ELEMENTS OF AKAMPA LIFE

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Syracuse University

1967
"Elements of Ákámbá Life" is the topic of this dissertation. The aim of the dissertation was to write an interpretive ethology of the Ákámbá people of South Central Kenya. The monograph is divided into seven chapters. The first one deals with the environment of the Ákámbá. It puts into consideration the physical environment which shapes the existence of Akamba, viz., land, ecology, climate, human ecology, flora and fauna.

Chapter II considers language and history with considerable emphasis on the Ákámbá language. A complete phonemic inventory of Ákámbá, together with a system worked out for the first time, and a grammar, based on the new Kekambi phonemic system is discussed. A comparative linguistics is attempted--Kekambá is contrasted with twenty-one Bantu languages--and a hypothetical evolutionary view is created from the comparison. A Glottochronology also is worked out. Theories of the origin of Akamba are discussed, and a new theory embracing the Akamba oral tradition is considered. Also, mythical history previously
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unconsidered is proposed or introduced.

Chapter III deals with Akamba structure and function, of Akamba social organization and contains a close look at the details. A new interpretation of mbae organization, i.e., sympatric elements, is introduced.

Chapter IV is concerned with Akamba government. The general legal structure criminal justice, and ordeals based on psychological concepts are considered for the first time. Chapter V deals with moral and traditional sanctions--kèëító, *óóí--are examined and a new interpretation given.

Chapter VI deals with Akamba and cosmos. The chapter chiefly examines the traits which Akamba have developed in order to adapt themselves effectively to their environment. Thus science, which includes such factors as metallurgy, medicine and biology, chemistry (*èbáí, dyes, industrial microbiology, brewing, and astronomy, is considered in the Kamba context and in the light of current views on the subject. Art forms--architecture, sculpture, weaving and utilitarian art--
are included in this chapter; religion, and time (under the Calendrical system) are given special emphasis. Finally, this chapter deals with folk-wisdom and oral tradition, of which little is known, is given special treatment. Such phenomena as ng'ooa, mbánó, and myali are considered in some detail.

Chapter VII presents the general conclusions of the study. The information in the monograph is gathered from documents, and research on Kámbá elders and students in the U.S., in addition to twenty years of the author's own experience as a mokámbá among the Kámbá. However, it should be pointed out that this monograph is in no way an autobiography; it is based on solid facts as seen and conceived by the writer.