

# History of Buha Pre-Colonial Social Formation up to 1890

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the history of Buha pre-colonial social formation up to 1890. The main objective of this paper is to trace the history of Buha prior to its colonization. It focuses on social formation from pre-colonial period up to 1890. This paper applied the theory of historical materialism which centers on the material production as the major force behind the development of any society in human history. Qualitative research methodology was used to gather the data needed from the primary sources. Oral interview was conducted with selected knowledgeable informants to complement other information from the primary sources. Data from secondary sources was gathered through review of books, isolated articles, articles in journals, as well as from published and unpublished documents including archival sources. The main argument in this paper is that before colonial period the people of Buha had reached higher level of social formation in terms of their political, social and economic developments. It was the intrusion of foreign immigrants from other societies and principally from parts of eastern Africa such as Tutsi that brought about some changes in the social set up of Buha.

**Keywords:** Buha, Social Formation, Muteko, Mwami, Mtwale, Ubugabire, Muha, Tutsi

## BACKGROUND

Buha referred today as Kigoma region is located in western Tanzania. It stretches near Lake Tanganyika to the western part and to the north it follows along the Burundi border. The north-eastern part reaches about fifty miles of Kibondo district while to the south it is bordered by Uvinza district and Tabora region to the east. The early Buha was bordered by River Muyovozi to the east, to the west were rivers Rupungu, Malagarasi, and Lake Tanganyika. To the south, Buha was bordered by River Malagarasi only while to the north Buha was separated by River Mwiruzi.<sup>[1]</sup> It is found between 2°46'S to 5°65'S and 31°30'E to 29°30'W.

Buha constitutes areas like Makere, Muhinda, Marumba, Kabanga, Mulela, Kasumo, Nyavumba, Kakonko and Nyaronga which are today found in Kasulu, Kibondo, and Kakonko districts.<sup>[2]</sup> It occupies an area of 10,000 square meters and was located in the western part of Lake Tanganyika territory.<sup>[3]</sup> The early Buha constituted six kingdoms namely Heru-Bushingo, Nkalinzi, Nkanda-Luguru, Heru, Buyungu, and Muhambwe. The Heru, also known as Buha was the largest and most popular kingdom.<sup>[4]</sup> The name Buha originated from what is now known Heru chiefdom. The Heru chiefdom combined other sub-chiefdoms of Bushingo, Buyenzi, Manyovu, and Bunganda.<sup>[5]</sup>

The Buha rose in height from east to west, accomplishing in some places close to Lake Tanganyika and the Urundi border almost an altitude of 6,000 feet. In the southern part of Buha, the highlands are more extensive than in the north which was particularly covered by grasslands.<sup>[6]</sup> The rest of Buha was to a large extent covered with open woodland. The border lands in the west, especially the south-western highlands, were hilly. Along Lake Tanganyika stretched a steep wall of rift origin which more or less formed a barrier between the interior and the coast. The main drainage of Buha was affected by the Malagarasi and its tributaries.<sup>[7]</sup> Therefore due to this geographical location, all parts of Buha had good fertile land which supported various economic activities like agriculture, trade as well as animal keeping. The development of these economic activities caused formation of nicely and strong social formation.

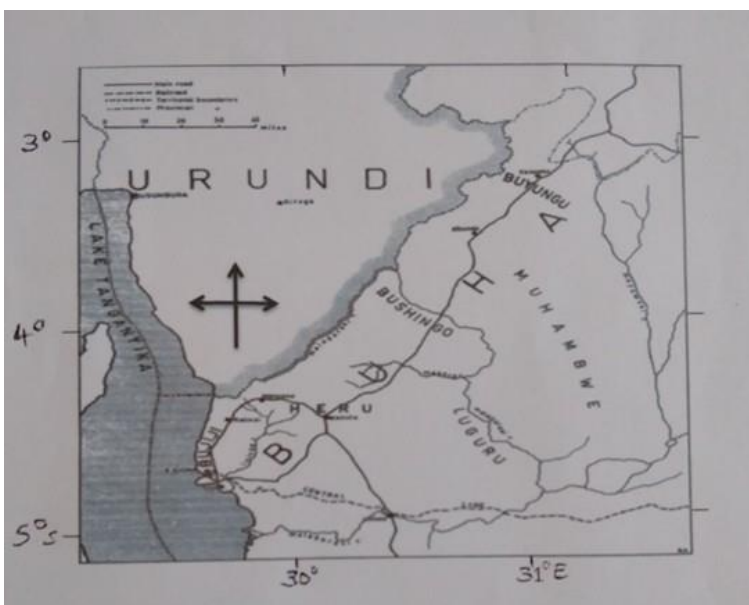
## The People

From the first to the eleventh century, Bantu speaking societies had expanded quickly after their transition in various regions in East Africa. Historical facts show that Waha people came from Eastern African parts around the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They are among the eastern African Bantu speaking people. Waha is considered to be among the section of the Baganda, Banyoro, Barundi and Banyarwanda to which they are very much related in customs, language, and beliefs.<sup>[8]</sup> Waha among other Bantu speaking societies is an example of the community that had made its revolutionary transition from north part of eastern Africa to Buha.<sup>[9]</sup> As iron making community, Waha occupied more favorable areas of Buha such as Buyenzi and Nkalinzi in contemporary Buhigwe district, Heru, Bunganda, Heru- Ushingo and Luguru in Kasulu district.<sup>[10]</sup> Others occupied the areas of Buyungu and Muhambwe in Kibondo and Kakonko respectively. Most of the areas occupied favorable climatic condition that supported agriculture and animal keeping activities. The whole of Bunganda, Buyenzi, Heru, Heru –Ushingo, Luguru, and Nkalizi for example were lushed grassland region with fertile soil.<sup>[11]</sup>

Waha inhabitants lived in isolated small groups or clans. Each clan produced from households and members of households consisting of father, mother, children, grandfather or grandmother. The elders of the households were appeared as heads of households.<sup>[12]</sup> The eldest man in each clan was regarded as the clanhead and was known as *Muteko* (sing) or *Abateko* (pl).<sup>[13]</sup> The term *Muha* or *Waha* were used to refer the indigenous of the Buha but Waha had slight differences according to the geographical areas of their settlement. For example Waha of Bunganda, Heru and Luguru were known as *Abanyaheru* (the indigenous of Heru).<sup>[14]</sup> The Waha of Buyenzi and Nkalizi identified themselves as *Abanyamanyovu* (the indigenous of Manyovu) while the Waha of Heru-Ushingo were known as *Abashingo*. The Waha of Buyungu and Muhambwe on the other hand distinguished themselves as *Abayungu* and *Abahambwe* respectively.<sup>[15]</sup> Linguistically, the Ha spoke *Kiha* generally.<sup>[16]</sup>

However, the migration of people also had influence on social formation. That means the starting point of all human history is the existence of living human individuals. Referring to the Ha society, the migration of the Ha to Buha areas had impact on their social formation.<sup>[17]</sup> The moment Waha arrived in Buha was interacted with the nature through economic activities such as hunting and gathering. Therefore the material production influenced them to reproduce through different activities and finally formed their society.

Map 1: Buha Chiefdoms, 1700



Source: J. H. Scherer: The Ha of Tanganyika, TNR, 1959, p. 902

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Sutton argues that Buha society like other African societies migrated from one place to another searching for fertile land to establish permanent settlement.<sup>[18]</sup> From the beginning, they lived in caves and relied on the nature of their environment. They collected fruits, roots and hunted animals with crude tools to sustain themselves for their daily survival.<sup>[19]</sup> By 1000 CE during Bantu expansion, Waha migrated into Buha where they established permanent settlement and started to engage in permanent productive activities like agriculture.<sup>[20]</sup> Living in households, Waha integrated each other via marriage to form clans. The extended family constructed from people who shared common place ancestry.<sup>[21]</sup>

Ehret states that, the period of 17<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the development of shifting cultivation in Buha.<sup>[22]</sup> Agriculture in Buha became a main career of the Waha. During that length, sex and age became elements for social and financial stratification and was characterized via the presence of scattered clans in Buha.<sup>[23]</sup> The family dominated the entire economy as the basic element of production. This led to the department of labour within the families and specialization got here into existence whereby women specialized in crop cultivation at the same time as men became hunters and gatherers of the wild products. Since the unit of production and consumption was the own family, the manner of production turned into for the introduction of use value and not for surplus. Social appropriation turned into also for intake. This resulted into socio-economic formation main into the emergence of specialization and division of labour in Buha.<sup>[24]</sup>

Waha inhabitants also got involved in trade. Several markets like Buyenzi, Kwigarame, Mkaduguda and Mwibuye were established in various areas of Buha highlands. Different trade items like hoes, axes, arrows, spears, salt and sickles were exchanged for goats, cattle, sheep and animal skins brought across from Urundi.<sup>[25]</sup> Pottery was another important economic activity which took place in Buha. Some of the market products produced included pots, baskets, bulk cloths and bracelets. All those economic activities which passed off in conventional Ha society were dietary supplements to their basic occupation namely agriculture, hunting and gathering. These enabled the Waha to strengthen the political stability of Buha chiefdoms as well as their economic position in relation to the long distance trade. Apart from political control, Waha also developed diplomatic relations with other neighbouring kingdoms in Urundi, Rwanda and Karagwe as Katoke stated.<sup>[26]</sup>

The arrival of the Tutsi in Buha in early 1800 transformed the family based production into feudal social formation.<sup>[27]</sup> The Tutsi superimposed their political system on the Ha traditional structure. Bateko who were the clan leaders lost their political authority but retained their rights to allocate land in their lineage areas and performed rituals. The Tutsi formed a political and economic powerful social status under *ubugabire* feudal relations.<sup>[28]</sup>

Itandala<sup>[29]</sup> argues that the feudal social formation developed in Buha and other parts of the Great Lakes regions influenced by either agriculture or pastoralism. For example, in the banana areas, the basis of production relations was land on which plantain was the main food crop.<sup>[30]</sup> Cory also supports this view by arguing that the banana economy forced people to live in permanent settlement because the banana was a perennial crop.<sup>[31]</sup>

Richards argues that unlike in the banana areas, in Buha, Rwanda and Burundi where land was used as the primary means of establishing control over the population by the chiefs (*wami*), it was cattle which were used for the purpose.<sup>[32]</sup> The chiefs in Buha appointed their favorites to senior administrative positions in order to consolidate their own political power. The appointed officials (*watwale*) were expected to serve the chief (*mwami*) faithfully and had to demonstrate their loyalty to him by attending his summons as often as possible and by occasionally giving him presents of cattle, honey and beer.<sup>[33]</sup> Ogot on his part is not

different from the views of Richards as he explains that it was in this sense, the *ubugabire* feudal system developed in Buha.<sup>[34]</sup> The *ubugabire* was a form of feudalism practiced in Buha, Urundi and Rwanda. It was deeply in- rooted in the practice of obtaining personal service in exchange for a gift (cattle). The donor also known as *Sebuja* could transfer cattle to the recipient (*Ifutu*) as sometimes known as *Mgabire*. The *Mgabire* and his family were obliged to perform several duties for the donor (*Sebuja*) including house building, cultivation and collection of firewood. This system was based on cattle as the major means of production. The migration of the Tutsi was influenced by the need for land and agricultural products from the Buha society that was identified as a cultivating society. The neighboring societies established their settlements in Buha to form a mixed society. This tendency influenced the changes in the Buha social organization because it abandoned the clan organization to form a centralized society.<sup>[35]</sup>

Tawney thinks that *ubugabire* in Buha was the administrative apparatus which was also used for the assumption of goods like and services from the subject class.<sup>[36]</sup> For example every area had a land-chief (*Muteko*) and a cattle-chief for administrative purposes.<sup>[37]</sup> The land-chief controlled the agricultural population and was responsible for the collection of tribute in agricultural products and required labour service from every household, while the cattle-chief was responsible for administration among the pastoralists and for collecting pots of milk from them for the chiefdom. All administrative officials involved in tribute collection at highlands and lowlands, retained a portion of the goods like salt, milk, grain and services like firewood collection for their own use and forwarded the rest to court or wherever the chief wanted them to be sent. Thus the chief and his assistants (*watwale*) exacted tribute in the form of goods and services from both peasants and common cattle-owners.<sup>[38]</sup>

As a result of the development of political institutions and a clientage system based on the control of cattle by one social group, two classes emerged in this zone, a cattle-owning Tutsi aristocracy and a Ha subject peasantry.<sup>[39]</sup> Agriculture was mostly done by the Ha while pastoralism was the monopoly of the Tutsi. The ownership of cattle by the Tutsi played a very significant role in determining their relationship with the agriculturalists (*Ha*).<sup>[40]</sup> Cattle were important because its products such as milk, ghee, meat, skins and manure were required by the agriculturalists too.<sup>[41]</sup> It is evident that by the eve of colonial rule on Buha cattle and land formed a socio-economic and political system in which the chiefs (*wami*) controlled both politics and the major means of production. Therefore, the changes on social formation in Buha were basically influenced by migration, and intrusion of other societies from other parts of eastern Africa such as Tutsi.<sup>[42]</sup>

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Production in Pre-colonial Buha Society

A number of productive activities were carried in Buha pre – colonial society to ensure life or livelihood sustenance of its population. Hunting and gathering constituted the main activities. Division of labour facilitated and promoted the progress of these activities. Considering the age and sex, women began to specialize in crops cultivation while men became hunters of game and honey production.<sup>[43]</sup> The Ha cultivated food crops like millet, potatoes, and other seasonal and tropical crops. They also engaged in pottery, weaving, carving, and smelting. Specialists in iron smelting manufactured iron tools like hoes, knives, swords and arrows. These activities were normally done by men. In some parts of Buha, the clans like Bakimbiri were involved in salt making.<sup>[44]</sup>

Salt processing was another economic activity in Buha. It was highly demanded both human and animal consumption locally and much was also exported to foreign markets. The Uvinza salt mine was long known to the Uvinza and Ha (Waha) before seized later by Europeans.<sup>[45]</sup> During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, several markets

were established among the Ha which were in Heru, Ushingo and Buyenzi in Kasulu district. At these markets, iron products such as hoes, axes, arrows, spears and sickles, salt, copper ornaments and pots were exchanged for goats, cattle, sheep, hides, and skin brought across Burundi and Rwanda.<sup>[46]</sup> Pottery was another important industry practiced by Waha in the 1880s. For example, pots were important items needed in Uvinza salt work for boiling the salt –brine.<sup>[47]</sup>

All these economic activities practiced in Buha were supplement to basic occupation namely agriculture. However, these activities brought a great impact in Buha as follows: First, it enabled Waha to strengthen the political stability of their kingdoms as well as their economic position in relation to the long distance trade. They eventually expanded their boundaries to engulf more territories in the norther part of Buha like Buyenzi and Ushingo. Second, apart from political control over their enormous area, Waha enjoyed diplomatic relations with other kingdoms found in Burundi, Rwanda and Buganda.<sup>[48]</sup>

**Political Organization of Pre-colonial Buha**

Politically, Waha were organized into clans (*ubhoko*) system during the pre-colonial period.<sup>[49]</sup> These were patrilineal groups which were represented by a grandfather considered leader of the group (*Mteko*).<sup>[50]</sup> Mteko was a hereditary Ha leader who distributed farming land and house plots and acted as healer in time of disaster. His authority was derived from claims that his family was resident of the region prevailed in all matters pertaining to environment. He could perform rituals for community members and direct the inhabitants in environmental matters like protecting water springs from human pollution.<sup>[51]</sup> Mteko was a respected person among the Ha and he controlled and led a particular clan. The members of clans were commonly known as *Abaryang’o* (‘clansmen’).<sup>[52]</sup> Each clan bared a name of an animal, insects or a bird. For example, dogs represent the *Wasindi*(*abasindi*), the pigs represented *Abanyongozi* while the pigeon represented *Abaragane* among others.<sup>[53]</sup> (see table 1)

Table 1: Clans’ names and their Symbols

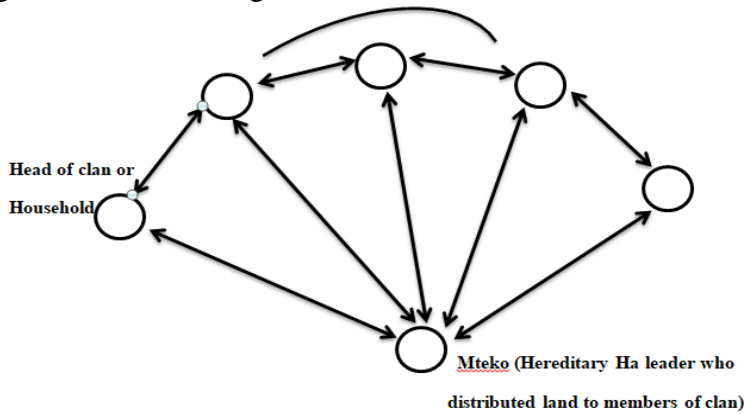
Clan	Symbol (animal/insect/bird)
Abasindi	Dog
Abanyongozi	Pig
Abatwa/Abayanda	Hyena
Abakimbili	Ground Hornbill
Abalima	Bullet ant
Abaragane	Crow

Source: Survey interview, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021

The basic unit of the Ha was the patrilineal family (*imiryango*, singular *umuryango*).<sup>[54]</sup> The residence combined several houses (*inzu*) to form a larger patrilineal family (*urugo*) under one man.<sup>[55]</sup> A man became the owner of the entire household (*nyenu’rugo*) while a woman became the head of patrilineal family (*nyeninzu*).<sup>[56]</sup> For practical activity, the dominant unit of production remained a clan (*umudyango*).<sup>[57]</sup> Up to 1750s the Ha were categorized into several clans including *Abakimbiri*, *Abanyongozi*, *Abatambo*, *Abatwa*, *Abazigaba*, *Abasindi*, *Abaragane*, *Abagahe*, *Abalima*, *Abajiji*, *Abashingo*, *Abababanda*, *Abavumu*, *Abazirankende*, *Abayango*, *Abatela*, *Abatambo*, *Abasase*, *Abaheza*, and *Abaganwa* among other clans co-existed (see diagram. 2).<sup>[58]</sup>



Diagram 1: Political Organisation of Pre-colonial Buha



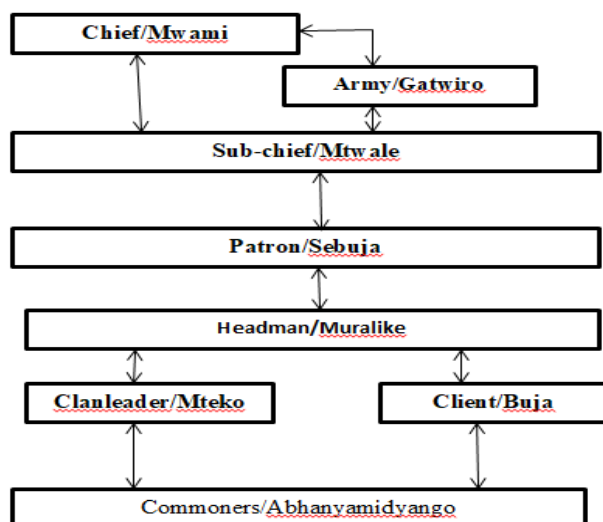
Source: Adapted by author from Jack, Wayne, “Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Kigoma region, Tanzania: A social structural view”, Canadian Review of Sociology Vol 12, 3(1975), p. 321

Starting the second half of the nineteenth century, the role of Bateko changed due to the coming of the pastoralists who were thought to be the Tutsi dynasts (*Abhakimbiri*) and assumed the territory of Buha.<sup>[59]</sup> The Tutsi migrated to Buha because of the war which resulted from succession within the north of Buha. The coming of the Tutsi changed into observed by the introduction of pastoral system. In this example, livestock have become the foundation of social prominence.<sup>[60]</sup>

What appeared to have kept the people together in Buha (among the Ha, and Tutsi) was the institution of the *Ubugabire*.<sup>[61]</sup> This was a highly personalized relationship between two individuals of unequal social status.<sup>[62]</sup> This was a form of feudal system practiced among the Tutsi and Ha. It provided a place and a status within a hierarchical system. In this system of the Bugabire the donor also known as *Sebuja* could transfer their cattle to the *Ifutu* (recipient), sometimes known as *Mugabire*. The *Mugabire* and his family were obligated to perform several duties for the *Sebuja* (donor) including house building and cultivation. This patron or client relationship involved reciprocal bonds of loyalty and exchange of goods and services.<sup>[63]</sup> Therefore, the practice of *ugabire* among Waha and Watutsi was of ancient origin and a deeply in-rooted part of the trial social structure. It was the practice of obtaining personal service in exchange for a gift. *Ugabire* required a gift of cattle in distinction to a grant of land.<sup>[64]</sup>

The patron was mostly Tutsi, but the client could be *Muha* or Tutsi of inferior social status.<sup>[65]</sup> One person could be a client as well as a patron. Even Tutsi patrons of Ha could be clients of yet another Tutsi.<sup>[66]</sup> Theoretically, the only person ultimately not a client of this system was the *Mwami*(chief) himself. Thus, most Tutsi were clients and some Ha patrons. At the top, however, there were always Tutsi and at the bottom always Ha (*Mteko*) (see Fig. 4).<sup>[67]</sup>

Diagram 2: Tutsi Aristocracy and Commoner Clients Relationship

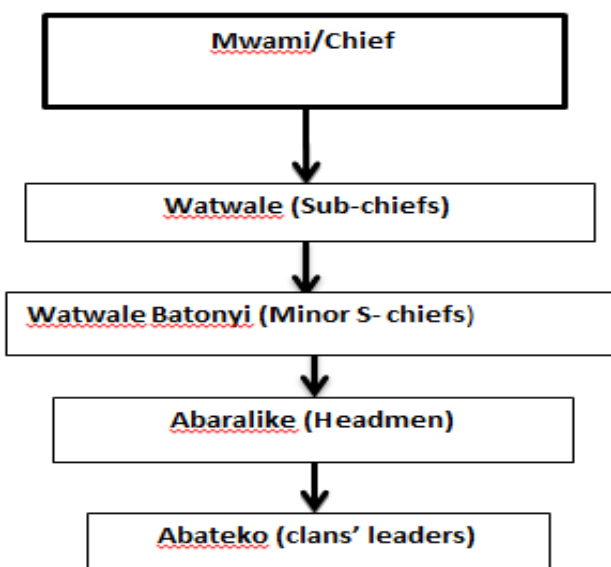


Source: Adapted by author from Jack, Wayne, “Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Kigoma region, Tanzania: A social structural view”, Canadian Review of Sociology Vol 12, 3(1975), p. 323 (*Diagram 2 shows the essential features of Buha’s social organization from 1800 to 1890. It shows that the Mteko is no longer an overall leader of Buha after the arrival of Tutsi aristocracy; the chief (mwami) is senior leader of Buha*)

The *ubugabire* system had some important effects on Buha political system. First, it institutionalized the economic differences between the mainly cultivating Ha (Waha) and the cattle –breeding Tutsi. Second, it was an instrument of control, and it turned the Ha into socio-economic and political clients and Tutsi into patrons.<sup>[68]</sup> Third, it led to a process of political amalgamation of Buha into six chiefdoms under the *wami* (chiefs) namely Heru (Buha), Ushingo, Nkanda-Luguru, Nkalinzi, Muhambwe and Buyungu.<sup>[69]</sup> Therefore, up to 1860s the Tutsi had already controlled the whole of Buha chiefdoms and Heru being the largest and headquarter of Buha kingdom.<sup>[70]</sup> The Nkalinzi chiefdom controlled the whole of Ujiji and Uvinza though the supreme leadership remained in the hand of the mwami of Heru (Buha). Bushingo chiefdom dominated the whole of Buyenzi, Biharu, Kasumo and Muyama in modern Buhigwe district. Nkanda- Luguru operated the whole areas of Basanza, Murufyiti, Makere in modern Kasulu district council while the two chiefdoms of Buyungu and Muhambwe dominated the whole areas of modern Kibondo and Kakonko districts.<sup>[71]</sup>

Therefore, it was within this context that the roles of Bateko were reduced in performing territorial rituals<sup>[72]</sup> because the institution of *ubugabire* was a response to the need for a comprador group from within the local communities. The presence of comprador group would further subordinate the old political systems to the new. Thus, the intruders (*Abhahamyi*) were considered the first clan to have received cattle in control of Mwami. They assumed the official responsibility of burying chiefs. On a wider basis, the new systems quickly replaced the Bateko system in which land was the basis of client ship. The client had to pay bondage to the lord, by cultivating the lord’s farm, presenting him each time with a gift of lead of firewood, or a port of beer and other products.<sup>[73]</sup> The lord was referred to as a mother of bondage and received a number of gifts in order to influence the lord to give out a second or third cow. These changes in the relation of production were reflected in ritual and related ceremonies. Mwami took over all the symbols of Muteko. While Muteko retained power to supervise land allocation and priestly powers as well. Muteko had to install a new Mwami to the throne. The insignia became even more elaborated as indicated on the diagram below and formed clans as guardians of the spears and drums merged while the queen mother assumes charge of the grove<sup>[74]</sup> (see diagram 3).

Diagram 3: The Tutsi Administrative System in Pre-colonial Buha



Source: Adapted from Salvatory, S. Nyanto, “Male Migration and Households’ Survival Strategies inKasulu

District 1920s-1960s”, Unpublished BA Dissertation, University of Dar es Salaam, 2009, p. 29 (*The diagram shows that since the Mteko was no longer ordinarily act as an intermediary between aristocrats and commoners, the commoners had to deal directly with leaders who had appointed by the chief (mwami) like Watwale (sub-chiefs) and Baralike (headmen) because the clan organization had been weakened by Tutsi administration in Buha*)

### Social Organization of Pre-colonial Buha

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in Buha, family members based on age and sex remained as the nuclei production. Women during this period besides making children also participated in other activities like tending and marketing the homestead gardens and field crops, cooking meals as well as weaving basketry. [75]

On the other hand, the Ha believed in the existence of God, although they called him by different names to appreciate his ability which was beyond that of the sun. [76] Waha called God *Imana*. This name became given to God through Waha and other Bantu societies of the interlacustrine vicinity like those from Burundi, Rwanda, the Kivu province of Zaire, and those from the south and western Uganda. [77] This name, to Waha represented sacred, mysterious and inspired respect. [78] God was also called “*Rurema*” to mean the creator partly because they believed that everything on earth was created by him. This was evidenced especially when the child was born whereby in recognition of the mysterious deeds, the people (*Waha*) had to praise the high God while saying, “*Imana Iralema*” ‘God creates’. [79] The God “*Imana*” was also called *Ruganza* meaning (‘Master or the Governor’). This was dictated by the belief that he had power over everything-visible and invisible. [80] Apart from all those names, Waha had other names for God (see Table 2):

Table 2: Other Names for God among Waha

Other names for God among Waha	Meaning
Rugaba	The giver from whom all good things came
Rukiza	Curer and saviour
Rubona	He who sees
Kazuba	The sun

Source: TNA, Kigoma District Book Vol.III on Laws, Manners and Customs

Stating to why Waha called God *Kazuba*, Fr. Ramon Vicens explains:

We need to be reminded of the essential roles played by the sun in nature and acknowledge the Baha’s aptitude for poetry in order to comprehend why they termed God *Kazuba*. The sun dispels the darkness, lights up the earth, and enables men to see, move around, and perform labor. The sun is necessary for the plant’s growth. However, Buha’s noon-time sun burns and is exhausting. Not so with the brief but beautiful and warm sun of the morning and evening. [81]

Hence, based on the fact that Waha believed in the existence of God whom they believed was the provider of everything, and was respected like the sun which saves both men and nature, and hence called him *Kazuba* “the sun.”

In the late 1870s Christianity was also introduced in Buha. This was engineered by Dr. David Livingstone in 1857 that inspired other Europeans to come to Africa to spread Christianity. [82] For instance, in 1882, Father Guillet – together with his two companions opened a mission station in Buha and the year that followed they tried to open the school in Buha to teach the catechists. [83] The spread of the new religion was not an easy task because the majority of Waha were not ready to abandon their traditional religion.



Hence, the missionaries had to use several tricks like offering presents in form of tobacco and salt to Waha so as to convince them to be converted into Christianity.<sup>[84]</sup> Despite this approach, Waha people still did not fully accept convert into Christianity. Consequently, Whites Fathers decided to study the indigenous traditional religions as well as their local languages and established schools where children were taught the new faith purposely to eliminate the traditional practices. Inspiration was gained from Lavigeries principles of 1874 and 1880. The principles were based on the fact that missionaries must be familiar with the local languages, dressing and food of the targeted group for evangelization.<sup>[85]</sup>

In case of education, Waha (Ha) had informal way of education. From formative years, children were taught via everyday life about their environments. They were taught to respect elders' speeches, good manners, obedience to elders, hospitality to elders, friends, visitors and respect for their elders and ancestral spirits as well as how to share in common tasks in the fields and homestead.<sup>[86]</sup> Children also learned through evening fireside elders' stories about how to be good father or mother, warrior and be able to handle their families. Tribal legend and proverbs were told and retold. They were stories to explain the origin of the tribe and of humanity in general.<sup>[87]</sup> These tales were told with care and with much repetition. There were neither books nor any writings. Hence teaching was done exclusively through speech.<sup>[88]</sup>

The youths learnt much by imitating their elders.<sup>[89]</sup> The names of trees, plants, birds, animals and insects and the dangers and use of each was learnt as boys herded the cattle with their fathers and girls worked with their mothers in the homestead.<sup>[90]</sup> Dancing and music were an important part of the Ha life in which children joined as they grew older. Sporadically there were children's dances.<sup>[91]</sup> In the early years, they learnt from watching their elder brothers, sisters and parents. Among the Ha there were no continuous formal instructions. The homestead was the school. The idea of giving presents to guests was enthralled very early on children to shape them from being selfish. A child was encouraged to go and fetch an egg or two for a visitor definitely as his or her gift. Instructions in good manners were not left to parents only. Any grown up person could, and did play a part in rearing the youth.<sup>[92]</sup>

Ha society also oriented the youths on religious issues. They taught them that spirits controlled everything in the clan, homestead and the society at large and every experience from birth, through childhood and adolescence, the sowing of seeds, the reaping of crops, marriage, death and burial were part of spiritual powers.<sup>[93]</sup> Therefore, the younger person in Ha society was involved in religious performances for example by practicing rituals about disaster, diseases and harvest.<sup>[94]</sup> In practicing their spiritual beliefs the youths did not need to recite any religious dogma.<sup>[95]</sup> Ha doctrine was within them. As a child grew up he or she knew the basic elements of their religious life; that there was God, spirits and there was an afterlife and an invisible force of nature which could be tapped.<sup>[96]</sup>

The youths had been taught the way to resolve each day troubles like hunger, drought and diseases using spiritual concepts e.g. slaughtering sheep and goats close by river banks as sacrifice. Problems related to droughts, flood, diseases and infertility were all seen in religious perspectives. They were viewed as a result of evil forces or spirits.<sup>[97]</sup> Every occurrence that threatened human existence like disease and disaster (floods/draught) was explained in religious terms.<sup>[98]</sup> The religious teachings provided a whole complex of taboos, ornaments and protective medicine. In inculcating this knowledge the youth were attached to an expert or group of experts, who guided them to herbalists and spiritual diviners. The non-secular diviners included clans' elders and Bateko who had been qualified to be leaders of the community and being capable of lead rituals like rain making.<sup>[99]</sup>

Moreover, family planning and child spacing was among the important lessons that were taught or given to the youth in Buha. The youth were taught that the family was not expected to have another child until the first was old enough to look after itself in case of danger. The youngest child must be able to follow instructions and even to run for safety in case of danger before the family was expected to have another baby.<sup>[100]</sup> However, the coming of new comers like Germans and British into Buha brought some changes

on the traditional education system imparted among the Ha society.<sup>[101]</sup>

With regards to marriage in Ha, courtship, bride price and finally marriage were the stages that bridegroom and brides were expected to follow before getting married. Courtship was considered very important because it laid the foundation of solid relationship and understanding between the two intending to get married. Among Ha, it was the duty of a man to search for his intended marry wife. Words like “*Ndasavyeakanzo*” were normally used by the boy to request the girl. If the girl accepted the request she normally replied by saying “*Karabhonese or Elemerewe*” which meant your request has been accepted. Following this acceptance, the boy thanked the girl by saying, “*Karaboneye bene Imana*” which meant thank you very much, may God bless you.<sup>[102]</sup> After this stage, the suitor had to consult the clan of a bride as a way of preventing in-traclanic marriage. In case of no obstacle, the bridegroom then embarked on a process of bringing their both parents together on the marriage issue.<sup>[103]</sup> If the process went successful, a meeting of the council of elders was then organized for the final agreement and arrangement.<sup>[104]</sup> A special day was then fixed for the payment of the bride price in terms of cattle or products like salts or grains (crop products) and followed by marriage ceremony. After the bride price payment, the couple were not immediately allowed to be together until after the official marriage fixed for another day is done and followed by event like the taking of bride prize from the boy’s parents to the girl’s parents.<sup>[105]</sup> This ceremony was accompanied by sowing seeds in the hole in the farming plot prepared by the husband’s parents.<sup>[106]</sup> Another important ceremony took place when the married girl was on her menstrual period. This was accompanied by sowing seeds from the wife’s mother as declaration or signal of the married lady being a tough running woman. Final ceremonies were made when the bridegroom visited her parents and that gave way also to her parents return visit to her home.<sup>[107]</sup>

In case where bride price could not be paid due to poverty, the deal was handled in two ways: first, the boy had to take the girl especially at night without even informing her parents (eloping). This kind of method was traditionally known as “*Ukwib’inkumi*) translated as marriage by theft and was recognized in Ha.<sup>[108]</sup> Secondly, the boy and the girl had to enter into an oath agreement. This requires that both of them swore to remain faithful to each other pending bridegroom must look for the dowry to come and pay to the bride’s family. The couple had to remain together unless death kept them apart.<sup>[109]</sup>

In the traditional customs of Ha, there existed situations where a girl had to go to the house of a man (solicited husband) when he was not around. Should in the case the man returned and find the girl in his house, he will immediately understand but such marriages could only be endorsed and he also fell in love with her reciprocating her love for him if love was judged between them.<sup>[110]</sup> Another form of marriage was that of an agreement between the adult man and woman who had been divorced or lost husband/wife. This sort of marriage came about to a person who has divorced or misplaced his or her lover. In Buha, a person divorced changed into now not allowed to marry a person who by no means entered in matrimony earlier than since it was appeared as taboo. It was believed that if such marriage came about in this situation one of the couple would die as consequence of being a liar. In this kind of marriage, the adult woman was called “*Msumbakazi*” among the Ha.<sup>[111]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This study has treated elements in pre-colonial Buha. First it has tried to offer a detailed discussion on Buha as a cultural area within which the existing Kigoma location falls in. The emphasizes has been on geographical place, environment and people of Buha. Secondly, it has supplied a discussion at the economic, political and social activities practiced by Waha prior to colonization of Buha. The study reveals that Buha referred today as Kigoma region in Tanzania. It comprises all areas determined in Kigoma rural, Buhigwe, Kasulu, Kibondo, and Kakonko districts. It is geographically located in the western part of Tanzania and bordered with Lake Tanganyika in the west and Burundi within the north. The inhabitants of

Buha are known as Waha and they speak Kiha of one of the Bantu languages spoken by people of East Africa. The study additionally exposes that Waha lived in isolated small groups or clans prior to integration with foreigners. Each clan produced household normally referred to as families. The eldest man in every clan regarded as head of extended family (clan) and was known as Mteko. Mteko was a hereditary leader who served as political leader and religious priest among the Waha. He distributed farming land, residence plots and acted as diviner in time of disaster in Buha. His position seized after the Waha had integrated with foreigners in particular the Tutsi and the Mwami assumed the position. Finally the study discloses the economic and social activities happened among the Waha as far as 1890. Division of labour facilitated and promoted the development of these activities. Considering the age and sex, girls specialised in crops cultivation while men have been hunters of game and honey producers. The Waha cultivated food plants like millet, potatoes, and other seasonal and tropical vegetation. They also engaged in pottery, weaving, carving, and smelting. Specialists in iron smelting manufactured iron equipment like hoes, knives, swords and arrows. The Waha additionally involved in trading activities wherein numerous objects which includes hoes, axes, arrows, spears and sickles, salt, copper adorns and pots had been exchanged for goats, livestock, sheep, hides, and skin delivered across Burundi and Rwanda. The Waha had their own ways of training, marriage and beliefs. Waha conventional training was complete in itself because it carried out its objectives. It prepared the youths for living in their community. It emphasised on appropriate manners, obedience to elders, hospitality to elders, friends and visitors. The Waha practiced marriage and there had been unique forms of marriages as highlighted in this study. The marriage controlled and lead by procedures such as paying of bride prices which was either in terms of cattle, salt or agricultural products. The Waha believed in a single God whom taken into consideration being supernatural power. Different names for God have been used to describe His powers as discussed on this study. Generally the coming of foreigners particularly the Tutsi in Buha brought about changes in economic, political and social organization among the Waha as seen today.

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2. Choyishe Mhunda (69) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Muhunga Village, 21/09/2021
3. Chrispin Chishako (88) years old, a peasant interviewed at Bugaga Village, 04/11/2021
4. Clemence Uwimana (78) years old, interviewed at Nyaragusu Refugee Camp in Makere ward, 13/02/2022
5. Hamisi Kizanye (73) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Muhunga Village, 20/9/, 2021
6. Haruna Mbunda (83) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Muhunga Village, 20/9/ 2021
7. Hasan Marohe (76) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Bugaga Village, 04/11/2021
8. Jackson Ntalindi (90) years old, retired teacher, interviewed at Munanila Village, 11/11/ 2021
9. James Kaliho (70) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Marumba Village, 17/09/2021
10. Jumanne Ntahondi (68) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Marumba Village, 17/09/ 2021
11. Kashonge Majaliwa (66) years old, retired teacher, interviewed at Muhunga Village, 20/9/ 2021
12. Nashon Luhamvya (71) years old, a descendant of Mtwale Luhamvya family, interviewed at Heru Juu Village, 25/9/ 2021
13. Ndimliho Ntabidi (71) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Heru Village, 26/10/2021
14. Ndirushe Puguu (70) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Muhunga Village, 20/9/ 2021
15. Richard Kisongora (85) years old, retired Ward representative, interviewed at Marumba Village, 17/09/2021
16. Richard Kiswaga (84) years old, retired District Agricultural Officer, interviewed at Kabanga Village, 23/09/2021
17. Seleman Ntimpamagaye (81) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Muhunga Village, 20/09/ 2021
18. Vicent Kisongora (63) years old, retired teacher, interviewed at Marumba Village, 17/09/ 2021
19. Yahaya Kasela (87) years old, retired Division Officer, interviewed at Nyaronga Village Kakonko district, 29/9/2021
20. Yohana Gilako (73) year old, a peasant, interviewed at Bugaga Village, 04/11/2021
21. Yusuph Sizwe (71) years old, a peasant, interviewed at Buhoro Village, 08/11/ 2021

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