but also, and notably, among its users, to overlook this distinction between the criteria applied, and this has occasioned the rather futile discussions over which groups qualify to be denominated tribes. Also, the two different aspects, cultural and political, have been brought into association with one another, since an attempt has been made to carry the political criterion of the narrower definition over to the larger unit and use it on the same footing as the other criteria of the broader definition, thus employing it in a supplementary rather than a singular sense. Specifically, this applies particularly to the colonial power, which in many instances deliberately set out to get the two meanings - and thus the two units - to coalesce, as a rule either by developing the political structure or by introducing one to cover the whole of the culturally-defined group in a clearly demarcated territory. There was already such a coalescence among some groups, e.g. Buganda, and elsewhere too there was a desire to work in terms of tribes in this sense as an element in the administrative build-up. But in doing this the given traditional basis of the tribe has been forsaken, and an external influence is helping to create the tribal groupings. From this it already emerges as an answer to the question posed under (i) that to utilise the anthropological concept of tribe as the basic unit is a highly uncertain proceeding.

Secondly, the dual use of the concept of tribe is symptomatic of a different choice of perspective in the concrete studies. Thus, the

following two trends within the discipline can be invoked for analytical use:

(a) Taking the cultural definition as a starting point, attention is concentrated either on the specific institutions through which people are organised: e.g., the village, age groups, kinship groups and lineage systems, rituals and ceremonies for a multiplicity of purposes, or, in continuation of this, on the whole system of norms and values (especially as expressed in religion). This also involves scrutinising the conduct of political activities, since attention is drawn to the way the institutions mentioned help to create a basis for authority and the exercise of power and perhaps coercion.

It is characteristic, however, that the political field is not singled out for special notice, save in the case of those societies where there is a centralised structure covering all other institutions of a social nature like an umbrella. In other words we are dealing with the political aspect of certain social institutions rather than with specialised political institutions.<sup>36</sup> For example, the Gisu group in eastern Uganda is characterised thus:

"The traditional symbol of Gisu unity ... was an organization, but an organization for periodical ceremonial rather than political purposes ... Initiation ceremonies as a unifying symbol were occasional and situational, not a framework within which other spheres of action might be associated with this ceremonial entity."<sup>37</sup>

It is precisely to this indirect treatment of political phenomena that Easton's criticisms, mentioned above, apply. The more specific criticism might be made on the other hand that, even with the cultural definition as the starting point, anthropology concerns itself too much with the formal structures. This produces a misleading conception of how authority and the exercise of power in these societies may actually evolve, especially since one is trying to derive authority and power from identifiable offices and so attaches too scant significance to the informal aspects.<sup>38</sup>

A further factor is that time after time in the course of the concrete studies it becomes apparent how difficult it is to demarcate the various population groups by applying criteria from the cultural definition. For example, the linguistically-defined regions do not necessarily correspond to the territories marked out in terms of kinship. This alone suggests that on this basis it is difficult to arrive at a tolerably unambiguous answer to the question, posed under (ii), of the role that the traditional pattern can play.

This view is further amplified through a second negative discovery. The very fluidity of the demarcation of the individual units sets a narrow limit on how much loyalty to and identification with the tribe can be assumed on the basis of the cultural criteria. In the Gisu example, the occasional initiation ceremonies serve as a symbol of unity in the sense that they manifest who is Gisu and who non-Gisu. Other institutionalised phenomena may in the same manner have this inclusive-exclusive function, i.e. may generate an awareness of who belongs and who does not, but other institutions may at the same time create sub-groups within the group thus defined. The cultural symbols such as language and rituals can thus hardly be utilised as the key elements constituting "a basic social unit", in this case the tribe. They do not of themselves create an identity and a level of awareness affording a basis for finding qualitative differences between one's own and other groups and thus generating a high degree of loyalty, common interest and possibly common action. There are latent possibilities of a conscious identification that may occasionally be expressed ritually, for example, but for these to find lasting expression, an external influence is required with a special capacity for harmonising the various criteria and activating the cultural symbols.

If these criteria have nevertheless been credited with an autonomous - indeed almost magical - influence<sup>39</sup> and on this basis the tribe has been regarded as a fixed unit, a large part of the explanation is that in socio-anthropological studies the structures have been examined separately while it has been taken for granted that they were elements of a larger whole, functioning within a group embracing a broad set of common values - sometimes called "the moral community".<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, a state of equilibrium has been assumed in which there was no place for conflicts.

Armed thus with an a priori conception of the existence of these tribal communities, one set out to understand and describe the exotic African societies,<sup>41</sup> and such an approach was much encouraged by the needs of the colonial administration. Both a vivid description and a trenchant criticism of this approach are embodied in the phrase "the illusion of tribe",<sup>42</sup> in which the following elements figure prominently: 1) the terminology is applied imprecisely to units which have a slender basis in African society and which may turn out to be simply the products of a modern influence; 2) it is assumed that African society can be parcelled out into integrated groups, accord-

ing to fixed classifications, with the result that the nature of this society is misrepresented and the numerous cross-links between the individual units are forgotten; 3) the cultural symbols are over-emphasised and presented as having autonomous significance, which gives rise to the impression that people cling to a traditional pattern and take a conservative attitude towards change and development - the antithesis of progress; 4) we have here a qualitative characteristic of African society, inasmuch as something static and not particularly civilised is bound up with the tribe.

As has already been remarked, therefore, there is much uncertainty over the continued use of the term tribe. Some believe that it is an empty concept, largely invented by anthropologists, while others reserve it for the so-called small-scale societies, most of which are now an historical phenomenon.<sup>43</sup> For this reason and also because of the many different associations conjured up by the concept, there is much to be said for using the broader concept of ethnic groups and ethnicity, where the formative process itself is stressed as vital, and where it is underlined especially that the traditional loyalty and identity embodied in it must be subjected to closer analysis and reinterpretation before being applied as explanatory principles to different forms of activity.<sup>44</sup>

(b) The second trend in political anthropology arising from the earlier-mentioned restrictive use of the word tribe has been a concentration upon describing and classifying the political structure of the various societies. As already noted, this criterion gives smaller units than does the cultural definition. One comes to work with precisely-demarkated territorial units within which it has been emphasised that "ethnic loyalty and identification" are clearly manifested and producing an impact right up to the current situation in the independent states.

It is therefore expedient to examine the following questions in more detail: how reliable a criterion is the traditional political structure for constituting ethnic groups with a high degree of political awareness? And as a corollary of this: is it the persistence of this traditional political system which forms the basis of the concrete political behaviour of the ethnic groups? This latter question will naturally be viewed in context with the question posed above (ii): what autonomous role can be ascribed to the traditional

pattern, and does it have here an absolute significance and not merely a relative one?

To elucidate these questions we shall invoke the aid of political anthropology's almost archetypal classification of African political systems as set forth in M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard: *African Political Systems* (1940), which is the starting point for all subsequent literature. The basic criterion employed is whether true institutions of government, viz. "centralised authority, administrative machinery, and judicial institutions, in short a government" (p. 5 f.) are discoverable in the various societies within a particular region. On this basis we arrive at a twofold differentiation between states possessing a specialised political organisation and those stateless societies in most of which the "segmentary lineage system" constitutes the structure. The latter should not, as has sometimes happened, be misconstrued as implying that political systems and political processes cannot exist in the stateless society. These do not consist only in specific governmental structures and specialised political roles. Political decisions covering a broader field than the single lineage group are reached and translated into action by groupings created to meet the needs of specific situations. These lineage groups, however, are not merely the manifestation of a political organisation but are multi-functional. Easton has very accurately termed these stateless societies "a contingent political system".<sup>45</sup>

This twofold classification was enlarged later through the addition of an intermediate category: that of segmentary states. Aidan Southall found during his studies of the Alur of north-west Uganda<sup>46</sup> that side by side with the segmentary lineages there also existed centralised authorities performing different functions for the whole area. The heads of the lineages and the persons filling the specialised political offices were largely identical, but the functions were quite distinct. Applying the same terminology as before, this system can be characterised as "a contingent policy manipulated by chiefs".<sup>47</sup>

This threefold classification can also be positioned on a scale according to the degree of centralisation, enabling a range of intermediate forms and transitional types between one category and the next to be accounted for.<sup>48</sup> At the one end are the hierarchical systems, corresponding to what are sometimes called monarchies, in



which the pattern of authority is vertical, starting from the top. In the centre are the pyramidal types (synonymous with segmentary states), where the pattern of authority follows the horizontal lines and there is always a parallelism between the individual units from the bottom upwards. At the opposite end, finally, is the segmentary type of authority, where there are "contingent politics" without specialised political roles or institutions. The latter two types in particular have been subjected to exhaustive anthropological study, simply because the descent group structure itself is a very widespread system in Africa, corresponding almost to the caste system of southern Asia.<sup>49</sup>

It is clear at once that the two types that are least centralised in regard to demarcation and organisational unity form just as slender a foundation for working in terms of fixed units enjoying a high level of internal loyalty and identification as do the units established in the foregoing on the basis of the cultural criteria. The same line of argument also applies here, especially bearing in mind the discrepancy between the political and cultural criteria.

Immediate reflection suggests, on the other hand, that the higher the level of political specialisation reached, the less meaningful will be the diverging boundaries of the cultural criteria. The question becomes one of whether the degree of centralisation provides a sufficient basis for speaking of highly mobilised ethnic groups. This is particularly an issue in Uganda, where four of the inter-lacustrine kingdoms, as they are called, are to be found. Three factors are to be taken into the reckoning here:

1) it is often a characteristic feature of the hierarchical structures that they were built up for war purposes, and this means that there were frequently clashes with neighbours that could cause boundaries to be changed and new population groups to come into the system. Over a span of years boundaries could be fluid.

2) in several of these kingdoms clear indications can be found that the ruling group consists of immigrants who have introduced the hierarchical structure into a formerly segmentary system either by conquest or in some other way. This is the case for instance in the kingdom of Ankole (in Uganda), and notably in Rwanda, where there is a vertical ethnic differentiation that also reflects social status

in the community.<sup>50</sup>

3) Finally, Buganda furnishes an example of how the dynamic between two systems within the same state can place its imprint upon events. The emergence of a single-stringed system with an independent administrative hierarchy has not dislodged an older system founded upon clans. Indeed the clan leaders have constituted a real opposition group against centralised kingly power, and as events have unfolded the activities of this sub-group have assumed more and more of the character of a struggle for social equality based on a traditional demand for the right of disposal over land.

Thus, even the most centralised society does not constitute a homogeneous unit. At the same time it is wholly necessary in studying such societies to bring in the historical dimension, because the latter gives an explanation both of their origins and of the current conflicts. Moreover, the historical dimension enables us to some extent to see in relative terms the value of the sharp distinction between the centralised and segmentary political systems.

This puts certain limits on the capacity that can be ascribed to the centralised system for evoking that sense of loyalty and solidarity which will conduce to the preservation of the traditional system when exposed to an external influence. It raises a general doubt as to what this classification of the political systems can be employed for and whether it is reasonable to take the traditional system as the starting point of the analysis. This is exactly the impression derived from a consideration of the use made of this classification.

#### B) Application of the findings of political anthropology

Characteristically, it is political scientists and historians who have made notable use of the findings of political anthropology. For example, these findings are employed comparatively in the consideration of terminological problems, such as whether segmentary states are properly to be termed states or merely singular chieftainships, and the whole question of whether hierarchical systems should be called nations rather than tribes when they have attained a reasonable size.

What is more relevant in the present context is that the degree of

centralisation is itself employed as a basis in which to determine how the encounter between a traditional society and new influences can be explained. It is an advantage to distinguish between two planes when evaluating this application of political anthropology to the explanation of contact situations: firstly, the traditional structure is crucial to the manner and forms in which the actual contacts with an external authority, especially the colonial power, are established; secondly, there is the matter of the adaptability of the individual systems and how well they can absorb a process of modernisation. Thus one speaks of their "absorptive capacity".

Whereas the first point has interested historians especially, the second has been accorded a high priority by a good many political scientists and political anthropologists. It is beneficial in regard to the whole of this difficult question of adaptation and absorption to make a distinction between two approaches to the problem: on the one hand an evaluation of the individual system's capacity and adaptability, and on the other, the problem of the extent to which traditional loyalties continue to be of significance in a modern state and to affect political behaviour.<sup>51</sup>

In the first case it is a matter of examining the individual traditional systems from inside in order to evaluate their adaptive capacities, which are then related to and explained in terms of the traditional political structure, so that differences emerge according to the degree of centralisation. However, there is a tendency to move on from here to the second approach and explain the existence of ethnic groups and the manifestation of traditional loyalties as a function of the traditional system's organisation and its degree of absorptive capacity.

In this way the analysis of the absorptive capacities of individual systems is credited with a higher and more exclusive explanatory value than is justifiable, as will be exemplified in some detail below when considering David Apter. The following remarks by Lloyd Fallers are relevant here: "... the old societies will, for the indefinite future, provide a major basis for political pluralism within the African polities, even while their particular traditional political structures may be disappearing."<sup>52</sup> It is being pointed out here that traditional loyalties can make themselves actively felt without necessarily having to be explained as functions of a

traditional political system and its absorptive capacity. There is no necessary relation between the two, and in order not to preclude other explanatory possibilities we have to distinguish between the two approaches to the problem.

The following four results are noted as illustrating in general how differently analyses of absorptive capacities can turn out when such a criterion as the degree of centralisation is applied. The final one leads on to a fundamental criticism of the utility of the classification employed by political anthropology.

1) Taking studies made in Busoga (in Uganda) as his starting point, Lloyd Fallers expounds the thesis that a hierarchical system can assimilate modern elements, especially a modern bureaucracy such as that of the colonial period, more easily and with greater stability than can segmentary societies. In a hierarchically-constructed system there exists beforehand an independent administrative machine into which Western practice can easily be integrated.<sup>53</sup> This thesis indeed is in line with the generally accepted fact that centralised societies possess very great flexibility in their contact with the colonial power.

2) Against this there are those who argue, still from a structural starting point, that it is actually the segmentary societies which, lacking centralised features, find it easier to incorporate a modern bureaucratic element, simply because there is no traditional structure to play the part of rival.<sup>54</sup> For example, the dual role of "civil service chief", with all its difficulties, is avoided. Similarly there is "room" to assimilate changes in other spheres as well.

3) The conflicting arguments adduced in the two previous examples indicate how difficult it is to generalise independently of the circumstances actually prevailing. This is illustrated by one study<sup>55</sup> which attempts to show how the character of the traditional structure is determinative of the region's adaptation to the political pattern in an independent African state, a strongly hierarchical system being contrasted with a segmentary system (Buganda in Uganda and Gogo in central Tanzania respectively). Buganda adjusts itself remarkably well to the colonial situation and modernises its institutions in an independent fashion so that they can continue to play a meaningful role, whereas Gogo remains largely untouched by alien influence.

After independence it becomes apparent that while Buganda was easily able to adapt to the bureaucratic hierarchy of the colonial system, because in principle the two systems were parallel, it cannot take to the principles of a democratic system at all. On the other hand Gogo, with its egalitarian traditions characteristic of a segmentary system and a firmly-rooted convention of "government by discussion", is completely in harmony with democratic principles and a socialistic ideology.

4) David Apter in several respects offers a solution of some of these contradictions, but at the same time he provides an illustration of the important weaknesses inherent in the procedure under consideration. Apter was one of the first political scientists to make a deliberate attempt at joining forces with political anthropology, as is notably manifested in his works on Ghana and Uganda. His main concern is to pinpoint which types of political system, in a context of modernisation, are best adapted to meet the society's basic political problems at the various stages of its evolution. He discusses traditional societies and the concept of traditionalism as a special aspect of the modernisation problem with a view to deducing some rules about how traditional societies react to modernisation and which factors cause them to react differently.

Apter finds the structural division into three power-types (hierarchical, pyramidal, segmentary) to be inadequate as a basis of explanation, and accordingly - in the tradition of Max Weber - he introduces a further set of variables that organises the system of norms into a two-type division: the secularised/instrumental type and the sacrosanct type.<sup>56</sup> The combination of these two sets of variables produces six main types into which the African societies described by anthropologists can be fitted. Buganda becomes a hierarchical system with a secularised system of norms, easily able to accept modernisation while not breaking up but on the contrary strengthening the traditional institutions. In such a "modernised autocracy" this process can continue until the central element, the sovereign position of the king, is affected, as will happen when a democratising process is at work within the system because authority will then be derived in a different manner.

The opposite situation is to be found in Ashanti (Ghana), with its pyramidal structure and a sacrosanct system of norms in which

religion was the vital guarantee of the various institutions. There was no flexibility here, and in the confrontation with modernising forces Ashanti represented a conservative dimension in which the preservation of the traditional system was always the essential factor.

These types were devised by Apter about the year 1960, and developments since then have shown that their explanatory value has not marched with the actual pattern of events. Even their heuristic value has not been particularly high, which may be ascribed in part to the use of over-simplified models.<sup>57</sup> The cardinal weakness is to be found, however, in the actual application of the findings of political anthropology, which can be summed up in the following main points:

1<sup>o</sup>) As we have seen, political anthropology has concerned itself particularly with the classification of political systems and has therefore produced some ideal types, or at any rate focused attention upon society at a fairly specific point in time and so furnished a static picture, with the emphasis upon stability and unity.<sup>58</sup> The political system thus produced takes Apter as the only factor in explaining how an external influence affects the system and how great an absorptive capacity the latter has. To attribute to the traditional system such an explanatory force seems out of proportion, for it is improbable that over the span of years covered by the study the political system will have failed to experience some development influenced by internal factors, especially considering the lack of homogeneity which, as we have already seen, characterised even the most hierarchical systems, and in particular that of Buganda. In this way the dynamic element is underrated out of a desire to uncover whatever principle of regularity is inherent in the capacity of the different types of systems for change and development.

2<sup>o</sup>) Apter's perspective is determined by the relationship between a traditional political system and the larger unit constituted by the colony or independent state. Therefore in the example of Buganda he focuses primarily upon the centre of the system, on the power and position of the king, and treats the other organs as being derived therefrom. Because of the emphasis placed by political anthropology upon the coherence in the system, his conclusion has to be expressed in terms of an alternative, so that either the whole system is preserved or it collapses entirely. However, contemporary studies on

the local level<sup>59</sup> show that this rhythmical cycle does not occur on all levels in a system. At the village level many more possibilities reveal themselves, e.g., from a kind of "ostrich attitude", whereby the traditional patterns are maintained intact and there is a refusal to recognise, for example, the village headman's change of status to that of public official,<sup>60</sup> to deliberate independent participation in a new and larger economic and political system.

3<sup>o</sup>) These two points lead on to a third, viz., that by employing the traditional system as his independent variable, Apter becomes trapped in a narrow explanatory pattern and is precluded from bringing in a number of other variables. He views the individual traditional systems from within, so to speak, and in so doing seems not to distinguish between the two approaches to the problem discussed above (p. 27), viz., the absorptive capacity of the individual systems and the current political use of traditional symbols, for he appears to hold the latter to be a function of the former. It is an easy next step to derive the political groupings uniformly from the boundaries of the traditional system, and also to draw a strong connecting line between the traditional culture and modern political behaviour. For example, the use of Apter's classification of traditional systems may cause explanations of attitudes and reactions to a democratic evolution to be couched exclusively in terms of traditional authority-types.

#### C) Criticism of political anthropology

Consideration of David Apter's application of the concepts and findings of political anthropology has highlighted a number of general features that have been criticised with increasing intensity in recent years, even by the subject's own practitioners. This criticism can be summarised as follows:

1) It relies too heavily on static studies that are frozen, as it were, at a fortuitously-selected point in time. The picture has often been idealised in the sense that what was investigated was how the system might actually have functioned under optimal conditions. An element of reconstruction is embodied in these studies, which may be characterised as "the melancholy paradox of anthropology".<sup>61</sup>

2) Political anthropology is based to a large extent upon the struc-

tural-functional view of society as consisting of functionally-linked components existing in a kind of equilibrium state. This has caused a concentration upon political institutions at the expense of political processes.<sup>62</sup>

3) The importance accorded to stability and unity fails to allow for the constant processes of change experienced by the various societies and the fact that their different phases might not necessarily move only in one direction on the centralisation scale. Therefore over the longer term the distinction between centralised and segmentary societies is significant only in a relative sense.

4) Continuing the same theme, the synchronic nature of many studies may be noted. The influence of earlier events has been mainly indirect, whereas the true field of study should be "a unit over time, not merely a unit at a particular point in time".<sup>63</sup>

We may sum up by remarking that the findings of political anthropology as recounted here cannot be used as a direct means of determining the composition of the political groupings characterised today as ethnic groups; neither do they yield a complete explanation of the role played by the traditional pattern in the political behaviour of these groups. The next step, therefore, is to outline some other explanation of how the ethnic groupings in Uganda have come about, emphasising the historical dimension, the manner of their politicisation, and the role they play within the national systems.

#### 4. A SCHEME OF ANALYSIS FOR ESTABLISHING ETHNIC GROUPS

In order to accomplish the aim thus outlined it will be expedient to construct a scheme embodying the factors entering into the analysis of such a pattern of events. Since ethnicity has shown itself to be a complex phenomenon it will be necessary to limit the number of variables for the sake of clarity and of manageability of the problem generally.<sup>64</sup> There are some conclusions from the foregoing criticism of the working methods and findings of political anthropology that can be brought in at the same time, for the constant end in view is to make the concept of ethnicity and the phenomenon of ethnic groups of service to political analysis in a field where the actors themselves utilise such categories and where ethnic groups manifest themselves politically.



The starting point in drawing up such a scheme may be found in Geertz's thesis, already cited, that when the political development being considered is a current one, the traditional foundations should be used, in fact, as a dependent variable (p.17), not an independent one as in Apter. In concrete terms, the crucial factor is not to perceive the ethnic groups from within and explain their existence and behaviour from that angle but rather to lay stress upon the interaction between the groups. This is of a piece with some of the more recent departures in political anthropology, where there is a trend away from taxonomies in favour of the "processual approach",<sup>65</sup> which emphasises the dynamic element and processes. When the accent is put upon interaction and the groups are defined primarily in terms of it, the first requirement is to determine the arena (to borrow a term from political anthropology) within whose bounds these processes of interaction unfold. In this way ethnicity becomes a dynamic concept when analysed within the larger framework and defined as a resultant of the whole of this interaction.

This latter proposition is substantiated further when the spotlight in regard to the constitution and continued existence of the ethnic groups is shifted from common tradition and culture to the actual drawing of boundaries between the groups and the preservation of these boundaries in being, since the groups are evaluated according to their organisational relevance inside the larger system. The Norwegian social anthropologist Fr. Barth has been chiefly responsible for introducing this perspective: "The critical focus of investigation ... becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses."<sup>66</sup> This boundary cannot be fixed territorially, but the criterion becomes how people regard themselves and how they are identified by others, i.e. the whole process by which a common identity emerges.

"It makes no difference how dissimilar members may be in their overt behaviour - if they say they are A, in contrast to another cognate category B, they are willing to be treated and let their own behaviour be interpreted and judged as A's and not as B's; in other words they declare their allegiance to the shared culture of A's." (p. 15)

Proceeding on these lines, Barth arrives at the following definition of ethnic groups: "To the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorise themselves and others for purposes of interaction, they form ethnic groups in this organizational sense." (p. 13sq) The objectively demonstrable differences, chiefly cultural features, do

not figure as a criterion in this definition. In Barth's view they are to be regarded more as the outcome of the boundary-forming process, in the sense that some portion, whether larger or smaller, of the cultural basis or the political structure is instrumental both in the expression of the ethnic identity and in the interaction with other groups. Which elements in a given situation and at a given point in time become implicated and organisationally relevant depends upon the specific facts of the case. Room can therefore easily be found for wide cultural variations inside the boundaries of the individual groups.

The boundary-forming process itself can be divided for analytical reasons into two phases: a) the organisational fixing of the boundaries, b) the development of a common consciousness around the differences between the groups and the emergence of a measure of common identity vis-à-vis other groups.

The last point in the scheme poses the question of the politicisation of the ethnic groups thus established, i.e. the utilising of these groups as the basis of or instruments for the allocation of values within the given arena. Such politicisation involves three factors in particular: firstly, the situation must be one of scarce resources, in which distribution is a live issue and the groups concerned are in competition with one another; secondly, the members must be able to see the advantage to themselves of channelling their interests and demands through the ethnic organisation; and thirdly, the groups must know how to articulate their interests vis-à-vis the other actors in the arena. The goal is to secure a better position in relation to other groups, or in some cases merely to retain the benefits already won. In both cases the issue can very easily become one of influencing the authority itself to allocate the resources. It is possible to detect in the political behaviour of the individual groups some relation to the traditional foundation inasmuch as elements of the latter are invoked both as justification for the demands presented and as a mobilising factor. The following definition of ethnicity may therefore be elicited from the politicisation process: "Ethnicity = a) the articulation of cultural distinctiveness in b) situations of political conflict or competition".<sup>67</sup>

Thus, a scheme constructed on the following lines may be used for analysing the position of ethnic groups in a sequence of political

events:

- A) Establishment of the arena.
- B) Establishment and maintenance of boundaries between the groups:
  - a) Organisational establishment of the boundaries.
  - b) The emergence of ethnic consciousness.
- C) Politicisation of the groups.

This scheme fixes certain minimum conditions for the use of ethnic groups as a tool of political analysis. At the same time the scheme furnishes guidelines for portraying the emergence of ethnic groups in a concrete situation and for revealing the level of politicisation. This also implies that the scheme involves a chronological relationship between some of the factors enumerated, and that generally speaking it provides a basis for analysing an historical train of events. There are numerous instances, on the other hand, where many of the elements can be seen to be operating simultaneously and in close mutual relation. This is not the place, however, for detailed consideration of the chronological and structural relations between the individual components of the scheme, since these will emerge when the latter is applied to the specific situation in Uganda.

## 5. THE EMERGENCE OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN UGANDA

The account of this aspect of Ugandan development will necessarily be somewhat sketchy and thematic, and only some of the main points can be alluded to.

### A) Establishment of the arena

The genesis, and the decisive event, of the establishment of the arena is to be found in the introduction of the colonial system. Boundaries drawn at that time gradually assumed a real significance, and specific groups were incorporated into an infant system without some formative historical process having led up to the innovation. In the area so staked out, at first denominated a protectorate and then a colony, certain structures take shape as time goes on, and these enable the parties involved to mark a distinction between this arena and the surrounding ones, even though for ethnic reasons the boundaries are still penetrable for local purposes ("permeability of boundaries"), a fact of some moment, as will be seen later. Moreover,

it is characteristic that when the colonial system is succeeded later on by the national state, the boundaries so inherited are regarded as being fixed (cf. the character of the Organisation of African Unity).

The following are to be reckoned among the structures which thus produce an integrating effect upon the region:

(a) an administrative system is created, with a centre whose importance increases over the years and which despite its pyramidal structure, makes more and more of an impact on the local plane. This brings into the system a force operating centripetally and exerting a potent influence on, for example, the design of the legal system and its appeal procedures.

(b) trade and economic development magnify the importance of the centre and help to promote an urbanisation that little by little draws in migrant labour from the various regions. Possibilities for communication with the local level are opened up in this way.

(c) an infrastructure, largely on the cobweb principle, is created as a corollary of factors (a) and (b). This in turn creates a comprehensive communications apparatus.

(d) simultaneously with the establishment of the colonial system, a second and equally influential organ appears on the scene in the shape of Catholic and Protestant missions. Their organisational forms and the entire nature of their work enable them to contribute powerfully to the structuring of the region, notably through their virtual administration of the education system, which is especially evident on the local level.

(e) a crucial factor in the whole subsequent train of events was that the colonial power - and the Protestant mission in particular - orientated itself towards the rest of the protectorate from a Bugandan standpoint. The kingdom of Buganda became the administrative and economic centre and enjoyed special arrangements in many respects, giving it a privileged position. As a direct consequence of this, the Bugandan system was used as a model in shaping the administrative systems of other districts, and the Baganda (the inhabitants of Buganda) were employed as officials in this process. This gave many other groups reason to evaluate their own situations in relation to

Buganda, and in this way a fundamental clash of interests, based upon a vertical ethnic differentiation, was built into the new system from its inception.<sup>68</sup>

The importance of the new unit to ethnic groups, no matter how constituted, was that their links with the outside world were no longer governed chiefly by relations with neighbours, as had previously been largely the case. Relations with neighbours became less important to the emergence of ethnic consciousness, the scale became bigger and a new pattern of interrelationships appeared extending over the whole defined arena and following the established structures just mentioned. In concrete terms, the pattern that discloses itself with the appearance of a centre is that to a large extent the latter conditions the relationships between the groups, and this principle is not altered by the transition from the colonial system to the national state.

The use made here of the arena concept does not follow the definition employed in the newer political anthropology, which finds its primary starting point in the actor concept, i.e. the notion that the actors having relations with or an interest in the processes being studied constitute the arena.<sup>68a</sup> The Concept is applied in the present context in a wider and more operationally-orientated sense, three criteria being used as a basis for establishment of the arena: firstly, the formal criterion that certain boundaries are drawn by the colonial system; secondly, the real criterion that political processes designed to cover the whole field take place within these boundaries and that a political centre develops and a central authority is exercised, however differently or feebly perceived by the various groups according to time and place. Thirdly and finally, there is the concrete criterion that various structures are established helping to knit the area together. It may be remarked in amplification of the two last-mentioned criteria that the validity of the political processes, the political centre and the various structures is limited to this particular area.

#### B) Establishment and maintenance of boundaries between the groups

As already noted, this establishment of boundaries and their wider validity divides into two types of process which are, however, closely related, so that the effect of the first is closely linked to the shape taken by the second.

(a) The organisational establishment of the boundaries:

1) The British colonial power built up its administrative system by stages.<sup>69</sup> The first step was the conclusion of a special agreement (the Uganda Agreement of 1900) with Buganda, whereby Buganda was granted various concessions and special privileges, including the right of private land ownership, thanks to its close relationship with the newly-established colonial authorities. Next, Buganda was rewarded for its assistance by being given certain counties that really belong to its north-western neighbour, the kingdom of Bunyoro (cf. map). The ground was thus prepared for the dispute over the "lost counties" that went on all through the colonial period and largely determined the relationship between the two districts until it was resolved by a ball not actually held until after independence. In addition, this kind of boundary-fixing had a catalytic effect in the broader context of the general opposition to Buganda to be found in the larger system.

The principle of geographical proximity was responsible to a considerable extent for the colonial power's next action in bringing the other three kingdoms, Ankole, Toro and Bunyoro, and the more mixed region of Busoga, into the new administrative system. Special agreements were made with them, but these did not include the same privileges as in the case of Buganda, so that the conditions were created for the emergence of certain vital political goals around which much activity has centred since then. The main principle was that the essential parts of the traditional system were left intact and that the local administration was built on this foundation, especially in regard to the levying of taxes, which was an important motivating force behind the entire administrative design.

It must be underlined here that the traditional political system played a substantial role in determining the outcome of the initial encounter with the colonial power, in fixing boundaries and in the construction of the administrative system, although from the very outset important modifications were made apart from the case of Buganda; for example Toro, one of the kingdoms mentioned above, was actually re-established after not having functioned for several decades, and its boundaries were enlarged to include certain population groups lacking any traditional connection with Toro. It should also be observed in a wider context that the five regions named, covering most of southern Uganda, constitute a Bantu group very different ethnically and linguistically

from the northern region.

In the north, the degree of centralisation could not be applied as a criterion for administrative partitioning because - in the language of traditional political anthropology - it was segmentary states and segmentary lineage systems that had to be dealt with. Criteria such as linguistic and cultural differences were employed instead, i.e. the inclusive definition (cf. p. 20), and the boundaries between the districts were drawn with the aid of "Baganda agents" and missionaries who had acquired extensive local knowledge. First of all the three main groups to be found in northern Uganda, viz., the Nilo-Hamitic, the Nilotic and the Sudanic (cf. map), were respected. These were all different from the Bantu group to the south and as well as this they were of mutually incomprehensible language-families. Within some of these individual main groups linguistic differences again were the deciding factor, but the criterion of obtaining administrative units of reasonable size played a part at the same time. If the latter could not be achieved with the aid of the objective criteria, then either small groups were amalgamated to form a single district (as with West Nile in the north-west and Bukedi in the east) or a small group was attached to a larger one (as with the placing of Sebei under Bugishu in the east).

The last-mentioned cases thus provide an opportunity of measuring the strength of the objective criteria as opposed to the new organisational patterns imposed on the region from outside. The fundamental difference between north and south also furnishes a possibility of establishing whether in the long run this disparity of political structure brought about a difference in kind or only in degree. In the latter case the consequence will be that the importance of the dissimilarity of the initial positions - i.e., the difference between the traditional systems - is diminished or obliterated during the politicisation process in the larger arena.

Some sort of answer to this is already given by observation of how permanent the boundaries thus fixed proved to be right up to independence, despite the disparate criteria applied, as noted, in establishing them and despite the existence of many mixed regions. At all events this suggests the prudence of not establishing a community of interest or ethnic identity on traditional grounds alone, but of seeking an explanation along other lines, in the first instance by calling attention to certain factors that lend a special importance to these

boundaries.

2) It is particularly significant that the Christian missions, notably the Anglican, were instrumental in the consolidation of these boundaries by their scrupulous copying of the administratively-created units as a basis for their own organisation. The missions were often better represented in the individual districts at first than was the colonial administration, and they therefore assisted considerably in the creation of the structures to bind the new unit together. The building of Christian schools especially, whose use of the local language attracted children and young people from the whole of the region in question, worked in this direction, and so did the "ideological coulering" supplied by Christendom, particularly having regard to the competing Anglican and Roman Catholic versions which were frequently at odds with one another. Moreover, the religious division assumed a political significance because the Christian denominations came to constitute the most important political structures in the individual districts. Thus, when the colonial power was appointing chiefs, it was forced to pay considerable heed to their Christian affiliations, so that all through the colonial period particular appointments were reserved for adherents of one or another denomination.<sup>70</sup>

The two Christian denominations and their two forms of organisation in this way constituted structures cutting across the traditional dividing-lines (especially families, clans and age-groups) and lessening their significance, while at the same time contributing to the build-up of the new units on a new foundation. However, the Christian division itself had a dual aspect with long-term significance. Firstly it constituted a fragmenting element in the individual districts and secondly each denomination was linked to its own central authority beyond the local level. This centralising element could diminish the importance of the individual districts as operative units and encourage the emergence of superior structures within the larger arena instead. This problem assumes significance in a later context; all that need be said here is that the relations both between religion and politics and between religion and ethnicity are to be understood against the background described above.

3) The local administrative system that took shape little by little in the individual districts pulled in the same direction as the religious factor with regard to the breaking down of traditional



dividing lines and the integration of the demarcated region, but at the same time there are factors here to prompt an analytical differentiation between different levels.

The colonial government operated a two-stringed form of local administration, the relationships between which were not always made clear. The first and older of these was devised after the Buganda model, which in turn resembled the familiar English system, a hierarchical system with the district commissioner at the apex as the representative of the centre and under him four grades of chiefs ending at the village level. In the centralised regions it was possible to tie in with the existing apparatus, whereas in other regions new posts had to be created and filled, producing a structure with little or no connection with the traditional system. This difference became less important as time went on, however, since weight was attached to educational qualifications in the appointment of staff and employees were liberated, through the payment of fixed remuneration, from any heavy dependence upon the traditional system; this was notably the case with the two highest grades, which had more the character of a corps of public servants available in some instances to be moved about within the individual districts.<sup>71</sup>

This background provides one of the central points from which to attack the earlier-mentioned problem of the adaptability or "absorptive capacity" (p. 27), of the different systems. At the same time it argues the necessity of distinguishing between this problem and the behaviour of these units as political groupings within the national state. The latter cannot be derived as a function of the former, as is often done for any explanation has to include a whole array of other factors. Some of these are brought clearly to light if, without going into further detail, the different variants of the administrative system here outlined are positioned on a scale one end of which comprises those instances where chiefs are totally swallowed up into the bureaucratic system and thus can no longer define their position in terms of traditional loyalties or be limited by the latter in their exercise of power. This will be particularly, but over a period not exclusively, the case in those regions where there is no tradition of chiefs. At the opposite end of the scale there is a sort of "dual system", where the chiefs especially at the lower levels of the hierarchy, function as it were within two systems simultaneously. Authority is derived both from above and from

the traditional environment, with major or minor linkages between the two arenas.

This last point can be amplified by taking a vertical section. The further one descends down the hierarchy, i.e. to the parish and village level, the more clearly the "dual system manifests itself, in two forms especially. In the first version, the same individual combines the two kinds of authority or simply functions simultaneously in the two spheres. In the second, the traditional system continues to exist and carries out its functions largely unaltered, alongside the official system but not integrated with it even to the extent of coincidence of personnel.<sup>72</sup>

In the light of all this it seems prudent to underline two factors when studying ethnic groups in a current political situation. Firstly, we have here an elaboration of the point made earlier, that even a fairly centralised system is not necessarily so coherent that it automatically experiences a rhythmic development, but that there is a need to evaluate the various levels. Secondly, we have an illustration of how the residual sector discussed earlier can exist not only outside the scope of the central government's allocative function but also independently of the authorities on the local plane, rooted in and nourished by the continued independent importance of the subsistence economy. This furnishes at the same time a partial explanation of the fact that there are large groups that remain untouched during a political mobilisation, and that these groups are not always affected by political upheavals at the centre either.

The second string of the local administrative system, evolved from the 1930s onwards, was a system of councils which in its final form ran parallel with the chiefs system, having organs at the different levels. The council was already a familiar institution in the kingdoms, but when it was extended to cover the entire colony, this was due to the desire to create a counterweight to the growing power of the chiefs and in general to guide oppositional tendencies into institutionalised channels. The development gathered momentum notably in the post-war period as a form of preparation for future independence, and this increased the importance of direct voting pending the adoption of this principle in the independence constitution.

The functioning and significance of these councils, and especially their relation to the chiefs system, form a complex question strongly coloured by local difference.<sup>73</sup> The following three consequences are cited as relevant to the issue:

1<sup>o</sup> The district council is the supreme organ, and from it there is no direct link upwards to the centre. It stops, like the chiefs system, at the district level, which accordingly constitutes the most important unit of local administration and within whose framework a centralised structure takes shape.

2<sup>o</sup> As a corollary of this, a highly local political focus is created at the expense of the centre. The entire perspective becomes primarily a local one, and the district becomes the meaningful basis from which to work.

3<sup>o</sup> The introduction of a voting system in the districts before its establishment on the national level makes the district a platform for political activity capable of containing within its bounds both traditional and religious conflicts and later on party-political conflicts as well.

4. The argument put forward under the three previous points bases itself to a large extent on the assumption of the colonial system's having exerted a decisive and lasting influence on the organisational patterning of Uganda. This in fact is in keeping with much contemporary African research, which is now tending to stress this colonial influence more heavily than formerly.<sup>74</sup> In the case of Uganda the independence constitution furnishes notable corroboration on this point, for to a surprisingly large extent it cements the inherited structure and in some respects even confers a self-fulfilling function.

In the last decade prior to independence in 1962, the colonial government sought to divert the current, firstly by striving to reduce the decentralisation of the system and secondly by imposing greater uniformity between the individual districts, this being done by using as common denominators those units to which the fewest concessions had been made, i.e. the northern ones. The objective was to create an integrated nation capable of functioning according to the Westminster model.

This policy of the colonial government provoked very sharp conflicts with Buganda, leading first of all to the deportation of Buganda's king (the Kabaka), then to a boycott of all central organs and finally, in 1960, to Buganda's bringing its case into the international arena by demanding recognition as an independent state. The conflict was resolved only by the colonial government's abandoning both of its principles and agreeing instead to a federal constitution which can be best characterised as an unusual example of constitutional asymmetry.<sup>75</sup>

Buganda acquired full federal status and assurance of the retention of its previous internal autonomy and traditional system; this was reflected centrally in the indirect method by which Buganda was to be represented in the national parliament. The other three Bantu kingdoms and the district of Busoga obtained semi-federal status, although they mounted a campaign to come into line with Buganda. They rested content, however, with assurances concerning their traditional rulers' positions and governing apparatuses. The other districts could not plead these criteria and therefore lacked both the grounds and, not least, the spokesmen to press demands for an equivalent position in the constitution. They therefore found themselves with a status that brought them under tighter control from the centre.

This constitutional asymmetry concealed a considerable imbalance in the system, and the matter did not stop there either. To begin with it was felt that the imbalance could be redressed constitutionally, and this belief was reflected in the continuance of agitation for the granting of federal status all round. Its practical manifestation was a demand for all districts to have their own Constitutional Heads sometimes called "Kabaka-substitutes"<sup>76</sup> - with an appropriate degree of economic and administrative self-determination, for the office of head of district had proved to yield dividends in many respects. In the year after independence Parliament passed an amendment to the constitution giving all district councils the right to choose "constitutional heads". It is therefore possible to follow the political machinations that attended the selection of these persons in subsequent years, when both traditional and modern lines of demarcation played a part and political activity was largely channelled into local situations. This state of affairs has rightly been characterised as "the high-water mark of legal recognition of ethnicity as a basis for politics in Uganda".<sup>77</sup>

The colonial system's grading of districts into three types is thus effectively confirmed in the constitution; later on, in the early years following independence, efforts were made to attain some degree of balance by utilising the highest common denominator, unlike the colonial power, which had made an eleventh-hour attempt with the lowest. The boundaries and the numbers of districts established in the colonial period were likewise confirmed in large measure. It is worthy of remark that despite minor adjustments - especially in the eastern region, where the boundaries were at first rather arbitrarily drawn in relation to the objective criteria - both features remained very constant until the constitution of 1962, and indeed even right up to the new constitution of 1967 devised after the 1966 crisis. This organisational pattern thus contains a strong element of inertia. To speak of ethnicity in such a context, however, would require that the emergence of ethnic consciousness should follow this pattern and coincide with the defined boundaries.

(b) The emergence of ethnic consciousness:

The emergence of ethnic consciousness is a matter of demonstrating how people come to identify themselves as different from others and how a community of identity and interests emerges, manifesting itself in the interaction with other groups. It is a matter of an awareness of common identity, expressing itself concretely, for example, in the responses made to those questions on the population census forms that seek to elicit tribal affiliations. However, we are encroaching here upon a domain where measurement is difficult and where in the absence of researches into the values and motives of individuals, conclusions have to be arrived at indirectly from certain more external and ascertainable factors. This will be the procedure chiefly employed below in enumerating some of the general conditions and certain of the mechanisms that are operative in the arena:

1) Buganda, as may be inferred from the foregoing, has had a strongly catalytic effect during the whole process of emergence of ethnic consciousness. By virtue of the character of its first encounter with the colonial power, because of the special privileges and the central position achieved by Buganda, and not least through the use made of the Baganda by both the colonial power and the Christian missions, Buganda became aware very early on of its special qualities. This conception was confirmed by the high opinion held by the colonial power - the

Baganda were dubbed "Africa's Japanese" - but it is their encounter with the other people in the Protectorate that demonstrates the enormous qualitative divide existing between them and others. The latter is particularly true in relation to the people to the northward, who wholly lack the institutions possessed by Buganda and are embraced under the inclusive designation of "Bakedi" (= "the naked ones").<sup>78</sup>

Viewed from the other side, the effect of the encounter with Buganda was a dual one. On the one hand the Baganda came to serve as a sort of reference group with regard to the goals established and the means to be employed for their attainment. Inspiration in this respect was provided notably by the strongly Buganda-orientated teaching materials used in the schools. On the other hand a defensive position might be taken up, both based on the traditional culture and manifested through it in the shape of a heavy emphasis upon certain rituals or institutions.

2) The case of the Anglican church provides a notable further illustration of the situation. Two wings developed early on among the English missionaries. One of these identified itself with the Baganda and wanted the whole of the new church and its work to rest upon Buganda. The other wing opposed this, identifying itself more with the districts in which its members worked and whose languages they commanded. These European missionaries thus were themselves active parties in the development of ethnic consciousness, often influenced by preconceived ideas brought from home.

Dissension broke out between these two factions as early as 1919, for a somewhat surprising reason; the two parties consisted of both Europeans and Africans, and it is possible to see from this not a few of the elements of the process by which ethnic consciousness emerged.<sup>79</sup> By and large the Anglican church is a useful parameter for measuring this development, just as the church often serves as a battleground for the kind of discords prevented by bans and restrictions from manifesting themselves elsewhere, both in the colonial period and after independence. This can be seen from the organisational structure of the church in the 1960s and 1970s and most notably in Buganda's attempt to break away from the church at the beginning of the 1970s.<sup>80</sup>

3) A central ingredient in the emergence of ethnic consciousness is

language, in respect of which the position of the Anglican church has been pivotal. An essential feature of its work consisted of the rapid provision of Bible translations into local languages for use as both Christianising and educative instruments. Scarcely any other factor has influenced boundary-fixing and ethnic consciousness to such a degree or with so strong a disseminating effect in the individual regions. The process of rallying around the various languages has accelerated steadily right up to the present decade, as is evidenced by the continued demand for and publication of Bible translations. Some kind of result from all these events is represented by the fact that in the middle 1960s Uganda radio was transmitting in 18 languages (not counting English and Swahili). The commotion over the status of the local languages is thrown into sharper relief by the exertions of the church over many years to make Luganda (the language of Buganda) the common and official language on the national level. Reaction against this was too strong, and instead it was English that assumed this function as the most neutral and practical language to meet the situation.<sup>81</sup>

4) Language is likewise a central factor determining the impact of the higher education system on the emergence of common consciousness and an ethnic identity. Students from the different localities encounter one another in the institutions of a more nation-wide character such as secondary schools, teacher training colleges, technical and vocational schools, and eventually the university too. But instead of the socialising effect and burgeoning of cross-cultural friendships often attributable to such educational institutions, the characteristic pattern of group-formation here conforms more to the linguistic and cultural bonds, as is manifested with particular starkness in the ethnic associations on the university level during the 1960s. This cannot be ascribed to practical causes alone. The choice of the language of instruction itself points to a distinction reflecting the unequal availability of opportunities for subsequent employment and the unequal distribution of educational facilities, all giving rise to a wide divergence of starting positions. The consequence is an "awareness of diverging interests"<sup>82</sup> and the development of a competitive situation in which the clashes run along the ethnic dividing lines and where security and support are sought in a rallying around the common identity. The young become alive to their affiliations to their local groups, and this pattern is fortified further by the career opportunities available. In colonial times, positions of

employment on the central level were very largely closed to Africans. The latter were encouraged to seek employment on the local level instead, either in local administration or in the new posts being created, especially in teaching.

It is in very large measure this group which, under the impulse of its own experiences, has been active throughout the process of ethnic identification. Its members' opportunities are tied to the local region, and they have a need to legitimise the latter as a base capable of furnishing the support necessary for interaction with other groups. A suitable means of doing this is to work for the emergence of a common identity through the use of broadly-accepted symbols from the traditional system such as language or a closing of ranks around a hierarchical system. A characteristic manifestation of this is to be found in the so-called welfare associations started up by the group here in question in several of the regions as early as the 1920s.<sup>83</sup> Activity was concentrated on two fields especially. The first was the promotion of improvements and raising of standards within the given context, i.e. for a specific ethnic group considered in comparison with other groups, especially the Baganda; these aspirations were expressed typically in such phrases as "the uplift of the Bagishu". Secondly, there was cultural and literary activity in the shape of endeavours towards the preservation and development of the local language, the collecting of historical material and publishing of text books, and the maintenance of traditional institutions and customs. As a rule these activities contained an element of defence against alien influences and a demand for equal rights for one's own group, whose identity was manifested in traditional terms. There are also several instances where such a traditional and cultural movement, led by the élite group referred to, was the precursor of and an element in the strategy of a political campaign for a bigger share of the valued things and a greater equality of rights.

Some further consequences of this aspect of the development of ethnic consciousness will be noted. Firstly, it is possible to identify from it the so-called new élite, who do not in fact make their appearance on a national platform but evolve their activities in a local context, whether they fill positions within the traditional machinery or occupy the new posts opened to them, notably as teachers. Both the colonial system as such and its associated situation of competition with similar groups caused the élites to establish their bases within their own



(c) Conclusion concerning the establishment of boundaries

In conclusion of these sections on boundary-fixing, two points will first be made concerning the concept of ethnicity:

1) In endeavouring to isolate the concept of ethnicity it seems best to go no further than the definition already cited: "the sense of ethnic loyalty and identification" (p. 19 ), adding as a rider a few words culled from Crawford Young: "... whether or not this group has any institutional structure of its own, or whether it had any real existence in the precolonial epoch."<sup>86</sup> To go on and speak of "a commitment to traditional patterns of culture or a traditional way of life" (cited above, p. 19 ) is not tenable. The reason is simply that ethnicity is not an independent goal but an ingredient of the strategy for establishing relations with other identifiable groups.

2) From this it follows that what is at issue here is not adherence to the traditional basis and a rejection of change but the reverse, i.e. the assumption of a central position in the process of change, using traditional symbols as instruments and especially as a mobilising factor in fixing the boundaries vis-à-vis outsiders. Ethnicity thus becomes a relative concept to a very large extent. This furnishes one explanation of the fact that even wide objective differences can be accommodated within the same unit, although this is not quite so noticeable in the Uganda situation, where the ten largest "tribes" equate to the administrative districts (cf. map with relevant statistics).

What this is leading up to is an attempt to evaluate the relationship between the two parts into which the boundary-fixing process is divided and so to answer the question whether the emergence of an ethnic consciousness is coterminous with the administratively drawn boundaries. On the one hand there is nothing automatic in the organisational pattern. What is required is that the common consciousness should be capable of reaching out to these boundaries while not cutting too strongly across them. On the other hand the emergence of ethnic consciousness has been seen to be dependent upon a range of different factors and not to rest exclusively upon the traditional system and culture, so that it is difficult to credit this process with an independent boundary-fixing function. This appreciation, which is based on the Uganda material, deviates from Fr. Barth's conception of "boundaries" inasmuch as he is inclined to derive them from the

ethnic groups. They began to consider themselves as representatives of their particular groups vis-à-vis both the centre and, especially, the other rival groups; they became indispensable to the articulation of their groups' interests and so assumed, in other words, the role of so-called brokers or middlemen.<sup>84</sup>

In the second place, an essential feature of the movement is that its dynamic is downward-flowing, as it were, not arising from any expressed aspirations on the part of the broad masses. Thus, the emergence of a common consciousness around the common symbols is not to be construed as reflecting any widespread or deep-rooted adherence to the traditional basis; rather, the latter is being used as an instrument in a situation whose cause is to be found outside the ethnic group.

This leads on to a third consequence. It is very difficult to determine how extensive is this development of a common consciousness and how many it touches. In the absence of information on this it is necessary to think in terms of different levels within the individual ethnic group.

5) The elements enumerated so far may, as noted, have effects upon larger or smaller proportions of the population. A more indirect form of ethnic consciousness, possibly reaching broader circles, can develop out of the migrant-labour system alluded to above. In the urban situation, with its insecurity as to work, living accommodation, family relationships, etc., "ethnic associations" spring up - a phenomenon especially familiar in West African studies but also prevalent among certain groups in Uganda. People in an immigrant situation come together in loosely structured organisations that offer help and create the necessary security on an ethnic basis. The sense of solidarity is further reinforced by the fact that the host group - in the present case often the Baganda - classifies them according to ethnic affiliations. It is characteristic that the Alur group, for example, which supplied a large proportion of migrant workers, only became conscious of a measure of common identity through finding itself in this situation. These experiences were carried home and encouraged this otherwise segmentary group to begin thinking of itself as Alur and to develop little by little a corresponding organisational pattern.<sup>85</sup>

subjective element composed of people's perceptions of their own and other people's positions. Such emphasis on the subjective element, however, is untenable in a Ugandan context, where it is characteristic the organisational build up provides a basis and has a structural function with regard to the framework within which an ethnic consciousness develops. This makes it the more important to stress the interaction and interdependence between the two forms of boundary-fixing rather than to determine their relative priorities, a point notably demonstrated by the ability of these boundaries to accommodate wide contradictions within their confines, as in the case of Ankole and Acholi.

This argument may appear to be undermined at once by one or two instances of the partitioning or seriously-attempted partitioning of certain existing districts during the run-up to independence. These instances can be interpreted to mean that despite everything the conflicts in the traditional systems proved stronger than the organisationally-determined boundaries, so that the emergent common consciousness followed the boundaries of the former and so cut across the latter. The question could be asked whether there is not an upper limit to how big the traditionally-derived differences can be within a given unit. An answer to this may be found by considering one of these instances - that of Sebei in eastern Uganda - where the movement for an independent district bore fruit. It is characteristic here that its genesis is to be found in an increasing sense of being oppressed and of not receiving a fair share of the valued things. These recognised economic and social differences were almost coterminous with important cultural differences. It was from these origins that mobilisation around the traditional symbols began, following the pattern outlined above.<sup>87</sup>

Moreover, a second factor was operating. Sebei's demand for an independent district featured in the platforms of both existing parties in the election campaign of 1961 and 1962, and the issue was thus brought into the national political arena. People were thus being invited to submit their local demands to the centre, which for its part was impelled to determine the distribution of resources on this basis. In this way the scene was laid for the political processes to go through the ethnic filter: which bring us to the politicisation of the ethnic groups within the major arena.

### C) Politicisation of the groups

In the light of the foregoing, the question at issue is how the groups which functioned predominantly as administrative units under the colonial system came to function as political units.<sup>88</sup> Considered from the standpoint of the centre, politicisation of the ethnic groups consists in their supplying the bulk of the input and there being scarcely sufficient capacity to handle any more. The centre becomes geared to dealing with the demands from those quarters and faces a difficult task if the direction of flow is to change. The situation can be described and explained in more details by grouping the relevant factors under three headings:

(a) The moment of politicisation: this may be considered to occur during the transitional period between colonial rule and independence. More specific evidence of this may be inferred from the following declaration by one of the district councils in the mid-1950s:

"Some people, especially those belonging to some new political parties from Buganda, argue that we should wait for self-government before doing anything about the land because at that time the Queen will have divested herself of control over the lands, so that we shall be in a better position to negotiate with an African government regarding land matters. We would ask one of these people to stand up and give us a guarantee that we shall not receive better hearing under the present seemingly foreign Protectorate Government. It is highly doubtful that anyone can give such a guarantee. We should not forget the fact that Bugiso is only a very small portion of the Protectorate and at the time of self-government everything will be decided by votes." 89

The description of the administrative system given above, according to which the district was the decisive unit and at the same time marked the limit of African participation, can be adduced as one element in the interpretation of this statement. The link from the district functioned without African participation and was managed by an alien bureaucracy. At the same time the link was single-stringed in the sense that other groups could not interfere in the procedure. This meant that the groups were not brought into direct confrontation with each other in a competitive situation: at most it was indirect. When the alien bureaucracy is removed, however, the groups concerned will be at the mercy of other groups as they move in to take over the functions of the centre.

The colonial system allowed only a little play for politicisation of the groups, and at the same time it is characteristic that the colonial

power succeeded in maintaining a kind of balance in a system generally marked by great inequality. This is bound up firstly with the repressive posture of the colonial power deriving from its possession of the instruments of coercion, as a number of groups had learnt earlier on. It is due secondly, as the passage cited above reveals, to the fact that in the given situation the colonial government was regarded as the external and to some extent neutral authority discharging the allocative function as between the groups like a kind of magistrate with absolute jurisdiction. What this implies is an acceptance of the colonial power's "referee function" and at the same time a lack of faith in the performance of the function by anyone from within. Buganda's attempt at secession and demand for independence can best be explained against this background.

The holding of democratic elections to the organ that was to perform the functions of the centre was not least of the factors creating, as it turned out, great uncertainty, and introducing an element of competition into the system. It brought the existing inequalities into much greater prominence and gave them more influence over the setting of objectives. At the same time it did not merely raise the issue of obtaining a share of the valued things and so correcting the imbalance but also involved the securing of influence over the allocating authority itself. Such a situation easily becomes a matter of relative power in the arena, based on the units already known, rather than of a national perspective; and at the same time the general insecurity leads to a maximising of security inside the ethnic groups. Thus, strong counter-forces will be required to halt this tendency for the ethnic groups to emerge as the most powerful factor in the politicisation process.

(b) Inequality and imbalance as characteristics of the national system: as stated, a bird's eye view of Uganda shows it to be marked by a characteristic imbalance attributable particularly to the uneven development that occurred in colonial times. Three specific illustrations of the latter may be cited:

1) the administrative and constitutional system was founded on a distinction between different categories of district, established in the colonial period, cemented during the negotiations accompanying the attainment of independence and embodied in the constitution itself. Such an imbalance was bound to generate political pressure has tended

quite clearly to follow the ethnic lines.

2) there was much inequality between the individual districts in regard to levels of education and availability of educational facilities. The principle of geographical proximity caused the districts surrounding the capital city and administrative political centre - i.e., Buganda particularly - to be heavily favoured. The second notable determinant was the pattern of distribution of the two rival missions, the skewness of which especially affected the availability of post-elementary education. Consequently, there emerged unequal possibilities of recruitment to posts established during the transition to independence or falling vacant during Africanisation. The disparities between the individual districts, and the over-representation of the Baganda especially, can be seen in the composition of the civil service and in university enrolments.<sup>90</sup> One of the vital goals of educational policy since independence has naturally been to rectify this distortion, notably through an increase in the numbers of secondary schools. Meagreness of resources, however, has constituted a retarding factor, which in turn has helped to intensify the ethnic basis of the demands on the centre. Overall, the inequality in the educational field has given rise to tensions and suspicions over appointments on the central plane, so that the centre has constantly had to take account of the ethnic factor in its recruitment policy.

3) running parallel with the unequal educational coverage in many instances coinciding with it geographically is an economic inequality between the different districts. This may be blamed in the first instance upon the colonial system's varying impact upon the different localities, e.g., because of the relationship between expansion of the transport system and transition to a money economy, but it can be ascribed especially to the pattern of distribution of cotton and coffee, the two most important export crops. Their cultivation has become concentrated in specific regions, especially Buganda and the eastern districts, which has resulted in wide disparities of income in the years since the Second World War, ranging for instance from £3-£5 per capita per annum in the west and north to £20 in Buganda around 1960.<sup>91</sup> Only two of the consequences attributable to this will be cited here: first the districts are regarded by those involved as constituting a single economic unit.

This is reflected clearly in the fact that the numerous producers'

cooperatives functioning at the processing and marketing stages invariably operate within and are confined to the given district boundaries, so that a true cooperative movement on the national level has never developed. In this way inequality is interpreted as coinciding with the ethnic dividing lines, reinforced again by the dominance of Buganda, so that efforts to achieve a greater measure of equality in the system also tend to follow this ethnic pattern.

In the second place, the economic inequality between the districts tends to be cumulative, so that in the absence of central intervention the gap widens. The earlier-mentioned system of migrant workers converging upon Buganda from certain other districts is one symptom of this. The system bolsters Buganda's development, while the home districts fall further behind. One practical result of this is a widening of the inequality of access to the educational system.<sup>92</sup>

Growing awareness of the various forms of inequality, and indeed the entire imbalance of the national arena, constitute one of the most crucial features of the entire process of politicisation. At the same time we have here a substantial explanation of the fact that the basis of politicisation is the division into ethnic groups. It is from the groups that claims for the bigger share in the valued things are submitted, or it is on the basis of groups that the retention of a leading position once attained is justified. However, the resources available are extremely meagre in relation to the extent of inequality and the expectations aroused, so that a problem of distribution appears. This further increases the pressure on the centre, whose pattern of action is in very large measure determined by its strivings to meet these demands. There is scant freedom of action if the government is to ensure at the same time within what has been aptly called "a nation of competing sub-systems",<sup>93</sup> and its every action easily becomes an occasion for suspicion and for accusations of favouritism towards particular ethnic groups. Office-holders, especially, are suspected of favouring their own home districts, a practice which indeed tends to be encouraged by the concrete formulation of the rules of the political game inasmuch as they too rest upon the ethnic divisions.

(c) The pattern of political activity: as already mentioned, much stress was laid by the colonial power on the development of the local district councils, which caused political activity to assume a largely local focus. The manner of establishing the lines to the centre became a

critical issue when nation-wide political activity was developing during the run-up to independence. This question forms one facet of the much wider problem of national integration, already referred to (p. 12 ), which has stood at the centre of much research into African politics, though viewed predominantly from the perspective of centre. In continuation of this theme, in the case of Uganda there have been a good number of studies of political parties and other institutions evaluating them in terms of their success or otherwise in promoting the integration of this highly pluralistic society.<sup>94</sup> These findings will not be recapitulated here. Two groups of problems only will be alluded to, narrowly selected from the whole range of problems considered here:

1) when direct elections on the national level were held for the first time in 1961, the constituencies were to a large extent identical with the districts, so that the boundaries of the latter assumed a new significance. This occasioned a tendency for representatives to be chosen on the basis of their local status and activities, and for local problems to be brought to the centre rather than *vice versa*. This is substantiated both by the candidatures for the 1961 election, when only nine out of 185 candidates were born outside their constituencies, and by the election results, a study of which made in 1966 shows that with one single exception, all the members of parliament were elected in their own ethnic regions.<sup>95</sup>

2) the two nation-wide political parties participating in the elections of 1961 and 1962 never became mass parties with centralised structures, capable of being used as instruments to break the patterns established in colonial days. Part of the explanation lies in the foregoing and needs no further elaboration.<sup>96</sup> The following factors have to be considered in elucidating the position of the ethnic groups:

(i) contrary to what occurred in other African states, the struggle for independence did not become a mobilising factor. Independence was a given fact, anterior to the emergence of the parties, and the contest therefore revolved round the question who should hold the power in independent Uganda, and especially around the status of Buganda. There was therefore no reason for the élite mentioned earlier to break out of the local framework in which it operated in order to establish a new basis on a national foundation.

(ii) thus, national and ideological considerations separated the two parties to only a slight extent. Instead, the two parties were



identified, both locally and nationally, with the two Christian wings. In the 1950s the Catholic church actively set about establishing a political party after the pattern of the European Christian democrat parties. The outcome was the Democratic Party (DP), and it was more in reaction to this than as a deliberate strategy that the other party, the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), identified itself with the Anglicans and became a rallying-point for them in an election situation. However, the religious division cloaks other and more socially-coloured differences. The Anglican system of education had deliberately set out to train up a "ruling class" through a rapid expansion of higher education, whereas the Catholics had gone in for a broader coverage. The Protestants had therefore pre-empted the leading positions and consolidated their grip on them regardless of the fact that Catholics formed a larger proportion of the population; this provoked a pent-up Catholic discontentment on which the DP was able to capitalise. Against this the UPC stood as the party offering the Protestants the greatest security. Thus there was an imbalance in the society running in a different direction from that discussed earlier.

This seemed to create a situation in which religious division might break up the ethnic foundation of political activity and prepare the ground for some other foundation that would be more national in scope. However, the religious factor did not manifest itself with that much force, which may be explained by citing the following points: firstly, Catholic loyalty and the Catholic sense of social injustice, could easily be appealed to on the national level, but it was primarily on the local level that the problems were experienced in practice, e.g., through appointments to official posts. Therefore it was also on the local level that solutions were sought and the political battle generally waged, particularly by the favouring of co-religionists at elections and the distribution of other values.

Secondly, the Christian churches cannot be identified with a national basis without further ado. It has already been noted (p. 40 ) that the work of the churches involved both centralising and decentralising tendencies, the latter weighing decidedly the more heavily. The religious ballast of the parties thus could not be expected to be a very potent factor in breaking up the ethnic pattern of politicisation. On the contrary, the key religious differences found their outlet in the competitive situation in the districts, and while the identification with two different political parties certainly gave the clash a

different character, it did not change the arena.

The actual relationship between the religious and the ethnic factors can be illustrated from the election results by noting two characteristic occurrences:

1<sup>o</sup>) Buganda boycotted the election of 1961, and the DP managed to attract only 2% of the votes there, although Catholics form about 30% of the population. Thus, ethnic solidarity was much stronger than religious and social appeal.

2<sup>o</sup>) outside Buganda the situation at the elections of 1961 and 1962 was somewhat different, being a genuine trial of strength without restrictions. It is therefore possible to assess the relationship between the religious and the ethnic factor by means of a comparison between the two elections. At the 1961 election there was a high correlation in the various districts between votes cast for the DP and the proportion of Catholics in the population, and similarly between the UPC and the Protestants, although the UPC did also manage to reach out beyond its religious basis. At the 1962 election, the correlation between religion and the pattern of voting was much lower than in 1961, because of a deviation from the norm on the part of six districts in particular. This can be ascribed partly to a change of party by a prominent local leader and partly to the fact that local problems such as district boundaries, federal status and antagonism towards Buganda became important issues in the election campaign. At both elections, religion and ethnicity rather than national political problems decided the outcome. The characteristic factor, however, is that as soon as locally-generated demands came to the fore, as happened in the 1962 election, they made a heavier impact than religious appeals.<sup>97</sup>

The conclusions to be drawn concerning the two parties, therefore, are that they were designed with the district as the natural unit; that they gave priority to local problems, powerfully stimulated by the resource-allocating importance of the district councils; and that their representatives at the centre were selected on the basis of local problems, which means that their primary task was to act as spokesmen for their own groups, and this in fact was an element in retaining the position at the next election. They thus certainly acted in two arenas, but an essential part of their task and a vital ingredient of political

activity was the legitimising of the demands from the districts to the centre.

The parties have been aptly termed "coalitions of local interests",<sup>98</sup> a description that could equally well define the conclusion of the entire politicising process, which ran largely along the ethnic boundaries and used the ethnic groups as the starting point of the allocative function. The local arena was the focus of political interest. The effect of this on the centre can best be described in the words of one of the principal actors, Milton Obote, prime minister and subsequently president, who summed up the situation at the time of independence as one in which the districts regarded the central government - i.e., the ministers and leading civil servants - "as representatives of their respective tribes, whose function in Government was to safeguard and plead tribal interests in matters of appointments, distribution of development projects and social services".<sup>99</sup>

## 6. EVALUATION OF THE ANALYTICAL SCHEME EMPLOYED

By applying the scheme we have devised we are now in a position to constitute ethnic groups in Uganda and to explain and justify their political behaviour and significance. The scheme has shown itself to be at the same time an essential tool in interpreting developments in Uganda up to the time of independence. The relevance of this interpretation is notably revealed when the pattern of events over the subsequent ten years is examined. These events serve also to bring the military into the political spectrum and thus open the way for us to check the connection between military rule and ethnicity in the Ugandan context, and especially whether, by its seizure of the centre, the military as an institution break with the pattern of political activity that has been so prominent in Uganda.

However, it is not unreasonable to pose the question in regard to the scheme itself whether it is necessary to employ a qualifying concept such as ethnic groups rather than a more generally valid description such as regional interest groups. Parallel with this, and in fact with the possibility of comparison with other parts of the world in mind, it has been suggested that the term ethnicity should be replaced by regionalism.<sup>100</sup> A detailed justification of the conceptual apparatus employed here may serve to throw the ethnic groups into sharper relief.

Up to now we have viewed the ethnic groups in relation to the role of the traditional system in their constitution and continued existence, to the use made of selected traditional elements for purposes of mobilisation and the creation of a common identity, and to the influence which the traditional system and values may have on political behaviour. The approach has been primarily to establish the boundaries between the groups and to trace the organisational expression of ethnicity through the interaction of the groups within the arena.

A possible next step would be to scrutinise the groups individually and bring to light the detailed mechanisms developed for the preservation of the unit. It will suffice in this regard to cite certain characteristics of the groups that help to distinguish them from other group-formations and which in fact are implicit in much of the foregoing:

1) the criterion of birthplace: the decisive criterion of membership of an ethnic group is to be born within that group. One is born thereby into a network of social relations conferring rights and imposing duties in numerous spheres. This is normally summed up in the term "ascription", as against "achievement". It means that naturalisation is very difficult under such a system, as is reflected, for example, in the rules laid down for endogamy. One practical effect of the birthplace criterion is revealed in the affiliations demonstrated above between election candidates and their places of birth.

2) mobility: in consequence of the foregoing the opportunities of mobility between the groups are slim or non-existent. In this the groups differ radically from such group-formations as classes.

3) kinship duties and the patronage system: these two related institutions are the principal reason why the ethnic groups can embrace within their boundaries conflicts and inequalities of economic, educational and other kinds. They furnish, so to speak, the requisite elasticity for absorbing changes. This is reflected in the fact that the local elite mentioned earlier still retains its close links with the rural population and is subject to pressure from it, so that one family member on a fixed wage supports other members, e.g., by supplying school fees for the younger generation. On a higher level, the patronage system is enlarged to function within the new religious and party-political divisions, so that the spoils system operates on this

basis within the individual districts. Moreover, on the national level too the patronage system helps to explain an adherence to the ethnic frame of reference in that appointments and other valued things are often distributed on the basis of such an authority-relationship.

Some scholars go still further, finding in this institution a substantial part of the reason why the "winner-take-all" philosophy has been such a prominent feature of political behaviour in the several districts.<sup>101</sup> Those who stand close to the centre of power and so enjoy the valued things are expected to share these out according to rules having their original validity in a traditional context.

Thus there are mechanisms in and around the ethnic groups that make them different from other group-formations. The strength of these mechanisms can best be measured by being viewed in the context of the difficulties that have revealed themselves as being associated with group-formations cutting across the ethnic boundaries. This has been debated particularly in connection with the process of social stratification. The latter is inhibited to start with by the fact that, as already noted, economic inequality within the arena coincides in large measure with the ethnic dividing lines, a trend that is further reinforced by the sense of common identity generated by the inequality. This in itself conduces to the bridging of internal differences and helps the ethnic group to become the primary reference group in which security is a crucial feature. This has contributed to the difficulty experienced by trade unions, which work for the same end, in establishing themselves as effective bodies.<sup>102</sup>

The same difficulties are in evidence with regard to the influence that the secondary schools might be expected to have. Studies from the latter half of the 1960s have shown that this sector of the schools system did not have the expected socialising effect of breaking decisively away from the ethnic dividing lines, despite this having been set as a goal by the centre. On the university plane, similarly, solidarity developed along the same ethnic lines instead of embracing the whole student group, and the patronage system was especially crucial in emphasising the ethnic frame of reference with regard to the prospects for future employment.<sup>103</sup>

Among the group consisting of the members of the centrally-appointed bureaucracy, whether employed in the central administration or located

in the districts as representatives of the centre, it might be expected that the common educational background and the income and occupational factors would nullify or lessen the effect of the ethnic dividing lines, and that this group might instead constitute a national élite with strong common interests. Material for verifying this hypothesis fully is rather sparse, and the results obtained are not totally in harmony. On the one hand it appears that regardless of the place of abode there is still a close affinity with the ethnic group, consisting of strong economic ties and manifested sometimes in the shape of long periods spent by wives and children, for linguistic and educational reasons, with the family rather than with the husband at his place of employment. On the other hand there are symptoms of a behaviour-pattern suggesting that in certain situations loyalty has moved from the ethnic to the national level.<sup>104</sup> However, it is uncertain whether this change is to be interpreted as a shift from ethnicity to a solidarity grown from quite different roots or whether it is to be explained in terms of an inconstant level of analysis and of the fact that the actors operate on inconstant levels.

The only conclusion to be drawn from all these considerations is that there is a powerful aura of inertia around the ethnic groups and that this inevitably has an effect upon other forms of group-formation. There is much to suggest that economic development and the educational system, often in combination, plus political measures aimed at securing a greater degree of balance in the system, may have some influence on the penetrability of the ethnic boundaries, but at the same time it is quite clear that it is an influence whose operation can be detected only over a long period. The braking distance is very long, in other words, and this gives scope for a multiplicity of combinations. The military regime in Uganda is itself a proof that the ethnic groups can assume varying functions under varying conditions in response to the policy in force.

## 7. FROM INDEPENDENCE TO MILITARY COUP: THE OBOTE PERIOD

In the period from independence in 1962 to the military coup in January 1971, Milton Obote was the dominant political figure in the Uganda arena, first as prime minister until 1966, and then, after a political upheaval which he himself described as a revolution, in the newly-created office of executive president. There are several reasons why it is proper to make a distinction between the periods before and after

1966/67. On the other hand the hectic events that occurred at the latter time, representing the culmination of developments over several years, cannot conceal the fact that the fundamental problem remained the same throughout the period, and that the new departure consisted for the most part of an attempt to initiate a constructive phase to follow a destructive one.

A speech by Obote in 1963 set forth the programme for the whole decade: "The tribe has served our people as a basic political unit very well in the past. But now the problem of people putting the tribe above national consciousness is a problem that we must face, and an issue we must destroy".<sup>105</sup> This speech isolates the ethnic factor as the fundamental problem and intimates that the current is now to be reversed, so that in future it will be the central government that has the political initiative. The means are proclaimed in the triad, reiterated ad nauseam, of "one government, one parliament, one nation", the import of which only becomes more than a truism when viewed in the context of the federal privileges embodied in the independence constitution.

Over and above this general recognition of the ethnic factor, the specific points of constitutional inequality and asymmetry in the system were brought to notice. In the first place, Obote's position as leader signified a shift of power to the northern Nilotic region, which in many respects was underprivileged, especially compared with Buganda. Next, Obote set about activating this difference by calling repeatedly for a struggle against feudalism. The latter comprised two elements, both of which produced an unintended effect that hindered rather than helped Obote's policy. The first involved a struggle against the four Bantu kingdoms and the privileges enjoyed by them. Equality was to be achieved by applying a northern common denominator. This opened up the possibility of a conflict between north and south, containing clear ethnic undertones, in which Obote would be placed against his will in one of the camps because his actions were easily construed as reflecting his northern origins and interests and as an attempt to mobilise the Nilotic group.

Secondly, Obote interpreted the struggle against feudal privileges in radical political terms, propounding as the antithesis of feudalism a socialist-style programme for the future development of society. Here he was endeavouring to break the ethnic pattern and to mobilise

specific population groups cutting across it. One such target-group could have been the Catholics, who as already noted (p. 57) were overshadowed by the Protestant hierarchy. In the event, however, the religious factor acted as a barrier. Although the religious cleavage had lost some of its importance in party-political respects, especially in consequence of the numerous defections from the DP to the UPC in Parliament, it was still a factor in determining support for a political programme. Obote the Protestant was relegated to the background while Obote the socialist, together with his socialist programme, became regarded as atheistic and downright hostile to religion.<sup>106</sup> Thus the coincidence between religious affiliation and social status again produced a political consequence. The religious factor came to operate in a negative direction with regard to mobilisation around a political programme of a supposed socialist character, thereby acting indirectly as a counter to the efforts, inherent in the appeal to specific social strata of the population, to break down the ethnic pattern.

Thus it is clearly apparent that the political conditions for Obote and the central government still consisted of manoeuvres between the several levels of division to be found in the population. The most prominent was the ethnic and religious division, which in some cases was manifested in group-formation and in others was crucial to the attitudes people took towards political personages and the points contained in political programmes. The strength of ethnic and religious affiliation was exhibited with particular clarity whenever attempts were made to replace such ties with a more nationally-based framework built upon social appeals. The degree of freedom of action was revealed to be limited, and unintended effects easily displayed themselves, thanks to the basic features of the system. For Obote, therefore, it became a crucial issue whether some of these ties could be weakened or entirely destroyed and whether this could be achieved within the established rules of the game or would require the application of means of a total different character.

(a) Obote's concern in the first period after independence was to weaken the organisational manifestations of ethnicity. Therefore he worked to strengthen the authority of the centre by enacting a series of regulations for local government creating a uniform system of relations between the centre and all the districts.<sup>107</sup> However, the



constitution set quite narrow limits to how far he could go along that road, especially in regard to Buganda. The constant negotiations, compromises and legal actions over Buganda's special privileges also show how much time and energy the government had to devote to getting the federal system to function, and how slender its authority and legitimacy actually were. Therefore a settlement with Buganda became the necessary and cardinal feature of Obote's strategy once defections from the opposition party had assured him in 1964 of a reasonably safe parliamentary majority.

The first round came with the holding of the referendum, provided for in the constitution, on the question whether the disputed "lost counties" (see above p. 38 ) should belong to Bunyoro or Buganda. The result of the referendum was a clear-cut defeat for Buganda, demonstrating that for the first time the initiative had slipped from the latter's hands. At the same time the affair acted as a test of the centre's credibility and strength within the arena and enabled Obote to capitalise on the general hostility towards Buganda.<sup>108</sup>

The critical question, however, was how Buganda was to be integrated into the whole, and by what means this was to be accomplished. It was crucial to the outcome that in the Uganda situation of the mid-1960s there were two organs capable of constituting a basis of central authority: the governing UPC party within the parliamentary system and the army outside it. The years 1965-66 assumed to a large extent the character of a race between Buganda and the Obote wing to draw upon the strength of these two organs for the eventual showdown.

Buganda's strategy became one of solving the problem of relations with the centre by securing a dominant position in the whole arena, and the instrument to this end was the governing UPC party, the infiltration of which was begun at this time. This produced a situation in which it became possible to play on the conflicts promoted by Obote himself between a southern Bantu wing and a northern Nilotic wing. The ethnic factor thus cropped up in the UPC and in the cabinet itself, though other elements besides the ethnic explanation, especially ideological differences, must be taken into account as well.

Thus Obote was losing his control of the parliamentary arena, but on the other hand he did obtain the support of the most important elements of the army and police. This power apparatus enabled him to regain the

initiative and suspend the parliamentary arena in February 1966: five ministers were placed under arrest, the constitution was abolished and a new one adopted retaining the parliamentary system but establishing a strong executive presidential office for Obote himself and changing the structure of the nation at one blow. Federalism was dissolved, all districts were made equal and all privileges, especially those appertaining to Buganda, were annulled; strong direction from the centre was henceforth to be the hallmark.

Buganda reacted by declaring the new constitution invalid and demanding the withdrawal of the central government and all its organs from Buganda by the end of May. This step was tantamount to a declaration of independence, and Obote sent in the army, which acted with great brutality. The upshot was a declaration abolishing the kingdom of Buganda and dividing it into four districts. This was confirmed in the final constitution of 1967, which put an end to the other kingdoms as well, and also inaugurated measures to break up the coincidence of constituency boundaries and ethnic divisions.<sup>109</sup>

The events of 1966-67 mark the termination of Buganda's special status on the political and constitutional level. They also mark the end of the ethnic group as the official political unit and in general signify the closing of the epoch in which the initiative in the formulation of demands rested with the ethnic groups. However, these changes chiefly affected the structures within the system and did not automatically mean that people ceased acting on the basis of loyalty to the ethnic group or that the ethnic factor was no longer vital to attitudes and to the political processes in general. Moreover, this surgical operation did not remove other inequalities in the arena that ran along the ethnic lines.

Three far-reaching consequences of the events of 1966-67 may be enumerated. To begin with, the army now entered the political arena, and in two capacities. Firstly, the army had been used in a showdown with an ethnic group. The character of the showdown admittedly was one of Buganda versus the rest, but all the same the army had become identified with the northern Nilotic group, especially since its composition reflected that of the victorious party. Thus the army was no longer regarded as an organ that was neutral in an ethnic sense. Secondly, from this point on the army became the power-base of the Obote régime through its possession of the means of physical coercion.

This is to be viewed in the context of the fact that the governing UPC party showed itself to be both unsuitable as an instrument in the practical situation and incapable of forming a sufficiently strong basis for the regime in the future, since it rested too heavily upon an ethnic coalition and therefore was not geared to the new circumstances. The UPC in fact ceased to function on the national level in the years after 1966, being strongly marked instead by contention at local level.

The second consequence to be cited is that Obote's treatment of Buganda after 1966 lent little credibility to his declared intention of reducing the significance of the ethnic factor. The Baganda were still regarded as so hostile and unreliable that the region was kept in a state of emergency. When the exiled Kabaka died in 1969, the government would not permit him to be buried in the traditional fashion, palpably because of its fears of an insurrection. This episode further humiliated the Baganda and welded them together in enmity towards Obote. An assassination attempt upon Obote in December 1969 was blamed on the Baganda, and the army again behaved with great violence. This entire treatment of the Baganda shows that little effort was made to integrate this central region into the national structure that in other respects Obote was trying to build up. The impression gained widespread currency that Obote was still acting from ethnic considerations, especially since he allowed the northern-dominated army so much freedom in Buganda.<sup>110</sup>

The third consequence to note, therefore is that Obote's solution of the Buganda problem and the situation in which this placed him exposed his dilemma to view: that in order to neutralise the ethnic factor in Uganda he had to lean for support upon an organ universally regarded as northern-dominated and so as resting on an ethnic foundation. This reduced Obote's freedom of action, as can be seen in his handling of Buganda, and it made him vulnerable to the suspicion that his actions in other respects were ethnically based, favouring his own group and his own northern region in particular. "The ethnic sickness" still afflicted the system despite the constitutional and organisational changes.

Obote himself recognised this dilemma in some degree and was trying to manoeuvre himself out of it in his second period covering the subsequent years until the coup of 1971. The following points may be observed:

1) A statement was issued that officials should refrain from requesting or using information about ethnic origins and affiliations in job appointments and in statistical data. For example, from 1965 the Ministry of Education was instructed not to compile data on the ethnic background of pupils,<sup>111</sup> and the population census forms of 1969 omitted the customary heading of "tribe" while retaining "religion".

2) Correction of the country's economic and educational imbalance was made a matter of deliberate policy. Harmonisation was sought through the allocation of bigger resources, notably to education, not by making cuts anywhere but by expanding faster in certain regions than in others. When expansion was concentrated in the north because of its backwardness, the government inevitably was blamed, not indeed for ignoring ethnic considerations but on the contrary for favouring its own regions. The situation, in other words, was such that whatever one did would be like pouring petrol on a smouldering furnace. Statistics had no more effect in such an atmosphere than did a purely technical argument for the location of a factory in Obote's home district rather than in the neighbouring region.<sup>112</sup> Credibility was particularly undermined when recruitment to units of the army was simultaneously being conducted on an ethnic basis.

3) The same problem presented itself when jobs were being filled and public sector appointments made. The Baganda were educationally a generation or two ahead of most other parts of the country and therefore generally well qualified for many posts. Thanks to Africanisation and expansion it was still possible to employ people from this source and simultaneously to correct the ethnic imbalance. Later information shows that in fact this was successfully achieved,<sup>113</sup> but in the immediate situation it is the vague impression and the individual case that count: the candidate passed over, the inexplicable promotion, etc. Moreover in some sectors there was talk of deliberate retardation of the Africanisation process so as to avoid an excessively lopsided ethnic composition or to avoid having to appoint Baganda. Notable instances were the university sector and the courts, where the problem was brought to public attention.<sup>114</sup>

4) In an effort to break out of the ethnic dimension, Obote sought from 1968 to explain his policy by setting it into an ideological context and formulating it into a proper programme, encapsulated in the slogan "a move to the left". The evident simultaneous intention

was to appeal, with the aid of this programme, to broad circles of the population and so create a basis for the government's authority and legitimacy by shifting loyalty out of the district level. Very suggestively, the various proposals featuring in the political programme were collected under the title of "The Common Man's Charter".<sup>115</sup> It was planned to include the now state-controlled trade unions and the cooperatives as the instruments of such a mobilisation and to introduce a "national service" project. As matters turned out, there were only two years available for working out and publicising this programme, and therefore its penetrative power is difficult to measure. The opposition is far easier to identify, coming as it did from the groups already cited, especially people with established interests, and from religious groups.<sup>116</sup>

5) In order to intensify his efforts to create a new and broader basis for his régime and to outflank the customary opposition from diverse groups, Obote did his utmost from 1968 to restore the UPC to working order. The new party constitution of June 1968 contained two features that denoted a decisive break with the past: firstly, there was a considerable measure of centralisation in the party's organisation, secondly, the district (corresponding to the ethnic group as the latter is defined in the foregoing) was abolished as the basic organisational unit and replaced by smaller units within the individual districts. This was an attempt to get over the fact that the party consisted of locally-based groups that regarded the formulating of the district's needs as their most vital task, and to circumvent the local élite's dominance and identification with the interests of the district. The massive effort made by Obote, notably in the elections of local party leaders and committees<sup>117</sup> in 1970, demonstrated a clear intention to by-pass the old leadership, to create new links between the centre and the local level and to utilise these channels to promote nationally- and ideologically- determined views rather than locally-based demands.

These UPC elections of 1970 afford at the same time the last opportunity of testing whether Obote's efforts were beginning to bear fruit. One observer believes that in 1970, in fact, and in the run-up to the parliamentary elections planned for 1971, it is possible to detect a decrease in the importance of the ethnic groups.<sup>118</sup> On the other hand it is argued, on the basis of studies of the elections to the various branches of the UPC, that ethnic differences and inequalities, together with religious divisions, are still the most prominent elements,

against which ideological issues cannot prevail on the local plane.<sup>119</sup> The divergence between these two findings may perhaps be ascribed to the often overlooked factor that because of Obote's measures there are quite simply far fewer chances of the ethnic groups' being able to manifest themselves as political quantities. Nonetheless it does appear that when people are placed in practical voting situations, they react and adopt attitudes on the basis of ethnic and religious ties. Thus it is a matter of measuring on two different levels.

6) The same sort of divergence is in evidence when the importance of the religious factor is being considered. After the attempted assassination of Obote in December 1969, the DP opposition was banned, and during the course of 1970 legislation was enacted making Uganda a one-party state. The particular justification urged was that at its then stage of development Uganda could not afford the dissensions and consequent debilitation of its strength to which a multi-party system gave rise; a special point was made of the abuse of religious differences for which the DP had been responsible over the years.<sup>120</sup> This ban reduced the scope for the institutionalised expression of religious factor from continuing to manifest its political significance in the kind of ways already exemplified.

7) One of the last items in Obote's programme was an alteration of the rules for electing Parliament. In future every candidate must stand not only in his own constituency but also in three other constituencies distributed over three different regions. Votes gained in all four constituencies were to be counted in the final reckoning of the individual candidates' results. The intention of this was to break up "the curious game of Tribal Development Monopoly" and to liberate members of parliament from their ethnic bonds. Whether this technical reform of 1970 would have accomplished its purpose and functioned effectively in practice was never proved, for the coup of January 1971 brought all talk of elections to an end.<sup>121</sup>

These seven points indicate how Obote endeavoured to create a national basis for the central government. At the same time they also show that throughout this process he was constantly and consciously having to secure his base until the hoped-for results should begin to reveal themselves. It was on this very point that he felt less and less sure of himself, as his increasing use of violent methods demonstrates, and his base became narrower and narrower. Mistrust of Obote not only

prevailed among the Baganda and the circles that received his policy with scepticism and opposition but also extended to the army. The whole process accelerated sharply after the assassination attempt of December 1969. Obote no longer trusted the commander-in-chief he had himself appointed, General Idi Amin, whom he tried to dismiss; when that failed, he reorganised the command structure so that to all intents and purposes Amin was removed from his post in the autumn of 1970 in an attempt to neutralise him.<sup>122</sup> At the same time Obote initiated a massive expansion of a special paramilitary corps and a lavishly equipped intelligence service, the General Service Unit, under the command of his cousin and recruited almost solely from his own ethnic group, the Langi (the inhabitants of the Lango district). What was happening, in other words, was that Obote was trying to break up the heaviest concentration of power in the land in order to safeguard his own position, but in doing so he was making use of ethnic means.

Thus there was a strongly self-contradictory element in Obote's whole strategy and position from 1966 to 1971, but at the same time this does underline the difficulty in the Uganda situation of breaking away from the previously-valid structures and putting something new in their place. It turned out to be impossible at this point in time to perform a balancing act between the simultaneous redressing of ethnic inequalities and maintenance of a reputation for ignoring ethnic claims. It was a source of particular weakness that in order to implement this policy, Obote had to rely for support upon an organ constituted on an ethnic basis.

#### 8. FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM OF ETHNICITY AND THE MILITARY

Many observers feel that what Obote and his strategy could not achieve, the military by their seizure of power on 25 January 1971 may have brought within the realm of the possible. The military have taken over the centre, and their possession of the instruments of power means they have no need to buttress their position by alliances; it is safeguarded by the fact that to all intents and purposes the valued things are now distributed within or via the military machine. At the same time the new organ of power seems to rise superior to ethnic and religious differences, so that these will form no part of the basis of the new régime or of the latter's conduct of policy. Moreover, a military régime involves by its nature a diminution of opportunities for choice and pressure, so that ethnically-based competition is depoliticised.<sup>123</sup>

This estimate of the military régime is founded upon arguments that can be traced back to the organisation model mentioned earlier (p. 12 ). The specific feature stressed is that the army acted in the interests of the centre in its two previous interventions in politics. On the first occasion there was the showdown over Buganda's claim for special rights within the arena; on the second, a government increasingly coloured by northern dominance was removed. The latter action thus seems to cancel out the impression of ethnic preference left by the former, and the emphatic rallying of the Baganda to the military régime despite its previous experiences seems to confirm this interpretation. On these facts the army may be judged a cohesive organ that acts on a national basis.

Two other interpretations of the Ugandan army's assumption of power view the army less as an instrument of national integration and more in terms of its behaviour as an interest group, but it is characteristic that in both cases the army is regarded as a social and organisational unit.

Ruth First considers the army, and especially the officer corps, to have acted in the interest of preserving its élite status, which was in danger from Obote's policies. The army was able to act because it enjoyed a degree of autonomy independent of other power-groupings. "This is the power of a corporate group vis-à-vis the fragility of the political systems in the new African states." First does add, however, that the situation can often change after the seizure of power, because the army may then be open to dissensions reflecting the divisions of the society at large.<sup>124</sup>

Michael Lofchie is even more emphatic in his view of the action of the military as a class action. The military constitute an economically privileged stratum accounting for more than 10% of the national budget. The very high pay-rates compared with the rest of the community, especially for private soldiers and NCOs, generates an economic solidarity superior to loyalty to the ethnic group. Although it is true that some measure of ethnic tension is discernible in the army, this cannot undermine its solidarity in action.<sup>125</sup>

Attention must be called to three features characteristic of these interpretations of the military takeover. Firstly, the analysis starts from the hypothesis of the army as an economic and social entity



capable of being evaluated in isolation from the rest of society. Secondly, it is assumed a priori that the army can be regarded as a homogeneous, organised unit. Thirdly, the analyses are based primarily on situations of action, especially the coup situation, without being supplemented by a consideration of behaviour over an extended period, which would enable the functioning of the organisation's individual components to be observed.

Against these three points it can be objected that the basis of evaluation happens to be rather limited because it is too highly related to the actual coup situation and because it automatically draws the eye towards the military as an organisation. A different analytical starting point will therefore be adumbrated. The Obote régime's dependence upon the military is not least of the reasons why it is important to study the relations and interaction between the military and the rest of society rather than considering them as two entities isolated from one another.<sup>126</sup>

Starting from this position, and in the light of earlier events in Uganda, the problem can profitably be reduced to the question of the importance of ethnicity in relations between the military and society at large. The latter in turn may be put in the form of two hypotheses: firstly, that ethnic affiliation on the individual level involves so many connecting lines between the army and society that this factor is superior to the socialising mechanisms also active in the Ugandan army and which might otherwise be expected to create a setting in which the army would be able to function as an élite group or at least as the primary reference group; secondly, that the ethnic affiliation in the circumstances given leads to fragmentation and the formation of groups, which in the long term undermines the cohesion and unity of the organisation.

If both these hypotheses turn out to be right they will show the military in Uganda as reflecting the ethnic divisions of the community and as easily becoming a battlefield for the same ethnically-rooted rivalries as are found outside. At the same time it has to be stressed that civil-military relations are a problem of some complexity that cannot be elucidated fully by applying a mere single variable such as ethnicity. However, this variable may serve to illustrate two general factors in the problems raised here: firstly, the absence of unity and a sense of solidarity in the army, and therefore its weakness as an

organisation; secondly, the character of the army's boundaries and especially the degree to which they are susceptible to penetration.<sup>127</sup>

Generally speaking, factual material about the military is very hard to come by. This is all the more true when such a politically sensitive nerve as ethnicity is touched. The argument below is therefore necessarily based on a patchwork of material, consisting firstly of specific events from which characteristic features of the behaviour of the military can be deduced, secondly of statistical and other quantifiable material, thirdly of the information assembled by other researchers in other contexts, and finally of personal communications at sundry times. Thus there is a limit to how far one can go with this material in approaching the problem along the lines mooted here. At the same time it must be added that the objective here is not to describe a sequence of concrete political events but to use the conceptual definitions that have been constructed in order to demonstrate the penetrative power of ethnicity.

The chronological principle appears to offer the most practicable system of exposition. Two main phases are therefore distinguished: the army's composition and status up to its assumption of power in 1971, and the army's behaviour as ruler.

#### 9. COMPOSITION AND STATUS OF THE ARMY PRIOR TO ITS SEIZURE OF POWER IN 1971

In this first phase, covering the period up to the seizure of power in January 1971, attention will be concentrated upon the following five problems:

- (a) size and expansion of the army,
- (b) pattern of recruitment and ethnic composition,
- (c) the mutiny of January 1964 and the Africanisation of the officer corps,
- (d) entry of the army into the political arena,
- (e) the army as the basis of the Obote régime.

##### (a) Size and expansion of the army

The table below illustrates various aspects of the army's growth:

Table 1: Growth and Africanisation of the Ugandan army.<sup>128</sup>

	1962	1967	1970	1973
Size of the army	1.000	5.960 (Lee: 7.000)	6.700	12.600
African officers	14 (21.9%)	350		
Foreign officers	50	0		
Officer cadets under training in Britain	11	8		

(total numbers 1960-67: 65)

The table shows that the growth in numbers is concentrated to a notable degree within two periods. The first comprises the five years from independence to the political crisis of 1966/67, when the annual rate of growth is over 40%, which is unexampled in Africa. The second period embraces the two years subsequent to the military coup, when manpower was approximately doubled. The growth occurring in the first period, of course, has to be viewed in the context of a newly-independent state's desire, for a variety of reasons, to possess defences of fitting dimensions. This unusually high growth rate, however, does require some further explanation, which is to be found in a number of factors, both external and internal. Serious disturbances in three neighbouring states immediately after independence demanded heightened preparedness on the frontiers, not least because of the many refugees fleeing to Uganda. First came the revolution in Rwanda, next the civil war in Southern Sudan, and finally the insurrection in the Congo (now Zaire). As will be demonstrated later, these crises were loaded with political dynamite, because the national frontiers cut across population groups of common ethnic origins.

The internal causes too were related to the ethnic factor, although the more traditional task of combating large-scale cattle stealing in north-eastern Uganda (Karamoja) played a part as well. Providing another instance parallel to that of Sebei cited earlier (p. 51), one of the regions under the kingdom of Toro wished to form an independent district. This developed into a kind of independence movement that tied down a large contingent of the army for several years.<sup>129</sup> On top of all this there was a potential threat to national unity in the shape of the separatist tendencies exhibited in Buganda on various occasions. In the event of an actual rising in that quarter a sizeable

military effort would be called for. Thus, it is the ethnic factor again that underlies the army's growth during this initial phase, and this makes the whole pattern of recruitment a crucial factor.

(b) Pattern of recruitment and ethnic composition

The Obote government followed closely the recruiting practices established by the colonial power. In the beginning it happened more or less automatically, but it rapidly became deliberate policy. The British had applied four criteria in particular: firstly, the practical requirement of a minimum height, which favoured the northern population groups and handicapped the Bantu group. Secondly, there was a notion - often of romantic provenance - that certain "tribes", by virtue of their inherited warlike traditions, constituted the best soldier material.<sup>130</sup> In line with this was the third criterion that people of education and a degree of independent awareness of their own worth were not really suitable, a description which fitted the Baganda especially well. Then came the fourth criterion, viz., that affiliation to Islam constituted a good background. This latter criterion, however, was found less useful in the Uganda situation than in Nigeria, for example.

Consistently with this, a system of norms emerged among the population confirming this pattern of recruitment. The educated, often including those holding secondary school-leaving certificates, did not look to the army, since a career in it carried little prestige. The Baganda especially considered that the army should draw on the primitive people from the north, particularly the Nilotic group, which indeed evolved as a well-understood concept in this context. The northern population groups for their part regarded the army as an attractive career opening bearing in mind the limited opportunities otherwise available to them.<sup>131</sup>

Since the recruiting practice outlined here was continued after independence, two characteristics should be noted. First and foremost, recruitment to the army, and therefore its composition, reflected the educational and economic circumstances of the country. Those regions which had made the biggest advances in those two fields had little personal connection with the army. Secondly, it was characteristic that recruiting was conducted on an ethnic basis and was interpreted in ethnic categories so that a palpable difference between north and south was

observable in this field. What this means, in other words, is that the army was not exempt from the inequality shown earlier to have characterised Uganda as a whole.

If more weight was not attached to this factor in the early years of independence, and if its wider implications for the political situation were overlooked, this had to do particularly with the fact that the colonial period's picture of the army as a non-political entity and professional body that will always loyally support the central government was still regarded as valid. This view was encouraged in large measure by the presence of British officers in all the higher posts and by the extreme tardiness of Africanisation (cf. Table 1). The mutiny of January 1964 changed these ideas decisively and made the political consequences apparent to all parties.

Regardless of the events of 1964, however, it was the pattern of recruitment inherited from the colonial power that was employed in the expansive period 1962-67 and was therefore crucial to the composition of the army. This composition will now be identified in detail, using a social and ethnic criterion. Viewed socially, those enlisted, predominantly from the north, can be characterised generally as springing from the rural population and as being among the lowest educated, meaning either that they were the products of the lowest classes in the elementary school and therefore often semi-literate, or that they were actually illiterate.<sup>132</sup> It is essential to be clear about these social origins in considering the socialising effect and the relation between the military and society.

In considering this problem more closely it is proper to bear in mind Edward Shils' distinction between the army as a professional organisation, functioning as a unit in concrete actions and differing sharply from the traditional society by virtue of its technology, discipline and training, and the individual soldier, whose sympathies and entire outlook may still be determined by his social starting point and continued links with the traditional community.<sup>133</sup> In a phase of vigorous expansion such as is found in Uganda, this distinction can be made fruitful by regarding the former element, the professional organisation, as primarily constituting the desired standard and instrument of the socialising process rather than as the result of it, already manifested and measurable. Similarly, there is some justification for taking the individual soldier's social origin as the

starting point of an estimate of the possibilities and effects of the socialising process or - a term frequently used - acculturation.

At all events the socialising process, assessed from this standpoint, will take a very long time both because of the considerable growth in the numbers enlisted over a short span of years and because of their origins and conditions. Enlistment in the army therefore may not immediately cause the individual soldier's links with his home environment, i.e. ethnic group, to cease receiving a high priority that will be determinative of his attitude, in this particular case to Buganda. The army does not necessarily become the only or most essential reference group; on the contrary, its social structure points to the possibility of a close relationship between the latter and the rest of society and thus of some penetrable boundaries. Neither, therefore, can the army as an organisation be said in itself to depart from the ethnic pattern so characteristic of Uganda; rather, it is much more liable to be present in society at large.

This provides a further justification for crediting the ethnic structure with greater importance than that allowed by Michael Lofchie, starting as he does from the privileged position enjoyed by the military profession in regard to pay. However, neither in annual reports nor in budgets is there to be found any breakdown of the army's personnel according to ethnic affiliation. In order to proceed beyond general impressions, it is useful and factually well-founded to draw a parallel with the police force, whose recruiting practice over the years has been the same as that of the military and a summary of whose ethnic affiliations appeared shortly before independence.

Table 2: Ethnic composition of the police force 1961<sup>134</sup>

	Bantu group	4 northern groups	Acholi	Lango	Teso	West Nile
% of population 1959	65.7	c. 26	4.4	5.6	8.1	7 - 8
% of police strength 1961	29.8	c. 54	15.5	7.5	15.2	15 - 16

Thus there is very little symmetry between proportion of population and representation in the police when north and south are compared. Applied to the army, the disparity becomes even wider. The share of the Bantu

group is lower while that of the Acholi is substantially higher, and this pattern continues throughout the 1960s both in consequence of established practice and as a result of political direction, so that it is estimated that shortly before the coup Acholi constituted between 33 and 50% of the total strength of the army.<sup>135</sup> The four northern groups cited also account for the largest contingents in the army, but it is difficult to rank them accurately as to size apart from the Acholi taking first place. However, it is probable that the Langi (Obote's group, which in conjunction with the Acholi forms the bulk of the Nilotic group) was more strongly represented in the army than is stated, while the proportion of Teso was smaller. West Nile (Idi Amin's home ground) contains several ethnic groups (cf. map), constituting a district in the administrative sense and functioning until the end of the 1960s, both in the army and elsewhere, as an ethnic group according to the definition arrived at in the foregoing.

In view of the subsequent events under the Amin régime, a further group, the Nubians, which falls outside the above table for several reasons, will be mentioned here. Historical reasons, and application by the British of their fourth criterion (affiliation to Islam), are responsible for the Nubians having formed part of the Ugandan army throughout the century. Their proportion, however, has been on the decline both in percentage and absolute terms.

The Nubians numbered between 5,000 and 10,000 people around the time of independence. Their status in Uganda may be defined in detail in terms of the following three characteristics<sup>136</sup>: 1) they originated in the first place from what is now Southern Sudan, where in a period of upheaval during the latter half of the 19th century there emerged a number of groups, of more or less military character, which it was found possible to recruit for various campaigns. One such group finished up in western Uganda in the 1890s, where it became enrolled into the British colonial forces and was used for pacifying various regions of the Uganda Protectorate then in process of being formed. These soldiers and their families later on settled themselves around the old garrison towns and in a number of trading centres all over Uganda, but they have managed to maintain close ties with one another, including even Nubians in Nairobi. 2) Their Muslim convictions are strong, and Islam lends an overall colour to their way of life and entire culture, as is manifested notably in their language, clothing and affinity for urban environments, the latter being reflected

especially in their activeness as small traders. 3) Finally, they have a special relationship with the military, as already noted. There has been a tradition among the individual Nubian families of supplying one or more members to the army, and their unique system of education has been largely geared to this.

In sum, the Nubians can be characterised as "a new and distinct group of Muslim townspeople in a hereditary relationship with the Uganda army".<sup>137</sup> They thus constitute a marginal group differing somewhat from the other population groups from which the army is recruited. They can scarcely be termed an ethnic group but have more of the character of an immigrant community differentiated from its surroundings by virtue of distinctive cultural features. In contrast to the Asian immigrant community and to the ethnic groups as a whole, however, the Nubians have quite open boundaries, giving scope for a continual process of Nubianisation, which explains the uncertainty over their numbers. Nubianisation has gone on over the years, firstly through marriages and secondly through an open membership practice whereby the Nubian community has functioned as a kind of reservoir for people who have lost their original affiliation in the urban situation. The only prerequisite has been that they should become Muslims and be able to express themselves in the Nubian language. A special instance of the process has manifested itself in the West Nile district, which is located ethnically and geographically closest to the regions from which the Nubians first originated. In West Nile, most of those belonging to the Islamic faith are termed Nubians without further ado.<sup>138</sup>

Thus the concept of Nubianism is fairly open-ended and flexible. In the colonial period and under the Obote régime, however, this was of little moment. To be a Nubian carried scant prestige and was synonymous with being badly educated. Under the Amin régime the Nubian groups have suddenly become politically significant, and under these changed conditions the flexibility and the open boundaries have become of considerable moment.

This examination of the recruitment pattern and ethnic composition of the army may be concluded by noting that this composition is not necessarily a crucial factor, unless weight is attached to it and it is turned to account internally by the army and externally by society at large. That this is a likely contingency is hardly surprising bearing in mind the high level of ethnic consciousness in Uganda as a



whole and the strong politicisation of the ethnic groups.

At the same time the matter can be approached in concrete terms via two observations from the foregoing concerning the ethnic grouping of the army: firstly, there is on the one hand a glaring asymmetry between the composition of the army and the population, while on the other there is a growing symmetry in the years after 1962 between the dominant elements in the army and those at the political centre. Secondly, there is the possibility of mutually incompatible loyalties in the minds of the individual soldiers: the army as an organisation versus the ethnic component, fellowship based on common social background versus the ties with the traditional group at home. That the army indeed is not immune to the forces at work in the rest of society but on the contrary takes its place in a scale of priorities is shown by the events of 1964.

(c) Mutiny in January 1964 and the Africanisation of the officer corps

In January 1964, the three East African states experienced mutinies within their respective armies unmistakably bearing the character of a chain reaction set in motion by the revolution in Zanzibar. The details of the dramatic events in Uganda, involving the arrest of the defence minister, the physical confinement of British officers and the calling in of British troops will not be recapitulated here. Their importance consists in the fact that, apart from a few dismissals and arrests, the government gave in completely to the two chief demands of the mutineers: better pay for private soldiers and NCOs (non-commissioned officers) and the acceleration of Africanisation in the army. The surrender to these demands had far-reaching consequences in itself, but in addition the whole train of events is indicative of the patterns that were about to develop in the interaction between the army and the political arena.<sup>139</sup> The following points require to be considered in evaluating the importance of the pay question:

1) A very high level of pay was introduced, so that the annual income of the lowest-paid soldier became at least fifteen times higher than the average income over the country as a whole.<sup>140</sup> The military, formerly an underprivileged group, had now advanced to a truly enviable position, which in itself increased the awareness of the opportunities that might be available within the military career.

2) The total capitulation to the mutineers' demands demonstrated for the first time the potential strength of the military over the political quarters that the army could be bought to passivity or direct support. The foundation was thus laid for a practice that accelerated rapidly all through the Obote period, as the defence budgets testify, and this acceleration appears not to have lessened under the Amin régime, as can be seen from the deliveries of foreign arms particularly.

3) While the two previous paragraphs suggest the army to be a uniform entity, there are other elements involved at the same time which have a divisive effect. Massive growth and increased resources posed a distribution problem, for example in regard to the more advanced equipment, the establishment of new units with different tasks, the stationing of the overseas training personnel, who no longer came solely from Britain but also from Israel and the USSR. There was an element of competition here, clearly reflected in an indubitable slackening of discipline occasioned by the mutiny itself and by the British officers' change of status to that of advisers, followed by their dismissal. The actual distribution of the new valued things affords at the same time a quantitative measure indicating who was favoured and who was not. That such divisions and group-formations could very easily run along ethnic dividing lines emerges very clearly when the problems of Africanisation of the officer corps are scrutinised.

The demand for rapid Africanisation of the officer corps was advanced by both privates and NCOs. Table 1 shows that the satisfaction of this demand was a very hasty process: yet only a few educated people were available. This meant that the field of recruitment had to be the ranks of NCOs and privates - which indeed had been one of the demands. Having regard to the scope of the process of expansion, promotions had to be very swift. The officer corps that emerged thus had a very slender educational background. Table 1 also shows that it became deliberate policy to build up the officer class chiefly by recruitment from the lower ranks, and this line has been consistently maintained ever since. Only a few cadets are sent to Britain for training, and the same applies to other donor countries.<sup>141</sup>

It has to be stressed in regard to the socialising effect discussed earlier that the officer corps has become a very faithful reflection of the composition of the army as a whole. The majority come from the north and have a close attachment to the rural areas. Then there is

the further consideration that the socialising effect often believed to result from a common overseas training has not been a factor in Uganda's case. For this reason alone there is no basis for applying a reference-group theory such as has been attempted in the case of Ghana, where there certainly is a large contingent with a common Sandhurst background.<sup>142</sup>

All the problems connected with the officer class contain an ethnic element too, and this shows how the north-south distinction became significant. There are certain indications that a contributory cause of the mutiny is to be found in the fact that the balance in the officer corps was at that time about to tip over to the advantage of those trained in Britain.<sup>143</sup> There is a conflict here between practical experience and theoretical training, between those promoted from the ranks after some period of service and the newcomers able because of their superior education to go directly for overseas training. Behind this again there was an ethnic dimension. The majority of the latter-mentioned category belonged, by virtue of their educational background, to the southern Bantu group, and some indeed were from Buganda. The whole conflict was brought into the open by the mutiny, and it exercised a high degree of influence on the Africanisation programme. It meant at the same time that from then on ethnic divisions became an internal fact of life for the army. The officer corps became the focus of the ethnic struggle thus providing a ready made yardstick of its progress.

In the first round the conflict was resolved by the government's compromise appointment of Shaban Opolot, a member of the northern, non-Nilotic Iteso group, as commander-in-chief. He had risen from the ranks but at the same time had spent a short period at Sandhurst and so was thought capable of bridging the social and ethnic dissensions that had arisen. On the other hand the second-in-command appointed was a "ranker's man", Idi Amin from West Nile, who never concealed his close affinities with the private soldiers and NCO class.

The Africanisation process in itself was a reflection of the desire for political control over the army and so a break with the principles for which the British officers had stood. At the same time the after-effects of the mutiny showed that the army was not a homogeneous unit but was riddled by the same ethnic divisions as the rest of society. These two factors heightened political interest in the army, manifested in practical terms as a desire to be able to count on the army or parts

of it in the political contest. Thus the army became a crucial element in the deployment of political forces prior to Obote's "revolution" of 1966.

(d) Entry of the army into the political arena

Even before the mutiny there had been political attempts to infiltrate the army,<sup>144</sup> but the events of early 1964 were the decisive starting signal for the army to become an important hunting ground for the various politico-ethnic groupings. The first manifestations came in two familiar fields. Close contacts were established in the officer corps between UPC leaders and officers from the north. The politicians, quite clearly, were exploiting the common ethnic background, especially as expressed in a common animosity towards Buganda. The Baganda for their part were convinced that there was discrimination against the Bantu officers, because of a widespread belief that Obote was reserving the central posts in the army for the Nilotic officers group, especially those from Lango.<sup>145</sup>

The other field involved was recruitment, where the lopsided ethnic distribution in the army, and the possible consequences, were realised. The issue was raised in Parliament on several occasions by Buganda and by the DP opposition. The target of attack was the height requirement inherited from British recruiting practice, which favoured the northern groups; the substance of the argument was that a person of small stature can be just as brave as one who reaches a specified height.<sup>146</sup> The Obote government rejected the demand for modified criteria - besides, the established practice had become too useful a means of control.

Following these skirmishes, the year 1965 brought distinct signs of efforts on the part of the various political groupings to secure their powerbase by getting part of the army on their side. As already noted (p. 65), this was a time when, in addition to the tensions between Buganda and the Obote government, two wings were emerging in the government UPC party: a southern-orientated wing under the leadership of Grace Ibingira, general secretary of the party, and a northern-dominated wing under Obote.<sup>147</sup> It has never become clear whether there really was a connection between the attempts of the Ganda and Ibingira wings to procure the backing of specific elements of the army, but at all events both were in close contact with General Opolot, the army commander, and a number of Bantu officers, including a brother of

Ibingira.

The political picture in Uganda is exceedingly complex and confused at this point, but two features can be distinguished that show the growing ethnic fragmentation and increasing politicisation of the army. Firstly, parts of the Ugandan army, under the command of Idi Amin and with Obote's encouragement, were heavily involved in the Congo insurrection in the latter half of 1965. This episode demonstrated fairly clearly that there was a split in the army between Amin, who had his base in the West Nile district adjacent to the Congo, and Opolot, who was supported by a Teso-Bantu coalition in the army.

Secondly, it is clear that on two occasions in October 1965 there were troop movements in the vicinity of the capital. In the first instance there was a southern-inspired attempt at a coup with Opolot as its leader, while in the second measures designed to consolidate their power were being taken by Obote-Amin. Corroboration of these phenomena was supplied some months later in Parliament, in fact, when Alexander Latim, leader of the DP opposition, commented openly on the attempts and at the same time warned the members of the government involved not to rely upon the army's power of coercion, as "the army is tribally divided sharply".<sup>148</sup>

Thus a situation built up in which what counted would be to act first. Obote moved swiftly, and on both the parliamentary and military levels simultaneously. With the aid of Amin and his group of NCOs, he subdued both Buganda and the Ibingira wing of the UPC, as has already been related. The consequence as far as the army was concerned was a purge. Opolot was removed from the post of commander-in-chief and placed under arrest, Idi Amin being appointed to succeed him. The vast majority of the Bantu officers were dismissed, as also were large numbers of privates and NCOs, especially from Opolot's own group, the Iteso. Thus, Obote was left with an army recruited to all intents and purposes from three groups: Lango, Acholi and West Nile and parallel in its composition with the dominant elements in the civil government. Obote believed that at the same time he had found in Idi Amin a commander-in-chief who was primarily a professional and obedient soldier without political ambitions. Thus a situation was created in which the army was to function as the power-base of civil rule yet was supposed to be capable simultaneously of living up to the old requirement of loyal support for the government in power and submission to

civilian control.

The general conclusion to be drawn about the relationship between the army and society in the light of the events just described is that despite northern dominance on both the political and military levels prior to 1966, the parallelism was not strong enough for the army to function merely as an arm of the government. The army was too vulnerable to the politico-ethnic discords at work in society and was therefore involved in and itself an object of the ethnic conflicts. The army's ethnic composition showed itself to be a more influential factor than its organisational qualities.

(e) The army as the basis of the Obote régime

The crucial issue in the period that followed, therefore, when the army was to appear in a new role under changed political conditions, was whether the army was now sufficiently homogeneous in its composition to be able to rise above the ethnic differences still existing between the three main groups from which it was recruited. What is especially critical is whether the symmetry between the army and the political authority is to be regarded as having been cemented to the point of neutralising the ethnic differences notwithstanding that the army was to stand behind the policy of national integration which Obote was endeavouring to pursue.

In considering this problem of the significance of the ethnic factor, it is essential in the light of the experience of the preceding period to take account of the following three aspects: 1) whether the distribution of the various values and of appointments to officer posts provoked ethnically-based internal reactions in the army, 2) whether leading political figures treated the army as a unit or as an ethnically-structured organ; 3) whether the society at large appealed to specific ethnic groups in the army and whether, as a corollary of this, individual soldiers responded primarily in terms of their local affiliations.

It became evident in the course of the discussion of Obote's policy from 1966 until the time of the coup that he was in a dilemma. On the one hand it was his goal to neutralise the political significance of ethnicity and at the same time to create a broader base for his régime than the military. On the other hand in attempting to realise these

goals he was compelled to lean upon such an organ as the army, which was regarded by most people as an ethnic, or at best regional, instrument. This detracted from Obote's credibility in the eyes of large sections of the population, and it involved a risk of diminishing his credibility in the eyes of the army as well, because it was being asked in effect to stand behind a policy that could lead to a reduction of its own position and influence. Thus the situation became one in which relations between the military and the civilian régime were specially vulnerable and not lacking in complexity. The really pivotal question was whether the military would subordinate themselves and accept the civilian régime's definition of their legitimate functions.

In the first instance Buganda served as a "functional imperative"<sup>149</sup> because keeping a firm grip on the former kingdom was an element of the political pattern and formed one of the army's most important tasks. At the same time the establishment of the Defence Council of Uganda, as it was called, furnished machinery for involving the army leadership in the vital decision-making processes. This organ appears to have functioned satisfactorily and as intended until the beginning of 1969, when Obote ceased to convene it, which engendered the view in military circles that the political authority was now trying to act on its own without the army.<sup>150</sup> At any rate it can be construed as a sign that relations between the army and the civil authorities have changed character.

The very situation itself suggests several reasons for this change, e.g., that Obote's "move to the left", launched at this time, was an ingredient of a strategy to liberate himself from the army. Hard on the heels of this development came an episode involving the foreign policy matter of Uganda's relations with the Sudan. During the years of the Sudanese civil war Uganda had adopted a somewhat obscure official attitude, but there is no doubt that vital supplies for the Sudanese rebels came via Uganda, sometimes despatched from Israel, which very conveniently had a military training mission in Uganda. For various reasons of foreign policy and pan-Africanism Obote modified his stance and adopted an official position in favour of General Numeiry's régime in the Sudan, giving orders that guerrilla operations must no longer be conducted from Ugandan territory and that the national frontier was to be respected.<sup>151</sup> Amin, however, still permitted support to be given to the Southern Sudanese rebels and some detachments of his army seem to have been directly involved. Ethnic solidarity

with the Southern Sudanese was the crucial factor for Amin, so that he regarded the national frontier as penetrable and subordinate to ethnic considerations.

Thus there emerged a serious divergency between the army and the civil power, and a tendency for the military authorities themselves to legitimise their own activities. This rendered the vital premise of the post-1966 power-system no longer valid. The next focus of interest was the question whether the conflict would be a confrontation between the civil and military authorities or whether it would cut across the two organs. An answer to this may be found by investigating whether the army could still function as a unity, a professional organisation, under these circumstances, or whether the ethnic differences would again come to the fore and make the boundary between the military and the rest of society permeable.

Two kinds of influence were at work upon the army in this situation. Firstly, it is a known fact that Obote staked heavily on an expansion of the intelligence service, the General Service Unit, filling it with personnel drawn chiefly from his own Lango group. The same applied to the paramilitary organ, the Special Force. In other words, Obote was to a large extent organising elements drawn from his own ethnic group as an alternative to the army. Parallel with this Obote also applied ethnic criteria within the army by placing Lango officers, and to some extent Acholi officers, in central and strategically important posts. Thus Obote was pinning his faith upon an alliance with the Lango group and to some extent the Acholi group in the army, so clearly exploiting the army's ethnic composition.<sup>152</sup>

It is possible in the light of these two forms of influence to assess how penetrable the army's boundaries were. Obote's measures caused the West Nile group in the army to react against both the Acholi and the Langi. Their reaction followed a typical ethnic pattern and can be divided into three elements: 1) Amin is their representative regardless of internal differences, and a weakening of his position vis-à-vis the civil power is a weakening of their position in the army as well; 2) they feel themselves to be representatives of their own regions ("we West Nilers"), which have been neglected by the central government over the years, and they see what is happening in the army as a sign that they are now about to be relegated to an underprivileged position again, while the lion's share of modern valued things has gone to the



Nilotic groups (Acholi and Langi); 3) their attitude to Obote is coloured by the strongly Catholic background of West Nile. Thus the West Nilers became embroiled in some of the deep-rooted dissensions of Ugandan society and came to regard Obote's policy and actions with scepticism.

Tensions arose within the Nilotic group too, because the Acholi reacted against the Langi. The background to this is to be found more generally in long-standing discords and rivalries between the two neighbouring groups, reaching a particular pitch of intensity in the early years after independence. In the practical situation the Acholi, forming as they did the largest group and being at the same time dissatisfied with the influential organs outside the framework of the army, which were dominated by the Langi, felt themselves to have been prejudiced by Obote's army promotions and appointments.

The status of the Acholi in relation to the two other important groups can be visualised more accurately by scrutinising a specific event of January 1970 and interpreting it in detail. It occurred one month after the attempted assassination of Obote, of which it may have been a repercussion. It centred around the murder of the Acholi's highest officer and second-in-command of the army, Brigadier Pierino Okoya, who was shot with his wife at their home in January 1970. Characteristically enough, there have been two theories about this murder. The first supposes it to have been Amin's work, firstly because there was a prospect of Obote's replacing Amin by Okoya and secondly because Okoya may have been close to uncovering participation by Amin in the attempted assassination of Obote the previous month. In general Okoya had evinced a degree of dissatisfaction over Amin's strong favouritism towards the NCO group from the West Nile region.<sup>153</sup>

The second hypothesis points the finger at Obote himself, whose motive may have been to weaken the powerful Acholi group in the army. Obote could have had an interest in this at this particular time because there were indications of a significant civil-military alliance in Acholi. On the basis of his leadership position among the Acholi group in the army, Okoya had established contact with civilians in Acholi, the foremost of them being Alexander Latim, who was the leader of the DP opposition in Parliament. The common Catholic background of both the opposition party and the individuals recruited into the army from Acholi may have provided a footing for such an alliance. Indeed, even

prior to the election which Obote had announced for 1971, such a civil-military alliance cannot have been a matter of indifference to him. There are no indications as to whether any similar contact between groups in the army and DP politicians can be traced in the strongly Catholic West Nile region. But a definite link was established in the year before the coup between Obote's own defence minister, Felix Onama, who was from a region near West Nile, and Idi Amin. This was based upon growing internal dissensions within the government, and the characteristic feature was that such dissensions almost automatically produced direct internal repercussions in the army.

Three observations can be made about this murder. Firstly, one's immediate inclination is to evaluate such an affair in terms of personal categories, going no further than the personal rivalries and power struggles. Closer scrutiny, however, discloses that behind the personalities lurk important groups, often ethnically constituted. These leaders are considered by others as representatives of their groups, not as private individuals, and they themselves act in this role. Regardless of which of the above-mentioned theories is correct, the personal category of explanation does not ring true, as is even more evident from what follows below. To this may be added the second observation. Definite alliances were being established at this time between groups in the army and groups in the political apparatus, and there was a distinct tendency for such alliances to be built on ethnic foundations. Thus the dividing lines do not run between the civil and military apparatuses but cut across them. This latter statement in turn has to be read in conjunction with the third observation. The army was not only divided into an Obote wing and an Amin wing, corresponding to a cleavage between the Nilotic and the West Nile groups. There were three groups, all in rivalry with one another and with their respective strengths to be measured also in terms of their civilian roots.

These three observations are all essential to the interpretation of the last period before the coup and of the actual coup situation and they help to provide a much more detailed picture than when the events are evaluated solely from the perspective of the political centre. The significance of this is revealed in concrete terms when the precaution taken as the situation gradually became more critical are considered in detail. Obote's reorganisation of the command structure (described on p. 71 above) under which Amin was "promoted" to a position of

greater honour but less influence , did not merely affect Amin as an individual. The objective was to weaken the West Nile group of which Amin was the representative, and there was also further reshuffling of the officer corps designed to achieve it. However, Obote for his part seems to have forgotten that Amin's influence was not merely dependent upon the command structure but rested just as much upon his enormous popularity among privates and NCOs.<sup>154</sup>

It is therefore very characteristic that one of the counter-measures taken by Amin consisted of the mobilisation of that self-same West Nile group in the army in preparation for the showdown which most people felt was bound to come soon. At the same time he endeavoured in numerous ways to place himself in situations that would enable him to capitalise on the dislike of Obote outside the ranks of the army and to muster support by identifying himself with specific groups within society. Both purposes were attained, characteristically, through Amin's exploitation of a part of the religious apparatus. There existed in the Obote period two organisations among Uganda's 5-10% of Muslims, one dominated by the Baganda and the other established and strongly supported by the Obote government. Amin adhered quite clearly to the latter until 1970, when his differences with Obote and with other groups in the army showed themselves in earnest. From that time forward Amin began to appear in public for the Baganda-dominated organisation and ensured that news of it was well circulated.<sup>155</sup> In this way Amin was sending out signals to at least four groups: 1) in the demonstrable conflict with Obote he was appealing to the diverse opposition groups; 2) he was appealing especially to the Baganda and in doing so gained the ear of some Christians as well; 3) he was invoking religious fellow-feeling and seeking the support of all Muslims in Uganda; 4) he was putting himself forward in particular as leader of his own religious group, the West Nile Muslims, and thus of Nubians all over Uganda as well.

That Amin hit the mark with this and other appeals is plain from a glance at the groups which first rallied to him after the coup. Almost all of them belonged to the four categories cited, as will be developed further below.

Thus the picture that emerges is a motley one of alliances and conflicts cutting across the boundaries of the army. From October 1971 there were widespread expectations of a showdown in one form or another; it was a

general topic of speculation, especially in the army, which of the three groups mentioned would first find a pretext for action, for no one doubted that the army was going to be the main theatre of battle.

The actual events of the coup will not be recounted here. It was the West Nile group that took the leading role, and the decisive factor in the outcome was that it had its representatives occupying key positions, both strategically and materially (in the Malire Mechanised Battalion for instance). Neither - as has already been said several times - will much emphasis be placed upon an analysis of the entire chain of causation. It should be evident from the foregoing that the explanation cannot be reduced, as has sometimes been attempted, to a personal showdown between Obote and Amin.<sup>156</sup> It is equally meaningless to treat the army as a uniform entity in these events when it was only a single ethnically-defined group that took power. Therefore it is difficult to interpret the coup in élite or class terms.

What seems to be essential is to bring in the ethnic factor, as the actors themselves do in their 18-point declaration issued to authenticate and justify the coup. Declarations of this sort should always be approached with a certain measure of caution, but it does serve to illustrate the ideas that the victorious West Nile group wished to put across to others and which thus represented something that was thought capable of carrying conviction.<sup>157</sup> Besides a passage on violations of political rights and proprieties and a reference to the nation's disappointing economic performance, the longest section of the declaration contained an attack on Obote's blatant favouring of his own ethnic group, the Langi, and of his home village in particular within this group. One of the 18 points alleged directly that this had fostered conflicts and had produced ill-effects on the other regions of the country.

Thus a crucial importance was attached to the ethnic factor by the actors themselves, but at the same time an attempt was made to limit the target to Obote personally and his closest relatives. This deliberate effort at limitation did not succeed, precisely because it was once more demonstrated that events proceeded within the framework of constant interaction between ethnic and personal factors. After the coup, Obote the individual swiftly became identified with the whole Lango group, and his regime with the Acholi group as well. When matters were coming to a head, therefore, these two groups were drawn in, and

at the showdown, though it was bloodiest in the army, the civilian populations of the two districts were engulfed as well. The same kind of mechanism was at work concerning the person of Amin. His name was not involved in the first and crucial phase of the coup but only came up later on, the explanation being that the chief actors from West Nile, consisting largely of the NCO group, waited until after the outcome was known before proclaiming as leader the individual among them who was most senior and had distinguished himself previously on behalf of West Nile.

The conclusion to be drawn concerning the army's seizure of power, therefore, is that the West Nile group acted out of a sense of common interest resting on an ethnic foundation. At the same time it defined its relations with the other two groups embraced under the term Nilotics in the same ethnic categories. The showdown and the seizure of power are to be seen, therefore, as falling within the already familiar pattern of Ugandan society, of which the army, far from standing aloof, forms an integral part. The centre of power is still in the north but has now moved to a new and more narrowly-defined group. The fact that the army has taken over the political centre has not brought any rupture of the pattern hitherto prevailing, as the following discussion of the Amin régime will show.

#### 10. THE ARMY IN POWER: THE AMIN RÉGIME

Verdicts on the Amin régime have generally tended to ignore these ethnic factors in the power takeover. Instead, the personality and entire behaviour of President Amin are deemed to be the conclusive factor, not least because of the deviations from a commonly accepted system of norms for which Amin has become notorious.

It is doubtful, however, whether an analysis starting from these premises will get very far. In the first place, it is evident from what has already been said that Amin and his régime are to be regarded as a continuation of the prior evolution of Ugandan society and notably of the importance of the ethnic factor over the whole spectrum of development. It will therefore be prudent to begin by considering the Amin régime's policy and actions in the context of the situation it inherited rather than by confining attention solely to the person of Idi Amin. Secondly, it will be necessary even in the case of Amin as with other political figures, to distinguish between his political

actions and his personal behaviour-pattern his style, his manner of expression, his methods and so forth. This pattern is to be judged against the background of his origins rather than in terms of his deviations from normal diplomatic standards. It has to be borne in mind that Amin is not a product of the Western-Christian system of education as the previous civilian power-élite was. Indeed, the seizure of power by Amin and his army signifies a decisive shift away from the dominance of this élite.

Amin's beginnings consist of a youth spent in rural surroundings and a brief acquaintance with the Koran school. Otherwise the major part of his life has been spent within the colonial military system. His mode of expression is decidedly coloured by his continuing rustic affinities and, not least, by what can be called the "officers' mess tone". Spontaneity, absence of ostentation, hard facts without adornment of any kind: these constitute essential elements of the style. Means and methods are conditioned by this, and the end usually seems to justify the means, even when the end does not seem particularly well defined and does not appear to form an element in a definite pattern. There is little room in practice for humanitarian considerations even though humanitarian principles are often extravagantly praised in strongly religious figures of speech.

It is essential, however, to bear in mind that Amin's whole behaviour-pattern does not lack effectiveness on the internal plane. He has contact and knows how to communicate with population groups which his predecessors did not managed to reach. Unquestionably there is a factor here that must be taken into account in evaluating the Amin régime and, especially, its capacity to retain power. The proper place for dealing with it is late on, however, it is not central to the Amin régime's policies and actions. The order of the factors is reversed if anything, and the flamboyant style should not hide the fact that Amin works to a large extent within the system he inherited and that his policy therefore is to be understood by reference to this relationship with the past.

The starting point of any consideration of the Amin régime is therefore to be found in the following problem: the army has now moved in and seized the political centre after an ethnic clash in the army which in its turn was closely related to dissensions both within the previous régime and between that régime and opposition groups. Relations between

the military and the civilian government are accordingly no longer the chief consideration, as indeed is reflected in the fact that the Defence Council now becomes the paramount organ while the cabinet is allotted a secondary role. The army has now become the immediate distributor of values and is directly exposed to the demands of the various groups. In this situation it is crucial that the army now consists of an ostensibly homogeneous but more narrowly-based group than was known earlier. The army as the decisive power-factor is not very representative in its ethnic aspect: this in a country with a high ethnic consciousness. A cardinal problem for any study, therefore, is how the army will handle the ethnic problem: whether despite its narrow base it can act on the national level with the necessary authority and legitimacy and manoeuvre between the conflicting ethnic interests without being blamed for favouring particular groups, and whether it will itself be immune to the ethnic cleavages characterising the rest of society.

The problems presented by the Amin régime will now be approached from this angle, the following two aspects being considered in turn: A) the policy and actions of the régime, B) the basis of the régime.

#### A) Policy and actions of the Amin régime

It is hard to distinguish clearly what are political intentions and programme declarations and what becomes translated into action under the Amin régime. Part of the reason for this is the difficulty of obtaining access to hard information, especially since all the news media are under rigid state control. Moreover, the régime surrounds itself with a cloud of rhetoric and has only one real spokesman, the president himself, who makes up for this by pronouncing almost daily on a wide range of topics, though not with a great deal of consistency or logic.<sup>158</sup> There is a further difficulty in the fact that the true final authority rests with the Defence Council, whose composition and actual decisions are very seldom made known.

The discussion below of the Amin régime's policy and actions is therefore somewhat sketchy. However, two mutually incompatible main trends do reveal themselves in the first two years of the government's existence, and these can be interpreted firstly as pointing to a lack of consistency within the régime and secondly as reflecting the dilemma in which the new régime, like that of Obote, finds itself.

(a) The first main trend can be taken to comprise measures with a centralising tendency intended to strengthen the authority and legitimacy of the régime. The following announcement by Amin shortly after the seizure of power affords some indication of his programme: "We want to build up our country as a single united and strong nation, and not as a federation of petty and powerless tribes that are jealous of one another."<sup>159</sup> This declaration constitutes both a reference to the current situation confronting the régime and a criticism of the Obote régime for conducting its policy on an ethnic basis.

1) Constitutionally, therefore, the Amin régime affirms categorically as one of its first acts that Uganda is to remain a republic, subsequently called "The Second Republic of Uganda", with Amin as president and that there is no question of establishing a federal state. This was something for which Buganda particularly had hoped, as immediately after the takeover Amin had given permission for the late Kabaka to be buried in due ritual form. The ceremony turned out as a spirited manifestation of Ganda solidarity and simultaneously both a celebration of Obote's fall and a vote of confidence in the Amin régime. It is characteristic that Amin made a conciliatory gesture by holding meetings with the former monarchs of the interlacustrine kingdoms, but did not permit the re-establishment of the institution of monarchy, so in effect sticking closely to the Obote policy.<sup>160</sup>

2) The same tendency is repeated in the very sweeping plans for a re-organisation of local administration, announced and initiated in 1972. Firstly the institution of chiefs was confirmed on the local level, but the former incumbents were declared deposed: henceforth, these offices were to be filled by ballot. Elections were held at the beginning of 1973 under the supervision of representatives of the military. As the result in many cases was the reelection of the former chiefs, new elections were ordered, and in the upshot many places found themselves with army privates occupying the posts at the various levels.<sup>16</sup> The objective, quite clearly, was to create a channel of communication between government and people at the grass roots, utilising the traditional institution of chiefs for the purpose. That the aim was not really achieved can be seen from the fact that the ballot method was not compatible with the traditional system for appointing local chiefs so that people abstained from taking part in the ballot procedure. Furthermore the government ended up by installing its own nominees, who stood little chance of being accepted in the role of chief. The



system thus failed to function, bringing echoes of similar errors committed by the colonial power in its day.

Secondly, the entire administrative structure was broken up. Ten new regions were established cutting across the main ethnic groups, and within each region new districts were designated. Many of the new units had high-ranking officers appointed as their top officials. The aim, quite plainly, was to break with the inherited ethnic group-structure by redrawing the boundaries. The parallel with Obote's efforts is plain: only the method is different. Whether Amin's attempt has been any more effective is impossible to ascertain, since it is uncertain to what extent the new structure has come into practical operation.<sup>162</sup>

3) A range of measures, designed to turn the army into an instrument of national integration, was announced in conjunction with these administrative reforms. Three points are to be noted. Firstly, it was proclaimed shortly after the coup that the army was now to be more ethnically representative, and a recruiting campaign was launched in all districts. The object seemingly was to avoid an ethnic concentration of power, as can be perceived not only from the ethnic composition of the cabinet but also in the somewhat unusual step taken by Amin in May 1972 in publicising the ethnic affiliations of all officers.<sup>163</sup> For all that, this facet of the Amin régime's policy has never looked credible, especially considering the way in which the Acholi and Lango problems were simultaneously being tackled along ethnic lines, as will be recounted below.

Secondly, a programme of "mass mobilisation" was launched at the beginning of 1973. Army units were stationed in every village, and courses in "rural development" were arranged for the soldiers. At the same time the military were assigned a controlling function with regard to local administration and in many cases filled the various posts themselves.<sup>164</sup> There is the dual objective here of using the military apparatus to structure the link between centre and periphery (whereas Obote had used the party) and of integrating the military and civil administrations. The integration has turned out to be one between unequal partners, however, as can be seen from the undisguised control and security element which was one of the factors behind the stationing of army units in the rural areas and from the fact that officers deemed to constitute a security risk are often selected for these posts.

Thirdly, Amin by-passed the established structures in his own efforts to assert the authority and popularity of the régime by means of a large number of "meet-the-people" tours around the country. Characteristically, this activity quickly became concentrated upon meetings with the elders, which served two somewhat populist purposes as far as Amin was concerned. Firstly, he was endeavouring to enlarge the régime's base by introducing a traditional authority-pattern into it, and secondly he was establishing contact with centrally-placed groups outside the customary leadership groups in the districts.<sup>165</sup>

4) The question of language policy can also be regarded as an element in the appeal to specific population groups. This long-standing problem was resolved in August 1973, when Swahili was declared the national language while English was to remain the official language for some time ahead.<sup>166</sup> This furnished opportunities for formerly disregarded population groups to assert themselves on the political level while at the same time efforts were being made to attain parallelism between the military language and the national language. Since Luganda too had been a possibility as a national language, the preference accorded to Swahili, of which no group has a monopoly, represented an attempt at ethnic equalisation.

5) Many of the elements mentioned above were reflected centrally in the religious policy of the Amin régime. This is a field in which Amin himself has been specially active, obviously with the dual purpose of neutralising the political effect of religious differences and utilising the structures of the religious denominations to build up loyalty and authority around the régime. Four aspects of religious policy are distinguishable from an inspection of the ten-point declaration, termed Amin's Ten Commandments, presented at a meeting with representatives of the three leading religious denominations in May 1971.<sup>167</sup> The first concern is to separate the two domains of religion and politics and to establish ground-rules for the relations between them. Particular stress is laid on the principle of non-intervention from either side, the objective palpably being in the light of the past to neutralise religion as a factor capable of manifesting itself politically under certain circumstances.

Secondly, it is declared to be the task of the régime to assist in creating unity within the individual religious denominations and especially to prevent contention and division on ethnic grounds. This

is to be seen in context with the intensification, towards the end of the Obote period, of ethnic dissensions both among the Muslim groups and within the Anglican church. In both cases the pattern of the front line was essentially Buganda versus the rest, which is to be explained in part by the fact that after the dissolution of Buganda as a political unit the religious field provided the natural and indeed only outlet through which its identity could be expressed and a measure of independent existence maintained. In the case of the Anglican church Amin opposed the idea of Buganda's being organised as a separate and independent province. Amin established the Supreme Muslim Council as a superior organ to reconcile the two earlier-mentioned Muslim factions and appointed a Chief Kahdi as its head. It was difficult from the standpoint of the state to tolerate ethnic disputes and ethnic concessions in the religious field because of the risk that other sectors might become infected. At the same time it was quite obvious to the Anglican church how large a risk there was of state interference and direction in the event of internal disharmony, and this served in the present instance as an important spur to the church in closing its ranks and acting as a unity.

Thirdly, the Amin régime endeavours to reduce the significance of the vertical division of society engendered by the presence of three religious denominations with different social characteristics and often in competition with one another. Amin therefore aims to create a kind of "ecumenical state" with himself in the role of mediator,<sup>168</sup> so harnessing the religious denominations to the promotion of national integration instead of its opposite. A characteristic manifestation of such a balancing act on Amin's part, typical indeed of his whole style, can be seen in the delegation he selected for the OAU summit conference in Morocco in 1972, the two archbishops and the Muslim Chief Kahdi being the most important members.

Fourthly and finally, Amin endeavours to bolster the legitimacy of his régime by drawing upon the network of loyalty and authority which characterises the individual religious denominations internally and also affords a possible channel of communication even to the most distant regions, for the religious denominations are the only functioning nation-wide organs in existence apart from the military. A tangible manifestation of this "flirtation" is the allotment of sundry valued things to the churches as one element of the state's allocative function.<sup>169</sup> The quid pro quo expected by the régime is the backing of the

religious leaders for its policies and the right to present itself to the people as enjoying such backing. When this support is not forthcoming, however, on an issue as crucial as the expulsion of the Asians over which, on the contrary, criticism is voiced by the churches the régime's whole basis is called into question. The concrete problem that presents itself is whether a military régime such as Amin's can tolerate even the existence of independent groups, let alone opposition from them. The later clashes, especially with the Catholic church show that the regime finds it difficult to accept a structure outside its own tight control.

6) With regard to economic policy, it is difficult to discover any overall design because in this field the gulf between words and actions is somewhat wide. It is characteristic, however, that in practice there is no rupture with the Obote period. Thus the nationalisation policy is maintained apart from certain modifications of the state's percentage share. The same continuity also underlies the much-discussed expulsion of about 50,000 Asians in August 1972. Obote had made a start on the solution of this problem, even if his methods were less drastic. Amin's sudden action effectively served to camouflage difficulties in other directions and achieved great success in capitalising upon xenophobic prejudice against the Asians and especially upon resentment of their dominant economic position.

However, the expulsion of the Asians cannot be reduced to an action designed exclusively to mobilise support for the régime. Two more fundamental implications can be read into it. The first is that this action is the genesis of, and an element in, what can be called the ideology of the régime, or at any rate its long-term strategy. This is formulated under the slogans of "the war of economic liberation" and "the economic war", and the goal is to gather the whole of the economy into Ugandan hands. Accordingly the considerably property and resources of the Asians are taken over first of all, and then in 1973 the drive for liberation touches the former colonial power as well, inasmuch as a number of British firms are seized. This ideology of "the economic war" has been hammered home since then in speeches and through the news media, with varying groups cast in the role of enemy; quite clearly, it is being exploited as a means of creating unity and a closing of ranks behind the régime.<sup>170</sup>

The second effect of the expulsion of the Asians, and of "the economic

war" as a whole, is a substantial enlargement of the régime's scope for exercising its allocative function because of the resources over which it has secured control. The aim has been to strengthen the centre in relation to the local authorities. However, this has drawn considerable attention to the principles applied in the distribution of valued things. Even the common man now has a yardstick by which to measure whether the régime is living up to its own programme and whether it is able to liberate itself from the ethnic favouritism imputed to the Obote régime.

The answer to this will emerge when the second aspect discernible in the Amin régime's policy during its first two years is examined. The following two characteristics may be cited as epitomising the six points enumerated above: firstly, it is noticeable that the Amin régime senses itself to be in the same situation as Obote and therefore works largely towards the same goals: to strengthen the centre, to buttress the legitimacy of the régime and to break down the ethnic divisions and religious affiliations or at least to neutralise their political significance. It is characteristic, too, that Amin also has recourse to many of the same measures in order to realise his aim. The crucial difference is in the style, in the speed with which matters are carried forward, and in the kind of methods employed.

This brings us to the second characteristic. The military régime seems by its policy to exploit its opportunities and to act more vigorously with regard to the claims of the different groups than did the previous civilian régime. Many of the observations made so far suggest that the military do act as an organ of national integration despite their lack of ethnic representativeness and that they thus do perform the role assigned to them by the organisational theory. This view is countered, however, by the second main trend discernible in the policy and actions of the Amin régime in its first two years.

(b) This second main trend comprises measures designed for particular and partial ends which at the same time serve the general purpose of securing the basis of the régime. What happens in many instances is that the programme introduced under the first main trend in the Amin régime's policy is rendered unworkable and that an atmosphere of mistrust is created. It should be remembered at this point that the Amin régime - like that of Obote - is judged not only by what it does but by how it looks, i.e. by the credibility of the régime's actions and

the population's interpretation of them. This in itself is an important political factor affecting the whole situation and influencing the framework within which the régime has to function. The following three points may be made in this connection:

1) In the course of his numerous travels around the country immediately after the coup Amin made many concessions to various groups. In one district after another he promised roads, schools and sundry improvements in health services. These promises were publicised far and wide, and they generated mistrust and envy among other groups. Moreover they were viewed in the context of Amin's complying in some instances with old ethnic claims by sanctioning the establishment of new districts. Even the limited concessions to Buganda led to the Amin régime's having to combat a widespread belief that the coup was based upon a West Nile-Buganda axis. Thus, it is clear that the actions of the régime, irrespective of their real purpose, are interpreted in terms of the familiar ethnic categories, and this impression is confirmed to the full by Amin's having announced on several occasions that his own home district of West Nile is to have a large airport, a gigantic hotel and a university. Regardless of the fact that nothing has come of these schemes, they are widely construed as a continuation of the already familiar pattern of ethnic favouritism.<sup>171</sup>

2) A number of cases are also recorded shortly after the seizure of power which were interpreted at first as constituting a tendency to favouritism towards the Muslim population group and which actually did assume this character later on, it being difficult, as already noted, to distinguish the two phases from one another. In 1972 Amin reiterated a decision of the Obote period by reaffirming the right of Muslims in certain regions to an independent legal status entitling them to trial in their own courts according to the laws of their religion.<sup>172</sup> This indication of identification between the régime and the Muslim group was further strengthened as Amin began, little by little, to behave as though he were assuming the role of Chief Kahdi. This reduced his scope for acting the part of neutral mediator between all the religious denominations. On the contrary, he became viewed in the role of active agitator for Islam, especially when his participation in numerous Muslim festivals around the nation received extensive media coverage and when there were reports of mass conversions in the army.<sup>173</sup> All this assumed a more concrete shape in the appointments made to various official posts. When the replacement of the chiefs was implemented at

the beginning of 1973, it was the general impression that the régime put in its own co-religionists. This was considered to apply even more to recruitment to and the filling of key positions in the army.<sup>174</sup>

The official imprimatur was set upon this policy, in the opinion of many, by a change of course in foreign policy. After the rift with Israel in March 1973, Amin orientated himself increasingly towards the Arab world, cultivating especially his contacts with Libya and Saudi Arabia. This resulted in concrete economic assistance for the country as a whole but also in large gifts to the Muslim community and participation in the drive for the further propagation of that faith through such measures as the establishment of "cultural centres". The culminating point was Amin's participation in the Islamic summit conference in Pakistan in 1974. This had the effect internally of signalling clearly the régime's religious priorities, especially when Muslims formed about 5-10% of the population compared with a Christian proportion of about 60%.

3) The régime's ethnic and religious inclinations openly converged in the matter of the distribution of the spoils available after the expulsion of the Asians. It was not, as had been expected, primarily the Baganda who moved into business life. The first rank of recipients comprised two groups that gradually became closely knit together: the military and the Nubians. As far as military personnel are concerned, it is characteristic that they were also considered to belong to the West Nile group, which gave rise to the widely-held belief that distribution was conducted on an ethnic basis. As regards the Nubians, they were already represented among the small trader class, but in the distribution situation they were considered to be Muslims first and foremost. Moreover, the Muslim community took over the resources and property formerly used by the Asians for religious purposes, which enhanced its strength and attractive power.

The following elements, deduced from the three points discussed above, may be cited as items in the balance sheet of the Amin régime's first two years in power. Firstly, it is characteristic that all three points have to do with fortifying the position and entire basis of the régime, and that to the latter end use is made of ethnic and religious means. The dilemma is the same as Obote's: that the means used are decidedly at variance with the end they are intended to secure. In Amin's case it merely presents itself in a far more paradoxical form.

Secondly, the military do not form merely the structure and machinery for the distribution of valued things. They themselves constitute the most prominent recipients and so confirm the truth, already familiar, that those who are closest to the seat of power also receive the largest share of the valued things available. A vital factor in this situation is that the army neither is regarded nor acts as an organ isolated from the ethnic and religious divisions of society at large.

There is a link here with a third item in the balance sheet. The dilemma confronting the Amin régime because of the dualism of its policy and actions gradually lost its urgency in the course of the first two years and thus resolved itself. Both an external threat and certain internal factors caused the basis of the régime and its maintenance in power to become the paramount concern, while longer-term political goals scarcely existed any longer. It was a notable expression of this shift that first of all 22 senior civil servants, including several Baganda, were dismissed in mid-1972, and then in February 1973 the whole cabinet was sent off on a long holiday.<sup>175</sup>

This shift made the ethnic and religious basis of the régime, both inside and outside the army, a matter of vital topical concern, and the external factors by their very nature enhanced the significance of these two criteria. First and foremost there was the threat from Tanzania, where Obote had installed himself after the coup. Tanzania had taken a consistently hostile attitude to the Amin régime and had withheld official recognition of it. The tension between the two countries then led to an armed clash on the frontier in August 1971. A factor of even greater importance is that considerable numbers of the Acholi-Lango elements of the Ugandan army fled to Tanzania, where they have been allowed to set up training camps. Thus there has existed a continuous threat of invasion and guerrilla activity from exile groups in Tanzania, in addition to which during the period after the coup there has been a similar threat from Southern Sudan, where an exile group was also allowed to operate. The genuineness of this external threat was demonstrated when Obote's forces launched an unsuccessful invasion of Uganda in September 1972.<sup>176</sup>

The vital factor to be established in this equation is that the threat from Obote has produced strongly ethnic repercussions inside Uganda. The Acholi and Langi are regarded as potential supporters of Obote and as a security risk to the régime for that reason. These two groups have



therefore suffered extremely rough handling from the Amin régime, on both the military and the civil levels, and there is scarcely a family that has not sustained loss. This in turn has created a kind of vicious circle, for insecurity and persecution have caused still more of the Acholi and Langi to flee to Tanzania, which has been interpreted as an ever greater threat to the Amin régime.<sup>177</sup>

Over and above the ethnic dimension, the external threat has assumed further significance in at least three respects. Firstly, the guerrilla threat has had the effect of cementing the régime's ethnic basis in West Nile and reducing the elbow-room for bringing other groups into it because of the very high priority assigned to the security aspect. Secondly, the external threat is an instrument that is always ready to hand when there is need to mobilise the army around the régime. At the same time it serves as a justification for shuffling army units about and cross-posting the officers, which is a very characteristic feature of the Amin régime. So one sees the external threat being trotted out at regular intervals without any justification other than purely internal ones being visible. Thirdly, support for and attempts at guerrilla activity have become a standard explanation for the rising number of arbitrary arrests and subsequent disappearances.

Corresponding with the effect of this external threat there are certain internal factors which give the régime cause to feel anxious about its basis and to regard the behaviour of other groups with suspicion. Two important examples may be cited. First there is some cooling of relations between Buganda and the Amin régime. As already remarked, the expectations of the Baganda in various respects (the monarchy, Asian businesses etc.) are not fulfilled, and they also begin to evince dissatisfaction with the inferior position they still occupy. Amin for his part is sensitive to special claims from the Bugandan side and is uneasy lest the Baganda should try to assert themselves again either on the religious plane or through the remnants of the former DP organisation. A proof of Amin's attitude and a signal to the Baganda came at the end of 1972, when Benedicto Kiwanuka, the president of the High Court and former leader of the DP, suddenly vanished. He could have been a potential leader for Buganda and accordingly was eliminated; the same fate overtook other prominent Baganda later.<sup>178</sup>

The second example, closely related to the first, concerns an institution that is felt to represent a risk to the régime - the Catholic

church, in which Kiwanuka was also a leading layman. As already noted, both churches voiced criticism of the expulsion of the Asians and thereby manifested a degree of independence vis-à-vis the régime. Amin's answer came in the form of mounting criticism of the missionaries in the country, whom he described as a security risk. The Catholic church was a particular target, for it had by far the biggest number of missionaries and loomed much the largest in Amin's eyes because of its highly centralised organisation and the high level of mobilisation of its members, which had been displayed earlier through the DP. The first expulsion of missionaries took place in December 1972, and since then others have been expelled at regular intervals. In addition, many leading figures in the Catholic church have disappeared, and the exposed position of the church has been emphasised by the watch kept by Catholic lay people over the Catholic archbishop's house on various occasions when his life has been believed to be in danger. This indeed suggests that ordinary people too have a sense of disharmony with the régime and base their actions upon it.<sup>179</sup>

Thus, a series of external and internal factors caused the régime by the end of its first two years in power to give top priority to its own security and retention of power, to a degree that makes it determinative of the whole behaviour of the régime. Two observations suggest themselves from this development, the question being left open whether we can see in it the operation of a kind of law in the sense that any régime which come to power by a coup, but especially a military one, will usually end up in this kind of situation. In the first place the issue of legitimacy and of establishing genuine political goals becomes of minor importance, and the régime resorts instead to the increasing use of violent methods through the employment of those very instruments of coercion that a military régime has at its disposal. Secondly, the régime identifies security risks and resistance by means of ethnic and religious criteria, and side by side with this, seeks to establish its primary power-base on the same foundation, which means in practice among the Muslims and the West Nile group.

In such a situation, therefore, with political activity orientated almost exclusively towards the issue of the basis and security of the régime, it is vital to focus attention upon internal developments in the army, since the problem can be presented in the form of the following series of questions: are the military themselves immune to ethnic and religious tensions, or - to formulate it in the terms employed

earlier - are the army's boundaries penetrable, so that the ethnic and religious groupings of society at large influence it even in a situation where the army consists of a more narrowly-composed group than before and now itself occupies the centre with direct access to the valued things? In the affirmative case, is it legitimate to infer that the army's political function is reduced chiefly to acting as an instrument for the retention of power by a specific ethno-religious group? Finally, this raises the question of what significance there is in the fact that the ethnic and religious divisions do not coincide inasmuch as the religious divisions to some extent cut across the ethnic ones.

B) The basis of the Amin régime: internal developments in the army

This problem will be dealt with by considering two features: (a) the composition of the army, and (b) the narrowing of the ethnic and religious basis of the régime.

(a) The composition of the army: the topic can be approached, as before, from the following three angles:

1) Growth and recruiting needs of the army: Table 1 (p. 75 ) shows that in the first two years of the Amin régime the size of the army doubled, which implies new recruitment to the order of about 6,000. Furthermore, it is widely believed that in the course of the next two years the army attained a strength of about 20,000 men.<sup>180</sup> This is difficult to verify, however, and one explanation may be that the enormous volume of new recruitment that took place is being mistaken for true growth. The need for new recruitment has to be viewed particularly in the context of the almost systematic purge of Acholi/Lango elements carried out in the army as a result of Obote's fall. These internal clashes in the army occur in several waves during 1971 and 1972 and can be perceived indirectly via the importance officially attached by the Amin régime at different times to the threat from Tanzania.<sup>181</sup> If the proportion of Acholi and Langi in the army at the time of the coup can be put at about 50% (cf. p.79 above), and if it can be demonstrated that virtually the whole of this contingent disappears either by murder, flight or return home, then there will be something like 3,000 vacancies and probably more, since the internal clashes themselves involve losses too. If the expansion amounting to 6,000 men is added to this, then in reality at least 75% of the presumed 1973 strength of 12,600 were re-

cruited in two years. This furnishes at least a partial explanation of the poor discipline for which the Ugandan army has become notorious.

2) The pattern of recruitment and the ethnic and religious composition of the army: The officially-defined objective of creating an ethnically representative army never became translated into actual recruiting policy. The latter pivots quite distinctly around three groups, and despite assertions to the contrary, recruitment from other regions scarcely amounts to more than isolated individuals. It is not really possible to establish accurately the proportion between these three groups. What is important, however, is to stress the overlapping that occurs and to clarify the mutual relations between the groups.

Men from West Nile constitute the most prominent element, as might be expected. They formed the victorious party immediately after the coup, and their proportion after the first two years of growth was probably between 35% and 50%. Up to now it has made sense to treat West Nile as a single unit, based on the definition of an ethnic group used here, despite the differences of a cultural and religious nature existing within this population group. The emergence of the Nubians as an important source of recruitment, however, involves a palpable differentiation in West Nile, bringing profound consequences in its train.

The Nubians gradually increased under the Amin régime to 25-30% of the army's manpower,<sup>182</sup> a fact that is to be viewed in the context both of the enhanced political role assigned to religion under Amin and of the favoured status granted to the Muslim element of the population. The prominent position of the Nubians in the army may be explained more concretely in terms of Amin's personal background. As already noted, Amin was regarded at the time of the takeover as the leading representative of West Nile in general, but as well as this he is especially considered to be, and does indeed act as, the representative of two other groups that overlap one another in substantial particulars. Firstly, Amin belongs by origin to the Kakwa, the smallest of the four main groups constituting the West Nile district. However, his mother belonged to the largest of the groups, the Lugbara (cf. map), and it is characteristic that very little was heard of the Kakwa before the emergence of Amin, since they were regarded if anything as a sub-group under the Lugbara. Many of them are Muslims, however, unlike the predominantly Catholic Lugbara.

It was just this difference that became of importance when Amin came to power, leading naturally on to the second group of which Amin is the representative, viz., the Nubians. Muslims in West Nile, and especially Kakwa Muslims, are counted as Nubians, and the connection with the army only emphasises this classification further.<sup>183</sup> This has to be seen in the context of the qualitative and quantitative expansion of the Nubian concept under Amin. Firstly, the group has been lifted by Amin out of its former despised position in society and has gained access via the army to the status and valued things from which, in its own view, it has hitherto been excluded. Secondly, Amin stressed the great flexibility of the Nubian concept and the very open boundaries of the group by alluding officially in April 1973 to the fact that people from a large number of ethnic groups were represented among the Nubians, and by emphasising that everyone was free to become a member.<sup>184</sup> No one in Uganda could be in any doubt that the condition for becoming a Nubian was adherence to Islam and that accordingly it was the Muslim group to which appeal was being made. At the same time this was regarded as an official acknowledgement of a strong move to Islamise the army. The Nubian category is the label under which the Muslim group from all over the country and not merely from West Nile figures in the army. The concept is widened so much under Amin that it can be used as a common denominator for the many Muslims recruited into the army as a result of deliberate policy.

This enlarged use of the Nubian concept has created in three respects a differentiation in the army easily capable of establishing a pattern of breakdown into groups and a source of acute tensions and discords. In the first place, within West Nile itself the Kakwa's and Muslims' primary reference group changes to that of Nubians. The ground is thus prepared for a religious and in part ethnic fragmentation of the West Nile group. Secondly, the seeds are sown for a conflict in a wider context between Christians and Muslims in the army, especially having regard to the fact that the Nubians now stand as representatives of the whole Muslim population group. In the third place the Nubians, furthermore, are not a part of the accustomed ethnic pattern. It means that this group can act in given situations without references to an ethnic affiliation and can also be utilised in this way by the holders of power. This creates - at least in theory - the long-run possibility of a break with the previous political pattern, and this is underlined further by the social position of the group. As representatives of a distinct religious group they stand also as representatives of a group

with distinct social characteristics.

This problem will be pursued further below. However, the possibility that the government may be able to act with greater freedom and without regard to ethnic categories, thus helping to promote far-reaching structural changes, is also to be viewed in its relation to the third main group from which recruits are taken, viz., volunteers from Zaire and Southern Sudan. This - somewhat surprising - source of recruitment is to be seen as a consequence of two factors already cited: firstly, the penetrability of national boundaries by virtue of an ethnic community of interest, as has been the case in West Nile especially; and secondly, Amin's support over several years for both the revolutionary movement in what was then the Congo and the independence movement (termed the Anyanya movement) in Southern Sudan. Amin had started recruiting among the Anyanya even before the coup, and the process of recruiting from ethnically-related groups in the neighbouring states accelerated sharply during the army's expansionary phase, which coincided with the conclusion of peace in the Sudan in 1972, so that this proportion reached a level of 20-25%, the bulk being from the Anyanya.<sup>14</sup>

With regard to the standing of this group in the internal pattern in Uganda, it is characteristic that the religious factor seems to be neutralised when the national boundary is crossed. The men from Anyanya fought in the Sudan against Islamisation from the north, and now they support a régime in Uganda which bases itself increasingly upon the Muslim population group and promotes its interests, perhaps to such an extent that the whole of the internal structure is changed. This paradox can be explained by the fact that the Anyanya in Uganda play a mercenary role. They are recruited by and are loyal to the régime in power as long as the contract entered into is respected and the agreed remuneration is paid promptly. They thus form a group that stands outside both the religious and the ethnic dissensions and serves as an instrument for strengthening the existing régime and increasing its freedom of action.

Thus it would seem from its recruitment policy that the Amin régime has its centre of gravity in West Nile, but that the situation contains some built-in conflicts of an ethnic and religious nature inasmuch as Amin comes to stand as a special representative of two closely-related groups, the Kakwa and the Nubians. At the same time there is a

possibility that the Amin régime, by basing itself on forces outside this pattern, can neutralise the significance of the ethnic factor and assist the emergence of a new structure founded upon a social stratification. However, another possible outcome is that the external forces alone enable Amin to retain power on his narrow ethnic and religious base. These two possibilities are further highlighted - and so indeed is the entire problem- by the distribution of various posts in the army and of the resources at the disposal of the régime generally.

3) Distribution of officer posts and resources: this topic has been touched upon already in conjunction with the evaluation of the military régime's actions seen from the outside; it should also be regarded as in large measure a reflection of recruitment policy. There are no real itemised statements showing such distribution, and there is a special difficulty in that we are dealing here with the relationship between the régime's real actions and people's expectations and impressions, the latter, as on earlier occasions, being a politically potent factor, so that the relationship between these two extreme points can assume a self-fulfilling character.

The material available does make clear that the vast majority of the numerous officer posts that became vacant after the showdown with the Acholi and Langi were filled by people from West Nile. A series of swift promotions was made from both the NCO group and the ranks of private soldiers. Some further qualification must be made, however, insofar as there are many indications that it was men from the Kakwa and Nubian groups, and Muslims generally, who got the posts that were most important from the standpoints of strategy and security, supplemented now and then by persons individually recruited from other regions.<sup>186</sup>

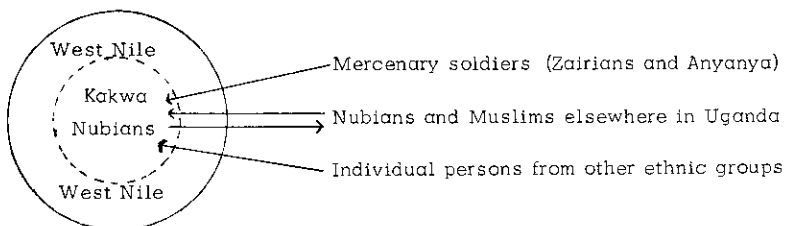
Thus, there was occasion here for tensions to arise within the West Nile group between the Kakwa-Nubian element on the one hand and the Lugbara in particular on the other, the latter forming the largest contingent in terms of numbers. The situation was not improved by Amin's appointing individuals from the Anyanya group to various army units in order to infiltrate them for security reasons. Apart from these more general tendencies it is difficult to elucidate in detail the ethnic and religious composition of the command structure, especially since a practice has developed of frequent cross-postings of personnel, provisional instead of firm appointments, terms of

overseas training and transfers from the military to the civilian sector and vice versa. On top of all this there are Amin's numerous direct appeals over the heads of the officer class to the NCOs and privates.

A similar pattern displayed itself in the distribution of the material values at the disposal of the régime after the expulsion of the Asians and the confiscation of British businesses. Generally speaking the lion's share was distributed among the army's own cadres or via the military apparatus. This meant, firstly, that West Nile as a whole secured great advantages, secondly, that the Nubians were brought into the limelight because of their traditional association with the business sector, and thirdly, that the composition of the officer class especially became of profound importance, since officers had the economic resources enabling them to take over sizeable businesses.<sup>187</sup> Thus there is a clear tendency, because of the particular composition of the military apparatus, for vital elements of the trade and business sector which means activities associated with the urban areas, to be channelled towards the Muslim population group. The net result is that a long-term effect flows from the army's composition and internal relationships of the moment. At the same time it has once again been seen how fluid the boundaries are between the army and the rest of society.

The three points by means of which the question of the army's composition has been illuminated may be summed up by saying that they help to reveal a power-structure underlying the Amin régime that can be described with the aid of the following figure:

Figure 1: The power-structure underlying the Amin régime





The military régime emanates from the West Nile ethnic group (marked by the large circle). Within the latter a smaller group has crystallised, based primarily on religion and consisting of Kakwa and Nubians, who are most numerous at the centre of power (represented by the small circle), thanks especially to Amin's personal position. This centrally placed group has close ties with Nubians and Muslims elsewhere in Uganda, and these are reflected in a two-way relationship: firstly, these Nubians and Muslims lend strength to the Kakwa-Nubian group and constitute a vital source of recruitment to the army, and secondly, they are important recipients of the valued things which the régime is additionally fortified by two other groups falling outside the ethnic pattern (the two remaining arrows). Thus the ethnic basis of the régime is broken, especially by the religious factor, which at the same time makes the army's boundaries penetrable.

(b) The narrowing of the ethnic and religious basis of the régime: analysis of the composition of the army makes it evident that there exist within it different groupings based upon ethnic and religious affiliation. Applying the same two criteria, certain tensions can be demonstrated between the different groups, and these are reflected most palpably in connection with allocation policy. The magnitude and effect of these tensions first show themselves, however, in a number of specific events during the period when the Amin régime is giving increasing priority to security and the mere retention of power. Here as on earlier occasions it is necessary to interpret events through a maze of postings of personnel, demotions, killings and disappearances, while also consulting the barometer constituted by the external threat.

1) The blow fell on the Alur, the second largest group in West Nile, as early as July 1971. First of all Lieutenant-Colonel Ochima, their highest-ranking officer, was imprisoned. He was employed at the time in the important post of secretary to the Defence Council. Next their only cabinet minister was dismissed. Both were accused of having planned a coup, and prominent members of the Acholi and Langi were summoned in the course of the enquiry into it. The latter, taken in conjunction with the timing, which coincided with one of the purges of the Acholi-Lango contingent in the army, shows that the Alur group was suspected of an alliance with the adherents of Obote. This is further confirmed by Ochima's being shot in October 1972, i.e. after Obote's unsuccessful invasion from Tanzania, and by the fact that thereafter all Alur were removed from important posts in the army.<sup>188</sup>

This change in the position of the Alur can be best explained by bringing in the ethnic factor. The Alur, like the Acholi and Langi, fall into the broader Nilotic category, of which they are the sole representatives in West Nile. The reaction of the Amin régime is thus conditioned by certain conceptions of the consequences of this broader community of ethnic interest and ascribes to it a larger significance than the affiliation of the Alur to the West Nile region. A further contributory factor in this is that the other groups in West Nile see the Alur as a dominating element by virtue of their educational and economic advantages.<sup>189</sup> Thus, in a specific situation external ethnic relations coupled with internal inequality trigger off a process which ends with the Alur being removed to a position further than before from the political centre with its valued things. The consequence in a wider sense is an ethnic differentiation within West Nile, so that the Alur are no longer fully covered by the West Nile concept.

2) In the latter half of 1972 the Madi began to be subjected to attack by Amin and others of the régime's notables. The entire Madi group was accused of drunkenness, idleness and other excesses. They were suspected of furnishing aid to guerrilla activity, and their officers were criticised for bad behaviour. After this events followed a well-worn pattern: Madi officers were eliminated one by one from important posts; prominent personages were dismissed, expelled from the country or condemned to death. A remarkable feature of the whole train of events was that Amin summoned the Madi elders to a meeting in order to explain his criticisms in detail, but they retaliated with a warning that there were limits to what they would tolerate.<sup>190</sup>

In the case of the Madi a vital explanation of these strained relations is to be found in the religious factor. The favouritism shown towards the Muslims impelled the Madi to express their dissatisfaction. They interpreted their own insignificant position and influence as being the result of religious discrimination, since the Madi regard themselves to some extent as Christians. At the same time this sense of religious discrimination excited an inchoate awareness of common ethnic interest, causing the Madi to act much more than before as an ethnic group vis-à-vis the other groups in West Nile. The accentuation of religious differences thus helped to activate ethnic consciousness within West Nile, which itself had otherwise functioned as an ethnic group before.

This latter point also throws Amin's meeting with the Madi elders into relief. Amin himself and the Madi in general regard the Madi contingent in the army primarily as representatives of their ethnic group and not as elements of a professional organisation with fixed boundaries. The Madi contingent in the army, and especially its position in the officer corps, is the Madi's link with the political centre and the valued things that come from there. If this mechanism does not function, the entire group is affected. Thus we find here confirmation of our earlier observation to the effect that the members of the army continue to regard the ethnic group as their primary reference group and that the army is utilised as an instrument by the ethnic groups involved.

3) Exactly the same mechanisms came into play with regard to the situation of the Lugbara, and the same conclusions are to be drawn about them. But the relations between the Amin régime and the Lugbara are of a much more portentous character, firstly because the Lugbara are bigger in numbers than the other three West Nile groups combined and secondly because they account for about 20% of the army. It has already been remarked that the modified and expanded use of the Nubian concept and the favouritism towards the Muslims following from it inevitably caused the religious difference between the Lugbara and Amin's group to be invested with crucial significance and the ethnic distinction between the Lugbara and Kakwa to become noticed, which had not been the case before. The result - expressed in terms employed earlier - was that the Lugbara became conscious of their own ethnic and religious boundaries as opposed to the other groups in the West Nile region. This emerges with great clarity from the often dramatic events which unfolded in the years 1972-74.

The tensions were already revealing themselves in March 1972, when the leading Lugbara officer, Obitre-Gama, was suddenly dismissed from the important post of Minister of Internal Affairs, probably because he had achieved too much influence. He was soon brought back into the cabinet, however, though in a less important post. Some months later another prominent Lugbara officer was kidnapped and murdered, and this was followed by so many indications of an attempted coup by the Lugbara that Amin had to hasten home from the OAU summit conference to pour oil on the troubled waters. He also found it necessary to hold meetings with the Lugbara elders, who voiced fears that "their sons" were in danger. They made it clear to Amin at the same time that they were

ready to fight if necessary.<sup>191</sup>

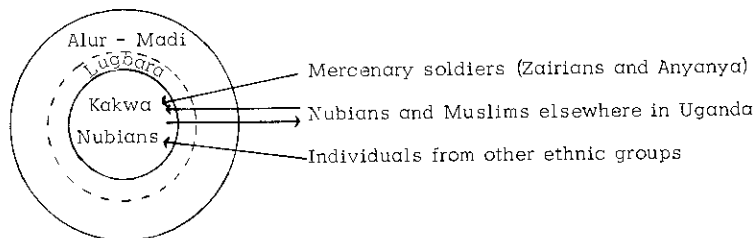
In July 1973, important changes of personnel took place among the top army posts. The three leading Lugbara officers were removed, and Obitre-Gama was finally dismissed from the cabinet at about the same time. This step was taken after reports on three separate occasions of plans for a coup; though these were never set into motion there are intimations that during meetings of the Defence Council the three Lugbara officers demanded Amin's resignation on the ground of the nation's poor economic situation which had even affected army pay and supplies.<sup>192</sup> It can only be regarded as remarkable that the individuals in question seem to have remained alive after their dismissal. Amin later alleged of Obitre-Gama that he was actively engaged in the "economic war" on his farm. On the other hand the events of 1973 show that Amin's base was now solid and secure enough for him to act to remove the Lugbara group from any position of real influence.

However, relations with the Lugbara deteriorated to the point where disorders and bloody clashes broke out in March 1974. One of the moves in the reshuffle of 1973 had been the sending of Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Ondoga to Moscow as ambassador. He was recalled at the end of 1973 and appointed foreign minister, but after a few months in the post he was dismissed; his body was found a few weeks later floating in the Nile. This triggered off violent commotions among the Lugbara, which reached a peak when one of the senior officers, admittedly a Kakwa but also a Christian and therefore closely associated with the Lugbara, was arrested shortly afterwards. The Lugbara soldiers in the capital reacted with riots that developed the character of an attempted coup, but the lack of plan together with Amin's swift handling easily brought the situation under control. A bloody purge of the Lugbara in the army followed. Amin even felt it expedient to signal the changed power relationships by divorcing three of his four wives. Since one was from an important Lugbara family and later died in bestial circumstance without this provoking any noticeable Lugbara reaction, and since a further reduction of the Lugbara's opportunities for influence in the army took place at the end of 1974, it must be regarded as established that the Lugbara were no longer capable in themselves of forming an effective counterweight to the Amin régime.<sup>193</sup> It was the government that had possessed the necessary material and tactical forces during the disturbances, while for their part the Lugbara had lacked the requisite leadership and the support from other groups that might have

enabled them to prevail.

The tensions and confrontations in West Nile thus produced changes in the power structure underlying the Amin régime. The new situation that obtained from 1975 may be illustrated through the medium of certain corrections to the figure on page 112 above:

Figure 2: The power structure underlying the Amin régime after the upheavals in the West Nile region.



Even after the events just described, the Amin régime continued to have its base in the West Nile region, since there were still substantial contingents of Alur, Madi and especially Lugbara in the army, and since no other source of recruitment centring upon a specific part of the country had been developed. The changes consisted of the narrowing of the ethnic and religious basis of the régime and were manifested particularly in appointments to the more influential posts in the army. The position of the Kakwa-Nubian group was decisively strengthened, and the boundary between it and other groups became clearly defined. It was not West Nile as such, but only the Kakwa-Nubian group, that now had a monopoly of the allocative function. Consideration will be given in a later context to the question whether this ethnic and religious narrowing process represented at the same time a breaking away from a previously dominant pattern of political activity and the beginning of a restructuring.

A severe reduction of the significance and status of the other groups took place alongside all this. The shake-up in West Nile caused them to appear now as three distinct ethnic groups with different relations to the political centre, and it is this that has made it possible for Amin to employ the divide-and-rule principle against them. The difference between these three is manifested notably in the fact that the Lugbara, thanks to their numerical strength, continue to be closer to

the centre of power than the other two groups. However, the West Nile shake-up and the entire narrowing process were only made possible by support furnished by the external groups to the Kakwa-Nubian group. They acted as the régime's tools without themselves being involved in the ethnic and religious conflicts in West Nile, and their importance was enhanced in step with the fragmentation of West Nile.

As well as this immediate stocktaking, some more long-term observations need to be made concerning the importance of the ethnic factor with regard to the West Nile shake-up. We may begin by posing the question why the large Lugbara group remains attached to the Amin régime and so chooses to belong to the drastically devalued West Nile group instead of breaking away and allying itself with other forces. The answer to this shows that the familiar ethnic conflicts of Ugandan society continue to be important even during the most recent phase of the Amin régime's development. In the Lugbara's situation, these conflicts have the effect of functional imperative. Firstly, the threat from Tanzania is regarded as a genuine one, which if it materialises will bring Obote i.e. the Nilotics, back into power. Secondly, Buganda is considered to be an alternative holder of power in the event of the Amin régime's fall, which there is no desire to bring about. Therefore the Lugbara are as it were constrained to give preference to the West Nile affiliation because of their past ethnic experiences.<sup>194</sup>

There are two other factors that work in the same direction and which have to be taken into account in assessing the situation of the Lugbara. Firstly, they are compromised and co-responsible in the eyes of the rest of the country for the outrages of the Amin régime, and this may bring reprisals in the event of a change of régime. Secondly, it is through the Amin régime that the Lugbara have emerged for the first time from the neglected and inferior position to which they previously felt themselves to be relegated. Even though they may most recently have been jostled away from the political centre somewhat, this situation is preferable to an uncertain alternative which might well banish them to the outer darkness again. Despite the Lugbara's changed position resulting from the fragmentation of West Nile, the affiliation to the latter region nonetheless is still of real significance viewed in the light of the possible ethnic alternatives.

It is likewise true that the same ethnic mechanisms are functioning outside the West Nile region. Apprehensions concerning the importance

of having a place at the political centre after a change of régime have so far had an inhibiting effect upon cooperation between the opposition groups known to exist. Thus Acholi-Lango cannot unite with Buganda in a joint effort, and there even seem to have been instances of tensions between Acholi and Langi during exile in Tanzania.<sup>195</sup> Therefore assassination attempts upon Amin in the most recent years have been largely the work of individuals or small groups.

Thus, the military régime has not had the effect of nullifying the ethnic mechanisms: they now simply work on a different level from before. What is a new feature, however, is that in step with the narrowing of the régime's ethnic basis they have also begun to operate inside the boundaries of West Nile, which can be characterised as an extension - or correction - of Clifford Geertz's thesis of "the integrative revolution".<sup>196</sup> Geertz infers from the study of his empirical material a general tendency for different traditional groups to transfer their loyalties to larger coalitions in order to strengthen their position relative to other groups in the new national arena. This is exactly what has happened in West Nile, whose origins have been described above, and whose objective has been to proclaim dissatisfaction with the peripheral position assigned to the region and to secure for itself the biggest possible share in the valued things at the disposal of the centre.

However, Geertz did not reckon upon the possibility of a reversal of the process of aggregation such as has occurred in West Nile. When West Nile seized the political centre by the military coup and became at once both subject and object of the allocative function, the new ethnic identity was unable to withstand the strain. Because the régime began to play upon the religious differences in West Nile, exploiting them instrumentally in the distributive process, a sense of identity was generated in the smaller units in a way not previously seen. In this way, starting from mainly cultural criteria West Nile became divided up into a number of minor ethnic groups performing the same functions as are familiar in the rest of Uganda. The fragmentation of West Nile thus does not contradict the definition of ethnic groups employed here. As regards the Geertz hypothesis, however, it is a matter of widening the conditions under which such groups can be formed. Not only the integrative effect but also the divisive effect must be taken into account. West Nile provides an example of a movement from larger to smaller units, a process which can be called the contraction of boundaries.

## 11. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The aim in the foregoing has been, firstly, to use political anthropology in order to make the ethnicity concept and its organisational manifestation, ethnic groups, operational as analytical tools, and secondly, to demonstrate the importance of ethnicity in the political evolution of Uganda and discover especially the extent of the correlation between ethnicity and military rule. The final observations and conclusions arrived at in regard to these matters will be divided into two groups: A) Summary and appraisal of the situation in Uganda after five years of military rule; B) Evaluation of the conceptual apparatus employed.

### A) Appraisal of the situation in Uganda after five years of military rule

Examination of its West Nile power-base has enabled us to establish that the Amin régime still forms part of, and operates within, an ethnic and religious group whose place in the economic and political development of Uganda has hitherto been marginal. There is good reason, therefore, to study in greater depth the question posed earlier, viz., whether the central positioning of the Muslims is preparing the way for a rupture with the familiar ethnic patterns so far prevailing in Uganda. The important point for consideration will be whether the Amin régime can have the long-term effect that another group not resting on an ethnic basis, but defined from religious and social criteria, will seize the economic and political centre. The discussion of these problems will provide an occasion at the same time for taking stock of the other ethnic and religious groups and can most conveniently be arranged in four sections.

a) First of all the military régime will be viewed in its social context by setting forth explicitly certain points already implied in what has gone before. To begin with, the seizure of power by the military entailed severance of the old correlation between a Western and Christian education and political power, as is evident notably in the field of army recruitment.<sup>197</sup> Next, it is the Muslim element of the population which by degrees becomes dominant in the political power apparatus. Both these features manifest themselves in the economic field as well. After the expulsion of the Asians there are openings for new groups to move into the preponderantly urbanised sector which is the habitat of trade. Under the Amin régime, there-



fore, it begins to be possible to identify a social stratum around the small urban centres throughout the country. This group starts to develop common economic interests and is to be distinguished from the vast majority of the population, which consists of small farmers.<sup>198</sup> The distribution policy followed causes this group to reflect in large measure the composition of the army, which means that Nubians and Muslims become heavily represented in this sector. Both these groups, as noted earlier, have a long tradition of association with the urban environment.

In this way a group appears on the scene having close relations with the Amin régime and capable of providing it with a basis that cuts across the ethnic divisions by being definable primarily in socio-economic terms. The emergence of this population group from its former obscurity can in fact be termed an innovation, and a result of the military régime. However, it is still early days, and the group's continued staying-power and capacity for self-assertion are qualities to be assessed in relation to a number of other factors active in the society regardless of how long the Amin régime may survive.

b) The position and expansive potential of this socio-economic group are dependent in large measure upon the country's economic situation, and especially upon high level of internal trade. Uganda's economy, it should be noted, is based principally upon agricultural production and that cotton and coffee constitute the most important export products (80% of total exports). However, the most recent years have witnessed a decline in the quantities exported despite excellent prices, and in the case of cotton this has been so severe that it has not been offset by the substantial price-rises.<sup>199</sup> The resultant drop in income has brought a slowdown of economic activity in its train. This shift of the production pattern is to be explained by the fact that the uncertain conditions prevailing under the Amin régime impel farmers to maximise their security by producing food crops, and so they plant less cotton and uproot their coffee plants.<sup>200</sup> In other words the subsistence sector of the economy has a higher priority than export crops, which brings profound consequences in a number of directions, such as a lack of money for sending children to school.

This development inevitably reduces the activity of the population group mentioned above as associated with urban occupations and so

also reduces the political importance it can attain. The situation must be viewed in fact in the setting of the overall economic crisis that Uganda is experiencing for a variety of reasons - one of the essential ones, however, being quite easily identifiable in the opinion of one of those involved as a general mishandling of the country's economy.<sup>201</sup>

Another possible measure of the role that can be played under the Amin régime by the group in question can be found by viewing the group in relation to the army itself. It has already been observed that army personnel, notably officers, have close ties with the economic sector through their takeover of Asian businesses. They have slipped, so to speak, into the role of economic partners in the development of society, and their dual role may help in breaking down the boundary between the military and the civil sector through the emergence of a common economic interest. This has further caused a hypothesis to be advanced to the effect that in the long run this double role will bring about a change in the character of the régime. Its members will develop a vital interest in economic stability and will therefore be less prone to employ the coercion and violent methods that work in the opposite direction.<sup>202</sup>

The slowdown of economic activity, however, means that the coupling effect to the economic sector and to the entire urbanised group fails to function. Army personnel continue to give first priority to the military role and to regard benefits received through the army's apparatus as their biggest asset. It is a natural consequence of this that a steadily rising proportion of the national budget is devoted to military expenditure, in addition to which the USSR swells the flow of benefits with copious supplies of weapons. Thus, the absence of economic stability and development diminishes in several respects the significance attributable to this urbanised group as a basis of the military régime.

c) Apart from the economic situation, the significance of the group in question and the social change represented by it are also to be judged in relation to its numerical size and potential for growth. Since this population group is defined essentially by its religious affiliation, the religious factor will be of primary importance. The Muslim segment of the population comprises about 6% according to the latest reckoning, but bearing in mind the Islamising policy of recent

years and reports on its results, the current proportion may well be conjectured as nearer 10%. However, further growth will depend upon two conditions being met: firstly, a close correlation between religious conversion and political power, the latter factor being considered the stronger; secondly, that the patronage system implied in this can reach out beyond the urban environment and cross the barrier to the great majority of small farmers.

One well-known writer on Ugandan affairs, Ali Mazrui, has speculated upon the possibility of the military régime being able to provide these conditions and set in motion a most radical change in Ugandan society. Professor Mazrui has put forward the thesis that a kind of "bandwagon effect" will develop as a result of which more than half the population will have turned to Islam by about the end of the century, and that Uganda can thus be reckoned among the Islamic nations.<sup>203</sup>

As well as the economic uncertainty that surrounds this future perspective and so also the fulfilment of the two conditions postulated the position of the two Christian churches must be brought into the calculation, since they account for about 60% of the population. Their situation in the most recent phase of the Amin régime can be illustrated from two angles. First of all, the Catholic and Anglican churches have gradually come to form the only organisations of nationwide scope offering any opportunity of activity outside the direct control of the régime. This state of affairs has revealed itself to be especially important in two respects: firstly, within this structure opinions are being formed independently and channelled to wide circles untrammelled by the heavily controlled official apparatus; secondly, a range of diverse activities and movements take place within the framework of the churches for want of any other outlet, while at the same time the church structure can also provide bridges across old differences in a difficult situation. The episode of Buganda's self-assertion, cited above (p 65 ) has to be viewed in this setting.

This independent and special role is confirmed indeed by the second aspect of the churches' position. The Amin régime has singled out the churches for criticism on numerous occasions, on the ground of their want of loyalty, and it has intervened in their activities and thus focused on the discord between the Christian and Muslim population

groups. The Catholic church has been subjected to particularly fierce attacks, as already noted (p106). Missionaries have been expelled after being accused of being spies and representatives of foreign military powers, and a number of leading Catholics have disappeared. In addition to this, Amin questioned the raison d'être of Protestantism in 1974 and urged Anglicans to return to the Catholic church.<sup>204</sup>

These assaults have evoked not weakness and defections but a strengthening of the Christian churches. The character of the attacks is such that they have a mobilising effect far out in the circle of membership. The churches accordingly become at once the manifestation and the focal point of dissatisfaction with and resistance to the Amin régime, and the sense of common identity thus generated becomes the essential barrier to any further deliberate enlargement of the régime's basis. Amin's exploitation of the religious factor brings about a politicisation of religion going far beyond anything seen in the Obote period, and it is this that furnishes the main argument against assuming a correlation between religious conversion and political power.

This makes it pertinent to ponder a little over the political effect of the position of the churches and, in concrete terms, to wonder whether there will emerge from the churches an alternative to, and indeed some form of direct action to get rid of, the Amin régime. Three factors must be accounted for in any such consideration of the churches' political potential. Firstly, the Christian presence consists not of a single organisation but of two churches with quite wide divergences between them. Secondly, resistance to the Amin régime is defined on religious and humanitarian grounds and not primarily in political categories, and at the same time it arises from defensive motives to a large extent. Thirdly, the scope for action through the church structures is conditioned by their organisational design. The Anglican church has a decentralised structure with units corresponding to the ethnic divisions. The Catholic church contrasts with this by being much more hierarchically organised. Nevertheless it too would have to take account of the strength of ethnic affiliations were it to proceed beyond a defensive posture. The earlier reference to the position of the Lugbara is instructive in this respect. When the situation in West Nile came to a head, the Lugbara acted primarily on an ethnic basis, not from their Catholic

affiliations.

It is therefore to be concluded, though admittedly on slender evidence, that the churches do function in the immediate situation as focal points for dissatisfaction and as centres or refugees in the general uncertainty, but that this does not constitute ground for expecting direct political action. The churches are of course national institutions in Huntington's sense, but their political significance is indirect rather than direct. They help to colour the attitude of substantial population groups to the Amin régime and to establish a body of opinion that stands ready in case of a change of régime, when it may be of crucial importance to a new government searching for legitimacy.

d) In assessing the military régime's scope for breaking an inherited pattern and building up a different structure, interest must be focused especially on the role that can be played by the ethnic groups under greatly modified conditions. It has already been established that except for the special status of West Nile, they could not function under the Amin régime as operative groups in relation to one another and to the centre. The effect of many of the régime's actions, on the other hand, may be merely to bolster the continued existence of the groups. This applies notably to the régime's concern for security, which caused the Baganda, and especially the Acholi and Langi, to be treated again and again as risk groups, thereby strengthening their feeling of a common identity.

This gives occasion for calling attention to a special dimension of ethnicity. It was remarked under b) above that under the prevailing conditions of uncertainty, people in rural areas attach increasing importance to the subsistence economy. This is a reflection of the increasing tendency to seek security from within rather than to depend on relations with the world outside. It is in just this context that ethnic solidarity has a special function. The primary group supplies the security that is needed and serves as a defence against tribulations emanating from outside. In this situation ethnicity no longer functions as a base in the contest with other groups, but it does work out the boundaries within which one can feel reasonably secure.<sup>205</sup> It is a function which ethnicity has always had, but it is now enlarged to become the primary one. It does not imply a break-up of the given structure, and the operative function of ethnicity can very

easily be activated under changed external circumstances.

It is therefore possible to conclude that the military régime in its present version has not effected any real change in the already familiar structure of Uganda. Efforts to make social rather than ethnic stratification the régime's underlying principle have not prospered. Economic, religious and ethnic factors, which the régime itself has done its share in activating, are a decisive obstacle to any change to another tack. The deeply marked religious divisions, particularly, reveal themselves to be a substantial barrier, and now as on previous occasions it is evident that affiliation to the Christian churches does not supplant or obliterate the effect of ethnic affiliation.

The upshot, willy-nilly, is a confirmation of the status quo. The military régime is considered to originate from and be identified with one particular ethnic and religious group, whose interests it is expected to promote in special measure. Even taking the longer-term perspective it is difficult to envisage any other possibility than the continuance of ethnic mechanisms as the decisive factor both inside and outside the army. If as a working hypothesis we assume a change of régime resulting from internal unrest in the army occasioned by failures to honour the promises made or from the success of one of the assassination attempts upon Amin, then we shall find that the power struggle will again run along the ethnic dividing lines. Which constellations or alliances will manifest themselves will depend largely upon the situation at the time.

The effect of the continued importance of ethnicity and the penetration of the boundary between army and society is that there is no basis on which to ask the question whether, if occasion should arise, the military will hand over the centre to civilian authorities and withdraw to their barracks. This approach to the problem has turned out fruitfully in other situations.<sup>206</sup> In the present instance, however, where the institutional autonomy of the military is low, where they serve in large measure as the tool of specific groups, and where the possession and use of the instruments of coercion seems necessary to retain control over the political centre, such a means of loosening the present rigid situation is not realistic.

### B) Evaluation of the conceptual apparatus employed

The concept of ethnicity is used predominantly in a functional sense in the foregoing account, and with this concept as an analytical tool a cross-section of Uganda's political development has been taken in order to shed light on the function and behaviour of the ethnic groups especially. The concept as defined here has shown itself to have a high explanatory value with regard both to the interpretation of the material and to situations where the material has been meagre or difficult of access. It seems to have been proved, moreover, that after the necessary clarification of its conceptual content, ethnicity is very useful analytically, and that it helps to achieve results and conclusions difficult to obtain in any other way.

On the other hand it has to be recognised that the concept is employed somewhat exclusively here inasmuch as it is not weighed in relation to or supplemented by other concepts offering other explanatory possibilities. This constitutes a considerable limitation, but it has been felt necessary because ethnicity itself, even on the conceptual definition applied to it here, is rather a wide concept to employ in an analysis. Some attempts have been made during the exposition to relate the ethnic groups to the course of socio-economic development, and there is little doubt that important additional - and also different - results can be achieved by an approach from the standpoint of for example political economy.<sup>207</sup>

A second limitation of more fundamental character may be cited in addition. It is not possible to deduce a general theory of ethnicity from the foregoing analysis or to construct a scheme of analysis for the study of ethnic phenomena. Some of the problems surrounding the concept have been brought to notice, and some illustrations have been offered of how in a given society the phenomenon can be isolated, described and explained in shifting political circumstances. In regard to the feasibility of generalisation it may be added that an attempt has been made to isolate the main concept through a discussion of the work of political anthropology, but both in the actual fixing of the concept and in the portrayal of the significance of the phenomenon there is a close link with a specific pre-defined field and a specific sequence of historical events. The factor of time and place and the sequence of historical events are included as explanatory factors.

It should be apparent from the foregoing that ethnicity is a persis-

tent theme in Uganda in the period here under review, and that this phenomenon has influenced the political processes to a high degree. It has been the dominant differentiating principle at work in society, and no trace is yet to be discerned of any structures capable of neutralising the effect of ethnic division. The latter possibility was discussed in the last chapter in conjunction with the question whether the military might be able to bring about the emergence of a stratum cutting across the ethnic divisions and constituted from socio-economic criteria. However, the conclusion was that the military régime is itself so integral a component of the existing ethnic pattern that it lacks the striking power to break it.

The ethnic links have been weighed against the religious pluralism that is such a prominent phenomenon in Uganda and which has had political consequences in several directions. A vertical dividing principle manifests itself in the religious structures and this could signify a weakening of the horizontal division constituted by the ethnic groups. It transpires, however, that the religious structures, especially the church organisations, cannot be credited with such importance and capability. The ethnic factor has shown itself to be clearly superior to the religious factor.

The relation between the two factors can be expressed in concrete terms by enlarging upon two aspects of what has just been said. Firstly, it is noticeable that the religious divisions also manifest themselves at the local level and are capable of being accommodated within the ethnic groups. This is particularly evident with regard to the confrontations between the two - religiously-based - political parties mentioned earlier (p 57 ), and most recently it has been seen in West Nile, where a division into ethnic groups has emerged instead of the expected Christian versus Islamic cleavage.

Secondly, a special pattern can be discerned in the relationship between these two factors. In those cases where religious affiliation has revealed itself as the dominant principle and has been utilised as an indicator of political outlook, the explanation is usually that the problems have lain outside the sphere of interest of the ethnic groups, or that the groups' opportunities of expression have been restricted. The difference between the 1961 and 1962 elections (p 58 ) can be explained in these terms, and the same applies to the growing political importance of religion during a part of the



Obote period and most recently under the Amin régime. The relationship can be described by saying that where ethnicity has not been the natural or feasible channel of expression, religion has been used instead - which does not, however, imply any impairment of the significance of ethnic boundaries or undermine the primacy of ethnicity.

One essential objective has been to verify the importance and strength of ethnicity in relation to such an institution as the military, especially since the military are often credited with characteristics that emphasise autonomy and clarity of boundaries. It has been possible to use developments in Uganda as a basis for studying this problem in three situations with different political conditions:

1. In the period from independence to 1966 the army is drawn into the political arena and loses its character of a neutral instrument available to the government in power at any given time;
2. from 1966 the military function as a guarantor and prop of the central political authority;
3. from 1971 the military themselves wield the central authority.

Three mutually related trends are to be found at work in all three of these situations: 1. the ethnic basis of the army is steadily becoming narrower and its representativeness of the nation at large less and less complete; 2. there is a growing symmetry between the army's ethnic composition and that of the political rulers; 3. the army moves steadily closer to the political centre and in the end takes it over completely. These three trends are a manifestation partly of the increasing politicisation of the military and the expansion of their political role, and partly of the fact that the military are so closely linked with the rest of society that they are subject to the same ethnic mechanisms, not liberated from them.

Thus, the military reflect in their composition and function the fundamental divisions and conflicts of society at large. Therefore the army possesses but little institutional autonomy, reflecting the fact that its boundaries are heavily penetrated by ethnic divisions and links. This penetration can be summed up as facilitating a two-way complementary traffic. On the one hand there is an outward flow ascribable to the fact that army personnel feel the ethnic group to be their primary reference group and define their connection with the army in terms of their role as representatives of their groups. Likewise there is a flow in the opposite direction because the ethnic

groups consider the soldiers to be their representatives, who are to look after the interests of the respective groups; they regard the army primarily as a means of access to some of the valued things that are available, not as a professional organisation with special duties to perform.

When the sequence of political events in Uganda since independence is scrutinised and cognisance taken at the same time of the results obtained by correlating ethnicity with social stratification, religious pluralism and the military as an institution, it may be considered an apt description of ethnicity as a political factor in Uganda to say that the political processes take place as a kind of ethnic circular movement. This is to be understood in the sense that people stake their primary loyalty upon the ethnic group, that they manifest and seek to advance their interests on this basis and that they interpret the actions of the political centre with the aid of these categories. This causes the régime itself to apply the same conceptions and to respond accordingly, either to preserve its base or quite simply on security grounds. Even in its attempts to break the hegemony of ethnicity, ethnic means have to be used, and these merely maintain or reinforce the significance of the ethnic boundaries.

It has proved impossible, even under differing forms of government and with varying opportunities of expression for the ethnic groups, to bring this circular movement to an end. Clifford Geertz's idea of "the integrative revolution" has failed to be realised because the two elements required by that hypothesis are not present at the same time: an acceptance of the existence of the ethnic groups as a fact and the establishment of a division of labour between the centre and the groups. Often the objective of the prevailing policy has been simply to terminate the existence or at least to neutralise the political significance of the groups, but the means employed to this end have proved to be inadequate.<sup>208</sup>

When the situation is considered from an institutional standpoint in the Huntington tradition, it is characteristic that institutions sufficiently powerful and sufficiently distant from the ethnic mechanisms to be capable of breaking the ethnic circle have not been created. This applies to the political parties, whether found under a multi-party or a one-party system; it applies to the military; and in the present context the religious institutions can be included too.

Apart from these findings it is not really possible to derive from our analysis a formula capable of bringing to an end the circular movement here under discussion. In very general terms one might refer as a starting point to the functional definition of the ethnicity concept employed here. The implication of the latter is that if the ethnic groups cease to be useful and meaningful tools for those involved, their importance will be substantially diminished. Such a reduction of the potential of the ethnic structures implies in turn an effort to eliminate those causes of the emergence and continued importance of the ethnic groups that have been examined above. This involves in particular there being sufficient resources to offset or diminish that inequality which in many of its aspects helps to accentuate the ethnic boundaries; it also involves there appearing a central authority with sufficient power, legitimacy and credibility to manage its allocative function independently of the ethnic mechanisms. What is both crucial and difficult is that several factors have to operate simultaneously.

However, these observations do more to underline the complications of the problem than to signpost the road to its solution. In many ways this is in conformity with the general uncertainty prevailing among many scholars with regard to the numerous manifestations of ethnic affiliation on record in many different countries, where the phenomenon cannot be explained merely as a legacy from the past but the mechanisms of a modern society are also involved.<sup>209</sup>

## NOTES

1. With regard to ethnicity just a few review articles can be mentioned: Walker Connor, Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying, World Politics, 24, 3, 1972; Andrew C. Janos, Ethnicity, Communism, and Political Change in Eastern Europe, World Politics, 23, 1970-71; cf. also Nathan Glazer & Daniel P. Moynihan (eds.), Ethnicity - Theory and Experience, 1975. - Concerning military rule vide in particular A.R. Zolberg, The Military Decade in Africa, World Politics 25, 2, 1973; Samuel Decalo, Military Coups and Military Regimes in Africa, Journal of Modern African Studies, 11, 1, 1973; C.E. Welch & A.K. Smith, Military Role and Rule, 1974.
2. Among numerous works see especially D. Rotchild & M. Rogin, "Uganda", in Gwendolen M. Carter (ed.), National Unity and Regionalism in Eight African States, 1966, p. 337 sq.
3. Milton A. Obote, The Footsteps of Uganda's Revolution, East Africa Journal, 5, 10, Oct. 1968.
4. G.S.K. Ibingira, The Forging of an African Nation, 1973, p. 284. Ibingira was until 1966 a leading minister in the government and held at the same time the post of secretary general in the ruling party UPC. He was imprisoned 1966-71 and then appointed leader of the Uganda mission to the UN.
5. Cf. Victor A. Olorunsola (ed.), The Politics of Cultural Sub-Nationalism in Africa, 1972.
6. Walker Connor, op.cit., p. 332.
7. See references listed in Walter L. Barrows, Comparative Grass-roots Policy in Africa, World Politics, 26, 2, 1974.
8. These comments on David Apter appear in Alex Weingrod, Political sociology, social anthropology and the study of new nations, British Journal of Sociology, 18, 1967.
9. Cf. Samuel Decalo, op.cit., p. 115.
10. Among representatives of this point of view can be mentioned S.E. Finer, The Man on Horseback, 1962; M. Janowitz, The Military in the Political Development of New Nations, 1964; Lucian Pye, Armies in the Process of Political Modernization, in J.J. Johnson (ed.), The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries, 1962. Cf. also Kenneth W. Grundy, Conflicting Images of the Military, 1968.
11. Thus Ruth First, The Barrel of a Gun, 1970.
12. A.R. Zolberg, The Structure of Political Conflict in the New States of Tropical Africa, American Political Science Review, 62, 75, 1968.
13. Cf. Michael F. Lofchie, The Uganda Coup - Class Action by the Military, Journal of Modern African Studies 10, 1, 1972 (abbr. JMAS).
14. A.R. Zolberg, op.cit., p. 70. The same criticism is expressed, but with a different result in Rich. Sklar, Political Science and National Integration - A Radical Approach, JMAS 5, 1, 1967.

15. See Henry Bienen, *Public Order and the Military in Africa*, in Bienen (ed.), *The Military Intervenes*, 1968, p. 36 sq.
16. Zolberg, *op.cit.*, p. 71, and Zolberg, *Creating Political Order - The Party States of West Africa*, 1966, ch. V.
17. Alex Weingrod, *op.cit.*, p. 123. Weingrod's article deals in particular with the relationship between political science and political anthropology.
18. This point of view has been expressed by Henry Bienen, *What does Political Development Mean in Africa?*, *World Politics* 20, 1, 1967, p. 136.
19. Cf. Joan Vincent, *African Elite - The Big Men of a Small Town*, 1971, p. 268.
20. Several writers characterise the study of local communities as the point of contact between the two disciplines, cf. Joan Vincent, *op.cit.*, p. 1.
21. See P.H. Gulliver, *Introduction*, in Gulliver (ed.), *Tradition and Transition in East Africa - Studies of the Tribal Element in the Modern Era*, 1969.
22. Parts of this dispute appear in Joan Vincent, *Anthropology and Political Development*, in Colin Leys (ed.), *Politics and Change in Developing Countries*, 1969. Joan Vincent developed her theme further in a seminar at The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, May 1974. Cf. also Raymond Apthorpe, *Does Tribalism really matter*, *Transition*, 37, 1968; and Peter Rigby, *The Relevance of the Traditional in Social Change*, East Africa Social Sciences Conference, 1970.
23. David Easton, *Political Anthropology*, in B.J. Siegel (ed.), *Biennial Review of Anthropology*, 1959.
24. Elizabeth Colson, *African Society at the Time of the Scramble*, in L.H. Gann & Peter Duignan (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1961*, vol. I, 1969, p. 28 sqq.
25. Colin Legum, *Tribal Survival in the Modern African Political System*, *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 5, 1-2, 1970.
26. Rich. Sklar, *op.cit.*, p. 7.
27. Pr. in Clifford Geertz (ed.), *Old Societies and New States - The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, 1963.
28. Geertz remains somewhat vague when he describes the process of integration. For a related, but more concrete exposition see Ali A. Mazrui, *Pluralism and National Integration*, pr. as ch. 10 in Leo Kuper & M.G. Smith, *Pluralism in Africa*, 1969.
29. Cf. Joan Vincent, *op.cit.*, p. 52.
30. Sklar, *op.cit.*, p. 6.
31. J.S. La Fontaine, *Tribalism among the Gisu*, in P.H. Gulliver (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 186.

32. This distinction between the objective dimension and the subjective dimension appears in Andrew C. Janors, *op.cit.*, (cf. note 1).
33. Cf. May Edel, *African Tribalism - Some Reflections on Uganda*, *Political Science Quarterly* 80, 3, 1965, p. 371.
34. Elizabeth Colson, *op.cit.*, p. 28. A virtually identical definition appears in Aidan W. Southall, *The Illusion of Tribe*, *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 5, 1-2, 1970, p. 28. Southall adds, though, some socio-economic criterions.
35. This distinction is in particular emphasised by La Fontaine, *op.cit.*, p. 177 sq. With regard to Evans-Pritchard see his "The Nuer", 1940, p. 5.
36. Cf. John Beattie, *Other Cultures - Aims, Methods and Achievements in Social Anthropology*, 1964, p. 142.
37. La Fontaine, *op.cit.*, p. 180 sq.
38. Carl J. Friedrich & Morton Horwitz, *Some Thoughts on the Relation of Political Theory to Anthropology*, *American Political Science Review* 62, 1968.
39. Cf. La Fontaine, *op.cit.*, p. 190, and Joan Vincent, *African Elite*, 1971, p. 262.
40. La Fontaine, *loc.cit.*, and May Edel, *op.cit.*, p. 353.
41. Cf. M. Gluckman in Aidan Southall (ed.), *Social Change in Modern Africa*, 1961, p. 69: "The tradition of anthropology is still "tribalistic", and with it goes a tendency to make the tribe and the tribesman the starting-point of analysis".
42. Southall's expression, cf. note 34.
43. For this point of view see Southall, *The Illusion of Tribe*, p. 46, and Archie Mafeje, *The Ideology of "Tribalism"*, *JMAS* 9, 2, 1971, p. 258.
44. For a similar terminology see Crawford Young, *Politics in the Congo*, 1965, p. 233 sqq.
45. David Easton, *op.cit.*, p. 237.
46. Aidan Southall, *Alur Society - A Study of Processes and Types of Domination*, 1956, ch. IX.
47. Lloyd Fallers, *Political Sociology and the Anthropological Study of African Politics*, *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 4, 1963, p. 321.
48. John Beattie, *op.cit.*, p. 143, and Aidan Southall, *A Critique of the Typology of States and Political Systems, in Political Systems and the Distribution of Power*, A.S.A. Monographs 2, 1965.
49. Cf. Fallers, *op.cit.*, p. 318.
50. Cf. Donald L. Horowitz, *Three Dimensions of Ethnic Politics*, *World Politics* 23, 1970-71, p. 232 sqq.

51. A similar distinction seems to be employed by Göran Hydén, *Politik och samhälle i Afrika*, 1969, p. 81.
52. Fallers, *op.cit.*, p. 329 (my italics).
53. Lloyd Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy - A Century of Political Evolution among the Basoga of Uganda*, 1965, p. 242.
54. Raymond Apthorpe, *Political Change, Centralization and Role Differentiation*, *Civilizations* 10, 1960.
55. Peter Rigby, *op.cit.* (see note 22).
56. David Apter has presented his point of view most systematically in the first three chapters in his "Politics of Modernization", 1965. Ch. 3, *The Analysis of Tradition*, is with few exceptions identical with his article "The Role of Traditionalism in the Political Modernization of Ghana and Uganda", *World Politics*, 13, 1958.
57. Thus expressed by Georges Balandier, *Political Anthropology*, 1970, p. 171.
58. Cf. the criticism from Joan Vincent, *Anthropology and Political Development*, p. 45 sq. (see note 22).
59. Martin Southwold, *Leadership, Authority and the Village Community*, in L.A. Fallers, *The King's Men*, 1964, cf. Alex Weingrod, *op.cit.*, p. 124 sq.
60. Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, p. 243, cf. also Southall, *Alur Society*, ch. XI.
61. Southall, *The Illusion of Tribe*, p. 29; cf. Joan Vincent, *op.cit.*
62. M.J. Swartz, Victor Turner, A. Tuden, *Political Anthropology*, 1966, the Introduction.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 30, and M.C. Smith, *History and Social Anthropology*, *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute* 92, 1962.
64. For such an approach compare Abner Cohen, *Urban Ethnicity*, *A.S.A. Monographs* 12, 1974, the introduction.
65. This newer approach is presented in the Introduction to Swartz, Turner & Tuden, *op.cit.*, and it has later been the subject for discussion in a special issue of *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 3, 1, 1969.
66. Fr. Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, 1969, the Introduction. For an employment of Barth's ideas two recent examples can be mentioned: Carol Eastman, *Ethnicity and the Social Scientist*, *African Studies Review* 18, 1, 1975, and W. Arens, *The Waswahili: The Social History of an Ethnic Group*, *Africa* 45, 4, 1975.
67. David Parkin in Abner Cohen, *op.cit.*, p. 119. With regard to the process of politicisation see also Robert Bates, *Ethnicity in Contemporary Africa*, *Eastern African Studies* XIV, Syracuse 1973.

68. Cf. Donald L. Harowitz, *op.cit.* (note 50).
- 68 a) For a brief description of the arena concept in political anthropology see Marc J. Swartz, *Processual and Structural Approaches in Political Anthropology: A Commentary*, *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 3, 1, 1969.
69. This section and the following ones are based upon material collected in Uganda by myself over a span of years, and upon results presented by other scholars (references will appear below). The archives used are mainly the following: 1) The Chief Secretary's archive (kept by the colonial government) in Entebbe Secretariat Archive (abbr. E.S.A.); 2) Archives in various district headquarters; 3) Church of Uganda Archive partly placed at Namirembe, the headquarters of the Church, partly deposited in Makerere University Library.
70. Various files in E.S.A. contain lists of chiefs' religious adherence and the accompanying minutes tell how conscious the colonial officials were of the religious factor in cases of appointments. Cf. also the lists of chiefs in the chapters on Uganda in Audrey Richards (ed.) *East African Chiefs*, 1960.
71. The local administrative system has been described in Fred. G. Burke, *Local Government and Politics in Uganda*, 1964, and in Joan Vincent, *African Elite*, especially p. 47 sqq.
72. Cf. Joan Vincent, *op.cit.*, and Vincent, *Visibility and Vulnerability: The Politics of Pacemakers*, *Africa* 44, 3, 1974.
73. This emerges clearly from Fred. G. Burke's survey.
74. Even scholars with a very different approach agree on emphasising the importance of the colonial period, thus Martin Staniland, *The Rhetoric of Centre-Peripheri Relations*, *JMAS* 8, 4, 1970, and Okwudiba Nnoli, *Socio-Economic Insecurity and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, *The African Review* 4, 1, 1974.
75. Rotchild & Rogin, *op.cit.*, p. 347 (see note 2), and Report of the Uganda Constitutional Conference, 1961, Cmd. 1523, London.
76. Colin Leys, *Politicians and Policies*, 1967, p. 10.
77. Nelson Kasfir, *Cultural Sub-Nationalism in Uganda*, in Victor Olorunsola, *op.cit.*, p. 75. (see note 5). The development in the various districts was reported in the daily newspaper Uganda Argus for the years 1963-65.
78. A very useful case study touching on the problem of Buganda versus the rest of the country appears in Michael Twaddle, 'Tribalism' in Eastern Uganda, in P.H. Gulliver, *op.cit.* (see note 21).
79. The issue at stake in the controversy was simply whether a wooden cross should be placed on the altar in the Cathedral or not; material in Church Missionary Society Archives, London (G 3. A7, 1919-21) and in the archives of the Church of Uganda (cf. note 69).
80. Characteristically a number of new dioceses have been inaugurated in the period since independence meeting the wishes of the local people; in almost all cases the new bishops have been elected in their capacity as local people, i.e. they are born in the area and speak the actual language, and the boundaries of the new dioceses



run along ethnic lines. Buganda's plans to secede from the Church of Uganda appear from various official and unofficial pamphlets and from a number of meetings in the late 1960's and the beginning of the 1970's. President Amin dealt with the problem during his meetings with the religious societies in 1971-72. Cf. also my interviews with some of the main actors in 1972.

81. A large material on the language problem in Uganda since 1900 is preserved in the archives of the Church of Uganda, in E.S.A. and in the records of the Colonial Office, Public Record Office, London.
82. This point has been admirably presented by Elizabeth Colson, *Contemporary Tribes and the Development of Nationalism*, in June Helms (ed.) *Essays on the Problem of Tribe*, 1968.
83. Mentioned by Twaddle, *op.cit.*, and by Kasfir, *op.cit.*
84. Emphasised by Martin Staniland, *op.cit.*, following the tradition of F.G. Bailey.
85. May Edel, *op.cit.* (note 33); Nnoli, *op.cit.*, p. 9 sqq.
86. Crawford Young, *op.cit.*, p. 234 (see note 44).
87. Twaddle, *op.cit.*, p. 203, and Kasfir, *op.cit.*, p. 94 sqq.
88. Thus phrased by Lloyd Fallers, *Political Sociology ...* (see note 47) p. 329.
89. Twaddle, *op.cit.*, p. 201 sq., for the quotation.
90. Figures are given by Kasfir, *op.cit.*, p. 119 sqq.
91. Figures from Fred. G. Burke, *op.cit.*, p. 23 sqq.
92. The problem of economic inequality and its cumulative tendency have not been a central theme in the various works on Uganda. It may be derived from C.C. Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth in Uganda*, 1959, p. 67 sqq., and from Cyril Ehrlich, *the Uganda Economy, 1903-1945*, in V. Harlow & E.M. Chilver, *History of East Africa*, vol. II, 1965. For the problem in general see Martin Staniland, *op.cit.*, p. 623 sq.
93. Colin Leys, *op.cit.*, p. 104.
94. A useful review of these various studies appears in Kasfir, *op.cit.*
95. Twaddle, *op.cit.*, p. 202, and Kasfir, *op.cit.*, p. 86.
96. The most thorough investigation of the origin of political parties may be found in D.A. Low, *Political Parties in Uganda 1949-1962*, 1962. Later works rooted in a local situation are Colin Leys, *op.cit.*, and Cherry Gertzel, *Party and Locality in Northern Uganda, 1945-62*, 1974.
97. Rotchild & Rogin, *op.cit.*, p. 356 sq., and 379 sqq.
98. Colin Leys, *op.cit.*, p. 104.

99. Milton Obote, *The Footsteps of Uganda's Revolution* (see note 3).
100. A suggestion made by Archie Mafeje, *op.cit.* (see note 43).
101. This point has been made by Garth Glentworth & Ian Hancock, *Obote and Amin: Change and Continuity in Modern Uganda Politics*, *African Affairs*, 72, no. 288, 1973, and by Aidan Southall, *General Amin and the Coup*, *JMAS* 13, 1, 1975, p. 95.
102. Roger Scott, *Trade Unions and Ethnicity in Uganda*, *Mawazo* 1, 3, 1968; cf. also R.D. Grillo, *African Railwaymen*, 1973.
103. This is brought out in the chapters on Uganda in Kenneth Prewitt (ed.), *Education and Political Values - An East African Case Study*, 1971.
104. Cf. David Jacobsen, *Stratification and Nationalism in Uganda*, *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 6, 1971.
105. Quotation from Rotchild & Rogin, *op.cit.*, p. 418.
106. This aspect has been particularly emphasised by Ali A. Mazrui, *Religious Strangers in Uganda: From Emin Pasha to Amin Dada*, *Conference Paper*, Jos, Nigeria, Sept. 1975.
107. The relationship between the districts and the centre appears for instance in Cherry Gertzel, *Leadership and Institution Building in Uganda*, *USSC Conference*, Makerere University 1971, p. 8 sqq.
108. The referendum and the subsequent crisis in Buganda have been dealt with in Ian Hancock, *The Buganda Crisis 1964*, *African Affairs* 69, no 275, 1970.
109. For a contemporary analysis of the crisis in 1966 see Crawford Young, *The Obote Revolution*, *African Report* 11, 6, 1966.
110. The bitterness in the relations between Obote and Buganda is discernible both in the former's article quoted above (see note 99) and in the exiled Kabaka's autobiography, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, London 1967.
111. Kenneth Prewitt, *op.cit.*, p. 123.
112. Cf. Nelson Kasfir, *op.cit.*, p. 117 sqq., and S.D. Ryan, *Uganda: A Balance Sheet of the Revolution*, *Mawazo* 3, 1, 1971, p. 49 sq.
113. See the figures given by Kasfir, *op.cit.*, p. 119 sqq., and Obote's self-defence in his pamphlet, *Myths and Realities - Letter to a London Friend*, Kampala 1968 and 1970.
114. It was in the middle of the 1960's generally acknowledged at Makerere University that the process of Africanisation deliberately was delayed in order to avoid that Baganda should fill most of the leading posts. When a leading politician, Abu Mayanja, who was very critical towards Obote, publicly voiced the same opinion with regard to the judiciary he was soon after imprisoned without any appearance in court; cf. the magazine *Transition* no 37, 1969.
115. A.M. Obote, *The Common Man's Charter*, Entebbe 1970. The programme is taken under review in Glentworth & Hancock, *op.cit.*

116. A thorough review of the Common Man's Charter and of the efforts to make it known in the public and not least an evaluation of its disseminating capacity may be found in Tertit Aasland, *On the Move-to-the-Left in Uganda 1969-1971*, research report no 26, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala 1974.
117. This can be seen from the coverage in *Uganda Argus* from October 1970. Cf. Also the booklet "Constitution of the Uganda People's Congress," Kampala 1968.
118. Michael Twaddle, *The Amin Coup*, *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* 10, July 1972, p. 102.
119. D.L. Cohen & J.L. Parson, *The Uganda People's Congress Branch and Constituency Elections of 1970*, *Journal of Commonwealth Political studies* 11, 1, 1973.
120. Cherry Gertzel, *op.cit.*, p. 17.
121. The new electoral system has been thoroughly reviewed by S. Ryan, *Electoral Engineering in Uganda*, *Mawazo* 2, 4, 1970.
122. Amin was sent to Egypt and Mecca, and on his return it was apparently planned to assassinate him. The plan misfired, and he was instead for a period placed under house-arrest. This may explain why the customary celebration of independence day on 9 October 1970 suddenly was cancelled. It may further explain peculiar circumstances surrounding Amin's presence at the graduation ceremony on the university about the same time. Personal communication from October 1970.
123. Cf. Robert Bates, *op.cit.* (see note 67), p. 53.
124. Ruth First, *Uganda: the latest coup d'etat in Africa*, *The World Today*, March 1971.
125. Michael Lofchie, *The Uganda Coup - Class Action by the Military*, *JMAS* 10, 1, 1972.
126. This way of presenting the problem is indebted to Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 1968, and especially to the discussion of Huntington's concepts in Henry Bienen, *Military and Society in East Africa*, *Comparative Politics* 6, 4, 1974.
127. A more thorough examination of the problem connected with civil-military relations appears in A.R. Luckham, *A Comparative Typology of Civil-Military Relations, Government and Opposition* 6, 1971. The problems especially related to ethnicity and military rule have only been examined to a very limited extent. It is only within the last years that articles dealing with this aspect have started to appear, e.g. Cynthia H. Enloe, *Ethnicity and the Myth of the Military*, *Ufahamu* 4, 2, 1973, and Ali A. Mazrui, *Soldiers as Traditionalizers: Military Rule and the Re-Africanization of Africa*, *World Politics* 28, 2, 1976.
128. Table 1 has been made on the basis of the following information: Charles S. Stevenson, *African Armed Forces*, *Military Review* 47, 3, 1967; J.M. Lee, *African Armies and Civil Order*, *The Institute for Strategic Studies*, London, 1969; Rich. Booth, *The Armed Forces of African States*, *Adelphi Papers* 67, *The Institute for*

- Strategic Studies, 1970; The Military Balance 1973-74, IISS Publication, 1973.
129. Kasfir, op.cit., p. 97 sqq.; Martin Doornbos, Kumanyana and Rwenzururu: Two Responses to Ethnic Inequality, in Rotberg & Mazrui (eds.), Protest and Power in Black Africa, 1970.
  130. Cf. Mazrui, Soldiers as Traditionalizers, p. 258 sqq.
  131. Kenneth Prewitt, op.cit., p. 183 sq.; A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinyewa, A.M. Obote, The Baganda, and the Uganda Army, Mawazo 3, 3, 1971, p. 38; Ali A. Mazrui, Cultural Engineering and Nation-Building in East Africa, 1972, p. 173 sqq.
  132. This suggestion has especially been put forward by Ali A. Mazrui in his paper "The De-Indianisation of Uganda", Makerere University, Sept. 1972 (mimeo) and in "Soldiers as Traditionalizers", p. 253.
  133. Edward Shils, The Military in the Political Development of New States, in J.J. Johnson (ed.), The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries, 1962.
  134. Table 2 has been constructed on the basis of a similar table taken from Kasfir, op.cit., p. 80 sqq., and by drawing on information compiled in J.E. Goldthorpe & F.B. Wilson, Tribal Maps of East Africa, 1960.
  135. This figure is mentioned by Mazrui, Soldiers as Traditionalizers, p. 260 sq.
  136. Material on the Nubians may be found in Public Record Office, London, especially under C.O. 536/182 - file 23593/1934 and C.O. 536/205 - file 40006/25/1940. Two published works have recently appeared dealing with the position of the Nubians: Dennis Pain, The Nubians: Their Perceived Stratification System and Its Relation to the Asian Issue, in Michael Twaddle (ed.), Expulsion of a Minority: Essays on Ugandan Asians, 1975; and Aidan Southall, General Amin and the Coup, JMAS 13, 1, 1975.
  137. Southall, op.cit., p. 103.
  138. John Middleton, Some Effects of Colonial Rule among the Lugbara, in Victor Turner (ed.), Colonialism in Africa, vol. III, 1971, p. 44 sq.
  139. About the mutiny in January 1964 see in particular Africa Report 11, 9, 1966: The Uganda Army: Nexus of Power, and Henry Bienen, Public Order and the Military in Africa, in Bienen (ed.), The Military Intervenes, 1968.
  140. Lofchie, op.cit., p. 22 sq.
  141. Cf. Africa Report 11, 9, 1966.
  142. Robert M. Price, A Theoretical Approach to Military Rule in New States: reference group theory and the Ghanaian case, World Politics 23, 3, 1971.
  143. J.M. Lee, op.cit., p. 108, and Africa Report 11, 9, 1966.

144. Lee, *op.cit.*, p. 74 sqq.
145. This paragraph is based on personal communications mainly from 1964-65. Cf. also the retrospective remarks by one of the main actors, the Kabaka of Buganda, in his autobiography, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 1967, p. 179, and the comments from Henry Bienen, *op.cit.*, p. 45 and 63.
146. Parliamentary debates from October-November 1964, cf. reports in *Uganda Argus* from the same period.
147. Cf. A.M. Obote, *Myths and Realities*, 1970, p. 21 sqq. With regard to Ibingira see note 4.
148. Discussion in Parliament 13 January 1966, reported in *Africa Report* 11, 3, 1966, p. 22. Information about the plans of staging a coup is based upon personal communications, cf. also accounts of the trial at the Military Court, carefully reported in *Uganda Argus* December-January 1965-1966.
149. Cf. Luckham, *op.cit.*, p. 19.
150. Thus Mazrui, *Cultural Engineering...*, p. 178, and directly stated in the 18-point declaration issued after the military take-over, see note 157.
151. Ruth First, *op.cit.*, p. 134; Ali A. Mazrui, *Is the Nile Valley emerging as a new political system?*, USSC Conference, Makerere University 1971. Cf. also David Martin, *General Amin*, 1974, where a letter from Obote regarding the Sudanese problem is quoted (p. 71 sq.).
152. Among others expressed by Gingyera-Pinyowa, *op.cit.*, p. 42, and by Southall, *op.cit.*, p. 99.
153. The Okoya-case has been taken up by Mazrui, *Nile Valley ...*, p. 28 sq., and by David Martin, *op.cit.*, p. 93 sqq.
154. The account of the circumstances around the coup is based upon personal communications from October 1970 and upon a variety of reports in *Uganda Argus* from the period. A general reference shall be made to the analysis in Michael Twaddle, *The Amin Coup*, *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* 10, July 1972.
155. Akiiki B. Mujaju, *The Political Crisis of Church Institutions in Uganda*, *African Affairs* 75, no. 298, 1976, p. 77 sq.
156. For instance in Colin Legum (ed.), *Africa Contemporary Record - Annual Survey and Documents (1970-71, 1971)*, B 187-190 (in the following abbr. ACR).
157. First published in *The Uganda Gazette* 5 Febr 1971.
158. The daily newspaper *Uganda Argus* was nationalised in November 1972 and its name was changed to *Voice of Uganda*. Almost every day it brings long reports of Amin's many off-the-cuff speeches and other statements from the President's office, and it presents, then, a good source to government policy and decisions.
159. *The Uganda Gazette* 26 Febr. 1971, p. 79.

160. The Uganda Gazette, loc.cit. A useful review of the Amin régime's first two year in power can be found in F.J. Ravenhill, Military Rule in Uganda: The Politics of Survival, African Studies Review 17, 1, 1974.
161. Ravenhill, op.cit., p. 239; ACR 1973-74, p. B 291. Cf. also Voice of Uganda from April 1973 when courses for the newly elected chiefs are mentioned.
162. Cf. D.A. Low, Uganda Unhinged, International Affairs 49, 2, 1973, p. 223 sq.
163. See the weekly paper The People 18 Febr. 1971 and Uganda Argus 10 May 1972, cf. also Ravenhill, op.cit., p. 242.
164. The Times 8 and 27 Febr. 1973, cf. ACR 1973-74, p. B 290 sqq.
165. Numerous references in Uganda Argus for 1971.
166. ACR 1973-74, p. B 307.
167. Printed in ACR 1971-72, p. C 241 sq.
168. Expressed by Ali Mazrui, Religious Strangers in Uganda, p. 18 sq. (cf. note 106).
169. D.A. Low, op.cit., p. 226 sq.
170. Cf. the enumeration of the régime's results after two years in power in Voice of Uganda, 27 Jan. 1973 (Independence Day).
171. The Times 22 Febr. 1973; Jeffrey T. Strate, Post-Military Coup Strategy in Uganda: Amin's Early Attempts to Consolidate Political Support, Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1973, p. 36 sqq.; Ali A. Mazrui, Ethnic Stratification and the Military-Agrarian Complex: The Uganda Case, USSC Conference, Dar es Salaam, 1973, p. 4 sq.
172. Dennis Pain, op.cit., p. 183.
173. Cf. ACR 1972-73, p. B 282.
174. Personal communication from August 1974, cf. the review of the state of affairs in The Observer 23 Sept 1973.
175. ACR 1973-74, p. B 291; D.A. Low, op.cit., p. 220.
176. This invasion coincided with the expulsion of the Asians and received wide coverage in the international press. A detailed account may be found in David Martin, General Amin, 1974, p. 170 sqq. As a comment to David Martin's book it should be added that although he has collected a vast source material it seems at places rather disparate, and the way he makes use of it is not always convincing.
177. Personal communication obtained in Acholi July-August 1972.
178. Personal communication from August 1972 and from January 1974, cf. ACR 1971-72, p. B 232.
179. Personal communication from August 1974; The Observer 31 Dec. 1972; ACR 1972-73, p. B 282.

180. Glentworth & Hancock, op.cit., p. 253; The Observer 31 March 1974.
181. Information about the purge of the Acholi and Langi has been difficult to get hold of. When two Americans, a political scientist and a journalist, attempted to verify the rumours about a massacre at the Mbarara Barracks they were killed, cf. "Commission of Inquiry into the Missing Americans Messrs. Stroh and Siedle", dat. March 1972. With regard to internal clashes in the army personal communications have been obtained in 1972 and 1974; see also "Inside Amin's Uganda: More Africans Murdered", Munger Africana Library Notes, March 1973, and Ravenhill, op.cit., p. 240 sqq., plus various articles in The Observer during 1971 and 1972.
182. Cf. ACR 1972-73 and 1973-74 (the sections on Uganda).
183. See page 79 above and Southall, op.cit., p. 87 sqq. (cf. note 136).
184. "Nubians are unique tribe, says General": headline in a report of a speech made by President Amin on the occasion of a Nubian football match, carried on the front page of Voice of Uganda 23 April 1973 and followed by a leading article in the same issue. Cf. also Dennis Pain, op.cit., p. 184 sq.
185. ACR 1972-73, p. B 273.
186. ACR 1972-73, p. B 272 sq., cf. "Inside Amin's Uganda..." passim and Ravenhill, op.cit., p. 240 sqq.
187. ACR 1973-74, p. B 295. Voice of Uganda from 20 April 1973 brings a report of a speech delivered by President Amin to officers and privates of the Malire Mechanised Regiment. Besides toughing upon a number of characteristic themes he also requests that those officers, who have got many businesses to look after, better retire from the army. He further alludes to senior officers who go around in Kampala closing factories in order later to take possession of them.
188. Africa Confidential 13, 13, 1972; ACR 1971-72, p. B 230, and 1972-73, p. B 272.
189. A.W. Southall, Alur Society, 1953, p. 345.
190. ACR 1972-73, p. B 273, and 1973-74, p. B 295, 299; cf. The Observer 4 Febr. 1973.
191. Africa Confidential 13, 13, 1972; ACR 1972-73, p. B 272.
192. ACR 1973-74, p. B 295 sq.; The Observer 8 July 1973.
193. For the crisis around the Lugbara see the Guardian 26 March 1974; The Observer 31 March and 17 November 1974; ACR 1974-75, p. B. 304 sqq.
194. Personal communication from 1975.
195. Cf. David Martin, op.cit., p. 189 sq.
196. Cf. Geertz, op.cit., p. 153 sqq.

197. This point has especially been discussed by Ali A. Mazrui, *The Lumpen Proletariat and the Lumpen Militariat: African Soldiers as a New Political Class*, seminar paper, Makerere University, August 1972, later published in *Political Studies* 21, 1, 1973.
198. Cf. Michael Twaddle, *Order and disorder in Uganda*, *The World Today*, Oct. 1973, p. 452 sq., and Dennis Pain, *op.cit.*, p. 190 sq.
199. Cf. the economic surveys in ACR for the years 1971-75. In 1967 coffee and cotton constituted 77% of total exports and in 1973 about 84%, see 1969 *Statistical Abstract*, Government Printer, Entebbe, p. 22, and ACR 1973-74, p. B 317.
200. Confirmed by personal communication January and August 1974.
201. Interview with Uganda's Minister of Finance over three years, Emmanuel Wakhweya, who defected in January 1975, in the *Observer* 19 January 1975.
202. Mazrui, *op.cit.*
203. Ali A. Mazrui, *Religious Strangers in Uganda*, 1975, p. 19 sq. (see note 106).
204. Mujaju, *op.cit.*, p. 75 (see note 155), and ACR 1974-75, p. B 316.
205. A similar aspect has been touched upon in P.H. Gulliver (ed.), *Tradition and Transition in East Africa*, 1969, p. 32 and 35.
206. Cf. Claude E. Welch, *The Dilemma of Military Withdrawal from Politics*, *African Studies Review* 17, 1, 1974.
207. One recent example from Uganda appears in Mahmood Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 1976. He analyses the development in Uganda from colonial times until the present day by applying the concepts of class formation and class oppression.
208. An illustrative example of a concrete attempt to implement Geertz's thesis may be found in Charles F. Keyes, *Buddhism and National Integration in Thailand*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1971.
209. Cf. the Introduction in Nathan Glazer & Daniel P. Moynihan, *Ethnicity - Theory and Experience*, 1975.