POLITICAL CHANGE IN SIERRA LEONE:

A DYSRHYTHMIC PROCESS

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Political Science

. University of Houston

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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by

Gary Allen Duck

August, 1968

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ABSTRACT

With the arrival of political independence for many
African colonial states, increasing attention has been fo-
cused on analyzing social change and modernization among these
states. Many of the models used for such analysis are uni-
directional in nature, for they are based upon the assumption
that once social change has begun, all subsequent change will
be consistent with initial social change. Such models are
eurythmic in character. More recently, however, eurythmic
models have been challenged by the experience of several
African states. It has been observed that social change does
not always follow consistent, unidirectional patterns. In
such cases, one suspects that a dysrhythmic model of modern-
ization might be more applicable and fruitful for inquiry.
It is the hypothesis of this paper that Sierra Leone is one
such case where a eurythmic model of modernization is inappli-
cable. Indeed, social change has followed, and will most
likely continue to follow, a dysrhythmic process of change.

To test this proposition, historical and survey re-
search data on Sierra Leone were used. The conceptual frame-
work was borrowed from James Coleman and Carl Rosberg's book
entitled Political Parties and National Integration in Tropi-
cal Africa.

Prior to the nationalists' movement for political in-
dependence, tribal Chiefs gained influential political posi-
tions vis-a-vis the colonial regime. From 1951, the Sierra
Leone People's Party effectively integrated both modern and
traditional elements into a dominant political party in
Sierra Leone. It is doubtful that such patterns of change
will be challenged by those students (a presumptive political
elite) attending the University College in 1959. This conclu-
sion is based upon survey data generated by Arthur Porter which
reflect a tendency to accept the integration of traditional
and modern elements into a national political system.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

With the demise of European colonial rule in Africa
and with the African nationalists' acceptance of political
self-rule, increasing attention has been focused on studying,
analytically and analogically, the process of "modernization"
on that continent. Such studies have offered various notions
of modernization. For Lucian Pye, underdeveloped countries
are necessarily compelled to assimilate to a "world culture"
if they indeed wish to gain equal status and influence among
the more developed countries. This goal toward which Asian,
African, and Latin American countries are supposedly being
drawn

> is generally recognized as being the essence of modern
> life. It is based upon a secular rather than a sacred
> view of human relations, a rational outlook, an accept-
> ance of the substance and spirit of the scientific ap-
> proach, a vigorous application of an expanding tech-
> nology, an industrialized organization of production,
> and a generally humanistic and popularistic set of values
> for political life.[1]

Confining his discussion to the political system, Claude E.

Welch maintains that a modern political arrangement includes:

> (1) an increased centralization of power in the state,
> coupled with the weakening of traditional sources of
> authority;
> (2) the differentiation and specialization of political
> institutions;

(3) increased popular participation in politics, and
    greater identification of individuals with the
    political system as a whole.[2]

These concepts of modernization assume that "tradi-

tional" institutions are unable to contribute to the process

of change in the underdeveloped country. "Modern" and "tra-

ditional" socio-political patterns are assumed to be mutually

exclusive, neither finding integration into the other. Thus,

Welch concludes that "political modernization involves . . .

a dramatic shift in the locus of authority. Religious, tra-

ditional, familial, and ethnic authorities are supplanted

. . . by a single secular, national political authority."[3]

Similarly, Edward Shils contends that modernity "involves

breaking the power of the traditional interest, of chiefs,

sultans and priesthoods."[4]

Conceptual models of modernization which are based on

the assumption that change is unidirectional and that once

one dimension of political or social life changes other dimen-

sions will make complementary changes have been termed "eu-

rythmic"[5] by C. S. Whitaker. Specifically, the models sug-

gested by Pye, Shils, and Welch are based upon the assumption

that:

(1) Significant change in one sphere of activity (e.g.,
    economy) occasions corresponding and supportive
    change in another sphere (e.g., polity, cult).
(2) Within a given sphere of social activity, signifi-
    cant change in any one aspect of the activity (e.g.,
    normative, psychological, institutional, structural)

promotes consistent change in all or most other as-
pects.[6]

Moreover, "by assuming a necessary eurythmic process," one is

encouraging the "belief in the mutual exclusivity of 'modern'

and 'traditional' patterns" of political culture.[7]

To conceive of political modernization as exclusively

constituting the adoption of modern political patterns is to

make an assumption not always necessarily supported by em-

pirical data. Inquiry based on questionable assumptions en-

hances the likelihood that such inquiry will be inappropriate

to the subject upon which one is focusing, and thus result in

unfounded or erroneous conclusions. Recognizing the weakness

inherent in the eurythmic concept of modernization, Whitaker

suggests an alternative conceptual model which is likely to

be more relevant in some cases. He states:

> To hold . . . that novelty is indivisible or that an in-
> novation inevitably produces a chain reaction of mutually
> reinforcing consequences is to rule out the possibility
> of equivocal results. Innovations that come only in an
> "explosive package" cannot form stable mixtures or viable
> combinations with important elements of the encountering
> society. That such mixtures or equivocations are impos-
> sible is clearly the implication of postulating irrecon-
> cilability between "modernity" and "traditionality."[8]

Thus, Whitaker suggests that the process of modernization

might not occur eurythmically. Rather, it is possible, and

in some cases most likely, that political change will proceed

"dysrhythmically." Indeed, it is quite plausible for con-

siderable change to occur along one dimension without

entailing or requiring complementary change throughout the socio-political system.

The hypothesis of this paper is that the experience of Sierra Leone challenges the supposed universal application of the eurythmic model of modernization. By using both historical and survey data, the notion that socio-political change in Sierra Leone has been following, and will probably continue to follow, a dysrhythmic path will be examined. Of particular interest will be the functions which have been performed by traditional institutions and ideas in the process of change in Sierra Leone.

In reflecting upon the process of change in Africa, James Coleman and Carl Rosberg found socio-political patterns of change which can be used to support the assumptions underpinning the eurythmic and dysrhythmic models of modernization. Welch suggests that a nation which is modernizing increasingly centralizes its locus of power while traditional sources of authority dissolve. This pattern has been observed in several African states since their independence, particularly in Mali, Ghana, and Guinea. Therein the political elites have been preoccupied with an ideology emphasizing revolutionary, transformative, and antitraditional goals. Little or no leeway has been provided by the political elites for traditional institutions to contribute to modernization. Furthermore, the political leadership in each state has

attempted to mobilize the majority of the voting-age populace
behind the dominant political party, thus de-emphasizing the
development of competitive party politics. For Coleman and
Rosberg, these changes are indicative of a "revolutionary-
centralizing trend." While there is no isomorphic relation-
ship between these patterns of change and the eurhythmic
model as stated by Welch and others, there are rough similari-
ties. The eurhythmic model of modernization suggests that
revolutionary change occurs and, as we have seen, several
African countries have experienced such change.

An alternative set of patterns has been observed by
Coleman and Rosberg. In the Cameroons, the Ivory Coast,
Senegal, and Sierra Leone, the political elites have followed
more of a "pragmatic-pluralistic pattern" of change. These
African states have generally de-emphasized ideology while
incorporating an adaptive, pluralistic approach to achieve
their goals of modernization. These systems have remained
flexible in terms of roles to be performed by traditional in-
stitutions in national politics. And there has generally
been minimal effort to mobilize politically the voting-age
populace. It is the openness of these patterns which leads
us to consider them as roughly conforming to the dysrhythmic
model of modernization. Rather than basing political change
on a unidirectional model, the dsyrhythmic model's openness
allows for multidirectional change.

Method of Analysis

The process of socio-political change in any country is obviously too complex and comprehensive to survey adequately within the scope of this paper. Hence, we shall focus upon change in terms of two dimensions: first, the approach to modernization taken by the Sierra Leonean political elite from 1951 to 1961, and second, the possible impact, as reflected in the opinions and behavior of students, of the University College upon political change in that country.

In an attempt to support the argument that social change in Sierra Leone has been following the dysrhythmic pattern, a rough notion of the extent to which traditional institutions and norms have been incorporated into national politics must be obtained. To do this, we shall consider the ideological positions the political elite in the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), the dominant party in Sierra Leone since 1951, has taken regarding the traditional authority structures. Has the SLPP coopted the traditional structures in an effort to legitimize its political dominance, or has it excluded such structures from party politics? What criteria have been used for elite recruitment? Have the criteria been strictly "modern" or "traditional," or a combination of both? Moreover, has the political elite attempted to mobilize the voting-age populace behind itself, or has it

followed a more narrow course allowing less dominant parties
some room to actively participate in national politics?
These questions are generally of interest to us since it is
felt that answers to them, though partial, are indicative of
whether change in Sierra Leone conforms more to the eurythmic
or dysrhythmic model of modernization. We hope to suggest
answers to these queries by using Coleman's and Roseberg's
classificatory scheme.

Related to these questions of elite recruitment and
performance is the question of what groups and institutions
perform the necessary socialization functions in preparing
individuals for induction into national political roles. Es-
pecially in underdeveloped, tribally based systems is this
question of crucial significance, for frequently only a few
so-called "modern" agents of socialization have the sole re-
sponsibility for providing such training. In discussing
whether familial or extrafamilial institutions provide the
experience conducive for change, Robert Levine suggests that,

> It is ordinarily extrafamilial institutions that provide
> the new values and behavior patterns involved in polit-
> ical change. Especially in new nations, where family,
> local community, and ethnic groups are likely to be work-
> ing for the enforcement of this Mendelian law, political
> leaders striving for change will attempt to create na-
> tional institutions for the countersocialization of in-
> dividuals whose orientations have already been formed to
> some extent along traditional lines.[9]

One extrafamilial institution which could presumably operate
as a countersocializer is the western oriented educational

system within the underdeveloped country. Indeed,

> whether termed citizenship training, indoctrination, or,
> even more crudely, brainwashing, the objective of the ed-
> ucational system in all societies is to produce among the
> youth attitudes and dispositions that will support the
> society in which they live.[10]

The impact of the educational experience of the University College will be used as an indicator of whether it is supportive or disruptive of political change in Sierra Leone. Do the responses made by university students--a presumptive elite[11]--indicate ideological consistency or inconsistency with the actual political elite in Sierra Leone? Are the responses indicative of an integration of certain "traditional" beliefs with more "modern" values and attitudes? If the students in our sample can be accurately characterized as a presumptive political elite, what personal political aspirations do they manifest? Do they indicate a desire to become involved in party politics as Welch's eurythmic model of modernization suggests; or do they indicate a desire to become involved in politics at a different level? The answers to these questions bear directly on the ultimate question of whether political change in Sierra Leone conforms more with the eurythmic or dysrhythmic model of modernization.

Before proceeding, two qualifications are in order regarding the research strategy and data to be used. As indicated above the intention here is to view the university experience as affecting, both directly and indirectly,

students' political opinions and attitudes. This intention

is based upon an assumption supported by empirical data de-

rived from other studies. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba

have found that "the uneducated man or the man with limited

education is a different political actor from the man who has

achieved a higher level of education."[12] This proposition is

empirically supported with data generated by their cross-

polity survey, which yielded the following uniform (in the

five nations) relationships:

(1) The more educated person is more aware of the impact of government on the individual than is the person of less education;

(2) The more educated individual is more likely to report that he follows politics and pays attention to election campaigns than is the individual of less education;

(3) The more educated individual has more political information;

(4) The more educated individual has opinions on a wider range of political subjects; the focus of his attention to politics is wider;

(5) The more educated individual is more likely to engage in political discussion;

(6) The more educated individual feels free to discuss politics with a wider range of people. Those with less education are more likely to report that there are many people with whom they avoid such discussions;

(7) The more educated individual is more likely to consider himself capable of influencing the government; this is reflected both in responses to questions on what one could do about an unjust law and in respondents' scores on the subjective competence scale.[13]

Obviously these responses resulted from a cumulation of many

variables, among them the differences in educational experi-

ences. But one cannot discount altogether early familial

experiences. It is in this regard that our study is limited, for we are unable to assess, except in an aggregate way, the impact of earlier experiences.[14] Moreover, it is entirely possible that the dispositions and values acquired through earlier socialization experiences in the tribal family have been reinforced by the experiences encountered while attending the University College. While recognizing these several possibilities, we shall frame our discussion in terms of the concept of socialization, attempting to obtain an assessment of the students' ideological dispositions as well as their inclinations to participate politically in the national polity.[15] In so doing, we can obtain an estimate of the impact of one so-called "modern" agent of change, and thus draw conclusions as to the universal application of a eurythmic model of modernization.

The second qualification concerns the attempt to measure two empirically distinct phenomena in terms of the same model using different types of data. As indicated above, we are attempting to analyse, by using Coleman's and Rosberg's scheme, the role which has been played by "traditionalism" in the process of change in Sierra Leone. We are focusing on the political elite of the SLPP and a potential elite which was attending the University College in 1959. There are certain weaknesses in using different data to analyse our two topics, one of which is attempting to draw

comparative conclusions regarding these foci. Hopefully, however, this exploratory study will yield pertinent conclusions as to the validity of a eurythmic approach to modernization.

The Research Instrument and Data

To analyse the impact of traditional authority patterns and values on political change in Sierra Leone, we shall draw upon secondary sources. Principally, Martin Kilson's comprehensive study, Political Change in a West African State, will be used. Also to be used are the following sources: Five Elections in Africa by W. J. M. Mackenzie and Kenneth Robinson; Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa by James Coleman and Carl Rosberg; Sierra Leone by Roy Lewis; and Sierra Leone Inheritance and A Short History of Sierra Leone both by Christopher Fyfe.

For analysis of the impact of the University on political change in Sierra Leone, survey data generated by Arthur T. Porter in 1959, while teaching at Fourah Bay College, shall be used. Porter used a questionnaire (See Appendix I) administered by himself to a sample of 204 (out of 328) Nigerian and Sierra Leonean students (for our purposes, only the Sierra Leonean students shall be considered) majoring in either art, economics, or science. Apparently no attempt was made to obtain a representative sample of students since students majoring in theology, education, and

applied science were excluded from the sample. Hence, the data will be employed in a strictly descriptive sense.

Coleman and Rosberg maintain that one dimension of political change which serves to differentiate African political systems is the character of ideological commitment to modernization goals. Here, the attempt will be made to tap student opinions for the scope and tempo of their modernization objectives as well as their commitment to severing an "unbalanced dependence on [the] West."[16] If it can indeed be shown that this sample of students manifested a certain tolerance of traditional structures and values, then some insight into the political demands these individuals are likely to make after graduation will be gained. If the hypothesis regarding the integration, by the students, of certain "modern" and "traditional" beliefs and values, is correct, then, barring any severe change in political or social circumstances, one would suspect that the political demands made would not be inconsistent with the pattern of change which has been occurring in Sierra Leone since 1951.

In terms of political participation, Coleman and Rosberg have observed that there are distinctive patterns manifested in both the pragmatic-pluralistic and revolutionary-centralizing systems. For the former, minimal emphasis is placed on political mobilization and commitment to the political party. Both direct and indirect political participation

are acceptable. The latter system, however, stresses political mobilization and popular commitment to the political party. And, direct political participation in the party is stressed. Therefore, an attempt will be made to ascertain the nature of political commitment manifested by the respondents. Having done this, one should be able to estimate whether the sample of respondents conforms more to the pragmatic-pluralistic pattern or the centralizing-revolutionary trend.

Thus, by using both sources of data in attempting to present a tentative picture of the political interests and aspirations reflected by the samples of respondents, it can be determined whether political change, along the dimension of student opinion and behavior, tends to conform more to the pragmatic-pluralistic pattern or the centralizing-revolutionary trend.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Lucian W. Pye, "Democracy, Modernization, and Nation Building," Self-Government in Modernizing Nations, ed. J. Roland Pennock (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 15.

[2]Claude E. Welch (ed.), Political Modernization: A Reader in Comparative Political Change (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1967), p. 7.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Edward Shils, Political Development in the New States (The Hague: Mouton and Company, 1966), p. 8.

[5]It is important to note that the terms "eurythmic" and "dysrhythmic" are not synonymous with "smooth" and "rough," or "peaceful" and "violent." In the present discussion, "eurythmic" (consistent and supportive) change means further change toward the characteristics of the society from which the original change derived. C. S. Whitaker, Jr., "A Dysrhythmic Process of Political Change," World Politics, XIX (January, 1967), 192.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid., 193.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Robert Levine, "Political Socialization and Culture Change," Old Societies and New States, ed. Clifford Geertz (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), p. 301.

[10]James S. Coleman (ed.), Education and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 23.

[11]Dwaine Marvick and Philip Foster argue that university students (or students at any level) with their exclusive education in underdeveloped countries will indeed be inducted into the socio-political elite after graduation. See Philip Foster and Reni P. Clignet, "Potential Elites in Ghana and the Ivory Coast: A Preliminary Comparison," American Journal of Sociology, LXX (November, 1964), 349-62 and Dwaine Marvick, "African University Students: A Presumptive Elite," Education and Political Development, ed. James S. Coleman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 463-97.

[12]Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 379.

[13]Ibid., pp. 380-81.

[14]By reviewing the intensity and breadth of impact of colonialism in Sierra Leone, we possibly can contrast and compare very roughly the character of pre-university experiences of the different tribal groups in our sample. It is impossible, however, to ascertain the impact of colonialism and modernity on individual respondents in the sample.

[15]Somewhat related to the question of the roles of various institutions in political socialization is Almond and Verba's statement that "numerous other factors intervene between . . . earliest experiences and later political behavior that might greatly inhibit the impact of the former on the latter. Such basic dimensions of political behavior as the degree of activity or involvement in politics or the individual's partisan affiliation seem to be best explained in terms of the later experiences." Almond and Verba, The Civic Culture, p. 324.

[16]James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (eds.), Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 5.

CHAPTER II

SIERRA LEONE POLITICS: SEVERAL PRE-WAR

AND POST-WAR PATTERNS

Pre-War Years

There is much in history to suggest possible explana-
tions of current events. By looking to the past one can
juxtapose seemingly relevant occurrences with current ones so
as to increase the comprehensiveness of understanding. For
this reason, we shall briefly review several features of
Sierra Leonean colonial history.

Modernization of the Chiefs'
political power

Assuming that all men have legitimate claims to polit-
ical self-determination, British Colonial administrators im-
plemented a policy of "indirect rule" in Africa. Theoreti-
cally, "indirect rule is the method of local colonial
administration through the agency of Chiefs who exercise
executive authority."[1] While the socio-economic and polit-
ical consequences stemming from this policy varied among
colonies, for Sierra Leone this policy initiated the process
by which Chiefly authority and power were modernized. By
inducting African Chiefs into a cash economy, provision was

made for an economic power base from which they could, at the national level, command respect and wield political influence.

Upon declaring a Protectorate over the Sierra Leonean hinterland in 1876, Great Britain instituted judicial and administrative procedures for governing new economic relations in this area. With the growth of contractual relations between African and European, and with the development of a new mode of land usage, some means had to be created to handle problems surrounding these changes. The Protectorate Ordinance of 1896 decreed the creation of three types of Courts: The Court of the Native Chiefs, the Court of the District Commissioner and Native Chiefs, and the Court of the District Commissioner. This Ordinance provided Chiefly authorities with a role in influencing the impact of socio-economic change.

Within three decades, patterns of socio-economic change necessitated administrative changes which enhanced even more the role of traditional authorities as mediators of change. With the influx and outflow of marketable goods, the cash nexûs increased in importance for Protectorate Africans, particularly Chiefs. One consequence of additional emphasis on the cash economy was that the British required traditional authorities to perform "regulating" and "distributive" functions in addition to the regular "extractive" ones.[2] Through an increase in the scope and depth of socio-economic functions conducted by Chiefs, additional legitimacy was imputed to the

authoritative role played by Chiefs in facilitating social change.

To organize and rationalize these new functions, the Colonial administration, in 1937, instituted the Native Authority system, based upon the following principles:

(1) the establishment of separate financial institutions, known as Chiefdom Treasuries, for each unit of administration;

(2) the grant of tax authority to each Chiefdom unit of administration; and

(3) authorization of Paramount Chiefs and other tribal authorities to enact by-laws and issue orders in pursuance of social services and development functions.[3]

Of these three principles, the granting of a taxing authority to Chiefs was especially important, for it provided the opportunity for them to accumulate a power position based upon wealth while retaining their traditional authority and influence. According to Martin Kilson,

As a group they [the traditional elite] claimed a disproportionate share in modern social change, owing largely to their role in local colonial administration. Their position enabled them to retain traditional authority while simultaneously pursuing wealth and power in the modern sector of colonial society. Among the sources of new wealth available to Chiefs were (1) direct money payments by governments, (2) tax extortion, (3) salary payments by Native Administrations, and (4) the commercialization of Chiefs' customary economic rights.[4]

While the sociological and political consequences resulting from these changes were many, of particular importance was the development of an "ambivalence toward traditional authority."[5] Having attained a highly competitive economic position vis-a-vis the peasantry, peasants viewed with

disgust the Chiefs' predominant power. Frequently, this dis-

gust was manifested in the revolt of peasants against tradi-

tional rulers and authority. During such revolts, however,

demands for change were in terms of ameliorative rather than

revolutionary change. This ambivalence toward Chiefly au-

thority, according to Kilson, "is likely to be one of the

crucial factors in local African society that make for a

stable, non-revolutionary pattern of political development."[6]

Indeed, one pattern which ran throughout recent Sierra Leonean

colonial. history was the maintenance of traditional legitimacy

by the Chiefs while nationalizing their political influence.

    With the growth of an educated, economically mobile,

and politically articulate African elite during the first

several decades of the twentieth century, additional social

changes were to occur under the right conditions. The develop-

ment of this "nascent" elite, however, did not occur hap-

hazardly. As Kilson notes,

> European decisions on where to locate schools, planta-
> tions, agricultural extension services, railways, and
> other modern enterprises in African colonies determined
> which tribal, regional, and religious groups would rise
> to the top of African society.[7]

Not only did particular tribal regions of Sierra Leone experi-

ence greater impact from colonialism than others, namely the

Mende and Creole regions, but groups within such regions en-

joyed differential treatment. When the Anglican Church Mis-

sionary Society established Fourah Bay College in 1827 (now

University College), Creoles were first to gain admission to the College. Since then, Creoles have dominated the Register.[8] In the Protectorate, the Mende gained the advantage of Western education from early colonial imposition. Both groups subsequently realized greater occupational, social, and political advantage (though the Creoles have since lost much of their original political power) than other Sierra Leonean tribal groups.

As the cadre of educated, "westernized" Africans grew in number and group-consciousness, the colonial regime was increasingly perceived as an impediment to upward economic and political mobility. For the nascent elite to emerge as a ruling middle class, it had to effect two changes:

(1)   replace the expatriate ruling oligarchy . . . in the modern sector of society and,
(2)   appropriate for itself the prestige of the traditional elite as the most legitimate authority in the eyes of the black masses who still reside[d] largely in traditional society.[9]

It was in regard to this second change that the traditional elite gained an additional foothold in national politics. Many of the elements within the politically ascendent middle class were directly related through kinship ties with tribal Chiefs. As Table I reflects, a large proportion of the legislative candidates running in 1957 from Protectorate constituencies had Chiefly kinship ties. Special note should be taken of the predominance of such ties amongst SLPP candidates.

The political and sociological consequences of these ties are summarized as follows by Kilson:

TABLE I[10]

CANDIDATES WITH CHIEFLY KINSHIP TIES IN
PROTECTORATE CONSTITUENCIES IN THE 1957
GENERAL ELECTION IN SIERRA LEONE

Party	Total Number of Candidates	Candidates with Chiefly kinship ties				
		Southwestern Province (21)[1]	Southeastern Province (20)[1]	Northern Province (23)[1]	Total	Per Cent of Number of Candidates
SLPP	25	7	4	7	18	72
UPP	6	2	0	0	2	33
Independents	33	5	10	3	18	55
Total	64	14	14	10	38	59

[1]Figures in parentheses denote number of candidates in each province.

They [the new elite] were thus disposed to assist Chiefs in making the transition from traditional to modern society while at the same time upholding the traditional authority of Chiefs. The fact that the kin of Chiefs [had] become political leaders in emergent African societies [was] itself linked to the greater opportunities Chiefs had to take advantage of social change. Their

favored status under colonial administration and the
wealth they derived from it enabled traditional rulers
to provide their kin with the best education available.
In the Sierra Leone Protectorate and elsewhere in Africa
the educated kin of Chiefs were among the first African
professionals and the first senior African members of the
colonial civil service. From these preferred positions
they readily moved into nationalist political leadership.[11] /)

Kilson continues:

The nationalistic new elite, in its attempt to secure mass
political support beyond the urban centers of its own ori-
gin, normally accommodated its political organization,
methods, and policies to the strategic position held by
Chiefs in local society.[12] } 2_

The character of Sierra Leonean
and British relations

The changes made during the Colonial era influenced

who became involved in the "politics of independence." For

the case of Sierra Leone, tribal Chiefs and western educated

Africans performed crucial roles for political change. The

era also contained events or experiences which partially de-

termined the character of the nationalists' drive for indepen-

dence. It is this second topic, the character of nationalists'

demands, which we want briefly to focus upon at this time.

What were the boundaries within which political and social

participation occurred during the colonial period? What were

the political demands made by Africans prior to independence

in April, 1961? We do not want to suggest definitive answers

to these queries. Rather, by reviewing several historical

events, we hope to ascertain several common threads with which

the events can be tied together.

As early as 1863, two Creoles served in the Legislative Council as representatives of the Creole merchant community in the Colony. Between this date and 1924, the African element in the Council grew in size as well as in occupational representation with the first professional African, Sir Samuel Lewis, a lawyer, being appointed in 1882. During this time span, Chiefs obtained representation. With the increasing presence of articulate and demanding Africans, the British allowed various interests some political leeway for articulating their interests. Also of some importance for subsequent socio-political change is the way most Africans perceived their political role, which is best expressed by Sir Samuel Lewis' words:

> Unlike the Unofficial Members in some of Her Majesty's
> Colonies, those in Sierra Leone [did] not study to oppose
> any and every measure proposed by the Government, but
> rather to give it frank support whenever they [could]
> honestly do so.[13]

While the African merchants recognized, at a relatively early date, their mutual interests <u>vis-a-vis</u> the Colonial regime and, accordingly, organized to gain representation, they were not alone in this endeavor. The Carpenters' Defense Union, the first trade union which was founded in 1895, initiated the growth of unionism in Sierra Leone (although it was during the Post-World War I era that unionism made its great surge forward).[14] Coinciding with two railway workers'

strikes in 1919, the Sierra Leone Railway Skilled Workmen
Mutual Aid Union was founded. The formation of these unions
and the conduct of strikes educated Africans to their com-
munity of interests, a prerequisite to effective political
action. An additional consequence of these events was the
recognition by the educated elite of common grounds upon
which it could cooperate with the urban labor force.

The urban poor was not to be excluded from these
trends toward organizing for political and social change.
The 1920's also saw the development of a variety of voluntary
or mutual-aid associations, all manifesting different polit-
ical interests. While the labor unions and professional in-
terest groups supported candidates for local elections to the
Freetown Municipal Council (a government council which con-
tained elected Africans since its founding in 1895) usually,
the voluntary associations "gained much of their political
consciousness and experience mainly through anomic acts such
as riots, looting and arson."15 '*b*'

Similar political changes were occurring in the Pro-
tectorate during the 1920's with the emergence of an educated
elite aware of a need to influence the behavior of the coloni-
al government. A distinctive feature of the Protectorate
elite was its kinship connections with the traditional social
structure. With the "modern" economic power base and the
experience of a Western education, traditional rulers were

capable of assuming positions in the emergent social and political system. Probably crucial for subsequent social change in Sierra Leone was that,

> The colonial government encouraged this attitude [that is, having acculturated Chiefs involved in emergent sectors of the system] in hopes that Chiefs who were acceptable to educated Africans would have a moderating influence and forestall precipitous demands. From the 1920's onwards, this policy shaped every facet of political development in the Sierra Leone Protectorate.[16]

The character of political demands made varied between groups. The urban poor, for instance, actually "did not make clear-cut demands upon the colonial regime."[17] Though mutual aid associations were organized to benefit their members during crises, it was through anomic political actions that they eventually gained political consciousness and political influence. For the professional associations, political demands were more specific and articulate. According to Kilson, these associations and organizations petitioned "to modify the imbalance in social and political power between Africans and the imported oligarchy of government officials, technicians, private entrepreneurs, and missionaries."[18] An even more fundamental and specific change sought by the Sierra Leone branch of the National Congress of British West Africa was "eventual transformation of the colonial system into a 'national' system."[19]

It was during the pre-World War II years that the traditional elements gained access to national politics. By

viding favorable economic and administrative positions to
efs, the colonial regime assisted the former in "moderniz-
j" their political legitimacy while retaining Chiefly au-
ority. Moreover, being favored with a crucial role in the
sh economy provided Chiefs with the necessary finances to
ucate their male offspring. As the colonial system was
ricanized and as African intellectuals petitioned increasing-
 for change, the educated Africans, with their traditional
es, acquired leadership roles. By having such connections
th the emergent elite, Chiefly authorities were able to
lay an influential role in nationalist politics.

litical Parties in Sierra
eone: The Post-War Era

The 1947 constitutional revisions changed the com-
lexion of the African unofficial majority in the Legislative
ouncil, for these changes awarded Protectorate Africans a
ajority of representation. It was upon these changes that
onditions developed for organizing two nationalist politi-
al parties, The National Council of the Colony of Sierra
eone (NC) and The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). The
C was predominantly a Creole organization, coopting several
olitical and semi-political associations with principally
reole members. The SLPP combined several Protectorate po-
itical associations for an organizational base. While sub-
equent conditions led to the formation of other parties,

amely, the United Progressive Party (UPP), a Creole-led op-
osition party, and the People's National Party (PNP), a
omewhat more radical party led by Albert Siaka Stevens, the
LPP acquired a dominant position in 1951 and sustained it
nto the early 1960's. This dominant leadership position is
a justification for focusing more thoroughly and systematical-
ly upon the SLPP, than the other parties, in attempting to
apply Coleman's and Rosberg's conceptual scheme of social
change. Where relevant, the other Sierra Leonean political
parties will be included in the discussion.

The political ideology of party
politics in Sierra Leone

Since Coleman and Rosberg do not attempt an explicit
definition of ideology, one can only infer a meaning from
their general discussion. For them, ideology apparently con-
sists of "an organization of opinions, attitudes, and values--
a way of thinking about man and society."[20] Coleman and Ros-
berg suggest that when focusing upon social change in African
states, one should attempt to distinguish political party
systems in terms of ideological preoccupation, the character
of beliefs concerning the "scope, depth, and tempo of moderni-
zation objectives," and commitment to nationalist objectives.[21]
To assess ideological beliefs and values regarding moderniza-
tion in Sierra Leone, we shall focus upon several features of
party politics during the 1951-1961 decade.

In the tradition of a pragmatic approach to social problems, Sierra Leonean political parties did not espouse a doctrinaire ideology of modernization. The SLPP desired and promoted the "political, social and economic emancipation of the people" in Sierra Leone.[22] Similarly, the PNP worked for "the rapid advancement of the economic, educational, social and cultural development of the colony."[23] These objectives were moderately expressed and pragmatically sought by Sierra Leonean political leaders. The lack of a doctrinaire stance on modernization is reflected by the SLPP's conservative view of social change, "a view which considers as desirable and necessary the integration of as much as possible of traditional authority patterns into the modern social-political system."[24]

The criteria generally used for political elite recruitment are indicative of the "pluralistic, adaptive" character of Sierra Leonean party politics. From the data presented in Table II on the occupational distribution of Sierra Leonean legislators in 1960, it appears that occupational and tribal positions had an important bearing upon winning the elections. Concentrating specifically upon the distribution of these criteria in the SLPP, we see that professionals and businessmen constituted 54 per cent of the SLPP legislators in 1960. Tribal officials constituted the remaining 46 per cent. These data indicate that as of 1960,

TABLE II[25]

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SIERRA LEONEAN LEGISLATORS, 1960

Occupation	SLPP (39)	Alliance (6)	IPP (4)	UPP (1)	Nominated members (2)	Total (52)
Professional						
Lawyer	2	2	0	1	0	5
Doctor	2	0	0	0	0	2
Druggist	2	1	0	0	1	4
Teacher	5	0	1	0	0	6
Accountant	0	1	1	0	0	2
Politician	0	1	1	0	0	2
Total	11	5	3	1	1	21
Business						
Produce merchant	2	1	0	0	0	3
Importer	1	0	0	0	0	1
Transporter	1	0	0	0	0	1
Trader	4	0	0	0	0	4
Hotel owner	2	0	0	0	0	2
Manager	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	10	1	0	0	1	12
Other						
Clerk	3	0	1	0	0	4
Civil servant	2	0	0	0	0	2
Native administration official	1	0	0	0	0	1
Chief	12	0	0	0	0	12
Total	18	0	1	0	0	19

at the legislative level, the key to electoral success con-

sisted of having either a "modern" or a "traditional" occu-

pational status, or some combination of both. Political re-

cruitment during this period, therefore, served to indicate

that social change had tended to follow a pluralistic-prag-

matic path rather than a revolutionary path.

Another dimension of political ideology of interest

to us is the commitment of Sierra Leonean political leaders

to African nationalist objectives. Here again we do not see

Sierra Leone tending toward the revolutionary-centralizing

trend. Rather, we see reflected in several events a pragmatic,

adaptive orientation toward such objectives. The SLPP admitted

quite early the need to attract foreign investment and capital

if Sierra Leone was to modernize. According to Sir Milton

Margai, his government wanted

> to look first of all to . . . old friends. There [were]
> all too many offers from other sources which we would
> [have preferred] not to encourage as long as . . . old and
> proven friends [were] prepared to stand by us and help
> us.[26]

Implied in this statement is a definite propensity to first

look to Great Britain and the West for assistance before so-

liciting it elsewhere. As the British were preparing to hand

the power of self-government over to the Sierra Leoneans, the

former "desired to maintain certain financial and military in-

terests under the post-colonial regime, and the African polit-

ical elite recognized this as legitimate."[27] Unlike Ghana

and other African countries, Sierra Leone has been prepared

to align, when practical, with the West. John Karefa-Smart,

minister of external affairs in 1960, stated in regard to

alignment with the West that his policy does not mean that,

> Sierra Leone must toe the line of any particular Great
> Power or bloc of Powers. Whenever we are invited to take
> sides, we must objectively consider every such proposal
> and only decide to align our sympathies one way or the
> other or remain neutral after carefully weighing the pros
> and cons of the effect which any particular alliance will
> have on our country as a young State.[28]

While others have made similar statements, Kilson still main-

tains that the "SLPP government has thus far pursued a policy

approximating alignment with the West through Britain."[29]

The moderate approach of nationalist political lead-

ers in working for independence, and the desire to align with

the West, when practical, for economic and military assist-

ance, are consistent with the SLPP's method of handling ex-

patriate personnel after independence. Rather than attempt

to "Africanize" all governmental and administrative positions

at one time, most Sierra Leonean decision-makers took a more

pragmatic approach. Wanting to modernize, the political elite

decided to retain many expatriates in their colonial posi-

tions. The emphasis of the SLPP was in terms of "rather

heavy reliance upon such personnel in administrative and

technical posts and as advisers in policy making."[30] The

exception to this policy was that advanced by the PNP. Some-

what similar to Ghana's position on the use of such personnel,

the PNP proposed a policy of rapid Africanization of all administrative posts. The argument made by these leaders was the employment of expatriates reduced Sierra Leone's freedom and independence. Hence, the PNP was not as enthusiastic about the policy implemented by the SLPP as others have been.

Popular political participation
in Sierra Leone

The popular mobilization and commitment of Sierra Leoneans to a single political party was not a feature of party activity in Sierra Leone. Except during political crises (e.g., the 1955-56 tax riots supposedly spurred relatively high levels of party enthusiasm and activity during the 1957 elections), both leaders and followers manifested little interest in organizing a mass political party or participating in party politics. The election and voter registration data available for 1957, however, are indicative of a relatively high level of disinterest. During that year, there were 495,000 registered voters available to vote in the general election. Of this number, only 165,000 (33 per cent) Sierra Leoneans voted.[31] This inactivity is especially important when one considers that the 1957 election can "be viewed as an institutionalized crisis."[32] Even at the time of independence, in 1961, Sierra Leone had approximately 1,000,000 qualified voters, of which only 150,000 were reported to have been enrolled in a political party.

This apathy among both the political elite and the populace is directly related to the several historical trends reflected by Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone approached the "politics of independence" with relatively moderate demands which were articulated through a party arrangement consisting of traditional and modern structures.[33] It was particularly the SLPP's technique to employ traditional authority structures as communication channels for expressing its political platforms. Moreover, the SLPP used Chiefs to line-up (i.e., coerce) party votes during elections. The availability of these traditional apparatuses made it unnecessary to create an extensive party structure for mobilizing party support. In fact, the use of such structures contributes to the impression that Sierra Leonean party activity centered principally around winning elections, particularly during crisis periods, rather than around organizing one mass political party from which continuous support could be derived by the regime.

Several Political Patterns Reflected by Sierra Leone: A Conclusion

The historical events thus far presented ·support the belief that social change in Sierra Leone has conformed more to a dysrhythmic than to a eurythmic process of change, for it has experienced a pluralist political tradition. Rather

than attempt to abolish the tribal political arrangement,
Great Britain incorporated Chiefly authority structures into
its colonial arrangement. Beginning around 1900, Chiefs be-
gan performing regulatory and distributive functions in ad-
dition to the usual extractive ones. A result of this
strategy was that Chiefs were able to modernize their au-
thority base by accumulating great wealth and influence while
retaining their traditional authority. This economic advan-
tage provided the scarce resources with which the children of
Chiefs obtained a Western education. Once these educated
Sierra Leoneans obtained administrative and governmental
positions, tribal Chiefs acquired another important link to
national politics. These are several conditions which pro-
vided some assurance that Chiefs would be among the national-
ists when the latter petitioned for independence.

The colonial government emphasized a policy of inte-
grating Chiefs into the emergent sectors of Sierra Leone
society.' This policy was pursued so as to assuage the dis-
ruptive tendencies resulting from rapid social change. Rather
than attempt to replace all traditional social patterns, the
British colonial regime attempted to integrate some tradition-
al structures into the modern national system.

We have seen the continuation of this policy by the
political activity of the SLPP between 1951 and 1961. The
SLPP supported a pragmatic program of modernization. Far

from taking a doctrinaire position on the need to purge tra-
ditional elements from the party, the political elite, with-
in the SLPP, was a mixture of traditional and modern elements.
Frequently, it was a definite advantage to possess some form
of Chiefly kinship ties if one wanted to run successfully for
the national legislature. The dominant party in Sierra Leone,
the SLPP, made no effort to prevent opposition party activity.
The freedom to oppose the policies of the SLPP Government was
available and was used effectively by opposition parties.

The political elite of Sierra Leone made no demands
that all Western economic influence be removed from its
country. On the contrary, the political elite recognized a
definite advantage in retaining and utilizing the wealth that
had been transported to its country. It was, indeed, the
practical approach to modernization.

While the nationalists wanted to gain independence
for Sierra Leone, they wanted to achieve it in the least
costly way. For these Sierra Leoneans, a moderate program of
socio-political change was least costly, for it attempted to
integrate the traditional with the modern. Moreover, these
decision-makers saw no intrinsic value in forcefully changing
all aspects of tribal life to conform to a so-call "modern"
society. This type of program was based upon a belief that
modernization can occur without totally revamping a social
order.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Martin Kilson, Political Change in a West African
State: A Study of the Modernization Process in Sierra Leone
(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 24.

[2]Myron Weiner, "Traditional Role Performance and the
Development of Modern Political Parties: Reflections on the
Indian Case" (unpublished MS, 1963), pp. 12-13, cited by
Kilson, Political Change in a West African State . . . , p.
18, note 16. For Weiner the regulatory functions "involve
placing limits upon what individuals can or cannot do without
administrative approval. . . ." The distributive functions
entail "the distribution of goods and services to the popula-
tion . . . the construction of roads, schools, electrifica-
tion, irrigation schemes and the distribution of agricultural
credit and fertilizers. . . ."

[3]Kilson, Political Change in a West African State
. . . ,p. 22.

[4]Ibid., p. 53.

[5]Ibid., p. 62.

[6]Ibid., p. 62.

[7]Ibid., p. 76.

[8]See K. Gyasi-Twum, "Sierra Leone Students Leaving
Fourah Bay College Between 1944 and 1956," Sierra Leone
Studies, No. 10 (June, 1958), pp. 85-98, and P. E. H. Hair,
"An Analysis of the Register of Fourah Bay College, 1827-
1950," Sierra Leone Studies, No. 7 (December, 1956), pp. 155-
60.

[9]Kilson, Political Change in a West African State
. . . , p. 69.

[10]Martin Kilson, "Sierra Leone," Political Parties
and National Integration in Tropical Africa, ed. James S.
Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (Berkeley: University of
California Press, 1964), p. 103.

[11]Kilson, Political Change in a West African State
. . . , p. 66.

[12]Ibid., p. 67.

[13]Samuel Lewis, Legislative Council Debates, Freetown, Sierra Leone, May 23, 1892, cited by Kilson, Political Change in a West African State . . . , p. 101.

[14]Kilson, Political Change in a West African State . . . , p. 105.

[15]Ibid., p. 110.

[16]Ibid., pp. 103-04.

[17]Ibid., p. 110.

[18]Ibid., p. 102.

[19]Ibid., p. 103.

[20]T. W. Adorno et al., The Authoritarian Personality (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), p. 2.

[21]James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (eds.), Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 5.

[22]Kilson, Political Parties . . . , p. 118, note 34.

[23]Ibid., p. 118, note 36.

[24]Kilson, Political Change in a West African State . . . , p. 241.

[25]Kilson, Political Parties . . . , p. 99.

[26]Kilson, Political Parties . . . , p. 123, citing Report of the Sierra Leone Constitutional Conference, 1960

[27]Kilson, Political Change in a West African State . . . , p. 176.

[28]Kilson, Political Parties . . . , p. 123.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid., p. 119.

[31]Ibid., pp. 128-29.

[32]Ibid., p. 105.

[33]D. J. R. Scott, "The Sierra Leone Election, May 1957," Five Elections in Africa, ed. W. J. M. Mackenzie and Kenneth Robinson (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1960), pp. 187-92.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS OF SIERRA LEONEAN
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The colonial experience, for Sierra Leone, was a peri-
od containing conditions conducive for the integration of
certain traditional social features into a national political
structure. Prior to World War II, tribal Chiefs modernized
their economic power base by serving as taxing agents for
Great Britain. Through corrupt practices, many Chiefs were
able to amass enough capital for investment in other enter-
prises. Besides giving Chiefs definite advantages in obtain-
ing influential positions in certain key areas of society,
their economic affluence provided the necessary means for
educating their children. This economic advantage is one ex-
planation for the close ties between the political elite and
traditional authorities in Sierra Leone. A consequence of
these close kinship ties was that they contributed to an at-
titude of "gradualism" in approaching the "politics of in-
dependence."

One might ask, as surely many Sierra Leoneans have,
whether this apparent gradualism can be sustained as more
Sierra Leoneans are introduced to the "good life," especially

as more receive university educations? While Sierra Leone is
a case in which efforts have been made to integrate many
traditional features of society with more "modern" ones, will
this amalgam be accepted as legitimate by future political
elites? Studies focusing upon this query suggest one answer.
For example, Seymour Lipset notes that "the conflict between
the values of intellectuals and students and of traditional
institutions is intensified with an increase in national con-
cern for modernization and for the international position of
the country."[1] An explicit assumption made by Lipset is that
there is always a basic conflict between students and tradi-
tional values. Moreover, he suggests that as a nation focus-
es more intently upon modernization, the chasm between the
"modern" and "traditional" enlarges.

It is now the purpose of this chapter to inquire into
whether the Sierra Leoneans attending the University College
in 1959 reflected ideological and political orientations in-
consistent with the general political patterns enumerated in
Chapter III. In so doing, we can obtain a tentative answer
to Lipset's hypothesis, particularly in terms of its appli-
cability to Sierra Leone. This objective is accomplished by
using Coleman's and Rosberg's conceptual scheme of analysis
to the extent our data allow. By doing this, we hope to cap-
ture a political profile of Sierra Leonean university students.

Political Orientations

The data presented in Table III indicate that Sierra Leonean students more frequently manifested either a quasi-pluralistic or pluralistic orientation regarding the role to be played by traditional political institutions in Sierra

TABLE III

ORIENTATIONS TOWARD TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS,[1] BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION (percentages)

Occupational Status	Political Orientation			
	Radical[2]	Quasi-Pluralist	Pluralist	Totals
Traditional[3]	10%	57%	33%	100%
Non-Traditional	12	28	60	100

[1]See Appendix I, question 1.

[2]See Appendix II, part 2.

[3]See Appendix II, part 1.

Leonean politics. The data indicate lack of support for radical policies of political change. Irrespective of socio-economic circumstances, the students did not advocate fundamental alteration in the direction of either more authoritarian decision-making arrangements or more reliance upon traditional structures. Of more interest to students from non-traditional socio-economic milieux was a policy which

"attempt[s] to use both modern and traditional political institutions." This predominantly pluralist orientation can be interpreted in more than one way. First of all, the support of an amalgam of political institutions may have resulted from a realistic assessment of Sierra Leonean politics. The involvement of traditional institutions in Sierra Leonean politics has been part of its colonial history. Moreover, it was the explicitly stated policy of the colonial regime to perpetuate respect for and acceptance of many tribal values and institutions through the primary and secondary school systems. As noted by Martin Kilson,

> Besides its concern to prevent Western education from alienating pupils from their tribal moorings, the government's adherence to a traditional organization in the regimen of Bo School aimed at producing literate personnel for chiefdom administration and related activities.[2]

It was essentially the policy of the British regime, as early as the turn of the twentieth century, to create "a continuity of ruling elites in the Protectorate."[3] This colonial policy was apparently continuing to have some impact on a new generation of university trained Sierra Leoneans as late as 1960.

The Sierra Leoneans whose fathers were employed in traditional occupations indicated a more "ambivalent" orientation toward the question of what role traditional institutions should play in Sierra Leone. These individuals are seen as ambivalent since they were unable to accept any of the explicitly defined alternative policies.

Suggestions of whether the students had these general dispostions prior to entering the University College are obtained from Table IV. While attempting to obtain a rough

TABLE IV

ORIENTATIONS TOWARD THE ROLE OF CHIEFS IN SIERRA LEONEAN POLITICS,[1] BY UNIVERSITY YEAR (percentages)

Academic Year	Political Orientation			
	Radical	Quasi-Pluralist	Pluralist	Totals
First	5%	56%	39%	100%
Second/Third[2]	17	72	11	100

[1]See Appendix I, question 3.

[2]Porter classified second and third year students together. We have labelled them advanced students.

notion of what impact university experience had on students, one must recognize that we have no really precise and accurate way of making such an assessment. However, the data do reflect several tendencies of interest. First of all, second and third year students (advanced students) indicated a greater propensity to support a policy of excluding Chiefs altogether from the legislature. In this sense, they tended to be more radical than the first year students. Consistent with this position is a smaller proportion of second and third

year students, compared to first year students, who took a
pluralistic position (i.e., "Chiefs should be represented as
such in the legislature" or "Chiefs should contest elections
for the legislature on the same terms as any other candidate,"
See Appendix I). While 39 per cent of the first year students
can be considered "pluralists," only 12 per cent of the ad-
vanced students can be so classified. A more attractive,
though again ambivalent, alternative for the advanced students
reads: "Chiefs should be represented only in a separate
house" (See Appendix I). While 56 per cent of the first year
students can be classified as quasi-pluralists, 72 per cent
of the advanced students were quasi-pluralists.

Dwaine Marvick, after a similar study conducted in
1960 of Sierra Leonean students, offered several propositions
which can be used to suggest an interpretation to these re-
sults. Marvick found that students indeed respected certain
tribal beliefs and values held by their respective families.
In terms of its place in national politics, however, these
same students perceived tribalism as one of the most divisive
problems potentially impeding national development. Moreover,
the final year students (58 per cent) more frequently felt
tribalism served as such an impediment.[4] It is possible that
as students progressed through the University, they developed
a social consciousness which led them to believe that an over-
emphasis on tribal identifications and values could serve to

divide a coordinated effort at modernizing Sierra Leone. This could possibly be the belief of the quasi-pluralist, for while he does not advocate barring Chiefs completely from national politics, he does support some limited form of Chiefly political involvement (i.e., "Chiefs should be represented only in a separate house," See Appendix I).

Another indication of a pluralistic tendency among the respondents was obtained when Porter asked students whether they preferred a single or multiple party system. The results are presented in Table V. There was heavy

TABLE V

ORIENTATIONS TOWARD PARTY POLITICS IN SIERRA LEONE,[1] BY
UNIVERSITY YEAR (percentages)

| Academic Year | Orientations Toward Party Systems | | |
	Multiple-Party System	Single-Party System	Totals
First	85%	15%	100%
Advanced	84	16	100

[1]See Appendix I, question 2.

support for a multiple party system for Sierra Leone. Both first year and advanced students tended to reject, except for about 15 per cent in each case, the single, authoritarian party system.[5] This general rejection simply reflects a

consistent pluralistic theme manifested by the students.

Related to a pluralistic ideological orientation to socio-political change, is the issue of commitment to realizing African nationalist objectives of neutralism, Pan-Africanism, and rapid Africanization of occupations in Sierra Leone. We have seen that during the past, Sierra Leonean nationalists approached these issues pragmatically, devoid generally of the doctrinaire attitude manifested by several other African leaders. What orientations were manifested by our sample of students regarding these issues? Unfortunately, we do not have opinions on all of these topics. We can, however, obtain a rough idea of the respondents' commitment to "neutralism."

TABLE VI

ORIENTATIONS TOWARD INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL NEUTRALITY,[1] BY UNIVERSITY YEAR (percentages)

Academic Year	Political Orientation			
	Western Alignment	Eastern Alignment	With Neither	Totals
First	62%	8%	30%	100%
Advanced	30	5	65	100%

[1]See Appendix I, question 4.

In offering opinions on international neutrality, students
tended to align with the West much more frequently than with
the East. This tendency is especially apparent for first
year students, 62 per cent of whom supported a policy of
Western alignment in contrast to 8 per cent for Eastern align-
ment. There was a tendency, however, for advanced students
(65 per cent) to advocate non-alignment, with 30 per cent sup-
porting Western alignment. While we cannot conclude that
these data are indicative of "positive neutralism" reflected,
according to Coleman and Rosberg, in the revolutionary-
centralizing pattern of social change, there was greater sup-
port among more advanced students for a neutralist policy.
It is possible that the university milieu tended to inculcate
a more cautious (perhaps, pragmatic) orientation toward is-
sues related to modernization. Similar to the pragmatic ap-
proach taken by the actual political elite during the early
1960's, .these responses may be indicative of a "pragmatic
neutralism" regarding international alignment.

Politicization of Sierra Leonean University Students

In developing their conceptual approach to political
change, Coleman and Rosberg suggest that the analyst should
inquire into what emphasis African political parties place
upon popular mobilization and commitment to party politics.
For the SLPP, minimal effort was spent to mobilize the mass

of Sierra Leoneans to political involvement. Only during

crisis periods did parties make such an attempt, and even

then the voter turnout was unimpressive. Although Sierra

Leoneans, through various political associations, have had

a relatively active political history, party politics has not

required full-time participation. Martin Kilson's comments

illustrate the part-time nature of party politics as well as

one possible reason for its existence prior to independence.

> Many of Sierra Leone's party leaders have been only part-
> time politicians, for they have simultaneously followed
> their professions. Sir Milton Margai, for example, car-
> ried on an active medical and surgical practice in Bo
> until 1955-56, and the P.N.P. leader, Albert Margai, was
> busy with his legal practice. Furthermore, most party
> leaders conceive of their respective parties primarily
> as instruments to contest elections rather than to achieve
> well-defined goals.[6]

We can conclude from this (as well as from what was presented

in Chapter II) that the politically active in Sierra Leone

have not conceived of party politics as the most effective

way of achieving their social goals. The party system has

been principally employed to win elections, while leaving to

other modes of activity the achievement of social change.

We now want to relate these notions of party activity

to the political interests and involvement manifested by our

sample of university students. In formulating his question-

naire, Arthur Porter did not include questions which could be

used to assess precisely how the students felt about mobiliz-

ing the mass populace behind a particular party. He did,

however, inquire generally into several dimensions of indivi-

dual political commitment. Dwaine Marvick delved more speci-

fically into individual political aspirations and commitments.

Using both of these studies, we should be able to assess the

interest the students had in becoming involved in party poli-

tics, both as an avocation and as a technique for forwarding

social change.

One way to obtain an impression of how students per-

ceive the general character of Sierra Leonean politics, was

to have them evaluate politics, as an occupation, vis-a-vis

other occupations. This Porter did by having students rank

various occupations in terms of prestige. Two assumptions

are made in using these data. First, in ranking the occupa-

tions, we assume that the individual respondent was indicat-

ing, at least partially, his own personal occupational aspira-

tions or values. Second, we also assume that the highest

ranking occupations are more likely to attract the individual

whereas the lower ranking occupations were personally much

less attractive. Assuming that the more attractive occupa-

tions would be the ones sought by our respondents is actually

assuming a certain rationality among respondents. The first

year students indicated a preference for professional and

wage earning occupations (94 per cent), while being essential-

ly uninterested in white collar or government jobs. For ad-

vanced students, the results are somewhat different. There

was greater interest in occupations connected either with the
government (12 per cent) or with non-professional, non-white
collar jobs (50 per cent), than was the case for first year

TABLE VII

OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS,[1] BY
UNIVERSITY YEAR (percentages)

Academic Year	Occupational Aspirations				
	Profes- sional[2]	White Collar	Wage	Govern- ment	Totals
First	52%	6%	42%	0%	100%
Advanced	31	7	50	12	100

[1]See Appendix I, question 5.

[2]See Appendix II, part 3.

students. One should not, however, over-interpret these re-
sults, for lack of interest in a governmental (or political)
career is not tantamount to general political apathy. Indeed,
commitment to a political career, as an occupation, is one of
the most all encompassing political endeavors that one can
make. To be disinterested in such a career does not preclude
political involvement in other areas or at different levels of
political activity. Nevertheless, one can interpret these re-
sults as somewhat indicative of disinterest in becoming in-
volved in politics as a relatively full-time activity.

Consistent with the general findings of other studies (e.g., Goldthrope, Lipset), Sierra Leonean university students perceived "government" employment as one of the less advantageous occupations.

When asked, "If there is an election tomorrow, which party will you support?" most of the students who responded in terms of one of the party alternatives indicated support for the SLPP. The data in Table VIII offer several insights into student dispositions toward party politics. First, the

TABLE VIII

PARTY IDENTIFICATION AMONG SIERRA LEONEAN
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Party Identifications	Student Support
SLPP	40%
UPP	6
PNP	7
Independent	0
Don't know or no answer	47
Total	100%

majority support for the SLPP corroborates the impression left by students that they tended to be pluralists rather than radicals. Having been presented with a hypothetical

election, in terms of which they were to select a party to support, better than a third of the students implicitly indicated general support of the SLPP's pragmatic-pluralistic policy orientation.

Also of some interest to us is the large proportion of "don't knows" and "no answers." Approximately one-half (47 per cent) of the students offered no substantive party identification. It is possible that these Sierra Leoneans approached the decision to support a party pragmatically, reviewing, prior to each election, policy alternatives. If this interpretation is correct, we suspect that these students could have identified themselves as "independents," which they did not do. Another possibility is that they were unable to identify with a particular party because they were essentially apathetic about political participation. For these students, political involvement in party activity might not have been important, hence they saw no need to project into the future about supporting a particular party.

Although we cannot specify which of these alternatives is more valid (if, indeed, either is valid), by assessing several other dimensions of political involvement, we should be able to suggest which one appears to be more valid.

We have selected four West African political newspapers about which Porter sought to obtain data regarding reading habits. The Shekpendeh (UPP) and the African Vanguard

(SLPP) are newspapers published by Sierra Leonean political parties. These newspapers were selected for several reasons. First, all of them offered university students an opportunity to read differing political philosophies and policy positions on modernization. The Shekpendeh, for instance, was financed by the UPP (principally by Cyril Rogers-Wright), a Creole-led peasant party. The African Vanguard, published by the SLPP, was an advocate of national unity.[7] For a radical orientation, we have used the West African Pilot, usually known as "Zik's Press," and the African Standard, a radical Sierra Leonean newspaper published by I. T. A. Wallace-Johnson. The Standard was known as a "strongly nationalist[ic] and anti-British" paper.[8]

There was apparently a limited proportion of Sierra Leonean students who considered themselves regular readers of any of the newspapers listed in Table IX. Of those who had heard of and read the Shekpendeh and the African Vanguard, most considered themselves "occasional" readers of each. The principal differences between first year and advanced students centered around whether the former had ever read either of these papers. It appears that a larger proportion of first year students had never read either of the two papers than was the case for advanced students. There is, however, a 22 per cent increase in occasional readers of the Vanguard as one moves from first year to advanced students. While the

TABLE IX

STUDENTS' READING HABITS OF POLITICAL NEWSPAPERS,[1] BY
UNIVERSITY YEAR (percentages)

Papers	First Year Students	Advanced Students
Shekpendeh (UPP)		
Never read it	9%	0%
Read it occasionally	65	79
Read it regularly	26	21
Totals	100%	100%
African Vanguard (SLPP)		
Never read it	19%	5%
Read it occasionally	73	95
Read it regularly	8	0
Totals	100%	100%
West African Pilot (Radical)		
Never read it	46%	46%
Read it occasionally	42	54
Read it regularly	12	0
Totals	100%	100%
African Standard (Radical)		
Never read it	-[2]	-
Read it occasionally	-	-
Read it regularly	-	-

[1]See Appendix I, question 6.

[2]Most students failed to indicate any awareness of
this paper.

university experience apparently did not influence more advanced students to read these papers more regularly, it did serve at least to introduce students to them.

Similar results were obtained when students were questioned on their knowledge and reading habits of the West African Pilot. Like the results on the Vanguard, no advanced students regularly read the Pilot, while 12 per cent of the first year students indicated regularity in reading it. Somewhat different from the data on the Shekpendeh and Vanguard was the relatively large proportion of advanced students who had not read the Pilot at all. In terms of occasional readers, 42 per cent of the first and 54 per cent of the advanced students indicated occasional reading habits.

The data presented in Table IX indicate that most students, at best, were occasional readers of these political newspapers. Even in the case of the African Vanguard, presumably the most acceptable paper to the largest aggregate of university students, the majority of students considered themselves occasional readers. One explanation for this irregular audience could be that the newspapers were unavailable to most students. This, however, is questionable, for it is more likely that the university community would have had greater access to these papers than other sectors of society. Another explanation could be that the students were reflecting a general disinterest in party politics (perhaps

party propaganda also) by not reading these papers regularly.
Indeed, it is possible that the majority of Sierra Leonean
students felt uncompelled to identify with a political party
as well as to read party newspapers.

Several specific questions asked during Marvick's
study provide answers which can be used to give some meaning
to data thus far presented on politicization.[9] He found that
university students tended to be disinterested in full-time
government careers, including political careers. Approximate-
ly one-half failed to identify with a particular Sierra Leon-
ean political party, a result which can be seen as indicative
of political apathy. This interpretation is not inconsistent
with Marvick's finding that few students (4 per cent) had
plans of entering local politics. Supposedly more students
would have identified with a party if more had manifested in-
terest in becoming politically involved. Moreover, more
regular attention would have been focused upon political news.
While most students appeared to be disinterested in local
politics per se, Marvick found that approximately 60 per cent
were more committed to serving as "civic leaders." As civic
leaders, rather than as politicians, the students felt that
more of a contribution could be made toward realizing social
change.[10] Their commitment to a "non-political" role was in-
tense, for only 4 per cent felt that by the time they were
forty-five years old, they would be in legislative positions.

Of the other students, 11 per cent felt they would be in
ministerial roles, 50 per cent in "other central roles,"
and 35 per cent in "no significant roles."[11]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Seymour M. Lipset, "University Students and Politics in Underdeveloped Countries," Comparative Education Review, X (June, 1966), 139.

[2]Martin Kilson, Political Change in a West African State: A Study of the Modernization Process in Sierra Leone (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 79.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Dwaine Marvick, "African University Students: A Presumptive Elite," Education and Political Development, ed. James S. Coleman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 493.

[5]While a single party system is not always authoritarian in character, most African single-party states have tended to be authoritarian. One suspects especially among informed Africans that when the topic of single versus multiple party systems is raised, a corollary topic of interest is that of authoritarian versus competitive politics.

[6]Martin Kilson, "Sierra Leone," Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa, ed. James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 105-06.

[7]Helen Kitchen (ed.), The Press in Africa (Washington, D.C.: Ruth Sloan Associates, 1956), p. 84.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Marvick, pp. 488-97.

[10]Ibid., p. 489.

[11]Ibid., p. 490.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Sierra Leone, as an individual case, does indeed
serve to challenge the universal application of the eurythmic
model of modernization. During the colonial era, social and
economic change occurred within certain sectors of Sierra
Leonean society. Such change, however, did not occur in a
thoroughly consistent manner. For example, Chiefly authori-
ties were able to acquire a "modern" economic power base from
which to influence the process of change throughout Sierra
Leone. In making this change, Chiefs continued to draw upon
their traditional tribal authority to command respect and in-
fluence behavior. Furthermore, as a nationalistic political
elite emerged, traditional social arrangements were employed
to mobilize politically the populace. Rather than attempt
the construction of a mass political party organization, the
political elite called upon Chiefly institutions to perform
certain political functions.

The employment of these tribal systems facilitated
the modernization of Chiefly power. One apparent consequence
of this strategy was the development of an attitude of
"gradualism" among the political elite of Sierra Leone.

Prior to independence, few demands were made for revolution-

ary change. Rather, the demands made can be characterized

as ameliorative. The nationalistic leaders who sought po-

litical independence accepted as legitimate certain tradition-

al values and institutions. Moreover, most Sierra Leoneans

apparently felt that some form of integration of traditional

and modern values could be effected. Hence, there was little

effort to change Sierra Leone in any fundamental way. In

fact, as independence approached, the Sierra Leonean national

legislature consisted of both "modern" (e.g., businessmen,

lawyers) and "traditional" (e.g., Chiefs) personalities.

The dysrhythmic nature of political change in Sierra

Leone can be seen from another perspective. As we have seen,

the University College apparently served to sustain a certain

respect for and acceptance of traditional values. Instead of

serving as a disruptive or "revolutionary" experience, the

university experience served to re-enforce a "gradual" orien-

tation toward social change. Only a small proportion of Sierra

Leonean university students demanded the abolition of Chiefly

influence in the national legislature in 1959. Similar to

the policies pursued by the political elite, between 1951 and

1961, most students felt that some form of integration of

traditional and modern institutions should be made.

While it would be an error to imagine that Western

influences have not had their impact on Sierra Leonean

society, the impact has not been thorough and complete. Although a cash economy has developed in Sierra Leone, such is not the base from which all national political influence stems. Chiefs qua Chiefs still wield great political power. It is also most likely that they will continue for some time to be influential since several institutions accept their role as legitimate. If the students attending the University College in 1959 are indicative of other Sierra Leonean students, then it is likely that few demands will be made for revolutionary change. The "pragmatic-pluralistic" approach will be more attractive.

APPENDIX I

The following questions were used by Arthur T. Porter
while conducting an inquiry into political opinions and atti-
tudes as manifested by university students attending the
University College in Sierra Leone.

1. Which of the following policies would you suggest
    a West African politician pursue?

    A. Rely upon small group of advisors in forming
        political policies
    B. Form political policies virtually single handed
    C. Use police and military forces to further po-
        litical policies
    D. Rely upon traditional political institutions
    E. Undercut traditional political institutions in
        favor of modern political ones
    F. Attempt to use both modern and traditional po-
        litical institutions

2. Which of the following statements on party govern-
    ment would you support?

    .A. Two or more parties
    B. Single party

3. Which of the following statements supports your view
    on the role of chiefs in the Legislature?

    A. Chiefs should be represented as such in the
        Legislature
    B. Chiefs should contest elections for the Legis-
        lature on the same terms as any other candidate
    C. Chiefs should be barred completely from the
        Legislature
    D. Chiefs should be represented only in a separate
        house

4.   In the present world situation, do you personally
     think that, on the whole, Sierra Leone should
     side with the West, with the East or with neither?

5.   Suppose someone asked your advice on what would be
     the best occupation to aim toward in present day
     Sierra Leone. Which occupation would you advise?

     A. Farmer, farming, agriculture
     B. Teacher, education (except university and
         college)
     C. Business, commerce (bank, manager, business
         manager)
     D. Proprietor, entrepreneur, independent business-
         man, trader, commercial undertaking
     E. Public administration, civil service, public
         official
     F. Medicine, practitioner
     G. Technician, technical job
     H. Engineer
     I. Clerical
     J. Artisan

6.   Do you read the following publications?

     A. African Vanguard (a SLPP publication)
     B. African Standard (a radical paper)
     C. Shekpendeh (UPP publication)
     D. West African Pilot (a radical Nigerian paper)

     Data from questions 1 and 3 were used to assess stu-

dent opinion regarding what role Chiefs should play in nation-

al politics. Responses to question 2 were used as another

indicator of a pluralistic orientation toward Sierra Leonean

politics among the university students. Question 4 was used

to provide data on student commitment to the consummation of

African nationalists' objectives of complete political and

economic independence from the West. Some indication of

student commitment to political participation (i.e., a career
as a civil servant or public official) was obtained from data
on question 5. Data from question 6 provided a measure of
student party loyalty.

APPENDIX II

1. A student was categorized as coming from a "traditional"
   socio-economic milieu if his father had a non-urban occu-
   pation (e.g., farmer, trader, Chief, Headman, Village
   Elder). The "non-traditional" had a father who was pre-
   sumably employed in an urban area (e.g., teacher, account-
   ant, carpenter, minister). The dichotomy was made between
   urban and non-urban environments on the basis that indi-
   viduals living in the latter frequently do not have the
   opportunities to be exposed to the same experiences and
   influences as individuals from urban environments. One
   weakness in classifying occupations in terms of the ur-
   ban/non-urban dichotomy is that, in reality, such cate-
   gories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For exam-
   ple, one may find the teacher or minister located in a
   non-urban area. The purpose of this dichotomy, however,
   is to obtain some useful distinctions between Sierra Leon-
   ean students from different social milieux. Although we
   make the assumption that different types of occupations
   involve people in different types of social interaction,
   this typology may not always be supported by events of
   the real world.

2. "Radicalism" is used herein to refer to policies adhered
to by students who favored fundamental "change [in] the
system of effective authority."[1] A frequent problem
presented by Porter's questionnaire concerns the ob-
tuseness surrounding several forced-choice response
categories. Where the respondent did not select one of
the more precise categories, he was classified as a
"quasi-pluralist." A response which was difficult to
interpret reads "rely upon small group of advisors in
forming political policies."

3. The occupational classifications were obtained by col-
lapsing the more specific categories used by Porter.
"Professionals" include teachers, bankers, managers, in-
dustrial administrators, medical doctors, and engineers.
"White collar" workers include independent businessmen,
entrepreneurs, traders, and clerical workers. "Wage
earners" consist of farmers, technicians, and artisans.
"Government" personnel include public administrators,
civil servants, and public officials (politicians). While
the latter category was used as the defining category for
those interested in political careers, actually it is not
specific enough to distinguish between those interested
in "government" and "political" careers.

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[1]David E. Apter, The Gold Coast in Transition (Prince-
ton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 179.

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