

Lecture 22 Lecture Overview and Discussion Questions

Main Point of Lecture: Provide an idea about life is like in East Africa and provide a description of two ethnic groups as a platform for reviewing concepts of this course

Overview of ethnic groups: Pimbwe and Sukuma

	Pimbwe	Sukuma
Economy	Hunter-gatherers, hunters, horticulture	Agro-pastoralists; Cows
Social Organization	Weak central chiefdom, villages and clans	Multiple chiefdoms, strong village institutions
Residential mobility	Settled	Migratory; search for better pastures
Social Capital	Low	High
Ethnic Identity and Loyalty	Low and Low	Very high
Scope of Institutions	<i>Smaller</i> (village, clans, families)	<i>Wider</i> (cross-cutting ethnic-level institutions; <i>Sungusungu</i>)
Importance of Sharing and Cooperation	Stereotyped as being stingy (institutions, economic hardship ?)	Stereotyped as being exceptional generous
Conflict	Conflict with their own group and other groups	Lots of between group conflicts

1.) Ethnic and Racial Identity

Important Points:

- a.) Race in Tanzania mainly concerns Africans as compared to Arabs, Indians and Europeans, or “Wazungu”. Many Africans have internalized the myth that they are inferior to the other “racial” groups
- b.) Tribes were partly a construct of European colonialists. They saw ethnic diversity, but simplified it for their own interests. Example: Sukuma and agriculture
- c.) Sukuma have a very strong ethnic identity compared to other ethnic groups, especially the Pimbwe.

Why do the Sukuma have such a strong ethnic identity?

- 1.) They live in fairly dense villages that are fairly homogenous
- 2.) They have one major occupation: get lots of cows!
- 3.) Little modernization of mixing of ideas in the “tribal” areas
- 4.) Shared sets of symbols (language, customs, religion)
- 5.) Shared interests: get lots of cattle
- 6.) Cultural pride: symbols of Sukuma culture are widely shared and very important to people

What happens when the Sukuma come into contact with other ethnic groups?

- 1.) Cultural ideology to want to get along, at least generally
- 2.) Belief that their group is superior to others, and thus ideological conflicts
- 3.) Sukuma cows cause a lot of trouble when they eat the crops of non-Sukuma
- 4.) Sukuma are highly cooperative, and have social institutions that make them much more powerful than their ethnic members.

What will happen to Sukuma ethnicity?

Many Sukuma are giving up “traditional” lifestyles. They invest in the markets rather than in cattle.

It is possible that Sukuma ethnic identity could become less important in the future due to modernization.

But will Sukuma eventually feel alienated by modernization, and return to their traditions as did many Jewish Americans in the 1960s ?