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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Giriama Rising, 1914:

Focus for Political Development in the

Kenya Hinterland, 1850-1963

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in History

by

Cynthia Brantley Smith

The dissertation of Cynthia Brantley Smith is approved, and
it is acceptable in quality for publication on microfilm.

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DEDICATION

to Rae and Blake
who sacrificed and cared

to DRS
who persistently gave constructive criticism

and to Professor Michael Hall
advisor at the University of Texas
who told this author she would
never get a Ph.D. because
she was a woman

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Giriama Rising, 1913-1914;

Focus for the History of Political Development

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in History

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This dissertation seeks to examine the development of Giriama society during a period of transition after the mid-nineteenth century and to examine the Giriama rising of 1913-1914 as a microcosm of Giriama politics - one embodying the difficulties and complexities emerging within Giriama society during the initial years of British colonial rule in what is now the modern Republic of Kenya.

The Giriama are an anomaly among the Kenya peoples. After living for at least a century inside a forest clearing (kaya) where they were organized through loosely-structured-councils of elders of a designated generation, they developed an extremely diffuse political system after the mid-nineteenth century. The Giriama regard themselves as a peaceful people, who fought only defensively; yet they are best remembered for their participation in wars - particularly for their role in the 1914 rising. Although they were among the first people to be exposed to Islam and Christianity, they chose, for the most part, to

accept neither. During the last century, the Giriama were forced to make many adaptations to life as they formerly knew it in their forest clearing. They have, however, attempted to maintain their political and cultural independence in the face of colonial and national administrative demands, becoming regarded as a people unwilling to change.

Field research, conducted in 1970-1971, included archival sources as well as extensive oral interviewing among the Giriama. Contrary to casual interpretations of the rising as being one in which the Giriama were deceived by a woman through the power of witchcraft, the research demonstrated that the Giriama action had mass support and that the fighting was conducted without strong leadership. The war itself, fought in the opening weeks of the first World War, was not solely a part of that wider conflict. On the contrary, the wider conflict provided the Giriama with hope for British weakness. The Giriama did not all share the same reasons for participating. Some wanted to retain their land, others were refusing war service, and still others were showing strong disapproval of those Giriama who had been co-opted into British service. The division of Giriama into several geographical units which experienced different administrative heritages from the British also has a parallel in the organization and intensity of the fighting and the subsequent participation in colonial administration.

Despite these differences, the Giriama shared a strong spirit for independence which was fed by the availability of land and thus the opportunity to move away from untenable circumstances at a time when most Africans had to choose the labour market for such freedom. It was also fed by the economic self-sufficiency they gained through maize

production and through trade.

Despite their losing the war, the Giriama ultimately benefited from the internal inconsistency of British administrative policy: pressure for labourers without the mechanisms or authority to secure them. The Giriama were able to retain their land, they never provided the labour support demanded of them, and they maintained considerable political independence throughout the colonial period.

INTRODUCTION

When the research on which this dissertation is based was begun there were five main aims, derived from the same number of assumptions.

First, it was assumed that a study of the Giriama could make a contribution of the historiography of African resistance to the imposition of colonial rule. Despite the lack of aggressive fighting traditions and of a centralized political organization, the Giriama were said to have launched a 'full-scale revolt' against the British in 1914. How the Giriama were able to stage such a revolt and why they chose to do so needed to be discovered.

Secondly, a study of the Giriama could allow for the opportunity to make use of an insight first expressed by Jacob Ajayi. Ajayi has stressed that too much emphasis has been given to the disruptive forces of colonialism at the expense of recognizing the continuity of African institutions, but he has further argued that the study of the process of adaptation is a still more useful approach.¹ Despite the alleged 'backwardness' and conservatism of the Giriama, it seemed that the idea of adaptation would prove valuable for understanding their history.

Thirdly, previous accounts of the Giriama rising appeared to be inadequate in their sympathies. These accounts have come exclusively from British reports and the memoirs of colonial officers. During the

colonial period no historian studied the affair because no British lives were lost and little property was damaged. One task of modern African history should be to review events in terms of the impact on Africans as well as on the colonial government. What was of lasting import to the British because of its small cost to them was of considerable and obvious import to the Griama, given the high price they paid. To move beyond studying those events in African history which Europeans interpreted to be most noteworthy it would be necessary to look at problems from the perspectives of the Africans who participated in them. This meant extensive oral research among the Griama would be crucial.

Fourthly, since existing accounts of the Griama were, apparently, not only inadequate in their sympathies but also misleading in their accounts of Griama history and political structures, and since British interpretations of the Griama political system differed considerably from the interpretations of the Griama themselves, the historical study would remain distorted until the Griama view was recovered.

Finally, since the rising had been a moment of supreme crisis for the Griama, it could reveal in a condensed way the difficulties and complexities which had developed among the Griama prior to and during early colonial rule. The intention was to work back from a study of the rising to an understanding of these difficulties and complexities.

These questions are discussed in the following chapters. As the discussion proceeds it will readily be seen that some assumptions,

turned out to be more valid than others. The idea of adaptation did indeed turn out to be the key to understanding Giriama history. Despite the constant assertion that they have 'no sense of history,'² the Giriama demonstrated amazing richness of knowledge and keenness of interest. Their oral testimony compels far-ranging modifications of previous ideas of Giriama history. On the other hand, the Giriama rising itself turned out to be an event of profound ambiguity and not at all a straight-forward case of 'primary resistance.' The rising remains at the center of this study but in a rather different way than was first anticipated.

These initial aims and the final conclusions between them shape the structure of the dissertation. The work was begun by posing some of the obvious questions about the rising. What was its relationship to earlier attempts by the Giriama to frustrate British policy? What was the nature of its leadership? British accounts suggested that the rising had been led by a woman, Mekatalili, who was variously described as a 'witch' or a 'prophetess,' and who was assisted by a male 'helper,' Wanje wa Mwadorikola. Had Mekatalili really led the rising? If so, what was the source of her legitimacy in a society where women had little political authority? Had she used religious belief to bind the Giriama to a single goal and as a means to execute their plans? Did the Giriama even have precise plans?

Another set of questions concerned the cause of the rising. Why did it happen when it did? Could the British war with Germany, which was just beginning in East Africa, have been the major influence which sparked this rising, as some British accounts have suggested?

And what did the Giriama themselves mean when they said that they fought over the rape of a woman, or the killing of a chicken? And why had the Giriama been the only ones of the Mijikenda peoples to fight, given the similar traditions and lifestyles of their neighbours?

These questions could not be answered without a general view of the situation in which the Giriama found themselves and the ways in which they had tried to respond to British demands. Clearly it became necessary to go back to the very beginnings of the contact with the British. Soon it became clear that many events of importance had occurred considerably earlier. It was impossible to understand the Giriama political and social structure at the time of the rising without understanding that it had been changing and developing over a long period of time. To comprehend the dynamics of these changes investigations needed to be pushed back to the mid-nineteenth century, when they first began to take place.

As historical investigations were moved back into the nineteenth century two additional questions came to assume a special significance. It became clear that not only Giriama political and social institutions had been changing but also the Giriama ecological environment. It was obviously important to understand the relationship between social and ecological change. Secondly, it became vital to discover and analyze the history of the Giriama encounters with their various neighbours in order to review the patterns of contact and interaction. This involved probing the history of the Galla, with whom the Giriama had the most extensive contact, of the Kwavi (Masai), of the Kamba of the interior, the Mazrui and Swahili on the coast, and

of the other Mijikenda.

Just as research was led in this way back into the nineteenth century, so this dissertation has to begin with introductory chapters which set the nineteenth century background. So the first chapter includes not only an introduction to the Giriama, but also to their environment, which changed in size and kind over the period in question. In addition, because of the impact of the Galla on the peoples of the hinterland, the chapter also includes an account of the history of the Galla and of their changing relationships with the Giriama. It has proved difficult to combine all this necessary introductory material smoothly in one chapter but at least it can be claimed that very little has previously been known about either ecological change or about Galla history so that, as well as setting the scene for the Giriama, the chapter begins to open investigations on these two broader subjects.

Since the Giriama process of diffusion was well underway by the time the British arrived in 1895, the second chapter is an examination of Giriama social and political structures around the mid-nineteenth century. This provides a base line against which to measure later adaptations.

The third chapter outlines the process of political change, the new conditions confronting the Giriama, their altered relationships with their neighbours, particularly the Galla, and the northwards migration of a large part of the hinterland population.

The early relationships of the Giriama and the British were indirect and were overshadowed by an intense conflict between the British and some of the coastal Mazrui. By forceful persuasion, the

Giriama shifted from giving secondary support to the Mazrui to agreeing to stay out of the conflict altogether. By remaining neutral toward the Mazrui, the Giriama were actually lending their support to the British. Their neutrality held them in good stead until 1912 when the British policy of 'active administration' demanded more from them than ostensible neutrality and moral support. Chapters IV and V deal with the initial encounter with the British, the short period of cooperation, and the advent of active British administration.

All this material was initially conceived as an introduction to what was assumed to be the key event in the Giriama reaction to the British, overshadowing all else - the rising of 1914. But by the time this inquiry into previous Giriama history had been carried out the rising began to look very different. Chapters VI and VII are an account of the two phases of the rising. But they are also an attempt to demonstrate the misleading nature of previous discussions of the rising and to set it in a more accurate perspective. In particular these chapters emphasize the many different levels of Giriama reaction and resistance, of which, it is maintained, the actual fighting was the least important.

Chapter VIII describes the difficulty both sides had in obtaining peace - the absence of authorities who could speak for the people, the lack of an administrative mechanism which was not discredited by both sides, and the British insistence on punishment with conditions which were impossible to meet.

Chapter IX is used to examine the initial, secondary and long-range impact of the rising on both Giriama society and the British

colonial administration. To analyze all this fully would require a full study of its own, so this study has been limited to an exploration of the ironic situation in which the Giriama ultimately achieved their goals despite the fact that the British had won the initial confrontation.

The dominant theme became Giriama adaptation. The Giriama modification and operation of their political system after the loss of elaborate age-sets, institutional rituals, and traditional leaders demonstrated the usefulness of this adaptation.

Finally, in a Conclusion an attempt has been made to resolve the tension between the original assumptions and the realities revealed by research, seeking to arrive at a just estimate of the significance of the Giriama rising and to establish the rhythms of adaptation in the last hundred years of Giriama history.

NOTES

¹J. F. Ade Ajayi, 'The Continuity of African Institutions Under Colonialism' in T. O. Ranger, ed., Emerging Themes in African History (Nairobi, 1968), pp. 189-200.

²This view was even shared by James Kirkman who expressed it to me when I visited him at Fort Jesus in October, 1970.

CHAPTER I

THE ENVIRONMENT, THE PEOPLE, AND THE GIRIAMA PAST

The Environment

The Giriama are the largest group of the nine peoples inhabiting the hinterland of the coast of Kenya between Mombasa and Malindi. The others are the Digo, the Duruma, the Rahai (Rabai), the Rihe (Ribe), the Chonyi, the Kauma, the Kambe, and the Dzihana (Jibana). Their territorial boundaries have undergone many changes - all of which have been integrally related to their history over the last century.

The ecology of this hinterland has crucially affected the political and social development of the people who occupy it. In fact the harsh nature of this area is partly responsible for our sparse historical knowledge of its inhabitants. It has never attracted many visitors. Even Lewis Krapf, who established the first mission station in East Africa near the Giriama at Rabai in 1846, guided European interests deep into the interior to Mt. Kilimanjaro, Ukambani, the Kikuyu highlands, Buganda and the source of the Nile rather than to the bush of the hinterland.¹

The coastal lowlands provide scenic and fertile contrast to the adjacent hinterland. It is to these lowlands that the Arabs came to trade and live and it is here that Swahili society emerged. Mombasa, an island which forms part of the coastline and which is surrounded by

natural harbours, became the most prominent city on the coast. To the north, several creeks and rivers flow into the Indian Ocean, in that area settlements grew at Mtwapa, Takaungu, Kilifi, Gedi, Malindi, and Mamburi. First the Portuguese and the Arabs and later the British fought to establish hegemony over the peoples of the coast and to secure the promising trade from the interior.

The rain that makes the coastal lowlands so productive is much depleted before it reaches the hinterland, making rich agricultural development there impossible. Because of its thickets, thorns, and arid nature, this hinterland is called simply Kiswahili, the Nyika, or bush. The farther northwest one travels, the less water one finds until, finally, the land becomes desert.

For centuries, the coastal peoples called the inhabitants of this hinterland, Nyika, after their environment. These hinterland people resented this derogatory appellation and have recently begun to call themselves the Mijikenda from the Swahili interpretation of the local word, Makayachenda, the Nine Kayas.² This name refers to the forest clearings, usually on hilltops, which are called kayas. There the people fortified themselves against the Orma Galla who were cattle-raiding pastoralists from the north. A ridge twelve miles inland and parallel to the coastline from the Shimba Hills in the south to Kilifi Creek in the north is dotted with the kayas of the Digo, the Duruma (at Mnyenzenai), the Rahai, the Rihe, the Kambe, the Dzihana, the Chonyi and the Kauma, respectively. The Giriama, interested in maintaining their cattle-keeping alongside their bush-fallowing cultivation, chose not to go to the hills where cattle had difficulty grazing.³ Instead, they made a clearing in a dense forest about twenty miles northwest of

Mombasa. At least as early as 1700, all nine of the Mijikenda peoples had established themselves inside their own kaya in this coastal hinterland.⁴

The Mijikenda share cultural, linguistic, and political customs as well as a historical tradition of migration into this hinterland from Singwaya, a site supposedly near Bur Kao in the Somali Republic. This early migration history is a complicated and controversial one, and not all of it is crucial to our inquiry here.⁵ However, one aspect - the impact of the Galla on the history of the peoples of this hinterland - was a major factor in determining the changing patterns of Mijikenda settlement.

The Galla

Much of our information concerning the origin and history of the Galla remains indefinite. Prins' attempt to define these people indicated the difficulty even of identifying them:

The Galla themselves do not form a tribe or nation at all, but rather an ethnic division of remotely related tribes with a more or less uniform culture.⁶

They can meaningfully be divided into five branches: Harar, Northern (Metsha), Shoa, Central (Boran, Arusi, Baratuma) and Southern (Tana). I. M. Lewis and E. Cerulli have argued that the Galla inhabited most of the Horn of Africa around the tenth century until some of the Somali coming from Aden in the twelfth century displaced the Galla, forcing them southward.⁷ However, H. S. Lewis has taken exception to this theory and has placed the origin of the Galla in Southern Ethiopia near Lake Shamo and environs, southeast of Lake Abaya and northwest of

present-day Borana. He based his theory upon the oral traditions of the Galla themselves and the agreement of these traditions with written and linguistic evidence.⁸ Reliable written evidence begins in the sixteenth century.⁹ Currently, H. S. Lewis's revision has received considerable acceptance.

Despite uncertainties about their origin undoubtedly the Galla were living in Southern Ethiopia in the sixteenth century and began attacking Ethiopian states to the north around 1537.¹⁰ By the end of the century, both Baratama and Borana Galla had conquered land as far as five hundred miles from the Lake Shamo region.¹¹ Why the Galla suddenly began this conquest remains in the realm of speculation.

The crucial question for our purpose, however, is the role of the pastoral Southern or Tana Galla who lived in Southern Somalia, Kenya, and, perhaps, Tanzania. Once again we are plagued with sparse historical records. Whereas we have evidence of Somali presence in Southern Somalia in the twelfth and fourteenth centuries from Yakut and Ibn Battuta,¹² the first historical reference which identifies Galla on the coast is dated 1624, when Father Lobo found them at the Jubá River and at Malindi.¹³ The Galla west of the Juba River have been called at various times 'Warde' or 'Warday,' 'Barata,' 'Wajoli,' and 'Oroma.'¹⁴ Their attacks on Arab and Swahili towns from Singwaya in the north to Mtwapa in the south probably began in the late sixteenth century and had forced evacuation of these towns by the mid-seventeenth century.¹⁵

Several suggestions have attempted to account for this aggressive movement by the Galla. It may have been due to their defeat by the Amhara and the Portuguese in the late sixteenth century.¹⁶ It is

also possible that the dessication of the northern part of Africa gradually drove cattle-keepers southward. When they encountered agricultural peoples, the dual population and the dual use of the land posed sufficiently difficulties to cause the friction.¹⁷ In any case, the Galla were remembered by the Arabs, the Swahili and the Bantu of the coast and hinterland as fierce, aggressive, powerful warriors.

Whatever the initial relationship between the Galla and the hinterland people the end result for the latter was flight or destruction. Singwaya, the large settlement considered to be the home of Persian (Shiraz) and Arab settlers, the Bajun, the Mijikenda, some highland Bantu, and perhaps even some Somali and Galla, was attacked in the sixteenth century. Many of the inhabitants migrated southward, some making their way eventually to Mombasa and its hinterland.¹⁸ By the close of the seventeenth century, Singwaya was merely a small settlement inhabited by the Bajun.¹⁹

The destruction of other coastal settlements is attributed to Galla invasions. The Bajoni (Guniah or Watiku), who had lived along the coast from Singwaya to Lamu, fled to Faza on Pate Island as a result of Galla incursions.²⁰ Malindi survived the attacks by the Zimba in 1589 but was abandoned because of the Galla in the first half of the seventeenth century.²¹ James Kirkman's evidence from excavations at Gedi indicated the Galla were probably responsible for its evacuation at the same time.²² Kilifi, which was originally on the southern side of the creek at Mnarani, was occupied from the end of the fourteenth century until some time after 1612.²³ W. F. W. Owen reported the Galla burned 'Killeefy' and 'butchered its unfortunate inhabitants.'²⁴

Thus by the mid-seventeenth century, the Galla had virtually pushed out many of the peoples of the coast and the hinterland as far south as Mtwapa, just north of Mombasa.²⁵ Their influence, however, stretched even farther south. Paulitschke's map of Galla regions showed them penetrating to the Pangani River, and he stated that in the fifteenth century they were driven northwards by the Masai.²⁶ Such an early date may be suspect, but the Galla could have inhabited the hinterland for a long time before coming to the coast, since the coast was less suitable for grazing. C. W. Hobley located the Galla as far south as Pangani, too.²⁷ Krapf was told that the Galla formerly ruled as far south as Tanga and Usambara and that they had virtually possessed a large portion of East Africa.²⁸ A. C. Hollis said they overran the entire region around the Uмба River north of Tanga in the sixteenth century, so again the dates serve to confuse more than to clarify.²⁹

Certainly, though, traditions of coastal and hinterland peoples corroborate the fact that the Galla dominated the territory during most of the seventeenth, and part of the eighteenth, centuries. The ivory exported from the coast was obtained by the Galla, and they may have controlled the trade routes. An indication of their importance in the trade as opposed to their penchant for devastation comes from a Portuguese account of the early eighteenth century. It notes that the Galla had changed their ivory route from Brava to Pate because three Surat boats came to Pate each year.³⁰

At some point, probably during the late eighteenth century, the Galla grew less dominant from the Tana River to Southern Kenya. Again, our external accounts seem contradictory, but it may be that

two activities were taking place simultaneously: Kirkman mentioned the Galla as still aggressive during this time since Vumba (the old Vanga) was destroyed by one of their raids.³¹ The missionary W. E. Taylor wrote that the Galla were slowly withdrawing from the Takaungu and Malindi hinterland in the 1780's.³²

What happened to the Galla in the late eighteenth century?

It appears that, for various reasons, they retreated north and may have declined in population. First, they became involved in conflict with the fighting pastoral Masai to the south and west. Masai encroachment may have been intensified as a result of their own civil war which began in the late eighteenth century. The main group of the Masai (Ilmasai) fought the Wakwavi (Iloikop) throughout the nineteenth century. This latter group, called the Kwavi by the hinterland peoples, are those who raided the region of the Mijikenda.³³

Second, the Galla encountered Kamba to the west and northwest who were challenging their land and cattle holdings. Prior to the eighteenth century, when the Kamba were entirely mobile and pastoral, they raided the Galla for cattle.³⁴ However, during the eighteenth century, they established a mixed sedentary life at Mbooni and at mid-century, they were peacefully settled. By the end of the century, though, portions of the Kamba had developed a pattern of successful hunting expeditions and semi-pastoralism which no longer tied them to the constraints of sedentary life. The interregional trade led by these hunters eventually emerged into the long distance trade with caravans well-protected by accompanying warriors. During this period, particularly from 1790 onward, the Kamba began raiding the Galla again and

developed a new, extremely successful fighting method to oppose the Galla.³⁵

Third, the Galla relationship with their northern neighbours, the Somali, was changing. In the eighteenth century the Southern Somali had moved south as far as the Juba River. One group of these Somali peoples, the Dārūd, had settled at Afmadu in the early nineteenth century. Whereas before, the Galla had clearly been the stronger, now the Somali were achieving a more powerful position, probably due to their increasing numbers in that area. Around 1820, these two peoples developed an allied relationship with the Somali as clients of the Galla. This left the Galla free to concentrate on their conflicts with the Masai and the Kamba.³⁶ Though this alliance was still in effect when Guillain visited the southern Somali coast in 1847, the peace with the Somali was to be only a temporary one.³⁷

Arabs and Swahili, who did not actively challenge the Galla, were nonetheless ready to re-occupy the coast when the Galla pressure eased. Once these people began returning to the coast, they made constant efforts to defend their settlements. Confronted, then, with other people who were actively raiding for cattle and with the situation where they no longer had weapons or war techniques superior to those of their neighbours, the Galla began to lose their control of the coast and its hinterland.

Although the new offensive activities of their neighbours - the Masai, the Kamba and the Somali, especially - were probably the major reason for the Galla's loss of dominance on the coast, several other factors could have contributed to their decline. Hobley suggested the Galla situation to be a case where:

pastoral peoples from the healthy highlands encountered in the south diseases intolerant to their cattle and eventually malaria which took many lives. They could not maintain themselves as well as the Bantu living there.³⁸

The outbreaks of cholera on the coast in 1821 and 1836³⁹ might well have contributed to the Galla's problem, and the fact that the Galla did, indeed, move northward suggests that they preferred that ecological region to the one from which they were moving.

By mid-nineteenth century, then, the Galla were victims of a series of circumstances forcing their steady loss of dominance south of the Sabaki River (Gallana). The further question of the disappearance of the Galla as a political force by the turn of the twentieth century will be dealt with in chapter three.

The Giriama and the Galla to 1850

The Giriama remember traditions of previous good relations with the Galla. In many accounts, they herded cattle alongside the Galla, perhaps near Singwaya.⁴⁰ At least three different accounts are given for causing the changing relationship. The first story centered around a conflict over cattle. A Galla killed a Giriama cow and the Giriama demanded a replacement, which the Galla gave. Later, when a Giriama killed a Galla cow and a replacement was demanded, the Giriama refused. This caused a fight which the Giriama found they could not win, so they took their cattle and moved away to the south.⁴¹ The second story indicated a more unequal relationship between the two peoples. The tradition was that, when a Giriama man married, he did not have the privilege of first intercourse with his wife. Instead, a Galla man came to their marriage house and slept with her first before

leaving her to her new husband. One day, a Giriama man refused to obey this custom of allowing a Galla to sleep with his new wife first. When the Galla came into the house, the Giriama killed him. This brought war upon the Giriama, who fled southward.⁴² Finally a third story told of the Giriama custom of needing to kill a stranger for their ritual of Mun'garo. On one occasion, a Galla was murdered for this purpose, and the Giriama could not hide this information from the dead man's family who came looking for him. A fight was inevitable, and the Giriama fled.⁴³

Although none (or all) of these stories may be true, they are consistent in their picture of the differences in fighting ability. Given a circumstance of conflict, the Giriama were no match for the Galla, so they moved away. Giriama bamboo arrows could not compete with Galla spears, bows, and metal-tipped arrows. When they did fight, it was not in direct confrontation. The Giriama persistently gave accounts of Galla following the Giriama on their southward journey.⁴⁴ The Galla would come at night into Giriama villages and spear through the thatch of Giriama houses, killing people, stealing cattle and then disappearing into the darkness.⁴⁵

For a while, probably-around 1680-1700, the Giriama and some other Mijikenda lived on Mt. Mangea, south of the Sabaki River (Gallana). But the Galla followed them there and forced them farther south. The Giriama moved into small wooded areas of slight ridges where they could find protection. Finally, they developed murikwa, groups of houses plastered with clay. The house was filled with wood which was lit and allowed to burn itself out. This fired the clay to make it extremely hard. These baked walls protected the inhabitants from spears thrust

from outside. The Giriama continued moving southward, establishing murikwa at Kwa Demu, Kinarani, and Mwiyo.⁴⁶ Finally, a group of Alaa (hunters) led them to a large forest and guided them into its center where the Giriama cleared their kaya.⁴⁷ Here, they were well-enough protected that they no longer had to move southward. They first called their kaya, Dzangamizini, the place where one can get lost.⁴⁸ All of the Mijikenda kayas were accessible by only one or two paths, and each entrance was barricaded by three wooden gates. The paths in the forest to Dzangamizini were so winding that an enemy trying to follow them could easily be attacked at several locations by people hidden alongside. Today, the Giriama kaya is called Kaya Giriama or Kaya Fungo - the latter being the name of a famous nineteenth century Giriama warrior.

Since the conflict with the Galla was largely over livestock, most of the Mijikenda of the hill-top kayas became exclusively land-rotation cultivators for a period. Although they lived in their respective kayas, they went out in the daytime to the hillsides to cultivate their shambas (farms), where they grew maize (muhindi), eleusine (wimbi), millet (mawele), beans (kunde), sorghum (mtama), pulses (pojo), and rice (mpunga). All of their homes and their goats and chickens remained inside the kaya. Only the Giriama and the Duruma tried to keep any cattle.

The historical accounts given by the Mijikenda imply that they lived in these hidden, stockaded protective kayas because of the threat of the Galla. This meant that unless the Galla disappeared, or ceased to be threatening, the Mijikenda were likely to retain this life-style as one necessary for survival. By the early nineteenth century, the constant threat of the Galla had lessened⁴⁹ for the Mijikenda. This was

at least one reason why some Mijikenda began living outside their kayas on a permanent basis. After 1850, the Giriama began an extensive migration north.

Giriamaland

As a result of this migration and subsequent expansions, the land occupied by the Mijikenda today is much more extensive than that which immediately surrounded their kayas during the early eighteenth century. Today the Mijikenda have spread south as far as Tanga (Tanzania), north almost to the Tana River, west to the Taru Desert and east, in some places, to the coast. The area now occupied by the Giriama and known as Giriamaland is mostly north of Kaya Giriama. It is shaped rather like a parallelogram, bounded by Mariakani and Kaloleni in the south and the Taru Desert in the west. In the north, the Giriama have moved past the Sabaki River (Gallana) as far as Marafa, Hadu, and Gogoni. Some Giriama have even gone to the valley of the Tana River. The eastern boundary persistently fluctuated as more Giriama are participating in government settlement schemes on the coast.

Giriamaland has both pockets and regions of ecological variations which change from time to time. There are two rainy seasons: the mwaka (long rains) come from March through June; the vuri (short rains) fall sometimes in November and December, if they come at all. Sometime even the mwaka fail. Food production, even in the more fertile regions, has always depended on the rains. The major Giriama grain is maize and they try to produce two crops a year. Droughts plague this hinterland, and without water, the maize dies on the stalk, leaving the Giriama to

face an nzala (hunger, or in severe cases, famine). Since the Giriama are without permanent sources of water, except on the Sabaki River (Gallana), then preparation against an nzala is impossible. Furthermore, almost every decade, the Sabaki River floods, disastrously ruining the crops of the major season and taking much of the richest topsoil into the Indian Ocean.

All soil of the hinterland, however varied, is of marginal fertility. At the time the Giriama began dispersing from the kaya, the amount of available land seemed unlimited. Initially, they practiced what W. H. Allan terms voluntary 'shifting cultivation'.⁴⁹ This meant abandoning a depleted area without feeling it necessary to return to that particular region when the soil became fertile enough to produce another short series of crops. However, within fifty years the Giriama had reached the limits of the available land. The poor quality soil still produced only about three years of crops before it had to be left fallow, making Giriama shifting cultivation 'obligatory'.⁵⁰

The Giriama divide their country into four regions: Weruni, Biryaa, Godoma, and Gallana. Weruni is the southern region around the kaya and the town of Kaloleni. The western portion of this area, where good land once surrounded the kaya, has become unfit for agriculture due to the exhaustion of the soil. Today it is more usable for herding cattle. In 1862, when most of the Giriama were still living in Weruni, Charles New described it as 'worse off than any district'.⁵¹ In 1887 the Rev. W. E. Taylor saw evidence of many previous settlements in this region, but almost no remaining population.⁵²

Today, very little can be cultivated successfully in the immediate area of the kaya. Weruni, in general, cannot support extensive

shambas, except around the Mwabanyundo settlement and Kaloleni. So many of the Giriama had left Weruni by the turn of the nineteenth century that the British in 1913 saw it as a vacant but potentially fertile area. People living north of the Sabaki River (Gallana) were encouraged to return to Weruni. When eventually the Giriama were forced to vacate the trans-Gallana, the action helped to set off the rising against the British in 1914. This action contributed to the rise of the town of Kaloleni. As late as the 1920's, Kaloleni's main economic subsistence came from cattle. Then cocconut trees were planted and, within a decade, the produce from these trees had supplanted cattle as the economic base.⁵³ In the 1930's, oranges and other citrus trees were planted, and in the 1940's, cashews. Kaloleni became the trading center of southern Giriama land. Despite many Giriama attempts to grow the cash crops of fruit and nuts and despite a British administration scheme to grow cotton, none have been successful west of Kaloleni because the land would not support the crops.⁵⁴

Biryaa, the region northwest of Weruni, produces maize and millet, but since it edges on the Taru Desert, water shortage has naturally been acute much of the time. Until a water scheme was developed in the town of Bamba in the late sixties, Biryaa had become land best used for herding cattle.

Godoma region mainly encompasses the basins of the Ndzovuni, Njoro, and Voi/Vitengeni/Rare Rivers, all of which flow into Kilifi Creek. On the face of it this should be an extremely fertile area, but the rivers are either dry much of the time, or else they form brackish pools rendering the water unusable. Again, like that around Kaloleni,

the land improves in the direction of the coast. Where the Rare River flows near Dida and into the Sekoke forest, good maize crops are frequently guaranteed, and at Sekoke itself, cocconut plantations still produce fruit from trees planted around the turn of the century. In both the southern and northern extremes of this region, the Giriama collected gum copal, used for varnishes and polishes, and sold it to Indian merchants.⁵⁵ North of Kilifi, the Arabuko forest separates the coast from the hinterland. In addition to collecting gum copal, the Giriama gathered rubber from the wild rubber trees native to this largely uninhabited area and used it as a medium of exchange.⁵⁶

Only in the last decade have the Giriama occupied the major cocconut-producing areas. In most instances, they moved into the hinterland to settle in small homesteads. However, there is one exception to this. Dida, under the leadership of Mwavua and his son Ngonyo, became a large plantation and village somewhat akin to those established by the Digo half a century earlier. In fact, Mwavuo wa Menza and Ngonyo were originally Digo and came from the Digo area in order to take advantage of the trade at Mtanganyiko entrepot. They became Giriama by joining the Akiza clan.⁵⁷ At some time after 1870 a large 'town' developed as described by Kenneth MacDougall in 1895:

Ngonio's town is beautifully situated on a forest clad ridge surrounded with comparatively light forest, and consisting of about 200 large huts, with his own house built in Arab fashion, in the centre, and about 1200 people - there are about 1,000 cocconut trees in the village, all nicely bearing. The village is remarkably clean in every particular. We saw several Galla and Wasania /Langulo/ present in it.⁵⁸

Therefore, quite early, Dida became a permanent settlement where cocconut and maize were successfully grown through crop rotation.

Ngonyo became an influential Giriama due to his prosperity. He eventually assisted the British in their fight against the Mazrui rebels in 1896.⁵⁹ As a reward, he was granted permission to settle far north of the Gallana River at Marafa, where he developed a second plantation village.⁶⁰ His descendents explain this move as one necessary for expansion.⁶¹

Marafa became one of two major centers in the fourth region, Gallana. This is the basin of the Gallana River, extending from the south at Mt. Mangea, Kakayuni, and Jilore to the northern locations of Hadu, Marafa, and Gogoni. The Gallana River (Sabaki) valley provides fertile land farther inland than at any other place occupied by the Giriama. North of the river, new clearings were made not only by Giriama, but also by the Kauma, the Chonyi, the Dzihana, and the Kambe. The area contained wild rubber and had successfully supported one Swahili rubber plantation. The quantities of pineapple, sim-sim (sesame), bananas, cotton, cashews, mangoes, tobacco, rice, cassava, and millet produced there impressed W. W. A. Fitzgerald when he travelled up the valley in 1891.⁶²

A major center of southern Gallana is Jilore, located on the banks of Lake Jilore, south of the river about twenty miles inland from Malindi. The Church Missionary Society established their mission there in 1890⁶³ and, within a year, three thousand Giriama were reported by Fitzgerald to be living in and around the station.⁶⁴ During the mwaka, the lake would usually be joined with the river, but during the remainder of the year, the flat between the two provided excellent land for growing crops. This river-lake combination made constant cultiva-

tion possible. Gallana has continued to be the most consistently fertile region of all Giriamaland, and today most Giriama inhabit this region of their country.

Kaloleni, Dida, Jilore, and Marafa - all of which support permanent tree crops and grains - are located in exceptionally fertile spots and provide a stark contrast to the areas farther inland. The hinterland is spotted with a few hills and patches of forest, dense sage which sometimes reaches eight feet, thorn trees of acacia and mimosa, and thick cactus clumps. The parched and arid-looking country is so badly watered that the Giriama were forced to dig water holes, or mitsara, the use of which they jealously guarded.⁶⁵ The few open glades often have considerable surface rock, so the Giriama prefer the wooded land. These features of the hinterland constantly change the beauty and utility of the Giriama environment.

When the Giriama began to migrate north from their kaya around 1850, they were, in a sense, returning to familiar territory. In the sixteenth century when they had moved southward from Singwaya, the Giriama had passed through much of the hinterland on their way to the final location of their kaya. Those ancestors who had settled for a while on Mt. Mangea or at Kwa Demu in Godoma or Kibwawani in Weruni told their sons what the land was like and where the richest spots were to be found. However, when the Giriama, moving northward in the 1860's, reached these areas, they noticed that the area was markedly changed from what they anticipated. It was less fertile and the water sources less reliable. They attributed the change in the ecology to the devastation wrought by grazing Galla herds which destroyed much of the vegetation. As a portion of the vegetation disappeared, the rainfall

became less frequent.⁶⁶

Despite its fertility not meeting their expectations, the newly-cleared land's productivity was far superior to that immediately surrounding the kaya. Although the land of Godoma was not as rich as their forefathers had found it to be, the Giriama still produced enough maize and millet during the years after 1880 to provide Takaungu with grain to export on a fairly regular basis.⁶⁷ When the Mazrui had come to Takaungu earlier in the century, they had made the Mijikenda of the hinterland (mostly Kauma, initially) promise to give to the Mazrui family a monopoly of their grain exports. The Giriama settlements there, especially Ngonyo's at Dida, provided a continuing supply. The Giriama developed an increasingly strong trading position. They successfully opposed this Mazrui monopoly demand sometime between 1877 and 1883 when the Mazrui tried to force it. The Giriama hid their wives, families, and herds in the forest and lured the Mazrui into waterless country and subsequently defeated them, killing 250.⁶⁸ The organization and success of such a plan was possible due to two things especially. Angry because some of their members who had gone to Takaungu were captured and taken away into slavery, the Giriama were united in their plan to fight the Mazrui. In addition, Ngonyo was able to influence his people and those of many surrounding homesteads to assist in this effort. Whether or not this fighting plan originated from or was organized by any of the Giriama elders in the kaya remains uncertain, but it has been suggested that this was so.⁶⁹

Trade with Mazrui was resumed after peace was declared, and Ngonyo himself became a trading blood brother of Aziz and Baraka, the Mazrui of Takaungu.⁷⁰ After 1890, the Giriama expanded their grain

trade farther north of supply Malindi and Mamburi. In 1889, Lugard noted an already 'considerable export of grain in native crafts to Persia /and/ Arabia.'⁷¹ By 1906, 6,000 to 10,000 gislas (1 gisla - 60 pounds) of maize were being exported annually from Takaungu and 5,000 - 8,000 from Malindi. Most of it was sent to Mombasa, Lamu, and some to Arabia and Zanzibar.⁷² In the next six years, the Arabs at Mamburi were to declare themselves totally dependent upon Giriama grain for food.⁷³

With the exception of that portion immediately adjacent to the coastal lowlands, the land of the Giriama was insufficiently fertile for an expanding population. The areas of Weruni and Biryaa were the first to be depleted, and then those of Godama and southern Gallana. This may have been due partly to the treatment of the land by the Giriama and partly to an excessive number of droughts which brought famine. In any case, production on land beyond the coastal strip depended more and more on the quality and frequency of the rains. A shamba which produced much one-year might provide almost nothing the following year. The importance of the quality of the soil is reflected in the large number of tree and vegetation names given to places in Giriama land, for certain types of vegetation were indicative of better soil than were others.⁷⁴

Colonial officers were amazed that the rains could be so unreliable for any particular area. F. D. Lugard, between 1889 and 1891, described the enormous cultivated fields which constantly suffered from drought, forcing the people of Fuladoyo who had no food to buy excess from Makongeni.⁷⁵ Rainfall measurements are difficult to obtain for Giriama land, but even Jilore, which is not far from the coast, recorded 43 inches in 1893, 9 inches in 1894 (coming twice in the year) and only

2½ inches in 1895 (all in the month of March).⁷⁶ Giriama today say that the time of their fathers was more prosperous than now, because the rains don't come anymore.⁷⁷

The topography as well as the weather has changed. According to Fitzgerald there were numerous lakes around the drainage of the Sabaki River (Gallana) in 1891.⁷⁸ Only one of these lakes remains today - Jilore. Some years this lake stays virtually dry, although Fitzgerald described it as some miles in length. The lake flat, five or six feet deep in the rainy season then, is now sometimes dry all year. North of the Sabaki River, a chain of swamps used to form the Komori River during the rainy season. South of the river was a marsh lake, Baratumu.⁷⁹ Neither of these remains.

According to the Giriama, when they went to Mangea in the 1880's, the land gave good crops, but after four or five years, they were forced to move away. They speak of the fertility of Weruni and Biryaa which seems to have so quickly disappeared. One of the two subsidiary kayas established by the Giriama was called Jurore, in Biryaa. Today, few people even know of its existence, and those who can identify it say that maize is no longer grown in the surrounding area. The other kaya, Kidzini, between Kaya Giriama and Kaloleni, is also uninhabited and overgrown, but some Giriama have returned to the nearby area to establish shambas additional to those they have elsewhere.⁸⁰

This changing ecology and the uncertainties of the rain imposed a pattern of great mobility on Giriama settlement and agriculture. Most Giriama moved out into small homesteads which were hidden if possible in the nearest woods. They cut long circuitous paths and fenced the homestead with poles and thorns. This allowed the Giriama to

continue living in protected areas, but these were hardly as effective as the kaya had been. When the threat of their enemies, the Galla and the Kwavi, no longer existed, the Giriama continued to build their villages far off the main routes, but they no longer fenced them in.

Lack of rainfall with resulting serious famines, the poor quality of the soil, and the danger from the Kwavi kept the Giriama frequently on the move. Famines were particularly unsettling. Before 1880, the Giriama had experienced the Nzala ya Kingo⁸¹ and Nzala ya Fungayo.⁸² During Kingo, they soaked their sleeping 'skins' for eating, and during Fungayo, they 'tied' their goats to take to market for food. Before the century was out, three serious famines forced much migration. In the early 1880's, Nzala ya Mwakasenge⁸³ marked the period when the first Giriama were said to have arrived as far north as Mt. Mängea.⁸⁴ During the 1890 Nzala ya Mkufu,⁸⁵ the Giriama began to cross the Sabaki River (Gallana) in large numbers⁸⁶ and fought at Mtanganyiko on Kilifi Creek with the Kauma who had maize although the Giriama crops had failed.⁸⁷ Mkufu is named after the women's neck chains which were sold for food. The worst famine of all lasted for three years at the turn of the twentieth century and is remembered as Nzala ya Magunia⁸⁸ named after the 'sacks' in which relief food came from the British. Some of these famines were accompanied by epidemics of cholera and smallpox. With Mkufu in 1890 came the devastating rinderpest. This epidemic virtually ruined the Galla and Kwavi herds and destroyed those which the Giriama were trying to rebuild.⁸⁹ Famines and epidemics forced the Giriama to move more frequently and over wider distances than they might have otherwise. Rather than progressing constantly northward at a regular pace, Giriama migration took place in spurts and was aimed

mainly at the Sabaki River (Gallana) valley.

These factors of poor soils, drought, and natural disasters increased Giriama mobility and also made settlements of smaller homesteads necessary. During Magunia, many starving Giriama went to the coast to steal mangoes, and only at this juncture did some Giriama offer themselves for work - on the railroad. Not until the mid-twentieth century in general and especially in the 1960's did the major population centers of Giriamaland today - Kaloleni, Dida, Sekoke, Jilore, Marafa, and Gogoni - grow in population. Considerable numbers of Giriama live in Kilifi because it is the administrative center and the site of a settlement scheme. The population of Bamba has grown due to a hospital, a secondary school and finally, to a water scheme, situated there.

For the Giriama, then, it is evident that the most fertile land available to them is that of the coastal strip and that of the lower Gallana valley, both of which usually receive rain. Here permanent crops such as cocoanuts, pawpaw, bananas, mangoes, and cotton are grown with increasing enthusiasm and success. Cashews, growing wild when Krapf and New were travelling, were widely cultivated by the 1940's and are today, along with cocoanuts, the basis of the cash-crop economy of the Giriama.⁹⁰

Due to Giriama migration, the question of the rights to land has become complicated during the last century. As the Giriama moved northward and coastward, so coastal plantations expanded inland. Since the Giriama had not cultivated land north of the Sabaki River (Gallana) until 1890, and were regarded as recent inhabitants there, it is possible that an outsider could see their rapid move as a greedy pursuit of land. When the Imperial British East Africa Company was established

in 1888, one of its first efforts was to develop coastal plantations which had deteriorated because of the scarcity of labour after the slave trade was abolished in the 1870's. Fitzgerald was one of their officials especially employed to explore the region and 'report on the agricultural capabilities' of the coast and its hinterland. He was placed in charge of Magarini cocconut plantations, inland from Mambrui north of the Sabaki River. In order to make this plantation or any others succeed, he had to depend on the Mijikenda for labour - a task which he found brought many promises but few workers. In addition, he travelled extensively to determine the suitability of the soils for producing cash crops, and he encouraged the hinterland peoples to grow them. In this, he had some initial success around Jilore.

In 1898, three years after the East African Protectorate was declared, the District Officer, H. C. Hollis, established a government station at Rabai.⁹² From that point on, the Giriama population was usually divided between two British administrative districts, one centered around Mombasa and Rabai in the south and the other variously around Takaungu and Malindi in the north. When the Provincial Commissioner, C. S. Hinde, decided in 1911 to send an assistant District Commissioner to establish a station in the Giriama hinterland, his main purpose was to pull the Giriama into the labour market. In addition, the long-range plans included the opening up of the trans-Gallana land for European cultivation. Therefore, in 1912, Arthur Mortimer Champion set up a station at Mt. Mangea and began enthusiastically collecting a tax which was designed to force the Giriama to work on the plantations.⁹³ The following year all the Mijikenda were told to return south

of the Sabaki River (Gallana). The twin demands for their best land and for their men to work as labourers helped to spark the Giriama Rising of 1914-15. Losing this war, the Giriama were forced to evacuate the trans-Gallana in 1915. Most returned south, but a large number went instead to the Tana River valley. In 1919, by order of the Governor following a land commission report, the Giriama were allowed to return to their lands across the river.⁹⁴ In addition, they continued to cross the boundaries of the 'Nyika Reserve' and the ten-mile coastal strip, as famines and taxes and especially the fine after the war forced them coastward for food.

Throughout the twentieth century, the British administration remained as impermanently based as did the Giriama. After the station at Mt. Mangea failed, subsequent attempts to build a station at Kakoneni on the Sabaki River (Gallana) were thwarted by a change in the river's course and by the debilitation of manpower caused by the frequency of malaria. In the south, the construction of a station at Kinarani ceased because of insufficient water resources. On the coast, even, the British continued to move their stations among Takaungu, Malindi, Kilifi, and Mombasa. The British failed to devise adequate administrative arrangements for the Giriama people primarily because they had in mind their own use for the Giriama and their land. Already accustomed to frequent migrations imposed by the ecology of their homeland and by the vagaries of natural disaster, the Giriama easily adjusted their movements to avoid becoming ensnared by British colonial rule.

During the 1960's, some Giriama have been involved in two additional migrations. Most Giriama from the Tana returned to Gallana during the years of the Somali Shifta rebellion, joining their kinsmen

in their homesteads. Since independence, settlement schemes on coastal lands have brought significant numbers of Giriama into the coastal strip, where they are becoming more permanently settled.

Conducting research among the Giriama is a frustrating procedure precisely because of their highly mobile settlement pattern. But recognition of this phenomenon is basic to understanding Giriama political development since their dispersal from the kaya after 1850. The changing ecology and unpredictable rainfall, interrelated with the famines and epidemics of the nineteenth century imposed this pattern of mobility upon them. And just as the Giriama migration into the Malindi hinterland in the nineteenth century was partly determined by ecological conditions and relationships with their neighbours so have their migrations of the twentieth century been shaped by the ecology and by external political developments.

NOTES

¹J. Lewis Krapf and his co-worker, Johannes Rebmann, were both German Lutherans working for the Church Missionary Society. Rebmann is the first European of whom we have record of going into the interior and the first to see Mt. Kilimanjaro. Krapf saw Mt. Kenya and journeyed northward to the Tana River. Their reports and maps stirred the adventurous and the Royal Geographic Society to look for the source of the Nile River. Krapf, Reports in the Church Missionary Intelligencer, Vols. II-IV (London, 1851-1853). Krapf, Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours, During an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa (London, 1860). Krapf, Church Missionary Society Archives, Documents 166-179, CA 5/0/16.

²The name Mijikenda emerged in the mid-forties when the nine tribes felt the need of a term to identify themselves collectively as a political group. They had been referred to by writers prior to that only by the derisory term WaNyika. Makayachenda has been contracted to be Midzichenda, but the Swahili Mijikenda ('nine cities') is the best known. I shall follow the preference of these people by using the name, Mijikenda, throughout the historical period unless the older form, Nyika, is necessitated by the context of the discussion.

³Giriama Historical Texts (hereafter GHT): Masha Murumwengu (Kizuruni) 8.30.71. The transcripts of these oral interviews conducted by the author are deposited in the History Department Archives, University of Nairobi, Kenya, and are also in the possession of the author.

⁴A Portuguese intelligence report of January 10, 1728, lists twenty-eight kings over which the Portuguese had power the last time they were in Mombasa (1698). Of these twenty-eight kings, fifteen were governed by 'Kaffir kings' and thirteen by 'Moors.' All of the Mijikenda except the Ribe and Dzihana are easily recognizable. (Livro das Monco es # 94-B, folio 618, anon., n.d., enclosed in Viceroy to Crown, Goa, Folio 615r, Historical Archives of India, Panjim, Goa). I am extremely grateful to Professor E. A. Alpers for this reference and for his translation from the Portuguese. Representatives from the Mijikenda groups also accompanied the Mazrui and the Mombasa tribes on a journey to Uman around 1728. The Giriama are easily recognizable once again, and this list of groups on the voyage comes from two sources. The first is Shaykh al-Amin b. 'Ali al-Mazrui (1890-), "Ta'rikh al-Mazurai" (A History of the Mazru'is of Mombasa). I am most grateful to Professor B. B. Martin who called this to my attention and sent me a translation of the pertinent passage, quoting the Arabic original folia. He notes that a xerox of this manuscript is in the possession of G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville. The second source is from W. E. W. Owan's Narrative Voyages, Vol I.

This date of 1698 from the Portuguese intelligence report and the 1728 voyage are two of the few dates which are not based on calculations of chronology from the list of Giriama marika (generations) based on 45 years.

GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71. says the kaya was established during the generations of Mijoga and Kalalake which would

place the Giriama in the hinterland much earlier than previously supposed.

⁵Singwaya (or Shungwaya) has generally been regarded as the origin of the north-eastern Bantu peoples who dispersed from there under the pressure of Galla and Somali expansion around 1600. (Neville Chittick, 'The Coast before the arrival of the Portuguese' in B. A. Ogot and J. A. Kieran, eds., Zamani (Nairobi, 1968) p. 111; Cashmore, 'A Note on the Chronology of the Wanyika of the Kenya Coast,' Tanganyika Notes and Records, Vol. 57 (September, 1961), pp. 167-178; B. G. McIntosh, 'The Eastern Bantu Peoples' in Ogot and Kieran, Zamani, pp. 100-103; A. H. J. Prins, The Coastal Tribes of the Northeast Bantu, Daryll Forde, ed., Ethnographic Survey of Africa: East and Central Africa, Part III, International African Institute (London, 1952), pp. 35-95. It is located at the present day area of Port Bur Gao (the old Port Dunford) in the Somali Republic. McIntosh, 'The Eastern Bantu Peoples,' p. 200, notes that it appeared on old maps by J. H. van Linschoten (1596), William Blaeu (1662), de la Feuille (1700), Ogilby (1700), Rebmann (1850) and Rebmann and Erhardt (1856). V. L. Grottanelli claims to have located the ruined site near Bur Gao where Singwaya once stood. V. L. Grottanelli, 'A Lost African Metropolis' Afrikanistische Studien No. 26 (Berlin, 1955). James Kirkman, the curator of Ft. Jesus, argues that the Mijikenda came from Singwaya, but that they must have been in the Gedi region between 1350/1400 and 1500 as evidenced by a particular fingernail marking on the pottery found there. James S. Kirkman, The Arab City of Gedi: Excavations at the Great Mosque (London, 1954), pp. 74-77; James S. Kirkman, 'Observations on the History of the Giriama' Kilifi Political Record Book, DC/Mal 2/3 Anthropological-Historical, 1913-1949, Kenya National Archives, (hereafter, KNA). Chittick, 'An Archeological Reconnaissance of the Southern Somali Coast,' Azania, Vol. IV (1969), pp. 115-130 does not date the migration but claims the Mijikenda came from the general area. After he conducted an archeological investigation of the Bur Gao area, he failed to find the site which so persuaded Grottanelli. There seems to be little dispute that the Shirazi of Mombasa have traditions of migrating from Singwaya but a Singwaya origin for the northeastern Bantu seems less acceptable to some. Kikuyu and Embu origins from Singwaya have been recently questioned by two authors. J. Forbes-Munro, 'Migrations of the Bantu-Speaking Peoples of the Eastern Kenya Highlands: A Reappraisal' Journal of African History VIII No. 1 (1967), pp. 25-28. S. C. Saberwal, 'Historical Notes on the Embu of Central Kenya' Journal of African History, VIII, No. 1 (1967), pp. 29-38. Another fascinating paper proposes that the Singwaya origin of the Mijikenda was added to their traditions in the late nineteenth century. Roger Frederick Morton, 'The Myth of Shungwaya Origins of Mijikenda: A Problem of Late Nineteenth Century Kenya History,' mimeo. This was kindly sent to me by the author in October, 1971.

⁶A. H. J. Prins, East African Age-Class Systems (Groningen, 1953; Comm., 1970), p.2.

⁷I. M. Lewis, 'The Galla in Northern Somaliland,' Rassegna

di Studi Etiopici, XV (1959), pp. 21-38; I. M. Lewis, 'The Somali Conquest of the Horn of Africa,' Journal of African History I:2 (1960), pp. 213-230; E. Cerulli, Somalia, scritti vari editi ed inediti, 2 vols. (Rome, 1957) as cited in H. S. Lewis, 'The Origins of the Galla and Somali' Journal of African History, VII:1 (1966), p. 27. I. M. Lewis based his research on oral traditions and blood group research of K. L. G. Goldsmith, The Blood Groups of Somali Tribes with special reference to Anthropology, MS (1959).

⁸H. S. Lewis, 'Origins of the Galla' pp. 27-46.

⁹Bahrey, an Ethiopian priest who lived in Gamo region of Lake Abaya which was one of the earliest areas attacked by the Galla, wrote A History of the Galla sometime around 1593. His accounts can be found in E. A. Budge, A History of Ethiopia 2 vols. (London, 1928) and in C. F. Beckingham and G. W. B. Huntingford, Some Records of Ethiopia, 1593-1646 (London, 1954).

¹⁰Bahrey, History (1928) II, p. 603.

¹¹H. S. Lewis, 'Origins of the Galla,' p. 33, fn 9.

¹²Ibid., p. 30.

¹³J. Lobo, A Voyage to Abyssinia, (New York, 1886), p. 24.

¹⁴C. H. Stigand, The Land of Zinj, (London, 1966, 1913), p. 179. Krapf, Travels, p. 115; K. MacDougall, 'Notes on the decline and extermination of the Gallas' 3.31.14, Anthropological-Historical 1913-1949, DC/Mal 2/3, KNA. This source lists five groups: Borana, Kofira, Kokuba, Warchob, and Barareta. Rev. Charles New, Life, Wanderings and Labours in East Africa (London, 1874). He calls them Orma or Ooroma, p. 270. D. A. Low says the Tana Galla lost contact with the main body in Ethiopia. 'The Northern Interior, 1840-1884' in R. Oliver and G. Matthew, eds., History of East Africa, Vol. I (Oxford, 1963), p. 321.

¹⁵James Kirkman, 'The Galla' in Appendix II: Topographical and Historical Notes of Justus Strandes, The Portuguese Period in East Africa (Nairobi, 1968; Berlin, 1899), p. 291.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 291.

¹⁷C. W. Hobley, Kenya from Chartered Company to Crown Colony (London, 1970; London, 1929), p. 177.

¹⁸McIntosh, 'Eastern Bantu,' p. 202. Note 5 to this chapter discusses Singwaya as the origin of various peoples.

¹⁹James Kirkman, 'Shungaya' in Strandes, The Portuguese Period, p. 311.

²⁰W. W. A. Fitzgerald, Travels in British East Africa, Zanzibar, and Pemba (London, 1898), pp. 381-82; James Kirkman, Men and Monuments on the East African Coast (London, 1964); Kirkman, 'Faza' in Strandes, The Portuguese Period, p. 290.

²¹James Kirkman, 'The Great Pillars of Malindi and Mamburi,' Oriental Art IV:2 (1958); Kirkman, Gedi; P. S. Garlake, The Early Islamic Architecture of the East African Coast (Oxford, 1966); Kirkman, 'Malindi' in Strandes, The Portuguese Period, pp. 296-7. Kirkman says Owan described Malindi as deserted, Guillain (1846) found it deserted, and Burton (1856) just mentions it in passing.

²²Kirkman, Gedi; Krapf, 'Forty Mile Journey to Takaungu, 28 June-4 July, 1845' Church Missionary Archives, London, C/A5/0/16, 168. (Hereafter, CMS.)

²³James Kirkman, 'Mnarani of Kilifi' Ars Orientalis, III (1959); Garlake, Islamic Architecture; Kirkman, 'Kilifi' in Strandes, The Portuguese Period, p. 292.

²⁴Owen, Narrative Voyages, I, 402. He describes it as large but abandoned.

²⁵It is indeed possible that the Galla were not solely responsible for the evacuation of the coastal towns, since the inhabitants were constantly at war with various Arab forces and, sometimes each other. However, the oral traditions of these people blame the Galla for final destruction.

²⁶Ph. Paulitschke, 'Die Wanderungen der Oromo oder Galla Ostafrikas' Mittel d. Anthropol. Ges zu Wien (1889) as cited in Gerhard Lindblom, The Akamba in British East Africa (New York, 1969; 1920), pp. 20, 570. Ph. Paulitschke, Harar Forschungsreise nach den Somali und Gallaländern Ost-Afrikas (Leipzig, 1888), as cited in Prins, Age-Class Systems, pp. 5, 128.

²⁷Hobley, Kenya, p. 177.

²⁸Krapf, Travels, p. 182.

²⁹A. C. Hollis, 'Notes on the History of Vumba' East Africa Journal of the Anthropological Institute (1900), p. 281.

³⁰Letter, King of Pate to Viceroy, Sultan Babucar bin Sultano, Umar bin Dau and his brother Bwana Muca bin Sultan, Balucar Fumovay, King of Jagaya, n.d., translated 10.10.1728; L. M. # 95-B, folio 585 r and v, Historical Archives of India, Panjim, Goa. This reference was kindly given to me by Professor E. A. Alpers.

³¹Kirkman, 'Galla' in Strandes, The Portuguese Period, p. 291.

³²Rev. W. E. Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary and Collections

(London, 1891), p. vii.

³³Alan Jacobs, 'A Chronology of the Pastoral Maasai' in B. A. Ogot, ed., Hadith I, (Nairobi, 1968), pp. 2-31.

³⁴John Lamphear, 'The Kamba and the Northern Mrima Coast' in Richard Gray and David Birmingham, eds., Pre-Colonial African Trade (London, 1970), pp. 78-9; Kennell Ardway Jackson, Jr., 'An Ethnohistorical Study of the Oral Traditions of the Akamba of Kenya,' Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (UCLA, 1972), Chapter VI: 'Trade and Traders in Akamba Society: 1775-1850,' pp. 219-284. I am grateful to Professor Robert Griffith for allowing me to read his copy of this dissertation.

³⁵Jackson, Ibid.

³⁶I. M. Lewis, 'Origins,' p. 226.

³⁷Lewis, Ibid., p. 226 cites this from Guillain.

³⁸Hobley, Kenya, pp. 177-8.

³⁹Reginald Coupland, The Exploitation of East Africa (London, 1939), p. 53.

⁴⁰GHT: Luganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.23.70; General discussions with Giriama, Dec.-June, 1970-71.

⁴¹GHT: Luganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.23.70; Ziro wa Mae (Madzimbani) 12.28.70.

⁴²GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Maita wa Mweni (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Musage wa Magongo (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

⁴³GHT: Karisa Kifudu (Bamba) 12.22.70; Mboga wa Galoa (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; cf. the traditions of the Seguju and Digo in Prins, Coastal Tribes, p. 45.

⁴⁴GHT: Yaa wa Mangi and Musage wa Magongo (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Kenga wa Hare (Vitengeni) 12.23.70; Mungela wa Kalama (Bamba) 12.22.70; Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

⁴⁵GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Luganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.28.71; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71; Mukiza wa Biryu (Hadu) 12.18.71.

⁴⁶GHT: Mulanda wa Wanje (Msabaha) 4.5.71; Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

⁴⁷GHT: Mahsa Murumwengu (Kizurini) 8.30.71; Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

⁴⁸GHT: Charo wa Maita (Bungale) 12.17.70; Mwinga wa Gunga

(Kinarani) 4.6.71; Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

⁴⁹W. H. Allan, The African Husbandman (London, 1965), pp. 5-6.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 6.

⁵¹New, Life and Wanderings, p. 81.

⁵²Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, p. vii.

⁵³David Parkin, 'Politics of Ritual Syncretism: Islam among the Non-Muslim Giriama of Kenya' Africa XL:3 (July, 1970), p.224.

⁵⁴This information was determined from many discussions with the Giriama in the area.

⁵⁵Prins, Coastal Tribes, p. 57.

⁵⁶Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 88.

⁵⁷GHT: Mwavuo wa Menze (Marafa) 12.16.70; James Ponda (Marafa) 12.16.70.

⁵⁸'Mbaruk's Rebellion from Malindi,' Kenneth MacDougall, D. O. Takaungu to Senior Commissioner, Mombasa, 12.22.95. CP 75/46, KNA.

⁵⁹'Mbaruk's Rebellion from Malindi,' letters from 7.9.95 to 12.3.95. CP 75/46, KNA.

⁶⁰GHT: Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70. AG. D. C. Malindi to P. C. Mombasa, 2.27.14 and 3.7.14. 'The Giriama Rising, Vol. I' SP 5/336, KNA. The 'Giriama Rising' file has five volumes and comprises the most useful archival record of this rising.

⁶¹GHT: Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70.

⁶²Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 9.

⁶³D. C. Malindi to P. C. Mombasa, 4.23.12, CP 6/425; A. M. Champion, 'History of the WaGiryama' Kilifi District Political Record Book, KFI/13, KNA.

⁶⁴Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 97.

⁶⁵F. D. Lugard, The Rise of our East African Empire: Early Efforts in Nyasaland and Uganda. (London, 1893), p. 263.

⁶⁶Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, p. viii.

⁶⁷GHT: Nyundo wa Mwamure (Sekoke) 12.22.70. Mwalimu Hamisi (Vitengeni) 12.23.70.

⁶⁸GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71. Kenneth

MacDougall, 'Notes on the History of the Wanyika' Kilifi District Political Record Book, KFI/13, KNA.

⁶⁹GHT: Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71; James Ponda (Marafa) 12.16.70. MacDougall, 'Notes,' Cashmore, 'Chronology,' p. 167.

⁷⁰Kenneth MacDougall, D. O. Takaungu to S. C. Mombasa, 'Mbaruk's Rebellion from Malindi,' 12.3.95. CP 75/46. KNA.

⁷¹Lugard, East African Empire, p. 273.

⁷²D. O. Malindi to Ag. S. C. Mombasa, 9.19.06. 'Malindi Inward, 1906' CP 85/115. KNA.

⁷³D. O. Malindi to P. C. Mombasa, 12.13.13. 'Giriama Rising, Vol. I,' CP 5/336. KNA.

⁷⁴Allan, African Husbandman, p. 5.

⁷⁵Lugard, East African Empire, p. 235.

⁷⁶Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 662.

⁷⁷GHT: Bambare wa Charo (Garashi) 12.18.70; Muganda wa Birya (Ganze) 12.23.70. Nyundo wa Mwamure (Sekoke) 12.22.70; Karisa wa Mweni (Garashi) 12.18.70.

⁷⁸Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 73-116, 174-190.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 113.

⁸⁰This information was determined from many informal discussions with the Giriama in the area.

⁸¹GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71; Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Mwakasenge (to send) comes from sengerako, or selfishness. The Giriama say they sent their sons away so they could eat the little remaining food alone. This famine was sometime between 1883-1885.

⁸⁴Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, p. vii. Arthur M. Champion, The Agiryama of Kenya, ed., John Middleton (London, 1967), p. 6; Champion, 'History of the WaGiriama,' Kilifi Political Record Book, KFI/13. KNA.

⁸⁵GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71; Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70.

⁸⁶Fitzgerald, Travels, passim found only a few Giriama across the river in 1891. By 1900, many Giriama lived north of the Gallana.

⁸⁷GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71; Champion, 'History of the WaGiriama' Kilifi Political Record Book, KFI/13. KNA.

⁸⁸GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71; Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70.

⁸⁹Cashmore, 'Chronology,' pp. 167-168.

⁹⁰Sisal was first tried at Malindi in 1903. 'Rabai Inward, 1907' CP 87/127. KNA. It became significant as a cash crop by the 1930's, but has remained largely in the hands of expatriates.

⁹¹Fitzgerald, Travels, p. ix and supra.

⁹²'Rabai Political Record Book' CP 2/2/73. KNA.

⁹³Instructions for new ADC Giriama' 12.24.12. Giriama District, Administration, CP 6/425. KNA.

⁹⁴Governor C. C. Bowring to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Walter Long, 1.3.18. Kilifi District Political Record Book, KFI/13. KNA. Malindi Commission of Inquiry, Report. C. O. 533, Piece. No. 180, Docket 30914, 4.7.17. Public Record Office, London.

CHAPTER II

THE GIRIAMA POLITICAL COMMUNITY AROUND 1850

The intimate relationship between environment and history makes it imperative to be specific about both place and time when discussing the Giriama political community. The central political institutions which existed during the period when the Giriama lived inside their kaya are virtually non-existent today. In order to understand the extent and quality of the change in Giriama political development during the second half of the nineteenth century, it is necessary to reconstruct the political system prior to Giriama dispersal, around the middle of the nineteenth century.

Obviously, the memories which Giriama have today of those political processes during kaya days have been affected by the changes since then. Because the Giriama population became so scattered and because a large number of Giriama living today in Gallana have never visited the kaya, the process of reconstructing the political system for 1850 required interviews with many Giriama living in every part of Giriama land. Only then could the written accounts of Europeans¹ be synthesized with a broad survey of the history given by the Giriama. It was possible to confirm the elements of the political system point by point through subsequent interviews. In this way, numerous

individual interpretations were obtained which corroborated each other but which had not been determined by active group decision. Each man's father and grandfather had passed on his knowledge to his sons, but the sons of homesteads fifty miles apart had never discussed these things with each other.

Finally, in addition to reconstructing the Giriama kaya political system around 1850, the subsequent variations which emerged after the dispersal of the Giriama from that central stronghold were also measured. In the following discussion reference will be made to the Giriama political system around 1850, when they were all living inside their kaya. The changes which subsequently took place are discussed in chapter three.

Marika

The Giriama were organized into generation-sets (marika, sing., rika) which served as the basis for their political organization and for measuring their historical past. According to tradition, seven marika have ruled since the Giriama left Singwaya:²

Amwendo (the going)
Kalalake
Mijoga (the warlike)
Ngunyeli
Kaumba (the creative)
Mkwavi (the Kwavi)
Kavuta (the poor)³

Within each of these marika, Giriama males were divided into thirteen age-sets⁴ of a specifically ordered set of names:⁵

Wulumbere (first rains)
Wulakahi (middle rains)
Wulanyuma (latter rains)

| | |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Puku | (large, wild rats) |
| Tungudza | (large tomatoes) |
| Kitambi | (particular, colored cloth) |
| Nguluwe | (pigs) |
| Mitseka | (mats) |
| AbiKizi | (Kizi's father) |
| Atsai | (wizards) |
| Mafira | (puff adders) |
| Kitsoga | (hatchet) |
| Nyoga | (feathers) |

A man's position in these age-sets determined seniority. Since a new age-set was designated approximately every three years,⁶ then a full generation, or rika, composed of thirteen age-sets, represented men born during a time-period spanning almost forty years.⁷ Once a rika was installed to 'rule,' it took almost forty years for the next rika to complete its age-sets, so the members of one rika were ruling at least during that entire forty years. Each ruling rika consisted of all the males who had been initiated into a full generation of age-sets from Wulumbere to Nyoga. However, the privilege of participation in Giriama government was reserved for the elders of the ruling rika who, sitting together in council as kambi, decided the affairs of the people. The term, 'kambi,' came to mean the councillor (singular or plural) or the council. Within the rika, when it was first installed to rule, only the Wulumbere were allowed to be kambi. The remainder were called nyere, or warriors. Then, approximately every three years, the next-senior age-set was initiated as kambi.

Three separate processes actually occurred and will be discussed in turn. First, every three years or so, the males were placed into age-sets. Second, some time after the entire rika of thirteen

age-sets was completed, it was installed as the ruling rika by means of a single ceremony, which also retired the old rika. Third, within the ruling rika, the age-sets were initiated, according to seniority into kambi.

Giriama males were divided into age-sets by the elders of the rika which ruled before theirs.⁸ For instance, Mkwavi Rika, which was ruling in 1850, had been divided into age-sets under the direction of Kaumba Rika, which ruled immediately before them. The Giriama use the concept 'trim' or 'cut' to describe the marking off of one age-set from another.⁹ This was accomplished through a special ceremony of Mwanza M'Kulu.¹⁰ Under normal conditions, each age-set was trimmed approximately every three years. This extended over the period between the births of the first two sons of any single wife. This probably occurred when the boy was between the ages of nine and twelve.¹¹ The Mwanza M'Kulu ceremony took its name, 'the big drum,' from a large friction drum (mwanza) which was central to the initiation ritual. The drum was made from a log about six feet long. The log was hollow except for one end, where about an inch of wood remained. A sheep skin was stretched over the open end. A thong, knotted on one end was extended through a small hole in the center of this skin.¹² The knot on the thong inside the drum prevented the thong from being pulled all the way out, but moving the taut thong against the drumhead caused loud vibrations. The emerging sound simulated that of a hyaena howling in the night. Because of the mystery of the noise, the Mwanza M'Kulu sound was fearsome for those who had not been initiated during these ceremonies. Only the initiated were allowed to look at the drum. The

actual drum, mwanza m'kulu, had another important function: it was played at the funeral of all Vaya (members of a secret society). Therefore, a boy had experienced many occasions when the drum was played near his home, yet he was forbidden to look at it. Those who had defied this prohibition against viewing the drum were said to have become plagued with a constant ringing in their ears and had to go to a medicine man to have the curse removed.¹⁴

Since the initiation fee for Mwanza M'Kulu was small, so every young boy could be initiated along with the other boys of his age at the proper time. Therefore, all the boys of an age-set were shown the Mwanza M'Kulu for the first time, learned the secrets of its sound, and were allowed henceforth to attend performances where it was played. When the kambi of the ruling rika announced that the Mwanza M'Kulu ceremony would be held to trim an age-set, all of those boys who had not been initiated into the previous age-set, and who were now of 'herds-boy age' (9-12 years), became members of the new age-set.¹⁵

For some reason the age-set was not given a name during this time. This meant that the initiates knew who their age-mates were, but they were not yet allowed to be called by a name, such as 'Mitseka.' However, for the three eldest age-sets in particular (Wulumbere, Wulakahi, and Wulanyuma) it was not difficult to guess what name their age-set would have, for they would become the leaders when their rika was installed and the old rika retired.¹⁶

This initiation into Mwanza M'Kulu involved no particular instruction beyond how the drum itself was manipulated. Even though the Giriama did circumcise, these age-sets were not circumcision cycles.¹⁷

Circumcision probably occurred when the boys were between the ages of nine and twelve, but this operation was probably performed on the boys in small groups, not all at the same time.¹⁸

The second process, after the completion of a full rika of Giriama divided into thirteen age-sets, was the installation of the entire group as the new ruling rika. Institutionally, a new rika was installed through an elaborate, prolonged ceremony, Mung'ara.¹⁹ At the same time, the old rika was closed and its leaders were retired. Therefore, when Kaumba Rika retired and Mkwavi Rika came into power, the adult male population ranging in age from about ten to fifty years of age, became members of this new corporate group, Mkwavi Rika.

Mung'ara (king'ara - to shine) takes its name from the red clay around the kaya which the Giriama used to smear their bodies during the ceremony.²⁰ The men of the rika which was to be installed had petitioned the kambi of the retiring rika with beer, maize and the equivalent of thirteen bullocks.²¹ The ritual began with three days of dancing in the kaya, during which time the retiring kambi consumed the food and drink. The men of the incoming rika then left the kaya wearing marinda, short gathered skirts of leaves similar to the ones the Giriama women traditionally wore.²² This costume signified that the participants were giving re-birth to the Giriama people.²³ With their hair and bodies still decorated with clay, the men of the incoming rika searched for a foreigner, killed him and cut off his genitals which they brought back to the kaya.²⁴ The purpose of this remains obscure, but the tradition extended back to Singwaya days and it is shared by the other Mijikenda.²⁵

The Mung'ara, then, served several purposes: it provided an

opportunity for widespread celebration; it symbolized the rebirth of the Giriama people; it installed a new ruling rika; and it provided the names for the thirteen age-sets included within it. All of these factors combined to bring new vitality into the government.

However, Mung'aro itself failed to provide the instruction which was needed for this rika to rule. Therefore, beyond the division of the Giriama into age-sets and the installation of the new ruling rika, a third process existed - elevation to the position of kambi and instruction in tribal traditions of government. When the new rika was installed, all of the men had been officially designated as nyere, but not all were immediately eligible to become kambi. Only the Wulumbere were initiated into kambi. This initiation involved two major steps, each celebrated by a ritual. First there was Sayo re Mudhanga which elevated an age-set to akomu, or those nyere who had become 'full grown' and were therefore eligible to become kambi.²⁶ Instruction of tribal traditions involving formal procedure of Giriama government and rituals began at this point in a man's life. Then, probably within the next three years, this age-set of akomu was initiated as kambi by means of the ceremony of Kirao, the most important Giriama ritual. This ceremony provided full instructions of the tribal traditions given by those who had themselves been most recently initiated. Therefore, if the Mafira age-set danced Kirao, their arisa (teachers, shepherds) would have been the Atsai.

Prior to the Kirao ceremonies, some men of that age-set which had become akoma by dancing Sayo Ka Mudhanga had made themselves responsible for collecting sufficient gifts from the members of their age-set to pay the expensive fees for their Kirao. The payments of fees for

kambi membership took several years to complete.²⁷ When this was accomplished, and when they understood that the time was right, some men of the akomu began kuvaka, 'seeking the way' to Kirao. This involved a formal procedure of persuading their immediate seniors that the Kirao should be held. The akomu had to find the msichana cha kirao which was kept by one of those men who had 'sought the way' of the previous Kirao. (The Giriama do not divulge precisely what this msichana cha kirao is, but some have suggested a small figurine and others, a drum.) These akomu began by taking a calabash of uchi (beer) to one of the men who had 'sought the way' of the previous Kirao. He took some of the beer and gave them the name of another man. This continued until finally they were led to the man who kept the msichana cha kirao. Once the keeper was found, these akomu were still not allowed to see the msichana cha kirao, but they were given a date to dance their Kirao, and during the ceremony the akomu who had 'sought the Kirao' would get to see it.

At the Kirao, those men (approximately 12 to 20) who had gone to kuvaka had expressed their wish to have the Kirao held and were formally designated Akirimu. They had 'qualified' as leaders of the age-set because they had taken the initiative. They did not dance while the others of the age-set were dancing; instead, they sat in front of the big fire which was burning strongly during the entire ceremony for seven days. These men were the only ones allowed to see the msichana cha kirao which was thought to have powers of the sun. This procedure was important because it designated the leaders of the age-set and identified them as men who could hold back the rain because they had seen the msichana cha kirao and had sat by the fire. When Kirao was finished, the Akirimu and the rest of their age-set were kambi. This

gave them the privilege of sitting on the council and taking part in the judicial decisions of the Giriana.²⁸

When the Mkwavi Rika, which was ruling in 1850, was installed (perhaps in the late 1830's) by their Mung'aro ceremony, the Wulumbere had very likely already danced their Sayo ra Mudhanga and had been led by some of their akomu through the process of kuvaka. Therefore, the date for their Kirao was set immediately following the Mung'aro ceremony which installed the rika.²⁹ After participating in Kirao, the Wulumbere became kambi. The Wulakahi, next in line, then had to petition to the new kambi for their own Sayo ra Mudhanga which elevated them to akomu and later had to undertake kuvaka for their own Kirao. After dancing Kirao, they would join the kambi ranks. This process continued until all of the men who had been installed into the Mkwavi Rika by that same Mung'aro ceremony subsequently had been initiated into Sayo ra Mudhanga and finally into Kirao and had become kambi. By the time the last age-set, Nyoga, had become kambi, the ruling rika was nearing its last days of power and a new Mung'aro would begin to install the next rika.

Precisely what determined the time for a new rika to be installed and the old rika to be retired? The answer is not clear. Champion became confused over the concept of 'generation' and figured that the average physical generation was $22\frac{1}{2}$ years. He interpreted Giriana explanations of their system to mean a government consisting of two generations: nyere and kambi. Thinking that one rika included two generations, he calculated the installation of a rika at every 45 years.³⁰ Although his calculations were based on the wrong premise, Champion was not far in error. Transferral of rule from one rika to

the next could not occur until the next rika had been completed with the full thirteen age-sets. According to this, each rika ruled for at least thirty-nine years. Even this estimate is dependent upon a regularity of initiations of the age-sets into Mwanza M'Kulu every three years.³¹ If indeed, the completion of a new rika signalled the automatic preparation for a new Mung'aro ceremony and the installation of this new rika into the ruling position, then we can assume that each rika remained in power approximately the same number of years - around forty. If, on the other hand, the decision to install a new rika was left ultimately to the retiring one, and if this decision depended largely on their health and ability to rule, then some marika could have ruled for much longer than forty years.³²

As this indicated, the structure of Giriama government, combined the functions of age-sets, marika, and the council of kambi. Membership in an age-set had the effect of including all Giriama as participants in the activities of the Giriama as a whole. The rika, on the other hand, provided a council of elders who were respected as the most knowledgeable in the society; therefore, by appealing to custom and controlling the judiciary process, the kambi emerged as the rulers of the Giriama.

The Giriama judicial procedure was designed to maintain order and command respect for the kambi, who received gifts for their consultation. When a case was brought before the kambi, both plaintiff and defendant brought food and beer as fees. Punishment for the guilty was frequently a large fine of food and beer paid to, and consumed by, the kambi. Wearing a special cotton cloth called kitambi, held at the

waist by a red belt, the kambi carried a tall forked stick, the symbol of their office, and a leather bag to hold their possessions.³³ Kambi were always greeted with respect and were considered the rightful recipients of surplus Giriama goods. Although as a group sitting in council, the kambi could, by mutual agreement, change regulations for behavior and set penalties for misbehavior, they were mainly instruments of appeal. Every decision had to be accepted, ultimately, by all parties concerned. The kambi maintained several sanctions to enforce their decisions. They could impose fines, ostracize, or appeal to the power of oaths and ordeals, which gave supernatural strength to their ability to settle disputes. Thus it was difficult to defy a final decision of the kambi and continue to live with the Giriama in the kaya.

Clans and Secret Societies

The social organization of the Giriama is founded upon six clans (mbari): Amililani, Aparwa, Akikzini, Amilulu, Akiza, and Amagunjoni.³⁴ All of these are said to be those who originally settled at the kaya. These six clans are further divided into sub-clans (also called mbari by the Giriama). (See Figure 1.) These divisions resulted either from fission among existing clans or assimilation of foreigners (usually other Mijikenda) into the Giriama clan. An instance of fission is the Amwanzaro and AmwaMkare of the Akidzini clan(##) who say they are one because they have the same father but different mothers. This occurred when one of the sons of the second mother decided to move away.³⁵ These two Akidzini clans, then, cannot intermarry. The AmwaBaya and AmwaNgari sub-clans have split in somewhat the same

FIGURE 1: GIRIAMA CLANS AND SUB-CLANS

| <u>Clans</u> | <u>Sub-clans</u> |
|--------------|---|
| AMaganjoni | AmwaZiro AmwaKiti AmwaGowa AmwaNgore AmwaKibohe |
| Akidzini | AmwaThoya AmwaNyundo AmwaMitsanze AmwaNzaro ## AmwaMkare ## AmwaBaya - Amwabayamwaro Amwabayagunga Amwambora AmwaMkweha AmwaMweni - Amwamuramba Amwamaitha Amwakimbi |
| AMililani | AmwaKombe - Amwakipa Amwaruwa AmwaNdundi AmwaDundu AmwaNgari - Amwayeri AmwaKadzangala AmwaKiringi |
| AMilulu | AmwaShungu AmwaMborra AmwaBogo |
| AParwa | AmwaFondo AmwaNguma AmwaKiwe (or Amwaidza) |
| AKiza | AmwaWale AmwaFondo (or AmwaChuku) AmwaIha AmwaHinzano ** |

way. The most prominent case of sub-clan assimilation is that of the AmwaHinzano (**) of the Akiza clan. This family had originally been Digo, but they joined the Giriama Akiza and formed the AmwaHinzano, a sub-clan of their own, under Mwavuo, who was the father of Nkonyo.³⁶ The influence of all clans in Giriama society has been largely restricted to matters concerning birth, marriage, and death, as well as the handling of internal quarrels through arbitration of the senior elders of the clan. Clans had no special functions within Giriama government nor did they have any separate controls over land.

In addition to rika and clans, the Giriama had secret societies (vyama, sing., chama) which incorporated both political and social functions. At least one, Kifudu, was primarily for women. The men had four: Habasi, Kinyenzi, Gohu, and Vaya. The first three of these were open to any man who could pay the fees, although Gohu was reserved for older men. The functions of each of them differed, so that, ideally, every Giriama male joined all three. Habasi and Kinyenzi could both be joined by children, if their fathers could pay the fees which usually included some combination of goats, fowl, pots of maize meal and calabashes of beer. Arthur Champion's records in 1912 show Habasi membership requiring seventeen lengths of cloth and Kinyenzi, five.³⁷ These two societies were not only social groups deriving public esteem from membership; they also provided a source of social control through their oaths (viraho, sing., kiraho). In each society, the most able of its ranks were trained as medicine men who could place or remove the oaths of that society.³⁸ Normally, these oaths were used to protect property or to appeal judicial decisions. Kinyenzi kiraho, once broken, caused numerous signs of damage to its victims. Habasi kiraho

caused profuse bleeding to its victims who happened upon the secret meeting-place, or Habasini. This oath was particularly dreaded because it caught both the thief who stole from a protected house or field and the innocent victims who stumbled upon the meeting-place in the bush.³⁹

Gohu, the Giriama marriage society, required all members to be married and to pay a bullock for membership.⁴⁰ Many of the society's activities were undertaken to ensure the fidelity and good behaviour of the members' wives and to provide prestige for its members. Festivities surrounding initiation were expensive; attaining membership was an honour. Gohu members were recognized by the buffalo horn bracelet (luvoo) worn on their upper arm.⁴¹ Upon death, they were the only Giriama buried in a wooden coffin; over their grave was placed a wooden marker or kigango, a three-foot tall wooden sculpture with a circular head carved from a flat piece of wood. Geometric designs depicted the face and the limbs, and small pieces of cloth were tied around the neck to symbolize clothing. The graves of Giriama who were not members of Gohu were marked with a small round wooden stick or kibao.⁴² Gohu institutionalized differences in wealth but prevented individuals from displaying such wealth for their own selfish ends.

Besides being a social club, the fourth secret society, the Vaya, had political function. It was composed of the most privileged social group of men - those who had enough wealth and esteem to gather frequently in their secret meeting place, the saka, for feasting and drinking. In addition, the Vaya had a special relationship with the kambi council's activities in the kaya involving special judicial procedures and the Fisi was in their control.

Some judicial cases were determined by all the kambi sitting in council, where evidence was presented by the accuser and the accused. The kambi members then made their decision in the presence of the litigants. Other cases were tried by the Vaya, who retired to their saka after they had been given prior evidence.⁴³ No one except members could go near the saka. Because they made their decisions in total secrecy and merely announced judgment when they were ready, appealing the Vaya's decisions was almost impossible.

In addition to making secret judicial decisions the Vaya also provided the medicine men of Fisi (hyaena). The Fisi oath was considered the most powerful and influential among the Giriama. Usually only two members from each of the six clans trained to be Fisi waganga. Since this curse and its medicine were considered so powerful, the Giriama entrusted this honour only to those who they felt could handle the responsibility. A careless man might use it for disposing of someone who had offended him. Lengthy training and the purchase of the medicines were required of a man before he became a Fisi mganga and was allowed to install this oath. Fisi members trained a new candidate only after the potential member had been fully approved. Since few men could install or remove a Fisi oath, its use was restricted. No man was supposed to install the oath alone, and a Fisi mganga would not participate in an oath involving a clansman. It was the final appeal available to a man to prove his innocence and it had to be administered before the kambi in a public ceremony. The Fisi oath was also administered to people accused of witchcraft.⁴⁴

Almost all oaths involved a combination of the medicine and the curse which indicated the results to all who did not follow the

proscription. An oath was generally used for protection of property or for appeal to discern the agents of witchcraft, theft, rape, murder, assault, incest, abduction, adultery, seduction. The kambi council allowed oaths of Habasi and Kinyenzi to be used for appeal, and also called upon medicine men to administer oaths of ordeal involving hot axes, needles through the lips, hot stones in the hand, and swallowing poisoned bread or pawpaw. The Fisi oath was only used after one or several of the others had failed; the Giriama believed the Fisi oath always succeeded. Therefore, within the kambi and the Vaya, the few Fisi waganga had power over social control.

Kaya Organization

The most senior elders of the six clans were collectively called Enyetsi, or owners of the land.⁴⁵ This meant communal ownership for all Giriama and not separate ownership by clans. When one of them died, his clan members chose his replacement. From among the Enyetsi, one elder was given the office of mwanamuli.⁴⁶ He was chosen for this office according to a system of rotation through the six clans and he held the office for life. As mwanamuli, he convened the councils and served as spokesman for the Giriama.

Very likely, these six Enyetsi were also Fisi waganga, but no circumstances existed when these six men alone made decisions for all the Giriama. Any situations which affected everybody - such as warfare, disease, famine or foreign relations - were controlled by the entire kambi sitting in council.

Inside the kaya, people of each clan grouped their houses

together and sub-clans lived nearby. The graves of the Gohu were marked with vigango in their clan areas. In the center of the kaya was the moro, the official council house, and a large shade tree where the kambi met to discuss matters brought before them.⁴⁷ Anyone could listen to the general discussion but the kambi conference was always private. A small house sits today in the moro of Kaya Giriama, but the original Mkwa ju shade tree did not survive the dynamiting by the British in 1914.⁴⁸

Some Giriama, particularly those who had served as mwanamuli of the kambi, were regarded as communal ancestors when they died, and their koma (spirits) were considered to belong to the whole community. Fungo wa Gona of the Amilulu, probably the mwanamuli in 1850, was the single most important man in the last century of Giriama history.⁴⁹ A baobab tree was planted on his grave, and today it stands almost fifteen feet tall. On my second visit to the kaya, I saw that a piece of broken pot along with ashes had been placed at the foot of this tree where the elders of the kaya had been praying for rain.⁵⁰

In order for life to be prosperous, the Giriama felt that their own ancestor spirits and those of the entire community had to be content. Therefore, when a particularly important adventure was undertaken, or when the rains failed or famine threatened, sacrifices were made to those koma, usually in the form of maize, beer or fowl. When some trouble plagued a man's house, he feared he had neglected a departed spirit. A diviner was summoned to diagnose the trouble and to prescribe the proper remedy. If the source of the misfortune was not determined to be a displeased ancestor, then witchcraft was usually blamed. In order to get the spell removed, a man had either to consult

an mganga who had the power to remove the spell or to accuse the witch and bring the person before the council of kambi. If the witch did not admit guilt, then the kambi council called on an mganga to administer oaths to both the accuser and the accused. After drinking the medicine, the person who was lying was expected to die or to confess, in which case the spell would be removed.⁵¹

The Giriama believed strongly in the effectiveness of such oaths in identifying the guilty party. Oaths were used by one individual against another to protect his property or person. Also, oaths protected Giriama custom by forcing obedience through fear of reprisals. The council of kambi, through the secrecy and exclusiveness of the Vaya's control of the most effective medicine and oath available, had the power and authority to maintain tight corporate control within the kaya.

Giriama government inside the kaya, then, consisted of several elements: age-sets, the council of kambi of the ruling rika, clans, secret societies and ancestor spirits (koma). Every Giriama male, as a member of an age-set, progressed through several stages to become a member of the council of elders. The system of judication was maintained by the elders sitting together to discuss matters involving all the Giriama and to decide cases of unresolved individual (or clan) conflict. These elders were much respected because of their knowledge of Giriama tradition. They received their legitimacy after being installed as members of the ruling rika and being trained as kambi during their initiation into Kirao. The council of kambi was supported by the Vaya (particularly those few Vaya members who controlled the Fisi oath and medicines) and the Enyetsi, representing the six clans. The

kambi as a government tried to balance the needs of the individual Giriama and the community as a whole, while at the same time maintaining the respect of the ancestor spirits, who were believed to have the power to effect for both good and evil in the existence of their living descendants.

Although theoretically the Giriama were ruled by all of their elders as a group, in reality, every age-set did not have equal participation in Giriama government. Several factors indicate this to have been the case.

First, since no two brothers were members of the same age-set, then elder sons had more chance to remain active kambi for a longer period than did younger sons. Second, since a rika was determined chronologically rather than geneologically (as is the case with the Masai, the Karimojong and the Embu),⁵² it was possible for a father and a son to be in the same rika, leaving sons little power so long as their fathers were still alive.

Third, since a person served with his age-mates within each ruling rika, those who were eldest when it was installed bore a greater amount of responsibility and privilege as kambi than did those who were young during its installation. A man who was a Wulumbere served as kambi throughout the entire ruling rika period until he died. A man who was a Nyoga was a kambi only during the last years of the ruling rika. The last age-sets of a ruling rika bore more of the responsibility of installing the next rika. By the time a new ruling rika was to be installed, most of the Wulumbere, Wulakahi, and Wulanyuma of the existing rika had passed away.

Fourth, age-sets had no corporate activities beyond their participation in rituals together. Unlike many African societies, such as the Masai, Jie, and Karimojong, in which the age-sets had extensive corporate identity,⁵³ the Giriama age-sets were less significant as units of corporate activity. The Giriama did not place any emphasis on the period of warriorhood. The older nyere fought when the need arose, the kambi gave guidance; but the Giriama did not have an institutionalized war council like the Embu and Kikuyu.⁵⁴ Since the purpose of Giriama warfare was protective rather than aggressive, Giriama warriors did not organize raids on their neighbour to prove or to announce their warriorhood. Instead, they learned the techniques of warfare through observation and participation; none of their ceremonial rituals included training for warfare.

Fifth, instruction into the customs of the Giriama came at an old age and was concentrated in the two ceremonies of Kirao (primarily) and Sayo ra Mudhanga (to a lesser extent). Government procedures became vulnerable if a series of Kirao could not be held.

Finally, no overlap in kambi existed from one ruling rika to the next. This encouraged the rika in power to remain so until it was no longer able to function. By that time, many of the Giriama who had been entrusted with special maada (customs) had died.

The end result of this combination of factors was that in each ruling rika, the positions of leadership and the secrets of ritual for Mung'aro, special occasions, and certain traditions were held by the senior two or three age-sets, Wulumbere, Wulakahi, and Wulanyuma. As long as any of them remained alive, they held the positions of Enyetsi, mwanamuli, and Fisi. By the time most of them had passed away,

a new rika was ready. Therefore, the men in the 'junior' age-sets, those from Puku through Nyoga, knew that they would have a chance to become kambi, but could not emerge in positions of leadership. Furthermore, those men younger than they, who would be the Wulumbere, Wulakahi and Wulanyuma of the next ruling rika, had considerable potential power, but they were not yet allowed even to become kambi, in spite of their age. The situation which emerged, then, during the closing days of a ruling rika, was one whereby the Wulumbere, Wulakahi and Wulanyuma of the retiring rika were old and tired and depleted in numbers. The kambi might still be sufficient but the leadership was shrinking. The Wulumbere, Wulakahi and Wulanyuma of the incoming rika were not much younger than the Nyoga of the expiring rika; yet, when they were installed, they would wield considerably more power. Thus, the younger members of the ruling rika were reluctant to install the next rika, even though they had none of the positions of leadership.

The tension was alleviated somewhat because even the retired kambi remained members of Vaya and Fisi. It is also possible that some Giriama welcomed the freedom of not having to participate in the leadership of Giriama society and were perfectly willing to let those men who were interested fulfill this function. This combination of each man's having an active part in the government as a kambi while at the same time having certain customs and mysteries entrusted to a select few may account for the strong independent spirit among the Giriama.

The above observations indicate that the Giriama government was non-adaptable, and was vulnerable to uncertain conditions. However, these characteristics of Giriama government may have given it

flexibility. The other Mijikenda had developed some of the same institutions (marika, Mung'ara, Kirao, age-sets, councils of elders, secret societies) but with significant variations. This implies that their government systems have been adaptable and have, in fact, undergone many changes. The following chapter will examine the changes which the Giriama system underwent in the second half of the nineteenth century when they moved out into small homesteads extending as far as a hundred miles from their kaya.

NOTES

¹The two major published sources on the Giriama are A. H. J. Prins, The Coastal Tribes of the North East Bantu (1952) and A. M. Champion The Agiryama of Kenya (1967). Prins' work is an admirable collection of the varied sources about all the Mijikenda and other northeastern Bantu. The Mijikenda information is so sparse that he was forced to rely on bits and pieces from any one of them to try to discuss them as a group. Most of the Giriama material he drew from Alice Werner, a lecturer in Swahili at the University of London who travelled through Galla, Pokomo, and Nyika country in 1911. Her accounts on the Giriama come from informants exclusively available to her either through the Muslim Liwalis of the coast, the British administration, or the missions. She did not visit the Giriama kaya, but she did collect a list of Giriama clans and a bit of Giriama tradition. Some of her notes can be found in 'Giriama District - Administration Of' CP 6/425, KNA. She has published three articles on the Nyika or the Giriama: Alice Werner, 'The Bantu Coast Tribes of the East Africa Protectorate' The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 45 (1915), pp. 326-354; Alice Werner, 'The Native Tribes of British Africa,' Journal of the African Society, 19 (1919-20), pp. 285-294; Alice Werner, 'WaNyika' in R. Hastings, ed., Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 9 (1917), pp. 424-427. Extensive material for the Giriama touches on only two subjects: age groupings and generational councils of elders. For both of these, Prins relied almost exclusively on Rev. W. E. Taylor, a C. M. S. missionary who travelled through Giriama land in the 1880's but was never stationed there. He published his Giriama Vocabulary and Collections in 1891. On age grouping and generational councils, Rev. Taylor seems to be in error. Prins got his information for age groupings under the category 'circumcision cycles,' the Giriama did not circumcise in annual groups - or in age groups at all, for that matter. Taylor's information on generations and councils of elders is entered under 'freemasonry.' By combining Giriama age-sets, rika, secret societies and rituals which advanced a man to kambi, he telescoped them into one system of 'grades' through which a male passed from infancy to Fisi. Champion's account was not published until 1967, when John Middleton found a copy in the Nairobi archives and edited it for publication; but Prins did rely on some of Champion's unpublished accounts. They were probably written around 1914 after he served two years as the Assistant District Commissioner for the Giriama. Champion's lists of clans, rika, and age-sets differ slightly from Werner's, but his were more accurate. On the subjects of age grouping and councils, Champion was much more reliable than Taylor, even though he also misinterpreted several aspects of Giriama life. For the Giriama, Prins' other main sources are the travel accounts of Krapf, New, Fitzgerald and C. Guillain (Documents sur l'histoire, la geographie et le commerce de l'Afrique orientale, Vols. I, II, III (Paris, 1856-1857)). The major disadvantage to Prins' work is that he is unable to give a full account of any single Mijikenda group, so he draws on information from each of them. The end result is a rather distorted picture of all the 'Nyika.' By so doing, he not only perpetuated the term, Nyika, but also made them appear to be much more alike than

they were.

The influence of Rev. Taylor's work upon subsequent written works makes him the major source for our knowledge about Giriama government. W. W. A. Fitzgerald quotes extensively from Taylor in his own Travels and Hardinge, the first Commissioner of the Protectorate, gives direct credit to Taylor in his own report discussing Giriama political organization. 'Report by Sir Arthur Hardinge on the Condition and Progress of the East African Protectorate from its Establishment to the 20th July, 1897' December, 1897. Parliamentary Papers: Africa (no. 7) 1897.

The unpublished accounts on the Giriama are located in the files of the Coast Province, Mombasa, Kilifi, or Malindi Districts, Kenya National Archives. Especially crucial are the files of the 'Giriama Rising' (five volumes) CP/5/336; 'Giriama Labour,' CP/4/308; 'Political Record Book,' 1914 DC/MSA/3/1; 'Anthropological/Historical, 1913-1949' DC/MAL/2/3; and 'Rabai Political Record Book' CP/2/2/73. Important entries in the Giriama Rising file are made by Arthur Champion, C. W. Hobley, J. B. Person, and Francis Traill. Extremely useful material by Kenneth MacDougall and Champion are in the Anthropological/Historical file. Other important entries include those of the following men: A. C. Hollis, 'Some of the Customs of the WaNyika People of the Mombasa District, 1898' in 'Native Tribes and their Customs,' Vol. I, part II; 2:d in the archives reading room; James Weaver, 'Malindi Inward, 1895-98,' CP/75/46; A. J. MacLean, 'Native Criminal Law Procedure and Customs as Found Among the Wanyika Tribes, May 7, 1909' DC/KFI/3/1; J. M. Person, 'Giriama General Report, 1916' CP/21/163, and 'A Comparison of Giriama and Digo Customs' DC/MAL/12/13; R. W. Lambert, 'Malindi Station Diary, 1925,' DC/MSA/6/2; J. D. Stringer, 'Correspondence/Reports, 1947-48' DC/KFI/1/5; O. S. Knowles, 'Safari Reports' DC/MAL/2/3; and W. F. P. Kelley, 'Kilifi District Gazetter, 1960.' One copy of this latter is at Methodist Mission, Ribe.

²Cf. Werner's list in 'Giriama District - Administration Of,' CP/6/425, KNA and Champion, Agiryama, p. 16.

³Kaumba, the eighth, is now ruling. It was due to begin around 1912 when the British began active administration. Its installation was delayed so long that nobody remained alive who knew how to install them. Kaumba, then, rules out of default, not authority.

⁴Due to the fact that the Giriama call both generation-sets and age-sets by the same term, marika, I shall use the term rika for the generation-set and maintain the English term 'age-set' for the latter.

⁵Cf. Champion, Agiryama, p. 54, Werner, 'Bantu Coast Tribes,' p. 347, Prins, Coastal Tribes, p. 63, and Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, p. 25.

⁶Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, refers to circumcision cycles which determine this but gives no indication of the time lapse between ceremonies, p. 25. Prins, Coastal Tribes, p. 72, interprets this to be annual circumcision cycles.

⁷Cf. Champion's 'physical generation' of 45 years and Prins' annual circumcision groups totaling thirteen which he places, somewhat mysteriously, into groups of three to provide a generation. The one advantage would be that thirteen multiplied by three would conveniently equal thirty-nine: - a comfortable span for a generation to rule. This chronology will be discussed on page 50 of this chapter. Champion, Agiryama, p. 16 and Prins, Coastal Tribes, p. 72.

⁸This was determined from extensive oral interviews which asked specific questions such as this. Historical Texts, Phase 5, Question 10. (Hereafter, HT:5:Q10.)

⁹Kutsindza /rika/ meaning to cut or slaughter.

¹⁰HT:5:Q4.

¹¹This estimate comes from HT:5:Q7.

¹²Cf. New's description of the Ribe mwanza in Wanderings, p. 225 and Krapf's on the Rabai in Travels, pp. 136, 322.

¹³Krapf, Travels, p. 136, regarded the mwanza drum of the Rabai as the center of their government which, because of the roar of the drum and the demand that everybody participate, he saw as based on fear. He openly defied the rule forbidding non-initiates' looking at the drum and refused to shut his door. He despised the festivities and dances of mwanza ceremonies which he regarded as obscene.

¹⁴HT:3:Q5.

¹⁵Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, p. 44 (under the heading 'Freemasonry and in discussing the 'first degree,' Habasi) called this ceremonial dance 'Gawe' and described it as the distribution or partition of those who may not wear the full-size loincloth. According to him, the 'mysteries' were called 'Mwandza M'Kulu.' 'The candidates Ku'tsindza rigo,' 'flay the Great Skin' /?/ i.e. they are shown the Mwandza by the Initiator.' Very likely, this is a misunderstanding on Taylor's part. Ku-tsindza means to slaughter, or to cut. There is no word, rigo. Skin is kingo. However, the Giriama do use the phrase 'kutsindza rika' to explain how one rika is divided from another.

¹⁶I see this delay in the actual naming of the age-sets at this early stage as a mechanism for ensuring that the power remained within the initiated ruling rika. Cf. pp. 61 and 62 of this chapter.

¹⁷Without exception, Giriama in oral interviews said that a Giriama male was usually circumcised as a young boy and normally with other boys participating in the ceremony. However, they insisted that the circumcision could take place at any time, but that it never had anything to do with either the installation of a rika or membership in an age-set. Champion, Agiryama, p. 16, supports this as do two of my colleagues working in the field at the same time as myself, R. Frederick Morton and Tom Spear.

¹⁸HT:5:Q2.

¹⁹Many Giriama I spoke with knew nothing more about Mung'aro than its association with the killing of a stranger and marika.
HT:5:Q11, 12.

²⁰HT:5:Q13.

²¹This number of bullocks was given for the installation of Kavuta Rika later. It may have been more for Mkavi since the Giriama had not yet been victims of Kwavi cattle-raiding.

²²GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71; Kazungu wa Kigande (Mavueni) 3.30.70; Kaleso wa Ruwa wa Jumwa (Malamweni) 8.12.71; Mikoba Chenda Hawedema Nzingo Masha (Mariakani) 8.13.71. This man is Kambe.

²³GHT: Sidi Ruwa (Kaloleni) 8.14.71.

²⁴HT:5:Q15.

²⁵GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

²⁸GHT: Kalama wa Nzaro (Mavueni) 3.30.71; Kaleso wa Ruwa wa Jumwa (Malamweni) 8.12.71; Gunga wa Baya (Kinarani) 4.6.71.

²⁹HT:5:Q18 and 19.

³⁰Champion, Agiryama, p. 16.

³¹HT:5:Q6. GHT: Luganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.23.70.

³²The written chronological accounts of Giriama history used either Champion's 45 years per rika or Prins' 39 years per rika to count backward.

³³GHT: Jambo wa Toloko (Marafa) 12.16.70; Luganje wa Masha Vitengeni) 12.23.70.

³⁴GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Champion, Agiryama, pp. 54-55; Werner, 'Bantu Coast Tribes,' p. 347.

³⁵GHT: Kalama wa Nzaro (Mavueni) 3.30.71.

³⁶GHT: Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70.

³⁷Champion, Agiryama, p. 22.

³⁸HT:5:Q22, 23.

39 GHT: Maita wa Mweni (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Musage wa Magongo (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mukiza wa Birya (Hadu) 12.18.70.

40 HT:5:Q25.

41 Cf. Galla and other Mijikenda use where it meant warrior status in the first case and councillor in several of the latter.

42 HT:5:Q24.

43 A. J. MacLean, 'Native Criminal Law Procedure and Customs as found among the Wanyika tribes, Malindi, May 7, 1909,' DC/KFI/3/1; KNA.

44 GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Masha Murumwengu (Kizurini) 8.30.71; Katoi wa Kiti (Kajiweni) 4.2.71; Kazungu wa Kigande (Mavueni) 3.30.71.

45 According to Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, p. 24, under 'chief,' mwenye-tsi is the official title of the supreme elders, coming from tsi, for land. This is certainly more symbolic of communal ownership of the land by the six clans, under the guardianship of the clan leaders.

46 Also called mtawala and mtumia, or mvyeri wa kaya.
Champion, Agiryama, p. 5.

47 HT:1:Q4. Pembe wa Bembere and Birya wa Masha (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

48 GHT: Yaa wa Mangi (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71.

49 MacLean, 'Law, Procedure and Customs,' 5.7.09, DC/KFI/3/1, KNA. MacLean says Fungo was thought to have died about 36 years prior to 1909. Cashmore, 'Chronology,' p. 172, suggests Fungo died around 1870.

50 GHT: 'Guided Tour of Kayafungo,' 12.31.70.

51 HT:2:Q3.

52 Alan Jacobs, 'The Traditional Political Organization of the Pastoral Maasai,' unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Oxford, 1965); P. H. Gulliver, 'The Age-Set Organization of the Jie Tribe,' Journal of the Royal Anthropology Institute, 83 (1953), pp. 147-168; Neville Dyson-Hudson, 'The Karimojong Age System,' Ethnology, 2 (1963), pp. 353-401; Satish Saberwal, The Traditional Political System of the Embu of Central Africa, (Nairobi, 1970), p. 28.

53 Jacobs, 'Maasai'; Gulliver, 'Jie'; and Dyson-Hudson, 'Karimojong.'

⁵⁴Saberwal, Embu, pp. 17-48. John Middleton and Greet Kershaw, The Kikuyu and Kamba of Kenya, in Daryll Forde, ed., Ethnographic Survey of Africa, East Central Africa, Part V (London, 1965), p. 33.

CHAPTER III

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE: A SOCIETY DIFFUSING, 1850-1888

Dispersal from the Kaya

The Giriama, like the other Mijikenda, left their kayas around the mid-nineteenth century because the Galla threat was disappearing. This weakening of Galla power allowed them a new freedom of movement and provided open land to cultivate. According to the Giriama, the population had grown too large.¹ Since the land nearby was no longer productive the need to find new land was crucial. Also, the Giriama were in the process of expanding their trade and increasing their cattle herd. The kaya was far south of any trade routes to Takaungu or Malindi, and additional grazing land was needed. Except for the fact that the kaya had been their home for over a century and had served as the burial ground for their ancestral spirits, most Giriama had little reason for remaining in the kaya.

The Galla Decline

The Galla's general movement northward, as discussed in chapter one, began to affect the coast and the hinterland north of Mombasa by the 1840's. This movement allowed people living there to leave their fortifications (at least temporarily) and it encouraged a

revival of coastal plantations. When these plantations were first started (around Takaungu in 1836 and Malindi in 1850), the labour villages had to be stockaded to protect them from Galla raids.² However, this rapidly changed. Krapf noted that a few years prior to his visit to Takaungu, nobody could come there by land from Kirwitu to the south because of Galla attacks, but it was safe to do so in 1844.³

Why did the Galla power weaken so significantly at this time, and why, by the turn of the century, had they ceased to be a threatening political force? Several factors caused this decline. One turning point was the Masai success over the Galla in 1858, when the Galla leader, Dado Boneat, was killed in a significant battle. By custom, the Galla elected a leader from one of five designated families once every eight years. The next in line, Mara Barowat, fled in fear rather than assuming his duty to lead the Galla into war. Since no provisions existed for holding another election before the allotted time was passed, the Galla remained virtually leaderless for the remainder of the expired term.⁴ The Galla were unable to rally from this loss. In 1866, Wakefield and New provided evidence of Masai devastation all the way to the Tana River. They found Galla villages vacated at Kurawa⁵ (south of the Tana, but actually north of the Tana mouth); and, ten miles south of the river, Weichu had been abandoned.⁶ By counting the bull carcasses found in a deserted camp, New estimated one thousand Masai in the raiding party which his own caravan narrowly escaped.⁷ The Galla north of the Sabaki River (Gallana) remained solely pastoral and non-nomadic. This meant that their loss of cattle to the Masai was devastating.

In addition to Masai successes, the Somali were able to gain

the upper hand in their relations with the Galla soon after 1866. The crucial event was the Somali 'love feast.'⁸ One Sultan of the Ogadans (Somali) reported:

We grew tired of straight fighting, unsuccessful, so we invited the 'Wardey' elders to a great peace offering at which 750 oxen were slaughtered, which they accepted, and it paid us well, for we assassinated 2,000 chiefs at the feast when they were well gorged with meat.

An extensive and successful raid was immediately organized against them for some 30,000 cattle and goats together with 8,000 women and children were captured.

We kept constantly slaughtering the 'Wardey' and our policy was to kill any 'Wardey' at sight, unless he submitted to become our slave and embrace Islam.⁹

From this point on, Galla strength was broken.

The Kamba became an enemy actively attacking the Galla, too. Evidence from Ukambani indicated a marked change in Galla influence in their area about this time. Lindblom stated:

There is no doubt that only half a century ago /1865/ Galla extended in a more southerly and westerly direction, towards the middle course of Athi (Sabaki) /Gallana/ and down towards Mombasa, than at the present time . . . the River Tiva, which flows practically through the centre of the present East Ukamba, was formerly the boundary between Ukamba and the Galla country. Even further south, at Kibwezi, Galla are said to have lived.¹⁰

The Kamba appear to have battled with the Galla from that point on with varying luck, but they finally succeeded in driving them back to the Tana.¹¹ This left the Galla and Kamba divided by an uninhabited area of 160 kilometers, but the Kamba crossed over to the Tana to plunder Galla cattle.¹² Since the Kamba and the Mijikenda had always been on good terms, it is possible that Kamba cooperation with the Mijikenda (the Giriama, especially) against the Galla, provided increased security for Kamba and Giriama trade while offering incentive for a more

aggressive attitude on the part of the Giriama.¹³

No longer were the Galla merely fighting others with similar weapons and goals; the Galla were fighting for survival. Masai raids continued to be more severe than those of the Somali or the Kamba. One of their best-recorded attacks is that of 1886 when John and Annie Houghton, C.M.S. missionaries, were murdered by them at Golbanti on the Tana.¹⁴

However, the final blow to the Galla was the rinderpest epidemic which accompanied the famine of Mkufu in 1889-90.¹⁵ This disease felled almost all of the cattle they had managed to salvage from the Masai raiding. At Kau, near the Ozi River, the Galla lost 200-300 head of cattle - the entire stock.¹⁶ When Fitzgerald travelled in Galla country in 1891, he found that most of the Galla villages on the map he used had totally disappeared.¹⁷ He did, however, encounter Galla along the banks of the Gallana River existing on maize as their principal food and other cultivating Galla living far north of the river. At Golbanti on the Tana River, the Galla were totally dependent upon goat herds for food. They no longer tried to keep cattle and they refused to cultivate.¹⁸ Near Witu and Lake Burabin north of the Tana, where Galla used to graze their cattle, Fitzgerald found them without herds and living in villages of around a hundred or so.¹⁹ Further north than this few Galla were to be found.

In 1899, Somalis made a series of murderous raids on the last remnants of two Galla settlements at Port Durnford and Arnola. As a result of this action, the British rescued 576 Galla and resettled them at Witu.²⁰ The Somali continued to overcome the Galla to the point

that most Southern Galla have finally been absorbed by the Somali, with the exception of a few remaining south of the Tana River.²¹

New Galla Relationship

Those Galla remaining south of the Sabaki River during the second half of the nineteenth century depended on trade and agriculture, rather than on cattle, for their livelihood.²² This change from cattle-raiding enemy to cooperating trader-cultivator on the part of the Galla was extremely important to the welfare of the Mijikenda and the coastal people. With the assistance of the nomadic, hunting Langulo, who served them in exchange for protection, the Galla did continue to control the land but no longer used it for grazing. As far south as Takaungu, the Galla commanded a royalty for the ivory from elephants killed in the area or from trade passing through. They also restricted to certain peoples the collection of copal in their territory, particularly in the Arabuko forest.²³

Their claims to the land were recognized by others through the payment of jivu which ranged anywhere from a rent of a 'use' privilege to a bribe preventing molestation.²⁴ In 1834, the Mazrui Arabs 'purchased' land from the Galla at Takaungu and subsequently paid annual bribes of appeasement to free planters from abuse.²⁵ Settlers from Lamu and Zanzibar began paying the Galla an annual sum when they reoccupied Malindi in 1853.²⁶ The Sultan Burgash of Zanzibar 'purchased' the good behaviour of the Gallas on the coast by paying them a monthly salary through the Liwali of Malindi.²⁷

By 1871, the Arab and Swahili settlers in Malindi district

were expanding their plantations by paying annual fees to the Galla. By the turn of the century when the Galla were no longer around to collect, these Swahili claimed ownership over this land.²⁸ The C. M. S. missionary H. K. Binns 'bought' the land for Jilore Mission station from the Galla in 1877.²⁹ and the Mijikenda who migrated northward say they paid the Galla for the land they used from the Takaungu hinterland and Mt. Mangeda to Marafa.³⁰ These Galla land claims were recognized until the rinderpest epidemic in 1890 destroyed their ability to enforce them.³¹ After that time the Langulo attempted, with moderate success, to collect such payments for themselves.³²

Galla-Giriama Relationships and Giriama Trade

The growing emphasis on trade by Galla south of the Sabaki River became the primary factor affecting their relationships with the Giriama. In order to understand this change it is necessary to discuss the development of Giriama trade procedures. All of the Mijikenda had exchanged foodstuffs and bartered cattle for bridewealth, but the major trade item among them had been palm wine which could be tapped only in Digo, until Rabai acquired palm trees early in the nineteenth century.³³ The link to Giriama trade expansion and, eventually, to relations with the Galla, was the Langulo. These hunters had befriended the Giriama when the latter came to the kaya area and they may have been the ones who showed the Giriama the hiding place which was later cleared for their kaya. They taught the Giriama how to make arrow tips and shafts of iron and how to use feathers rather than leaves to guide their arrows. In addition, the Langulo gave the Giriama the formula and

process for making poison which soon became a Giriama trade item in great demand.³⁴ In appreciation, the Giriama gave the Langulo grain or a goat in exchange. To show his gratitude for the Giriama's concern, the Langulo might present the former with an elephant tusk. Thus began a system of very personalized gift-exchange.³⁵ The two men became blood brothers. The Giriama man, upon selling the ivory, would buy cloth, which he often shared with the Langulo, wire for the Giriama women's decorative chains, and sometimes cattle to pay bridewealth. Since the Giriama had no difficulty getting rid of the ivory and since they wanted to build cattle herds, they began kuhamba (travel trade) to Ukambani in the early nineteenth century.³⁶ To protect themselves from Galla or Masai raids, the Giriama usually travelled in groups. But the travel-trade process was the same as that with the Langulo. They took utsungu (poison), cloth and chains which they presented to a friend who arranged for cattle in return.³⁷ There were still no markets; still no large caravans. During 1836 when many Kamba, fleeing from famine in Ukambani, sought refuge in the coastal hinterland, they came first to the homes of their Giriama blood brothers.³⁸ The Kamba settlement was made at Mariakani, just south of the kaya.

According to a recent study of Kamba trade, the Giriama stimulated the Kamba to extend their own developing regional trade, based on hunters, warriors and labourers, to the long-distance caravan trade which became so famous.³⁹ But the Kamba trade did not substitute for that of the Giriama, it supplemented it. While the Kamba drew upon the Mt. Kenya and Kitui area for ivory, the Giriama continued to get theirs from the Langulo or from Teita.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, Giriama traders

were harassed by Masai and Galla in their trading attempts with Ukambani.⁴⁰ However, the increasing success of the Kamba in fighting the Galla and their cooperation with the Giriama in protecting kuhamba made sure that Giriama were no longer helpless victims of Galla raiders.⁴¹ Also, the Giriama slowly entered into a special trading relationship with the Galla for three reasons: their mutual friendship with the Langulo, the location of Giriama near the borders of Galla country, and the increasing Galla interest in trade. Krapf described 'Emberria' (Biryaa) as the 'rendez-vous place' for trade in the interior. The Giriama and the Kauma were the only peoples whom the Galla allowed to visit their territory.⁴² The use of this privilege was intensified by the increasing demand for copal just before mid-century.⁴³ The Swahili on the coast, jealous of the Giriama privileged position, were eager to enter Galla country themselves to collect the copal which abounded there. By mid-century, Takaungu had become a growing trading center, and even if the Swahili could not control the collection of trade items from the interior, they were eager for Giriama traders to come there to sell their goods.⁴⁴ Therefore, Giriama activity was advantageously moving northward from the kaya; their main trade route became that from Silaloni to Biryaa and on to Takaungu.

In addition to discussing the general development of Giriama trade, we must examine a growing change in Giriama fighting technique in order to understand their changing relations with the Galla. Historically, Giriama warfare with the Galla had been defensive and without direct confrontation.⁴⁵ After they arrived at the kaya, however, the Giriama learned from the Langulo how to make new weapons and arrow

poison, how to divide their forces, and how to attack from different points simultaneously.⁴⁶ The various Mijikenda groups were frequently arguing over something, but they did not conduct massive raids on each other, and refrained from using poisoned arrows. No warrior class trained specifically for warfare. No raids were conducted as proof of prowess. Galla age-sets, on the other hand, were composed of active warriors.

From mid-century on, the Giriama seemed to be much more willing and capable of fighting against their neighbours. Early in 1860, they began a war with the Rabai which continued for a decade until Charles New was called upon to negotiate a peace settlement. Giriama men had been killed when they went to Rabai to trade, so the Giriama began fighting the Rabai. Over the years, it became more of a feud than a war.⁴⁷

The turning point for Giriama-Galla relations came in 1865 when the two peoples decided to cease their hostilities, as reported by Wakefield:

. . . there were Galla 'sultans' or chiefs at Biriya
. . . on a visit of a diplomatic nature to Giriama.
They had been sent to negotiate a covenant of peace with the authorities of Giriama, there having recently been hostilities between the two tribes, and Gallas had come to the conclusion that such hostilities were not favorable to the interests of both peoples, as the road had been closed against an interchange of visits and a stop put to commercial intercourse.⁴⁸

Thus the Galla entered into a period of mutual cooperation with the Giriama. In spite of Giriama increasing willingness and ability to fight, both peoples felt they had more to gain through good trading relations.

The Search for New Land to Cultivate

As the Galla, too, became more settled on the land, they became less of a threat to their agricultural neighbours. In fact, this may have been more significant than the increase in population as a factor causing the Giriama to expand from their kaya. The Giriama told Champion that they had left the kaya because it was overcrowded and the land was exhausted.⁴⁹ They continue to give this as the reason, and yet statistics to verify it are hard to obtain. For the Giriama this is particularly so because no external description was ever given of their kaya while all the Giriama still lived inside. Later observers were unable to distinguish one Mijikenda group from another, and lumped them all together. We do know that Krapf estimated the WaNyika to be about 50,000 in 1846, but New guessed in 1863 that such a figure was a bit high.⁵⁰ Most of the figures given for populations of Rabai, Ribe, Chonyi, Jibana, Kambe and Kauma kayas between 1846 and 1879 range from 600 to 1500 people.⁵¹ Personal observation suggests that Kaya Giriama at its largest clearing could hold as many as 1000 houses, providing for a population not exceeding 5000 people. If there were, in fact, no more than 5000 Giriama in the 1850's, their population has increased rapidly since then. Arthur Hardinge estimated the Giriama population to be 70,000 in 1895,⁵² and the first official census estimate in 1912 listed 60,000 Giriama.⁵³ The 1924 census accounted for 104,433 Giriama.⁵⁴ The 1962 and 1969 census do not give separate figures for the Giriama, but they give a total Mijikenda population of 414,625 and 520,520, respectively.⁵⁵ Whether or not population pressure was a major factor causing the Giriama to leave the kaya, once they did leave, the

Giriama increased their population significantly.

Expanding Cattle Herds

By 1860, the Giriama had acquired cattle herds of substantial size.⁵⁶ Since the Galla were no longer raiding for cattle, by 1865, some Giriama had established small homesteads in Birvaa and Godoam, cultivating new fields and herding cattle nearby. This life of ease was not to last, however, for in 1866 Masai raiders came all the way to Ribe and then headed toward Giriama,⁵⁷ looking for cattle. Various Giriama acted differently toward this threat. Some tried to move themselves and their cattle nearer to the coast; others were willing to give up their cattle if the Masai would not return to disturb their cultivation;⁵⁸ still others, led by the famous warrior Fungo wa Gona who was mwanamuli of the kaya, fought and finally defeated the Kwavi at one point around 1875.⁵⁹ Disagreement developed because some Giriama felt Fungo and his warriors were wasting their energies and extending the conflict,⁶⁰ other Giriama felt that those families who lost cattle deserved the loss as justice for acquiring such wealth in the first place.⁶¹ Regardless, Giriama cattle attracted Kwavi into their area. Unlike some of the other Mijikenda who chose to retreat to their kayas under Kwavi threat, most Giriama gave up their cattle or moved away. By 1877, the entire district from Ribe to Malindi was suffering badly from Masai attacks.⁶² In this way the Kwavi helped to precipitate the rapid migration of Giriama toward the Sabaki River.

The Process of Dispersal

Why did the Giriama move into small homesteads instead of building another kaya? If they wanted to cultivate new land and to be nearer a developing trade route from Siāloni to Takaungu, then why did they not move their kaya?

In order to answer this question, we must first compare the timing and dispersal process of the other Mijikenda, and then we need to examine the same for the Giriama. The southernmost Digo and Duruma were the first Mijikenda to begin dispersing. At some time in the eighteenth century the Digo founded several additional kayas which were more like large kinship villages. Land was plentiful toward the coast, and the Digo began cultivating coconuts, grain and tobacco there. They exchanged copra, palm wine, grain, and copal with the Swahili at Mtongwe, Gazi, Vanga and Tanga.⁶³

Near the end of the eighteenth century the Duruma, moving westward, formed two additional kayas. Within forty years they had dispersed into homesteads based on a cattle-keeping economy. The Duruma did take some copal to the coast, but they were more interested in becoming brokers for Kamba ivory in exchange for cattle and slaves. Their kinship being matrilineal, they wanted both the cattle and slaves to redesign their inheritance pattern: the cattle served as bride-wealth for non-Duruma wives; the slaves became sons who could inherit wealth directly from their fathers. This process was comparable to that undertaken by the Yao of southern Malawi and Tanzania who acquired slaves for wealth. Unlike the Duruma, however, the Yao did not wish to change from matrilineage.⁶⁴

The Digo and Duruma living in the southern Mijikenda area were the first to be freed from the threatening Galla, and almost none of these once-powerful raiders remained in the southern neighbourhood by the nineteenth century.

Rabai interests concentrated primarily on cocoanut trees, which were cultivated in their area by the beginning of the nineteenth century. They tapped these trees three times a day for palm wine which they sold to other Mijikenda (except the Digo) who had no palm trees. By the time Krapf arrived in 1846, the Rabai already had begun a new kaya, and they subsequently founded additional ones. However, even when they ceased to live inside their kayas, the Rabai did not move far away because the cocoanut trees needed constant attention.⁶⁵ The remaining populations of the hilltop kayas, the Ribe, the Kambe, the Dzihana, the Chonyi and the Kauma spread into the land toward the coast, but they were ready to return to the kayas when the need arose.⁶⁶ In 1862 New found several of their kayas almost deserted, but many were reoccupied when the Kwavi began raiding.⁶⁷

The Giriama, like the Duruma, were more interested in trade and cattle-keeping. Since they had no permanent crops to hold them to the kaya, and since, indeed, the land surrounding it had been cultivated much too long, there was little reason to remain there if they no longer needed protection.

The beginning date of the Giriama dispersal remains uncertain. Descendants of those Mazrui Arabs who first arrived in Takaungu reported the Giriama to be still in their kaya in 1834.⁶⁸ In 1845, Krapf, who never mentioned a kaya, visited the 'Kerima hamlet' of Babai Korura

(8-10 'cottages') and Mikomani (20 'cottages') and was told that Mikomani was the largest Giriama community outside 'Emberria,' where he understood the majority of Giriama resided.⁶⁹ In his journey to Ukambani in 1849, Krapf met many Giriama along the trade route,⁷⁰ but he mentioned no Giriama communities there. So it appears that by mid-century, the Giriama had only begun to spread into a few homesteads, in the direction of Mombasa.

The Giriama did, in fact, have two kayas additional to Kaya Giriama. The exact history of either of them is difficult to reconstruct, because few dates can be confirmed. The earliest kaya at Jurore, in Biryaa, was considered to have been the province of the AMaganjoni clan. It may be that Jurore was founded prior to Kaya Giriama as one of the intermediate stopping places during the migration from Singwaya, perhaps around the late seventeenth century. Possibly when Giriama moved to Biryaa after 1850, they simply re-occupied it; perhaps it was never a true kaya at all. It lacked the extensive protective features of Kaya Giriama, it commanded no political influence, and nobody speaks of its being 'consecrated.' Today Jurore is remembered by only a few Giriama who are uncertain about its exact location.⁷¹

The second kaya, located near Mwabayangundo, was called Kidzini after the AKidzini clan. The AKidzini remember specifically that their kaya was established after a quarrel.⁷² Never, though, were they banished from or refused the use of Kaya Giriama.⁷³ This second kaya was considered to have 'untraditional, unconsecrated fingo'; only the traditional fingo could have provided the proper religious attributes.⁷⁴ Champion was told that this kaya was built before Krapf

arrived in 1844,⁷⁵ but we do not know the source of his evidence. New visited one of the Giriama kayas in 1871,⁷⁶ which, from the description of his travels, was likely to have been Kaya Kidzini. But the exact date of its origin is impossible to determine.

Neither of these kayas appears to have had a significant role in the general Giriama dispersal. Even Kaya Kidzini did not remain occupied for long, although it continued to be used on ceremonial occasions.

Therefore, the process of Giriama dispersal from the kaya correlated with the reasons for that dispersal. The removal of Galla threat freed the Giriama from life inside a single fortress. If, indeed, the population was increasing, they would have needed a much larger kaya located where the land could provide continuing cultivation. The marginal fertility of the land eliminated this possibility. The individual character of the expanding trade did not require only one trading center, and advantage accrued in independence of movement.

Discrepancies in wealth and unreliable fertility of new land were already causing the Giriama to grow less cohesive. They may have had no desire to build another kaya, and they would probably have been unable to get the entire population to cooperate in such a venture had this decision been made. Therefore, the Giriama moved into small homesteads. Eventually unpredictable rainfall and the emerging threat of Kwavi raiders stimulated population movement from homestead to homestead rather than encouraging population stability, even in the homesteads.

Since the Giriama settlement pattern today indicates no

particular predominance of clan affiliation in any part of their country, with the exception of the influence of the Kidzini near their kaya, presumably the Giriama did not usually leave the kaya in clan groups. The general result of the total dispersal was that a majority of the Giriama moved north, west, and east of their old home to inhabit most of the hinterland between Takaungu and Malindi. However, at first, the Enyetsi (the leaders of the six clans), the mwanamuli (spokesman), and probably some of the elderly members, continued to occupy the original kaya or the regions nearby. The dispersal emerges as action undertaken by individuals who had several reasons for leaving the kaya, who took advantage of the opportunity to do so, and who were subsequently urged to keep moving by natural conditions and intervening incidents.

The Process of Change

Just as the need for protection against cattle raiders allowed a rather tight corporate political system inside the kaya, so did the changing character of Giriama needs and of Giriama environment help to determine the type of political change the Giriama underwent during the second half of the nineteenth century. The character and success of Giriama political organization within the kaya demanded consensus and unity. The mechanism of a society ruled by its elders sitting in council depended on their being available at any given time. When the Giriama began leaving the kaya, the kambi were no longer able to meet easily and frequently as a whole. Consequently, they had to adapt their governing roles to the new needs of the people, but the kambi did retain their position of respect and their privilege of

making judicial decisions.

Local Adaptation

An example of this process is the modification of the kambi's role as arbiters when two new principal units of settlements emerged: the homestead and the lalo (pl. malalo), a small community of homestead clusters. The homestead's founder became the primary decision-maker. Krapf wrote that 'every man of wealth and of a large family and relations considered himself a headman.'⁷⁷ Where several homesteads were clustered together, the first founder theoretically had no direct authority beyond his own family. Those men who had been initiated as kambi mutually still determined decisions. However, just as a kaya leader represented the Giriama as a group to outsiders, so did one man frequently become the primary representative in a lalo. To formalize malalo councils, clearings called bandari were designated especially for the gathering of the kambi to settle arguments. When disputes arose between malalo, then those inhabitants who were kambi living in both malalo would sit in councils to discuss the matter. It was important to have as many of the six clans as possible represented, but the clansmen of those involved in the dispute would excuse themselves from the proceedings. If this council could not solve the problem, then representatives were usually sent to the kaya where some of the kambi, Vaya, and Fisi remained.

Kaya Adaptation

The status of the kaya was changing, too. The relationship of the Giriama to the Enyetsi and to the mwanamuli, as well as the regard for the sacredness and authority of the kaya, had undergone considerable adaptation. In order to understand the changes which occurred from the initial dispersal around the mid-nineteenth century until the British took power in 1888, we can usefully divide this period between the two rika which were ruling. The Mkwavi Rika was ruling when this period opened. The Kavuka Rika was installed sometime around 1877 and was still serving when the British took power.⁷⁸

Mkwavi Rika

The mwanamuli of the kaya during most of the Mkwavi Rika was Fungo wa Gona, a superior warrior with a strong personality.⁷⁹ The kambi members of the Mkwavi Rika had been installed while the Giriama were still living in the kaya. Rules of behaviour and penalties for abuse were rigid but well-accepted. Fungo's personal influence was significant, for he was remembered in fear as one who would not stop at using violence to force the observance of customs.⁸⁰

Fungo himself probably became more powerful than most of the mwanamuli had before him because, as a strong warrior, he was able to lead a successful campaign against the Kwavi in the early 1870's.⁸¹ Also, his remaining in the kaya during the period when the Giriama were becoming diffused accentuated both the importance of the kaya as the central focus of a newly-expanding political process and of the greater need for a single spokesman.

The kambi in the kaya continued to serve as the highest court of appeals, but judicial power moved from the kaya into the homesteads with the kambi members. However, the Giriama still tended to defer to the Enyetsi and to the mwanamuli on matters of warfare, famine, disease and foreign relations. All the Enyetsi probably lived in or near the kaya throughout the rule of the Kwavi Rika, but during the closing years of this rika, they were so old that the dying ones were constantly being replaced. As long as Fungo lived, he probably maintained power over all the Giriama, and the active Enyetsi may have become less than six.

The kaya itself continued to be the ritual center for the Giriama and the storehouse for all medicines. It was considered the place where those Giriama who kept the secrets either lived or could convene, but the kaya became less of an influence on those Giriama who had moved north. Recent devastating Kwavi raids had made life difficult. Distances from homesteads to the kaya were long and perilous; ceremonies were expensive; time was precious. The month or more required to complete the rituals was longer than many eligible Giriama could afford to be away from home.

Kavuta Rika

When the Kavuta Rika was installed around 1877, Fungo was no longer alive, and there was increasing need to strengthen the government with new leadership. In order for the new rika to function, it was necessary to hold Mung'aro simultaneously at the two kayas - Kaya Giriama and Kaya Kidzini.⁸²

In addition to holding Mung'aro in two places, several other adaptations had begun. Theoretically, all males who had been initiated into Mwanza M'Kulu since Mkwavi Rika had been installed in the late 1830's were supposed to be at the kaya for this Mung'aro which would install their own rika to rule. The return of all Giriama males to either kaya, however, was impossible. Therefore, fathers attended for their sons as well as for themselves.⁸³ When they returned home, they anointed their sons with red clay from the kaya and thus ensured their installation. This practice may have supported Champion's belief that two geneological generations ruled in a rika.

After the Mung'aro ceremonies were completed, then a Kirao ceremony was needed to elvate the seniors to kambi of the new rika. Although I found no evidence to substantiate it, two Kirao as well as two Mung'aro may have been held. According to reports, both written and oral, this Kirao was held not just for Wulumbere, but also for Wulakahi and possibly Wulanyuma initiation into kambi.⁸⁴ This may have been a formal recognition that these age-sets would hold leadership positions for the rika anyway, and by having them initiated at the same Kiaro, fewer Kirao ceremonies were needed. Without doubt, the Kirao of the remaining age-sets were danced in pairs so that Mitseka and Abikizi danced together, then Atsai and Mafira, and so forth.⁸⁵ Probably, during the later years of Mkwavi Rika, the Giriama had learned that the Kirao ceremony demanded the presence not only of the initiates but also of their teachers, so combining Kirao made it easier for more to attend.

In addition to these adaptations of Mung'aro and Kirao, by the time Kavuta Rika was installed, the role of the Enyetsi must have

been less restricted to the kaya. This is supported by the fact that, in each kaya, a mwanamuli and an assistant were chosen at the Mung'aro to be in charge of the kayas: Mwazize wa Bunduki and Mbaruk wa Nduria in Kaya Giriama and Ngolo wa Baya and Rua wa Yaa in Kaya Kidzini.⁸⁶ Again, this was an acceptance that, due to dispersal, all Enyetsi were not remaining in the kaya, so representatives were chosen from among them. Doubtless, only AKidzini held positions in their kaya.

Judicial Adaptation

Not only did the ritual procedure undergo adaptations, but the judicial process became more important in the malalo than in the kaya. By the time of the Kavuta Rika, the practice of sending representatives to the kaya from the malalo became even less effective for several reasons. Many of the senior kambi, including the Vaya and Fisi, had moved from the kaya area into more fertile lands. Since the land near the kaya was becoming so difficult to cultivate, those elders who did remain in the kaya grew more and more dependent upon the people outside to bring food and water.⁸⁷ The distance to be travelled in order to bring a judicial case from Godoma or Gallana to the kaya was a deterrent to following this procedure as a matter of course.

Finally, once the capable men of legitimate credential as kambi, Vaya, and especially Fisi, established residence as far away as Gallana, the old location of authority was no longer the base for the majority of influential Giriama. Thus Giriama ties to the kaya weakened as the authority of the resident kambi was dissipated by their decreasing numbers and by the lack of power to force obedience.

Subsequently, councils emerged not only in the malalo but also in the four regions: Biryaa, Godoma, Gallana and Weruni (the latter usually held inside the kaya).⁸⁸ Eventually, at least one Fisi, many Vaya, and the kambi of a region provided the full functions of government for the Giriama population living within that region. However, these councils, too, found it difficult to bind people to their decisions. The availability of land meant that a dissatisfied litigant simply moved away. He could also appeal to another council or even to the courts of the Muslim Mudirs on the coast.⁸⁹ All of this stimulated the independence of nyere (younger men) who objected to the kambi's authority to make decisions concerning their own well-being. It also intensified their propensity to establish their own homesteads where there would have sole responsibility for their inhabitants. And if they were a member of a lalo, these nyere logically expected to be a part of the larger decision-making process.

What emerged, then, was a blurring of the distinction between initiated kambi and nyere who acquired judicial authority as a result of their own ability and the changing circumstances of the times. The expanded opportunities for acquiring personal wealth meant that sometimes the youngest were often the wealthiest in a lalo, or were at least wealthy enough to pay the fees for membership into the internal societies of Habasi, Kinyenzi and even Gohu at a much earlier age than was possible when they all lived in the kaya. They could also complete the payment for kambi membership long before they were old enough to serve as councillors.⁹⁰

Ritual Adaptation

Moreover, the faltering maintenance of the Giriama patterns of political authority that had developed inside the kaya over the long period during which the Giriama lived inside was further complicated by the breakdown of Giriama initiation ceremonies. Perhaps more correctly, the changing patterns rendered some traditional rituals almost obsolete while others gained prominence.

Since Sayo ra Mudhanga traditionally involved very little instruction and merely elevated a man to be akomu, placing him next in line for kambi, then support for the ritual quickly atrophied.⁹¹ As long as some few of the age-set presented the payment to the kambi in the kaya and a few came to dance, all those of the proper age were considered initiated.

Since Kirao was the ritual which elevated a Giriama to kambi and provided instructions about Giriama maada (customs), it was the one ritual maintained for a considerable period after the dispersal from the kaya. No matter how much power a man had in his own homestead, he still was not kambi unless his age-set had danced Kirao. Even though all men who were eligible to go to the kaya to dance and receive instruction did not do so, Kirao maintained its vitality in the malalo. New initiates returned from the kaya to their malalo and recreated a part of the ritual which, in effect, installed into Kirao those of kambi age who had been unable to attend the ceremonies in the kaya.

Kirao could be celebrated only during times of peace and plenty since, in addition to long days of instruction, these ceremonies were lavish in food, beer, and celebration in general. The initiates

had spent many years contributing to their kambi fees, and their wives were taken along to cook all of the food. When the men returned home and presided over the second portion of the Kirao (kuramara) in the malalo, they were expected to choose a host for the local celebration, as well.⁹² This was an expensive undertaking, and since disparities in wealth occurred between the men old enough to be initiated and some who were younger but wealthier, individual wealth became as important as seniority in determining Kirao sponsors in the malalo. The initiates chose the host, and great honor was bestowed on whoever was awarded the privilege.⁹³

Not only had Sayo ra Mudhanga and Kirao changed, but the use of the Mwanza M'Kulu to trim the age-sets became less effective after the installation of Kavuta Rika. Since the Mwanza M'Kulu was played both at the funeral in honor of any deceased Vaya and at the trimming of the age-sets, its use for these two purposes could be controlled only so long as everybody lived in the kaya. Once the Giriama dispersed, the Mwanza M'Kulu had to be sent around all of Giriama land in order to trim the age-sets. This was complicated not only by the distance and time involved but by the fact that the drum was needed simultaneously for funerals and trimming. Since it was impossible for elders in the kaya to coordinate the use of a single drum for deaths all over Giriama land, the Giriama solved this difficulty by making many other mianza (drums) to be used for funerals.⁹⁴

Also, young fathers, who were wealthy at an early age and wanted their children to be able to see the drum when it came for the funeral of a family member, paid the fees before the actual time for

the age-set. Thus it became impossible for a person to know if he had been initiated at the proper time for boys of his age.⁹⁵ A boy's position in an age-set, then became less distinct than in the past.

A combined result of Giriama population dispersal and a decreasing support for Giriama rituals was that fewer Giriama knew the fine details of Giriama tradition. The restrictions under Kavuta Rika were only half as strong as those demanded when Kwavi Rika was in power, reflecting the growing weakness of the rika's power over the Giriama population.⁹⁶

Changing Foreign Relations

As the Giriama left the kaya, they had to establish different kinds of relationships with some of their closer neighbours. Three examples of this involved the Mazrui Arabs at Takaungu, the Galla and the Somali to the north, and the Kauma in the Takaungu hinterland. In all three cases the Giriama established legitimacy of their presence and respect for their intent to remain there.

After Kavuta Rika had been initiated, the Giriama found themselves in the first serious conflict with Mazrui sometime between 1877 and 1883.⁹⁷ The two people had developed a good trading relationship, especially in the Takaungu hinterland, but the Giriama stayed mainly to themselves, remaining cautiously distrustful. Most of the trading transactions took place at the neutral entrepôts of Mtanganyiko and Konjoro. Usually Indian traders came with donkeys to carry the Giriama grain or ivory into Takaungu. The war between the two occurred in the aftermath of several events disturbing for both Mazrui and Giriama.

Just at the time coastal plantations achieved their highest development in 1873, the sea trade in slaves was banned by the Sultan of Zanzibar. This spurred a successful overland slave trade from Kilwa but it was short-lived since it, too, was banned three years later.⁹⁸ The plantations suffered greatly from want of labour, and the danger of Giriama becoming victims of enslavement intensified. The Mazrui also needed and demanded more Giriama grain, but Giriama land was on the threshold of a new serious famine, so there was less surplus to trade. The Giriama, holding an advantageous position by non-dependence on the products they got in exchange for their grain, became reluctant to trade. The Mazrui apparently decided to challenge the Giriama power in the trading relationship, or at least they were convinced that a conflict would gain such ends. They had been envious for some time of the Giriama's privileged trading position with the Galla and in Galla territory, but they were unable to break up the Giriama trade monopolies.⁹⁹

The Giriama consider this conflict as a fight to prevent the Mazrui from enslaving their people. Partly, this issue cannot be separated from the fact that both Giriama men and women were becoming Swahili. Particularly, grievance was expressed against the marriage of Giriama women to Muslims. Though it may be a hindsight observance, according to one account, the 'kaya elders gave the order that the Giriama should attack the Arabs.'¹⁰⁰

The Mazrui version, which comes from written European accounts, pictures a situation where an ultimatum was delivered by the Mazrui about maintaining the grain monopoly, and a punitive force was sent out by the Arabs to implement it.¹⁰¹ Whatever sparked the

confrontation, the Mazrui marched into the hinterland with a large fighting force of slaves and confronted the Giriama at Mukimwani.

The outcome was decisive. The Giriama, accustomed to hiding in the 'bush' of their country, were assisted by its waterless condition. They lured the Arabs into the hinterland but remained elusive in 'guerilla-type' attacks. The Arabs lost 250 men, not in open confrontation, but in succumbing to the traps of the desert-like hinterland.¹⁰² Trading relations eventually resumed and, as Giriama and coastal peoples established tsoga (blood brotherhood), enduring relationships were established between the two peoples.¹⁰³ In spite of the fact that the the Giriama had won the conflict, however, one Giriama explained that 'because we did not go to school, they still considered us their subjects.'¹⁰⁴

As the Giriama migrated northward, they usually paid jivu to the Galla for the use of the land.¹⁰⁵ However, there appears to have been remaining conflicts, particularly among those Giriama who kept cattle. According to MacDougall, in 1881 the Giriama successfully staved off a combined Somali-Galla raid:

The Gallas induced the Somalis to make a raid on the Giriama, offering their services as scouts and guides in return for a portion of the spoil. The raid had been accordingly undertaken but resulted in utter defeat for the raiders, as all the Gallas were killed, and only 30 wounded Somalis survived to tell the tale.¹⁰⁶

Finally, in 1888, the year the British influence began on the coast and in the opening period of the Mkufu famine, the Giriama fought the Kauma, probably over food. The war lasted only two weeks,¹⁰⁷ but during that time the Giriama sold captured Kauma women to the coast for food. One account attributes this war to Giriama reaction against the

abuse of their mwanamuli by the Kauma.¹⁰⁸ Since there was famine, the mwanamuli had left the kaya for his home outside. While at Kaoweni buying from some Indian shops, he was recognized as the Giriama mwanamuli because he was wearing the kidhumbiri, a headdress symbolizing his office. Out of respect, the Indian shopkeepers gave him many things, but the Kauma he encountered on his way home 'threatened him and beat him up.' In retaliation, the mwanamuli set up camp at Marabuni, called upon Giriama from all over to come there to fight and the Giriama won their subsequent confrontation with the Kauma.¹⁰⁹

All of these confrontations indicate the Giriama's ability to gather a fighting force when the need arose. The method of gathering forces was the same used to announce a disease in the land and to set up the procedure for administering the medicines. A stick with leaves affixed was carried by a runner to the main areas of Giriama land. As a sign that the message had been received, one leaf was torn by the man who got the message. The runner then returned the stick with its torn leaves which insured that the right people received the message. In the case of disease, the medicines and an mganga would stay at the pathways into the malalo and 'inoculate' all who passed by and burn them with a small mark on the neck to indicate they had been treated. In the case of war, the warriors came to the appointed place.¹¹⁰ From all indications, any Giriama kambi could urge a gathering for war on good grounds, but the actual call usually came through the kaya.

The Giriama were no longer people who hid because they had no alternative. They remained to themselves out of preference, but they had successfully convinced their neighbours that they were to be taken seriously. In spite of the fragile appearance of their political

structure, and the loss of some of their cohesiveness, they had confronted their enemies on more equal ground than had been the case in the past.

A New Pattern of Independence

New circumstances and needs, then, had brought about a drastic restructuring of power relations within Giriama society in the second half of the nineteenth century. When a man became head of his homestead and prospered, he was regarded as a member of the wider Giriama leadership and considered himself as such. Some became extremely wealthy, and even if they did not attain kambi, they wielded considerable authority.

This development occurred elsewhere in East Africa during the nineteenth century. The Kamba kitonga, 'rich man,' included the famous Kavui Mwenda (Kavoi) of Kitui of whom Krapf wrote. There were others such Mukuti, Juyanga and Mtanga wa Msuki, the latter being a man of means who was regarded as a chief but not a trader.¹¹¹ Trading chiefs emerged among the Pare, Yao and Kimbu while Mirambo and Ngungu ya Mawe developed Nyamwezi politics around their individual trading networks. Semboja at Momba emerged as ruler of a powerful Shambaa trading state away from the Usambara mountain center, and Mwakikongo left the Digo kaya at Kwale to form his own Jombo to expand his influence.¹¹² These were all cases of dynamic adjustments within traditional politics and a mobilization of resources of land, trade, and manpower.

Such changes among the Giriama meant that the cohesiveness of Giriama society weakened. Whereas once the kaya had been their home

and the unique source of Giriama power and authority, it became instead merely a place of supportive political authority. Many of the ancestors were buried there, and it was the logical place for any event which involved a meeting of the Giriama kambi as a whole, but political authority resided essentially with the kambi themselves wherever they lived. The kaya was considered the Giriama 'home' and was regarded as sacred. Some of the eldest kambi remained there, but unlike in the first several decades of the dispersal when matters concerning all Giriama usually were decided at the kaya, in the period of Kavuta Rika such matters were merely referred to the kaya if they could not be handled in the malalo or the regions. Insofar as it remained the center of Giriama culture, the kaya was regarded as the source of medicines, oaths, spirits of the Giriama and, theoretically, political authority. Possibly, as the political authority of the kaya was weakening, its religious authority was expanding since, for the first time, one had to travel to another place in order to consult the spirits of the ancestors of all the Giriama.

Essentially, Giriama political organization had changed so that the full kambi council, the Enyetsi and the mwanamuli, the Vaya and the Fisi adapted to form two parts: the councils of kambi throughout Giriama land; and the kaya, which became the focus for unity. The Enyetsi, the Vaya and the Fisi were represented in both. Day-to-day functioning of government was conducted on the local or regional level. The mwanamuli and an assistant or two were selected from among the Enyetsi to be guardians of the kaya. Because the Giriama ancestors were buried in the kaya, because many Giriama traditions had begun there, and because it was the source of all Giriama oaths and medicines, these

kaya elders became guardian of the ultimate religious authority - the ancestor spirits, Giriama custom, and the power of the oath. They could not 'control' this authority at the expense of the others; they were actually 'caretakers' for the Enyetsi and the whole body of kambi. The kaya elders had persuasive power particularly on the issues of tradition, warfare and foreign relations, and they maintained effective power of judicial appeal where cases were brought to the kaya for that purpose. In both cases, however, kambi and Enyetsi who were interested or involved joined them from various parts of Giriama land. The mwana-muli of the kaya or any of the Enyetsi theoretically could convene the entire kambi council by blowing 'the sacred horn' but only part of the kambi actually ever attended. This gave the kambi as a full body less effectiveness and supported growing independence among those Giriama who were spread throughout Giriama land.

This tendency toward greater independence can be attributed to the development of regional governments and increasing conflict between Giriama kamba and younger men. Although the kaya and the men who remained there retained widely recognized prestige and authority, the new pattern of Giriama settlement placed them on the geographical periphery of Giriama land. An inevitable decentralization of Giriama political and social organization occurred as a result of the different ecologies and economic opportunities encountered by Giriama in other parts of Giriama land. Particularly in Biryaa and northern Gallana, trading opportunities made possible greater social mobility and lessened the need for men to rely on the kaya for authority. One colonial authority later described this as the cause for the decline of Giriama unity.

From this time I date the decline of the Giriama constitution: the poison trade with the Wa-Boni /Alangulo/ and Pokomo led to an ivory trade which gave the trans-Gallana councils grandiose ideas of their own importance and of independence from their corn-growing brethren to the south, while similar trade with the Akamba and Atharaka undermined the loyalty of Bamba and Biryaa settlements to the central authority. The result was intrigues, poisonings, and separation.¹¹³

Not only did the Giriama develop regional forms of organization, which forced adaptation toward diffusion against the central authority, but there also emerged a serious conflict between the kambi and younger men. Sociologists, speaking of age groups in terms of their performing integrative or disintegrative functions in the society, say the function is dependent upon the various types of conformity or deviancy.¹¹⁴ Unlike many of the Giriama non-Mijikenda neighbours, whose political systems of age-groups provided power to the warriors who were middle-aged, Giriama government was a type of gerontocracy. The eldest ruled because of their special powers, wisdom and prestige. So long as elders remained the wisest in the society, and so long as the population accepted this, then the people conformed and the political system remained integrative. However, if the elders' superior wisdom became questionable, either because the society was changing too rapidly for them to remain full authorities or because they had less access than others to the communication network, then they were confronted with deviancy which resulted in a disintegrative function. Giriama society was developing in such a way as to strain the privileged position of the elders.

This was the status of Giriama society when British authorities arrived in this part of East Africa. The British believed

incorrectly that the peace and security provided by the British administration allowed the Giriama to move from their kaya in the first place and made it possible for some Giriama to escape traditional authority and customs. But it is evident that the dispersal pattern was established well before the British Imperial East Africa Company's influence began to be felt in 1888. When the British took control of the East Africa Protectorate in 1895, they only served to reinforce the pattern of independence which had already developed.

NOTES

¹Pembe wa Bembe (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71; HT:2:Q1; Champion, Agiryama, p. 5.

²Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 154.

³J. Lewis Krapf, 'Forty Mile Journey to Takaungu, 28 June - 4 July, 1845,' Church Missionary Archives, London, C/A5/0/16-168. (Hereafter CMS 168.)

⁴New, Life and Wanderings, 162-163. New was seeing the results of Masai devastation on the Galla first hand and was himself rumoured killed by Masai raiders. He had difficulty travelling and winning enough confidence from the Galla to be able to meet with some of the important men. He was told that Yaya Wariot was about to be elected the new chief, assisted by Aba Laga Jarot, pp. 163, 254. He eventually got to see Mara Barowat (who had returned, but who was ineffective as a war leader) and Bolio Boneat, the brother of the slain Dado. Together with about fifty or sixty Galla, he met these two near Ganda, pp. 240-241. These Galla had never seen a white man before, and they requested New's assistance against the Masai, pp. 242-243. Finally, anticipating hostility, New made it to Ganda (Gubisa) to Mara Barowat's home. The meeting was cordial, but unproductive for New. p. 251.

⁵New, Life and Wanderings, p. 195.

⁶Ibid., p. 199. Wakefield saw a cairn here commemorating loss of cattle to the Masai, E. S. Wakefield, Thomas Wakefield, Missionary and Geographical Pioneer in East Africa (London, 1904), p. 65.

⁷New, Life and Wanderings, p. 223.

⁸The date of this has never been confirmed. Hobley, Kenya, p. 176 dated it at 1848, but he gave no source for his information. Cashmore, 'Chronology,' p. 166, included both Hobley's date and a suggested 1860's from the Malindi Political Records. In 1913, Kenneth MacDougall placed in the Malindi Political Records under 'Notes on the Decline and Extermination of the Gallas' a quote by the late Sultan of the Ogadens (Somali) who had died about the turn of the century at the age of ninety. The only possible way to date from this account is to guess from his statement that, as a boy, he remembered how his elders feared the Galla for whom they worked as herdsboys. He then goes on to tell the story of Somali retaliation. From New's extremely thorough reporting of his journey in 1866 to the Galla at Ganda and also to Lamu and Fata, he undoubtedly would have mentioned such an event had it occurred prior to his visit. DC/MAL/2/3, KNA.

⁹Ibid., Muga Eusuph, the late Sultan of the Ogadens, in his account to Kenneth MacDougall, D. C. Malindi which MacDougall recorded on 3.31.13 but which was told to him as much as fifteen years previously.

Hobley, Kenya, pp. 176-77 quotes precisely the same numbers (with the exception of 80,000 rather than 8,000 women) so presumably this was his source. I. M. Lewis, 'Galla,' p. 226 wrote that the Galla were stricken with smallpox in 1865 and the Darod Somali turned the tables on their masters, but I find it hard to believe that the Galla and not the Somali were harmed.

¹⁰Lindblom, Akamba, p. 19.

¹¹Ibid., p. 353.

¹²Ibid., p. 204.

¹³Ibid., p. 353. Lindblom notes their combined efforts against the Galla.

¹⁴Wakefield, Thomas Wakefield, pp. 242043. MacDougall, 'Galla.'

¹⁵A. M. Champion, 'History of the WaGiriama, DC/KFI/1/3, KNA. MacDougall, 'Galla,' KNA.

¹⁶Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 344.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 318.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 322.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 330, 398, 335.

²⁰MacDougall, 'Galla,' KNA.

²¹I. M. Lewis, 'Galla,' p. 227.

²²Krapf, Travels, pp. 115-6.

²³Krapf, CMS-168.

²⁴Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 169. Krapf, CMS-168.

²⁵Krapf, CMS-168.

²⁶James Weaver, Acting D. O. Malindi to C. H. Crauford, Acting Commissioner, Mombasa, 7.23.96, Malinda Inward, 1895-98, CP 75/46, KNA.

²⁷MacDougall, 'Galla,' KNA.

²⁸Weaver to Crauford, CP 75/46, KNA.

²⁹Tate to Hobley, 4.23.14, CP 6/425, KNA.

³⁰GHT: Mwavuo wa Manza (Marafa) 12.16.70; Elders in Kaya Giriama (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

³¹Cashmore, 'Chronology,' p. 169. 'Champion,' KNA.

³²Weaver to Crauford, CP 75/46, KNA.

³³I am grateful to T. S. Spear for some of the information in the following paragraph on the discussion of non-Giriama Mijikenda trade. See his 'The Mijikenda in the Nineteenth Century' (mimeo.), Nairobi, 1971, for more extensive discussion.

³⁴GHT: Luganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.23.70.

³⁵GHT: Kenga wa Mwanenge (Mwabanyundo) 9.15.71. I am grateful to Victor Gona Kamungu for presenting me with a copy of this interview, which was a part of his own research project on the Giriama.

³⁶Ibid. Rabai Sub-District Annual Report, 1912-13, Seyidie Provincial 8/157, KNA. 'Illicit Ivory Trade,' CP 8/172, KNA.

³⁷GHT: Mwangoto wa Kalama (Mwenbekati) 6.14.71; Jefwa wa Mwayaya (Hadu) 12.18.71; Birya wa Masha (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

³⁸GHT: Kenga wa Mwanenge (Mwabanyundo) 9.15.71.

³⁹Jackson, 'Akamba,' Chapter VI: 'Trade and Traders in Akamba Society, 1775-1850,' pp. 219-284.

⁴⁰Krapf, CMS-173.

⁴¹Lindblom, Akamba, p. 353.

⁴²Krapf, 'Excursion to the Wanika Division of Kerima, NNW of Mombasa, February 17-19, 1845' CMS: C/A5/0/16 - 166. (Hereafter, CMS-166.)

⁴³Krapf, CMS-168.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵GHT: Ziro wa Mae (Madzimbani) 12.28.70; Mbogo wa Golca (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71.

⁴⁶GHT: Kitoi wa Kiti (Kajiwani) 4.2.71; Luganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.23.70.

⁴⁷New, Life and Wanderings, p. 485.

⁴⁸Wakefield, Thomas Wakefield, p. 56.

⁴⁹Champion, 'History,' KNA.

⁵⁰New, Life and Wanderings, p. 128-9; Krapf, Travels, p. 159; Krapf, Risen in Ost-Afrika, 2 Volumes, (Stuttgart, 1858). In Vol. I, p. 304, he estimated 4,000 Rabai, 30,000 Digo, 20,000 Northern Nyika.

⁵¹CMS: H. K. Binns, 10; J. L. Krapf, 28, 134; J. Rebmann, 41, 52, as cited in Spear, 'The Mijikenda.'

⁵²Arthur Hardinge, Diplomatist in the East (London, 1928), p. 136.

⁵³Provincial Commissioner, Political Report, Coast, 7.29.13, DC/MAL/2/1, KNA.

⁵⁴Annual Report, Coast Province, 1924, CP 2/1043, KNA.

⁵⁵Kenya Population Census, 1952. Census of Kenya, 1969, in Kenya Statistical Abstract, 1970, Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Nairobi, Kenya.

⁵⁶New, Life and Wanderings, p. 114.

⁵⁷Wakefield, Thomas Wakefield, p. 134.

⁵⁸GHT: Elders at Kaya Giriama (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

⁵⁹Cashmore, 'Chronology,' p. 166. GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71.

⁶⁰GHT: Birya wa Masha (Kaloleni) 6.12.71; Karezi wa Mwasada (Bamba); 2.22.70.

⁶¹GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71.

⁶²Wakefield, Thomas Wakefield, p.

⁶³Spear, 'The Mijikenda.'

⁶⁴John McCracken, 'The Nineteenth Century in Malawi,' in T. O. Ranger, ed., Aspects of Central African History (London, 1968), p. 100.

⁶⁵Spear, 'The Mijikenda.'

⁶⁶Coastward, the land was quite fertile at first.

⁶⁷New, Life and Wanderings, p. 248.

⁶⁸MacDougall, 'Notes on the WaNyika,' KNA.

⁶⁹Krapf, CMS-166.

⁷⁰Krapf, 'Journey to Ukambani, November and December, 1849' CMS: C/A5/0/16 - 174. (Hereafter CMS-174.)

71GHT: Charo wa Maita (Bungale) 12.17.70; Joseph Denge (Kibwabwani) 6.17.71; Samuel Jefwa Bumbe (Mikomani) 6.18.71.

72Statement made by Kitu wa Syria before J. B. Pearson, 14.11.13 at Rabai, CP 9/403, KNA.

73Champion wrote that the Kidzini made their own sacred emblem. 'History,' KNA.

74'Anthropological/Historical, 1913-1949' DC/MAL/2/3, KNA.

75Champion, 'History,' KNA.

76New, Life and Wanderings, p. 487.

77Krapf, 'Excursions to the Country of the Wanika tribe at Rabai and Visit of the WaKamba people at Endila,' CMS: C/A5/0/16-165. (Hereafter, CMS-165.)

78This date, 1877, was stated without reservation by Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71, but few others can corroborate such a precise date. We do have some hints for dates of similar, related ceremonies from some of the other Mijikenda. Richard Burton, Zanzibar, City, Island and Coast (London, 1872) Vol. II, p. 91 remarked that 1857 was 'Unyaro' year, but that the 'Wamasai' hindered the rite. Krapf, Travels, p. 147, noted that he was warned not to travel from Rabai into Digo in 1845 because he might be killed as the victim of their 'unyaro.' Although he did not name it, New, Life and Wanderings, pp. 108-9, described his observance of a similar ceremony in Kaya Ribe sometime between 1863 and 1872. All of the Mijikenda seem to have had some sort of similar ceremony, but mainly the Giriama and the Ribe coordinated the timing of theirs. The Ribe, as the senior people, had to begin their ceremony first.

79HT:3:Q1, 2, 3.

80HT:3:Q1.

81Kaya Elders (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

82HT:4:Q2.

83GHT: Lunganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.23.70.

84GHT: Jefwa wa Muyaya (Hadu) 12.18.70; Mulanda wa Wanje (Msabaha) 4.5.71; Kazungu wa Kigande (Mavueni) 4.2.71. Champion, Agiryama, p. 17; H. S. La Fontaine, 'Changing of the Cambi,' 9.7.13, DC/MAL/2/3, KNA.

85Ibid. Today, the Giriama always speak of the age-sets in pairs, saying two danced the same Kirao. It is possible that the combination of two age-sets for the dancing of Kirao is a phenomenon

dating from the late nineteenth century rather than from a period when the Giriama lived inside the kaya. The late nineteenth century was fraught with disturbances which might have prevented any regular ceremonial affairs, and the Giriama may have adopted the practice of putting two Kirao rituals together. If this is the case, then one could assume that the procedure during the kaya days would be separate Kirao initiations for each age-set. This double ceremony has not been mentioned in a single written account, but I found no exception in my entire oral investigations to the description of the age-sets dancing the same Kirao and the explanation given was that the elder was there to teach the younger.

86 LaFontaine, 'Changing of the Cambi,' KNA.

87 HT:2:Q4.

88 HT:2:Q5.

89 C. W. Hobley, 'Provincial Commissioner, Political Report, Coast' DC/MAL/2/1, KNA. Champion, Agiryama, p. 19, writing about 1912, stated, 'For the past thirty years or so litigants have often had recourse to the Mohammedan courts on the coast . . . and a hasty trial which probably ended in half the family being sold into slavery to pay off the debt.'

90 HT:4:Q3.

91 Everybody knew that the Wulembere and the Wulakahi would lead the next rika.

92 Taylor, Giriama Vocabulary, p. 44. GHT: Kaleso wa Ruwa wa Jumwa (Malamweni) 8.12.71, interviewed by Victor Gona Kazungu who kindly gave me a copy.

93 GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga, (Kinarani) 4.6.71.

94 GHT: Samuel Baya Mose (Kibwabwani) 6.17.71.

95 GHT: Kaya Elders (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Katoi wa Kiti (Kajiweni) 4.2.71; Luganje wa Masha (Vitengeni) 12.23.70.

96 MacLean, 'Law Procedures and Customs,' KNA.

97 MacDougall, 'Notes on the WaNyika,' KNA.

98 Coupland, Exploitation, p. 221.

99 Krapf, CME-168.

100 GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71.

101 MacDougall, 'Notes on the WaNyika,' KNA.

- 102 Ibid.
- 103 GHT: Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.16.70.
- 104 GHT: James Ponda (Marafa) 12.16.70.
- 105 Kaya Elders (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.
- 106 MacDougall, 'Galla,' KNA.
- 107 Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 5.2.71.
- 108 GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kayafungo) 11.5.71.
- 109 GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kayafungo) 11.5.71. Here he names this mwanamuli as Ndungo wa Marai, who was indeed the mwanamuli from 1901 onward. However, the name here is probably an error for two reasons. First, Mwinga himself in another account says Ndungo became mwanamuli in 1901. Also, the 1896 accounts in British records tell that the same leaders who were designated at the last Mung'aro were still in their respective kaya leadership positions in 1896.
- 110 GHT: Mulanda wa Wanje (Msabaha) 4.5.71.
- 111 Jackson, 'Akamba,' p. 281.
- 112 A. C. Hollis, 'Notes on the History of the Vumba,' Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 30 (1900), pp. 275-297. G. H. Osborne, 'The Wadigo of Vanga District' DC/KWL/3/5, KNA. Andrew Roberts, ed., Tanzania Before 1900 (Nairobi, 1970).
- 113 J. M. Pearson, 'A Comparison of Giriama Customs with Digo Customs as Described by the Hon. C. C. Dundas' DC/KFI/13, KNA.
- 114 S. N. Eisenstadt, From Generation to Generation (New York, 1956), p. 21.

CHAPTER IV

THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE BRITISH 1888-1896

The Imperial British East Africa Company, 1888-1895

Though the first touch of British influence on the Kenya coast was placed there by the hands of the British East Africa Association, the Giriama were hardly affected by the Association's activities until 1888, when the Imperial British East Africa Company was formed. The B. E. A. A., headed by William MacKinnon and dedicated to obtaining profits from the interior ivory trade,¹ actually had its beginnings with an Anglo-German Agreement of October, 1886.² On that date, a ten-mile wide strip of land along the mainland coast was designated as the domain of the Sultan of Zanzibar. The inland boundary of this land was always an arbitrary delimitation, for in some places the Arab influence extended far beyond it; in other areas no effective Arab influence existed at all. In May of 1887 due to the Sultan, Burghash's fear of growing German influence, William MacKinnon secured for his British East Africa Association a fifty-year concession over the Sultan's mainland possessions from Kipini north of the Tana River to the Unba River near Vanga to the south. He was granted full judicial and political authority and the right to levy customs duties. The Sultan was promised no less than he was already receiving as customs duties from these regions.³

In April of 1888 a large company was founded, and by September the Imperial British East Africa Company was chartered under British protection.⁴ Except for efforts to vitalize the deteriorating plantations on the coast, the I. B. E. A. expended most of its energy trying to profit from the control of the interior trade. Headquarters were established at Mombasa, with stations at Takaungu and Malindi. The overriding task was the construction of a railway to Lake Victoria. A detached post was built at Machakos, 350 miles inland in Kamba territory, and plans were made for another at Kavirondo, east of the lake.⁵ F. D. Lugard was hired by George MacKenzie, the Company's director in Mombasa, to open the Sabaki River as a route to the interior to supersede the old one across the Taru Desert. Lugard's plan was to establish a series of garrisons along the route. He built his first stockade at Makongeni, which was inhabited by a community of runaway slaves.⁶ Major J. R. L. MacDonald, the Company's chief engineer hired to survey a preliminary route for the railway, concluded that Lugard's route was unsuitable; so the railway was begun from Mombasa near the old Kamba caravan route.⁷

The I. B. E. A.'s impact on the Giriama was minor, and it was limited almost exclusively to Company attempts to develop new crops, to expand existing ones, and to use Giriama labourers on British plantations. The most influential of I. B. E. A.'s men was W. W. A. Fitzgerald, who spent two years from 1891 exploring the coast lands, running the Magarini rubber plantation north of the Sabaki River, and encouraging Giriama (particularly those around Jilore) to diversify their crops. The Company's administration was so short-handed that had

they seriously tried to collect the small tax they instituted, the sparse Giriama population would have made the task an extremely difficult one.⁸

The I. B. E. A.'s southern trade route missed Giriama country but the northern route ran from Malindi along the south bank of the Sabaki River which was then the northern boundary of Giriama territory. This latter route was supported by stockades built, not by Giriama labourers, but by communities of slaves who had run away from their Arab masters on the coastal plantations.⁹ The Giriama, preferring not to alienate their Arab friends who wanted them to return those runaway slaves, refused to assist the British support of the runaways.

The Giriama regarded the British as passing visitors and did not expect them to remain in their territory any longer than the Swahili and Arabs had stayed.¹⁰ The Giriama maintained their primary trading relationships with the Arabs and the Langulo. Although they were never controlled by the Arabs and never paid taxes to them, the Giriama did recognize the Arabs as the reigning power of the coast. Since the Company used either the Sultan's officials or Mazrui chiefs for their administrative purposes, the British themselves remained apart from direct relationships with the majority of the Giriama.¹¹

However, in addition to encounters with occasional wandering travellers and requests for Giriama labour from the coastal plantations, some Giriama had become exposed to European ways through Christianity. The Giriama welcomed its bearers cautiously and persistently kept them at arms length. The first Christian community emerged in the early 1870's around Fuladoyo, thirty miles inland from Takaungu. Besedi, the

Giriama evangelist, had come from Rabai as self-punishment after striking and killing his wife in an argument. He went into the hinterland carrying Rev. Johannes Rebmann's KiNyika translation of St. Luke.¹² His village became a haven for runaway slaves and by 1874 he had eleven converts. Although Besidi was himself killed when the Arabs attacked Fologoyo a few years later, one of his converts was among the four Giriama confirmed by Bishop Royston at Freretown in 1878.¹³ A Giriama catechist began work in 1882 at Mwaeba's Hill, ten miles west of Mtanganyiko, and its small congregation was made up of Giriama. Both of these Christian settlements had been off-shoots of the Church Missionary Society at Rabai and Freretown, but the first official mission in Giriama land was opened at Jilore in 1890, headed by Rev. Grafftey Smith. It was not an easy place for Europeans to live, and the second missionary, Rev. F. Burt, almost died of blackwater fever. Rev. Douglas Hooper and his wife took charge and by 1893 they had eight evangelistic trainees.¹⁴ The Christian colony itself was small, but the Giriama around Jilore numbered three thousand in 1891.¹⁵

Government and Christianity began working together. Eight of the Giriama headmen around Jilore responded 'eagerly' to a request for labour at an experimental station Fitzgerald wanted to begin at Jilore for the Company. He felt the proximity of the Christian Giriama at the CMS mission would assist in 'helping to civilize the district.'¹⁶ He also arranged for the runaway slaves at Lugard's first stockade on the Sabaki River at Makongeni to buy their freedom and go to Jilore to live.¹⁷ As early as 1874, the Church Missionary Society had become actively dedicated to ministering to the needs of ex-slaves. Freretown

developed into a community for their care near Mombasa, and Rabai grew into a large refugee camp.¹⁸ Unintentionally, this created problems with the local people who felt inferior to the runaways. The latter had mannerisms of the coastal culture, spoke Swahili, and dressed like Arabs. Most of the slaves had come originally from Nyassa or Shambaa.¹⁹ Unable to return to their homelands, they were eager to accept European ways as their own. The Giriama, like the Rabai, were less eager. The local people thus found themselves in a position second to those ex-slaves in the missions. In 1891 Fitzgerald took 159 names of slaves willing to settle at Jilore. Had they gone, this would have created the same problems for the Giriama at Jilore that they had encountered at Rabai.²⁰

The life of Christian Giriama was a difficult one. They were forced to adopt European manners and reject almost all traditional customs. Most of the missionaries, like Rev. Douglas Hooper, 'ruled the settlement/s/ very rigidly and a firm hand was kept over the adherents.'²¹ This divided families and caused internal friction. As early as 1891, an incident occurred which forced the Giriama around Jilore to take a stand either for or against the British. On October 30, letters were received at Jilore and Malindi to the effect that Galla, assisted by Giriama, were going to attack these two places. The Hooper family was hurriedly evacuated from Jilore and nearby Giriama summoned into a fighting force. A full camp of armed Giriama gathered and by November 10, they were joined by 300 Kambe at Sekoke Hill between Malindi and Jilore. Kauma and Chonyi declared themselves ready to take up arms for the Company and Baluchi soldiers were sent from

Mombasa.²²

But the entire threat turned out to be a hoax - conceived by some Giriama who hoped to scare the Europeans away. The perpetrator of the false alarm was caught, arrested, and sent to Mombasa for trial.²³ The mission station had thus become a target for Giriama opposition to growing British influence as well as a catalyst for support of that influence by some Giriama. When the British found themselves involved in conflict with some of the coastal Arabs four years later, the Giriama living in the immediate area of Jilore Mission quickly lent their support to the British. Having seen the Remingtons, Sniders, and Enfield muzzle loaders, and having witnessed an explosion of dynamite cartridges in the Sabaki River for their benefit, these Giriama were less willing to oppose British power than they might otherwise have been.²⁴

The East Africa Protectorate, 1895

The establishment of this Protectorate was due to events external to the coastal area. The failure of the Imperial British East Africa Company, which necessitated withdrawal from Uganda, forced the British to change from a policy of informal empire and to declare an official protectorate. Officially controlling Uganda, the British needed to extend this control over the area between that Protectorate and the coast. Britain took over the Company's lease of the Sultan's coastal strip by paying 11,000 pounds rent and 3% interest on the 200,000 pounds paid for the surrender of the original treaty. The Company's rule expired on June 30, 1895, and on July 1, the East

African Protectorate was proclaimed by Arthur Hardinge, who became the Consul General in Zanzibar and Commissioner for the Protectorate. Besides the debts and the lack of administrative network which remained as the Company's legacy, the British inherited a rebellion among the Mazrui family of Arabs at Takaungu.²⁵

The Mazrui 'Rebellion,' 1895-1896

Had it not been for their forced involvement in this 'rebellion,'²⁶ of the Mazrui Arabs against the British, the Giriama might not have been aware, or cared, that the power on the coast was undergoing a serious change. The 'rebellion,' originally an internal dispute among the Mazrui, began four months before the Protectorate was declared. Kenneth MacDougall, the I. B. E. A. representative at Malindi, had chosen the successor to the Takaungu governorship according to British needs rather than according to absolute Mazrui claim, causing open conflict to emerge among the Mazrui.²⁷

The Mazrui Arabs had been the most powerful family in Mombasa during the eighteenth century, but they were constantly feuding. After being defeated in 1837 by Sultan Sayyid Said, who was a Busaidi, the remaining Mazrui moved to other sites on the coast. The two prominent centers were that of the Hamedites at Gazi, south of Mombasa, and that of the Zaherites at Takaungu, south of Kilifi Creek. The Mazrui never did accept the Sultan's right of dominion over their land, but those at Takaungu had worked more willingly in the service of the Sultan and subsequently, of the officials of the I. B. E. A., than had those of Gazi. This was particularly true after 1860 when Mbaruk bin Rashid

bin Salim, the son of the last Mazrui ruler of Mombasa, became chief in Gazi and refused to acknowledge British power.²⁸

For the governorship of Takaungu, MacDougall passed over the rightful heir who, by custom, was the eldest surviving male. Instead, he installed the son of the late Governor, causing the dissention over the governorship to emerge into open conflict. Mbaruk bin Rashid bin Hamis, the rightful claimant and his younger brother, Aziz, fought against the new Liwali, Rashid bin Salim of Takaungu. The British assured Rashid of Takaungu that he would have the assistance of their troops. Therefore, Mbaruk bin Rashid bin Hamis and Aziz were declared 'rebels' against the Sultan of Zanzibar and they went to Gazi for refuge. Since Mbaruk of Gazi himself had a claim to the throne of Takaungu through his mother, who was a Zaherite, he was quite amenable to supporting his nephews in their cause.²⁹

On July 5, 1895, Hardinge and Sir Lloyd Matthews, who was First Minister to the Sultan, met with Mbaruk of Gazi. Mbaruk convinced Matthews, who was a long-time friend, that he would handle the 'rebels' himself. Hardinge, on the other hand, would settle only for the immediate arrest of the elder Mbaruk's nephews - Mbaruk the younger and Aziz. Mbaruk the elder agreed that British troops should move against Gazi and that he would then arrest his nephews. He took the British gift of gunpowder, but he failed to keep his promise. Arriving British troops found Gazi abandoned. Mbaruk of Gazi had supported his nephews, had become leader of the rebellion, and had set up headquarters in the Shimba Forest called Mwele.³⁰

In August, Hardinge and Matthews successfully attacked Mwele,

but the occupants escaped and the British failed to capture any of the leaders. The 'rebellion' expanded as Mazrui from all along the coast began to support Mbaruk. British garrisons were established at Gazi, Wassin, Mombasa, Freretown, Jomvu, Ribe, Rabai, Jimba, Takaungu, Mtanganyiko, Sekoke, Jilore and Malindi. Kenneth MacDougall led British troops in the north while Hardinge chased 'rebels' in the south. But the only way to end the opposition was to capture the leaders and in this the British failed. In February, 1896, the 'rebels' successfully attacked Freretown and humiliated the British by burning Malindi. British prestige was at stake, and a Baluchi regiment was called in from India. When the 'rebellion' finally collapsed in April, 1896, Mbaruk of Gazi and many of his followers escaped to German East Africa, where he surrendered and remained until his death in 1910.³¹

The Mazrui opposition to the British might never have continued for as long as it did without the assistance of the hinterland peoples, especially the Giriama. Lacking headquarters in which to hide once Mwele was taken, the Mazrui were dependent upon their trading friends to provide them with food, and if necessary, a hiding place in their villages. The Giriama viewed the situation as a simple one at first: the Mazrui were their trading partners and the British were almost strangers. Moreover, a rumour spread to the Giriama that the Mazrui had killed the wazungu (Europeans) at Mwele.³² Many Giriama therefore thought the Mazrui were going to win the conflict, and they felt compelled to make some show of support by making bows and arrows as a careful attempt to prevent alienation of the Mazrui who appeared to be winning.³³

Those areas in Giriama land where, initially, Giriama might have been friendly to the British in this effort were limited to Rabai, Malindi, and Jilore.³⁴ By withholding information from the British, the Giriama were supporting the 'rebels'. As early as September 3, 1895, two representatives from Kaya Giriama had come to Rabai to 'put matters straight with government' that they were neutral.³⁵ However, Mbaruk's forces attacked Rabai on November 2, 1895, and by December Aziz was supposedly hiding in Kaya Giriama. In January, 1896, Mbaruk himself was reported there.³⁶ But Giriama participation was concentrated more in the north, not the south.

At first, the Giriama did not join the Mazrui in actual fighting against the British. Their support was limited to the provision of food and hiding places and to refusal to reveal to the British movements and locations of the Mazrui. From the Giriama point of view, in the hinterland, the Mazrui power was not being broken - just threatened. The belief in the strength of Arab magic could have dominated Giriama assessment of the situation as one ultimately favouring the Mazrui.

Over time, however, the Giriama attitude toward the British changed. Whereas at first they felt 'hostile toward the mzungu whom they did not know' they began to realize that the British were more powerful than the Arabs. MacDougall's policy (implemented in late September, 1895) was to convince the Giriama that they had no other choice but to support the British.³⁷

To all the Giriama homesteads of Malindi and Takaungu district MacDougall sent bribes of rupees and threats of punishment to any who harboured 'rebels.' The people of Sekoke, caught in the line of

fire, immediately told Aziz they would not support his attack on Takaungu. Aziz was offering them no payment or rations for their assistance, and they would be confronting the British paid armies who were much better armed. They began informing the British of the whereabouts of some 'rebels' and by the end of September, MacDougall had gained the same response from other Giriama by burning all homesteads known to have fed or hidden 'rebels.' Throughout October, MacDougall's forces demonstrated British maxim guns and war rockets against the enemy, mainly villages of slaves and Swahili who had joined Mbaruk's side. A boma (government station) was constructed at Tandia, west of Sekoke, near the Rare River approximately twenty miles inland from Kilifi. After the boma was completed in November, MacDougall sent messages to all the 'chiefs in the surrounding district' to attend a meeting there. His display of maxims and rockets and the burning of villages produced the desired results; all but two 'chiefs' came and they 'appeared to be very much afraid.'³⁸

Three items here deserve our attention. First, the British at Takaungu and Malindi were concerned only with Giriama in their surrounding area despite the fact that all of the Giriama appeared to be assisting Mbaruk's forces. There was no apparent feeling that it was necessary to work through the kaya to gain the assistance of northern Giriama. Second, from the beginning the British insisted on working through Giriama 'chiefs.' Since the Giriama did not have 'chiefs,' as such, and since the British accounts fail to enlighten us on how they determined them, it seems to me that they were the headmen of the homesteads or malalo, not necessarily any Enyetsi.

The third item to be noted is the role played by Ngonyo wa Mwavui of Dida, one of the two 'chiefs' who refused to appear at MacDougall's boma meeting but who subsequently became the most influential Giriama working in the interests of the British. Ngonyo and his father had established a 'town' of 1200 people at Dida on the Rare River. Although his father was no longer living, Ngonyo's influence had grown through his ownership of coccoanut farms, control of slaves and ivory trade, and his possession of a large number of slaves. In September and October, Mbaruk and Aziz had hidden in his village, and he had purchased slaves captured from the Malindi plantations.³⁹ MacDougall was aware that he would have difficulty enlisting the support of the other Giriama unless Ngonyo's support of the 'rebels' ceased.

Those 'chiefs' who attended MacDougall's meeting at Tandia 'expressed appreciation of our British occupation of Tandia and said they would be able to assist.'⁴⁰ MacDougall wanted them to drive the 'rebels' out of their country with 'war horns and drums.'⁴¹ They took back a message to Ngonyo that he was to turn himself in and give up his slaves or he would be sent for. On his own accord Ngonyo went to Takaungu where MacDougall planned to detain him for at least a month for supporting Mbaruk and Aziz. By December 22, Ngonyo had decided to assist MacDougall and the British cause against the 'rebel' Mazrui. The two went together to Dida where Ngonyo sent for the surrounding elders to get their support. He even offered to build a boma for fifty soldiers at his place if the 'rebels' ever came into the area of Dida again.⁴²

Thus Ngonyo became the leader of the Giriama in the eyes of the British. He doubtless had more influence than any other single man in the north, and there is absolutely no indication that he felt compelled to consult with the mwanamuli and his assistants in the kaya, with the Eyetsi as a whole, or with a council of kambi in order to make his decision.

The British worked hard to win the Giriama over to their side, but on February 12 the 'rebels' had burned Malindi, and the northern Giriama, especially those around Kirwitu, were obviously assisting the 'rebels.' MacDougall and Ngonyo had already made plans to hold a meeting of elders in northern Godoma at Bararani on February 13. Approximately forty elders came from Kirwitu, Dida, Fuladoyo, Bararani and other nearby areas but Mbaruk wa Nduria, one of the kaya elders who lived in Bararani, did not attend. He was away at the kaya, and whether or not he specifically refused to lend his support to this meeting or whether he felt the need to take care of matters at the kaya, it appears that the activities were conducted without kaya support.⁴³

Ngonyo told the elders that,

he had been down to the coast and seen the power of government, its ships and maxim guns and that it would be madness on their part to mistake its (government's) forbearance for weakness and provoke a conflict with it. . .

/Some/ recalled the vengeance /Mbaruk of Gazi/ had inflicted before on those who assisted his enemies . . .

In the end the whole assembly were induced to take a solemn oath that they would throw in their lot with the government and not with the rebels and that within 15 days they would clear them from their district and induce chiefs of other divisions of Giriama to come to the same decision.⁴⁴

Presumably the oath taken was that of the Fisi, but it is not clear what authority anybody attending this meeting had to place such an oath. The meeting had not included all of the Giriama leadership... it appears to have included none of the senior leadership, and the activities were not supported by the younger nyere, some of whom actively opposed the British by fighting against them.

The next day Col. Harrison, MacDougall's immediate subordinate, found himself surrounded at Fuladoyo by some 300 Giriama who shouted, blew war horns, and brandished bows and arrows. Elders intervened and apologized, but clearly they were no longer able to enforce the decisions they had just made.⁴⁵ On February 18, Giriama attacked the Tandia boma. Assessing the action, the British determined it was one taken by younger Giriama who could not be controlled by their elders. However, British military response was effective enough to dampen their enthusiasm for continued opposition and it encouraged them to be more amenable to the decisions of the elders.⁴⁶

While the nyere were making weak attempts to fight the British, the elders were becoming successful at convincing their counterparts that they should support the British. On March 3, 1896, MacDougall and Hardinge went to Tandia boma to confer with the Giriama. There they met representatives of all six clans, with Ngonyo as leader.

The Giriama were fairly well represented with Mzee Ngonio at their head - after a long and interesting conference, it was unanimously decided that on and after 4th March, the Wa Giriama would no longer harbour the rebels or supply them with food or water, and that no rebels would be tolerated to walk through their villages. As a mark of their good will and loyalty towards the Government, they swore by 'Pigaing' Fisi,' to keep steadfast to their solemn declaration, in accordance with their ancient traditions, which is

absolutely steadfast. It is customary to pay a sum of Rs. 60 . . . to the six tribes as a token of respect on similar ceremonies. After the shauri, a fat bullock was presented by the WaGiriama to the Consul-General which he ordered to be slaughtered, of which the WaGiriama and our garrisons enjoyed a hearty feast, which terminated the ceremony.⁴⁷

In return, Hardinge assured the Giriama of British 'desire to protect the interests of their nation and promote the peace and prosperity of their country.'⁴⁸

Hardinge returned to Kilifi; Harrison and MacDougall proceeded via Dida to Kirwitu with 86 Sudanese soldiers plus as many porters and maxim guns. From this point on, success favoured the British. The Giriama brought in a few 'rebels' to show their good faith and were no longer attracted by 'rebel bribes' to oppose the British.⁴⁹

The Giriama area of Kirwitu, under Ndungu, had been the second greatest stronghold for the 'rebels' after Ngonyo's. So it was here that MacDougall concentrated next on forcing a change of allegiance. Ndungu, though 70 years old, was still influential enough to have an impact when he chastized his fellow Giriama for turning away their Mazrui friends. Mbaruk and Aziz lived in his village for part of the time that they were in the hinterland. Earlier, in February, before Hardinge's meeting with the clan elders at Tandia, MacDougall had burned Ndungu's village and had confiscated all of his grain and chickens, forcing him to flee to Tsavo. On this mission in March, following the Fisi oath, elders had preceded MacDougall to Fuladoyo and Kirwitu, and he met no hostility there for the first time. He sent a message to Ndungu promising him no harm if he came to talk but

threatening to search him out if he refused. Ndungu, as Ngonyo before him, came. According to MacDougall

He explained the whole situation to me and said he did not wish to be enemies with such a dangerous man as Mbaruku, whilst he was king of the country. But now, he would gladly join and promote the resolution come to by his WaGiriama friends. So I made him the Mzee of Kirwitu as before, to the entire satisfaction of all the WaGiriama.⁵⁰

Assisted by the Kirwitu elders, then, MacDougall's forces weeded out 'rebels' from Kirwitu to Gabina, some three hours march west. He successfully drove Mbaruk and Aziz and their 400 men westward and scattered them in the bush. Aziz finally fled to Bamba, where 'the elders appeared to hesitate, for some local reason unknown to /the British/ to enforce the decree of the Hyaena /Fisi/.⁵¹

MacDougall suggested that a garrison be built at Kirwitu from which government control of the area could be maintained, but it was finally established at Bamba (in Biryaa) instead. This 'created a favourable impression on the WaBamba, for they 'Pigad /sic/ Fisi.'⁵² The remaining 'rebels' retreated and settled in Weruni forest isolated from any Giriama villages. By April, many of the 'rebels' had come in from the forests to ask for peace, and Mbaruk himself escaped to German East Africa and surrendered on April 21.⁵³

Although the exact role of the kaya elders and of the Enyetsi is left to conjecture, the Mazrui and their followers managed to get general support from the Giriama population. Without this support, the British figured - and rightly so - that the 'rebel' movement could not survive. The Giriama progressively changed sides so that, by the time Mbaruk escaped, no Giriama were treated as rebels and they appear to

have accepted British instead of Arab domination. However, the Giriama anticipated that British rule remain restricted to the coast as Arab rule had. The most important thing to them was that peace had come once again to their country.

During this 'Mazrui rebellion' the kaya elders were those who had been installed during the last Mung'aro: Mwazize wa Bunduki and Mbaruk wa Nduria. Even Mwazize may not have actually lived in the kaya, and Mbaruk wa Nduria lived at his home in Bararani, in northwest Godoma. Although Kaya Kidzini had been abandoned before this time; the clan leader of the Akidzini was Ngolo wa Kombo. He, too, was named during the last Mung'aro.

Hardinge's awareness of Giriama government was greatly influenced by the description given by Taylor in his Vocabulary.⁵⁴ Since Taylor, although in error, wrote that the Enyetsi were the three elders that govern Giriama and judge the land, then Hardinge looked for three elders, naming those mentioned above. He acknowledged, however, that the senior elder in each of the six clans was theoretically a member of the Enyetsi and that the Fisi were a small but exclusive body consisting of the six senior elders and a 'few other old men of great authority.'⁵⁵

Hardinge's description of the kaya as an 'insignificant village' was based on his own visit there before February, 1896, when he found just a few old men (apparently none of the official leaders) there. He regarded it as the official residence of the 'National Assemblies' and the 'principal magistrates,' but otherwise, 'a place of no real importance.'⁵⁶

Thus our examination of the Giriama role in the Mazrui 'rebellion' provides us with a point in time by which to gauge some of those adaptations which had been developing in the Giriama political system since they migrated from the kaya. Then too, the stage was set for ensuing British-Giriama relations based upon this initial experience between the two.

Support or Disguised Opposition?

For historical purposes, a real value in examining the changing Giriama relationship with the British is that it provides us with evidence that the Giriama were growing increasingly independent. Although Giriama acknowledged the 'official' kaya leadership, they were also willing and able to act independently of it. The best illustration of this fact is provided by Ngonyo. Probably the most wealthy Giriama, he had direct power over many people who were either his slaves, his family, or those who were economically dependent on him. He did not have to obtain the support of the clan elders for his actions. Since he was of Digo heritage, it was possible that Ngonyo was never initiated into an age-set within Giriama and that he, therefore, could not officially hold the position of one of the Enyetsi or become a Fisi mganga.

Nonetheless, he was obviously the most powerful of his clan, region, and general age-grouping in spite of the non-traditional source of his power. The suggestion that Ngonyo had no rank is supported by British records which name the leaders of the six clans, placing Ngonyo as the Senior Akiza but listing an age-set for all of them except

Ngonyo.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Ngonyo's name is missing from a list of all the remaining Wulumbere and Wulakahi still alive in 1906, when he was noted as the senior in the Akiza clan.⁵⁸

Ngonyo emerged with more real power than the Enyetsi on matters that did not demand expertise regarding Giriama traditions. Consequently, he was looked upon with jealousy and disapproval by Giriama who tried to maintain the traditional legitimacy for power. Although he assumed a more independent attitude toward the Enyetsi and the kaya, he did not try to take their authority from them. Finally, for those young men who had grown more wealthy and independent, Ngonyo was an example to follow in defying the traditional powers and acquiring some of their own.

How had the use of the Fisi oath changed, and how crucial was its role in changing the Giriama attitude toward the British? In this case, the Fisi oath seemed more important to the British than to the Giriama. The group which Ngonyo led, composed of all six clans, may have behaved in total independence of the rest of the Giriama. There is no indication that Ngonyo was a Fisi mganga; nor is there any record of who installed the oath. Doubtless, Mwazize, Mbaruk,⁵⁹ and Ngolo did not attend the famous Tandia gathering when the Fisi oath was sworn, and yet they were probably Fisi waganga.

The terms of the oath are not clear. Even from British accounts, no reference is made to the effect that others joined the British cause because they were afraid of the oath; indeed, the Giriama seemed to have joined the British because they were afraid of British power. Two things are clear, however. The British themselves had

sufficient fearful respect for the 'hyaena cult' - which they admitted they did not understand - to want it to be sworn in their favour.⁶⁰ Also, the British thought the Fisi was a loyalty oath in favour of government. Since the use of the oath has been one of proscription, then the Giriama were forbidding a specific action - aiding 'rebels' - not pledging loyalty to the British or anyone else. For the Giriama, this was a realistic acceptance of a situation; had they continued to assist the 'rebels,' they doubtless would have regretted their action.

The oath was used as an outward sign to the British that the Giriama were on their side. Certainly the British felt it important that the oath be sworn and they urged its use. Perhaps for those taking the oath, it was a sign of individual loyalty. If so, then this becomes a new adaptation of the Fisi oath stimulated by the British. The use and influence of the Fisi oath will be a significant matter of investigation in chapter seven concerning the Giriama rising.

Finally, what was happening to the political system based upon gerontocracy? The British were well aware of a generational conflict among the Giriama; they spoke of elders (wazee) and young men (nyere).⁶¹ Their accounts rarely mention the word kambi. At first, few Giriama no matter their age were eager to support the British. Later, however, elders lent the British their assistance. Initially, men like Ngonyo and Ndungu (and others who weren't reported) had much more to gain by assisting their trading partners, the Mazrui. Ultimately, though, they changed to British support and were influential in persuading other Giriama to do so.

Although Giriama age did not determine their reaction to the


British, the age-power differences did become more acute under this stressful situation. According to Hardinge, the previous year, when the rains failed,

youths of several districts combined . . . to seize the old men and threaten that, if they did not produce rain within a certain number of days, they would burn them and it was only after one of the most venerable Elders, who was kept tied to an ant heap (a very painful ordeal in Africa) until he had exhausted all the requisite incantations at least satisfied them that the heavens were adverse, that the remainder were contemptuously released.⁶²

This emerged from that tradition concerning those kambi who had shown initiative at their Kirao and had become Akirimu by sitting near the blazing fire and looking at the msichana cha kirao, which was associated with the power of the sun. These Akirimu, then were thought to have, as a result of this experience, the power to hold back the rains.⁶³

Even if nyere had held the prerogative of abusing their elders under such conditions for a long time, the fact that they did this the year prior to the Mazrui 'rebellion' could only have intensified conflict between the generations. Therefore, the fighting on the part of the nyere against the British may have been as much an action defying their own elders as it was one of opposition to the British. Moreover, if they had managed to acquire independent wealth and influence, though they were still not kambi, their success was probably due to good trading relations with the coast. Their assessment may have been that to oppose the Mazrui was to reject one source of their growing independence.

The real problem was probably not one of age differences.



Instead, the Giriama reaction was probably determined by the direct impact on those Giriama in each region where the British were fighting. The 'rebellion' was more concentrated in the Takaungu hinterland and in the region of Kirwitu than Biryaa or Weruni. Thus, Ngunyo's leadership might be regarded as natural for his area. After all, the Giriama were not at war. They were not being 'attacked' by either side. There was no reason for the kaya elders to take sides. Basically, the Giriama benefited from their neutral position. Through the years, British officials would remain confused as to whether the Giriama had opposed or supported them.

NOTES

¹Mackinnon Papers, quoted in M. J. de Kiewiet, 'History of the Imperial British East Africa Company, 1876-1895' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, London, 1955), p. 23. John S. Galbraith, Mackinnon and East Africa 1878-1895: A Study in the 'New Imperialism.' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 55-70.

²E. Herslet, Map of Africa by Treaty, Vol. III (London, 1909), pp. 882-886. Coupland, Exploitation, pp. 472-476. John Flint, 'The Wider Background to Partition and Colonial Occupation' in Roland Oliver and Gervase Matthew, eds., History of East Africa, Vol. I (Oxford, 1963), p. 376.

³P. L. McDermott, British East Africa or I. B. E. A., 2nd edition, (London, 1895), p.9.

⁴Flint, 'Background to Partition,' p. 379.

⁵Lugard, East African Empire, p. 220.

⁶Ibid., pp. 221, 235.

⁷J. R. L. MacDonald, Soldiering and Surveying in British East Africa, 1891-1894 (London, 1897), pp. 20-21.

⁸Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 147-149, McDermott, IBEA, pp. 238-247.

⁹MacDonald, Soldiering, p. 21.

¹⁰GHT: James Ponda (Marafa) 12.16.70; Gona wa Rimba (Bungale) 12.16.70.

¹¹G. M. Mungeam, British Rule in Kenya, 1895-1912 (Oxford, 1966), p. 24.

¹²Rev. Kenneth E. Stovald, The C. M. S. in Kenya (Book I: The Coast, 1844-1944) (Nairobi, 1949), p. 63.

¹³Ibid.; p. 64

¹⁴Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁵Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 97.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 98.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 122.

¹⁸Stovald, CMS, pp. 14-17.

¹⁹Werner, 'Native Tribes,' p. 290.

²⁰Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 97.

²¹Stovald, CMS, p. 66.

²²Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 210.

²³Ibid. His name was not mentioned.

²⁴Ibid., p. 216.

²⁵Mungeam, British Rule, p. 21.

²⁶The term 'rebellion' is strictly from the British perspective, since some Mazrui felt they were trying to prevent outsiders from usurping their political independence. Some had maintained this position against the Sultan of Zanzibar and now extended it to the British, who had taken over the administration.

²⁷Parliamentary Papers, 1896, LVIII, /C. 8274/, Correspondence Respecting the Recent Rebellion, 1896, p. 11. Hardinge, Diplomatist, p. 165.

²⁸PP, /C. 8274/, p. 14. L. W. Hollingsworth, Zanzibar Under the Foreign Office, 1890-1913 (London, 1953). R. N. Lyne, An Apostle of the Empire being the life of Sir Lloyd Matthews, (London, 1936).

²⁹PP, /C. 8274/, p. 16.

³⁰Ibid., p. 15. Lyne, Apostle, p. 134.

³¹'Mazrui Rebels,' HE to CO, 2.12.07, in 'Malindi Inward, 1895,' CP 97/115, KNA.

³²Jones to Pigott, 8.28.95 in 'The Mbaruk Rebellion as Reported from Rabai,' CP 65/4, KNA.

³³Smith to Pigott, 9.3.95, CP 65/4, KNA.

³⁴This was due to the influence of mission center administration.

³⁵Smith to Pigott, 9.3.95 in 'The Mbaruk Rebellion as Reported from Rabai,' CP 65/4, KNA.

³⁶Carthew to Pigott, 1.12.96, CP 65/4, KNA.

³⁷MacDougall to Pigott, 8.22.95, CP 75/46, KNA.

³⁸MacDougall to Pigott, 9.22.95 and 10.12.95, CP 75/46, KNA.

- 39 Jones to Pigott, 8.25.95, CP 65/4, KNA.
- 40 MacDougall to SC Mombasa, 10.20.95, CP 75/46, KNA.
- 41 Ibid., 11.22.95.
- 42 Ibid., 12.22.95.
- 2.19.96. 43 Parliamentary Papers, /C. 8274/, Hardinge to Salisbury, This action was not necessarily in defense of the kaya.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 MacDougall to SC Mombasa, 3.3.96, CP 75/46, KNA.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 PP, /C. 8274/, Hardinge to Salisbury, 3.12.96.
- 49 MacDougall to SC Mombasa, 3.30.96, CP 75/46, KNA.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 PP, /C. 8274/, Hardinge to Salisbury, 3.27.96.
- 52 MacDougall to SC Mombasa, 4.18.96, CP 75/46, KNA.
- 53 T. H. R. Cashmore, 'Sheikh Mbaruk bin Rashid bin Salim el Mazrui,' in Norman Bennett, ed., Leadership in Eastern Africa: Six Political Leaders (Boston, 1968), p. 135.
- 54 See especially 'Freemasonry' and 'Circumcision.'
- 55 Parliamentary Papers, 1897, K58c, /727/, Sir Arthur Hardinge, 'Report on the Condition and Progress of the East Africa Protectorate from its establishment to 20th July, 1897,' p. 27.
- 56 Ibid., Hardinge to Salisbury, 3.12.96.
- 57 DC/KFI/3/1, KNA.
- 58 MacLean, 'Law Procedure and Customs,' KNA.
- 59 This should not be confused with Mbaruk bin Rashid, who was an Arab.
- 60 PP, /C. 8274/, Hardinge to Salisbury, 3.12.96.
- 61 This may have been due to the confusion over the word kambi as both the councillor and the council.

⁶²pp, /C. 8274/, Hardinge to Salisbury, 2.25.96.

⁶³Ibid.

CHAPTER V

DIRECT RELATIONS WITH THE BRITISH

Cooperation, 1896-1912

The period following the 'Mazrui Rebellion' was a time of peace and prosperity for the Giriama but eroded by the merciless famine at the turn of the century. By far the worst in Giriama memory, this famine lasted almost three years. Many survived only because the British brought in gunny sacks of grain which were distributed throughout the hinterland. The Giriama called the famine Magunia, after the sacks that gave them food and provided them with rough clothing. For the first time in their history some Giriama became paid labourers by working on the railway then being built from Mombasa to Lake Victoria. A significant number of Giriama made their way to Freretown, where they found food and Christian teaching. Many others came to the coast and stole mangoes from the trees to stay alive.¹

The informal encounters between British and Giriama were for the most part friendly and mutually beneficial. One exception to this was a conflict over ivory. In the late nineteenth century the British had outlawed the killing of elephants for ivory. Their interest was twofold: to protect the elephants from indiscriminate killing and to control the ivory trade. Specified hunters were allowed to shoot elephants, but the ivory had to be sold to the British government which

raised considerable revenue by placing an export tax on it. For many years the Langulo had traded ivory to the Giriama in exchange for food, and numerous Giriama had become wealthy as middlemen in this trade with the coast. When the British outlawed it, the Giriama redirected their trade toward German East Africa. This action neither stopped the killing of elephants nor brought revenue to the British. For many years, the British were lax in policing this law against illicit ivory trading, so some Giriama continued to participate and became wealthy.

Most of the Giriama who became directly involved with the British did so on more friendly terms. Usually, these were people living near the coast, particularly around the community of Jilore, or those who had gone for schooling or for work to Mombasa or Rabai. The first permanent government station of the hinterland was built at Rabai in 1898. From the point of view of the administrators there, the Giriama lived on the periphery of their area and interest. Although a particular Giriama trend toward 'independence' had been noted, the Giriama's situation was generally seen as one no different from any of the other 'Wanyika,' most of whom were still concentrated near their kayas.²

At Malindi, on the other hand, the British found mainly Giriama in the hinterland, and they were more keenly aware of their extensive migration. After 1895, since the majority of the Giriama population lived in Godoma and Gallana, they looked to Malindi and Takaungu, rather than Rabai, as their trading centers.

It was hardly strange, then, when the mwanamuli of the kaya, Ndungu wa Marai, called upon the District Officer of Malindi for assist-

ance in arbitrating a feud between some Giriama and the Kamba of Mariakani in 1901. Coincidentally, at this gathering, the officer asked the Giriama and the Kamba to choose some of their numbers to represent Government and, before the year was out, the first tax was charged. It is from this point that the Giriama date the beginning of British administration.

The conflict between the Giriama and the Kamba had begun when Giriama, coming back to Biryaa from Rabai with tembo (beer) and grain, were attacked by Kamba, who stole their goods. Some Biryaa elders asked Ndungu wa Marai to assemble the kambi for consultation. Deciding that the Giriama should retaliate by attacking the Kamba, the kambi sent all over the country for men to come with their weapons to Mithangani. An ultimatum was issued to the Kamba and on the appointed day the two parties met, shooting arrows at each other from a hundred yards. On the third day of fighting, G. H. L. Murray, the D. O. Malindi, arrived with armed Nubian soldiers. Stopping the conflict with a series of loud shots, he challenged anyone who wanted to continue fighting. He then gathered all the arrows and burned them.

According to the Giriama, they wanted to show appreciation for Murray's assistance by offering payment for his trouble. Murray, thinking more in terms of a fine, asked what they usually did to show their thanks for such help. To this they replied, 'we pay for his legs.' According to the Giriama, Murray then placed a cloth on the ground and told them to contribute one rupee each. In addition, he had both Giriama and Kamba select wazee wa Serikali (government elders) to assist the British in the various districts, beginning with the

collection of a rupee from every Giriama and every Kamba at Mariakani who was not there to give one. Ndungu himself was present, but he was not chosen. The Giriama said their own people did not choose their best men. Instead, they chose mwitsi mwitsi - men who would be 'yes men,' and who would be people the Giriama could afford to have working in this capacity.

The Giriama thought they had caused the institution of an official government tax by 'paying for his legs.' The Giriama and the Kamba did pay a fine for their little war, but according to one of Murray's reports, he sent for payment of three cows from Ndungu and ten from the Kamba. The first Hut Tax, had already been ordered but not announced. It was published in the Official Gazette in November, 1901, and collection began throughout the whole Seyidie Province (Coast) in January, 1902.³

Giriama Headmen and Traditional Leaders

Those wazee wa Serikali of 1901 chosen by the people present at the Kamba war, were selected from their malalo: Tsuma wa Iha from Vitengeni, Kavillingo from Kayafungo, Kiti Mwawiswa from Ganze, Ndungi from Ndigiria, Kitumbui from Biryaa and Mchungu from Sekoke.⁴ In addition to collecting taxes, these men were allowed to try day to day cases in their respective malalo.

But how representative of the Giriama people were these chosen men? This can best be answered by comparing the functioning of Giriama government at this time with the mechanisms introduced by the British for their own purposes.

Just by chance, the British initiation of tax collection and appointments of wazee wa Serikali coincided with the closing years of the Kavuta Rika. Those Wulumbere and Wulakahi still alive were few. Most of those still living were reported to be in their late eighties or nineties. The Kirao for age-sets Atasi and Mafira was due in 1906, and the Kirao for the last pair of age-sets, Kitsoqa and Nyoga, was due around 1912. Soon after that, a Mung'aro would have to be arranged to install the next ruling rika. This meant, then, that many of the nyere were approaching forty years of age. The eldest of them would be Wulumbere and Wulakahi of the new ruling rika when it was installed. Thus they had potential power for the immediate future, and they were frustrated, meanwhile, by their lack of traditional power.

The wazee wa Serikali chosen in 1901 were neither Wulumbere nor Wulakahi.⁵ They were kambi of Kavuta Rika in age-sets junior to these but senior to Atsai and Mafira, and Kitsoqa and Nyoga - none of whom had their Kirao by that time.

The Village Headman's Ordinance of 1902 gave these men the power to continue their judicial decisions in civil and petty criminal matters and to collect tax.⁶ At this time, the British divided the countryside into convenient-sized Locations, each represented by a Headman who was responsible to the British government but respectful of the orders of traditional rulers. This division was accomplished for all of Giriamaland between 1906 and 1908.⁷

For the Giriama, this partitioning into Locations was complicated by the fact that their people were divided into two basic Districts: the south, administered from Rabai, and the north,

administered from Malindi. Prior to 1904, the kaya had been included in the Malindi District, allowing all the Giriama to be administered to from one center. In 1904 the boundary was changed to place Kaya-fungo in the Rabai District. This was done to equalize the Liwali's 50% commission on the Hut Tax which he collected for the government.⁸

In 1907 only two of a total of twenty Headmen were of the Enyetsi: Ngonyo of Marafa and Lunganje wa Mulanda, who lived south of the Sabaki River at Mwangudo in the Location of Mangea South.⁹ Ngonyo had already proved himself willing to work with the British through his assistance during the Mazrui 'Rebellion.' In fact, the government allowed him to migrate from Dida to Marafa, twenty miles north of the Sabaki River, as a reward for his services. Ironically, there he was further out of their reach and successfully defied their proscriptions against trading in ivory. Ngonyo was neither Wulumbere or Wulakahi.¹⁰ Perhaps as a result of his Digo heritage, he was not initiated into a Giriama age-set. Nevertheless, he was obviously recognized by the Giriama as the leader of the Akiza clan. Lunganje was the only Wulakahi of the Enyetsi and the only other Enyetsi in the Malindi District. The British considered him the most influential of all Headmen because he was willing to work for them actively despite his old age.

By 1908 this spreading of the Giriama over two districts was proving problematic because Pembe wa Mrimi, the new mwanamuli of the kaya, in association with two other Enyetsi, Bogosho wa Menza and Abelugo Mwaro, was influencing Giriama in the Malindi District. He was successfully urging elders to pay an annual visit to the kaya and persuading some of them to migrate from Mangea to Weruni to live in

order to be nearer the kaya. Pembe wa Mrimi and Bogosho wa Menza were Wulakahi. Abelugo Mwaro, who was their senior as a Wulumbere, was apparently so old that the position of mwanamuli had been passed on to the next age-set.¹¹

Rabai District gave token recognition to Pembe's authority by selecting him as a Chief in their District. However, they gave him no responsibilities in the District because he lived in the kaya and because he was really too old to leave it. Rabai District was divided into two sections, east and west. The two men designated to be in charge of the two sections were called sub-chiefs: Kizele wa Mrimi and Toywa wa Karambuko. By Giriama tradition, these men were not in positions of authority. They were, in all probability, men who had assisted Pembe to carry out his work - as clerks, not fellow age-mates. Kizele may even have been Pembe's younger brother.¹² Whether they were aware of it or not, the British were taking the risk of undercutting the privileged position of the kambi's seniority system. In Malindi District, Ngonyo was made Chief of the trans-Gallana, Luganje wa Mlanda and Tsumu wa Iha shared the position for the south-Gallana, and Mchungu wa Mangi was Chief for Sekoke and Takaungu.

We can be less sure of the age-set of all Headmen gazetted in 1908, but they were probably chosen by the people under the same principle as those chosen in 1901 - men who were legitimate kambi, but who were mwitsi mwitsi. The British failed to recognize that an individual Giriama might obey an order of the kambi in council, but he would not feel bound to obey any single kambi member. British objective to have the Giriama organized into manageable administrative

districts necessitated giving special authority to one man. The British were also unaware that the Giriama maintained loyalty and obedience to their elders only so long as those elders did not interfere with the individual's private wishes.¹³ Once again, British need interfered, and the duties they asked of their Headmen - collecting taxes, providing labourers, and commanding some judiciary procedures - were precisely those actions the Giriama were unwilling to accept. By the close of 1908, therefore, the British were dealing with a Giriama population divided into two official Districts - Malindi and Rabai - and their Headmen were alienating their own people but still failing to please the British.

The only benefit to the British of this elaborate administrative network was the meagre collection of taxes through the Arab Liwalis of the coast. In Weruni, Giriama paid reluctantly. In Godoma there was more attempt to avoid any request for taxes, and collectors rarely went far into Biryaa. But the Gallana Giriama, representing the majority of the population by 1908, had the greatest success escaping this initial impact of the British.

The Gallana Giriama had many advantages. The maize they grew in the fertile river basin provided the local Arabs with much of their food as well as considerable excess to export annually from Malindi.¹⁴ Since the freeing of the slaves had virtually destroyed the labour force, the production on Arab and Indian plantations had continued its decline. These plantations were being purchased by Europeans hoping to make them profitable again. But no matter who owned the plantations, they could succeed only with a regular supply of labour. The Giriama

were the logical and initially, the only, source. Their success in the illicit ivory trade precluded any need to work for the planters. They were more willing to move further into the bush to work on their own shambas than to leave their crops and work on another man's plantation. An officer appointed in 1907 specifically to convince the Giriama to provide labour failed in his efforts.¹⁵ The Governor's suggestion of bringing in Manchester cotton so the Giriama would work to purchase cloth failed.¹⁶ European planters were forced to import labourers from upcountry. Even if the British threatened two economic sources of Giriama independence - cash cropping and ivory trading - Giriama food production was usually more than sufficient to keep the Giriama fed and to pay their taxes.

'Active' Administration, 1912

The factors external to the Giriama combined to threaten their isolation in 1912. The first involved obtaining labour. Coastal planters exerted such pressure on the Protectorate concerning their needs for labour that the Governor himself became involved. He decided that the Giriama could be forced into work through closer administration.¹⁷ To begin this task in October, 1912, Arthur Mortimer Champion was sent to Mt. Mangua as the first officer posted to administer Giriama in the hinterland. Although he was required to collect the tax, establish a station, and set up the administrative machinery, the pressing need was to obtain labourers. Hopefully this could be accomplished by forcing each man to pay his tax.¹⁸

The second factor was the arrival of C. W. Hobbly as the new

Provincial Commissioner of the coast. Since he was the senior of the P. C.'s, Hobley read his appointment there as a sign that the Protectorate Government considered the coast to be the most important region for future development. He assumed he would have a relatively free hand. Therefore, for personal and professional reasons, he intended to succeed. This was to make him, and many of the administrators working under him, less tolerant of failure. And from the British perspective, particularly from officers instrumental in the previous 'pacification' of other African peoples, it was impossible to conceive of a people, who, by 1912, did not know what power the British officer represented and the awe in which one was supposed to hold the Provincial Commissioner.¹⁹

However, the mere presence of Hobley and Champion did nothing to change Giriama attitude toward the British. Hobley was in far away Mombasa, and Champion encountered only a portion of Giriama in southern Gallana (which came to be called Mangea, after his station) and Godoma. In any case, the Giriama were hardly filled with immediate respect and were no more willing to accept the British as instant overlords than they had accepted the Arabs before them. They had found local migration to be an adequate solution to some of their own personal conflicts, and this tactic was used to frustrate the British immensely. Even when crops failed or famine struck, the Giriama responded by migrating to another place to begin a new shamba. This tactic provided new land to cultivate and additional distance between them and the annoying British officer who appeared once in a while to ask for taxes and to plead for labourers.

But Arthur Champion would not be deterred. When the Giriama did not pay the tax (or the fine imposed as a penalty for refusing to do so), Champion brought police in to arrest them. Only when the Giriama realized that his capacity for handling prisoners was small indeed did they continue their refusal to cooperate without running away. To support his additional requests for labourers to build roads and construct camps and council houses, Champion had only the same threat. So Giriama took to the bush when they heard him coming, and Champion was left to negotiate with the women.²⁰

By 1912, only three Giriama of the Wulakahi age-sets were living; all their elder Wulumbere had died. Pembe wa Mrimi, the mwanamuli who lived in the kaya with several assistants, was said to be nearly a hundred years old. Bogosho wa Menze lived in Biryaa, where he had remained totally out of touch with the British government. Wanje wa Mwadorikola lived north of the Sabaki River at Masendeni near Garashi and he, too, had remained isolated from the activities of the British. He had replaced Luganje wa Mlanda as clan head, but Luganje's son, Ziro wa Luganje, had succeeded his father as Headman. The British looked to young Ziro as the leader of the people in the Gallana region south of the river because he welcomed the British presence and provided considerable assistance. Although the British hardly took note of Wanje, the Giriama regarded him as the most prominent man of the upper Gallana valley and the western Trans-Gallana. He held the authority to convene the entire kambi of the Gallana region. Ignorant of Wanje's power, the British chose to communicate with this western Gallana region through their headman Mkwā wa Gobew, in nearby

Garashi.²¹

North of the river, the eastern Trans-Gallana remained the province of Ngonyo, who, by that time, was extremely old and blind. Still, he wielded influence over the Giriama. Although a British record noted that Ngonyo had been replaced as the Enyetsi representative for the Akiza clan by Kirima wa Chai, a younger man, this was not a sign of Ngonyo's loss of power, but of his age, his increasing independence and his inability or unwillingness to go to the kaya for necessary occasions.²²

Since Pembe, Bogosho and Wanje were the only remaining Wulakahi, the rest of the Enyetsi were of age-sets junior to them. And since it was unusual for men of younger age-sets to hold the position of Enyetsi, then the Enyetsi as a whole had less authority than they would have had during other periods. In fact, with a new rika due to be installed, the two senior age-sets of nyere were next in line to acquire the traditional reins of power.

The three governing divisions that emerged among the Giriama after leaving the kaya - the homestead, the lalo and the region - were constantly fluctuating in size and membership as the Giriama continued to move. The regional councils provided the chance to settle a problem through appeal to larger and more authoritative councils without forcing everybody to travel to the kaya for that purpose. This multiplication of councils reflected the Giriama need to determine authorities within geographical regions as well as age-sets, but the transformation was extremely difficult. One by-product of having numerous councils was an increasing number of medicine men who emerged

to serve for the appeals. We cannot confirm whether or not these were specifically Fisi waganga, but both the wide geographical distribution of the Giriama population and the loss of almost all the members of the two senior age-sets encouraged the initiation of younger and younger men into Fisi.

Government Headmen were an added complication to the changing nature of Giriama government. So long as they did little more than ask for taxes and hold their own councils and did not push anybody on either issue, the Giriama tolerated them.²³ However, Champion's arrival into Giriama land not only forced these two issues but was also accompanied by a complete reorganization of the Giriama judicial process.

Champion began work in the Giriama hinterland in mid-October, 1912, under what the British considered 'rough safari conditions.'²⁴ The C. M. S. had just abandoned its mission station at Jilore because of high mortality from fever, and Champion was totally dependent upon the Giriama for food and for labour to build his temporary stations. When he arrived in the hinterland, he was to concentrate on collecting taxes and obtaining labourers, and feeling the pulse of the people and land.

The ultimate development plan called for a permanent station to be built in a central locality and a reserve to be marked off to limit Giriama land-holding. A system of roads was to be developed and Giriama were to provide labour for both the Mombasa waterworks and the plantations on the coast.²⁵

Champion visited all of the twenty-eight Headmen. Four had

been gazetted Presidents of Native Councils (Tsumu wa Iha of Vitengeni, Mkowa wa Gobwe of Garashi, Ziro wa Lunganje of Mwanjudo, and Baya wa Ndungu of Shakadole); sixteen were gazetted Headmen; and eight were on probation.²⁶ Some of the Government Headmen chosen by the Giriama were those same men who had emerged throughout Giriamaland as local presidents of the councils. They were kambi; they were of age-sets younger than Wulumberè and Wulakahi, and they were more often than not wealthier than their neighbours. Others were strictly mwitsi mwitsi, whom the Giriama had no intention of obeying in any way.

Some of them were legitimately the most senior man in their lalo so they would have normally called together the kambi of their lalo when the need arose. As Headmen or Gazetted Presidents of the Native Councils, these men were given more individual authority than the Giriama allotted to them. Furthermore, their authority was extended throughout the entire designated Location, which reached beyond their natural jurisdiction.

From the British point of view, most of their Headmen had the authority to be of great assistance but were too suspicious of change to be enthusiastic about the new measures and too old and feeble to undertake the rigorous duties that the British required. Even Headmen had little desire for their sons to work and gave more verbal than active support to the requests for labour. Moreover, the fear of witchcraft was strong. Any Headman too ardent in his duties could be threatened by witchcraft. Normally, we might be able to suppose that those Headmen who had been naturally the presidents of local kambi would also have been Fisi waganga. However, this does not seem to have been the case. From Champion's first report in May, 1913, we learn

that the Headmen were fearful of witchcraft as punishment for carrying out their duties. Later, when we do get names of some Fisi waganga, the Headmen are conspicuously absent and are fearful of the Fisi activities.²⁷

In addition to giving their Headmen more personal and extensive authority, the British placed the function of the highest appeal into the province of the District Officer, removing it from the Kambi council and the waganga, who used oaths, which the British never considered. The reorganization of the Giriama judicial process was further intensified when Champion decided to reduce the 28 Locations to 15. It became even more difficult for Headmen to carry out their duties over this wider area.²⁸

Asking his Headmen to undertake such unpleasant duties as collecting taxes, providing labourers, carrying loads, and building council houses might have been enough to have them turn against him. Ironically, Champion proceeded to alienate most of his Headmen in another, far more serious, way. Encountering a significant amount of illicit ivory trading during his initial travels, Champion decided to suppress the trade in his territory, and in two months he had confiscated 52 tusks. The Headmen reacted angrily to this usurpation of their functions, so Champion turned over the responsibility to them and they got two tusks in as many months. The problem, of course, was that the Headmen were themselves the principals in this illicit trade. Champion became an immediate enemy. People refused to sell him food, and one Headmen and his kambi council tried to kill one of Champion's interpreters by means of witchcraft.²⁹

Champion was undaunted, however, and by May, he had made

several suggestions to the District Commissioner in Malindi. He felt the British could gain the Headmen's confidence by providing programs which would enhance their positions. He proposed to encourage agricultural production through free distribution of good maize seed and the acceptance of cotton or rubber as tax payments. He also urged that the government drop their Giriama labour policy:

It is not possible to succeed by any means that are at present legal. The Giriama will never be of much use as a labourer: he is too conservative and independent. Increased taxation would throw more on to the already heavily-laden shoulders of the women.³⁰

Evidently unsuccessful in gaining support for these suggestions by June he was continuing vigorously with plans for the reorganization of the 15 Locations and the demands for labourers. Hobley made a safari from Mombasa in late June to warn the elders that if they failed to cooperate, he would request His Excellency the Governor to send a military patrol through their country at their expense.³¹ It was too late then for the Headmen to back down from their commitment to help the British.

Why had these men agreed to work for the British in the first place? They had various reasons, but only a few were genuinely in favour of the British intensification of authority. Most of them had anticipated serving in name only. They would collect the taxes but would not worry too much if they failed to do it adequately. They received a 2½% commission on the taxes they collected, but this was hardly enough incentive to oppose their own people. Some respected the British; others were afraid of them; still others felt they had no choice but to serve them.³²

without doubt, even those Headmen who were later to lend considerable support to the British against their own people did not welcome all the changes the British brought. Champion made his first headquarters around Mt. Mangea at Njalo. He was dependent upon the local Headman, Tsumu, to provide him with food, porters and shelter. Tsumu could not get sufficient porters and had to rely heavily on his own family.³³

One of the first Locations which Champion organized was Jilore. The European missionaries had left the mission there in charge of a Giriama, Rev. Lugo Gore. Gore was insulted by another District Officer, Mr. Hemmant, who had gone there to collect taxes, and the Giriama at Jilore never even built their council house.³⁴ Probably the first and largest community in Gallana was Garashi, three miles north of the river. It had been founded by Mkowa wa Gobwe, whose heritage, like Ngonyo, was Digo. Mkowa became one of the few enthusiastic Headmen. Since Garashi had a male population of more than a thousand, it was a crucial place for the British to have support. When Champion went there asking for labourers, the elders there told him (in spite of Mkowa) that they could not allow their young men to work without getting permission and advice from the kaya. Furthermore, they told Champion if he wanted an answer on that question he would have to go to the kaya himself to get it.³⁵

Every indication supports the view that the Giriama reaction to the British 'active administration' was one of opposition by the Giriama population as a whole. Champion saw evidence that Giriama had been moving to places such as Kademu and Ndigiria, near the Taru Desert,

to avoid paying taxes.³⁶ When confronted by Champion for taxes, many produced a receipt with a relative's name and insisted it was their own, leaving him no way to check because so many people shared the same names.³⁷ Even inspectors making up the tax rolls were threatened; police were sometimes attacked; and Champion continued to find notched arrows.³⁸ Even in 1909, before Champion's arrival, an officer had reported his party was almost killed by somebody who poisoned their water.³⁹ Headmen, then, had to find a middle course between the people and the government, and they were effective at serving neither, really. They reacted by giving excuses of ill health or old age. Some of them even disappeared when they heard Champion was coming while others made wild promises, but did nothing.

Champion became personally disliked by many Giriama. The main reason was his refusal to go away. Always before, each British officer had come and gone, often never to return. When Champion stayed, many Giriama thought the taxes he collected and the ivory he confiscated went into his own pocket.⁴⁰ The Giriama were still unable to conceive that the British had embarked on a Coastal development program for which they were expected to pay. Not atypically, the British were demanding tax, organization and labour from the Giriama before they learned about the people with whom they were dealing. At the same time, they failed to explain adequately what benefit (if any) these changes would bring to the Giriama. In a society whose government was based upon respect for elders, Champion himself as a young man of 27 seemed an unlikely superior. Even his police, his interpreters and his houseboys were young. The nyere, especially, many of whom were older

than Champion but had not yet been installed in their rika, disliked him. The younger men whom Champion wanted to recruit as labourers not only disliked him, but seem willing to run him out.⁴¹

The harder Champion worked, the less support he got. He became frustrated when the Giriama showed him so little respect and when they dismissed what he had to say as if he were a missionary.⁴² In contrast to the Kamba and Kikuyu, among whom he had previously worked, Champion felt the Giriama failed to express good feelings, much less enthusiasm, for government. 'Direct insolence was by no means exceptional.'⁴³ The situation became extremely difficult; the British became frustrated.

The levers of control were weak and unreliable. There existed no strategic target, which once brought into collaboration - or smashed in defeat - rendered the tribe submissive and obedient.⁴⁴

But the Giriama were soon to provide the British just the opportunity they needed - both to bring a number of Headmen into active collaboration and to smash the growing opposition.

NOTES

¹GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.70; Stovald, CMS, p. 65. Cashmore, 'Studies in District Administration in the East African Protectorate, 1895-1918' (Unpub. PhD. dissertation Jesuit College, Cambridge, 1965.) This was kindly lent to me by Roger Frederick Morton. Cashmore, 17In, was told the name by Florence Deed.

²'Handing over Report' ADC Rabai to PC Mombasa, 1.12.13, CP4/275/A, KNA. To show how little he knew, he ordered them, according to size: Dunema, Rabai, Chongi, Kamba, Gir, Jibana, Kambe, Ribe, Langulu, Teita, plus a few Nyamwezi, plus 3 Swahili towns - Jomvu, Mwangufa, Mathirungwe. W. A. F. Platts, Rabai Sub Dist. 1910-1912, CP 65/4, KNA.

³Murray's report of his visit is recorded in 'Malindi Inward, 1901-1902' CP 73/32, KNA. Also Mal Out 1901 73/36. Giriama accounts include GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71; Joseph Denje and Birya wa Masha 6.12.71.

⁴GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71. This was verified by later government lists. MacLean, 'Law Procedure and Customs' 5.7.09 DC/KFI/3/1, KNA.

⁵GHT: Kaya Elders (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71.

⁶Rules under Village Headmen's Ordinance, 1902 CP 62/13, KNA. Secretary for Native Affairs to Chief Secretary, Nairobi, 22.8.07 wrote: 'This system need not in any way affect the position of the great chiefs. They would still be the leaders of tribes; the headmen would work under their orders, and we should then have a regular chain of responsibility throughout.' Since no such chain of responsibility existed for the duties the British were asking, this system was unrealistic from its inception. CP 62/13, KNA.

⁷DC Malindi to PC Mombasa, 30.12.07; DC Malindi to PC Mombasa, 18.2.08. CP 62/13, KNA.

⁸DC/KFI/1/3, KNA.

⁹DC Malindi to PC Mombasa, 30.12.07; DC Malindi to PC Mombasa, 18.2.08; Maclean 'Law Procedures and Customs,' DC/KFI/3/1.

¹⁰Mwavuo wa Menza (Marafa) 12.6.70. Ngonyo was his uncle. MacLean, Ibid.

¹¹DC Malindi to PC Mombasa, 18.2.08, CP 62/13, KNA. MacLean 'List of Wulumbere and Wulakahi' DC/KFI/3/1, KNA.

¹²ADC Rabai to PC Mombasa, 7.11.07, CP 62/13, KNA.

¹³Secretary for NA to Chief Secretary, Nairobi, 22.8.07, CP

62/13, KNA. 'Handing over Report 1.12.13 Rabai.' The British thought the Mijikenda all had chiefs and that they could use the power of the central kambi council to do their work for them. J. M. Pearson wrote a report (undated, but after 1914) comparing Digo customs and Giriama customs and noted that the Giriama had no 'zumbé' (individual who controlled groups of people) like the Digo did. DC/KFI/13. Ngunyo was probably more like the Digo 'zumbé' than anyone else in Giriamaland.

¹⁴In 1906, the export was 6-10,000 gislas (1 gisla = 60 lbs) of mahindi from Kilifi and 5-8,000 from Malindi. Most was sent to Mombasa, Lamu, and Kismayu, and some to Arabia, Asia and Zanzibar. Collector, Malindi to Ag. Senior. Collector, MSA, 19.9.06. 'Malindi Inward,' CP 85/115, KNA.

¹⁵CO 533/43 des. 244, 19.5.08 as cited in Cashmore, 'District Administration,' pp. 194-195.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Governor H. Conway Belfield, Fourth Session Legislative Council, November, 1912, p.2.

¹⁸'Instructions for New ADC Giriama,' 12.24.12, CP 6/425, KNA. By 1912, coastal plantations were still in the developmental stage in contrast to up-country farming, which was well-developed and well administered. The needs of the coast were different: it was suited exclusively for tropical crops, malaria presented a serious problem for Europeans and labourers, the land still belonged to the Africans and not to a large body of European settlers, and labour had not been forthcoming. In desperation, three estates at Gazi, Nyali, (north of Mombasa) and Powysland (Kilifi) had arranged at their own expense to import labourers from Somaliland. On June 25, 1913, representatives of twenty-two coastal plantation interests met in London to form the East African Coast Planter's Association to cooperate with the Coast Planters Association of British East Africa. Its purpose was to secure for those who had interest in the coastal development a 'fair share of the benefits of the British Government in those parts,' particularly by lobbying for them with the Colonial Office. They felt their needs were overshadowed by those of the highlands. One of their main requests was the need for labour, but they were also asking the government to invest in full coastal development by providing a road from Mombasa to Malindi to replace the footpath, and by providing adequate sea service along the coast, better ferry service and jetties. They urged the procedure for land purchase or leasehold be outlined, that a coastal Agricultural Department be established and that the copra industry be revived. Most importantly, they stressed the need to improve the general health conditions by reducing the malarial mosquito. 'Report of Proceedings at a Meeting of the Representatives of the Coast Plantations in British East Africa' 6.25.13, in 'Coastal Zone-Proposals for Development,' CP 9/295, KNA. C. W. Hobley, 'Proposals for Development of Coastal Zone,' 7.5.13, CP 9/295, KNA.

¹⁹Hobley himself led expeditions against the Sakwa, Seme, and

Uyoma locations and the Vigusu in Western Kenya, plus participating in the quelling of the Nandi rebellion. Carl Rosberg and John Nottingham, The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya (New York, 1966), p. 10.

²⁰Arthur M. Champion, 'Report on the Present Condition of the Administration of Wagriama and Kindred Wanyika Tribes,' 10.28.13, DC/KF1/1/3, KNA. (Hereafter, 'October Report!')

²¹Champion, 'History;' Maclean, 'Law Procedure and Custom,' KNA. Mkowa wa Gobwe, 'Statement before Hobley,' 11.15.13, CP 9/403; KNA. GHT: Charo wa Maita (Bungale) 12.17.70; Bambare wa Charo (Garashi) 12.18.70.

²²November Baraza notes, 1913, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

²³The original instructions specified that they were not to interfere with government (kaya) activities. Murray to Senior Commissioner, Mombasa. 'Malindi Inward,' 1906, 11.20.06, CP 85/115, KNA.

²⁴H. W. Montgomery, 'Attitude of the Wanyika,' 6.4.14; A. M. Champion, 'Report on the Present Political Situation in Giriama and the Attitude of the Natives Towards the General Order to Vacate the North Bank of the Sabaki; 4.29.14, CP 5/3360I, KNA.

²⁵'Instructions for New ADC Giriama,' 12.24.12, CP 6/425, KNA.

²⁶Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

²⁷A. M. Champion, 'Report on the Wanyika covering a period from October, 1912 to May 1913 by ADC Giriama,' (hereafter 'May Report') 5.30.13, CP 8/157, KNA. November Baraza Notes, 1913, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

²⁸Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

²⁹Ibid., This was Tsumu of Vitangani. He eventually became one of the most trusted Headmen.

³⁰Champion, 'May Report,' KNA.

³¹Hobley, 'The Provincial Commissioner Goes on Tour and Makes a Report on the State of the Giriama District in 1913,' DC/KF1/1/3, KNA.

³²The Provincial Commissioners and the District Commissioners constantly debated the payment question. The most important Headman got either a higher percentage or a flat rate of fifteen rupees. CP 62/13, KNA.

³³Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

³⁴On 3.22.12, Aubyn Rogers, Secretary, CMS, sent a letter to H. R. Tate, DC Malindi. This letter covered complaint letters from Rev. Lugo Gore and Wazee wa Ashofu. This matter went to the CMS Bishop and

to the Governor, resulting in Hemmant's being reprimanded. He refused to apologize, however. E. V. Hemmant, 'Letter regarding the mission complaint against him,' 3.26.12, CP 2/101, KNA. 'Rev. H. Binns to CMS,' 7.12.12, CMS Archives, G3 A5/1912/71, par. 10. I am grateful to Jocelyn Murray for this latter citation.

³⁵Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

³⁶F. S. Traill, 'Nyika District Annual Report,' 6.18.15, CP 16/49, KNA.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹W. F. P. Kelley, compiler, Kilifi District Gazetteer, 1960, p. 9. A copy of this was kindly lent to the author by Dr. J. Milton-Thompson of Kaloleni.

⁴⁰Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

⁴¹Champion began his army service in India in 1905 and joined the Protectorate Administration in 1909 where he served under J. B. Ainsworth in Kitui before coming to Giriamaland. His youthful appearance made him look younger than most of the men he was to administer. CO 533/32/44192.

⁴²This same position was taken for all the Giriama by Norman Leys, Kenya (London, 1924), pp. 127-128.

⁴³W. S. Marchant, 'Kilifi Diary, 1925,' DC/KF1/4/1, KNA.

⁴⁴Cashmore, 'District Administration,' p. 197.

CHAPTER VI

THE GIRIAMA RISING, 1913-1914

The Non-Cooperation Campaign of Mekatalili June - August, 1913

The Giriama participated in two phases of active resistance against the British. The first was a regeneration campaign begun in July, 1913, and subsequently rendered inoperative by the British in November of the same year. The second phase resulted in actual fighting which broke out in August, 1914, and was followed by a short, brutal, punitive campaign, a stringent peace settlement, a year of enforced compliance by the Giriama to meet the conditions of peace, and, finally, a devastating famine.

The main aim of the regeneration campaign was to prevent the British from taking away the young men to work and to re-establish the traditional elders as the only legitimate councils, replacing those of the Government Headmen. The campaign originated in Gallana, was brought from there to the kaya where oaths were taken, and non-cooperation was effectively extended throughout most parts of Giriamaland.

If any single incident sparked the organization of a full non-cooperation campaign among the Giriama, it was the visit of the Provincial Commissioner in late June, 1913. The Giriama grievances up to that time were many: taxes, the presence of nearby Government

stations, the incessant demands for labour, and the usurpation of Giriama councils for the purpose of British administration. Hobley aimed to urge the Giriama into more enthusiastic support for the British. Two things which he discussed with the Giriama made them uneasy.

The first was his appeal to widespread participation in large Government councils as a sure means of successful defiance against the waganga, whom he thought to be witches rather than medicine men. His purpose, naturally, was to remove the elders' fear of witchcraft and to replace that fear with assurances that British power was stronger than the medicine of the waganga. However, since the power of senior elders and that of Fisi waganga were integrated, he was, in fact, encouraging usurpation of power from senior elders - particularly the three remaining Enyetsi whose major responsibility was judicial.

Second, Hobley stressed those duties of the councils which were being expanded to include executive as well as judicial functions. He wanted the councils to assist in hut-tax collections, building roads, digging wells, improving agriculture, and suppressing drunkenness among the young men.¹ They were also to help Government by catching murderers and escaped criminals.²

In addition, Hobley's mere presence had an even greater impact than what he said. Once the PC had visited them, and had called upon forces even greater than himself in his cause, the Giriama could no longer doubt that their relationship with the British had developed from one of casual encounter to one in which they were being increasingly threatened by an alien government.³

The Giriama grievances found focus through the actions of a woman in Gallana, Mekatalili. She heard Hobley speak at Garashi, and she was determined to do something about it. She wanted to prevent Giriama men from labouring for the British and to 'restore the country to its old condition.'⁴

It is odd, in a society where government resides exclusively in the hands of the men, that this campaign should have been led by a woman, and not an Enyetsi or prominent elder. In a sense, the British had already co-opted many of the prominent individuals by making them Headmen. With a few exceptions, such Headmen who had experienced the active British presence disliked it as much as most Giriama. On the other hand, they were willing to gain personal benefit through alliance with the British and they were more aware of the risks involved in opposing them.

Particularly in Biryaa, those Giriama who had not been called upon to serve as builders of this new administration had not yet conceived of its long-range implications. The Headman Kitumbui of Biryaa served the British poorly as tax collector and was himself involved in the ivory trade. Except that he had to share council duties (and the resulting fees) with Government Headmen, Bogosho witnessed little of the strain from Champion's constant requests. Pembe, at least, had been given tacit recognition by the Rabai officials though he remained fairly isolated inside the kaya.

In contrast, people in Wanje's region of Gallana were being pressed by Champion's unrelenting demands. Wanje himself had escaped any direct involvement with Champion or his officers, but he had

steadfastly refused to help them to gain a foothold. On the other hand, his age, the distance from the kaya, and the growing influence of nearby Garashi as a sphere of influence for the new British administration probably dulled his interest in organizing beyond his own personal commitment.

The Giriama did not see this as a situation calling for war. The Enyetsi power in warfare had been restricted to signaling the warriors to protect the Giriama from a common enemy. In this case, the British had support among the Giriama. They were not invading; they were infiltrating. Although Wanje was not in a position to lead Giriama sentiment against the British, he was obviously willing to take advantage of the situation Mekatalili was to offer.

If Wanje's powers were limited under the circumstances, then how was a woman in a better position to lead this campaign? Women in Giriama society were not divided into age-sets as were the men. However, they did acquire the age-set of their husband, and in the kaya, they had developed their own Kambi. The jurisdiction of the women's kambi was reserved for the province of women and for behaviour around the home or the shamba. It was primarily supportive of the rituals for Kirao and Mung'aro. The women had their own mwanza drum and an oath to accompany it. Their single secret society was called Kifudu. The medicine women (akuzi) of this society had control over a medicine which was stored in a jar in the kaya, so the women had to travel there to use it. The medicine's purpose was to prevent certain misbehaviour, usually regarding male-female relationships. Male victims were expected to break out in sores on the mouth, tongue, and ears and even

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become deaf. Female victims became sterile.⁵

It might be expected that Mekatalili drew her legitimacy for leadership among the Giriama from either the women's kambi or the Kifudu medicine, but she had authority in neither of these. It was, instead, her personal anguish over the growing disintegration of Giriama society which led her to try to convince others to do something about it. She has been called both a 'prophetess' and a 'witch,' but it seems she was neither.⁶ Having no authoritative position from Giriama traditional government, her legitimacy emerged entirely from her charisma. As an effective and emotional public speaker, she began to publicize the injustices she felt, and she found many Giriama agreed with her. Although her legitimacy was non-traditional, her plea appealed to tradition. She wanted a revival of the kaya and the traditional kambi, a return to the many customs which had been spoiled, and an absolute rejection of the demands of Giriama sons for labour.⁷ How much of her campaign she thought to be propagating truth and how much she felt to be good propaganda will never be known. The impact, though, was immense.

Ironically, it was Hobley's tour which gave Mekatalili the excuse to do something about the general grievances. Its purpose was to demonstrate the PC's power and to convince the Giriama that the British were too strong a force to oppose. The Headmen were instructed to have the elders of their Locations ready to hear the PC's speech. Everywhere the response was poor, and Wanje was conspicuously absent. After Hobley left Garashi, Mkowa, the Headman, tried to convince the elders of his Location to send their sons to work. They told him they

would not agree until they had consulted with Wanje who was away at the kaya.⁸

A few days later, Mekatalili called together women from Gallana to meet at her home in Masendeni. She successfully obtained the support of other women by appealing to their concern for children. Their sons were being taken away for labour and many never returned. Their daughters were marrying non-Giriama (Swahili and Duruma, mainly) and none of them came back. Though Mekatalili herself was ineligible to issue any oath,⁹ she secured support of the women of Gallana who had such powers - from the kambi and from Kifudu. Once she realized that her grievances had taken hold, she elicited the assistance of Ngonyo and Wanje to challenge the authority of the Headmen and to seek solutions that would re-establish Giriama political independence.

These two men together remained the foci of traditional Giriama government in Gallana - Wanje, because he was one of the three remaining Wulakahi, and Ngonyo, because his economic success had made him powerful even prior to British arrival. From his home in Masendeni, Wanje had been conducting council meetings for years and he had refused even to attend meetings called by Mkowa, the Headman in Garashi. Until Mekatalili's campaign began to bring results, Champion was totally unaware of his existence.

The relationship between Wanje and Mekatalili has become extremely confused. In some reports, he was called her 'male helper.' In others, her 'son-in-law.'¹⁰ These two people were not related by marriage or blood. Long before her campaign, Mekatalili had married a man whose home was Masendeni, so she and Wanje had been neighbours.

Later, after they were imprisoned up-country together, they cared for each other as a man and wife would. The use of the relationship terms is a reflection of this as well as their experience, after their return to Giriama land in 1924, when they lived in the kaya as head of the newly-established men's and women's kambi.

Mekatalili's description of how she began to stir the Giriama in Gallana is revealed in a statement made before Champion at Garashi when she was later captured. She made the whole series of gatherings sound quite innocent.

The rains last year failed. And in Mangea and Goshi, there was no food. I heard that the rains had failed on account of the introduction of cents and rupees into the country. I went to Ngonyo to ask if this was true. He told me it was not so. Ngonyo said the koma of the Kaya Giriama were destroying the country.¹¹

Champion's own report tells the story another way. He was insistent that the rains were 'quite up to average.'

/Mekatalili and Wanje/ collected a following under the guise of making harmless enquiries into the question of the rains (always a draw). The curious soon came to see what was happening, and in no time the witch Katililili got their attention and told them that the Government headmen had received each 1,000/- to sell young men to the Europeans, that the Europeans would send them over the sea and they would be sold as slaves and never see their native land again. That now was the time to resist for the Europeans had no power.¹²

From Masendeni, Mekatalili led the women to Marafa to confer with Ngonyo.

We told him the European at Mwangea wanted labour to work at a monthly wage on the ground that Government paid salaries to Headmen. He told us to take an omen from a sacrifice of goats, and we would have a feast . . . Any woman could have gathered the meeting together, no special power is required. I am not a 'Mganga' and have no medicine.

Ngonyo interpreted the augury of the goats and said, 'You have left your Kaya, you must return and consult spirits there.'¹³

Because of the accusation against Headmen, Mkowa of Garashi was summoned to Ngonyo's where he was confronted by the women and some men who had joined them there. Mekatalili demanded that he 'pay back the bag of money he had received to sell Giriama sons for labour.'¹⁴ When he replied that he had received none, she promised trouble 'against you of Malindi.'¹⁵ Ngonyo told the agitated group to go to the kaya and feast the spirits of the ancestors.¹⁶ By advising a ceremony to propitiate the displeased spirits of the kaya and denying any blame to the British, Ngonyo was absolving himself from any anti-British posture while at the same time encouraging Mekatalili to continue the campaign.

Mekatalili had no difficulty getting Wanje's support. She may well have begun the entire campaign in cooperation with him, although according to him, she did not consult him before she called her meeting.¹⁷ After leaving Marafa, a meeting was called for everybody to meet at Wanje's at Masendeni. Fines were levied at 5/ for kambi and 3/ for nyere who did not attend.¹⁸ They decided to go to the kaya six days later.

This was the beginning of a formal attempt by Giriama to regain their political independence. The stimulation and enthusiasm had begun in Gallana and progressed to the kaya. Mekatalili had been successful for several reasons. As a woman, she recognized that requests for young men as labourers was opposed by the female as well as the male population. Too, it was to her advantage to be outside the formal structure of Giriama government while at the same time to get support

from some of its members. The growing independent spirit of the Giriama from their pattern of government a century before had become so strong that had one of the Enyetsi suggested returning to greater control by authentic Giriama councils, many men who held positions of importance due to their wealth or achievements would have opposed the suggestion, fearing loss of their gained independence.

But since Mekatalili presented such a revitalization as a solution to those very problems Giriama had been encountering since the British began their 'active administration,' she was able to provide a sense of unity of purpose which the Giriama had not had for over a century and which was non-threatening. Finally, since she was far removed from either the traditional or British co-opted administrative networks, and because she was a woman, British officers and Headmen initially dismissed the reports of her actions as 'old wives' tales.¹⁹

Between them, Mekatalili and Wanje massed a large following as they travelled separately from Gallana to the kaya. They threatened to fine those who did not join them. People from many parts of Gallana and Godoma gave enthusiastic support, with the exception of the men and women in Ziro's Location at Mwangudo. They remembered the British punishment they experienced in 1908 when nyere tortured some of the Akirimu, trying to end the drought. Wanting no part of such British punishment again, they chose to remain aloof from this controversy.²⁰

When the group from the north arrived at the kaya, Mekatalili said those present from Biryaa and Weruni there to greet them were insufficient, so messengers were sent out to bring in more people.²¹ Mekatalili then began her oratory, asking the people of Biryaa, Godoma

and Weruni to join with the people of Gallana in breaking up the order for labour.

. . . as the Government pays wages to Headmen, Government thinks it can demand labour. Every elder must pay it back and if they dare to send it themselves, /I/ will take it even to 'Bibi queen,' the mother of the European. /Florence Deed, C. M. S. missionary at Kaloleni/ We are not to fear the European, /I/ have been to Malindi and seen the Provincial Commissioner.²²

The pressure was being placed on the Headmen. Their burden would be to wipe themselves clean of any association with the British by returning their wages. But even Mekatalili could not have thought it would be that simple.

Each region provided a sheep and the ceremony was held in sacrifice for the koma. After calling in a rain specialist, the Giriama prayed for rain. Then came the attempt to persuade the absent Headmen that the Giriama meant business.

Two major items were decided by agreement, not by oath. The first was full opposition to service as British labourers under any circumstances. Secondly, they resolved to return the government to the Giriama by re-establishing the kambi councils apart from those of the British. Since three Wulakahi were still living, they were to be responsible for the government. Wanje wa Mwadorikola was appointed chief judge of the Gallana valley, with precedence over all Headmen. Bogosho wa Manza and Pembe wa Mrimi were to hear cases in the south at the kaya. In addition, the kaya was to be revived by having a large number of elders coming to live there permanently. This decision, carried out unanimously, was binding on all Giriama. The oaths which followed were curses to prevent specific actions which could assist

the British effort and harm the Giriama goals.²³

As the people in the kaya became more excited, the list of grievances grew. The restoration of the Giriama maada (customs) included the proscription of European clothing, soap, washing at drinking places, and giving Giriama girls to non-Giriama for marriage. The attempt to cease British encroachment forbade assistance with taxes, councils, or labour. People who bewitched goats or caused crops to fail were cursed. Clearly, much of this was aimed at Giriama who had gone to the missions and who were wearing shirts and trousers and working to assist the British administration.²⁴

This endeavour to regenerate traditional Giriama customs was made effective through the use of several oaths, two in particular: Mukushekushe and Fisi. The women swore the former and the men, the latter. According to Kadidi wa Bembere, one of the women of Biryaa who 'laid' the Mukushekushe,

Mekatalili's business was to gather the people to checkmate the government's request for labour. She was not however at the oath, nor is she one of our chief women. She was in the kaya, but her grade is too low to permit of her taking part in the oath.²⁵

Mekatalili's energy and powers of oratory had been sufficient to provide focus for the Giriama grievances, but she had no control over the oaths which were sworn in the name of Giriama independence. It would, therefore, be a mistake to regard the meeting at the kaya and the proscriptions which emerged from the oaths sworn there as a well-planned, tightly-organized campaign. Certainly from the beginning Mekatalili did not have in mind all the things which surfaced at the kaya. Bogosho, Wanje, and Pembe did not apparently work in conjunction

or try to control the outcome. The women were behaving independently.²⁶

There were two separate gatherings at the kaya in which oaths were sworn. Bogosho was present at the first, Wanje was there for the second, and Pembe was apparently there for both of them. In every case, the penalty for breaking an oath was death. On the day Mekatalili led the sacrifice for the koma, news reached the kaya that a Giriama had been killed by one of Champion's police at Chakama. This stirred greater anger against the British; there is even some suggestion that the second gathering was called because that policeman was neither hanged nor punished.²⁷

At the first oathing ceremony, Bogosho led the Fisi because he resented those elders younger than he who were denying him his portion of the court fees.²⁸ While Champion had been trying to establish effective British control through Headmen in the Malindi District at the expense of Wanje wa Mwadorikola's position of authority, the Assistant District Commissioner of Rabai, J. B. Pearson, had successfully relied on the Headmen of Weruni and Biryaa to assist him in his district. Pembe, Bogosho and the kaya had been virtually ignored. He received even greater cooperation from the Giriama in his area for several reasons: The two active mission stations staffed by Europeans were those of the C. M. S. at Kaloleni and the Catholic White Fathers at Mwabanyundo, just west of Kaloleni. Their offerings of good land, medical care, and education had gained support from some of the Giriama of the surrounding area. Also, the abandoned Kaya Kidzini was not too far away, and Kiti wa Sirya, the Headman representing its immediate surroundings, maintained that his Kidzini clan was fully independent of

Kaya Giriama.²⁹ And even if they did not like the changes the British were bringing, many Giriama in Rabai District were fully aware of how near they were to the railway, and how quickly troops could be brought in to fight them.³⁰ The result of this support for the British was that people were more willing to go to Headmen's councils than to Bogosho's. He not only missed out on what little money the Headmen got as salaries, but the fees which would have normally gone to him as the senior elder were going to junior men.

After this Fisi oath had been taken, the women swore the Mukushekushe oath. One of their grievances was the large number of Giriama girls who were marrying Duruma men. The Duruma preferred Giriama wives to their own because taking a non-Duruma wife allowed them to break away from the restraints of matrilineage and amass greater personal wealth which their sons could directly inherit. This was obviously a problem for the Giriama as in the north where Giriama women were marrying Swahili, but it may also have been an excuse Mekatalili used to get the women of Biryaa and Weruni to be more receptive to her objections against the British.³¹

The terms of their oath forbade (1) anyone from pointing out tax defaulters to government servants, (2) Giriama fathers from giving their daughters in marriage to the Duruma,³² (3) anyone from telling the government information about ivory,³³ (4) wizards from destroying crops or killing goats,³⁴ and (5) women from charging less than 5/- for sexual intercourse instead of the then-present low rate of payment.³⁵

A second gathering at the kaya was attended by Nduria wa Gunga, the Headman of Kirwitu, the Location northeast of Champion's

camp. This time, another Fisi oath was sworn forbidding any persons to hear, or appear in, a suit in a Headman's council. Also anyone who called in a plaintiff or a defendant would die. At some point, the proscriptions were extended to forbid all people to help the government in any way, to wear European dress, to wash with soap instead of cleansing with traditional castor oil, and to go to missions.³⁶

Oaths were commonly used among the Giriama and frequently, the mere threat of an oath was sufficient to change a person's behaviour.³⁷ The Mukushekushe oath cursed everybody in a family, wherever he was. Cast as a revenge against children who had behaved to dishonor their parents and resulting in the discreditation of the entire family line, this curse was never taken lightly. Usually, this was a women's oath. The men's adaptation, kulilira, probably came later. On this occasion, it was used only by the women. In practice, water collected from washing the private parts was sprinkled on the ground with the curse that all who had suckled at that breast were to die unless the offense ceased. After this oath was taken at the kaya, the water was carried throughout Giriama land by the women. They sprinkled it in the water holes of the country and repeated the oath.³⁸

The Fisi oath worked somewhat differently. It had long been regarded by the British as the secret oath of the hyaena cult and the most powerful Giriama oath. This probably reflected the respect the Giriama themselves demonstrated for it. The Fisi had been sworn during the Mbaruk 'Rebellion' to proscribe assistance to the 'rebels.' Because of this experience, the British had great respect for the Fisi oath, but no feeling at all regarding the Mukushekushe oath. The Fisi

had been used periodically throughout Giriamaland to forbid washing in some vital waterholes, and to cleanse areas of witches. Once the Giriama spread from the kaya after 1850, the uses of this oath were expanded to proscribe other forms of unacceptable behaviour. When the medicine was buried, the entire water supply supposedly would be contaminated and anyone who broke the terms of the oath and drank from the source would die. During the famine of Magunia, 1899-1900, the waterholes of all of Giriamaland were put under the protection of the Fisi oath.³⁹

How did these oaths really work? There were two elements. First, Fisi and Mukushekushe oaths had long been used to regulate proper behaviour. The rumour that they had been sworn was almost enough to have their proscriptions followed. Second, most of the Giriama were already predisposed to opposing British taxes, labour demands, and judicial system, and to supporting a revival of traditional Giriama government instead. Since they had left the kaya, traditional Giriama government had grown increasingly weak. Particularly at this time, when the installation of a new rika was due, the Giriama faced difficulty in coping with the threat of the British. Perhaps, for the first time, the Giriama were wondering if they could afford not to strengthen their government. The dual aim of the oaths was to provide this strength and, at the same time, victimize Government servants by keeping them from their duties. Of course, there existed the wild hope that the British, failing in their goals, would become discouraged and go away, leaving the Giriama alone.

The British gave more credence to the efficacy of the oaths

on this particular matter than did the Giriama themselves. The few people who were likely to continue helping the British were those who had some vested interest in doing so. Some Headmen saw this as a way to escape the forces of the British; others feared both sides, knowing that the ultimate strength of the British was greater for this conflict.

The oaths gave legitimacy to mutual behaviour that the majority of the Giriama had previously been conducting on their own. It also made the possibility of bewitching somebody who continued to assist the British much more believable - to the people in general, and to the Headmen in particular. The result of oaths taken at the kaya was not to fight the British, but to try and win back those Giriama who had begun switching their loyalties to the British. Thus the British effort would have been subverted in favour of the Giriama government, culture, and independence.

The Impact, August - November, 1913

Champion had heard about Mekatalili's campaign in its early stage in August from Kombi wa Yeri, a Christian Headman of Shakadulu. Kombi had been present at the meeting in Marafa and reported to Champion immediately.⁴⁰ Champion, thinking these activities would not amount to anything, dismissed them as 'women's gossip.'⁴¹ Later, Kombi was to serve as a witness to Mekatalili's 'sedition.'⁴²

In mid-August, just as Mekatalili's forces had gathered at the kaya, Champion became involved in the 'Chakama incident.' Ironically, even as the death of a Giriama here flamed the resentment of those taking the oaths in the kaya, Champion's interpretation was that

opposition to him faded for the time being as a result of the Government's show of force. The incident began on August 10. He had detained nine nyere there who had 'displayed a most defiant attitude' when he suggested they go to work to get money to pay their taxes. He 'exercised pressure' by having them carry stones for the station at Mangea. On August 13, some thirty armed nyere appeared, rushed the camp, and a nervous police officer fired without orders, killing one man.⁴³

The attack had been made to free the prisoners, but it was also a culmination of growing hostility over the labour demands and Champion's persistent confiscation of ivory. He later learned that a Baluchi ivory trader had been concealed in a nearby village, and, because Champion had persistently warned that traders in ivory would be punished, the people thought he was baiting them. The nyere hoped that by brandishing arms they could frighten Champion away.⁴⁴

Upon hearing of the incident, R. Skene, the DC Malindi, sent for the Headmen of the Gallana valley to accompany him and Champion to Chakama to deal with this matter. Headmen were sent ahead of his party to reassure the inhabitants, and the Headman of Chakama was convinced to come out of hiding and meet the party.⁴⁵

Skene and Champion agreed that since a Giriama had been killed, no further penalty should be levied against the Chakama people.⁴⁶ Hopley, on the other hand, wired from Mombasa that Skene was to demand the 'ringleaders' for punishment or force the people to hand over 100 men for three months of paid labour in Mombasa. That failing, they would be visited by a 40-man patrol.⁴⁷ He was, perhaps, reacting to his

own helplessness over a current epidemic which had cut off the source of up-country labour, but it was a strong reaction indeed. Skene worked until September 28 to settle the matter while Champion was away in Malindi on medical leave. Several nyere were arrested and sixty goats paid in fine by extremely disgruntled Giriama.⁴⁸

From the Giriama point of view, it was they who had lost a man and the Government soldier who should have been punished. Under Giriama law, kore (blood money) was paid to the family of the dead man by the man who killed him. The dead man's nearest relation in this case was Ngonyo. Champion had offered to pay kore, but Ngonyo refused to accept it, arguing that according to European law, if one man kills another, then the killer must die. The British of course refused this solution. Ngonyo still did not want the kore money and furthermore he refused to pay his taxes. Skene reacted by forcing Ngonyo's people to work around the station instead. Eventually Ngonyo capitulated and sent people to carry stones as tax payment, probably because he did not want the growing friction to reach the point of explosion.⁴⁹

In any case, he had successfully stirred up Giriama in all regions. They knew the Europeans had killed a Giriama and had not paid kore. For them, the matter was far from settled. They became even more certain that the British were the ones in error; they attributed the overall source of their difficulties to the British; and they were even more dedicated to preventing Headmen from completing their duties.

In late September, when Champion was ready to return to the Gallana valley to build the new station at Njalo, he could not get

porters to carry his loads from Jilore. He had intended to intensify tax collection, and this delay of eight days frustrated his efforts. He had only collected 900/- prior to that time, and in the next three months, he had to get the Giriama to pay the remaining 30,000/-.⁵⁰

Champion pressed Mkowa of Garashi to keep an earlier promise to send porters down to meet him. Mkowa wrote back on September 28 that the people were so adamant against providing labour that some were migrating into Langulo country at Ndebute. They replied to his summons:

Even you, Mkowa, we can shoot you with arrows
because of this business of the Wazungu.⁵¹

He explained about the resolutions of Mekatallili's party and the oath taken cursing anyone who 'would make himself a judge . . . or . . . become an askari.' The next day, he advised Champion in another letter:

Sir, think about this matter seriously. I, Mkowa,
in my heart, very much fear the Government.⁵²

The Headmen were caught in the middle. It was they whom the British would blame for lack of cooperation. And it was they, along with clerks and mission converts, who had reason to fear the oaths. The Headmen knew that the waganga were not beyond poisoning them if they did not meet the terms of the oaths. The result of Mekatallili's campaign was not that the Giriama were confronting the British directly; instead, they were aiming their threat at those of their own people who had helped the British in the first place.

And the Headmen were indeed scared. When it was clear, months later, that the British were back in control and the oaths had been removed, Mkowa confessed that he had openly recognized the

authority of the traditional elders.

As Wanje was a big elder and as he was too old to offer court to my baraza, I arranged that if a person wished they should take cases before him and if he was unable to settle them they could come on to my baraza. I did this so that he should not become jealous at not getting any court fees. I called a special meeting of the kambi to tell them of this arrangement.⁵³

During the ten months Champion had been in Giriamaland, he had come to rely especially on four Headmen: Ziro wa Luganje of Mangea South, Tsumu wa Iha of Mangea North (both of whom lived south of the Sabaki River), Mkowa wa Gobwe of Garashi and Kombi wa Yeri of Shakadulu (who lived north of the river). When all these men found themselves powerless to help him, Champion knew things must be serious. Prior to August, he had been able to use persuasion. By the end of September, nothing worked.

When Champion finally arrived at Njalo after his medical leave in Malindi, Tsumu was the only man who appeared when he summoned the elders; even Tsumu was reluctant.⁵⁴ During the next sixteen days, Champion got no labourers. Ziro wrote from Mangea South on October 4 that neither elders nor nyere had come to his council for more than two months. Two of his people had told him secretly about Mekatalili's campaign and the 'witch medicine' put in the water holes to kill anyone who helped the government.

I think this affair is the outcome of the wages paid by government to headmen. The people say the government headmen have received it to sell the wanyere. It is the government headmen that they dislike . . .
/and/ those who go to the missions.⁵⁵

Four days later, Kombi wrote from Shakadulu that government councils were now non-existent and the Giriama were holding 'little

councils in the bushes at which a few elders meet and give judgment secretly and eat the fees.⁵⁶ Champion then made a special safari to see Ziro and Tsumu. He found villages empty, his station at Vitengeni robbed, roads overgrown, and council houses unfinished and delapidated. At Kirwitu, the Headman Nduria admitted he had not informed his people about the taxes or the need for workers at Njalo. Nduria's nephew, who wanted to replace his uncle as Headman, refused Champion's offer of the office because of the oath: 'I am a Nyika, and I shall be killed by it.'⁵⁷

At Merikano, the Headman Mkole had ignored Champion's letter to have the taxes ready nor did he appear to greet Champion's arrival. A party of ten armed met Champion's party as it entered Merikano, but a confrontation was avoided.

At Garashi, Champion learned that Mekatalili had preceeded him, and he was once again denied success in his missions. He became determined to capture her. She had escaped from Kirwitu when Nduria hoped to detain her. Finally, on October 17, with the help of Mkowa and his deputy, Champion arrested Mekatalili near Garashi. She signed a statement in Champion's presence, but she admitted no wrong-doing. Her only mention of an oath was one regarding prostitution fees.⁵⁸

Later that same day, Wanje was arrested, probably at his nearby home in Masendeni. Wanje made no formal statement, but Champion reported on their conversation, and Wanje mentioned no oath. Champion still regarded Wanje as Mekatalili's 'chief male assistant' although Wanje said he had been appointed to be in charge of the Gallana valley by the people gathered at the kaya.⁵⁹

The following day Champion tried unsuccessfully to arrest Headman Nduria of Kirwitu as one of the instigators of the Chakama incident. Nduria was nowhere to be found, but his people rushed the police with bows and arrows and war cries. No one was hurt, but three were arrested.⁶⁰

The situation had indeed become serious. The arrest of Wanje and Mekatalili failed to solve the problems immediately. At the end of October, Champion wrote a full report describing the changing attitude of the Giriama from 'lethargic indifference' to 'defiant opposition.' He admitted Mekatalili's campaign to be effective. 'Every Giriama is much more afraid of the kiraho /oath/ than of the government . . . the WaGiriama boast openly that the government are afraid to fight them and for that very reason have never done so.'⁶¹

Champion explained in detail how he had come to learn of the campaign, his own difficulties, and his proposed solutions. He did not feel that the ultimate position of the British - or even of himself as an officer - was threatened. Instead, he was angry that the Giriama were delaying the inevitable, at his expense. His recommendations at this point aimed at future goals. Having already arrested Mekatalili and Wanje, he expected that the resistance movement would be stopped with their deportation. He recommended that the oaths be removed, that the elders be punished, and that the kaya - 'a hotbed of sedition' - should be destroyed. More than that, Champion wanted to restrict the Giriama to a reserve south of the Sabaki River and west of the ten-mile coastal strip. This would prevent their escaping into the bush, give him better control, and it would open up the trans-

Gallana to Europeans.

The loss of their fertile plain of Modunguni and that of Garashi would be a punishment certainly felt by the most unmanageable section of the tribe and one that would not be forgotten for a long time to come. At present it is a crying shame to see the rich black cotton soil of the valleys over-grown with rank grass and tangled with undergrowth and to see the swamps choked with reeds and grass, where enough rice would be grown to suffice half the wants of the coast, if in the hands of intelligent people . . . I am of the opinion that European planters being thus right alongside the reserve would soon get their labour and they should be encouraged to offer WaNyika small plots on signing contracts of labour for a stated period of time during the year.⁶²

This appeared to be a perfect solution to the problems of administration and labour acquisition for European-proposed plantations. Champion was not only suggesting that the needs of existing plantations could be met, he was implying that in this way Giriama would be available to provide labour for expanding plantations. This could have been based upon nothing but his combined anger and desire.

More realistically, Champion argued that any increase in the hut tax would merely overburden the women and still not produce men as labourers. Since he had failed up to this time to collect the tax, he urged that permission be granted to destroy all huts on which taxes had not been paid by the appointed time. In desperation, then, he proposed force as a solution.

The time has come for firm action and the placing of the administration on a sound basis. The tribe will then, and not until then, realize its position with regard to Govt. The WaNyika are no exception to the rule and ours must be asserted if it is to receive the respect which is so essential in the successful government of a black race.⁶³

Those Giriama who had cooperated in the effort to foil

British colonialism and to restore Giriama autonomy came from all regions of Giriamaland. Their passive resistance was harder to cope with than open warfare would have been. The British were insulted and frustrated - and even more determined to overcome the embarrassing Giriama challenge.

The Punishment, November, 1913

The British were never in danger of being expelled from Giriamaland. The Giriama were not preparing organized parties of armed warriors to begin an offensive. The few groups of armed men whom Champion encountered were acting to protect what was being threatened at the moment - they did not want to provide labourers, and taxes meant just that. However, the British were in danger of being humiliated, and their efforts to develop the coast had already experienced a severe setback.

It is no wonder, then, that the British officers were in the mood for severe punishment and stringent restrictions. The Giriama had not proved worthy of all the effort the British had expended on them. The British were neither frightened nor discouraged, but they were indignant and angry. The October report, which Champion had sent to Hopley, demonstrated his extensive knowledge of the Giriama after almost a year among them. It also, for the most part, expressed sympathy for the Giriama position. But it concluded in frustrated anger, and Champion's suggestions, however unrealistic, were intended to ensure that he could accomplish the task he had been assigned to do even though the facts indicated his task might be an impossible one.⁶⁴

Hobley ignored all the sympathetic portions of this report. However, he used Champion's accounts of Giriama activity as evidence they had committed criminal acts. And he welcomed Champion's recommendations as verification of his own suggested solution: to punish the Giriama severely, to force them into active participation in the administrative network, and to open up land for European use.⁶⁵

Hobley had received reports in addition to Champion's that trouble was brewing in Giriama. Local missionaries and DC's at Takaungu and Rabai passed on tales they heard and sent out their faithful servants either to confirm them or to determine them rumour of no account. The stories they heard were of opposite tone. People were rushing to Weruni from Gallana after hearing the Government was about to make war on the Giriama, beginning near the river.⁶⁶ Or, the Giriama were preparing arrows, forming companies, and conspiring with the Somali to fight the British.⁶⁷ Giriama anger against the British in general was aimed at Champion, who had been the man actively annoying them.⁶⁸

Hobley asked Skene to enquire around Malindi and to provide a full report on the situation. Skene encountered problems getting the necessary loads of building material to Njalo for the station. The labour agreement which he forced from the elders at Chakama had been received with great disfavour by the nyere, and some elders there had been threatened with violence and witchcraft.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, the DC Mombasa was sent to Kaya Giriama to snoop.⁷⁰ He returned to Mombasa with eight elders from the kaya neighbourhood. Hobley proceeded to interview them, at first without any success. After several interviews

which brought nothing but denials, the Mudir of Tiwi was asked to intervene. He finally succeeded in winning their confidence, and they admitted with great trepidation that there was an organized agitation in the country against the Government.⁷¹

Due to combined fear and pressure, these Giriama elders provided a picture for the British administration which erroneously attributed to Mekatalili's kaya sessions the organization of war against the British. The elders were quick to state that they did not approve and that the 'plot broke down' as a result of their refusal to comply.⁷²

However, they did offer an explanation for their own preparation for war which began in late August. When Champion returned to upper Gallana after his medical leave in Malindi in August, the rumour spread that he

had gone to organize an expedition against the Giriama. The Giriama became very frightened and made such preparation as they could to protect themselves, driving off their cattle, burying their food, and sharpening their weapons. They are merely frightened and we have no reason to think they contemplate any attack either on the ADC /Champion/ personally or his police.⁷³

This was enough to confirm Hobley's growing feeling that the situation demanded administrative action. He requested and received permission from the Governor to 'investigate matters on the spot,' meaning he would go to the kaya. However, Hobley's actions indicate that he always intended to go beyond mere investigation and wanted to settle the matter once and for all.⁷⁴

He made the outcome of his expedition certain before it even began. He never veered from his belief that, from the beginning, the Giriama campaign at the kaya was intended to organize war against the

British. He intended to force the Giriama to confess to this effect. He planned to remove the opposition completely by gaining the confessions of the traditional leaders (particularly Bogosho and Pembe) and by obtaining accusations which condemned Wanje wa Mwadorikola and Mekatalili, who were already British prisoners, as the 'ringleaders.' The DC Malindi had been holding them since Champion captured them at the end of August. They were to be brought to the kaya and formally charged while Hobley was there. He wanted to have the oaths removed, the kaya closed, and a fine assessed on the Giriama to pay for his expedition which would, after all, be necessary because of their misdeeds. At the same time the traditional leadership and the activities they supported were to be discredited, Hobley wanted to demonstrate Government's strength.⁷⁵

On this occasion, the British who frequently accused the Giriama of 'cunning' were guilty of attempting this tactic themselves. Hobley ensured that he would appear stronger than he really was. He left Mombasa for Giriama land on the 6th of November, accompanied by Captain Eustace and twenty-four police. He also took four of the 'confessed' Giriama elders from the kaya neighbourhood to 'enable /him/ to open communications with the people through some responsible mouth-piece.' Rather than going straight west from Mombasa, he went up through Kilifi Creek to Mtanganyiko, where he had directed Champion to meet him with as many elders as he could bring from his region. Hobley took this route in order to arrive at the kaya without warning. He sent one of the elders with him ahead just a little to warn the people not to go into the bush. With such a large British force at their

doorstep, the Giriama in the malalo did not flee.⁷⁶

Hobley wanted to go to Biryaa first, to see Bogosho. Their numbers significantly increased by fifty-three Gallana elders, the contingent arrived at Bogosho's home to find him away at the kaya consulting with Pembe wa Mrimi. He was summoned, and Hobley continued to instruct the elders in his party as preparation for the formal palaver (meeting).⁷⁷

Hobley succeeded at weighing conditions in his favour. He arrived at Bogosho's with as many elders supporting the Government's position as the local leaders had supporting theirs. This meant that when the Giriama got together to discuss matters, the internal division between Hobley's government 'friendlies' and the traditional government's 'antagonists' would assist in convincing the latter of Government's power.

At the palaver on November 11, Bogosho was joined by some forty elders from his region. Hobley told the assembly that he knew all about what had happened and that he intended to stay until they had given him a full report. Three times Hobley confronted them with accusations, and each time all of the elders, including the fifty-three from Gallana led by Mkowa, Tsumu, Ziro, and Kombi, went into njama (private council). Each time, after returning, they admitted a little more.

At first they said an oath was sworn against women marrying Duruma and against those taking council fees which rightly belonged to Bogosho. Hobley told them to reconsider their answer. They stated that the women wanted Headmen to return the money Government had paid

them to provide young men for labour. Hobley wanted names. They agreed on Mekatalili and Wanje. They mentioned the Headman Nduria of Kirwitu and Mweri wa Mangi who was present on this occasion. Mweri said his spells concerned marriage to Duruma and the bewitching of goats. Hobley felt none of this was sufficient explanation for the actions over the previous months, so he insisted on the removal of all oaths.

By the time the third report was given, Bogosho refused to talk and a man from Headman Tsumu's location in Mangea became the spokesman. Bogosho insisted that he knew little about the opposition except in connection with the council fees which he had been denied. He assured Hobley that his family had always paid their taxes on time. The situation must have been a difficult one for him. He was bearing the brunt of the accusations. He was confronted with the combined power of the British administration and their Giriama supporters. And he was relieved of his position of leadership during the course of the day.⁷⁸

The Giriama finally admitted that in addition to a Fisi oath against anyone who prevented an elder from getting his share of the court fees, two more oaths had been sworn. The women's mukushekushe opposed any assistance in pointing out tax defaulters or showing Government officers to peoples' homes. The second Fisi oath prohibited anyone from participating in any way in Government councils.

The men agreed to remove the Fisi oaths and confessed that those who had taken the oaths had gone wrong. Wanje and Mekatalili were given sole blame. However, they all balked at the suggestion

that the kaya should be moved to a position more central to the Giriama population. Late in the day, the assembly was finally dismissed and ordered to attend the next morning at seven to hear the stories of the women.⁷⁹

The women were extremely cooperative. They agreed immediately to tell what had happened and admitted that they might have been duped.

We will remove the oaths complained of, here and now, but a month would be necessary to gather all the women for a new oath, unless we just call in the neighbours which is not so effective of course.⁸⁰

The new oath was one Hobley wanted which would be a pro-government oath. When the women explained the difficulty of this, he let it go, but he became more insistent on this item with the men. Both groups removed their oaths in Hobley's presence later that day, but they could not make a new one while the crops were still in the ground. Hobley had attributed the full effectiveness of the campaign to the Fisi oath and wanted especially to use the same technique to ensure support of Government. Arrangements were made for this to take place at a later date.⁸¹

Actually, the Giriama did not use oaths to support actions. Oaths provided a proscription, and sometimes this could be interpreted to aid one group against another. During the time of the Mazrui 'rebellion,' the Fisi oath was sworn at British urging to prevent Giriama from assisting the 'rebels.'⁸² In a sense, it had been used in precisely the same way by the Giriama at this time: to prevent the Giriama from assisting the British by oath proscription just as they had before sworn to prevent lending help to the Mazrui.

The Giriama agreed to Hobley's request in Biryaa to conduct another oath in favour of the British. This was not so much because

they thought it would be at all effective among themselves but because the British obviously considered it important. Bogosho and three others were designated to conduct the ceremony when the harvest was in. When this actually took place, four months later, Bogosho was not even present; Headmen loyal to the British conducted the ceremony in the presence of British officials, knowing all the time that it would be ineffective.⁸³

Armed with the confessions of the elders and the women and the removal of the oaths, Hobley was ready to go to the kaya complete his mission. He detained four of those accused of making the Fisi oath: Bogosho wa Menza, Katzombo wa Nzai, Mweri wa Mangi, and Ngoloa wa Mwatsa. He ordered them to accompany him to meet with Pembe and a large group of elders.

But when he arrived at the kaya on November 13, Pembe virtually ignored him and 'obstinately plaited a mat' from palm leaves. After a long wait produced only five elders, Hobley indignantly retired to his camp outside the kaya and ordered Pembe to be there the next morning with sufficient elders.⁸⁴

Pembe came, along with twenty-eight elders. They were joined by the Government Headmen of Kaloleni, Kitu wa Sirya, and an extremely supportive Giriama, Fondo wa Nyama. At this time, too, Mekatalili and Wanje were present as prisoners in Hobley's camp along with an accused 'witch,' Nziji wa Yaa, whom Skene had caught at Garashi and sent to Hobley. Statements were taken from all three on this day. Their participation in any of the discussions is doubtful, but the men who gathered there must have been influenced by their presence as prisoners.

As in the case of Bogosho at Biryaa, Pembe was reluctant to talk. Beja wa Kiti, who had been sent by the local council at Bamba to live in the kaya and to assist Pembe, spoke for him. At first, he mentioned minor reasons for the gathering of the women at the kaya. When pressed, he said the Giriama wanted their own councils to try cases. Pembe refused to give any more information, and when Hobley asked who originated the oaths, all the elders present went into njama.

Fondo wa Nyama, a Government supporter, emerged as spokesman for this palaver, speaking for all but Pembe. They agreed that the originators were Mekatalili and Wanje wa Mwadorikola, assisted by Nziji wa Yaa and Mame Kombe Nyavula, two women of Gallana who were members of the women's kambi and who had the power to give the mukushekushe oath. They also admitted that since justice had not been carried out against the policeman who shot a Giriama at Chakama, the oath of Fisi was sworn to prohibit anyone from assisting Government councils.⁸⁵

Finally Hobley was satisfied. He had admission of the oaths, their removal, and the accused leaders whose power had been broken. He got the elders to pledge to move the kaya to suit the needs of Government better, and he told them that Kaya Giriama would be closed. He dismissed the assembly, with the exception of Mkowa and Ziro and Bogosho and his three companions who were to accompany Hobley to Rabai the next day. He informed Pembe that he would be carried there and detained to await the Governor's report.

Convinced that any 'danger of active antagonism was over for the present,' Hobley made recommendations 'to make the effect of /his/ mission more permanent and to impress it on the minds of the people in

general.⁸⁶ The Governor, H. C. Belfield, discussed these with the six Giriama elders Hobley brought back to Mombasa and then gave them his approval. Mekatalili and Wanje were to be deported for five years, the kaya was to be relocated, a fine of Rs. 1500 was to be collected with the assistance of twenty-five police, and an oath was to be taken 'to the effect that they will in future assist the Government.' To decrease the illicit ivory trade and the 'destruction of much forest,' the Gallana River was made the northern boundary for all Mijikenda, who were to move to the south bank 'as soon as practicable.'⁸⁷

This latter provision had absolutely no direct relationship with the campaign of Mekatalili and the activities instigated by the Giriama. Moreover, it involved all Mijikenda, not just Giriama. Yet, Hobley was using the situation of some Giriama's proven misbehaviour to carry out a plan which he had been proposing for some time. It was this proposal, more than anything else, which would provide the focus for renewed 'active antagonism' which Hobley was so sure had ended.

On November 25, 1913, the six Giriama elders were returned by train from Mombasa to Rabai where Mkowa and Ziro were dismissed to their locations and the remaining four joined Pembe to await the official instructions from the Governor.⁸⁸ On December 1, 1913, Pembe wa Mrimi and his family vacated the kaya and went to live in Kadunguni. From that day on, the kaya was closed.⁸⁹ Mekatalili and Wanje arrived as prisoners at Kisii on December 18, where they were allowed a hut, ten cents a day for food, and a blanket apiece to protect them from the cold.⁹⁰

Years later, Hobley was to write proudly in his memoirs of

this November reprisal against 'the tribe /which/ was on the verge of open rebellion. It was, however, averted by a stupendous effort at a memorable durbar in the center of the district.⁹¹ In 1913, however, he probably would not have openly admitted what he then went on to say:

Matters thus quieted down for a time, but the under-current of opposition was always there and ready to crop up again at a favourable opportunity.⁹²

Hobley's encounter with Giriama opposition was far from over, but he began to behave as if the problems had been solved.

Assessment of British Administrative Philosophy

Those officers working among the Giriama during this campaign had failed to consider seriously that the Giriama actions focused around Mekatalili were as much pro-Giriama as they were anti-British. As a result of the regeneration campaign, British administration had been slowly and surely grinding to a halt, but there was no moment of crisis. However, by the end of October, Champion, who was caught in the middle between a people whom he had grown to know and a job he was supposed to do, had begun to panic. Hobley had interpreted the situation as an acute one to be handled by force. A reassessment of policy during such a time of pressure would have been difficult, but not impossible. Instead, Hobley took charge and used the misbehaviour as an excuse to punish the Giriama without thoroughly assessing the situation. One would have thought that once the Giriama were again under control, the reassessment would have been made. This was not done. The British used the confession of the oath by the participants as justification to proceed with all due speed pursuing their original demands.

Events immediately following the punishment led Hobley to think he had done the right thing. The British were now faced with a cowed population and powerless, discredited traditional leaders who had barely escaped imprisonment. They were assisted by a few zealous Headmen who had been invigorated by the British support. For Hobley, the task ahead was to make sure that all Giriama knew the folly of their ways.

But a realistic analysis of the Giriama situation might have given the British cause to act differently. Why were the Giriama opposing what Government was trying to do? Why were they refusing to provide labour? Why did they not perceive that they had a responsibility in helping the development plan to succeed? What was the basis of this British development plan for the coast?

To answer these questions, we must examine the historical events which led up to the hostile impasse which came to a head in November, 1913. In their rush to 'develop' the coast, the British had overlooked the logic of firmly establishing a workable system for administering the people in the Coast Province before requesting them to sacrifice for the cause. Instead, they jumped right into an effort at 'active administration' which was based on a combination of their philosophy of 'land usage' and the need for Giriama labourers. The Giriama were not densely populated, and therefore the British expected them to take up no more land than their numbers warranted. Furthermore, the land which they occupied was not used to its fullest capacity, according to European standards. This philosophy prevailed when Fitzgerald was touring and assessing the land for the Imperial British

East Africa Company in 1890.⁹³ It was the accepted attitude among settlers who had gone up-country in the earlier twentieth century and who were astounded that the Kikuyu had lived there so long and yet had made so few 'improvements' on the land.⁹⁴ Furthermore, the assumption that the coastal land could be developed into productive, profitable plantations was the basis on which the Protectorate government was giving its attention and energies to the coast.

The Giriama held the key to British success there. Even before Champion's very thorough reporting, the British had acquired plenty of information as to what Giriama society was like. Champion merely confirmed the details. This society had developed into one of small, independent family units. Many of these units lived alone; others joined in communities ranging anywhere from two to three hundred families. In a few rare cases, like at Garashi and Jilore, as many as a thousand families lived in a concentrated area. The women did all the agricultural work and carried most of the loads. The men cleared the forests, conducted community business and made trips into Ukambani or Langulo territory for trade. They also went to the coast to arrange the exchange of their maize and chickens for a calabash of tembo. This was one of the few loads they were willing to carry, and 'indeed, there was honor in the toil.'⁹⁵ The Giriama had a four day week: Jumwa, Kuramuka, Kurima-hiri, and Kuisa. Every Jumwa was considered a day of rest.⁹⁶ A man's greatest pride lay in being head of his household - not in the work he performed. The goal of the Giriama man was to get as much as he could by working as little as possible in order to have plenty of time to enjoy life.

No famine had come since the severe Magunia at the turn of the century. With the exception of lanc squabbles among the Mijikenda north of the Sabaki River, they were all living as peaceful neighbours. The threat of the Galla and Somali, under which they had suffered for so many years, was virtually gone. The Arabs were no longer fighting each other on the coast, and until 1912, the British had left the Giriama alone. Never had the Giriama been so prosperous, though by British standards, they were extremely poor.

The difficulty between the British and the Giriama was truly one of conflicting cultures. Almost everything the Giriama believed in, the British scorned. Their greatest pleasure, drinking tembo (palm wine) under a shade tree with their friends, was drunkenness to the British. The missionaries regarded this 'toddy' as sinful;⁹⁷ the administrative officers worried about its ability to incapacitate potential labourers; cocconut trees tapped for tembo would never mature to produce profitable copra.⁹⁸ The many happy days Giriama spent in community discussions, travels, weddings and funerals, the British interpreted as idleness. It was as though nothing was more abhorrent to the British than the abhorrence of labour. What the Giriama cherished as independence the British scorned as lack of discipline. Women, forced to do most of the work, were abused. Youth, not under strict control of the elders, were considered upstarts.

The British even disapproved of Giriama trade - because Giriama continued to profit from ivory, which was illegal, and because the Giriama were trading primarily to get tembo. The worst insult of all was that, in rare cases, Giriama would work on Arab plantations in

exchange for tembo, but not on European plantations, whose owners refused to tap their own trees to pay for their labour with an alcoholic beverage.⁹⁹ Even the 'pronounced democratic tendencies' which, under other circumstances, an officer might normally hail, became something with which the Giriama had been 'originally cursed' since it was not conducive to successful indirect rule.¹⁰⁰

How did this 'civilization' which the British proselytized look to the Giriama? What were the British offering? Work. Steady work. On contract. Fulfilled. When the Giriama asked how it would benefit him, he was told he would be richer. He could purchase European goods. The British promised peace and security. The Giriama already had that. The British tried to entice them with permanent council houses, good roads, dams, bore holes for water, and more cloth. To the Giriama, these were not worth the price: loss of their freedom, the increase of tax, and the constant threat of labour. Most Giriama had rejected the prospects of education and were leary about hospitals, but the British were hardly ready to think about providing these.

Champion's attempts to get the Giriama into the labour market had been nothing new, just more intensive and abrasive. British records from 1890 onward were filled with unsuccessful attempts. Just as the Galla, the Arabs and the Swahili before them, the British had failed. Fitzgerald, who had such high hopes for plantation development after 1890, got many promises but few workers.¹⁰¹

In 1906, when several Companies were formed to grow cotton and rubber on plantations near Malindi, the need for labourers became acute.¹⁰² Kenneth MacDougall, then DC Malindi, was certain that he

could use his influence with Ngunyo to provide a constant supply from Marafa. Ngunyo's reply to him then was the same reply Champion was later to hear so often:

We are an industrious people who really do not need to work outside our own country except in case of prolonged drought.¹⁰³

MacDougall got no labourers, either.

The British did not accept the possibility that the Giriama might never become labourers for them. It was assumed, at first, that the Giriama were participating in the same initial reluctance against working for Europeans that Kikuyu and Luo had demonstrated up-country in previous years.¹⁰⁴ So they looked constantly for some key which would change reluctance into acceptance. In their desperate pursuit for labourers, the British overlooked the facts - or, rather, refused to accept them.

Experiences recounted in British reports provided ample evidence that the Giriama were different - more than just reluctant on first call. The British had blamed Giriama reluctance on a myriad of things. Each time their solution failed, they looked for another single reason for such unusual resistance to labour. In 1907, the Provincial Commissioner, A. C. Hollis, blamed the Giriama unwillingness to work on toddy. He estimated the tembo consumption to have increased considerably over the previous ten years, and he was aware that Arabs and Swahili were refusing to sell tembo unless the Giriama agreed to work on their plantations for a short while. He rightly assumed that one successful appeal to labour was to make tembo the enticement. But whereas the Arabs made tembo available, the British were trying to keep

it from the Giriama. Hollis' proposed solution, therefore, was to tax the tembo to make it more difficult to get and to use the money as salary for an additional administrator to persuade the Giriama to work to pay the tax. It is no wonder the Giriama were not attracted to the prospect of trading some of their tembo for a tax and another administrator.¹⁰⁵

W. E. H. Barrett, the man sent to accomplish this task in 1908, failed after eighteen months. He attributed his failure not to the problems created by tembo, but to the fact that the Giriama's own fertile soil and rich crops enabled them to sell produce sufficient to raise any rupees they may want.¹⁰⁶

This reason for failure was ignored, and the Governor proposed another lure - Manchester cotton.¹⁰⁷ He hoped they would covet cloth more than tembo and want it enough to go to work. This suggestion was never even carried out, but it would not have provided the solution, either.

Still looking for an explanation for Giriama uncooperativeness, O. F. Watkins, the ADC Takaungu in 1909, attributed their failure as labourers to lack of discipline. He suggested a strong officer be brought in to live among them and get them under control. Barrett's failure had been quickly forgotten, and the movement was begun to get another man to bring the Giriama into line.¹⁰⁸ By the next year, the experiments in cotton and rubber had failed as well as the attempts to get Giriama into the labour market.¹⁰⁹ Governor Girouard was not willing to give up. When the PC, S. L. Hinde, recommended in 1911 that a special officer be assigned to Giriama, Girouard gave it his enthusiastic support.¹¹⁰

Ironically, at this time, the Colonial Office held a different position on both the need for labour and land usage. When the Coast Province asked for additional manpower, the reply they received cautioned against what they were, in fact, doing.

I trust it is not implied that it is proposed that one of the main duties of the new officer should be to act as a labour recruiting agent.¹¹¹

After all, the country belonged to the natives and the doctrine that they must be compelled to furnish labour to enable the whiteman to develop the country is not one to which we can subscribe.¹¹²

But as was often the case during the colonial years, the pressures on Whitehall and the pressures felt by the men on the spot were different. Locally the labour policy was pursued by the new Governor, Belfield, who felt the risk of going against the wishes of the Colonial Office was worth it. The recommendation of the Native Labour Commission which had met in the Protectorate in 1912 had stressed the need for Giriama labourers. Ironically, a necessary first goal - providing full administration - had become the justification for a goal which should have been tried only when the British had full control - that of producing labourers. Although he explained to the Legislative Council that the administrative officer was being appointed for Giriama to 'dispel' their 'disinclination to work,' Belfield told the Colonial Office that the goal was closer administration.¹¹³

So three men stood committed in 1912 to bringing the Giriama into the labour market: the Governor, Belfield, pressured between planters and faraway Whitehall; the PC Hopley, whose success in Provincial development depended upon it; and the ADC Champion, whose job was the goal's implementation.¹¹⁴

In September, the month before Champion arrived, F. I. Bretts, the ADC at Rabai, reported that a drought was forcing some Giriama who no longer had any food, to work for the Duruma.

They prefer to work in this independent manner, as they have done for their keep during former famines before Europeans settled here so that any time, should the rain fall or should they obtain relief from some other source, they may be free to return to their homes to prepare their own shambas. Bearing in mind that they are working at all for others is only due to the fact that they are compelled to do so by hunger, I am of opinion that it is their love of independence coupled with an aversion to any kind of discipline when performing any task, to which native labourer on a European's estate must be subjected, is the reason why the WaGiriama do consistently refuse to engage for even short period with any European or even with the Government on public works.¹¹⁵

Barnett had warned of Giriama self-sufficiency as early as 1908. Bretts was pointing out once again that, even when deprived of everything, including food, the Giriama still did not want to work on European estates. Every officer was aware of the reports Hollis and MacDougall had given about the Giriama selling their women and children into slavery in times of severe famine. Yet, in spite of all warnings, official policy ignored interpretations of 'Giriama independence' and 'self-sufficiency.' The British decided once again to create deprivation in order to coerce the Giriama into the labour market.

Champion's work among the Giriama began as a deliberate attempt to combine a natural deprivation with one of British making:

. . . there was a considerable shortage of food in Giriama and it was thought that a vigorous collection of hut tax would result in an exodus of young men to the coast plantations in search of work.¹¹⁶

As a newcomer, he had every reason in the world to expect this to be a wise technique. Hopley, as PC, also had the disadvantage of being new.

But after learning the facts, Champion changed his mind. Hobley, however, did not. By the following May, Champion had done a complete about-face and had recommended that Giriama agriculture be encouraged and the Gallana valley irrigated. More important, he urged that the labour policy for Giriama be dropped as one impossible to implement without stooping to illegal means.

The same month, H. R. Tate, who was then DC Malindi, wrote that Giriama would 'always be a home-loving tribe' who possessed 'unique facilities for storing grain in their large huts /and/ preserving the same from weevil by maintaining a smoke fire underneath.' He suggested that the administration encourage their own economic development with good seed, roads, dams and reservoirs.¹¹⁸ Both Champion and Tate had discovered that the formula of establishing administration and trying to get labourers contained a built-in conflict. For reasons not quite clear, Hobley either ignored, or rejected, their recommendations. The next month, his own tour of Giriama land was made to lend his weight to a tax collection for July - before the harvest - to force young men to work. For his efforts to collect this tax and to get the labourers, Champion got involved in the Chakama incident and Giriama opposition to government found focus in their hatred of labour.

The ultimate responsibility rested with Hobley. By May, he knew from Champion's report that both administration and labour-getting were failing. He did not pursue any of Champion's recommendations - he remained on his same old course and took an even harder line.

In addition, he had an idea for even more intensive deprivation - restricting all access to land north of the Sabaki River and to

the strip of land ten miles from the coast. Hobley carefully opened his report of this June Safari arguing that the Giriama had occupied the land north of the Sabaki only recently. His authority was Rev. W. E. Taylor, who wrote in 1887 that the northern boundary of Giriamaland touched the river at Jilore. From this Hobley established that Giriama occupation of the land was subsequent to the I. B. E. A. Company's administration. He was making a strong claim that the land belonged more to the British than to the Giriama.¹¹⁹

By October, Hobley had convinced two crucial officers that his development plans would work. Skene recommended evacuation of the trans-Gallana on administrative grounds. Champion let his anger get the best of him when he recommended the same as a solution to his own failure - overlooking the facts which he himself had so sensitively accounted.¹²⁰

Bolstered by two officers' reports and taken in by the testimony he obtained from the elders under pressure that Mekatalili's campaign was to organize war against the British, Hobley was armed with ample justification for using force against the Giriama. Still, unless the Giriama were going to become labourers, and unless the Europeans were going to want the 100,000 acres which would be opened up in the trans-Gallana, and unless the crops they were going to plant there would in fact flourish, then forcing the Giriama into a reserve and permanent settlement had little purpose. According to his minutes of the darbar, Hobley did not ask why the Giriama were so opposed to becoming labourers. He did not even ask if, from that point on, they would provide them. He assumed they would, and he counted on their

compliance.

By oversimplifying the situation, the British officers were in danger of committing serious errors. They thought that the problem had been completely solved with the confessions, the removal of the oath, and Mekatalili and Wanje's deportation. They expected their Headmen to take complete charge.

Unfortunately for them, this was not so. Four conditions - none of them new - combined to keep the Giriama removed from these elaborate British administrative plans. Any one of these conditions might have been sufficient to thwart British goals. All four portended disaster.

In the first place, the Giriama were much less centrally organized than either Champion or Hopley held them to be. Hopley was a firm believer in preserving traditional authority and was an advocate of indirect rule. Both men had previous experience with the Kamba, whose problems of decentralization they had eventually overcome from the administrative point of view. Indirect rule through Giriama elders meant appointing individual Government representatives. This effort had small chance of success since no single elder had the authority to muster the support of many people around him - certainly not to the extent the British desired. Had the rika been functioning as it once did inside the kaya, or even if its top leadership had been much younger, then indirect rule might have been possible. As this was not the case, the British Headmen emerged with less power over the people around them than they had previously had. Their authority under pre-British circumstances was based upon their being the founder of their

community, and their ability to guide justice from disparate opinions. In this latter situation, every Giriama was given a chance to hear problems, to discuss them, and finally to participate in the council which determined the solution. Everybody had to agree. With British administration, the Headmen were given extended judicial and executive duties, but, since the reserve was yet to be established, there were no laws to support their position. In the absence of such laws, the only hope of achieving the new goals for Headmen or British officers was through persuasion or force.

Ultimate authority was taken away from the Giriama and given to the PC in Mombasa, or to the Governor in Nairobi with no legal machinery in-between. The British were trying to establish an administration on reputed, not real, power.

It had been Hobley's insistence on preserving native administration and working through it indirectly which determined the administrative procedure in this case. The philosophy was commendable, but unrealistic. Tribal authority had undergone many adaptations since the Giriama had moved from the kaya around 1850. The British were trying to rule indirectly through a system which no longer functioned.

The second difficulty for the British administration was a by-product of the first. During this process of decentralization, the Giriama population had grown increasingly and successfully more independent. The extent and importance of this was difficult for British officers to grasp - yet almost all of them who spent some time with the Giriama noticed it and remarked about it.¹²¹ The Giriama wanted no

outside interference. They liked their life as it was. They wanted no curbs on their freedom.

The third condition which thwarted British plans was their own insistence on obtaining labourers for a plantation economy in spite of prior failures. T. H. R. Cashmore pinpointed the cause.

West Coast experience suggested that indirect rule functioned best with a peasant economy. Unpopular demands for labour would overtax a weak authority; labour outside the reserve was a detribalising force. But energetic officials did not see the conflict in these terms.¹²²

If the Giriama were not willing to become labourers on coastal plantations, the only way to get them there was by force. In the attempt to use their Headmen to provide this force, the British increased the chances for failure both in bolstering tribal authority and in obtaining labourers.

Finally, so long as the Giriama remained economically self-sufficient, they could choose not to provide labourers. This might have been their decision even if they had had strong central authority. They desired nothing from the British and they were not dependent on them for anything. Their diverse economy was sufficient to feed their population except during drought and famine. In addition to agricultural products, by 1912, the Giriama had considerable cattle herds in Weruni, Biryaa, and along the Tana River where Pokomo or Langulo friends watched them for Giriama living in Gallana. Everywhere people had chickens and goats and sometimes sheep. Maize was the major crop, producing twice a year; millet and sim-sim grew prolifically in the more fertile areas. Trade had been established not only with the coast in an ever-increasing amount of cash crops but also continued with the

Kamba and the Langulo.

The Giriama did not need to work for anybody else under normal circumstances. Manchester cotton had failed as an enticement; somehow, they always managed to pay their ever-increasing taxes; and they had no tribal authorities strong enough to pressure them into working. In fact, in Mekatalili's campaign, the population had overwhelmingly expressed their opposition to working and called upon the spirits of the ancestors and the remaining senior Enyetsi to join them.

Hobley told the Giriama in November that they had been tricked by witchdoctors. He told them that their future lay in supporting the British administration. He truly believed this, but he was hoping for a renaissance on the coast which was dependent upon several factors: the Giriama would be closely administered through their own 'tribal' authorities; they would be restricted to a reserve so that they could be closely controlled; they would provide labour for the coastal plantations; land north of the Sabaki River and along the coast would be taken up by European farmers and planted with European cash crops and provide revenue for growth. If all these things came true, then Hobley would have his renaissance. However, if even one of them failed, his future dream was seriously in question. Based on the facts of previous experience, there was absolutely no reason to expect, in all honesty, that any of these matters would work as Hobley wanted. Yet he was relying on this dream to achieve his own reputation and, more importantly, Giriama welfare.

Punishment as Policy, November 1913 - May 1914

By the close of November, 1913, the British still believed completely in this dream which depended so heavily on Giriama cooperation. They had ignored the facts of the unwillingness on the part of the Giriama. They had ignored their own historical reports of failure to use the Giriama as labourers. They had ignored the actual focus of the non-cooperation campaign.

Moreover, they were to be misled by the Giriama who agreed, under the force applied, to cooperate with them. They failed to anticipate that once the pressure was lifted, the Giriama would return to their original attitude and behaviour. Furthermore, they were exacerbating their problem by forcing a deeper division between Giriama. Most Headmen, who now relied on British force to get some performance to back up their promises of aid, were pitted against a combination of the more conservative elders, who had wanted nothing to do with the British from the very beginning, and the younger men, who felt they were paying the price for Giriama submission.

Whereas at one time, the internal division of Giriama existed between elders and youths, now some elders and most youths cooperated in their intensified grievances against the Headmen. Meanwhile, the British failed to secure the support of all their Headmen; they relied exclusively on those who had been 'loyal servants;' and they assumed - falsely - that their Headmen finally had real authority over all the Giriama. Some Headmen continued to serve in name only, a few were actually hostile, and those who had helped the British the most were duly rewarded. The people of Kaloleni under Kitu wa Sirya had

refused to join Mekatalili's campaign, so they were exempt from the fine.¹²³ Kitu emerged as a leader of all Weruni. Fondo wa Nyama, who had impressed the British officers at the baraza by giving them a cow to slaughter, was appointed Headman in one of the Weruni Locations. Bunba wa Baya replaced Pembe wa Mrimi as Headman for Kayafungo. The combined zeal of these three men encouraged the British to think that their administration was indeed succeeding.

Bogosho and company returned to Biryaa having themselves barely escaped prison. Their reaction was to remain as silent as possible.¹²⁴ They had little desire to stir trouble. The Biryaa Headman, Kitumbui, never gave them trouble nor worked actively for the British. This was the area where most of the clan heads still lived, yet the British gave the people there the least attention.

Mkowa and Ziro, who had accompanied Hobley to Mombasa to speak against their own people with the Governor, were exempt from paying any of the fine.¹²⁵ Mkowa returned to Garashi regarded as the most influential man in Gallana. Ngonyo, now extremely old, had remained quietly at Marafa through all of this. He seemed unlikely to do otherwise now. Marafa had about 700 people, whereas Garashi had over 4,000. With the support of the Headmen of these two centers, plus Kombi wa Yeri of Shakadulu, the British could reasonably assume that they were in control of the majority of the Gallana population.

Ziro and Tsumu were so effective in Mangea that the opposition of Nduria of Kirwitu was ignored. He had not been punished for his role in the Chakama incident nor his presence at one of the cath-takings, and he still opposed the Government. In Godoma, the effective-

ness of Mchungu of Sekoke, Baya wa Gunga of Manyimbo, and Kalama wa Sada of Bamba overshadowed the notorious disloyalty of Kiti mwa Wiswa of Ganze, who lived in their midst. Finding replacements for some of these ineffective Headmen would have been a difficult task, but by allowing them to remain, the British were taking the risk that they might become focal points of resistance.

With the fracturing of leadership and the closing of the kaya, dissatisfied Giriama could only work in local groups. Realistically the Giriama opposition, if any remained, was powerless. Government had shown that it would, as promised, support its Headmen.

Outwardly, the Giriama ended their non-cooperation. They attended Government barazas, they provided porters, they helped to clear roads. But they remained divided. Non of the problems had been solved. Only their options had been reduced.

Although Hobley wrote the Governor in November that

the present crisis has taught us a great deal and the knowledge acquired will be of great value for future administration¹²⁶

he did not appear to apply his new knowledge. One officer, J. B. Pearson openly expressed his own doubts. Pearson, who had been the ADC Rabai, exchanged places with Champion in late November and became the new ADC at Njalo. On December 9, 1913, he wrote to Hobley trying to clarify whether the move from the Trans-Sabaki was merely administrative, having nothing to do with the Giriama mis-behaviour (which was Skene's position), or punitive, specifically to punish the Giriama directly for their non-cooperation. In addition, Pearson was questioning the ability of the administration to communicate the meaning of the

November baraza to the Giriama people. I quote Pearson's letter and Hobley's reply in full since the tone indicates the difficulty faced when officers disagreed.

In my own mind there is considerable doubt as to whether the Giriama elders ventured to tell you in your tour all the causes of the recent disquiet in this country, and I am anxious to know and to remove any feelings of animosity which they may have toward us, and to reassure the natives once more from a source of local repute of the good intentions of Government towards them. I attach considerable importance to a mission of this character at the present juncture, for it would be a thousand pities if the administrative move from the Northern banks of the Sabaki and collection of expenses of your mission were misunderstood.

The man I have in mind is a powerful Arab of the old school who acted as political for Colonel (then Captain) Harrison and Mr. MacDougall on their march through Giriama land in the Mbaruk Rebellion, and to this day has enormous influence over those elements which I am most anxious to befriend. MacDougall will be able to tell you all about him.¹²⁷

Hobley's reply, via Skene in Malindi, indicated how his own pride and his concern about the 'appearance' of Government allowed him to assume that the Giriama fully understood what his officers had not.

The ADC has adduced no reasons as to why the Giriama should misunderstand the collection of the expenses of my mission and the proposed removal from the North Bank. There is only one explanation and that is that they are intended as punishment for their past attitude toward government. If he has any further information on the subject he should submit it. I am loathe to send an Arab thru the country to stir up any of the past events and consider that it would be rather a confession on our part that we could not deal with the situation without invoking the assistance of Arabs.¹²⁸

However, there was one underlying indication of Hobley's insecurity. Not long after he returned to Mombasa from the hinterland, he produced a Plan of Campaign in the Event of Punitive Measures Becoming Necessary. If armed resistance came, he anticipated that it

would be in the form of guerilla warfare, not attacks by large Giriama armies. He warned his officers to beware of attempts to poison the waterholes, of sabotage via thorns and spikes in the road, and of tempting gourds of beer left in deserted villages for unsuspecting police officers. His proposals for gaining the upper hand in the event of warfare included capturing stock, destroying all coconut trees, and securing sacred objects from kayas which could later be redeemed for a high price. He not only suggested June, July or December as the best months for such an expedition, he provided directions for dispatching four fifty-man columns into the hinterland. With the soldiers concentrating the population north and west of Mt. Mangua - away from their coastal friends and onto the edge of the Taru Desert - Hobley anticipated the Giriama should quickly come to terms.¹²⁹

This was almost precisely the plan which was later used against the Giriama, but success did not come as easily as Hobley hoped. He was demonstrating an ignorance about the potential of guerilla warfare and underestimating the Giriama zeal for independence. He was also intimating that the Giriama might not accept the demand to move from the lands across the river.

When the new year opened, the Giriama had still not been confronted with the fine collection or the idea of evacuating the Trans-Gallana. Hobley and Skene in particular had originally shared the same reasons for suggesting the move and Skene anticipated no trouble over it.

It is very valuable agricultural land which could undoubtedly be made to produce far richer returns if worked by enlightened European planters than at present in the possession of savages.¹³⁰

Skene's justification ignored the failure of their administration to encourage the hinterland people to grow their own products for cash crops as his predecessor, Tate, had urged. He continued,

It is not intended by this to enunciate a principle to the effect that one is justified in taking from another what one can make better use of one's self. But it is obvious that native crops do not require the special kinds of soil that certain economic products do, and it is therefore no hardship to the native to require him to cultivate land which is less suitable for such economic products.¹³¹

They were also ignoring the failure of the tests of the proposed 'European crops' on the Trans-Sabaki land. In September of 1913, J. E. Jones, the manager of the Magarini Syndicate requested permission from the Commissioner of Lands to trade 5,000 acres of his land north of the Sabaki for 5,000 acres occupied by the Giriama south of the Sabaki. He needed the Giriama land because his land had 'proved unsuitable for cotton and rubber production.' Later, Governor Belfield himself overruled the Commissioner's denial and granted Jones' request.¹³² This action was inconsistent with his support for the evacuation of the Trans-Sabaki.

If the British had decided only to collect the fine and to hear the Government oath, then the Giriama and the British might have reached an enduring compromise in the early years of 1914. But lurking beneath the apparent calm was the proposed evacuation. The final approval had to come from the Secretary of State for the colonies, Louis B. Harcourt. In the interim, however, Hobley and Skene (and even Champion, who advised caution from his post in Rabai) began preparations in February. Since Skene had twenty-five police assigned to help collect the fine, he used the opportunity to announce to all Headmen that

the move was to be completed by August, 1914.¹³³ They could pick the place south of the river where they wanted to go. Since they were not going to have the opportunity to sell their cocconut trees to the people moving in, the Giriama asked for compensation, according to their tradition. Hobley later supported this and requested permission from the Governor.¹³⁴

On February 23, H. R. Montgomery, who had replaced Skene as DC Malindi, toured to remind the people of the move and to arrange for a meeting to finalize plans for building a new kaya and the administration of a pro-Government oath. Those Giriama who were to move requested exemption from the following year's tax, but Hobley refused to forward this request to the Governor. Montgomery had assured the people that they could re-cross the river to harvest their last crops and he anticipated that everybody would be gone, according to his word, by the deadline. By March 3, most Headmen had chosen the place where they wished to go and they were expected to see to it that all the people in their locations went with them. This kind of control, the Headmen did not have. The most willing, even, were reluctant to admit this to the British.¹³⁵

Only Ngonyo had objected to this move from the beginning. He had protested 'bitterly' because he had gone to Marafa with Sir Arthur Hardinge's permission and he was too old to move again. He argued that, at least, he deserved a refund of Rs. 100 and a cow which he had paid to the Langulo to settle in Marafa. Montgomery denied this request and one for help in recovering several hundred rupees which Ngonyo had advanced to some Langulo to buy cattle for him.

Montgomery felt privately that the advance was for ivory, not cattle. He was also convinced that Ngonyo wanted to stay in Marafa because he had ivory buried there, and ending their illicit trade in ivory was one of the many excuses given to the Giriama as to why they had to move.¹³⁶

With the exception of Ngonyo's protest, the overall administration in Giriamaland appeared to be going smoothly. At Vitengeni on March 12, Montgomery and Pearson met with a 'large number of Headmen and Elders representative of the Giriama in the District' to supervise the pro-government oath and arrange for the building of the new kaya. According to the terms of the punishment, Bogosho and the three who accompanied him to Mombasa were appointed to carry out this oath, but they were not present at Vitengeni. The ceremony took place near Tsumu's home and was conducted by Headmen, including Mkowa, Tsumu, Kalama wa Kalindi of Bamba, Kitumbui of Biryaa and Gunga wa Baya of Kayafungo.¹³⁷ Even they made 'various excuses' before finally agreeing. The Vaya elders assembled for a four-hour preparation. Montgomery and Pearson were told that they would have to become Vaya members if they wished to take part, so they paid their fees and waited. This in itself was unusual, since a Giriama would have to be a kambi and go through lengthy payments before he could become Vaya.

When Montgomery approached the ceremony, he 'found them dancing round the totem symbol /a piece of bone shaped like a conch/ beating their buttocks, and at the end of each round howling like hyenas.' In the center a man crouched under a blanket and Montgomery assumed him to be the 'impersonator' of the hyaena. An elder 'invoked the hyena by name' and introduced Montgomery and Pearson as 'members

of the grade.' The curse was laid on anybody who refused to obey Government of the Headmen.

At first owing to a mistake on the part of the invoker only orders emanating from Mr. Pearson or myself /Montgomery/ were mentioned but this was altered to all orders from Government officers.¹³⁸

This ceremony was conducted for the benefit of the British officers, not to change Giriama behaviour.¹³⁹ The Headmen were caught once again in between their people and their new jobs, and this was one way of relieving the pressure.

At this same meeting, Montgomery insisted that operations begin to build the new kaya near Mt. Mangea as promised. He was offended by the many excuses offered by those present. The only one he considered important was their need, in the not-too-distant future, to hold the Kirao ceremony at Kayafungo to initiate into kambi the final two age-sets, Kitsoga and Nyoga, of the Kavuta Rika. He compromised, promising that if they started a new kaya, then they could return to Kayafungo for this special Kirao. The Giriama promised to begin building as soon as they could assemble the waganga of each clan who had to be present when the path to the kaya were cut.¹⁴⁰

The British failed to understand that they were asking their Headmen to give orders to traditional elders, who had more authority than the Headmen did in this particular matter. The Headmen neither wanted to confront these men with the demands nor felt it was a good idea. They themselves did not want to move the kaya because it was risky to push the issue versus new authority. If it were moved, it might, when active, threaten their new-found power. They insisted that the conservative elders were causing the delay. This relieved

them of the major responsibility.

However, the elders they so-accused were not just being obstinate. Nor were they all disinterested in moving the kaya. Some, of course, objected to the move because the British wished it. But the real problem was that nobody remembered the necessary rituals. The clan heads were not of the Wulumbere age-set, so they were less likely to hold long-term ritual secrets. Since the Giriama had lived in Kaya Giriama for so long, these particular rituals had not been passed down. Most Headmen failed to realize that this ritual was lost. The men who were supposed to have it certainly wanted to keep the fact from the British. So the Giriama found themselves having agreed to a condition they could not possibly fulfill.

Unrest, May - August, 1914

Signs that all was not well began appearing in April, 1914. Pearson heard a rumour that three of the elders who had to be present to sanctify any new kaya had fled north to Fundi Isa. When this report was checked, it proved false. The men had not fled, they had always lived near Fundi Isa. Furthermore, they had nothing to do with the functions of the kaya.¹⁴¹ British officials concluded that someone had intentionally tried to delay the building of the new kaya and they suspected it to be a group of nyere. However, the nyere were not the only Giriama opposing the new kaya plan. Many Headmen thought the British would become discouraged and give up the idea.

In May, Arabs and Indians resident at Mambrui, north of Malindi, wrote to Hobley protesting the move of the WaNyika south of

the river. They argued that the WaNyika would suffer immensely and that Mambrui was dependent upon them for food and trade.¹⁴² The previous year, Hopley had bragged of the potential use for the Sabaki valley by remarking that the Giriama grain, carried 'laboriously' coastward by the women, fed Malindi, Mambrui, and native labour employed on the plantations.¹⁴³ Now, he replied with a completely different attitude:

One can I suppose expect such an appeal from people like those of Mambrui who are merely parasitic as regards a food supply . . . they must grow it like other people.¹⁴⁴

He assured them they would benefit from the development which he expected from the coming of Europeans.

Montgomery was beginning to sense that the evacuation was not going to be quite as easy as he had thought. He extended the deadline to October 1, to ensure that the last of the final crop would be harvested. He requested permission to begin collecting Poll Tax then, including a sweep in the Trans-Sabaki. Anybody still north of the river would be forcefully removed by his police, and he would burn all empty huts and villages as insurance people would not return to them.¹⁴⁵

On June 1, Hopley went on leave and C. S. Hemstead acted as PC in his absence. During the month, Champion returned to Njalo as ADC, and Pearson went back to Rabai. Preparations to move the kaya had bogged down. Few people had moved across the river and they were still building new houses and planting new crops. Some people had moved further into the bush and a few had actually moved to Garashi from south of the Sabaki.¹⁴⁶

Champion arranged July 1 as the date to begin actual

construction on the new kaya. All Headmen and the heads of the six clans were instructed personally to come to Mohera with food, tools, and workers to build the kaya. Hazleriggs, the ADC Malindi, arrived to supervise the construction. He was extremely angered by the small showing. Only thirteen Headmen, forty elders, and none of the six clan heads had appeared. Exceeding his authority, Hazleriggs informed those present that if they did not begin a new kaya, Kaya Giriama would be destroyed in a month.¹⁴⁷ This would leave the Giriama without a kaya to initiate the incoming kambi.

Only afterwards did Hazleriggs request approval of the PC, thus confronting the latter with a situation in which a refusal would be a public sign of Government weakness. Hemstead consented.¹⁴⁸

At the same time Hazleriggs was trying to get the new kaya started, Champion was reporting disturbing news. The Giriama did not intend to evacuate the Trans-Sabaki. 'If forced, they will resort to armed resistance.' They had organized a plan to burn down Mangea (Njalo) station in hopes the British would blame the Mangea Giriama and punish them unjustly. This was expected to cause sufficient resentment to have the Mangea Giriama join the Gallana Giriama in 'pushing the government out of the district.'¹⁴⁹

What had happened to make the Giriama change? They had not changed. They had only become masters at telling Government what Government wanted to hear even when they never intended to carry out the orders. As the time for the move was drawing nearer, the intention to disobey, which had been present in many Giriama all along, began to emerge actively. In addition, Ngonyo, for all of his recognition of

Government's power, still had no desire to leave his land. His role, at this time, was one of playing for time, hoping that the British would not actually carry out the move. By July, they were expected to demonstrate their good faith and be well under way with the move. They could no longer pretend they were going to leave their lands, and they were forced into a decision.

From their previous experience with Government over Mekatalili's campaign, the Giriama rightly anticipated that Government was planning to fight them over the issue. They prepared defensively for war, making arrows, storing poison, burying their grain, sending their cattle off for others to keep in Biryaa or in the Tana River valley.¹⁵⁰

Montgomery expected none of this. He had depended on his Headmen, and he had received their verbal cooperation. However, by the end of July, he was forced to admit that the Giriama would not move until forced, and when forced, they would put up a fight. Nevertheless he thought the rumours of Giriama activity which Champion reported were greatly exaggerated, particularly regarding Giriama aggression. After investigations by Headman Ziro and an extensive safari by Champion, Montgomery confirmed the bad news. The Headmen still assured Champion that they would move, but this was reminiscent of the promises to provide labour the previous year. As before, few people attended his meetings. He was struck by the absence of young men in the villages and, at Baricho, Lukole, Marafa and Garashi, the few elders who did come to meet with him were extremely reserved. People all over were clearing bush, planting tobacco, building huts and storing bows and

arrows.¹⁵¹

Champion had been particularly suspicious of Ngonyo, suggesting that he was the leader behind this growing opposition. Ngonyo had replied to none of his communications. Champion made a special trip to Marafa, where Ngonyo was unable or unwilling to get his elders to come to the baraza. To support Ngonyo's authority, a police party went to the nearby villages to gather the people and were confronted with bows and arrows. Two attackers were captured and tried in Ngonyo's council, where the elders were 'induced to punish them.' Although this was probably done deliberately on Ngonyo's part, as an act of good faith, he provided a guide to take Champion to Fundi Isa. Champion was led on a confused, thirty-six-hour waterless march, and he was convinced he had been purposely misguided. Rumours that Ngonyo had no intention of moving supported his suspicions.¹⁵²

But Ngonyo was not the only reluctant Headman. Mkowa was losing his control over the people of Garashi. The elders there, rather than planning to follow him south of the River, were 'holding him up to derision as a coward' and were actively making arrows. They were discussing plans to drive the Government west of Jilore on the main road and wipe them out at an ambush at Kakoneni, between Jilore and Malindi.¹⁵³ This plan was based on the same tactic as Hobley's, except that it would push the British toward the sea instead of the desert.

By July 29, the verdict was clear; 'the administration north of the river was in a state of complete chaos - passive hostility - needing only a spark to burst into flames.'¹⁵⁴ Champion's suggestion

was that the Government forcefully move Ngonyo in hopes that the rest of the people would follow. That act alone would probably have been enough to spark the kindling he had so aptly described.

But the north was not the only problem. At the close of July, Wanje and Mekatalili mysteriously appeared in Biryaa. They had escaped from prison in Kisii on April 20. Due to their age, no official expected they could survive a trip by foot to the coast, but Hobley had warned his officers to watch out for them. Champion received a confirmed report that they were 'holding open baraza' and were 'levying a toll of fowls and grain,' but he was unsure what they were really trying to do. Although Champion himself did not seem unduly alarmed, he was told that they were about to come to Gallana, so he made plans for their arrest.¹⁵⁵

NOTES

¹Hobley, '1913 Tour,' KNA.

²He stressed this and reiterated the other points when he addressed the elders at the baraza in November, 1913. Hobley, 'Giriama District Report on Political Situation,' 11.19.13, CP 5/335-I, KNA.

³Champion actually argues this point in his 'October Report,' KNA.

⁴Ziro wa Luganje, Statement made before Champion, 10.4.13, CP 5/336-II, KNA.

⁵GHT: Hawe Charo (Kajiweni) 4.2.71; Kaleso wa Ruwa wa Jumwa (Malamweni) 12.8.71; Hawe Karisa Nyevu Makarye (Jilore) 12.15.70.

⁶Hobley, Kenya, p. 197. Champion 'October Report,' KNA; Dundas, Africa Crossroads, p. 77; most Giriama referred to 'witch medicine' rather than calling her a witch. Cf. statements by Ziro wa Luganje 10.4.13 and Kombi wa Yeri, 10.7.13 in CP 5/336-I, KNA.

⁷GHT: Nzaro wa Chai (Garashi) 12.18.70; Bambare wa Charo (Garashi) 12.18.70; Mekatalili, 'Statement made before Hobley and Pearson at Kaya Giriama.' 11.14.13, CP 9/403, KNA.

⁸Mkowa wa Gobwe, 'Statement made to Hobley 11.15.13,' CP 9/403, KNA.

⁹Kadidi wa Bembere, 'Statement made at the baraza at Biryaa 11.12.13,' CP 5/336-I, KNA.

¹⁰Champion, 'October Report' and general responses from oral interviews this author had with Giriama.

¹¹Statement made by the woman Menyazi wa Menza, alias Katalili before me (Champion) at her own request at Garashi, 10.17.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

¹²Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

¹³Mekatalili, Statement made before Pearson at Kayafungo, 11.14.13, CP 9/403, KNA.

¹⁴Mkowa wa Gobwe, 'Statement,' 11.15.13, CP 9/430, KNA.

¹⁵Mkowa wa Gobwe, 'Statement,' 11.15.13, CP 9/403, KNA.

¹⁶'You have left your kaya. You must return and consult spirits (koma) there' quoted by Makatalili in 'Statement,' 11.14.13, CP 9/403, KNA.

17. Wanje wa Mwadorikola, 'Statement made before Pearson at Kaya Giriama,' 11.15.13, CP 9/403, KNA.
18. Nziji wa Yaa, 'Statement made before Pearson at Kaya Giriama' 11.14.13, CP 9/403, KNA.
19. Cf. Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.
20. Ziro wa Luganje, 'Statement made before Hobley,' 11.15.13, Cp 9/403, KNA.
21. Nziji wa Yaa, 'Statement,' 11.14.13, CP 9/402, KNA.
22. Ibid.
23. Wanje wa Mwadorikola, 'Statement,' 11.15.13; Nziji wa Yaa, 'Statement,' 11.14.13; Mekatalili, 'Statement,' 11.14.13, CO 9/402, KNA.
24. 'Notes from Baraza Outside Kaya Giriama,' 11.14.13, and 'Notes from Baraza in Biryaa,' 11.11.13-11.13.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
25. Kadide wa Bembere, 'Statement,' 11.12.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
26. Wanje wa Mwadorikola, 'Statemtnt,' 11.15.13, CP 9/403, KNA.
27. Nziji wa Yaa, 'Statement,' 11.14.13, CP 9/403, KNA; 'Notes from Baraza at Kaya Giriama,' 11.14.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
28. 'Notes from Baraza at Biryaa,' 11.11.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
29. Kitu wa Syria, 'Statement made before Pearson outside Kaya Giriama,' 11.14.13, CP 9/403, KNA.
30. Statement of some Giriama Elders before Hobley at Waa (Mombasa), 11.4.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
31. 'Notes from Baraza at Biryaa,' 11.11.13-11.13.13, and Hobley, Political-Situation, 11.19.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
32. 'Women's Statement,' 10.14.13, CP 5/335-I, KNA.
33. 'Notes from Baraza at Biryaa,' 11.14.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
34. 'Women's Statement,' 10.14.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
35. 'Elders' Statement at Biryaa Baraza' 11.11.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
36. 'Notes from Baraza at Biryaa,' 11.11.13-11.13.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA; Ziro wa Luganje, 'Statement,' 10.4.13, and Kombi wa Yeri 'Statement,' 10.7.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

37GHT: Kaya Elders (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Katoi wa Kiti (Kajiweni) 4.2.71; Mwing wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71; Mwangoto wa Kalama (Mwembekati) 6.16.71.

38Ziro wa Luganje, 'Statement,' 11.15.13; Kombi wa Yeri, 'Statement,' 10.7.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA. GHT: Katoi wa Kiti (Kajiweni) 4.2.71; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 4.6.71 and 6.14.71; Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

39GHT: Mulanda wa Wanje (Msabaha) 4.5.71; Kibogo wa Masha (Kajiweni) 4.2.71; 'Notes from Baraza at Biryaa,' 11.11.13 - 11.13.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

40Kombi wa Yeri, 'Statement,' 10.7.13, KNA.

41Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.

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55Ziro wa Luganje, 'Statement I,' 10.4.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

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- 67 Report of Rev. Harris as told to Skene 10.29.13; Skene to Hobley 11.3.13, CP 5/226-I, KNA.
- 68 Report of Rev. Harris as told to Skene 10.29.13, CP 5/226-I, KNA.
- 69 Skene to Hobley 10.31.13. 'I am told that the young men consider this call to labour as a piece of bluff on the part of the local officials. They state that if the Government wished the people to work, the slaves of the Arabs would not have been bought off by the Government and given their liberty and all obligation to work against their will, entirely removed.' CP 5/336-I, KNA.
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- 95 A. M. Champion, 'Memorandum on the Labour Supply and the WaGiriama,' Malindi Political Record Book, n.d. but included with December, 1914 correspondence, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
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- 100 Champion, 'May Report,' KNA.
- 101 Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 97-98.
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- 103 Kenneth MacDougall, 'Report,' 9.10.07, CP 2/154, KNA.
- 104 The Kikuyu and two men who were the right age for labour grew to recognize a distinct advantage in leaving the authority of their families and becoming independent geographically and financially. The Giriama did not need labour to provide this function.
- 105 Hollis, 9.28.07, 'Malindi Inward,' 1907, CP 97/185, KNA.
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- 111 C. O. 533/105/30601, Governor's statement.
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- 114 Champion had arrived in October, Belfield in early November and Hobley in late November, 1912.
- 115 F. I. Bretts, Giriama Labour: Memo, 9.14.12, CP 4/308, KNA.
- 116 Champion, 'Labour Memorandum,' KNA.
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- 118 Tate to Hobley 6.6.13, CP 8/157, KNA.
- 119 Hobley, '1913 Tour,' KNA.
- 120 Skens to Hobley 10.31.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA; Champion, 'October Report,' KNA.
- 121 This was often expressed in negatives: 'They ask nothing more than to be left alone and stagnate,' Tate to PC 6.6.13, CP 8/157.

KNA. 'As a whole the tribe are even more democratic than the Akamba; the family is the unit; beyond it little or no discipline is known or tolerated.' 'The Giriama will never be of much use as a labourer. He is too conservative and independent.' Champion, 'May Report,' KNA.

122 Cashmore, 'District Administration,' p. 200.

123 Kitu wa Syria, 'Statement,' 10.7.13, KNA.

124 Hobley to ADC Rabai 12.25.13, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

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131 Ibid.

132 Letters 9.16.13 through 3.5.14, Sabaki Rubber - Cotton Company and the Magarini Syndicate, Ltd. CP 4/294, KNA.

133 The importance of a demonstration of government's dignity strength is indicated by the orders: 'They will proceed in full marching order viz Fez, Jersey, Short's, Puttis, Rifle with sling, Belt with Bayonet and brace, 2 pouches, Haversack, waterbottle, great coat and blanket folded and fastened between coat straps onto the braces,' 2.2.14, Commissioner of Police, NBI to DC Taveta; Arthur Champion, 'Movement of WaGiryama from the North to the South bank of the Sabaki,' 2.11.14, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

134 Montgomery, 'Native Affairs, Giriama,' 2.27.14; Montgomery, 'Report on Tour in Giriama,' 3.19.14, CP 5/336-I, KNA. Hobley to Chief Secretary, Nairobi, 4.1.14, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

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137 Ibid. GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71.

138 Montgomery, 'Tour,' 3.14.19, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

- 139GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71.
- 140Montgomery, 'Tour,' 3.19.14, CP 5/336-I, KNA.
- 141Pearson to Hobley 4.3.14; Montgomery to Pearson 4.15.14,
CP 5/336-II, KNA.
- 142The letter of complaint was sent to Montgomery through
Liwali Said bin Abdulla Bakswain. The translation is enclosed in
Montgomery to Hobley, 5.16.14, CP 5/336-II, KNA.
- 143Hobley, '1913 Tour,' KNA.
- 144Hobley to Montgomery 5.27.14, CP 5/336-II, KNA.
- 145Champion 'Attitude of Wanyika' reported by Montgomery to
Mombasa 7.4.14, DC/KFI/13, KNA.
- 146Champion to Montgomery 7.2.14; Montgomery to Hemsted 7.4.
14; Champion, Safari Report, n.d. CP 5/336-II, KNA.
- 147Hazleriggs to Hemsted 4.7.14, CP 5/336-II, KNA.
- 148Ibid.; Hemsted to Chief Sec. Nairobi, 7.22.14 and Hemsted
to Champion 7.28.14, CP 5/336-II, KNA.
- 149Champion, 'Attitude of the Wanyika' reported by Montgomery
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- 155Ibid.; 'Deportation of the Prisoners Katalili and Wanje'
ADC Rabai to FC Mombasa, 8.7.14, CP 9/403, KNA. 'Destruction of Kaya
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CHAPTER VII

OPEN WARFARE,
AUGUST - DECEMBER, 1914

Prelude

By August 1, the situation was indeed volatile. Giriama in Gallana were threatening to oppose evacuation if the September 30 deadline was forced, and Mekatalili and Wanje were stirring up people in Biryaa. In the midst of this, on August 4, 1914, the British carried out their plans to destroy Kayafungo. While they were gathered at the kaya, they received word that East Africa was to be involved in Britain's war with Germany.¹ These two events - one deliberate and one completely unexpected - assisted the spread to the rest of Giriama-land of that discontent which had grown so strong in Gallana.

The British made a ceremonial occasion of destroying the kaya in order to save face and to keep Hazlerigg's promise. Their purpose was to teach the Giriama another lesson. A Public Works Department dynamite team accompanied Hemsted and his DC at Mombasa, A. J. Bretts, along with Montgomery, Pearson and Champion to the still-closed kaya for this purpose. In answer to a summons, about fifty elders appeared, including Headmen Mkowa, Gunga wa Baya of Kayafungo Location, Ndungu of Ndigeria, and Fondo wa Nyama, who emerged as spokesman for the group.

The British explained that the kaya was being destroyed

because the Giriama had failed to build a new one as promised. Fondo told the officers that the Giriama were not opposed to the event about to take place except that they needed the kaya to initiate the new rika, which was almost due. This was of no concern to the British. They told the Giriama that they would have to make other arrangements for their rika initiation.

The elders watched silently as the main trees and gates were blown up, all the huts and trees inside the kaya were burned, and the entrance was dynamited and barricaded.² As a Headman, Fondo was hardly a representative spokesman for all Giriama's feelings on the matter, since he had proven himself to be a particularly strong advocate of Government activities. Earlier in the year, when Champion was ADC at Rabai, he had received a strong request for Fondo's removal. The protestors said he tried to be dominating in carrying out his duties as Headman.

By asking the opinions of those men such as Fondo, who were least likely to disagree with them, the British were using a false barometer of the mood of the people. Watching the elders go away quietly to their homes the next day,³ the officers thought the matter was closed. But they had given the Giriama of Weruni greater cause to despise their Headmen, who had approved of the kaya's destruction.

The Headmen and elders present at this event did not seem to be worried by it at all; nor were the Giriama in other districts overly concerned. But among the nyere of the Weruni district, anger began to simmer. Mekatalili and Wanje had been recaptured and sent back to Kisii on August 7, so they played no active part in events subsequent

to the dynamiting.⁴ However, they may have inspired the ensuing reaction.

The nyere held a meeting to discuss the situation. They decided the Headmen had 'sold the land' and had conspired with the Government to destroy their traditions. They were particularly angry at Fondo wa Nyama, who had made open attempts the previous year to impress the Government when Pembe wa Mrimi was forced to leave the kaya. Fondo had subsequently been made a Headman as reward for his loyalty.⁵

None of this alone provided sufficient courage for action by the nyere against the Headmen. But the hatred was there, and given incentive and opportunity, many Giriama of Weruni were ready to challenge their Headmen's authority and the right of the British to govern them.

According to Mwinga wa Gunga, the son of the Kayafungo Headman, Gunga wa Baya, it had been made clear to all those Headman and elders present at Kayafungo on August 4 that the war effort with the Germans presented a new need for labour. Mwinga was clerk for A. J. Bretts, the DC Mombasa, and in that capacity he had accompanied his boss to the kaya for this event. His own father volunteered him immediately for war service. The Headmen were asked to send porters to Rabai, where they would be trained to join the Carrier Corps.⁶

The British were not only calling upon the Giriama to provide labour, they were also announcing that they were involved in a war with a power as great as they. For the first time, the British appeared less invincible than the image they had worked so hard to create.

The Giriama 'Offensive': A Matter of Protection

Almost every Giriama tells the following story of how the war began, with variations as to the precise time and place. The Giriama were being asked to give up their political freedom; the most controversial issue was labour.

And the Giriama said, 'Who will give his son away to go and be killed? Try taking the chicks.' Chembe /Champion/ took a chick and the hen flapped and then attacked Chembe. And the Giriama said, 'Do you see what the hen has done? If you take our sons, we will do the same.'⁷ . . . And that is how the war started at Vitengeni.⁸

On August 15, after returning to his camp at Mangea from the trip to Kaya Fungo, Champion received a telegram via Malindi from Hemsted who was acting as PC Mombasa while Hobley was on leave. This opened up the issue for confrontation.

1000 men urgently required military purposes Mombasa must be able bodied capable of carrying heavy loads of sand stones . . . collect in gangs and dispatch to report Watkins Mombasa stop arrive before 25th stop wire progress on morning of, the 17th.⁹

Knowing the Giriama, Champion should have replied that the labour would simply have to be found elsewhere. But obedient officer that he was, he tried to do his duty. He found himself compelled to 'use force never resorted to before'¹⁰ just to acquire porters to accompany him to Vitengeni on a labour-recruiting mission. He sent requests for fifty men to all Headmen in Mangea, Biryaa, and Godoma. Each of them was confronted with angry reaction and refusals from the people. At this juncture, the struggles between the Giriama and the British escalated into open conflict over the rape of a Giriama woman.

On the evening of August 17, indiscreet askaris, including a

Kamba, Kalunja wa Mutui, raped a young bride in Ikombi's lalo near Vitengeni. They had gone to recruit porters, but they found no men in the village. Hearing the women's cries, the men who had been hiding nearby suddenly came out from the bush firing arrows. The askaris replied with a volley of shots into the air and escaped. Champion heard these shots from his nearby camp and rushed to learn what had happened. He met his returning askaris on the way. They mentioned that armed warriors had shot at them and that they had hurt nobody when they fired into the air. They failed to mention the rape. Champion took them back to the village where he found one lone old woman. He confiscated all the goats he could find and led his party back in darkness to his camp.

On the way, an arrow came from the bush and struck Kalunja right in the heart, killing him instantly. Champion opened fire, but failed to hit anybody. To Champion, a 'more unprovoked and dastardly act /could/ hardly /have been/ imagined.¹¹ Young men brandishing arrows had become almost common encounters for his police parties, but never before had there been an attack on his party. Not knowing his own men had provoked the incident, he placed all the blame on the Giriana.

But why should such an incident begin a war? The rape itself was not so much the trigger as was the decision by some Giriana to retaliate. Furthermore, once a few had retaliated by avenging a rape, they were joined by others who had become emboldened to show their aggravation to Champion personally. What conditions existed which encouraged these people, who had a tradition as defensive, not aggressive fighters, to take an offensive stance against their Headmen and the

British administration?

The revenge for the rape was hardly surprising. Champion had been dependent upon the people of Mangea and Vitengeni to help him establish the infrastructure of administration. People nearby his station had to provide his water. He was in the process of constructing a dam, but until it was completed, water had to be carried by the women to the station from nearby villages. Most of the askaris, being non-Giriama, had at some time or another taken advantage of these women who travelled to and from the station. In a time when the Giriama were losing more of their women to the Swahili on the coast and to the Duruma to the south, abuse of their women was not taken lightly. This issue had been simmering for a long time.¹²

Moreover, the people of Ikombi's village had refused for more than a year to obey any of the summons of Ziro, their Headman. His own daughter had been threatened and his retainers intimidated by the inhabitants. Makaziro, Ikombi's son, was angry that anyone would rape his new bride. The fact that it was a government askari seemed grounds enough to pursue him.¹³

The impact of the death of the askari was almost electric. Why did it stimulate Giriama to fight? First was the growing personal hatred many Giriama had for Champion. In his years of experience, he had come to know the Giriama better than anybody else. But they had come to know him, too, and he had the disadvantage of being the focus for all their anger.

Second, the new demand for labour gave the Godoma Giriama a reason to fight. In his desperate attempt to obtain porters, Champion

had become involved in the 'chicken incident' whereby he threatened death to those Giriama who did not comply with labourers. The Giriama had no way of determining that he was not actually intending to bring in a large police force to kill those who would not force their sons into labour. Giriama throughout Godoma replied to their Headmen with the same emphatic, 'no.'

Third, the situation surrounding the war emerging between Britain and Germany gave the Giriama reason to believe that if they fought, they might win. This resulted from activities of agents from German East Africa who, in an effort to stir up trouble for their British foes, urged the people under British colonial rule to fight for their freedom. Several German agents can be precisely identified in Godoma and Mangea and possibly in the Trans-Sabaki around mid-August. One was a Somali named Haji, who came to a lalo of Murai in Tsumu's Location. He told the Giriama that he had received a charm from the Germans which would protect them from bullets and that, with his special medicine, he would be able to kill 'Champion and 'cut off his head.'¹⁴

Although he had promised German assistance to the Giriama effort, he got no Giriama to accompany him on such a venture. He told the Giriama to put a black flag in front of their lalo as an indication that they were pro-German, and when the Germans came, they would not burn those malalo with black flags. Many of these black flags were found by British troops in later stages of the war.¹⁵

Another report identified two slaves of sons of Mbaruk bin Rashid, who had fled after his 'rebellion' to German East Africa. These agents had left the German troops at Taveta and had come to

Giriamaland to foment a Giriama rising against the British, who they said were weak and being defeated by the Germans. They gave assurances that the Germans would shortly be able to help the Giriama.¹⁶

The Germans were well-known to many Giriama because they bought the illicit ivory which the Giriama continued to trade. From the Giriama point of view, the Germans were potential allies. Such agents, then, not only gave the Giriama reason to believe the British were weak and the Germans would help them to win in a confrontation, but they also gave the people in an entire malalo region to stick together in whatever decision they made.

In the face of these three conditions - hatred of Champion, labour demands, and the hope of German assistance - the resentment which had been building up over labour since the Chakama incident the previous year surfaced and exploded into open hostility in Mangea and Godoma. The Giriama had never been compensated for the loss of the nyere who was shot by an askari at Chakama. Now they had evened the score. The Chakama victim had been from Mangea wa Nyasi, a lalo not too far south from Champion's station. The people there had been unfriendly toward him thereafter. A later incident in which a leader from this lalo was taken prisoner provided the excuse for more widespread Giriama hostility to surface.

The people of Mangea wa Nyasi had become particularly incensed when a police patrol came to their lalo on August 16, demanding labour for the British war effort against the Germans. Ironically, Champion's own recruiting confirmed the tales of German agents: the British needed Giriama support to defeat the Germans, so the British

must be weak. The police patrol had been met by unfriendly men brandishing arrows. Two men, Sirya wa Jefa and Jefa wa Masemo, were taken prisoner and escorted to Champion's boma (camp) at Vitengeni.¹⁷

When Kalunja the askari was killed the next evening, the anti-Government forces which had been festering all along began to organize. They were adamant against the new appeals for labour, angered by the rape but emboldened by the desire for quick revenge, and they wanted to free the prisoners Champion held.

Independently, these anti-Government forces had been creating problems for the Headmen for some time. Ziro had been faced with opposition led by Ikombi (in whose lalo the rape had occurred) and Rua Mitseka. Together their followers were greater in number than Ziro's own. Sirya wa Jefa, one of Champion's prisoners, had led the opposition party in Tsumu's Location. Nduria, the Headman of nearby Kirwitu, had been implicated in the Chakama incident at the time, but he was never punished and now he controlled a small area where Government had a few, silent supporters. So Giriama 'rebel' leadership fell to those who had opposed Government all along. Conservative kambi and restless nyere combined their strength and gathered a force of seventy men. Their object was Champion and the Headmen gathered at the Vitengeni boma.

On August 18, the day before the above-mentioned arrived at Champion's camp, Headman Kalama wa Kuro of Bamba reached Vitengeni with a letter from some of the elders of his Location, requesting his removal as Headman. He also had a list of names for porters, but he complained that he was facing absolute opposition on the matter. Both Tsumu and

Ziro, who had arrived earlier, were unable to provide so much as a list.¹⁸

On August 19, just after Headman Ndungu of Ndigiria had entered the boma in response to Champion's call for labourers, the 'rebels' surged into the camp. Ostensibly, they had come to free the two prisoners, but their greatest rage was vented against the Headmen and Champion. They left no doubt that they wanted the immediate end of Government activities. Champion stood bravely before them in this confrontation, and nobody tried to shoot. The Giriama seemed less anxious to kill Champion than to try to shout him away.

At Ziro's suggestion, and against his own best judgment, Champion let Sirya wa Jefa out to negotiate with the crowd. He managed to break loose from his guards and to join the angry group. This gave the Giriama new energy, and they began firing arrows. Again, Champion was able to calm them and his police, who wanted to return fire. The foray lasted more than an hour and finally, when one of the bandas (huts) caught fire, Champion ordered shots into the air, successfully encouraging the Giriama to flee.

Now Champion had been attacked for the second time. As far as he knew, this was merely a case of misbehaviour in Mangea, but he sent a messenger to Malindi asking for police support and left with the ten Headmen and elders early the next morning. He returned to Mangea station, hoping it had not been attacked in his absence. After his departure, the Giriama burned the huts of his boma at Vitengeni and looted the banda of Rev. Harris of C. M. S., who was trying to build a school there. Champion also got a report that Ziro's council

house and the mud house where his retainers lived had been burnt.

Because his Headmen had been with him at Vitengeni, Champion was able to pinpoint the 'agitators' in the attack against his camp. They also reported to him truthfully the lack of support Government had always had. Since those men involved had come from malalo as widespread as Kirwitu, Mohera, Kisiwani, Ganze, Tsangalaweni, Mangea wa Nyasi, Ikombi's lalo, Dangicha, and Fuladoyo, Champion concluded on August 21 that the demonstration and burning of Vitengeni was 'part of an organized scheme of resistance to Government.' Furthermore, he stated:

I am of the opinion that quite ninety percent of the AGiryama are at present actively hostile to Government and that should a rising start all would join to drive us out of the country.¹⁹

His figures were high, but he had assessed their mood correctly. This had been the Giriama goal the previous year during Makatalili's campaign. The goal had not changed, only the tactic. And Champion's condition at the moment, being confined to the station at Mangea, produced just the impression of weakness he feared it would.

Upon hearing of Champion's plight, Hemsted had ordered Hazleriggs, the ADC Malindi, to go to his aid with ten police from Malindi. He also ordered the newly-arrived DC Rabai, Charles Dundas, to go to Mangea with twenty-five more police and to take charge of Mangea and handle the situation. Dundas felt totally capable of doing both. S. F. L. Lascelles replaced Dundas at Rabai.²⁰

Meanwhile, Giriama from Makondeni, a lalo that had not participated at Vitengeni, took advantage of Champion's apparent vulnerable position and attacked Mangea station at dawn on August 22,

1914. They succeeded in burning some of the bandas, but Champion was never in fear for his own safety. However, his only sources of water came from holes four hundred and seven hundred feet from his camp, and the Giriama had poisoned them with euphorbia. Though this situation was only temporary, it was more than a mere inconvenience. Meanwhile, Hemsted telegraphed the Officer, Commanding Troops, of the King's African Rifles in Nairobi to report the Vitengeni attack and to await his instructions.²¹

This was a crucial turning point, because the rumour spread that the attack on Champion at Mangea had been successful. In many instances, Champion was rumoured to be dead. On the same day, in an un-coordinated, but perhaps related, incident, a group of men went to Sekoke at Headman Mchunga's to inform him that they would not supply porters for the war efforts. They threatened to kill anyone who came into their villages seeking porters. Some of this party, who were old employees of the Sekoke Plantation, went among the labourers working there and shot some arrows. Nobody was killed, and one of the attackers was captured. The rumour reached Mr. Henry, the manager of Sekoke Plantation, that three hundred Giriama were going to attack him. He wrote an anxious, hurried note to the ADC at Takaungu requesting soldiers.²²

Once they had fighters to join in their cause, the aggressive Giriama in Mangea and Godoma took the offensive and began to concentrate their energy against those places which were the symbols of the British Government: Vitengeni camp, Mangea station, Headmen's houses, Government Council Houses, and Sekoke Plantation. Dundas encountered

opposition when he crossed the Rare River on his way from Rabai to Mangea and sent a telegram to Takaungu: 'General rising of Giriama and situations very grave.'²³

This assessment, made in haste, was exaggerated. He was basing this interpretation on his single encounter and disturbing reports he received along the way. These reports had been corroborated by Rev. Harris who was returning to Rabai from Vitengeni, but they were not verified during the remainder of Dundas' trip. He encountered no more Giriama along the way. His full report, written two days later, called the Giriama action 'more demonstrative than determined.'²⁴

He wisely warned that the Giriama action occurred because they believed the British forces to be weak, but that the dense bush of Giriama land made disproving such a myth extremely difficult. The Giriama were striking at missions and Government buildings where few people were present to strike back.

On August 23, Hazleriggs arrived at Mangea with his ten police. He had confronted no Giriama along the way, but his coming had announced that Champion was in need of reinforcements, and another attack was made on Mangea in the afternoon. Until this time, however, only Giriama from Mangea and Godoma had participated.

The moment the Giriama of the north heard of the attack on Mangea, many were ready to join their southern neighbours in the fight. They, of all people in any Giriama region, had been expecting that the British were going to come to fight them over the evacuation of the Trans-Sabaki. Now, they heard that Mangea had been burned to the ground by Giriama. They had hopes that the Giriama might be able to

push the British back to the coast.

It appeared that Champion's fears that the rising would spread were justified. The same day Hazleriggs arrived at Mangea, Mr. Waters, the manager of Magarini Syndicate plantations south of Marafa, sent a hurried letter to Montgomery in Malindi saying that two hundred Giriama were threatening to attack his plantations the next day.²⁵

Montgomery, who had sent his own police to Mangea, gathered the three Europeans in Malindi and some reinforcements and rushed up, waiting all night for the Giriama to attack. Nothing came of it, however, and Montgomery returned to Malindi the next day. He later explained that when the Giriama checked and found the report of a successful attack on Mangea to be untrue, they gave up their own aggressive plans.²⁶

Giriama in Weruni also became aware of the situation in Mangea. Florence Deed of the C. M. S. mission at Kaloleni entered in her diary on August 24 that she could hear war songs around the mission. A number of men refused to work on the roads, and a hostile party of armed men went to Headman Kitu's, but he disappeared when he heard they were coming. They had also gone to Fondo's and elsewhere, but Miss Deed had not heard that.²⁷

With the exception of Champion, British observers, whether officers or missionaries, were totally perplexed as to a single potential source of organization among the Giriama. For them, Headmen had become a new positive focus in a disintegrating political organization. Now, in Mangea and Godoma, nyere and kambi were combining in discontented groups and separating themselves from other Giriama in their

willingness to take advantage of the British weakened condition. But there were few individuals actually 'leading' the others. Instead, groups acted from consensus and then set about trying to persuade others. They knew that their greatest power of persuasion would come from a demonstration of their own success or of a British failure.

Two erroneous assumptions made by the British early in these disturbances influenced their own official reaction. They thought the Giriama action was a unified one despite the reports to the contrary by Headmen. Thus, they failed to take advantage of the many opportunities to persuade neutral or sympathetic Giriama into their camp. Instead, they adopted the tactic of brutalizing them to the point that they would beg for the conflict to end. Secondly, they assumed there were 'ringleaders' in each area who, if caught, could end the fighting as effectively as it had begun. They ultimately admitted that the mood had permeated the population so deeply that no single man in any region was so important that he alone could have controlled the direction of the fight or its demise.

Our most thorough details concerning the membership of the 'rebels' and their efforts at organization come from Weruni rather than Mangua. Here in Weruni, the nyere alone had gathered as a group to discuss their anger when the kaya was destroyed. They had concluded that their Headmen were serving the British and not the Giriama. Upon hearing that the Giriama had won against Champion, they set about trying to get the support of the kambi for their efforts.

The kambi were at first too scared to do anything, but when they saw the courage of their sons, those who were against the mzungu /European/ came forward one by one to take their place of leadership.²⁸

Some of the kambi went into council and decided that a collection of cattle should be brought to the Mitsara wa Kaya (a place of preparation outside the kaya) to be slaughtered and eaten by the kambi. Traditionally when the Giriama were preparing for war, they would go to every traditional elder and ask him to contribute a bull for rituals. In this case, the main purpose was to have the Headmen contribute a bull to the kambi. This would demonstrate support for their own people, opposition to the British, and it was tacit recognition of the authority of those kambi sitting in council over their own position of leadership as Headmen. The Giriama were collecting their own tax from the Headmen.

Most of the nyere were Wulumbere - so they would have been the leaders of the next rika. They grouped into midhia (contingents of about fifty men) and went to the homes of the Headmen. They were under instructions from the full group not to hurt anyone unless there was resistance. The Headmen were asked to pay goats and cows and accompany the men to the Mitsara wa Kaya. Fôndo wa Nyama and Kitu wa Syria escaped the armed parties which came to them, but Fondo wa Thibu of the Nyoga age-set, led almost two hundred men to confront Headman Gunga wa Baya. Gunga paid two cows and five goats and then sat through a frightening and humiliating session at the Mitsara wa Kaya in which they argued over whether he had paid sufficiently for their purposes.²⁹

If you murder him, what do you gain? And they sat there with several nyere pointing arrows at him as though they were waiting to shoot. And . . . /he/ sat quietly through the ordeal and waited quietly to see what action they would finally take. He watched them slaughter all the animals and eat everything in /his/ presence.³⁰

He had successfully purchased his own life and agreed to work

no longer for the British. Before Kitu and Fondo were found, word reached Weruni that Champion was safe after all, so hostile actions against the Headmen apparently ceased. However, Headmen had been served notice that their future was in jeopardy. They had been intimidated by Mekatalili's campaign the year before; this time, their lives had been threatened. Now both sides in Weruni waited to see what the developments would be.

Since the Weruni offensive had been against Headmen and not British administrators (who were in Rabai) or European missionaries, the British were unaware that the rising was in danger of spreading to the south. From Mangea, it appeared that only Mangea and Godoma were in unrest. From Malindi, the whole Sabaki valley seemed to be involved.

From Mombasa, the entire situation looked much more severe than it was. On the afternoon of August 23, Hemsted received reports of the attack on Mangea, the threats to Sekoke and Magarini plantations, and Dundas' exaggerated telegram of a 'general rising.' He telegraphed the OC Troops to send a company of Kings' African Rifles to Kilifi immediately.³¹

On August 24, one company of KAR under Major Hawthorne started for Mangea from Rabai. The next day, a second company of KAR started for Mangea from Kilifi Creek. They had been allotted six days to 'quell' the Giriama rising.³²

The Six Day War

Dundas wrote in his memoirs that this rising had spread because the troops were around for only six days.³³ Their goal in that

time was to punish Mangea and Godoma for their attacks on Champion and the Headmen. However, this punishment was also extended to include the Giriama of the Trans-Sabaki, and the KAR swept through the region, burning malalo along the way.

Dundas would have been more correct had he said that allowing the troops to cross the Sabaki had caused the hostilities to spread. The anticipated attack on Magarini plantations had not actually occurred. British administrators were well aware of Giriama uneasiness regarding the move from the Trans-Sabaki, but up to this point, these Giriama had only made threats; they had not joined the hostilities.

Dundas could have argued further that bringing troops in the first place caused the scattered attacks to spread into a full-scale rising. The 'rebels,' who had difficulty getting many fellow Giriama to join them in this offensive, were rewarded by a significant increase in recruits after the KAR marched through each area. What had appeared at first to be a risky venture by a few energetic upstarts was translated into an obligation to fight with their own people who were at the mercy of gun-carrying soldiers.

Dundas had determined as soon as he arrived at Mangea on August 24 that a tough British 'show of power' was necessary, but he also recognized that such a tough showing was almost impossible given the characteristics of the bush.³⁴

Yet all the British officers were anxious to have the troops come. Montgomery urged troops because he wanted them to clear the Trans-Sabaki, according to the September 30 deadline, at the same time. His request for troops included sending them across the river. He

thought the Giriama there deserved punishment and he wanted force to help make them move.³⁵

Champion urged troops because he thought the Giriama in Mangea and Godoma ought to be treated to a slash and burn policy - and a stiff fine - as severe punishment. He needed troops to accomplish this. Dundas wanted them to show the Giriama a proper lesson as to Government's strength. He was sure, if they went unpunished, the Giriama would be certain to try to oppose the British again.³⁶

Lascelles, acting in Dundas' absence at Rabai, was relieved to know troops were coming because he was involved in some unrest of his own: rumours that Duruma and Kamba were getting ready to attack Rabai and that German askaris were nearby (all proved to be false).³⁷ Hemsted felt troops were needed because, from Mombasa, the view was one of Government's near loss of control.³⁸

The KAR were in the field from August 24 to August 30. On their way to Mangea, the only opposition they encountered was at Jilore, where attempts were being made to burn the houses of some of the Christians.³⁹

Once the troops had actually arrived at Mangea, Dundas wanted them to give an unquestionable demonstration of British military strength. Champion, who had been more isolated than anybody during his 'imprisonment' at Mangea station, still considered the rising to involve only the Giriama of Mangea and Godoma, for whom he proposed harsh punishment. He, too, wanted the Trans-Sabaki evacuated, but not immediately.

However, Montgomery's request for the KAR had specifically

urged them to clear the north side of the river. More than likely, his basis for punishment due the people living there was the failure of the Headmen to declare their support for Government as soon as hostilities became evident south of the River. Mkowa and Kombi, proven faithfuls, had never reported to Government and had, apparently, disappeared. Ngunyo was suspected of encouraging the abortive attack on Magarini. Montgomery wanted these men punished, too. Dundas came to support this opinion and blamed the Trans-Sabaki Giriama when he heard that the KAR had encountered trouble at Jilore and unjustifiably concluded: 'This indicates the hostile action of Giriama of all the Northern part.'⁴⁰

Champion was overruled and had no way of knowing, from his isolated spot, that the Trans-Sabaki Giriama were not actively involved. He was asked to accompany two officers and one company of KAR on the sweep north of the river. They burned villages along the way, including Baricho, Marafa, and Mugangeni. They met with 'more or less continuous opposition,' and killed twelve Giriama.⁴¹

Captain Carew marched along the south bank. He was attacked at Jilore by 1000 Giriama and killed about 30 of them. Lt. Rusburger returned with a party to Rabai, but he fought some Giriama along the way. Dundas remained at Mangea to make short trips with the police to assure that the Giriama did not become hostile again with the exit of the troops.

Because the KAR met resistance on this double swoop, Major Hawthorne decided that he needed two companies of KAR with a full month's supply of stores in order to evacuate the Trans-Sabaki. But there was an interim before they returned to the field. Dundas had

been correct. A ten-day absence of troops gave the Giriama encouragement that they might, indeed, win something. By marching through the Trans-Sabaki and burning villages, the British themselves had extended the rising to the north bank. The Giriama there had no reason not to fight. The Mangea-Godoma swoop halted things there for a while because the Giriama had been stunned by the British rifles. But when the troops failed to return after a few days, at Jilore and the Headmen's villages once again became targets for Giriama warriors.

Until September 4, all remained quiet. Then, Giriama from Biryaa joined the hostilities, and an attack was made on Mangea station and on Tsumu's village near Vitengeni.⁴²

Hemsted had arranged for Kenneth MacDougall, who was still in Malindi and who, of course, knew the Giriama very well, to try to negotiate a peace with the Giriama at this point. Dundas was adamantly against it on grounds that it would make Government appear weak and that MacDougall would not subsequently be responsible for his actions. On September 5, Dundas was still arguing: 'Our only possible policy lies in a severe hammering which will silence them once and for all . . . Now I just hold the station but a hundred KAR could perhaps do the rest or at least hustle the tribe so that it will afterwards be a speedy undertaking to crush them entirely.'⁴³ The Governor, on his own, concurred on September 7. He instructed the 'reduction' of the Giriama /to be/ finally effected and a sharp lesson given to them.⁴⁴

The rapid KAR sweep had accomplished very little. They had frightened the Giriama, but they had hardly shown them proof of British superiority in the field. They had angered the Trans-Sabaki Giriama.

Moreover, their presence was a sign that there was indeed a war between the Giriama and the British. Many Giriama felt obligated to step from their neutral position and support their fellow Giriama against the enemy.

The south, Weruni and Biryaa, had been excluded from the KAR activities on the grounds that they had not behaved in any way deserving punishment. But after the KAR left the north, the hostile nyere of Weruni intensified the pressure on their Headmen. They had marked Fondo wa Nyama earlier for death, on grounds that his British loyalty was too great. Fondo had clarified his position when he refused to pay a fee of cows to the Giriama. This provided just the opportunity they needed. He would not sell off his loyalty to the British with a few cows, and the Giriama determined he would pay with his life.

Fondo's resistance seemed to heighten the courage of Weruni Giriama. A group of warriors attacked his house on September 7 and killed him with a poisoned arrow, while neighbours looked on, frightened. It was Fondo's death that emboldened the Giriama of Weruni to threaten the missions at Kaloleni and Mwabanyundo.⁴⁵

The subsequent evacuation of the missions and the death of the most loyal British Headman widened the war to Weruni. And when nobody came to punish them, more Giriama joined the fight against the British. On September 11, fresh attacks on Mangea station included 300 Giriama from Kaloleni.⁴⁶

But by the time the KAR had returned and established a boma at Jilore on September 8th, all of Giriamaland was involved in the upheaval. Lascelles, the Acting DC Rabai, was instructed to take out

the KAR under Captain Hughes and the police under Inspector West to stop the rising in Weruni and Biryaa. By September 13, many Giriama were gathering at Kayafungo, including large numbers from Mangea. Montgomery wrote at this time that there could be no question of peace at the present - the Giriama needed to be punished.⁴⁷ The war had expanded, not ended.

Inconsistent Reactions

The second sweep of the KAR began September 10. They fired on all parties of Giriama that they met whether hostile or not. They systematically confiscated goats and burned huts.

British weapons and tactics surprised and stunned the Giriama. Eleven years previously, when they had fought the Mariakani Kamba, each side had lined up and shot a volley of arrows and retired to regroup before lining up to fire again.⁴⁸ The loss of life in this kind of confrontation was minimal in comparison to what happened with the British. Giriama fell like flies and when they retired to regroup, the shooting continued. Moreover, their previous experience with guns had been against the Arabs several decades before. Now they were facing repeater rifles.

Giriama reacted in two ways. In some cases, warriors scattered and fled into the bush, totally demoralized. In other cases, they entered the bush and began to make systematic attacks on British soldiers from their hiding places. Using the bush as an ally was not new to them. Only in this way could their arrows be a match for British firepower.

Their traditional obligation, as Giriama, was to fight with their people. In most descriptions or explanations of the war, no mention is made of a chance to decide what alternatives they had.

* This man had been killed by a Giriama so the mzungu was fighting the Giriama and a full-scale war broke out. The Giriama called on their friends and Champion called on his.⁴⁹

In Weruni, a more concerted action developed among the nyere against the Headman. Their fight was not one with the British, per se, until Fondo wa Nyama was killed. In the Trans-Sabaki, despite prior plans for offensive action, almost all Giriama had found themselves in a defensive position when the KAR marched through, unifying the vast majority to oppose the fighting force. But, just as reasons for joining the rising had been different in each region, so were reactions to British fire power, depending, ultimately, upon their vested interest in continuing the war.

In Weruni and Biryaa, the people had little to lose and much to gain by trying early to surrender for peace. They had not been asked to supply labourers. They were not required to give up their land. In the Trans-Sabaki part of Gallana, the Giriama had nothing to gain by surrendering. Their homes had already been destroyed, they knew they would face punishment, and they had few belongings left. Their families were scattered and they were fighting to keep their land.

In Mangea and Godoma, the deepest split had occurred. With the exception of Fondo wa Nyama in Weruni, all the Headmen who had openly supported the British throughout the entire troubled period lived in these two areas. But also in these two areas lived the people who had been asked to lend active support to the establishment of

British administration and who had borne the brunt of all labour demands. They had experienced the greatest degree of British control, they had the most to gain from driving the British out. Encouraged by the promise of German support, they had the greatest hope of succeeding. The concentration of KAR expeditions in this area encouraged some to surrender but made those who had opposed the British in the earliest stages more determined to continue fighting.

There had been no organization of all the Giriama into a single military unit at any time during this rising. The situation for most Giriama was that they had anticipated trouble might come, heard they were at war, grabbed their bows and poisoned arrows, and joined their own people in a fight against the enemy. A large portion fled from the fight altogether - into the Taru desert, to the Tana River, south to Duruma country. Since there was no organization even on the regional level, the Giriama themselves had no mechanism to use to stop this confrontation once it began.

From the British vantage point, their own 'hostilities' were to continue until the Giriama had been sorely punished. For them, then, the focus for any peace settlement rested on those who they knew were involved. They wanted Ngunyo's surrender and the murderer of the askari captured and tried. All those Champion had named in his report on the Vitengeni camp were to be turned in as ringleaders, and their own Headmen who had defected were to be punished.⁵⁰

With the exception of Champion, British officers were suspicious of anyone who became a 'friendly.' They could not distinguish between trickery and sincerity. The philosophy of Dundas, in particu-

lar, was to continue reprisals until the Giriama had ceased all hostilities and promised to begin no more.⁵¹ Two factors made this impossible: the lack of a good communication network, central control, or singleness of purpose among the Giriama and the continued reprisals of the KAR which agitated the Giriama to keep fighting back.

In Mangea, Godoma and Gallana, the situation had become a vicious circle: the Giriama would continue to fight back as long as the KAR continued to plunder, and the KAR would not stop fighting the Giriama so long as the Giriama seemed hostile. So a rising which had spread because of a series of accidents took on a life of its own, and with no chiefs, no authorities at the kaya, how was one to get peace? The dilemma was just as difficult for both sides.

Problems of Securing Peace

Securing the peace was virtually impossible among people who were scattered, terrified, and unsure, whom to trust. The British concern to punish the Giriama exceeded their desire to end the fighting. When the Giriama started straggling in to ask for peace, they were turned away with a demand that all the Giriama declare together. This was impossible. The fighting itself had been haphazardly organized, the issues were different in each of the regions, fighting had taken place between Giriama, and the British themselves had insured division and fragmentation of recognized leadership.

Two separate attempts for peace, almost simultaneous, were made in Weruni and South Gallana. In Weruni, after Fondo wa Nyama was killed, Kitu wa Syria barely escaped with his life. But for all of

the rumours of attacks on the missions and on Rabai, the offensive in Weruni was a 'half-hearted effort'.⁵² and immediately encountered police and plundering KAR.

Their entry into this conflict had been primarily against Headmen. They did not entertain hopes of defeating the British based on information of British military weakness against the Germans. They were less prepared for this encounter. Most Giriama, seeing their friends fall before them, ran away.

The same men who had come the month before to Headman Gunga's and taken him off to the Mitsara wa Kaya to humiliate him changed their minds and decided that Gunga was their only hope at trying to secure peace. They came to him apologetically and asked him to write a letter to the DC requesting an end to the war. Gunga was a good liason between the Giriama and the British for three reasons. He had not served long as a Headman and thus had less of a background tainted with Government zeal. He had paid his fine and tacitly supported the 'rebels' by refraining from helping the British, but he had provided little aid for the rebels, either. He also had a son, Mwinga, who could read and write English, so the peace request could be made by letter.⁵³

In the north, the problem was much harder. Mkowa and Kombe had paid a fine and fled for their lives to Langulo country. The British were unlikely to recognize as peacemakers any other than their Headmen or one of the leaders Champion had mentioned in his report. Ngonyo was not interested in negotiating for peace. Tsumu and Ziro had been attacked by some of their own people. Tsumu was rescued and Ziro was thought to be dead. Their communication with the rebels was

hardly a trusting one. Mchungu of Sekoke, Nyamwe of Madunguni and Msaga of Jilore had never waivered in their support for the British, so Giriama rebels distrusted them entirely. Nduria of Kirwitu had sided with his people against the British and remained in hiding. The Headmen in this area were openly divided into those who were either active British supporters or active British opposers. This made them less accessible for men from the other side to work through. As a result, the peace feelers from the Giriama of the north came through a coastal Arab, Sheik Fathili bin Omar. He was a long-time friend of the Giriama and he had previously worked for the British as Mudir of Arabuko. Unlike the situation in Weruni, however, where the 'rebels' themselves decided they wanted peace, these men seeking peace were elders who were tired of hiding in the bush and frightened by the threats they felt from British and hostile Giriama alike.⁵⁴

In Weruni, Gunga agreed to write a letter requesting peace. Upon receiving it, Lascelles said that Headman Kitu would have to join Gunga and some of the 'rebels' to go to Mombasa to talk with the FC. Lascelles was reacting to an error in his telegraphed instructions which said to 'reserve' Kitu instead of 'rescue' him. When the delegation appeared in Mombasa with no papers, Hemsted could not understand why they had been sent. He was unsure whether he was supposed to imprison them or grant them audience. When he ascertained the purpose of their mission, he absolutely rejected their peace offer. He argued that the Giriama should declare for peace altogether, and that he could hardly begin negotiations with the first location that decided to give up. He wanted the 'ringleaders' of the trouble and not the 'friendlies.'⁵⁵

Montgomery's reply to the northern peace offers was the same: 'partial submission will not be accepted.' Dundas was of the same mind. When he sent Champion to Marafa to check on a rumour that Ngunyo was ready to surrender and it proved to be false, he replied, 'I propose to make no attempts to solicit their submission.'⁵⁶

Those political and military officers working in the north and Mangesa had almost no knowledge or interest in what was happening in the south, beyond the fact that the rising had spread to that area. To them, the real trouble was in the north, and that was where the solution lay.

But, Hemsted, Montgomery and Dundas all changed their minds when they learned that the KAR was needed elsewhere.⁵⁷ None of the Giriama efforts at getting peace succeeded as well as this British knowledge that the KAR had only a short time to stay.

Hemsted accepted the peace offer from the south, and a fine and a levy of porters was set as punishment. At the same time, Dundas and Montgomery decided that they would go ahead and meet the elders from the northern region separately. A meeting was set for October 5 at Jilore, and the peace terms were given to the elders present. Who represented the Giriama remains a mystery. Evidently, lalo elders of significant enough numbers convinced the officers that the Giriama were ready for the hostilities to end. They agreed to the following terms despite their inability to execute them.

- a) all persons wanted on capital charges for 2 years prior to beginning of punitive measures handed over.
- b) formal submission by native custom of the heads of the tribe and rebellion leaders.

- c) 1000 men to be handed over for military transport
- d) fine of Rs. 100,000 out of which compensations will be paid for damages. Whole fine to be paid in cash. (amounts to Rs. 6 per head per adult male.)
- e) evacuation of North of the Sabaki
- f) all of the above conditions are to be complied with within 7 days failing which hostilities by the British are to recommence.⁵⁸

The British had compromised on their original demand that all the Giriama declare for peace together. But even so, the terms of this peace, particularly the seven-day time limit, were totally unrealistic. Families were scattered, loyalties were questioned, homes and villages had been burnt, and everybody was powerless to have much effect on actions of fellow Giriama. Moreover, some Godoma and Mangea Giriama were not at all ready to quit.

This fact led to the incident which made Solomon Kadzitza the only hero of the Giriama war. Solomon was caught in the middle because he could read English. In an act of good faith, two of the 'rebel' leaders of the south agreed to take a message from the KAR captain in Rabai to the KAR captain in Mangea. The message told of the agreement for peace in the south, indicating that this should assist the efforts for peace in the north. When the two messengers arrived near Tsumu's at Vitengeni, they were confronted by a group of warriors who were just returning from a fighting expedition. They demanded to see the letter, but since none could read, they took it to Folodoyó for Solomon Kadzitza to read. When they learned that the letter was requesting peace from the Giriama on the northern side, they objected, and forced Kadzitza to tear it up. When the messengers returned to

Rabai to tell what had happened, Captain Rose, who had succeeded as officer in charge, took one of the messengers with him on his patrol to Mangea to identify Kadzitza for punishment.⁵⁹

Rose felt that Kadzitza should have delivered the message anyway. Even if Kadzitza had been forced to tear up the actual letter, he knew the contents. Rose's choice of punishment went beyond the crime committed. Solomon Kadzitza was allowed to go into his house for his Bible and to kiss his family before he was tied to a tree and shot.⁶⁰

Rose's behaviour justified the arguments of those Giriama who were unwilling to stop fighting. He was aware that Weruni and parts of Godoma had declared for peace, and he knew that the people in the north had been given until mid-October to meet the terms of their peace settlement. Yet during this period, he killed 7 Giriama who were running away at Magogoni and 7 others at various villages. He captured 400 goats and burnt several villages while at the same time admitting that only two arrows were actually fired at his troops.⁶¹ Even peaceful Giriama had difficulty interpreting such actions as an honest desire by the British for peace.

The October 7 meeting in Jilove failed to be what the British had hoped as an end to hostilities and total capitulation by the Giriama. But it did succeed in convincing many Giriama that the winning side was indeed the British side. Finally the British were being persuasive. The Giriama sensed they would be unable to win. From that point forward the British officers, too, thought in terms of seeking those Giriama who were hold-outs to the peace stipulations. They regarded the war as finished. The majority of Giriama wanted the

hostilities to end, but they had no control over those few who still wanted to fight.

The greatest exception to the desire for peace were those Giriama of the Trans-Sabaki and the anti-government forces of Mangea and Godoma who had stimulated open hostility in the first place. The former still did not want to leave their land. The latter knew they could hide in the bush for some time. To surrender was to lose all hope of ending British domination.

The official position of the British made the situation of their officers more difficult by insisting that all Giriama were guilty and should be punished. They gave no reward for cooperation. Even loyal Headmen had to pay, for failing to control their own people. As a result, those people who surrendered first bore the brunt of the penalty simply because the rebels continued to cause trouble and then escaped into the bush, leaving their fellow Giriama to pay the fine.

The British had actually failed to demonstrate their superior war power, because the availability of the bush for hiding allowed the enemy on the battlefield to escape. He was never forced to surrender. Captives were never taken. Any Ndadiana of a Midthia who was killed was replaced by another in the rank. Those Giriama who sought peace in Mangea and Godoma did so because they were tired of living in the bush, not because the British had defeated them.

It was for this reason that the completion of the harsh peace terms took on such importance for the British. It was the only mechanism through which they could demonstrate their superiority and ensure Giriama total submission. The terms of the peace became the battle for

British dominance. Once having decided on the terms, however unrealistic, then to give in would be a sign of weakness. In this instance weakness of this sort meant defeat because it would signify that the Giriama had learned nothing and that the British effort had been useless.

Therefore, it was the British who reopened hostilities at the end of October on the grounds that the Giriama had not met the terms of the peace. Dundas figured he had only 930 arrows out of the 6000 that existed.⁶² Three thousand goats had been captured, but the labourers, the rupees, and the evacuation of the Trans-Sabaki still remained to be achieved.

Just when it seemed that the Giriama had given up the offensive completely, Hemsted received a report in Mombasa indicating that this 'little war' was about to explode again. On November 6, a message came from the DC of the Tana River District to the north that 3000 Giriama were advancing on the community of Witu. He was sending a company of KAR from Lamu to handle the situation and he requested an officer from Malindi to come north to meet it. Champion was sent on what proved to be complete wild goose chase which took up his time and energy and that of a full company of KAR. The action had been based on rumours spread again by German agents.⁶³ It was an undeniable reminder that the KAR was needed elsewhere to confront the German enemy directly and that the Giriama were now so scattered that no one was sure where most of them were.

The 'Second War'

Meanwhile, Captain Rose had begun the evacuation of the Trans-Sabaki, and the unofficial 'second war' to get the Giriama to meet the peace terms was under way. The responsibility for this second phase was given to Francis Traill, who was sent in November to replace Dundas as DC at Jilore. Traill was of the old school of British-trained officials. He believed in the rules and he followed them explicitly. He was no stranger to the Giriama. He had served as DC in Malindi in 1910, and he had been one of the few officers to speak favourably of the Giriama then.⁶⁴

He set out immediately to get the labourers and the fine and to supervise the evacuation of Giriama from the north bank of the river. As early as November 19, however, he had joined the ranks of myriads of British officers among the Giriama and concluded that the Giriama hated labour and were absolutely unwilling to work for the Government. He had been confronted with twenty-two young men in one village who paid an average of sixteen goats each, saying they would rather die than work for a couple of months.⁶⁵

Government should be realistic. If this is the Giriama attitude, then attempts to get labour are self-defeating . . . Since August things have been upset, the Giriama have lived in the bush like animals, lost huts, stock and friends. Still they refuse to work.⁶⁶

Dundas, at this time DC at Mombasa, was also beginning to realize that the labour condition might have to be postponed. He concluded that the rising had been quelled but inadequately punished and that passive resistance continued. In spite of his insistence on

a hard line, he decided that, to avoid the ruin of the Giriama, British punitive measures would have to be spread over a long period of time.⁶⁷

When Hobley returned to Mombasa to resume his post as PC in late November, the rising was over, but the Giriama were scattered and frightened, and the task ahead of the British seemed just as monumental as before the war. He heard different interpretations of the events from his officers. Champion argued that the duties and the positions of the Headmen had been extremely difficult among their own society. In assessing his two years experience among the Giriama, he understood that the Giriama felt justified in behaving as they did. He even suggested that Government policy had been 'too rapid' during the previous two years.⁶⁸ He pointed out that Giriama who wanted to help the Government then had to flee from their own war parties, leaving them no choice but to hide in the bush. He intimated that the treatment by Government of all Giriama as guilty was a mistake.

Dundas, on the other hand, believed that the Giriama 'had no provocation to justify their insurrection.' As a result, he felt no responsibility toward them or any need to look after their interests. 'We have, therefore, no reason to show consideration for them and may consult only our own interests.' He even suggested that if the Giriama gave too much trouble during the collection of the fine, that the British 'might employ a troop of Masai, who the Giriama dread.'⁶⁹ Dundas was senior to Champion. Hobley kept the idea of the Masai as a possible reserve tactic, and he, too believed the Giriama rising was unjustified.

By the close of 1914, the British had reluctantly accepted that their peace plan was still incomplete. Almost three months had passed since the Giriama elders had agreed to the terms at Jilore, but they had produced only 141 labourers out of the quota of 1000 and 43 of those had run away. Out of a fine of 100,000 rupees, only 30,000 had been paid. The British had burned at least 5,000 houses, captured over 3,000 goats, and accounted for over 150 Giriama dead. They had lost no men. Only one proposal of their peace terms had been met: the Trans-Sabaki had been evacuated. But not all people had moved south of the river. Some scattered to the Tana River to join the Pokomo, some went up the Sabaki River to Taveta, some took refuge along the coast, and some just hid in the bush. Hemsted recognized that the situation was serious when he toured in late December at Hopley's request. The collection of the Giriama into a reserve was no longer just a means for effective administration, it had become the only means for any administration at all.⁷⁰

If /British/ hostilities are re-opened and protracted as they must be from the nature of the country pending full compliance with our terms, there appears the gravest danger that the tribe will disperse /completely, leaving Giriamaland empty/.⁷¹

The actual fighting had lasted just over a month. The Giriama knew they had not frightened the British away. And the British knew the Giriama were less demonstrative but still determined.⁷² But the situation for both sides was now more difficult than it had been before the war. People were scattered, resources were strained, loyalties were questioned, and famine reared its ugly head.

The Uncertain Responsibility

Although it was not discussed in official correspondence, the chain of command between the Provincial office and the District officers, on the one hand, and the KAR on the other, was never precisely determined. This was further exacerbated by the fact that officers in the province and officers in charge of KAR divisions were changed during this year of upsetting events - mostly due to the need for their services in the war with Germany.

The KAR regarded the Giriama unrest as a side campaign in the war with Germany. The fact that German agents had been involved provided support for their attitude that the Giriama situation needed to be handled quickly and decisively. Troops were needed for more pressing maneuvers. It was this need to handle the matter quickly which accounted for the incredible expectation by British officers that the Giriama could be frightened by two companies of KAR into doing in ten days what they had refused to do all along - provide labourers and leave their land. The Giriama themselves had been scattered like a swarm of ants, their homes had been burnt, their goats had been confiscated, and what leadership that remained was even more fragmented.

The reaction of British officers to this unrest was hardly one of total agreement. This was due, partly, to the lack of experience most of these men had had with the Giriama. They were, of necessity, translating their knowledge of other African peoples to the situations they encountered in Giriama land. This was always risky.

Hemsted was acting PC in Hobley's absence, and it was his

telegram which had sparked Champion's intensive drive for labour in the first place. Although Hemsted later told the Governor the order was sent to the DC Malindi who forwarded it on to Champion 'for his information,'⁷³ Champion had no way of knowing that this was not a serious order and he proceeded to carry it out.

Also, whereas up to this time the ADC Giriama was the prominent spokesman for the Giriama in the Njalo area and reported directly through the DC Malindi, it was Charles Dundas, who had just arrived to become the new DC Rabai, who was ordered to go to Champion's assistance and to supervise the punishment for the killing of the askari and the attack on Vitengeni station. Once Dundas arrived, he took complete charge. Champion spent the entire time on patrol with the KAR. Although Dundas' knowledge about the Giriama was small and he depended upon Champion for acquainting himself with the people, he still took over the decision-making for the duration of the rising. Champion was left merely to take orders. It is for this reason that Dundas constantly expressed horror at the lack of professionalism in the administrative network of the Giriama, and why he was so insistent that the British make a strong showing and ensure Giriama punishment.

Hemsted, Dundas' immediate superior, was also new to the area, and he lacked full knowledge of the events which had taken place during the previous year. As soon as he heard Champion's party had been shot at, he ordered Dundas to check on the matter. Then, the Officer, Commanding Troops ordered that Mangea be evacuated. Dundas disagreed with this, remarking the need for a show of force and giving assurances that he could handle the matter. He felt the evacuation of

Mangea station would let the Giriama think that they had succeeded in running out the British. Then, the OC Troops countermanded his own order and said that Dundas was to go to Mangea, after all. So Hemsted found himself caught in the middle rather than in charge, and on August 23, when he heard the Giriama were preparing to attack Magarini and Sekoke plantations, and when Dundas sent a puzzling report that there was a general rising in Giriama, he wired for a company of KAR to come to Kilifi at once, assuming this to be his only alternative.

The acting DC post at Rabai was filled by S. F. Lascelles, who was on his way to Mombasa and was stopped on the train at Rabai and told to take charge. Montgomery remained at Malindi, but he was particularly concerned that the KAR was coming to assist the evacuation of the Trans-Sabaki which was supposed to be completed by September 30. J. B. Pearson, who had also served as ADC at the Mangea station, accompanied Major Hawthorne of the KAR from Rabai to Mangea as an advisor. He was one of the two men assigned to raise porters for the war effort, in what came to be the Carrier Corps. Like Champion, he was in no position to make authoritative decisions about the events. He could only advise.

Therefore, the expectations of the DC's and Hemsted and the KAR were based more on their experiences with other African peoples and their unwillingness to let the Giriama show disrespect to the British Government. They expected the Giriama to behave as if they had been well-administered. They had little sympathy for the dangerous position of the Headmen, who were more concerned about being killed by their own people than 'letting down the British.' Montgomery's

position was that any Headman who had not openly declared for the British was supporting the rebels. He and Dundas both insisted that they surrender unconditionally and be treated as leaders of the rising. It is true that in the Trans-Sabaki, Ngonyo did not declare for Government, and when they came after him, he fled, knowing they would punish him. Masha wa Lugatzi of Baricho, Maguta of Bura, Chula wa Dzala of Bungale and Taura wa Bau of Bore (who was Kauma) all led their people in opposing Government.⁷⁴

But these men had much more than their land to lose by migrating south. The migration would have forced competition among Headmen, and those who were moving south would lose their positions in Government service. For all of their objections to working for the British, they did understand that their own leadership legitimacy by then resided in the British network. They would be joining other locations and serving under other Headmen, effectively leaving themselves with no remaining power. In such a case, they would have to accept this new leaderless position or try to carve one for themselves outside the British structure.

South of the river, Nduria wa Gunga of Kirwitu and Kitumbui of Biryaa fought on the Giriama side. But most of the Headmen did not desert the British until they were forced to by their own people, and then they tried to buy their lives with a fine. When the British troops arrived, any Headman who had paid a fine to the Giriama then fled from the Government to avoid punishment.

Champion was the only one who fully understood the difficulties of the Headmen under the circumstances, and he wrote a report on their

behalf in October. He also stressed that a large number of Giriama did not actively support the resistance against the British. If the task originally designed by the British had been inadequate and had been pursued too rapidly, then it was possible the British administration could have failed even without the Giriama behaving so 'notoriously out of hand.' Champion obviously felt he had been doomed to failure. Traill, who followed him, had better luck, but he had previous experience with the Giriama, an official surrender document, and the assistance of a considerable police force.

NOTES

¹Champion, 'Confidential Report,' 7.29.14; 'Destruction of Kayafungo,' 8.4.14, DC/FKI/13, KNA. GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71.

²'Destruction of Kayafungo,' 8.4.14, DC/FKI/13, KNA.

³Ibid.

⁴ADC Rabai to Ag. PC Mombasa 8.7.14, CP 9/403, KNA.

⁵GHT: Joseph Denge (Kibwabwani) 6.17.71; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71; Ziro wa Mae (Madzimani) 12.28.70.

⁶GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71.

⁷GHT: Hawe Karisa Nyevu Makarye (Jilore) 12.15.70.

⁸GHT: Ishamael Toya (Jilore) 12.15.70.

⁹Champion, 'Summary of Incidents on Outbreak of Giriama Rising' n.d. CP 5/336-III, KNA.

¹⁰Champion to DC Rabai, 8.17.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

¹¹Ibid. note for August 17, 1914.

¹²GHT: Karezi wa Mwasada (Bamba) 12.22.70.

¹³Champion, 'Report on Armed Disturbance at Vitengeni,' 8.21.14. CP 5/336-III, KNA.

¹⁴Statement made by Giriama interpreter Jonathan Wanje wa Mugaya 7.23.15, CP 16/38, KNA.

¹⁵S. F. Traill, Giriama District, Annual Report, 3.1.14 to 4.31.15, CP 16/49, KNA.

¹⁶Sheikh Fathli bin Omar, then a recent Mudir of Arabuko, reported this matter. Montgomery to Hemsted, 8.28.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

¹⁷Champion, 'Summary of Incidents' n.d.; Champion, 'Report on the Armed Disturbance at Vitengeni,' 8.19.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Telegrams, 8.20.14 and 8.21.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

²¹Montgomery to Hemsted 8.22.14; Champion, 'Attack on

Government Station in Giriama,' 5.23.14; Hemsted to Chief Secretary, Nairobi, telegram 8.20.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

22L. Henry, Manager of Sekoke Plantations to Vidal, ADC Takaungu, 8.22.14; Notes from Hemsted's notebook 8.24.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

23Dundas to ADC Takaungu (telegram). The inked copy appears to indicate that it was received 8.18.14, but such an early date is impossible. More than likely it arrived on 8.23.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

24Dundas to Hemsted 8.24.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

25Montgomery to Hemsted, 'Disturbance at Magarini,' 8.25.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

26Ibid.

27Florence Deed, 'Log Book of the Church Missionary Society, Kaloleni, Aug, 1914 - Oct, 1939,' entries between August 5 and September 10. I am most grateful to Dr. and Mrs. J. Milton-Thompson of Kaloleni who kindly lent me the diary for a few days.

28GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71.

29GHT: Cyril Kenga (Maluwani) 6.14.71; Willie Katifu Fondo wa Nyamawi, Paul Nyamwi (Vishakani) 6.17.71; Joseph Denge (Kiliwabwani) 6.17.71.

30GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71.

31Code telegram to Governor from Hemsted 8.23.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

32A. C. Saunders, Captain, KAR, 'Plan of the Giriama Campaign; n.d. CP 5/336-III, KNA.

33Charles Dundas, African Crossroad (London, 1955), p. 73.

34Dundas to Hemsted 8.24.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

35Montgomery to Hemsted 8.25.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

36Champion, 'Attack on Government Station,' 8.23.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

37Anonymous 8.25.14; Lascelles to Hemsted 8.25.14; Lascelles to Hemsted 8.26.14, CP 12/222, KNA.

38Hemsted, notebook 8.23.14; Hemsted to CS, Nairobi, 8.26.14, CP 5/336-III, KNA.

³⁹Dundas, 'Report on the Giriama Rising,' 10.25.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA; Major Hawthorne to Commander, Troops in BEA and Uganda 8.31.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁴⁰Dundas to Hemsted 8.26.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁴¹Hawthorne, Officer, Commanding Troops, 8.31.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁴²Dundas to Hemsted 9.4.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁴³Dundas to Hemsted 4.9.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁴⁴Acting Chief Secretary, Nairobi, To Acting DC, Msa. (telegram) 9.7.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁴⁵GHT: Pembe wa Bembere (Kayafungo) 12.31.70; Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.5.71.

⁴⁶Dundas to Hemsted, 9.11.14, CP 12/222, KNA.

⁴⁷Montgomery to Hemsted 9.13.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁴⁸G. H. L. Murray 8.11.01, CP 2/1043, KNA.

⁴⁹GHT: Muganda wa Biria (Ganze) 12.23.70. Karezi wa Mwasada (Bamba) 12.22.70.

⁵⁰Dundas to Hemsted, Mangea 8.29.14 and 9.4.13 to Acting PC Mombasa; Montgomery to Hemsted (Malindi) 9.5.14, KNA.

⁵¹Dundas to Hemsted, Mangea, 9.4.13, KNA.

⁵²H. J. Lascelles 'Annual Report for Rabai,' 5.29.15, CP 14/49, KNA.

⁵³GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71.

⁵⁴MacDougall to Hemsted, Malindi, 8.29.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁵⁵GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71. Lascelles to Hemsted, Rabai, 9.23.14, CP 12/222, KNA.

⁵⁶Montgomery to Dundas, Malindi, 9.28.14; Dundas to Hemsted 9.27.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁵⁷Hemsted to Chief Secretary Nairobi, Mombasa, 9.30.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Lascelles to Hemsted, Rabai, 10.3.14, CP 12/222; KNA;
GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.14.71; Anderson Kenga (Vitengeni)
12.23.70.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹R. M. Rose, Captain, 3 KAR to O.C. Troops, Mombasa, from
Jilore, 10.16.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁶²Dundas to Hemsted, Jilore, 10.19.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁶³Champion to Francis Traill, DC Nyika, 11.19.14, CP 5/336-
IV, KNA.

⁶⁴S. F1 Traill, 'Nyika District Annual Report, April 1, 1914 -
March 31, 1915,' 6.16.15, CP 16/49, KNA.

⁶⁵Traill to Hemsted, Jilore, 11.19.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Traill to Hobley, 11.24.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁶⁸Champion, 'Memorandum,' 10.8.14, CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁶⁹Dundas, 'Memorandum,' n.d. CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

⁷⁰Hemsted, 'Memorandum re Punitive Measures in Giriama,'
12.21.14, CP 5/336-V, KNA.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Traill, 'Annual Report,' 6.16.15, CP 16/49, KNA.

⁷³Hemsted to Governor, 2.2.15, CP 5/336-V, KNA.

⁷⁴Traill, 'List,' n.d. CP 5/336-IV, KNA.

CHAPTER VIII

THE YEAR OF THE FINE, 1915

The year 1915 opened with the return to Jilore of the last KAR patrols. One patrol had burnt 400 huts, captured 1,800 goats, and killed nineteen Giriama. The other had burnt 200 huts, captured 1,200 goats and fifty-five head of cattle, and killed four Giriama. They had met with no hostilities; their goal was to collect the fine from those areas - Baricho, Shakahola, Garashi and parts of Mangea - which had not yet begun to contribute 'their fair share' of the fine.¹

By the end of January, the KAR had been withdrawn, replaced by Mr. Higgins, the Assistant District Superintendent, Police and an expanded police force of eighty-five men.² At the same time, an additional ADC, Mr. Thompson, was sent to help Traill and Champion until the latter took leave of East Africa in March. Traill proceeded with the determination of a man who combined unflinching effort with patience to get the fine and labourers that were demanded. The Giriama had moved from most of the sites across the river, yet they were allotted their portion of the fine according to population figures. Garashi simply had no goats to pay.

The British were not sympathetic with the fact that the Giriama had lost most of their resources to pay a Rs. 6/ per male

fine. The capture of goats had taken the main source for this fine. The burning of houses, the lack of sufficient food, and the shortage of water only intensified the problems. The British expected the Giriama to react to the need for a fine by providing a labour force - that was a certain way of getting money. Once again, as might have been expected, few Giriama chose this alternative.³

Finally, in desperation, the Government agreed to take goats as fine rather than money. It was as though the needs of the goats caused more concern than those of the Giriama. The British files are filled with telegrams concerning the collection, transport, and feeding of goats, all of which became more difficult when an epidemic of goat disease broke out. Due to the pressure put on local administrators by the Colonial Office to make every action pay for itself, the pecuniary goals overshadowed the human concerns. Non-cooperation was not blamed on the goats for getting ill or hungry, but when the Giriama demonstrated such needs and since they would not become labourers to solve these needs, punishment was intensified. The reputation of Government and the balancing of books had priority. The British still failed to ask themselves why the Giriama behaved as they did.⁴

Traill had set up headquarters at Jilore, where he had many prisoners from the rising. These included Makaziro wa Ikombi, who allegedly killed Kalunja for raping his wife, Sirya wa Jefa, who had escaped from Champion's Vitengeni boma, where he was held prisoner after shooting at a labour recruiter on August 16; two men who supposedly incited the attack against Mangea on August 22, and Ngonyo, who had been captured on November 2 north of the river and brought back to

Jilore. Traill had the names of three others who had led the burning party against the C. M. S. Mission and Government station at Jilore, but they had not yet been arrested. Maguta of Bura and Nduria of Kirwitu were two of the imprisoned Headmen.⁵

Both Tsumu and Ziro stayed at Jilore with their families for a while, but they soon afterwards returned as Headmen of their Locations. Even Nduria, who had been hostile from the beginning, was allowed to retain his post. Kombi and Mkowa, who had saved their lives by paying a fine and fleeing to Langulo country, sent word to Traill that they did not want to return to Government service and have to collect the fine and porters. They said they would come forward upon the completion of the terms. Kombi remained in the north, but Mkowa went first to Weruni and then to Merikano, just south of the river. He and Ngonyo both wanted no part in the settlement because they had played absolutely no part in the hostilities.⁶

But by May, when the fine and labourers continued to dribble in slowly, Ngonyo and Mkowa offered their assistance as leaders of a large group of elders. They told Traill they realized the condition of their country was most unsatisfactory. They needed to plant fresh crops soon in order to prevent famine, and many people were still exiting to the Tana River. They felt that if the elders lent their support to Government to complete the peace terms, then the trouble would be ended. Although many Giriama had paid their fine and given labourers, the total amount had been based on the total population, many of whom had escaped to the Tana, to Langulo country, or to the coast to live near Malindi, to Duruma or to Teita. The elders proposed sending

delegations to these places to get their fine from them and having them send labourers.⁷

• Traill was extremely suspicious of the Giriama whom he considered 'past masters in the art of creating false impressions favourable to themselves,' but he was more than anxious to give them a try.⁸ He said they would have to prove themselves in the Reserve, though, before he would let them go outside. Although his reluctance to send Giriama elders to places where others were escaping to is reasonable, his test - in the Reserve - was doomed to failure, for Ngonyo and Mkoa, especially, had no power over the people in that region.

Traill had been forced to rely on the old Headman in setting up his Locations - not because most of them had done an effective job, but because he needed help meeting the peace terms and there seemed no better alternative. Two who had openly opposed the British, Maringa of Jilore and Nduria of Kirwitu, were allowed to retain their offices. Ziro's performance after this time was disappointing. The two most effective were Tsumu and Ndungu of Ndigiria, which was west of Mangea and had remained rather aloof from the conflict. Had Marafa and Bura not been in the evacuated area, then Ngonyo and Maguta might have retained their offices rather than remaining as prisoners in the Jilore camp.

The elders had not succeeded as they promised, and by July when Hobley came on tour to meet with them, he considered Ngonyo personally trying to obstruct settlement.⁹ People were beginning to move back to the north of the river, but as soon as a patrol crossed, they would run into the bush and hide, so it was almost useless to go after

them. Many of Ngonyo's people were at Marafa though he stayed at Jilore. Chula wa Zala remained at Bungale. Masha wa Lugatsi had moved south of the river, but some of his people remained at Baricho. A large collection of people had remained at Gandi, where they had sentries posted and remained openly hostile. A second stronghold, led by a brother or cousin of the late Pembe wa Mrimi, remained at Konoda Kacha. He said he had medicine to prevent the Europeans from coming into the area. Hobley proposed taking care of the south Sabaki first, and then a column should go across to take care of the remaining pockets of Giriama. In lieu of soldiers or police, he suggested 50 Masai spearmen could do the trick.¹⁰

By the end of August, 1915, Traill had accomplished all of this without a patrol. He found no active opposition. He conducted three safaris, assisted by 300-600 persons each time. He captured prisoners at Gandi and Bungale, burnt villages there and at Konoda Kacha, and reaped all of the maize from the shambas at the latter. He managed to get 150 loads which could be sold in Malindi to contribute to the fine. He encountered about twenty malalo, which he destroyed. He captured sixty-seven people living on the north bank and brought them back to Jilore.¹¹

In the end, the fine was paid by October 25, almost a year to the day that Traill had come to be DC for the Giriama. The brunt of the fine had been paid by those who had been least hostile, since many Giriama had escaped and contributed nothing. In desperation to get it completed, Traill resorted to reaping the maize which Giriama had cultivated north of the river after the evacuation. Most of this

was cultivated by people who had actually moved south, but the few holdouts at Konoda Kacha and Gandhi provided justification for Government to reap as much as the officer wanted. In addition to this, he also resorted to raiding cattle in Biryaa, which was taken to Rabai to be sold within two weeks unless the owners came in with their part of the fine. Thus, the few Giriama who had emerged from the rising with a bit of wealth paid a greater proportion of the fine than did the rest.¹²

The same was true for the 1900 labourers which had come from the families nearest to Government administration. Once again, those Giriama who had fled into the bush and were willing to live under considerable hardship, still found it to be an effective way to avoid British administration.

Trall stressed that the completion of the fine was a great accomplishment. It was, for him, 'the end of the second stage of the Giriama Rising.' He regarded the 'spirit of active opposition' to be completely crushed but reminded that they would always have a certain amount of passive resistance. He was surprised and pleased to find that they had provided porters for him and cleared roads and helped him to reap and transport the maize.¹³

These may be only small accomplishments compared with the work done for Government by natives in other districts, but for Giriama it is a distinct advance.¹⁴

Pearson wrote a special memorandum pointing out that Government had been fortunate to have the success it did. He noted that much of the fine was paid in silver, which was a comment on their previous prosperity and a sign that they had borrowed against the next

year's crops. Those crops would have to be cultivated without the large grainary of the Trans-Sabaki which, as early as 1910 had provided a Customs export value at Malindi of Rs. 135,000 and must have amounted to Rs. 150,000 if one took into consideration commissions for buying, selling, and transport for the Indians. Secondly, part of the fine was paid in goats, which would have been impossible for Government to turn into a profit had there not been a war and soldiers to eat them.

He also felt that Government had been fortunate that more Giriama did not leave for other parts but chose, instead, to remain in the 'miserable strip of country that lies between the Sabaki and the Ndzowuni Rivers.' And finally, Pearson stressed the significance and contribution of Traill, the officer in charge, who was 'trained in that school where duty pointed to the end and necessity supplied the means.'¹⁵

But in spite of Traill's and Pearson's attempts to point to the significance of the accomplishment, the final stipulation of the peace terms - punishment of the leaders and the unconditional surrender of the Headmen - had proven unsuccessful. Headmen except those of the Trans-Sabaki had kept their posts. The most important prisoner, Makaziro wa Ikombi, who allegedly killed the askari, had been tried by Traill and Vidal and Thompson under military court in March, 1915, was found guilty, and was condemned to death. Their decision was overturned by the General Officer, commanding, who argued that the court was improperly constituted. Traill then urged deportation, since he had statements from several people that Makaziro was indeed guilty. His own father admitted his son's guilt and had paid the fine of three bulls to the kambi. This deportation was also turned down with the

suggestion that Makaziro be tried in ordinary court. Traill, like Champion before him, was faced with the lack of judicial power to back up his responsibilities. This matter was finally settled when Makaziro was certified a leper and was sent to Mzikima leper camp.¹⁶

This action took care of the only person who had committed a criminal act. As for all the other prisoners in camp, Traill decided that keeping them in Jilore as political detainees was punishment enough. It was clear that these men had acted against the Government, but then so had their counterparts in almost every location in Giriama-land.

The more I learn of the Rising the more I am convinced that it was the concerted act of the whole tribe, and it hardly seems fair to deport the old men unless we are going to recommend deportations on a wholesale scale.¹⁷

At the time, a leaderless rising seemed inconceivable. And yet, the Giriama had involved themselves in a fight against the British for different motives and in varying degrees without any real leadership. Some people fled to the bush and took no part. Others opposed their own people, but the majority of the Giriama population, when given an opportunity which they thought might bring defeat to the British, were willing to fight. It took only a short time for the Giriama to realize that the British were not easy to defeat, and they were caught with no kaya elders to mediate a peace.

The lack of organisation, and /lack of/ obedience to recognized leaders which has always been so marked a feature of the tribal life of the Giriama in peace time, was again apparent in the war and no doubt accounted to a large extent for their failure to accomplish greater results. It is impossible to single out any particular member of the tribe as having taken any pre-eminent part in inciting others to revolt or in directing the operations.¹⁸

In the end, even Ngonyo was absolved of responsibility. However, he remained for some time at Jilore, a blind man who promised to refrain from further opposition and intrigue.¹⁹

NOTES

- ¹Traill to Hobley, 1.1.15, CP 12/222, KNA.
- ²Traill, 'Annual Report,' 6.16.15, CP 16/49, KNA.
- ³Traill to Hobley, 2.10.15 and 2.20.15; Beech (DC Malindi) to Traill, 2.22.15; W. J. Monson for the Chief Secretary, Nairobi, to Hobley, 3.6.15, CP 5/336-V, KNA.
- ⁴Traill to Hobley, 2.26.15; Dundas (DC Mombasa) to Hobley, 4.8.15, CP 5/336-V, KNA.
- ⁵Traill (from Vitengeni) to Hobley, 3.16.15 and 4.10.16, CP 5/336-V, KNA.
- ⁶'Memo,' anonymous, n.d. This appears to be Traill's handwriting. CP 5/336-IV, KNA.
- ⁷Traill (Jilore) to Hobley, 5.10.15; Hobley to Traill, 5.21.15, CP 16/38, KNA.
- ⁸Traill, 'Annual Report,' 6.16.15, CP 16/49, KNA.
- ⁹Hobley, 'Tour of Giriama - Inspection Report,' 7.19.15, CP 17/62, KNA.
- ¹⁰Ibid., Hobley, 'Notes on PC's Meeting at Jilore Camp,' 6.27.15, CP 17/62, KNA.
- ¹¹Traill to Hobley, 8.8.15 and 8.27.15, CP 17/62, KNA.
- ¹²Traill to Hobley, 9.18.15; Traill, 'Giriama Affairs,' 10.25.15, CP 16/38, KNA.
- ¹³Ibid.
- ¹⁴Ibid., Traill, 'Handing Over Report, Nyika District,' 11.12.15, CP 20/136, KNA.
- ¹⁵J. M. Pearson (Jilore), 'Collection of Giriama Fine,' 11.25.15, CP 21/132, KNA.
- ¹⁶File, 'Deportation of Makisiro Giriama' including a 'Statement made by Tsumu wa Iha, Government Headman,' 3.16.15; Traill to Hobley, 10.2.15; Pearson (Jilore) to Hobley, 11.12.15; Lt. J. W. Barth to Hon. Chief Secretary, Nairobi, 9.13.15, CP 19/97, KNA.
- ¹⁷Traill to Hobley, 8.30.15, CP 16/68, KNA.
- ¹⁸Traill, 'Handing Over Report,' 11.12.15, CP 20/136, KNA.
- ¹⁹Ibid.

CHAPTER IX

THE IMPACT ON BRITISH ADMINISTRATION 1916-1963

The Post-Rising Pattern, 1916-1920

In November, 1915, Traill left the Giriama district in considerably better shape than he had found it. He had laid the groundwork for cooperative administration, and he had achieved the impossible - over 1000 Giriama labourers. When he left, Mr. P. L. Deacon took over and the headquarters for the District were transferred from Jilore to Rabai. H. G. Evans, who had replaced Vidal as ADC in August, 1915, had begun work establishing a temporary station just south of the Sabaki River at Kakoneni. J. M. Pearson was stationed there from November on. The primary purpose of this location was to prevent the Giriama from crossing the river.¹

Hobley felt the most pressing issue was to get the Giriama settled permanently, in definite locations. To meet this point, the Nyika Reserve was proclaimed in March, 1916.²

But the personality of Traill was missed. Ill most of the time, Pearson was finally 'invalided out' to Malindi. Hobley was the only familiar face remaining, and he could not, from Mombasa, handle the need for more effective control. The goals so dearly won were in danger of being lost altogether. The war effort created a desperate

need for labour in the Protectorate. Hobley, believing just as strongly as ever that African peoples should govern themselves and that everybody should contribute to the work effort, still asked for labourers.³

The harvests were bad. People began to call this the famine of the fine, or nzala ya Faini. They watched their old grainary across the river remain uncultivated, and they had need of food. People began slipping back to the Trans-Sabaki. The question of land use could not be avoided.⁴

One of the lingering problems of the Protectorate was the clarification of the land titles between Africans and Europeans. W. E. F. deLacey, the deputy Recorder of Titles at Malindi, had become angry over the delay in the work of his court due to the eviction of some ex-slaves who had registered their claims with him. He pressed the issue, and his private complaint developed into a personal animosity against Hobley, who considered the matter insignificant. deLacey pressed his case all the way to the Secretary of State, and this brought into the open the plight of the Giriama land question. Pressure was put on the Governor, and finally Hobley agreed to a Commission of Inquiry to be held at Malindi. Although the main purpose of the inquiry was for deLacey to voice his complaints against the delay in his own courts, the result was to make the land issue public. Sheikh Fathili bin Omar, the ex-Mudir of Arabuko who had been liason in the Giriama declaration for peace, had become deLacey's agent. Probably at his urging, Ngonyo and some elders were asked to testify before the commission.⁵

Before the turn of the century, Ngonyo had in fact been given

permission by Sir Arthur Hardinge to live at Marafa. His grievance was strong, and his goal was to return to Marafa. But more significant than Ngonyo's testimony was the fact that there had been a discrepancy in the communication of the numbers of people involved in the evacuation. Around 27% of the entire Giriama population had been living north of the river. This amounted to nearly 20,000 people, considerably more than the 5,000 which Governor Belfield had originally reported to the Secretary of State.

Hobley was blamed for this numerical discrepancy. He had first proposed the evacuation of the Trans-Sabaki in June, 1913, and it had been merely convenient that he could carry out his plan under the auspices of punishment after November that same year. In his original proposal, he gave a total Giriama population of 60,880, but he failed to mention how many were living north of the river. I have been unable to find a copy of Skene's proposal for the same move on October 23, 1913, to learn if he provided an estimate. Champion had no estimate in his October 28 report when he recommended the move, but on December 4, 1913, Skene used the 1913 census to estimate 14,000 total population to be moved south of the river. This included a considerable number of non-Giriama. He had added the figures of 4,765 men, 5,158 women and 4,855 children. This was approximately 5,000 families. By the time this had finally been proposed by Governor Belfield to Lewis Harcourt, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on May 4, 1914, the total people involved had been reduced to 5,000 people.⁶

In the course of the tour, the PC found 'some sections amounting in numbers to some 5,000 in all' taking advantage of the fact that they were entirely free of control and wandered 'outside their own country and

scattered over an extensive and fertile area to the North of the Sabaki, a situation which is entirely outside their traditional tribal location.⁷

Hobley had also reported that there was an 'abundance of vacant and suitable land for their occupation' south of the river and that the Giriama did not object if they were given time to cultivate crops and to choose a new site to occupy. Hobley was actually deceiving his own Government at the time, but he, too, may not have realized the difficulties of his proposal.

The implication was not only that relatively few Giriama were involved but that they were trying to use land which was clearly not theirs. The facts do not bear this out. When the Giriama began their migration northward after 1850, the Sabaki River was no more considered a boundary of their land than the Ndzovuni River, flowing into Kilifi Creek, had been when they reached it. In all of this area, Giriama paid Galla for permission to use the land. When the Galla were no longer present to grant the permission, the Langulo were there to do it for them.⁸

In 1896, James Weaver, the Acting District Officer in Malindi, wrote that during the previous five years officers in charge of Malindi had exerted themselves to get the Wanyika to settle on the Sabaki and that he had attempted to 'get the Wanyika /sic/ from the Far Giriama country, a dry, and not very prosperous district, to come and settle on the fruitful lands adjoining the Sabaki River.' He was strongly opposed to the Giriama paying the Langulo for use of the land since permission was coming directly from Government. The Giriama had not 'sneaked' across the river. Government had encouraged them.⁹

The Commission of Inquiry in 1917 had exposed Government's doubts, if not outright error, in the handling of the Giriama's rights to the Trans-Sabaki. When the Commission adjourned in December, the Giriama left with the impression that the invincible British Government might not have had the right to move them from their land after all. That seed of doubt caused plenty of alarm among the officers.

The result was the loss of prestige of the administrators of the Giriama District, and the weakening of their authority. Governor Belfield censured Hobley directly, and he recommended that the position of Provincial Commissioner was both unnecessary and detrimental to the communication between the Central Administration and the District Administration. But difficulty was added to the officers' situation by the failure of the Inquiry to settle the matter one way or another. During the interim they were powerless. Ngunyo began to encourage people to return to the North Sabaki, and the DC could do nothing about it. Hobley, continuing to keep the District under close administrative watch, toured the district and succeeded in recruiting 1500 men for the Carrier Corps by April.¹⁰

He was convinced that foreign instigators were again at work in his District. deLacey was still protesting by August, and he kept the matter high in the people's minds. Furthermore, a lawyer named Morrison, who had formerly been engaged by the Masai in their land case, was hired by some Giriama from Marafa to challenge the original order to evacuate the Trans-Sabaki.¹¹

Realizing that he was not going to succeed in keeping the Sabaki River as the northern boundary for Giriama land, Hobley proposed

a compromise solution to allow people to go to part of the land on a temporary basis. But he lost. On January 3, 1918, Acting Governor C. C. Bowring recommended that the Giriama be allowed to return to the Trans-Sabaki indefinitely or until adequate water supply was provided in the south. This was a public admission that the Government had made a mistake. This had precisely the effect that Hobley, Dundas, and Champion had warned such a demonstration of Government weakness would have - the Giriama became less willing to participate as supporters of the administration.¹²

In February, a food shortage forced the Government to advocate that the Giriama return to active cultivation of the Trans-Sabaki.

The Food Production Committee arrived in the District armed with the authority to allow any one who was willing to plant food crops to go and do so on the north bank. On the same evening of the day on which this was made known in Nyika reserve, the Giriama began to cross the river and continued to do so all through the night and the following days, whole locations crossing in a body including their elders and native council and their women and children. Instructions have not yet been received how this people are to be administered. This has increased the population by at least 5000 souls.¹³

Not only were native councils disrupted by the loss of their members to the Trans-Sabaki, but military recruiting added to the upheaval of this year. And despite the re-opening of their former grainary, before the year was out, the Giriama were experiencing the worst famine since the turn of the century. Much effort was expended trying to see that people were fed. Many Giriama left the reserve and went to the coast, hunting for food.

The clash between the British and the Giriama ended in a compromise. Between the years 1919 and 1921, the British lost much of

what they had gained in the previous seven years of 'active' administration. During 1919, a portion of the Trans-Sabaki was gasetted into the Reserve, and the Giriama gained legal title to the land they had been forced earlier to evacuate. Immediately, the grain exports from Malindi began again, and many Giriama rushed to make their homes there. By this time the Reserve, minus the additional land, had been divided into 24 locations, with malalo elders represented in the kambi which was presided over by the Headman who was at the same time the President of the Native Council. The rush for new land had disturbed this arrangement since several Headmen left to cross the river. Oddly, the British who had protested against so much migration by the Giriama because such movement hindered proper administration had actually caused intensified migration in their changing policies from 1915 through 1919. One positive result of the British administration came when the first meeting of all malalo throughout Giriama land was held at Ganze for four days in 1920. They found the elders much more willing to express their views openly here than they had in local councils. Ganze's location in the center of Giriama land gave it the advantages the British wanted when they sought to have the kaya moved, but over the years, interest and attendance decreased and the general council inadequately served administrative goals.¹⁴

Mekatalili and Wanje wa Mwadorikola were allowed to return to Giriama land early in 1919, and they were met at Rabai 'with an enthusiasm rare among the Giriama.' They became heroes after-the-fact - not because they had led their people against the British but because they had served together in prison.¹⁵

Governor Belfield himself came to the District to announce the re-opening of Kaya Giriama, and in September, the DC at Kakoneni station discussed with a large number of elders, including Ngunyo, the return of Wanje wa Mwadorikola and two representatives from each of the six clans to Kaya Giriama.¹⁶ Both of these actions were in anticipation of holding the proper ceremonies to bring new blood into the leadership, but they were also a gain for the Giriama who had wanted their kaya reopened. Wanje and Mekatalili both went to live in the kaya where they became, officially, the head of the men's and women's kambi. They held no position in Government, but they assumed the leadership of the Giriama by those who wanted kaya leaders once again.¹⁷

In September of 1919, Hobley left Giriama administration on a long-overdue leave. He was the last of those who had been involved in the early years with a vested interest in the Giriama administrative success. Before the year was out, the station at Kakoneni was closed and abandoned. Primarily, it was no longer of much use since it had been established to prevent people from re-crossing the river. But extremely malarial conditions developed when the Sabaki River changed course somewhat, and so many of the officers had been 'invalided out' that Kakoneni was declared a health hazard.¹⁸

After seven years the British no longer had a station in the hinterland. The Giriama were organized under Local Native Councils in the Reserve which had been extended to include the North Sabaki, but population movement was still in flux due to the opening up of this land and the increased migration into the coastal area stimulated by the famine the year before. The Headmen were still the agents of the

Government and their own people, but many of them had learned that they had only one alternative - to be non-aggressive serving neither the Government nor their people. Only by favouring neither and offending no one could they survive. The kaya, which Champion had called six years before a 'hot bed of sedition' was re-opened under the leadership of the 'seditionists.' Despite giving many of their numbers to the Carrier Corps as punishment for the rising the Giriama were no more eager to provide constant labour for the development of the coast. The demand for labour had actually lessened - not because the Giriama had finally convinced the British that they were unwilling to work for them - but because the war had ended and the plantations on the coast had failed to achieve their anticipated success.

The personalities of Champion and Hobley, Ngonyo and Mkowa, Mekatalili and Wanje wa Mwadorikola, Gunga wa Baya and S. F. S. Traill had all played their part. Unforeseen famines, a World War, and lobbies in London were beyond the power of anyone to avoid or control. And had there been less tembo and fewer mosquitoes, the situation would have been different. But it was the British officers' belief in the myth of single-minded purpose, of Government's 'power,' and of a 'workable policy' that allowed so many of them to devote such energy to a task that was almost impossible. Trying to get the Giriama to rule themselves to British advantage and at the same time provide plantation labour caused division, not unity. The internal contradictions were almost enough to prevent success.

In the final analysis, though, it was the uniqueness of the Giriama people which needed the greatest consideration. They were

enough like the Kikuyu and Luo and Nandi and Kamba for the officers to feel that tried ideas and practices would work. But the Giriama were considerably different in ways that counted. Some officers described this trait as obstinacy, indifference, or 'unbendable pride'; or they called the Giriama 'pertinacious,' 'democratic,' 'undisciplined,' 'apathetic,' or 'anarchists.'¹⁹ Whatever the label, it amounted to an independent spirit and a disregard for the ideals and goals which the British held so dear. The Giriama were indeed one of the rare African peoples who rejected so much of what the British were offering and yet appeared to have so little themselves to which to cling.

Traill wrote that the Giriama opposition to labour was rare among agricultural peoples of Africa.²⁰ Hobley seemed incredulous over the Giriama psychology as he saw it:

Their psychology is perhaps the most complex of all the tribes; they knew the power of Government, but always seemed to think that by the adoption of a persistent attitude of non pessumus they could wear us down so that we should become tired, thus relaxing our efforts . . .

and then surprised perhaps even himself, by concluding:

Their reasoning was more or less sound.²¹

The Giriama learned from their experience that Government would have to be approached with compromise. They learned that sometimes the deference paid to allow the British to feel in power was enough to keep them ultimately out of power.

The British learned less. In 1936 the Kilifi officer wrote: 'The backwardness of Nyika can largely be attributed to drink, venereal disease, or malaria.'²² Even a decade before, an officer was making the same oversimplified diagnosis and prescribing the same ineffective

medicines.

The WaNyika suffer from five grave disabilities: drunkenness, apathy, lack of discipline, incompetent and apathetic headmen, and loose administration. Special attempt has been made to tighten administration. Labour, with good employers, is at the moment one of the best medicines available for the WaNyika ills.²³

In the end, neither the Giriama ability to fight nor their ability to convince the British of their preference for independent, democratic behaviour proved a successful technique. It was the 'weakness of the Giriama tribal structure which proved to be its strongest weapon.'²⁴ They simply had no organization which the British could use as a mechanism through which to govern them. Furthermore, they no longer possessed the traditional machinery and power with which to govern themselves.

Minimal Colonialism, 1920-1963

In the years between 1920 and independence in 1963, administration lacked the programs and the anticipation of success of the first years. The Giriama failed to use the established Local Native Council to their own benefit and the British failed to bring the Giriama into the labour market as they had set out to do. This was due partly because there was difficulty with leadership on both sides. Prior to the rising, British administrators had come and gone at such a fast pace that the Giriama hardly got to know them before they were off, never to return. This trend continued into the next forty years.

Even the location of stations changed so many times that the British gave an impression of indecisiveness. The first of these

efforts, at Kakoneni, had been plagued with bad luck. In 1921, the station begun at Kibwa Bwani, near Mwabanyundo in the south, was abandoned for lack of water. Before the year was out, Rabai station was closed, too, and the British were further from the hinterland than they had been since 1898. Over the years, the administrative center was transferred among Kilifi, Malindi, Takaungu and Mombasa almost as frequently as the officers attached to them. The officers habitually relied on the attitudes and evaluations of the previous year's report to develop their opinion of the Giriama, then they were not around for sufficient time to develop and to report attitudes of their own. After twenty or thirty years, the British retained almost no benefit from the knowledge of the few officers who had assessed the Giriama beyond a superficial level. They continued to pass on wise warnings such as 'The Nyika are notoriously adverse to progress.'²⁵

One officer, returning after ten years in 1939, was struck by the lack of administrative achievement. He admitted that poor health was a problem which could perhaps be overcome by education. But he emphasized the need for a reasonable period of office by the DC.

The average period for the last six years is, I believe, 9 months, and I beg to be excused for recounting that the Tribal Policeman recently, being met in the boma by my successor and asked, 'Do you know who I am?' replied, 'Yes, sir, you are the D. C. of today.'²⁶

The Giriama, too, were faced with a leadership problem. The emergence of Headmen as their spokesmen did not necessarily mean acceptance. This lack of leaders was further complicated by the delay in traditional ceremonies to install a new rika. The problem of an overdue initiation which Champion had faced in 1912 was even more acute by

the 1920's. The number of initiated kambi from which to choose leaders was small indeed, and all the men were old. The last age-sets, Kitsoga and Nyoga, had danced their Kirao to join the Kavuta Kambi, although the kaya had been reopened. The nyere themselves were quite old, but still had no traditional power. And the British had yet to call upon the nyere to serve as Headmen, because there was enough trouble with effectiveness by the Headmen already.

Some Giriama, too, were concerned about the need to have people ready to receive leadership positions in the future. They thought Government would object to their customs and that the nyere would refuse to pay the fees of one bull each for the ceremony.

As early as 1917, Kitu wa Sirya's council at Kaloleni and Birya wa Masha of Mienzeni had asked the ADC to support the installation of a new kambi over Giriama land in order to bring in 'new blood' and to teach some of the customs to the younger men. Because this was a potential solution to their administrative problems, British officers urged that the new kambi be installed. There were as many Kitsoga and Nyoga living as members of all their senior age-sets put together. Oddly, those kambi in power seemed reluctant to turn over what authority they had to the younger men though the time was past due. One officer argued that the Headmen were effective for Giriama and not for the British because they did their best to hinder their own administration. One way for the British to gain effective Headmen was to bolster the traditional system. Although they did not believe in this system which was dying out, the officers felt it was the only immediate way to place younger Giriama men in the leadership roles.²⁷

The logistics of attaining this were immense. First, a kirao ceremony was necessary to initiate Kitsoga and Nyoga into the old Kavuta Rika. Then Sayo ra Mudhanga ritual had to be held for the incoming senior age-sets (Wulumbere and Wulakahi) of the new rika. A Mung'aro for the entire incoming rika had to follow. After this, another kirao ceremony was necessary to initiate the Wulumbere and Wulakahi, the new leaders of the new rika, as kambi. Only then could the British choose Giriama with legitimate authority to serve as leaders in a new kambi and to serve as British Headmen of lalo elders.

Many officers deserve credit for trying to find out what the proper process would be. They understood that the nyere wanted the legitimate power but that they had lost interest in most of these traditional customs. They also determined that the few remaining old men would cling to their power, and refusing cooperation in conducting the ceremonies, could prevent the turnover.

What the officers failed to realize was that the entire process would take four separate lengthy ceremonies, that each of the ceremonies was possible only if the crops were good, and - most importantly - that there was likely to be a breakdown in the process when the Mung'aro ceremony came-up because there was nobody who knew how to conduct it. The Wulumbere and Wulakahi of the Kavuta Rika were the only ones who had been trained to conduct this ritual, and of these, Pembe wa Mrimi and Bogosho wa Menza had died, and Wanje wa Mwadorikola alone remained. That one man could remember all the details was doubtful. Furthermore, in the past, a Mung'aro ceremony had been conducted by the Giriama only after the Ribe, Kauma, Chonyi and Dzihana had completed

their comparable ceremonies. At this time theirs were in the same confused state as were those of the Giriana.

As much as this seemed like a solution to the problems of leadership, the attempt to install a new kambi had built-in complications. The ceremonies would be meaningless unless all of Giriamaland participated; the spirit of cooperation, joy and friendliness had been marred by the recent events, and the vagaries of the climate made four years of prosperity uncertain, at best.

But the British tried to install a new kambi on several occasions in the 1920's. They urged, pushed and prodded between 1920 and 1925, but promises rather than action were forthcoming. Finally, in 1925, the process was actually begun. Fees for Sayo ra Mudhanga were collected in January from the nyere of Wulumbere, Wulakahi, Wulanyuma, and Puku. Wulumbere and Wulakahi performed this ritual at the kaya in April. However, it was not well attended and only three men from all of Gallana were there. Although they danced the Sayo through all parts of Giriamaland until June 17, the small participation reflected the lack of interest.²⁸

In November, the kirao for Kitsoga and Nyoga was danced in the kaya and the Acting DC Malindi, W. S. Marchant, was there to observe. He expressed amazement at the large participation and the efficient organization. This finally installed Kitsoga and Nyoga as kambi into the Kavuta Rika, but it still did not meet the main purpose of the series of ceremonies, which was to retire Kavuta Rika and to install the next rika, with the Wulumbere and Wulakahi (who had just danced their Sayo) installed as kambi.²⁹

The Mung'aro was scheduled for April, 1926, but for some reason, it never took place. The next request for installing the new rika came from Wanje wa Mwadorikola in 1937. He had watched the existing kambi dwindle in numbers and urged for the transferral of traditions.³⁰ In 1940, the Local Native Council, composed of younger men, discussed the matter. Shadrack Harrison, an educated Christian who had been peripherally involved in political issues which concerned the Kikuyu and Luo at this time, spoke for the members. Although he agreed that the young men objected to some of the customs such as dancing naked and killing (which nobody was seriously suggesting), they thought the Mung'aro would be an important revival because 'it was formerly government and had great power.'³¹

By this time, the British were less interested. The officer in charge said it would be futile to revive the kambi just to learn what it used to do or to maintain it in its old form, but he favoured merging the kambi with the existing scheme of administration. The British had worked out a semi-effective system of representatives through the Local Native Council, and they were less dependent upon legitimacy from traditional authority than they had been ten years before. However, the nyere, for the first time, were experiencing pride in Giriama culture and, rather than resisting 'ancient ways,' they pressed for their rights to serve as kambi.³²

This new enthusiasm was insufficient. Although in February, 1947, J. D. Stringer, DC Malindi, visited the kaya to make preparations for the ceremony which was scheduled for April, the Mung'aro was never held. British administration continued without assistance from the

kaya, where a few men resided and where one person actually served as titular head of the Giriama.³³

The kaya underwent its only subsequent revival when the Mijikenda Union was founded in 1947. The internal purpose of joining these nine peoples into a union was to promote trade, agricultural development, cooperatives and education.³⁴ Politically, Ronald Ngala emerged as spokesman and the major issue was that of opposing the Mwambao or separatist movement of the Arabs of the coast. The Arabs argued that they had a right to the coastal strip from the agreement signed by the British with the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1895. The Mijikenda opposed this, and they worked together to see that Mwambao did not succeed. Part of the ability of the Mijikenda Union to be persuasive demanded that it be representative, so arrangements were made to convince two representatives of each Giriama clan to come and live in the kaya. The revival suffered because no one remained who knew many of the secrets, rituals, and customs.

Given the elaborations and complications of the social and political organization which the Giriama had developed by the mid-nineteenth century, it seems impossible to think of their losing these without serious problems resulting. They had governed through councils of elders whose positions were determined by their promotion through age-sets into ruling marika and by their demonstration of capability to handle problems facing the Giriama generally. Clans and ancestor spirits were drawn in through the elaborate rituals which marked each stage of this promotion: Mwanza M'Kulu, Sayo ra Mudhanga, Kirao and Mung'aro. These were all supplemented by the four secret societies of

which Vaya was the most significant. Because it had been their home for so many years, the kaya had become the site where all ritual, political and economic activities had taken place.

However, it would be wrong to assume that the kaya, the rituals and the elaboration of secret societies and age-sets were wrenched away from the Giriama. On the contrary, they had found these useful and had developed certain sophistications while it was convenient to do so when they all lived in the kaya in the early nineteenth century, and several rituals were interwoven with similar ones of the other Mijikenda peoples, but some of the sophistications were more convenient than necessary to Giriama life. The Giriama adapted easily when circumstances changed. The Mwanza M'Kulu became more important for funerals than to 'cut' age-sets. The elders continued to sit in council and arbitrate regardless of any installation of their rika. Ability superseded seniority. This was also true for some of the other Mijikenda such as the Ribe or the Dzihana, who remained in or near the site of their original kaya and thus did not have the excuse of dispersal to account for the atrophy of rituals for promoting age-sets.

In fact, one way in which the Giriama demonstrated their recognition of ability over seniority for communal privileges was their willingness in the twentieth century to let younger and younger men join Vaya when a man's ability or wealth merited increased responsibilities of decision-making. The Vaya retained the special position in Giriama communities even after the people dispersed, and among the Vaya, the retention of strict controls by the Fisi waganga over new men who were allowed to buy and use this potent medicine maintained the

importance of these medicine men.³⁵

A second way that the Giriama recognized ability over seniority was the growing acceptance as their spokesmen educated men who were trained through the missions and who increasingly proposed new ideas. In this way, the Vaya and Fisi waganga shared traditional authority with 'new men' not so much because of their interest in working together but because the Giriama became increasingly willing to heed both factions. Both factions had been able to function outside the kaya successfully. Once the Giriama had move outside the kaya, they needed the spirit of the kaya more than the actual premises of the kaya to draw upon a historical and ritual heritage. Many Giriama living in the north today are perfectly content to misinterpret the kaya as a fully functioning political institution which is served by representatives from all the clans who take care of all significant matters concerning all Giriama and any matters of foreign relations.³⁶ Internal matters are handled, for the most part, in the malalo and have been for years.

The only time the Giriama needed the kaya after its closure was to initiate the age-sets of Kitsoga and Nyoga there because the first part of the ceremony had occurred there before its closure. But the loss of the use of the kaya had not been as detrimental to the Giriama as the loss of those many traditions which disappeared when the elders who kept the secrets died without passing them on.

However, even without the Mung'aro ceremony, the Giriama managed to set up a new ruling rika when the call came for forming the Mijikenda Union. The existing elders Zia wa Gunga as their spokesman and picked Kaumba as the name for their rika. In so doing, they complicated two Giriama traditions: the one of naming a ruling rika and

the other of naming a young boy after his grandfather. The men intended to skip over the name of the previous ruling rika - Kavuta, which they interpreted to be that of their fathers - and to pick the name of the rika immediately preceding it - Mkwavi, which would have represented their grandfathers. Instead, they made a mistake and went back three marika instead of two and chose the name Kaumba. Today, the Giriama speak of the current ruling rika as the Kaumba and they speak of the Vaya as their government. The kaya is the spiritual home and the place where their ancestors are buried and the current mwanamuli, Pembe wa Bembe, is their spokesman, mostly to outsiders.³⁷

The goal of having two representatives from each clan live in the kaya has never been achieved. Only six or eight men live there on any permanent basis. The council which can be called to convene in the kaya is a mere skeleton of the formal ruling councils of last century. The Giriama continue to give the kaya emotional support, but many elders will not go to live there or even attend when called.

Through most of the colonial period, the Giriama remained barely a part of the administration and they remain so today. They pay their taxes and they recognize the power inherent in the Kenyan officers and their own mwanamuli in the kaya, but they remain aloof from that power in a spirit of independence that is consistent with their historical past.

NOTES

¹Traill, 'Annual Report,' 6.16.15, CP 16/49, KNA; Pearson, 'Giriama Report,' 1.2.16, CP 21/163, KNA.

²Ordinance 12/1915. O. G. 1916, p. 197, 4.3.16.

³Pearson to H. G. Evans, 6.8.16, CP 20/136, KNA; Hobley, 'Tour in Giriama,' 9.24.16, DC/MAL/2/1; Hobley to DC Nyika, 1.16.16, CP 20/136, KNA.

⁴W. F. P. Kelley, compiler, Kilifi District Gazetteer, 'Chronological Conspectus, 1960.' A copy of this was kindly lent to the author by Dr. J. Milton-Thompson of Kaloleni.

⁵This sequence of events involving the Giriama is outlined by Cashmore, 'District Administration' in Chapter V, 'The Giriama Problem,' pp. 240-246. I had no better luck than Cashmore did in attempting to find a copy of the 'Report of the Malindi Commission of Inquiry, 4.17.17' in Kenya, but thanks to the effort Robert Collison, reference librarian at the University of California, Los Angeles, it was located in the 1917 correspondence on East Africa in the Public Record Office, London, Class C. O. 533, Piece No. 180, Docket No. 30914 of 4.17.17.

⁶Hobley, '1913 Tour,' 7.29.13, KNA; Champion, 'October Report,' KNA; Skene, 'Giriama Reserve: Western boundary north of the Sabaki: Area to be evacuated by Giriama,' 12.4.13, CP 2/154, KNA; Governor Belfield to Louis Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 5.4.14, CP 5/336-I, KNA.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Champion, 'History,' KNA. MacDougall, 'Galla,' KNA.

⁹James Weaver, Acting District Officer, Malindi, to C. H. Craufurd, Acting Commissioner, Mombasa, 7.23.96. 'Malindi Inward,' 1895-1898, CP 75/46, KNA.

¹⁰Hobley to Chief Secretary, Nairobi, 'Government Policy in Giriama,' 11.26.17, DC/MAL/2/1, KNA.

¹¹Hobley to CSN, 'Nyika Reserve,' 11.15.17, DC/MAL/2/1; Cashmore, 'District Administration,' pp. 244-245.

¹²C. C. Bowring, Governor, East African Protectorate to Walter Long, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1.3.13, DC/KFI/13, KNA.

¹³'Malindi District, Annual Report, 1917-1918,' DC/KFI/1/1, KNA.

¹⁴F. M. Lamb, DC Kakoneni to PC Mombasa, 3.28.19; Lamb, DC

Rabai, to PC Mombasa, 6.17.19; Lamb to PC, 8.1.19, CP 21/161, KNA.

¹⁵R. W. Lambert, ADC Rabai, to PC Mombasa, 6.27.19, CP 16/49, KNA.

¹⁶H. L. Mood, ADC, 'Safari Diary,' mentions that on 9.28.19 Lamb discussed this with the elders at Kakoneni. CP 50/1221, KNA.

¹⁷The Giriama considered them so.

¹⁸Hobley to Principal Medical Officer, Nairobi, 6.28.19, CP 21/161, KNA.

¹⁹Champion, 'Labour Supply and the WaGiryama,' n.d. From its contents this must have been written after June, 1914, and probably after the August, 1914 rising. DC/KFI/13; Hobley, 'Tour in North Giriama,' 9.24.16, DC/MAL/2/1; R. W. Lambert, 'Annual Report, 1924,' n.d., DC/MAL/1/2; 'Annual Report, 1925,' CP 2/1043; Pearson, 'Handing Over Report,' 8.10.14, CP 4/375A, KNA.

²⁰Traill, 'Handing Over Report,' 11.12.15, CP 20/13, KNA.

²¹Hobley, Kenya, p. 165.

²²E. St. J. Tisdall, 'Annual Report, 1936,' DC/KFI/1/1, KNA.

²³L. A. Weaving, 'Annual Report, 1926,' DC/KFI/1/1, KNA.

²⁴Cashmore, 'District Administration,' p. 247.

²⁵Tisdall, 'Annual Report, 1937,' DC/KFI/1/1, KNA.

²⁶Capt. C. G. Usher, 'Annual Report, 1939,' DC/KFI/1/1, KNA.

²⁷R. F. Palethorpe, 'Handing Over Report,' January, 1917, CP 21/168, KNA.

²⁸'Annual Reports,' 1920, 1921-22, 1923, 1924, 1925, DC/MAL/1/2, KNA.

²⁹W. S. Marchant, 'Malindi Station Diary, 1924,' DC/MSA/6/2; 'Kaya Initiation Ceremonies, Kilifi Diary, 1925,' DC/KFI/4/1, KNA.

³⁰'Malindi Annual Report, 1937,' DC/MAL/1/3, KNA.

³¹'Minute of the Local Native Council,' 20/40, p. 2, 1940, DC/MAL/2/3, KNA.

³²Ibid.

³³'Annual Report, Kilifi, 1944,' DC/KFI/1/4, KNA.

34GHT: Birya wa Masha (Kayafungo) 12.31.70.

35GHT: Boniface Kahindi wa Kinde (Kanyumbani) 4.2.71; Jambo wa Toloko (Marafa) 12.16.70; HT:5:Q5.

36GHT: Thuva wa Konde (Hadu) 12.18.70; Gona wa Nguma (Jilore) 12.14.70; Kadzumbi wa Ngari (Cahkama) 12.14.70. HT:5:Q3

37GHT: Mwinga wa Gunga (Kinarani) 6.15.71; Joseph Denge (Kibwabwani) 6.17.71; Ziro wa Mae (Madzimbani) 12.28.70; W. F. P. Kelley, 'Kilifi District Gazette, 1960, 'Methodist Mission, Ribe. HT: 4:Q1.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

A strong folk myth about the Giriama held by many people in Kenya describes their disinterest in wider politics and education, Christianity and Islam, and wealth and achievement; their lack of strong cultural beliefs to justify their independent spirit; and their stringest unwillingness to adapt. These interpretations, based on little fact, attribute such Giriama attitudes to the 'lazy climate of the coast' and the strong Giriama belief in witchcraft.

The lack of investigation about the Giriama has permitted such interpretations to go unchallenged for half a century, and the inability to understand a society whose organization and behaviour do not fit into what became an accepted developing pattern has resulted in the tendency to dismiss the Giriama as people behaving in 'strange, persistent ways.'¹

Perhaps the greatest significance of the forgoing study is its transfer of the Giriama from the realm of myth into that of history. Not only that, but the existing references on the Giriama rising of 1913-1914 were so dependent upon the one-sided perception of British officers and left out entirely all the vital things those officers failed to see. When the Giriama oral tradition is consulted a quite

different picture emerges. In the first place, the Giriama rising lacked the coordinated leadership which has been suggested and it was never a 'full-scale revolt.'² Moreover, the rising was merely a part of a lengthy, disconjoined, many-faceted, and complex interaction between the Giriama and the British. The fighting itself was not the most important aspect.

The Rising

The rising had two major phases. The ultimate goal of both was retention of political independence. The immediate goals, as well as the characteristics of each phase, were drastically different. The first phase, in July and August, 1913, focused on the woman, Mekatalili. She was neither a prophetess nor a witch. Her capacity for persuasive oratory and her ability to interpret to women, elders, and young men alike the threat each of them faced provided the articulation of the grievances most Giriama had been expressing individually. She was also well-acquainted with two of the four most important men in Giriama-land, Wanje wa Mwadorikola and Ngonyo wa Mwavuo.

Giriama society had grown more divided because the traditional mechanisms for transferral of power from one generation of elders to another had slowly broken down and because of the varied response to the alternatives which the British were offering. Someone outside the structure was needed to try to overcome these growing gaps. The issues which had strained Giriama society had not all been caused by the British but the longer the British stayed, the more obvious became the Giriama need for collective response. That was what Mekatalili urged.

The object of this campaign was not opposition to the British directly but opposition to their agents within Giriama society. The aim was to bring to an end all Giriama support of British activities. Recognizing that social change had strained their system and forced the Giriama to create new rules, many Giriama wanted to stop those changes which were threatening their independence. They aimed to end the demands for labour, which would take Giriama sons from Giriama land; to end the usurpation of their basic governmental institutions, the councils of elders, which the British were trying to transform into agencies for British administration; to end the tax from which they derived no benefit; and to end the support some Giriama were giving to the British by serving as Headmen and agents for the disliked demands. The women, in particular, wanted no more Giriama girls to be promised as brides to the neighbouring Swahili and Duruma.

The British interpretation of Mekatalili as a witch evolved from the tactic that was chosen by the Giriama to try to solve the problem. This tactic was not Mekatalili's idea, but the suggestion of Ngonyo, a highly-respected Giriama elder. He told the Giriama to go to the kaya and to ask the ancestral spirits what to do. The resulting gathering at the kaya drew people partly from curiosity, partly through coercion, and partly from genuine support for the goals of Mekatalili's campaign. The basic decision made at this time was that no Giriama was to assist the British government in any way whatsoever.

The method used to communicate their decision to the Giriama had a dual character. People were supposed to go back and tell others in their homesteads what decisions had been made. Moreover, the oath

(Kifudu) of the women's secret society and the oath of Fisi, used by councils of elders in judicial cases as a final appeal, were taken by the men and women who gathered at the kaya. The oaths ensured that their takers would act as had been agreed and ensured that if they did not, witnesses would testify against them. Then the medicine from these oaths was carried in calabashes to all parts of Giriamland and poured in the waterholes. The technique was the same as that used by witchdoctors to eradicate witchcraft. Any witch who drank from water so treated by a witchdoctor would die unless he or she confessed. This allowed for the cleansing of entire communities. In this case, it was a promise that the Giriama could start all over again without the British.

However, medicines can be used for evil purposes. The same medicine man who knows how to make medicines powerful enough to counteract witch medicine could also use his own medicine for evil purposes. The Fisi oath, in particular, was supposed to kill, and frequently it was thought of as a poison oath. Thus, the people at whom this oath was really aimed - the agents of the British - interpreted the action as being malevolently directed against them and they feared being poisoned. They called Makatalili a witch, and they were afraid of their own people, with reason.

The results of this campaign were extremely effective. The British found their Headmen refusing to give them their support, councils did not meet, taxes were uncollected, and labourers were nowhere to be found. The British reaction to this and their subsequent punishment of the Giriama completely misinterpreted the situation on one

crucial level: they thought Mekatalili and Wanje had duped their own people. They did not consider that they were merely articulating a widely-held attitude. Thus, they tried to end the opposition by removing the two 'leaders,' who were deported to Kisii. They then proceeded as if the difficulties were over.

It was precisely this continuation of British demands alongside Giriama recognition that the previous tactic would not work which made other alternatives possible. The Giriama, still holding to their original opposition, were soon afterwards faced with an additional unacceptable demand - evacuation of the Trans-Sabaki. Since this issue did not directly involve the Giriama south of the river, they tended to ignore it. Trans-Sabaki Giriama, however, began preparations for defense should the British try to remove them by force. They made arrows and stored food. Many sent their cattle to be cared for by others either along the Tana River or south of the Sabaki. Nowhere, however, is there indication of organization or training until the following July, and then it remained basically defensive.

It is here that the question of Giriama fighting tradition becomes pertinent in order to discern if the eventual 'rising' was as uncharacteristic as the British supposed. The Giriama had historically responded in several ways when conflict seemed imminent. They had escaped from the Galla several centuries before to avoid direct confrontation. Their inadequate arrows shafted with leaves and tipped with bone were no match for Galla spears and shields. They had fought other Mijikenda, after learning better tactics and acquiring more efficient tips for their arrows, but the object of their wars was to

maintain a previously acquired position and not to destroy. When the Kwavi came into Giriamaland raiding for cattle, the Giriama usually hid from them or else forfeited their cattle to the raiders. The Giriama fought the Arabs who were trying to take some of their people into slavery by choosing the tactic of guerilla warfare. They lured the Arabs into the bush, trapped them without water, and shot their arrows from hiding places in the trees. In this conflict, the Giriama had first experienced firearms, but the guns were far from accurate and the Giriama had successfully hidden in the bush. Their fight with the Mariakani Kamba in 1901 had begun over the honor of their women and the inconvenience of trade robbers. They lined up and each side shot a volley and retired for another round. Few people were killed in such a confrontation. Giriama fighting took little organization, little planning, and it occurred when an alarm was sounded for men of fighting age to gather their hunting bows and arrows and to line up in age-sets to fight. No official period of warriorhood existed, no special training was given, and unit leaders were not permanent.

If, then, the Trans-Sabaki Giriama began defensive preparations in case the British tried to force their evacuation and if they had the capacity to gather a fighting force simply by calling the men with weapons to join the fight, then it becomes difficult to discern if they had started a fight or merely responded to the notification that they were at war. From their previous experience, it appears the Giriama would have begun such a fight only if they thought the enemy had challenged them or only if they thought they might have a chance to win.

The demand in Godoma and Mangea on August 16, 1914, for men to serve in the Carrier Corps was just the issue over which the Giriama living in those regions were willing to fight. The knowledge that the British were at war with the Germans and needed Giriama help, combined with stories they had heard about German designs to defeat the British, gave them reason to think that they might win in a confrontation with the British.

The 'rising' was never coordinated, much less previously planned. Fighting was begun in three distinct regions for separate, unrelated reasons. In Godoma and Mangea the issue was labour. In the Trans-Sabaki, it was land. In Weruni and Biryaa, angry resentful nyere had used the opportunity of conflict to force Headmen into compliance and to show their disapproval of the influence of missions and government stations. Any leadership which existed emerged from those who had persistently opposed all British activities and nyere who were dissatisfied with their own elders' cooperation with the British. There was no element of religious power; neither Mekatilili nor any other woman was involved.

Despite this lack of coordination, however, the opposition to the British had mass support. The anti-British feelings were so widespread that few Headmen were willing to defy their own people openly to support the British. Those who did were threatened and had to buy their freedom and promise support to the Giriama or to flee for their life. One was murdered by his own people.

Although outside influences obviously assisted the Giriama in their choice of tactics, the objections of most Giriama to the over-riding British challenge to their political and social autonomy had

remained consistent. Once the British moved beyond merely collecting taxes, most Giriama, including a number of Headmen, responded with passive resistance. This continued after the non-cooperation campaign and lasted long beyond the 'rising' into the colonial period. The 'rising' was just an interlude, much shorter than the time spent collecting the fine which was dealt out as punishment.

Unrealistic Goals of the British

The Giriama were not the only ones who resorted to open warfare out of frustration and the feeling that war might accomplish what peace had not. The misunderstandings, the lack of communications, and the feeling that they could easily win were as significant to the British interpretation of the situation as to that of the Giriama.

The British were not unaccustomed to using force to establish their rule in the East African Protectorate. They had organized a series of expeditions against recalcitrant peoples early in the century - the Nandi (1901, 1905, 1906), the Embu (1904, 1906), the Gusi (1904, 1908), the Kipsigis (1905), and the Bagusu and Kabra (1907). C. W. Hobley was himself responsible for the latter one.³ Furthermore, even earlier, the British East Africa Company had been confronted by Kikuyu attacking their stations at Dagoretti, Fort Smith, Fort Hall and Nyeri in response to the suffering they had experienced when Count Telecki and Lt. Hohnel had forced their way through Kikuyu country raiding for grain.

With the Giriama, the British had little need to conduct expeditions into their country to get grain and supplies. Moreover,

the Giriama were not a fighting people who needed to be 'pacified.' What the British did come to want from the Giriama was labourers but force was the least logical way to acquire them. However, it must be remembered that the British kept force in mind as a possible last resort. Like the Giriama, the British were unlikely to use force unless they were certain they were going to win. The lack of officers to police Giriama country had been a constant complaint. Only if they could call on additional men, such as the Kings' African Rifles, could the British seriously consider 'forcing' the Giriama to leave the land and to provide labourers.

It can be argued, then, that the British were not so unreciprocative to the idea of a Giriama 'rising' which they could quell. Assistance by the KAR was just what was needed to 'force the Giriama into submission,' and the argument that German 'agents' were 'stirring up the Giriama' provided reasonable cause for the KAR to come to their aid.

The psychological need of a few British officers, a minority trying to administer a vast area, to have the people they are administering openly demonstrating a support for 'government's power' and to save face at all costs prevented their recognition of their own weakness. They believed their own myths about British power, but their difficulties in this situation were as complex and sometimes as uncoordinated as those of the Giriama. Three overriding factors dominated the thinking of British officers in Giriama land. The Giriama were supposed to contribute to the overall development of the coast despite the lack of a development plan or an indication that they recognized a single benefit to themselves. Pressure emanated from the tight

financial situation by which the province was supposed to pay for itself. And in either a psychological or an actual confrontation with the Giriama, the British demanded of themselves and the Giriama that Government be respected and that Government orders be met.

Having had some experience dealing with other African peoples, British officers seemed unwilling to be deterred from their goals by the fact that they were dealing with a people new to them. Therefore, most British officers did not attempt to understand the Giriama beyond merely accepting them to be African. They behaved out of ignorance, but they thought they were acting with full knowledge. Misunderstandings dominated their relationship because they misinterpreted so many elements of Giriama life.

Four prevailing conditions were misunderstood by the British despite the importance of these conditions for the general British administrative framework. They thought the Giriama had been able to migrate northward because British rule had brought peace. This caused them to overestimate British influence on the Giriama prior to active administration. They also thought that those men who had gained wealth were powerful due to the advantages brought by European trade. They failed to understand that Giriama trade was basically internal and that they exported via the Mazrui, not the British. Furthermore, they kept trying to get the Giriama to work as labourers while failing to recognize that the the Giriama were successfully exporting grain. They thought that Giriama-Galla relationships had always been, and continued to be, hostile. Because of this, they failed to understand that these two enemies had developed new relationships and that the

end of Galla dominance allowed for increasing Giriama freedom. Finally, they failed to understand the internal inconsistency of their own plans to get the Giriama into the labour market without first establishing the administrative power to achieve it.

More specifically, the traditional colonial view of Giriama society was based upon a series of misinterpretations of the mechanisms which Giriama society used for social control and development. British understanding of potential 'governing structures' was determined by the position in which that particular structure was seen vis a vis the British administrative needs. Thus, the Hambi were regarded as a group of old men who had once made communal decisions but because the system in which they worked appeared to have disintegrated, the assumption followed that 'tribal' government was non-existent.

The secret societies were regarded as a threat, primarily due to their secrecy, and secondarily because they were approached with an historical experience of similar societies among other Africans which had turned anti-colonial or anti-white. These societies were regarded as particularly dangerous, seen separately from a once-functioning government, and thus as a potential substitute. They thought that since age-sets were no longer initiated and had no special knowledge, that they appeared to be divisive rather than cohesive. Witchcraft and its potency among the Giriama was seen separately from politics and as proof of moral degeneracy.

Oaths were thought to be potentially evil and not seen as an accepted system for passing new laws or spelling out new legitimate patterns of behaviour. As a last resort, an oath sworn to support the

British was accepted by them as a technique to insure that one would not be sworn in opposition. Medicine men were thought to be sorcerers in disguise. This denied legitimacy to their positions. The British would have considered it improper to call upon such men unless the latter forfeited their medical prowess for colonial law. The result of all this was an ultimate interpretation of Giriama 'anarchy' and the illogical conclusion that local headmen should be employed in British service out of mutual need.

Fewer distortions would have occurred had more attention been paid to the reports of A. M. Champion, whose experience and knowledge exceeded all others. He suffered from a credibility gap basically because he had failed in his initial administrative attempt. That was interpreted as sufficient reason to suspect his interpretations about the Giriama. In addition, when the Giriama became worthy of greater British attention and an additional officer of higher rank was brought to Champion's immediate area, his own authority was effectually reduced. His physical isolation at that instance prevented his confirming his reservations against extending the punishment beyond those Giriama who were directly involved in the attacks on the camp.

In the end, punishment of the Giriama, rather than winning the confrontation, became the major British aim. As a result, it was not the war itself, but the ensuing punitive actions of the British which made the most lasting impression on the Giriama. It is also fair to suggest that the British were glad to have the excuse of punishment to get the assistance they did in obtaining labourers, evacuating the Trans-Sabaki and, for an interim, deaden the Giriama spirit for

non-cooperation. These had been their goals in the first place, but they had been unable to accomplish them with the few officers at their disposal.

Giriama Adaptations

One problem so often overlooked when examining the response of Africans to European administration is the kind of internal adaptations the African societies were experiencing prior to and apart from British presence. The Giriama had expanded to cover a much larger territory than the immediate kaya environs they had inhabited at mid-century. This had three main consequences. In the first place, the fertility of the hinterland had decreased over the previous century, and the Giriama needed to farm on larger plots and to use them for fewer seasons than they had anticipated. This was true of the land until they got to the Sabaki River, where the land was much richer. The advance into these new lands, the fertility of the Sabaki River valley, and the Giriama mobility combined to give the population freedom and to allow for economic self-sufficiency. The British had seen the entire environment as harsh; from their own perspective it was. They found it extremely difficult to travel, live or fight in Giriama country. The Giriama, on the other hand, adjusted to their environment, used it effectively and appreciated its wealth.

Trade was another source of economic self-sufficiency. In many cases, it allowed for increasing wealth. Cattle-keeping had offered such promises of wealth in the first few decades after the kaya dispersal. However, it suffered a set-back during the Kwavi raiding

and did not thrive again until the Kwavi threat ceased after 1880. Individual Giriama gained increasing control over resources through trade, cattle-keeping and cultivation.

In the second place, this migration and economic self-sufficiency forced some and allowed for other changes in Giriama political and social organization. As in the Pare study made by Isaria Kimambo,⁴ the Giriama offer a good example of political evolution in an African society; but unlike the Pare, who became increasingly centralized, the Giriama developed in the opposite direction. Migration and subsequent dispersed settlement after the mid-nineteenth century had weakened the Giriama cohesiveness which had been based upon seniority, ascribed status, and ritual control. The functioning of their political system had been dependent upon consultation and cooperation. The loss of the opportunity for consultation meant a greater reliance on achieved status than seniority. The fragmentation of the Giriama into smaller units made the continuation of some rituals less possible. The greater impact of individual achievements correlated with the decline in interest in these rituals. This, in turn, resulted in the loss of control over ritual and tradition by the kambi and the Fisi waganga, and a slow dying out of the age-sets.

The original Giriama cohesiveness was gradually replaced by new social units more dependent upon individual leadership and less on kinship. Whereas one might have anticipated the development of Giriama homesteads into affinal units - expanded by blood-brotherhood and pawning - many grew instead through growing inter-ethnic alliances, personal attachment and economic success. Personal power came to extend over

wider geographical areas. Ngonyo wa Mwavuo of Marafa was the best Giriama example of this. From his large landholding north of the river he controlled trade between the Mazrui and the Kamba; he kept his own slaves until slavery was outlawed; and, during famine, he provided food and security for a large number of people who became dependent on him. Ngonyo was so successful that he formed his own clan, but he was exceptional in his success. The missions at Jilore and Mwabanyundo and the Giriama attached to them were able to provide some of the same services and receive allegiance in return for their landholding and trade. This general development of homesteads via economic endeavor and beyond affinal alliances facilitated cohesion of the Giriama into new social units.

The Giriama had become economically self-sufficient through migration, trade and cattle-keeping. They were in the process of adapting their political organization into new units based on new principles. These combined to allow the Giriama more freedom in their response to British demands and made Giriama Headmen less effective as agents for the British. This can best be seen through comparisons with other societies. The trend toward the rise of 'new men' and the weakening of the traditional councils was not unique to the Giriama. It had occurred among several societies in Kenya. Many of the 'new men' responded to new opportunities and reacted against restraints in their own societies. Some built their positions from adaptations of traditional authority by taking advantage of internal situations and by building on their personal ability. Many became totally reliant upon the British for their new power.

However, the British had to be served effectively in order to maintain that power acquired through them. Here the Giriama situation was more unique. The Giriama Headmen were different from the Kikuyu and Kamba, for instance, in one fundamental way. They were unsuccessful at getting the taxes, providing the labourers, and developing their councils. This was so for two reasons. They were much less willing to ask their own people to go to work and therefore did not try to increase their authority for that purpose. Moreover, the economic self-sufficiency and the migratory pattern meant the Giriama were not compelled to respond. Many Kikuyu eventually became labourers because young men wanted freedom from constraints of the elders. Moving away from the Kikuyu heartland was accepted because of its advantages. Financial independence through a salary made that freedom real. Some went willingly. The pressure of nearby white settlers and the willingness of some of their own Headmen to coerce the Kikuyu to work for the British meant the only escape was a physical one which removed them from the heartland. For the Headmen, this widened the gap between themselves and their own people and made them more dependent upon British support of their new positions. For the young Kikuyu, alternatives were limited. They could not remove themselves from the pressures growing in Kikuyuland without the assistance of the British.

Circumstances were different for the Giriama. Those wanting to be free from the constraints of traditional authority did not need to accept recruitment as labourers to make this possible. They had become financially independent through migration, trade or cattle-keeping. Land was available; the Giriama were expanding. They could simply move

away from unfavourable conditions. Even if the need of the younger men to break away from their elders was great, their need for outside assistance to accomplish it was minimal. And if the desire for some to acquire riches was great, the ability of the British to assist in this sphere was minimal, if not negative. The kind of labour the British wanted would have taken the Giriama away from these sources of economic security and would have made them dependent upon the British. That they wanted desperately to avoid.

Those who served the British as Headmen were not dependent upon them for power, either. They were opportunists who wanted the prestige without the responsibility. Most did not want Giriama to work away from Giriama land either and were unwilling to use coercion. Most significant, however, was that even those few Headmen who gave the British their full support were unable to coerce the Giriama.

The Significance of Giriama Resistance

Finally, after examining the questions about the causes, leadership, and development of the Giriama rising in particular; after a look at the impact of misunderstanding and misinterpretations on the part of the British; and after reviewing the adaptations within Giriama political structure and the impact of Giriama geographical diffusion, one broader question remains. How did the Giriama rising fit into the wider investigations about the complex range of African responses to the imposition of colonial rule?

First of all, given what we have learned about the lack of leadership and coordination of the rising, we cannot deny the involve-

ment of the people as a whole and their determination, despite their lack of training and preparation, to maintain their political autonomy at all costs.

Secondly, investigations of African resistance have developed into a continuing dialogue which has directed us by stages to a fuller understanding of the phenomena involved. The Giriama case carries this dialogue further and suggests some new interpretations.

Initially, Africans who tried to use armed forces to oppose colonial powers were dismissed by European historians as foolish. Only those societies which worked with the European powers were the objects of historical investigation. With the works of Robinson and Gallagher⁵ and with Oliver and Fage,⁶ African societies were divided by their reactions into one of two categories: collaborators and resisters. The collaborators were seen as successful, but despite their interpretation of resisters as failures, at least resistance was recognized as a response and not just an instantaneous, absurd reaction. Furthermore, for these authors, a direct relationship was assumed between the political structure of the society and the response chosen. Collaborators were centrally organized, better informed and morally engaged while resisters lacked central political organization (or were engaged in immoral plundering) and were less informed.

The Giriama would have, by this interpretation, assumed the position of the 'less far-sighted, less fortunate or less well-advised,'⁷ who attempted a 'romantic, reactionary struggle against the facts.'⁸ They did lose their land, but they also brought enough attention to the problem by fighting that the British themselves reversed the decision

and gave the land back to them. So this theory proved far too simple for the Giriama situation and in retrospect is distasteful in its Eurocentrism.

At another stage of the dialogue on resistance, T. O. Ranger still recognized two basic responses - collaboration and resistance - but he gave ample evidence of cases where resistors succeeded in gaining far more than was previously thought to be the case.⁹ He could have used the Giriama for one of these examples. Certainly, having lost the war, the Giriama were dealt a harsh punishment. But ultimately, they regained their lands on the Trans-Sabaki and the British administration in Giriamaland was never more than a meagre success. Neither of these was reflection of respect or fear of Giriama military prowess. Far from it. But the fact that the Giriama would try to fight when they had so few apparent advantages left the British with the unmistakable message that they were determined to remain politically autonomous.

Ranger also argued that societies were not faced with only one alternative. Given one situation and one set of circumstances, a people might have chosen to resist while at another time they might have collaborated. For example, the Lozi, Baganda and Masai were expected to fight, but collaborated. The Ndebele and the Kikuyu were expected to collaborate, but fought.¹⁰ If African societies had the same goal - to gain as much as possible from the new colonial situation and to lose as little as possible of their own power - then presumably it is the combination of situations, structure, and methods available at the time which explains why people reacted as they did.

The Giriama demonstrated their capacity, if not always their

ability for effective execution, for several alternative responses to British demands. This point speaks to a major argument made by Gilbert Gwassa in his discussion of Tanzanian resistance movements. Gwassa expanded these responses to include four techniques: 1) active resistance by force of arms, 2) passive resistance in the form of non-compliance or reluctant acquiescence, 3) African adaptation in which certain societies sought to employ the newcomers in a bid to advance their own local cause, and 4) mercenary techniques adopted by 'straight business dealers after money and loot.'¹¹ It seems impossible to place societies into one of these categories alone. The Giriama response is distorted if they are merely labeled 'active resisters.' That would tell only part of the story. They could be better interpreted as having a basic response of passive resistance and turning to fighting only under particularly strained circumstances in an unusual situation and as a last resort.

Rather than placing whole societies into these categories, I think it would be more useful to place the individual Giriama in them. Such an approach indicates the internal conflicts and the forces which were competing in this situation of external social stress and of the varying mechanisms called upon to secure relief. Some few Giriama had always been willing to use their poisoned arrows against the British. They struck at officers long before an ADC came into their region permanently. At the other extreme because the traditional sources for legitimacy of power were breaking down in Giriama society, some of those men who became Headmen or went to live at the missions chose such an adaptation in hopes that they would be able to advance

their own local cause. However, no factions large enough or well enough coordinated existed so that they could collaborate with the British against groups of their own people. To my knowledge, no evidence exists that any Giriama tried the mercenary technique. This is an indication of how little the British were offering that was attractive to the Giriama and how self-sufficient the Giriama were at the time. Most of the Giriama consistently chose passive resistance. This is not to say that more of them might not have tried other alternatives given different conditions, but to point out that not all Giriama felt acted the same.

Individuals in societies, not societies in toto, respond to social stress. Because of this the response of one culture to another is usually more complex than is usually realized. Shula Marks argued this in her investigation of the Khoisan responses to the Dutch in South Africa,¹² and it certainly has been proven true in the case of the Giriama. She suggested that a society considered to be 'small scale' either by size or social structure was likely to respond at some times by collaborating and other times by resisting. She stressed that the nature of either response had, in part, to be related to social structure.¹³ In this, she was speaking to a point made previously by Ranger. He had pointed out the lack of correlation between political structure and response. But he had also suggested that, if anything, collaborators and resisters from centrally organized societies had more in common with each other than small-scale societies that could neither resist nor exploit colonial rule.¹⁴ Shula Marks urged modification of any idea that centralization was necessary for a society to have more

than one alternative.

It is here that I feel the Giriama investigation provides its most essential contribution. As one of those societies which was small scale in structure and which had variations of non-centralized government, the Giriama were often better able to thwart colonial rule in non-conquering situations for two reasons. They basically refused to participate in the 'administrative activity' at all by ignoring the colonial requests. In this way they were able to maintain their own position of strength through non-activity which was regarded, from the colonial perspective, as 'passive resistance.' This pointed up clearly the dependence the British had on agents to work for them within any society they wanted to administer. Many years later, they were to suggest bringing in agents from other African societies for this purpose.

Most of the Giriama were persistent in their resistance. Their lack of a centralized political organization made passive resistance effective because the British did not have anyone to punish. They tried to punish their own Headmen for not controlling the rest of the Giriama. Even after the rising there was nobody to punish. After the first phase, they had mistakenly thought that the removal of Mekatili and Wanje would end the threat. After the second phase, the officer in charge finally included that there were no leaders to be singled out for special punishment; all the Giriama were responsible.

This raises the problem of the involvement of the other Mijikenda in the fight against the British. Some of these other Mijikenda had moved across the Sabaki River before the Giriama had arrived there. They were the only other Mijikenda touched by the

demands of the British, with the exception of the Rabai who had experienced a long-term process of change as a result of the mission of Krapf and the settlement of ex-slaves in their community. Most of the non-Giriama living north of the river returned to their old homes when the British first gave the order. They probably did this for two reasons. Their relationships with the Giriama across the river had always been strained and they welcomed a chance to be given some land which was slightly nearer the clans around the hinterland of Kilifi creek. A few Kauma did not move and did in fact fight with the Giriama. This included one Headman, Taura wa Bura of Bore; he and his people were punished as if they had been Giriama.

This points up another potential response - mere cooperation without collaboration. The difficulty in trying to understand the variations of responses is limited by our lack of knowledge about people such as the Duruma, Dzihana, Kauma and Kambe. If we work with only two alternative responses - collaboration and resistance - then perhaps it is easier for societies to choose one of these if they are centrally organized. But if we recognize that there exist a number of responses and that societies are not limited to one, or even to two, then the possible variations are expanded, rather limited. Furthermore, we need to understand that individuals within societies did not always make the same choices. How they grouped in their responses may be indirectly related to the nature of the political organization, but certainly not determined by it.

The responses to the imposition of colonial rule should form the beginning, not the end of our investigations. My attention was

drawn to the Giriama because they resisted by force but in the event the variation of their responses, their adaptability in some realms and conservatism in others were of far greater significance than their short war.

In so far as this dissertation has been a study of a resistance, it has shown that if we do not rely solely on open warfare to understand resistance then it takes on new dimensions. By examining the scope and tactics of extended Giriama resistance, we are provided with an opportunity to interpret the Giriama actions as positive ones which aimed to uphold their own society. If this is interpreted from the British perspective as resistance, then so be it. It is important to see people like the Giriama not just in terms of conflict, but rather to understand their nature, the patterns of political and social organization they developed to meet the changing situations, their needs together with the variations and limitations of those needs, the environment in which all of this occurs, and the external factors beyond their control.

More than their political organization or lack thereof, more than their leadership or lack thereof, and more than the fact that they fought or did not fight, the economic and geographic independence of the Giriama and the fact that they shared few cultural values with the British enabled them to remain longer outside the stream of 'westernization' which seemed so inevitable to so many others.

This helps to explain for the most part why the Giriama remained outside the protest movements that began in Kenya in the 1920's. The major difference between the Giriama and so many other Kenyan

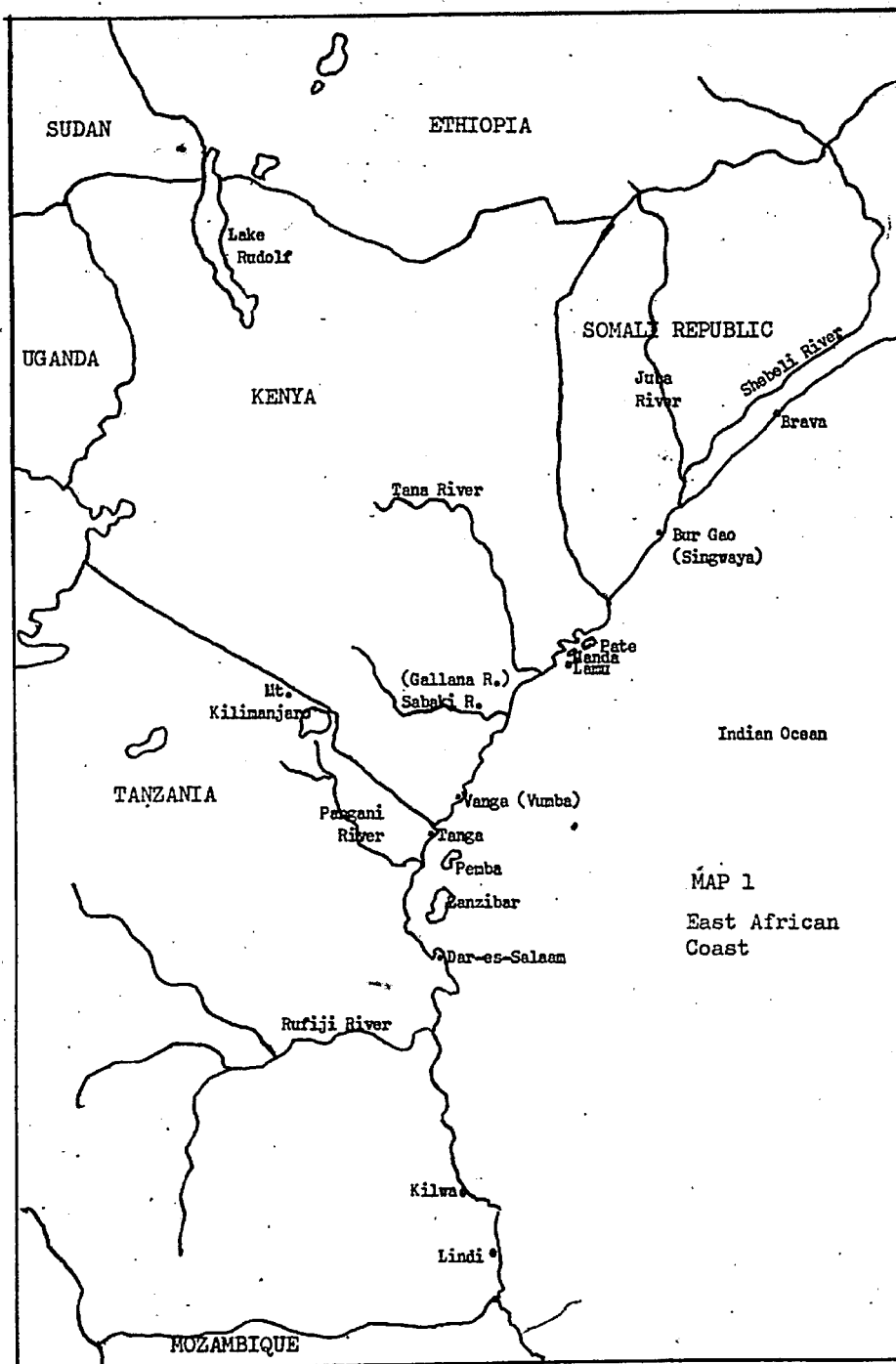
peoples was the fact that they were left alone after 1917. Others were faced with intensified grievances in the post-war years. They experienced loss of their land and the humiliation of registration which forced them to carry passes. They were confronted with increased compulsory labour. The Giriama, on the other hand, had a chance to survive and perhaps to thrive outside the growing colonial system. So many others could not survive outside it; consequently they demanded to participate. The exceptions among the Giriama were the same as those who had assisted the British in their initial administrative efforts. Those men who wanted to partake of the benefits they saw through education and political participation supported colonial administration.

The short-lived Giriama rising was not a prototype of Kenyan nationalism. If there is any connection between this primary resistance movement and the modern mass nationalism of Kenya, it would be a negative one. The Giriama have remained consistent in their preference for political autonomy. They were, initially, no more willing to give it up for the sake of Kenyan nationalism than they were for British colonialism. They argued that only through regional development would societies such as theirs retain enough power in their own hands. Their growing change in attitude, however slowly, emerges from their growing understanding of the change going on around them and the all-encompassing nature of that change. Before, only the British and a few Giriama could sense this. There had been little in 1914 to indicate to the Giriama how inevitable the changes would be in favour of the culture and the political and economic systems of western Europe. The apparent singularity of the Giriama resided in a combination of their

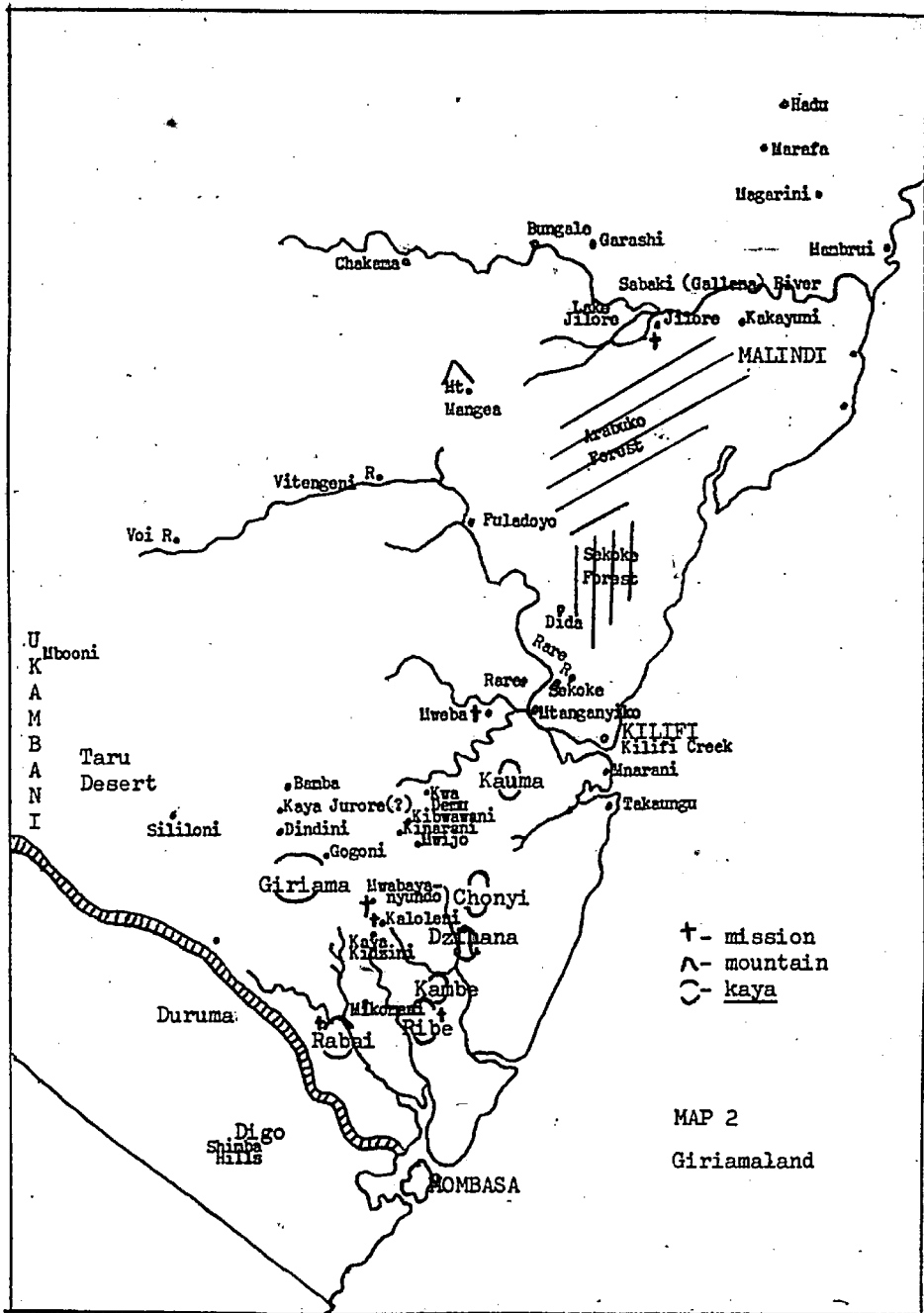
past historical tradition and the conditions under which they were confronting the colonial powers. When understood thus, they can be placed in a much larger comparative context than was before thought possible.

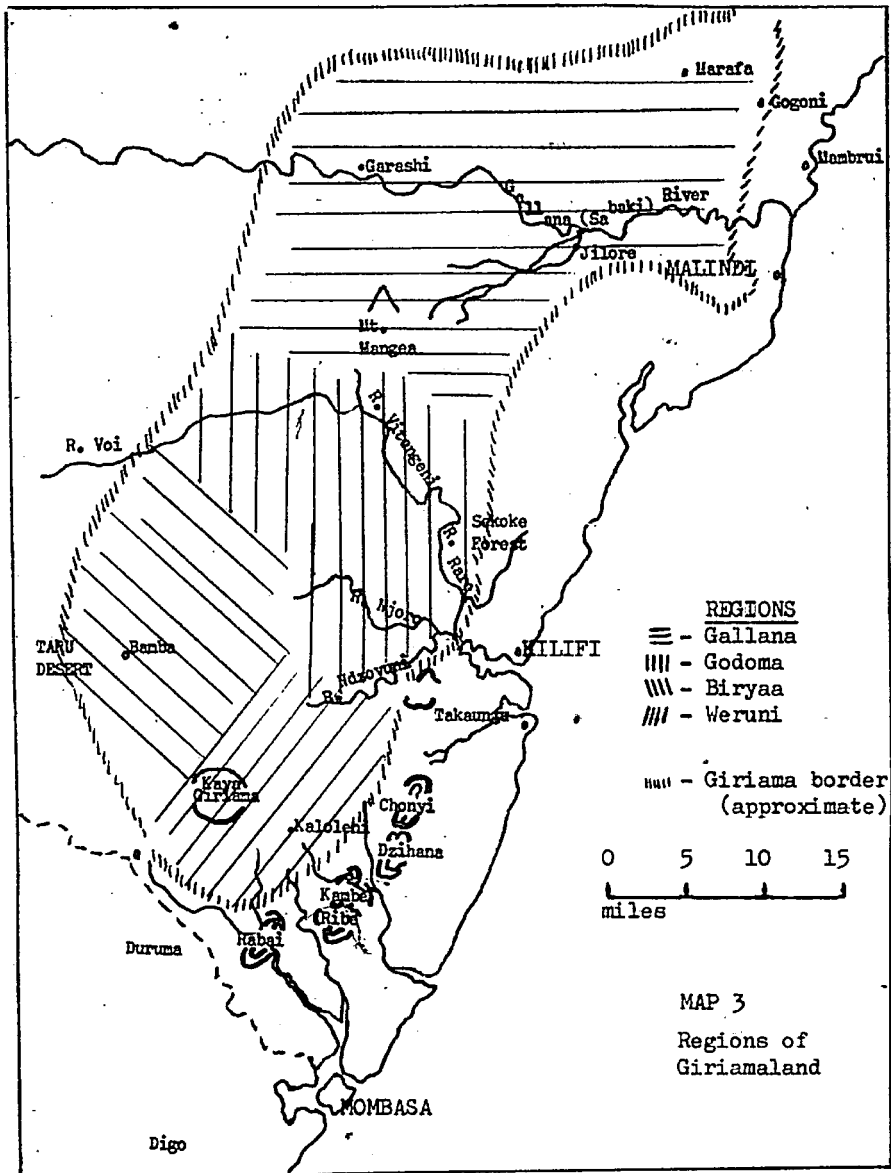
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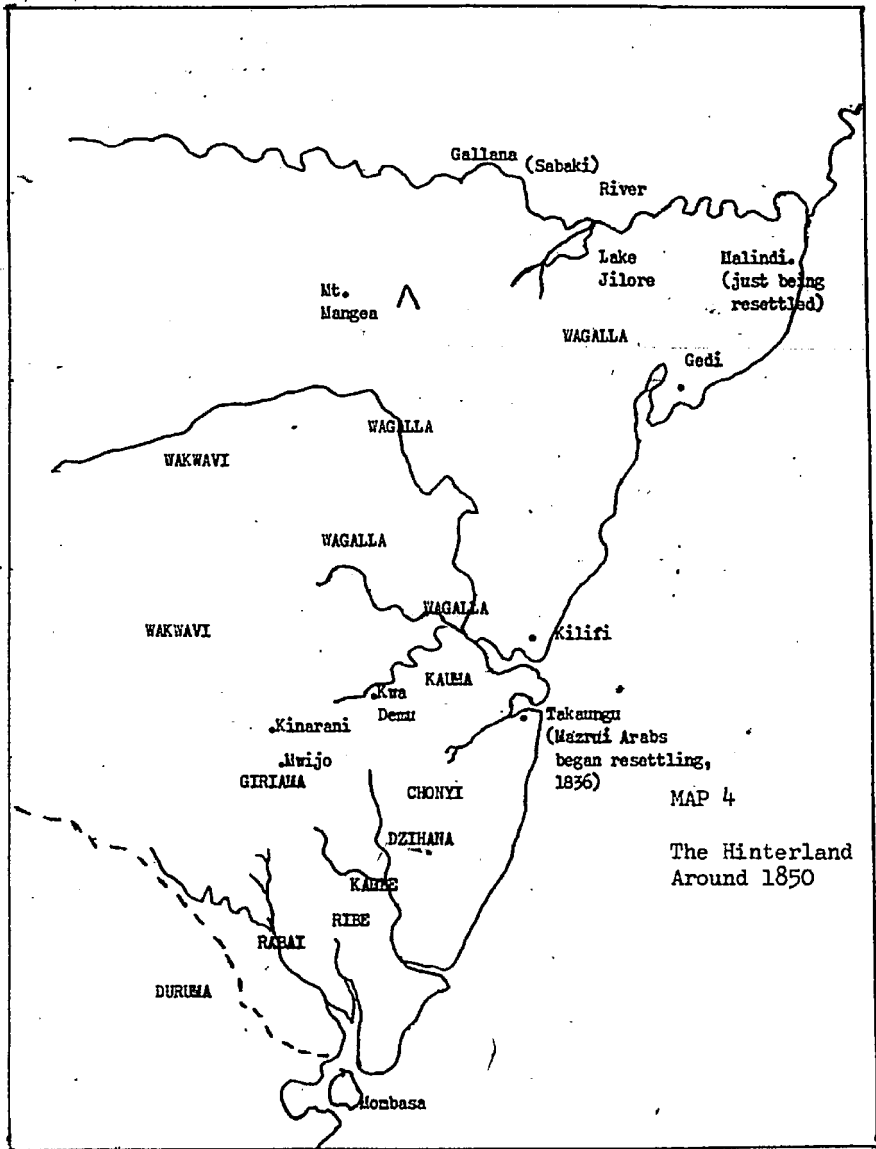
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- ³Bethwell A. Ogot, 'Kenya Under the British, 1895 to 1963' in B. A. Ogot and J. A. Kieran, eds., Zamani: A Survey of East African History (Nairobi, 1968), p. 259.
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- ⁵Ronald E. Robinson and John Gallagher, 'The Partition of Africa,' in F. H. Hinsley, ed., The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. XI, Material Progress and Worldwide Problems, 1870-1898 (Cambridge, 1962), ch. 22.
- ⁶Roland Oliver and J. D. Fage, A Short History of Africa (Baltimore, 1962), pp. 203-4.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 203.
- ⁸Robinson and Gallagher, 'Partition,' p. 641.
- ⁹T. O. Ranger, 'African Reactions to the Imposition of Colonial Rule in East and Central Africa' in L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan, eds., Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1914 (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 293-324.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 296.
- ¹¹Gilbert Gwassa, 'The German intervention and African Resistance in Tanzania,' in I. N. Kimambo and A. J. Temu, eds., A History of Tanzania (Nairobi, 1969), pp. 85-122.
- ¹²Shula Marks, 'Khoisan Resistance to the Dutch in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,' JAH XIII:1 (1972), pp. 55-80.
- ¹³Ibid., pp. 79-80.
- ¹⁴T. O. Ranger, 'Connexions between 'Primary Resistance' Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa,' JAH IX:3 and 4 (1968), pp. 437-453, 631-641.

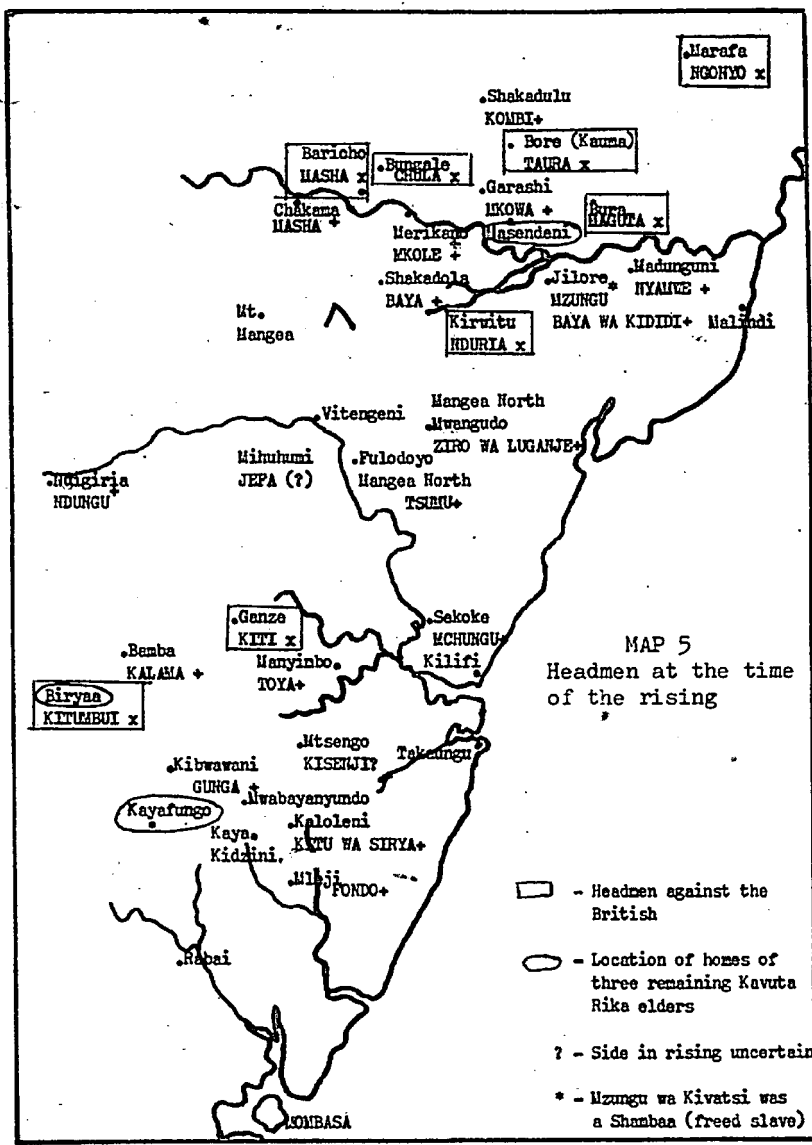


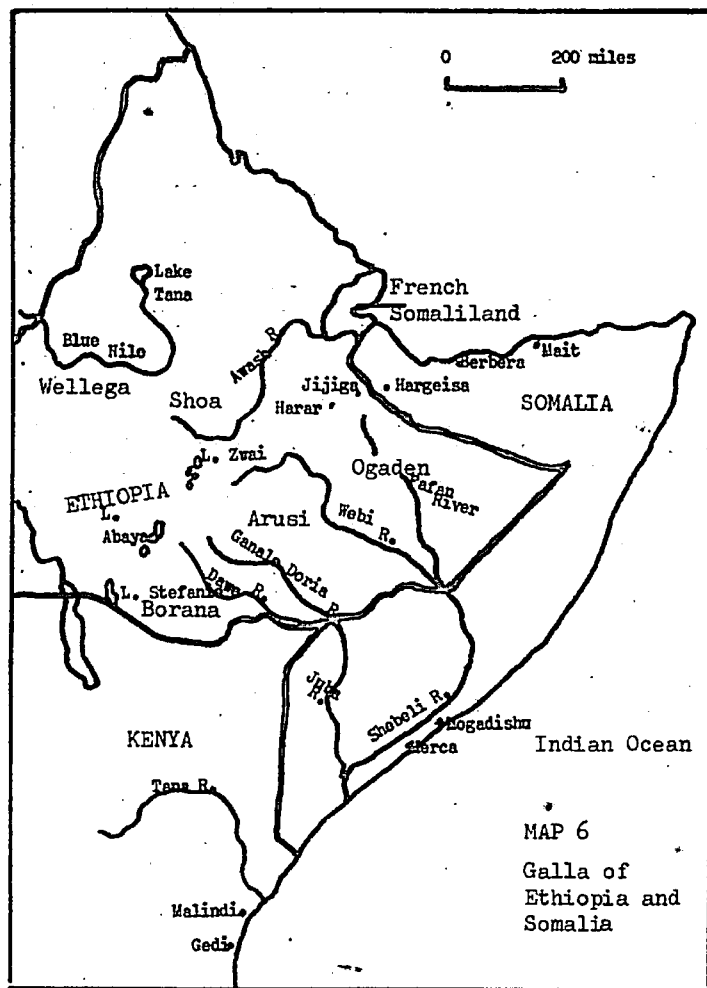
MAP 1
East African
Coast











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Transcripts of these oral interviews are deposited in the History Department Archives, University of Nairobi, Kenya, and are also in the possession of the author. The informants who provided the basis for these interviews are listed below with their nearest village location.

A second stage of oral investigation was conducted through formal interviews throughout Giriama land in five phases with the purpose of clarifying answers to specific questions.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Anderson Kenga | (Vitengeni) |
| Bakardi Nzovu | (Kayafungo) |
| Bambare wa Charo | (Garashi) |
| Baya wa Toya | (Bungale) |
| Biria wa Masha | (Kaloleni) |
| Boniface Kahindi wa Konde | (Kanyumbani) |
| Chakuku wa Nguyete (Chonyi) | (Mwembekati) |
| Charo wa Maita | (Bungale) |
| Chembe wa Kajoro | (Jilore) |
| Daniel Ngumbao | (Jilore) |
| Danieli Mwavuo Thoya | (Mikomani) |
| Erastus Hare | (Sekoke) |
| Gona wa Nguma | (Jilore) |
| Gona wa Rimba | (Bungale) |
| Hawe Charo (Kahonzi wa Kiti) (f) | (Takaungu) |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Hawe Chengo (f) | (Jilore) |
| Hawedema Nzingo Mashe (Kambe) (f) | (Mikoba Chenda) |
| Hawe Karisa Nyevu Makarye (f) | (Jilore) |
| Hawesidi Kabuche (f) | (Mwabanyundo) |
| Hawe Sidi Katsoe (f) | (Jilore) |
| Ishamael Kenga | (Bungale) |
| Ishamael Toya | (Jilore) |
| Jambo wa Toloko | (Marafa) |
| James Mudhengi | (Jilore) |
| James Ponda | (Marafa) |
| Jefwa wa Mwayaya | (Hadu) |
| Joseph Denge | (Kibwabwani) |
| Joseph Kalume | (Kanama) |
| Joshua Gohu wa Uyombo | (Mavueni) |
| Kabunda wa Kuchu (f) | (Mwabanyundo) |
| Kadu wa Baya (f) | (Mkomboani) |
| Kadzumbi wa Ngari | (Chakama) |
| Kalama wa Nzaro | (Mavueni) |
| Kaleso wa Ruwa wa Jumwa (f) | (Malemweni) |
| Kalume wa Koi | (Ganze) |
| Karezi wa Mwasada | (Bamba) |
| Karisa Kifudu | (Bamba) |
| Karisa wa Gona | (Chakama) |
| Karisa wa Mweni | (Garashi) |
| Katoi wa Kiti | (Kajiweni) |
| Kazungu wa Kigande | (Mavueni) |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Kenga wa Hare | (Vitengeni) |
| Kenga wa Mwanenge | (Mwabanyundo) |
| Kibogo wa Masha | (Kajiweni) |
| Kithi wa Mrimi Charo | (Kayafungo) |
| Knazi wa Finga (f) | (Chakama) |
| Kuronga (f) | (Mkomboani) |
| Luganje wa Masha | (Vitengeni) |
| Luvuno wa Kalama (f) (Chonyi) | (Maluwani) |
| Maita wa Mweni | (Kayafungo) |
| Masha Murumwengu | (Kizurini) |
| Masha wa Kaluma | (Ganze) |
| Mavuo wa Menza | (Marafa) |
| Mboga wa Galoa | (Kayafungo) |
| Michael Kachaa (Chonyi) | (Mwembekati) |
| Mole wa Munyaya | (Kayafungo) |
| Muganda wa Biria | (Ganze) |
| Mukiza wa Birya | (Hadu) |
| Mulanda wa Wanje | (Msabaha) |
| Mungela wa Kalama | (Bamba) |
| Musage wa Magongo | (Kayafungo) |
| Mutsunga | (Bungale) |
| Mwalimu Hamisi | (Vitengeni) |
| Mwamoto wa Nzaro | (Kajiweni) |
| Mwangoto wa Kalama (Chonyi) | (Mwembekati) |
| Mwilo wa Simba | (Hadu) |
| Ngala wa Pembe | (Kayafungo) |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Nguma wa Kalama | (Mutsara wa Mavindi) |
| Nyundo wa Mwamure | (Sekoke) |
| Nzaro wa Chai | (Garashi) |
| Nzingo Pengu | (Mwabayanyundo) |
| Paul Mitsanze | (Mwabayanyundo) |
| Pembe wa Bembere | (Kayafungo) |
| Rebecca Kadzo (f) | (Vishakani) |
| Samuel Baya Mose | (Kibwabweni) |
| Samuel Jefwa Gumbe | (Mikomani) |
| Samuel Ngale | (Ganze) |
| Sayo Ngala Mose | (Kayafungo) |
| Shadraack Kambi | (Jilore) |
| Sidi Ruwa (f) | (Muleji) |
| Thomas Kalume (Kauma) | (Nairobi) |
| Thuva wa Kajambo | (Kayafungo) |
| Thuva wa Konde | (Hadu) |
| Toya wa Iha | (Bamba) |
| Tsangwa Ngala | (Kinarani) |
| Victor Gona Kazungu | (Vipingoni) |
| Willie Katifu Fondo | (Vishakani) |
| Wilson Gona Nguma | (Malindi) |
| Wilson Kajoro | (Jilore) |
| Yaa (Godha) wa Mangi | (Kayafungo) |
| Ziro wa Mae | (Madzimbani) |

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