

JAN CZEKANOWSKI AND HIS VERSION OF ORAL TRADITIONS  
OF THE INTERLACUSTRINE REGION PEOPLES

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In entering the last decade of the 20th century, it is difficult to expect the discovery of new, so far completely unknown written sources for the history of the interior of Eastern Africa. It seems even less likely for science to obtain sources of simply fundamental significance for the history of large areas of the Black Continent - sources of a rank comparable to that of reports by Heinrich Barth, or, for instance, Mungo Park. But there is such a source, or there are even sources like that, and although a small fragment of them has already been published, they have not reached a position in Africanist research which they deserve. Their author is Jan Czekanowski - a Pole with a Russian passport, who took part in 1907-1908 in the greatest German research expedition to East and Central Africa, headed by Herzog Adolf Friedrich von Mecklenburg, an uncle of the Grand Duke then ruling in Mecklenburg and a brother of the husband of the Dutch queen Wilhelmina (Czekanowski 1958:15). The royal origin and connections of the head of the expedition brought about the fact that no means were spared for the organization of the expedition and the publication of its results.

For Czekanowski the expedition to Africa began on May 9 1907, when he left Zurich, and ended after 25 months on June 9 1909. The fact that Czekanowski counted the duration of the expedition from his "leaving Zurich" is justified in a way. Czekanowski graduated from the University of Zurich, here too he obtained in 1906 the title of the doctor of science, here too "felt at home so much" that he returned to this city on all available occasions (Czekanowski 1958:15).

On November 1, 1906 Czekanowski was nominated assistant in the Africanist section of the Royal Museum fur Volkerkunde in

Berlin:

"The nomination to Berlin involved, as Czekanowski wrote, the promise that he would be sent to Africa on a government fellowship the recipient of which would have the task of carrying out research, collecting ethnographic and anthropological assemblages and writing reports, as far as possible good for publishing in book form" (Czekanowski 1958:20).

The occasion to go came extremely soon. Already in December 1906, the Director of the Berlin Museum - Professor von Luschan - told him to begin in the greatest secret to prepare for an expedition to Central Africa, specifically to the Interlacustrine Region between the Congo and the Nile. Czekanowski took these preparations very seriously, reading much, learning languages and meeting recognized authorities. In February 1907, after he had been presented to Herzog von Mecklenburg, he was nominated the "anthropologist and ethnographer of the expedition being organized". The expedition had an enormous programme of scientific research: from geology and topography, to botany, zoology and musicology. Apart from the government, the expedition was sponsored also by museums in Leipzig and Berlin. In its full composition, the expedition included about 800 persons, and on the route of its journey 7 precisely prepared stores waited for it, to which supplies were brought by more than 2.000 porters (Czekanowski 1958:20,23). Each of the members of the expedition had his personal servants contracted in Dar es-Salaam, and in the course of the expedition consumed not only splendid drinks which were resupplied with the passage of time, but also had a luxury as a bathtub and hot and cold water bath in it. The perfectly operating mail ensured the members of the expedition constant contacts with families and friends in Europe (Czekanowski 1958:144ff.).

"In the expedition - wrote Czekanowski - the young scientists chosen by leading Berlin professors were given completely exceptional conditions of scientific research work. Each could work according to his own mind and his own plans, not constrained by anybody or anything except his own interest lying in the necessity of keeping in touch with the reserve column on the supply stores. The Herzog tried to indulge them as much as he could, for he cared very much for the publication which would document the scientific achievements of the expedition. He wanted to occupy a permanent position in the history of research on the African continent" (Czekanowski 1958:24).

The fruit of the research of the expedition was to be the publication of the work *Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse der Deutschen Zentral Afrika Expedition 1907-1908 unter Führung Adolf Friedrichs, Herzogs zu Mecklenburg*. Within it two volumes were reserved for ethnographic and anthropological research, to constitute an autonomous publication entitled *Forschungen im Nil-Kongo-Zwischengebiet von Doktor Jan Czekanowski*. Czekanowski was to carry out this work over 5 years after the end of the expedition, i.e. until the middle of 1914. Over these 5 years he had the exclusive right to publish the materials which he deposited in the museums in Berlin and Leipzig. It was only after this period that they could be made available to other researchers (Czekanowski 1958:25ff.).

Czekanowski also had the task of keeping the diary of the expedition, which he could publish in Polish, after meeting the other research tasks imposed on him (Czekanowski 1958:25ff.).

The keeping of the assumed obligations proved to be far from simple, taking Czekanowski much longer than 5 years. What turned out to be particularly tedious was the work related to the effects of anthropological studies. Involved in the elaboration of the results of the expedition to Africa, occupied as all others with World War One, Czekanowski neither had time nor a frame of mind to turn to diaries. Misunderstandings with von Luschan, who, contrary to the agreement, let rivals use Czekanowski's collections, induced Czekanowski to move first to Petersburg (in 1911) and then to Lvov, where he received a chair at the University.

In Petersburg Czekanowski was the keeper of the African section in the Ethnographic-Anthropological Museum of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. He was able to do so by using African collections given to the Museum by Wilhelm Junker. This Baltic German made a long trip in Africa and its route coincided with, or just touched in some parts that of Czekanowski's trail. This no doubt facilitated the work connected with the publication of the results of the expedition in 1907-1908 (Czekanowski 1958:28).

The work of ethnographic collections and anthropological data convinced Czekanowski that by no means would he fit into the two volumes reserved for him. He estimated his needs at, at least, six volumes. Struggling for necessary, additional subsidies, he made up his mind to publish in 1911 a third volume of the planned whole (Czekanowski 1958:27; 1911).

Because of the war and the fact that in connection with it a manuscript sent to Leipzig in 1918 was lost, Czekanowski had to do the same work again. This delayed the publication of a successive, fourth volume of the *Forschungen...* It appeared only in 1922. In contrast to his original, broader plans, the author had to limit himself in it to presentation of the result of anthropological observations on live individuals (Czekanowski 1922).

Because of the low rate of work - for the most part not the fault of Czekanowski himself - the distance between the time of the expedition and the publication of its results dangerously increased. I believe that this was the circumstance and so was the beginning of the publication of the results by Czekanowski with anthropological materials of least interest to readers that brought about the fact that Czekanowski's studies did not enter the research circulation. They had been forgotten before they appeared. The language of the publication - German - less known among the English and French, did not add to its popularity, either. A survey quest which I made, looking through about 100 major items, showed that only few authors heard of Czekanowski's studies, including just one - Sir John Gray - with a more significant name.<sup>1</sup>

It was only in 1924 that the volume devoted to ethnographic studies appeared as a second volume of the whole edition:

"Despite its ample size (45 sheets), the volume did not include, however, quite important illustrative material. The latter appeared in 1927 as a fifth volume. With it, the publication of *Forschungen im Nil-Kongo-Zwischengebiet* was broken. Instead of projected six volumes it had only reached

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. John Gray, "Early History of Buganda". *The Uganda Journal*, 2/4 (1935):259-271. More extensive use of Czekanowski's work we could find in: David P. Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition. Quest for a Chimera*. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1974:105-114.

the size of five" (Czekanowski 1958:29; 1924; 1927).

Anyway, Czekanowski gave up the work too on an anthropological monograph study on Central Africa. He recognized that:

"[...] the publication of the anthropological observations made on live individuals and the transfer of extremely large craniological materials to the section of anthropology of the Museum fur Volkerkunde in Berlin ... [was] the complete satisfaction of my anthropological obligations with respect to the expedition" (Czekanowski 1958:29).

It probably was, but the lack of such a synthesis did not favour career among Africanist experts. After all, every important researcher treated him as an anthropologist!

Freeing himself for some time from his African interests, Czekanowski became intently engaged with the problem of ethnogenesis of the Slavs (Czekanowski 1927). This brought him well deserved renown, but again put off for long years the work connected with the publication of the most important source for the history of Africa, which is, or perhaps may rather become, his *Diaries from the Expedition in 1907-1908*.

In 1937, that is 30 years after the German expedition had set out for Africa, Czekanowski found some time to work on the publication of his *Diaries* (Czekanowski 1958:31). But again he had bad luck. He submitted volume I for printing in the spring of 1939, and even the outbreak of World War Two would not have prevented their publications, had there been no plans for making a school reading item out of the *Diaries*. Before appropriate decisions had been made, the 1st of September came. In the hostilities of the war the manuscript of volume I prepared for printing was lost. After the war, it was necessary to begin the whole work again. It was easiest to prepare the publication of volume II, the edition of which had been elaborated preliminarily still before the war. In 1958, The Polish Folk Society published *Deep into the Aruwimi Woods. A Diary of an Expedition to Central Africa by Jan Czekanowski*. The volume which appeared was given the number II, and in the introduction the author promised that volumes I and III would also appear soon. Unfortunately they have not to the present day. Czekanowski died in 1965, and none of his students and co-workers undertook to continue his work. The

answer why it so happened is beyond the framework of this study.

Still before the African expedition set out from Europe, the protectors and superiors of Czekanowski obliged him to keep regularly a diary of the ethnographic-anthropological expedition to which much freedom was given and the route of which did not coincide in general with the trail of the principal part of the expedition:

"The official diary of the trip was predicted for 800 pages in folio and 400 pages in octavo" (Czekanowski 1958:173). Czekanowski divided the whole of the diary into three volumes. He called volume I *To the Springs of the Nile*, volume II - *Deep into the Aruwimi Woods*, and volume III - *On the Borders of Sudan* (Czekanowski 1958:15-20).

The first six chapters of the volume I are not the diary proper of the expedition, for they are concerned with the period preceding the setting out of the expedition from Bukoba on Lake Victoria deep into the Interlacustrine Region. It does not mean at all that these chapters are completely useless for Africanist research. One can find in them Czekanowski's impression from Mombasa, a description of a journey across then East Africa from Mombasa to Bukoba, information on the relations occurring in German colonial lands, finally data on the organization of the expedition, its equipment and technique of moving in a zone not quite yet fully occupied by the colonial states. The further chapters of volume I are already the diary proper of the trip, covering the period from the setting out from Bukoba on June 15, 1907 to the end of November of that year. Over this time, the caravan covered about 900 km, which took it 187 hours of march, to find itself in Nyundo at the foot of volcanoes, close to Lake Kivu. The march itself took the caravan 37 days. The remaining time was devoted to "[...] scientific studies of collections, primarily anthropological ones, which reached record size" (Czekanowski 1958:15-17).

It seems that it is exactly the yet unpublished part of the diaries that would be most significant for the Africanists, in particular for lovers of oral tradition as sources. In that period Czekanowski wrote:

"[...] the main task of the expedition lay in gathering information for a historical monograph of the local feudal

states governed by pastoral aristocracy of foreign origin, only linguistically assimilated by their subjects who cultivated the soil by digging. An extremely exceptional opportunity was offered for this. The area of this part of the expedition was a region treated as a reserve, and almost twice the size of Switzerland. It was closed (by German colonial authorities) to both European settlers and merchants, the coloured, Indian, Arab and even Black. [...] With such a system of relations, the natives led their lives still in the old fashion, under the reign of their own hereditary rulers who were governed by the timeless, common law authorised by tradition. The relations observed in this great reserve showed a striking resemblance to those that occurred at the beginning of the historical time, e.g. in our lands under the first Piasts" (Czekanowski 1958:16).

This is what Czekanowski wrote in 1958, in the introduction to the second volume of the *Diaries*, but - what seems interesting to emphasize - similar thoughts can be found too in his texts written more than 80 years ago. Czekanowski not only believed that Black peoples had their own history - which was not obvious to everybody in the early 20th century - but also he had no doubts that this history could be investigated by means of oral tradition. No doubt as one of the first in the world - he also thought that in studies on the past of Africa and Europe one should use *c o m p a r a t i v e m e t h o d s*. He also put forth and tried to justify, even in the *Diaries*, the thesis of the feudal character of the pastoral states in Interlacustrine Region. This thesis was fully developed in a study, published in 1961, with the significant title "Feudal Pastoral States in the African Interlacustrine Region" (in Polish). Czekanowski recognized this study as his meeting of the promise of writing a monograph on the pastoral states based on the materials which he had collected in 1907-1908. Unfortunately, this paper was written in the manner of popular science and is characterised by an almost complete lack of footnotes. Therefore, the reader finds it seriously difficult to distinguish between Czekanowski's old and new views and those from the literature.

Published in Polish, volume II of the *Diaries* covers the period from early December of 1907 to the end of March, 1908. Czekanowski's caravan covered then the route from Rwanda to Fort Portal in Toro, wherefrom he started on along the north-western slopes of Ruwenzori massif deep into the woods of Aruwimi basin. The trail was about 1.700 km long. It took 357 hours of march (61

days) and 5 days in a boat along the western coast of Lake Edward. Additionally, 66 days were spent on research carried out at points of mostly short stops:

"It was only in Fort Portal that I had exceptionally convenient conditions of work - Czekanowski wrote - and for a few days I was taken ill, I stopped for 18 days" (Czekanowski 1958:17ff.).

The main purpose of the expedition was then to come in contact with Pygmies, to study them anthropologically and explain the ethnic relations in the southern part in the Interlacustrine Region between the Nile and the Congo:

"In these matters it was most important to determine the borders between the Sudanese tribes pressing from the north and those of the Bantu language family, pushed into the virgin woods to the south" (Czekanowski 1958:17).

To Czekanowski's mind, the achievements of this stage were great:

"[...] the coming in closer contact with the natives permitted detailed knowledge to be gained about the technique of colonial exploitation of the Independent State of Congo. It permitted the determination that this technique was related to the organizational achievements of the Zanzibarites who were pushed out of their posts by armed victories of the Europeans. Moreover, it turned out that the expansion of the Zanzibar Arabs was characterized by striking analogies to the invasions of Scandinavian Germans, despite such a great passage of time dividing these two ethnic explosions blowing up in so different conditions. The more detailed realization of Zanzibarites' achievements in their expansion area showed that the creation of a great continental empire [...] can be the work of just a few dozen determined and brave people having the gift of organization, and does not require by any means the support of masses of the invader population" (Czekanowski 1958:17ff.).

It is worthwhile to remember and treat seriously this general conclusions drawn by Czekanowski from his own research in both Africa and Europe (mainly in Scandinavia and Slav lands), thus based on broad comparative material (Czekanowski 1958:384). It is particularly interesting to note the thought which just occurred in the *Diaries* and was more fully developed in "Feudal Pastoral States", speaking of a few strangers, not necessarily invaders, able in appropriate and earlier shaped socio-economic conditions to create the institutions of an early state.

As Czekanowski wrote, his longer stay in Fort Portal, the contact with the king of Toro who was writing a history of his



own country, information gathered from missionaries - above all the White Fathers, numerous interviews with merchants:

"[...] made it possible for me to approach correctly my own observations and to realize the separate nature of the British system of exploitation, based on money economy, rather than the natural services of the feudal economy, just as in the Independent State of Congo" (Czekanowski 1958:18).

The third volume of the *Diary* covers the period from April 1, 1908, to April 1, of the next year. In this period Czekanowski left forever the remainder of the expedition and set out completely on his own to the south borders of Sudan. This stage ended with the breaking up of the caravan in Gondokoro on the Nile, where Czekanowski embarked on a ship. In this stage the caravan covered about 3.750 km over 784 hours of march, that is 175 days. 190 days were taken by the exploration work carried out in localities where the caravan could stop:

"The research of the third period of the expedition was concentrated above all on explaining the ethnic and anthropological relations on the south borders of Sudan. [...] Moreover, very interesting studies were engaged with the barbarian states of Sudanese tribes, based on *sui generis* feudal system the grounds of which lay in fief of women" (Czekanowski 1958:19).

In this system women played the role of cows in pastoral monarchies. More facts about this interesting subject can be found in the "Feudal Pastoral States":

"[...] the ruler [of Azande] - gathered young women in his harem and granted them to his vassals. These great vassals made their clients dependent on themselves in the same way, and finally this whole system came down to masses of wifeless beggars. The dependence was literal, for the fief could be ended at any time. [...] the older the man was, unless he was already very old and invalid, the more he meant, the younger he was, the less significant. As a result old men were granted younger women in fief, whereas women were indemnified with younger husbands as they became older and fell in social hierarchy. The youngest men had to serve in waiting for the happy fortune to give them, with the passage of time, finally at the beginning of their life career, with eldest, most experienced women with broad connections, even previous bosses" (Czekanowski 1961:24).

Then the career of these young men was ensured:

"One cannot negate the fact - Czekanowski concluded - that this Sudanese people implemented, after all, a certain kind of ideal justice. It lay in the fact that the oldest men had the youngest wives, and the oldest women had the youngest husbands, and all this was reached automatically, moreover,

without any greater friction, and besides the sum of the husband's and wife's ages was approximately a constant value" (Czekanowski 1961:24).

The system observed in Azande encourages sad reflections about the lack of internal mechanisms, imbedded in African communities, which could dynamize these societies, give rise to, and accelerate the processes of change in social, political or economic structures. Instead of dynamizing mechanisms they had something like developed social safeguards which, as it turns out, also provided women. There was less need - as, for instance, in European communities - to fight for land, political or social advancement, there was no need for constant struggle for one's position in life. Today when we are considering the complex reason for Africa's backwardness, it is worthwhile to remember it

Czekanowski, who distinctly did not like the colonial rulers of Congo and expressed his dislike directly many times, could set himself free from these prejudices and note that:

"[...] the occupation [of the southern borderlands of Sudan] by the Independent State of Congo led to stabilization of relations. Namely it protected the native population from the invasions of Sudanese Arabs pressing from the north, and at the same time it stopped the southward migration of the Sudanese tribes running away from the Arabs. As Czekanowski claimed, the migration of Sudanese peoples caused no less devastation than the Arab's looting expeditions, which took away masses of slaves deep into Sudan. For the Sudanese from the tribes of Azande and Mangbetu were cannibals and treated the defeated natives as cattle for slaughter. They practiced it even at the time of my journey, although to a very small extent and in the greatest secret" (Czekanowski 1958:19).

The third volume of the unpublished *Diaries* of Czekanowski:

"[...] gives an image of relations transforming under the impact of the European colonial occupation and the exploitation of the country and its population organized by it" (Czekanowski 1958:19).

What speaks for the full publication of the *Diaries* is not only their themes and the date when they arose but also the material (the sources cited in them) of which they consist. Some of them are now lost. The *Diaries* were made up obviously and first of all of the author's own observations. They also included the oral tradition passed to Czekanowski by many then rulers, interviews with people of the most varied rank: from power elites to servant slaves Batwa and Pygmies.

Because of Czekanowski's origin, as he was a baron, and also

the distinct sympathy he enjoyed from the royal head of the expedition, Czekanowski had easy access to local rulers and dignitaries, but also to the highest levels of colonial administration. Personally in no way engaged in the process of building a colony for his state - the Pole - who had enormous theoretical and empirical knowledge, had sufficient reserve to the problem of formation of a colony to present it *sine ira et studio*. For this reason, his considerations of the early stage of formation and functioning of colonies in Africa, are to my mind, much more valuable than the analogous reflections by the French, the English or Germans.

It is also necessary to point out Czekanowski's professional qualifications which were higher than average. He was not only a doctor of science, an ethnographer and anthropologist by education, a historian and sociologist by predilection, and a musicologist by interest, but he could also take photographs - which was not then an easy and popular skill, he could record sounds and melodies on wax cylinders, he was able to come in contact easily with people to whom he spoke, with no difficulty and without resorting to violence, he kept perfect discipline in his caravan, he had no "racial" prejudices, which characterized many of the colonial administrators, finally he was an authentic polyglot, knowing not only the basic European languages, including the Slavonic ones, but also Kiswahili and Arabic. He learned also other Bantu languages. After all, he had an outstanding teacher, Carl Meinhof - then the most eminent expert on Bantu phonetics (Czekanowski 1958:174). Czekanowski reproached himself for neglecting linguistic studies, for in the middle of the route he had managed to "write only three dictionaries", according to Von der Gablentz's scheme. "What explained this - he added - was that I remained in areas elaborated linguistically by missionaries. Therefore I could write down systematically only local dialects" (Czekanowski 1958:174ff.).

One of the most important of Czekanowski's informants - in particular in terms of oral tradition - was the ruler of Toro, Daudi Chwa Kassagama. Czekanowski met him quite often, was even invited by the ruler to court sentences. One of such meetings deserves no doubt a wider description:

"When the servants put down in front of us cool drinks, cold water siphons, bottles with citron juice and with whisky, the king left, to return after a while, carrying a thick copybook written in legible, developed hand. Because Sir Apollo Kaggwa, the Prime Minister of the king of Buganda, published the history of his country in print, the king Kassagama, who probably had no literary minister or one in sufficient confidence and with knowledge of the history of the state, the king decided to write the history of the kingdom of Toro himself. So then, because I mentioned that I had Sir Apollo's book, he fetched his manuscript. Although he refused to lend it to me, he promised that he would himself dictate it to me in translation to Kiswahili (as the text was written in Runyoro). Namely, its beginning, unfortunately only partly translated for me [for lack of time - B.N] read as follows: The ancestor of the dynasties ruling in the kingdoms of Bunyoro and Toro was Mpuga Rukidi Nyabongo who came from the land of Rukidi, now called Bukedi, situated on Lake Chioga [...]" (Czekanowski 1958:178).

It cannot be excluded that the slight fragments of the text in this thick book of Kassagama are now the only preserved parts of it. It would be difficult to overappreciate their value for science, as they are perhaps the oldest record of the origin of the Babito dynasty which ruled in Bunyoro and Toro. There are 30 years earlier than the relation of Omukama Tito Winyi IV and about 40 years earlier than the learned treatise by Nyakatura.<sup>2</sup>

The literary ambitions of the ruler of Toro were not something completely exceptional in the earliest decades of this century. The then ruling elites - brought up by missionaries - often took to pen, anyway greatly encouraged to do so. Much credit in this respect should go, for instance, to John Roscoe or R.P. Ashe (Kiwauka 1971:XIII-XLVIII). It cannot be denied that the works which arose then enrich today the source basis at professional historians' disposal. On the other hand, however, the then literary vogue had in itself much of a historical and literary competition in which all participants tried to be better than others at any price. As a result - with the passage of time and the publication of new "works" - the dynastic lists became longer and the beginnings of almost all the states in the Inter-

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Kabalega and Winyi, "K.W." (Tito Winyi IV), "Abakama Ba Bunyoro-Kitara", *The Uganda Journal*, part I, vol.3, no 2 (1935) pp. 155-160; part II, vol. 4, no 1 (1937), pp. 75-83; part III, vol. 5, no 2 (1937), pp.53-67. Nyakatura. *Abakama Ba Bunyoro Kitara*. Canada 1947.

lacustrine Region went back further and further into the past (Henige 1974:108). Rwanda can be an excellent illustration of this situation. Czekanowski who spent a few months in Rwanda and often met with its ruler, Juhi Musinga, could not obtain any information from him which would go back into the past beyond the 19th century. So he concluded in his *Diaries*:

"[...] compared with Urundi, Rwanda was obviously a new state. [...] Obviously it had no genealogy reaching as far back as that of the kingdoms ruled by the dynasties of Bahinda and Babito. Therefore, one should seriously consider the possibility that it was only the great king Lwabugeri Kigeri, father of the now ruling Juhi Musinga, who gave Rwanda its present form" (Czekanowski 1958:65).

Czekanowski was so much interested in this problem that in the *Diaries* he repeatedly came back to it, trying to find out in various ways why Juhi Musinga and other of his informants from Rwanda, e.g. blacksmiths belonging to Lwabugeri Kigeri, would not tell. In vain. The conclusions which he had drawn in his small pedigree of Rwanda could not be falsified. On the other hand, in Czekanowski's study on the "Feudal Pastoral States" one reads:

"[...] we already find a genealogy of the rulers of Rwanda reaching 27 generations back and quite weak argument explaining the necessity of abandoning his own, older thesis" (Czekanowski 1961:50ff.).

Returning to Kassagama, he also took part in this historical and literary competition, for he knew the work by Sir Apollo. The contemporary researcher on the history of Buganda - Kiwanuka - is right in warning against making small of the effect of Kaggwa on writings of not only the traditional historians in Buganda, but also Bunyoro. He points out that at the same time that use should be made of all works by Kaggwa, for they complement each other and only then can conclusions drawn on their basis be true (Kiwanuka 1971:XXVII).

Kassagama could know only one, the oldest work by Kaggwa. Others appeared after Czekanowski had left Africa. So the influence cannot be excluded.<sup>3</sup> But the value of Kassagama's relation is enhanced by an additional circumstance: he was not

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jan Czekanowski, *W głąb lasów Aruwimi*, p. 178; Sir Apollo Kaggwa, *Ekitabo kya Basekabaka be Buganda*. London 1901; *Ekitabo kye Mpisa za Baganda*. London 1918; *Ekitabo kye Bika bya Baganda*. Kampala 1949.

the only informant of Czekański's about the history of Toro and Bunyoro. In the published volume of his *Diaries*, Czekański noted:

"I went to see King Toro after studying in detail the *manuscript of the late Father Achte*. It turned out that there is no difference in the two approaches [...]" (Czekański 1958:181).

So, even if Kassagama was influenced by Kaggwa, he did not paint up excessively the history of his country, for if he had, his story would differ from that of Father Achte.

And who was Father Achte? Czekański presented him in greater detail the "Feudal States...". This matter is so important that I am encouraged to quote the whole of a large fragment of the Czekański's paper:

"The first news about the history of the Interlacustrine Region going far back into the past was brought by Stanley from his first trip, who gave a list of 34 kings of Buganda. This list was not accurate, first of all because sometimes brothers ruled one after another, and, therefore, the number of generations of Buganda's rulers must have been slightly shorter than the number of kings, even if the list of kings had been exact. It was only the research of Father Achte from the Society of White Fathers of Cardinal Lavignerie (who died in Toro in 1903) that explained the problem involved in determining the number of generations of Buganda's rulers, so important for all chronological studies. His manuscripts were put at my disposal by the superior of this mission Father van Daile in January of 1908, when I used the support from this post in my investigations. I published them only in 1917 when the outbreak of the war stopped the publication of my work. On the other hand, the Anglican missionary Rev. John Roscoe published, as early as 1911, the genealogy of Buganda's rulers which was different only in four insignificant details from Father Achte's list (Czekański 1961:29).

The limited purposes of this paper prevent, unfortunately, detailed analysis of this text. Let us then note that Father Achte's manuscript published by Czekański has never been cited by experts, although it contained among other things dynastic-genealogical information of the past of the most important states in the Interlacustrine Region: Bunyoro, Toro and Buganda. Father Achte's work - along with the tradition collected by Czekański himself, should no doubt be part of the canon of the fundamental sources on the basis of which we reconstruct today the distant past of the Interlacustrine Region. And although it is possible to excuse Africanists, ignorance of the Polish texts on Czekański's *Diaries*, it is difficult to justify

lack of knowledge of the *Forschungen...* published after all in German. Let us emphasize too the almost full coincidence, indicated by Czekanowski, between the dynastic lists collected by him and Father Achte and the lists published until 1911 by Rev. John Roscoe.

In this paper we mentioned already two valuable sources, without knowledge of which it would be difficult to imagine serious studies on the past of the Interlacustrine Region. They are: five volumes of the *Forschungen...* and *Diaries*. Africanists should reach out for *Forschungen...*, although difficulties involved in access to them even in the greatest European libraries make one wonder if they should not be published again, of course, in new scientific elaboration. We mentioned also "Feudal Pastoral States of the African Interlacustrine Region". A few years ago, I sent a copy of this Czekanowski's paper to Paris, and all indicates that it will be published in French any moment now.

Czekanowski's private letters and those that he sent in the line of duty from Africa still await discoverer and editor. As Czekanowski wrote "Private letters were a more personal supplement of the official report. Out of prudence I did not put all that deserved recording in the *Diaries*" (Czekanowski 1958:293). Of course, the proposal for a separate edition of letters would go too far, but nothing prevents their chosen appropriate fragments from complementing the text of, for instance, the *Diaries*. A similar role could be played by the reports which he sent to Germany.

Czekanowski sent to the Crassi Museum in Leipzig ethnographic collections amounting to hundreds of exhibits. For instance, he sent from Toro the complete equipment of a smithy. Its photograph can, by the way, be found in the Polish volume of the *Diaries* (Czekanowski 1958:201):

"Although I had least understanding of musicology - Czekanowski confessed - but out of 140 cylinders taken along I sent 90 recorded ones to Berlin. A few were destroyed [...]" (Czekanowski 1958:173).

"Out of photographic equipment, consisting of 35 dozen plates, I sent 250 well developed and more than a hundred undeveloped ones, although the Berlin Museum demanded that plates should be sent directly after pictures were taken. [...] I take pictures only on glass plates, for museums do not

believe the films [...] (Czekanowski 1958:173).

At least some of that material was published in *Forschungen...*, and what about the rest? What about the pictures and other materials now at his family's disposal?

The French colleagues from the Centre des Etudes Africaines in Paris promised me to publish not only "Feudal Pastoral States" by Czekanowski, but also his *Diaries*. As I know they have started working towards it. However, time flies fast without pity, and the enormous and completely unused scientific material left by Czekanowski requires more determined and effective activity.

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