

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

- Chaga (Chagga, Dschagga, Haya, Haya Chaga, Jagga, Wa-caga, Wachagga, Waschagga), Kichagga, Eastern Bantu language. (1, p262)
- Chaga (Caga, Enga, Tchaga, Tsaga) (2)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): enq

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- (-3.30/37.50)
- Principally located in northern Tanzania

1.4 Brief history: Bantu peoples (Chagga are a sub-culture) migrated to the area surrounding Mount Kilimanjaro around five to six hundred years ago.

- “The Chagga originated in the Taita region and eventually settled on the eastern, southern and western slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro.” (1)
- “Chagga chiefdoms traded with each other, with the peoples of the regions immediately surrounding the mountain [...] and also with coastal caravans. Some of this trading was hand to hand, some of it at markets. [...] Many chiefdoms had several produce markets largely run by women.” (3)
- “As far back into local history as the accounts go, Chagga chiefdoms were chronically at war with one another and with nearby peoples. Various alliances and consolidations were achieved through conquest, others through diplomacy, but the resulting political units were not always durable. [...] Presumably, the fighting between the chiefdoms was over control of trade routes, over monopolies on the provisioning of caravans, over ivory, slaves, cattle, iron, and other booty of war, and over the right to exact tribute. [...] As large as some of the blocs of allies became, at no time in the pre-colonial period did any one chiefdom rule all the others.” (3)
- “In 1886, Germany and Britain divided their spheres of influence in East Africa; Kilimanjaro was allocated to the Germans. Some Chagga chiefs became German allies and helped the Germans to defeat old rivals in other Chagga chiefdoms. [...] By the 1890s, all the Chagga had been subjugated.” (3)
- “The colonial government passed from German hands into those of the British in 1916. Arabica coffee remains a major cash crop produced locally. Since 1961, Tanzania has been an independent nation and, among other products, relies on coffee exportation for foreign exchange.” (3)
- “The political scene has changed in Tanzania from a single party in 1965 to multi-party politics in 1992. This has encouraged more Chagga to be politically active. There is an increasing cohesion of the Chagga people along party lines and a renewed sense of cultural identity.” (7)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

- “Initially (i.e., before the German conquest), various Chagga chiefdoms welcomed missionaries, travelers, and foreign representatives as they did traders; in the 1880s, however, when the Chagga gradually lost their autonomy, they became more hostile.” (3)
- “Taxes in cash were imposed to force Africans to work for Europeans from whom they could receive wages. A native system of corvée was expanded for the benefit of the colonial government. A handful of armed Germans successfully ruled a hundred thousand Chagga by controlling them through their chiefs. The chiefs who cooperated were rewarded with more power than they had ever known. The resisting chiefs were deposed or hanged, and more malleable substitutes were appointed in their stead.” (3)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- “If one passes from north-east to the south-western end of this belt, one could drive for 120 km through a closed “banana forest” containing about 225 million banana ‘trees.’” (11, p235)
- “Typical of the agrisilvicultural system of the Chagga home gardens is their multilayered vegetation structure [...] beside herbs (are) also trees, shrubs, lianas and epiphytes. Apart from some cultivated fruit trees, e.g. Avocado and Mango [...], most of the 82 encountered tree species are remnants of the former forest cover. Most widespread are Albizia schimperiana, Rauvolfia caffra, Cordia africana, Commiphora eminii and Marga- ritaria discoidea.” (11, p241)
- “Bananas form a dense (mean cover value 50%) upper shrub layer of about 4-6 m height and coffee trees a lower layer of 1,5-2 m.” (11, p241)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

- “Most of the population is concentrated at an altitude between 1000 and 1800 metres, with densities varying from 500 to 1000 people per kilometer squared in some areas.” (11, p235)
- The most recent census (2003) has the population of peoples on Kilimanjaro as over 1.3 million. About 850,000 of these people consider themselves Chagga. (8)
- Farms are between 2 ha and 0.5 ha. (11, p211)

2. Economy

- During the 19th century, the Chagga were primarily farmers and agriculturists, growing coffee beans and raising cattle. (1)

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- Bananas: Considered male property, but women can trade these in the markets with permission (3)
- Millet, maize, pawpaws (3)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- Beans (men’s property), beef (3)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

- Bows and arrows and spears were utilized during the chiefdom conflicts. Pistols and rifles were later introduced. (11)

2.4 Food storage:

- Not a major practice.

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- Women manage the trading markets, run the households and grow most of the annual vegetable crops (these were considered women's property) (3)
- Men and women have divisions of property, which includes types of food (3)

2.6 Land tenure:

- "In precolonial times, land was regarded as male property [...] Widows and women in other relationships to men could occupy, hold, and use land but could not obtain a transferable interest. That pattern of landholding continues..." (6)

2.7 Ceramics:

- "Pots were made of unfired clay and was used as a ritual objects [...] These enchanted vessels were part of a supernatural system of enforcement used to protect property, crops and land [...] The cursing pots were reported to have been in stable demand and could be loaned by their owners. Their shape was regular and the size varied but was never cumbersome. The pots were normally publicly deployed although illegitimate private uses were not unknown." (8)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- "There was a system of cattle lending whereby many households tended animals that were not their own. In return for caring for an animal, the borrower received the milk and the manure and, eventually, when the animal was slaughtered, was entitled to a portion of the meat." (3)

2.9 Food taboos:

- Most Chaga clans won't eat fish. Some don't eat meat or drink milk, but others do. (4, p189)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- None.

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- No average height given.

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

- No average weight measured.

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- No specific age is given. Instead, a training course called the shiga must precede the first menstruation. "This course covers the time from circumcision [...] to the lessons in connexion with the wedding and even to several rites during the first pregnancy and confinement which are accompanied by formalized instruction [...] Frequently, however, the maiden awaits her first menstruation in the house of her future mother-in-law. (4, p349)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- There is no specific given average age for the first birth.

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- "Chagga couples have an average of six children. Great importance is placed on having a son to continue the lineage." (7)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

- 3 years between births. This is in part to a postpartum sex taboo. It lasted at least until the child could walk and could go until the child is three years of age. (9)

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- No specific age is given. "Youths should not marry before they have grown a moustache and performed certain tests [...] the bride-price is only paid and accepted for a nubile girl." (4, p288)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- Divorce is possible, but is very uncommon.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- Very little to none
- "In pre-Christian days, polygynous marriage was legitimate. Over time, the churches have discouraged this practice, and monogamy (although sometimes in the form of a series of monogamous marriages) now prevails." (3)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

- "Bride-wealth was paid and an elaborate series of ceremonies held. Some of these ceremonies persist, but indigenous cultural forms are mixed with Christian rituals." (3)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- "In pre-colonial times land was regarded as male property, inherited patrilineally by males from males or transferred inter vivos by males to males." (3)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- "Parents of the Chaga tribe in Tanzania begin drilling their three-year-olds in the three classes of names that all family members have. By six years of age the children have been taught terms of address and new and elaborate manners." (5, p380)

- Marriage is virolocal, with couples living near or with the man's family. (3)
 - "The Chaga parent uses special methods for dealing with the crisis in his relations with his offspring [...] an attempt is made to destroy the nimbus of juvenile comradeship [...] (Parents) see the necessity of varying the instruments of control and of granting to their child an increasing amount of freedom." (4, p292)
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:
- "There is a prohibition on homosexual intercourse. If a man violates it, he may die. To ensure social continuity, he must have sex with women only." (10)
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):
- "Exogamous patrilineages are the basic building blocks of the kinship system." (3).
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?
- The husband is the recognized father.
 - "An initiated man is a socially procreative one, one who can marry and have children." (10)
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")
- "A woman is only closed when she is pregnant, she is at the height of her procreative power and her fertility. Chagga women say that the original ngoso, the original plug, the secret of the masculine control over procreative power, once belonged to them, before it was stolen from them by men." (10)
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?
- No. However, there is a period of preparation. "(Conception) must be controlled throughout by the harmonious and efficient co-operation of the young parents with their respective families." (4, p100)
 - "This development [...] is also a function of the tone of behavior in the family. Especially any dissension between the young couple and their parents results in serious deformities of the embryo." (4, p79)
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape
- Rape is an uncommon occurrence. (13).
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
- "Girls are taught to avoid poor suitors." (4, p189)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
- Yes. (4, p67)
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring
- Beginning in the 1970s, secondary-school girls began affairs with wealthier married men, who recompensed them with gifts of money. (9, p121)
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?
- If the mother dies, the husband's mother takes over the maternal duties. (4, p104)
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females
- The total population sex ratio is 0.99 males to 1 female. (13)
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades:
- No: "It is actually a substitutive taking over by the husband of the functions of the mother. This is done to divert upon himself the magical dangers threatening mother and child during the crisis of birth. In this extreme form, the custom is not known among the Chaga. But the father, although not allowed to be present at the birth, comes to the assistance of his parturient wife and defends the infant by means of prayers outside the hut." (4, p82)
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)
- Physical traits are not mentioned often.
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?
- Joking is not common because it may go too far and "lead to abusive language between two sections which should stand in the relationship of respect and authority to each other." (4, p331)
- 4.24 Joking relationships?
- Manly conduct demands detachment from the female sex and the younger age-groups [...] The only exceptions are the wife of the mother's brother and girls of one's own age, who have been taught not to revile men." (4, p331)
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations
- Patrilineal. (4)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- Marriage between cousins, siblings and half-siblings is prohibited. (4, p180)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- "Traditionally, the Chagga marriage ceremony was a long process, starting with betrothal proceedings and continuing long after the couple was married. Bridal payments were made over the wife's lifetime. Today, Christian couples are married in churches. There is much drinking and feasting throughout the marriage negotiations and celebrations." (7)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?
- "The first son is often called after the paternal grandfather, and the second after the maternal grandfather. Subsequent children are occasionally named after other ancestors, whom they are said to resemble in shape or character." (4, p297)
 - A young man chooses his new name, called a 'warrior name.' His peers call him by this new name. However, his parents continue to use his original name. (4, p312)
 - "This warrior name has a female equivalent. After marriage, a woman receives the 'name at the husband's'. This is her paternal grandmother's name, by which her age-mates call her; her parents continue to use her first name." (4, p312)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

- Marriage is preferred outside the community. "First, marrying outside the kinship group closely associates and allies two such groups. This has its political and economic advantages. Furthermore, the eradication of sexual interest among kindred makes economic co-operation between them smooth and profitable." (4, p182)
- Females are the gender that normally leaves to live in her husband's community.

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

- Parents used to negotiate marriages between couples. This still occurs, but is not a strict custom. (3)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

- This is not mentioned.

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

- This isn't known, but because chiefdoms are estimated to have consisted of between 500 and 2000 people. It's unlikely death rates were very high. (8)

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- Before the twentieth century, chiefdoms primarily resolved conflicts through warfare.
- "In pre-colonial times, warfare and raiding between rival chiefdoms and patrilineages was common. At the same time petty chiefdoms were campaigning with each other for local dominance. This usually involved the warrior age-set performing raiding exercises for cattle, for women for breeding and for men to be sold into slavery." (8)
- "In many parts of Africa, European colonials used whole communities, such as the Chagga, as sources of labor, raw materials, and agricultural production, sometimes with little concern for the human suffering that resulted." (9, p50)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

- "At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Orobo, a chief from the eastern side of the mountain, tried to conquer all the rest, and to put them in a tributary relationship [...] Orombo's cause was greatly enhanced by a strategic alliance he was able to make with a Chagga chiefdom some miles to the southwest of his own called Mamba. Mamba was a centre of ironworking. As the spear-making centre of the day it may well have served as his principal supplier of arms." (11, p49)
- In resistance to German rule, various groups used armed resistance. A German captain hanged two Chagga chiefs and seventeen around the beginning of the twentieth century. (9, p50)

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

- "Chagga chiefdoms traded with [...] the peoples of the regions immediately surrounding the mountain (such as the Kamba, the Maasai, and the Pare), and also with coastal caravans." (7)

4.18 Cannibalism?

- None.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- "The Chagga live within their home gardens in single dwellings; villages as such do not exist." (11, p235)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- The Chagga are a stationary people with little mobility.

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

- "Localized patrilineages formed the subunits within a district, and chiefdoms were composed of several districts. Chiefs were chosen within the chiefly lineage. Chiefs appointed the district heads. Lineages were led by the senior male, who was the ritual head, and also by a "spokesman," or political representative for external relations. [...] Since independence, party and government administrative units have replaced earlier chiefs and chiefly councils." (3)

5.4 Post-marital residence:

- "The husband later built a hut of his own, which he shared with his older sons, the wife keeping her own hut with unmarried daughters and very young sons. Households often had other single relatives (e.g., widows and widowers) attached to them. Today households are of variable composition. Many young men leave wives and children on their plots of land on Kilimanjaro while they search for salaried jobs elsewhere." (3).

5.5 Territoriality? (Defined boundaries, active defense):

- Most of the defense boundaries that had been created to provide protection against other chiefdoms are barely detectable today. These included war trenches, ditches and other earth foundations. "The most conspicuous of these defensive structures were stone fortifications, the best preserved being found at Kibosho." (8)

5.6 Social interaction divisions? (Age and sex):

- "Manly conduct demands detachment from the female sex and younger age groups."
- "Specific behavioral norms are maintained between various persons in Chagga society. These are based on a show of respect, non-hostility, or distance. A newlywed woman covers her head and squats in the presence of her father-in-law, thereby showing respect to and distance from him. The father-in-law is similarly required to avoid the daughter-in-law. A wife is required to always face her husband on approach lest she be accused of cursing him." (7)
- "Public show of affection through bodily contact between the sexes is considered highly inappropriate. Traditionally, men and women were socially segregated." (7)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

- "The joking relationship with young women facilitates the contact of potential marriage partners." (4, p331)

5.8 Village and house organization:

- “There are no nucleated villages on Kilimanjaro. Each household lives in the midst of its own banana-coffee garden, and the gardens, one next to another, stretch all over the mountain. The gardens are, for the most part, ringed with living fences that mark their boundaries.” (3)

5.9 Specialized village structures (men’s’ houses):

- “In the older areas of settlement, male kin tend to own and reside in contiguous homestead gardens, forming localized patrilineal clusters.” (3)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- People sleep on hides or beds. (12, p27)

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

- “A household, or several together, could break away from the localized patrilineage of which they had been members. There being no land shortage, they could, with the consent of the local chief or district head in the new location, establish themselves elsewhere and even found a new patrilineal cluster. [...] Thus, there are older and newer settlements on the mountain, older and newer patrilineal clusters, and substantial areas where the majority of residents are from unrelated households.” (3)

5.12 Trade:

- “In pre-colonial times, in addition to production for domestic consumption, the Chagga produced food, animals, and other items for trade and tribute. Having no domestic source of iron or salt, nor an adequate supply of clay, the chiefdoms of Kilimanjaro were dependent on trade with neighboring peoples for these essential materials. They needed iron for weapons and agricultural tools, salt and clay pots for cooking.” (6)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- “Pre-colonial organized groups were founded on kinship, locality, age, and gender. [...] A system of male age grades crosscuts lineages and districts. Women were also grouped in age grades. From the start of the colonial period, other organizational entities became prominent. The churches were first; later, a coffee cooperative emerged.” (6)
- “Younger people are required to show respect to the older generations. It is believed that the more senior a person is, the closer his or her contact with ancestors.” (7)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

- Many everyday activities have a spiritual significance. (3)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- Diviners are consulted. Spells, curses, amulets and witchcraft are present, for both good and harmful purposes. (3)

6.2 Stimulants:

- Not mentioned.

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

- There are rituals for all major events within a life-cycle. (3)
- “The body of the dead was initially buried in the hut, and later exhumed and most of the remains reburied in the banana grove. The skulls and sometimes the arm bones were kept above ground. A special place in the grove marked with dracaena plants was reserved for the skulls of the ancestors. This “skull grove” of ancestors served as best evidence of the right of a descendant to that particular banana garden.” (6)
- “A host of ritual practices reinforce the links between place and identity. The umbilical cords of newborns and the bodies of the deceased must be buried [...] in order to become ancestors.” (8)

6.4 Other rituals:

- Many caves on the mountain have significant spiritual significance. Some are the sites of rituals. (8)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- “Chagga legends center on *Ruwa* and his power and assistance. *Ruwa* is the Chagga name for their god, as well as the Chagga word for “sun.” *Ruwa* is not looked upon as the creator of humankind, but rather as a liberator and provider of sustenance. He is known for his mercy and tolerance when sought by his people. Some Chagga myths concerning *Ruwa* resemble biblical stories of the Old Testament.” (7)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- The elders tell stories and proverbs. “Other art forms include wood carvings (mostly utensils such as bowls, huge beer tubs, spoons, and ladles), basket weaving and musical instruments including wooden flutes, bells and drums.” (6)
- “Traditional Chagga instruments include wooden flutes, bells, and drums. Dancing and singing are part of almost every celebration. With exposure to other ethnic groups and Western culture, the Chagga have shown a liking for various types of music. These include Swahili songs produced by various Tanzanian bands, and West and Central African music and dance forms. Reggae, pop, and rap are popular with the youth.” (7)
- “The Chagga have rich oral traditions and have managed to record most of their history. They have many legends and songs. Proverbs are used to guide youth and convey wisdom.” (7)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- “Traditionally, before male youth were allowed to marry, the *Ngasi* (male initiation) ceremony, took place. A young man went to live in the forest. He received instruction in manhood, went hunting, and endured various ordeals. The *Shija* (female initiation) ceremony was performed after the young women were circumcised. All initiated young women were instructed in Chagga rituals, sexuality, procreation, and menstruation. Initiation ceremonies were abolished by the Germans, who controlled

Tanzania from 1885 to 1946.” (7)

6.8 Missionary effect:

- “The first mission station in the area, operational between 1885 and 1892, was an outpost of the British Church Missionary Society. They were ousted by the Germans and missionary enterprises continued through the Lutheran Leipzig Mission and the Catholic Holy Ghost Fathers. With an assimilative agenda, the Christianization programme was remarkably successful; indeed, at the time of Tanzanian Independence over 85 per cent of the Chagga considered themselves Christian.” (8)

6.9 RCR revival:

- Today, the indigenous beliefs and ceremonies are fused with Christian ideals and conceptions.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- Dead ancestors care how their descendants behave. (3)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- No. The dead were an everyday part of life. The Chagga believed there are three categories of ancestors in the spirit world.
- “The deceased held in living memory were known as the *warimu waischiwo*. The *warimu wa ngiinduka* differed in their being on the cusp of falling out of memory. These first two kinds of spirits could be brought into dialogue with the living through offerings. The final category of spirit consisted of those unable to take offerings known as the *walenge* (‘disintegrated’). These spirits were harder to engage with but were no less potent.” (8)

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

- None.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

- “The indigenous groups held ‘animistic’, although the term is useful only in very general application, beliefs concerning the landscape. For example, it was thought that the sacred spirit *Ruwa* was embodied in the mountain and the sun.” (8)
- “Christianity was introduced to the Chagga people in the middle of the nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, both Protestants and Catholics had established missions in the region. With the adoption of Western religions, traditional Chagga beliefs and practices have been reduced or adapted to the new Christian beliefs [...] Islam was introduced to the Chagga people by early Swahili caravan traders.” (7)
- “The major religious holidays of both Christianity and Islam are celebrated. The major Christian holidays are Easter weekend and Christmas. The major Muslim holidays are *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*.” (7)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

- No.

7.2 Piercings:

- Yes. (4, p298)

7.3 Haircut:

- Not specified.

7.4 Scarification:

- Yes. (4, p120)

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

- As soon as girls are able to walk, they wear an apron of beads around their hips to ‘keep away shame.’ (4, p182)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- This isn’t mentioned.

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- Young girls sometimes get small tattoo marks on the lower eyelids. (4, p182)

7.8 Missionary effect:

- “Christianity spread, and, eventually, most Chagga became, at least nominally, Christians. The churches, Catholic and Lutheran, were allocated religious control over different parts of Kilimanjaro. As part of their mission, they introduced schools and coffee-growing clinics. [...] Long-distance trade became a European monopoly. Coffee growing spread rapidly over the mountain.” (3)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

- This isn’t mentioned.

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

- “The position occupied by the eldest brother in the system of diffused authority which characterizes the Chaga kinship group, invests him with a power over his siblings which reflects that of his father.” (4, p168)

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- Levirate. (4, p376)

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

- The kinship terminology tends to be ‘classificatory.’ (4)

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- “Initiation rites are clearly an example of the intentional teaching of adolescents. During adolescent initiation, Chaga boys must endure the adults’ relentless repetition of ethical teaching.” (5, p381)
- Enurseis is a ground for divorce. (4)
- “The Chagga made (and continue to make) beer out of bananas and eleusine.” (3)
- “Parents could assign their children to others. Children could be “loaned” to relatives or “pawned” to others. Old women without children in their households could request a child of a young family. The third child was particularly suitable for such placement (as were all children beyond the first two). Children were deposited as pledges for debts. Girls were particularly desirable for this purpose, as the bride wealth for a girl could then be received by the creditor in lieu of the debt when the pledge child married.” (6)
- “In one of two celebrated instances, powerful women acted as chiefs. Mamka in Kibosho and Mashina in Mamba are two examples. Such women were usually widows of chiefs, ruling as a stop-gap until their own preferred masculine candidate could be manoeuvred into the chieftaincy. The real political power of women however was wielded through love affairs. Both Mamka and Mashina had attachments in high places.” (12)

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