Doing colonialism

Reading the banishment of a »native chief« in the Tanganyika territory[1]

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Introduction

In April 1940, an incident took place in Iringa, the district's capital town in the southwestern region of the Tanganyika territory in today's Tanzania. In front of the center of the colonial administration, called the *Boma*, in a public and busy square, chief Sapi Mkwawa, the leading figure of the »native authority« in the British administration system,[2] lost his temper. Almost 80 years later, we cannot fully reconstruct the detailed course of events, however, according to the British administration, the chief severely misbehaved and threatened colonial rule. Reportedly, he told the British to leave his country, otherwise he would force them to do so. He mentioned the Germans and the possibility that they would (re)capture Dar es Salaam. He even cursed in the German language. The British interpreted

1 This short article has already been on a long journey. On this journey, I received very helpful comments and input from many people. I especially wish to thank Celia Isaak Mkwawa, Is-Haka Mkwawa, Frank Edward, Br. David Gantner, Martina Kessel, Levke Harders, Paul Ocobock, the Africa Working Group, Georgina Willms, and the peer reviewers. In naming all those people, I must also emphasize that the final product is completely my own responsibility. I will continue to develop the ideas contained here as part of a larger book project on colonial biographies. My trips to Tanzania and the work on this article would not have been possible without the grants I was awarded from the Gerda Henkel Foundation and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation.

2 For »native authorities,« see Beidelman (2012, 21). For a recent problematization of the term »native,« see Mamdani (2012). For the term Boma, see Michels (2009, 165–66).

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these articulations as an expression of alliance with the German enemy. The incident had consequences. Mkwawa was ordered to leave the district and move to the north of the Tanganyika territory. In May 1940, at the age of 60, he left his home, with two wives, and ten of his smaller children.[3] What had taken place? What had motivated a member of a prominent family in the region to insult the British administration by mentioning the European enemy in war and questioning colonial rule?

The historical context is the »colonial situation« in Tanzania, as Georges Balandier has described the rule of a minority over a majority ([1952] 1970). It began in 1885 with German colonization and formally ended in 1961 with independence. After World War One, Tanganyika came under a League of Nations mandate, administered by the British. This meant that the British were obliged to report on their work in East Africa to the League of Nations. Historians have pointed out that the former German colonies were effectively »treated as colonies« again (Banton 2008, 15; see also Beidelman 2012, xi). However, new research places more emphasis on the League of Nations as »a force field« and differentiates between the »anything but uniform« British colonial policies (Pedersen 2015, 5, 137). British policies varied not only from mandate to mandate but also over time. In relation to Tanganyika, both the League and British politicians agreed that it should be considered a territory for which permanent European settlement would be impossible. The British therefore avoided settler-friendly politics. They introduced »indirect rule,« which basically meant that they installed »native chiefs« in the various districts (Pedersen 2015, 136–37).[4]

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3 Tanzania National Archives (hereafter abbreviated to TNA), Acc. 24, Iringa, A2/19, Native Affairs, Ex-Chief Sapi and his Family, fol. 14. Sapi Mkwawa was born in 1879. I do not know the month and day of his birth.

4 Uncountable studies have already been written on the British Empire and on indirect rule, unlike German colonialism, which for a long time has been considered a short and unimportant period in history. For German colonialism and its long neglect in historiography, see Eckert and Wirz (2002, 373–74). For Germany as an empire, see Dickinson (2008).

The African history scholar John Iliffe wrote, in his groundbreaking book on the history of Tanganyika during colonialism, that the system of indirect rule was in crisis by the 1930s (1979, 357). A tired and languishing administration might explain Mkwawa's banishment, but this only offers an explanation in a very general sense and fails to give reasons for the trans-colonial aspect of the event. However, I want to interpret the incident in front of the Boma and its aftermath not just as a symptom of a collapsing system, but rather as an integral part of an ongoing process of »doing colonialism.« I understand doing colonialism in the same way that Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman have defined »doing gender« in their canonical text »as a routine accomplishment embedded in everyday interaction« (1987, 125). This article, of course, covers just a small part of »everyday interaction,« because it focuses on governing people and leaves out the majority of men and women on the ground.

In terms of methodology, I employ, first, a biographical approach and, second, I apply a theoretical framework for »belonging.« The biographical approach can speak to virulent questions in (post)colonial history, I would like to argue. The major objectives of colonial life writing are still to »provincialize Europe« (Chakrabarty 2001), to write decentered and shared histories (Conrad, Eckert, and Freitag 2007; Conrad and Randeria 2002), and to explore the »tensions of empire« (Cooper and Stoler 1997). Catherine Hall shows the possibilities of a decentered history by observing the itineraries of people between metropole and colony (2009). Natalie Zemon Davis demonstrates in *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds* how even a life that left few archival traces can offer a way into a global history of the early modern era (2006). In different ways, these works open a »window« onto a certain time period and locality.[5] Thus, they represent new tendencies in life writing. Recent biographies no longer exclusively focus on prominent men but also on women, on transnational life courses, and some biographies try to decenter the person

5 For more about the »window« method as one of the different ways to conceive of biography, see Lässig (2008, 13).

they are writing about for example by focusing more on the context.[6] However, histories of extraordinary men and exceptional women of the colonial period are still prominent.[7] More widely, in European historiography depictions of colonizers far outweigh depictions of colonized men or women.[8] Taking the findings of postcolonial and subaltern studies into account, a history that focuses mainly on European sources, people, and experiences will, as informed as it may be, always remain one-sided. As a result, the biography of Sapi Mkwawa, who was an active leader in administrative positions and was promoted to a high rank under German and British colonialism, may deepen our understanding of the colonial period in Tanzania and, at the same time, offer insight into a life that was highly affected by colonialism.

The second and related methodological approach in this article is the application of the notion of belonging. In her definition of the term, Nira Yuval-Davis differentiates between: »social locations,« which are arranged around categories like race, class, and gender; »identifications and emotional attachments,« which explain or narrate identities; and »ethical and political values,« which might vary even within the same location and narrative (2011, 12–18). Furthermore, Yuval-Davis distinguishes belonging from the »politics of belonging,« which entails the creation of boundaries by those who have the power to do so (ibid., 18–

6 For an overview of the historiography of biography, see: Lässig (2008); Etzemüller (2012); Harders (2014).

7 As an example of the history of German East Africa in biographies, see about Lettow-Vorbeck: Schulte-Varendorff (2006); Michels (2008); about Carl Peters, see: Perras (2004); Kpao Sare (2006). For more information on the only woman who gained much attention for her exhaustive travel writing, see the work on Frieda von Bülow: Wildenthal (1998); Bechhaus-Gerst (2009).

8 For exceptions to this rule, see: Schechter (2012); Desley, Russell, and Woollacott (2010). For evidence of the growing interest in imperial or colonial lives, see: Lambert and Lester (2006); Habermas and Przyrembel (2013); Buchen and Rolf (2015). All these works mainly focus on imperial biographies, and one could replace the adjective imperial with »white.« For Africans in Europe, see: Oguntoye (1997); van der Heyden (2008).

19). She stresses that »belonging tends to be naturalized and to be part of everyday practices« and to come to the fore only when it is challenged or under threat (ibid., 10). Hence, a colonial scene, like the one I analyze in this article, is exactly the site where belonging and the politics of belonging are articulated. Therefore, I explore whether and in what ways belonging helps to shed light on the way colonialism functioned, and how belonging offers a way of looking at the making and effects of colonialism, the activity of doing colonialism.

To sum up, this article, first of all, contributes to newly realized modes of writing biography. It aims to offer a »window« onto a certain time and place, and it focuses on a non-»white,« overlooked (in comparison to those of his father's and son's) life course.[9] Second, it intends to offer a better understanding of the colonial situation by analyzing different forms of belonging. The sources I have analyzed are written documents from the colonial archives in London and Dar es Salaam, the archive of the Benedictine Mission in Bavaria, and interviews that I conducted in Iringa with members of the Mkwawa family.

A colonial biography

In the nineteenth century, the majority of people who lived in the Uhehe region were called *Wahehe*. The Wahehe were a »general political unit« (Mumford 1934, 203) of people with heterogeneous types of belonging (to groups, to families, and so on).[10] The family of *Mutwa* Munyigumba and his son Mkwawa had a hegemonic role among the Wahehe.[11] This

9 Sapi Mkwawa's grandson, Chief Abdul Adam Sapi, said in an interview that he and his grandfather shared the same fate of being sons of prominent fathers; interview with Abdul Adam Sapi, 21 Feb. 2014, Iringa; all interviews conducted by the author.

10 *Hehe* (*Wa* indicates a plural in Swahili) was a relatively new term in the nineteenth century, and has been interpreted by German and British colonizers as meaning tribe. See also Redmayne (1968) for more about the term Wahehe.

11 *Mutwa* is the Hehe word for male leader. The historian of the Mkwawa family, Fulgens Malangalila (1987), calls all male leaders in the Mkwawa

hegemony continued throughout the period of colonization. German as well as British colonizers positioned Mkwawa's male family members in social structures as leaders of the region.

The Mkwawa family has a famous history of resistance against German colonization. Mutwa Mkwawa was well known for his long-time opposition to the German colonial project. He fought against the occupation of the Iringa region until 1898, when he ultimately shot himself rather than surrendering. The Germans in Iringa, under the command of captain Tom Prince (1869–1914), took his skull and presumably sent it to Germany. For the British, the skull came to symbolize the cruelty of German colonialism; it is even mentioned in the Treaty of Versailles.[12]

Sapi Mkwawa was the firstborn son of Mutwa Mkwawa, and he was educated and trained, as was the case for all Mkwawa sons, as a warrior.[13] That means he was brought up with an attachment to the military. Born in 1879, he stayed with his father almost until the latter's suicide in 1898. When Sapi Mkwawa surrendered to the Germans, they took him and many of his father's wives, along with their children, in chains to the

family Mutwa. The German missionary Cassian Spiß wrote for the German word »*Häuptling*,« which meant leader or chief, in his Hehe dictionary: »*mutwa*, *mtemi*, *mlugu*, *chota*« (1900, 160). I use Mutwa to indicate the Wahehe position and chief to refer to an individual's position in the British administration.

12 For the history of German colonialism in East Africa, see Pesek (2005). The history of the skull is still not completely clarified (Bucher 2016). For the history of the Wahehe, see especially the works of anthropologist Alison Redmayne (1964, 1968), who completed extensive research in the Iringa region in the 1960s and spoke to a lot of Mkwawa descendants.

13 Bonifaz Mkwawa, Sapi's brother, talked to the anthropologist Alison Redmayne about his childhood (see fn 12). I learned about this from Is-Haka Mkwawa on July 20, 2015, in Plymouth. The Catholic missionary Alfons Adams (1899, 27), who used to live in Tosamaganga, which is close to Iringa, at the time of Mutwa Mkwawa's persecution, wrote that all Wahehe children had to follow their fathers on war expeditions and carry their spears.

coast, where many of them died of illnesses as a result.[14] Sapi Mkwawa stayed on the coast and worked as a clerk for the German government. In 1905, the first year of the three-year Maji Maji War against German occupation, Governor Gustav Adolf von Götzen sent Sapi Mkwawa to Germany, in the custody of missionaries, in order to keep him away from Iringa. His caution reflected both the contemporary political situation, and German military and European geographical publications that described the Wahehe, and the Mkwawa family primarily, as the »tinderbox« of the colony.[15] These publications referred to the Wahehe as one of the colony's most dangerous »tribes« and thereby raised the prestige of the military forces that finally defeated them.

Sapi Mkwawa stayed in Bavaria until 1908. He lived at the colonial government's expense in St. Ottilien, and the government in Dar es Salaam also paid for all his travel costs. This was the arrangement reached by the abbot and Benedictine missionary, Norbert Weber, and the deputy governor, which was firstly put in place by the Catholic bishop of Dar es Salaam, Cassian Spiß.[16] Spiß was killed during the Maji Maji War. Weber, while stressing that he did not like the idea of bringing Africans to Europe, agreed to take the son of the famous Mutwa Mkwawa, who could be dangerous for the colony, to Bavaria. The abbot's opinion about keeping Africans out of Europe was part of the policy of non-assimilation that German colonizers preferred.[17] In 1905, after Spiß's

14 Different sources give information on these events: Letter from Sister Thekla in Dar es Salaam, *Heidenkind*, 9 Sept. 1898; Prince (1905, 164); and Archiv der Missionsbenediktiner St. Ottilien (in the following AStO), Peracta Tosa Maganga, 10 May 1898, Z.2.1.19.

15 Captain Nigmann to government in Dar es Salaam, 11 Nov. 1908, TNA, German Records, G 9/77, fol. 59. Nigmann was the leader of the military station in Iringa from 1903 to 1910 and published a much-cited work about the Wahehe (Nigmann 1908). For European geographic studies, see, for example, Thomson (1881, 229–38). For the Maji Maji War in German East Africa, see Giblin and Monson (2010).

16 Spiss to deputy Governor Haber, 28 July 1905, AStO, Z.1.04.

17 Weber to Rechenberg, Sept. 1908, AStO, Z.1.04; Lindner (2011, 309).

death, Catholic missionaries and German administrators shared the feeling that there was a threat of danger in Dar es Salaam. As such, Weber presumably approved of the policy of exile, and he himself took Sapi Mkwawa to St. Ottilien, the Benedictine's headquarters in Bavaria. Mkwawa's stay was supposed to be temporary. He was married when he was sent to Bavaria. The abbot and the governor discussed the wife and considered the possibilities for where she might stay. Weber then noted in his travel diary that she accompanied her husband to the port and that she was supposed to live with her sister until his return.[18] There is no evidence of what happened to her after this.

In short, missionaries and colonial administrators negotiated bringing Sapi Mkwawa out of his country. This was at first only an orally arranged transaction among German men over the life of a man from Uhehe, who they considered to be dangerous because of his strong attachments to his home region and family. Mkwawa's wife was excluded from any such transaction.[19] In terms of belonging, as a woman she was located outside colonial politics due to what was viewed as her socially marginal position.[20]

Weber sent Sapi Mkwawa back after two and a half years, saying in a letter to the governor in Dar es Salaam that Mkwawa was happy in Germany and highly interested in military matters. According to the abbot, he had asked to be allowed to remain for a longer time because he wanted to join the German army. Weber wrote that he had refused that

18 Norbert Weber, diary of 1905 (*Tagebuch*), 25 Nov. 1905, AStO, A.1.8.1; thanks to Fr. Tobias Moos, there is a transcript of the diary, which was written in old stenography. See also Governor Götzen to Weber, 22 Nov. 1905, AStO, Z 1.04.

19 Spiss to deputy Governor Haber, 28 July 1905, AStO, Z.1.04. Spiß suggested taking the wife along and housing her close to the monastery; however, in the letters that followed between Weber and Götzen, this was no longer considered.

20 For the argument that colonization was a predominantly male practice, see also Lawrance, Osborn, and Roberts (2006). This, of course, neither means that women were not colonizers nor that women were not a part of colonial practices (Wildenthal 2001).

wish and instead had always tried to keep Mkwawa away from big cities or military actions.[21] The letter shows Sapi Mkwawa's evidently still strong attachment to military practices. It can be assumed that military culture was part of his identification in terms of belonging.

There is little information about Sapi Mkwawa in Bavaria. He is absent from most of the records in St. Ottilien. The annalist of the monastery mentions him only once; at Christmas, 1905, he wrote that Mkwawa was one of the pupils and already felt at home.[22] At that time, the new pupil was 26, had just arrived after leaving his family in German East Africa, and found himself within a group of schoolboys. The practice of not mentioning Sapi Mkwawa further in the chronicles and school reports could have been a way of denying that he was entitled to belong there, especially because he was not one of the missionaries' conversion successes: according to his family, he was a Muslim.[23] The abbot's unwillingness to admit Africans to Europe, together with Mkwawa's sense of not belonging for reasons of religion, might be the reason for his exclusion from the missionary's archive.

After his return to East Africa in 1908, Mkwawa worked as an *Akida*, a leading administrator, for the German government on the coast and in the Dodoma area from 1912 onward.[24] After World War One, Mkwawa made his way home. The Italian monks of the Consolata missionary congregation, who took over the station close to Iringa after the German missionaries had to leave, mentioned Sapi Mkwawa in a letter to their

21 Weber to Rechenberg, Sept. 1908, AStO, Z.1.04.

22 Annalen, AStO, A.3.4.

23 Interview with Sapi Mkwawa's son, Msitapha Sapi, 21 Feb. 2014, Iringa. Ranger mentions Sapi Mkwawa using the name Saleh bin Mkwawa in 1919 and 1920. This highlights Mkwawa's own sense of belonging to Islam (Ranger 1975, 56–61). How and when Mkwawa became a Muslim is still an open question.

24 Beleg für die benediktinische Missionsaktivität vor und während des Ersten Weltkriegs, AStO, Z.2.4.05; Ranger (1975, 57).

predecessors in St. Ottilien in 1919.[25] They wrote that the local population chose Mkwawa as their leader. The letter reports that he lived at the Boma, which was still the center of the colonial administration. After almost 20 years of involuntary absence, he was back in his hometown and following in his father's footsteps as the leader of the local population.[26]

When the British officially implemented indirect rule, they installed Sapi Mkwawa as chief of the Iringa District. The British introduced indirect rule in their newly mandated territory to replace the former German system. According to their early descriptions, the system of the enemy in war was mainly based around Akidas who were—according to the British—very often alien to the area they administered. In 1922, the new European authorities in Tanganyika reported to the Council of the League of Nations:

> The continuation of the German system of employing Akidas, paid native officials, has been fairly successful in the administration of the coastal districts. Here the tribes lack tribal organization and the Akida is generally connected with the people by descent. In up-country districts where tribal cohesion is greater and where the Akida is often an alien, the policy has been to control the people through their own chieftains, replacing the Akida when possible by a headman of the people's choice. (Colonial Office 1922, 5)[27]

From this perspective, we can see that Sapi Mkwawa experienced both positions: he was Akida and then became chief. In his life course, he was a living example of the transformative process of colonial rule. One of

25 Mwanliti and Rugaruga to P. Severin et al., 12 June 1919, AStO, Z.1.02. Fr. Matthias Wetzel thankfully did the translation from Swahili to German. The information above that follows is taken from this letter.

26 Ranger (1975, 57) states that Sapi Mkwawa was given a subordinate position as »hut counter« in 1919. Brown and Hutt (1935, 43) mention Sapi Mkwawa's position as chief in 1920.

27 Ralph Austen (1967, 580) argued that this critique was only the conclusion of the first analysis of the German system; the British subsequently learned that the greater problem was missing manpower and a lack of control.

the leading figures in this process was Donald Charles Cameron (1872–1948). Cameron was governor of the Tanganyika territory from 1925 to 1931 after 17 years of colonial service in Nigeria. He brought his knowledge about indirect rule from Nigeria, where he became governor after his time in Tanganyika (Kirk-Greene 1991, 56; Cameron 1939; Hunter 2015, 20). Cameron presented the setting up of local government as follows: »We seek, then, the authority which according to tribal tradition and usage has in the past regulated the affairs of each unit of native society, which the people of the present generation are willing to recognize and obey« (1939, 97).[28] This statement exemplifies the process of »inventing traditions,« as Cameron shows how the British were looking for »practices« that »seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past« (Hobsbawm 1984, 1). The administrators needed a past to refer to in order to create stability through history. The Wahehe offered a history imagined as »tribal cohesion,« and Sapi Mkwawa was the first-born son of a prominent leader in the Wahehe's past. His belonging to a family made him the person the British were looking for. Hence, within both German colonialism and the British mandate, Mkwawa had an exceptional position because of the colonial politics of belonging.

A prominent figure within these politics was, as Anthony Kirk-Greene has emphasized, the district officer (DO). According to Kirk-Greene (2006, 13), the connection between the district officer and chief was pivotal, since »[t]he essence of indirect rule lay in the relationship between the DO [district officer] and the chief. The DO did not rule; the DO advised, the chief ruled, and the DO administered through the chief and his Native administration.«

In the British administrative organization, Sapi Mkwawa was chief for more than 20 years. To understand Mkwawa's role as chief it is helpful to consult a contemporary British publication. In 1935, Bruce Hutt, district

28 For Cameron's motivations in general terms, see Austen's (1967) article on questions of indirect rule and on leading British personalities in the Tanganyika territory.

officer of the Iringa District since 1932, and Gordon Brown, a leading British anthropologist, published *Anthropology in Action*. They wanted to offer an amalgamation of administration and science. In their book, they defined the role of the chief before colonization as »judge, maker and guardian of the law, the repository of wealth, dispenser of gifts, and leader in war« (Brown and Hutt 1935, 29). The most notable difference between this description and the position of the chief in the British administration was that the »native authority« was an integral part of the British system.

What did Mkwawa's work entail, and how did the district officer administer »through« him? Here I can give just a few examples. Reports from leading administrators of the Iringa District from 1930 to 1935 yield information about Sapi Mkwawa's work as chief. He travelled through the district and gave descriptions of the places that he visited, for example of the expected harvest. Furthermore, he installed sub-chiefs, who administered smaller unions within the district. According to the reports and other files, in this task he favored his own family when choosing men for administrative posts. Belonging was a large part of his own politics. In acting in this way, he was successful, in so far as most people seem to have accepted his personnel decisions, since the British administrators often failed to install their own and other's favorites in new posts.[29]

Another function of the chief was the collection of taxes. As with the installation of sub-chiefs, one can find evidence of the problems that arose with the British administrators. There is a letter where Sapi Mkwawa suggests a change to the tax system. He wanted to (re)install a flat tax for husbands with more than one wife. According to him, that would have been easier to collect. The British administrators rejected his proposal;

29 *Tanganyika*, Iringa monthly newspapers to Chief secretary (1930–1935), 11 June 1931, report about Mkwawa's travels, NA, FCO 141/177737; report about Mkwawa favoring his own family for sub-chief posts, 6 Jan. 1932, NA, FCO 141/177737. For Mkwawa's successful installation of family members who were widely accepted, see also, for example, Robinson to Provincial Commissioner, 20 Febr. 1940, TNA, Acc. 24, A2/32, Vol. I, fol. 61.

they did not see the need for a change.[30] This rejection is just one example of an unsuccessful attempt from the chief to gain influence on the administrative duties he had to carry out.

A striking example of how the British administration influenced politics on the ground was legislation. The chief signed regulations on the distribution of alcohol, among others, which was an oft-discussed topic during colonial rule.[31] Due to this, the British chose to implement unpopular rules »through« the chief. Acting as chief meant acting in between very different systems of belonging: British government, local people, and the chief's own family. With regard to Sapi Mkwawa, the position of chief was even more complex. According to Brown and Hutt, most people in Iringa disliked Mkwawa because he was a stranger to them; his long residence outside of Uhehe had »made his outlook too foreign for a tribal chief« (1935, 44). This did not correlate with the British aim to gain political stability through the continuity of tradition.

Sapi Mkwawa was awarded a silver King's Medal in 1936. The medal was a British reward for African chiefs (see the cover of this issue of the journal).[32] There is no hint in the files as to why Mkwawa received the medal, but it is reported that the British King George V bestowed it upon him on the occasion of his own birthday.[33] Thus, even if British administrators might not have especially supported the award, the medal had a performative meaning in terms of the British politics of belonging. While the archives reveal the troubles of everyday policy implementation,

30 *Tanganyika*, Iringa monthly newspapers to Chief Secretary (1930–1935), 4 Apr. 1934, NA, FCO 141/177737.

31 For example, native beer rules, 1940, TNA, Acc. 24, Iringa, A2/3, Native Affairs, fol. 45.

32 *Tanganyika Territory Gazette* XVII (36), Dar es Salaam, 23 June 1936. The King's Medal was inaugurated in 1919 by King George V; King's Medal for Native Chiefs (1919–1922), NA, MINT 20/651.

33 Native affairs, King's Medal for Native Chiefs and King's Certificate of Honours, TNA, Acc. 24, 42/34.

the medal symbolizes, perhaps precisely because of these everyday troubles, a successful collaboration between local and British governance.

To sum up, the position of chief during the British colonial period was fragile and contested.[34] It was characterized by competing local and familial systems of belonging, and was subject to the colonial politics of rule »through« the people. Reading one file from the archive very closely offers a more nuanced view of the conflict in question. Furthermore, the incident that took place in front of the Boma in 1940 shows how an individual subjected to colonization responded to the colonial politics of belonging with his own politics of belonging.

A colonial confrontation in 1940

There is no autobiographical description from Sapi Mkwawa about what happened in front of the Boma. There is an account of the scene in the archive in Dar es Salaam, but a more detailed version can be found in London. The British administrators had to write a report on any banishment or deportation (NA, CO 691/180). Reading »along the archival grain« the whole file in London offers a glimpse at the anxieties that Ranajit Guha so convincingly elaborated for British colonialists on the spot (1997).[35] They had to prove, testify to, or perform the justness of their decisions and seek the approval of otherwise potentially dangerous people on the ground. The file appears to follow the logic of an archive organized in chronological order, but it also happens to reflect the array of British professional hierarchies. At first, there are notes and letters from staff of the Colonial Office in London and from Governor Mark Young in Dar es Salaam. These are followed by a memorandum from Provincial Commissioner Cecil Mc Mahon, who did the final interview

34 There are, of course, more stories about the contested role of chiefs in the Tanganyika territory. See, for example, Lawrence Mbogoni's (2013, 42–56) research on Chief Makongoro (1894–1958) in the Musoma District.

35 I thank Richard Hoelzl for reminding me of Guha. Ann Laura Stoler claimed to analyze a colonial archive »along the archival grain« before reading against it (2002, 100). She then later offered a reading of Dutch colonial archives (Stoler 2009).

with the defendant and dismissed him. After this, we find a report from District Officer Innes Lowell Robinson, who made the decision on the dismissal, and finally there are several written statements from local (non-British) employees in Iringa. The report and statements are not dated; however, one statement refers to the incident as having happened »yesterday« (Patenani), so presumably the report and statements are from April 18.[36]

To come to the content, the »head messenger,« Tambatamba s/o Mubanga,[37] reported the following under oath to the British Assistant District Officer:

> At about 12 noon on the 17th April, I heard the bell ring and I found Chief Sapi standing at the door. He was very drunk. The District Officer told me to accompany Chief Sapi to his house in Iringa. I asked Chief Sapi to go with me. He refused and tears fell from his eyes. He said, »This is my country. I recognise no European whoever he may be. If the Germans take Dar es Salaam I will take Iringa.« (I understood this to mean that he would act as an ally of the Germans.)[38]

According to this statement, the chief was drunk and did not follow the advice he received to go home. Instead, he threatened the government and cried. The messenger went on to say that the chief spoke in Swahili, Hehe, the language of the Wahehe, and German.

Another clerk, Henry Paul, related what he had heard the chief say in Swahili, which was even more hostile toward the British: »*Ingekuwa kama Wadachi wamekamata Dar es Salaam nami ningejaribu kadiri niwesavyo kwa*

36 NA, CO 691/180/15.

37 S/o means »son of« and is included in some of the names. What is almost always noted is people's religion, which for Tambatamba was Christian, for Henry Paul Christian, and for Abdulrasul Patenani Islam. There is no information about the place of birth of the people that were interviewed, but they were probably all locals. For the different functions in administration and their meanings, see Lawrence, Osborn, and Roberts (2006).

38 NA CO 691/180/15.

Waingereza, ningejaribu kuwaua Waingereza walio hapa.«[39] This quotation articulates Mkwawa's threat that he would kill the British inhabitants of Iringa if the Germans took Dar es Salaam. A direct translation reveals a conditional threat in the subjunctive mood: »Had it been that Dar es Salaam had fallen under the Germans, I would have tried my best to eliminate the British found in this area.«[40] Henry Paul concluded his statement by saying that he was ashamed of the chief's behavior, but that the chief was very drunk. Another witness, Abdulrasul Patenani, put it on record that »He was very drunk. He answered me ›Verfluchthund‹ (filthy dog). *Hawa ni washenzi tu* (They are nothing but savages).«[41]

There are more statements in the archival file, taken under oath. Thus, according to several deponents, Sapi Mkwawa had threatened the British administration. However, most witnesses reported that he acted in a drunken state of mind, which could be understood as merely an excuse, especially since excessive consumption of alcohol was a much-debated issue in the colonial period, as I mentioned above. Just a few months earlier, Sapi Mkwawa had signed legal regulations for beer licenses.[42]

A detailed report was provided by District Officer Innes Lowell Robinson.[43] In his written perspective on the events of April 17, 1940, he emphasized that Sapi Mkwawa was »very intoxicated« and lurching about in front of the Boma. The chief

> at once became extremely abusive and said that he was not drunk and that if I wanted to quarrel with him he was ready to quarrel with

39 Ibid.

40 I thank Frank Edward for translating this sentence and Paul Kollman for making sure that I asked a native speaker for a more precise translation so that the subjunctive is transmitted properly.

41 NA CO 691 /180/15.

42 Native beer rules, 12.1.40, TNA, Acc. 24, Iringa, A2/3, Native Affairs, fol. 45.

43 Robinson was the 36-year-old son of a priest and had been educated at Cambridge. This was a common educational background for the leading administrators in Tanganyika (Kirk-Greene 1991, 308; 2006; Austen 1967).

> me. He then said that he was a Hehe and his father was Mkwawa, and that I knew what that meant and that he was not afraid of any European as the Hehe could fight.[44]

According to Robinson, Mkwawa had mentioned his father in order to highlight a genealogy of men who had the ability to »fight,« to which he belonged. Along with the recorded threat that he, Sapi Mkwawa, would kill the British in Iringa if the Germans reached the coast, Robinson provided the governor with serious reasons why he had to convict and sentence the chief. This decision was based on the »Deportation Ordinance« from 1921. According to the ordinance, it had to be proved under oath that the convict was »dangerous to peace and good order in any part of the Territory,« that he was »endeavouring to excite enmity between the people of the Territory and His Majesty« or, finally, that he was »intriguing against His Majesty's power and authority in the Territory.«[45]

The recorded testimonies were taken under oath; they report behavior that compromised »good order.« As this behavior is said to have taken place in front of the Boma, it could be assumed that Mkwawa was »endeavouring to excite enmity between« colonized and colonizers. As a result, Sapi Mkwawa and his family were exiled to Mwanza in the north of the mandate territory. He would never return; the British even refused a request for his corpse to be brought back after his death.[46] Today, his gravesite can be found in Kalenga, a small town close to Iringa.[47]

44 NA, CO 691/180/15.

45 Deportation Legislation, NA, CO 691/174/13. The legal text is attached to a letter from 19 Oct. 1939.

46 Ex-Chief Sapi and his Family, Apr. 1951, TNA, Acc. 24, Iringa, A2/19, Native Affairs, without page.

47 At the present stage, I cannot say whether Sapi Mkwawa was reburied; I have just seen a gravestone with his name written on it. Kalenga was the capital of the region the famous Mutwa Mkwawa led. For more information about the family, provided by a member of the family, see http://www.mkwawa.com/ (accessed June 12, 2016).

The banishment does seem to be an extraordinary outcome, as the British themselves had appointed Sapi Mkwawa chief and later honoured him for his work. This biographical sketch has already offered some possible explanations. To be chief meant fulfilling a contested and difficult role between the colonial administration and the needs and demands of the local people. That was especially the case within the system of indirect rule, which happened to be a very local mode of ruling based on the making of local traditions and of »tribes.«

John Iliffe, Ralph Austen, and Terence Ranger were some of the first historians to emphasize that the British »created« tribes. Iliffe wrote that »The British wrongly believed that Tanganyikans belonged to tribes; Tanganiykans created tribes to function within the colonial framework« (Iliffe 1979, 318; see also Austen 1967; and Ranger 1982). In current work, the political scientist Mahmood Mamdani considers the deconstructive power of the creation of tribes. He states that »unlike direct rule, indirect rule aimed at the reproduction of difference as custom, not its eradication as barbarism. Before managing difference, colonial power set about defining it« (2012, 44). Only »natives« could possess land and work in the administration, which, according to Mamdani (2012, 47–51), excluded migrants, divided societies into small entities and, therefore, disempowered the colonized people. As a consequence, the important element of indirect rule in this context is its attributes of differentiating, categorizing, and making forms of belonging.

The British government installed local chiefs from 1926 onward. When British administrators replaced the German system with their own, they tended to choose Africans who had resisted the Germans (Iliffe 1979, 330). Sapi Mkwawa's genealogy was promising in this regard. Returning to the report from District Officer Innes Lowell Robinson, it probably was not necessary for Sapi Mkwawa to remind Robinson who his father was, as this was one of the reasons why the British had chosen him to be chief. Be that as it may, it might nevertheless have been necessary for there was frequent rotation in most of the leading British administrative posts, and Robinson was a new district officer at the time; he had been in Tanganyika

since 1926, but he had arrived to take up his office in Iringa just the year before (Kirk-Greene 1991, 308).

In a nervous state of war in 1940, Sapi Mkwawa allied himself with the European enemy, at a time when Germany was the most serious threat to the British homeland. At least the British administrators chose to understand his speech in this regard. Mkwawa's son and grandson told me that he was fluent in German, disliked the British, and used to participate in military exercises with German settlers.[48] In 1919 and 1920, Ranger described Mkwawa as a leading promoter of *Beni ngoma*, a military dance that included German military positions and European clothing (1975, 5–6, 56–61; see also Michels 2009, 224–226). Therefore, it is likely that Sapi Mkwawa perceived himself first and foremost in terms of his sense of belonging to family, Uhehe, and a military culture. The region of Uhehe was, in Sapi Mkwawa's account, Wahehe land. At the same time, he had a colonial biography that included journeys to Rome with the abbot and Bavaria, where he lived for more than two years. Afterward, he was Akida in several areas of German East Africa. Hence, he crossed a lot of national borders in Europe, as well as colonial administrations and district borders in East Africa.

Mkwawa could look back upon more than 40 years of different European colonial practices. The British had tried to reinforce a system of belonging that was based on their interpretation of history and their construction of »tribes.« They installed Sapi Mkwawa as chief because his father had opposed German colonization. When they realized that Mkwawa's position as chief was weak because of his allegedly foreign behaviour, they felt free to dismiss him. The backdrop of war offered them an opportunity. The British administrators agreed with the sub-chiefs' recommendation to install Mkwawa's son Adam Sapi in his place. Therefore, Mkwawa's behaviour did not change the British way of constructing power through the »native« leaders from ruling families.

48 Interview with Is-Haka Mkwawa, 20 July 2015, Plymouth.

Concluding remarks

Sapi Mkwawa's life course reveals the deep entanglement of the histories of Germany, Great Britain, and Tanzania. German and British models of colonialism alike presented themselves as works in progress that tended to preserve the status quo that was in place before their occupation of East Africa. The Wahehe under Mutwa Mkwawa ruled Uhehe. European geographers originally characterized the Wahehe as the strongest »tribe« in that region, and German military research later strengthened that reputation. Both colonizing powers, Germany and, later, Britain, bolstered their power by constructing »tribes.« Sapi Mkwawa, the son of a major rebel against German colonialism, was hired by the German government and sent to Bavaria in order to keep him away from Uhehe. Afterward, the British installed him as chief to rule Uhehe. Both decisions were the result of thinking in terms of specific frameworks related to »native society,« »tribe,« and class, specifically in this case, his being a man from the region's ruling family. As this case study therefore shows, »belonging« in the early twentieth century had different implications than a hundred years before (see Levke Harders' article in this issue), at least outside Europe. The category of »tribe« was one of the major social frameworks in terms of belonging, and »native« was an attribute that included the category of race.

From a colonizer's perspective, ruling was organized through differentiation and categorization. To call this kind of rule a politics of belonging is just one, and surely a debatable, way of interpreting it. In the case of Sapi Mkwawa, I would like to argue, it helps to avoid making a distinction between a colonizer's agency and a colonized response to an act in terms of collaboration or resistance. Instead, we can see two corresponding, albeit competing, politics of belonging in an asymmetrical power relation, that is to say in a colonial situation.

The politics of belonging provides a framework for colonization, and colonizers could, at any time, use belonging—a shifting category for producing difference—to demarcate the colony. However, the politics of belonging were not exclusively colonizing politics, and they could result in change as well. In his agitation in front of the Boma, Mkwawa was a

principal actor within the »tensions of empire.« As for the making of diasporas (see Stefan Manz in this issue), doing colonialism was a process, which included conflicts and fighting as an integral part. When Mkwawa objected to the call to go home, he referred to himself as a Wahehe and a famous warrior's son. Thus, he acted out of the power of the politics of belonging, even if it did not benefit him directly. The intertwining of the organization of power in both the individual context of Mkwawa and that of the British administration may be one of the reasons for the family's political viability and achievements. After Sapi Mkwawa's banishment in 1940, the British administrators, working alongside local representatives, did not disempower the family but chose Mkwawa's son Adam Sapi Mkwawa to be chief. Mkwawa's recorded response to the installation of his son is revealing: »I am glad that my son, Adam, is taking my place. It is the same as if I were the Chief.«[49] Today Adam Sapi Mkwawa is a well-known figure in Tanzanian history as he became a member of the first parliament after independence.

49 Memorandum, NA CO 691/180/15.

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