POLITICAL AUTHORITY AMONG THE LANGI OF NORTHERN UGANDA, CIRCA 1800 to 1939

by

John Andrew Tosh

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the University of London

1973

ProQuest Number: 10731425

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.

ProQuest 10731425

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.
This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

ABSTRACT

Throughout the pre-colonial era, the Lango people of Uganda lacked any state organisation or formal chiefdoms. The scope of the thesis is determined by this salient feature. The development of political authority among the Langi is traced from the formation of the Lango people around 1800 until the eve of the Second World War.

The pre-eminent social category in 19th century Lango was the clan, which was small and highly localised. Above this level, regional leadership provided the basis for inter-clan harmony at home and successful warfare abroad. But at the beginning of the 1890's, major defeats in the inter-lacustrine region, together with the disastrous social consequences of the great rinderpest epidemic, destroyed the authority of the regional leaders. Thereafter, local combinations of clans under a dominant clan leader could provide security and redress for wrongs in the immediate vicinity, but otherwise there were no restraints on inter-clan warfare.

When the British arrived at the turn of the century, the scope of political authority in Lango was therefore more restricted than ever. Nevertheless, clan leaders were able to delay the assertion of full colonial control, and then to manipulate the new administrative structure for the benefit of traditional interests. The ordinary population lost the participation in political decisions which they had had in pre-colonial times, and they found scant redress against abuse of power. But up to 1939 native administration was controlled for the most part by men who enjoyed some traditional status.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract 2

Acknowledgements 4

List of Maps 6

Abbreviations 7

A Note on Orthography and the words 'Lango' and 'Langi' 8

Introduction: Themes and Sources in Lango History .. 9

Chapter 1 The Background: Environment, Migration and Settlement 42

Chapter 2 Social Groups in 19th century Lango 78

Chapter 3 Pre-colonial Clan Leadership 118

Chapter 4 The Zenith and Collapse of Regional Leadership 149

Chapter 5 The Politics of Pacification 179

Chapter 6 The Formation of the Colonial Administrative Structure 241

Chapter 7 Power and Patronage in the Colonial Bureaucracy 285

Chapter 8 The System Scrutinised 337

Bibliography 368

Oral Sources 379

Appendix: Four Examples of Oral Testimony 403

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was Professor Roland Oliver who introduced me to the study of African history and who first directed my attention to the subject of this work. As supervisor of my research since then, he has provided constant encouragement and advice, without which the thesis would probably never have been completed. I am deeply grateful to him.

For financial support, I would like to thank the Department of Education and Science, the Governing Body of the School of Oriental and African Studies, and above all the British Institute in Eastern Africa, whose award of a Studentship made generous provision for the expenses of my research in Uganda in 1968-69.

To the Uganda Government I am grateful for permission to use their archives and to conduct fieldwork in Lango District, where the District Commissioner, Mr. Y. B. Mungoma, and his staff were most helpful in smoothing my path. For making available the books and documents in their charge, I am grateful to the librarians of the Church Missionary Society, the British Museum, Makerere University, the Uganda Society, the Royal Commonwealth Society and the Royal Geographical Society. I am also indebted to the staff of the Public Record Office. Dr. T. T. S. Hayley allowed me to refer to the field-notes of his own research in Lango in the 1930's; Mr. Nasan Engola, Mr. Lazaro Okelo and Mr. Yusto Oweno allowed me to make copies of their vernacular studies of Lango history. To all of them I am most grateful.

During my stay in Lango District, I was fortunate in enjoying the hospitality of many people. Particularly generous were the Verona Fathers of Lira Diocese, the teaching staff of Boroboro Senior Secondary School, David and Sheila Revill, and Hugh and Jan Coleridge.

Many people have given freely of their time to discuss aspects of Lango with me, and some of them must be mentioned here. In England I received help from Professor D. A. Low, Mr. E. B. Haddon, Dr. David Cohen and Mr. Julius Odurkene. In a correspondence extending over four years, Dr. Richard Curley of the University of California has been extremely generous with his advice. For six months in 1968, Professor A. N. Tucker and Mr. J. Olum Oludhe patiently introduced me to the Lango language at S.O.A.S., thus enabling me to achieve some practical command when I reached Lango.

In Uganda, Professor J. B. Webster, Mr. Balam Nyeko, Dr. Anne King and Miss Mildred Browne all helped in one way or another As interpreter and research assistant, Mr. Kassim Ochen worked with me for seven months, and I owe much to his zeal and industry. It is a pleasure to make belated acknowledgement of the help which I have received over several years from two people: Dr. Michael Twaddle, who saved me from several errors during field-work, and whose comments on some chapters of this thesis have been invaluable; and secondly, Dr. John Lamphear, who has shared with me his deep knowledge of Para-Nilotic history, and who has also made very helpful remarks on the first four chapters of this thesis. To both of them I owe much.

My greatest debt, as almost every page testifies, is to the people of Lango District. Their courtesy and readiness to communicate their historical knowledge made my stay in their country a delight, and without them this history could not have been written . The early encouragement I received from Mr. Peter Enin of Boroboro and Mr. Yakobo Adoko of Akokoro was particularly valuable in dispelling my doubts about the extent of oral tradition in Lango.

LIST OF MAPS

1 The Uganda Protectorate, 1935, showing administrative divisions 10

2 Lango District, 1969, showing sub-counties selected for interviewing 30

3 Main physical features of Lango country 44

4 The settlement of Lango country 57

5 South-western Lango, showing the settlement of Akokoro, ca. 1888-1909 100

6 Aber on the eve of the colonial period 131

7 The Langi and their neighbours in the 19th century 163

8 The colonial penetration of western Lango 184

9 The colonial penetration of south-eastern Lango .. 191

10 The Districts of Miro and Palango, 1911 229

11 Sub-counties with Lango chiefs, 1912 252

12 Counties and sub-counties, 1920 278

13 Counties and sub-counties, 1933 311

ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Acholi District Archives, Gulu
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CO	Colonial Office
CS	Chief Secretary
DC	District Commissioner
EPMP	Eastern Province Minute Paper
FO	Foreign Office
LDA	Lango District Archives, Lira
LDMP	Lango District Minute Paper
NPMP	Northern Province Minute Paper
PCEP	Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province
PCNP	Provincial Commissioner, Northern Province
PRO	Public Record Office, London
SMP	Secretariat Minute Paper
T.B.	Tour Book
TDA	Teso District Archives, Soroti
UNA	Uganda National Archives, Entebbe

A NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY AND THE WORDS 'LANGO' AND 'LANGI'

In the writing of Lango proper names, I have aimed at consistency in the use of Standard Lwo Orthography. Thus, I write 'Iceme' rather than 'Icheme', and 'Okelo' rather than 'Okello'. However, Standard Orthography was devised mainly with reference to the Acholi dialect, and it is not entirely appropriate to Lango. Most of the difficulties arise in the rendering of colloquial speech rather than the writing of individual names, but one point must be mentioned. In the Lango dialect - unlike most other forms of Lwo - the lengthening of consonants is often very important; I have taken account of this by doubling the consonant when appropriate; thus, Okadde, Olwa Abelli, Ng in Lango is always pronounced as in 'singer', never as in 'ingot'.

Some confusion surrounds the words 'Lango' and 'Langi'. In this work I adhere to the current usage of the people themselves. 'Langi' denotes the people in the plural, but is used in no other context. 'Lango' denotes an individual member of the tribe and also his language; in addition, it is used as an adjective, in both singular and plural. Thus 'Lango country' and 'Lango warriors', but 'the Langi dwell in Uganda'. Until very recently the term 'Lango' was used indiscriminately in the ethnographic literature (e.g. J. H. Driberg's book, The Lango); it would appear that 'Langi' is a relatively new form.

INTRODUCTION :

THEMES AND SOURCES IN LANGO HISTORY

The Lango people, who today number half a million,[1] are one of the larger and more influential groups in Uganda. Ethnographically, they occupy a strategic position on the frontier between the Bantu and non-Bantu worlds. As speakers of a Nilotic language, it is to the latter group that they belong, and of all the non-Bantu peoples in Uganda, the Langi are the second largest.[2] Politically, the initiative within the independent state of Uganda lay to a considerable extent with Lango politicians from October 1962 until January 1971,[3] Lango District having been the home of Uganda's leader during that period, Milton Obote.[4] A balanced history of Uganda must clearly take account of the Lango past, and in so far as the Langi have not previously been the subject of a historical enquiry in depth, the present work may be regarded as breaking fresh ground.

However, this study is not merely intended to plug a gap in the ethnographic coverage of African history. It was written from a broader perspective, which may recommend it to a wider readership than the small body of scholars concerned with Uganda. As the title indicates, the focus has been narrowed to the

---

1. The 1969 Census found that Lango District numbered 504,315 people. Since the correspondence between the District and the area actually settled by the Langi is nowadays very close, this figure can be regarded as a fairly accurate indication of the Lango population of Uganda. Report on the 1969 Population Census, vol I (Entebbe,1971).

2. The largest non-Bantu group are the Iteso, eastern neighbours of the Langi. Ibid.

3. In that month, Major-General Idi Amin came to power as a result of a military coup; most Langi in positions of national influence were quickly removed.

4. Lango was also the birth-place of one other short-lived actor on the East African stage: 'Field-Marshal' John Okello, military leader of the Afro-Shirazi revolution in Zanzibar in 1964.

Map 1

The Uganda Protectorate, 1935, showing administrative divisions

(Reproduced from H.B. Thomas and R. Scott, Uganda, London, 1935)

political field. The reason for this preference lies in the nature of Lango society. Before the imposition of colonial rule, the Langi lacked any centralised institutions of government; they belonged to that important category of African peoples whom ethnographers usually call 'stateless' or 'acephalous'.[1] To any student of human society, the distribution of political power and the cooperation between independent groups within the one society ought to be of special interest. The historian shares this concern, but with an added interest in the transformation wrought by the colonial experience. And so the present work concentrates on the political aspects of Lango history, in order to show how one stateless society in Africa evolved during the nineteenth century, and how it was adapted to the requirements of authoritarian and centralised government during the colonial period.

The serious study of acephalous societies in Africa may be said to have begun with the publication in 1940 of African Political Systems.[2] This was a collaborative volume in which eight social anthropologists reported on their findings. Only three of them actually dealt with acephalous societies, but significantly they included the editors of the book, Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, both of whom had made pioneering contributions in precisely this field. The next twenty years witnessed an upsurge of scholarly interest, reflected in the research of several British anthropologists who were concerned both with

---

1. A third label, 'segmentary', is often used in this context, but as defined by social anthropologists it implies a degree of regularity and consistency which Lango society did not possess. See below, pp. 88-9.

2. M.Fortes and E.E.Evans-Pritchard, African Political Systems, (London,1940).

the mechanisms of social cohesion in stateless societies, and with their theoretical implications.[1]

Probably no other discipline could have ventured into the field of African stateless societies with any confidence until social anthropology had made a contribution. This is one reason why, until the 1960's, historians were hardly involved at all. But there is another explanation, which has more to do with the preconceptions of historians than with the actual state of knowledge about acephalous societies. Historians who turned after the War from European or colonial history to the study of Africa were almost entirely preoccupied with the development of indigenous states - Ashanti, Kongo, Buganda, and the rest. There were sound practical reasons for this emphasis. African states tended to be better covered by contemporary European documents than other polities, and their oral traditions were more easily retrieved.[2] Moreover, historians with an orthodox training naturally felt less out of place in African societies which possessed recognisable institutions of government. Circumstances of time and place thus made a preoccupation with state systems inevitable, but the result was that African history tended to be seen in terms of the rise and fall of states, and that individual societies were assessed according to their potential for state development. Such a view not only ignores large areas of the continent; it also discounts the fact that the capacity to lead an ordered existence in a stateless society is one of Africa's more interesting contributions to the sum

---

1. For a useful survey of this research, see Lucy Mair, Primitive Government (Harmondsworth,1962).

2. J.Vansina,R.Mauny and L.V.Thomas (ed), The Historian in Tropical Africa (London,1964), PP.64,86.

of human experience, with a value independent of any place it may occupy in a chain of social evolution.

This 'historicist' approach to the African past has come under attack in recent years.[1] More to the point, solid research into non-centralised societies is now well under way. Here, the decisive event was the publication in 1967 of Ogot's History of the Southern Luo.[2] For some of his material, Ogot drew on the work of Crazzolara, whose collection of Lwo traditions had been published during the 1950's.[3] But Ogot's was the first attempt to place Lwo tradition in a balanced historical context. His interpretation was also completely free from evolutionary overtones.

Impressive though Ogot's book is, it does not have a very direct bearing on the subject matter of this thesis. He was concerned with the origin, migration and settlement of the Luo, rather than the history of their political institutions.[4] Several pre-colonial political systems in East Africa have been analysed by historians in recent years; their emphasis has to some extent shifted from centralised states to societies which were divided into a number of formal chiefdoms,[5] but truly

---

1. B.A.Ogot 'Some Approaches to African History' Hadith 1 (1968), pp.1-9; C.C.Wrigley, 'Historicism in Africa: Slavery and State Formation', African Affairs 70 (1971) pp.113-24.

2. B.A.Ogot, History of the Southern Luo: Volume I, Migration and Settlement, 1500-1900 (Nairobi,1967).

3. J.P.Crazzolara, The Lwoo, 3 parts (Verona,1950-54).

4. This will doubtless be the theme of the projected second volume of Ogot's History.

5. See, for example: Andrew Roberts (ed), Tanzania before 1900 (Nairobi,1968); D.W.Cohen, The Historical Tradition of Busoga (Oxford,1972).

acephalous societies, such as Lango, have continued to attract little attention.[1]

Reluctance to stydy stateless societies has, if anything, been more prevalent among historians of colonial Africa. Attention has mostly been directed to those areas where chiefs were not merely junior functionaries of the colonial government but enjoyed traditional legitimacy as well. Though some research has been carried out among acephalous groups, nothing of substance has been published up to now.[2] When historians have tackled the colonial history of stateless peoples, they have for the most part regarded it from the viewpoint of European administrators, and with too broad a sweep to shed much light on political change at the ground level.[3] As a result, the tendency has been towards insipid generalisations, which do scant justice to the different types of acephalous society, and to the subtle interaction between rulers and ruled which largely defined the colonial power structure.

Lack of state organisation naturally causes acephalous societies to be set on one side as a category on their own. But it would be wrong to suppose that they exhibit any less

---

1. The most substantial exceptions so far have been Dr. Muriuki's work on the Kikuyu and Dr. Lamphear's on the Jie of north-eastern Uganda, but neither of these has yet been published. Godfrey Muriuki, 'A History of the Kikuyu to 1904', unpublished PhD thesis, London University, 1970; J.E.Lamphear, 'The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda', PhD thesis, London University, 1972.

2. The most substantial case-study available so far has been Dr. Dorward's work on the Tiv of Nigeria, but this is based almost entirely on European sources. D.C.Dorward, 'A Political and Social History of the Tiv People of Northern Nigeria, 1900-1939", unpublished PhD thesis, London,University,1971. We may soon expect a major work from Dr. Michael Twaddle on colonial politics among the segmentary peoples of eastern Uganda.

3. For Uganda, see James Barber, Imperial Frontier (Nairobi, 1968); for the Southern Sudan, see R.O.Collins, Land Beyond the Rivers: The Southern Sudan, 1898-1918 (New Haven,1971).

variety as a group than do centralised states. In the first place, the basic mechanisms of social cohesion take widely different forms: age groups, segmentary lineage systems, ritual leadership, secret societies - all these fulfil important structural roles in Africa, sometimes in combination within the same society.[1] In the second place, the degree of political specialisation varies greatly from one stateless society to another. To take only the culture area to which the Langi belong - that of the Nilotes - we find at one extreme the egalitarian system of the Dinka, among whom political authority is so diffused as to be nobody's special concern, while at the other extreme the Alur accord to personal leadership powers which barely distinguish it from formal chiefship.[2] Within this range, the Langi may be said to occupy an intermediary position, but to classify them further entails disposing of another mistaken view sometimes taken of acephalous societies: that they are somehow 'timeless', and only change under the influence of a much more advanced culture. In order to classify Lango society more precisely, we must specify what point in time we are referring to. Around 1860, for example, we would need to take account of both a vigorous age organisation, and a regional leadership which from time to time overrode local loyalties. A generation later the picture would be different: no regional leadership, and the age organisation already in decline, but instead a tendency towards more cohesive clan

---

1. Elizabeth Colson, 'African Society at the time of the Scramble', in Colonialism in Africa, vol I, ed. L.H.Gann and P.Duignan (Cambridge,1969), pp.48-53.

2. A.W.Southall, 'Rank and Stratification among the Alur and other Nilotic peoples', in Social Stratification in Africa, ed. A.Tuden and L.Plotnicov (New York,1970), pp.31-46

combinations at the local level. In other words, stateless societies - like other polities - experienced political evolution and change before the colonial period.[1]

This adaptive, dynamic aspect of Lango society was much in evidence during the twenty years of pacification and conquest which followed the first appearance of the colonial power in 1894. The complex events of that period, which are the subject of the longest chapter in this thesis,[2] are important for two reasons. They show, firstly, that in a non-centralised society weak political leadership is not to be confused with weakness in the face of external aggression. Realisation of this fact soon dawned on the agents of the Protectorate Government at the time. In retrospect, however, a second aspect of the years 1894-1912 assumes greater significance: this was the extent to which the colonial power structure in Lango was conditioned by the perceptions and prejudices which both parties acquired during that period. Each side compromised its own notions of political authority in the light of the other side's - or what it believed to be the other side's. This process continued after colonial authority was securely established. Of course, the Langi were compelled to make a much greater adjustment than the British, but the reverse side of the coin should not be ignored. The overall administrative framework was laid down at Protectorate level, but on matters of detail there was considerable scope for responding to local conditions, and District Officers used this to the full. At the same time, the colonial power structure was being manipulated on a massive

---

1. See below, Chapters 2 to 4.

2. See below, Chapter 5.

scale in the interests of factional groups in Lango. Consequently, the political system of the 1930's differed considerably from both British and African expectations twenty years earlier.[1] Although the details of this adaptation are peculiar to Lango, the process can hardly be regarded as out of the ordinary. Any view which interprets the colonial experience of non-centralised societies as being no more than the indiscriminate imposition of external standards is simplistic.

In the chapters that follow, these external standards are usually described as 'bureaucratic'. Bureaucratic authority is here taken to refer to leadership roles conferred from above, rather than conceded from below. Since all leadership roles in Lango had hitherto been of the latter kind, the contrast between old and new was very great. But the notion of bureaucracy affects the substance of authority, as well as its derivation. In the case of the Lango colonial power system, it meant that the native authorities should administer their people impartially, without furthering the interests of any particular group. Ideally, it meant that the relationship between rulers and ruled should be uncomplicated by any ties of kinship or locality. Obviously these requirements were wholly alien to the Langi, which partly explains why they were enforceable only to a limited extent. But in addition, bureaucratic standards were by no means universally subscribed to by colonial officials. Their uncertainty about the correct path of political development in Lango was one reason why local interests were so successful in bending the rules to ensure their continuing influence right up to Independence.

---

1. See below, Chapters 6 to 8.

The theme of the present work is clearly one which could be carried forward to the present day. That 1939 has been taken as the terminal point is not dictated by Eurocentric considerations. For Uganda, as elsewhere, the Second World War initiated a phase of rapid social change, and the decade after 1945 saw radical innovations in the Lango political system. In common with the rest of Uganda, the first steps were then taken to democratise local government; a system of councils was introduced as a control over the chiefs. Although some of the most powerful local interests continued to be prominent, the rules of the political game were now different. Even if this development was felt to form an appropriate tail-piece to the work as it stands, it would be very difficult to offer more than a bare record of institutional changes, because there is as yet so little evidence on which to base a deeper analysis. The starting point of 1800 is determined by the fact that about that time the last groups involved in the formation of the Lango people entered Lango country. The first chapter does include a survey of migrations before 1800, but its purpose is merely to explain the dynamics of human settlement in Lango, and to place the Langi historically in the wider culture area whose social institutions are reflected in their own. Any quest for the 'origin' of the Lango political system in the period before the 19th century would be entirely speculative, and it is not attempted here.

The purpose of this thesis is to trace the evolution and adaptation of the Lango political system from its formation until the eve of the Second World War. Attention is directed in equal measure to pre-colonial and colonial history. It is hoped that the reconstruction of 19th century history, apart

from its intrinsic interest, will facilitate a more acute grasp of colonial rule in a stateless society than has been possible up to now. Perhaps, for all the diversity evinced by non-centralised societies, the present work will have some value as a case-study in relation to this much neglected category of African peoples.

****

The literature on the Langi is varied and interesting, but it contains little of an avowedly historical nature. Pride of place is taken by J. H. Driberg, whose book The Lango was published fifty years ago.[1] Driberg collected his ethnographic material in the course of his duties as a District Officer during the first decade of British rule in Lango. Though he later studied under Malinowski and was to be an effective populariser of anthropology, Driberg himself had no acquaintance with the subject before he went to Lango,[2] and he was the first to admit that an official could not achieve the degree of trust required for the best fieldwork.[3] For all that, The Lango is generally regarded as a classic of descriptive ethnography. Its analysis of social organisation lacked depth, and its historical material was slight, but as a guide to the material culture and ritual practice of the Langi at that time (1912-18) it is an invaluable source.

Some twenty years later, Driberg was followed to the field by T. T. S. Hayley, whose book on Lango religion and ritual

---

1. J.H.Driberg, The Lango: a Nilotic Tribe of Uganda (London, 1923).

2. J.H.Driberg, At Home with the Savage (London,1932), p.1.

3. J.H.Driberg, 'Anthropology in Colonial Administration', Economica 7 (1927), pp.158-59.

filled out Driberg's findings in a number of ways.[1] Hayley's research, like Driberg's, did not come up to the rigorous standards of modern fieldwork, though in this case the reason was the brevity of his stay in Lango rather than any government status. His book is valuable, all the same, because it reveals how certain aspects of Lango social behaviour had changed by the 1930's, and it is in this context that both Hayley's work and Driberg's have been drawn upon by the most recent anthropologist to do fieldwork in Lango, R. T. Curley. The research carried out by his predecessors enabled Curley to identify innovations in ritual practice over a period of fifty years, and to interpret them in the light of social change. Although it has only a limited bearing on the distribution of political authority, Curley's work shows a strong sense of history, and it is to be hoped that publication will not long be delayed.[2]

Though Lango has been the subject of a certain amount of historical speculation, the only previous investigation of its oral traditions has been Tarantino's. His findings were published in four short articles in the late 1940's, after he had served as a missionary in Lango for some fifteen years.[3] His interpretation is open to question, but on matters of detail he is usually a reliable, and in some instances an indispensable,

---

1. T.T.S.Hayley, The Anatomy of Lango Religion and Groups (Cambridge,1947).

2. R.T.Curley, 'Persistence and Change in Lango Ceremonialism", unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1969 (A copy of this thesis is retained on microfilm in S.O.A.S. Library).

3. A.Tarantino, 'The Origin of the Lango', Uganda Jl. 10 (1946), pp.12-16; "Lango Clans', 'Notes on the Lango', and 'Lango Wars', Uganda Jl. 13 (1949), pp.109-11, 145-53, 230-35.

authority. The colonial period in Lango has been the subject of one introductory article by Kenneth Ingham.[1] Otherwise, the published record is blank. Unlike other Districts of Uganda, Lango has - with one exception - failed to produce amateur historians. The exception is Reuben Ogwal, whose collection of traditions has been wide-ranging, but none of his work has yet been published.[2] The few vernacular histories which I collected during fieldwork were very parochial in scope and made no claim to offer an interpretation of Lango history in general.[3]

So far as unpublished documentary evidence is concerned, the main sources for this study lie in the government archives of Uganda, and to a lesser extent in those of the United Kingdom. Private European papers were generally disappointing, as were the archives of the Church Missionary Society.[4] Government sources on Lango during the period of pacification up to 1919 are full and accessible, but after 1919 is a different matter. The Colonial Office records in London are of very little use, since they were hardly concerned with the administration of individual Districts. The Uganda National Archives would be invaluable were it not for the fifty-year rule which is still enforced there for many categories of document. At the local level, on the other hand, the fifty-year rule is usually ignored,

---

1. K.Ingham, 'British Administration in Lango District, 1907-35', Uganda Jl. 13 (1955), pp. 156-68.

2. Copies of Canon Ogwal's works have, however, been deposited in Makerere University and translations have been made. See Bibliography.

3. The best of these histories are by Nasan Engola and Lazaro Okelo. For details, see Bibliography.

4. The Society enforces a fifty-year rule, and no European missionary was resident in Lango until 1926. Access to the archives of the Verona Fathers in Rome was not granted.

and the problem there is of a different kind. Archives have been destroyed in many parts of Uganda. In some cases this was probably done to release storage space, but the majority appear to have been destroyed for political reasons by outgoing officials on the eve of Independence in 1962. The only archives in northern and eastern Uganda to have escaped unscathed are those in Soroti (Teso District), which were of very marginal relevance to this study. The Acholi District Archives in Gulu have been severely depleted, but they include some of the Northern Province Archives, which were an invaluable source for the 1930's.

In Lango District itself, the archives at Lira are in a sad state. Virtually all correspondence before the 1940's has perished.[1] However, the redeeming feature of the Lango archives is that they include one of the most complete collections of County Tour Books to be found anywhere in Uganda. From the point of view of the present work, a more important written source could not be imagined. From 1912 onwards, the District office in Lira kept one foolscap notebook - and sometimes two - for each county in Lango. Whenever a District Officer went on tour, he took with him the relevant books, and made entries on each of the sub-counties where he stopped to inspect native administration. Comments were entered in connection with every conceivable government concern, from public works to game and livestock. The entries are particularly full on the performance of individual chiefs, their local standing and their mutual antagonisms. Of course, much was concealed from the eyes of District Officers who only stopped for a day or so in any one

1. The Lira archives had previously been examined in the early 1960's by Dr. Andrew Roberts and Dr. Michael Twaddle. They have kindly make available to me their notes on a few important documents that have since disappeared.

locality and who were seldom posted to Lango for more than a couple of years. But even with these limitations, the County Tour Books are a first-class source for the workings of political authority at the grass-roots level. Without them, it would have been difficult to carry this study into the colonial period.

Beyond a handful of references in the Victorian travel literature, documentary sources on Lango go no further back than the 1890's. From the very beginning of this project, it was therefore clear that the reconstruction of the political system of pre-colonial Lango would depend very largely on oral traditions - and on traditions collected by the present writer, since little of the necessary research had ever been done in Lango. It is not proposed to defend here the use of oral sources by historians; that has been adequately done elsewhere.[1] But every oral historian is under an obligation to explain his research techniques and to comment on the overall nature of the material he has collected. Oral traditions vary greatly from one society to another, as regards both content and means of transmission. The historian's methods must take account of these particularities; and - if his findings are to have analytical force - his techniques must also be geared to the topics on which he seeks information.

****

In a society which traditionally has lacked state organisation and chiefs, oral tradition - like political authority - is widely diffused. Knowledge about the past, instead of being a special privilege of the chief's attendants, tends to be evenly

---

1. J.Vansina, Oral Tradition (London,1965).

distributed in the society as a whole. This feature presents the historian with both a practical headache and also substantial advantages. The difficulty lies in the collecting of traditions which are scattered over so wide an area. Historical research in an acephalous society is usually a time-consuming business. This partly explains why none was attempted by professional historians until recently. In 1961 Vansina expressed his view that research in stateless societies would reveal much more than had been thought possible, but he pointed out that the experiment had yet to be made.[1] Ogot's work on the Southern Luo vindicated Vansina's hope.[2]

The inaccessibility of historical traditions in an acephalous society is offset by their freedom from certain pit-falls of interpretation. The traditions of a pre-literate state may be easily gathered, but they can be extremely difficult to assess. The ruling élite may have an articulate awareness of the past,[3] but this is partly because they realise its present-day political significance. Events which reflect badly on the royal dynasty may be expunged from the record, and the king's credentials may be strengthened by falsification and exaggeration. In an acephalous society, on the other hand, traditions are not distorted so badly. The incentive to 'politicize' is altogether less; and, while there is inevitably some bias, this can be checked by reference to the traditions of comparable groups within the same society.

---

1. Vansina, op.cit. p.173 (The original edition was published in 1961: De La Tradition Orale, Tervuren, 1961).

2. Ogot, Southern Luo.

3. Vansina, Mauny and Thomas, op.cit. p.64.

The kind of bias is determined by the nature of the social groups which transmit the traditions from one generation to the next. In the case of Lango, the only group which is relevant here is the clan[1] - the largest named descent group in a given locality, and the principal location of political authority during the 19th century. Although the clan has been superseded in everyday social organisation by territorially-defined 'neighbourhoods', it is still the sole repository of tradition.[2] Since clans in Lango are very small, virtually any tradition recounted by one clan impinges on the history of a neighbouring clan, and can therefore be verified. In any given area, clans vary in size and political influence, so that one of them may occupy a dominant position. But eminence of this kind has never been secure, and it has nowhere been formalised by a distinction between 'royal' and 'commoner' clans, as has happened among other Nilotic groups.[3] The historian does not, therefore, have to take account of 'official' histories, or of undue influence by one clan over the traditions of another.[4]

The historical traditions of acephalous societies differ from those of centralised societies in another important respect:

---

1. More precisely, it is the clan section, i.e. the clan members concentrated in a single locality. But in this context, 'clan' is accurate enough.

2. The distinction between 'clan histories' and 'settlement histories', which has been drawn with reference to the Padhola of south-eastern Uganda, is not relevant to Lango. R.M.Packard, 'The Significance of Neighbourhoods for the Collection of Oral History in Padhola', Uganda Jl.34(1970),pp.147-62.

3. A.W.Southall, in Tuden and Plotnicov, op.cit,pp.37-39. The nature of Lango clans and their place in the 19th century political system are fully discussed below, Chapters 2 and 3.

4. The difficulty of evaluating 'official' histories in the interlacustrine region of Uganda has caused one historian there to concentrate on clan histories instead. Cohen,op.cit.

they tend to be much less 'literary' in character. Just as state traditions may be distorted by political considerations, so too they may have to adapt to a literary form which compels changes in both style and content. This distortion makes the traditions more attractive, and for that reason more likely to survive over many generations, but it also limits their historical value. To say that non-centralised societies have less oral literature than do large chiefdoms is perhaps too sweeping, but it certainly seems that in the former the connection between history and literature is more tenuous. Lango culture itself is very poorly endowed with oral literature. Virtually the only form current today is the folk-tale, which is mainly intended to instil socially approved standards of conduct.[1] The Langi perform many rituals requiring the recitation of verbal formulae and songs. But the only ones to contain historical material - the age-set songs - are no longer used, and such records as we have suggest that they contained only the most perfunctory allusions to war-leaders of old.[2]

Clan traditions in Lango make no claims to literary appeal. They are pedestrian and unadorned. They are of interest to nobody save the members of the particular clan whose history they recount. It is true that there are a number of traditions with a much wider currency and a less humdrum character - creation myths and stories of tribal origin.[3] But these traditions cannot be taken too seriously as historical sources.

---

1. M.J.Wright, 'Lango folk-tales - an analysis', Uganda Jl. 24(1960),pp.99-113; J.p'Bitek Okot, 'Oral Literature and its Social Background among the Acholi and Lango', unpublished BLitt thesis, Oxford University,1963,pp.394-95.

2. Driberg, The Lango, pp.254-60; Okot,op.cit,pp.174-75.

3. Driberg,op.cit.p.205; Tarantino, 'The Origin of the Lango'.

They are more like a 'mythical charter' to justify the social order. Historical traditions in Lango are almost exclusively the property of the clans, and their lack of literary pretensions makes them an excellent historical source.

The informal character of Lango traditions applies not only to their style, but also to their mode of transmission. Within the clan setting, there are - and were - no ceremonies during which traditions are passed on by the elders, nor is knowledge of the past restricted to a small category of people. Almost every elder has absorbed something of his clan's history; how much he remembers or cares to communicate depends on personal qualities, such as interest and intelligence, rather than on social factors like genealogical or ritual status. Traditions are transmitted piecemeal in any domestic setting which brings people together round a beer pot or a hearth. As a result, the history of a clan is practically never presented as a whole; it is conceived in an episodic way, and when recounted to an audience is less like a recitation than a response to questions and promptings.

As a means of conveying traditions over many generations, spontaneous tramsmission of this kind would not be very reliable. But this is not a problem in Lango, where the time-depth of traditions is anyway very shallow. This is on account of the history of Lango settlement. For, while the main migrations of the Langi into their present homeland were over by the beginning of the 19th century, 'secondary' migration within the homeland continued until the end of the century. The settlement of clans in their present-day localities dates back, in most cases, no further than the period from about 1860 to 1890.[1]

1. The course of these migrations is discussed below, Chapters 1 and 2.

Understandably, the bulk of any clan's traditions concern the time since its final settlement - which means, in effect, no eaelier than the lifetime of the grandfathers of today's elders.[1] It is unlikely that most of the traditions which I collected had been transmitted more than twice, or three times at the most, before they reached my informants.

At the time of planning fieldwork, of course, many of these features of Lango tradition were not yet apparent.[2] But I knew enough to realise that the main initial problem was one of selection. Although the nature of the pre-colonial political system was as yet obscure, it was clear that traditions were conveyed in a clan setting, and that clans were very small. The only way in which every clan could have been reached was by use of a questionnaire, which at the best of times is a somewhat inflexible and superficial device. In a situation where it was not even obvious what questions would be relevant, such an approach seemed unwise. I therefore decided at the outset to concentrate my research on a handful of the 42 Lango sub-counties, with a view to producing case-studies of political development, from which a more general analysis could be abstracted. In order to take account of regional variations - an important issue, as it turned out - I included sub-counties in every quarter of the District. This geographical spread also enabled me to consider the impact of the different neighbouring peoples. In addition, documentary sources from the early colonial period provided a guide as to areas which had

---

1. This point is elaborated below, p.35-36

2. While planning fieldwork, I received much good advice. I would particularly like to acknowledge the help of Dr. D.W. Cohen and Dr. Michael Twaddle.

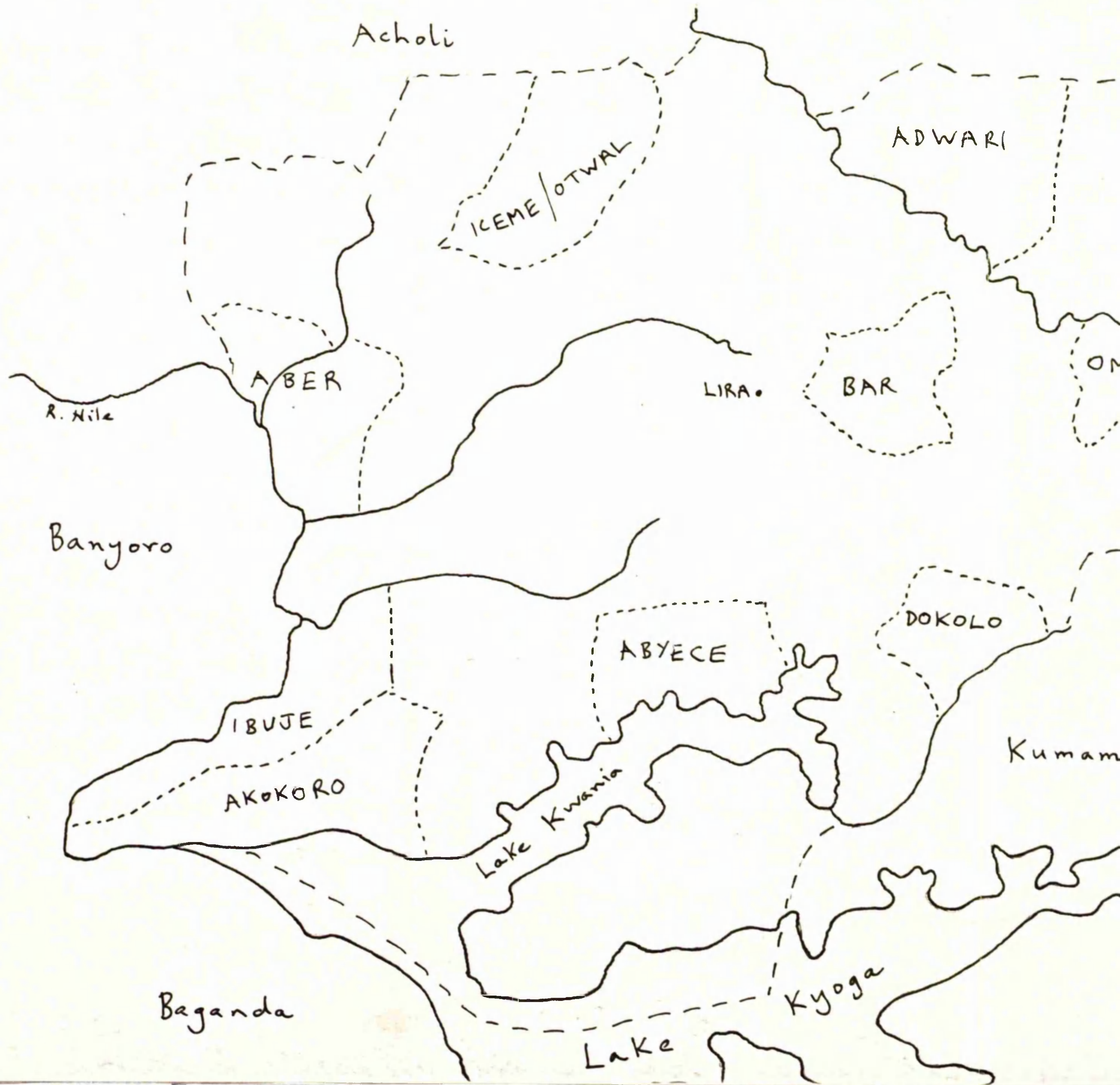
been particularly accommodating towards the British, areas which had put up strong resistance, and areas from which the crucial first generation of county chiefs had been recruited. In all, nine sub-counties were chosen. If any bias crept into the selection, it was in favour of the extreme west of Lango, near the Nile, since here the range of supporting documentary evidence was richer than anywhere else (Map 2).

It is extremely difficult to strike the right balance between in-depth case-studies and overall coverage, and doubtless mine was not the perfect answer. Given time, there were other areas which I would like to have studied. Even within the case-study area, informants had to be selected according to their clan alignment, their reputation as experts on the past, and their accessibility. My understanding of certain topics might have been deepened had I conducted a completely thorough investigation of one village. Otherwise, the results of fieldwork tended to justify both the overall balance and the actual choice of case-study areas.

The collection of oral traditions in the nine selected sub-counties took seven months, from May to November 1969. The time spent in each area varied from four to ten days of continuous interviewing, and the number of people interviewed from seven to twenty, depending on the speed with which good informants were identified, and on the complexity of the historical material. So far as my standing in the eyes of informants was concerned, much depended on my relationship with the Lango District Administration. I could not have carried out fieldwork without government permission, and everyone in Lango knew this. Apart from that, I was anxious to disclaim any connection with the government, and in the early stages I resisted any

Map 2

Lango District, 1969, showing sub-counties selected for interviewing



involvement by the chiefs in my research. These efforts proved in vain. Except for the missionaries, any European working in rural Lango is assumed to be associated with the government, and the information that I was a student did nothing to remove this impression. The mere presence of a European was taken to be the business of the authorities - from the District Office down to the village chief. In due course, I accepted the logic of this situation; I sent the sub-county chief advance notice of my arrival, and accepted his help in contacting good informants, especially those who were not easily reached at their own homes. So far as I could tell, the closer involvement of the chiefs did not inhibit my informants. My semi-official status was established from the start, and by acting on it I was not making myself any less acceptable to informants.

Throughout my research, informants were interviewed singly, rather than in groups. Since the group method has been favoured by some historians of acephalous societies,[1] it is worth explaining why I rejected it. If a group testimony takes the form of an agreed version conveyed through a spokesman on behalf of a definite social group, then it can be regarded as valid.[2] But when recent historians have advocated the group method, this is not usually what they have meant. In practice, the initiative for a group interview tends to come not from the informants, but from the historian himself, for whom it is a means of coping with the multiplicity of historical sources in a non-centralised society. Undoubtedly group interviews enable the researcher to

---

1. By Ogot among the Luo, for example (Ogot,op.cit.pp.23-25). While I was in Lango, Professor J.B.Webster was collecting traditions among the Iteso; he used group interviews almost exclusively.

2. Vansina,op.cit,p.28.

cover the ground more quickly, with less repetition and less disagreement among informants. But there are serious disadvantages. The discrepancies between related traditions, which may be obscured or suppressed in the group interview, are a vital part of the historian's source material, because they show up the various views which different social groups have of the same events. Of course, a group interview is not necessarily free from argument among the informants; but, even if the historian is proficient enough in the language to follow the cut-and-thrust of debate, he will still be losing something, since many informants naturally defer to those with strong personalities or political influence. The basic objection to the group interview, as usually practised, is that it partially removes from the historian's hands the weighing of conflicting evidence. So far as Lango is concerned, there was never any suggestion from informants that a group meeting should be called. A rewarding number of informants - and not always the most forceful personalities - gave testimonies of outstanding value which might never have come to light in a group interview. The use of the private interview exploited to the full the knowledge and goodwill of the individual informant, and allowed his testimony to be completely grasped on the spot. The group method might be appropriate for certain purposes and under carefully controlled conditions, but the bulk of any historical research among the Langi should be done by individual interviews.[1]

The conduct of the interview was determined by the piecemeal way in which clan traditions are usually transmitted. With

---

1. A broadly similar view on group interviews is taken by Muriuki for the Kikuyu, and by Lamphear for the Jie. Muriuki, op.cit.pp.21-22; Lamphear, op.cit.pp.115-31.

very few exceptions, informants were unable to hold forth for more than a few minutes without prompting. The basic form of the interview was therefore question-and-answer. On account of the concentration required from all concerned, this pattern placed a limit on the length of the interview, which never exceeded two hours. Such a situation also calls for considerable skill on the part of the researcher. A courteous and deferential manner must be maintained, loaded questions must be avoided, and the informant's answers must not meet with an unduly prejudiced response - either of enthusiasm or incredulity.

These requirements make it particularly important for the researcher to be in full control of the interview. Complete command of the language is something which few Europeans can hope to attain, particularly when time is limited, but some knowledge is essential. Six months tuition in London had introduced me to the grammar, and to the peculiarities which distinguish Lango from neighbouring, better-documented dialects. Once in the field, it did not take long to acquire some knowledge of both the stock phrases of everyday conversation and the fairly restricted vocabulary used for recounting the past. This meant that I could respond directly to informants from time to time, and towards the end I could sometimes manage without on-the-spot translation. Above all, I was able to control my interpreter - to ensure that his manner towards informants was appropriate, and to check any tendency on his part to sift information or run the interview. In the event, my interpreter's ease of manner greatly contributed to a good interviewing atmosphere, and for the most part he restricted himself to a detailed translation into English of what was said. Interviews were recorded on tape, and I also took notes in summary form.

The interviewing atmosphere was generally relaxed and friendly. This was partly due to the fact that most interviews took place in the informant's own home, where he felt most at ease. The interview often became a social event in itself, as friends and kinsfolk gathered from nearby homesteads. I do not think that my informants were preoccupied by thoughts of material gain. Although I always gave a small present - usually tea and sugar, or cigarettes - I never offered any payment, a salient point which had probably reached the ears of many people before I arrived to request an interview with them. For most informants, it appeared to be enough to know that their testimony would contribute towards a book about the Langi, which their descendants would be able to read. The fact that a stranger should be interested in their past did not usually provoke surprise or suspicion. Unlike other academic subjects, history is regarded by the Langi as a self-explanatory and innocent preoccupation.[1] The enthusiasm with which informants were prepared to endure a long interview - and sometimes two or three - meant that the collection of traditions was in itself a rewarding experience.

While fieldwork was still in progress, certain strengths and weaknesses in Lango tradition were already apparent. Once the testimonies had been transferred from the tape-recorder onto paper and then arranged according to locality and theme,[2]

---

1. A German research student who was exploring aspects of economic geography in Lango shortly before I began fieldwork had a much less sympathetic hearing.

2. Verbatim transcriptions seemed inappropriate to 'informal' traditions, and only a minute proportion of the material was given this rigorous treatment. For the rest, the final written record always entailed an element of paraphrase and summary (especially of repetitious matter). Examples of the end product will be found in the Appendix. In addition, about one quarter of the interviews (65 hours) was retained in an edited form on tapes; these will shortly be deposited with the British Institute in Eastern Africa, Nairobi.

these features became clearer. So far as the pre-colonial period was concerned, the oral evidence proved to be more plentiful and more consistent than I had hoped. An informant's testimony generally began with a brief account of his clan's origin and migration route to its present locality. Then came a description of the organisation of the clan, with special attention to its leadership; informants were encouraged to give the fullest possible details about particular battles and disputes, since these shed light on the content of clan leadership and on the relationship between the clan and its neighbours - both Langi and non-Langi. The bulk of any interview was taken up by these topics, and the results were impressive The catch came in the fact that these descriptions as a rule referred to only the last generation before the colonial occupation (i.e. the period ca.1880 to 1910) - usually the lifetime of the fathers of today's elders. Within this range, traditions were fairly precise as regards their sequence and their place in clan genealogy, so that chronology presented few problems. Once informants moved further back in time, however, their testimony was much more difficult to evaluate. There was nothing like the same amount of detail, nor could events and personalities be easily put in context.

There are two explanations for this shortcoming. The first is related to the nature of present-day Lango society. In certain contexts, great concern is felt about the power of the ancestors to affect human destiny for good or ill, but this power is held to reside only in the last generation or two. Otherwise, genealogy has no particular importance for the Langi, so that names and relationships beyond the third ascending

generation are not often remembered.[1] But there is a more important - and more historical - explanation for the weakness of pre-1880 traditions. For many African peoples, the retention of historical knowledge is bound up with land occupancy; outside the realm of the mythical charter, they are mostly interested in the events that tie them to their current locality - why they settled there, how they have got on with their neighbours, how far they have improved their standing, and so on. The Langi are no exception. And the reason why their detailed traditions do not extend further back than the late 19th century is that it was only then that most clans settled in their present-day localities.[2]

Traditions about the earlier history of the Langi are usually unconnected with clan histories, and thus lie outside the control of genealogical reckoning. Clan genealogy is not the only possible guide to chronology in acephalous societies; a tribal age organisation can sometimes be an excellent alternative, especially if it has a succession of named age-sets or generation-sets of fixed duration.[3] The Langi certainly possessed an age organisation in the 19th century, but it has since completely disappeared and now scarcely features in tradition at all.[4] Prior to about 1880, events in Lango history have to be dated by outside referents: in the first place by the traditions of neighbouring peoples with a more solidly based

---

1. Curley, op.cit. pp.56-57, 92-94.

2. See below, pp. 70-71.

3. A.H.Jacobs, 'A Chronology of the Pastoral Maasai', Hadith 1(1968),pp.10-31; Lamphear,op.cit.pp.115-31.

4. See below, pp. 107-14.

chronology,[1] and in the second place by fixed dates in the European travel literature, which begins to contain references to Lango in the 1860's.[2] These external aids, however, are only applicable to certain traditions, and are no substitute for an extended chronology in Lango itself. The lack of this chronology, and the sparseness of the actual traditions, means that a certain imbalance in the present work is inevitable.

Despite this weakness, the oral sources on pre-colonial Lango history were nevertheless more extensive than expected. The same could not unfortunately be said of the colonial period, on which I had hoped to collect oral sources as a control on the European bias of the written materials. Informants could usually contribute a good deal on the early punitive expeditions and the setting up of the administration; sometimes they dis - cussed general aspects of the colonial period, such as what it was like to be a village chief, or what obligations were imposed on ordinary Langi; but when it came to the conduct of individual chiefs, informants were much more reticent. They were unwilling to descend from the general to the particular, and if enquiries about colonial times were prolonged, they quickly grew bored or restless.

This reticence is not difficult to understand. Oral sources on the colonial period are not traditions, so much as personal reminiscences. Events in which they were protagonists or spectators are not regarded by the Langi as 'history', which

---

1. Jie history, with its established chronology of generation-sets, has proved particularly helpful in this respect. Lamphear, op.cit.

2. The first substantial reference is J.W.Grant, <u>A Walk across Africa</u> (London,1864),pp.290-91,303. For the application of these European contemporary sources, see below, Chapter 4.

for them concerns only 'olden times' (kare acon), before the Europeans came. So my questions about the colonial period were in their eyes inconsistent with my declared preoccupation with history. But there was another reason why informants stone-walled on the colonial period, and this concerned the realities of local politics around them. Whereas the pre-colonial political system is evidently in a different world from today's, no break is perceived at grass-roots level between the colonial era and Independence. The same administrative posts persist, and in many cases the same families continue to fill them. It pays people to be discreet when referring to chiefs of 30 or 40 years ago whose clans may still wield influence in the local government now. Had I been able to disclaim any official connection, the barrier might have proved less formidable, but - as I have stressed - this was impossible. Although the County Tour Books are an excellent source, I was disappointed that I had to rely on them so heavily.

One way of interpreting the oral material which I had gathered would have been to treat it impressionistically, and to abstract points of detail in conformity with an overall analytical plan. I decided instead that material collected on a case-study basis was best kept in that framework, at least during the first stages of interpretation. Each case-study was written up in turn, using only the evidence relating specifically to that area - whether oral or documentary. This was an extremely time-consuming task. Meticulous cross-checking was needed between informants of the same area, and between the traditions of different areas with shared experiences; the measure of agreement between sources was on the whole reassuring. One complication as regards the assessment of oral

testimony fortunately did not apply: the possibility that traditions had been contaminated by the printed word. One vernacular history of Lango has in fact been published, but its circulation has been negligible.[1] Two of the nine areas chosen for research failed to produce good material. The informants in these places were unusually confused and imprecise. I might have discovered the reasons for this, or perhaps have identified more promising sources, if I had spent more time there; but I could only have done so at the cost of excluding other areas altogether. In the remaining seven research locations, detailed and consistent pictures of pre-colonial history were obtained, and when these were used as a backdrop to the Tour Book entries, the politics of the colonial period did not prove quite so elusive as had been feared. Only when all the case-studies had been fully examined was the shape of the present work determined in detail.

The uneven coverage of the oral sources is largely responsible for the imbalances in the chapters that follow. In the first place, there is insufficient evidence to treat fully one of the most interesting features of pre-colonial Lango, namely the rise and fall of regional leadership. This was a form of political authority which, until the early 1890's, transcended the clan context in certain situations. Just because of this supra-clan character, clan histories say little about how regional leadership developed,[3] and there are no other social

---

1. A.Tarantino, <u>Lango i kare acon</u> (London,1952). This is a simplified version of Tarantino's four articles in the <u>Uganda Jl</u>., cited above.

2. No case-study is reproduced <u>in toto</u> below, but parts of the same case history appear at different stages and are fully cross-referenced. The most extended examples are taken from Aber and Akokoro. See below, pp. 129-39, 98-102.

3. See below, Chapter 4.

groups with an interest in handing down traditions about this vanished institution. In the second place, the lack of good oral sources for the colonial period means that the perspective alters in the second half of the thesis. The basic themes remain the same, but they have to be approached from a different angle; in particular, the heavy preponderance of documentary sources results in more generalisation and less minute attention to political processes in the colonial era.[1]

Apart from these defects, which are related to fundamental weaknesses in the source material, there are one or two topics on which further research would be rewarding. Much more could be learnt about the origin and migration of the Langi; a thorough examination of this topic would be a major undertaking - of considerable interest, though with only a limited bearing on the theme of the present work. Towards the end of my oral research, it became clear that certain areas of Lango which I had not visited should provide further information about the content of regional leadership in the 19th century. As for the colonial period, the most useful addition to our present knowledge would be a historical survey in depth of several villages,[2] in order to elucidate the dramatic shift in settlement patterns since the colonial occupation, and to clarify the development of the various types of informal political leadership at grass-roots level.[3] Research of this kind, besides filling an important gap, would also be free from some of the frustrations

---

1. This is particularly evident in Chapter 7.

2. By 'village' I mean here the smallest territorial unit recognised by the government.

3. This subject is touched on briefly in Chapter 7.

which attend enquiries into the 'official' politics of the colonial period.

The hope was earlier expressed that this thesis would have some value as a case-study of political development in an acephalous society. The diversity exhibited by this type of society suggests, however, that a considerable number of case-studies is required. In adumbrating future research trends, it is more helpful to stress this consideration, than to pin-point aspects of Lango history in need of further attention. For it is only when comparable studies have been made of non-centralised societies in places like western Kenya, the southern Sudan and eastern Nigeria, that historians will be able to take account of the full range of indigenous political systems found in Africa. The historiography of Africa is at present largely preoccupied with two themes: pre-colonial political change, and the local response to colonial rule. Once historians have brought the acephalous societies into the mainstream of their subject, we may expect that their perception of both these themes will be greatly enriched.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BACKGROUND : ENVIRONMENT, MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

The present-day traveller who proceeds north from Kampala, crosses the Nile at Karuma Bridge and then makes for the Kenya-Uganda border in the north-east, could hardly help being impressed by the extreme ecological diversity within Uganda. During a journey by road of some 300 miles, the scenery changes from the lush, dense woodland of the Lake Victoria littoral to the dusty and infertile plain of central Karamoja. And this contrast in natural endowment is reflected in human terms. While the Buganda heartland supports a high density of small farmers, the population of Karamoja is a sparse and shifting one. There is no sudden change from one extreme to the other; between the two lies a continuum of intermediate conditions, determined by rainfall and by the position of the Victoria Nile.

The region at present occupied by the Lango people is one such intermediate habitat. It coincides very nearly with Lango District, which is about 5,000 square miles in extent. On the south and west the District is bounded by Lake Kyoga and the Nile, which constitute a natural frontier with the Bantu-speaking areas of Busoga, Buganda and Bunyoro. No such boundaries separate the Langi from the Acholi to the north, or from the Labwor, Iteso and Kumam to the east. Lango country forms part of the large plateau north of Lake Kyoga, with an overall elevation of about 3,500 feet. Apart from scattered rock outcrops, there are no dramatic changes of elevation. Away from the Nile, the land rises very gradually towards the watershed with the Moroto or Asua river,[1] falling away more abruptly on the other side

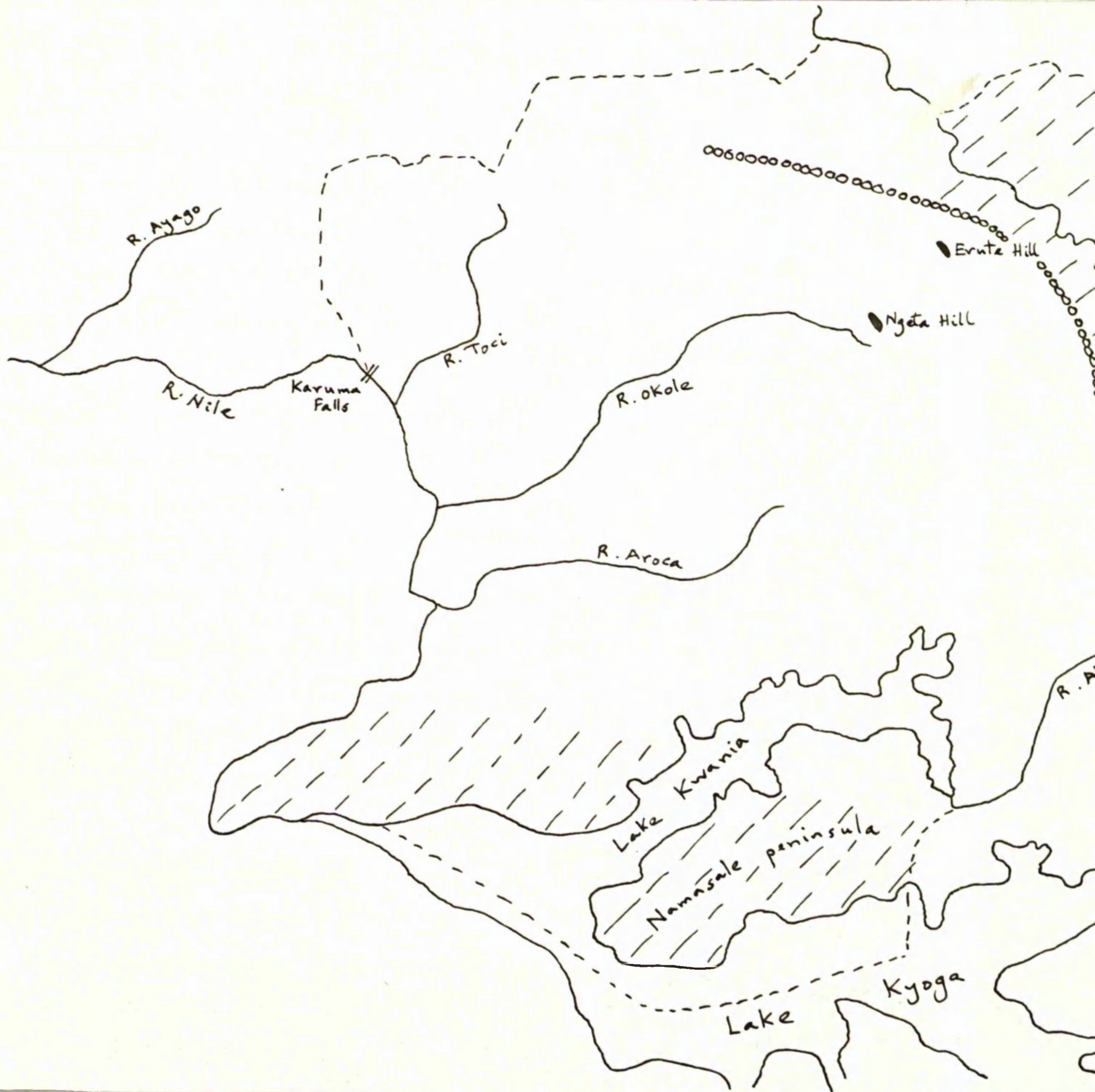
1. On Uganda Government maps, this river usually appears as the Asua, which is a corruption of the Acholi 'Acua'. In Lango, however, it is universally known as the Moroto, which is the name I use here.

into the river valley. North of the Moroto, the ground rises again only very slowly, though in the extreme north-east the present extent of Lango settlement is conveniently marked by Otuke Hill, beyond which lie the Labwor Hills of Karamoja.

The Nile-Moroto watershed (Map 3) is the approximate dividing line between two belts of vegetation. South of the watershed, the extreme evenness of elevation is related to the course of the Nile. From the point where it enters Lake Kyoga as far as Karuma Falls - a distance of over 100 miles - the Nile loses little height and flows very slowly, especially through Lakes Kyoga and Kwania, and for much of this passage the river is concealed from the banks by a thick cover of aquatic vegetation. The Nile and Lake Kwania are fed by numerous streams and rivers from the right bank, of which the most important are the Abalang (which now marks the Lango-Teso border), the Aroca, the Okole and the Toci. These streams, too, are very slow-moving. With the exception of the Toci, no flow of water is perceptible during most of the year, and they have more the appearance of great swamps; indeed, the Langi themselves make no distinction between stream and swamp, but use the same word (kulu) for both. Some swamps are more than a mile wide and cannot be crossed at all in the rainy season. Apart from the Nile's main tributaries, there are hundreds of other small swamps which follow the slight declivities of the terrain; they are such a regular feature of the landscape that a Lango in giving directions to a stranger will say that his destination is so-many swamps away. Even in the dry season, few swamps run dry, so that no settlement in these parts is ever far from water. The natural vegetation is deciduous woodland, the trees growing to a height of sixty feet, not as forest, but

Map 3

Main physical features of Lango country



Key

ooooooooo Nile - Moroto watershed

////// areas of well-drained savanna

close enough together to exclude any cover of long grass underneath.

North of the watershed, the streams run clearer and faster, and they vary greatly in size according to the season. Even the Moroto, which flows north to join the Nile near the Uganda-Sudan border, is liable to become parched during a severe dry season, while at other times of the year its tributaries can be flooded quite suddenly. The annual rainfall is lower than in the south, and the dry season a little longer. As a result, the vegetation is more characteristic of well-drained savanna: shorter and more scattered trees, thinner soils, and higher grass-cover. On a more restricted scale, these conditions also prevail in the extreme south of the District: in the interior of Namasale peninsula, and in the angle formed by the Nile further west. These less favoured areas in the north-east and south-west have the lowest densities of population.[1]

For reasons of soil and climate, Lango conforms to the pattern of seed agriculture so widespread in northern Uganda. This is in contrast to southern Uganda, which in general practises plant agriculture based on the banana. For as long as tradition recalls, the Lango staple has been finger-millet (eleusine), a crop well suited to light soils, high temperature and uneven rainfall. Second in importance is sorghum which, while more resistant to drought and containing a higher level of protein, is less palatable both as food and when used for making beer. These crops make up the bulk of the traditional

---

1. J.H.Driberg, The Lango (London,1923),pp.43-46; I.Langdale-Brown, H.Osmaston & J.Wilson, The Vegetation of Uganda (Entebbe, 1964); Uganda Government, Atlas of Uganda (Entebbe,1962).

diet in Lango, cassava and sweet potato being more recent introductions. No meal, however, is complete without a relish or sauce. For this purpose, the Langi grow simsim (sesame) for its high oil content, a tasty species of buck-wheat known as malakwang, pigeon peas, and several varieties of bean; groundnuts are also grown, but until recently have been much less popular.

As an indigenous cropping system, the Lango association of finger-millet, pigeon peas and simsim has been judged by one modern authority to be "the best diet of vegetable protein anywhere in Uganda".[1] The contrast in physique between the Langi and their Bantu neighbours, who practise a plaintain agriculture, was frequently noted by early European observers.[2] However, there is another side to the picture. A millet-based agriculture requires much more labour than one based on the banana. The only perennial crop of the traditional Lango complex is the pigeon pea, and that is seldom left for more than three years before re-sowing. Millet in particular requires heavy labour every year for clearing the ground, weeding and harvesting. In Lango, therefofe, both men and women are regularly employed in the fields, in contrast to Buganda and Bunyoro where women do most of the agricultural work.[3]

A further disadvantage for the Langi lies in the yearly distribution of rainfall. In common with other Nilotic-speaking

---

1. J.D.Jameson, 'Protein Content of Subsistence Crops in Uganda", East African Agriculture Jl.24(1958),pp.67-69, quoted in D.N.McMaster, A Subsistence Crop Geography of Uganda (Bude, 1962),p.28.

2. For the first such observation, see C.T.Wilson & R.W.Felkin, Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan (London,1882),vol II,pp.53-54.

3. McMaster,op.cit. pp.48-50,83-84.

areas, there are effectively two seasons rather than four, the rainfall coming to a single peak, rather than two. The Langi recognise this by dividing the year into one dry season (oro) roughly from December to March, and one rainy season (cwir) from April to November.[1] By restricting the sowing of most crops to once a year, this two-season pattern limits net harvests and increases the chance of shortage, especially if the dry season is severe.

The agricultural year begins at the end of the dry season, with the clearing and digging of the ground in preparation for sowing at the start of the rains. There may also be a second sowing in June or July, if the rains let up, as they often do at that time. Harvesting may begin as early as June and continue until November. By the time the dry season begins in December, no crops can be expected for six months (except for cassava and sweet-potatoes, which have been introduced in the last hundred years). It is therefore essential to cultivate the largest possible area, and to store the surplus harvest in granaries; millet is well suited for this, since after careful preparation it can be kept for three years or more.[2]

So far as cultivation goes, the dry season is for the most part a period of enforced leisure. Other activities which are not so dependent on the cycle of seasons tend to be concentrated in this period, - for example public rituals and celebrations. Once a certain amount of the harvest has been set aside as a reserve, the remainder is used for beer, and large quantities are made at the beginning of the dry season. No public ritual

---

1. Driberg, op.cit. p.48.

2. Driberg, op.cit. pp.98-99; McMaster, op.cit.

can be performed without beer being provided, and the same is true of purely leisure pursuits, such as drumming and dancing. All these activities flourish in the relaxed atmosphere after the harvest is complete.[1] Economically, the most important dry season pursuit has until the recent past been hunting. Lango used to abound in elephant, buffalo, rhinoceros and several species of antelope. Nowadays there is very little big game left, but smaller animals are hunted with vigour. Hunting may be organised at any time - for example to protect crops - but it is concentrated in the dry season, partly because conditions are then best suited to the favourite Lango technique of beating out the game by setting fire to the bush, and partly because game meat used to be a very welcome addition to the diet towards the end of the dry season.[2] In addition, those Langi who live on the lakeshore or along the principal swamps supplement hunting with fishing.[3]

Besides cultivation and hunting, there is one other means of subsistence - animal husbandry. Goats are so frequently slaughtered for ritual meals that they constitute an important source of food. Sheep and poultry are also kept. But more important than any of these in Lango eyes are cattle. Except in the extreme south-west, which has only recently been cleared of tsetse-fly, the short-horned zebu is kept everywhere in Lango, for the close network of swamps and streams means that herdsmen seldom have much difficulty in watering their stock.

---

1. R.T.Curley, 'Persistence and Change in Lango Ceremonialism', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley,1969, p.104; Driberg,op.cit.p.129.

2. Driberg,op.cit.pp.112-18. For a fuller account of hunting techniques during the 19th century, see below, pp.103-4.

3. Driberg, op.cit.pp.121-22.

As is the case in so much of East Africa, and especially among non-Bantu peoples, cattle are crucial in a wide range of economic and social contexts. Outside the modern cash economy, cattle are the principal form of wealth and unit of account. They are the preferred payment for both bridewealth and compensation for offences, and the way in which cattle transferred in these contexts are then distributed among kin is a significant index of social relationships. On important ritual occasions, cattle are slaughtered and eaten ceremonially. Nevertheless, fond as the Langi are of meat, cattle are a dietary asset in everyday life not so much for their meat as for their milk, which is drunk curdled or made into butter.[1]

Livestock, crops and game together make up the pattern of Lango subsistence.[2] Until the last fifty years, methods of food production and hunting had hardly changed since the Langi first settled their present homeland; the technological base remained constant, iron having always been used for hoes and spears.[3] Nor do regional differences in rainfall and soils greatly affect the way in which the Langi exploit their food resources today. During the last 150 years, however, the balance between livestock, crops and game has altered considerably. This has been a vital determinant of Lango history, and especially the sequence of migration, assimilation and settlement.

****

1. Ibid, pp.91-93.

2. For the earliest reference to the combination of seed agriculture and animal husbandry in Lango, see Carlo Piaggia, 'Sesto Viaggio di Carlo Piaggia sul Fiume Bianco nel 1876', Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana 14(1877),p.389.

3. The use of iron in 19th century Lango is discussed below, pp. 142-3.

The debate on the issue of Lango origins goes back fifty years,[1] and in that time radically different solutions have been proposed. The great progress in elucidating the early history of the Nilotes has not included the Langi. Indeed, the debate has centred on the more basic question of whether the Langi should be seen as Nilotes at all. It is because of this ambivalent situation that, as recently as 1967, Ogot referred to the issue of Lango origins as "one of the most difficult and unsolved questions in the pre-European history of Uganda."[2]

The essence of the problem is easily stated. Lango culture contains, in substantial measure, both Nilotic elements and features commonly associated with the 'Nilo-Hamites', or Para-Nilotes as they are better called.[3] The Nilotic and Para-Nilotic peoples together account for the majority of northern Uganda's population, and they are also significant elements in Kenya and the southern Sudan. Although there is a certain amount of linguistic ground common to them all, the Para-Nilotic languages can readily be distinguished as a group from the Nilotic. Each group can be further subdivided along linguistic lines; in the present context, only two subdivisions need to be considered:

---

1. The first contribution to the problem was J.H.Driberg, 'The Lango District, Uganda Protectorate', Geographical Jl. 58(1921), pp.119-22.

2. B.A.Ogot, History of the Southern Luo, vol I (Nairobi, 1967),p.48.

3. Since not even the Central Para-Nilotes acknowledge a common name for themselves, ethnographers have to fall back on an external linguistic classification. The most plausible alternative yet proposed to the discredited 'Nilo-Hamitic' is Tucker and Bryan's (Para-Nilotic'. A.N.Tucker and M.A. Bryan, Linguistic Analyses: The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa (London,1966).

the Southern Lwo, who are Nilotes, and the Central Para-Nilotes.[1] The Southern Lwo include the Alur, Acholi and Kenya Luo, and they have become completely separated from the Northern Lwo (e.g. the Shilluk), who live in the southern Sudan. The Central Para-Nilotes include the Iteso, Karimojong, Dodos, Jie and Turkana, the last four being usually referred to as the 'Karimojong Cluster'.[2] Close contact between the Southern Lwo and the Central Para-Nilotes over the last two hundred years or so has made it difficult to attribute precise cultural traits, but broadly speaking Lwo social organisation is based on segmentary systems of descent groups, while the Para-Nilotes have laid greater stress on age or generation groups, and have been even more wedded to pastoral values than their Lwo neighbours.

Of the Nilotic elements in Lango culture, the most significant is language: Lango is classified as one of the Southern Lwo group and is closely related to Acholi.[3] So far as social organisation goes, Lango is generally regarded as being closer to the pattern of hereditary clan chiefdoms in Acholi than to the less stratified, more variegated social structure found among the Central Para-Nilotes.[4] Thus language and social organisation, which are the main criteria of conventional

---

1. Tucker and Bryan, The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa (London,1956),pp.94-117,149-50. These authors do not actually use the terms 'Central Nilo-Hamitic' or 'Central Para-Nilotic', but their Teso Language Group corresponds to the more commonly accepted label used in the Gullivers' study for the Ethnographic Survey of Africa: P. & P.H.Gulliver, The Central Nilo-Hamites (London,1953).

2. Gulliver,op.cit.p.9. This term entails somewhat dubious assumptions about the common origins of the peoples concerned, but it is a convenient lable.

3. Tucker and Bryan, Non-Bantu Languages (1956),pp.103-4.

4. See below, Chapters 2 and 3.

ethnographic classification, have caused the Langi to be labelled as Nilotes.[1]

Against this must be set the weight of Lango traditions, which are almost unanimous in pointing to an eastern origin among the present-day speakers of Para-Nilotic. This grass-roots view is supported by linguistic evidence that the Langi once spoke a Para-Nilotic tongue;[2] by several features of ritual practice also found in Teso; and by a number of important clan names with a clear eastern provenance. Particularly significant is the fact that other Lwo-speaking peoples do not regard the Langi as being Lwo at all. Thus the Alur regard the Acholi and the Jopadhola as fellow Lwo, sharing in some degree a common history, but they see the Langi as an alien stock - a sentiment which is fully reciprocated. The rich store of Lwo traditions has little place in Lango folklore, and if well-known Lwo stories are recounted in Lango, they are seldom placed in a historical context.[3]

The earliest attempts to solve the problem of Lango origins were committed exclusively to one side or the other. Driberg saw the Langi as being of purely Nilotic stock, while Tarantino took the opposite view.[4] Such monolithic explanations are out

---

1. A.Butt, The Nilotes of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Uganda (London,1952); Atlas of Uganda,op.cit.

2. A.N.Tucker, 'Some Problems of Junction in Lango', Mitteilungen des Instituts Für Orientforschung 6(1958),p.142.

3. For an interesting exception, see Nasan Engola, 'Olden Times in Northern Lango', translation of undated vernacular MS, Department of History, Makerere University, p.1. This author uses the story of the bead, the spear and the elephant to describe a supposed split between the Langi and the Jopadhola. For the fullest version of this story, see J.P.Crazzolara, The Lwoo, 3 parts (Verona,1950-54),pp.62-66.

4. Driberg, The Lango, pp.23-33; A.Tarantino, 'The Origin of the Lango', Uganda Jl.10 (1946),pp.12-16.

of fashion. Recent authorities have rather tended to see the Langi as a fusion of two principal stocks, an earlier Lwo substratum being overlaid by Para-Nilotes from the east.[1] This interpretation dovetails neatly with our knowledge of Lwo migrations as a whole, but - as Ogot points out - the deciding factor must be the traditions of the Lango clans.[2] These traditions are as yet very imperfectly known, mainly because of the bewildering number of Lango clans : some 250 have been identified to date.[3] However, the present state of research provides the basis for a new interpretation, which resolves the incongruities of Lango society much more convincingly than any previous theory.

While the debate has centred on the roles of the Lwo and the Para-Nilotes, it has not been supposed that these were the first inhabitants of Lango country. Middle Stone Age artifacts have been found at the Nile-Chobi confluence in the extreme west of the Lango settlement area, but no comprehensive archaeological survey has yet been made of Acholi and Lango.[4] Until this has been done, any reconstruction of the area's history before the Lwo migrations at the end of the 15th century must be speculative in the extreme, and only one scholar has

---

1. J.P.Crazzolara, 'Notes on the Lango-Omiru and on the Labwoor and the Nyakwai', Anthropos 55(1960),pp.174-214; R.Oliver in R.Oliver and G.Mathew, History of East Africa, vol I (Oxford, 1963),pp.173-79; Ogot,op.cit.,pp.48-62.

2. Ogot, op.cit. p.53.

3. Clan lists are found in: Driberg, The Lango, pp.192-204; T.T.S.Hayley, field-notes (1936-37); A.Tarantino, 'Lango Clans', Uganda Jl. 13(1949),pp.109-11; Crazzolara, 'Notes on the Lango-Omiru'. In addition, the present writer collected a number of clan names which had not previously been recorded.

4. B.M.Fagan and L.Lofgren, 'Archaeological Sites on the Nile-Chobi Confluence", Uganda Jl. 30(1966),pp.201-6.

seriously attempted it; In Lango, as in Acholi, Crazzolara sees the pre-Lwo population as having consisted of two elements - Madi, and 'western Lango', by which he means Para-Nilotes akin to the Didinga of the southern Sudan.[1] So far as Lango is concerned, Crazzolara's evidence consists almost entirely of clan names and place names, without reference to the traditions surrounding them.[2] The attribution of these names to the Madi or 'western Lango' rests on guess-work, and in the absence of other evidence it cannot command much confidence. Furthermore, if some Lango place names are indeed Madi in origin, then it must be pointed out that these names could just as probably have been given at a later date by Lwo groups who had absorbed Madi during their southward migration. For southern Lango, Cohen cites Banyara traditions from south of Lake Kyoga to show that, besides Madi, there were probably Bantu-speakers north of the Lake who retreated southwards when the Lwo appeared.[3] Both these suggestions are plausible, but at present they are hardly more than guide-lines for future research.

There is much more evidence on the next phase. The remarkable consistency of traditions among all Southern Lwo groups - from the Alur to the Kenya Luo - has allowed historians to reconstruct with some confidence the migrations which brought the Southern Lwo from their cradleland in the Sudan.[4] During

---

1. Crazzolara, The Lwoo, pp.81-82,340-41,551.

2. Crazzolara, 'Notes on the Lango-Omiru', pp.179-90; The Lwoo, p.548.

3. D.W.Cohen, The Historical Tradition of Busoga (Oxford,1972), p.158.

4. The techniques of glottochronology have also recently been brought to bear on the problem. B.Blount and R.T.Curley, 'The Southern Luo Languages: a Glottochronological Reconstruction', Jl. African Languages 9 (1970),pp.1-18.

the 15th century, they began to advance southwards from a halting-place in the Nile valley, near Nimule (on the Uganda-Sudan border). Most groups followed the valley of the Nile until they reached Pubungu at the north end of Lake Albert. Here a dispersion occurred. Some entered Bunyoro, where they established the Bito royal dynasty, and where - as 'Jopalwo' - they soon became the dominant population in eastern Bunyoro, in the area known as Chope, or Pawir. Some remained on the right bank of the Victoria Nile and slowly expanded into Acholi. Others at a later date crossed into what is now Alur country in West Nile District. Meanwhile, a smaller section of the Southern Lwo had stayed behind in the Nimule area, and from there they gradually spread over north Acholi. This, in outline, seems to have been the migration pattern for two centuries, during which increasing numbers of Lwo settled in northern Uganda with their herds of cattle along the Nile and its tributaries, where they practised a mixed economy of seed-agriculture and pastoralism. The indigenous peoples were assimilated both linguistically and politically, and there emerged a number of small chiefdoms, dominated in most cases by a royal clan of Lwo origin and ruled by a _rwot_, or lord.[1]

This pattern held good in Lango as well. Crazzolara and Ogot, drawing mainly on Acholi and Padhola traditions, have shown that, broadly speaking, the Lwo groups which entered Lango can be placed in three categories: firstly, those who migrated south from Nimule and the Agoro massif, at some distance from the Nile valley; secondly, those who stopped their southward

---

1. Crazzolara, _The Lwoo_, parts 1 and 2; Oliver, op.cit. pp. 171-80; Ogot,op.cit. pp.40-47.

migration at Pubungu, without crossing the Victoria Nile; and lastly, groups from Pawir or Chope, in eastern Bunyoro.[1] However, as is so often the case with pre-colonial African migrations, it is easier to enumerate the groups who entered an area than to determine which ones remained there over a long period. There is no doubt that Lango country was part of the broad stage across which the Southern Lwo were migrating from the 15th century onwards, but it is more difficult to distinguish the Lwo groups still there at the end of the 18th century, when the first Para-Nilotes arrived from the east, especially since so many Lwo had migrated still further south to Padhola and Nyanza. In order to assess the extent of Lwo settlement, we must turn to Lango traditions and the evidence of Lango clan names.

Three areas of Lango attracted permanent Lwo settlement: the Nile valley on either side of Karuma Falls, a portion of the Moroto valley, and the Lake Kwania region. The picture is clearest in the Nile valley. From the earliest days of Lwo settlement, it seems that the Lwo colony of Pawir in eastern Bunyoro in fact included both banks of the Nile. The distribution of clan names indicates that, on the right bank of the Nile, Lwo country stretched from the Ayago river almost as far upstream as the Aroca.[2] At its greatest extent, this Lwo sphere stretched at least twenty miles up the Okole river, and perhaps as far up the Toci also.[3] In this region, the Langi have never maintained that they were the first inhabitants.[4]

---

1. Crazzolara, The Lwoo, pp.78-80,563-64; Ogot,op.cit.pp.55-61.

2. The relevant clan names are: Acore, Atik (not to be confused with Atek), and Alwaa. In most cases, these names survive today in conjunction with Para-Nilotic clan names,e.g. Okarowok me Acore (found in Minakulu and Aber).

3. Interviews: Bartolomayo Okori, Matayo Acut.

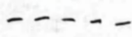
4. Driberg, The Lango,pp.25-27; A.Tarantino, 'Notes on the Lango', Uganda Jl. 13(1949),p.148.

Map 4

The settlement of Lango country

MAP 4

<u>Key</u>

 extent of Lango settlement in about 1900

approximate extent of Lwo settlement, late 18th century

Further east, Crazzolara's enquiries in Ogur and Alito have shown that, before the easterners arrived, there was a Lwo population which complemented the one north of the Moroto river, in Awere and Puranga. Probably the strong concentration of the Alira clan round modern Lira town should be included in this group.[1]

More problematic is the Lake Kwania-Kyoga area, since this was one of the principal migration 'corridors' of the Padhola, whose traditions mention Kacung and Kaberamaido as early stopping-places.[2] Conceivably, all Lwo from this area had moved further east by the time the Langi finally settled there in the 1870's, and some traditions lend support to this view.[3] But the abnormal density of population noted there by the first European visitors[4] suggests that the Langi had in fact absorbed a previous population. Lango informants do not admit as much, but some of them say that when the Langi first reached Abyece, Awelo and Dokolo, they had to chase away 'Kumam'.[5]

The Kumam are a small tribe who today live mainly in Kaberamaido county in southwestern Teso; the problem of their

---

1. Crazzolara, The Lwoo, p.563; Crazzolara, 'Notes on the Lango-Omiru', p.194. See also: R.S.Anywar, Acoli Ki Ker Megi (Kampala,1954), pp.117-18; Reuben Ogwal, untitled vernacular MS, translated as 'A History of Lango Clans', mimeo, Department of History, Makerere University, p.24.

2. Ogot, op.cit.pp.68-69.

3. It is often said that the Langi reached this area to find potsherds and excavated iron-ore, but no people. Interview: Tomasi Ojuka; J.A.Otima, 'Atek of Oumolao Clan and its leaders in Kwera and Aputi in the 19th century', undergraduate research essay, Department of History, Makerere University, 1970.

4. Grant to Boyle, 1.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07; A.R.Cook, 'The Story of a Camping Tour in Equatorial Africa', Mercy & Truth 13 (1909), p.280.

5. Interviews: Isaka Ojaba, Amnoni Abura, Ekoc Opige.

origin is similar to that of the Langi, since they too speak a form of Lwo while showing many typically Para-Nilotic features. Now Kumam tradition completely denies any settlement west of the Abalang river, which marks the boundary between Dokolo and Kaberamaido counties.[1] It seems likely, therefore, that Lango traditions about 'Kumam' settlers in south-eastern Lango refer to a Lwo group quite distinct from either the Langi or the Kumam. Some of these Lwo may indeed have joined the Kumam as refugees, but it is equally likely that others were assimilated by the Langi.

During the period 1600 to 1800, Lwo settlement was not, of course, static. Small bands of new migrants were probably joining those already there until the turn of the 18th century and beyond, while others were pressing further inland from the Nile and the Moroto. Map 4 shows the probable extent of Lwo settlement at the end of the 18th century. It can be seen that the Lwo settled in just those areas which they might have been expected to prefer, - well-watered locations near rivers and lakes; they avoided the drier regions in the north-east and the extreme south-west. There seems to have been no population pressure or intense rivalry for natural resources. Even along the main water-courses the population was probably sparse and village communities widely spaced. Ogot's statement that "most of the Lango clans formed part of the migrating group of the Southern Luo" cannot be accepted,[2] for there are only ten clan names in Lango with reasonably clear affiliations to the north

---

1. Personal communication from Mr. Mathew Odada, of Canon Lawrence College, Lira, who is engaged in research on Kumam history.

2. Ogot, op.cit. p.52.

and west rather than the east.[1] There is no evidence that the whole, or even most, of Lango was colonised by the Lwo.

This being so, the current theory[2] that the Para-Nilotes from the east assimilated the language and some of the social institutions of their Lwo predecessors seems scarcely tenable. The first European observers in the 1860's and 1870's placed the Lango language in the same category as other Lwo languages such as Jopalwo, Acholi and Shilluk.[3] The possibility that the Para-Nilotes had within two generations of their first westward migration adopted the Lwo language could perhaps be entertained, had they been an immigrant minority obliged to take wives from a well established existing population.[4] But in view of the very limited extent of Lwo settlement and the likelihood that the easterners were in the majority, so fast a rate of linguistic assimilation is inconceivable. Clearly another explanation for the infusion of Lwo culture must be sought. The most obvious alternative is that the fundamental fusion of Lwo with non-Lwo did not take place in Lango District at all, but in the land of the Para-Nilotes to the east. And the evidence for this view is now becoming increasingly strong.

---

1. The clan names are: Acore, Atik, Alyec, Obala, Ojimo, Amor, Ayom, Abol, Alira, and Alwaa.

2. See Oliver,op.cit. pp.176-79 and Ogot,op.cit.pp.61-62.

3. J.W.Grant, A Walk Across Africa (London,1864),p.291; Linant de Bellefonds to Gordon, 24.3.75, in M.F.Shukry (ed), Equatoria under Egyptian Rule (Cairo,1953),p.238. This is not to say, however, that the Lango language was uniform. Emin Pasha gathered second-hand information in 1881 to the effect that different dialects were spoken by the Langi (G.Schweinfurth and others, Emin Pasha in Central Africa, London,1888,p.251). Even today, despite government attempts to spread a standard form of Lwo, Para-Nilotic elements can be distinguished in the form of Lango spoken in the east of the District.

4. Compare, for example, the case of the Ngoni of Malawi. MmRead, 'Tradition and Prestige Among the Ngoni", Africa 9 (1936), pp.453-83.

Due consideration of the Lwo factor in Lango history has been inhibited by the almost universal tradition of the Langi themselves that they migrated from Otuke, the imposing hill which marks the boundary between Lango and Labwor in the north-east. The statement "We Langi came from the east", has been seen as pointing exclusively to a Para-Nilotic origin.[1] Insufficient attention has been given to Lango traditions about migrations before Otuke. Now it is true that the majority of elders today, especially those in the west of the District, are unable to elaborate on the Otuke statement. Among those that can, however, there is no unanimity. Broadly speaking, the traditions fall into two categories: the first and larger group refer to Teso, Karamoja in general, or Jie in particular, - that is, to areas which for a long time have been predominantly Para-Nilotic.[2] The second group refer to several locations in the south-eastern Sudan. The places of origin are recalled only in the most general terms, but the essential common ground is that some of the Langi at Otuke had migrated not from the east, but from the north.[3] The number of informants who can recount traditions of this second category is small, but they gain weight from one conclusion reached by Driberg some fifty years ago. According to him, the Lango tribe originated near the Agoro range of hills on the Uganda-Sudan border, due north of the Lango country; they then migrated southwards, and settled for a time in the area immediately north-east of Lango District, before moving into their

---

1. Tarantino, 'The Origin of the Lango, p.14.

2. This explanation runs through Ogwal, op.cit.

3. Didinga, Lotuko and Shilluk are mentioned. Interviews: Edwardi Olir, Tomasi Ojuka, Lazaro Okelo; Nasan Engola, op.cit. p.1; Ogwal, op.cit. pp.46,47,55.

present homeland.[1] The ethnic and linguistic associations of this second group are far more open to debate. Lango traditions do not indicate whether this group was composed of Lwo or Para-Nilotes, nor do they say how or when the easterners and northeners at Otuke combined to form a single people.

For enlightenment on these questions, we have to refer to the traditions of the Jie people, which have recently been the subject of an exhaustive study by Lamphear.[2] Two aspects of his reconstruction of Jie history are relevant to Lango: the identification of <u>two</u> layers of Para-Nilotes, distinguished originally on grounds of subsistence economy; and the indications of substantial Lwo infiltration into Jieland. The Jie have usually been seen as originating from a concentration of pastoral Para-Nilotes in the Koten-Magos area of Karamoja, above the Rift Valley Escarpment which today forms the frontier between Kenya and Uganda.[3] While this group certainly played a very important part in Jie evolution from the time of their westward migration in the mid-18th century, it is now clear that they were not the first Para-Nilotes to inhabit either Jieland or Karimojong

---

1. Driberg, <u>The Lango</u>, pp.27-30. Traditions about Agoro should not be taken to imply any connection with the other, very small tribe called Lango, which lives between the Lotuko and the Didinga near the Agoro range. The name 'Lango' is not their own, but was given to them by their Lwo-speaking neighbours to the south (in the Lwo language <u>lango</u> means 'foreigner'). Their language, clan names and social organisation have no features in common with the Langi of Uganda. L.F.Nalder (ed), <u>Tribal Survey of Mongalla Province</u> (Oxford,1937),pp.82,87.

2. J.E.Lamphear, 'The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda', unpublished PhD thesis, University of London,1972. The next two paragraphs are drawn from Chapters 3 to 5 of this work, especially pp.164-89,198-206,279-84,305-8. Dr. Lamphear was kind enough to make available his main conclusions to me before writing his thesis; I am also grateful for his comments on an earlier draft. His conclusions can be given here only in summary form.

3. Gulliver, op.cit.pp.10-11,28-29.

country. The Koten-Magos group arrived to find a well-established Para-Nilotic population, which for its livelihood depended less on pastoralism than on the traditional crop complex of northern Uganda - millet, simsim, groundnuts, and above all sorghum. These agriculturalists are known to Jie tradition as 'Ngiseera' or 'Iseera'; they had probably originally migrated from the region of the Agoro hills in the southern Sudan. When the pastoralists first reached central Jieland from Koten and Magos, a significant proportion of the Iseera migrated to the south-west. They stopped first at the Kotidani river, north of the Labwor Hills, and then continued through Labwor to the vicinity of Otuke hill.

The Iseera themselves, however, were something of a hybrid group. This was on account of Lwo influence which affected them at every stage of their migration. Before the Koten-Magos group arrived in central Jieland around the middle of the 18th century, there had already been Lwo infiltration from the west - so much so that the Iseera are said to have become bilingual in Ajie and Lwo before their departure to the south-west. By this time, there was also a significant Lwo population along the Kotidani river itself; so when the Iseera settled there, they were exposed to still more Lwo influence, absorbing both new people and new cultural traits. At the same time, some of the original Iseera migrants from Jieland were disheartened by famine at both Kotidani and Otuke, and they retraced their steps to settle alongside the Koten-Magos group. As the westward migration of the Iseera continued, therefore, the number of Lwo increased, while the Para-Nilotic speakers became fewer. This process probably continued at Otuke, since there are Acholi traditions about Lwo groups who migrated south-eastwards as far as Otuke.[1]

1. Crazzolara, The Lwoo, pp.305,534,541,552. Acholi traditions describe these groups as having retraced their steps to Acholiland proper, but it is reasonable to suppose that not all of them left Otuke for the north.

So far from conflicting with Lango traditions, this general picture conveyed by Jie sources in fact complements them. Jieland is given by several accounts as the Lango homeland,[1] while mention of locations in the southern Sudan by some Lango sources can readily be interpreted in the light of the probable Iseera migration from the Agoro area. The Langi say that, when they lived at Otuke, they already grew millet, sorghum and simsim,[2] and already spoke their present language, though bilingualism continued for some time.[3] According to Lango traditions, the Langi and the Jie separated at Otuke because of ill-feeling caused by food scarcity: the Langi enjoyed a surplus, while the Jie were short, and the Jie were obliged to sell their children to the Langi in return for food; the two came to blows, and the Langi decided to move away. This tradition is sometimes recounted with reference to the Karimojong or the Labwor, rather than the Jie - an understandable confusion, in view of the likelihood that these labels had as yet no meaning in the late 18th century.[4] None of this conflicts with the Jie tradition that at Otuke there was a division among the Iseera, some returning to Jieland on account of famine, and others pressing forward to the south-west.

Beyond indicating an easterly origin in general, the evidence of Lango clan names is more difficult to assess. Among

---

1. Ogwal Ajungu, untitled vernacular history (1936-37),MS in the possession of Dr. T.T.S.Hayley, para.84; Ogwal,op.cit.p.7. Interviews: Joseph Orama, Yokonia Ogwal, Kezekia Okelo, Yakobo Gaci.

2. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Anderea Okadde, Luka Abura, Adonia Ecun.

3. Interview: Anderea Okadde. In the 1930's some elderly Langi could still remember how to speak Ajie. Tarantino, 'The Origin of the Lango', p.15.

4. Interviews: Ekoc Opige, Nasaneri Owino, Anderea Okadde, Yubu Engola, Adonia Ecun. Tarantino, 'Notes on the Lango', pp.147-48.

the 250 or so clans identified to date, there are many which on present evidence have no affiliations with any other clan in Lango or elsewhere. However, at least one hundred clans, and possibly as many as two hundred, are associated with six names representing the original clans from which they sprung: Oki, Bako, Atek (or Atekit), Arak (or Arakit), Ober and Okarowok.[1] Three of these clans - Atek, Arak and Okarowok - are found among several Central Para-Nilotic-speaking peoples. Lamphear has shown convincingly that these 'universal' clans belong to the Iseera, or agricultural Para-Nilotes, and that their prevalence in each of the tribes varies according to the historical contribution of the Iseera to the present-day population.[2] Lamphear also includes in this group one other clan, Otengoro, which is found among the Langi, but is much less widespread than the basic six.[3] The three remaining clans of the Lango 'core' do not appear to correspond to any groups elsewhere. This is not in itself an argument against the theory of an Iseera origin for the Langi. Jie elders today recall only the names of those clans which contributed to the return migrations from Kotidani and Otuke; they shed no light on the identity of those Iseera clans which continued their journey westwards without any of their members returning to Jieland. It is these clans which in the Lango story are particularly important, and it seems reasonable to suppose that Oki, Bako and Ober represent Iseera

---

1. Without research into each of the clans concerned, it is impossible to be more precise about numbers, since the evidence of clan names is not in itself conclusive. A splinter-group may assume a clan name to which it has no claim on kinship grounds, while other clans whose names include two of the 'big six' (e.g. Arak me Bako) are ambiguous.

2. Lamphear, op.cit.pp.171-72.

3. Ibid, p.172. The Oremakori clan, a minor group in Lango, is also classified as an Iseera clan. Ibid, p.259.

clans which decamped *in toto* from Karamoja to Otuke, and thence to Lango country proper.[1]

The traditions of the Lango clans themselves do not greatly help in this respect, since pre-Otuke migration routes are not recalled with sufficient precision to allow identification with any one of the different groups in Jieland or Labwor. The details of Lango migration are thus tantalizingly vague at present - and will perhaps remain so - but the general outline emerges clearly enough from Jie traditions, substantiated on a few crucial points by Lango sources. The assimilation between Lwo and Para-Nilotes was well under way by the time that the Langi left Otuke. They began their westward migration into Lango already equipped with a knowledge of the Lwo language, and already practising a mixed economy of seed-agriculture and pastoralism which was well suited to their new environment.

Besides linguistic and economic adaptation, there is one other problem which has been seen to stand in the way of a theory of eastern origin for the Langi: the problem of population growth. The 1959 Census showed that Lango has about two-and-a-half times as many people as Karamoja. This contrast reflects the big disparity in natural endowment between the two Districts, a disparity which has probably not changed radically during the last 200 years. The problem of reconciling the demographic picture with migration traditions is aggravated by the fact that important elements of the Iteso trace their origin to

---

1. I owe this suggestion to Dr. Lamphear. The name 'Ober' would appear to be Lwo in origin, and to point to the Lwo infiltration of Kotidani and Otuke, discussed above. Outside the central core of six, a few other Lango clans can be classified: Ararak (not to be confused with Arak) occurs also in Teso and Turkana; Omolo and Inomo appear from Teso evidence to be Lwo clans. J.C.D.Lawrance, *The Iteso* (London,1957), p.55; J.B.Webster, 'The Iteso during the Asonya', Department of History seminar paper (mimeo), Makerere University (1969).

the same area. Faced with the almost total lack of evidence, all that can be done is to comment on such population statistics as exist, and to offer a few tentative suggestions.

The really spectacular growth in the Lango population has taken place since 1931, and is associated with greater material prosperity and the growth of medical services. Until the 1930's the improved conditions of the colonial period did not make much of a demographic impact. Census figures for the early colonial period are not a very accurate guide, being liable to serious under-enumeration; but assuming a roughly equal discrepancy in the first two Censuses of Lango District (1921 and 1931), it appears that the Lango population increased by 3% in ten years, to something probably well over the official figure of 176,000.[1] There are two reasons for thinking that the rate of growth may have been higher than this during the pre-colonial era. The first is that an expanding pioneer society can reproduce more rapidly than a settled society which has reached the practical limits of territorial expansion. The second reason is more peculiar to Lango. During the 19th century, the Langi were constantly raiding their neighbours, and they sometimes engaged in quite distant campaigns. There are good grounds for supposing that the Langi were extremely effective warriors, and that the balance of success lay with them.[2] Now an important feature of these campaigns was the taking of captives, especially

---

1. Census Returns,1921 (Entebbe,1921); Census Returns,1931 (Entebbe,1933). District population figures for this period have to be broken down into their tribal constituents, since the Lango settlement area did not then coincide with Lango District. The inadequacy of population statistics for the early colonial period is stressed in R.R.Kuczynski, Colonial Population (Oxford,1937),pp.vii-xiv.

2. See below, Chapter 4.

women and girls. In a polygynous society these were easily absorbed, and the natural result would have been to increase the size of the average family.

Turning to Karamoja, there is one item of material evidence for large population movements in a westward direction. In the area of the Kotidani river, there survive today several hundred grinding-stones which Jie tradition ascribes to the Iseera group, most of whom went on to Otuke. This would at least suggest that the migrants themselves were numbered in thousands.[1] The constant reference in tradition to Otuke, a dry locality, is not a serious drawback. It is clear from Lango traditions that 'Otuke' stands as a symbol for the whole Labwor area, access to which is by way of Otuke hill; the more detailed traditions current in eastern Lango mention several other localities deep into Labwor - Morulem, Nangolebwal, Awila and Loyoroit.[2] Compared with the surrounding areas of east Acholi and Jieland, the Labwor hills are fertile and healthy. It can tentatively be suggested that the Iseera group from Jieland entered an area where the pressure of population was already building up to a crisis, and that the sudden addition of new settlers from the east set in train a steady exodus to the south-west. Much depends here on how large were the Lwo groups which joined the Iseera at Kotidani and Otuke, and on the size of the existing Lwo population in Lango itself. On all these points, further evidence is needed.

****

---

1. Lamphear,op.cit.pp.283-84,504-5.

2. Interviews: Yubu Engola, Anderea Okadde. Ogwal,op.cit.passim; Tarantino, 'Notes on the Lango', p.146. 'Awila' here does not, of course, refer to the village of that name in Akokoro sub-county.

The advance of the Langi from Otuke into their present territory did not take the form of one migration along a single route to common dispersion points.[1] The return of some of the Iseera to Jieland at the end of the 18th century no doubt coincided with the first advance to the south-west, but the dispersion from Otuke seems to have continued into the early 19th century. The greatest mystery surrounds the very first group to enter Lango. A tradition current in eastern Lango corroborates Driberg's conclusion that a group of Langi settled in the lower Toci valley - one of the most fertile parts of Lango - appreciably before the main body of the tribe spread over the rest of the country. Through a misreading of Nyoro traditions, Driberg exaggerated the interval between the two, pushing the first occupation of the Toci valley back to the early 18th century.[2] The element of mystery is that no clan can be identified with this early migration. The Lango accounts today tend to associate the migration with the Arak clan of Aber, but this is only because they are the dominant clan on the lower Toci today. In western Lango generally, the tradition of a 'vanguard' settlement on the Toci has much less currency than in the east, while the traditions of the Arak clan about their settlement of Aber mostly go no further back than about 1870.[3]

This first migration to the Nile corresponds with Crazzolara's choice of 1780 as the approximate date for the beginning of

---

1. The accounts of both Driberg (The Lango,p.32) and Tarantino ('Notes on the Lango',pp.146-47) are misleading in this respect.

2. Driberg,op.cit.pp.26-29. Interviews: Lazaro Okelo, Reuben Ogwal, Anderea Okadde, Nasaneri Owino, Kezeron Awongo.

3. Interviews: Misaki Oki, Leoben Okodi, Matayo Acut. Crazzolara ('Notes on the Lango-Omiru',p.186) says that Aber was originally colonised by the Ober clan, but he offers no evidence beyond the similarity of names.

Lango migration westwards.[1] The movement of the main body seems to have begun about 1800.[2] Some Lango accounts make out that Otuke was abandoned at the same time by the three clans (Arak, Atek and Okarowok) who alone, they say, made up the Lango people at that time.[3] But other informants, especially those in eastern Lango, stress that the Langi left Otuke at different times and by different routes, some continuing along the north side of the Moroto river, while others went south immediately. The migration traditions of some forty clans have been collected to date,[4] and they show that certain places in Lango were important as dispersion points, though for what reasons we can only speculate. One of these places - and the best known - was Ngeta Rock, near Lira. Another one, which features in the traditions of fourteen clans, was Ongora Rock, near Abako, and the nearby complex of swamps north of Lake Kwania.

These traditions about concentrations and dispersions at Ngeta and Ongora refer to the early 19th century, when the new arrivals from the north-east seem to have been, in effect, prospecting potential areas of settlement without putting down roots. For it is a striking fact that, in most parts of Lango, continuous settlement by the present occupants dates back no further than the second half of the century, approximate dates being: Aloi, 1840/50; Bar, 1850/60; Dokolo, 1870; Acora, late 70's; Abyece,

---

1. Crazzolara, The Lwoo, pp.88,564.

2. Here at least Driberg's dating is correct. Driberg,op.cit. p.31.

3. This view is reproduced in Tarantino, 'Lango Clans', p.109.

4. The traditions have been collected by Canon Reuben Ogwal (op.cit.), and by the present writer.

1880/85; Iceme, early 80's; Akokoro, 1888/90 (Map 4).[1] As for the migrations which immediately preceded permanent settlement - and these are the migrations which are remembered today - there was a wide range of possible motives. Sometimes the deciding factor was political or social, such as tension within the clan, or between clans.[2] But economic considerations were quite as important; a localized drought, a cattle epidemic, or an outbreak of smallpox could cause migration.

One economic factor, however, predominated over all others, and that was the quest for wild game. Discussion of the varying modes of subsistence in northern Uganda tends to concentrate on seed agriculture and animal husbandry. This focus is justified today in view of the almost total disappearance of big game outside the reserves. Seen historically, however, the stress on food production to the exclusion of hunting and gathering is misleading. The present-day decline of wild game is due precisely to the importance which hunting until recently occupied in the subsistence economy. Nowhere in northern Uganda was this more so than in Lango. The outstanding physique of the Langi was attributed by early European observers as much to their high consumption of game as to their happy combination of crops.[3] The 'courage and perseverance' of the Langi in hunting the elephant was compared favourably with the less serious attitude of the Acholi.[4] There were five recognised

---

1. These dates are deduced from the oral traditions collected in each of the places mentioned, assisted in some cases by the European travel-literature of the time.

2. See below, Chapter 2.

3. Wilson and Felkin, op.cit. II,pp.53-54; Driberg,op.cit. p.104.

4. C.A.Sykes, Service and Sport on the Tropical Nile (London, 1903), p.177.

methods of hunting among the Langi, and very few wild animals were taboo.[1] Several accounts say that the Langi first got to know their present country through hunting expeditions from afar.[2] This pattern continued throughout the 19th century. Time and again, settlement traditions explain that clans moved to fresh localities because there was plentiful game there which, in many cases, had already been hunted during dry-season forays from the old home. The Ibuje area on the Nile was not settled until about 1880, but as early as 1862 Lango hunters were going there.[3] Such hunting expeditions even crossed Lake Kwania by canoe to Namasale peninsula.[4]

This preoccupation with game offers the best explanation for the speed with which a relatively small population colonized so large an area , - 5,000 square miles in less than a hundred years. Certainly, this rapid expansion cannot be accounted for by the pattern of land use, which was relatively modest in its requirements: 'shifting cultivation' in Lango does not seem ever to have needed more than two units of fallow to one of cropping.[5] Such a system can readily be accommodated to indefinite residence on or near the same site. Periodic migration was not therefore necessary on agricultural grounds. On the other hand, a community accustomed to a regular meat supply from game would soon reach the stage when its requirements were

---

1. Driberg,op.cit.pp.104,112-18. Interview: Anderea Okadde.

2. Driberg,op.cit.p.27; Tarantino, 'Notes on the Lango',p.147; Ogwal Ajungu,op.cit.para.1.

3. J.W.Grant,op.cit.p.303. Interview: Okelo Abak.

4. Interview: Becweri Ongebo (conducted by J.A.Otima, as part of the undergraduate research scheme of the Department of History, Makerere University,1969).

5. William Allan, The African Husbandman(Edinburgh,1965),p.187.

better served by hunting in new tracts, than by exploiting the diminishing assets of the immediate neighbourhood. The survival well into the colonial period of big game in even the earliest settled parts of Lango is no problem in this context. The important point is the disparity, which must quickly have arisen, between the game resources of a settled area and those of an unsettled or more sparsely populated area.

If the impetus for migration was most often provided by hunting, the actual choice of settlement sites was determined by agricultural considerations. It is said that the earliest Lango settlers on the north shores of Namasale peninsula tested the fertility of the soil by sowing seed there during their hunting expeditions across Lake Kwania; only then did they decide to migrate south of the lake.[1] The marshy terrain of much of Lango was certainly unfamiliar to the migrants from Otuke, but they realized soon enough that Lango's potential lay in, or rather near, the swamps.[2] The new population was concentrated along the water-courses, particularly in western Lango where it was densest along the Aroca, the Okole and the Toci; as late as 1910 the country between those rivers was very sparsely populated.[3] The ideal site was a rise or ridge above a swamp, so that the settlement would escape the disruption caused by the swelling of the streams in the rainy season. But

---

1. Interview: Becweri Ongebo (conducted by J.A.Otima).

2. The unfamiliarity of the terrain is delightfully conveyed in the following story. When the Langi first reached the edge of their present country, they walked gingerly, fearing that the soft earth would swallow them up. They did not resume their normal gait until they saw a hartebeeste running at a great pace in front of them. Ogwal Ajungu,op.cit.par.1; Driberg, 'Lango District', p.123.

3. Tufnell, Map of Lango District, October 1910, UNA SMP/519/09.

any site with surface water near to hand was acceptable. By 1910 the Langi were very much more evenly dispersed than their predecessors had ever been. In the south, excluding Namasale and the extreme south-west, the density of population had resulted in the almost complete clearance of woodland, and its replacement as natural cover by the characteristic 'elephant-grass', eight to ten feet high.[1]

The areas which attracted the most Lango settlers were, of course, precisely those riverain localities which the Lwo had made their own during the previous 300 years. One would therefore suppose that from the early 19th century there was contact between the two groups. Lango tradition, while admitting to such contact, limits it to the Jopalwo along the Toci and the Okole, and stresses the aggressive aspect. Some of the Lwo are said to have been pushed into Pawir (or Chope) and Acholi by the Lango vanguard around 1800, and others were expelled by the later settlers in the 1860's and 70's.[2] There is no doubt that such forcible expulsions did occur,[3] but they are not the whole story. Despite the universal Lwo opinion that the Langi are an alien stock, the sharing of a common language (if of a different dialect) and a similar subsistence economy must have reduced the strain of the encounter; indeed, there is no reason for thinking that this encounter was any different from earlier ones with the Lwo in western Jieland and Labwor. The high density of population in the Toci valley

1. Driberg, The Lango, p.44.

2. Ibid,p.26; Crazzolara, The Lwoo,pp.88-89; interviews: Bartolomayo Okori, Leoben Okodi, Yakobo Olugo, Suleman Ikwe.

3. Acholi traditions indicate as much. Anywar,op.cit.p.135.

also suggests a continued Lwo presence there.[1] As for more direct indications, some Lango accounts admit that trade and intermarriage took place,[2] and - more important - the occurrenne in north-western Lango of clan-names such as Okarowok me Acore and Arak me Alwaa is strong evidence that Lwo groups were absorbed into Lango clans, later emerging as lineages and then as clans in their own right. As a discrete element, the Lwo survived longest west of the Toci. In 1880 Emin Pasha found Jopalwo and Lango villages intermingled in Acora near the Ayago river, and on the north side of Karuma Falls, and this pattern was still discernible in the 1920's.[3]

Elsewhere in Lango, the evidence about early contact with the Lwo is far more slender. Doubtless these contacts took varying forms. It has been suggested already that in the south-east a Lwo population was absorbed. For Kacung, there is evidence that the arrival of the Langi caused the Lwo clan called Ayom to disperse, some of them settling in Adwari north of the Moroto.[4] In the Lira area, it can tentatively be suggested that the tradition of a Lango dispersion caused by the 'explosion' of Ngeta Rock refers to a clash between the Alira clan and the migrants from Otuke, but this is pure speculation. All that can be said with confidence is that substantial Lwo elements were absorbed into the Lango population. The details remain obscure.

---

1. This density was first noted in 1900. Anderson to Johnston, 21.3.00, UNA A4/27.

2. Interviews: Erisa Olugo, Misaki Oki.

3. Schweinfurth,op.cit.pp.280-81,286-87; Rubie, entry for 2.9.25 in Paranga Tour Book (1925-26), ADA.

4. Interview: Kezekia Ongom. Cf Crazzolara, The Lwoo, pp.545,563.

Map 4 shows the extent of Lango settlement on the eve of the colonial period. In the west, the expansion of the Langi had taken them as far as the Ayago river by 1880, and as far as Kungu in the angle of the Nile by 1900. In the south, no attempt had yet been made to penetrate the inhospitable centre of Namasale peninsula,[1] but further east most of the fertile region between Lakes Kwania and Kyoga had been colonised.[2] The extreme north-east, across the Moroto river, was one of the last major areas of permanent settlement; despite its proximity to the 18th century homeland of the Langi, the dry country between Orum and Otuke was still empty.[3] With these exceptions, the confines of Lango country at the turn of the century were roughly as they are today.

****

The pattern of migration and settlement outlined above was the foundation of Lango tribal identity during the 19th century. Internally, there was little institutional basis for a sense of 'Lango-ness'. Lango society not only lacked the cohesion of a central political authority; it also exhibited considerable variation in the forms of social organisation.[4] The Langi owed their collective identity not to any internal consistency, but to a historical experience which set them apart from their neighbours. Above all, they were distinguished by the particular way in which Lwo and Iseera groups had combined in Karamoja towards the end of the 18th century. Several neighbouring

---

1. C.E.Fishbourne, 'Lake Kioga (Ibrahim) Exploration Survey, 1907-08', Geographical Jl. 33 (1909), p.195.

2. Ormsby, Sketch of Umifu, October 1908, UNA SMP/1822/08; Jervoise, undated entry in Kioga Tour Book (1912-13), TDA.

3. Interview: Ogwel Okolla. Driberg, entry for 12.2.18, in Moroto Tour Book (1918-26), LDA.

4. See below, Chapters 2 and 3.

peoples can, of course, be analysed in terms of these same two constituents, but there the 'mix' has taken different forms. In the case of the Labwor, Iteso and Kumam, these different forms are reflected linguistically, with Para-Nilotic traits of speech much more to the fore.[1] Between the Langi and the Acholi the distinction is not so clear-cut linguistically, but it is reflected in other ways, notably in the contention by both peoples that the Acholi are 'Lwo' while the Langi are not. In this respect, the Otuke tradition plays a crucial role. Very few Langi will admit today that their own ancestors did not come from Otuke, notwithstanding the contrary evidence offerred by some of their own clan names and by the migration traditions of neighbouring peoples. Those Lwo groups who were living in Lango country before the easterners arrived, and who were then assimilated, subsequently expressed their new identity as Langi by subscribing to the Otuke tradition. The migration from Jieland was the central historical experience of the majority, and in time it came to be the defining attribute of Lango identity.

---

1. Acholi influence has caused the Labwor to speak a fairly straightforward dialect of Lwo in recent years, but there is no doubt that historically they are Central Para-Nilotic-speakers.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL GROUPS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY LANGO

The analysis of indigenous political systems in tropical Africa presents the historian with special problems of approach and definition. Political functions, instead of being concentrated in a number of explicitly political bodies, tend to be widely diffused, so that institutions such as the extended family or the age group, which in Europe are generally discounted, play roles in African polities which cannot be ignored. Thus, even in the centralised kingdom of Bunyoro, where tribe and polity were coterminous, the closely-knit village community must be considered along with the omukama (king) and his court, since both contributed to the maintenance of public order.[1] This diffusion of political functions is still more marked in the case of non-centralised societies, where specialised political roles - if they exist at all - are fewer in number and deploy less authority. It is doubtful whether the historian could understand the political system of a state such as Bunyoro without first examining the smallest units of social organisation and, so to speak, working 'upwards' from there; social institutions would be considered in turn according to their scale, up to and including the kingship itself. This procedure must be applied still more rigorously in the case of stateless, acephalous peoples. For unless the historian begins with fundamentals in this way, he is most unlikely to arrive at a correct assessment of the nature and scope of the political system. Without this essential groundwork, the role of individual leadership in particular is likely to be totally misconceived.

---

1. J.Beattie, Bunyoro: An African Kingdom (New York,1960).

The bases of Lango social organization can be examined in two ways: in terms of descent groups, and in terms of residential or territorial groups. The present chapter defines the nature of these groups, - their composition, range and cohesion, and the extent to which territorial and descent groups were coterminous. From this analysis it emerges that the individual's primary identification was with his clan section, which lived in a single village or a small group of villages. Neither clan loyalties nor village loyalties provided a basis for common action outside the immediate neighbourhood. Other groupings of a more specialised type, described at the end of the chapter, entailed cooperation between normally distinct units, but only occasionally and in limited social contexts. The ability of the Langi to achieve order and cooperation on a significant scale depended not on any institutional arrangements, but on the informal grouping together of clan sections in varying degrees of dominance and subordination. These groupings are examined in the next chapter.

In kinship terms, Lango society in the 19th century could be summarised as being patrilineal, virilocal and polygynous. Descent was reckoned in the male line, the descendants of a male ancestor constituting an exogamous descent group, which was a social as well as a genealogical reality; that is, its members shared common interests. From the point of view of his position in society, the individual's most important links were with his agnates, - those to whom he was closely related in the male line. Ideally, agnates lived together, and they were bound to each other by mutual obligations of labour and property. They regarded their descent group as having a permanence of its own, irrespective of the fate of the individual members; they there-

fore shared a common preoccupation with both deceased and unborn members of the group. The first preoccupation was expressed in ancestor rites,[1] and the second in the regulation of marriage. All descent groups were concerned to ensure their survival and expansion. To this end, a woman was required on marriage to identify herself with her husband's descent group. Apart from leaving her own family, the most important way in which she identified herself with her husband's group was by observing its taboos, or ritual prohibitions. Most taboos in Lango were applicable to women only, and were often specially directed at the pregnant woman; the prohibitions stressed her new loyalties and her well-being at those times when she was able by childbirth to contribute most to her husband's descent group.[2] Her daughters were given in marriage to other descent groups, and the bridewealth surrendered in exchange was used to procure wives for her own sons and so ensure the future of their group. The more children a wife had, the greater her worth in the eyes of her husband's agnates.

Just as it was desirable for a woman to bear many children, so it was desirable for a man to marry many wives. If a man was rich in livestock, the best way in which he could serve the interests of his descent group was to use them as bridewealth for himself or his immediate agnates. Polygyny was the ideal, but since the marriageable age for both sexes was nearly the same, the ideal was not widely attainable. At the same time, polygynous households were by no means rare. Among important

---

1. Ancestor worship as such played little part in Lango religion, but relations with the dead were important in a number of ways. See below, p. 105.

2. For a list of taboos, see J.H.Driberg, The Lango (London, 1923), pp.192-204.

men, three to five wives were common.[1] The polygynous husband established for each wife a separate household with its own fields, and he directed his marital attentions and his labour to each in turn.

The Langi distinguished between two levels of descent group: the lineage (doggola) and above that the clan (atekere). Both the lineage and the clan were named groups whose members were referred to as, for example, Jo Elwia ('The Elwia people', a lineage) or Jo Arak ('The Arak people', a clan). If a clan was small, compact and of recent origin, it might not make any further distinction, and clan and lineage would be one and the same. Usually, though, clans included two or more lineages, and the number tended to increase as the clan expanded in size. In everyday life the lineage was the more important of the two. It varied in size, but the essential point was that there was reasonable agreement among members as to the composition of their lineage and the genealogical relationships within it, - even if these were sometimes based on no more than fictional descent. The generation depth of the lineage was defined by the common acknowledgement of an ancestor from whom all members of the lineage could in theory trace their descent. The knowledge which the members had of their lineage was usually based on the fact that they lived close together, within easy reach of one another for assistance, consultation and participation in the round of domestic ceremonies concerned with birth and marriage. If members migrated far away from their lineage, they were likely to be assimilated to another lineage of their

1. For example, Akaki of Akokoro (ca.1850-1936) had 5 wives and at least 9 sons who grew to maturity. Interview: Yakobo Adoko.

clan or in time to constitute a new lineage altogether.[1]

Once the individual travelled out of his immediate neighbourhood, his clan affiliations became more important than his lineage, both with regard to distant kinsmen and in his relations with strangers. The clan was usually too large for all its members to be known personally to each other or to have any idea of how they were related, and these difficulties were increased if the clan was broken up into a number of territorially separated sections. Thus, while lineage membership could be taken for granted and needed little formal expression, clan membership was defined by various symbols. Each clan had its own clan cry which was uttered during ceremonies, in battle and while hunting.[2] Cattle were branded with markings according to the clan membership of their owners.[3] The most important symbolic expression of clan membership was the taboo, which was the exclusive attribute of the clan and was observed by all its members, regardless of lineage. Despite the everyday importance of the lineage, it was with the clan that the values of patrilineal kinship were associated, and it was the clan which evoked the strongest loyalty. A man identified himself by referring not to his lineage, still less to his village, but to his clan.

---

1. T.T.S.Hayley, The Anatomy of Lango Religion and Groups (Cambridge,1947),p.52; R.T.Curley, 'Persistence and Change in Lango Ceremonialism', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley,1969,pp.49-58. Curley introduces the further concept of the 'local lineage', as against the jo doggola or maximal lineage, the first being localised and the second dispersed. This is a useful distinction in terms of present day settlement patterns, but there is no evidence that the doggola was commonly a dispersed group before the colonial period.

2. Hayley,op.cit.pp.42-43; R.Ogwal, untitled and undated vernacular MS, translated as 'A History of Lango Clans', mimeo, Department of History, Makerere University, p.3.

3. J.H.Driberg, Engato the Lion Cub (London,1933),p.29.

Traditions about the past are almost invariably recounted in terms of clan history. In a sense, the lineage was for the individual simply the local and practical embodiment of the clan.

Respect for the corporate rights of the clan was strongest in the case of livestock. Cattle were regarded as the property of the clan, as is indicated by the practice of cattle branding. This concept of clan ownership was quite logical in view of the role played by cattle in marriage transactions, which provided for the future of the clan. In practice, however, cattle were individually owned and their products individually consumed.[1] Some evidence of land tenure by clan was found by Driberg in eastern Lange: an extensive tract of country round Abako was occupied by the Bako clan, and a member of an alien clan settling there was required to give the leader of the Jo Bako a present in order to secure tenancy rights.[2] There is no evidence that this practice had ever been more widespread, and it anyway represents only a slight departure from the general rule that land belonged to an individual for as long as he used it; if he migrated elsewhere, he forfeited his rights and it fell to his neighbours to dispose of the land.[3]

The interests of the clan or lineage were, however, taken into account over the inheritance of property. A man could bequeath his property, but his wishes were subject to the decision of his lineage after the burial, and the final arrangements had to stay within certain limits. The wives of the deceased

1. Tarantino's suggestion that in earlier times clan control of cattle was far more rigorous may be noted here. A.Tarantino, 'Lango Clans', Uganda Jl..13(1949),pp.110-11.

2. Driberg, The Lango, pp.170,153.

3. Ibid, pp.170-71.

were usually inherited by his brothers. On the other hand, the land and the livestock generally passed to the eldest son, who was then under an obligation to make provision for his uterine brothers and his half-brothers. Only if the lineage was dying out could property pass to kin outside the clan.[1]

From birth through marriage until death, lineage and clan loomed large in the daily life of the individual Lango, but they did not serve all his requirements. As a sedentary farmer, he was a member of other groups, which were defined territorially rather than on kinship principles. The way in which descent groups were organised on the ground depended in the first instance on the requirements of cooperative labour. The system of subsistence agriculture practised in Lango - then as now - could only work satisfactorily if labour resources were pooled. Seed agriculture based on finger-millet involves seasonal peak demands on labour for sowing, weeding and harvesting; but more than this, the annual cycle of only two seasons means that there is great pressure to cultivate the largest possible area in order to supply food all the year round; as McMaster has put it,

> "Northern Uganda faces the problem of concentrating agricultural activity to meet the requirements of the convergence of the rainfall regime towards a single peak".[2]

The response of the Langi to this situation was to arrange for the heaviest tasks to be performed by a work-group which attended each member's plot in turn, thus ensuring that at crucial points in the year labour resources were used to the best advantage. The cooperative principle did not extend to land tenure or consumption, but in the labour context it was, and still is, integral to Lango culture.

---

1. Ibid, pp.173-75; Hayley, op.cit. p.46.

2. D.N.McMaster, A Subsistence Crop Geography of Uganda (Bude, 1962), p.16.

At the most rudimentary level, work groups comprising a handful of households carried out the less exacting parts of the farming routine such as weeding. These groups, called alea, were very informal, and they included women as well as men. The core of the system, however, was the wang tic. This comprised a much larger number of households with a fixed membership and a territorial identity. The wang tic was concerned with the heaviest agricultural duties, above all with clearing the ground before sowing. The basis of the group was reciprocity of labour, but the man whose land was being worked by the group was also expected to provide beer for his fellows at the end of the day. All married men and fully-grown boys took part as a matter of course, failure to do so being tantamount to opting out of the community altogether.[1]

The size of the wang tic is not easy to determine. Nowadays it may comprise over fifty households and two hundred people (including children). But these figures cannot be assumed for the 19th century, since the pattern of land-use and settlement has changed so much during the last fifty years. For the same reason, elders have difficulty in giving detailed descriptions of the physical lay-out of settlements before the colonial era. The estimates that we have suggest that the wang tic is larger than it used to be. Driberg, writing of the period 1912-18, regarded twenty as the maximum number of active participants.[2]

---

1. The best description of the wang tic is Curley's (Curley, op.cit.pp.13-15,31-37). This however relates to the period 1965-67. For earlier though less detailed accounts see Driberg The Lango,p.97, and Hayley,op.cit.pp.58-59.

2. Driberg,op.cit.p.97. One oral account mentions 30 for the pre-colonial period. Interview: Nasaneri Owino (in Omoro, eastern Lango).

Estimating the size of the wang tic would be easier if it had been consistently reflected in residential patterns. But during the 19th century this was by no means the case. The wang tic was not the same as the village (paco). Sometimes the two did coincide exactly, but in fact the size and situation of the village was determined by factors other than labour. The village was by definition a concentration of households. Villages were sometimes built according to a linear or circular design, but it is unlikely that they had ever followed a set pattern; indeed, Driberg noted a tendency for villages to straggle, the huts of one polygynous family being separated from its neighbour by up to thirty yards.[1] There is no doubt, though, that the Langi found it necessary to live in compact territorial groups. This pattern of settlement had little to do with the communal labour system. During the last fifty years, the compact village has vanished from the landscape, its components being dispersed as scattered homesteads, and yet the wang tic is as strong as ever. Provided the exact composition of a wang tic is recognised, there is after all no reason why its members should all live in one place rather than on their respective holdings. The reason for the village was not economic so much as military. It was intended to provide security against attack, especially at night, and greater protection for cattle which were kept in a single village kraal.[2] Once law and order had been established in Lango by the Protectorate Government, the village ceased to have any purpose, and the dispersed wang tic became the basic unit of territorial organization.

---

1. Interviews: Luka Abura, Anderea Ogwang. Driberg,op.cit.p.72.
2. Ibid, pp.71,80.

Villages varied in size according to several factors. One was the extent of their insecurity: people who lived in fear of raiding tended to congregate more densely. Another factor was the nature of the environment. The villagers needed to be able to reach their own plots easily, and if the amount of cultivable land nearby was small, this placed a limit on the number of households in the village. A limit was also set by the site of the village, for in most of Lango the dry land is broken up by swamps into tiny units. This did not restrict cultivation, because there was never an overall shortage of dry land, but the size of individual villages was limited because no part of the village could be built on land likely to be waterlogged. For these reasons, a village could number as few as ten and as many as 150 huts or more.[1] 150 huts did not, of course, mean 150 polygynous households: a married man was obliged to build a house for each wife, and his unmarried sons slept in special bachelor-huts on stilts;[2] so most households included several huts. Rough calculations made in Adwari north of Moroto in 1918 indicate that the average village there contained fewer than twenty household heads;[3] villages north of the Moroto, however, tended to be on the small side. By contrast Tarogali village in south-west Lango was found two years earlier to have 73 men.[4]

---

1. Ibid,p.71. Melland and Cholmeley, whose observations in 1910 were limited to the extreme west of Lango, estimated the usual number of huts as between 10 and 50. F.H.Melland and E.H. Cholmeley, Through The Heart of Africa (London,1912),p.223.

2. This curious feature provoked the first outside record of the Langi, though the information was inaccurate and second-hand: Speke referred to the Langi as "a stark-naked people who live up in trees." J.H.Speke, Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile (London,1863),p.89.

3. Driberg, entries for 17.2.18 in Moroto Tour Book (1918-26), LDA.

4. Driberg, entry for 9.3.16 in Maruzi Tour Book (1912-19),LDA.

We have no means of telling how representative these figures are, nor can we be sure how far they are applicable to the 19th century, but at least they show that villages did not always conform to the requirements of the wang tic. And a few oral accounts are explicit that some villages contained more than one wang tic, while others had to combine in order to muster enough men for a wang tic.[1] All individuals were members of both a wang tic and a village, and in many cases these two were identical; but in origin they were different, the first being an economic and the second a strategic arrangement.

In considering the political organisation of 19th century Lango, the point of departure must be the relationship between territorial groups and descent groups. Until the eve of the colonial period and even beyond, it could be said that almost every Lango village was associated with one descent group. An outside observer, bearing in mind the social organisation of other Nilotic-speaking peoples, might therefore assume that here was another example of a segmentary system in which, at every level of the lineage structure, each descent group was identified with a particular locality, and in which relations between segments were expressed in lineage terms.[2] But this was not the case, as two preliminary points will make clear. Firstly, from at least the mid-19th century, villages included individuals who lacked any agnatic connection with the dominant group. These individuals were not absorbed by the fiction of

---

1. Interviews: Nasaneri Owino and Luka Abura.

2. See for example, E.E.Evans-Pritchard, The Nuer (Oxford, 1940); Evans-Pritchard, 'Luo Tribes and Clans', Rhodes-Livingstone Jl. 7 (1949), pp.24-40; A.W.Southall, Alur Society (Cambridge, 1953); Southall, 'Lineage Formation Among the Luo', International African Institute Memorandum XXVI (London, 1952).

assumed descent - a common device in segmentary lineage systems - and they frequently amounted to a significant minority of the villagers. Secondly, from a comparable date, the major Lango clans were widely dispersed over every quarter of the tribal territory, and no attempt was made to structure the relations between dispersed clan sections in kinship terms, beyond referring to other clansmen as 'brothers'. An anthropologist who worked in Acholi country during the 1950's and visited the Lango enclaves there was forcibly struck by the lack of lineage structure among the Langi.[1] Even the Jopadhola of south-eastern Uganda, among whom the correspondence between genealogical and spatial relations has been widely disrupted,[2] present a more ordered aspect than do the Langi. The reason for this incoherence can only be understood by more detailed reference to the motives behind Lango expansion and the circumstances in which new villages were settled. The environmental and economic factors examined in the first chapter place the overall expansion of the Langi in context, but they do not directly explain the lack of coherence in their lineage organisation.

Two closely connected processes can be detected which, during the 19th century, acted as a constant check on the scale of the lineage system and limited its political role. Firstly, the largest grouping with which the individual identified on grounds of descent - namely the clan - was becoming smaller. Secondly, the tendency for the components of a single clan to be widely dispersed reduced still further the size of the largest localised descent group.

---

1. F.K.Girling, The Acholi of Uganda (London,1960),pp.208-09.

2. A.W.Southall, 'Padhola: Comparative Social Structure', East African Institute of Social Research Conference Proceedings, January 1957.

It is symptomatic of the lack of coherence in the descent group system that, among the elders today, there is frequent uncertainty as to the full name of a clan, its relationship to other groups of the same or a similar name, and whether these groups fall within the marriage restrictions. However, the oral traditions recorded to date do point to a number of tensions which resulted in clan fission. The various factors cannot be quantified, partly because clan names and the traditions about them seldom furnish precise reasons for a particular cleavage,[1] but a number of causes of general application are mentioned.

Quarrels inside the clan could easily be caused by the allocation of meat at ritual feasts. Clans varied in size, but a practical limit was set on the numbers that could be invited to a feast by the amount of meat which one carcass could provide. For many ritual occasions there seems to have been no commonly accepted limit on the range of kin to be invited, - one such ceremony being kayo cogo ('biting the bone'), which was held when a young child was seriously ill. Much bad feeling could be caused by persistent slighting over invitations to such ceremonies, and this greatly contributed to tension within the clan.[2]

More serious, however, were the quarrels over livestock, the principal form of moveable wealth. The theory of clan

---

1. Clan cleavages are usually indicated by composite clan names in which a qualifying name is added to that of the original clan. Qualifying names most commonly refer to the leader under whom the seceding section hived off (e.g. Jo Atek me Oyaro), or else they allude obliquely to the circumstances of the split; for example the name Jo Atek me Okalodyang refers to the story that the first leader of the clan had a great bull which he jumped over. Interview: Nekomia Agwa.

2. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Reuben Ogwal. Kayo cogo is described in Hayley,op.cit.pp.91-94 and Curley,op.cit.pp.194-204.

ownership of livestock became fact when bridewealth and compensation for offences were due for payment. A man was entitled to expect that, when his son married, other members of the clan would contribute to the bridewealth, on the assumption that the future well-being of the clan as a whole was involved. The same principle of corporate action by the clan applied to its relations with other clans. If a member of the clan was guilty of manslaughter or extramarital intercourse, the whole clan was liable, and the compensation, paid in goats or cattle according to the offence, was a shared responsibility. Families or lineages who persistently committed offences caused resentment among their clansmen, who in extreme cases severed their clan ties altogether in order to preserve their goods from further liability.[1] Conversely, compensation for offences belonged not to the injured individual but to the clan, and ill-feeling could easily be caused by the inequitable distribution of compensation.[2]

A formal clan split was marked by the ending of marriage restrictions and by the seceding group taking a new name and new taboos. In some cases, however, a breach of exogamy or a change of taboo was a cause rather than a consequence of the split. A series of theoretically incestuous unions between distantly related clan members could cause the elders to decide on a formal split.[3] A section of the clan might consider that a change of taboo was required. The main function of taboos was, after all, to protect the unborn progeny of the clan; so a

---

1. Ogwal, op.cit. passim. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Bartolomayo Okori.

2. Ogwal, op.cit. pp.57-58.

3. Interviews: Yubu Engola, Bartolomayo Okori; Ogwal, op.cit. passim.

possible response to an abnormally high rate of infant mortality was to change the taboo, in the hope that the children would be better protected. Such a change entailed a total breach with those who continued to observe the old taboos.[1] Clan names which expressly allude to the taboo perhaps indicate a split of this kind.[2]

Whatever the reasons, there is little doubt that the number of clans multiplied at a very fast rate during the 19th century. At the present time the total number of clans is in the region of 250.[3] In view of the limits set on migration by the colonial government, it is improbable that the number of clans has increased appreciably since the beginning of this century.[4] A much more difficult problem is to determine the number of Lango clans a hundred years before that. The tradition published by Tarantino that all clans stemmed from three clans at Otuke is doubtless an oversimplification.[5] But, as has been indicated already, at least a hundred clans - and perhaps even two hudred - are derived from a core of six 'original' clans,[6] and the Langi certainly do not maintain that the number of clans was anything approaching the current figure during the first migrations westward from Otuke. All available indications are that the rate at which clans multiplied was faster than the rate of population growth; in other words, clans were becoming

---

1. Interview: Tomasi Ojuka.

2. For example, Jo Atek me Okwerawele indicates that the dove (awele) is taboo (kwer) to this clan (Interview: Anderea Okadde). 9 clan names of this type have been recorded to date.

3. See above, p.65.

4. Driberg made no claim to be comprehensive in his list of 112 clans.

5. Tarantino, op.cit. p.109.

6. See above, p.65.

smaller. Even allowing for serious under-enumeration in the first Census count of the Langi in 1921, the membership of the average clan at the beginning of the colonial period must have been considerably less than 1,000 all told, or under 300 adult males.

This figure must be still further reduced if an estimate is required of the number of clansmen with whom the individual came into regular contact. In everyday life, what counted was not the total strength of the clan but the number of members concentrated in any one area. By the latter half of the 19th century these two were very rarely the same, for most clans were represented in several widely separated localities. Three factors were mainly responsible for the dispersion of the clan into territorial sections. The first was pressure of population on the environment. As a clan grew by natural increase, it exceeded the size that could be supported by its territory. The ideal response to this situation was to colonise the nearest ridge of dry land and so retain contiguity of settlement between all members of the clan. Lango history is full of cases where a clan which intitially settled in one or two villages expanded over the years into new villages nearby. But often the adjacent land was uncultivable, or else occupied by another group already, in which case a section of the clan migrated away, thus causing a rupture in the neighbourhood ties that bound clansmen together. Such a rupture could more readily be contemplated since in Lango the clan was not tied ritually to a particular site by a clan shrine or a clan burial-ground.

The second factor which caused clan dispersion was antagonism between clans. Inter-clan fighting, so well documented for the last few years of the pre-colonial era, appears to have been a

feature of Lango society as far back as traditions recall, though it was only during the last generation before the colonial period that spears came to be regularly used in this context.[1] Illicit sexual intercourse (<u>luk</u>) was one common cause of attacks on nearby clans; another was disputes over hunting rights. Fighting often caused a defeated clan section to migrate to a fresh locality, even at the price of settling in a less favoured environment. This is particularly noticeable in the extreme south-west of Lango, where the positive inducements were not very strong, in view of the irregular rainfall and the prevalence of tsetse-fly.[2] Repeated failure to resist the attacks of other clans could result in a clan section migrating further away from the rest of the clan, so that relations between the dispersed sections could no longer be maintained. In about 1900 the uninhabited angle of the Nile opposite Masindi Port was colonised by a group of Jo Arak me Oyakori; they had previously migrated from Teboke on the Okole river to Tarogali near Ibuje, but from there they were expelled by the Jo Ocukuru in a bloody battle during which their own leader was killed. As a result of their flight after this battle, they found themselves in one of the most remote and inhospitable parts of Lango, separated from their nearest clan brothers by nearly fifty miles.[3]

---

1. See below, pp. 173-5.

2. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Matayo Aman, Ciriwano Ojok, Misaki Obala, Yosia Omwa.

3. Peter Enin, vernacular MS (1967), translated as 'The Life of Chief Odora Arimo of Lango', typescript, Department of Religious Studies, Makerere University, pp.1-4; Reuben Ogwal, 'Bino a Muni kede Mwa i Lango', undated vernacular MS, typescript copy in Makerere University Library, p.7. Interviews: Peter Enin, Sira Okelo.

In some cases serious inter-clan fighting appears to have caused the initial dispersion of a large concentration of one clan, the various lineages or sections scattering in disorder to different localities. One tradition has it that, early in Lango history, when most of the Jo Arak were still living as one clan round Dokolo in the south-east, a dispute arose while they were out hunting with a neighbouring clan. An Arak man speared a waterbuck without bringing it to the ground, and the kill was completed by a man of the other clan. When the Jo Arak tried to claim the animal in accordance with the right of first spearer, bitter fighting broke out, and because the Jo Arak had started a battle in which so many men were killed, they were shunned by the other clans in the area. Only a few Jo Arak remained in Dokolo; the rest migrated in different groups to the south-west and the north-west.[1]

There was one other factor which caused the dispersion of clans into territorial sections. This was the pull of kinship ties outside the clan. To talk of kinship ties outside the clan may, in the case of a strongly patrilineal society, seem to be a paradox. In a great many patrilineal societies, however, a marriage is regarded as initiating - or continuing - a relationship between two descent groups, and this is particularly so if men customarily find their wives in the immediate neighbourhood. On marriage, the man enters into a lasting relationship not only with his wife but also with his in-laws, or affines, who will continue to be concerned for their sister's

1. Ogwal, 'Lango Clans', pp.5-6. This tradition may be compared with one explanation offered for the name Jo Arak me Opelo: this clan was nick-named 'Opelo' because they made a habit of claiming that they had been the first to spear animals when out hunting(pelo, to do something first). Interview: Barikia Opie.

welfare, and also for her offspring. This last point is particularly important. For one generation's affinal ties become blood, or cognatic, ties in the next generation. It is commonly recognised in African patrilineal societies that a young man's needs cannot always be met by his father and his father's brothers for his relationship with them is one of respect, and even fear, which allows few liberties. From time to time he will wish to turn for psychological or material support to his mother's people and particularly to her brothers. The bonds that exist on the one hand between brothers-in-law, and on the other between mother's brother and sister's son, are a recognition that patrilineal descent groups cannot live in isolation from each other. At the same time, if these bonds are too strong they will endanger the solidarity of the patrilineage itself; in part therefore, the cohesion of lineage systems varies according to the strength of these bonds.

In 19th century Lango both affinal and cognatic bonds were very strong indeed. Lango culture places great emphasis on resolving the ambiguities of the married woman's role. Every stage, from her marriage until well past her child-bearing prime, is marked by a domestic ceremony attended by both families. Men are constantly in touch with their in-laws, and great store is set by tranquil affinal relationships.[1] Similarly, the bond between mother's brother, or <u>nero</u>, and sister's son, or <u>okeo</u>, is very strong. The <u>okeo</u> may call upon his maternal uncle for help with bridewealth and he can inherit his uncle's wife if heirs in the male line are lacking.[2]

---

1. Curley, op.cit. pp.164-223.

2. Driberg, op.cit.p.174; Hayley, op.cit.pp.54-56.

Affinal or cognatic ties can be so strongly felt as to cause an individual to counter the interests of his own descent group. In the days of inter-clan raids the victims were sometimes warned in advance by a <u>nero</u> who belonged to the attacking clan.[1] Still more important, cognatic and affinal connections often cause people to migrate away from their own clan. A man whose clan brothers are too poor to provide him with bridewealth will go and join his <u>nero</u>; or if he has inherited the <u>nero</u>'s wife, he may go to settle in her village. Such changes of residence are common in patrilineal societies, and they often result in the migrant or his offspring being absorbed by the host descent group.[2] The striking feature of pre-colonial Lango is that it was not unusual for whole groups of clansmen to go and join their affines or their cognates, and to retain their original clan identity, either in a village of their own or in combination with the host clan.[3] Time and again, migration traditions recall that it was marriage links or maternal ties that caused a clan section to settle in its present locality.

The pull of kinship ties outside the clan, pressure of the environment and inter-clan fighting together explain the constant dispersion of clans. In the long run this dispersion was likely to result in fission, the dispersed sections becoming clans in

---

1. Interview: Matayo Ayika.

2. See, for example, Southall, <u>Alur Society</u>, pp.37-38.

3. Previous writers have suggested that early in Lango history new clans were sometimes formed when a large clan section migrated to settle near another clan with which it had kinship ties. Names such as Jo Okarowok me Oki are said to indicate that a new clan was formed by a migrant group (Jo Okarowok) and a host group (Jo Oki) combining. This is a plausible suggestion, though it appears to rest more on reasoned inference than on oral evidence. Driberg,op.cit,p.191; Hayley,op.cit.p.41; J.P.Crazzolara, 'Notes on the Lango-Omiru and on the Labwoor and Nyakwai', <u>Anthropos</u> 55 (1960),p.182.

their own right. Once a clan had become spatially divided, the practical difficulty of getting the members together for clan rituals reduced the awareness of a common identity among the dispersed sections. Formal fission was not inevitable, however, especially if individual sections were small; and if fission did take place, it was likely to be preceded by an interval during which the clan was represented in two or more localities. To say, therefore, that Lango society on the eve of the colonial period was composed of between 200 and 250 clans, each with a membership of 200 or 300 adult males, does not adequately convey the small scale of localised descent groups. Lango tradition gives the impression that most clans at that time were dispersed, and this impression is strongly born out by Driberg's statement that "clans and even families are often widely scattered under the stimulus of war and migration".[1] An estimate of 100 adult males, or two to three villages, would probably convey the size of the typcal clan section around 1900.

The fragmentation of localised descent groups can best be illustrated by tracing the settlement history of one locality, Akokoro. On account of its situation on Lake Kwania in the dry country of the extreme south-west, Akokoro was never colonised by the Lwo and it was one of the last areas to be settled by the Langi.[2] Its recent occupation allows the sequence of settlement to be reconstructed with relative precision.

During the 1870's a section of the Jo Oyima clan were living in Alyecjuk, a few miles north of the Aroca river near Aduku.

---

1. Driberg, op.cit.p.71.

2. The very name Akokoro is said to be an onomatopoeic allusion to the sound which a spear makes when thrust into the parched ground. Interviews: Suleman Enoke, Yosia Omwa.

It was in Alyecjuk that Akaki - the grandfather of Milton Obote - grew up, married and became the leader of his fellow clansmen. In about 1880 fighting in Alyecjuk caused Akaki to lead his clan south-westwards to Awir, in present-day Apac, where there were Jo Oyima already living. However, a quarrel soon arose within the clan and fighting broke out. Akaki was worsted and he migrated to a nearby place called Aminapok, which he had first visited while hunting. Soon afterwards defeat at the hands of another clan caused him to migrate yet again between about 1888 and 1890; this time he settled on the uninhabited lakeshore at Akokoro.[1]

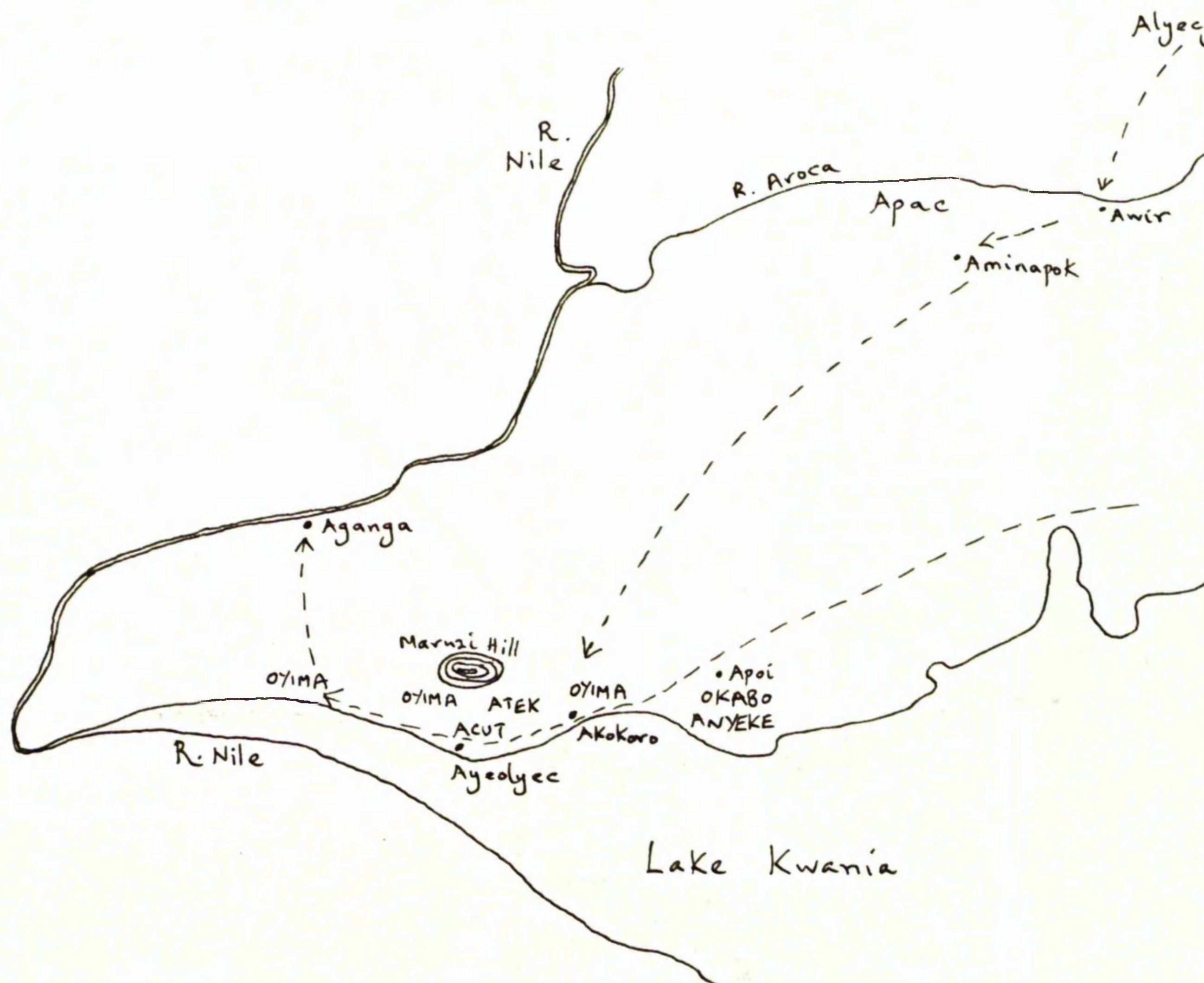
At the core of Akaki's following were his nine brothers, most of whom migrated at the same time to Akokoro. Together with an unknown number of lesser clansmen, they settled in a village about two miles east of the present Akokoro-Ibuje road.[2] On this last stage of migration, Akaki was also accompanied by a group of Jo Okarowok me Okabo. The two clans already had close affinal ties, which probably dated back to Alyecjuk, where the Jo Okabo had lived for over twenty years. The Jo Okabo settled in Apoi, a few miles east of Akaki's village.[3]

During the next ten years the two pioneer groups were joined by other clans. The Jo Atek me Okalodyang and the Jo Acut me Ongoda had been forced to leave their previous homes in the north and east, and they already had marriage links with the Jo Oyima.[4] According to one account,[5] they came quietly by night, first the leaders to prospect, and then the main body

---

1. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Matayo Aman, Jorbabel Akora.
2. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Matayo Aman.
3. Interviews: Suleman Enoke, Yosia Agum.
4. Interviews: Nekomia Agwa, Samwiri Ade.
5. Interview: Yakobo Adoko.

Map 5
South-western Lango, showing the settlement of Akokoro, ca. 1888-1909



MAP 5

Key

ACUT — Clan-names

- - - - -> — migration routes of the Oyima clan

of twenty or thirty people. Other clans included a small detachment of Jo Atek me Omwara, led by Akaki's <u>okeo</u> (sister's son).[1] During the same period, three more sections of the Jo Oyima arrived, all of them belonging to lineages other than Akaki's. One of them settled in Akokoro proper, and the other two further west along the lakeshore.[2] Hitherto it seems that the various groups in Akokoro had coexisted amicably, but one of the later Oyima groups, the Alwa lineage, caused trouble. One source has it that in a fight over abusive beer-songs, the Jo Alwa killed three men of another clan.[3] But the Jo Alwa also alienated their fellow clansmen of the Jo Oyima, and the upshot was that, shortly before the arrival of the Protectorate Government in 1909, the rest of the Jo Oyima - including Akaki - combined to expel the Alwa lineage, who then migrated to Aganga on the Nile further west. In ridding themselves of the Alwa lineage, the Jo Oyima of Akokoro were helped by another section of their own clan from Apac. Olal, the leader of this section, returned to Apac when the fight was over, but soon afterwards he brought his following southwards to settle at Ayeolyec on the lakeshore.[4] As a result of all these migrations, the adult male population of Akokoro was roughly estimated to be 430 in 1912.[5] Five clans were numerically significant, and there were smaller groups as well. All of them had clan ties outside Akokoro. The largest clan, the Jo Oyima, was made up of several

---

1. Interview: Misaki Obala.

2. Interviews: Erieza Okelo, Yakobo Adoko.

3. Interview: Yakobo Adoko.

4. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Erieza Okelo, Anderea Adoko, Yosia Omwa.

5. Census figures for Akokoro, Maruzi Tour Book (1912-13), LDA.

lineages, which had arrived at different times and from different places and which fell into no overall genealogical pattern within the clan (Map 5).

This situation was entirely typical of the way in which localised descent groups were disposed in Lango on the eve of the colonial period. At that time any locality of comparable size was inhabited by a number of disparate clan sections which lacked any integrative structure. The clan sections were related by the web of affinal and cognatic ties, but they were in no sense segments of an articulated segmentary system. The territorial scope of the lineage organisation was thus severely restricted. Above the level of the clan section living in a single village or a small group of villages, Lango social organisation cannot be viewed in terms of a segmentary lineage system.

****

Everywhere in Lango, however, groups of villages were linked togwther for certain social purposes, irrespective of the clan affiliations of the inhabitants. There were in particular three institutional ties which bound together neighbouring villages on an occasional basis and for specific reasons. The first was an economic link determined by hunting requirements. The second and third were ritual links, the one concerned with relations with the dead, and the other involving the allocation of all adult males to corporate age groups. As we shall see, there is some evidence to indicate that one of these ritual links, the age organisation, played a very much more integrative role in Lango society during the early 19th century, but the age system steadily declined and by the end of the century the social context of age ceremonies was very restricted. This was a limitation which applied still more to the other two institutional

links. None of them provided a basis for everyday inter-village cooperation or a framework for the allocation of authority above the village level, but each one contributed to the individual's awareness of a community which transcended his own clan section. No picture of 19th century Lango society would be complete without them.

Among peoples of rudimentary technology, the hunting of big game is necessarily a cooperative venture, for without mass participation personal safety will be at risk and the supply of game meat less sure. Among sedentary agriculturalists the careful regulation of hunting is still more important if crops and homesteads are to be spared unnecessary damage. For the Langi, with their reliance on game meat as an important part of their diet, the organisation of hunting was a serious business. The whole of their country was divided up into game tracts, called arum. The arum varied greatly in size from four to 140 square miles,[1] but it nearly always included more than one village. Such large units were essential if big game was to be efficiently exploited. The most important hunt of the year took place towards the end of the dry season, when a fire was lit on one side of the arum in order to drive the animals towards a line of hunters armed with spears; if the grass was very dry it was not unknown for two hundred square miles to be ravaged by one blaze. Several hundred men could be involved, and the hunters could cover anything from 25 to 40 miles a day in pursuit of fugitive game.[2]

Hunting rights over the arum were vested in a single individual, the won arum or 'master of the hunt'. He chose the day

1. Driberg, The Lango, p.111.

2. Driberg, Engato, p.47; The Lango, pp.113,116.

for the hunt, directed the hunters to their positions and was entitled to a toll of all game killed; during the hunt itself his word was supreme.[1] Such a degree of institutionalised authority was rare in Lango society, but its exercise was very limited. Except when the hunt was in progress, the won arum had no authority: he could not, for instance, refuse permission to build or cultivate in his arum.[2] In effect, the won arum was responsible for organising hunting in the best interests of the community as a whole. A major hunt entailed coordination between groups who lacked a recognised hierarchy, and so there was a clear advantage in concentrating authority in one individual for the occasion. But at all other times, the won arum enjoyed no more than the respect due to any clan elder.

The great dry season hunt was a major expression of the sense of community between neighbouring villages and different clans. But it only occurred once a year, and at other times game was hunted by much smaller groups of men. The cooperation required for rituals, on the other hand, occurred more frequently and related to a greater number of communal concerns. The majority of rituals - then as now - were very small-scale affairs which centred on the individual family; rituals of birth and marriage, for example, were performed by the two family groups concerned. Such occasions should perhaps be called private rituals. From the point of view of neighbourhood ties, the important rituals were those which called for the participation of elders on a territorial basis. These public rituals were of two kinds: ceremonies organised by ritual groups called etogo, and ceremonies associated with the age organisation.

---

1. Driberg, The Lango, pp.113,116.
2. Ibid, p.171.

The *etogo* was the meeting together of elders for the performance of certain rituals which concerned relations between the living and the dead.[1] Like many African peoples, the Langi believed in the power of the dead to bring suffering on the living, either by causing individual sickness or - more seriously - by inflicting drought and other natural disasters. This power was considered to be particularly strong in the case of the recently deceased, and to cope with the danger a series of funeral ceremonies was prescribed by which the spirit or 'shade' (*tipu*) of the dead man was placated. If the continuing malice of a shade was evidenced in chronic sickness, special curing ceremonies were required. The most elaborate ceremony, and the one which expressed most clearly the link between the shades and the natural elements, was *apuny*, the final funeral rite held every two or three years to commemorate several dead people; *apuny* was the ultimate means of placating the shades and ensuring that the rains would fall at the start of the wet season. The interesting feature of Lango attitudes to the dead was the belief that the shades could not be controlled by the lineage concerned or by a ritual specialist, but only by the community as a whole; if a shade was badly offended after all, it was the community which through drought might suffer the consequences. The *etogo* was the practical expression of this belief. All the funeral and curing ceremonies were its responsibility. The only way in which the individual could maintain proper relations with the dead was through his *etogo*.

---

1. The account of the *etogo* which follows is drawn from two authorities: Hayley, op.cit. pp.48-52, 111-26; and Curley, op.cit. pp.75-163. Neither of these two is explicitly concerned with the 19th century, but both take account of colonial changes, and Curley pays special attention to the pre-colonial role of the *etogo*.

The *etogo* is also considered in J.p'Bitek Okot, 'Oral Literature and its Social Background among the Acholi and Lango', unpublished B Litt thesis, Oxford University, 1963, pp.146-54.

The first essential of the *etogo*, then, was that it should include elders of several clans. By the end of the 19th century this was a requirement which could often be met within the confines of a single village, but in fact the *etogo* always included men of different villages, the men of one village being distributed among several *etogo*. In this way *etogo* affiliations cut across village loyalties.[1] The ideal of good neighbourliness was explicit in the internal organisation of the *etogo*. The central feature of the ceremonies was a ritual feast at which the *etogo* members were divided into three meat groups, each group consuming a prescribed portion of the animal. A father and his sons could not sit in the same meat group, but had to be evenly distributed among all three. Clan ties were thus set aside for the duration of the feast, and within each group an elder had to share the meat with his neighbours rather than his kin. The *etogo* ceremonies therefore not only allayed anxiety about the shades; they also promoted harmony among men of different villages and clans. While the *etogo* itself had no existence outside the ceremonies, the mutual regard of its members was expected to be maintained at all times. If two villages came to blows, a man was not permitted to fight a member of his *etogo*, and if he did kill him he had to be ritually cleansed before participating in any more ceremonies.

Much of the respect felt for the *etogo* was derived from the belief that its composition was fixed and permanent. The

---

1. Hayley is ambiguous on this point, and other writers without first-hand experience have assumed that *etogo* and village were coterminous: J.E.Goldthorpe, *Outlines of East African Society* (Kampala,1958),p.87; Okot,op.cit.p.150. Curley however is in no doubt about the cross-cutting nature of *etogo* membership and its constructive impact on inter-village relations. Curley, op.cit.pp.157-58.

clans involved were believed to have been associated together for ceremonies since time immemorial, and each clan was assumed to have the same _etogo_ partners wherever its several components happened to live. This was patently untrue. Sections of the same clan living in widely separated parts of Lango were almost bound to have different neighbours, and it was with them that each section had to associate for _etogo_ ceremonies. The belief in the immutability of the _etogo_ was a convenient fiction which concealed an essential flexibility. For in fact the composition of the _etogo_ was constantly changing as villagers left the neighbourhood and new migrants arrived. On a smaller scale these migrations continue today. When a recently arrived settler wishes to hold an _etogo_ ritual at his home, he will approach his neighbours for help; if they agree to hold the ceremony for him, he will thenceforth consider that his _etogo_ comprises the clans who attended the ceremony.[1] Hayley's account, which relates to the 1930's, suggests that the accommodation of new members used to be less straightforward. A first generation settler could attend the ceremonies of a local _etogo_, but only his sons could in due course become full members.[2] At all events, it is clear that the inclusion of new clans in an _etogo_ presented few practical difficulties. In effect, the _etogo_ was a means of assimilating new settlers to the village and the wider local community.

It is frustrating that some details of the traditional _etogo_ organisation remain in doubt. But these difficulties are small compared with the problem of reconstructing the Lango age organisation, the third institutional link which bound together

1. Curley, op.cit.pp.87-89.
2. Hayley, op.cit.p.49.

neighbouring villages and clans. For here the process of decline has been much more devastating. Almost the only source is Driberg's account.[1] By the time that Hayley visited Lango twenty years later, the age organisation had fallen into complete disuse, while among today's elders there is a degree of confusion which is not entirely explained by the suppression of the age ceremonies early in the colonial period.[2] Driberg's account, based on his own initiation into an age-set in 1915, abounds incolourful detail, but it is not analytically sound. When he published his findings he was not able to draw on any comparative data of such detail . But since Driberg's day, anthropologists have shown how very complex East African age systems can be; the scope for terminological confusion is especially great, since the same vernacular words often refer to structurally distinct elements of an age system. The position is further complicated by the fact that Driberg withheld some information from publication out of respect for the vow of secrecy he had taken at his own initiation.[3] Hayley found that memory of the age organisation was already beginning to fade, but the information he received appeared to differ from Driberg's on some points.[4]

As the specialised Lango vocabulary shows,[5] and as Driberg

---

1. Driberg, The Lango, pp.243-60; Driberg, Engato, pp.102-11.

2. Only 10% of the present writer's informants were able to offer any information at all on this subject. Curley also failed to collect any helpful oral material during his 18 months' field-work in eastern Lango (personal communication).

3. This is what Driberg told Hayley. Hayley, op.cit.p.73.

4. Ibid, pp.72-73.

5. More than half the set-names were taken from animal names found in Para-Nilotic and not used in any other context in Lango (for example, amocing, rhinoceros; ekori, giraffe; engatu, lion). Ewor or ewuron, the Lango name for the initiation ceremony, is probably derived from the Ateso, eigworone. Driberg observed that the rain songs taught during the initiation contained many Para-Nilotic words and formulae which even old men could not understand The Lango, p.254.

himself admitted,[1] the Lango age organisation must be considered in the same category as the Para-Nilotic systems further east. If the apparent contradictions between Driberg's and Hayley's accounts are considered in the light of these systems described since their day,[2] then it would appear that the Langi had a cyclical generation system. According to this interpretation, the basic unit was the age-set, a corporate group of age-mates who at puberty or soon afterwards underwent initiation during a single initiation period of about four years, in ceremonies which were coordinated throughout Lango.[3] At the end of that period, the set was declared closed, and a fresh one was begun and identified according to an established sequence of animal names. Four sets formed in this way completed a generation-set. The break between one generation-set and the next was marked by several years when no initiations were held, so that a new generation-set began to be formed about twenty-five years after the previous one had been started. Each generation-set passed as a unit through a clearly defined sequence of ~~three~~ two or ~~four~~ three levels of seniority, or age-grades, which were also given animal names. The formation of a new generation-set entailed the promotion of the preceding one to a more senior grade, its

---

1. Driberg, op.cit.pp.253-54.

2. P.H.Gulliver, 'The Age-Set Organisation of the Jie Tribe', Jl. Rl. Anthrop. Inst. 83 (1953),pp.147-68; Gulliver, 'The Turkana Age Organisation', American Anthropologist 60(1958), pp.900-22; N.Dyson-Hudson, Karimojong Politics (Oxford,1966), pp.156-204. There is no adequate account of the Teso system, but see A.C.A.Wright, 'Notes on the Iteso Social Organisation', Uganda Jl. 9(1942),pp.57-80.

3. Driberg's account suggests that each set was further divided into two or three sub-sets which were given animal names associated with the set name. Every initiation ceremony would in this case result in a sub-set being formed. The Lango,p.244; Engato,pp.103-04.

duties and privileges changing accordingly.[1]

The available evidence is so confusing, and the chances of any more coming to light so remote, that the composition of the Lango age system will probably never be known for sure; so the reconstruction offered here must be regarded as tentative. If the structure of the system were better known, there would be more certainty about its social functions. At the time when Driberg observed the age organisation, these functions had already been attenuated. This was not merely because of the new conditions of colonial rule, for oral traditions indicate that by the 1890's the age organisation was already playing a more limited role than previously.

As Driberg described it, the Lango age organisation had a mainly ritual and symbolic significance. The ceremony of initiation to an age-set, called ewor (or eworon), was a dramatic introduction to full manhood. For three days the initiates lived in the bush under the direction of the elders; they were made to eat purposely unappetising food, to go on long marches outside the camp, and to perform hateful sexual practices, the memory of which was expected to act as a deterrent for the rest of their lives.[2] The initiates were also instructed in the

---

1. This reconstruction is not explicit in the accounts of Driberg and Hayley, but it explains an important discrepancy between them. According to Driberg, a man remained in the same animal group from initiation until death, while Hayley's informants drawn from different places in Lango assured him that as a man grew older his animal name changed. Driberg appears to be referring to age-sets, while Hayley's informants were talking about age-grades. The confusion arises from the fact that the same animal names were used in both contexts.

The generation aspect is strongly indicated by the pause observed at the end of the cycle of age-sets and by the fact that the initiating of a set was conducted by the last group to take the same name (i.e. its namesake in the previous generation); thus the buffalo (jobi) set of 1915 was initiated by elders who had been initiated as buffaloes in about 1891 (Driberg The Lango, p.245). I am grateful to Dr. John Lamphear for his help in analysing the evidence on Lango age organisation.

2. Driberg, Engato, pp.107-10.

traditions and customs of the tribe, and above all in the ritual observances of the rain-dance (myelo kot). This ceremony was performed once a year early in the wet season and lasted for four days. Roles were allocated according to age- and generation-sets, and the successful performance of the ceremony entailed the correct recitation of songs which were full of difficult archaisms; these songs were taught to the initiates during ewor.[1]

There is no evidence that the division of Lango society into age- and generation-sets determined the deployment of warriors in battle, as among the Karimojong, or the hiving off of agnates to form new settlements, as among the Iteso.[2] But two other functions appear to have been in decline by the time Driberg underwent initiation in 1915. Firstly, initiation to an age-set had been the final stage in a young man's training for fighting, the ceremony being immediately followed by a raid on a neighbouring tribe.[3] Secondly, ewor appears to have been an occasion for the settlement of inter-clan conflicts and for declarations by the elders against anti-social behaviour such as the killing of strangers or the infringement of hunting rights.[4] The conciliatory and didactic aspects of ewor were emphasised by the convention - still observed in Driberg's day - that during the ceremonies a strict truce was kept throughout Lango.[5]

---

1. Driberg, The Lango, pp.243, 249-53.

2. Dyson-Hudson, op.cit.pp.172-73; J.C.D.Lawrance, The Iteso (London, 1957), p.68; J.B.Webster, 'The Iteso During the Asonya', mimeo, Department of History, Makerere University, 1969.

3. Hayley, op.cit.p.57. Driberg does list training in "the art of fighting" as one of the ewor activities, but it appears to have been much less important than instruction in ritual. The Lango, p.245.

4. Interviews: Pilipo Oruro, Isaka Ojaba, Yakobo Gaci, Ibrahim Lodo, Lajaro Obia, Yakobo Adoko.

5. Driberg, The Lango, p.246.

The territorial scale of the age organisation gave it an integrative function unique in Lango society. Here Driberg's account is very explicit. The whole of Lango country was divided up into four territorial sections. One section, the north-west, did not have formal age-groups, but each of the remaining three sections had a ritual centre, where all the initiates and the elders of that section assembled for _ewor_ and where the _myelo kot_ was also held.[1] Driberg's description is contradicted by several Lango traditions which say that _ewor_ could be held in any village.[2] This discrepancy may reflect a distinction between age-set initiation, which was held by each village, and the promotion of a generation from one grade to the next, which was the concern of the whole section acting in concert with the other sections of the tribe;[3] alternatively, the discrepancy may indicate variations of practice between one territorial section and another. It is unlikely that the answer to this question will ever be known for certain. But Driberg's account is sufficiently precise to show that at one stage in the generation cycle at least, representatives from a very large number of villages assembled in one place. The cooperation required on this occasion went far beyond the range of neighbourhood or kinship ties.

****

Of the three institutional links which transcended the immediate context of clan section and village, the age organisation was plainly the most significant. The impact of the

1. Ibid, pp.244-45.

2. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Lasto Otim, Reuben Ogwal, Adonia Ecun.

3. This kind of distinction is found among both the Jie and the Karimojong, Gulliver, 'The Age-Set Organisation of the Jie Tribe', pp.149,153; Dyson-Hudson, op.cit. pp.188-91.

arum organisation and the etogo ceremonies was limited both by their very restricted social context (dry-season hunting and funeral ceremonies) and by their narrowly local basis. By contrast the age organisation entailed cooperation over a very wide area, and it was specifically concerned with smoothing out inter-clan tensions and enjoining high standards of social behaviour. The reasons for its decline are therefore of special interest.

As was mentioned earlier, the age organisation was already in decline by the time it was finally suppressed by the Baganda and the British. The conciliatory and didactic aspects had been much curtailed, and its functions had by Driberg's day become almost exclusively ritual and symbolic. The reasons for this decline are not easy to ascertain, but they should probably be seen in the context of what is clearly a crucial aspect of the early evolution of Lango society - the fusion of Lwo and Para-Nilotes. On this topic Lango tradition is conspicuously silent, which is hardly surprising if the reconstruction offered in the first chapter is correct - that the fusion of Lwo and Para-Nilotes was well advanced by the time that the Langi began to colonise their present country.[1] Although explicit oral evidence is lacking, it is nevertheless possible to infer from the social organisation of other Lwo and Para-Nilotic peoples the broad outlines of adaption and change among the Langi. The most striking difference between the Lwo

---

1. According to Crazzolara, the arrival of 'Lango-Teso' groups at the end of the 18th century caused the stable rule of the Lwo to be replaced by conditions of quasi-anarchy. This suggestion is made on the assumption that most of Lango country was at that time inhabited by Lwo and Madi and that the easterners were of alien stock. Crazzolara, 'Notes on the Lango-Omiru' pp.200-01.

and the Para-Nilotes lies in the respective importance of clans and age groups as the bases of social organisation. Among the Lwo, corporate age groups are not nearly so important as the segmentary lineage structure. Among the Central Para-Nilotes of the 'Karimojong Cluster' on the other hand, links between clansmen have little practical significance compared with the all-embracing age organisation.[1]

The evolution of Lango society during the 19th century can up to a point be interpreted in terms of the interplay between these two principles, corresponding to the respective contributions of Lwo and Iseera. So far as the age organisation is concerned, it would of course be very misleading to assume an identity of social organisation between the Iseera and the present-day peoples of the 'Karimojong Cluster'. Since the latter were so heavily infiltrated by the pastoral Para-Nilotes from Koten and Magos, while the Iseera who migrated to the west were hardly affected at all, a substantial discrepancy is more likely.[2] Nevertheless, whatever the ultimate derivation of the Lango age system may have been, it certainly did not lie with the Lwo. The age organisation is most easily explained as the distinctive contribution of the Iseera. Its decline can be attributed to the westward migration of the Langi, which not only took them further away from Para-Nilotic influence, but also entailed the absorption of additional Lwo groups already resident in Lango, to whom the age organisation was quite alien.

---

1. For the limited role of clans in these societies, see Dyson-Hudson, op.cit. pp.87-90; P.H.Gulliver, <u>The Family Herds</u> (London, 1955), pp.76-77, 212 (for Jie and Turkana). Cf also Lawrance, op.cit. pp.54-55 (for Teso).

2. J.E.Lamphear, 'The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda' unpublished PhD thesis, London University, 1972, p.250.

A similar perspective can be brought to bear upon the problem of the fragmented lineage structure found in 19th century Lango. By the end of the century, clans and lineages were certainly the most important social groups in Lango - much more so than among the Para-Nilotic peoples to the east. But lineage organisation in Lango was far removed from the segmentary systems found among the Kenya Luo and the Alur. It provided no social framework above the level of the clan section living in a handful of adjacent villages. As Tarantino has pointed out, the cohesion of the clan in Lango was much less than among other Lwo-speaking peoples, its readiness to break up into separate exogamous units being quite uncharacteristic of the Lwo.[1] This marked 'dilution' of Lwo culture can be seen as a consequence of the combination of Lwo and Iseera groups, in the same way that the diminishing vigour of the age organisation can.

Taking into account the ethnic composition of the Lango people, the distinctive aggregate of social institutions found in 19th century Lango readily lends itself to explanation along these lines. But the danger of generalisation at this level is that it may imply a greater degree of homogeneity in Lango society than was actually the case. In concluding this survey of social groups in 19th century Lango, it is more enlightening to stress the diversity on the ground, than to construct a valid model for the whole society. This diversity is striking in two ways. Firstly, localised clan sections varied considerably in size and cohesion. A broad distinction could be drawn between east and west, with the east tending towards greater fragmentation. North of the Moroto river, for example, the sparse

---

1. A.Tarantino, 'The Origin of the Lango', Uganda Jl. 10 (1946), p.15.

population at the end of the century was distributed among a multitude of clans, and this fragmentation was reflected in the small size of the villages there.[1] Near the Nile-Toci confluence, on the other hand, the Jo Arak of Aber were the largest clan section in Lango; their members were spread over at least seven large villages, and their political organisation in some ways approximated to the hereditary clan chiefdoms of the Acholi.[2] In the second place, there was a comparable variation in the strength of the age organisation, though here the continuum followed a north-south, rather than an east-west axis. When Driberg studied the question during the first decade of colonial rule, he found that the further south he travelled in Lango, the more entrenched ewor ceremonies appeared to be, while in the north-west they were not practised at all.[3] The existence of these variations shows that within Lango society the fusion of Lwo and Iseera was not uniform, but varied according to both local settlement history and geographical position vis-à-vis neighbouring peoples.

The essential elements of social organisation common to all Lango during the 19th century were those described at the beginning of this chapter - the localised clan section, the wang tic and the village. These were the units which dominated the outlook of the ordinary Lango. It was at this level that

---

1. Interviews: Okelo Olet, Festo Odwe, Adonia Owuco, Yosua Odongo Opio, Joseph Orama, Onyanga Ewoi, Ogwel Okolla. Driberg, entries for 17.2.18, Moroto Tour Book (1918-26), LDA.

2. For a full account of pre-colonial Aber, see below, pp.129-39.

3. Driberg, The Lango, pp.243,245,254. My own experience bears out Driberg's. Of all my Lango informants, those in Aber and Iceme were the most ignorant of the defunct age organisation (even though their historical knowledge in other respects tended to be above the average for Lango as a whole).

CHAPTER THREE

PRE-COLONIAL CLAN LEADERSHIP

Early European observers had little difficulty in identifying individual leaders in Lango, but they were not much impressed by the scope of their authority. Linant de Bellefonds, one of Colonel Gordon's officers, noted in 1875 that the Langi only recognised the authority of their chiefs when out on raids.[1] Twenty-five years later, a Protectorate official in Bunyoro wrote of the unadministered country east of the Nile, "each village is governed by its own chief who owes allegiance to nobody."[2] In attempting to determine where these 'chiefs' fitted into the social organisation of the Langi, a distinction must be drawn at the outset between two levels of leadership. The first category was that of clan leadership. This was a strictly localised position, though in favourable conditions it could be extended to include authority over neighbouring clans as well. The second type was regional leadership, which completely transcended the context of clan and village. The basis of this regional authority is much more obscure, but until almost the end of the 19th century it was a vital element in the ability of the Langi to impose upon their neighbours and to resist external pressures. This second type of leadership is examined in Chapter Four. Here we are concerned only with clan leadership which was a constant of the political scene throughout the pre-colonial era.

Two explanations of the role of 'chiefs' in pre-colonial Lango have been put forward by previous writers. Driberg

---

1. E.Linant de Bellefonds, 'Voyage de service fait entre le poste militaire de Fatiko et la capitale de M'tesa roi d'Uganda', <u>Bulletin Trimestriel de la Société Khédiviale de Géographie du Caire</u>, I(1876-1877),pp.15-16.

2. Anderson to Johnston, 21.3.00, UNA A4/27.

believed that the chief was essentially a war-leader whose position depended on success in battle and was unrelated to the clan system.[1] On the other hand, Tarantino has said that the only chiefs in pre-colonial Lango were the clan heads.[2] The truth lies somewhere between these two extremes. The basis of individual leadership was more complex than either view would suggest, for it feflected the way in which descent groups and territorial groups had become intertwined. Even at the lowest level, individual leadership, while based on the descent group, took account of territorial dispositions. The typical 'chief' was not a lineage head or a clan head, but the leader of all the members of one clan living in one village, irrespective of lineage, and irrespective of the clan being represented elsewhere in Lango; in other words, he was the leader of a clan section.[3] Provided this qualification is borne in mind, the term 'clan leader' is acceptable, and for the sake of simplicity it is used here.

Before analysing the actual functions of clan leadership, it is as well to emphasise just how limited was its role. Clan leadership in Lango was far removed from the stereotype of chiefship popular among Europeans. There were almost no formal trappings of power. A clan leader was not entitled to any free labour service. He had no group of retainers or 'court', - indeed his household could seldom be distinguished by its size or

---

1. J.H.Driberg, The Lango (London,1923),pp.204-08.

2. A.Tarantino, 'Lango Clans', Uganda Jl. 13 (1949),p.110. Hayley, while accepting most of Driberg's account, regards it as very unlikely that war-leaders were not also leaders of their respective clans. T.T.S.Hayley, The Anatomy of Lango Religion and Groups (Cambridge,1947),pp.56,145.

3. The distinction between lineage and clan section is expounded in A.W.Southall, Alur Society (Cambridge,1953),pp.38-39.

position from those of his neighbours. He wore no commonly recognised insignia of office, though in some clans particular ornaments were regarded as his prerogative.[1] Nor was his position even identified by a commonly accepted title. The term rwot (lord) was probably the most widely used, but a clan leader was also referred to as awitong (spear-leader) or awimony (war-leader).[2]

As for the substance of his authority, the clan leader played no special part in the economic life of the clan. The organisation of communal labour was the business of a headman chosen informally by the members of the wang tic. Hunting activities were controlled by the won arum, or hunting leader, whose position was more formal.[3] This office was hereditary, the succession being limited to a very small group of kin, usually the close agnates of the deceased. In some places, the hunting leader was succeeded by his sister's son, thus ensuring the rotation of the office among the clans.[4] And even when the office did lie with one clan only, hunting leader and clan leader were very seldom the same man. In Ibuje, for example, the extensive

---

1. Driberg, op.cit.p.63, believed that the wearing of ivory ornaments was the universal prerogative of chiefs and their descendants, but there were many places in Lango where any elder could wear ivory (Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Luka Abura). In some places the wearing of a heavy iron bracelet (okom) was a mark of chiefship; in others, it was a leopard-skin (Interviews: Okelo Abak, Tomasi Ojuka).

2. Driberg, op.cit.p.206, listed three titles as a hierarchy, according to territorial influence: jago, rwot, and twon lwak as the highest. No such classification existed, and the terms jago and twon lwak did not denote formal positions at all. Jago appears to have been an importation from Acholi at the beginning of the colonial period. Twon lwak ('bull of the crowd') was simply a praise-name, with which any outstanding leader might be complimented.

3. See above, pp. 103-4.

4. Driberg, op.cit.p.175.

territory of the Jo Ocukuru included during the 1890's two arum, and in each case the won was a member of the clan without being one of the three clan leaders.[1]

Most significant of all, the exercise of ritual power by chiefs, which was so common a feature of both centralised and stateless societies in East Africa, was almost completely absent from Lango.[2] On the one hand, relations with the dead were handled by the etogo group, which transcended the clan context altogether.[3] On the other, communication with the various manifestations of jok, the presiding spirit of the universe, was in the hands of professional diviners, called ajoka. These were usually women. They were expected to cure sickness, sterility and mental disorder, to identify witches, and to determine auspicious moments for dangerous undertakings like hunting, cattle-raiding and long journeys. Their services were thus in constant demand, and people were prepared to travel well outside their normal neighbourhood range in order to consult a good diviner: at the turn of the century, Angwen of Ngai was consulted by men from Aber, twenty miles away.[4] But no practical advantages accrued to the clan leader in whose village the diviner lived. The clan leader had no control over the diviner's activities, still less did he practise divination himself. If the diviner recommended certain ceremonies to be performed, the clan leader

---

1. Interview: Anderea Ogwang. See also Hayley,op.cit.p.149.

2. The only significant exception was the special position enjoyed by the rain-makers of Aduku from about 1860 onwards. See below, pp 154-5.

3. See above, pp. 105-7.

4. Interviews: Nekomia Otwal, Misaki Oki, Ogwang Abura, Barikia Opie. See also Driberg,op.cit.pp.233-40; Hayley,op.cit.pp.22-29, 153-69.

might organise them, but he himself had no ritual powers.[1]

The functions of the clan leader were twofold. In the first place, as the terms awitong and awimony imply, he led his clan in battle. Secondly, he took the lead in settling peacefully disputes between members of the clan. Neither of these functions was carried out in isolation, however. The decision to go on an expedition was generally taken in consultation with the best warriors of the clan; and in the arbitration of disputes, the opinion of the clan elders (odonge) was respected, for whether or not they were still able to fight in battle, they were deeply versed in the clan's affairs and were credited with sound judgement.

The degree of authority which the clan leader was able to exercise depended in the last resort on his personal qualities. If these were outstanding, the processes of consultation would be less effective. The most important quality was prowess in battle. In so far as skill in hunting added to a man's prestige, this was also an asset.[2] In addition a clan leader was expected to be hospitable and sociable.[3] These were the qualities which on the death of a clan leader determined the choice of his successor. Clan leadership was hereditary in much the same way as title to land and cattle. The wishes of the deceased were taken into account, and a son usually succeeded, but the final choice lay with the clan elders. Ideally the eldest son was most suitable; he was after all likely to have amassed greater wealth and married more wives than his younger brothers; he would therefore enjoy greater prestige and be able to dispense more hospitality. But if the eldest son made a poor showing in battle,

---

1. I have found no evidence to support the view mentioned to Hayley by Driberg that the clan leader 'incarnated' the power of jok in the clan. Hayley, op.cit.p.43.

2. Interviews: Onyanga Ewoi, Yakobo Adoko.

3. Interviews: Matayo Acut, Sira Okelo.

he was passed over in favour of a younger son, a brother or even a cousin of the deceased. In Abyece, for example, Ogwang Owiny, the leader of the Jo Alipa, died prematurely of smallpox in about 1900. His sons were too young and his brother was a weakling. So the leadership devolved on Ogwang's first cousin, Ebek, who had only recently migrated with his brothers to Abyece and inherited a wife there.[1]

In some cases however, a son of the deceased became clan leader even though he was too young. Amongst the Jo Arak of Aber, Odongo Aja was chosen to succeed his father during the 1870's while still in his twenties; during his early years as rwot senior members of the clan guided him until his own success in battle proved the wisdom of their choice.[2] In Iceme, Olwa Abelli, who died in about 1895, was succeeded as rwot of the Jo Olwa by his son Olong Adilo, then in his teens. For some years afterwards the effective leader of the clan was Olwa's brother, Okaka, who as late as 1905 was regarded as the local chief by the British. It was only shortly before the colonial administration was established in northern Lango in 1910 that Olong Adilo had ceased to defer to his uncle and had become rwot in fact as well as name.[3] The normal rules of succession were also bent when a clan leader survived the dangers of battle and disease to become an old man. In such cases the leader usually held a meeting of the elders and with their approval transferred

---

1. Interviews: Benedikto Okelo Elwange, Matayo Ojok, Ibrahim Lodo.

2. Interviews: Matayo Acut, Leoben Okodi.

3. Lazaro Okelo, undated vernacular MS, translated as 'Concerning Our Ancestors', typescript in Department of History, Makerere University, p.1; Nasan Engola, 'Olden Times in Northern Lango', translation of undated vernacular MS, typescript in Department of History, Makerere University, p.6. Fowler to Wilson, 9.7.05, UNA A12/6. Interviews: Mohammed Okec, Lazaro Okelo, Ogwang Abura.

his authority to a son or close agnate.[1] It is possible that stories about transfers of this kind conceal usurpation of clan authority by younger men of oustanding abilities, but no explicit traditions of usurpation have been recorded, and there is no doubt that in the majority of cases clan leaders continued in office until death or old age overtook them.

****

There was little variation in the content of Lango clan leadership, but the actual power which it conferred varied greatly according to the size of the clan section. Probably the majority of clan sections in the late 19th century were each accommodated in one or two villages, but there were many clans which required several villages and were able to retain them as a territorial bloc. Sometimes these blocs were the result of one large clan section migrating <u>en masse</u>, as in northern Ibuje where in the mid-1880's the Jo Ocukuru arrived in large numbers and settled in three villages.[2] In other cases the first representatives of the clan were quite few, but they were later joined by other sections of the clan who founded villages adjacent to the first; the way in which the commanding position of the Jo Oyima in Akokoro was built up has already been described.[3] On the eve of the colonial period, the leaders of these clan blocs were the most powerful men in Lango.

The fact that a clan section was spread over several villages did not cause all the functions of clan leadership to be concentrated in one man. Each village within the complex had

---

1. Interviews: Suleman Ikwe, Bejaleri Ogwang, Pilipo Oruro, Onyanga Ewoi.

2. Interviews: Anderea Ogwang, Yakobo Gaci.

3. See above, pp. 98-102.

its own leader who was head of a lineage or a clan section. Like any other clan leader, he was responsible for the settlement of petty disputes and for the defence of his village. The way in which villages of the same clan responded to each other's needs in an informal way is conveyed in the following account, which refers to the three villages occupied by the Ocukuru clan in Ibuje during the 1880's and 1890's:[1]

> "When there was trouble in Aduni, a horn was blown there and a drum beaten; then the people here [in Alenga] would run and join the warriors there, and all the Aketo people went along as well. When a fight began here and the leader sounded his horn, the leader of Aketo heard it and sounded his horn as well. And when the people of Aduni heard it, they hurried along, saying, 'Our brothers over there are being attacked!'"

In Ibuje there was no single leader recognised as head of all Jo Ocukuru in the area; in the last few years before administration was established there in 1909, two men appear to have exercised almost equal authority.[2] This was an atypical situation. For while village leaders settled disputes in their own villages, they usually recognised the primacy of one of their number as leader of expeditions. In effect, a clan which occupied several villages needed a single head where relations with other clans were concerned. And when those other clans were small and dependent, the single head became a powerful figure.

To a limited extent, nearly all clan leaders ruled men of other clans. For by the end of the century - and probably earlier - most villages in Lango included a handful of non-agnates who had migrated there because of kinship ties or

---

1. Interview: Anderea Ogwang.

2. The two men were Arum of Aduni and Gongi of Aketo. The fact that Arum later became County Chief of Maruzi (1913-30) has caused his pre-colonial eminence to be exaggerated in some quarters. Interviews: Yakobo Gaci, Yakobo Oluma, Anderea Ogwang, Pilipo Omwa Ayo.

difficulties at home. These strangers, while retaining their original clan identity, were subject to the authority of the leader of the host clan. The typical Lango 'chief' was thus village headman as well as head of his clan section. This was an interesting gloss on the principle of clan leadership, but in practice it represented hardly any increase in the clan leader's power. On the other hand, above the village level the acknowledgement of authority outside the clan was the most significant growth point in the Lango political system.

The dominance of one clan section over another seems usually to have been based on primacy of settlement, a clan being more likely to assert itself if it had been the first to settle in the area. As the last chapter showed, the decision of other clans to settle nearby was frequently based on affinal or cognatic ties. This was the reason why during the 1890's the Jo Atek me Okalodyang, the Jo Acut me Ongoda and the Jo Anyeke migrated to the lakeshore in Akokoro. They came from different places and had been obliged to move on for different reasons, but they all had marriage links with Akaki's clan, the Jo Oyima. Once having settled in Akokoro, they regarded Akaki as their leader.[1] Often, however, clan dominance was not based on kinship links in the first instance, though such links were the inevitable result of prolonged residence in the same locality. A migrating clan section could settle near another clan merely because there was vacant land. If the first clan was a large one, it was likely all the same to become dominant, either because the new arrivals had to ask for military help in a crisis, or because they preferred to accept a subordinate position rather than risk becoming the target for cattle-raids by the stronger

---

1. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Nekomia Agwa, Samwiri Ade, Yosia Omwa.

clan. And the reason for entering into a subordinate relationship was still more compelling if the dominant clan had already proved its strength by expelling other clans from the area. In Abyece for example, a succession of incidents in about 1902 precipated a clash between Ebek of the Jo Alipa and four small clans. By calling on the help of allies from Agwata, Ebek so harrassed the other clans that they abandoned Abyece altogether and settled south of Lake Kwania.[1] At about the same time, a section of the Jo Arak me Eling settled in western Abyece, and it seems to have been Ebek's military reputation which caused them to accept his leadership in battle and even his views on the succession to their own clan leadership.[2]

The most widespread way in which clan dominance was expressed was militarily. The subject clans answered calls to arms by the dominant clan, or one of them requested military help, but in either case it was the leader of the dominant clan who commanded the expedition. In some places, this military co-operation was formalised by the gathering together each year of the clans concerned for a meeting at the leader's village where expeditions during the coming dry season were planned.[3]

In places where the dominant clan was particularly well-established or respected, military leadership was combined with authority to settle peacefully inter-clan disputes. Quarrels within the clan were generally settled by the clan leader; they were unlikely to concern serious offences, because respect for

---

1. Interviews: Isaka Ojaba, Ibrahim Lodo, Nasaneri Ongona, Matayo Ojok.

2. Interviews: Pilipo Oruro, Omara Ekak, Matayo Ojok.

3. Interviews: Erisa Olugo, Tomasi Ogwete, Yakobo Olugo, Misaki Oki, Barikia Opie, Mohammed Okec, Yakobo Adoko, Yosia Omwa. In northern Lango this meeting was called amur.

the solidarity of the clan was so deeply ingrained; but between different clans fewer restraints applied. Personal quarrels were much more likely to result in homicide, and illicit sexual intercourse (luk) with unmarried girls or wives was a common cause of friction. Disagreement arose less over the identity of the offender than his liability for compensation in livestock. At different times there was a fair measure of agreement about what in theory the rates of compensation were,[1] but in practice the two parties were unlikely to agree on the exact amount, particularly if the number of cattle in the neighbourhood was fluctuating or a 'free' wife was suggested as an alternative in a homicide case.[2] If the two clans concerned were not neighbours, disputes of this kind often took the form of raiding and counter-raiding. But between neighbouring clans affinal and cognatic ties placed a limit on violent reprisals. Compensation might be fixed by consultation among the two groups of elders, but the matter was more likely to be settled smoothly if a third party could arbitrate. In this way, the leader of the locally dominant clan could become responsible for maintaining good relations between the clans he led in battle. In Akokoro during the time of Akaki, for instance, the leader of the Jo Anyeke settled any disputes that arose within his clan, but if another clan was involved he sent to Akaki, either for warriors so that the issue could be settled by force, or to ask him to adjudicate; this Akaki did in a homicide case between the Jo Anyeke and their neighbours, the Jo Okabo.[3]

---

1. Since about 1890 the usual rate for homicide appears to have been seven head of cattle. Driberg, op.cit.pp.210-11; R.T.Curley, 'Persistence and Change in Lango Ceremonialism', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1969, p.54.

2. A.Tarantino, 'Il matrimonio tra i Lango anticamente e al presente', Anthropos 35(1941), p.881. Interview: Anderea Okadde.

3. Interview: Yosia Omwa.

The number of clans who were militarily or judicially dependent on a dominant clan varied considerably. One European observer estimated on the basis of his experience of southern Lango in 1899 that a powerful chief ruled up to ten villages;[1] this number would of course have included villages of his own clan. The number of subordinate clans and villages depended ultimately on the strength of the dominant clan, for the greater its size and reputation, the greater would be the number of clans seeking its protection. This can best be illustrated with reference to the hegemony of the Jo Arak of Aber which at the beginning of the 20th century enveloped seven substantial clans in north-west Lango, - the most powerful military combination of its time.

****

The case of Aber shows very well the limits of inter-clan dominance and individual leadership on the eve of the colonial period. The area today known as Aber lies north of the Nile, astride the river Toci, and it is among the most fertile parts of Lango. It attracted Lwo settlers as well as the earliest Lango migrants from the east around 1800. Oral traditions do not throw much light on the clan identity of the earliest settlers. The most ancient of the present-day clans is the Jo Arak, and their traditions are divided. While most accounts allow the arrival of the Jo Arak from Odike in Loro to be pushed no further back than 1870,[2] two of the clan elders believe that

---

1. H.J.Maddocks, Wakedi Field Force Intelligence Report, May 1899, PRO FO/403/281. This estimate is paralleled by Driberg's statement that a <u>rwot</u>'s sphere comprised from 3 to 10 village leaders. <u>The Lango</u>, p.206.

2. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Misaki Oki, Matayo Acut, Yosia Omara.

the Jo Arak had been in Aber for two generations before that.[1] The clan may therefore have arrived in two groups, the first one being in the vanguard of Lango migration. It is also likely that some of the preceding Lwo population was absorbed. These two assumptions would explain the exceptionally large concentration of Jo Arak in Aber. By the end of the 19th century they were living in at least seven villages, divided into three groups. North of the Toci was a group of villages called Kamdini, associated with the Elwia lineage. This same lineage was also dominant in a group of four villages called Ocini, due east of Kamdini on the left bank of the Toci, while five miles south-west of Ocini lay Akaka, the village of the Ocola lineage.[2] Early British observers were much impressed by this density of population.[3] (Map 6).

Each of the three groups had its own leader, but the leadership of the whole clan lay with the Elwia lineage in Kamdini. By 1880 Odongo Aja had succeeded to the position of rwot, with Owiny Akulo as leader of Ocini and Okelo Abong as leader of Akaka.[4] Odongo Aja did not concern himself with the internal affairs of Ocini and Akaka, but he took the lead in organising raids against other clans. On one occasion when a man of the Ocola lineage led a raid south of the Okole river and was killed, Odongo Aja stepped in to recover the clan's prestige.[5] The

---

1. Interviews: Nekomia Otwal, Simon Ogwete.

2. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Misaki Oki, Matayo Acut, Nekomia Otwal.

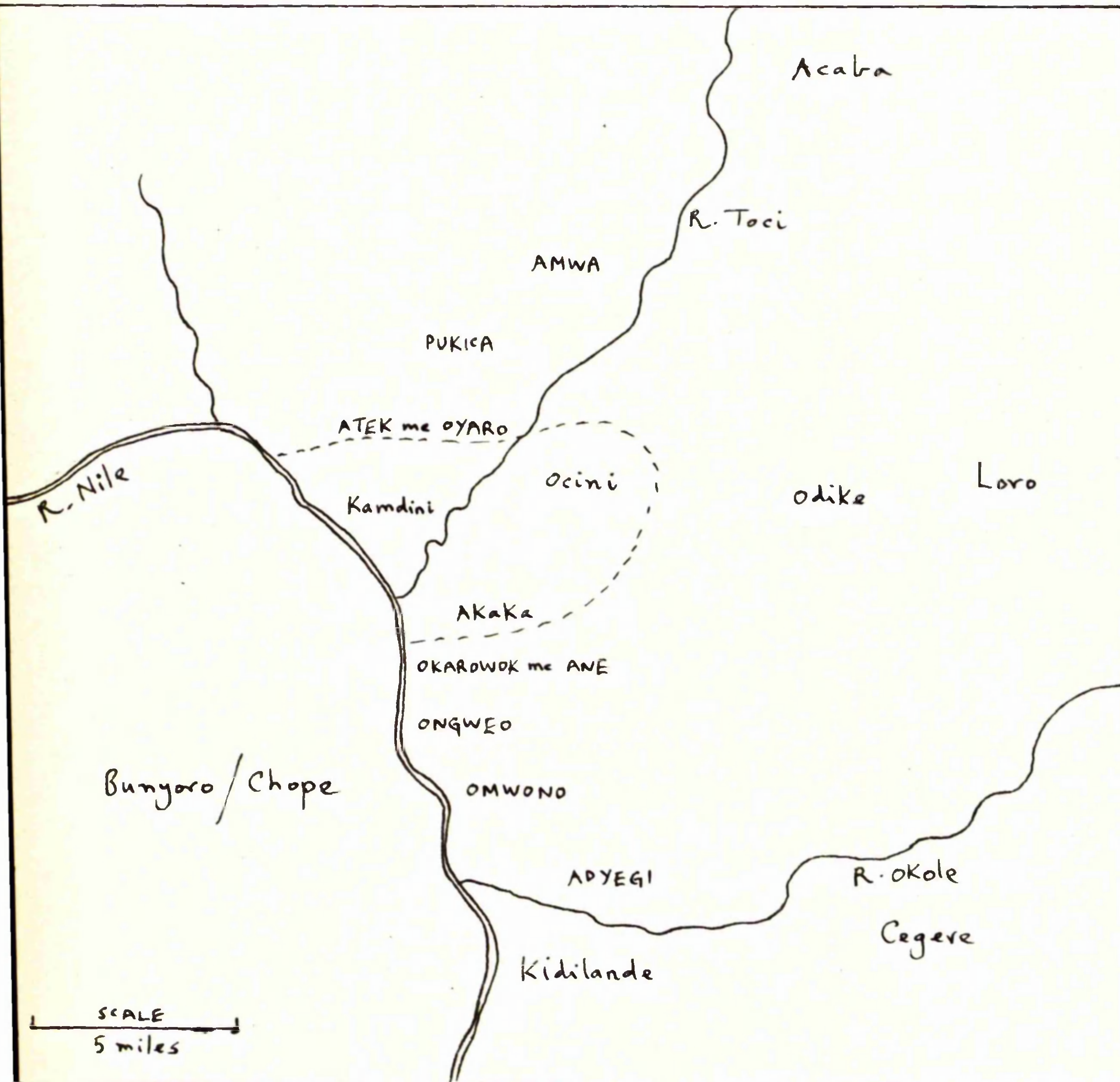
3. Anderson to Johnston, 21.3.00, UNA A4/27; Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for July 1906, UNA SMP/515/part 1.

4. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Matayo Acut, Nekomia Otwal, Kosia Ato.

5. Interview: Misaki Oki.

Map 6

Aber on the eve of the colonial period



Key

- - - - - - - -	approximate extent of area settled by the Arak clan
ONGWEO	clans acknowledging the authority of Odongo Aja
Odike	place-names

MAP 6

only remembered case of a successful expedition not led by Odongo was Owiny Akulo's attack on Anyeke.[1] After Odongo, Owiny Akulo was the best warrior in the clan; the raid on Anyeke may have occurred during Odongo's last illness in 1906.[2]

By that time Odongo had capitalised on the numerical strength of the Jo Arak to achieve a dominance over all the country from the Okole river in the south to very nearly the Acholi border in the north. Seven substantial clans acknowledged his leadership.[3] According to Odongo's son, all the clans north of the Toci were conquered by force.[4] Another account distinghishes between those clans defeated in battle and those who were cowed into submission by Odongo's reputation - those who, as the tradition puts it, "saw the fire" (oneno mac).[5] These explanations exaggerate Odongo's prowess. None of the subject clans has a tradition of conquest by the Jo Arak. Their accounts suggest that their subordination dated from, or shortly after, their original settlement. Two closely linked factors can be distinguished. Firstly, such a large concentration of one clan was an attraction for smaller and less secure clans seeking protection. At the lowest level, the Jo Arak attracted individual families who had been forced to leave their own settlements.

---

1. Interviews: Kosia Ato, Simon Ogwete.

2. One of Odongo's last expeditions was against the Jo Olwa of Iceme. He kept in the background, probably because of illness, and in Iceme Odongo's brother, Otwal, and Owiny Akulo are remembered as the leaders of the expedition. Engola,op.cit.p.7. Interviews: Mohammed Okec, Ogwang Abura.

3. The 7 clans were: Adyegi, Ongweo, Okarowok me Omwono, Okarowok me Ane, Atek me Oyaro, Pukica and Amwa. Interviews: Koranima Ayena, Suleman Ikwe, Yosia Okwe, Edwardi Olir, Erisa Olugo, Yakobo Olugo, Tomasi Ogwete.

4. Interview: Matayo Acut.

5. Interview: Leoben Okodi.

Refugees of this kind are said to have come from as far away as Erute and Aduku in central Lango, and one etymology advanced today for the place-name Aber is that it meant 'the good place' (aber) for refugees.[1] In the same way, whole clan sections settled in Aber in order to enjoy the protection of the Jo Arak. This is admitted to have been the case among the Jo Pukica, who seem to have settled north of the Toci around 1890, and it was probably so elsewhere.[2] Secondly, even if other clans did not settle near Kamdini explicitly in order to be protected by Odongo Aja, circumstances could quickly oblige them to turn to him for help. It is often said in Aber today that Odongo used to answer appeals from war-leaders who wished to attack a more powerful adversary or who had already been defeated.[3] Towards the end of his life, Odongo's answers to these appeals took him as far afield as Ngai and Iceme. But before 1900 this was how several clans nearer home became dependent on him. When the Jo Okarowok me Omwono settled near Atura, Odongo helped them to expel some of the Jopalwo there; their dependence on Odongo was increased a few years later when they called on him to secure the release of their leader who had been captured by a clan from Cegere.[4] In 1899 the Jo Adyegi, who had recently migrated across the Okole from Cegere, fell out with the clans already there, and Odongo's intervention enabled the Jo Adyegi to expel them.[5]

---

1. Interview: Leoben Okodi.
2. Interview: Yakobo Olugo.
3. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Edwardi Olir, Nekomia Otwal.
4. Interview: Suleman Ikwe.
5. Interview: Koranima Ayena. The dating seems certain because this was one of the first battles in which the guns of the Sudanese mutineers were used (see below, Chapter 5) and because it corresponds closely with a major disruption among the Langi within 15 miles of Foweira, recorded by a British officer in Bunyoro in August 1899. Evatt to Ternan, 8.8.99, UNA A4/20.

The price of protection was invariably participation in Odongo's own raids, under his orders. With a view to planning expeditions, all of the subject clans were required to attend regular meetings at Odongo's home along with elders of his own clan; the only exception to this rule was the Adyegi clan which lived further away from Kamdini than any other clan.[1] With this military subordination went an acknowledgement of Odongo's authority as arbitrator in disputes. In the case of the Jo Pukica this authority was even called upon to resolve the constant quarrels between the two component lineages of the clan.[2] But Odongo's main interest was in disputes that divided one clan from another among those he relied on for his military ventures. Thus the Jo Adyegi asked Odongo to intervene if one of their number was murdered on a path outside his village.[3] In a case of manslaughter arising from illicit sexual intercourse which involved the Jo Pukica and a small clan living nearby, Odongo Aja went to the scene and settled the dispute, although both parties had already begun to assemble warriors for a fight.[4] Instead of going himself, Odongo sometimes sent an assistant (awang rwot), who was usually a senior member of the Jo Arak resident at Odongo's own village. But whoever came brought warriors, and it is plain that some of these missions turned into punitive raids in which the offender was plundered or perhaps even killed.[5]

---

1. Interviews: Erisa Oluga, Yakobo Olugo, Tomasi Ogwete, Nekomia Otwal, Koranima Ayena.

2. Interview: Yakobo Olugo.

3. Interview: Koranima Ayena.

4. Interview: Yakobo Olugo.

5. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Misaki Oki, Yakobo Olugo, Matayo Acut.

It will be clear from the foregoing account that the dependence of the subordinate clans was primarily on Odongo Aja, rather than on the other two leaders of the Jo Arak. This was so wherever the clans were situated. For example, both the Jo Ongweo and the Jo Adyegi looked to Odongo Aja in Kamdini rather than to Okelo Abong at Akaka, despite the fact that Akaka was much closer.[1] The only authority which Okelo Abong or Owiny Akulo had outside the Jo Arak was over non-agnates living in their own villages. In Owiny Akulo's area of Ocini, this authority was considerable: an elder from another clan was even made headman of one of the four villages there.[2] Outside Ocini however, Owiny Akulo enjoyed great prestige as a warrior, but he did not wield authority comparable to Odongo Aja's.

On the basis of his strong position in the Jo Arak and among the neighbouring clans, Odongo Aja was able to raid far afield during his last years. The assistance which he had given to the Jo Adyegi in 1899 involved him in a feud with one of the clans that had been chased away, the Jo Adok of Kidilande. On one of his raids south of the Okole river in about 1902, Odongo even went as far as Ibuje, to the territory of the Jo Ocukuru, who were allies of the Jo Adok.[3] At about the same time, Odongo went to attack the Jo Olwa of Iceme, and shortly before his death he answered an appeal from the Jo Olwa themselves, who were anxious to defeat one of their northern neighbours, the Jo Ongoda.[4] The main aim of these expeditions was of course

---

1. Interviews: Yosia Okwe, Koranima Ayena.

2. Interview: Leoben Okodi.

3. Interviews: Yakobo Oluma, Koranima Ayena, Matayo Ayika, Anderea Ogwang. Fowler to Wilson, 27.2.05, UNA A12/6; Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP 1005/08.

4. Engola, op.cit.pp.5-7. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Edwardi Olir, Mohammed Okec, Ogwang Abura.

plunder, and much livestock was taken from south of the Okole and from the Jo Ongoda.[1] A sizeable proportion of the booty was kept by the rwot, 'for his flag' (me bere) as it was said.[2] Odongo also made a speciality of human captives. Many women and children were taken from the Jo Olwa, including their leader's son who was nearly sacrificed alive.[3] Captives were released in return for a ransom of livestock: a woman of Iceme recalls that her husband paid eight head of cattle to recover her from the Jo Arak a year after her capture.[4]

Towards the end of his life, Odongo's position as rwot was increasingly formalised. At his own village of Ayel in Kamdini he maintained about six warriors called jo kal ('people of the chief's compound') or ogwok rwot ('chief's guards') who guarded his compound and accompanied him on campaigns, carrying his shield and spears until he required them.[5] During battle Odongo stayed in the rear to encourage back-sliders and he entered the fray only when his men were hard pressed, while the actual attack was led by Owiny Akulo or by Odongo's brother, Otwal.[6] Odongo also carried a special stick - rather like a baton or sceptre - which was decorated with iron rings and blackened incisions.[7] Most important of all, Odongo's position as chief was becoming defined by the term ker. This word was commonly used in Acholi to describe the authority which a rwot exercised over his own clan

1. Interview: Erisa Olugo. Engola,op.cit.p.5.
2. Interview: Koranima Ayena.
3. Interview: Mohammed Okec.
4. Interviews: Anna Awor; also Leoben Okodi, Matayo Acut.
5. Interviews: Matayo Acut, Leoben Okodi.
6. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Fancio Itot.
7. Interview: Leoben Okodi.

and the subordinate clans. It denoted not the territory of the rwot but the quality of his authority, and can best be translated as 'chieftainship' or 'royalty'.[1] Ker was used with just the same meaning in Aber and in other places in northern Lango where there was a particularly powerful clan.[2]

The concept of ker indicates that the leadership of the Jo Arak in Aber was beginning to be seen as an institution, rather than just a temporary recognition of one man's outstanding abilities. This impression is strengthened by the turn of events after Odongo Aja's death in 1906.[3] The British official at Masindi reported that Odongo's brother, Otwal, had been "chosen by his own people" to succeed him.[4] Practically speaking, this was so, but the report concealed an all-important limitation on Otwal's prospects. For the formal successor was not Otwal, but Odongo's own son Itot, who was then only about ten years old. Odongo himself had succeeded his father as a very young man, and it seems that the rule of filial succession was particularly strong in the Jo Arak; but the designation of a mere boy was most unusual, - perhaps unprecedented in Lango. Otwal had his own ambitions for the chiefship, but he failed to persuade the other elders that Itot ought to be set aside on account of his extreme youth. Instead, Otwal acted as guardian for his nephew.

---

1. F.K.Girling, The Acholi of Uganda (London,1960),pp.85-86.

2. Interviews: Fancio Itot, Yosia Omara, Ogwang Abura. The term aker, meaning one invested with ker, i.e. a chief, occurs in a Lango proverb, but in no other context. T.R.F.Cox, 'Lango Proverbs', Uganda Jl. 10(1946),p.118.

3. Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for October 1906, UNA SMP/515/ part 2. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Matayo Acut, Fancio Itot.

4. Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for October 1906, UNA SMP/515/ part 2.

For the time being he effectively ruled as _rwot_ and was recognised as such by the subordinate clans; indeed it is sometimes assumed among elders in Aber today that he was Odongo's actual successor. But in the Arak clan it was fully understood that Itot would one day take over the powers of his father, for he had been installed as _rwot_ in an elaborate ceremony in which he was ritually 'washed' by the clan elders and declared to have assumed his father's _ker_.[1]

The effectiveness of the new regime cannot easily be assessed since within three years of Odongo Aja's death Protectorate rule was established in north-western Lango. But it seems fairly clear that the dominance of the Jo Arak survived Odongo's death. By 1908 the initial fears of British officials that Otwal's influence would not equal Odongo's had been dispelled,[2] and the raids south of the Okole river continued as vigorously as before.[3] It is possible to discern in Aber on the eve of the colonial period the makings of a stable political structure enveloping the Toci valley and the right bank of the Nile over an area equivalent to nearly two modern sub-counties. Had British administration not been established in 1909, the next generation or two might have seen the Arak dominance strengthened by new institutions.

It is as well to be clear just how little clan dominance had been institutionalised in Aber. Odongo Aja exercised no

---

1. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Matayo Acut, Fancio Itot (Odongo's successor). According to Okodi, Odongo Aja had also been 'washed' at his succession.

2. Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for December 1906, UNA SMP/515/part 2; Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08. The traditions of the subordinate clans also indicate no diminution of power. Interviews: Koranima Ayena, Oyom Iyim, Yakobo Olugo, Yosia Okwe, Tomasi Ogwete.

3. Knowles to Wilson , 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08. Interview: Nekomia Otwal.

ritual powers, any more than leaders of smaller clans did. The dominance of the Jo Arak had not led to a distinction between an aristocratic clan (jo kal or jo ker) and commoner clans (lwak or lobong) as had happened among the Acholi.[1] There was no term to describe the territorial extent of the rwot's authority, and no symbolic expression of his dominance, such as a chiefdom shrine or a ceremony attended by all subject clans: even Itot's succession ceremony appears to have been the exclusive concern of the Jo Arak. Nor was there any tendency towards appointive chieftaincy, for the leaders of the subordinate clans continued to be chosen by the elders in the traditional way.[2] Odongo's authority was channelled through the leaders of the other clans and did not impinge directly on their clansmen; his was inter-clan rather than supra-clan or territorial authority. In short, politics in Aber cannot be seen in terms of a combination of chiefship with kinship values. The individual's political loyalties were to his clan section and village; any obligations beyond that were recognised for practical reasons and not out of respect for an ideal of chiefly rule.

These qualifications to the concept of chiefship applied with still greater force elsewhere in Lango. The degree of one-clan concentration in Aber was unique. Nowhere else was the disparity in size between a dominant clan and its subordinates so marked. The special regard for the rwot's position, as shown

1. J.P.Crazzolara, The Lwoo, 3 parts (Verona,1950-54),pp.71-72; R.M.Bere, 'Land and Chieftainship among the Acholi', Uganda Jl.19 (1955),pp.49-50.

2. Some of Hayley's informants in the 1930's told him that a rwot used to appoint other clan chiefs as his jagi or sub-chiefs; but, as Hayley himself pointed out, this was probably due to a confusion with the colonial system of appointive chiefs; the word rwot was used to mean county-chief. Hayley,op.cit.p.145.

in the succession ceremony and the notion of ker, was found only in north-western Lango.[1] Furthermore, the judicial content of inter-clan authority was more developed in western and central Lango than in the east, where, outside his own clan and village, a rwot tended to exercise no more than occasional military leadership. In Omoro at the beginning of this century, for example, there were four major clans; two of them, the Jo Otikokin and the Jo Atek me Okwerowe, were close associates, but their alliance was one of equals and they had no authority over the other two, though they did lead some smaller clans on cattle raids.[2] Round the present day town of Dokolo, the leaders of the two most populous clans used to combine periodically for attacks on the Kumam during the 1890's, and other clans used to join them, but at all other times the authority of the two leaders, Okwanga and Opige, was restricted to their own villages.[3] This distinction between east and west did not escape early European observers. It was probably with his previous experience of western Lango in mind that G. P. Jervoise, the first British official to be stationed near Dokolo, remarked that there appeared to have been "no chiefs recognised by the Lango" there before he arrived;[4] in Aber, by contrast, Jervoise had been in

---

1. Both these elements are found among the Jo Inomo of Loro and the Jo Olwa of Iceme (Interviews: Yosia Omara, Ogwang Abura), but they have not been recorded anywhere else. They were absent, for instance, in Ibuje, Akokoro and Abyece. Olyech's description of the traditional Lango clan leader's installation ceremony can only be applied to northwest Lango. E.Olyech, 'The Anointing of Clan Heads among the Lango', Uganda Jl. 4(1937),pp.317-18. See also, Hayley, op.cit.p.103.

2. Interviews: Yubu Engola, Nasaneri Owino, Yolam Aliro, Kesekia Okelo, Anderea Okadde, Enoci Bua.

3. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Yeromia Otim, Zedekia Ogwang Abor, Ekoc Opige, Abiramo Okelo Oyanga, Oco Abolli, Amnoni Abura, Alessandro Ocen.

4. Jervoise, undated entry in Dokolo T.B. (1913-26 Part 1),LDA.

no doubt that Odongo Aja was a formidable chief.[1]

It is easier to record these variations in political organisation on the eve of the colonial period than to account for their roots in terms of divergent experience during the previous century. However, the contrast between east and west is probably to be explained with reference to the uneven influence of Lwo ideas upon the political organisation of the Langi. Western Lango, particularly the country along the Nile and its tributaries, had been the area most affected by Lwo settlement during the period from 1600 to 1800. The Lango migrants from Otuke who colonised this area from 1800 onwards not only absorbed more Lwo than their fellow-countrymen to the east; they were also living in closer proximity to the well-established Lwo populations of Acholi and Chope, and further away from any Para-Nilotic-speaking peoples. These accidents of geography and migration accounted for the more sophisticated clan leadership found in north-western Lango. In eastern Lango, on the other hand, clan sections tended to be smaller, and clan leadership was less freely acknowledged. The chances of an effective inter-clan dominance being built up were therefore much reduced.

****

The role of clan leadership has up to this point been considered in relation to the internal ordering of Lango society, and in particular as a focus of antagonism or alliance between neighbouring clan sections. It remains to be shown what part clan leaders played in relations between the Langi and their neighbours during the 19th century. Inter-tribal trade and warfare caused a constant flow of material assets into and out

---

1. Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for October 1906, UNA SMP 515/part 2.

of Lango. To what extent was this flow controlled by clan leaders, and how far were the assets acquired from abroad a political resource ?

In common with much of sub-Saharan Africa, the most important articles of indigenous trade in pre-colonial Uganda were iron and mineral salt. Natural deposits of both these essential commodities were relatively rare, and during the 19th century there was a brisk trade in salt and iron throughout the interlacustrine region and beyond.[1] Mineral salt does exist in Lango near Lake Kwania, but it was not discovered until the beginning of the colonial period.[2] Salt could be extracted from goat's dung and from certain wild grasses, but the results were not very palatable, and during the 19th century there was a demand in Lango for imported mineral salt from the deposits at Kibero in Bunyoro.[3] Natural deposits of iron ore are quite common in Lango, and in the northern and eastern parts of the country smelting was practised by the earliest settlers; but the Langi were not good iron-workers, and they preferred to import metalware from their more highly skilled neighbours, - the Labwor in the east, and the Banyoro in the west. Bracelets and wire were imported for use as bodily ornament, and also hoes, which were turned into spear-heads as well as put to agricultural use. The iron trade appears to have flourished from the earliest

---

1. For a brief survey of this trade, see John Tosh, 'The Northern Interlacustrine Region', in Richard Gray and David Birmingham (editors), Pre-Colonial African Trade (London,1970), pp.104-11.

2. Jervoise, Report on Bululu District for March 1909, UNA, SMP 945/09; unsigned entry for 14.9.17 in Dokolo T.B. (1913-26, Part 1), LDA.

3. C.T.Wilson and R.W.Felkin, Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan (London,1882), vol II,p.54; Ogwal Ajungu, untitled vernacular history (1936-37), MS in the possession of Dr. T.T.S.Hayley, para. 8; Driberg, op.cit. pp.89-90.

period of Lango settlement onwards, so much so that by the beginning of the 20th century the indigenous tradition of iron smelting had almost completely disappeared.[1]

The main commodity given in exchange for salt and ironware was foodstuffs - principally millet, sorghum and simsim. Goats and poultry were also bartered. Both the Labwor and the Banyoro regarded Lango as an important source of food to supplement inadequate supplies at home; such shortages were very common in Bunyoro, though more irregular in Labwor. By the end of the 19th century imported ironware was being widely used in Lango, and grain crops were still the main export. This suggests that the Langi produced very considerable surpluses of food. In subsistence economies, it is common for the farmer to place under cultivation enough land to furnish his subsistence needs if the yield proves bad; in years of average or good yield he will therefore produce a surplus.[2] It is unlikely, however, that the prevalence of imported hoes can be explained in terms of the 'normal surplus' alone. Almost certainly, there was deliberate production of a market surplus in some parts of Lango, and this impression is strengthened by the reliance which the Protectorate government was able to place on food exports from Lango during the years 1913-14, when there were severe shortages in Busoga and northern Buganda.[3]

---

1. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Oco Abolli, Lazaro Okelo, Luka Abura, Erieza Oyaka. Grant to Commissioner, 21.3.02, UNA A10/2/1902 (for Labwor). Driberg,op.cit.pp.44,62,81,87. Tarantino, 'Notes on the Lango', Uganda Jl. 13(1949),p.149.

2. William Allan, The African Husbandman (Edinburgh,1965), pp.38-48.

3. Scott, Report on Lango District for 1913-14, UNA EPMP Z/228/13. Driberg, op.cit.pp.99-100.

Lango traders were known to travel abroad during the 19th century,[1] but most of the barter was conducted by itinerant traders from Bunyoro and from Labwor. The Banyoro were much the more important of the two, since they penetrated every part of Lango except the extreme north-east, and because they came much more frequently than the Labwor did. The most regular traffic from Bunyoro was carried by boat along Lake Kwania and Lake Kyoga, - a route which enabled the Banyoro to extend their activities to Kumam country and even to Teso; but the traders also came by land, and by the end of the century they were visiting the Moroto valley. Banyoro traders travelled in small groups, stopping for a few days in one promising locality before moving on to the next. Lango traditions are almost unanimous that the traders did not travel at random, but stayed at the homes of well-known leaders for protection. Such a home could be used either as a base for touring the immediate vicinity, or as a market from which salt and ironware were redistributed in small quantities by individual Langi. No doubt a clan leader's prestige was increased if he played host to foreign traders, but there is no evidence that he controlled either the production of agricultural surpluses or the distribution of the trade goods. Trade with non-Langi involved the humblest cultivators and was in no sense a source of political patronage.[2]

---

1. Interviews: Nekomia Otwal, Leoben Okodi, Isaka Ojaba, Tomasi Ojuka, Yubu Engola, Anderea Okadde, Onyanga Ewoi. G.Schweinfurth and others (ed), Emin Pasha in Central Africa (London,1888),p.113; W.Junker, Travels in Africa During the Years 1882-1886 (London,1892),pp.470-71.

2. Knowledge of the 19th century trade with the Banyoro is common among Lango elders today. The following were the best informants: Yakobo Adoko, Pilipo Oruro, Yeromia Otim, Yakobo Gaci, Koranima Ayena, Amnoni Abura, Tomasi Ojuka, Lazaro Okelo, Yolam Aliro, Luka Abura. On the Labwor trade, the following were helpful: Erieza Oyaka, Lakana Ekin, Kezekia Ongom, Ogwel Okolla, Anderea Okadde, Amnoni Abura. For the 19th century trade in general, see D.A.Low, in R.Oliver and G.Mathew (ed), History of East Africa, vol I (Oxford,1963),p.327.

This situation was not radically altered when, with the arrival of Sudanese traders on the Victoria Nile during the 1860's, Lango became tenuously connected with overseas markets for the first time.[1] The Sudanese created a demand for ivory which was passed on to the Langi by Banyoro traders and - to a very limited degree - by the Sudanese themselves. But elephants in Lango continued to be hunted by the long-established communal methods, the tusks falling to the first hunter to spear the elephant.[2] Only among the Jo Arak of Aber was there any attempt to extend to Lango the practice current in Acholi whereby one of the tusks belonged by right to the rwot.[3] In north-west Lango - the only area where Sudanese traders operated directly - firearms became available in small quantities, probably during the 1880's. Among both the Jo Arak of Aber and the Jo Olwa of Iceme, these firearms were concentrated in the hands of the clan leaders,[4] but in not one of the recorded oral traditions about pre-colonial clan battles do firearms have any place. The possession of guns seems to have been mainly a matter of prestige; they were fired during war-dances,[5] and as a means of sounding an alarm before battle,[6] but they had no military impact. In

---

1. For the wider context of the Sudanese penetration, see Richard Gray, History of the Southern Sudan, 1839-89, (London, 1961),pp.99-119; D.A.Low,op.cit.pp.324-26.

2. Interviews: Oco Abolli, Tomasi Ojuka, Lazaro Okelo, Yokonia Ogwal.

3. Interviews: Nekomia Otwal, Leoben Okodi, Misaki Oki, Matayo Acut. For the Acholi, see Girling,op.cit.p.94.

4. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Matayo Acut, Mustio Apunyo, Mohammed Okec, Yokana Engola, Onap Awongo.

5. Interview: Tamali Adur Apio.

6. "Whenever the Langi heard a gun go off, they used to regard it as a summons for help". Interview: Leoben Okodi (in Aber).

short, neither local trade nor the importing of exotic goods affected the standing or powers of clan leadership. The benefits of trade with the non-Lango world were rapidly dispersed throughout Lango society.

Raiding was as constant a feature of relations between the Langi and their neighbours as trade. Linant de Bellefonds observed in 1875, with understandable overstatement, that the Langi "live only by raiding and are the terror of these lands."[1] During the 19th century the Madi of the Nile valley north of Lake Albert, the Acholi of Puranga and Patongo, and the Kumam of Kaberamaido were all regular targets of Lango raiding.[2] From the 1850's onwards Lango campaigns were also fought in Bunyoro and the other interlacustrine states to the south.[3] Sometimes these conflicts were caused by disputed claims to hunting tracts, such as the uninhabited country north of Karuma Falls during the 1870's.[4] But nearly always the purpose of raids was the acquisition of livestock and human captives. Large numbers of women and children were captured and brought back to Lango, and many important Langi of the late 19th century are said to have been born of non-Lango mothers or to have themselves been foreigners captured in infancy.[5]

---

1. "Ils ne vivent que de razzias, et sont le terreur de ces pays", Linant de Bellefonds, op.cit. p.16.

2. For a summary of Lango military activity based on oral tradition, see A.Tarantino, 'Lango Wars', Uganda Jl. 13(1949), pp.230-35.

3. See below, pp. 155-60, 165-67.

4. S.W.Baker, Ismailia (London,1874),vol II,pp.130-31.

5. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Yakobo Obia, Festo Ejok. Driberg, op.cit.pp.165,173. Warne, entry for 4.8.13 in Koli T.B. (1912-14, part 2), LDA.

These spoils of war were not, however, the prerogative of clan leaders, despite their crucial role in the actual conduct of warfare. Both livestock and captives were distributed among the warriors of the clan. The capture of women and children did not introduce a slave element into the political system, nor did it provide clan leaders with a personal following of uprooted foreigners. Instead, war captives were rapidly absorbed into the kinship system, and the acquisition of 'sons' or 'daughters' in this way lay within the reach of ordinary clan members. Particular emphasis seems to have been placed on the capture of women and girls, for these were important in allowing the ideal of polygyny to be more widely attained.[1]

****

It should now be clear just how circumscribed clan leadership in 19th century Lango was. Spatially, the position usually involved control over no more than a hundred or so adult males and their wives and children, with in some cases the addition of a few smaller clan sections whose territory was immediately adjacent. In qualitative terms, clan leadership was given no formal expression in symbolic or ritual form, and it carried with it no control over economic resources, whether produced by the clan community itself, or brought in from outside through trade and warfare. The clan leader's role was limited to command in battle and the settlement of disputes; and even here he was bound to take into account the views of his foremost warriors and the clan elders, unless he was a man of quite exceptional prowess and repute. In everyday life the Langi accorded to

---

1. Interviews: Samwiri Ade, Yakobo Gaci, Onap Awongo, Reuben Ogwal, Yeromia Otim.

their 'chiefs' the minimum powers needed to achieve order within the community and to resist, or initiate, an attack outside. Driberg was in no doubt as to the Lango aversion to authority. The Langi, he wrote,[1]

> "are emphatically independent and impatient of control, strongly conservative and averse from all innovations. Guided in their social relations by a morality based on public opinion, they are nevertheless individualistic in their political life. Each man is as good as his neighbour, and disliking interference himself, is equally averse to limiting his own individuality by an acknowledgement of political dependence. They are the last people in the world to be dragooned into any line of thought or action."

The limitations on clan leadership in the 19th century fully accord with Driberg's judgement of the Lango character. So restrictive were these limitations that it is virtually meaningless to describe Lango clan leaders as 'chiefs'.

---

1. Driberg, op.cit. p.69.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ZENITH AND COLLAPSE OF REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

The picture of clan leadership painted in the last chapter was essentially a static one; the essentials of clan authority were taken as given, while the dominance achieved by one clan section over its weaker neighbours was seen as a process which was constantly repeated as migration changed the clan configuration of settlement areas. Judging by the examples adduced of individual leadership and inter-clan dominance, it may be objected that the condition of Lango as it was around 1900 has too readily been assumed to apply to the previous century. The emphasis on the period from about 1880 to 1910 is determined by the principal weakness of Lango oral tradition, which is that detailed clan histories can be pushed no further back than the settlement of clan sections in their final, present-day localities.[1] The lack of evidence for the earlier period is certainly a serious drawback, but at the same time there are no grounds for believing that the type of clan leadership described here developed only during the last generation before colonial rule. It should rather be viewed as a natural corollary of the particular combination of territorial and descent groups in Lango society, and of the pattern of secondary migration and settlement.

However, it would be very misleading to see political authority in 19th century Lango as no more than the operation of clan leadership at a parochial level. For almost all social and political purposes, the local concentration of a single clan, or of a group of allied clans, was the only context that

---

1. For a fuller discussion see above, Introduction.

counted, but it did not totally dominate the outlook of the individual Lango. For in certain situations, clan sections were caught up in very much wider alignments. It is here that the process of evolution and change in 19th century Lango history is most striking. The culmination was a sudden deterioration in political scale around 1890, which had a crucial bearing on the response of the Langi to the incoming colonial power during the ensuing thirty years.

The main features of political cooperation above the local level before the 1890's can be summarised under four heads: the exercise of leadership at the regional level; the observance of conventions limiting the intensity of inter-clan fighting; a capacity to intervene militarily in neighbouring countries, especially in the interlacustrine world; and a corresponding capacity to defeat the Sudanese slave-raiders who invaded Lango during the 1870's. It is here that the limitations of oral tradition in Lango are most serious. For the reconstruction of these features of Lango history throws the historian back on the confused and imprecise traditions relating to the period before about 1880. Nevertheless, a careful reading of the traditions does reveal common elements, and when these are set alongside the writings of European travellers of the day, a consistent picture does emerge.

****

In many parts of Lango, stories are told about great leaders of old who were respected over a wide area, - men like Opyene Nyakanyolo, Ngora Akubal, Ogwal Abura and Agoro Abwango. They are said to have limited the extent of clan warfare at home and to have led the Langi on successful campaigns abroad; in some of the traditions they are described as having presided

over mass gatherings where 'laws' were promulgated and admonitions given to the people.[1] This exalted form of authority is closely linked in tradition with the maintenance of important restraints on fighting within Lango. There is a widespread tradition that in the early days of Lango settlement the use of the spear was confined to hunting and to raids on other tribes. Battles between clans or villages were fought with sticks or clubs, and with whips made from twisted buffalo hide. A clear distinction was therefore drawn between Langi and non-Langi where fighting was concerned. Consequently the participants in a clan battle were less likely to be killed, the chances of a prolonged state of feud were reduced, and clans could more easily be mobilised over a wide area for campaigns abroad.[2] There may be elements of a mythical golden age in these stories, but the traditions as a whole need to be taken seriously, since in one form or another they are found all over Lango, and also because contemporary European sources substantiate the tradition of vigorous campaigning abroad.[3]

The first requirement is to establish the place of the great leaders of old in Lango social organisation. This is no easy task in view of the tendency for traditions of this period to be divorced from the mainstream of clan histories. It is usually claimed that the authority of these leaders extended all

---

1. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Jorbabel Akora, Yakobo Gaci, Luka Abura, Lakana Ekin, Adonia Ecun, Erieza Oyaka, Tomasi Ojuka, Lajaro Obia, Kezekia Okelo. A.Tarantino, 'Lango Clans', Uganda Jl. 13(1949),p.110.

2. Interviews: Anderea Okadde, Yakobo Adoko, Kezekia Okelo, Isaka Ojaba. Ogwal Ajungu, untitled vernacular history (1936-37), MS in the possession of Dr. T.T.S.Hayley, para. 7. J.H. Driberg, The Lango (London,1923),pp.106-7.

3. See references later in this chapter.

over Lango. A much more probable explanation, however, is that they were figures of regional rather than tribal importance, and this is indicated by the fact that the _dramatis personae_ of the tradition vary from one part of Lango to another: of the four men mentioned above, the first two are mainly associated with south-western Lango, and the last two with the east. Assuming that their authority was regionally based, it is tempting to see it as in some way dependent on the age organisation. According to this interpretation, the regional leaders were heads of the four territorial sections into which Lango was divided for purposes of the age ceremonies; they were clan leaders in their own right, who periodically came to prominence during the _ewor_ ceremonies, where they took the lead in enforcing the ban on spear-fighting, enjoining good standards of behaviour, and organising attacks on other tribes.[1] Oral tradition does contain a few positive indications of a link between the great leaders and the age organisation. In western Lango several leaders, notably Opyene Nyakanyolo, were reputedly prominent in the _ewor_ ceremonies;[2] while the songs of the buffalo age-set include several references to Ngora Akubal's campaigns against the Madi.[3]

Attractive though this explanation is - and it may be the correct one - it would be unwise to seize upon it too readily. The territorial spread of the age organisation certainly contributed to an atmosphere of inter-clan concord in which regional

---

1. See above, p.111.

2. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Jorbabel Akora, Yakobo Gaci.

3. The songs as set down by Driberg(op.cit.pp.257-60) refer to him as 'Ngora' only, but there is little doubt that this is the Ngora Akubal whose campaigns against the Madi are recorded in other traditions (A.Tarantino,'Lango Wars' _Uganda Jl_.13(1949), p.230) Okot is right to identify one with the other (J.p'Bitek Okot 'Oral Literature and its Social Background among the Acholi and Lango' unpublished B.Litt thesis,Oxford University,1963,p.161)

leadership would have been more easily accepted. But the evidence is far too slender to determine whether there was any closer connection. Furthermore, the ultimate fate of regional leadership would suggest that personal influence was more important than an institutional base. In view of the inadequate sources, it is unlikely that this question will ever be settled. But the practical importance of regional leadership is demonstrated by the record of large-scale Lango campaigns abroad during the 19th century, and especially in the period from about 1850 to 1890; on this, there is no room for doubt at all.

Raiding in strong groups and over great distances dates back to the time of the initial westward expansion of the Langi from Otuke. In northern Lango during the second quarter of the 19th century, combinations of border clans were led against the Acholi by a warrior named Angulo Orenga, who met his death in the royal village of the rwot of Patiko.[1] The period from about 1820 to 1860 was also the time of greatest activity against the Madi of the Albert Nile, to the north-west of Lango, from whom many captives were taken.[2]

One interesting consequence of these raids may be mentioned. The campaigns against the Madi resulted not only in the taking of many captives, but also in the introduction into Lango of new techniques of rain-making and a tendency towards ritual centralisation. On one of these expeditions - probably during the

---

1. J.P.Crazzolara, The Lwoo, 3 parts (Verona,1950-54),pp.236-37; A.Tarantino, 'The Origin of the Lango', Uganda Jl.10(1946),p.12, and 'Lango Wars', p.232; F.K.Girling, The Acholi of Uganda (London 1960), pp.86,117.

2. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Yakobo Obia. Driberg,op.cit.p.165. This dating depends mainly on the place in clan genealogies of known war captives. But for corroboration, see also: Crazzolara, op.cit.p.366; Tarantino,'Lango Wars',p.230; Girling,op.cit.p.155.

1840's or 1850's - Oketa, a clan leader of the Jo Ogora, captured a Madi youth who was brought back to Lango with his possessions, including two large rain-stones and a two-mouthed pot. The captured boy was adopted by Oketa and given the name Okelo Maitum; he grew up to become - probably during the 1860's - leader of the clan at Ikwera, near present-day Aduku, and a noted rain-maker.[1] Among the Madi, a rain-maker or rain-chief was distinghished by his possession of rain-stones made of quartz, which were kept in a special pot.[2] The rain-stones and the ritual power of the rain-makers were much venerated by the Madi, and they seem to have communicated this respect to the Lwo, for the same system was practised among the Acholi of the Sudan-Uganda border.[3] It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Madi techniques proved attractive to the Langi. What is remarkable is the fact that Okelo Maitum and his son Lingo were the only rain-makers in Lango who practised them. So far as is known, theirs were the only rain-stones brought from Madi. As a result they enjoyed immense prestige. They combined the position of rain-maker with leadership of their own clan, the Jo Ogora. By the end of the century Lingo's ceremonies were attended by people from all over south-western Lango.[4] This special position allowed the Jo Ogora of Aduku to take a lead

---

1. Interview: Yakobo Obia. T.T.S.Hayley, The Anatomy of Lango Religion and Groups (Cambridge,1947),pp.74-75; Tarantino, 'Lango Wars', p.230.

2. For rain-makers in Madi, see: J.Middleton,'Notes on the political organisation of the Madi of Uganda', African Studies 14(1955),pp.33-35; F.H.Rogers, 'Notes on Some Madi Rain-stones', Man 27(1927),pp.81-87.

3. E.T.N.Grove,'Customs of the Acholi', Sudan Notes and Records 2(1919),pp.172-73.

4. Interviews: Yakobo Obia, Lajaro Obia, Yosia Omwa, Yakobo Oluma, Isaka Ojaba, Omara Ekak, Pilipo Oruro.

in other spheres as well. Okelo Maitum convened *ewor* ceremonies for the south-western section, or *jo moita*, and in either his time or Lingo's, the other sections of Lango began to acknowledge the *jo moita* as the initiators of both *ewor* and the rain-dance (*myelo kot*).[1]

****

The most striking evidence of the power of Lango regional leaders is to be found not so much in their campaigns against the Acholi or Madi, as in their activities in the interlacustrine world. The Langi affected the balance of power within the kingdom of Bunyoro itself, and in the conflicts between Bunyoro and Buganda their aid was eagerly sought by both sides. That the Langi were seen in this light by powerful chiefs is no small measure of the authority wielded by Lango regional leaders.

Lango traditions, while they stress the dependence of the Banyoro kings on Lango military help, are imprecise as to particular expeditions and overall chronology. According to Nyoro royal tradition, however, the first significant Lango intervention was in about 1851-52, during the succession war between Kamurasi and Olimi Rwakabale. Kamurasi enlisted Lango help, and in a battle near Lwampanga, on the left bank of the Nile, Olimi was defeated and killed.[2] This early success did not, however,

---

1. Interviews: Lajaro Obia, Ibrahim Lodo. Driberg,op.cit.p.249; Hayley,op.cit.p.75.

2. R.M.Fisher, *Twilight Tales of the Black Baganda* (London,1911) pp.153-55; K.W., 'The Kings of Bunyoro-Kitara', part 3,*Uganda Jl.* 5(1937),p.62; J.W.Nyakatura, *Abakama ba Bunyoro-Kitara* (St.Justin, Canada,1947; English translation in typescript, Makerere University Library).
Tarantino ('Lango Wars',p.233), working from Lango sources, also regards this as the first Lango intervention in Bunyoro, and he associates it with the leader Opyene Nyakanyolo. The present writer has found no traditions pertaining explicitly to Kamurasi's war.

render Kamurasi secure from other challenges. For the kingdom was still suffering from the effects of the breakdown of royal authority during the reign of Kamurasi's grandfather, Kyebambe Nyamatukura, early in the 19th century. Not only had the independent kingdom of Toro then been carved out of the Nyoro state; two of Nyamatukura's sons had also tried to use Chope, the Lwo-speaking enclave in Bunyoro, as a base from which to throw off the omukama's authority. During Kamurasi's reign this challenge was continued by Mpuhuka and Ruyonga, sons of the original rebels.[1] By and large, the Langi sided with the rebel princes, both by giving military help and by offering them refuge when they were expelled from Bunyoro.[2] This is hardly surprising, since Chope was immediately adjacent to Lango, and its Jopalwo population had close affinities with the Langi, especially with the clans of the Toci and Okole valleys, who had absorbed substantial Lwo elements.

On Kamurasi's death in 1869, there was again a disputed succession and a protracted war between the rivals. Kabarega, the eventual winner, was twice defeated by Kabigumire, his brother, and there is little doubt that Kabigumire's ability to prolong the struggle owed something to his "strong army of Bachope and Lango warriors".[3] Kabigumire's death did not halt

---

1. For the 19th century Nyoro background, see: K.W.,op.cit. pp.59-62. K.W.'s account is corroborated in: Linant de Bellefonds to Gordon, 24.3.75, in M.F.Shukry (ed), Equatoria under Egyptian Rule (Cairo,1953),p.237; and in C.T.Wilson and R.W.Felkin,Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan (London,1882), vol II, p.325.

2. J.H.Speke, Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile (London,1863),p.570; J.W.Grant, A Walk Across Africa (London 1864),pp.284,312; S.W.Baker, The Albert N'yanza (London,1867), vol II,pp.241,243; K.W.,op.cit.p.62. See also Driberg,op.cit.p.34.

3. K.W.,op.cit.pp.63-64.

the challenge to royal rule from the Chope princes and their Lango allies. In 1872 Ruyonga and a Lango force attacked Kabaraga at the same time as the Baganda invaded from the south,[1] In 1875 about 3,000 Langi raided Kabarega on behalf of Mupina, the brother and successor of Mpuhuka.[2] A year later Colonel Gordon, Governor of Egypt's Equatoria Province, planned to mobilise 4,000 Langi as part of a major assault on Kabarega, though this plan was never implemented;[3] and in 1878 Mutesa of Buganda also tried to secure the cooperation of Lango leaders.[4]

The Langi were not, however, uniformly bostile to royal authority in Bunyoro. During the 1860's Kamurasi appears to have received many visitors from Lango.[5] Nor is it by any means clear that all Lango war-bands operating in Bunyoro during the succession war of 1869-70 were on the side of Kabigumire.[6] During the 1870's Kabarega was certainly receiving military help from Lango, as this revealing remark of Linant de Bellefonds in 1875 shows :[7]

> "It is a strange thing that the same Lango who one day are helping Kabarega against Rionga return the next day with Rionga against Kabarega."

---

1. S.W.Baker, Ismailia (London,1874),vol II,p.433.

2. E.Linant de Bellefonds, 'Voyage de service fait entre le poste militaire de Fatiko et la capitale de M'tesa roi d'Uganda', Bulletin Trimestriel de la Société Khédiviale de Géographie du Caire, I (1876-1877),pp.15-16. Campaigns on Mupina's behalf are well substantiated by traditions in north-west Lango. Interviews: Yakobo Olugo, Mohammed Okec, Yokonani Alyai.

3. Gordon to Khairy Pasha,28.9.76, in Shukry,op.cit.p.366; G.Birkbeck Hill (ed), Colonel Gordon in Central Africa,1874-79, (London,1881),p.194.

4. Entries for 31.1.78 and 5.2.78 in 'The Diaries of Emin Pasha - Extracts III',Uganda Jl.26(1962),p.86.

5. Speke,op.cit.pp.502-4,509,567.

6. Some Lango traditions speak of intervention on Kabarega's side, but the adversary mentioned, usually 'Abwon', has not been identified. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Nekomia Otwal.

7. Linant to Gordon,24.3.75, in Shukry,op.cit.p.238. (My translation from the French).

Quite how much help the king received is more difficult to determine. Kabarega himself made a powerful impression in Lango, perhaps on account of his exile there during the late 1890's.[1] Nowadays Lango traditions tend to see pre-colonial contacts with Bunyoro in terms of a personal relationship with Kabarega, and few Langi will admit that their leaders ever fought against him, although the documentary record on this point is unequivocal. Clearly, then, the estimate made by the Langi themselves of their role in Kabarega's campaigns must be treated with some caution. That Lango war-bands helped Kabarega against the Chope rebels and in border wars against Buganda is not in doubt. It is the claim that the Langi took part in campaigns much further afield which is difficult to assess. The Alur, the Banyankore and the Bagungu are all recalled as adversaries.[2] Perhaps the most interesting Lango claim relates to Kabarega's reconquest of Toro during the 1870's. The belief that the Langi contributed materially to the reconquest is quite common in Lango.[3] No mention is made of Lango participation in any of the published bodies of Nyoro tradition, but the awareness in Lango tradition of so remote an event as the reconquest of Toro would seem to indicate some form of involvement by the Langi.

The frequency of Lango campaigns in Bunyoro during the 1860's and 1870's raises several important questions. The first is: what precisely was the role of Lango auxiliaries in the more sophisticated interlacustrine world ? Beyond contemporary

---

1. See below, pp. 182-85.

2. Tarantino, 'Lango Wars', pp. 233-34. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Yakobo Gaci, Suleman Ikwe, Tomasi Ojuka.

3. Interviews: Yakobo Gaci, Tomasi Ojuka, Anderea Ogwang, Koranima Ayena, Reuben Ogwal.

assurances that the fighting abilities of the Langi were widely respected,[1] we have no evidence about this. Neither documentary nor traditional sources describe the tactics employed by the Langi when fighting in large numbers. It is not even known whether the Lango detachments merely carried out general instructions on their own, or whether they were properly integrated into the Banyoro armies. There is more evidence about the appeal, in Lango eyes, of campaigning abroad. A successful expedition brought not only plunder from the enemy, in the form of cattle and captives, but often rewards from allies as well, such as hoes, beads, salt, and sweet-potato plants - unknown in Lango at that time.[2] The spoils of war were within the reach of ordinary clan members, who might be in need of bridewealth,[3] and they could be obtained without necessarily disrupting the agricultural routine at home, since warriors did not normally spend more than three months away on an expedition.[4] For as long as foreign expeditions entailed no severe losses of men, the prospect of reward and plunder was a highly attractive one. It seems very likely that the opportunities for easy pickings held out by Kamurasi, Kabarega, Ruyonga and the rest, contributed greatly to the hold which regional leaders were able to exert

---

1. Speke, op.cit. p.90; Wilson and Felkin,op.cit.vol II,p.53.

2. Interviews: Ibrahim Lodo, Gideon Odwongo, Lakana Ekin, Yakobo Adoko, Mohammed Okec. Linant de Bellefonds,op.cit.p.16. Driberg, entry for 3.2.16 at Aloi, in Eruti T.B.(1915-21),LDA; Tarantino, 'Lango Wars',pp.233-34.

3. Interviews: Dominiko Opone, Isaka Ojaba, Yakobo Gaci, Yeromia Otim.

4. Interviews: Erieza Okelo, Yubu Engola, Lakana Ekin; also Yosia Omwa (interview conducted by W.Okot-Chono, as part of the undergraduate research scheme of the Dept. of History, Makerere University, 1969).

over their followings. And this development was not confined to the border clans along the Nile: large war-bands came from as far afield as Aloi, Alito and Omoro, in the Moroto valley.[1]

It was against this background of effective military co-operation abroad that the Langi were confronted during the 1870's by the most serious external threat before the arrival of the British - namely, the Sudanese raiders, or 'Khartoumers'. Traders from Khartoum first became active on the Victoria Nile during the 1860's. Their main requirement was ivory, with only a subsidiary interest in slaves; but the ivory trade itself was conducted in a highly irregular fashion. The traders raided the indigenous peoples for cattle and slaves, with which to pay their ivory hunters and porters. The explorations of J. H. Speke and Samuel Baker exposed these abuses to the outside world, and trade was soon followed by the flag: in 1870 Baker returned to the White Nile with instructions from the Egyptian Khedive to set up a province in 'Equatoria'. His intention was to curb the rapacity of the traders and to establish instead 'legitimate commerce'. In practice, the problem was too great for Baker and his successors, Gordon and Emin Pasha, to solve with their limited resources. They were unable even to restrain their own Sudanese soldiers and petty officials, who raided the African peoples of the Province for provisions and for goods to trade on their own account.[2]

In northern Uganda, the main victims of the Khartoumers were the Acholi, Madi and Lugbara. The Langi lived further from

---

1. Interviews: Anderea Okadde, Yubu Engola, Ogwel Okolla, Yokonia Ogwal. Driberg, entry for 3.2.16 in Eruti T.B.(1915-21), LDA. The participation of easterners is also confirmed by informants in western Lango: Erisa Olugo, Benedikto Okelo Elwange.

2. For the history of Equatoria, see Richard Gray, History of the Southern Sudan,1839 to 1889 (London,1961),pp.99-119,135-51.

the main lines of communication, and they were not included in the formal administration of Equatoria Province.[1] All the same, they were well within the range of the Khartoumers: before Baker arrived as Governor in 1872, the traders already had permanent bases at Patiko, in south-western Acholi, and at Foweira, on the left bank of the Nile near the mouth of the Okole river; while later there were government garrisons at Foweira from 1872 to 1884,[2] and at Mruli, near the Nile-Kafu confluence, from 1876 to 1880. The reason why the Langi suffered less than their neighbours from the Khartoumers lay not so much in their geographical remoteness as in their capacity to defeat the raiders.

In two areas of Lango, the Khartoumers suffered major reverses during the 1870's. When Baker reached Acholi in 1872, he was given a graphic account of the first of these reverses which had just occurred. A force of some three hundred Sudanese and Acholi left Patiko for Lango country. They followed the course of the Asua/Moroto river upstream to the south-east, until they reached a well populated area with large herds of cattle, in what is now Moroto county. Here they were hospitably received and were given seventy head of cattle and much ivory; but after a week the Khartoumers rounded on their hosts, burning villages,

---

1. Only one case is know of Langi who acknowledged the rule of Equatoria. In 1880 a group of 'chiefs' near Foweira agreed to pay a tax to the government. Most probably, these were Langi who lived in Kumeri and Acora, west of Karuma Falls, and beyond the control of the powerful Jo Arak in Aber. Entry for 2.11.80, in ' Diaries of Emin Pasha /hereafter D.E.P./ - Extracts IV', Uganda Jl.26(1962),p.134.

2. In 1875 Foweira fort was moved about 12 miles northwards to a site opposite the Nile-Toci confluence, where it remained until 1884. (Linant de Bellefonds to Gordon,24.3.75, in Shukry, op.cit.p.237). For a brief period in 1879-80 the garrison was withdrawn on Gordon's orders.

massacring the inhabitants, and capturing women and children who were taken back to Patiko.[1] This sudden and devastating attack caused several clans to migrate away from the area altogether.[2] But it also caused those clans that remained in the Moroto valley to set aside their differences and prepare to resist the next attack. As one tradition current in Adwari puts it:[3]

> "All the people who were divided by hatreds assembled together and made an agreement. People from Adwari, Orum, Aloi and Apala /from both sides of the Moroto river/ met together. They said, 'Let us put aside our hatreds. These strangers are depleting our people; for take note that when they seized our cattle, they also captured our best young men and added them to the livestock'."

The Khartoumers soon returned. A ruffian named Lazim led another force of 350 Sudanese, together with many Acholi auxiliaries, in order to capture cattle and slaves from the same area. But when the advance guard of 250 men went ahead to attack a group of villages at dawn, they were ambushed on a narrow path; the Langi attacked them from the high grass on both sides; and before most of them could even load their muskets they were speared; only one survivor regained the main body of the expedition, which returned to Patiko by forced marches after beating off a further Lango attack. About 250 men had been killed and 103 guns lost. The Moroto valley was never again troubled by the Khartoumers[4] (Map 7).

---

1. Baker, Ismailia, II, pp.102-3.

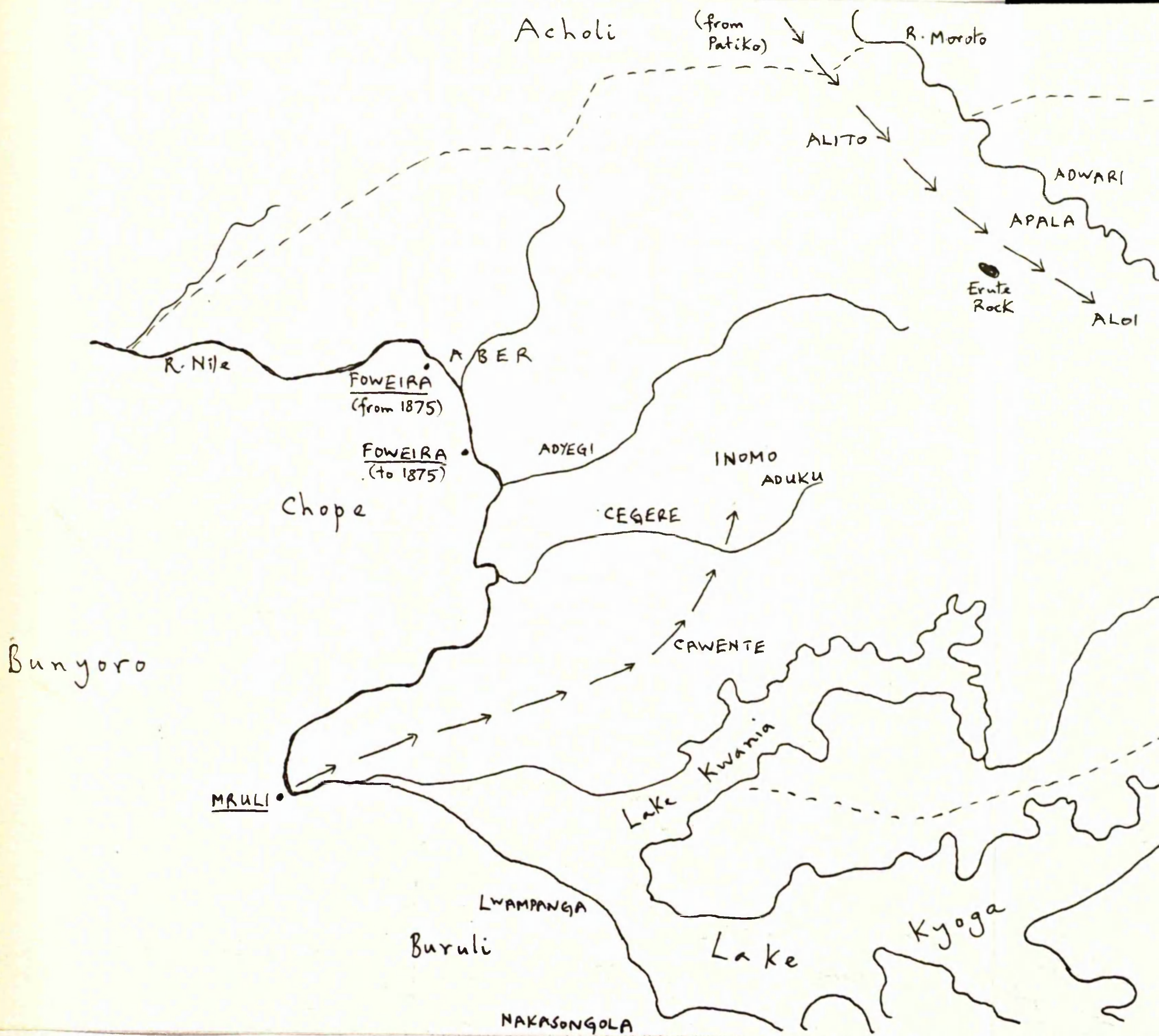
2. Reuben Ogwal, untitled vernacular MS, translated as 'A History of Lango Clans', mimeo, Dept. of History, Makerere University,pp.5,21. Interviews: Yosua Odongo Opio, Yakobo Onya.

3. Interview: Kezeron Awongo. According to this informant, the Khartoumers had raided the Aloi area several times before. This could well be true; it was not, after all, in the Khartoumers interest to reveal the full extent of their plundering to Baker.

4. Baker, Ismailia, II,pp.104-6. Interviews: Kezeron Awongo, Yubu Engola.

Map 7

The Langi and their neighbours in the 19th century



Key

→ → → Khartoumer incursions during the 1870's

MAP 7

The second crisis occurred in south-western Lango, in what are now Maruzi and Kwania counties. It was probably this area which was affected by the first recorded Khartoumer incursion into Lango in 1864, when Kamurasi of Bunyoro sent a Sudanese trader and eighty of his men to punish Lango villages which had offered help to the rebel, Mpuhuka.[1] South-western Lango became more seriously exposed when an Egyptian station was established at Mruli in 1876.[2] The garrisons of government stations tended to live off the land, despite official inducements to the troops to grow their own crops, and Mruli was no exception. The country immediately opposite the fort on the right bank of the Nile was at this time still uninhabited, but there were Langi living further inland in Cegere, Inomo and Cawente. On what was probably not the first foraging expedition, 200 men crossed over into Lango in August 1877; they returned to Mruli two weeks later, having lost over eighty men killed, about thirty women and children killed, and - as Emin Pasha ruefully remarked - with "not a dishful of provisions secured".[3] An avenging expedition the following year captured 800 head of cattle,[4] but it seems that the debacle of 1877 was an effective deterrent. Between 1879 and the withdrawal of the Patiko and Foweira garrisons in 1884-85, only one further raid is recorded:

---

1. Baker, Albert N'yanza, II,p.244.

2. Gordon to Khairy Pasha, 4.1.76, in Shukry,op.cit.p.433.

3. Entries for 27.8.77 and 9.9.77 in 'D.E.P. - Extracts II', Uganda Jl.25(1961),p.154.

4. Entries for 19.2.78 and 28.4.78 in 'D.E.P. - Extracts III' loc.cit.,pp.86,93; Wilson and Felkin,op.cit.II,pp.38-39. Relations between the Mruli garrison and the Langi are minutely examined in two articles by Sir John Gray: 'Gordon's Fort at Mruli', Uganda Jl.19(1955),pp.62-67; 'Lango Wars with Egyptian Troops', Uganda Jl.21(1957),pp.111-14.

this was a fruitless foraging expedition from Foweira in 1882, which lost yet more men and munitions.[1]

Little is known about the Lango response to the raids from Mruli, but, according to one tradition, the threat caused the clans of the south-west to unite under a leader in Inomo called Abili Obangkwon, who visited a diviner in Bugerere in order to secure protection against the bullets of the Khartoumers.[2] It may well have been Abili who organised the decisive rebuff of 1877. At any rate, the oral record on both the Patiko and Mruli raids indicates a coordinated, multi-clan response over a wide area, and the very scale of the defeats inflicted on the Khartoumers supports this conclusion.

By the end of the 1870's the Khartoumer threat had been effectively dealt with, but the opportunities to campaign abroad continued, and on much the same pattern as before. During the 1880's Lango war-bands were active on Kabarega's side, as well as on the side of the rebels based in Chope - Ruyonga, Mupina and their successors.[3] During the late 1880's Kabarega was active against two other adversaries - the Equatoria administration, now on its last legs, and the Baganda - and here too the Langi were involved. When at the end of 1887 Kabarega began to prepare for an attack on Emin Pasha's few remaining posts, his forces included Langi.[4] As for the border wars against Buganda,

1. Entry for 16.7.82 in 'D.E.P.-Extracts V' Uganda Jl.27(1963) p.2.

2. Interviews: Yosia Omwa, Jabulon Okuta (conducted by W.Okot-Chono, as part of the Makerere undergraduate research scheme,1969) See also J.N.Odurkene,'The Langi-Banyoro Relationship and the Career of Chief Daudi Odora,1850-1931',mimeo(1968), Dept. of History, Makerere University, p.7.

3. Entries for 23.3.87 and 9.5.87 in 'DEE.P.-Extracts VII', Uganda Jl.28(1964),pp.82,90-91.

4. G.Casati, Ten Years in Equatoria (London,1891),vol II, pp. 92,144; entry for 7.1.88 in 'D.E.P.-Extracts VIII',Uganda Jl. 28(1964),p.216.

Lango participation on Kabarega's side is recalled in tradition, being associated with both victory and defeat.[1] It is quite likely that the Langi took part in Kabarega's greatest success against the Baganda, - the battle of Rwengabi in 1886, when an invading army was repulsed with heavy losses and its commander killed.[2]

As a result of the frequent campaigning in Bunyoro, Lango society was exposed to influence from the interlacustrine world over a period of some forty years, from about 1850 to 1890. This influence took both economic and cultural forms. The sweet-potato brought back from Bunyoro proved very popular, and by the end of the century the new crop was universal in north-west Lango.[3] A few captured Ankole cattle were responsible for one characteristic strain of cattle in Lango.[4] The practice of spirit possession was so greatly influenced by the kubandwa cult of the Banyoro, that several features of the Nyoro complex have since become an integral part of Lango religion.[5]

Politically, however, the impact of Bunyoro was less than might be imagined. Once the regional leaders had become able

---

1. Tanantino, 'Lango Wars', pp.233-34. Interviews: Erieza Okelo, Pilipo Oruro, Leoben Okodi, Yakobo Adoko, Yosia Omara, Erisa Olugo, Erieza Oyaka.

2. On this battle, see K.W. op.cit.p.64; Fisher,op.cit.pp. 170-71; J.K.Miti, 'History of Buganda' typescript translation of vernacular MS, Makerere University Library,p.264. G.Schweinfurth and others, Emin Pasha in Central Africa (London,1888), pp.499,501. None of these accounts mentions the Langi, but some Lango traditions apparently refer to the battle of Rwengabi. Interviews: Koranima Ayena, Luka Abura.

3. Delmé-Radcliffe, 'Memorandum on the Physical Features and Animals of the Lango Country' (1901),PRO FO/403/318.

4. Driberg, op.cit.p.91.

5. R.T.Curley, 'Persistence and Change in Lango Ceremonialism', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley,1969, pp.226-30,288-89.

to mobilise their warriors on demand, the Lango political system was remarkably little affected. A centralising process is implied in the claim sometimes made that military leaders summoned detachments from everywhere in Lango to fight in Bunyoro. But conflicting claims of this kind are made on behalf of several contemporary leaders in different parts of the country, and they can be dismissed as mythical exaggeration. In fact contact with the state structure of Bunyoro made little impact. This was probably because individual expeditions were relatively brief. Absences of two or three months from home, even if repeated several times over a number of years, gave ordinary Langi little experience of living in a more hierarchical and deferential society. Kamurasi and Kabarega sometimes claimed that they were rulers of Lango,[1] but this claim had absolutely no basis in fact. Probably it was expressed partly in order to impress European visitors, and partly out of sentimental regard for the tradition that the Bito dynasy had, centuries before, originated in Lwo country on the Lango side of the Nile.[2] The only Langi who became absorbed into a centralised state structure were those adventurers who during the 1870's and 1880's enlisted in Kabarega's own army, the abarasura.[3] No memory of these men is retained in Lango tradition, so it is likely that they settled permanently in Bunyoro. Certaihly their experience made no impression at home.

****

---

1. K.W.,op.cit.p.67; Speke,op.cit.pp.496,516; Linant de Bellefonds, op.cit.pp.12,15; Schweinfurth,op.cit.p.118.

2. K.W.,'The Kings of Bunyoro-Kitara',part 1, Uganda Jl.3(1935), p.160; Crazzolara,op.cit.p.105.

3. Baker, Ismailia,II,pp.162-63,257; Casati,op.cit.pp.62,80, 82-83. The Langi were by no means the only non-Banyoro to serve in the abarasura; Kabarega evidently made a point of attracting foreigners to his service.

Politically, the main interest of the Lango campaigns in Bunyoro lies not so much in their effects on Lango society, as in the evidence they afford of an effective military leadership at regional level, able to transcend clan divisions and to mobilise thousands of warriors for expeditions abroad. Yet within ten years of the battle of Rwengabi, regional leadership had been destroyed. The difficulties that stand in the way of any attempt to reconstruct the authority of a man like Opyene Nyakanyolo are due precisely to the fact that this type of authority had disappeared by the time the first European observers began to penetrate deeply into Lango country at the end of the 1890's. The punitive columns which entered Lango at that time were never resisted by groups of more than 200 or 300 warriors at the most.[1] Faced with resistance on such a restricted basis, British officers were at a loss to account for the earlier Lango successes against the Khartoumers; they could only fall back on feeble explanations such as the 'treachery' of the Langi and the machinations of Kabarega.[2] Plainly, a dramatic and destructive change occurred in a short space of time.

Lango tradition speaks of two developments, closely linked: the great campaigns abroad came suddenly to an end; and the conventional restraints on inter-clan fighting were overturned. And so the Langi turned their attention from plundering abroad to internecine strife at home. Spears became the normal weapon in all battles; raiding and ambushing were practised without restraint, and lone travellers were likely to be set upon unless well armed.[3] Oral tradition is not very enlightening as to the

1. See below, Chapter 5.

2. Delmé-Radcliffe to Coles, 10.9.01, PRO FO/403/318.

3. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Luka Abura, Kezekia Okelo, Anderea Okadde; Driberg,op.cit.pp.106-7; Tarantino, 'Lango Clans',p.110.

causes of this deterioration. It is sometimes linked with the personality of Agoro Abwango, who lived in the country between Erute rock and the Moroto river; his death is said to have removed the one man capable of maintaining peace.[1] Driberg recorded a tradition that it was Akena, a war-leader of Adyegi on the Okole river, who destroyed the traditional conventions.[2] These attempts to attribute a widespread change to one individual are not very convincing. It is necessary to search for more deep-set causes. The record of the years 1890-93 provides two such causes.

The first is that at the beginning of the 1890's Lango war-bands fighting in Bunyoro suffered major losses for the first time. It was at this juncture that Kabarega's fortunes took a decisive turn for the worse. In the border war with Buganda which had been intermittently waged since Mwanga's accession to the Ganda throne in 1884, there appears to have been a fairly even balance of loss and gain. But early in 1890 Kabarega suffered a major defeat as a result of his intervention in the Ganda civil war on the side of Mwanga's Muslim rival, Kalema.[3] When Kalema fled to Bunyoro, Kabarega continued to support him; and he was heavily involved on Kalema's side when Lugard and the Baganda Christians defeated the Muslims in May 1891, killing - so it was said - 300 of the enemy.[4]

---

1. Interviews: Luka Abura, Lakana Ekin; Odurkene, op.cit.p.10.

2. Driberg, op.cit.p.107.

3. R.P.Ashe, Chronicles of Uganda (London, 1894), pp.143-44; Fisher, op.cit.pp.172-73.

4. M.Perham and M.Bull (ed), The Diaries of Lord Lugard, vol II (London, 1959), pp.162-67.

There is contemporary documentation from Buganda to the effect that Kalema's foreign allies during 1890 included Langi as well as Banyoro.[1] And Lango traditions leave little doubt that large numbers were involved, and that they paid dearly for it. Many Langi are said to have been killed south of Nakasongola, in Buruli, among them Agoro Abwango.[2] It is not clear to which of the battles against the Baganda this tradition refers; the Langi may, indeed, have fought in both battles; but there is little doubt that the disaster made a deep impression. After Agoro Abwango's death, it is said, no major expeditions went to Bunyoro.[3] The death of a famous leader and so many other warriors seems to have caused widespread disenchantment with foreign campaigning. Perhaps there was an awareness that, as firearms assumed a more important role in interlacustrine warfare, there was less place for Lango fighting techniques. Campaigning abroad was attractive so long as plunder and gifts could be relied upon. The campaigns of 1890-91 destroyed Lango confidence in the rewards of foreign war. The effects on regional leadership can only be conjectured, but two possible consequences may be suggested. Firstly, the disastrous defeat in Buganda may have so discredited all the major leaders as to destroy the whole basis of regional authority in Lango.[4] The second possibility

---

1. Richard Walker (CMS missionary) to family, 4.1.90 and 1.11.90, Walker Papers, CMS Archives. (I am indebted to Dr. Michael Twaddle for these two references).

2. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Pilipo Oruro, Lakana Ekin, Luka Abura, Elia Olet, Yakobo Obia. See also Tarantino, 'Lango Wars', p.234.
Luwero, Bombo and Kakogi are among the battle-sites in Buruli and Bulemezi mentioned in these traditions.

3. Interviews: Lakana Ekin, Yosia Omara. Tarantino, 'Lango Wars', p.234

4. On the basis of traditions about earlier expeditions against the Madi, Driberg affirmed that the authority of a major leader (twon lwak) could not survive his defeat in battle. Driberg, op.cit.pp.206-8.

is that the need for this kind of leadership was no longer acknowledged once large scale expeditions abroad had lost their appeal. At all events, regional leadership could hardly have escaped unscathed from so serious a turn of events.

Overshadowing the reverses suffered in Buganda, however, was a catastrophe of far greater proportions, - the rinderpest epidemic. In 1889 the cattle disease known as rinderpest was first observed on the East African coast. With lightning speed it spread inland during 1890, devastating the herds of the Masai and other cattle-keeping peoples.[1] By the early 1890's the epidemic was wreaking havoc in Lango.[2] The wealth of the Langi in cattle is well documented for the 1870's; indeed, it was the "vast quantities of the finest cattle" in the Moroto valley which attracted the Khartoumers in 1872.[3] In about 1883 there appears to have been an earlier, unidentified cattle epidemic, and this may have increased competition for cattle between clans.[4] But it was the rinderpest outbreak of about 1891 which inflicted the greatest damage. Some parts of Lango were completely denuded of cattle.[5]

---

1. For the general course of the epidemic, see C.R.Edmonds, Diseases of Animals in South Africa (London,1922),p.418; R.W. Mettam, 'Short History of Rinderpest with Special Reference to Africa', Uganda Jl.5(1937),p.22.

2. Driberg (op.cit.p.91) estimated 1890-91 as the date. This is probably more accurate that the estimate of 1893 by Captain Johnstone, who was in Lango in 1911-12. R.H.Johnstone, 'Past times in Uganda' (1921), MS in Rhodes House Library, Oxford,p.17.

3. Baker, Ismailia, II,pp.102-3. See also Wilson and Felkin, op.cit. II, pp.39,55.

4. Driberg (op.cit.pp.46,91) referred to this epidemic as rinderpest also, but in view of the general course of the disease, this is most unlikely. The difficulty is that the Lango word for rinderpest, ideke, is applied to several other diseases.

5. Tarrant to Johnston, 13.11.00, UNA A10/1.

In view of the economic, social and ritual importance of cattle in Lango society, it would be hard to exaggerate the shock of the epidemic. In the long run the Langi adapted to the new, unwelcome conditions - bridewealth was paid instead in sheep, goats or hoes.[1] But the immediate result was desperate competition for those cattle that had survived. As an informant from Dokolo put it :[2]

> "When the Langi came from Didinga /in the south-eastern Sudan/ they had many cattle, - as many as the people of Karamoja do today. One man might possess 100, 500 or even 1,000 cattle, and as many goats besides. But then disease killed off the cattle. So it was the shortage of cattle which caused fighting and divisions. If you had livestock, other people would come and rob you; they would attack you and rob your goods. It was this which caused fighting and divisions."

No doubt the Langi engaged in some cattle raiding among themselves before the 1890's. But in those days cattle had been abundant, and the incentive to steal them was relatively low. After the rinderpest epidemic cattle raiding was more a matter of life and death. Clans which had lost all their cattle urgently needed more stock if their members were to get wives and if essential rituals were to be performed, - if, in other words, society was to continue functioning at all. Clans which lived near the tribal boundaries could attempt to replenish their stocks at the expense of neighbouring peoples; it was probably the rinderpest which caused the incessant cattle-raiding between the Langi and the Kumam around the turn of the century.[3] But the Kumam themselves were just as affected by the disease, while in the west the end of the big campaigns after 1891 reduced the

1. Ibid; Driberg, op.cit.p.91.
2. Interview: Tomasi Ojuka. See also Luka Abura (of Bar).
3. Interview: Tomasi Ojuka.

flow of captured livestock from the interlacustrine region. For most people, therefore, neighbouring clans were the only possible source of cattle.

The result was that all restraints on fighting within Lango were abandoned. Those without livestock used whatever means they could to make good their losses. The spear became the normal weapon in any combat, whereas previously it had only rarely been used in fights between Langi, and the shedding of blood that ensued created implacable hatreds between clans. This deterioration in inter-clan relations has its own logic, but it must be stressed that in many other societies with a strong dependence on pastoralism the rinderpest epidemic did not cause a comparable break-down in social order; in most Para-Nilotic societies, for example, where the economic disruption caused by the rinderpest was quite as severe, the limitations on fighting within the tribe survived.[1] In Lango, however, the strain imposed by the shortage of cattle proved too great, and conventional restraints were cast aside. The authority of regional leaders was totally irreconcileable with this situation. They could no longer lead large clan combinations in war, nor could they smooth out inter-clan tensions. In this way, the coincidence of the defeats in Buganda with the rinderpest epidemic caused the complete disappearance of regional leadership as a political force during the years 1890 to 1893.

A good deal of light is shed on the character of inter-clan fighting on the eve of the colonial period by both oral tradition

1. I owe this observation to Dr. John Lamphear, whose research into Jie history has revealed a quite different reaction to the great rinderpest epidemic; the Jie resorted to elephant-hunting, trade and even emigration, but not to fighting within the tribe. J.E.Lamphear, 'The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda', unpublished PhD thesis, London University,1972,pp.404-10.

and contemporary European reports. When armed for battle, a Lango warrior usually carried five or six throwing spears and an oblong shield, made preferably from buffalo hide.[1] Most fighting was carried on during the dry season, when swamps could be crossed easily and men could be spared from agricultural work, but attacks also occurred during June and July, when the purpose was to destroy the enemy's young crops.[2] On minor raids the object was to surprise the enemy's village, usually just before dawn, in order to carry off their cattle and sometimes to destroy their crops; for this purpose, a band of fifteen or twenty warriors would be sufficient.[3] A major expedition involved the cooperation of several neighbouring clans and the performance of rituals before the day, in which case the enemy were likely to have had warning; they would summon their warriors by sounding war-horns, and a general melée ensued.[4] An expedition of this sort could number 200 or 300 warriors.[5] Each clan was commanded by its own leader, but once battle had been joined in earnest, there was little direction; the warriors did not fight in tightly-knit groups, but stood at several yards' distance from each other.[6] Contact with the enemy was established by

---

1. Interviews: Koranima Ayena, Paulo Ajuk, Isaka Ojaba, Matayo Ayika. Tarrant to Johnston, 13.11.00, UNA A10/1; Johnstone, op.cit.p.17; Driberg, op.cit.pp.81-84.

2. Paske Smith to Grant, 13.12.09, UNA SMP/1876/09; Johnstone, op.cit.pp.13-14; Driberg, op.cit.p.111.

3. Driberg, op.cit.p.109; Curley, op.cit.pp.156-57.

4. C.A.Sykes, Service and Sport on the Tropical Nile (London, 1903), p.239.

5. Interviews: Koranima Ayena, Isaka Ojaba, Matayo Ayika; Ogwal Ajungu, op.cit. para.34; Fishbourne, Report on Districts round Lake Kyoga, 5.10.08, UNA SMP/549/08.

6. Interviews: Koranima Ayena, Yakobo Adoko, Yosia Omwa, Anderea Okadde. Driberg, op.cit. p.109.

long-range spear-throwing. The two sides then closed in hand-to-hand fighting, at the end of which the vanquished were pursued. If the enemy were completely routed, their villages were destroyed and any women, children and livestock who had not been sent to safety were captured.[1] At attack on this scale could last from dawn until the afternoon, though the intensive hand-to-hand fighting took much less time.[2]

The numbers killed in inter-clan battles are difficult to assess. Numerical estimates in oral tradition or personal reminiscence are notoriously unreliable. European estimates must also be treated with reserve, since they were nearly always secondhand and were often taken from the defeated side, who were likely to exaggerate their losses in order to press their case for help. European estimates vary from 20 to 60 warriors killed in a single battle.[3] Even this lower figure represents a pretty formidable rate of mortality. There can be little doubt that the chances of an ordinary clan warrior being killed in battle were considerable. The years from 1890 to 1910 were the period when, as some Langi later recalled with a touch of nostalgia, "a man's grave was in the bush".[4] Nor were the men alone in this fate. The mortality of inter-clan fighting was increased by the fact that, in the final stages of a successful onslaught,

---

1. Interviews: Nekomia Agwa, Lazaro Okelo. Nasan Engola, 'Olden Times in Northern Lango', translation of vernacular MS, typescript in Dept. of History, Makerere University, pp.4-7; Driberg, op.cit. p.109.

2. Interviews: Koranima Ayena, Isaka Ojaba, Paulo Ajuk.

3. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08; Jervoise to Spire, 28.2.10, UNA SMP/332; Jervoise, Return of murders and raids by natives, 1911, UNA SMP/2020; Driberg, entry for 14.5.16 in Eruti T.B. (1915-21), LDA.

4. J.H.Driberg, 'The Lango District, Uganda Protectorate', Geographical Jl.58(1921),p.127.

women were not only captured and held to ransom; they were sometimes killed outright.[1]

By the end of the 19th century, therefore, inter-clan fighting was being carried out in deadly earnest. It was subject to as few restraints as inter-tribal fighting; it had become more frequent and more lethal than ever before. Here again satisfactory evidence for the earlier period is lacking, but it does seem that as a result of the deterioration in inter-clan relations, the insecurity of everyday life increased. In south-eastern Lango, for example, the first resident British official reported that no man would have thought of travelling unarmed or of working in the fields without weapons at his side.[2] Travel outside the neighbourhood was in fact severely limited, and if people wished to visit friends or clansmen at any distance, they travelled in groups, and at night.[3] The daily insecurity is well conveyed by this account of life among the Jo Ocukuru of Ibuje on the eve of the colonial period :[4]

> "Food used to be gathered from all the houses to one man's house. And while the people ate, others kept a look-out in case enemies should come .... Those who lived on the higher ground here ate their food together for fear of enemies. The people at Adak, where the school now is, ate separately, for they had a village of their own. If you went and ate somewhere else, enemies might come and seize your goods while you were away."

****

---

1. Ogwal Ajungu, op.cit;para.7; Engola,op.cit.pp.5,6,7. Interview: Nekomia Agwa.

2. Jervoise to Spire, 8.7.11, UNA SMP/2020.

3. Interviews: Pilipo Omwa Ayo, Yakobo Adoko, Oco Abolli. Fishbourne, Report on the Districts round Lake Kyoga, 5.10.08, UNA SMP/549/08.

4. Interview: Anderea Ogwang.

On the eve of the colonial period, Lango society was further from being a political unit than it had ever been. Throughout the 19th century two social developments were constricting the outlook of the individual Lango. On the one hand, the size of localised descent groups was being steadily reduced by the dispersal and fragmentation of clans.[1] On the other, the age organisation was declining as an integrative force. On top of this, the Langi were subjected to the disasters of the early 1890's - the defeats in Buganda, and above all the terrible rinderpest. These reverses resulted in the collapse of regional leadership, an intensification of inter-clan fighting, and an increase in the insecurity of everyday life. Unimpeded travel and redress for wrongs were only possible within the territory of a small number of clan sections grouped under a clan leader. In western Lango, such an area might approach the size of a modern sub-county; in the east it tended to be still smaller. And everywhere even this small degree of security was in danger of disruption by raiding in which villages were burnt and women and children were captured or killed.

Theoretically, it would be possible to envisage that, in the course of several more generations, the informal dominance of one clan section over its neighbours might have developed into an established territorial chiefship. Certainly there was greater potential here than at the level of regional leadership, which the 19th century record shows to have been a precarious institution, geared to external circumstances rather than integral to Lango society. On the eve of the colonial period, however, there were very few signs of a territorial chiefship

1. See above, pp. 90-8.

developing in this way, and they were limited entirely to north-western Lango. Speculation of this kind is anyway misplaced, since it takes attention away from the strengths which Lango society possessed, for all its fragmentation and disorder. The collapse of regional leadership had not caused a decline in martial fervour or a reluctance to retaliate against alien aggressors. For some twenty years after 1894, the efforts of the colonial power to evolve a new political order among the Langi were held up by persistent and widespread resistance on the part of countless clan leaders and their followers. For a colonial power whose representatives were very thin on the ground, this localised resistance was in many ways more taxing than a coordinated, 'tribal' response would have been. Lango society hardly conformed to the European stereotype of a tribe dominated by autocratic chiefs, but it would be wrong on this account to dismiss it as a negligible entity. The British and the Baganda were soon to learn otherwise.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE POLITICS OF PACIFICATION

On the Victoria Nile the interval between the demise of Egypt's Equatoria Province and the first assertion of British colonial control was a brief one. Barely a year after Emin Pasha had abandoned his few remaining posts in May 1889, the Anglo-German agreement which assigned Uganda to the British sphere was concluded. In December 1890 the first ~~representative~~ administrator of the Imperial British East Africa Company arrived in Buganda from the coast; by a treaty signed in April 1892 the Kabaka acknowledged the Queen's rule, and two years later a British Protectorate was formally declared over Buganda. The implications of this assertion of imperial control were momentous, for potentially the Protectorate Government was infinitely more powerful than any other polity on the Victoria Nile.

Yet the titan was slow to extend itself. The resources invested in the new Protectorate were trifling by imperial standards. Outside Buganda, the range of effective administration was only gradually and haltingly extended. No part of Lango was administered until 1907, and only in 1918 was the whole of Lango brought under control. The reason for this slow progress lay in the financial stringency imposed by the imperial government in London. No expenditure could be sanctioned which did not bear directly on the motives behind Britain's original entry into Uganda. The overriding objective had then been to secure the headwaters of the Nile against European rivals; this resolve had been strengthened by public concern in England that the Christian missionaries and their converts at the Kabaka's court should be protected, and by Buganda's popular reputation as a haven of order and prosperity. Throughout the

1890's and beyond, the Foreign Office was opposed to any expansion of the Protectorate which did not buttress the security of Buganda or the maintenance of communications down the Nile. Thus Bunyoro was conquered, between 1893 and 1896, because of Kabarega's hostility to Buganda; Toro was occupied at the same time in order to cut off Kabarega's supplies of munitions from German East Africa; and in 1898 a line of forts was established on the Nile below Lake Albert as a precaution against French expansion from the west. But there was no immediate prospect of extending administration north of Lake Kyoga or inland from the Nile valley stations.[1]

Prospects for expansion were still further restricted by the emergency of 1897; a rebellion by Kabaka Mwanga in July was quickly followed by a mutiny among the government's Sudanese troops. For several months the British position in Uganda lay in the balance. Elaborate and expensive counter-measures were required, including the despatch of military reinforcements from India. By the time the position had been fully restored in 1899, the imperial government's grant-in-aid to the Protectorate had soared far beyond the acceptable limit.[2] At the turn of the century, therefore, the prevailing view in the Protectorate capital at Entebbe was that expansion into the peripheries of the British sphere must be delayed on grounds of both retrenchment and security: a forward policy could not be implemented until economic development had produced a healthy balance of

---

1. On the British occupation of Uganda, see: M.de K.Hemphill, Chapter 11 in Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew (ed), History of East Africa, I (Oxford,1963); D.A.Low, Chapter 2 in V.Harlow and E.M.Chilver (ed) History of East Africa, II (Oxford,1965).

2. For the best summary of the 1897 emergency and its consequences, see Low, op.cit. pp.72-78.

tax revenue, and until police and troops could be spared from duties at the centre. Furthermore, when expansion was resumed, areas of genuine economic potential must take precedence.[1]

From 1905 onwards officials who visited the border of Lango became increasingly convinced that the costs of administering the country would soon be amply repaid by taxation. Foodstuffs, skins and ivory were already being exported to Bunyoro in greater quantities each year, and it was expected that the Langi would readily take to the cultivation of cotton for the export market; if carefully managed, both these forms of trade would enable the government to collect a significant amount of tax. This was an important argument in convincing the Secretariat officials that government stations should be established on the borders of Lango at Bululu in 1908 and at Palango in 1909.[2] The Bululu decision was also dictated by the need to develop Lake Kyoga as a waterway linking the north-west of the Protectorate with the terminus of the Uganda Railway on Lake Victoria;[3] and in 1910 the proposed expansion from the Nile valley into central Lango was recommended to the Colonial Secretary on the grounds that the export of produce from the new area would be facilitated by the projected Busoga Railway.[4] In this way, the fortunes of the Langi were tied up with the economic strategy of the Protectorate as a whole.

---

1. For the debate in Whitehall and Entebbe on expansion during the years 1901-9, see James Barber, Imperial Frontier (Nairobi, 1968), pp.34-65.

2. See for example: Fowler to Wilson, 8.3.05, UNA A12/6; Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for October 1906, UNA SMP/515/part 2; Grant to Boyle, 1.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07; Knowles to Wilson, 6.10.08, UNA SMP/1520/08.

3. Hesketh Bell to Crewe, 8.5.08, UNA SMP/549/08.

4. Boyle to Crewe, 4.1.10, PRO CO/536/32.

There is an important sense, however, in which the colonial era in Lango can be said to have begun during the 1890's rather than the years 1907-18. The government could not afford to ignore Lango completely, partly because its enemies tended to take refuge there, and partly because the Langi continued to raid areas which were now administered. From 1894 onwards, therefore, Lango was penetrated by British expeditions, which made a stronger impression than any previous raids, and which were a foretaste of the colonial regime to come. The long interval between the first appearance of British officials and the beginning of formal administration allowed the Langi to devise responses which determined their behaviour when the government arrived in strength. For the most part, their response was one of resistance to alien incursions, and despite the highly localised range of this resistance, it was remarkably effective right up until the beginning of administration in 1908-9 and beyond. By that time certain patterns of accommodation had also emerged, especially in western Lango. In the context of Lango history, the real significance of the years from 1894 to 1908 lies in this diversity of contact with - and response to - the colonial power.

****

Between 1894 and 1901 the government was obliged to take action in Lango on account of the flight there first of Kabarega, and then of Kabaka Mwanga and the Sudanese mutineers. The brief campaign of 1893-94 ended Bunyoro's independence, and established the British and their Baganda allies in control; but their position remained insecure as long as the Omukama was at large. Early in 1894 Kabarega crossed into Lango, and his headquarters was almost continuously there until he was captured five years

later in Angai, near Lake Kwania. During his last year of freedom Kabarega was able to make common cause with Mwanga and the remainder of the Sudanese mutineers who escaped to Lango early in 1898 after their defeat in Buganda. Mwanga was captured along with Kabarega. The mutineers established themselves in a fort on the upper Toci, at a place called Modo, near the confines of Acholi country. They were finally captured during a protracted campaign of several months by government forces under Delmé-Radcliffe in 1901. Delmé-Raddliffe's expedition, though more elaborate than most, was in fact the tenth that had entered Lango since 1894. During that period, much of western and southern Lango had been traversed - the valleys of the Toci and the Okole, the right bank of the Nile from Aber up to Namasale peninsula, and the eastern shores of Lake Kwania.[1] In these areas the Langi had not been idle witnesses of others' misfortunes, but had been directly involved.

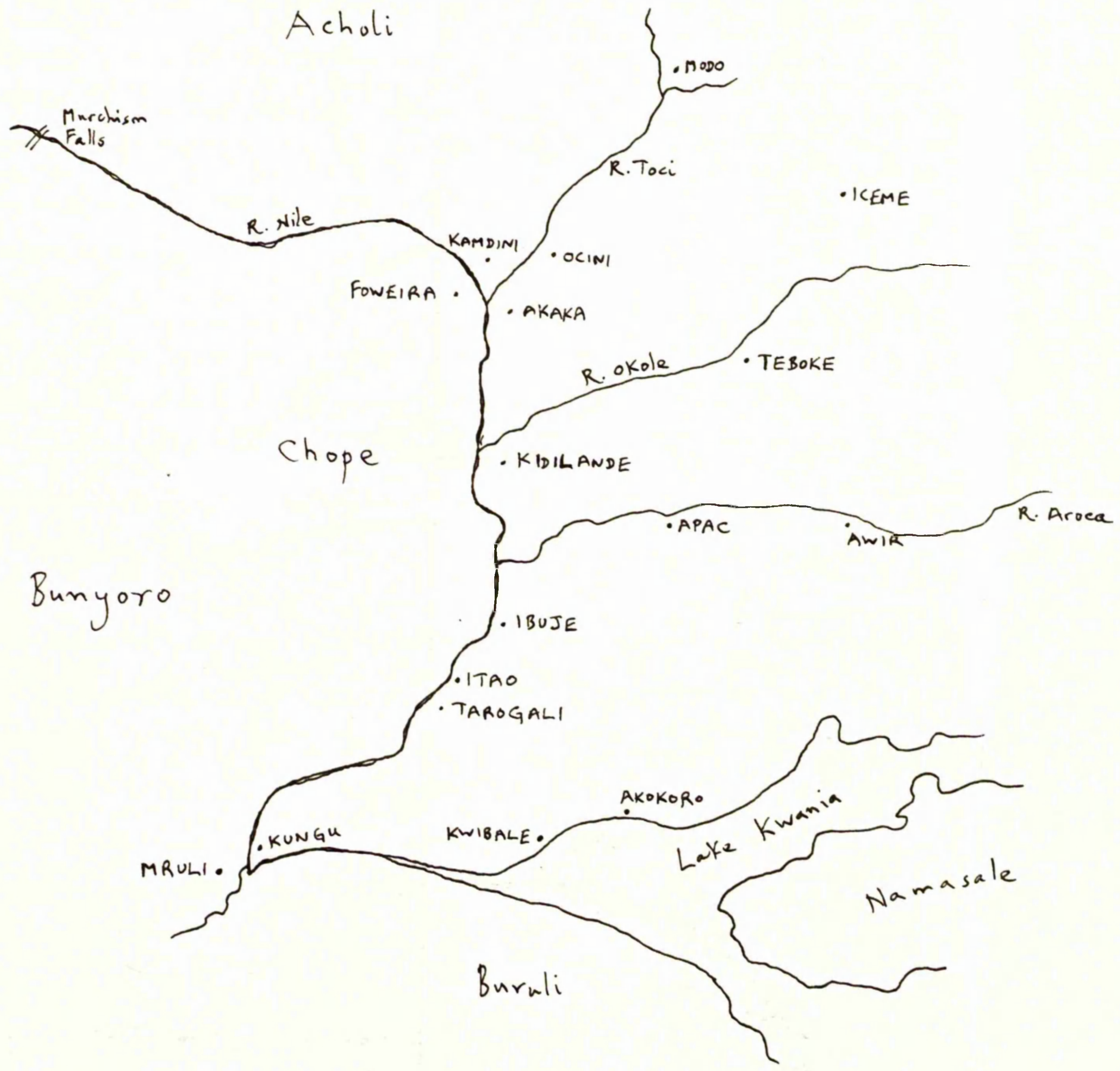
Some Langi had been actively engaged on the side of the fugitives. Kabarega's purpose in moving to Lango was partly to have a convenient base for retaliating against the government, but partly also because he hoped that friendly Lango clans would provide him with military reinforcements, as well as a place of refuge. On account of the collapse of regional leadership early in the 1890's, Kabarega could no longer rely on the aid of large clan combinations, and no war-bands came from the north-east at all; but in south-west Lango, where Kabarega was based from 1894-95, some of the clans joined the abarasura (royal army)

---

1. The principal sources for these expeditions are as follows: the series A2 and A4 in UNA; the Foreign Office series 403/211, 241 and 318, in the PRO; A.G.Bagshawe, 'Journal of Lango Expedition', MS in Makerere University Library; Seymour Vandeleur, Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger (London,1898); C.A.Sykes, Service and Sport on the tropical Nile (London,1903).

Map 8

The Colonial penetration of western Lango



in their raids across the Nile,[1] and when a British column pursued Kabarega northwards along the right bank of the Nile in May 1895, it had to force a passage over the Aroca.[2] Support for Kabarega was strongest in the wouth-east, probably on account of the vigorous lake trade of the Banyoro. When Kabarega withdrew along Lake Kwania in April 1899, his pursuers were attacked, and Lango warriors were at Kabarega's side when he was captured a few days later. The expedition retaliated by destroying villages and granaries.[3]

Although the Sudanese mutineers lacked any previous connection with the Langi, they too were able to come to an arrangement with local clan leaders. A handful of mutineers stayed with Odongo Aja in Kamdini; they sold him a few firearms and instructed some of the Jo Arak how to use them; they also joined Odongo on some of his raids.[4] When Delmé-Radcliffe entered Lango at the mouth of the Toci in April 1901, the mutineers had evidently left Kamdini, and Odongo himself was cooperative, but during the course of the expedition he was suspected of complicity with the mutineers, and two of his villages were attacked in

---

1. Some observers attributed the raids on Bulemezi and Buruli to the Langi alone (Ternan to Commissioner, 5.1.95, UNA A4/4; Pulteney to Commissioner, 16.3.96, UNA A4/4; Vandeleur,op.cit. p.104). Col. Evatt, whose expedition captured Kabarega in 1899, was of the opinion that Kabarega's followers were solely responsible (Evatt to Ternan,10.5.99,UNA A4/17). The truth is probably that the Langi took part in raids organised by the Banyoro; they are mentioned together in connection with a raid in February 1895 (Dunning to Commissioner, 13.2.95, UNA A4/1).

2. "The Wakidi were soon dispersed by the Maxim". Vandeleur, op.cit. p.72.

3. Evatt to Staff Officer, 8.4.99, UNA A4/16; Evatt to Ternan 10.5.99, UNA A4/17. Interviews: Gideon Odwongo, Tomasi Ojuka, Reuben Ogwal.

4. Interviews: Misaki Oki, Kosia Ato, Leoben Okodi, Fancio Itot, Koranima Ayena. Wilson to Johnston, 7.10.00, UNA A12/1.

August.[1] Most of the mutineers, though, were based at Modo. They used their surplus of firearms to equip local allies, principally the Alwaa clan; mutineers and Langi raided the Acholi as well as Lango clans hostile to the Jo Alwaa.[1] The clans who supported the mutineers were punished accordingly: a small expedition in 1899 fired their villages and crops,[3] and this treatment was repeated on a much larger scale by Delmé-Radcliffe in 1901.[4]

However, the injuries inflicted on the Langi during the years 1894-1901 went a good deal further than retribution for supposed offences. During the 1890's the number of troops in the Protectorate was so small that large numbers of irregulars had to be employed in the pursuit of Kabarega and the mutineers. These irregulars were mostly Baganda, whose main objective was to return with as much plunder as possible. The handful of British officers who led the expeditions were usually quite unable to prevent the Baganda from raiding into the Lango hinterland for livestock and provisions.[5] In Ocini this behaviour provoked a strong reaction from Owiny Akulo and the Jo Arak; in May 1895 they ambushed and killed 150 Baganda irregulars as

---

1. Delmé-Radcliffe, Diary of Lango Field Force, entries for 26.4.01,27.4.01,15.8.01,16.8.01, PRO FO/403/318; Bagshawe, 'Journal', entry for 17.8.01. Interviews: Juma Arbam, Edwardi Olir.

2. Anderson to Johnston, 21.3.00, UNA A4/27; Macallister to Johnston,20.11.00, UNA A16/1. Interviews: Yakobo Olugo, Yokonani Alyai.

3. Sykes, op.cit. pp.240-41.

4. Delmé-Radcliffe, Diary of Lango Field Force, passim; Bagshawe, 'Journal', passim.

5. See for example: Captain Gibb, Diary of Mruli Expedition, May 1894, UNA A2/2; Vandeleur, op.cit.p.74.

they were waiting to be ferried across the Nile.[1] Elsewhere the scale of the clashes between Baganda and Langi was much smaller, but there is little doubt that the depredations of the Baganda at this time made a deep impression.

It is more difficult to assess Lango attitudes to the colonial regime itself. The material strength of the government forces must have made a considerable impact, and particularly the straits to which Kabarega and Mwanga were reduced.[2] A decisive demonstration of power by the government could certainly elicit a submissive response; friendly advances were made around Kamdini in 1896,[3] and also in 1899 near Lake Kwania, where Kabarega's last refuge was revealed by a local clan leader.[4] But these submissions did not entail a resolve to cooperate with the government in the future; they were merely diplomatic gestures designed to stave off an immediate crisis. The impression of material strength was offset by the fleeting nature of government interventions, for most expeditions were over in a matter of weeks rather than months. The government might be powerful, but it appeared to have no intention of taking Lango over for good. As a senior official put it in 1903, the Langi "look upon our action in their country as being always purely transient".[5]

---

1. Vandeleur, op.cit. p.79; Jackson to Foreign Office,7.6.95, PRO FO/403/210; Scott, entry for 31.1.14, in Koli T.B.(1912-14, part 1), LDA. See also A.Tarantino, 'Lango Wars', Uganda Jl.13 (1949),p.234.

2. The officer commanding the expedition of 1899 was particularly optimistic on this score. Evatt to Ternan,10.5.99, UNA A4/17.

3. Ternan to Berkeley, 20.10.96, UNA A4/6.

4. Evatt to Ternan, 10.5.99, UNA A4/17.

5. Wilson to Hayes Sadler,9.12.03, UNA A12/5. Compare also, Delmé-Radcliffe to Coles, 10;9.01, PRO FO/403/318.

****

In the aftermath of Kabarega's capture, the experience of south-east Lango began to diverge markedly from that of the west. The agencies of pacification differed in personnel and attitude. The government itself regarded south-east Lango in the light of its experience in Bukedi, while western Lango was seen from the point of view of the Bunyoro administration. This distinction did not cease to be drawn with the beginning of formal administration in Lango. Miro District, established in 1908, was supervised from Mbale, while Palango District was set up in 1909 by officials operating from Hoima. Although officials were aware that they were dealing with a single people, they nevertheless maintained the separation of east from west until 1911. It might be tempting to dismiss this arbitrary division as an administrative convenience with little bearing on the experience of the Langi themselves. In point of fact it had a very great bearing on the local perception of colonial rule. The task of devising a viable political system proved to be more difficult in the south-east than in the west. In part, this was caused by the smaller scale of inter-clan politics there, but it was also due to the divergent experience of east and west during the years from 1899 to 1911. Whereas, in the west, European officials were actively involved in making contact between government and Langi before the start of formal administration, in the east this task was left entirely to African intermediaries, whose attitude to the Langi was predatory and vindictive. As a result, when officials eventually took direct responsibility for the south-east, the atmosphere had been poisoned, and the local reaction was one of sullen indifference or overt resistance. By contrast, the relative restraint

with which officials in the west had handled the Langi before 1909 elicited in some quarters a positive response, based on a confidence that the colonial regime could be manipulated by local interests. In order to appreciate this distinction, it is necessary to treat each story separately, and in some detail, up until 1911. In that year the two Districts, having expanded towards a common boundary, were merged to form a single Lango District; and for the first time officials took stock of what they had achieved to date.

The divergent experience of south-eastern Lango originated in the attempt by the powerful Muganda chief, Semei Kakungulu, to carve out a personal fief in the area, with the approval of the Protectorate authorities. This improbable enterprise was determined by two factors: the expansionist energies of the Baganda, and the readiness of the government to consider any cheap method of extending administration. Kakungulu himself had been one of the outstanding figures in Ganda politics during the civil wars of 1888-93, but it was his rival in the Protestant faction, Apolo Kagwa, who gained most from the settlement in Buganda. Frustrated at home, Kakungulu began to look further afield. His interest in opportunities abroad was shared by many less illustrious Baganda for whom the advent of the colonial order and the entrenchment of the Christian chiefly elite limited the prospects for promotion, profit and adventure at home.[1]

When Bunyoro south of the Kafu river was annexed to Buganda in 1894, Baganda were appointed to chiefships in that area. Kakungulu took charge of Bugerere, the province which adjoined

---

1. For the aspirations of Kakungulu and his followers, see M.J.Twaddle, 'Politics in Bukedi, 1900-1939', unpublished PhD thesis, London University, 1967, especially pp.83-91,120-26.

the Nile immediately south of Namasale peninsula; the Banyara, who inhabited northern Bugerere, had been an integral part of Kabarega's kingdom. It was while he was reorganising the administration of Bugerere that Kakungulu became interested in 'Bukedi', - by which the Baganda meant all the country to the north and east of Lake Kyoga.[1] His attention was probably directed there in the first instance by the long-standing trade links between this part of Bunyoro and 'Bukedi'. Banyara traders used to repair to trading centres on the lake, such as Kaweri island near Bululu,[2] and Kabarega's chief of Bugerere had collected some form of tribute from the Kumam.[3] In about 1896 Kakungulu began to send his own traders north of the lake. Kaweri island was taken over as a commercial base, and during the next two years several trading posts were established in the hinterland to the north. Most of the posts were situated in Kumam and Teso country, but the one at Agaya near the southern tip of Lake Kwania lay within Lango territory, and there is little doubt that Kakungulu's followers were trading with the Langi at this time.[4] That Kakungulu's interest in 'Bukedi' was

---

1. The story of Kakungulu's career during the period 1896-1900 is involved and obscure. The following accounts have some relevance: H.B.Thomas, 'Capax Imperii - The Story of Semei Kakunguru', Uganda Jl.6(1939),pp.125-36; J.C.D.Lawrance, The Iteso (London, 1957),pp.17-22; J.M.Gray,'Kakunguru in Bukedi',Uganda Jl.27 (1963),pp.31-59; Twaddle,op.cit. However in the following account I have drawn mainly on discussions with Dr. Twaddle, who has made extensive use of Luganda chronicles and personal reminiscences in order to reconstruct Kakungulu's movements at this time; I gratefully acknowledge his assistance.
   It should be noted that Lango oral sources are an inadequate guide in this matter, since Kakungulu is frequently confused with later Baganda.

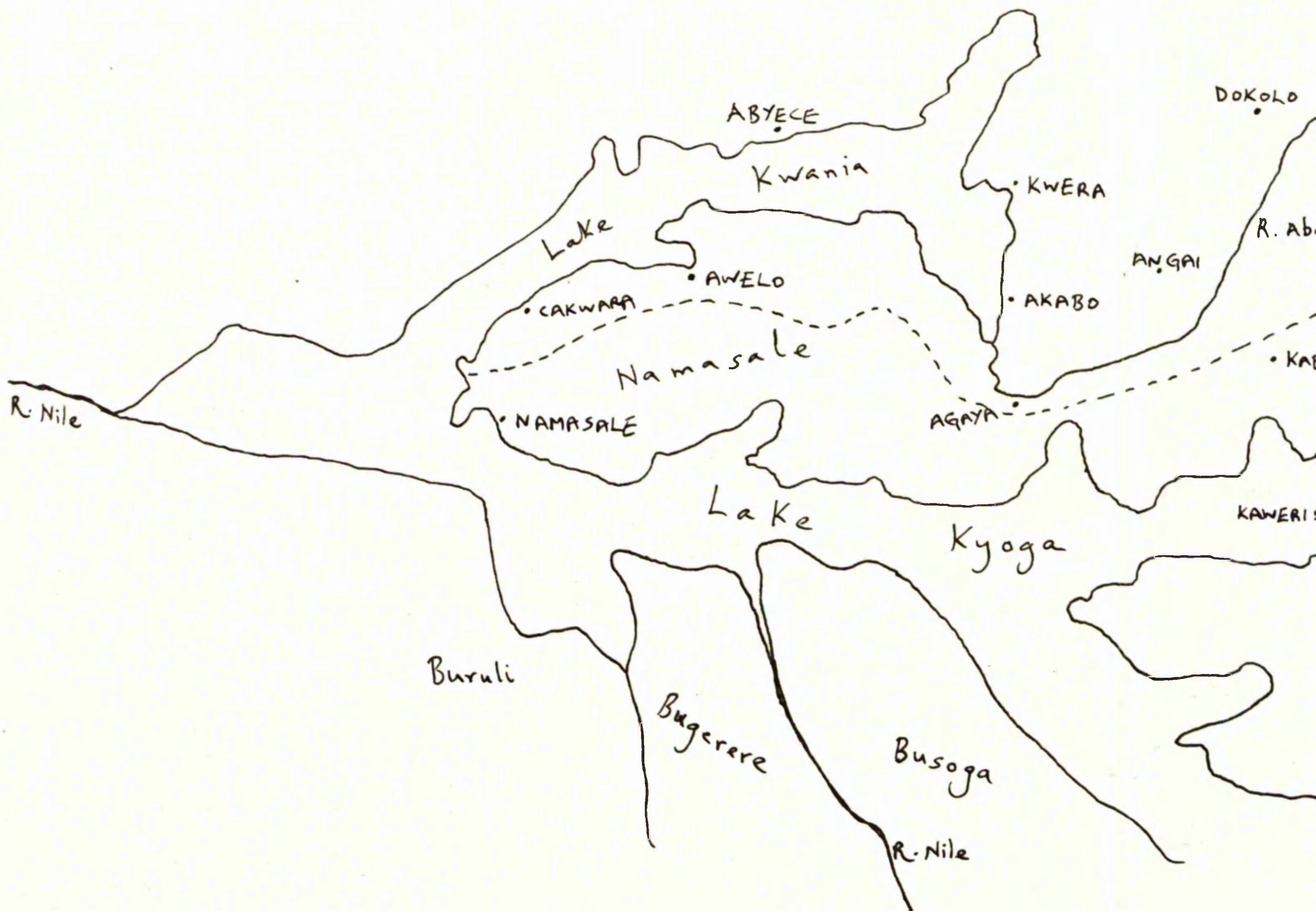
2. Paulo Kagwa, 'Kakungulu Omuzira wa Uganda', Luganda MS in Makerere University Library,p.10. I owe this reference to Dr. Twaddle.

3. Ormsby to Boyle, 23.10.08, UNA EPMP/Z/885/08.

4. This point finds some corroboration in Lango sources. Interview: Ekoc Opige (in Dokolo).

Map 9

The Colonial penetration of south-eastern Lango



Key

- - - - - approximate southern limit of Lango country, 1907

not merely commercial is shown by his attempt in 1896 to get help from the Buganda authorities for a military intervention north of the lake. However, a disastrous raid into Lango that year seems to have convinced Kakungulu that the time for an imperial venture was not yet ripe, and he waited several years before attempting another military intervention. In the meantime, he was preceded north of the lake by Kabagambe, who during Kabarega's reign had been an important chief in Buruli, to the west of Bugerere. In 1898 or early 1899 Kabagambe settled with his Baruli followers on the uninhabited south-western shores of Namasale peninsula, where during the next few years he attracted a growing number of fishermen and farmers from Buruli.[1]

Kakungulu's opportunity came in the middle of 1899. Earlier in the year he had taken part in the expedition which captured Kabarega and Mwanga near Lake Kwania. This experience gave him firsthand acquaintance with Lango country, as well as a claim on the British authorities. He was able to secure a loan of government rifles, and official approval to expand his chiefdom across Lake Kyoga. In June 1899 he established himself at Agaya, with the intention of building up a kingdom on the basis of his trading connections with Lango and Kumam. Trading posts were turned into forts, and additional forts were established in Lango, - at Dokolo and at Akabo on the eastern shore of Lake Kwania. Kakungulu achieved some success with the Kumam, who regarded him as a potential ally against the Langi and had made overtures to him as early as 1896.[2] But in Lango the reaction

---

1. Jervoise, Notes on Namasale, in Kioga T.B.(1913), TDA.

2. The delegation of 'Bakedi' which accompanied Kakungulu to Mengo in 1896 were almost certainly Kumam.

was almost uniformly hostile.[1] The fort at Agaya was plagued by attacks from the start, and when in September Kakungulu launched a major plundering expedition into Lango, there was a heavy engagement at Dokolo in which his second-in-command was killed. Livestock were seized and settlements burnt, but the Baganda appear to have been prevented from penetrating any deeper than Dokolo, and the expedition was scarcely an encouragement to empire-building in Lango. By the end of 1899 Kakungulu had withdrawn to Bululu, well within Kumam country. The following year he directed the main thrust of his offensive against the Iteso to the east, and he then moved his headquarters away from Lake Kyoga altogether. Until his enforced retirement in 1902 Kakungulu maintained a presence on the lake, with chiefs at Bululu and Akabo, but with no greater success against the Langi. The posts at Dokolo and Agaya were closed down, and the attempt to administer the vicinity of Akabo caused many clashes with the local inhabitants.

Kakungulu's brief imperial venture earned for the Baganda the deep hatred of the south-eastern Langi. An informant who grew up near Akabo fort gives an account which reflects this hatred, as well as the rough methods of government employed by the Baganda :[2]

> "While Kakungulu was here, if you were caught doing something wrong, your ears or your lips were cut off, or the ear and the eye on opposite sides of the face were cut off. That's how Kakungulu behaved. Sometimes four poles were stuck in the ground and you were tied onto them; then they lit a fire underneath and dried you out as a wild animal is dried out."

---

1. There is only one recorded case of a Lango clan-leader visiting Kakungulu; this was Okori of Amac. Jervoise to Spire, 18.4.10, UNA SMP/624.

2. Interview: Tomasi Ojuka.

The standing of the Baganda was further compromised by their close association with the Kumam.[1] For the Langi, cattle raiding against the Kumam became more difficult, and the pressure on the most easterly Lango settlements to withdraw towards the Abalang river may also have begun in Kakungulu's time.[2]

In 1902 Kakungulu's position on Lake Kyoga was taken over with government approval by the Banyara, many of whom had joined him in exploiting their traditional connections with the peoples of 'Bukedi'.[3] A leading Munyara named Musabira was placed in charge of Bululu. The fort at Akabo had been abandoned by now, and the Banyara appear to have made no great efforts to administer the Langi. But their influence with the Kumam depended on their ability to deter cattle raids by the Langi, and this was no easy task. Only a year or so after taking charge of Bululu, Musabira met his death when he responded to a Kumam appeal for reprisals against the Jo Arak of Alwa, near the Abalang river.[4]

Musabira's kinsman and successor, Kazana, gradually built up his influence among the Kumam. By the beginning of 1907, sixteen Kumam clan leaders were prepared to take orders from him and pay tax,[5] and in July of that year Kazana was able to muster 3,000 Kumam warriors for a punitive campaign.[6] On the

1. Interviews: Yusufu Erau, Abiramo Okelo Oyanga.

2. Driberg credited Kakungulu with the expulsion of the Langi from Anyara and Kelle (The Lango, (London, 1923) p.35). It is certain, however, that the Abalang only became the effective frontier between the Langi and Kumam after a government station had been established at Bululu in 1908.

3. Thomas, op.cit.p.132.

4. Jervoise, undated entry at Kelle, in Kioga T.B. (1912-13, part 1), TDA. Interviews: Yeromia Otim, Abiramo Okelo Oyanga, Tomasi Ojuka, Yusufu Erau.

5. Boyle to Wilson, 6.3.07, UNA SMP/281/07.

6. Lt. H.M. Harries, 'With the Bumiro Punitive Force', appendix to Uganda Intelligence Report No. 31, July 1907, PRO CO/536/14.

other hand, the Langi proved scarcely more amenable than they had in the time of Kakungulu or Musabira. By the middle of 1907 it seems that a handful of villages had begun to pay tax,[1] but the overall pattern of Langi-Banyara relations did not change. The Langi continued to raid the Kumam and Banyara for cattle, goats and women, burning villages and destroying crops. From time to time Kazana launched reprisals.[2]

This pattern of raiding and counter-raiding between Kazana and the Langi was not in itself very significant. Kazana's importance lies in the fadt that European officials assessed the prospects for administration in south-east Lango through his eyes and incorporated his informal political structure into the Protectorate. Kazana enjoyed from the beginning some official status as the inheritor of Kakungulu's commission to subdue this part of 'Bukedi'. And as early as 1904 he was voluntarily paying hut tax for himself and his personal followers through a county chief in Busoga.[3] So when in 1906 government officials began to consider the northern side of Lake Kyoga in the context of communications along the Nile, Kazana loomed large in their plans. He was able to discredit Kabagambe, who had also been paying hut tax for two years and who was his only rival for the government's favour. The local officials became convinced that Kabagambe had encouraged neighbouring Langi to raid Kazana.[4] In

---

1. Grant to Boyle, 1.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07.

2. Boyle to Wilson, 28.9.06, UNA SMP/1054/06; Grant to Ag.Deputy Commissioner,24.4.07, UNA SMP/549/07. The precise locale of Kazana's counter-raids is not known, but one clan leader in Angai was killed during one of them. Driberg, undated entry, Dokolo T.B. (1913-26,part 1), LDA. Note: except when stated otherwise, all Tour Books cited hereafter are to be found in the Lango District Archives at Lira.

3. Cubitt to Hayes Sadler, 29.8.05, UNA A10/4; Boyle to Wilson, 28.9.06, UNA SMP/1054/06.

4. Boyle to Wilson, 29.11.06, UNA SMP/1054/06; Boyle to Wilson, 11.3.07, UNA SMP/305/07.

January 1907, a Muganda agent called Bumbakali Kamya was placed at Namasale, partly to supervise supplies for the Nile steamer, but also to keep an eye on Kabagambe.[1] When the agent and sixteen of his followers were murdered in April, Kabagambe was again suspected of inciting the Langi to kill them; he was deported to Jinja and his Baruli colony was placed under Kazana.[2]

Bumbakali Kamya's murder highlighted the need to provide some security for commerce and communication along Lake Kyoga. Senior officials were also aware that the government would lose credibility if it continued to ignore attacks by the Langi on tax-payers.[3] In June 1907, therefore, a major punitive operation was carried out against the Langi who lived along the Abalang river and in Namasale peninsula. The Kyoga Expedition was exceptional in the annals of Lango pacification, in that its sole objective was to teach the Langi a sharp and indiscriminate lesson. Within the selected area, property was seized or destroyed as comprehensively as possible, regardless of whether the villages concerned merited punishment. In effect, a license to plunder was given to Kumam irregulars, over whom Kazana had little control. On the first day of the campaign, the expedition was attacked by the Jo Palamyek under Opige at Dokolo,[4] but elsewhere

---

1. Boyle to Wilson, 29.11.06, UNA SMP/1054/06; Grant to Boyle, 18.2.07, UNA SMP/305/07.

2. Evidence taken by P.W.Cooper at Kabagambe's, enclosed in Cooper to Grant,1.5.07, UNA SMP/544/07; Grant to Boyle,1.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07; Jervoise, Notes on Namasale, in Kyoga T.B.(1913), TDA. Kabagambe's removal to Jinja had actually been decided upon before the agent was murdered (Boyle to Wilson,11.3.07,UNA SMP/305/07).

3. Wilson to Elgin,16.7.07, and enclosed memorandum, UNA SMP/751/07.

4. Grant to Boyle, 1.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Yeromia Otim, Abiramo Okelo Oyanga.

there was little overt resistance, as the officer in charge admitted. Every ten miles or so the expedition set up camp and then scoured the surrounding country, plundering and shooting indiscriminately; not even those who took refuge in the bush were safe.[1] In just over ten days 163 villages were destroyed and 200 casualties inflicted;[2] between 20,000 and 30,000 Langi were estimated to have been 'dealt with'.[3] The expedition was the grand climax to a sequence of eight years' violence between the Langi and the government's unofficial African representatives.

The government's strategy was to follow up this convincing demonstration of strength with a more conciliatory attitude and a beginning of formal administration. During the next year arrangements were made for a new district of Miro to be formed, with jurisdiction over the Kumam and the Langi near Lake Kyoga.[4] An Assistant Collector (soon to be renamed Assistant District Commissioner) responsible to Mbale was to administer the District from a station at Bululu, near Kazana's village. Within a month of the expedition, J. M. Coote, a junior official, visited Dokolo, accompanied by four Lango 'chiefs', who had come to Mbale to make their peace.[5] At the beginning of 1908 Coote revisited Dokolo and toured Namasale peninsula.[6] In March 1908

---

1. Edwards to Commissioner, 5.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07. Interview: Tomasi Ojuka, This informant was an eye-witness as a boy at Aputi. See Appendix.

2. Edwards to Commissioner, 5.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07.

3. Grant to Boyle, 1.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07.

4. For reasons that are not clear, the term used by the Kumam when referring to the Langi was adopted as the name of the District.

5. Coote to Grant, 7.8.07, UNA SMP/279/07. The 'chiefs' have not yet been identified by name or locality; they do not appear to have been Dokolo men.

6. Coote to Notley, 6.2.08, UNA SMP/264/08.

G. P. Jervoise arrived at Bululu with a complement of thirteen police - soon increased to 40 - in order to open the new District[1], and in May a survey party covered again the route of the Kyoga Expedition.[2]

The administrative structure of the new District conformed almost exactly to the 'agent system' then in operation among all non-centralised peoples in the Eastern Province of Uganda. The system of governing through Baganda agents was derived from the informal empire which Kakungulu had set up in Bukedi. When in 1900 Kakungulu had turned his energies from Lango to Teso, Bugwere and Bugisu, he had been very much more successful, - so much so that the Protectorate authorities, who had authorised the venture in the first place, became uneasy. From 1902 onwards, overall control of Kakungulu's 'kingdom' was appropriated by European officials, their efforts culminating in Kakungulu's transfer to Busoga in 1906. At the same time, Kakungulu's vast following was reduced in number and, stage by stage, bureaucratised: by the end of 1905 his chiefs had become salaried agents of the Protectorate government. This somewhat irregular arrangement was justified on the grounds that the agents would accustom the 'Bakedi' to the benefits of ordered government during the time it would take to train administrative personnel locally. Their job was to punish and prevent breaches of the peace, to build roads with local labour, and to collect taxes.[3]

---

1. Jervoise, Report on Miro District for March 1908, UNA SMP/216/08.

2. Fishbourne, Preliminary Report on Umiro Country, May 1908, UNA SMP/549/08.

3. For the best account of the emergence of the agent system, see Twaddle, 'Politics in Bukedi', op.cit.

It was taken for granted that Miro District would be administered along the same lines. The only improvisation lay in the choice of staff. Kazana was not superseded by a Muganda; instead his sphere of influence among the Kumam was incorporated as it stood.[1] He surrendered the hundred or so muzzle-loaders which he had accumulated over the years and was issued with fifty government rifles.[2] By 1909 the Kumam country had been divided into ten sub-divisions, each under a Munyara agent responsible to Kazana, and each paying hut tax.[3] Not until 1915 were any inroads made on Kazana's direct authority over the Kumam.[4]

In Lango itself, a more orthodox arrangement was made. Isaka Nziga, formerly a prominent client of Kakungulu's and now agent at Kumi in Teso, was chosen to be chief agent. He was installed at Dokolo in July 1907 with fifty armed askaris, as an advance party of the incoming administration.[5] The intention was that Nziga should visit the places through which the recent expedition had passed, but for the time being his hands were full in Dokolo, where forced labour had to be mobilised in order to build a permanent fort.[6] Baganda penetration of the country

---

1. Boyle to Wilson, 11.3.07, UNA SMP/305/07. See also K.Ingham, 'British Administration in Lango District, 1907-35', Uganda Jl. 19(1955),p.156.

2. Jervoise to PCEP, 1.2.09, and Jervoise to DC Mbale, 16.5.09, UNA EPMP/Z/1261/08.

3. Bululu Report for 1909-10, UNA EPMP/N/98/09.

4. In that year Kazana's agents began to be replaced by Kumam chiefs. Entries for 14.6.15 and 14.10.15, in Kioga T.B.(1913-20) TDA.

5. Coote to Grant, 7.8.07, UNA SMP/279/07; Jervoise, Report on Miro District for March 1908, UNA SMP/216/08; Jervoise, Notes on Dokolo, in Dokolo T.B. (1913-26,part 1).

6. Interviews: Yeromia Otim, Ahiramo Okelo Oyanga.

west and north of Dokolo was delayed until the survey party of May 1908 had reported favourably on the prospects for administration there.[1] By October Nziga had made contact with 130 Lango villages.[2] Towards the end of the year, Jervoise established three agents' posts at Angai, Kwera and Bata.[3] Three more posts were set up along the northern shores of Namasale peninsula in 1909,[4] and early in 1910 Agwata and Abyece on the north side of Lake Kwania were taken under administration.[5] (Map 9).

The relatively modest pace of territorial expansion was matched by caution in imposing novel demands on the Langi. Cotton cultivation was begun in 1909, but was not practised on a large scale until 1913; and no taxes were collected until 1914, in contrast to Kumam. This restraint was in accordance with the gradualist approach favoured by the Governor, Sir Hesketh Bell :[6]

> "Instead of compelling the outlying primitive tribes to accept our authority suddenly by force of arms, it appears to me far preferable to effect our object gradually by a policy of peaceful penetration. The officer stationed at Bululu will gently extend his influence among the neighbouring clans, and, little by little, the Lango tribes may be led to appreciate the advantages of our rule and the benefits of an orderly regime."

If officials hoped that the penetration of south-eastern Lango would be peaceful, they were disappointed. What they failed to realise at the outset was that the most basic functions of administration were unacceptable to the Langi. As in other

---

1. Fishbourne, Preliminary Report on Umiro Country, and Report on Districts round Lake Kioga, 5.10.08, UNA SMP/549/08.
2. Ormsby to Boyle, 23.10.08, UNA EPMP/Z/885/08.
3. Jervoise, Report on Miro District for 1908-9, UNA SMP/925/09.
4. Jervoise to DC Mbale, 30.4.09, UNA SMP/359/09.
5. Jervoise to Spire, 28.2.10, UNA SMP/332.
6. Hesketh Bell to Crewe, 8.5.08, UNA SMP/549/08.

newly subjected areas, the government's immediate priorities were the establishment of law and order, and the enlistment of forced labour for public works. The first of these objectives meant in practice an end to inter-clan and inter-tribal raiding, and a recognition that the punishment of serious crimes was from now on the government's job. When a cattle raid was reported, or a clan leader refused to hand over an alleged murderer, the appearance of a District Officer at the head of a police detachment could easily be construed as a hostile act, to which the villagers responded either by attacking or by decamping into the bush. All too often, officials had little choice but to open fire on the attackers, or to confiscate livestock and burn abandoned settlements.[1] As for forced labour, this was if anything more unpalatable in a society where political authority had never been associated with the right to labour service; inevitably, orders that the Langi should clear roads and build permanent camps tended to be obeyed only when force was used, or at least threatened.[2] An experienced official declared at the end of the Kyoga Expedition that, once a European was on the scene, the Langi would "be prepared to do whatever they are told";[3] he could hardly have been more mistaken.

The most taxing demand on the south-eastern Langi during the first years of administration was one which they certainly could not have accepted without protest; this was their forcible

---

1. See for example: Jervoise to Coote, 19.3.09, UNA SMP/225/09, for two such incidents in Kwera and Amac.

2. See for example: Jervoise to Spire, 27.10.09, UNA SMP/1705/09; Wright to Spire, 15.11.10, UNA SMP/1408.

3. Grant to Boyle, 1.7.07, UNA SMP/751/07. Grant had served as Collector at Hoima and Mbale, and in both places had had direct contact with the Langi.

expulsion from the most recently settled areas, - the western shores of Namasale peninsula and the country between the Abalang river and Lake Kyoga. Since the government had entered the area in the wake of Kazana, local officials felt some responsibility towards the Kumam, many of whom had been paying tax to Kazana for a year or two before Bululu station was opened. One of their first priorities was therefore to provide protection for the Kumam against the menace of Lango cattle raids; the second agent's post in Lango was set up in October 1908 at Angai, near the Abalang, with precisely this objective in mind.[1] But officials were also aware that in recent years Lango settlements had been steadily gaining ground at the expense of the Kumam between the Abalang and Omunyal rivers. Both Kakungulu and Kazana had made some headway in checking Lango expansion, and during 1909 the government's success in limiting Lango raids enabled the Kumam to resettle the no-man's-land round Kaberamaido.[2] Jervoise, however, was not content with 'freezing' the existing boundary; in his view, a fair deal for the Kumam entailed moving all Langi still on the left bank of the Abalang over to the other side.[3] There were several large villages in Alwa, including that of Okwanga, leader of the Dokolo Jo Arak. By April 1912 they had all been compelled to leave, and the reluctant ones had been burnt out.[4]

---

1. Jervoise, entry for 3.9.12 at Angai, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1).

2. Jervoise, Report on Miro District for June 1909, UNA SMP/359/09; Jervoise, Notes on Kaberamaido, in Kioga T.B.(1912-13) TDA.

3. Jervoise to Spire, 31.12.10, UNA SMP/178.

4. Jervoise, Notes on Dokolo, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26,part 1). Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Gideon Odwongo.

A similar policy was implemented on Namasale peninsula, though here the beneficiaries were the Baruli and Banyara, to whom the government also felt obliged. Since Kabagambe's arrival in about 1898, the Baruli had colonised the southern coastline of the peninsula, and by about 1910 had reached Cakwara on the north-western coast. When Kazana succeeded Kabagambe as chief in 1907, Banyara also began to settle in the area. At the same time, Langi from Awelo had been pressing steadily southwards, not into the interior of the peninsula, which was poorly watered, but along the coast, where they encountered the Baruli. As long as the two populations were intermingled, theft and murder were frequent, and there was much to be said for separating them. For a time Jervoise toyed with the idea of making the whole of Namasale a Bantu preserve, and the Langi were urged to migrate to the north side of Lake Kwania.[1] By 1913 this plan had been abandoned, and the government was content with expelling Langi from south of Cakwara. By 1918 almost all of them had been moved north.[2] The converse of this arrangement was that the Bantu-speakers living in Cakwara and Awelo were expelled, but the numbers involved were considerably smaller and can scarcely have mitigated the impact of the restrictions on Lango settlement to the south.[3]

Whether administrative demands took the form of forced labour, restrictions on raiding, or enforced migration, the difficulty of making them acceptable to the local population was

---

1. Jervoise, Notes on Awelo, 1913, in Kioga T.B. (1914-19).

2. Kioga T.B.(1913-25), passim. During the 1920's the Langi began to infiltrate southern Namasale again, and the two communities are inextricably mixed today.

3. Entries for 26.6.15 and 26.6.16, in Kioga T.B.(1914-19).

greatly increased by the fact that they were usually channelled through the Baganda. For the average villager, 'the government' meant not the one or two Europeans based in Kumam country at Bululu, but the nearest agent and his followers. Nziga's men were certainly better armed than Kakungulu's had been, and they were possibly better disciplined, but they were nevertheless Baganda, and quite a few of them must have been survivors from the 1899-1902 episode. It is highly unlikely that the Langi drew any distinction between the two. In the case of Nziga, resistance to the Baganda would appear to have been more sporadic - probably because of the strong impact made by the Kyoga Expedition - and it was certainly less successful. All the same, there were over thirty armed clashes between Nziga's followers and the Langi between 1907 and 1911.[1] The most serious opposition was encountered in 1910 in the Abyece area, where the Jo Alipa and their neighbours attacked the stockade five times and Baganda patrols three times; the agent could do little except remain in the stockade until early in 1911, when Jervoise moved the post to a new site about ten miles away.[2]

At the same time, events in Namasale peninsula would suggest that the government was well advised to rely on Nziga in preference to Kazana, whose recent past was even more compromising in Lango eyes. In March 1910 Nziga's men in the Lango area south of Lake Kwania were replaced by Kazana's Banyara agents, so that all Namasale should be under one authority, and in order to release some of the Baganda for work in fresh localities.[3] During

---

1. Jervoise, Returns of encounters between Isaka Nziga's Baganda Agents and the Miru up to May 1911, UNA SMP/2020.

2. These incidents are reported indivually in UNA SMP/332,178, 1133,1408. See also, Jervoise, Notes on Nabieso, in Kwani T.B. (1913-19). This is the only instance in the whole of Lango where local pressure compelled the administration to alter the site of a post.

3. Jervoise, Bululu Report for March 1910, UNA SMP/178.

the previous year there had been several small clashes between the Langi and the Baganda,[1] but there was much more violence when the Banyara took over. In April 1910 seven of Kazana's men were killed at Awelo.[2] In 1911 another seven were killed in one incident at Aputi, and in the same year there were four other clashes in which seven Langi were killed.[3]

When, therefore, the government station at Bululu was closed down and a headquarters for the new Lango District opened at Abyece in 1911, the prospects for administration in the south-east were bleak. From 1899 until 1907 there had been an almost continuous record of violence between the Langi and a succession of alien chiefs on their borders. And, far from implying a fresh start, the beginning of regular administration in 1907 merely formalised the freelance activities of those chiefs. Worse still, the government took over the prejudices of Kakungulu and Kazana in favour of the Kumam and the Banyara, and the Langi were expelled from disputed areas. By 1911 hardly any attempt had been made to recruit administrative personnel locally. When, as a result of policy changes at Protectorate level, local chiefs were appointed in 1912, the resentment and suspicion built up among the Langi since 1899 added greatly to the difficulties. These points will emerge in higher relief as we turn to consider the contrasting story of western Lango in the same period.

****

1. Jervoise, Report on Miro District for May 1909, UNA SMP/359/09; Return of encounters between Isaka Nziga's Baganda Agents and the Miru, UNA SMP/2020.

2. Jervoise, Bululu Report for April 1910, UNA SMP/178.

3. Jervoise to Spire, 15.2.11, UNA SMP/1738, and 28.4.11, SMP/1133; Jervoise to PCEP, 2.1.12, UNA SMP/2404.

The close interest taken by the government in western Lango during the 1890's had been aroused by the presence there of Kabarega, Mwanga and the Sudanese mutineers. However, the rounding up of the last fugitives by Delmé-Radcliffe in 1901 did not end the government's anxieties. The limelight was henceforward taken by Lango raids into administered territory. Up to 1901 there had been a tendency to see these raids as the responsibility of the fugitive Banyoro and the mutineers. Outside encouragement had certainly had some effect, particularly in the case of raids on Buruli in 1895-96, but events after 1901 soon showed that Lango raiding was a problem in its own right.

During the years 1901-9 there were frequent raids against the Acholi. Lango war bands were seen as far afield as the Murchison Falls area and around Patiko.[1] Systematic administration of the Acholi away from the Nile did not begin until 1910, but the vacillations of official policy since 1899 had resulted in an ill-defined obligation to protect friendly rwode (chiefs). British officials were posted temporarily to Lamogi between 1899 and 1901 and to Keyo (near Patiko) from 1906 to 1907. Promises of protection were made, with the result that, even when the government presence was restricted to the Nile valley, complaints about Lango raids were received and investigated. From time to time local officials advocated punitive operations against Lango leaders such as Okaka of Iceme;[2] but the Entebbe authorities were adamant that expeditions could not be launched

1. Cooper to Wilson, 6.12.04, UNA A16/4. There are several other references to these raids for the years 1902-6 in UNA, series A12 and A16. See also, A.B.Lloyd, Uganda to Khartoum (London,1906),pp.193-95,225.

2. Cooper to Wilson, 14.3.05, UNA A16/4; Fowler to Wilson, 30.9.05, UNA A12/7.

on such slender grounds. As Hayes Sadler pointed out, it was impossible to allocate blame for border raids in which both sides had indulged for many years.[1]

The authorities were much more worried about the situation in Bunyoro, which was unequivocally part of the Protectorate and where strenuous efforts were needed to reconcile the conquered population to colonial rule. As a result of the Baganda depredations of 1895-96, the Langi of Aber were strongly antagonistic to the government and those who submitted to its rule, and Delmé-Radcliffe's campaign had hardly mollified their attitude. Early in 1902 they attacked the government post at Foweira,[2] and by 1904 the temporary refuge they offered to tax evaders from Chope was becoming a serious headache.[3] South of the Okole, the government found itself in a dilemma over those Banyoro who had settled on the east bank of the Nile. They had done so for a variety of reasons. During the 1890's some had gone to Lango in order to escape from the general insecurity in Bunyoro, and from the excesses of the Baganda who manned a chain of forts along the Nile from 1895 onwards.[4] Others had migrated because of famine in Bunyoro,[5] or in order to evade taxation.[6] Banyoro communities were to be found along the Nile from Kungu as far east as Kwibale, near Maruzi hill. As their numbers increased, they began to pose a threat to the Langi, who were

---

1. Hayes Sadler to Wilson, 28.8.05 and 14.11.05, UNA A13/2.
2. Langton to Wilson, January 1902, UNA A12/2.
3. Speke, Report of Tour in Chope District, November 1904, UNA A12/5.
4. Thruston to Ternan, 5.5.97, UNA A4/8. Interview: Yakobo Adoko.
5. Evatt to Ternan, 8.10.99, UNA A4/21.
6. Grant to Hayes Sadler, 30.8.04, UNA A12/5.

rapidly expanding in this area. By August 1904 there had been six clashes between Langi and Banyoro on the right bank;[1] in one incident fifteen Banyoro were killed and eighteen women carried off.[2] No doubt officials would have preferred to ignore the right bank completely, but it was difficult to collect tax from the Banyoro on the left bank if those on the right bank were exempt. In 1903 Hayes Sadler therefore ordered that tax should be collected from the Banyoro living between Kungu and Kwibale. Yet the government could hardly expect these Banyoro to pay up unless they were given protection against Lango raids. Officials in Bunyoro were thus placed in the impossible position of supposedly administering Banyoro across the Nile without being allowed to intervene against the Langi.[3] Not until 1905 did a punitive columne under C. W. Fowler, Sub-Commissioner of Western Province, cross the Nile. Fowler tried to solve the problem by evacuating all Banyoro to the left bank, but by 1909 many had returned, including tax evaders.[4]

The government's difficulties with regard to these Banyoro illustrate very well the contrast between official attitudes to the west and east of Lango. In the east, no essential short-term interests were at stake, and the officials at Mbale - 90 miles from the nearest Lango settlements - were only marginally concerned with how the Baganda and Banyara behaved there; and

---

1. Ibid.

2. Grant, Report on Hoima station for August 1904, UNA A12/5.

3. Prendergast to Wilson, 8.12.03 and 9.12.03, and attached minutes, UNA A12/5; Prendergast to Wilson, 21.12.03, UNA A12/4; Grant to Wilson, 10.10.04, UNA A12/5.

4. Fowler to Wilson, 8.3.05, UNA A12/6; Henry, Report on Masindi District for April 1909, UNA SMP/280/09; Jervoise, undated entry, in Maruzi T.B. (1912-13).

so between 1899 and 1907 no European official visited the south-eastern Langi. By contrast, western Lango was immediately adjacent to a District of the Protectorate - a District, moreover, the stability of which was a high priority for the Protectorate as a whole. From 1903 onwards a civilian official was resident as Masindi, less than thirty miles from the most westerly part of Lango. The reports submitted by successive Assistant Collectors at Masindi show that considerable thought was given to relations with the Langi, in the light of the long-term problem of pacifying the country east of the Nile.[1] After Fowler's visit in 1905, this interest was quickened by a positive response from some of the Lango clan leaders. As the permanence of the government's presence in Bunyoro became more obvious, and as officials showed more concern about the right bank of the Nile, so clan leaders in western Lango began to take the government into account when making political calculations. Overtures were made by Odora of Kungu in 1904, by Arum of Ibuje in 1905, and by the great Odongo Aja in 1906. Accommodating gestures had been made before, but not until 1904 can we identify a response which was determined by a long-term perception of colonial rule rather than the exigencies of an immediate crisis.

These overtures were important in several ways. In the first place, they partly determined the timing of the government's entry into western Lango. Officials in Bunyoro were quick to see how important the assistance of friendly 'chiefs' would be when the time came to open a station in Lango; they soon realised, too, that if they did not respond quickly, the local standing of 'pro-government' leaders in Lango was likely to be undermined. Such

1. These reports can be found in UNA as follows: A12/5,A12/7, SMP/314/06,SMP/515,SMP/371/07,SMP/34/08,SMP/4/08,SMP/1005/08.

fears were particularly strong at the beginning of 1908;[1] and so in April of that year the Sub-Commissioner was instructed to tour western Lango and to draw up detailed plans for its administration.[2] Thus, whereas the timing of the government's entry into Miro was affected by the increasing menace of Lango raids, in the west the government acted when the momentum of conciliation appeared to be endangered. Psychologically the difference was considerable.

In the second place, the personal acquaintance which officials had had with individual clan leaders before 1909 meant that they began to administer western Lango with at least some grasp of local politics, and with some confidence that indigenous 'chiefs' could be used, - in marked contrast to the pattern in the south-east. Finally, in Lango itself, the contacts with the administration during the years 1904-8 ensured that the initial response to colonial rule was not entirely negative or passive; a handful of clan leaders at least were prepared to play the government along and to manipulate it in their own interests.

The advances made by Lango leaders from 1904 onwards therefore repay careful attention. The first, and unquestionably the most skilful, was made by Odora of Kungu. For this reason alone, Odora's story merits a closer look. Furthermore, a unique combination of contemporary documentation and oral reminiscence allows his life to be reconstructed in some detail. In the account that follows, each of the stages by which he rose to an extremely influential position in 1909 is examined in turn; together they afford a rare glimpse of one of the earliest encounters between Langi and Europeans.

---

1. Anderson to Wilson, 3.1.08, UNA SMP/4/08; Speke to Leakey, 27.3.08, UNA SMP/1005/08.

2. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08.

****

Odora was born in about 1880. He was brought up near Teboke, on the Okole river, as the son of Angole Acak, who belonged to the Arak me Oyakori clan. Angole Acak was not the leader of his clan, but in about 1895 he led a sector of the Jo Oyakori away from Teboke to Tarogali on the Nile, where he had marriage ties with the leader of the Jo Ogora Atar.[1] Tension soon arose between the Jo Oyakori and their powerful northern neighbours, the Jo Ocukuru of Ibuje. A series of incidents culminated in a major battle: Arum led the Jo ~~Oyakori~~ Ocukuru to complete victory, and many of the Jo Oyakori were killed, including Angole Acak himself. The remainder of the clan fled south-wards to Kungu which they reached between 1899 and 1901.[2] (Map 8).

It is a measure of the extremity to which the Jo Oyakori were reduced that they migrated to such an infertile and unhealthy site, abounding in tsetse and mosquitoes. The only merit of Kungu was that, being surrounded on three sides by the Nile, it could more easily be defended against attack from the land. There were no other Langi living in Kungu, and no allies nearby

---

1. Peter Enin, vernacular MS (1967), translated by J.N.Odurkene as 'The Life of Chief Odora Arimo of Lango', typescript in Dept. of Religious Studies, Makerere University, pp.1-4; Reuben Ogwal, 'Bino a muni kede mwa i Lango', vernacular MS, summary translation in Makerere University Library, p.7; Yusto Oweno, vernacular MS, translated as 'The Life of Daudi Odora', typescript in Dept. of History, Makerere University. Interviews: Isaya Ajoba, Sira Okelo.

   The exact identity of Odora's father is disputed. According to one tradition (Enin, Ogwal, Ajoba), Odora was born the son of Ogwok, but Ogwok was killed shortly afterwards and Odora was adopted by his uncle, Angole Acak. According to the other tradition (Okelo, Oweno), Odora was the actual son of Angole Acak. All sources are, however, agreed that Odora was brought up by Angole.

2. Interviews: Sira Okelo, Okelo Abak, Pilipo Omwa Ayo, Peter Enin, Yakobo Gaci, Anderea Ogwang. The dating of the Kungu migration given here fits the oral record, but is in fact determined by two documentary observations: Evatt to Ternan, 19.1.00, UNA A4/25, and Grant to Wilson, 20.10.04, UNA A12/5.

on whom the Jo Oyakori could rely.[1] However, by the end of the 1890's there were a few Banyoro living there, and Kungu was also one of the regular access points for Banyoro traders entering southern Lango. These contacts encouraged some of the Jo Oyakori to look across the Nile for fridndship and security. Their proximity to the kingdom of Bunyoro and its new European overlords was the only asset which the Jo Oyakori possessed in an otherwise very bleak predicament.

By 1903 they had already put their contacts with Bunyoro to use, for when the missionary Albert Lloyd stopped at a village on the left bank of the Nile and invited the Langi of Kungu to visit him, they were able to converse in Lunyoro and were aware of Lloyd's unofficial status and his movements in Bunyoro.[2] It was while these first contacts with the Banyoro were being made that Odora emerged as leader of his clan. As Angole Acak's son, he naturally had a claim on the leadership, but he did not take over immediately, because he was very young; at the time of the battle with the Jo Ocukuru, he can have been no more than nineteen or twenty, and he did not even take part. The clan was led to Kungu by a lineage brother of Angole Acak. In fact, Odora began to take the limelight not because of military prowess, but because of his skill in dealing with the Banyoro. This would not normally have been much of a recommendation, but in the situation of the Jo Oyakori it was an important asset. When Lloyd invited the Kungu people to visit him in 1903, two 'chiefs' came; but as relations with Bunyoro were more assiduously

---

1. Their relations with the Jo Ogora Atar had cooled somewhat by this time. Interviews: Sira Okelo, Okelo Abak.

2. Lloyd, op.cit. pp.123-25. Interview: Peter Enin.

cultivated, Odora came to dominate the elders of the clan.[1]

Odora's first visit to Hoima, the administrative capital of Bunyoro, was late in 1903 or early in 1904, when he went to see Lloyd again.[2] This visit probably convinced him that the best chance of restoring the fortunes of his clan lay in securing the help of the authorities in Bunyoro. Some help was plainly needed, as the Jo Ocukuru were continuing to harrass the Jo Oyakori. In December 1903 they attacked Kungu, spearing eight Banyoro, and a year later Odora's men were again attacked.[3] Faced with this threat, Odora resolved on a dramatic gesture of submission to Bunyoro. In October 1904, on another visit to Hoima, he attended the British Collector's baraza; he declared that henceforward he wished to have all disputes among his people settled by the Bunyoro lukiko (council); and as an earnest of his good intentions, he there and then handed over to the lukiko one of his own men who was accused of killing a Munyoro.[4] With this flourish, Odora thrust himself on the attention of the British administration as a 'progressive', and an ally of colonial rule.

Odora now made frequent visits to Hoima, bringing gifts to Anderea Duhaga, the Omukama, and sometimes staying as his guest

---

1. Interview: Sira Okelo. Lloyd, op.cit.pp.123,125. Judging by Lloyd's account, only one 'chief' appears to have been included in the group of Langi who visited Hoima a few months later, so this may have marked an important stage in the consolidation of Odora's position within the Jo Oyakori.

2. Lloyd, op.cit.pp.124-25.

3. Prendergast to Wilson,8.12.03 and 9.12.03, UNA A12/5; Speke, Report on Masindi District for December 1904, UNA A12/5. The attackers in the first case are described as Langi from Itao; this can only mean the Jo Ocukuru. The provenance of the second group is not recorded.

4. Grant to Wilson, 20.10.04, UNA A12/5; Unyoro District Annual Report for 1904-5, UNA A6/18.

for a month at a stretch.[1] All the time he was preparing the ground for a government intervention which would confound the Jo Ocukuru and establish himself as a chief outside his own clan. The tradition current in Odora's family is that the Europeans agreed to come and help Odora avenge his father's death.[2] This was certainly not Fowler's intention when he entered Lango in January 1905. His main concern was with the Banyoro living on the right bank, but it is likely that during his visits to Hoima Odora had stressed the role played by the Jo Ocukuru in Lango attacks on the Banyoro. To some extent, therefore, Odora probably influenced Fowler's movements. While Fowler was on Lango soil, Odora identified himself with him as closely as possible. When the Sub-Commissioner landed on the right bank at Kungu, Odora presented himself with eighty warriors, and helped in evacuating the Banyoro to the left bank.[3] Fowler was soon joined by 70 officers and men of the K.A.R.; accompanied by Odora, he then proceeded northwards to Ibuje. If Odora had hoped for a full-scale attack on the Jo Ocukuru, he was disappointed. Arum had prior warning of their approach; when Fowler arrived, he and his co-leader, Gongi, laid down their spears and submitted. Several Banyoro women and children were recovered, livestock was confiscated, and shots were fired, but there was only one casualty. Odora's demand for the death of Amori Okwelobo, his father's killer, was ignored.[4]

---

1. Unyoro District Annual Report for 1904-5, UNA A6/18.

2. Enin, op.cit; Ogwal, op.cit.

3. Fowler to Wilson, 8.2.05, and 8.3.05, UNA A12/6.

4. Fowler to Wilson, 6.2.05, UNA A12/6; Captain Archer, Report of Tour in Bukeddi, 25.3.05, appendix to Uganda Intelligence Report No. 25, PRO CO/879/782; Oweno,op.cit. Interviews: Sira Okelo, Peter Enin, Anderea Ogwang, Yakobo Gaci.

Yet if Odora's desire for revenge was not fully satisfied, the favourable impression he had made on Fowler paid immediate dividends. When Fowler left Lango in February, Odora asked if he might take over the government earthwork in Kungu which had been occupied briefly in 1899 during operations against the Sudanese mutineers. Fowler not only agreed to this, but sought permission from Entebbe to lend Odora rifles, on the grounds that this would be an economical alternative to building a fort on the Nile. Twelve Sniders and 1,200 rounds of ammunition were then made over to Odora, on condition that they were used only for defensive purposes.[1]

The combined effect of Odora's occupation of a former government earthwork and his possession of firearms was to give his local standing an immense boost. During the years 1905-7 his following was swelled by migrants from other clans in south-west Lango to approximately double its former size.[2] The firearms, far from being saved for defence, enabled Odora to switch over to the offensive. He began to raid the hinterland for food supplies and ivory,[3] and also to pay off old scores, particularly in Ibuje.[4] His raids took him as far as Akokoro and even Awir, on the Okole river.[5] British officials in Bunyoro were aware that Odora was

---

1. Fowler to Wilson, 15.2.05, UNA A12/6; Grant to Wilson, 26.4.05, and attached minutes, UNA A12/6; Anderson, Report on Unyoro District for July & August 1905, UNA A12/7.

2. Jo Arak me Ococ, Jo Along, and Jo Ogora Atar are mentioned (Interviews: Sira Okelo, Yusto Oweno). For population estimates, see: Grant to Wilson, 20.10.04, UNA A12/5; Anderson to Spire, 8.12.07, UNA SMP/34/08.

3. Interviews: Peter Enin, Matayo Aman.

4. Interviews: Anderea Adoko, Matayo Ayika.

5. Anderson, Report on Unyoro District for July & August 1905, UNA A12/7. Enin, op.cit. Interview: Matayo Aman.

interpreting rather liberally the terms on which he had been lent the firearms, but disapproval of his methods was outweighed by the hope that his expanding influence would facilitate the opening of administration.[1] Odora played up to this hope, and during 1905 he conveyed the impression that his influence was being extended by leaps and bounds. By October 1905 Jervoise, the Assistant Collector at Masindi, believed that Odora had a hold over chiefs who lived between three and six days' journey from Kungu.[2] This estimate was wildly exaggerated. Even Awir, the furthest extent of Odora's raids, was no more than three days' journey (45 miles) from Kungu, and although Odora was feared over much of the country between the Okole and Lake Kwania, he exercised no regular authority outside Kungu, nor did he command other clan leaders in battle. The evidence strongly suggests that during 1905 Odora went out of his way to deceive Jervoise at Masindi about the territorial reach of his authority; perhaps he was already thinking in terms of an official paramountcy when formal administration began.

Odora did not confine his dealings with the government to advertising - or exaggerating - his power as a chief. He seized every opportunity to cooperate and to establish his reputation as a 'progressive'. In September 1905, without any prompting from above, he sent back across the Nile a number of Banyoro who had ignored Fowler's ban on settlement east of the river.[3] Soon afterwards he expressed his readiness to begin tax collection

---

1. This view was first expressed in May 1905; Grant, Unyoro District Annual Report for 1904-5, UNA A6/18. See also: Wilson to Sadler, 14.10.05, A12/7.

2. Jervoise to Anderson, 2.10.05 and 4.11.05, UNA A12/7.

3. Jervoise to Anderson, 2.10.05, UNA A12/7.

thus prompting the government to reconsider the opening of a station in Lango.[1] Early in 1907 he obliged Jervoise by providing a large amount of grain to help meet a famine emergency in Bunyoro.[2] From 1906 onwards too, Odora was playing host to Protestant evangelists from Bunyoro - the first Lango to do so.[3] Confronted by so rare a degree of understanding, officials were inclined to overlook the reckless expenditure of ammunition during beer-feasts, and other symptoms of Odora's "state of barbarity".[4]

The most spectacular instance of Odora's early skill in exploiting Europeans occurred in November 1907, when Winston Churchill, then Under-Secretary for the Colonies, stopped briefly at Mruli on his way down the Nile from a tour of East Africa. After getting permission to greet the distinguished visitor, Odora and nearly 400 of his warriors crossed the Nile and "promised their everlasting loyalty to England", in consideration of which they requested help against their hostile neighbours.[5] Churchill rose to the occasion and, without consulting the local officials, promised British protection in the future, and an immediate addition of six Sniders to Odora's arsenal.[6] It is hardly surprising that, as one of Churchill's

---

1. Jervoise to Anderson, 4.11.05, UNA A12/7.

2. Interview: E.B.Haddon. Mr. Haddon was stationed at Masindi under Jervoise for six months in 1907.

3. Jervoise to Leakey, 4.2.06, UNA A12/7; R.M.Fisher, 'Other Sheep', Church Missionary Gleaner 35 (January 1908), p.3.

4. Leakey to Commissioner, 15.2.06, UNA A12/7.

5. Anderson, Report on Masindi District for November 1907, UNA SMP/317/07.

6. Anderson to Spire, 8.12.07, UNA SMP/34/08; Churchill to Bell, 8.12.07, UNA SMP conf/47/10.

party later wrote, "A few words ... from Mr. Churchill put them in the wildest spirits".[1] No less surprising was the chilly reaction provoked in Entebbe by Churchill's essay in African diplomacy.[2]

Odora's attempts to manipulate European officialdom culminated in Sub-Commissioner Knowles's tour of western Lango in April 1908. This tour, during which firm administrative plans were at last drawn up, came not a moment too soon. Odora had been running into difficulties: on the one hand, officials were beginning to be sceptical of his claims to enlightenment,[3] and even to regret the encouragement given to him in the past;[4] on the other hand, the government's delay in implementing its long-advertised intention to step in was undermining Odora's prestige.[5] The Sub-Commissioner's tour dispelled most of the doubts about Odora and restored his prestige. Knowles was by no means uncritical: he felt that Odora was exploiting the administration in order to discomfort his enemies, and he established that Odora had no influence north of the Aroca river. But he came away from Lango convinced that Odora controlled the country to the south as far as Lake Kwania and that his position there should be officially recognised.[6] The crucial factor

---

1. F.A.Dickinson, Lake Victoria to Khartoum with Rifle and Camera (London,1910),pp.80-81. See also, W.S.Churchill, My African Journey (London,1908),pp.146-47.

2. CS to Anderson, 3.1.08, UNA SMP/34/08.

3. Leakey, Report on Bachope and Bakeddi incidents, 18.1.08, UNA SMP/1528/07.

4. Wilson to Bell, 28.2.08, UNA SMP/1528/07.

5. Speke to Leakey, 27.3.08, UNA SMP/1005/08.

6. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, and attached Diary of Tour, UNA SMP/1005/08.

would appear to have been Knowles's decision to proceed northwards, starting at Kungu and taking Odora with him. This choice of itinerary was a timely reminder of Odora's special relationship with the government. The last European whom Odora had accompanied outside Kungu had been Fowler in 1905; Odora's enemies - notably the Jo Ocukuru - doubtless feared that they might be penalised as before, if they did not allow Odora to stage-manage the tour. This is the most likely explanation for Odora's tour de force, a large baraza (meeting) held at Itao, close by the settlements of the Jo Ocukuru. The assembled leaders agreed with Knowles that a paramount chief over the country between Lake Kwania and the Aroca was required, and they "elected Dora as the man they should choose".[1] At the same time a site for the District headquarters was selected near Ibuje hill. Knowles did not enlarge on the reasons for his choice, but Odora may well have swayed the decision. Clearly Kungu itself was quite unsuitable; Ibuje, on the other hand, was reasonably central to the new District, while still within Odora's allotted sphere. Ten months later Knowles returned to introduce the first Assistant District Commissioner of Lango.[2] Odora moved his own headquarters to Ibuje,[3] where he retained his special relationship with the government, and where he was well-placed to press his claims to even greater authority. Compared with his near-desperate straits only six years before, Odora's position as a government chief was a giddy eminence indeed.

---

1. Ibid.

2. Paske Smith to Grant, 11.3.09, UNA SMP/519/09.

3. Interviews: Zakalia Isengeze, Saida Apio Alit, Yakobo Adoko. Odora's village was described in 1910 as being a little to the north of Palango station. F.H.Melland and E.H.Cholmeley, Through the Heart of Africa (London,1912),p.225.

****

The lessons to be drawn from Odora's experience were not lost on other clan leaders in western Lango, though none of them equalled his understanding of European attitudes and requirements. Arum, the leader of the Jo Ocukuru, against whom Odora had been particularly incensed, learnt quickly from his confrontation with Fowler in 1905. His immediate reaction was to play Odora's game, and to prejudice Fowler against Odongo Aja, just as Odora had prejudiced Fowler against Arum.[1] Over the longer term, Arum appears to have realized that Odora's reputation with the government was firmly established, and that nothing was to be gained from opposition. It may be that, as Jervoise believed, Arum hoped that friendliness towards the government would be repaid with the loan of rifles, as in Odora's case.[2] At any rate, he allowed the impression to grow in government circles that Odora had a hold over him: whereas he was described in 1906 as one of the three important Lango chiefs along the Nile, Knowles regarded him two years later as a mere 'headman' under Odora.[3] And at the crucial baraza at Itao in 1908, Arum kept in the background and made no objection to Odora's 'election' as chief.[4] During the years 1905-8 the Jo Ocukuru were certainly troubled by Odora's raids, but there is no evidence that Arum was in any sense subject to Odora. His submissive behaviour was determined by political judgement rather than necessity. During Odora's residence at Ibuje from 1909 to 1911, Arum continued to cooperate, and in so doing he strengthened his position vis-à-vis his co-leader of the Jo Ocukuru, Gongi, who resisted the administration.[5]

---

1. Fowler to Wilson, 27.2.05, UNA A12/6.

2. Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for 1905-6, UNA SMP/314/06.

3. Ibid; Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08.

4. Ibid.

5. In November 1909, Gongi attacked a Muganda agent. Fox, Report on Lango District for November 1909, UNA SMP/872/09.

Arum's policy paid off in 1911 when, with Odora's move to a new headquarters, Arum became the sole chief in Ibuje and was issued with five government rifles.[1]

So far as officials could see, the same process of reconciliation was taking place in Aber, if more haltingly. In view of the clashes with the Baganda in 1895-96 and with Delmé-Radcliffe in 1901, the leaders of the Jo Arak were more antagonistic to the government than most.[2] Odongo Aja refused to have any dealings with Fowler in 1905.[3] However by April 1906 his attitude had softened; he now declared his readiness to pay hut tax, and he made two visits to officials in Bunyoro before his death later in the year.[4] This accommodating stance was maintained by his successor, Otwal, who visited Masindi in December.[5] It is unlikely that the change of attitude among the Jo Arak betokened a taste for government rule. Almost certainly, Odongo Aja saw the opening of a station near Patiko early in 1906 as evidence that the government was determined to bring the right bank of the Nile under direct control, and he decided that it would pay him to be less hostile. This interpretation is suggested by the fact that, when Patiko station was closed down early in 1907, no more overtures were received from Otwal. Indeed there were signs that the old pattern of Lango raids on the administered area was being resumed, for in December 1907 a war band landed at Foweira and abducted a chief in broad daylight.[6]

---

1. List of Baganda Agents and their posts in Lango District, September 1911, UNA SMP/519/09.

2. See for example: Speke, Report of Tour in Chopi district in November 1904, UNA A12/5.

3. Fowler to Wilson, 27.2.05, UNA A12/6.

4. These conciliatory moves are recorded in a sequence of reports on Masindi District by Jervoise: Report for 1905-6, UNA SMP/314/06; Report for July 1906, SMP/515/part 1; Report for October 1906, SMP/515/part 2.

5. Jervoise, Report on Masindi District for December 1906, UNA SMP/515/part 2.

6. Anderson to Wilson, 3.1.08, UNA SMP/4/08.

The impression in Aber that the government was in retreat was finally removed by Knowles's tour in April 1908. From Otwal's point of view, the auguries for his meeting with Knowles were hardly propitious; for besides the recent deterioration in his relations with the government, Knowles had just visited the Adok clan of Kidilande, who had given him a very one-sided version of their feud with the Jo Arak. Nevertheless, Otwal dispelled all doubts. He was able to set the record straight on the feud with the Jo Adok, and he said that he would like a trading depot to be set up at Foweira. Most remarkable of all, he convinced Knowles that his territory extended 50 miles east of Foweira, as far as the upper reaches of the Okole river, - a wild exaggeration - and he had himself designated 'responsible chief' of the area between the Aroca river and the Acholi border.[1] Knowles soon realized that to give Otwal authority over the Jo Adok of Kidilande was impractical, and so the Okole was defined as Otwal's southern border.[2] All the same, the administrative divisions made in 1908 were a striking indication of the confidence placed in Otwal - a confidence which Otwal himself had done nothing substantial to justify.

The new District of Palango[3] was inaugurated in March 1909. A site called Palango had already been selected as District headquarters near Ibuje hill. It was staffed by 40 native police and by two Assistant District Commissioners, the senior of whom, Paske Smith, was responsible to the District Commissioner in

---

1. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, and Wilson to Knowles, 22.6.08, UNA SMP/1005/08.

2. Knowles to Wilson, 6.10.08, UNA SMP/1520/08.

3. The District was officially known as 'Lango', but to avoid confusion with the Lango District of 1911 onwards, I refer to it as 'Palango', which was the name of the headquarters.

Hoima.[1] The government confined itself for the time being to the country within twenty miles of the Nile.[2] As a result of friendly contacts with Odora, Otwal and others, officials faced their task with some confidence. Certainly the ground had been better prepared than in Miro District. Those clan leaders who had obstructed Knowles's tour had by February 1909 submitted, and a handful of leaders ten to fifteen miles inland had also indicated their support.[3] Knowles had already made a straightforward division of the country into three sections according to the main rivers, and he had appointed chiefs over two of them: Odora over the country between Lake Kwania and the Aroca, and Otwal for the stretch between the Ayago river and the Okole.[4] During the inaugural tour, Okelo Adak of the Jo Adok was appointed to rule the intervening stretch between the Aroca and the Okole.[5] As far as Knowles could see, it was only a matter of time before a Paramount Chief of Palango was appointed.[6]

This initial confidence in the capacity of Lango chiefs had to be qualified almost immediately. In the first place, it soon became clear that territorially the claims made by Odora and Okelo Adak were much exaggerated. More important was the realization that, even within his acknowledged sphere, the kind of authority exercised by a clan leader was very different from European stereotypes. The fact that government orders were

---

1. Paske Smith to Grant, 11.3.09, UNA SMP/519/09.
2. Tomkins to Knowles, 22.9.08, UNA SMP/1520/08.
3. The more distant leaders were from Cegere, Apac and Loro. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08; Knowles to Wilson, 8.7.08, and 22.7.08, SMP/1003/08; Paske Smith, Report on Masindi District for January 1909, SMP/280/09.
4. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08.
5. Knowles to CS, 16.3.09, UNA SMP/1520/08.
6. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08.

conveyed through recognized leaders did not make the ordinary clansman any more inclined to obey.

> "The chiefs themselves", observed Paske Smith, "are afraid to enforce their authority, stating that if they attempted to do so, they would be driven out of their villages or speared." 1

During the first months of administration, evidence of the incapacity of the appointed chiefs accumulated. Tax evaders from Bunyoro continued to be offered refuge in Lango;[2] there were raids against the Jopalwo;[3] and - most serious of all - clan leaders near the Nile continued to attack their enemies to the east, in the knowledge that the injured parties would not dare to travel through their territory in order to complain to a District Officer.[4] Although the three appointed chiefs had originally agreed to clear their respective portions of the proposed road down the Nile from Kungu to Kamdini,[5] in practice the enlistment of forced labour was a task beyond them. The truth was that, as in the south-east, the basic administrative tasks of maintaining order and mobilizing labour resources were quite unacceptable to the Langi.

Officials were in little doubt as to how this problem should be tackled in the short term. The obvious example was the Eastern Province, where Baganda agents had been used in similar circumstances, and apparently with striking results. Even at the inauguration of Palango District, it had not been supposed that the appointed chiefs would be able to manage without on-the-spot assistance, and Knowles secured the chiefs' approval for a

---

1. Paske Smith to Grant, 17.5.09, UNA SMP/519/09.
2. Henry, Report on Masindi District for April 1909, UNA SMP/280/09.
3. Henry, Report on Masindi District for 1909-10, UNA SMP/671.
4. Paske Smith to Grant, 5.10.09, UNA SMP/872/09.
5. Knowles to CS, 16.3.09, UNA SMP/1520/08.

proposal to bring in Baganda agents.[1] But rapid disillusionment with the appointed chiefs caused Paske Smith to lay much greater stress on the need for agents.[2] He was supported in blunt terms by Grant, the responsible official in Hoima, who had previously served in the heart of the agent country at Mbale; in a letter to the Chief Secretary he wrote:[3]

> "The Lango ... are raw savages. The only system on which these people can be dealt with is through the use of intelligent Agents, as has been done in Bukeddi, and until these Agents are established throughout the District, I fear progress will be slow."

And so in July and August 1909 the first two agents were posted to Akaka in Aber, and to Okelo Adak's village in Kidilande, with a dozen or so followers each.[4] In the next nine months four more agents were posted - to Cegere, Apac, Akokoro and Ocini. (Map 10).

Paske Smith's expectations about the agents' prospects were as illusory as Knowles's confidence in the appointed chiefs. In forwarding his request for agents in March 1909, he observed that "a tactful Muganda" from Bukedi "should find no difficulty in managing the people here without any display of force;"[5] he was under the impression that the Baganda would be able to start with a clean slate, "as the Lango have never had any dealings with the Waganda before".[6] It was true that the western Langi had been spared harrassment by Kakungulu and Kazana, but many of them had had unpleasant experiences of the Baganda during the years 1894-96. At Apac the installation of an agent in

1. Knowles to CS, 16.3.09, UNA SMP/1520/08.
2. Paske Smith to Grant, 20.6.09 and 8.7.09, UNA SMP/872/09.
3. Grant to CS, 26.5.09, UNA SMP/519/09.
4. Paske Smith to Grant, 2.8.09 and 5.10.09, UNA SMP/872/09.
5. Paske Smith to Grant, 11.3.09, UNA SMP/519/09.
6. Paske Smith to Grant, 17.5.09, UNA SMP/519/09.

January 1910 provoked the most serious hostility yet encountered. A large number of villages on both sides of the Aroca, assisted by one from the Okole, carried on what Paske Smith described as "guerilla warfare" against the official party. Within a month the agent had deserted his post, and further resistance was offered when a new agent was installed in June.[1] In Aber - the scene of the most serious clash between Baganda and Langi in the mid-90's - the posting of an agent to Akaka destroyed the toleration with which the Jo Arak had hitherto viewed the government. Until the agent arrived, Otwal's attitude continued to be friendly. But in February 1910 three of the agent's followers were killed in Kamdini. Otwal took to the bush with Owiny Akulo, and while they were still at large, another thirteen Baganda were killed on their way through Ocini. Order was only restored in Aber after vigorous police action and the removal of both Otwal and Owiny Akulo from the District.[2]

The scale of the administration's difficulties greatly increased with the removal early in 1910 of the Governor's twenty-mile limit. Between June and October 1910 Captain Tufnell established eight more posts, which extended the government's range to between 25 and 40 miles' distance from the Nile.[3] So rapid an expansion was not achieved without violence to the niceties of approved conduct: Tufnell's practice of seizing livestock as a means of effecting quick contact with the owners earned him a reprimand from Entebbe.[4] More important, however, was the

1. Fox to Paske Smith, 21.2.10, and Paske Smith to Grant, 12.3.10 UNA SMP/1859/09; Paske Smith, Reports on Lango District for January and February 1910, UNA SMP/193; Tufnell to Grant, 6.7.10, UNA SMP/1876/09.

2. Paske Smith to Grant, 14.3.10, UNA SMP/201; Fox to Tufnell, 16.6.10, UNA SMP/1860/09. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Kosia Ato, Erisa Olugo, Edwardi Olir, Yakobo Olugo.

3. Tufnell to Grant, 28.10.10, and attached map of Lango District, UNA SMP/519/09.

4. Tomkins to CS, 10.10.10, and Grant to Tufnell, 14.10.10, UNA SMP/1859/09.

added scope which this expansion gave to the Baganda. They were placed in charge of all the new posts, so that the number of agents was more than doubled and the amount of European supervision proportionately reduced. Lango attacks on the Baganda continued. In November 1910 an agent and fourteen of his followers were killed in Aboke, far up on the Okole river, and another major clash was only narrowly averted in Aber.[1] For the first time, officials now began to see these clashes in terms of provocation by the Baganda, as well as obstinate resistance by the Langi.[2]

These misgivings were brought to a head in February 1911 by J. O. Haldane, who had just taken charge of the District. One tour of the hinterland was enough to convince him that something was seriously wrong, and by the time he reached Palango station again, he had already drafted a letter to his superior in which he attacked the agent system in the strongest terms.[3] When this letter was forwarded to Entebbe, it prompted the newly arrived Governor, Frederick Jackson, to review the history of administration in Palango. He was appalled by the evidence of maladministration which he found in earlier reports,[4] and he promptly decided that the agent system should be dismantled in Palango immediately, and throughout Eastern Province in the near future.[5] The immediate result of Jackson's decision was a spate of correspondence between the responsible officials, in which the system was scrutinised and assessed.[6]

---

1. Place to Grant, 13.12.10, UNA SMP/193.
2. Tufnell to Grant, 31.10.10, UNA SMP/519/09; Place to Grant, 13.12.10, UNA SMP/193.
3. Haldane to Knowles, 6.2.11, UNA SMP/519/09.
4. Jackson's comments appear on several earlier letters in the SMP/519/09 file.
5. CS to Knowles, 3.5.11, UNA SMP/519/09; Jackson to Sec. of State, 14.7.11, PRO CO/536/41.
6. For this debate, see Twaddle, 'Politics in Bukedi', op.cit, pp.255-74.

Haldane's outburst was grounded on one solid objection - that the Baganda were not adequately paid. With the exception of the head agent, none of the agents in Palango received more than 10 rupees (just over 13 shillings) per month. Their followers were in an even worse position; despite official recognition that the followers - a dozen or so for each agent - were essential to the system, they received no pay whatsoever. In practice, Haldane concluded, the system was based[1]

> "upon the openly unspoken and officially gainsaid understanding that we concede them the right to live by underhand methods of plunder so long as they employ it discreetly & don't oblige us to scrutinize their conduct. It might be suggested that we deliberately countenance peculation on their part as an indirect & economical way of paying them."

This criticism was widely subscribed to by officials in Eastern Province, if in less blunt language,[2] and there is no doubt that Haldane's attack was justified. In both Palango and Miro, the Baganda agents maintained themselves by compelling the local population to bring them food, and by dispatching raiding parties to steal anything else they wanted in the way of livestock, grain or beer.[3] It was a demand for provisions which caused the killing of six Baganda near Bar in May 1911.[4] And the trouble at Aber in 1910 was sparked off in a similar way, as

---

1. Haldane to Knowles, 6.2.11, UNA SMP/519/09.

2. Jervoise to Spire, 5.6.11, UNA EPMP/Z/44; Watson to CS, 3.11.11, UNA SMP/519/09. See also, R.H.Johnstone, 'Past Times in Uganda', MS in Rhodes House Library, Oxford, p.9. Johnstone was a K.A.R. officer posted to Lango in 1911; his criticisms of the agent system, written ten years later, are therefore those of an outsider.

3. See especially, Johnstone, op.cit. p.10.

4. Interviews: Luka Abura, Tomasi Ojuka, Isaya Ogwangguji. The official report on the incident attributed the clash to a demand for forced labour. Jervoise to Spire, 17.5.11, UNA SMP/1960.

Map 10

The Districts of Miro and Palango, 1911, showing all agents' posts in Lango country

Owiny Akulo's son recounts:[1]

> "Otwal was drinking beer with some guests - matoke beer which some Jopalwo had brought him. Then the Baganda came along and found Otwal drinking beer with his guests, and they seized the beer. Instead of sitting down like the other guests, they just took away what they wanted. Then Otwal's companions said, 'These are not guests, rwot; should we fight them ?'
>
> Rather than behave quietly until the Langi started to fight, the Baganda shot one man called Ngole Adul, and he fell to the ground. 'He's dead! He's dead !' the people cried. Ah ! Then the young men set upon the Baganda ! Some of them, seeing that the Baganda were going towards the Toci river, killed them by the water there. The three Baganda who'd been killed were thrown into the Toci, and the Toci carried their bodies into the Nile."

The predatory attitude of the Baganda compromised their whole role as petty officials. The mere counting of heads could be construed by the Langi as a hostile act.[2] The Baganda had great difficulty in rounding up labour for public works; time and again, they could only persuade people to erect a stockade or clear a road by force of arms, which invited counter-action. Of those clashes between Baganda and Langi which were fully reported at the time, the majority were caused by demands for free labour.[3] Taking both Districts up to the middle of 1911, the returns called for by Jackson revealed that the Baganda had expended ammunition against the Langi no less than 118 times; 43 Baganda and 13 of Kazana's men had been killed, while the number of Langi killed almost certainly exceeded the 63 recorded cases.[4]

---

1. Interview: Leoben Okodi. The official report, at secondhand, said that the Baganda were attacked when they arrived with a message for Otwal. Paske Smith to Grant, 14.3.10, UNA SMP/201

2. Near Loro it precipitated the killing of two Baganda. Haldane, Report on Lango District for March 1911, and Knowles to Haldane, 19.5.11, UNA SMP/193. Interview: Yosia Omara.

3. In Palango and Miro Districts, 11 incidents of this nature are recorded for the years 1910-12. They are reported in UNA SMP/2404,1938,2020.

4. Returns of all encounters between Langi/Kumam and Baganda/ Banyara were sent in from Palango and Miro in July 1911. See UNA SMP/2020,1938. The number of Kazana's men killed actually exceeded 13.

The unrealistic rate of pay was the aspect which received most attention at the time, because it was a readily identifiable defect with a straightforward solution. But there were two other considerations which militated against good government by the Baganda. The first was the racial antagonism of the Baganda towards the Langi. The Baganda despised all those of their neighbours who lacked centralised political institutions, and they applied the term 'Bakedi' (naked people) to them without discrimination. This sense of racial superiority seems to have been particularly strong towards Lwo-speakers, whose language the Baganda found great difficulty in learning.[1]

The second defect lay in the circumstances in which the Baganda were recruited for service in Lango. In the earliest areas of the Protectorate to be farmed out to the Baganda, the lead was taken by chiefs of established eminence in the Ganda political system, who took with them their personal clients in the expectation of establishing permanent fiefs; it was therefore in their interests to protect their new subjects against the worst abuses. Broadly speaking, this was the pattern in the annexed areas of Bunyoro during the 1890's, and in Bukedi between 1899 and 1906. But in Lango there were significant differences. In neither Palango nor Miro was it envisaged that the Baganda would remain indefinitely. Their role, as Ingham has put it,

> "was primarily that of skilled mechanics called upon to create an administrative machine and then to withdraw when it was in running order." 2

---

1. For observations to this effect, see: Kitching to Baylis, 31.12.05, CMS Archives, G3/A7/0/1906(a); Pleydell to CMS headquarters, 5.11.07, in Extracts from the Annual Letters of the Missionaries for the Year 1907 (London,1908),p.239.

2. Ingham,op.cit.p.158.

Nor did the government entrust overall responsibility to an important Ganda chief; very few of the agents had any pretension to chiefly title at all.[1] In Miro District there was probably some sort of discipline among the Baganda, since most of them appear to have come together as followers of Isaka Nziga, who had himself been a senior lieutenant of Kakungulu's. In Palango even this element of control was lacking: agents and followers were simply hired piecemeal as the need arose, and they were mostly recruited from the police, from the labour force on the Busoga Railway, and from the ranks of other government employees.[2] This difference in recruitment patterns may have accounted for the higher incidence of armed clashes in Palango.[3] In general, the Baganda came to Lango not with a view to prestige or long-term political prospects, but in order to 'get rich quick'. They were no more than petty officials, and they behaved accordingly; frequent transfers from one post to another gave them plenty of opportunities to line their own pockets.[4]

Jackson's opposition to the agents led him to question the wisdom of installing them in the first place. He felt that virtually no effort had been made to test the capacity of the indigenous chiefs, particularly in Palango.[5] This was less than

---

1. For an acute observation on this point, see Melland and Cholmeley, op.cit.p.220.

2. My understanding of this point has been sharpenedd by discussions with Dr. Michael Twaddle.

3. In the period from September 1909 to June 1911, there were about 77 clashes in Palango, as against about 30 in the Lango area of Miro District. Allowing for the fact that the administered area of Palango was about twice as large, there was still a substantial disparity in the incidence of clashes.

4. For example, Semu Kagwa served at Kidilande, Inomo, Loro and Ayer between 1909 and 1913.

5. Jackson to Sec. of State, 14.7.11, PRO CO/536/41.

fair to the officials involved. As we have seen, high hopes had originally been placed in the three appointed chiefs along the Nile. That these hopes had proved illusory was only partly due to the bad choice of men; it was mainly due to misapprehensions about the authority enjoyed by clan leaders in general. In Lango as a whole, the only alternative to the use of alien native agents was direct administration by Europen officials. A solution of this kind could conceivably have been adopted if the government had been prepared to expand very gradually from a small nucleus, so that officials could directly train and supervise Lango 'chiefs'. But there were strong arguments against such a course, the main one being that the very slowness of the government advance would undermine the progress of already administered areas. For the longer some portions remained unadministered, the more did people from the administered area use them as places of refuge from government demands. There was much to be said for the view that, once a beginning had been made in the administration of an untouched tribe, the whole tribe should be subdued as soon as possible. In the case of Lango, where no political boundaries existed, and where ties of clanship or marriage linked each community to one at least of its neighbours, the problem was particularly acute. At every stage of administrative expansion, officials stressed the difficulty of maintaining order in the current marches of the district, when only a few miles away there were Lango settlements outside the pale of government.[1] If any further argument in favour of quick expansion was required, it was that the bloodshed caused by inadequately supervised Baganda was a fraction

---

1. Ormsby to Boyle, 23.10.08, UNA EPMP/Z/885/08; Jervoise to Spire, 28.2.10, and Jervoise to PCEP,3.10.12, UNA SMP/2404; Scott to PCEP,12.5.13, UNA SMP/2404.

of the bloodshed which would have occurred had the Langi been left to continue their inter-clan fighting.[1]

Taking into account the nature of the Lango political system and the resources of the Protectorate at the time, the use of alien agents in Lango was thus almost inevitable. On the other hand, it is not so clear that these agents had necessarily to be Baganda. This was especially so in Palango, where the Banyoro could surely have been considered as an alternative. Between 1904 and 1909 the possibility that western Lango should become an appendage of Bunyoro was certainly in the air. On the Lango side, Odora's attentions were directed quite as much to the Omukama as to the British. When a delegation of clan leaders from Apac visited Hoima in July 1908, the way they expressed their submission was that they would recognise Anderea Duhaga "as their Kabaka".[2] There is some evidence that the expectation that Lango would be subject to Bunyoro was reciprocated in Bunyoro. When Knowles was planning the inaugural tour of the new District, the Omukama was most anxious to accompany him, and when this proved impossible he sent a senior chief instead.[3] From the government's point of view, it can be seen in retrospect that there was much to recommend a Nyoro hegemony in Palango. It might have done something to raise the morale of the Banyoro, who were still smarting under their defeat and loss of territory. There can also be little doubt that Banyoro administrators would have been more acceptable than Baganda to the Langi. It is true that Kazana's experience in south-eastern Lango was hardly reassuring, but this was because the Banyara had

1. Tufnell to Grant, 28.10.10, UNA SMP/519/09.
2. Knowles to Wilson, 22.7.08, UNA SMP/1003/08.
3. Knowles to Wilson, 6.10.08, UNA SMP/1520/08.

been closely associated with Kakungulu. In western Lango, military and commercial contacts with Bunyoro had been particularly close during the previous two generations. These contacts were surely a more auspicious foundation on which to build than the suspicion and ignorance which divided the Langi from the Baganda. This consideration was quickly grasped by the Protestant missionaries. As early as 1905 they realised the impracticality of using Baganda catechists in Nilotic areas,[1] and from 1906 onwards the evangelisation of western Lango was carried out by Banyoro.[2] The Protectorate officials, however, never took seriously the parallel inference that Banyoro, rather than Baganda, should be employed as agents in Lango. For the sake of administrative convenience, Palango was classified as a sub-district under Hoima,[3] but no attempt was made to turn to advantage the informal influence of the Banyoro chiefs in Lango. The period from 1905 to 1910, when the subjection of Lango was being planned, represented for the Baganda the acme of their power and esteem in the Protectorate as a whole,[4] with the result that officials gave barely a thought to alternative methods of administration in Lango.

Despite his own disgust at the system of administration in Palango, Haldane had not advocated that the Baganda agents should be withdrawn, but only that their terms of service should be improved. Both Haldane and his Provincial Commissioner, Knowles,

---

1. Kitching to Baylis, 31.12.05, CMS Archives, G3/A7/0/1906(a).

2. Jervoise to Leakey, 4.2.06, UNA A12/7; Fisher,op.cit.p.3. Interviews: Zakalia Isengeze, Zekeri Rwangire.

3. This arrangement was first proposed in 1904. Wilson to Fowler, 19.12.04, UNA A13/2.

4. Twaddle, op.cit.pp.250-61.

were alarmed by Jackson's intention to scrap the system completely They pointed out that to withdraw the agents now would be construed by the Langi as a concession to local pressure - and violent pressure at that.[1] An even stronger reaction came from officials in the Eastern Province, with Jervoise, the District Commissioner at Bululu, well to the fore.[2] The unanimous opposition of local officials caused Jackson to modify his stand. He allowed the employment of agents and followers to continue, on the understanding that they would not be retained a moment longer than necessary, and that a start was made on reducing their number at once. Jackson expected that, with the posting of an additional Assistant District Commissioner to each of the affected Districts, substantial reductions would be made; and in order to effect a smooth transition he made available several companies of K.A.R. for patrol work; in addition, the agents' followers were in future to be paid at the rate of three rupees per month.[3] These arrangements were further modified under pressure from the local officials, and nowhere more than in Lango, where Jervoise took command of the united Districts of Miro and Palango in August 1911. Despite the arrival of a Company of K.A.R. in September, and of another junior official at the end of 1911, no agents were actually withdrawn until March 1913, when the number was reduced by seven to a total of sixteen agents.[4] When the expansion of the District was resumed in 1915

---

1. Knowles to CS, 6.5.11, UNA SMP/519/09; Haldane to Knowles, 16.5.11, UNA SMP/545.

2. Jervoise to Spire, 5.6.11, UNA EPMP/Z/44, and 24.7.11, EPMP/Z/1288/09.

3. Spire to District Commissioners, Eastern Province, 22.8.11, and Memorandum by the Governor, 9.12.11, UNA SMP/519/09.

4. Spire to CS, 30.9.12, and Jervoise, List of Agents recommended for gratuities, 4.3.13, UNA SMP/519/09; Scott to Spire, 2.8.13, LDA (I am grateful to Dr. Andrew Roberts for showing me his notes on this letter, since lost).

and the Moroto valley opened up, Baganda agents were again used to lay the administrative foundations, and as late as 1920 there were still eight agents in Lango.[1] The last agent was not withdrawn from Moroto County until 1927.[2]

Despite the successful delaying tactics of the officials on the spot, the upheaval of 1911 nevertheless marked a significant stage in the evolution of the colonial political system in Lango. In the first place, the increased European establishment allowed more touring, and while on tour officials were much more vigilant in their scrutiny of the agents' conduct; both reprimands and dismissals became more frequent. Combined with the payment of followers, this more effective supervision was soon justified by a marked decline in the incidence of clashes between Langi and Baganda. From 1911 to the end of 1913 there were no more than about 20 such clashes,[3] and thereafter the only serious incident was the murder of eleven Baganda at Adwari in 1919.[4]

In the second place, the role of the agents was much more narrowly defined than before. The agent was now seen as the District Commissioner's representative, whose job was to teach and advise the local chief. Except in extreme emergency he was not empowered to exercise any independent executive or judicial

---

1. They were at Angai, Agwata, Ogur, Apala, Aloi, Adwari, Orum and Ngotokwe.

2. Black, Report on Lango District for 1927, UNA EPMP/N/40/27.

3. This figure is abstracted from reports in UNA SMP/2404. It is impossible to be more precise because in some cases it is not clear whether the ammunition was discharged by agents or by unsupervised Lango chiefs.

4. Cator to Eden, 8.2.19, UNA SMP/4214. For a published account, see: M.J.Wright, 'The Early Life of Rwot Isaya Ogwangguji, M.B.E.' Uganda Jl. 22(1958), pp.134-35.

authority; he was not allowed, for example, to try cases on his own unless he was first accepted as arbitrator by both parties to the dispute, and he could only dispatch his followers to arrest a man after consulting the chief and his headmen.[1] Under these conditions, the appointment and supervision of the chiefs became a much more pressing official preoccupation. From 1913 onwards this problem became more acute as agents were withdrawn from the District. In the longest-administered parts of the District the withdrawal was more rapid than the rate of overall reduction would suggest, since only by releasing agents from those parts could further advances be made in the north-east of Lango. In short, the crisis of 1911 brought the authorities in Lango face to face with the problem of creating an administrative structure staffed by natives of the District. This task had up till then been all but ignored in the south-east, and had received scant attention in the west since the abortive experiment of 1909.

****

In the meantime the prospects for a stable administrative system based on local personnel had been prejudiced in several ways. By and large, the effect of the many government-inspired incursions into Lango since 1894 had been to arouse a deep resentment of outsiders, without offering evidence of the benefits which might accrue to the Langi from colonial rule. The reputation of the Europeans had been compromised by their association with

---

1. No detailed definition of the agents' role has survived in official records, but the official attitude emerges clearly from the following reports and entries in Tour Books: Jervoise to Spire, 30.4.12, LDA (once again I owe this reference to Dr.Roberts) Scott, Report on Lango District for 1913-14, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13; extracts from letter from Driberg to PCEP, 20.6.18, enclosed in Eden to CS, 4.10.18, UNA SMP/4349 ; entry for 21.6.18 at Kwera, Dokolo T.B. (1913-26, part 1), and entry for 19.9.23 at Abako, in Dokolo T.B. (1913-26, part 2).

inadequately supervised auxiliaries. It is perhaps not too far-fetched to suggest that some of the Langi drew an analogy between their experience of the Khartoumers a generation previously and the activities of the _onami_ or Bantu-speakers. In each case, the invaders were distinguished by the handful of lighter complexions to be found among their number. In the latter case, resistance could not be mobilised on the same scale as before, but nevertheless the _onami_ were restricted to the margins of Lango country, while the European tendency to withdraw quickly after each penetration did nothing to disillusion the Langi about their own capacity to resist. When the Europeans began the formal administration of Lango country, they were therefore confronted by continuing resistance, and this was all the greater because of the government's reliance on Bantu personnel. After 1911 overt resistance declined markedly, partly due to adjustments in the administrative system, and partly no doubt to a realisation by the Langi that the government had come to stay. But the events of the previous twenty years were hardly conducive to a tranquil assumption of government authority by locally recruited personnel.

Within this overall picture, the period of pacification had seen significant variations between one part of Lango and another. Some parts had had almost no contact with the government as yet - notably the Moroto valley in the north-east. Within the pacified area, there had been a substantial divergence between east and west. For while in the west the predatory activities of the Baganda had been tempered to some extent by the concern of European officials on the spot for long-term administrative prospects, the Langi of the south-east had seen

only the most unpleasant face of the government in their country; their response was accordingly much less flexible. By 1911 hardly a single clan leader in Miro District had made significant gestures of accommodation towards the government, whereas in the west Europeans were already being manipulated by local interests, - in Odora's case with striking results. As officials turned to the task of recruiting and training chiefs to administer Lango in place of the Baganda, they faced difficulties everywhere, but nowhere more so than in the south-east.

CHAPTER SIX

THE FORMATION OF THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

In their first attempts about 1912 to recruit on a wide scale local administrative personnel, officials in Lango District had little doubt where the field of choice lay. In the absence of states and chiefdoms, the vital territorial category was quite obviously the village, with its convenient concentration of up to seventy households in a limited residential area. It followed that the village leader was the key to native administration. Europeans at that time had somewhat confused notions about the powers and qualifications of village leadership, and especially its connection with the clan system,[1] but this did not prevent them from identifying with considerable accuracy the actual leaders. Once identified, the leaders could be accorded recognition as village headmen responsible to the government. However, this simple expedient was in itself no answer to the requirement of staffing an administrative structure: it merely defined the field of choice. For the problem was not one of identification so much as selection. If the two or three European officials stationed in Lango had needed to relay government instructions to all village headmen directly, nothing would ever have been achieved. From an administrative point of view, the choice of intermediaries was therefore a vital priority. As a result, almost overnight, an entire range of executive positions was opened up to clan leaders, giving them access to unprecedented powers and resources. The present chapter seeks to show how the new administrative positions were defined, both territorially and qualitatively, and how the first generation of native functionaries was chosen.

---

1. Driberg's analysis is a case in point. J.H.Driberg, The Lango (London,1923),pp.204-6.

What officials aimed at in Lango was the division of the District into territorial 'chiefdoms', to which they appointed men who combined local standing with some measure of tolerance towards the government. The total number of chiefdoms had to be small enough to enable District Officers on tour to inspect all of them two or three times a year; at the same time, the size of the chiefdoms was limited by the need for the chief to maintain contact with all parts of his allotted territory. In September 1912 33 Langi were officially gazetted as chiefs.[1] In 1920, by which time the colonial administrative system was established over the whole of Lango, there were 37 Lango chiefdoms,[2] varying in size between about 2,000 and 6,000 people. Within his territory the appointed chief was given full executive and judicial powers, and was removeable only by the Provincial Commissioner acting on the advice of the District Commissioner.

This type of administrative structure was not, of course, peculiar to Lango, nor was it limited to Uganda. Throughout British tropical Africa, native administration between the wars was organised along these lines; in both centralised and non-centralised societies, appointed chiefs with executive and judicial authority were the norm. On several significant points of detail, however, the system in Uganda as a whole was distinctive. This was because in Buganda, at the centre of the Protectorate, the British found an indigenous chiefly hierarchy which, with some adjustments, was well suited to colonial requirements, and which they proceeded to extend throughout Uganda.

1; Uganda Protectorate Gazette (hereafter Gazette), 30 September 1912.

2. 33 of these were in Lango District, 2 were in Gulu District, and 2 in Teso. Lango District also contained 7 Kumam and 4 Bantu chiefdoms. Gazette, 31 July,1920.

The detailed organisation of native administration in Lango was determined in the first instance by this 'Ganda model'.

On the eve of the colonial period, the Kabaka of Buganda presided over not one hierarchy of chiefs, but three separate hierarchies, and the high concentration of power in the Kabaka's person was partly due to the dependence of all three hierarchies on him and to the tension between them.[1] But during the long minority of Kabaka Daudi Chwa beginning in 1897, the British simplified the government of Buganda and limited the role of the Kabaka. They selected one of the three hierarchies, that of the _bakungu_ chiefs, and concentrated all the new functions of government in its hands. The attraction of the _bakungu_ hierarchy lay in its proximity to the British requirement of graded administrative offices: pre-colonial Buganda was divided into ten units called _saza_; the _saza_ chiefs were appointed, transferred and dismissed by the Kabaka, and they were bound to attend his court regularly. The Uganda Agreement of 1900 between Sir Harry Johnston and the Kabaka and chiefs of Buganda confirmed the _saza_ chiefs in their duties and privileges as government servants, and throughout the colonial period the 'county' chiefs, as they were called, were the backbone of the Buganda administration. The British did not, however, confine themselves to squeezing out the other two chiefly hierarchies. They also rationalised the lower levels of the _bakungu_ system itself. Under each _saza_ chief there had been a number of lesser _bakungu_ who administered subdivisions of the _saza_. By two stages these lower positions were simplified

1. For the political system of 19th century Buganda, see C.C.Wrigley, 'The Christian Revolution in Buganda', _Comparative Studies in Society and History_ 2(1959), pp.33-48; and L.A.Fallers, Chapter 2 in _The King's Men_, ed. L.A.Fallers (London, 1964).

and standardised, first in 1908 by the appointment of gombolola or 'sub-county' chiefs, and then by the creation of a third position of miruka or 'parish' chief in 1916. Every saza, gombolola and miruka was given precise territorial definition, and the chiefs' powers were fixed by Protectorate Ordinance. The end result was a three-tier structure of executive chiefs.[1]

Almost simultaneously, the administration of Busoga and the western Kingdoms (Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole) was adapted to the Ganda model, and this entailed considerable changes in the status and powers of the chiefs concerned.[2] An even greater local adjustment was required when the system was extended to the non-centralised peoples of eastern Uganda, to whom the notion of formal chieftaincy was wholly alien. Kakungulu's 'kingdom' of Bukedi was short-lived, but the bakungu-type divisions which he created between 1900 and 1905 provided the basis of British administration among the Iteso and the segmentary Bantu peoples to the south.[3] By the time the administration of Lango was set in train, it was virtually inevitable that the Ganda model should be implemented there as well. The need for intermediaries between village headmen and District Officers was met by establishing the three tiers of parish, sub-county and county. The key position in this hierarchy was the sub-county chief, since he was the most junior African functionary to be entrusted with judicial authority and to be regularly

---

1. D.A.Low and R.C.Pratt, Buganda and British Overrule, 1900-1955 (London,1960), especially pp.137-48; D.A.Low, Chapter 2 in V.Harlow and E.M.Chilver (ed), History of East Africa, II (Oxford, 1965), especially pp.93-4,95,98.

2. D.A.Low, in Harlow and Chilver,op.cit.pp.95-7.

3. M.J.Twaddle, 'Politics in Bukedi, 1900-1939', unpublished PhD thesis, London University,1967, especially pp.136-43.

inspected by a European official. Once the days of the Baganda agents in Lango were numbered, the first priority was to select suitable local men as sub-county chiefs. The 33 'chiefs' gazetted in 1912 represented the first attempt to do this. Only later were the other positions in the hierarchy filled; and throughout the colonial period the sub-county chiefs were considered to be the lynch-pin of native administration in Lango, as elsewhere in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Two aspects of the administrative provisions made in Lango in 1912 deserve close scrutiny; the drawing of the sub-county boundaries, and the basis on which sub-county chiefs were chosen. The second of these might appear to be the all-essential issue. In fact it was intimately dependent on the first. For in a situation where the basic unit of administration was in almost every case larger than any territory or sphere recognised in the indigenous system, an individual's chances of being appointed chief in part depended on where he happened to live in relation to the sub-county boundaries. These boundaries were pre-determined. For in almost every case, the place from which the sub-county of 1912 derived its name and where it had its headquarters was an agent's post, or <u>boma</u>. The administrative geography of Lango District dates back not to 1912, but to the years 1908-11. Any enquiry into the politics of colonial Lango must therefore begin with the choice of boma sites.

The overall rate and timing of administrative expansion during those years depended, as the last chapter showed, on wider considerations of government policy. So far as the actual siting of agents' posts was concerned, the only explicit principle was

that they should be a convenient day's journey apart.[1] That this principle was not interpreted very precisely is shown by the fact that in 1911 the distance between neighbouring posts varied from seven to twenty miles. Agents also tended to be posted to areas of relatively dense population; this was an important consideration in western Lango, where the population was less evenly spread than in the east, and it resulted in the majority of posts being sited on or near the Nile and its principal tributaries.[2] But even within these guide-lines there was obviously a very wide choice of suitable boma sites. By the middle of 1911, 28 posts had been established in Lango country (Map 10). In many instances the circumstances surrounding the posting of the first agent were not recorded in official correspondence, but there is sufficient evidence to suggest that in choosing boma sites officials were influenced by three varieties of local political situation.

Firstly - and apparently most frequently - agents were established in localities which had already made trouble for the colonial power or its representatives. This was clearly so with the first Lango post of all, the one established at Dokolo in 1907. Isaka Nziga was sent in to the area which had reacted most sharply against the Kyoga Expedition a few weeks earlier, doubtless on the assumption that if the men of Dokolo were quickly overawed, adjacent areas would give little trouble.[3]

---

1. Jervoise to Spire, 30.4.12, LDA (I owe this reference to Dr. Andrew Roberts).

2. See especially Tufnell's map of Palango District, October 1910, UNA SMP/519/09.

3. The establishment of the agent at Dokolo was reported in a letter by J.M.Coote, without however spelling out the reasons for this choice. Coote to Grant,7.8.07, UNA SMP/279/07.

In Palango District during 1909 and 1910 four posts were established as a result of local acts of antagonism. At the end of 1909 an agent was sent to Akokoro on Lake Kwania after the Jo Oyima and other clans had attacked neighbouring Banyoro settlements under government protection.[1] The posting of agents to Apac and Cegere early in 1910 was preceded by a record of sporadic hostility extending over two years.[2] Further north, the killing of twelve Baganda near Owiny Akulo's village in May 1910 was quickly followed by the posting of an agent to Ocini village.[3] A similar pattern can be discerned later in 1910 at Cawente and Ngai, and at Bala in 1911.

At the other end of the spectrum were those cases in which the administration responded to direct requests for agents. Such requests were not, of course, made out of appreciation of any abstract benefits of colonial rule. They arose from the tensions of inter-clan politics, in the same way that Odora's overtures before 1909 had done. Not all requests for agents succeeded. An appeal from Alito hill in October 1910 could not be met, because there was no agent to spare at the time.[4] But in general officials were only too ready to respond. In 1910 Tufnell complied with a request for an agent from Okulo Cagara of Loro, even though Loro was less than ten miles away from two existing posts.[5] Okulo had been objecting to his obligation to

---

1. Paske Smith to Grant, 29.10.09, UNA SMP/1782/09.

2. Knowles to Wilson, 30.5.08, UNA SMP/1005/08; Jackson to Paske Smith, 4.5.09, UNA SMP/873/09; Fox to Paske Smith, 30.11.09, UNA SMP/1876/09; Paske Smith to Grant, 12.3.10, UNA SMP/1859/09.

3. Fox to Tufnell, 16.6.10, UNA SMP/1860/09; Tufnell, Map of Palango District, October 1910, UNA SMP/519/09.

4. Tufnell to Grant, 28.10.10, UNA SMP/519/09.

5. Ibid.

perform labour duties for the Cegere agent among strangers on the other side of the Okole river;[1] his later complaint that outlying villages ignored him suggests also that his request may have been motivated by a desire to assert his own clan's local supremacy.[2] But for his request it is very unlikely that the government would have considered posting an agent to Loro. More striking still was the case of Okori Alima, the leader of the Jo Oki me Okabo at Amac, on the periphery of Miro District. Okori had travelled some 30 or 40 miles to visit Kakungulu when he was at Bululu; during the 18 months before an agent was posted to Amac in April 1910, he had been urging that a boma should be set up, had entertained officials on tour, and had engaged their sympathies in his feuds with neighbouring clans. When Jervoise at last arrived with an agent, Okori's clan were alone in providing labour and in standing by the government when the boma was attacked.[3] For a couple of years afterwards, Amac was a major trouble spot: the Baganda were involved in several clashes there; Okori's main assistant was speared, and his own cattle raided.[4] All the evidence suggests that Okori had no influence outside his own clan, and that he was manipulating the government at his neighbours' expense. In this he met with considerable success: when his cattle were stolen, the agent recovered them for him;[5] and in 1912 he was

---

1. Tufnell to Grant, 29.8.10, UNA SMP/1859/09.

2. Tufnell to Grant, 31.10.10, UNA SMP/519/09.

3. Jervoise to Coote, 19.3.09, UNA SMP/255/08; Jervoise to Spire, 18.4.10, UNA SMP/624.

4. The agent was involved in clashes in October 1910, December 1911 and August 1912. Wright to Spire, 15.11.10, UNA SMP/1408; Jervoise to PCEP, 2.1.12 and 3.10.12, UNA SMP/2404.

5. Jervoise to PCEP, 3.10.12, UNA SMP/2404.

appointed chief of Amac sub-county, an office which he managed to retain for seven years.

The third type of situation which affected the siting of bomas was when - irrespective of hostility or encouragement - an area was found to have one really strong clan. On the northern side of Lake Kwania, for example, the posts established at Agwata and Abyece in 1910 were close by settlements of the Jo Okide and the Jo Alipa, which were both powerful clans, as well as allies in battle.[1] The choice of what is now Lira town as the site of a post in January 1911 seems to have been determined by the "considerable sphere of influence" under Olet Apar, leader of the Jo Oki.[2] Official reports are frustratingly silent on the sources of information which were used in identifying significant clan leaders, but the case of Bar may point to a widespread pattern. According to a tradition there, the British established an agent at the village of Oki, leader of the Oki me Abura clan, because Okori of Amac had told them that Oki was the important man in that area.[3]

At the same time, there is no doubt that the siting of many bomas was haphazard and arbitrary. Tufnell's hurried expansion into central Lango in the middle of 1910 is a case in point. When agents were established at Aduku, Akalu and Aboke, Tufnell had no experience of these areas to draw on, since he was the first government representative to visit them. The Aduku boma was built not near the village of Lingo, the most well-known

---

1. Jervoise to Spire, 28.2.10, UNA SMP/332. Interviews: Israel Alele, Isaka Ojaba.

2. Haldane, Reports on Lango District for January and February 1911, UNA SMP/193A.

3. Interview: Lakana Ekin.

ritual leader of his day, but on the other side of the Aroca river among the less important Eling clan.[1] The boma at Aboke was actually sited at the village of a quite insignificant leader named Atai; 18 months later it was moved about ten miles away to the territory of the powerful Jo Pukica, who had attacked the agent soon after his arrival.[2] By and large, however, there was some method in the siting of agents in Palango District. It was in Miro District that the process was most haphazard, particularly during the first two years of administration, when officials were very ill-informed about local politics. There appears to have been no logic behind the choice of Angai, Kwera and Bata in 1908, or of the three sites in Namasale peninsula in 1909. If the choice of boma sites had been no more than a temporary expedient, hasty and ill-informed decisions would hardly have mattered. But the reality was more serious. Whether they appreciated it or not, the officials who posted agents in the years 1908-11 were in fact making detailed provision for the long-term future. Of the 28 sites selected by the middle of 1911, only three have since been abandoned and only one has been moved an appreciable distance.

****

Later in the colonial period, when the system of native administration in northern and eastern Uganda was under attack, there was a tendency to belittle the status of the first generation of chiefs in Lango. The Baganda were said to have ignored the traditional clan leadership, and to have filled the new positions with their own hangers-on - Langi who had been uprooted

---

1. Interviews: Yakobo Obia, Lajaro Obia, Enoci Ekak.

2. Place to Grant, 13.12.10, UNA SMP/193; Cator, Report on Lango District for April 1912, UNA EPMP/Z/1329/13.

from their clan environment to serve as askaris or camp-followers.[1] This interpretation was wide off the mark. Of the 33 chiefs gazetted in 1912, not one had worked for the Baganda, and in the next decade there was only one clear instance of the 'camp-follower made good' model.[2] This was in spite of the fact that plenty of Langi did take service with the Baganda. Two of them were actually appointed as agents, but their promotion to sub-county chief was never considered.[3] The truth is that the Baganda agents, like the Lango chiefs who came after them, worked through clan leaders acting as village heads.

It is anyway misleading to concentrate attention here on the Baganda. In those parts of the Protectorate where they were most strongly entrenched, the Baganda did indeed control the recruitment to office of local personnel; this was the pattern in Kakungulu's territory of Bukedi, in eastern Uganda.[4] But in Lango the Baganda were fewer in number, more alienated from the local cultural setting, and altogether less interested in long-term political prospects. And so, in almost every case, the selection of Lango chiefs was carried out by European officials. However defective their understanding of Lango society may have been, it is quite clear from the Tour Books of the period that District Officers on safari took considerable pains to establish the local standing and the qualifications for office

---

1. This view was reflected in the attitude taken by Captain Philipps in 1933-34. See below, Chapter 8.

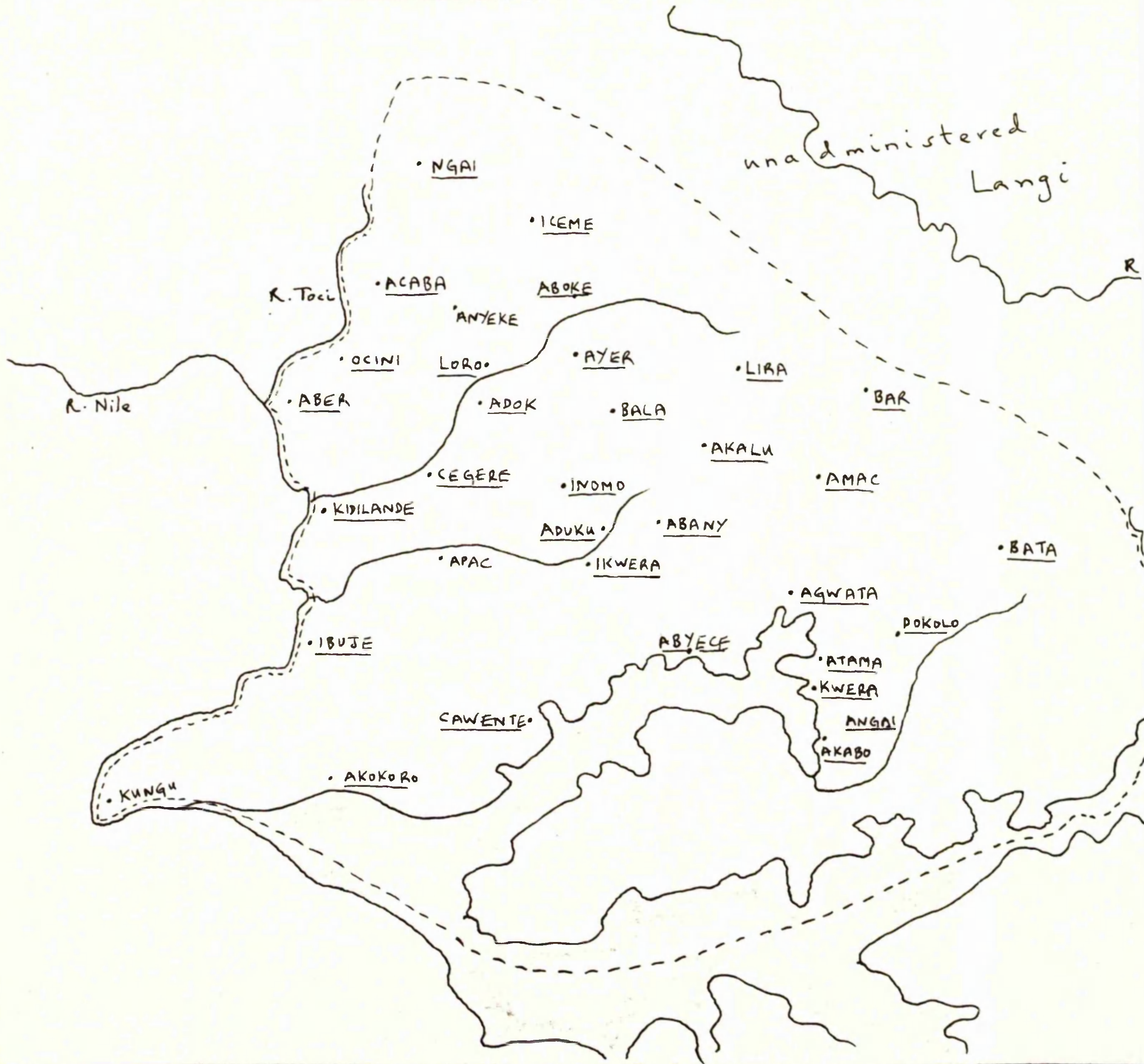
2. This was Tomasi Ojuka. For his career, see below, p.298.

3. Driberg, entry for 19.5.17, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 2), and entry for 12.2.18 in Moroto T.B.(1918-26). Except where otherwise stated, all Tour Books cited hereafter are in the Lango District Archives.

4. Personal communication from Dr. Michael Twaddle.

Map 11

Sub-counties with Lango chiefs, 1912



Key

- - - - limits of administered area in Lango District

Chiefdoms underlined were officially gazetted in September 1912

of individual clan leaders.[1] This does not mean that the right men were necessarily appointed, but the selection of chiefs was certainly not left to the Baganda. Official policy was consistent: the aim was to appoint the most influential clan leader of the locality, unless there were overriding practical objections. A remarkable degree of success was achieved. Except for one or two cases in which a clan leader deliberately hung back from the limelight,[2] the chiefs gazetted in 1912 were in general men of local standing.

The selection was most straightforward when the territory round an agent's post contained a dominant clan leader of a co-operative frame of mind. One such case was considered in the last chapter: Arum was made sub-county chief of Ibuje after six years' careful cultivation of Odora and the Europeans.[3] The same pattern held good at Inomo, Iceme and Lira. The real test of official determination to build on traditional authority lay in those areas where that authority was hostile to the colonial power. Abyece is an example of this. As we have seen, this was one of the most troublesome localities during the first years of Ganda administration. Officials laid the blame squarely on Ebek, the leader of the Jo Alipa.[4] His removal to Mbale and Jinja for a few weeks in 1910 did little to temper his hostility, and the government had to consider an alternative. The most likely candidate was Ogwal Agir, headman of one of the Alipa

---

1. Driberg's book, The Lango, is also a monument to the local knowledge amassed by officials of the day (1912-18).

2. This accounted for the appointment of Okelo Adak as chief of the Okole-Aroca division in 1909. Jervoise, Notes on Kidilande, in Koli T.B.(1912-14, part 1).

3. See above, pp 220-1.

4. His rise to power in pre-colonial Abyece is desribed above, p. 123

villages under Ebek. For a year or two no final decision was made. When government cattle were distributed to 23 prominent Langi in February 1912, both Ogwal and Ebek figured among the recipients. In the event Ebek was rejected; Ogwal Agir was the only chief from Abyece to be gazetted in September 1912, and a year later he was clearly recognised by officials as head chief over Ebek.[1] However, Abyece was not typical. By and large, the government tended to take the risk of nominating fractious clan leaders, particularly if they had shown signs of mending their ways. Thus Onyinge of Cegere was made chief, despite his attacks on agents; and in Aboke Oleny, leader of the Jo Pukica, who had personally organised the killing of 15 Baganda in 1910, was appointed on the strength of his being "well-disposed."[2]

The most striking instance of the government's readiness to let bygones be bygones was the treatment given to Owiny Akulo of Aber. After the two clashes early in 1910, in which a total of 16 Baganda had been killed, Otwal, the official chief of the country between the Ayago and Okole rivers, was captured and detained in Hoima, where he died soon afterwards. Owiny Akulo, who had organised the second and more serious incident, was also captured and imprisoned in Jinja.[3] In the immediate aftermath of the killings, District Officers took two actions which were

---

1. Wright to Spire, 3.7.10 and Spire to CS, 12.7.10, UNA SMP/178; List of chiefs given cattle by the government, February 1912, UNA EPMP/N/53/12; Jervoise, Notes on Nabieso, and Scott, entry for 25.8.13, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19). Interviews: Matayo Ojok, Benedikto Okelo Elwange.

2. Place to Grant, 13.12.10, UNA SMP/193; Jervoise, Notes on Aboke, in Koli T.B.(1912-14, part 2). Interviews: Paulo Oyet, Nasan Engola, Bejaleri Ogwang, Israel Opio, Lazaro Okelo.

3. Fox to Tufnell, 16.6.10, and Tufnell to Grant, 3.10.10, UNA SMP/1860/09; Place, Report on Lango District for November 1910, UNA SMP/193.

gravely prejudicial to the interests of Otwal, Owiny and their followers. Firstly, they chose as Otwal's replacement Okelo Abong, the leader of the Ocola lineage.[1] This was a complete contradiction of the traditional distribution of power within the Jo Arak. Otwal, Owiny Akulo, Odongo Aja and his predecessor as rwot had all belonged to the Elwia lineage.[2] In promoting Okelo Abong to be chief of the country north of the Okole, the authorities were not only ignoring local realities; they were also aggravating the existing tension between the two lineages, and in particular between Okelo Abong and Owiny Akulo.[3]

The second action taken in Aber was of greater moment. Otwal's official sphere had extended as far north as the Ayago river, which was the western limit of Lango settlement, some 25 miles from Kamdini. But Okelo Abong's territory was declared to end at the Toci river. The country to the north, including Kamdini itself, was assigned instead to the Acholi chief Lagony.[4] This arrangement was formalised in 1912 by a change in district boundaries: the Toci was made the boundary between Gulu and Lango Districts,[5] and it remained so until 1936. No record of official thinking at the time has survived, but it is hard to resist the conclusion that the boundary change was made on political grounds. The events of 1910 had shown the strength of

---

1. Tufnell to Grant, 20.6.10, UNA SMP/1860/09.

2. For the pre-colonial power structure of Aber, see above, pp. 129-39.

3. Interviews: Kosia Ato, Matayo Acut, Leoben Okodi, Misaki Oki.

4. Okelo Abong was gazetted chief "between the Toshi [sic] and Koli rivers" (Gazette, 15 August 1910). By January 1911 Lagony had built a post at the mouth of the Toci. Haldane, Report on Lango District for January 1911, UNA SMP/193.

5. Gazette, 15 July 1912.

the Jo Arak as a unit - for example in the cooperation between clan members on either side of the Toci. Officials had been seriously alarmed by the attacks on the Baganda in Aber, and they were apparently now bent on breaking up a major centre of opposition.

The boundary anomaly was not rectified for a quarter of a century, but the favour given to Okelo Abong was soon withdrawn. After just over a year's detention in Jinja, Owiny Akulo was allowed to return home early in 1912. He was presented with a gift of government cattle,[1] and soon afterwards was gazetted sub-county chief of Ocini, which was now detached from Okelo Abong's sphere. In 1916 Okelo Abong was dismissed altogether.[2] A year later Owiny Akulo was appointed first county chief in north-western Lango,[3] and until he became too old he was considered by the authorities to be an exemplary chief. Owiny Akulo's son attributes his father's change of heart to the Christian influences which he encountered in Jinja gaol.[4] In fact the change was not quite so abrupt as it appears. Owiny Akulo never appears to have borne much animus against the Europeans; his quarrel was with the Baganda. He had given them a rough reception in 1895,[5] and fifteen years later he was determined that they should not be allowed to resume their predatory activities. While Owiny was in prison, the maladministration of the agents had been exposed, and it seems likely that

1. List of chiefs given cattle by the government, February 1912, UNA EPMP/N/53/12.

2. Hannington, Report on Lango District for August 1916, UNA EPMP/Z/537/16.

3. Gazette, 30 April 1917.

4. Interview: Leoben Okodi.

5. See above, pp. 186-7.

the resultant reforms and the limit now set on the agents' term in Lango contributed to Owiny's readiness to cooperate on his release. The arrangements made in Aber between 1912 and 1917 were a credit as much to official wisdom as to Owiny Akulo's change of outlook. After the first attack on the Baganda in February 1910, Paske Smith recognised that Owiny had several times before assisted the government and that in view of this - and in contrast to Otwal - he should eventually be allowed to return to Lango.[1] It says much for the responsible officials that they continued to hold to this view after the more serious events of May. By adhering to the traditional leadership of Aber, the government secured twenty years of political stability in north-western Lango.

In a very large number of sub-counties - probably the majority - there was no clan leader who stood head and shoulders above his fellows. Here the problem was not whether to risk appointing an important man with a record of hostility behind him, but whom to choose from among several village leaders of equal eminence. In Dokolo a choice had to be made between two men - Okwanga of the Jo Arak and Opige of the Jo Palamyek, both of whom used to lead temporary clan combinations in cattle raids on the Kumam.[2] European officials were aware of the importance of these two leaders from 1907 onwards.[3] Their eventual decision to appoint Opige was probably made on several grounds. Okwanga had been the principal victim of the decision to expel Langi

---

1. Paske Smith to Grant, 14.3.10, UNA SMP/201.

2. See above, p. 140.

3. According to Jervoise, Coote in 1907 had identified Okwanga, Opige and two others as local headmen. Jervoise, Notes on Dokolo, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1).

living east of the Abalang river, and his attitude to the authorities was probably coloured by this humiliating experience. Opige had ingratiated himself with the Dokolo agent between 1909 and 1913, while Okwanga had mistrusted the Baganda and believed that they would soon leave.[1]

In many sub-counties the field of choice was wider still, and it was in this context that the siting of bomas was particularly significant. Other things being equal, clan leaders whose villages were close to the agent's post tended to be co-operative, or at least acquiescent, while those who lived several miles away could afford to be less careful. The odds were therefore in favour of a near-by clan leader taking over as chief when the agent was withdrawn. Apac provides a good example of this. The agent's post on the left bank of the Aroca was used as a base for administering both sides of the river. Tufnell chose four headmen in 1910 - two for the left bank and two for the right bank; but it was Okweng, the headman nearest the post, who was made chief in 1912, and even when officials discovered that they had mistakenly chosen a mere "peasant", Okweng was succeeded not by another of Tufnell's nominees, but by the real leader of his own village.[2] If the Apac boma had been on the right bank of the Aroca or further upstream, there is little doubt that the choice of chief would have been different. Such was the haphazard procedure for recruiting administrative personnel.

In some places, the kind of informal arrangement which Tufnell had made at Apac in 1910 was maintained much longer, and

---

1. Interviews: Yeromia Otim, Silvesto Otim, Tomasi Ojuka.

2. Tufnell to Grant, 6.7.10, UNA SMP/1876/09; Jervoise, Notes on Apac, and entry for 31.1.13, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

sometimes even gazetted; in this way a choice could be postponed until the various candidates had had time to prove themselves. In Kwera, at the eastern end of Lake Kwania, three chiefs were gazetted in 1912; one of them was deposed in 1914 and his chiefdom divided between the other two; the following year all Kwera was placed under one chief.[1] In Aduku three chiefs were also appointed in 1912, but by 1915 only one was still recognised.[2] In these places, a genuine effort seems to have been made to test possible chiefs, but even here one suspects that the government appointed the man with whom they were most familiar; for in each case the surviving chief was the one nearest the sub-county headquarters.

The most carefully researched initial appointments were made in the Moroto valley, which was the last part of Lango to be opened up. By the time officials turned to this area in 1915, they had learnt a fair amount from their experience in central and southern Lango. They therefore considered the actual siting of the agents' posts in the context of the local distribution of power and the likely choice of chief, which was made in each case within one year of the setting up of the boma. No doubt also the arrangements gained from the fact that most of the bomas were sited by J. H. Driberg, whose grasp of Lango politics was exceptional.[3] In Abako Driberg found in 1916 that the area included three significant clan leaders. Two of them, Ocen Ocur and Ogeta, were jockeying for position; during the previous

---

1. Notes on Kwera, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1); Gazette, 30 April 1914 and 30 September 1915.

2. Entries for Aduku, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

3. Driberg opened up Abako, Aloi and Apala in 1916, and Adwari and Orum in 1918. Ogur was set up in 1915 by another official; Omoro (1915) and Amugo (1917) were opened up from Soroti.

year or two, when District Officers had been on tour nearby, each of them had requested an agent to be sent to his village. Instead of responding directly to either of these requests, Driberg established the agent in the intervening territory of the third clan, and he instructed that all three clan leaders should be treated as equals by the agent until one of them evinced real ability. This proved to be a sensible policy. Within six months it was clear that Ocen Ocur, who had been much the most assiduous in his cultivation of government officials, was in fact the least suited for authority: he refused to take part in public labour and his men frequently took up arms. And so Ogeta was gazetted as chief of Abako in 1917.[1] At Aloi Driberg also chose three headmen, each from a different clan, though in this case there was little doubt that Ocato, leader of the dominant Jo Oki, would be appointed.[2] The same principle was implemented in 1918 at Adwari, where informal recognition was given to the two most influential clan leaders.[3]

If the procedures adopted by officials in making inaugural appointments to the position of sub-county chief varied in precision and effectiveness, there is no doubt that in the vast majority of cases men of genuine local standing were chosen. In terms of traditional political authority, the decisive break during the years 1912-18 was not so much in personnel, as in the type of authority which the appointed chiefs were called upon to exercise. On paper their power was transformed in two ways: territorially, they were given authority over clans to which they

1. Driberg, entries for 30.1.16 and 19.7.16 in Dokolo T.B. (1913-26, part 1).

2. Driberg, entry for 3.2.16, in Eruti T.B. (1915-21).

3. Driberg, entry for 17.2.18, in Moroto T.B. (1918-26).

had no prior claim; and qualitatively, the range of circumstances in which they could affect their subjects was changed out of all recognition. The precise content of these new powers must now be examined.

****

The powers conferred on sub-county chiefs could be summarised by saying that within the confines of their allotted territories they were responsible for achieving the objectives set by the Protectorate Government. In 1912 these objectives had scarcely changed since the beginning of formal administration four years earlier. The first priorities were still the maintenance of law and order, and the provision of labour for public works.

So far as the physical enforcement of order was concerned, the chiefs simply took over the main instrument of the agents' authority - that is to say, a handful of retainers (called askaris), armed with government rifles. During the transitional period when agents were working alongside Lango chiefs, the chief deployed the Baganda followers in consultation with the agent. When the agent was withdrawn, local men were recruited to replace the Baganda followers. They took over their weapons and their rates of pay. By 1919 the allocation had been standardised at three askaris for each sub-county chief.[1] The function of the askaris was to arrest offenders on the chief's orders, to guard them in his lock-up pending trial, and in general to enforce the chief's orders. It is plain from the comments of District Officers that, initially at least, considerable latitude was allowed to chiefs in their use of firearms,

---

1. Entries to this effect in all current Tour Books by E.D. Tongue in 1919 suggest that the allocation was standardised in that year.

and no objection was made to the summary killing of offenders who resisted arrest.[1] Until the askaris were reconstituted as chiefs' police in 1920 and given training at District headquarters,[2] the handling of firearms was doubtless somewhat inexpert, but the askaris by no means exhausted the chief's resources for enforcing his authority. If there was serious disorder, and especially if any of the askaris was killed or badly wounded, the chief could send for help to a District Officer, who would then arrive on the scene with a detachment of Protectorate police. Government action along these lines was quite common until 1914, and it was always effective.[3]

The chief's responsibility for law and order was given institutional expression in the court of law over which he presided. These courts took shape during the years 1912-13, when gazetted chiefs were being advised and instructed by Baganda agents. The court, or lukiko as it was called from the prototype in Buganda, was composed of the chief and all the village headmen of the sub-county, meeting together at least twice a month to try civil cases and petty criminal cases; its judgements were subject to appeal to District Officers on tour. The lukiko functioned not only as a court but also as a council, where matters of public concern could be discussed and government orders be communicated to the headmen.[4] Procedure was informal,

---

1. See for example, Driberg, entry for 2.7.18, in Maruzi T.B. (1912-19).

2. Tomblings, Report on Lango District for 1920, UNA EPMP/N/121.

3. Incidents of this kind occurred at Aduku in 1912, Ngai in 1912, Lira, Agwata and Dokolo in 1913, and Bala in 1914. Jervoise to PCEP, 6.11.12 & 3.10.12, UNA SMP/2404; Scott to PCEP, 12.5.13, 14.5.13 & 10.11.13, SMP/2404; Driberg to PCEP, 10.10.14, SMP/4214.

4. Scott, Reports on Lango District for August 1913 and January 1914, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13; K.Ingham, 'British administration in Lango Distrtict, 1907-35', Uganda Jl. 19(1955), pp.159-60.

and in both its judicial and its consultative aspects, the early lukiko in Lango seems to have depended as much on consensus as on the executive decision of any one individual.[1] Between 1915 and 1918 sub-county courts were set up in every part of Lango except the north-east, under the Courts Ordinance of 1911. The sub-county chief's lukiko now had original jurisdiction in all civil and criminal cases, and it was to meet regularly once a week. Criminal law was to be administered as laid down by Protectorate law, and civil law as expressed in native or customary law.[2] This formalisation of organisation and procedure tended to concentrate judicial authority in the chief's hands, but the consultative side of the lukiko was maintained. The headquarters of every sub-county chief took the form of a lukiko hall with a couple of adjacent offices for the chief and his clerk. On one day the chief would preside over the sub-county court, while on the next day in the same hall he might be hearing the views of the village headmen and other notables on some topical issue.[3]

In time, the restraint which a chief could exercise over individuals through his police and his law court became a crucial aspect of his authority, open to much abuse. Initially, however, the chiefs made an impact on their people less because of their responsibility to maintain law and order than on account of the

---

1. For example, when Akaki of Akokoro was found to be incompetent, the Touring Officer instructed that the agent should wait for a suitable successor to emerge from "a lukiko of equals". Entry for 3.12.13, in Maruzi T.B.(1912-13).

2. Proclamation on Lira Native Courts, 9.2.15 and subsequent amendments, UNA SMP/907/08; Standing Orders, 1919, entered in every current Tour Book.

3. Officials deliberqtely encouraged a close association of these two functions; Tomblings, Report on Lango District for 1920, UNA EPMP/N/121.

government's other priority - the provision of a labour supply. The end of inter-clan warfare, which was the most radical change required by the *pax Britannica*, had been achieved remarkably quickly by the Baganda agents and the first British officials. With few exceptions, the ban on fighting *en masse* did not have to be enforced directly by the chiefs. Their defence of law and order was conducted against individuals rather than whole communities. By contrast the obligation to provide labour touched the daily life of every able-bodied man in the sub-county.

Labour demands were of two kinds. There was first of all labour on projects put in hand by the District authorities for the benefit of the community as a whole. During the period of Baganda rule, no practical limit appears to have been set on labour demands, but by 1919 obligations had been standardised. Every year each adult male was liable to one month's unpaid labour, known as *luwalo*, and until 1923 to a further two months' paid labour, known as *kasanvu*.[1] *Luwalo* was mainly used for the building and maintenance of local roads. Paid labour was called upon by Departments of the Protectorate Government for cotton ginneries,[2] major road construction, and above all for 'porterage' - the transport of the countless loads essential to the smooth running of colonial government, ranging from cash boxes to the Touring Officer's personal effects. The economic significance of these reserves of labour was of course considerable, but in the present context it is their bearing on political authority which matters. The responsibility for enlisting both *luwalo* and

---

1. R.C.Pratt, Chapter 9 of Harlow and Chilver, op.cit.pp.492-93. *Luwalo* and *kasanvu* were authorised by the Native Authority Ordinance of 1919.

2. Entries for 25.5.18 and 8.7.18 in Omoro T.B.(1915-26).

kasanvu labour lay with the chiefs. It is unlikely that the legal maximum of labour was ever actually called out, and no records were kept as a basis for strict rotation in labour duty. Favour and discrimination were probably practised by the chiefs from the beginning; they were certainly an important feature by the 1920s.[1]

The chief was also entitled to a personal tribute of labour from every man in his sub-county. This was perhaps the most anomalous aspect of the 'Ganda model' so freely exported to the non-centralised societies of the Protectorate. For what had been an integral part of the political culture in the inter-lacustrine states was seen by the Langi as a degrading imposition. To be liable for personal unpaid service one day a week was hardly less repugnant to a chief's own clansmen than it was to his other 'subjects', since in Lango eyes the principle of labour reciprocity applied as much to the clan leader as to the clan members. There is little doubt that during the first twenty years of colonial rule arododo, as it was called (or busulu in Buganda), was the most consistently unpopular government requirement.[2] By a convention which in Lango had no explicit statutory basis, chiefs were also entitled to demand a tithe of produce from peasant holdings.[3] How far they actually did so is open to doubt, since few chiefs maintained the large personal followings which could have consumed the proceeds.[4] In view of the fact

---

1. See below, Chapter 7.

2. This is reflected both in contemporary Tour Books and in the reminiscences of informants today. The one-day-a-week obligation was written into the Standing Orders of each county in Lango District.

3. In Buganda this tribute had the weight of tradition behind it, and it was called envujo. For examples of the convention in Lango, see: Driberg, to Spire, 10.10.17, UNA SMP/4349; Tomblings, entry for 10.2.21 in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 2).

4. For examples of such followings, see below, Chapter 7.

that pre-colonial clan leadership had carried with it no control over economic resources at all, these forms of tribute and service were a striking - and doubtless highly unpopular - novelty. From the government's point of view, they could hardly have been avoided at the beginning, when there was virtually no other means of remunerating chiefs; but in allowing arododo to continue long after the introduction of taxation, officials were conforming to Protectorate practice at heavy local cost.

Once law and order were assured and labour had been mobilised, the government could proceed with its third priority - the introduction of a viable cash crop and the collection of tax. The advance into Lango had been begun in 1907 in the belief that the country was suited to the cultivation of exportable crops and would in this way produce taxable wealth. In southern Lango, large surpluses of groundnuts and simsim were produced for export to the south of Lake Kyoga, and the administration encouraged this trade, since it helped to alleviate food shortages in Busoga and Buganda.[1] In general, however, it was held that cotton - the crop which had been introduced into Buganda with such success from 1904 onwards - would be the basis for progress in Lango also. The first experiments were made in 1909 in Miro District and in 1910 in Palango.[2] Then in 1913, following on the completion of the Busoga Railway, production greatly expanded, and from then on Lango District could be classed as a significant cotton-growing area in Uganda as a whole.[3] The following year

1. Scott, Report on Lango District for 1913-14, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13; J.H.Driberg, 'The Lango District, Uganda Protectorate', Geographical Jl. 58(1921), p.130;

2. Jervoise, Report on Miro District for May 1909, UNA SMP/359/09; Lamb, Cotton Report on Palango for 1910, UNA SMP/943.

3. Eastern Province Report for 1913-14, UNA SMP/703D; Ingham, op.cit.p.160. It is a little misleading to say, as Wrigley does, that in Lango "cultivation of cotton spread almost simultaneously with the establishment of administrative control" (Christopher Wrigley, Crops and Wealth in Uganda, Kampala, 1959, p.20). Cotton plots were laid out very early in the new areas, but it was some years before theybecame significantly productive.

taxation was begun in all Lango except the north-east. From the political point of view, the salient feature of this early success in establishing cotton was that it depended on compulsion, first by the Baganda agents and then by Lango chiefs. Some of the agents' followers were trained as cotton instructors,[1] and work on cotton plots was but one aspect of compulsory communal labour.[2] When the gazetted chiefs assumed authority, compulsory cotton cultivation on communal plots was still the rule, and as in Buganda it was only gradually that peasants began to grow cotton on their own holdings and for their own market requirements.[3]

The trend towards individual cotton plots was doubtless hastened by the introduction of universal, individual taxation. In 1914 the collection of poll-tax at 3 Rupees (Shs. 4/-) per head was begun in the entire administered area of Lango.[4] The first levy of tax is often taken to have been the point when the reality of colonial rule was first brought home to the 'man-on-the-shamba'. In the case of the Langi, this function was performed by the earlier imposition of labour obligations. While chiefs continued to find difficulty in getting people to work until well into the 1930's, the annual demand for poll-tax caused very little friction. District Officers sometimes remarked on inefficiency in its collection and occasionally on embezzlement of the proceeds,[5] but they found little evidence of deep

1. Fox to Grant, 13.6.10, UNA SMP/130; Haldane, Report on Lango District for March 1911, UNA SMP/193A.

2. Haldane to PCNP, 14.5.11, UNA SMP/545; Jervoise to PCEP, 3.10.12, UNA SMP/2404.

3. C.Ehrlich, Chapter 8 of Harlow and Chilver,op.cit.pp.417-18; Wrigley,op.cit.p.48.

4. Proclamation under Poll Tax Ordinance, 6.3.14, in Gazette, 15 September 1914. Taxation was extended to the southern portion of the Moroto valley in 1918 and to the northern side in 1919.

5. Entry for 19.10.21, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 2).

objections on the part of the tax payers. The reason for this should probably be attributed to the delay in imposing tax in the first place. Instead of demanding tax within the first year of administration, the government had waited until the cultivation of cash crops was fairly well established. At the same time, it was several years before cotton growers became accustomed to the idea of using cash to buy imported goods such as kitchen hardware, clothing and bicycles.[1] Thus, while the compulsion needed to get the earliest cotton grown provoked hostility, the levy on the cash proceeds caused little friction. All the same, the beginning of taxation was an important stage in the evolution of appointive chieftaincy. Even without opposition, collection from every able-bodied male in the sub-county was a major task for the chief. The first generation of sub-county chiefs would probably have failed to come up to administrative requirements had it not been for the 10% rebate on poll-tax which now became their principal remuneration (though without replacing their right to labour service).

The setting up of the minimum apparatus of colonial government in Lango during the years 1912-14 entailed one other highly important novelty, which represented for the people in general a distasteful restraint, and for the chiefs an additional hold over their subjects: this was the ban on group migration. From an administrative point of view, labour obligations could not be enforced, nor taxes collected, if clan sections retained their freedom to migrate at will. Admittedly, the imposition of colonial rule did not cause a total freeze of existing settlement areas. Colonisation of the few extensive bush areas that

1. Bruce, Cotton Report for February 1910, UNA SMP/9; Eastern Province Report for 1913-14, UNA SMP/703D.

remained was allowed, so that during the next twenty years the Langi were able to settle in the hinterland of Akokoro and Cawente,[1] and also in the country immediately to the west of Otuke hill.[2] In addition, the government occasionally ordered villages to move to sites nearer the lines of communication.[3] But otherwise group migration was strongly discouraged. Unauthorised moves were forbidden and punished.[4] And if for some reason a migration seemed not to be entirely out of the question, District Officers tended to leave the decision to the chiefs concerned.[5] Emigration was naturally not favoured by the chiefs, since their pay was directly related to the amount of tax collected. Combined with the government's own strong preference for a completely settled population, this disfavour effectively placed group migration outside the law. Obligations of service and payment were thus not easily evaded by the ordinary population.[6]

By 1915 the minimum administrative requirements of the Protectorate Government were well on the way to being met in Lango. These requirements were a heavy burden for the ordinary

---

1. Warne, entry for 26.8.13, in Maruzi T.B.(1912-13); Hannington, entry for 15.8.16, in Maruzi T.B.(1912-19).

2. Driberg, entry for 12.2.18, in Moroto T.B.(1918-26); Rubie, entry for 22.4.32, in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

3. Driberg to Spire, 5.10.17, UNA SMP Conf/340; entry for 8.7.18, in Omoro T.B.(1915-26).

4. Scott, entry for 31.1.14, in Koli T.B.(1912-14); Driberg, entry for 4.2.15, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

5. Scott, entry for 25.7.14, in Koli T.B.(1913-19, Part 2); Driberg, entry for 8.12.15, in Maruzi T.B. (1912-19).

6. It should be noted that the colonial period brough unprecedented opportunities for migration by individuals, and this was not discouraged to the same extent.

people, requiring adjustment over a period of time. Yet hardly had taxation been successfully begun than further impositions were laid on the Langi, through events outside the government's control. There was first of all the Great War. In 1917 recruitment to the King's African Rifles (K.A.R.) and the Carrier Corps was extended to Lango District. In theory recruitment was voluntary, but in practice the chiefs had to cooperate with European officials in mustering a quota of men, whether they volunteered or not. In October 1917 army recruitment occasioned many riots, which - as Driberg pointed out "but for the tactful conduct of the Chiefs might easily have led to bloodshed".[1] In all, more than 1,100 men were enlisted into the K.A.R.[2]

The war coincided with, and in part aggravated, an appalling combination of natural disasters. There were epidemics of bubonic plague and small-pox; in 1917 a new disease, cerebro-spinal meningitis, ravaged Lango, to be followed a year later by influenza. Many thousands of people died.[3] The main reaction which these disasters caused among the Langi was a steep increase in witchcraft accusations and witch-findings.[4] The government's reaction was to restrict the movement of both people and livestock, and to carry out compulsory inoculation.[5] Both measures required the cooperation of the chiefs in overcoming their

---

1. Driberg to PCEP, 9.5.18, UNA EPMP/Z/862.

2. Driberg, 'The Lango District', p.133.

3. Spire, Reports on Eastern Province for April, June and November 1917, UNA SMP/1929F; Eden, Reports on Eastern Province for November and December 1918, UNA SMP/1929G; Driberg, The Lango, pp.55,92.

4. Driberg to PCEP, 8.10.17, LDA LDMP/15/17 (Noted by Dr. Michael Twaddle and since lost).

5. Spire, Report on Eastern Province for September 1915, UNA EPMP/Z/441/16; Spire, Report on Eastern Province for June 1917, UNA SMP/1929F.

people's resentment of highly inconvenient, and apparently irrational, fiats of the government. These assertions of authority were met with sporadic rioting and general unrest;[1] it is remarkable that no chiefs were killed or wounded as a result.

To add to the ravages of disease, the combination in 1918 of drought and locusts caused famine in every part of Lango except the south-east. The severity of the famine and the cost to the government of alleviating it (over £11,000) caused local officials to implement permanent precautions against famine: every year in which there was a good yield, a proportion of the harvested grain was to be put aside as a famine reserve and stored in communal granaries at the sub-county headquarters. By the end of 1919 this scheme was in operation.[2] Throughout the colonial period, the levy and maintenance of famine reserves was considered by the government to be an important part of the chief's duties, especially in drier areas like Abyece.[3]

The direct intervention by the government in public health and famine prevention entailed further restrictions on the liberty of individual Langi and further responsibilities for chiefs. In the period between the Wars there was no comparable crisis in health or food supply, but the government continued to require compliance with regulations enforced through the chiefs By 1920 both chiefs and people had been introduced to virtually the full range of government activity as it was practised in the period up to 1939.

****

1. Spire, Report on Eastern Province for November 1917, UNA SMP/1929F.

2. Driberg to Eden, 23.3.18, and Special Warrant, 16.4.18, UNA SMP/3942/ part 1; Jervoise to CS, 11.11.19, UNA SMP/3942/part 2.

3. Entries at Abyece, passim, in Kwania T.B.(1926-33). Interview: Pilipo Oruro.

By 1920 native administration both below and above the sub-county level had also been systematised. The big increase in Chief's duties between 1914 and 1919, and especially the introduction of tax, made it essential to have a clear chain of responsibility and command. When the first chiefs were gazetted in 1912, each village leader in the sub-county was informally designated 'headman'; Okelo Abong of Aber, for example, was recorded as having under him 44 headmen, whose followings varied from eight to 52 adult men.[1] As yet, no hierarchy was established among the headmen, nor were their duties defined; they were merely supposed to sit with the chief in <u>lukiko</u> and assist him in the general running of the sub-county. Very soon after 1912 - if not before, in some of the longest administered parts - the traditional settlement pattern began to change. Once cultivators had security against attack by a neighbouring clan section, there was little to be said in favour of the highly concentrated village which kept many of them a mile or more from their own plots. Large villages began to split up and eventually to disperse altogether, until the countryside assumed its present-day aspect of scattered farmers' homesteads, separated from each other by sometimes a hundred yards or so of land. This latter stage took some time to be completed, but the splitting up of villages began early, - by 1913 in Kwera for example, and by 1917 in Akokoro.[2] This process led naturally to a proliferation of 'headmen'; Thus, at a time when the range of administrative tasks was increasing sharply, the government found that the immediate subordinates of the chief were becoming more numerous, and therefore

---

1. Jervoise, List of headmen at Aber, in Koli T.B.(1912-14).

2. Jervoise, Notes on Kwera, 1913, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1); Driberg, entry for 8.7.17, in Maruzi T.B.(1912-19).

individually less powerful, with every shift in the local settlement pattern. The answer was to erect an intermediate position between that of village headman and sub-county chief. From about 1915 the first experiments were made in grouping several headmen under a principal headman.[1] In 1919 a formal distinction was made between parish headmen and village headmen, in accordance with the latest refinement of the bakungu prototype in Buganda. In every sub-county between three and six 'parish headmen' were appointed, some of them with authority over more than a hundred households; the ablest of them acted as deputy, or katikiro (according to Ganda terminology), to the chief.[2] The village headmen were then organised so that each parish headman had between two and four under him. Even with this adjustment, however, the number of village headmen was often found to be too large, as villages subdivided into yet smaller units. In most places the number of headmen actually recognised by the government had to be cut down,[3] so that in due course the territory controlled by the official village headman tended to become a somewhat arbitrary category, just as the parish was.

Village chiefs and parish chiefs received a small share of the tax rebates and of the peasants' labour for chiefs (arododo),[4] but their appointments were not regarded as full-time by the government. They had no office or official house, nor did they

---

1. Fox, entry for 5.6.15 in Maruzi T.B.(1912-19); List of headmen at Iceme, circa 1916, in Koli T.B.(1913-19, part 2); Driberg, List of headmen under sub-chief Ogwal Agir, 1917, in Kwania T.B. (1913-19).

2. The Standing Orders and the lists of headmen periodically drawn up in each Tour Book show a consistent pattern.

3. For example: Driberg, entry for 10.7.18, in Maruzi T.B. (1912-19); Cator, entry for 26.2.19, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19); Tongue, entry for November 1919, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26,part 1).

4. Standing Orders, 1919, entered in every current Tour Book; entry for 27.7.24, in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

need to keep records. In two crucial respects their authority differed in kind, as well as in quantity, from that of the senior chiefs. Firstly, they were given no armed retainers; indeed the government discouraged the keeping of any followers at all, and for this reason refused to allow the junior chiefs to exempt any of their people from labour service.[1] In the second place, parish and village chiefs had no judicial authority. They attended the sub-county chief's <u>lukiko</u>, and they might use their influence to bring about an informal settlement of a dispute before it was taken to court, but they could not themselves 'cut cases'. There is no doubt that the main resources of both legal and physical power lay with the sub-county chief. The junior chief's job was essentially to pass government orders down the line from the sub-county headquarters, and to ensure that his people presented themselves for labour service and payment of tax when required.

Concurrently with the internal organisation of the sub-county, the administrative structure was capped by the appointment of the first county chiefs. In Buganda the county or <u>saza</u> had been much the most important territorial category in the 19th century kingdom, and its chief had been a focus of patronage and power. The county was the first level of the <u>bakungu</u> hierarchy to be adapted to the requirements of colonial government in Buganda. For most of the colonial period, the <u>saza</u> chief retained something of the prestige traditionally attached to his office, and the supervision of the lesser chiefs was left almost entirely to him.[2] On paper, the senior chiefs in Lango

---

1. Standing Orders, 1919, entered in every current Tour Book; Driberg, entry for 17.12.17, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19); Driberg, Summary of Instructions given at annual District Baraza, 31.7.18, ADA LDMP/40/15.

2. Low and Pratt, op.cit.pp.219-23.

occupied positions analogous to their prototypes in Buganda; in fact, the model was turned upside down, in order to take account of the limited horizon of political action among the Langi themselves. The sub-county was the first tier of the new system to be organised: its boundaries were fixed and its chiefs appointed before the county had any administrative reality at all. And once county chiefs had been appointed, District Officers on tour continued to spend the bulk of their time supervising directly the sub-county chiefs. Though not actually superfluous, county chiefs always had a somewhat ill-defined function in the administration of Lango District.

The first county in Lango District to be given precise form was Kyoga. The demarcation of this county was determined by the personal ascendancy which Kazana had established among the Kumam and in Namasale peninsula. Kazana was formally gazetted county chief in 1912. Except for a few years when Awelo and Aputi on the southern shores of Lake Kwania were included under Kazana's jurisdiction, Kyoga county was the concern only of the Kumam, Banyara and Baruli in the period up to 1935. In Lango proper, the first experiments in county administration were made in 1913 in response to two factors: the special position of Odora, and the total withdrawal of the Baganda agents from south-west Lango.

When Odora took up residence near the new station of Palango in 1909, his position was hardly any more defined than it had been during the period of sporadic contact with the government since 1904. While the other two 'chiefs' appointed by Knowles in 1909 continued to live in their own villages and to exert what influence they could further afield, Odora left the day-to-day leadership of his clansmen at Kungu to others, and concentrated instead on consolidating his position with the European

authorities. Outside Ibuje he exercised virtually no authority. But Odora continued to seize every opportunity of making an impression on his superiors: in 1910 he was recruiting porters for European service,[1] and in the same year he responded to the government's preoccupation with cotton by preparing a nine-acre plot near District headquarters as an advertisement of how cotton should be grown.[2] This remarkable sensitivity to official aspirations soon paid dividends: when the chief of the county between the Aroca and the Okole was dismissed, Tufnell recommended that Odora should add that sphere to his own.[3] And in January 1911 Odora was instructed to take up his headquarters at Aduku, on the upper reaches of the Aroca.[4]

For the time being Odora's enlarged responsibilities were as empty as his official role at Ibuje had been. North of the Aroca as well as south, the government relied on Baganda agents. The exception was Aduku itself, which the agent vacated on Odora's arrival. Far from district headquarters and free from on-the-spot supervision, Odora was able to assert control over the locality which was to be his headquarters for fifteen years. He was a complete stranger to Aduku. If there were any of his own clan, the Jo Oyakori, already living there, they were very few in number.[5] Odora was therefore obliged at first to rely exclusively on his own askaris. These numbered about 50, though not all had guns. A few of them were Banyoro or Baganda; the majority were Langi from the south-west, with a strong element

---

1. F.H.Melland and E.H.Cholmeley, Through the Heart of Africa (London,1912), pp.224,233.

2. Fox, Report on Lango District for May 1910, UNA SMP/193.

3. Tufnell to Grant, 17.10.10, UNA SMP/1325.

4. Haldane, Report on Lango District for January 1911, UNA SMP/193A.

5. Interviews: Peter Enin, Yakobo Obia, Lajaro Obia, Enoci Ekak.

of Jo Oyakori.[1] Odora ruled without any semblance of legitimacy or local consensus. His unpopularity broke surface in September 1912, when two of his askaris were killed, and the whole area was found to be in "a truculent state" and in need of punitive action by the District Commissioner.[2] At that time, Odora found himself obliged to move about "closely followed by several armed followers".[3]

Odora might be unpopular in Aduku, but no other Lango of his day had so much experience of Europeans and their requirements. There was much to be said for taking advantage of this flair. Odora's chance to prove his skills in a wider arena came in March 1913, with the permanent removal of Baganda agents from Apac, Cawente and Abyece.[4] In place of supervision by agents, the government substituted supervision by Lango county chiefs, who were to be remunerated on the same basis as the sub-county chiefs - by tax rebate and labour services. Odora was appointed county chief of Kwania, with headquarters at Aduku. To the west, a county was formed out of Ibuje, Akokoro and Kungu. It was called Maruzi county and placed under Arum.[5] Since his move to Aduku, Odora had ceased to exercise any authority in that area, and the arrangements made in 1913 were a simple recognition of this fact.

---

1. Interviews: Yakobo Adoko, Lajaro Obia.

2. Jervoise to PCEP, 6.11.12, UNA SMP/2404; Jervoise, entry for 5.10.12, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

3. Warne, entry for 8.8.13, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19) (referring to the period before April 1913).

4. Notes on Abyece, Cawente and Apac, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

5. Scott, Report on Lango District for June 1913, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13.

Map 12

Counties and sub-counties, 1920

Key

- - - -	County and District boundaries
Atura	Counties
INOMO	Sub-counties

MAP 12

Officials at the time acknowledged that Odora's position was something of an anomaly; he was "really more of an agent than a chief",[1] - a parvenu even.[2] It was Arum's position in Maruzi which provided the model for county development in Lango as a whole during the next five years. In each case one of the existing sub-county chiefs, a native of the area, was picked out for promotion. In Arum's case, and in the counties of Atura and Kole created in 1917, this was done by appointment from above. When the first county chiefs were appointed to Erute and Dokolo at the end of 1918, the assembled sub-county chiefs were asked to elect one of their number.[3] (Map 12) The first county chiefs were sometimes allowed to administer directly their own sub-counties. Odora did so in Aduku from 1917 to 1918, and Arum from 1913 to 1917. But thereafter the appointment of a county chief automatically brought about a vacancy at sub-county level. County chiefs were expected to devote their time to supervising the administration of the county as a whole.

Although the demarcation of sub-counties was somewhat haphazard, several of the resultant units bore at least some relationship to pre-colonial spheres of inter-clan dominance. By contrast, the counties were almost totally artificial. Between four and six sub-counties was regarded as the right size, and within this framework the boundaries were worked out according to ease of communication, the administrative capacity of the first county chief, and other bureaucratic criteria. As if to emphasize the artificiality of the idea, most of the counties

---

1. Jervoise, Notes on Aduku, in Kwania T.B. (1913-19).

2. Scott, Report on Lango District for 1913-14, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13.

3. Driberg, Report on Lango District for November 1917, UNA EPMP/Z/1326/17.

were given politically neutral names referring to prominent features of the landscape.[1] The county headquarters was sited in the place which enjoyed the easiest access to the county as a whole, so that two of the county chiefs had to live and work some distance from their home areas.[2] Furthermore, county boundaries were changed several times in the period up to 1939; Kwania, for example, 'lost' Apac in 1916, but 'gained' Inomo in 1917 and both Awelo and Aputi in 1918. Of course, the artificiality of so large a unit as the county was virtually inevitable, but some account could have been taken of pre-colonial categories, however vaguely defined they had been. A little investigation might have revealed the extent of the regional spheres of military influence which had collapsed less than a generation before. During the very years (1913-17) that the counties were being set up, Driberg was uncovering the fourfold division of Lango for purposes of the age organisation,[3] but no account was taken of this discovery. The nearest approach to a pre-colonial unit was Atura county. This corresponded quite closely to the area east of the Toci river which had acknowledged Odongo Aja's military leadership during his last years, and from 1917 until 1939 the county chief was Owiny Akulo, in effect Odongo's successor; but the pre-colonial association broke down on the fact that the area of Odongo Aja's influence west of the Toci was now part of Gulu District.

The artificiality of the county boundaries was matched by the total novelty of the county chief's function. His office

1. Kyoga and Kwania were named after lakes; Erute and Maruzi after hills; Kole and Moroto after rivers.

2. Owiny Akulo of Atura had to live at Loro, and Olong Adilo of Kole at Aboke.

3. Driberg, The Lango, p.245.

carried no direct, every-day authority over the local inhabitants, but was concerned mainly with the supervision of administrative subordinates. The county chief presided over a county lukiko, which met twice a month as a consultative body and - more important - as a court of appeal from the sub-county courts. Every county chief also had a lock-up for offenders and five (or sometimes eight) police to guard the gaol and to assist in difficult arrests. To begin with, appeals to the county court were few in number, but in time the judicial powers vested in the county chief became very important.[1] The county chief was also responsible for inspecting the work of the sub-county chiefs in their own areas. During his first four years in charge of Kwania county, Odora chose to do this by posting personal representatives to each sub-county headquarters; this amounted to an informal survival of the discarded agent system - the more so since Odora was inclined to employ Banyoro and Baganda for the purpose.[2] Arum used the same method in Maruzi.[3] By 1919, however, both Odora and Arum had abandoned the use of personal agents, and no other county chief resorted to this expedient. Instead, supervision was carried out by frequent touring, during which court records, cash books and public works were inspected. The touring routine, which consumed a large part of both the county chief's and the District Officers's time, summed up much that was novel in the colonial political system: the hierarchical ordering of functionaries, the specificity of tasks allotted

1. Eden, Report on Eastern Province for 1919-20, UNA SMP/703I; Standing Orders, 1919, entered into every current Tour Book; Driberg, 'The Lango District', p.129.

2. Between 1913 and 1917, Odora had two Baganda at Abyece, and two Banyoro at Cawente; at Apac his own brother acted as agent. These men were referred to by the Lunyoro/Luganda word for agent or deputy, omusigire. Notes on Abyece, Cawente and Apac, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

3. Arum had a Bantu agent at Akokoro from 1914 to 1917, and a Lango agent at Apac from about 1916 to 1918. Entries in Maruzi T.B.(1912-19).

to them, and the importance attached to the accurate recording of petty transactions.

The seal was set on the administrative structure by the choice of an official vernacular terminology for the four grades of chief. From 1917 onwards, the county chief was referred to as rwot, the sub-county chief as jago, and the village chief as won paco; two years later, the newly created parish chief was called won magoro, or more usually amagoro.[1] No record of how this terminology was arrived at has survived. Official enquiries cannot have been very searching. The only title which remotely corresponded to a pre-existing category was won paco. The term paco referred both to the family household and to the concentrated village of which it regularly formed a part, and so won paco could mean either a household head or a village leader. In this latter sense, the term was near enough to the lowest tier of the official hierarchy as it was originally constituted; but when the concentrated village broke up, leaving the wang tic as the basic local community, the officially defined paco and its chief lost the appearance of continuity. The most unsatisfactory term in the new vocabulary was jago. Among Lwo-speaking peoples, including the Acholi, this term referred to the leader of a non-royal corporate lineage.[2] The Langi on the other hand lacked both the distinction between royal and commoner lineages, and the position of jago.[3] Had

---

1. Driberg, Summary of instructions given at Annual District Baraza, 28.3.17, ADA LDMP/40/15; Standing Orders, 1919, entered into every current Tour Book. Later in the colonial period, the term won magoro was changed to janjago.

2. J.P.Crazzolara, The Lwoo, 3 Parts (Verona,1950-54)I,p.72; A.W.Southall, Alur Society (Cambridge,1953),p.47.

3. The term jago is hardly ever used by informants today when describing pre-colonial politics, whereas rwot is used frequently. As pointed out in Chapter 3, Driberg's picture of a traditional hierarchy of jagi and rwode appears to be completely without foundation. Driberg, The Lango, p.206.

officials wanted a vernacular term for the sub-county chief with some traditional legitimacy, they would have done better to choose rwot. Instead this term was reserved for the even more artificial rank of county chief.[1]

****

By 1920 officials in Lango District had erected a structure of native administration which conformed to the general requirements of colonial government, and to the specific model most readily to hand - the consolidated bakungu hierarchy of Buganda. We have stressed how alien to Lango conceptions of political order the new structure was. Both territorially and qualitatively, positions of authority were radically transformed. It is easy to see the administrative system as something imposed on an inert and passive population, - as a manifestation of the Leviathan which had consumed the Langi and their neighbours during the previous twenty years. Yet local political activity did not cease; it merely entered new channels. The fact that the Uganda Government had to deploy its material resources at a very parochial level, and to entrust these resources to local personnel, brought the colonial power structure firmly within the purlieu of inter-clan politics. The graded chiefly positions quickly became an object of intense rivalry between clans. This was partly because chiefships were attractive in themselves as a potent source of political leverage, but it was also because of a more profound conditioning of political conflict. In pre-colonial Lango inter-clan tensions had been resolved in one of

---

1. In the Chapters that follow, I deliberately adhere to the English terminology, despite its cumbersomeness. To use the vernacular would imply a spurious degree of traditional legitimacy; it would also lead to confusion between an individual's pre-colonial role and his government position, especially in the case of a rwot.

two ways, - either by fighting or by group migration. Neither of these expedients was permitted by the colonial government. Inter-clan tensions had now to find expression within fixed administrative boundaries, with the result that the allocation of power within these units assumed a crucial political significance.

This chapter has shown that government chiefships were conferred on men who already enjoyed an established position in Lango society. To this extent, there was continuity between the old order and the new. To a large degree, however, the continuity was an illusion. Many clan leaders received no recognition at all, since administrative requirements set a limit on the number of Langi who could be accommodated in the colonial power structure. Furthermore, the creation of a four-tier chiefly hierarchy entailed at every level favouring one clan leader at the expense of his peers; in most cases the existing distribution of power gave no clear-cut indication of who should be promoted above the level of village headman, with the result that recruitment to senior positions tended, in traditional terms, to be quite arbitrary. Above all, new opportunities for personal power and enrichment meant that the political game was now played for much higher stakes. It is in this setting that politics in Lango during the 1920's and 1930's have to be considered.

CHAPTER SEVEN

POWER AND PATRONAGE IN THE COLONIAL BUREAUCRACY

From the government's point of view, the conduct expected of chiefs was clear enough: their function was to transmit to their subjects orders from above and to maintain public order, with the minimum of force and with impartiality to all. It is a commonplace that this external, bureaucratic standard was far removed from the indigenous political systems of Africa during the colonial era, and that chiefs with one foot in each system were subject to irreconcileable expectations.[1] The grafting of bureaucratic institutions onto an acephalous society posed especially acute problems. Some continuity with the traditional order could be maintained in terms of personnel, but so far as the functions and powers of political office were concerned, the break was complete. In Lango, the gap between the old order and the new, so far from narrowing, in fact widened during the early colonial period. The way in which political offices were filled rapidly departed still further from pre-colonial practice; the ordinary population became for the most part alienated from the administrative structure; and chiefs increasingly exploited their offices for personal or narrowly factional ends. This chapter traces these developments up until 1933. In that year native administration was for the first time since 1911 subjected to serious reappraisal. The resulting exposure of abuses, and the reforms brought in to remedy them, form the subject of the final chapter.

The difficulties which the first generation of sub-county chiefs experienced in enforcing their government-conferred

---

1. The classic account of this conflict for Uganda is Fallers' study of Busoga. L.A.Fallers, Bantu Bureaucracy (Cambridge,1956).

authority turned on two distinct problems. The population of every sub-county fell into two categories: the chief's own clansmen - usually the minority - on the one hand, and on the other all the remaining clan sections - usually the vast majority. Each category presented its own problems. So far as his own clansmen were concerned, the chief had to reconcile their expectations of his role with those of the government. The contrast between the informal and only occasionally enforced leadership of a clan head and the full executive powers vested in a government chief was, of course, immense. Some chiefs reacted by opting out of their newly ascribed role altogether. Such a man was Anyuru, the chief of Adyegi sub-county, on the Okole river. His father had been killed by a Muganda agent in 1909, and Anyuru had succeeded him as leader of the Omolo clan.[1] After he had served as chief for eight years, he and his headmen were reported to have not[2]

> "the slightest influence over their peasantry. They never will until they show them that they are the masters, not their drunken companions, in which latter respect, the Jago himself sets the worst example."

By 'influence' the District Officer meant administrative authority in the European sense. Anyuru was simply continuing to live according to the values of clan leadership, with its emphasis on egalitarian conviviality.

In the long run, however, this response was dangerous. The chief who made no attempt to exact labour duties and tax from his clansmen and who made light of his official authority was sure to be dismissed, with the likelihood that the chiefship

---

1. Scott, entry for 31.1.14, in Koli T.B.(1912-14, part 1). Interview: Koranima Ayena.

2. Long, entry for 13.10.20, in Atura T.B.(1920-26).

would be given to the leader of another clan in the locality. This indeed was what happened to Anyuru; he was removed in 1920, and his sub-county was divided up between Aber and Loro, which at that time were ruled by the leaders of the Jo Ongweo and the Jo Inomo respectively.[1] The lesson was plain: it was better for clansmen to concede in some measure the distasteful demands made upon them by a chief of their own clan, than to have these demands imposed with much less indulgence by a chief from another clan. There was undoubtedly scope for a certain amount of discrimination along clan lines in the allocation of duties and payments, but a chief who went too far was placing his whole clan at risk.

Much the more onerous task for the sub-county chief was the assertion of his authority over clans other than his own. His appointment was likely to be construed as an assertion of his clan's hegemony over theirs, and to be resented as an arbitrary arrangement imposed from above. For these other clans, the moment of truth must often have been the final withdrawal of the Muganda agent and his followers from the sub-county. From then on, there could be no doubt that orders were coming from the chief rather than the agent, and at the same time the boma was losing the most tangible expression of the government's power to crush resistance. In the first areas to be freed from supervision by the Baganda in 1913, the result was reported to be a breakdown of chiefly authority, with village and parish chiefs preferring not to meet in <u>lukiko</u> for fear of coming to blows. Intensive touring by officials was required in order

---

1. Tomblings, Report on Lango District for 1920, UNA EPMP/N/121.

to stress the continuing, and threatening, presence of the colonial power.[1]

Over the longer term, the extent to which the sub-county chief's authority was tolerable to clans other than his own depended on two factors, one negative and the other positive. The negative element was the extent to which the chief had become personally identified with the Baganda. Some association between them was inevitable. Nearly every gazetted chief continued to have the advice of an agent for a year or two after his appointment, and it was some years after that before there were any Langi qualified to step into the shoes of the Baganda clerks at sub-county and county headquarters.[2] But the crucial question was the nature of the chief's own relations with the Baganda. In Iceme the unruffled calm of the early colonial period undoubtedly owed something to the fact that the Baganda had been kept away altogether; agents had been posted to Aboke and Ngai, but not to Iceme itself, with the result that chief Olong Adilo lacked any connection with the Baganda at all. In Aber, local indignation against the Baganda had been very strong, but Owiny Akulo had been completely identified with the opposition both in 1895 and in 1910, and he therefore escaped the taint of being associated with their regime.

Other clan leaders were more accommodating towards the Baganda at the start, and they paid the price of forfeiting local support. Round Lira, for example, the most powerful clan section when the government arrived was the Jo Oki, led by

---

1. Scott, Reports on Lango District for August 1913 and for 1913-14, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13; Scott to PCEP, 12.5.13, UNA SMP/2404.

2. A school for Lango clerks was opened in Lira in 1921. Eden, Report on Eastern Province for 1921, UNA SMP/703K.

Olet Apar.[1] Olet was consistently cooperative, and in 1912 even warned the District Commissioner against an impending attack on the agent.[2] Since he was already an old man, Olet gave his son to the Baganda for training. This son, Ogwangguji, was even more closely identified with the Baganda. He accompanied them on missions outside the boma, and on one occasion when they were attacked, he "personally helped to carry the dying Muganda".[3] As his father's youthful assistant, he displayed a high-handed arrogance towards village chiefs which was only too typical of the conduct of the Baganda.[4] The result of this cooperation was that Olet Apar and Ogwangguji had great difficulty in enforcing their authority as government chiefs. In April 1913 Jervoise reported that Lira was the only part of Lango where there had been frequent village fights during the previous year, which suggests that Olet exercised no authority in lukiko.[5] When his son was formally appointed to succeed him in 1915, he fared even worse. In 1917 Ogwangguji narrowly escaped being speared to death after his followers had been ejected from a near-by village, and at the same time an abortive attack was made on the chief's headquarters by men from another part of the sub-county.[6] These

---

1. Interviews: Isaya Ogwangguji, Elia Olet. J.H.Driberg, The Lango (London,1923),pp.252-3; M.J.Wright,'The Early Life of Rwot Isaya Ogwangguji, M.B.E.', Uganda Jl.22(1958),p.131. The exact scope of Olet's influence is difficult to determine, partly because of the very great influence which his family has since obtained in the Lango District Administration.

2. Jervoise to PCEP, 4.12.12, UNA SMP/2404.

3. Scott to PCEP, 12.5.13, UNA SMP/2404.

4. "I have impressed on him /Ogwangguji/ his extreme youth and the undesirability of his making himself universally hated before the time is ripe for him to become of active assistance to the Government". Scott, Report on Lango District for October 1913, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13.

5. Jervoise, Report on Lango District for 1912-13, UNA EPMP/Y/16

6. Driberg to Spire, 10.10.17, UNA SMP/4349.

disturbances were symptomatic of Ogwangguji's estrangement from the local people, and one may surmise that there would have been much more evidence of this rift if the District headquarters with its detachment of Protectorate police had not been transferred to Lira in 1914.

The positive factor influencing the extent to which a chief's authority was accepted by his subjects at large was the relationship between the sub-county and the pre-colonial sphere of inter-clan dominance. Here again, Aber and Iceme are striking examples of the potential for reasonably uneventful rule. After Owiny Akulo's release from prison, the distribution of power in Aber south of the Toci river was almost exactly in line with pre-colonial divisions: Owiny Akulo ruled in Ocini, and Okelo Abong in Akaka. In each of the two sub-counties, the population was predominantly Jo Arak, and the remaining clans were already accustomed to a subordinate position. Not surprisingly, Aber was one of the earliest areas where the chiefs were "able to settle cases and enforce decisions".[1] In Iceme, the Jo Olwa had on the eve of the colonial period achieved a dominant position over all the clans which were to be brought into the sub-county. The Olwa leader, Olong Adilo, was appointed chief, and there was little evidence of resentment against the new authority.[2] In both these cases, much of the chiefs' success was due to the fact that <u>lukiko</u> procedure was not entirely unfamiliar. In Aber and Iceme the right of the dominant <u>rwot</u> to settle inter-clan disputes in the area had come to be accepted by the time the

1. Jervoise, Report on Lango District for March 1913, UNA EPMP/Z/1329/13.

2. The only apparent resentment came from the Jo Arak me Ongoda. Entries for 1914 and 1915 at Iceme, in Koli T.B.(1913-19, part 2).

British arrived, and regular meetings at his village had provided a forum for adjudication.[1] The similarity between the lukiko and these traditional gatherings was increased by the government's policy of upholding clan - as opposed to individual - liability in both civil and petty criminal proceedings.[2] It would seem that the habit of dependence was sufficiently ingrained to prevent overt resistance to the new demands of colonial government.

As we saw in Chapter 3, however, this degree of inter-clan authority was the exception rather than the rule in Lango at the beginning of the 20th century. Elsewhere judicial authority tended to be less developed; inter-clan dominance was more restricted to the cattle raid and the battle field, and its territorial range was smaller. The implications of this were evident in the administrative arrangements made in central Lango, to the east of Lira. In both Bar and Aloi, the dominant clan was the Jo Oki me Abura. They had lived in the area for two generations, and during the 1870's their rwot, Ogwal Abura, had been an important regional leader. By the time the government arrived, all that remained of this eminence was the lead taken in cattle raiding by Ogwal's son, Oki, in the Bar area, and by Ocato, Oki's clan brother, in Aloi. Both men were appointed chiefs, but Driberg's intention in 1916 was that the clan connections should be turned to advantage and the two areas placed under Oki, who had shown himself "able and strong in dealing with his own men".[3] When this plan was implemented in 1920, however,

1. See above, pp. 127, 134.

2. This policy is evident from tour book entries in other parts of Lango; Tongue, entry for 10.5.20, and Tomblings, entry for 2.2.21, in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 1); Lawson, entry for 2.8.22 in Moroto T.B.(1918-26).

3. Driberg, entry for 3.2.16, in Eruti T.B.(1915-21). Interviews Luka Abura, Erieza Oyaka, Tito Omara.

the new sub-county was found to be unwieldy, and after two years it was split into two again.[1]

The establishment of chiefly authority was most difficult in south-eastern Lango, where every circumstance conspired against it; inter-clan dominance was least strong, and the impact of the Baganda and Banyara had been most traumatic. Conditions were worst in Dokolo, whither many of the Langi expelled from east of the Abalang river had migrated. The Kyoga Expedition of 1907 had done most damage there, and - the crowning insult - discharged agents and their followers were allowed to settle.[2] Here, there was almost no basis for widespread cooperation with the government. Opige, the official choice for chief, had thrown in his lot with the Baganda, and for four years was 'educated' by the local agent. When the agent was removed in 1913, Opige was soon in trouble. He was subjected to threats by his people,[3] and he had great difficulty in recruiting reliable askaris to handle his five rifles. Within a few months the askaris had precipitated a clash in which a villager was killed, and in July 1914 Opige himself was dismissed because he had used his askaris to carry out raids to the north and to oppress the people of Dokolo itself.[4]

Opige's case illustrates an important general feature of chiefly rule in its early years. Opige was dismissed by the

---

1. Long, entries for 2.6.20 and 14.2.21, in Eruti T.B.(1919-26); entry for 15.3.22, in Eruti T.B.(1920-25).

2. 23 Baganda were allowed to settle in Dokolo in 1915. Driberg, entry for 7.8.15 in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1).

3. Scott, Report on Lango District for September 1913, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13.

4. Driberg and Cox, entries for 25.7.14, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1). In using his askaris in this way, Opige, in the words of his son, "wanted to act as the Baganda had done". Interview: Ekoc Opige.

District officials because in their eyes he had grossly exceeded his powers. Authoritarian rule of this kind was almost inevitable in a stateless society, where a chief was required to assert authority with no indigenous models to guide him. He had constantly to demonstrate to his people that he had the force of the administration behind him and that he must be obeyed.[1] He saw his various statutory powers as being all of a piece, and interpreted contradiction of any one of them as a challenge to his personal authority. When minor offences were committed by his subjects, the chief tended to lack a sense of proportion and to punish them much too severely. In Lango there were cases of men being sentenced to 48 lashes or beaten to death, when a small fine would have been more appropriate.[2] Arum, the county chief of Maruzi, was criticised in 1920 for being "apt to take anything that happens contrary to Standing Orders as a personal affront", and for adopting "the attitude rather of the Eastern potentate towards his 'subjects'".[3]

This pattern of chiefly rule posed a major difficulty for the European officials in charge of Lango. They well knew that in a situation where administrative authority was so tender a growth, every official encouragement was needed for the chief who was prepared to exercise it in the face of local opposition.[4] E. L. Scott, who acted as District Commissioner in 1913, took the view that official reprimands must be delivered in private,

---

1. For a succinct discussion of this point, see J.A.Barnes, 'Indigenous Politics and Colonial Administration with special reference to Australia', <u>Comparative Studies in Society and History</u> 2 (1960), pp.133-49.

2. Driberg, entry for 7.9.17, in Koli T.B.(1913-19); Lawson, entry for 4.6.22, in Koli & Atura T.B.(1919-26).

3. Tomblings, Report on Lango District for 1920, UNA EPMP/N/121.

4. See for example: Driberg to PCEP, 10.10.14, UNA SMP/4214.

since public evidence of disagreement with Europeans was[1]

> "calculated to endanger even the life of a Lango chief who stands alone as the symbol of discipline and authority in the midst of a people who care for neither of these things."

Officials also realised that in some measure the exceeding of statutory powers on the part of the chief was inevitable. Commenting on the situation in Dokolo in 1913, Scott reported,[2]

> "Opigi and his headmen must be supported at almost all costs at this present stage, or they will be unable to control their people. No decision by them should be reversed, if possible, even at the risk of occasional injustice. A little oppression even need not be a bad thing."

At the same time, as Opige's case showed, there came a stage when abuse of authority could be tolerated no longer, when arbitrary rule threatened to compromise the standing of the colonial government. The only course then open to officials was to dismiss the chief.

****

In the period up to 1919, a great many changes had to be made in sub-county appointments. Dismissal was resorted to not only when, as with Opige, chiefs grossly overstepped the limits of abuse, but also when, like Anyuru of Adyegi, they opted out of their role in order to retain the full esteem of their own clansmen. Of the 37 sub-county chiefs appointed in 1912, only nine were still on the payroll in 1919. One had died in office. 14 had resigned or retired; in many cases this was due to old age or ill health, but some chiefs certainly resigned under pressure, either in order to make way for a more suitable choice, or so that their sub-counties could be merged to form larger

---

1. Scott, Report on Lango District for September 1913, UNA EPMP/Z/228/13.

2. Scott, entry for 10.9.13, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1).

units. 13 chiefs were actually dismissed between 1914 and 1919. When allowance is also made for comparable changes in chiefdoms which had been set up since 1912, and for promotions to county chiefships, the total of replacements which had to be found for sub-county chiefs between 1913 and 1919 amounted to 30.[1] So far as the emerging political system of colonial Lango was concerned, a great deal depended on the way in which these second appointments were made.

In choosing successors to displaced sub-county chiefs, officials did not apparently work according to any clearly defined objectives. In most cases, however, the choice was resolved in one of two ways. In the first place, wherever possible a close agnatic kinsman of the displaced chief was chosen, preferably a son. The hereditary principle was not only integral to clan leadership, which had been taken as the guide-line in most initial appointments to sub-counties. It also corresponded to British conceptions of how in general African peoples were, or ought to be, ruled. Perhaps unconsciously, social and political stability was seen to be tied up with the predictable continuity of hereditary succession. British respect for the hereditary principle is particularly evident in the attitude taken to Odora's family. When Odora in 1916 allowed his adopted son, Elia Adupa, to become a catechist in Acholi, he was told that this was not a suitable occupation for a county chief's son; Adupa's rightful place was held to be at his father's side, and a few months later the District Commissioner gave him a seat in the county Lukiko, - and this despite Odora's complete lack of any 'traditional' claim

---

1. These figures are abstracted from the official Gazette, the Tour Books, and official correspondence.

to rule in Kwania county.[1]

Many of the first sub-county chiefs were therefore succeeded by their sons. Among the earliest sub-counties where this happened were Aboke and Cawente in 1917, followed by Agwata and Aduku in 1918. Officials were prepared to stick to the hereditary principle even when this entailed the appointment of a very young man. When Akaki of Akokoro retired in 1916, a son in his twenties named Adoko was appointed, the government having rejected as unsuitable two candidates previously suggested by Akaki.[2] No doubt, from the government's point of view, the experience which Adoko had had as an askari under Odora and Arum was an asset, but it is very likely that some of the tension in Akokoro during the next few years[3] was due to resentment against a mere stripling, who had been absent from home for several years before his appointment. The Akokoro example emphasises an important limitation which applied in some measure to all cases of hereditary succession. A son might succeed his father, but it was the officials and not the clan elders who made the choice; given a wide field, the two were unlikely to come to the same decision. Whether or not the hereditary principle was observed, the appointment of a new chief had more the character of a decision imposed from above than a free popular choice.

The second response which officials made to sub-county vacancies was to appoint a prominent figure from a different clan. This happened most frequently in those sub-counties which

---

1. Driberg, entry for 14.3.16, and Hannington, entry for 7.8.16, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19), In 1926 Adupa was appointed sub-county chief of Aduku.

2. Driberg, entry for 7.3.16, in Maruzi T.B.(1912-19). Interview: Yakobo Adoko.

3. Long, entry for 14.8.20, in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26).

lacked a single dominant clan, and above all in south-eastern Lango, where the number of clan leaders to choose from tended to be bewildering. In Amac, for example, the success of Okori Alima in getting the colonial authorites to bolster his clan's shaky position[1] did not survive his tenure of office. When he was dismissed in 1919, he was succeeded instead by a man of the Jo Palamyek.[2] In Dokolo sub-county two changes were made in the space of five years. The discredited Opige was succeeded in 1914 by Owiny Aleka, who was a nephew of Okwanga, Opige's main rival on the eve of the colonial period; and when Owiny Aleka was himself promoted in 1918, he was replaced - much to his own annoyance - by a son of the recently deceased leader of yet another clan.[3]

Hereditary succession and the selection of alternative clan leaders together accounted for the vast majority of second appointments to sub-counties during the years up to 1919. Both approaches took some account of traditional concepts of legitimacy. But a handful of appointments departed radically from such concepts, and it was these which set the tone for recruitment to office during the 1920's and 1930's. When a sub-county chief was promoted to county chief, his successor tended to be a man with little claim to the sub-county chiefship except a close association with his immediate predecessor. In four out of the six counties erected between 1913 and 1918, county chiefs were able to take office with a secure hold over the sub-counties from which they had been promoted. It seems that the government consulted them about the choice of their successors, and they

---

1. See above, p.

2. Gazette, 31 October 1919. Interview: Yeromia Otim.

3. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Yeromia Otim, Silvesto Otim. Cator, entry for 29.10.18, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26, part 1).

responded by nominating their own followers. At Ibuje, Arum, after combining the posts of sub-county and county chief for four years, secured in 1917 the appointment of an unimportant village elder who had been under his "personal tutelage" before promotion.[1] In Aber and Iceme, Owiny Akulo and Olong Adilo were both succeeded by close kin.[2] The most remarkable instance of a personal dependent taking over was at Lira, vacated in 1918 by Ogwangguji's appointment as county chief of Erute. Instead of being succeeded by one of his many brothers and cousins, Ogwangguji chose an askari called Ojuka. This man had been born near Lake Kwania, had taken service with the Baganda, been brought to the boma at Bar, and had then escaped unharmed when six Baganda were killed there in 1911; he had then been befriended by Ogwangguji and given employment as askari and interpreter; at the time of his appointment, he had lived in Lira for no more than seven years.[3]

The significance of this exercise of personal patronage by county chiefs was that during the next ten years, from being a rare occurrence, it became a fairly widespread basis for appointments to all official positions below county level. The somewhat limited administrative function of the county chiefs was compensated for by their rise to a position of real influence, from which they were able to manipulate both their subordinates and the European administrative staff.

Initially District Officers viewed with some suspicion attempts by county chiefs to instal their own nominees in junior

---

1. Entries for 24.11.16 and 13.7.17 in Maruzi T.B.(1912-19). Interview: Yakobo Gaci.

2. For a fuller discussion of these two cases, see below pp.310-4

3. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Isaya Ogwangguji.

positions. The early administrators set considerable store by the local standing of candidates for chiefships. They were accordingly quite prepared to reject the county chief's candidate if he seemed to represent a choice imposed from outside. This happened at Aboke in 1917,[1] Kidilande in 1920[2] and Agwata in 1922.[3] As the 1920's wore on, however, officials participated less and less in the selection of chiefs below county level. Increasingly the choice was left either to the county chief personally,[4] or to his lukiko[5] - which came to much the same thing.

Up to a point, the District Officers were a willing party to the concentration of political patronage in the hands of the county chiefs. During the 1920's the range of administrative concerns grew steadily, as pacification gave way to 'improvement'; the government began to step up expenditure on medical and veterinary services and on agriculture.[6] Administrators were obliged to spend more time in their offices at District headquarters. Touring became more infrequent and more hurried, with the result that less time was devoted to assessing the local political atmosphere and the standing of prominent individuals. As a result, officials were less qualified to make decisions on chiefly appointments.

---

1. Driberg, entry for 5.9.17, in Koli T.B.(1913-19, part 2).

2. Tongue, entry for 12.5.20, in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 1).

3. Tomblings, entry for 16.3.22, in Dokolo & Moroto T.B.(1918-26). Interview: Israel Alele.

4. The following tour book entry at Ibuje for 13.12.25 is typical: "Rwot to find successor, recommends Jemusi, W.M./won magoro/ of Kidilande". Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 2).

5. Tongue, Report on Lango District for August 1920, UNA EPMP/N/39/20. A rare exception was the decision in 1931 to override the Maruzi county lukiko's choice of the county chief's brother as sub-county chief of Cegere. Rubie to PCEP, 31.8.31, LDA/unnumbered.

6. R.C.Pratt, Chapter 9 of V.Harlow and E.M.Chilver, History of East Africa, II (Oxford,1965), pp. 484-86.

Much more significant, though, was the appropriation of missionary education by the county chiefs and their clients. When the first sub-county appointments were made in 1912, literacy was not an issue, since contact between the Langi and the missionaries had by then occurred only on a superficial level. But by the mid-1920's schooling had become available to the Langi, and it was now regarded by the District authorities as an important qualification for office, in view of the growing complexity of native administration. The fact that most of the men so qualified were dependents or close relatives of the older chiefs was a crucial element in the continuity of chiefly personnel during the inter-war period. In order to understand why this was so, some attention must be given to the circumstances in which Christianity entered Lango.

The pattern of early evangelisation in Lango was broadly similar to the penetration of the colonial power, in that two thrusts were made, one from the west and the other from the south-east. They were made concurrently, and both were under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.), the dominant Protestant interest in Uganda. But the two campaigns were conducted with different tactics, different personnel, and varying degrees of success. In the south-east, Baganda catechists were sent in the wake of Baganda agents, and had reached Dokolo by 1910. At first they were more concerned to minister to their fellow countrymen than to make converts among the Langi. The pioneer catechists did not venture out into the villages, and any Langi wanting instruction had to attend at the agent's post and be taught in Luganda. Baptism would appear to have been a token of cooperation with the hated Baganda, and few Lango converts were made at this early stage.[1]

1. Kitching to CMS HQ,22.12.11,CMS Archives G3/A7/O/1911(b); Jervoise, Report on Lango District for 1912-13, UNA EPMP/Y/16. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Erieza Olwol.

In western Lango, the central intermediary in early missionary contact, as in early government contact, was Odora of Kungu. During his early visits to Hoima in 1904 and 1905 he had been introduced to the local missionaries by the Omukama of Bunyoro, who was a keen convert. It is plain that Odora's main interest at this stage was not in Christianity, but in military help against his enemies. Nevertheless he agreed to a suggestion by the Omukama and the Rev. Arthur Fisher that catechists should be sent to Kungu, and early in 1906 two Banyoro arrived.[1] They were soon disillusioned, probably by Odora's lack of interest in anything except reading and writing,[2] and returned to Bunyoro within a year. Odora, however, continued to value the services of catechists, and Fisher continued to send them.[3] When Odora moved to Ibuje in 1909, a Munyoro catechist came with him,[4] and more teachers followed him to Aduku, where in 1913 Odora was at last baptised.[5] By that time there were ten 'out-stations' of the C.M.S. in western Lango, staffed by Banyoro and Acholi catechists, many of whom had been sent from Aduku to other sub-county bomas.[6] A year after Odora's baptism, Arum of Maruzi followed his example, and from then on the number of converts rapidly increased.[7]

---

1. Jervoise to Leakey, 4.2.06, UNA A12/7.
2. Ibid.
3. Fisher to Manley, 1.11.13, Copy in the Fisher Papers, CMS Archives. Interview: Zakalia Isengeze.
4. This was Daudi Bitatule, the first Munyoro to be baptised in Hoima (in 1900). M.M.L.Pirouet,'The Expansion of the Church of Uganda (N.A.C.) from Buganda into Northern and Western Uganda between 1891 and 1914',unpublished PhD thesis, University of East Africa,1968,p.376; J.G.Huddle,'The Life of Yakobo Adoko of Lango District',Uganda Jl.21(1957)p.186.
5. Scott, entry for 24.11.13 in Kwania T.B.(1913-19); R.M.Fisher, 'The Awakening of a Nile Tribe',Church Missionary Gleaner 41 (June 1914),p.91.
6. Fisher to Manley,3.9.13, CMS Archives G3/A7/O/1913 (b).
7. R.M.Fisher,op.cit.p.91; H.T.Wright,'Pioneer Work in Mid-Africa', Awake 25 (May 1915),p.51.

This responsiveness to local conditions, coupled with reliance on African personnel, was typical of the C.M.S. evangelisation of Uganda as a whole. It sprang from the zeal displayed by the Baganda in proselytizing outside their own country, and from a readiness on the part of the European missionaries to give the Baganda - and other African evangelists - their head.[1] But there is an added twist to the Lango story. In most new mission fields in Uganda, pioneer African catechists were quickly followed by a handful of Europeans, to supervise their work and to staff institutions such as schools and hospitals. In Lango there was a time-lag of twenty years: not until 1926 was Protestant missionary work directed from within the District.[2] In the case of the Roman Catholics, whose impact before the Second World War was small compared with that of the Protestants, the delay was still greater: only in 1930 did the Verona Fathers establish a mission station in Lango. Until 1926 European supervision by the C.M.S. was restricted to occasional safaris from Gulu, and from Ngora in Teso. Finance and training facilities for catechists were limited, so that in 1925 the number of catechists was still modest.[3] The limited scale of missionary activity and the absence of Europeans gave the chiefs great scope for controlling the evangelising process. Catechists were in practice dependent on the good offices of the chiefs, and if they had wanted more independence they could hardly have achieved it without European support on the spot.

---

1. The authoritative account is Pirouet, op.cit.

2. Early in 1910 W.G.Innes opened a mission station at Kalaki in Kumam country, but he died of blackwater fever later that year and was not replaced. Wright to Spire, 30.9.10, UNA SMP/178.

3. Between 1925 and 1926, however, the number of catechists working in Lango increased dramatically from 30 to 60. Notes by T.Lawrence in Church Missionary Outlook 53 (April 1926),p.81.

In the event, the deployment of catechists was controlled by the chiefs from the beginning. The prior agreement of the chief was normally secured before a catechist was posted to his area. The chief's support was enlisted most often by one of his peers, and here Odora played an important role, both by his own example and by personal contact with chiefs like Omara of Loro and Ogwangguji of Lira.[1] Once in residence, the catechist was under the chief's orders. The two of them cooperated to their mutual advantage, and to the confusion of those Langi who were less familiar with the distinction between church and state. The catechist lived at the boma, taught and worshipped there, and beat the boma drum to summon the faithful.[2] In some cases the catechumens themselves were encouraged to settle round the boma.[3] Catechists and their pupils tended to be exempt from labour services,[4] while the labour service of the non-Christian community was drawn on for building chapels and schools.[5]

The District administration disapproved of these practices on the grounds that a rigid distinction ought to be maintained between government and missions, and from 1913 onwards rules were formulated to this effect. These rules went considerably further than administrative practice elsewhere in Uganda. Chiefs were forbidden to make public labour available to catechists and

---

1. Interviews: Yosia Omara, Isaya Ogwangguji.

2. Scott, entry for 19.10.13, in Dokolo T.B.(1913-26,part 1); Driberg, entry for 6.2.15, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

3. Driberg, entry for 14.3.16, and Hannington, entry for 7.8.16, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

4. Hannington, entry for 7.8.16 in Kwania T.B.(1913-19).

5. Driberg, entry for 6.12.15, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19); Driberg, entry for 15.4.18, in Koli T.B.(1913-19, part 1).

to excuse 'readers' from labour calls, and the catechist was forbidden to use the chief's headquarters for any religious purpose.[1] Between 1913 and 1918 the rules were rigorously enforced, especially by Driberg, who combined strident secularism with a romantic attachment to 'the savage as he really is'.[2] Driberg actively discouraged chiefs from taking Christian instruction,[3] and he burnt down mission buildings if they were constructed too close to a chief's headquarters.[4] His behaviour provoked a high-level protest from the Bishop of Uganda in 1917.[5]

After Driberg's departure from Lango in 1918 the restrictions on catechists, though still on the rule book, were not enforced to the same extent. The association between chiefs and Protestant evangelists remained close. In Kwania county under Odora, the exemption of 'readers' from all labour services became standard form.[6] Both in Kwania and elsewhere, sub-county chiefs often connived at enforced school attendance.[7] In the context of chiefly control of education, two aspects of this continuing association between chiefs and catechists were important.

---

1. Fisher to Millar, 18.6.13, copy in Fisher Papers, CMS Archives; Hannington, Baraza Instructions, 6.4.16, and Driberg, Baraza Instructions, 28.3.17, ADA LDMP/40/15; Standing Orders, 1920, entered into every current Tour Book.

2. The Savage as He really is, title of book by Driberg (London,1929).

3. Wright to CMS HQ, 21.11.19, copy in Fisher Papers, CMS Archives. Interviews: Isaya Ogwangguji, Isaya Ajoba, Peter Enin.

4. Driberg, entry for 14.3.16, in Kwania T.B.(1913-19), and entry for 15.4.18, in Koli T.B.(1913-19, part 1).

5. Willis to Jackson, 21.5.17, UNA SMP/4844, cited in Felice Carter, 'Education in Uganda, 1894-1945', unpublished PhD thesis, London University, 1967, pp.86-7.

6. Interviews: Yakobo Obia, Pilipo Oruro, Matayo Ojok.

7. Interviews : Enoci Ekak, Isaka Ojaba, Ibrahim Lodo, Barikia Opie, Ezekeri Olwa, Yokana Engola, Yeromia Otim.

The first aspect was the use of the chief's household as an educational centre. This practice was started by Daudi Odora, who derived it from Bunyoro. In the interlacustrine kingdoms, great chiefs habitually maintained large households to which youths were sent for training, either with a view to obtaining a position in the chief's gift, or simply as a means of being educated in etiquette and the ways of the world.[1] Odora himself was entertained many times at the court of the Omukama of Bunyoro, who had incorporated Christian teaching into the regime of his household. Partly from delusions of grandeur - Odora is said to have aspired to be 'Kabaka' of Lango[2] - and partly because of its value as a lever of patronage, Odora built up a household on these lines within a few years of his move to Aduku in 1911. He maintained in his compound a large number of 'boys', known as ogaragara, from the Lunyoro word for a chief's attendants, abagaragara. The boys received food and clothing in return for performing the many domestic chores needed to maintain Odora in the dignity which he felt befitted a great chief. Some of the boys were close kinsmen of Odora himself; a few came from afar; the majority appear to have come from villages in Aduku sub-county. It is not clear what proportion of the ogaragara attended any form of instruction. But a significant number were catechumens who picked up the rudiments of literacy from the Acholi and Banyoro teachers in Aduku, and it was these ogaragara who after two or three years' service could look forward to posts as askaris, clerks and village chiefs.[3]

---

1. Lucy Mair, Primitive Government (Harmondsworth,1962),pp. 190-6; John Beattie, The Nyoro State (Oxford,1971),pp.124-8, 134-5.

2. Interviews: Peter Enin, Reuben Ogwal. Huddle,op.cit.p.186.

3. Interviews: Peter Enin, Elia Adupa, Reuben Ogwal. Enin estimates that at one stage Odora maintained around 60 ogaragara.

On a less grandiose scale, Odora's household was emulated by other county chiefs in western Lango during the 1920's. Arum of Ibuje was quick to follow his example, in this as in so many other matters. He recruited 'boys' for service at his headquarters from all over Maruzi county during his official safaris, and as early as 1926 two of them had secured chiefly appointments.[1] A comparable household was maintained by Olong Adilo, chief of Kole county.[2] Whether or not the catechist was actually a member of the chief's household hardly mattered when so many of his pupils were recruited by the chief and were lodged in his compound.

However, the amount of education which catechists could provide in Lango was limited. Catechumens were expected to be able to write their own names, and some of them certainly took advantage of the better qualified catechists to acquire reading skill as well. But for all higher schooling, the only openings lay outside the District. This limitation provided the county chiefs with their second means of control over educational reqruitment. Prospective pupils had to enrol at the C.M.S. High Schools at Masindi, Ngora, or - the usual choice - Gulu. Only a tiny number of people could consider such a possibility, and their number was mainly limited to the sons and protégés of county chiefs. This was partly because of the schools' declared preference for chiefs' sons. Gulu High School was founded in 1913 by the District Commissioner and the senior local missionary with chiefs' sons in mind, and when the School's catchment area was extended to Lango in 1914, it was the chiefs who were canvassed. The

---

1. Anderea Ojuka was parish chief of Tarogali and Jemusi Bura sub-county chief of Ibuje. Interviews: Anderea Ogwang, Yakobo Gaci, Yakobo Oluma, Elia Olet.

2. Interview: Paulo Oyet.

élitist composition of the schools was also promoted by the relatively high fees, and perhaps too by the daunting prospect of residence among foreigners.[1] County chiefs, on the other hand, could easily afford to pay school fees several times over, while sponsored official visits to neighbouring districts[2] overcame any doubts they may have entertained about the safety of their sons among the Acholi or Banyoro. The first Lango to attend Gulu High School was Daudi Odora's adopted son, Elia Adupa, who was there from 1914 to 1916.[3] Odora sent several other close kinsmen to school in Gulu and Masindi, as well as at least six former <u>ogaragara</u> who were not related to him.[4] His example was followed by chiefs Ogwangguji, Owiny Akulo and Olong Adilo, each of whom had several sons or close kinsmen at Gulu High School between 1915 and 1925.[5] At that time it was rare for anyone not connected with a county chief to attend school outside Lango.[6]

Once having spent several years at school outside Lango, the protégés of county chiefs soon entered government service, and tended to be quickly promoted to sub-county level. A few served an apprenticeship as clerks[7] or interpreters,[8] but most

---

1. For Gulu High School, see T.Watson,'A History of Church Missionary Society High Schools in Uganda, 1900-24,' unpublished PhD thesis, University of East Africa,1968,pp.456-64.

2. See for example: Jervoise, Report on Eastern Province for April 1919, UNA SMP/1929H.

3. Watson,op.cit.p.461. Interview: Elia Adupa.

4. Interviews: Elia Adupa, Peter Eniŋ.

5. Interviews: Misaki Oki, Elia Olet, Mohammed Okec, Nasan Engola.

6. Exceptions were: Pilipo Oruro (parish chief's son), Reuben Ogwal and Zedekia Angulo (sub-county chief's son). Interviews: Pilipo Oruro, Reuben Ogwal, Misaki Oki.

7. Elia Adupa and Enoci Igwel (a protégé of Owiny Akulo's) were examples of this.

8. Elia Olet, cousin of Ogwangguji, was an example of this.

began their careers as village and parish chiefs in their patrons' home areas. In this way a county chief could build up a pool of young men who could be put forward to fill sub-county vacancies anywhere in the county. By 1928 at least five High School graduates had become sub-county chiefs, and three of these were no more than thirty years old.[1] Among European officials there was some prejudice against 'mission boys'; the "jumped up clerk"[2] seldom won the personal respect which officials showed towards some of the older untrained chiefs, but from an administrative point of view the advantages of appointing an educated man were compelling.

The success of the county chiefs in having their own nominees accepted was paralleled by their ability to get objectional chiefs dismissed. This was an important weapon, since on the one hand a personal nominee might take a more independent stand once in office, while on the other hand the county chief might wish to remove a man who had been appointed against his wishes in the first place. Here again, government policy became more accommodating with the years. It was not originally intended that county chiefs should be able to remove their subordinates at all. When Olong Adilo attempted to do so shortly after his promotion in 1917, he was roundly told that[3]

> "the making and breaking of s/chs is not in his hands and that the present s/chs will certainly not be broken just because he does not like their relations or their faces, and that as County Chief it is his duty to work with the sub/chs appointed by the government."

---

1. The three were: Elia Adupa of Aduku, Kosia Ato of Aber and Misaki Oki of Ngai.

2. Rubie, entry for 22.4.32, in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

3. Driberg, entry for 7.9.17, in Koli T.B.(1913-19).

Blatant attempts by county chiefs to get personal bêtes-noires removed continued to be resisted by officials, but in practice any astute chief could exploit his position as administrative overseer of the county. Unfavourable reports on a sub-county chief, combined with more frequent access to officials, could achieve the desired effect. The most successful exponent of this technique appears to have been Arum of Maruzi. In the space of six years between 1919 and 1925 he had three sub-county chiefs dismissed from Ibuje, the first two being former protégés, and the last apparently a government nominee from outside; in the first instance Arum chose to interpret a temporary suspension as a definite dismissal and harried the sub-county chief out of the county altogether.[1] In a few cases the objectionable chief was transferred to another county rather than dismissed, but from the county chief's point of view, the effect was the same; in 1926 and 1927 the incumbents at Aboke and Dokolo were disposed of in this way.[2]

In addition to dismissals and transfers induced by the county chiefs, many sub-county chiefs were dismissed on the initiative of District Officers for failure in their official duties. The cumulative result of this combination of pressures was a fairly high turn-over of sub-county chiefs. The average duration of a sub-county chief's term of office was in the order of three or four years. The contrast with the county chiefs could hardly have been greater. The majority of the first county chiefs remained in office for a very long time: Odora and Olong

---

1. Cator, entry for 22.5.19, in Maruzi T.B.(1912-19); entries for 6.9.24 and 13.12.25, in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26). Interview: Yakobo Gaci.

2. Iwai of Aboke was transferred to Adwari in 1926, and Ogwal Ajungu of Dokolo to Aduku in 1927.

Adilo for 14 years, Arum for 17, Owiny Akulo for 22, and Ogwangguji for a remarkable 39 years. This staying power can partly be explained by the fact that in each county the ablest man had been chosen, and by and large the first county chiefs were very able men indeed. But the disparity in tenure was also due to the nature of the offices involved. It was the sub-county chief, rather than his superior, who had direct responsibility for imposing government demands on a diffident or resentful peasantry; slackness or partiality were therefore more easily detected in his conduct. And so, whereas it was relatively easy for the county chief to have his subordinate dismissed, it was extremely difficult for a sub-county chief to discredit his superior in the eyes of the government.

As a result of their long survival in office, their privileged access to educational opportunities, and the discretion allowed them by officials, it was possible for the county chiefs to establish themselves as the fount of patronage, from which chiefships were dispensed to cliques of their own placemen . By 1933, out of 36 Lango sub-county chiefs,[1] at least eleven were personal nominees of the county chiefs, while many others were amenable to influence and pressure from above. The patronage of the county chiefs was most marked in four out of the seven counties,[2] - Atura, Kole, Erute and Maruzi. A brief account of the first two may serve to illustrate the analysis so far.

Atura county, to which Owiny Akulo was appointed in 1917, consisted of Acaba, Ngai and Loro, besides Owiny's home area of

---

1. This leaves out of account the 10 Kumam and 2 Bantu sub-counties also included in Lango District.

2. 7, not counting Kyoga county, which was predominantly Bantu, and the 2 Kumam counties of Kalaki and Kaberamaido.

Map 13

Counties and sub-counties, 1933

Key

- - - - - County and District boundaries

Atwa Counties

INOMO Sub-counties

MAP 13

Aber. As the unquestioned leader of the Jo Arak, the traditionally dominant clan on the lower Toci, Owiny's influence in Aber was considerable, and despite the siting of county headquarters some ten miles away at Loro, Owiny kept a close grip on affairs there. For the first nine years, Aber sub-county was ruled by a nominee of Owiny's called Amolli. He was the leader of the Ongweo clan, which had acknowledged the dominance of the Jo Arak since the days of Odongo Aja, and his mother came from the Jo Arak.[1] During Amolli's tenure of office, Owiny sent to Gulu High School two of his own sons, one adopted son, one of Odongo Aja's sons, and a boy from the junior lineage (Jo Ocola) of the Jo Arak. By the time that Owiny had turned against Amolli and secured his dismissal in 1926, four of these young kinsmen already held village or parish chiefships in Aber sub-county.[2] Amolli was completely overshadowed by the eldest of them, Enoci Igwel, who acted as his katikiro (deputy chief).[3] Igwel succeeded Amolli as chief, and when the District Officer dismissed him in 1928, another of the High School 'boys', Kosia Ato, stepped into his shoes, to be followed by yet another, so that from 1926 until 1940 Aber was ruled continuously by Owiny's closest clan associates.[4] In the county at large, Owiny's influence was based partly on existing clan alliances, and partly on the appointment of his own nominees. Until 1935 Loro was ruled by the son of Okulo Cagara, who had been an ally in battle of Odongo Aja.[5] In

---

1. Interview: Leoben Okodi.

2. Atura T.B.(1920-26), passim. Interviews: Leoben Okodi, Misaki Oki, Kosia Ato, Matayo Acut.

3. Peyton, entry for 21.8.21, in Atura T.B.(1920-26).

4. A District Officer remarked of Aber in 1932: "This is Owiny&s own stamping ground, Kosia is a son, Leobeni Okodi (katikiro) is also of the family & so is anyone of any importance". Rubie, entry for 2.9.32, in Atura T.B.(1926-33).

5. Interview: Yosia Omara.

Ngai the original chief served until 1927, when he was succeeded first by one of Owiny Akulo's High School protégés, and then by another.[1] From Owiny's point of view, the position was least satisfactory in Acaba where Apil, leader of a clan traditionally antagonistic to the Jo Arak, was chief from 1918 to 1936. Yet the fact that Apil's son was a school-friend of Owiny's own children at Gulu and was then appointed to a parish chiefship in Aber would suggest that the rift between the two clans had been patched up by the late 1920's.[2]

The neighbouring Kole county, which was created at the same time as Atura, comprised Iceme, Aboke, Ayer and Bala. Olong Adilo of Iceme built up a county dominance comparable to Owiny Akulo's, though he was slower to take advantage of educational openings. In Iceme itself, Olong was for several years frustrated by the government's refusal to dismiss chief Odyek Arima. Odyek was Olong's <u>okeo</u> (sister's son); he had been brought up as an orphan in Olong's own household, and he was Olong's personal choice in 1917, yet almost immediately the two men fell out.[3] The ill-feeling between Odyek Arima and Olong's clan, the Jo Olwa, accumulated until Odyek could no longer arrest debtors for fear of being assaulted; it was at that stage that officials decided in 1927 that Odyek should be removed.[4] His successor, Yokonia Ogwal, though not a member of the Jo Olwa, was nevertheless Olong's nominee. He came from neighbouring Alito, which had just been added to Kole county; his father had been an ally of the Jo Olwa against the Acholi, and the two clans had close

---

1. Misaki Oki (adopted son) from 1927 to 1932; Kosia Ato (son) from 1932 to 1935.

2. Interview: Misaki Oki. Rankin, entry for 28.[illegible].28, in Atura T.B. (1926-33).

3. Driberg, entry for 3.9.17, in Koli T.B. (1913-19, part 2). Interviews: Nasan Engola, Anna Awor, Ezekeri Olwa.

4. Mitchell, entry for 20.6.27, in Koli T.B. (1926-33).

marriage links.[1] By 1930 Olong Adilo's control over Iceme sub-county was completely restored, two of the three parishes and three of the seven villages being in Jo Olwa hands.[2] Outside Iceme, Olong also took time to assert his control. In Aboke, where county headquarters was situated, the dominant clan had been enemies of the Jo Olwa before the government arrived, and for nine years Olong had to tolerate a member of this clan as sub-county chief; not until 1926 was he replaced by the brother of one of Olong's wives.[3] In the next year one of Olong's closest clan associates, Olwa Akoli, who had worked as a police instructor in Lira for several years, was appointed sub-county chief of Ayer. Thus by the time Olong retired because of ill-health in 1931 he had built up a strong position in most of the county. His success was capped by the government's decision to accept his own choice of successor: Olwa Akoli was appointed county chief after only five years as a parish and sub-county chief, and he was succeeded at Ayer by yet another member of the Jo Olwa.[4]

It was in the two most easterly counties that county chiefs had been least successful in building up patronage systems by 1933. In the case of Moroto this can largely be explained by the relatively recent appointment of a Lango chief in this, the last area to be pacified. Not until 1927 was the Muganda county agent replaced by Enoka Acol of Omoro. In 1929 he managed to

---

1. Interview: Yokonia Ogwal.

2. Lists of Iceme headmen, 1926 and 1933, in Koli T.B.(1926-33).

3. Interviews: Mohammed Okec, Tamali Adur Apio, Nasan Engola, Onap Awongo, Jemusi Okot.

4. Interview: Yokana Engola. Entries for 1931, in Koli T.B. (1926-33).

get a clansman appointed to Adwari sub-county,[1] but two years later he failed in a similar attempt in his home area of Omoro, and had to accept instead a complete outsider from western Lango.[2] In Dokolo county, the growth of a patronage network was hindered by a change in the county chiefship in 1923; Owiny Aleka of Dokolo was dismissed and succeeded by Odur Acar of Angai.[3] Like Enoka Acol, he was compelled to accept an outsider as chief of his home area - in this case a Kumam.[4] Part at least of the explanation for this divergent pattern in eastern Lango lies in the limited impact of Christianity there. In Dokolo county especially, the first catechists had been Baganda, and acceptance of their teaching was probably seen as identification with the agents. Such prejudices died hard. According to the 1931 Census, the proportion of baptised Christians in Dokolo county was much lower than elsewhere in Lango - 3.7% of the population, as against 7.5% in Erute and 11% in Atura.[5] Both Owiny Aleka and Odur Acar were pagans, and neither of them patronised the C.M.S. school at Ngora, in Teso District. The fact that the pool of semi-literate and educated men in Dokolo - and up to a point in Moroto too - was so low helps to explain why District Officers tended to appoint outsiders to chiefly positions in eastern Lango.

****

The county chiefs were by far the most important source of political patronage in Lango District during the 1920's and 1930's

---

1. Entry for 27.10.30, in Moroto T.B.(1926-33). Interview: George Apenyo.

2. Rankin, entry for 23.3.31, in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

3. Entries for 7.3.23 and 1.5.23, in Dokolo & Moroto T.B.(1918-26).

4. Enoci Eturu, appointed in 1932. His background is described in Hunt to PCNP, 5.4.34, ADA/NPMP/274E.

5. <u>Census Returns for 1931</u> (Entebbe,1933).

but they did not exercise a monopoly over appointments, - not even in the most homogenous counties like Atura and Kole. Opportunities to manipulate the colonial power structure were shared to a lesser extent by the sub-county chiefs, especially when it came to parish and village posts. By the late 1920's District Officers on tour hardly concerned themselves with chiefly positions below sub-county level; their role was confined to the retrospective approval of dispositions already made by the sub-county chief.[1] In some cases, the sub-county chief took a leaf out of the county chief's book by exploiting missionary education for patronage purposes. During the 1920's hardly any of them could afford to send boys outside the District for schooling,[2] but the link between chapel and boma enabled some of them to control recruitment to the catechists' classes and then to give minor appointments to converts.

Yakobo Adoko, chief of Akokoro sub-county from 1916 until 1930, was the most successful exponent of this approach. Soon after his appointment, he started to maintain a household along the lines of Odora's at Aduku. Until the mid-20's no Christian teaching was given outside the boma, and by that time Adoko had available a group of semi-educated men whom he placed with great skill;[3] by 1931 five out of the seven parish and village positions in Akokoro were in the hands of his protégés.[4] Adoko's

---

1. Thus at Dokolo in 1932 the touring officer, in noting that chief Alele had sacked three subordinates, commented that Alele should be supported in his attempt to take this problem area in hand. Slaughter, entry for 26.10.32 in Dokolo T.B.(1926-33).

2. One of the few who did was Andrea Apil, chief of Acaba from 1918 to 1936; but it may that his son, Zedekia Angulo, was supported at Gulu High School by the county chief, Owiny Akulo. Interview: Misaki Oki.

3. Interviews: Isaya Ajoba, Zakalia Ocam, Zakalia Adoko, Yakobo Adoko.

4. List of Akokoro headmen, 1931, in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33).

position was not, however, built up without antagonising the county chief of Maruzi, Ibrahim Arum. For several years before Arum's death in 1930, the two were at odds.[1] Adoko prevented Arum from installing any of his own nominees in Akokoro, and he was probably already hoping to become county chief. In such a situation, any county chief would have agitated for Adoko's removal, and Arum was no exception.[2] In this instance, however, the government never seriously considered transferring Adoko, partly because of his record as a competent administrator, and partly because of the special problems posed by the poly-ethnic nature of Akokoro's population.[3] Adoko stayed at the helm, and, when Arum died, succeeded him as county chief. The long-standing tension between Arum and Adoko was highly exceptional. Elsewhere, sub-county chiefs who remained in one posting for a long time did so mainly because they were on good terms with their immediate superiors. And even these were few in number: Abyece (1912-26), Loro (1912-35) and Acaba (1918-36) were the only notable cases, apart from Akokoro.[4] The European requirement of high bureaucratic standards, combined with the county chiefs' reluctance to allow alternative sources of patronage to emerge in their own counties, ensured a rapid turn-over in the ranks of the sub-county chiefs.

The opportunity for sub-county chiefs to consolidate their local power bases was further constricted by two changes in

---

1. Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 3) and Maruzi T.B.(1926-33),passim.

2. Undated entry in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 3).

3. Lukyn Williams, entry for 27.4.29 in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33). Besides Langi, Akokoro sub-county included a sizeable Bantu-speaking population.

4. The chiefs concerned were Ogwal Agir, Yosia Omara and Anderea April.

government policy. In the first place, less emphasis was now placed upon hereditary succession. In the early days, personal defects had often been overlooked in order to keep chiefships in the same lineage, but by the mid-20's the tendency was to look elsewhere unless the chief's family included a candidate of outstandingly 'progressive' stamp . At Orum in 1926, for example, the son whom the retiring chief had been grooming for the succession was passed over as "unsuitable" - even though he was a Christian convert - in favour of a man from a different clan.[1] By the early 1930's there were very few cases of unbroken hereditary succession in sub-county chiefdoms[2] - except, that is, for the home areas of county chiefs.

This move away from hereditary succession coincided with the second change in government policy, which tended to bureaucratise still further the position of sub-county chief. During the years 1927-28, something of a purge was carried out in the ranks of the sub-county chiefs, in an effort to increase the efficiency of native administration. In all, a total of 26 changes was made. Some of the new appointments were made in consultation with the county chiefs concerned, as had been standard form hitherto. But in a large number of cases officials pursued a policy of their own: they promoted younger, educated men, even though there might be no vacancy in their home areas, and they began to use the transfer as a reprisal against unsatisfactory chiefs who did not yet merit outright dismissal; five chiefs were even transferred out of their own counties altogether.

---

1. Black, entries for 29.3.26 and 14.8.26 in Moroto T.B.(1918-26).

2. Only two such cases have come to light: Bar, ruled by the Jo Oki me Abura from 1912-31, and Abyece, ruled by the Jo Alipa from 1912-34.

Despite reluctance to move and requests for re-transfer on the part of the chiefs,[1] the experiment was maintained. The result of this change of policy was that the number of sub-county chiefs serving away from their birthplaces increased from seven to fifteen between 1926 and 1927, and it remained at around this level until 1933.[2]

In this respect, the county chiefs presented a striking contrast. They owed their wealth and patronage not only to their long tenure of office, but also to the fact that they administered their home counties - and without fear of transfer. Between 1913 and 1933 the only county chief to rule outside his home area was Daudi Odora, whose circumstances were unique. Paradoxically, District Officers continued to apply their notions of traditional legitimacy to county chiefships for several years after they had abandoned them at sub-county level; and they did so, despite the fact that, of all native functionaries, the county chiefs had least connection with the pre-colonial political system. When Odora retired from Kwania county in 1927, the District Commissioner felt that none of the local sub-county chiefs was suitable for promotion; but, rather than appoint an outsider, he installed a Muganda as county agent instead; the chiefship itself was reserved for a local man.[3] A similar policy was pursued towards Atura county, where by 1930 chief Owiny Akulo was considered to be overdue for retirement. For several years Touring Officers commented on the need for a new broom,[4]

---

1. See, for example: entries for 24.1.32 and 30.5.33 in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33); Rubie, entry for 17.11.32 in Kwania T.B.(1926-33).

2. These figures are abstracted from the Gazette and the County Tour Books. See also Black, Report on Lango District for 1927, UNA EPMP/N/40/27.

3. Ibid.

4. Temple-Perkins, entry for 23.11.30, and Bradley, entry for 23.9.31, in Atura T.B.(1926-33).

but Owiny Akulo stayed in office because his family, who dominated the county, appeared to include nobody of county chief calibre; for a time in 1933 the appointment of a caretaker agent was seriously considered,[1] but at no stage were the claims of outstanding sub-county chiefs elsewhere in the District taken into account.[2] Secure in the knowledge that their own local ties were approved in official quarters, the county chiefs were free to take advantage of the opposite policy which was being pursued towards subordinate chiefships. At a time when chiefly office in Lango was becoming increasingly bureaucratic, the county chiefs'retained intact their personal influence and their freedom from administrative control.

The anomalous position of the county chiefs was the more remarkable because by the 1930's bureaucratisation had spread down to the lowest level of all - the village. There too the chief was tending to be a man who lacked any local ties apart from his office. In most of Uganda during the colonial period, village chiefships were firmly grounded in tradition; there was often territorial continuity, and the chiefship was either hereditary or elective.[3] In Lango the situation was quite different. The last chapter showed how the change in settlement patterns after 1912 quickly caused the official village boundaries to become somewhat arbitrary. No doubt this was one reason why, almost from the start, village chiefs were designated from above. The District Officers who made these appointments

---

1. Philipps to PCNP, 13.11.33, ADA LDMP/unnumbered.

2. A chief who was recognised to merit promotion was Tomasi Ojuka of Lira, "the best Jago in the District". Entries for 8.5.32 and 22.6.33 in Eruti T.B.(1930-33).

3. Audrey Richards (ed), East African Chiefs (London,1960), especially pp.13-14.

at least restricted their choice to men of the village concerned. But once junior appointments were delegated to the senior grades of chief, this limitation ceased to apply, and the village chiefship was caught up in a web of patronage which extended over the whole sub-county, and often into the county as well. Before 1939 it was very rare for chiefly protégés, however well qualified, to be drafted directly into sub-county posts; they nearly all served as parish chiefs, and usually as village chiefs also. In addition to these aspirants to higher office, there were the lesser placemen for whom a junior chiefship was a desirable end in itself. By 1933 the majority of junior (i.e. parish and village) chiefs were probably men whose homes lay outside their petty chiefdoms. The first village heads, appointed during the years 1912-19, had been regarded as natural leaders of their own communities; their successors in the 1930's, by contrast, occupied the bottom rungs of a career ladder.

In this way, recruitment to political office in Lango had become completely divorced from traditional patterns. The breakdown was partially obscured by the fact that the most senior chiefs enjoyed considerable status apart from their colonial roles. No doubt it was reassuring to officials to see a veteran war-leader like Owiny Akulo still at the head of Atura county. To groups such as the Jo Olwa in Kole, the Jo Oyima in Maruzi and the Jo Arak in Atura, the distribution of power probably seemed fair and proper. But outside this charmed circle, the bulk of the population had little cause to identify themselves with the colonial administrative structure, and those who staffed it. Political authority was conferred from above, and the recipients tended increasingly to be men who lacked any territorial or clan links with the area allotted to them. And, just as the

'man-on-the-shamba' saw his chief as an outsider with no status apart from his office, so the chief tended to treat his 'subjects' without any of that restraint which kinship affiliation would have imposed. The few years that he was with them were a time for currying favour with the administration and an opportunity for lining his own pocket. During the inter-war period, this last aspect loomed large in relations between the chief and his people.

****

The most obvious way in which chiefs expressed their acquisitive streak was by using askaris for the arbitrary seizure of livestock. Both county and sub-county chiefs are known to have behaved in this way.[1] Arum ranged over the whole of his county of Maruzi, "making eagle-pounces on his people's property, sometimes with legitimate cause, but more often not", in what appeared to one official to be a "general civil war against the people".[2] However, predatory confiscation of this kind was not so easily concealed from District Officers, and during the 1920's chiefs evolved subtler means of enrichment, by taking advantage of the new cotton economy and their right to labour services.

The amount of personal labour, or <u>arododo</u>, which chiefs of each rank could call upon was carefully defined by regulation, but no abuse came to the attention of touring officers so frequently as extortion of labour above the legal maximum.[3] There

---

1. For example: Lawson, entry for 4.6.22 in Koli & Atura T.B. (1919-26); entry for 11.12.23 in Kwania & Maruzi T.B.(1919-26); Mitchell, entry for 13.4.26 in Kwania T.B.(1926-33).

2. Tomblings, entry for 16.2.21 in Kwania & Maruzi T.B.(1919-26)

3. For example: Driberg, entry for 14.3.16 in Kwania T.B.(1913-19); Tomblings, entry for 10.2.21 in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 2); entry for 27.2.24 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

were cases of chiefs using unpaid labour for long periods in order to build private residences for themselves; in 1920-21 Arum kept 250 men working for three months on a two-storey house at Ibuje.[1] Arododo was also used for the cultivation of subsistence crops, which for a chief who maintained a large household of ogaragara was no mean requirement. But the real significance of private forced labour was the chance it gave chiefs to amass large incomes from cotton cultivation. Direct evidence on this is lacking, but there can be little doubt that in this respect Lango conformed to the pattern in Eastern Province as a whole. Looking at the cotton-growing areas of the Province during the 1920's, Wrigley concludes that[2]

> "a large part, perhaps a major part, of the total crop long continued to be grown by unpaid labour for the profit of the chief."

In Lango these exactions were enforced by heavy punishments, such as fines and beating, either ordered by the chief in lukiko, or carried out without any legal process at all.[3] In the drier, less fertile parts of Lango, like the south-west, labour demands actually endangered subsistence cropping by the ordinary population.[4] The abuse of free labour became so evident to officials that in 1926 they decided to abolish it; from the following year, peasants were to pay a commutation fee, and chiefs of all grades were to receive fixed salaries, financed by the commutation fees

---

1. Tomblings, entry for 16.2.21 in Kwania & Maruzi T.B.(1919-26)

2. C.C.Wrigley, Crops and Wealth in Uganda (Kampala,1959),p.49.

3. Mitchell, entry for 3.5.27 in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33); Rankin, undated entry /1927/ in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

4. "No wimbe this year, owing to drought and demands on labour by Rwot Arum" was the laconic entry at Ibuje for 6.9.24 in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 2). For Akokoro, see Tomblings, entry for 10.2.21, ibid.

and by the proportion of poll-tax which had hitherto been reserved for personal rebates to the chiefs.[1]

This reform reduced the opportunities for exploitation, and it appeaɍs to have been welcomed in the countryside.[2] In practice, however, the chiefs were hardly worse off than before. On the one hand, the abolition of arododo encouraged them to misappropriate public labour (luwalo) instead.[3] And - more important - the Great Depression soon necessitated a partial reversion to free labour.[4] Consequently, at the beginning of the 1930's excessive labour demands and illegal punishments were as prevalent as before.[5] Moreover, a fresh abuse of economic power was now added: some chiefs deprived peasants of a fair price for their cotton; the chief would compel his peasants to sell their crop to a particular Asian trader at a low price, in return for which the trader would buy the chief's own crop at well above market price.[6]

It is easier to establish the main categories of abuse in chiefly administration than to identify the victims. What sort of people had their cattle seized and their time taken up by inordinate labour demands ? One possible answer is that these

---

1. Black, Report on Lango District for 1927, UNA EPMP/N/40/27; Fallers, op.cit.p.150; Wrigley, op.cit.pp.54-55. A similar change was made elsewhere in Eastern Province at this time, except that chiefs still retained some rights to labour service.

2. Mitchell, entry for 9.6.26 in Atura T.B.(1926-33).

3. Entry for 5.5.27 in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33).

4. K.Ingham,'British Administration in Lango District,1907-35', Uganda Jl.19.(1955),p.165.

5. Wrensch, entry for June 1930 in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33); Temple-Perkins, entry for 20.10.30 in Dokolo T.B.(1926-33); Slaughter, entry for 10.10.32 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

6. Oswald, entry for 25.1.32 in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33); Philipps to PCNP,13.12.33, ADA NPMP/unnumbered.

impositions were handed out quite indiscriminately. With the growth of arbitrary appointments and transfers in the late 20's, this probably became an increasingly widespread pattern. Yet as late as 1933 there were still many chiefs of all grades who continued to rule their home areas, and prior to 1927 their number was even larger. In these cases, the chief's treatment of his 'subjects' was guided by loyalty to his own clan and antagonism towards its traditional rivals. And throughout the inter-war period, there was one other potential check on the impartiality of a chief: the presence of his superior's kin, whether clansmen or affines; this was a particularly serious matter if the county chief's own family was represented.[1] In both the allocation of labour duties[2] and in his court judgements,[3] a chief could easily succumb to pressure from his own or his superior's kin. An interesting light is cast on the prevalence of this abuse by an opinion expressed at Omoro in 1931. A vacancy had just occurred in the sub-county; the county chief, Enoka Acol, suggested one of his own clansmen, but the peasants were opposed to the idea, one of them saying that they wished to have an outsider from no closer than Bar, over 20 miles away.[4] For some Langi at least, impartiality was preferable to local ties in a chief. How prevalent this attitude was - or the abuses from which it stemmed - it is impossible to say.

Lack of specific evidence confronts any assessment of the prevalence of these abuses. That they were all practised at one

1. Philipps to PCNP, 11.12.33, ADA NPMP/274E.

2. This aspect is unusually well documented for Akokoro: entries passim in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 2). See also: Philipps, Notes on abuses worth watching, 18.2.34, ADA NPMP/274E.

3. Philipps to PCNP, 11.12.33, ADA NPMP/274E.

4. Rankin, entry for 23.3.31 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

time or another is not in doubt, and in a handful of sub-counties autocratic rule is well documented.[1] But elsewhere lack of evidence cannot be construed as lack of abuses. Certainly the silence of verbal testimony is by no means conclusive; misuse of power by government chiefs of only a generation or so ago is far too delicate a matter to be discussed freely by Lango elders today.[2] As for contemporary evidence in government records, the difficulty here is that a great deal of maladministration never reached the ears of District officials. In some measure, this can be attributed to less thorough supervision of chiefs from the 1920's onwards, already mentioned. But a much more important factor was the deliberate obstruction on the part of the chiefs themselves. When in 1933-34 a searching enquiry was at last conducted into native administration in Lango, it revealed that communication between officials and the ordinary population was being impeded on two fronts: the first judicial, and the second administrative.

In theory, miscarriage of justice was guarded against by the right of appeal: from the court of first instance to the county court, and thence to the Native District Court in Lira, presided over by the District Commissioner. In practice, the chiefs could, if they wished, frustrate this procedure completely. Since they controlled the courts of first instance, they could subject plaintiffs to inordinate delays before even allowing a preliminary hearing.[3] And since they were responsible for initiating the

---

1. Akokoro and Ibuje are the best examples, as frequent reference to Maruzi county in the foregoing foot-notes indicates.

2. For a fuller discussion of this point, see Introduction.

3. One of the few documented instances before 1933 of refusal to hear cases in lukiko was at Adwari in 1927. Rankin, undated entry in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

appeal procedure, they could also prevent cases going any further. This kind of obstruction was naturally more frequent in cases where the chief himself was an interested party.[1] It was thus well nigh impossible for the victims of chiefly maladministration to secure redress through judicial channels.

The breakdown in communication was almost as complete in the administrative sphere. The purpose of regular touring was not only to inspect the work of the chiefs, but also to meet the people. But, whereas in the early years of colonial rule District Officers travelled on foot at a leisurely pace, by the late 1920's they sped from one sub-county head-quarters to the next by motor-car and spoke to few people outside the boma.[2] The touring officer's contact with the ordinary population was limited to the baraza, a formal gathering at the chief's head-quarters where instructions could be given and complaints - in theory - received. It was only too easy for the chief to stop such complaints. Sometimes he omitted to advertise the time of the baraza altogether.[3] More often, he assembled an adequate audience, and relied on the common fear that those who spoke out against him would be victimised later. The administration of Adwari by Okuk Awira, a clansman of the local county chief, presents a striking example. In July 1933 the official who visited Adwari reported, "everything in the Gombolola is in good order and running well, and there is a marked absence of complaints".[4] A mere five months

---

1. Philipps to PCNP, 23.2.34, and 17.11.33, ADA NPMP/274E.

2. Philipps to PCNP, 23.2.34, ADA NPMP/274/6.

3. Entries for 25.8.23 and 25.10.25, in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 2).

4. Greenwood, entry for 7.7.33 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

later, the government's widely announced intention to investigate complaints provoked a quite different response in Adwari: it took the District Officer four days to listen to complaints of theft and summary imprisonment brought against Okuk by over a hundred people.[1] During the early and middle 1920's, officials had encountered cases of local maladministration quite frequently, but by the early 30's the gagging of protest had become more efficient, and it was rare for chiefs to be challenged in baraza.

Apart from judicial appeals and baraza complaints, there was one other index of oppression - unauthorised migration out of the sub-county. This reaction was a much more difficult one for the chiefs to stem, and touring officers commented on it quite frequently. Migration entailed a breach of kinship ties and the surrender of territorial rights; it was the last resort of victimised individuals who found the legitimate channels of redress barred to them; they went with their families either to a neighbouring county, or else outside the District altogether.[2] Some migrants, of course, were fugitives from justice in the normal sense, but there is no doubt that many were refugees from the oppression of particular chiefs. This was amply demonstrated when the dismissal, transfer or promotion of a chief was followed by a reversal of the flow, with natives of the sub-county returning under more equitable conditions, as at Omoro in 1931 and Akokoro in 1933.[3]

---

1. Steil, entry for 1.12.33, ibid.

2. The following are typical: entries for 12.8.20 & 6.9.24 in Kwania & Maruzi T.B.(1919-26); Lawson, entry for 12.11.21 in Maruzi T.B.(1919-26, part 2); Bradley, entry for 9.11.29 in Atura T.B.(1926-33); Temple-Perkins, entry for 25.10.30 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).

3. Slaughter, entry for 10.8.31 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33), and entry for 31.5.33 in Maruzi T.B.(1926-33). Interviews: Anderea Okadde, Elia Olet.

Emigration provides one of the few clear indications of peasant attitudes towards authority. Together with the enthusiastic popular reaction to the government's reforms after 1933, it suggests that most chiefs were unpopular, and that sub-county chiefs, who bore the brunt of enforcing rules and regulations, were especially so. This unpopularity was so widespread that some chiefs regarded it as an occupational hazard of their job. Yakobo Adoko, for example, admits that he was hated in those days, but says simply, "Government employment makes enemies" (tic okelo amone).[1]

This reaction against the chiefs was a fairly common phenomenon in East Africa between the wars. It reflected the fact that, under colonial rule, formal political leadership had departed radically from pre-colonial norms, - so radically that the powers of chiefship, whether abused or fairly enforced, were often viewed from below as intolerable. It is usually at this stage that recent historians, their eyes trained on the later growth of mass political action, begin to identify competition from other types of leadership: sometimes 'progressive', in that educated elements began to assert themselves; sometimes 'traditional', in that ancient forms of leadership were adapted to new purposes.[2] In Lango, however, there was no hint of these developments until the Second World War; least of all was there an educated or 'progressive' leadership waiting in the wings.[3]

---

1. Interview: Yakobo Adoko. Tic in Lango means simply 'work' of any kind, but with reference to the early colonial period it is widely used to mean employment with the government.

2. For a stimulating commentary on this issue, see J.M.Lonsdale, 'Some Origins of Nationalism in East Africa', Jl.African History 9 (1968),pp.119-46.

3. The first sign of a 'progressive' challenge was the emergence of the Young Lango Association in 1944. Even after the War, however, 'new-style' politicians were for the most part closely connected with existing networks of chiefly patronage: Milton Obote, for example, was nephew of chief Yakobo Adoko.

As we have seen, education itself was manipulated by the chiefs. Recruitment to schools outside Lango was done in such a way as to ensure that the pupils would enter the local administration as dependents of the senior chiefs. Not even the catechists working in the District posed a threat, since most of them were not Langi. As for the new sources of economic power, these too were effectively controlled by the chiefs. The system of free labour enabled them to derive large incomes from cotton, while preventing anyone else from doing so, with the result that no class of wealthy cash-crop farmers emerged. Cotton buying and the retail trade were at this time almost exclusively in the hands of the Asians, who were not above making special arrangements with chiefs in order to protect their own position.[1] One other potential catalyst of political change was likewise without significance in Lango; this was the returned migrant labourer. For most of the inter-war period, Uganda was divided for purposes of economic policy between materially productive areas and labour-providing areas. In West Nile, for example, the development of a cash crop economy was held back in order to release migrant labour for work in Buganda.[2] Lango, on the other hand, had been seen from the beginning as a cotton-growing zone.[3] Some Langi did travel south for employment, but they were never a significant proportion of migrant labour in Uganda as a whole, nor were they numerous enough to exercise influence when they returned home.[4]

1. Philipps to PCNP, 13.12.33, ADA NPMP/unnumbered.

2. For the development of Protectorate labour policy, see P.G. Powesland, Economic Policy and Labour (Kampala,1957).

3. See above, pp. 181, 267-8.

4. A more obtrusive element might have been the soldiers demobilised at the end of the First World War, but the policy of compelling them to disperse to their villages and former occupations appears to have been effective. Driberg, Notes on Lango Baraza of 31.7.18, ADA LDMP/40/15.

Educational and economic attainment were alike unable to provide the basis of an alternative political leadership between the wars.

The role of traditional forms of leadership is rather less straightforward. There is no doubt that outside the official hierarchy such forms of leadership survived, and in some cases they flourished even when the local chief tried to encroach on their preserve. At Ngai the sub-county chief was unsuccessful in laying claim to the traditional office of won arum, or 'master of the hunt,' despite his close ties with the county chief of Atura.[1] More important was the continued vigour of ritual leadership. The Baganda agents had tried to stamp out some of the local ceremonies, especially those which called for attendance by many people from different neighbourhoods; in so doing, they had administered the coup de grace to the regional ewor ceremonies.[2] But other public rituals survived, above all the rain-making ceremonies which, under the direction of Lingo of Aduku, were if anything more important than before. It was during the 1920's that this celebrated rain-maker consolidated his position; he trained young men of his own clan in the lore of rain-making, and then posted them to other parts of the District; Lingo's role as initiator of both the rain-dance (myelo kot) and the final burial rite (apuny) was also being increasingly accepted all over Lango.[3] Yet outside the sphere

---

1. T.T.S.Hayley, The Anatomy of Lango Religion and Groups (Cambridge,1947), p.149. The account of the Lango informant whom Hayley quotes does not give the chief's name, but the event evidently refers to either 1927 or 1932; in both years a newly-appointed kinsman of the county chief arrived in Ngai.

2. Interviews: Anderea Okadde, Omara Ekak, Erieza Olwol. Hayley, op.cit.pp.71,80. For the role of ewor during the 19th century, see above, pp. 110-1.

3. Hayley, op.cit.pp.63,75. Interview: Tomasi Ojuka. For Lingo's pre-colonial position, see above, pp. 154-5.

of ritual, Lingo himself never competed with official authority; indeed for many years he served as a parish chief.[1] Right up to his death in 1936, he appears to have made no effort to turn his immense prestige to political advantage.

In the last resort, it was not the ritual authorities who would have wished to supplant the government chief, so much as the families of those clan leaders who had received no place in the official hierarchy. The last chapter showed how the creation of such a hierarchy entailed, even at the lowest level, a process of selection which was often quite arbitrary. The historical record is inevitably more illuminating about the jockeying for position inside the official hierarchy, than about the manoeuvres of groups outside. We are dealing here with one of those obscure and elusive undercurrents of early colonial rule, where reliance must be placed more on reasoned inference than on solid evidence. Doubtless those leaders who were unplaced hardly cared at first, regarding their existing roles as more valuable than any that the government could offer. But as appreciation of the power and privileges conferred by appointment spread, unrecognised clan leaders became resentful of their low status in official eyes. Of course, the first clans to be singled out for chiefly appointments did not, in most cases, achieve a monopoly, and many other clans were subsequently brought into the ranks of the native administration. But as late as 1933 there were still important clans who had received little or no taste of office.

One such clan was the Jo Ogora of Ibuje. In terms of length of settlement and numerical strength, this clan had as good a claim to dominate the sub-county as the Jo Ocukuru did; indeed,

---

1. He was <u>won magoro</u> of Ikwera until 1928. Kwania T.B.(1926-33).

it is said that the leader of the Jo Ogora remonstrated with the government that he had a better right to be sub-county chief than Arum of the Jo Ocukuru, because his clan had settled in Ibuje first.[1] Once in power, Arum did his best to exclude the rival clan from all chiefships, even in their own locality of Tarogali. From 1915 until 1933 no Ogora man received an official position, except for a brief interlude in the early 20's.[2] The clan as a whole showed little interest in Christian teaching, despite the fact that Ibuje had well above the average number of catechists, and its leaders appear to have devoted more attention to the upkeep of rain-making and other ceremonies in the neighbourhood.[3] The Jo Ogora plainly had more cause for complaint than most in Ibuje, yet there is no indication that the clan's leaders spoke up against the rule of Arum and his family. 'Out-groups' like the Jo Ogora were potentially a focus for popular agitation against the existing political order. Yet in most of Lango no effort was apparently made by the leaders of these neglected clans to articulate grass-roots protest.

Part of the explanation for this silence lies in the high concentration of power in the chiefs' hands: if any attempt was made by local clan leaders to challenge chiefly authority, it was stifled before it reached the ears of the District Officers. But there was another reason. By the 1930's grass-roots political leadership was itself in a state of flux. For some time

---

1. Interview: Okelo Abak.

2. Interviews: Yusto Oweno, Okelo Abak. As late as 1936, an official on tour noted that the Jo Ogora held no chiefships in Ibuje. Entry for 26.6.36 in Maruzi T.B.(1934-54).

3. Interview: Okelo Abak. In July 1969, the present writer participated in a rain-making ceremony in Tarogali which was presided over exclusively by elders of the Jo Ogora.

after the assertion of colonial control, the principal position of indigenous authority had continued to be clan leadership, exercised either in conjunction with a government chiefship, or – more commonly – quite separately. However, the practical importance of clan leadership was diminishing, not just because some of its traditional functions were obsolete, but also because the clan itself was becoming less relevant to ground-level politics. The crucial determinant here was the changing pattern of local settlement. The last chapter showed how the establishment of colonial law and order was quickly followed by the dissolution of the traditional village, with its high concentration of homesteads and its heavy preponderance of a single clan. This left, as the basic unit of territorial organisation, the wang tic, or 'neighbourhood' – the largest group within which labour resources were regularly pooled.[1] At the same time, greater security of life and limb weakened the individual's dependence on his local clan section and enabled him to seek land elsewhere.[2] This acted as a further check on the preponderance of a single descent group in any given area. Descent groups of every kind were counting for less and less in the setting of the wang tic. It was for this reason that clan leadership, while retaining great prestige, declined as an effective political force. In due course it was to be superseded by new positions, based explicitly on neighbourhood, but during the 1930's these positions were only just beginning to appear.[3] Around 1930 it would seem that there was

---

1. See above, p. 85.

2. For a short case-history of this pattern of settlement, see R.T.Curley,'Persistence and Change in Lango Ceremonialism', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1969, pp.51-53..

3. The key position was that of adwong wang tic or 'neighbourhood leader'. For a preliminary account, see Curley,op.cit.pp. 37-38.

something of a vacuum in grass-roots political leadership. As a result, the official chiefs had little cause to fear a challenge to their power from below.

In only one sub-county was there a clear case of well-organised and effective popular protest: this was Omoro, in Moroto county. Chief Danieri Awio, who came from neighbouring Amugo, was already noted as unpopular with the peasantry soon after his appointment in 1927.[1] In 1930 the baraza was filled with complaints that Awio was misappropriating cattle and imprisoning without trial.[2] A year later Awio was dismissed, and in response to popular demand, the District Officer appointed as his successor a stranger from western Lango, rather than the relative whom the county chief had proposed.[3] Before 1934 there appears to have been no other instance of serious pressure being brought to bear on chiefs in the localities they ruled. For the most part, neither traditional interest groups nor progressive 'modernisers' were in a position to bring about political change, even in a small way. And when significant change did occur, it was imposed from above, rather than demanded from below.

For a long time, officials showed no wish to change the rules of the game which their predecessors had laid down before 1919. They were aware that maladministration occurred, but the limited scale on which it actually came to light encouraged in them the belief that it was only individuals who were at fault, not the system itself. At the same time, their underlying expectations of the chiefs did change. At the end of the First World War, chiefs were still seen as 'of the people', natural leaders

---

1. Rankin, entry for 23.9.27 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).
2. Moss, entry for 15.3.30, ibid.
3. Rankin, entry for 23.3.31, ibid.

who, as Driberg put it, did not "stand coldly aloof in the isolating attitude of the parvenu".[1] By the late 1920's, on the other hand, the growing complexity of administration had led to a contrary emphasis on impartial and distant authority. To take a trivial but revealing aspect, frequent participation in communal dancing, which Driberg had seen as laudable in a 'democratic' chief,[2] was now disapproved of as a distraction from paper-work.[3] This change of attitude on the part of the government had, it is true, occasioned the one major reform of the period 1919-33 - the introduction of chiefs' salaries in 1927. It had even prompted harsh words about the calibre of younger chiefs: Captain Black reported from the District in 1927 that[4]

> "the newcomers ... are very inclined to let the welfare of their people suffer while they seek personal gain and to give a superficial impression of efficiency which is not founded in fact."

But officials continued to accept this 'superficial impression'. Not even the frequent cases of emigration from misrule prompted them to look below the surface of orderly tax-returns and compliance in baraza. As a result, popular feeling was more and more alienated from all grades of native administration.

---

1. J.H.Driberg, 'The Lango District, Uganda Protectorate', Geographical Jl. 58 (1921),p.129. His comments refer to 1918, the last time when he had served in Lango.

2. Ibid.

3. Bradley, entry for 15.9.31 in Atura T.B.(1926-33).

4. Black, Report on Lango District for 1927, UNA EPMP/N/40/27.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE SYSTEM SCRUTINISED

Towards the end of 1933, in the space of just over four weeks, the Provincial Commissioner of the Northern Province[1] received from his subordinate in charge of Lango District no less than five letters on the subject of native administration.[2] Every one of them was highly critical. The District Commissioner had begun a personal enquiry into the conduct of the chiefs by encouraging the peasants to address their grievances directly to him, without reference to the local courts. By the middle of December he had uncovered enough scandal in south-eastern Lango to confirm his own worst fears and to appal his superiors. The abuses inherent in the chiefs' control of appeal procedure and in the system of personal forced labour were exposed, together with intimidation reminiscent of the "methods of medieval Inquisition".[3] The offenders were tried by a Native District Court specially set up at Kaberamaido. The District Commissioner chose to interpret his findings in a dramatic light. He went so far as to raise the spectre of rebellion - all that was lacking, he suggested, was a "pagan Mahdi" to fan the flames.[4] And he

---

1. In 1932 Lango District was transferred from Eastern Province to Northern Province.

2. The 5 letters from J.E.T.Philipps to B.Ashton Warner are dated: 13.11.33,17.11.33,27.11.33,11.12.33 & 13.12.33, ADA NPMP/274E. The Northern Province Archives (now combined with the Acholi District Archives in the DC's office at Gulu) are confused and incomplete, but they have the only accessible record of the Philipps/Ashton Warner correspondence. All trace of the letters in the Lango District Archives has vanished. Copies may survive in the Uganda National Archives, but they are not yet open to inspection.
The Philipps episode was first covered in a brief account by Professor Ingham: K.Ingham,'British Administration in Lango District,1907-35',Uganda Jl.19(1955),pp.166-68.

3. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 11.12.33.

4. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 27.11.33.

also spelt out the implications for Britain's standing as an enlightened colonial power: "My attitude", he declared in his last letter,[1]

> "is consistent, straightforward and quite simple. So long as our representatives at Geneva give to the world firm & formal assurances of the total abolition throughout our 'colonies' of any form of unpaid forced labour, so long one can only see to it that their position should not be falsified behind their back and any form of such labour should be uncompromisingly and honestly eradicated, thus allowing for no shadow of reproach ... "

The author of these extraordinary letters was Captain J. E. T. Philipps. For all the impression he conveyed of being a youthful firebrand, Philipps was in fact an experienced administrator, with a record of service in the Sudan, as well as Uganda. He had nevertheless made a habit of exposing abuses. As early as 1922, he had warned a London audience of the opportunity which heavy-handed government offerred to "pan-African agitators".[2] He had on several occasions pushed through major changes in native administration - among the Azande of the Southern Sudan,[3] in Teso District, where he had first become aware of malpractices over the border in Lango,[4] and twice in Kigezi.[5] For his investigations in Teso in 1927, Philipps had been commended at the highest level.[6] However, with the years

---

1. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 13.12.33.

2. J.E.T.Philipps,'The Tide of Colour', Jl. African Society 21 (1922),pp.129-35,309-15.

3. J.E.T.Philipps,'Development of Indirect Administration in the Southern Sudan, Bahr-El-Ghazal Province' (1925), MS in Balfour Library, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

4. Ingham, op.cit.p.166.

5. Donald Denoon,'Agents of Colonial Rule, Kigezi 1908-30', University of East Africa Social Science Conference Proceedings, January 1968 (mimeo).

6. Sir William Gowers to Sec. of State, 28.2.28, PRO CO/536/148.

he became increasingly carried away by his self-appointed role as scourge of the wicked - and these included, in his view, not just unscrupulous African underlings, but also negligent and stupid Europeans. The language of his official correspondence grew more intemperate and provocative (as well as less grammatical). His campaign in Lango District created a greater stir than any of his previous efforts. It was also to be his last.

Ashton Warner, the official to whom Philipps's outbursts were addressed, was cast in a more conventional mould.[1] As Provincial Commissioner for the next five years, he was an important steadying influence on administration in Lango, which was disrupted by frequent changes of European personnel,[2] as well as by the prevailing "state of apprehension".[3] He shared the typical District Officer's pride in imperial achievement and respect for established practice. He also disliked Philipps intensely. But he saw that decisive action was needed, in which case Philipps must submit orderly reports instead of formless manifestos. In his reply to Philipps's five letters, Ashton Warner took the gravest view of the situation in Lango: it pointed, he declared, to "a complete breakdown of the Native Court System". But he felt bound to emphasize that, for all their imperfections, the existing courts must be associated with the handling of complaints if the established order was not to be completely discredited. For the same reason, restraint was to be exercised in punishing errant chiefs. In an effort to stem the flow of correspondence, Ashton Warner requested concise reports on every county in Lango.[4]

---

1. Among other things, he presented a trophy to Lira Golf Club.

2. Between August 1933 and October 1935, Lango had three District Commissioners.

3. Ashton Warner to Chief Secretary, 8.8.34, ADA NPMP/274E.

4. Ashton Warner to Philipps, 23.12.33, ADA NPMP/274E.

Philipps wasted no time in replying. He accepted his instructions, but he felt bound to point out the difficulties that stood in the way of using the chiefs' courts; the members of these courts, he said,[1]

> "cannot yet be trusted too long to resist luscious and bovine bribes which affluent defendants, before Court by day, dangle temptingly before them by night."

As requested, Philipps continued his investigations county by county, though with less energy than before. He had begun with the Kumam areas of Kaberamaido and Kalaki. In December 1933 he had investigated Dokolo and Kwania, while an Assistant District Officer covered Moroto county.[2] Philipps now turned to Maruzi and Erute, but although his findings were broadly similar they were based on more superficial enquiries.[3] Atura and Kole appear to have been completely ignored. Then, towards the end of February, he submitted his considered findings, on which reform was to be based.[4]

Philipps began by listing again the several scandals which were disfiguring Britain's good name in Lango District. There were no surprises here. Misappropriation of livestock, torture to extract confessions, the blocking of appeals and the 'packing' of the county with relatives of the county chief, were by now well-aired abuses. He then went on to identify the historical causes for this fall from grace. His fundamental point was that the Langi (and the Kumam) lacked any traditional idea of chiefs,

---

1. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 28.12.33, ADA NPMP/274E.
2. Steil, entries for December 1933 in Moroto T.B.(1926-33).
3. Philipps, untitled memorandum, 13.2.34, ADA LDMP/unnumbered.
4. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 23.2.34 (subtitled 'Report on Conditions in Lango (Kumam), including counties of South Kwania and Dokolo'), ADA NPMP/274E.

or of judicial bodies beyond the informal gathering of village elders. From this, everything else stemmed. The government had imported a Bantu hierarchical system of administration which was, in Philipps's view, "quite alien to the genius, social practice and stage of development of this Nilotic people". In order to staff the new organisation, the government had recruited a Lango Civil Service, whose members it had quite misleadingly termed 'chiefs'. For a time these local officials had been supervised by disinterested Baganda "tutor-mechanics"; but the Baganda had been removed prematurely, and Lango chiefs had then assumed the character of a "clan or caste of officialdom", equipped with "a loaded rifle" in the form of the native courts, and in practice answerable to nobody save themselves. The already wide gulf between rulers and ruled had been worsened by the recent increase in chiefs' salaries, as compensation for the abolition of forced labour, to which tribal custom had anyway never entitled them. Finally, Philipps stressed the lack of contact between European officials and the population at large. He attributed this to the divided loyalties of interpreters and clerks, the Province's reliance on "a top-heavy facade of paper", and the advent of the motor-car, which had induced slap-dash touring.[1]

This analysis shows that, for all his tendency towards verbose exaggeration, Philipps had a shrewd grasp of Lango administrative history. In only two particulars was he at fault. In the first place, he white-washed the Baganda and therefore glossed over the very real dilemma confronting the government in 1911: should they rely on corrupt foreign agents or on untrained local men ? His second mistake lay in supposing that Lango chiefs

1. Ibid.

had attained the solidarity of a confraternity which stood or fell together. In fact, even within a single county, there were office-holders who remained outside the county chief's patronage, while between different patronage networks there was real enmity, as events after 1934 were to show.

Philipps concluded his report with a plan of action. In view of the fact that he had obtained a total of some 200 convictions of chiefs in the Native District Court,[1] he may once have contemplated a draconian purge. But by this time his prescription was more modest in scope. Indeed, it scarcely measured up to the situation. Philipps raised the possibility of dismissing or transferring 75% of all sub-county chiefs, only to discount it. Instead, he merely suggested an exchange between three pairs of county chiefs, as "an immediate and decisive check to the nepotic system".[2] To cope with maladministration at a lower level, he proposed attaching sub-county chiefs to the few remaining Baganda chiefs in the District - two of whom he had himself appointed.[3] The collapse of the Native Court system was to be dealt with by reducing court fees, limiting the powers of the courts, and nominating lay assessors to assist the chief in court. The paper-work carried out by District Officers on tour was to be drastically reduced, as a step towards the "complete rehumanisation" of relations between Europeans and Africans. Philipps ended his report on a characteristic note of self-righteous pessimism:[4]

---

1. Philipps to Ashton Warner, undated, /Jan/Feb 1934/, ADA NPMP/274E.

2. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 23.2.34, ADA NPMP/274E.

3. Daudi Mwanga at Ibuje, and Kezekia Atate at Abyece. Philipps had prescribed the same remedy in Teso District during the 1920's. J.C.D.Lawrance, The Iteso (London,1957),p.35.

4. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 23.2.34, ADA NPMP/274E.

"Both the abuses and their remedy lie very deep. It is, at bottom, a matter of both the secular psychology of this group of African peoples entrusted to our Protection, and British African policy as, in practice, applied to them. Having seen what one has seen, throughout the greater part of Africa and to some extent beneath the surface, one can only beg leave to remain somewhat pessimistic and despondent."

Philipps's superiors agreed that reforming action was required. They not only carried out most of his suggestions; they also made further policy changes of their own. To this extent Philipps was vindicated. But the senior officials probably felt that the implementation of reform and the reassertion of normal controls could not easily be carried out by Philipps himself, since he was associated in the popular mind with an 'anti-chief' stance; a steadier hand was needed. Philipps was anyway more adept at uncovering abuses than at suggesting how they should be checked.[1] Combined with the dislike in which he was held by his colleagues, these considerations were enough to get him removed. Shortly after submitting his special report, he was replaced as District Commissioner. A year later, he was retired from the Colonial Service, under protest. A brilliant man who "did not exactly fit into Colonial administration", ran one official verdict.[2]

The initiative now passed to the Provincial Commissioner, Ashton Warner. At the beginning of March 1934, he held a baraza for the whole of Lango District, at which stress was for the time being laid on the punitive aspect of the government's programme. He told the assembled chiefs:[3]

---

1. This view was expressed by the Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, whose opinion is cited in: Sir Cecil Bottomley to P.E.Mitchell, 29.8.35, PRO CO/536/186.

2. Ibid.

3. Ashton Warner, text of speech to Lango District Baraza, March 1934, ADA NPMP/274E.

> "Your district is at present like a house which is beautifully white-washed outside but is very dirty inside."

The dismissal or demotion of 17 sub-county chiefs was announced: eight were Kumam, seven were Langi and two were Bantu. As for the county chiefs, six were transferred as Philipps had recommended; one was demoted; and Kwania county was split into two, the southern half (Namasale peninsula) forming the new county of Kioga, with a predominantly Bantu population. Ashton Warner told the baraza that in future chiefs would be appointed on merit, and that county chiefs would not normally serve in the county of their birth. He made it plain that the intention was to stop certain big families filling positions with their own members.[1]

Ashton Warner's detailed instructions for the reform of native administration were contained in a long letter which he wrote shortly afterwards to Philipps's successor, R. O. Hunt.[2] A number of regulations were formulated to deal with practical abuses. The seizure of peasants' livestock was to stop; personal labour for chiefs was abolished for good; court fees were to be revised; and appeals to the District Commissioner were to be eased. Ashton Warner shared Philipps's faith in the efficacy of more intensive touring by European officials; he therefore instructed that tours should be slower, and less taken up with the inspection of chiefs' paper-work; officials on tour should also leave the beaten track from time to time, and for this purpose "shooting and fishing by Administrative Officers" were to be encouraged.[3]

More important, however, were the structural reforms designed as a long-term check on oppressive rule. Here, the crucial issue

1. Ibid.
2. Ashton Warner to Hunt, 7.3.34, ADA NPMP/274E.
3. Ibid.

was the recruitment of chiefs. If the chiefs had no hereditary claim to their positions - a point on which Ashton Warner was by this time clear - then "the alternative was to regard them as civil servants and appoint them on merit without regard to territorial considerations".[1] The Provincial Commissioner had already adumbrated this approach at the District baraza; he now filled in the details. The policy against chiefs serving in their home areas was to apply not only to the county chiefs, but also to the sub-county chiefs; wherever possible, they were to serve outside the county of their birth. With this end in view, a number of transfers of sub-county chiefs were to be carried out; six transfers were actually made in 1934, and most of the promotions occasioned by dismissal or retirement were in effect transfers as well. But the most radical reform concerned the lowest office in the official hierarchy: henceforth the village chief was no longer to be regarded as a government chief; he was to be a local and unpaid headman, elected by the villagers to convey their views to the government. This policy, which brought Lango District into line with most of Uganda, was in operation by April 1934.[2] A clear break was thus effected between the village chiefship, which was to be a non-official and 'democratic' position, and the three grades of the government hierarchy, which were to assume a strictly 'bureaucratic' nature.[3]

Ashton Warner capped his programme with two reforms, both of which were designed to involve the layman in public affairs.

---

1. Ibid.
2. Hunt, entry for 19.4.34 in Maruzi T.B.(1934-54).
3. Ashton Warner to Hunt, 7.3.34, ADA NPMP/274E. The words 'democratic' and 'bureaucratic' were not actually used in official correspondence of the time. For a time, Ashton Warner intended to make the parish chiefship an elective position also, but this idea was never put into practice.

The first of these was a Native Council, to advise on matters affecting the welfare of the whole District, and to include other persons besides chiefs. The Council was constituted along these lines during 1935 and began work in 1936. The second reform was one which Philipps too had advocated: on an experimental basis, four 'non-officials' in selected counties were to be appointed to the bench by the District Commissioner, to serve as assessors in the native courts; they were to represent the more "progressive and educated" elements.[1] At the same time, however, Philipps's suggestion regarding Baganda agents was ignored. No agents were appointed, and the two Baganda chiefs whom he had installed were soon removed.[2]

This was the only one of Philipps's proposals which was not actually carried out; and several reforms which he had never even hinted at were vigorously pursued. Taken as a whole, Ashton Warner's programme was remarkably innovatory. It involved the biggest upheaval in Lango administration since the gazetting of the first chiefs in 1912. Philipps himself had been rejected, together with his insinuations against the integrity of British rule; but, so far as practical reform went, he had been outdone by a more senior, and by nature a much more cautious, official.

Nor did the changes of 1934 mark the end of European scrutiny of native administration in Lango. The late 1930's were a time of reform and reappraisal in northern and eastern Uganda generally. In Acholi there was a short-lived attempt in 1937-38 to redraw the administrative map in accordance with traditional clan

---

1. Ibid.

2. Kezekia Atate of Abyece was dismissed in 1935; Daudi Mwanga of Ibuje retired in 1936.

groupings,[1] while in Teso the establishment of representative councils at every level proved to be of lasting importance.[2] Furthermore, for the first time since the days of Frederick Jackson, the impulse towards reform now emanated from the highest level, in the person of Philip Mitchell, Governor of Uganda from 1935 to 1940. Mitchell came to Entebbe from Dar es Salaam, where for ten years he had been closely involved in the adaptation of native authorities in Tanganyika to Indirect Rule. Unlike his predecessors, he took a close interest in the details of native administration, as well as its underlying philosophy.[3] In this atmosphere, officials in Lango were encouraged to keep their reforms under constant review; and District and Provincial reports of the time dealt more fully with the tenor and practice of native administration than ever before.

****

However, it was one thing to place reforms on the rule book, but quite another to see that they were enforced. The first task was to convince the ordinary population that the government meant business in seeking to end abuses which had the sanction of twenty years' practice behind them. There is little doubt that Philipps's original initiative in 1933 met with an enthusiastic popular response. He found himself "literally beseiged by aggrieved persons".[4] For the people of Angai in Dokolo county,

---

1. R.M.Bere,'Land and Chieftainship among the Acholi',Uganda Jl.19(1955),pp.50-51; F.K.Girling,The Acholi of Uganda (London, 1960), pp.196-97.

2. Lawrance, op.cit.p.36; J.C.D.Lawrance,'The Position of Chiefs in Local Government in Uganda',Jl. African Administration 8(1956), p.189.

3. P.E.Mitchell,'Indirect Rule',Uganda Jl.4(1936),pp.101-7; Native Administration: Note by the Governor (Entebbe,1939).

4. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 17.11.33, ADA NPMP/274E.

the opportunity to air their grievances appeared as "water in a thirsty land".[1] At Adwari, the District Officer found over 100 people ready to voice their complaints against the sub-county chief.[2] Having once opened the doors to unimpeded litigation against salaried officials, the government could not easily close them again. Long after Philipps had left Lango, actions continued to be brought against chiefs: 1935 was the peak year, after which the volume of litigation slowly dropped.[3]

These signs of popular enthusiasm strongly suggested that Philipps's indictment of native administration had been justified, but they hardly settled the more difficult question of whether serious misrule by chiefs had actually been eradicated. Here there is little evidence to go on. The only positive indication that conditions had materially improved was the reversal of the trend of migration out of misgoverned sub-counties: by the end of 1935 large numbers of Langi had returned from Bunyoro and Buganda to settle at home once more.[4] This was certainly a most significant development, but it is the only one which can be elicited from contemporary sources. The remaining evidence is negative: the fact that migration out of Lango was never resumed on any scale, and the almost complete absence from the Tour Books of cases of oppressive rule by chiefs.[5] This last piece of

1. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 11.12.33, ADA NPMP/274E.

2. Steil, entry for 1.12.33 in Mototo T.B.(1926-33).

3. Ashton Warner's report in Annual Reports of the Provincial Commissioners, Eastern, Northern and Western Provinces, on Native Administration for 1937 (Entebbe,1938),p.27.

4. Ashton Warner's report in Annual Reports ... for 1935 (Entebbe, 1936),p.17.

5. In the aftermath of Philipps's investigations, some of the older chiefs proved unable to change their methods. Enoka Acol, transferred from Moroto to Kwania county, was an example. Cox, entry for 16.6.34 in Kwania T.B.(1934); Richards to Bell, 22.1.35, ADA LDMP/unnumbered.

evidence must plainly be handled with caution, in view of the failure of touring officers in the 1920's and early 30's to perceive the true state of native administration. All the same, the greater thoroughness of touring after 1933, combined with the more acute awareness of the possible abuses and deceptions, suggests that the absence of reported complaints may be taken more or less at face value. In this respect, the reforms of 1934 were effective.

However, Ashton Warner had aimed at more than a clean-up of day-to-day administration. His measures had also been designed to open up the political system, at the expensesof the family blocs which had hitherto held most power. It was in this sphere that the strongest resistance to reform was encountered. If the ordinary population was now spared the worst excesses of chiefly misrule, the hopes for less restricted recruitment to office and for lay participation in public affairs proved to be largely illusory. When the dust had settled and orderly administration had been résumed, many of the old faces still survived, and some of the patronage networks to which they belonged were hardly less influential than before. In part, this was due to the skill and resilience of experienced chiefs; it was also due to uncertainty and confusion among officials.

Philipps and Ashton Warner had rightly identified the county chiefs as the focus of powerful patronage groups based on kinship. The straight swap between three pairs of chiefs was a neat way of breaking up these groups at one blow. In the event, however, this programme was never fully carried out. Within days of his announcement at the Lango District baraza, Ashton Warner modified the proposed changes: only two pairs of chiefs were to be switched after all; Olwa Akoli of Kole county and Ogwangguji of Erute

county were to remain at their posts.[1] There is no record of what caused the Provincial Commissioner to change his mind over Olwa Akoli; but in the case of Ogwangguji his reason was that he had, as he put it, "received a remarkable demonstration of his popularity with all classes".[2] It is impossible to say whether this demonstration was genuine or not. Ogwangguji was undoubtedly adept at hoodwinking authority; he needed to be, since his county headquarters was situated barely a mile from the District Commissioner's office. But, whether or not it was based on a misapprehension, the decision to leave Ogwangguji _in situ_ ran against Ashton Warner's own policy. According to this policy, county chiefs were not intended to serve in their home counties; Ogwangguji's supposed popularity might show that he was a good chief, but it could hardly justify his indefinite rule over Erute county, where he had been born and where all his government service had been performed. The same consideration applied in the case of chief Owiny Akulo of Atura, whom not even Philipps had suggested should be transferred, and who also survived unscathed.[3] The result of this retreat was that, of the four most cohesive county cliques of the early 1930's, three retained their leaders after 1933. Only Yakobo Adoko of Maruzi was made to abandon his power-base by moving to Moroto county, at the other end of the District; and even he was to find means of sustaining his role as patron. Of the seven Lango county chiefs in 1939, four were ruling in their counties of origin.[4] So much,

---

1. Ashton Warner to DC Lango, 6.3.34, ADA LDMP/unnumbered.

2. Ashton Warner to Chief Secretary, 8.3.34, ADA NPMP/274E.

3. Ashton Warner to DC Lango, 6.3.34, ADA LDMP/unnumbered.

4. Owiny Akulo (Atura), Olwa Akoli (Kole), Ogwangguji (Erute) and Tomasi Ojuka (Dokolo). This last was a marginal case, since Ojuka had not lived in Dokolo county since he was a boy.

then, for the hope that county chiefs would become senior civil servants, without any deep local ties. The government's determination had flagged at exactly the point where increased bureaucratisation would have had most effect.

Ashton Warner's policy towards sub-county chiefdoms was watered down in a similar way, though more gradually. The transfers and promotions of 1934 were not questioned immediately, but by the middle of 1935 the District Commissioner, J.R. Bell, had his doubts, which crystallised round two points. The first of these was sensible enough. One result of the changes of 1934 had been that several Kumam chiefs found themselves among the Langi, and vice versa; in Moroto and Dokolo counties there were four Kumam sub-county chiefs.[1] Bell therefore submitted a number of transfers with a view to separating Kumam and Langi.[2] But his proposals went one stage further, in a direction totally at odds with the policy laid down in 1934. Bell wished to restore a number of chiefs to their home areas. Now it is true that in some cases he was doubtless bowing to the inevitable. This certainly happened at Akokoro: the dominance of the Oyima clan there was so entrenched that the outsider whom Philipps had installed as chief could make no impression - he merely fell in line with the "family caucus" of junior chiefs;[3] Bell therefore replaced him with a brother of Yakobo Adoko, "a popular appointment" as he noted with relief.[4] However, Akokoro was the exception, rather

---

1. At Dokolo, Kwera, Omoro and Adwari. Also, one county chief was transferred from Kumam to Lango in 1934: Yakobo Engwau succeeded Yakobo Adoko in Maruzi.

2. Bell to Ashton Warner, 8.5.35, ADA LDMP/unnumbered.

3. Bell, entry for 9.5.35 in Maruzi T.B.(1934-54).

4. Bell to Ashton Warner, 18.9.35, ADA LDMP/unnumbered. The new chief was Stanley Opeto, father of Milton Obote (Interview: Stanley Opeto).

than the rule. There is no evidence of comparable local pressure in the other two sub-counties to which local men were appointed in 1935.[1] The trend was continued by Bell's successors; in 1938, for example, two local men were appointed to sub-counties in Dokolo county.[2] In addition, a few sub-counties - Aber, Acaba, and Ogur - saw no break in local control from 1933 until the end of the decade. In the ten sub-counties for which we have reliable information,[3] 39% of the chiefs who ruled between 1933 and 1939 were local men.

Like his earlier decision to leave Ogwangguji as county chief of Erute, Ashton Warner justified this change of policy by reference to what he took to be grass-roots opinion in Lango. In this case, the obstacle confronting his original policy was the popular preference for "some form of territorial or clan leadership".[4] Ashton Warner would have been wise to have refrained from acting on evidence of this kind. For, despite the reforms of 1934, there was still no way in which officials could test grass-roots opinion. Any canvassing of views tended to be selective and arbitrary, and this allowed powerful interests to 'prime' opinion in advance. What ordinary people actually felt - if, indeed, they shared a common reaction at all - is impossible to tell.

One of the ways in which the government should have been able to assess grass-roots opinion was through the popularly

---

1. Abyece (Pilipo Oruro) and Akalu (Muca Ogwal).

2. Dokolo (Joseph Okelo) and Angai (Gideon Odwongo).

3. The official Gazette gives the names of chiefs, but for their personal origins and early careers reliance has to be placed principally on oral sources. These 10 areas represent just over a quarter of all Lango sub-counties in 1939.

4. Ashton Warner's report in Annual Reports ... for 1937 (Entebbe,1938),p.32.

elected village chiefs. But this, too, was a reform which barely got off the ground. In areas such as Dokolo, where bitter experience had led people to distrust - and if possible ignore - government institutions, there was no popular interest in elections.[1] More typically, the representative character of the village headship was subverted not by local apathy, but by the intervention of the senior chiefs. One county chief of the period recalls that election meetings were always attended by the county chief and the sub-county chief; and although they did not speak in public, they could easily make their preference known beforehand.[2] Officials were aware of this danger. The District Commissioner reported in 1936 that a 'popular choice', as submitted by the chiefs, was rarely confirmed by the people afterwards.[3] Sometimes District Officers attended dlections and indicated from which clans candidates ought to come forward, in an attempt to limit control by one family caucus.[4] Yet inevitably, the number of elections over which officials could preside was a small proportion of the whole. For the most part, senior chiefs could expect to have their placemen 'elected', provided their interference was not too blatant. The result was that dominance of a sub-county by one family continued to occur.

In Aber, for example, Misaki Oki, who had been chief since 1932, continued to instal his own clansmen in junior positions, despite warnings from above against favouritism.[5] In 1939 the

---

1. Richards, entry for 3.3.35 in Dokolo T.B.(1934-54).

2. Interview: Elia Olet (county chief of Maruzi from 1936 to 1941).

3. DC's report, quoted by Ashton Warner in Annual Reports ... for 1936 (Entebbe,1937),p.32.

4. Entry for 26.6.36 at Ibuje, in Maruzi T.B.(1934-54).

5. Entry for 12.5.36 in Atura T.B.(1934-39).

clan still held three of the four parish chiefships and four of the twelve village headships.[1] This dominance was perhaps predictable in view of the fact that Misaki Oki was the adopted son of chief Owiny Akulo, whose county included Aber. More revealing is the case of Akokoro, in Maruzi county. Yakobo Adoko had been county chief of Maruzi, but after 1934 he was no longer in a position to exert direct pressure on his home sub-county of Akokoro. Nevertheless, his Oyima clan maintained as strong a hold on petty chiefships there as it had at the end of 1933.[2] The success of the Jo Oyima was partly due to their skilful propaganda: in May 1935 a touring officer left Akokoro with the impression that about 90% of the population was descended from Adoko's grandfather,[3] which was a wild exaggeration. Faced with the kind of situation which prevailed in Akokoro and Aber, officials simply passed the buck to the peasantry: people not related to the dominant group were urged to turn up in force when there was an election; and if the democratic will was overruled, it was up to them to report the matter to a District Officer.[4] How far the democratic element in village headships was equally weak elsewhere in Lango is hard to say, in view of the thin coverage of contemporary evidence. But it is clear that Sir Philip Mitchell's prediction - that Lango county chiefs would in due course be chosen from men who had begun as popularly elected headmen - was wide of the mark.[5] Much more than the stroke of

---

1. List of chiefs in Aber, 1939, in Oyam T.B.(1939-53).

2. Lists of chiefs, and entries for Akokoro, in Maruzi T.B. (1934-54).

3. Entry for 9.5.35 in Maruzi T.B.(1934-54).

4. Entry for 12.5.36 in Atura T.B.(1934-39); entry for 15.10.37 in Maruzi T.B.(1934-54).

5. Mitchell to Bottomley, 23.5.36, PRO CO/536/186.

a pen was needed to implement a radical change at the expense of strong vested interests, and at the level most distant from administrative scrutiny.

A similar fate overtook Ashton Warner's other venture into the field of democratic reform - the Lango Native Council, with its prescribed lay representation. This council was not the first central organ of African opinion in Lango District. In 1919 a council of county chiefs had been set up; it was to meet quarterly in order to discuss matters of public concern and to recommend changes in customary law.[1] Five years later, this council had been given an additional role as Native District Court under the District Commissioner's presidency.[2] Both these bodies had been the exclusive preserve of the county chiefs. The proposed constitution of the Lango Native Council could therefore be construed as a threat to their primacy. This was certainly how Ashton Warner had intended it. However, the precise composition of the Council was left to the District Commissioner, and the principle of independent members was soon modified, to the advantage of the county chiefs. Bell decided that the Council should be made up of all ten county chiefs, ten of the sub-county chiefs, and up to ten 'non-officials'; the last two groups were to be nominated by the county chiefs, and of the nine 'non-officials' actually chosen, eight had at one time served as government chiefs.[3]

Bell's superiors were a little perturbed by the scope for control which his provisions gave to the county chiefs. Mitchell observed that, since the Lango Native Council was not a customary

1. Eden, Report on Eastern Province for 1919-20, UNA SMP/7031; Ingham, op.cit.p.164.

2. Ingham, op.cit.p.165.

3. Bell to Ashton Warner, 18.6.35, UNA NPMP/ADM/21/L.

body, its members could reasonably be nominated by officials; but these must be British officials.[1] In practice, all this proviso meant was that the Provincial Commissioner's approval was required before the county chiefs' choice could take effect.[2] When the Lango Native Council was reconstituted in 1938, the non-official element was subdivided into five 'clan heads', or wegi atekere, and six educated people nominated by the District Commissioner.[3] The term wegi atekere was completely misleading. The District Commissioner claimed that they had, "except by rare coincidence, no official status".[4] But, since the 'clan heads' were to be chosen by the county chiefs, he could not ensure that they were outside the web of chiefly patronage: of the five 'clan heads' who attended the Council's next meeting in January 1939, four had previously held office as sub-county chiefs, and two of these had been dismissed by Philipps for gross misrule.[5] Until the end of the Second World War, the county chiefs were strikingly successful in ensuring that grass-roots opinion did not make itself heard at District level.

The topics aired in the Lango Native Council were seldom of great moment.[6] But the Council was nonetheless politically

---

1. Mitchell's remarks were cited in Chief Secretary to Ashton Warner, 23.11.35, UNA NPMP/ADM/21/L.

2. Ashton Warner to DC Lango, 5.11.35, UNA NPMP/ADM/21/L. Responsibility for choosing the sub-county chiefs' representatives was in fact shifted from the county chiefs to the sub-county chiefs themselves.

3. Tucker to Ashton Warner, 25.6.38, and Ashton Warner to Tucker, 13.7.38, UNA NPMP/ADM/21/L.

4. Tucker to Ashton Warner, 25.6.38, UNA NPMP/ADM/21/L.

5. The Council's members are listed in Rogers to Sandford, 27.2.39, UNA NPMP/ADM/21/L. The two who had been dismissed by Philipps were Israel Alele (Dokolo) and Danieri Okuk Awira (Adwari).

6. In January 1939 the Council's resolutions concerned the following: (1) regret at transfer of Kumam areas to Teso District, (2) proposed school in memory of King George V, (3) payment of bridewealth, and (4) the regulation of adultery and fornication (the majority of resolutions). Minutes of Lango Native Council, 6.1.39, UNA NPMP/ADM/21/L.

important in that the 'feel' of Lango opinion was conveyed to European officials mainly through the county chiefs and their henchmen. The prominence of the county chiefs in all deliberations at District level confirmed a trend already apparent before 1934 - their greater access to European administrators. This was evident in the sphere of senior appointments. Before 1934 so few changes of personnel had occurred at county level that no procedure had been devised for selecting new chiefs. After 1934 such vacancies arose more frequently, and they were filled in such a way as to entrench existing interests. For example, when the county chief of Maruzi was transferred in 1936, the District Commissioner consulted the other county chiefs about the vacancy, with the result that Elia Olet, a cousin of Ogwangguji's, was chosen in preference to any of the other 'progressive' sub-county chiefs.[1] As regards sub-county appointments, county chiefs were able to advance the interests of their families as before: Olwa Akoli of Kole had his son made chief of Alito in 1936, while Ogwangguji installed a brother at Apala in 1939.[2] In that year there were at least eleven sub-county chiefs in Lango who were personal protégés of county chiefs. This total represented no fall-off from the pre-1934 figure. The only difference was that placemen were now less likely to find themselves in the same county as their patrons. From the point of view of opening up the Lango political system, the reforms of 1934 therefore had very meagre results. Some of the smaller patronage groups probably went to the wall. But the really powerful ones survived.

---

1. Interview: Elia Olet. Olet's claim was admittedly strengthened by his education at King's School Budo (the only Lango of this time to have been there) and his experience as interpreter in the DC's office.

2. Interviews: Yokana Engola, Isaya Ogwangguji.

They not only retained their hold on local appointments, but became increasingly effective at the District level, where they were able to press their candidates' claim to vacancies anywhere in the District.

It remains to consider two negative implications of this continued prominence of established interests. At the time of the 1934 reforms officials had not speculated on who would benefit from the predicted break-up of the existing patronage networks. But there were two categories which in retrospect might have been expected to gain substantially. The first was dependent on the 'bureaucratic' aspect of the reforms, and the second on the more democratic objective of grass-roots involvement.

Ashton Warner's preference for appointment on merit, without regard to territorial or clan considerations, if carried to its logical conclusion, entailed the promotion of 'new men', dependent on education rather than patronage connections. Before 1934 'rootless' men had gained important positions, but only because they had entered the orbit of senior chiefs. Thus Tomasi Ojuka, who had begun as a camp-follower of the Baganda, became a sub-county chief through Ogwangguji's patronage.[1] From 1934 onwards, it was no longer impossible for a _parvenu_ to gain advancement on his own merits. Erieza Olwol, who had been a Protestant catechist and a clerk, was appointed by Philipps to a Kumam sub-county, and was then transferred to Apala in 1935.[2] Joseph Okelo grew up in Dokolo and received five years of Catholic education, before serving first as a clerk and then as a sub-county chief from 1935.[3] Neither of these men came from clans of any significance

---

1. Interviews: Tomasi Ojuka, Isaya Ogwangguji.
2. Interview: Erieza Olwol.
3. Interview: Joseph Okelo.

and they both later became county chiefs. In part, their careers reflect the increasing scale of missionary activity, which the chiefs could not control so absolutely as before.[1] Yet, even in the late 1930's, such cases were still very much the exception. The fact that educational standards among chiefs were improving did not as a rule indicate a loosening of the patronage nexus.

The second category who might have been expected to profit from the upheaval of 1934 were the 'out-groups' - those clans for whose leaders no place had been found in the official hierarchy. The government had the opportunity of filling some of the vacancies caused by Philipps's investigations with men from these groups. There is no evidence that such a policy was considered, and admittedly by the mid-30's to promote to sub-county level a man who had no experience of government would have been risky. At all events, none of the displaced clan leaders was appointed. Alternatively, 'out-groups' might have entered the system through election to village headships. For all the machinations of the senior chiefs, it is probable that some of them did gain village headships. But to achieve recognition in this way was no guarantee of entry into the system. The village headship lay outside the three-tiered government hierarchy, and admission to this hierarchy continued to be mainly at the discretion of the senior chiefs. It would seem a reasonable surmise, therefore, that the changes in the method of recruitment to chiefships after 1933 did nothing to halt popular alienation from the official political hierarchy. The successful eradication of abuses doubtless tempered the resentment of the 'man-on-the-shamba' towards government chiefs, but he could still not think of them as the natural spokesmen for his own community.

---

1. A big expansion followed on the establishment of a CMS headquarters at Boroboro in 1926 and a Verona Fathers Mission at Ngeta in 1930.

****

It will be plain from the foregoing account that this outcome, which fell so far short of the hopes entertained in 1934, was due in large measure to the manipulative skill of the chiefs themselves. But it also reflected the confusion and vacillation of official policy, particularly when this turned on European perceptions of 'bureaucratic' and 'traditional' authority in an acephalous society. Captain Philipps had been in no doubt about the real status of senior chiefs in Lango: they were no more than "native officials".[1] Sir Philip Mitchell was if anything blunter: chiefs in areas like Lango were "a subordinate black administrative service", comparable to the discredited akidas of German East Africa.[2] What Philipps's indictment boiled down to was that in Lango civil servants had been treated by the government as though they were traditional rulers; and these civil servants, lacking the restraints which an indigenous position of authority would have imposed on them, had not unnaturally used their immense powers for personal enrichment and patronage.

If this analysis was accepted, there were only two possible remedies: either the chiefs should be subjected to the controls appropriate to salaried civil servants, or the whole structure of native administration ought to be reconstituted in the light of the indigenous social organisation. Ashton Warner had begun by settling for the first alternative. When, however, he drew back from a rigorous programme of bureaucratisation by transferring chiefs back to their home areas, he justified himself on the grounds that the Langi appeared to favour "some form of

---

1. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 17.11.33, ADA NPMP/274E.
2. Mitchell to Bottomley, 25.5.36, PRO CO/536/186.

territorial or clan leadership".[1] Whether or not this preference really reflected the popular view, the way in which Ashton Warner acted on it showed considerable confusion in his mind about Lango society. For, if clan leadership was to be the model, then much more was required than the appointment of local men to existing chiefships; the boundaries of pre-colonial clan combinations would have to be reconstructed, and the views of the elders canvassed as to the identity of the most important clan leader.[2] A reform along these lines was actually attempted in Acholi District in 1937, though it was short-lived.[3] In Lango, the recasting of the village chiefship might be interpreted as a step in this direction, but otherwise a restructuring of local administration was never considered. All that happened as a result of Ashton Warner's change of heart was that the bureaucratic element in appointive chiefship was diluted, to the profit of the existing chiefs and their families.

Of course, the difficulties which stood in the way of reorganising native administration from the bottom upwards must not be underestimated. The basis of indigenous political organisation had eluded the very first officials stationed in Lango. By the 1930's their successors had in addition to contend with the distorting effect of an alien type of government, which had overlaid traditional forms for twenty years or more. As the follow-up to the much-discussed Aba Riots of 1929 in Eastern Nigeria showed, patient research was required in order to uncover

---

1. Ashton Warner's report in Annual Reports ... for 1937 (Entebbe,1938),p.32.

2. It is doubtful, in fact, whether such an investigation would have been successful, in view of the declining importance of clan leadership, described in Chapter 7.

3. Bere, op.cit.pp.50-51.

the indigenous political organisation of 'submerged' acephalous peoples.[1] If more than superficial results were to be obtained, anthropologists had to be employed, or administrative officers seconded for full-time research, and the Uganda Government could not afford such luxuries. At the same time, some of the difficulties were of the officials' own making. Whatever the theoretical appeal of a reorganised administration, District Officers were in practice reluctant to dispense with a set of chiefs who, tyrannical and corrupt though they might be, smoothed the path of government. They preferred a system which was fairly standard throughout Uganda to the unpredictable task of devising a new form of native administration for a single District. This conservatism was strongly reinforced by the European officials' own terms of service; frequent leaves and changes of posting encouraged them to content themselves with the efficient conduct of routine administration. This was a common pattern in the Colonial Service.[2] The impetus for reform usually came, not from within the provincial administration, but from agitation below, or from a shift in policy at Secretariat or metropolitan level.

So it was in Lango. Radical change, when it came in the 1950's, was the result of a change of course which affected the whole of Uganda. The essence of the new policy was that control over the chiefs, together with some of their administrative functions, should be transferred to elected District Councils. This was in response to the Colonial Secretary's dispatch of 1947, which declared that democratic local government on the English

---

1. Margery Perham, Native Administration in Nigeria (London, 1937),pp.241-48.

2. Ibid, pp.351-52.

model was now the objective in the African dependencies. In Uganda, an Ordinance of 1949 transferred the power to alter native law from the chiefs to the councils; and by another Ordinance in 1955 the District Council was recognised as constituting the District Administration, with power to appoint and remove chiefs.[1] It is true that by 1947 representative councils had already been introduced in many parts of Uganda, including Lango, where a three-tier system had been set up below District level in 1946,[2] and where the District Council could be traced back to the reforms of 1934; but until the change of policy in London, these bodies showed no sign of evolving beyond an advisory capacity. Only when the councils were charged with executive functions was the power of the chiefs significantly reduced. As a result of the innovations made between 1947 and 1955, native administration in Lango was recast for the first time since 1912, and the rules of the political game were rewritten. Some of the patronage factions which had grown up since 1920 continued to flourish,[3] but they did so in a different atmosphere and by different methods.

It may seem remarkable that, throughout the discussions among administrators about what changes ought to be made in Lango during the 1930's, hardly any reference was made to theories of colonial government. Captain Philipps himself, for all his delight in pronouncing on broader issues of colonial policy, was

---

1. For the development of these new institutions, see F.G.Burke, Local Government and Politics in Uganda (Syracuse,1964),pp.38-72.

2. Lord Hailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories, Part 1 (London,1950),pp.64-65.

3. In the early 1950's, control of the African Local Government in Lira was hotly contested between Isaya Ogwangguji and Yakobo Adoko, each of whom served a term as its executive head (rwot adwong).

not measuring Lango up against the requirements of Indirect Rule, nor was he calling in question the value of that doctrine; he merely observed that the undesirable terms of service which senior chiefs enjoyed in Lango owed their currency to the way in which Indirect Rule was being implemented elsewhere.[1] At the Colonial Office, Philipps's investigations were construed as an attack on Indirect Rule,[2] but in Uganda his activities were frowned upon for more down-to-earth reasons. Until Mitchell's Governorship (1935-40), theory and doctrine had little place in the native administration of Uganda.

During the inter-war period the Langi were not, of course, governed in accordance with the principles of Indirect Rule. In the first place, the powers allowed to them were too restricted in certain areas, notably the financial. Indirect Rule implied a native government with its own treasury, empowered to initiate expenditure on a wide range of public concerns. In Lango, on the other hand, all taxes were paid in to the Protectorate Government; only the most trifling sums were entrusted to African authorities, and these only at sub-county and county levels. In the second place, the administration of Lango could not be said to have been carried out by indigenous authorities, except in the most superficial sense. Initially some identity had been achieved between government chiefs and clan leaders, but the connection soon became tenuous. Besides, continuity of personnel was less significant than continuity of territory and function, and here the official positions were radically different from the clan leadership that had gone before - and different, too, from the

---

1. Philipps to Ashton Warner, 23.2.34, ADA NPMP/274E.

2. Minute by J.E.W.Flood, 8.6.36, PRO CO/536/186.

regional leadership which had perished a generation earlier. Clan leaders invested with government office found themselves ruling villages over which they had no vestige of natural authority, and exercising powers which were totally alien to their experience.

Indirect Rule rested on the assumption that indigenous institutions could be adapted to the requirements of 'civilised' administration. That these institutions should be authoritarian was not integral to the theory, but during the early colonial period it was deemed essential that they be so in practice. The exponents of Indirect Rule had great difficulty in separating their theory from the highly authoritarian institutions through which it had first seen the light of day in Northern Nigeria; not even Sir Donald Cameron, the most liberal of Lugard's followers (and Mitchell's mentor), suggested that chiefs could be removed from their central administrative role.[1] Indirect Rule, as it was actually practised, ruled out any institutional continuity in highly fragmented, acephalous societies.[2]

So far as Lango was concerned, considerations of general theory did not anyway enter into the original provisions for administration. The institutions of government established between 1912 and 1919 were authoritarian and hierarchical - and thus contrary to Lango traditional forms - because at that time there appeared to be no other way of securing enforcement of administrative demands. Broadly speaking, the system was maintained over

---

1. R.E.Robinson, 'Why "Indirect Rule" has been replaced by "Local Government" in the nomenclature of British Native Administration', Jl. African Administration 2 (1950), pp.13-14.

2. This point comes across forcefully in D.C.Dorward, 'The Development of the British Colonial Administration among the Tiv, 1900-49', African Affairs 68 (1969), pp.316-33.

the next thirty years for the same reason, except that the expansion of government services set if anything a greater premium on the 'Ganda model'. The men who set up these institutions in Lango District were under few illusions about the new departure which they entailed for the Langi themselves. And because they were particularly aware of how little experience the 'chiefs' had of administrative authority, the earliest officials kept them on a tight rein. Their successors were less circumspect. Without being pressurised to conform to Indirect Rule - or indeed any orthodoxy at all - they nevertheless succumbed to the common official tendency to see administrative systems as in some sense hallowed by tradition. As a result of both Protectorate policy and improvisation at District level, powers were accorded to chiefs in Lango which might have been appropriate to traditional rulers, but which were quite unjustified in the case of a recently established civil service. The underlying attitude was that, in Lango as elsewhere, rule by chiefs was part of the natural order - that the British were administering the Langi through their own leaders. This misconception increased the reluctance of officials to tamper with the existing system of administration; had they recognised that chiefs were really civil servants, they would have been more sympathetic to the idea of change.[1]

Strong though this misconception was, it did not monopolise policy. For in practice a fundamental ambivalence informed the official mind: the 'traditional' credentials of the chiefs were cherished, but at the same time bureaucratic standards of administration were increasingly being expected of them. During the 1920's, therefore, changes were made in the terms of service and

---

1. Ingham, op.cit.p.167.

recruitment of chiefs, which were at variance with the supposedly traditional foundation of their office. This contradiction was most evident in the policy of transferring chiefs away from their home areas. The debacle of 1933-34 cast serious doubt on the notion that chiefship was indigenous to Lango, but the new recognition that chiefs were mere civil servants was not consistently reflected in official policy. The enjoyment of local esteem by individual chiefs - whether real or imagined - was looked upon as evidence of a popular preference for rule by men of local standing, and the most powerful patronage groups were allowed to flourish as before. Not until after the Second World War were changes made which materially diminished the power of the chiefs. Only then was the authoritarian nature of the political system in Lango tempered by an element of democratic control.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. UNPUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

1) Official Documents

Public Record Office, London: British archives are most useful for the period up to 1905 when Uganda was the responsibility of the Foreign Office. Military and administrative contacts with the Langi during that period are fully covered in the series FO/403 (Confidential Prints). By contrast, Colonial Office records contain very little which is relevant to the administration of Lango District. The registers of correspondence relating to Uganda (CO/682) were checked, and as a result only a few items in the series CO/536 were consulted. The series CO/879 (Confidential Prints) was also consulted.

Uganda National Archives, Entebbe: the administration of Uganda up to 1906 is covered District by District in the 'A' series. The files on Busoga (A10-11), Bunyoro (A12-13) and Acholi (A16-17) were all useful. After 1906 documents are arranged in Secretariat Minute Papers (SMP). These are not numbered in a straightforward sequence, nor are they properly catalogued. It was therefore impossible to be sure that everything relevant to Lango had been consulted; but in the period up to 1919 (the start of the closed period), my coverage appears to have been comprehensive. After 1919 it was difficult to get clearance for any documents apart from quarterly and annual reports.

The Uganda National Archives also hold what is left of the former Eastern Province Archives (EPMP), which mainly take the form of regular reports. The Northern Province Archives (relevant to Lango from 1932 onwards) are divided between Entebbe and the Acholi District Archives at Gulu (see below); the correspondence at Entebbe relating to the composition of the Lango Native Council in the 1930's was made available to me.

Lango District Archives, Lira: almost no general correspondence before the 1940's survives, though there are a few District Reports from the earlier period, which duplicate those held in the Uganda National Archives. The principal holding is the County Tour Books (for a general description, see Introduction). Up to 1912 touring records were made in a single book, which was lost in Lake Kyoga in that year. Thereafter each county had a separate book. For the counties of Dokolo, Maruzi, Kole, Kwania and Moroto, the series is complete for the period from 1912 to 1939; in the remaining counties there are gaps, which are particularly bad in the case of Erute.

Acholi District Archives, Gulu: a few items concerning the administration of Acholi are relevant to Lango, particularly the Paranga Tour Book for 1925-26, which contains some useful historical information about the Lango enclave of Minakulu, administered from Gulu until 1936. But the most important files are those which formerly were kept in the Northern Province Archives (NPMP); these include the

only accessible record of the Philipps-Ashton Warner correspondence of 1933-34 and the reforms brought in by the Provincial Commissioner in the next two years.

Teso District Archives, Soroti: the best organised archives in Uganda. The Tour Books dealing with the early administration of the Kumam counties of Kakaki and Kaberamaido were transferred from Lira to Soroti, presumably when these areas were ceded to Teso District in 1939. There are also reports dealing with the early administration of some of Moroto County (Omoro and Amugo) which was part of Teso until 1923. Otherwise the Teso District Archives were not relevant.

2) Non-official documents and private papers

A. G. Bagshawe, 'Journal of Lango Expedition, April-August 1901', MS in Makerere University Library. A diary of Delmé-Radcliffe's expedition by the Medical Officer who accompanied it.

Church Missionary Society Archives, Waterloo Road, London. On account of the 50-year rule, letters from missionaries who actually lived in Lango are not available. But some of the letters written from Acholi and Teso were found to be useful. These are in the series G3/A7/O.

Papers of Rev. A. B. Fisher, deposited in the Church Missionary Arbhives. The papers include correspondence relating to the Gulu Mission in 1913-14, as well as letters from Fisher's successors after 1914.

Field-notes of Dr. T. T. S. Hayley, in his possession. These represent the raw material on which Hayley based his book, The Anatomy of Lango Religion and Groups. Hayley was actually resident in Lango from 1936 to 1937. His notes include a long list of clans, as well as the original of Ogwal Ajungu's history (see below).

R. H. Johnstone, 'Past Times in Uganda' (1921), MS in Rhodes House Library, Oxford. Not so much a history as a record of personal reminiscence. Johnstone was a professional soldier; he commanded a detachment of the King's African Rifles in Lango from 1911 to 1912.

J. E. T. Philipps, 'Development of Indirect Administration in the Southern Sudan, Bahr-El-Ghazal Province' (1925), typescript in the Balfour Library of the Pitt-Rivers Museum, Oxford. This provides a record of Philipps's innovations in native administration in Zandeland.

B. PUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

1) Official Publications of the British Government (London)

Parliamentary Papers: the annual reports of the Commissioners (later Governors) of the Uganda Protectorate appeared as Parliamentary Papers up to the report for 1918-19. The series includes Sir Hesketh Bell's 'Report by the Governor on a Tour through the Eastern Province' (1909), Cd. 4524.

Colonial Reports - Annual: from 1919 this was the only form in which the annual reports on Uganda were published. A reading of these reports up to 1939, and of the earlier reports published in the Parliamentary Papers, revealed almost nothing of direct relevance to Lango.

2) Official Publications of the Uganda Government (Entebbe)

Annual Reports of the Provincial Commissioners, Eastern, Northern and Western Provinces, on Native Administration for 1935 (1936). Similar volumes were published for 1936, 1937 and 1938

Census Returns, 1921 (1921)

Census Returns, 1931 (1933)

Native Administration: Note by the Governor /Sir Philip Mitchell/ (1939).

Report on the 1969 Population Census, vol I (1971).

Uganda Protectorate Gazette, published fortnightly from 1908 onwards.

3) Non-official publications (all books were published in London, unless otherwise stated).

Ashe, R. P. Chronicles of Uganda (1894)

Baker, S. W. The Albert N'yanza 2 vols (1866 & 1867)
Ismailia 2 vols (1874)

Casati, G. Ten Years in Equatoria 2 vols (1891)

Church Missionary Society, Extracts from the Annual Letters of the Missionaries for the Year 1907 (1908)

Churchill, W. S. My African Journey (1908)

Cook, A. R. 'The story of a Camping Tour in Equatorial Africa', Mercy & Truth 13 (1909), pp.181-87, 277-85.

Dickinson, F.A. Lake Victoria to Khartoum with rifle and camera (1910)

Fishbourne, C. E. 'Lake Kioga (Ibrahim) Exploration Survey, 1907-8', Geographical Jl. 33 (1909), pp.192-95.

Fisher, R. M. 'Other Sheep', Church Missionary Gleaner 35 (Jan. 1908), p.3.

'The Awakening of a Nile Tribe', Church Missionary Gleaner 41 (June 1914), pp.90-91.

Grant, J. W. A Walk across Africa (1864)

Gray, J. M. (ed) 'The Diaries of Emin Pasha - Extracts II', Uganda Jl. 25 (1961), pp.149-70.

'The Diaries of Emin Pasha - Extracts III', Uganda Jl. 26 (1962), pp.72-96.

'The Diaries of Emin Pasha - Extracts IV', Uganda Jl. 26 (1962), pp.121-39.

'The Diaries of Emin Pasha - Extracts V', Uganda Jl. 27 (1963), pp.1-13.

'The Diaries of Emin Pasha - Extracts VII', Uganda Jl. 28 (1964), pp.75-97.

'The Diaries of Emin Pasha - Extracts VIII', Uganda Jl. 28 (1964), pp.201-16.

Hill, G. B. (ed) Colonel Gordon in Central Africa, 1874-79 (1881)

Junker, W. Travels in Africa during the Years 1882-1886 (1892)

Kirkpatrick, R. T. 'Lake Choga and surrounding country', Geographical Jl. 13 (1899), pp.410-12.

Lawrence, T. L. Notes on mission work in Lango, in Church Missionary Outlook 53 (April 1926), p.81.

Linant de Bellefonds, E. 'Voyage de service fait entre le poste militaire de Fatiko et le capitale de M'tesa roi d'Uganda', Bulletin trimestriel de la Société Khédiviale de Géographie du Caire 1 (1876-77), pp.1-104.

Lloyd, A. B. Uganda to Khartoum (1906)

Melland, F. H. and Cholmeley, E. H. Through the Heart of Africa (1912)

Mitchell, P. E. 'Indirect Rule', Uganda Jl. 4 (1936), pp.101-7.

Perham, M. and Bull, M. The Diaries of Lord Lugard, vol II, (1959)

Philipps, J. E. T. 'The Tide of Colour', Jl. African Society 21 (1922), pp.129-35, 309-15.

Piaggia, C. 'Sesto Viaggio di Carlo Piaggia sul Fiume Bianco nel 1876', Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana 14 (1877), pp.380-91.

Schweinfurth, G. and others (ed) Emin Pasha in Central Africa (1888)

Shukry, M. F. (ed) Equatoria under Egyptian Rule (Cairo 1953)

Speke, J. H. Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile (1863)

Sykes, C. A. Service and Sport on the tropical Nile (1903)

Vandeleur, S. Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger (1898)

Wilson, C. T. and Felkin, R. W. Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan, 2 vols (1882)

Wright, H. T. 'Pioneer Work in Mid-Africa', Awake 25 (May 1915), pp.50-51.

C. UNPUBLISHED SECONDARY SOURCES

1) Vernacular Histories (Lango and Luganda)

Engola, Nasan: 'Kop Otimere i Lango Ibut Ober', Lango MS in the author's possession; translated by J. A. Tosh and K. Ochen as 'Olden Times in Northern Lango', typescript copy in the Department of History, Makerere University.
'Rwot Kole Olong Adilo', Lango MS (incomplete) in the author's possession; translated by J. A. Tosh and K. Ochen as 'Olong Adilo, the Rwot of Kole', typescript copy in the Department of History, Makerere University.

Enin, Peter: Lango vernacular history, translated by J. N. Odurkene as 'The Life of Chief Odora Arimo of Lango', typescript in the Department of Religious Studies, Makerere University.

Kagwa, Paulo: 'Kakungulu Omuzira wa Uganda', Luganda MS on microfilm in Makerere University Library (no translation appears to be on public deposit).

Miti, J. K.: Luganda history, translated by G. Rock as 'History of Buganda', typescript copies in the libraries of Makerere University and the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Ogwal, Reuben: unfinished Lango vernacular account, translated by J. A. Otima and W. Okot-Chono as 'History of Lango Clans', mimeo, Department of History, Makerere University.
'Bino a muni kede mwa i Lango', Lango MS in Makerere University Library; the translated version, 'The coming of the Europeans and the Baganda to Lango', is incomplete and unreliable.

Ogwal Ajungu: untitled historical account in Lango, in the possession of Dr. T. T. S. Hayley; Ogwal, who was a county chief at the time, dictated his account to a literate aide, specifically for Hayley's use, in 1936 or 1937.

Okelo, Lazaro: 'Kit Kop a Kwarowa Acon', Lango MS in the author's possession; translated by J. A. Tosh and K. Ochen as 'Concerning our Ancestors', typescript copy in the Department of History, Makerere University.

Oweno, Yusto: untitled Lango MS in the author's possession; translated by J. A. Tosh and K. Ochen as 'The Life of Daudi Odora', typescript copy in the Department of History, Makerere University.

2) University theses, seminar papers, etc.

Carter, F. 'Education in Uganda, 1894-1945', PhD thesis, London University, 1967.

Curley, R. T. 'Persistence and Change in Lango Ceremonialism', PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1969 (microfilm copy in Library of School of Oriental and African Studies).

Denoon, D. J. 'Agents of Colonial Rule, Kigezi 1908-30', University of East Africa, Social Science Conference Proceedings, January 1968 (mimeo).

Dorward, D. C. 'A Political and Social History of the Tiv People of Northern Nigeria, 1900-1939', PhD thesis, London University, 1971.

Lamphear, J. E. 'The Traditional History of the Jie of Uganda', PhD thesis, London University, 1972.

Muriuki, G. 'A History of the Kikuyu to 1904', PhD thesis, London University, 1970.

Odurkene, J. N. 'The Langi-Banyoro Relationship, and the Career of Chief Daudi Odora, 1850-1931', undergraduate research essay, Department of Religious Studies, Makerere University (1968).

Okot, J. p'Bitek, 'Oral Literature and its Social Background among the Acholi and Lango', B.Litt thesis, Oxford University, 1963.

Otima, J. A. 'Atek of Oumolao Clan and its Leaders in Kwera and Aputi in the 19th century', undergraduate research essay, Department of History, Makerere University (1970).

Pirouet, M. M. L. 'The Expansion of the Church of Uganda (N.A.C.) from Buganda into Northern and Western Uganda between 1891 and 1914', PhD thesis, University of East Africa, 1968.

Southall, A. W. 'Padhola: Comparative Social Structure', East African Institute of Social Research Conference Proceedings, January 1957 (mimeo).

Twaddle, M. J. 'Politics in Bukedi, 1900-1939', PhD thesis, London University, 1967.

Watson, T. 'A History of Church Missionary Society High Schools in Uganda, 1900-1924', PhD thesis, University of East Africa, 1968.

Webster, J. B. 'The Iteso during the Asonya', research paper, Department of History, Makerere University, 1969 (mimeo).

D. PUBLISHED SECONDARY SOURCES

1) Books (published in London, unless otherwise stated)

Allan, W. The African Husbandman, (Edinburgh 1965)

Anywar, R. S. Acholi Ki Ker Megi, (Kampala 1954)

Barber, J. Imperial Frontier, (Nairobi 1968)

Beattie, J. Bunyoro: an African Kingdom, (New York 1960)
The Nyoro State, (Oxford 1971)

Burke, F. G. Local Government and Politics in Uganda, (Syracuse 1964)

Butt, A. The Nilotes of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Uganda, (1952

Cohen, D. W. The Historical Tradition of Busoga, (Oxford 1972)

Collins, R. O. Land Beyond the Rivers: The Southern Sudan, 1898-1918, (New Haven 1971)

Crazzolara, J. P. The Lwoo, 3 parts (Verona 1950, 1951 & 1954)

Driberg, J. H. The Lango, (1923)
The Savage as he really is, (1929)
At Home with the Savage (1932)
Engato the Lion Cub (1933)

Dyson-Hudson, N. Karimojong Politics (Oxford 1966)

Edmonds, C. R. Diseases of Animals in South Africa (1922)

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. The Nuer (Oxford 1940)

Fallers, L. A. Bantu Bureaucracy (Cambridge 1956)
(ed) The King's Men (1964)

Fisher, R. M. Twilight Tales of the Black Baganda (1911)

Fortes, M. and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. African Political Systems (1940)

Gann, L. H. and Duignan, P. (ed) Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960 vol I, (Cambridge 1969)

Girling, F. K. The Acholi of Uganda (1960)

Goldthorpe, J. E. Outlines of East African Society (Kampala 1958)

Gray, R. History of the Southern Sudan, 1839-89, (1961)
and Birmingham, D. (ed) Pre-Colonial African Trade (1970)

Gulliver, P. and P. H. The Central Nilo-Hamites (1953)

Gulliver, P. H. The Family Herds (1955)

Hailey, Lord, Native Administration in the British African Territories, part 1 (1950)

Harlow, V. and Chilver, E. M. (ed) History of East Africa, vol II, (Oxford 1965)

Hayley, T. T. S. The Anatomy of Lango Religion and Groups, (Cambridge 1947)

Kuczynski, R. R. Colonial Population (Oxford 1937)

Langdale-Brown, I., Osmaston, H. and Wilson, J. The Vegetation of Uganda, (Entebbe 1962)

Lawrance, J. C. D. The Iteso (1957)

Low, D. A. and Pratt, R. C. Buganda and British Overrule, 1900-55 (1960)

Mair, L. Primitive Government (Harmondsworth 1962)

McMaster, D. N. A Subsistence Crop Geography of Uganda (Bude 1962)

Nalder, L. F. (ed) Tribal Survey of Mongalla Province (Oxford 1937)

Nyakatura, J. W. Abakama ba Bunyoro-Kitara (St. Justin (Canada) 1947)

Ogot, B. A. History of the Southern Luo, vol I (Nairobi 1967)

Oliver, R. and Mathew, G. (ed) History of East Africa, vol I, (Oxford 1963)

Perham, M. Native Administration in Nigeria (1937)

Powesland, P. G. Economic Policy and Labour (Kampala 1957)

Richards, A. (ed) East African Chiefs (1960)

Roberts, A. (ed) Tanzania before 1900 (Nairobi 1968)

Southall, A. W. Alur Society (Cambridge 1956)

Tarantino, A. Lango i kare acon (1952)

Thomas, H. B. and Scott, R. Uganda (1935)

Tucker, A. N. and Bryan, M. A. The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa (1956)
Linguistic Analyses: The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa (1966)

Tuden, A. and Plotnicov, L. (ed) Social Stratification in Africa (New York 1970)

Uganda Government Atlas of Uganda (Entebbe 1962)

Vansina, J. Oral Tradition (1965)
Mauny, R. and Thomas, L. V. (ed) The Historian in Tropical Africa (1964)

Wrigley, C. C. Crops and Wealth in Uganda (Kampala 1959)

2) Articles

Barnes, J. A. 'Indigenous Politics and Colonial Administration with special reference to Australia', Comparative Studies in Society and History 2 (1960), pp.133-49.

Bere, R. M. 'Land and Chieftainship among the Acholi', Uganda Jl. 19 (1955), pp.49-56.

Blount, B. and Curley, R. T. 'The Southern Luo Languages: a Glotto-chronological Reconstruction', Jl.African Languages 9 (1970), pp.1-18.

Cox, T. R. F. 'Lango Proverbs', Uganda Jl. 10 (1946),pp.113-23.

Crazzolara, J. P. 'Notes on the Lango-Omiru and on the Labwoor and Nyakwai', Anthropos 55 (1960), pp.174-214.

Dorward, D. C. 'The Development of the British Colonial Administration among the Tiv, 1900-49', African Affairs 68 (1969), pp.316-33.

Driberg, J. H. 'The Lango District, Uganda Protectorate', Geographical Jl. 58 (1921), pp.119-33.
'Anthropology in Colonial Administration', Economica 7 (1927), pp.155-71.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 'Luo Tribes and Clans', Rhodes-Livingstone Jl. 7 (1949), pp.24-40.

Fagan, B. M. and Lofgren, L. 'Archaeological Sites on the Nile-Chobi Confluence', Uganda Jl. 30 (1966), pp.201-6.

Gray, J. M. 'Gordon's Fort at Mruli', Uganda Jl. 19 (1955), pp.62-67.
'The Lango Wars with Egyptian Troops, 1877-78', Uganda Jl. 21 (1957), pp.111-14.
'Kakunguru in Bukedi', Uganda Jl. 27 (1963), pp.31-59.

Grove, E. T. N. 'Customs of the Acholi', Sudan Notes and Records 2 (1919), pp.157-82.

Gulliver, P. H. 'The Age-Set organisation of the Jie tribe', Jl. Royal Anthropological Institute 83 (1953), pp.147-68.
'The Turkana Age Organisation', American Anthropologist 60 (1958), pp.900-22.

Huddle, J. G. 'The Life of Yakobo Adoko of Lango District', Uganda Jl. 21 (1957) pp.184-90.

Ingham, K. 'British administration in Lango District, 1907-35', Uganda Jl. 19 (1955), pp.156-68.

Jacobs, A. H. 'A Chronology of the Pastoral Maasai', Hadith 1 (1968), pp.10-31.

K. W. 'The Kings of Bunyoro-Kitara', 3 parts; part 1, Uganda Jl. 3 (1935), pp.155-60; part 3, Uganda Jl. 5 (1937), pp.53-67.

Lawrance, J. C. D. 'The Position of Chiefs in Local Government in Uganda', Jl. African Administration 8 (1956), pp.186-92.

Lonsdale, J. M. 'Some Origins of Nationalism in East Africa', Jl. African History 9 (1968), pp.119-46.

Mettam, R. W. M. 'A Short History of Rinderpest with Special Reference to Africa', Uganda Jl. 5 (1937), pp.22-26.

Middleton, J. 'Notes on the political organisation of the Madi of Uganda', African Studies 14 (1955), pp.29-36.

Ogot, B. A. 'Some Approaches to African History', Hadith 1 (1968), pp.1-9.

Olyech, E. 'The Anointing of Clan Heads among the Lango', Uganda Jl. 4 (1937), pp.317-18.

Packard, R. M. 'The Significance of Neighbourhoods for the Collection of Oral History in Padhola', Uganda Jl. 34 (1970), pp.147-62.

Read, M. 'Tradition and Prestige among the Ngoni', Africa 9 (1936), pp.453-83.

Robinson, R. E. 'Why "Indirect Rule" has been replaced by "Local Government" in the nomenclature of British Native Administration', Jl. African Administration 2 (1950), pp.12-15.

Rogers, F. H. 'Notes on some Madi rain-stones', Man 27 (1927), pp.81-87.

Southall, A. W. 'Lineage Formation among the Luo', International African Institute Memorandum XXVI (1952).

Tarantino, A. 'Il matrimonio tra i Lango anticamente e al presente', Anthropos 35 (1941), pp.876-97.
'The Origin of the Lango', Uganda Jl. 10 (1946), pp.12-16.
'Lango Clans', Uganda Jl. 13 (1949), pp.109-11.

Tarantino, A. 'Notes on the Lango', Uganda Jl. 13 (1949), pp.145-53.
'Lango Wars', Uganda Jl. 13 (1949), pp.230-35.

Thomas, H. B. 'Capax Imperii - the story of Semei Kakunguru', Uganda Jl. 6 (1939), pp.125-36.

Tucker, A. N. 'Some Problems of Junction in Lango', Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung 6 (1958), pp.142-56.

Wright, A. C. A. 'Notes on the Iteso Social Organisation', Uganda Jl. 9 (1942), pp.57-80.

Wright, M. J. 'The Early Life of Rwot Isaya Ogwangguji, M.B.E.', Uganda Jl. 22 (1958), pp.131-38.
'Lango folk-tales - an analysis', Uganda Jl. 24 (1960), pp.99-113.

Wrigley, C. C. 'The Christian Revolution in Buganda', Comparative Studies in Society and History 2 (1959), pp.33-48.
'Historicism in Africa: Slavery and State Formation', African Affairs 70 (1971), pp.113-24.

ORAL SOURCES

Listed below are the 117 informants whose testimony was drawn upon for the present work. In addition, another 22 informants were interviewed; their names do not appear here, since their testimony was either worthless or irrelevant to the subject of this thesis.

A. LANGO INFORMANTS

The informants are listed alphabetically, in order of Lango personal names. These personal names, and any other Lango names used in apposition (father's name, mother's name, or nick-name), are written in capitals. Christian or Muslim names are written in ordinary type after the Lango names.

Each entry begins with the clan to which the informant belongs, together with his present address (village and sub-county); an estimate of the informant's date of birth gives some indication of his age. Biographical details are then given, particularly those which affect the informant's standing in the community and his qualifications as an informant. Baptism refers to the Native Anglican Church (Church of Uganda), unless otherwise stated. All interview dates refer to 1969.

For the sake of brevity, I use the vernacular terms for the four grades of official chief, and two of them in the form of recognised abbreviations. Thus :

rwot	county chief
jago	sub-county chief
WM (won magoro)	parish chief
WP (won paco)	village chief

ABURA, Amnoni

Clan: Ober me Oyitoleyi. Address: Angwecebange, Dokolo. Born in Dokolo about 1885/90.

Abura had been a farmer all his life until he became infirm. He was baptised late in life. His father, Okol, was leader of the clan, but in fact Abura owes most of his knowledge of the past to his mother, who came from the Jo Okide. Abura was a reasonably good informant on the precolonial history of Dokolo generally.

Interviewed at the home of his clansman, Joseph Okelo (q.v.), 14 and 15 October.

ABURA, Luka

Clan: Oki me Abura. Address: Ayira, Bar. Born in Adekokwok in about 1890.

Abura served as an askari under the Baganda in Bar from about 1912 to 1919, except for a few months' service in the K.A.R. in about 1915. Otherwise he has been a farmer all his life; he is now too old to work and almost blind. He was baptised in about 1926. He was an excellent informant on both the pre-colonial history of Bar and the period of Baganda rule. His main source was Oki, who was the sone of the famous war-leader, Ogwal Abura, and first chief of Bar sub-county.

Interviewed at his home, 17, 18 and 19 September.

ACUT, Matayo

Clan: Arak me Elwia. Address: Ocini, Aber. Born in Aber about 1900, the son of the important clan-leader, Odongo Aja.

Acut attended Gulu High School, 1919-20, and was baptised in about 1925. He served as WP Barcal (now part of Ocini paco) from 1931-40. He then worked at Aber cotton-ginnery for twenty years and is now a farmer. An excellent informant who supplemented the testimony of other senior members of his clan who had been interviewed earlier; his source was Owiny Akulo, his adopted father from 1906 onwards.

Interviewed at his home, 12 September.

ADE, Samwiri

Clan: Acut me Ongoda. Address: Ayeolyec, Akokoro. Born about 1915.

Acut has been a farmer all his life. He would only consent to a short interview, and provided little information. But he appeared to be the only suitable informant from the Jo Acut in Akokoro.

Interviewed at his home, 30 June.

ADOKO, Anderea

Clan: Oyima. Address: Aganga, Ibuje. Born in Apac during the 1880's.

Adoko served in the K.A.R. during the First World War. He was baptised into the Church of Uganda in Bunyoro, where he also worked as a catechist. For a short time during the 1920's he was WP Aganga. Since then he has been a farmer. As a representative of a very minor clan in Ibuje, Adoko provided a useful testimony.

Interviewed at his home, 19 June.

ADOKO, Yakobo

Clan: Oyima. Address: Akokoro. Born in Akokoro in about 1890/93, the son of Akaki, leader of the Jo Oyima. Adoko himself was one of the most influential figures in Lango during the whole colonial period. At the time of the interview, his son, Akena Adoko, was head of the General Service Unit in Kampala, and his nephew was President of Uganda.

From 1916 to 1930, Adoko was jago of Akokoro, in succession to his father. He was baptised in 1918. Towards the end of that period, relations between him and the county chief of Maruzi, Arum, became extremely bad. But on Arum's death in 1930, Adoko succeeded him. As a result of the debacle of 1933-34, he was transferred to Moroto county. he also served in Oyam county, before becoming rwot adwong (paramount chief) of Lango in 1952. He retired in 1956, and now runs a large trading business, with one of his sons. He is widely recognised as leader of the Oyima clan in Lango.

Adoko is passionately interested in history, and in conversations amounting to some 14 hours he provided a great deal of valuable information on ths history of his clan. As regards age organisation and regional leadership, his testimony was also well above the average.

Interviewed at his home on 20, 21, 23, 26, 27 and 30 May.

ADOKO, Zakalia

Clan: Oyima. Address: Ayago, Akokoro. Born in Akokoro about 1902, a half-brother of Yakobo Adoko (q.v.).

After being baptised in 1918, he served as a catechist in Akokoro, and then as an askari. Between about 1923 and 1934 he was successively WP and WM. In 1935 he became jago of Awelo, but was dismissed after two years. Since then he has been a farmer. In a short session he was able to fill out a few details about Akokoro in the early colonial period.

Interviewed at his home, 27 May.

ADUPA, Elia

Clan: Arak me Oyakori. Address: Adongigwok, Amac. Born about 1904, and was soon after adopted by Daudi Odora.

Attended Gulu High School from 1913 to 1916, the first Lango to do so. After serving as a clerk and WM, he was appointed jago of Aduku in 1926. Transferred to Amac in 1928, and to Akalu in 1939, but never promoted to county chief. He is now retired. His memory is confused, and he needed careful prompting. On both occasions Peter Enin (q.v.) was present.

Interviewed at his home, 2 and 12 May.

ADUR OPIO, Tamali

Clan: Jo Akute. Address: Awungu, Iceme. Born in Aboke during the 1880's.

As a young woman, Adur married Olong Adilo, leader of the Jo Olwa of Iceme. During the short interview she was surrounded by kinsmen, including Kezekia Oto (q.v.) and Kassim Ocen, her grandson and my interpreter. She died in October 1969.

Interviewed at her home, 28 August.

AGUM, Yosia

Clan: Oyima. Address: Awila, Akokoro. Born in Apac in the 1890's.

Agum was baptised in about 1927, but he has never held office of any kind; he still farms. He was not a very forthcoming informant.

Interviewed 28 May (jointly with Jorbabel Akora, q.v.).

AGWA, Nekomia

Clan: Atek me Okalodyang. Address: Awila, Akokoro. Born in Aduku around 1900.

He was baptised early in life. For a short time he was WP in Ibuje and then a field assistant with the Department of Agriculture. Since then he has been a farmer. He was an invaluable source on one of the subordinate clans in pre-colonial Akokoro.

Interviewed at the local cotton store, and at his home, 23 and 26 May.

AJOBA, Isaya

Clan: Arak Acol me Ngila. Address: Aduku trading centre. Born in Awelo in about 1899.

He was baptised at Aduku in about 1914, and then for three years worked as a catechist in Ibuje and Akokoro. He was taken to Kampala as a houseboy, and then returned to Lango in the 1920's as a forest ranger. Since about 1934 he has been a farmer. He was very helpful on the early evangelisation of Lango, having previously been interviewed on this subject by Dr. Louise Pirouet.

Interviewed at his home, 14 August.

AJUK, Paulo

Clan: Oyima. Address: Anwangi, Abyece. Born in Amac in about 1879.

Ajuk was never baptised (despite his assumed Christian name), and was a farmer all his life. He is now completely blind and partially deaf. His testimony had little value, except for a striking account of a pre-colonial battle in which he took part.

Interviewed at his home, 12 August.

AKORA, Jorbabel

Clan: Oyima. Address: Awila, Akokoro. Born in Apac about 1885.

He was baptised as a young man, and between the Wars he held a number of posts as WP and WM. Since then he has been a farmer. He proved to be an excellent informant on clan history.

Interviewed at his home, 28 May.

ALELE, Israel

Clan: Okide. Address: Lwala, Agwata. Born in Agwata during the 1890's.

He was baptised in about 1930, after he had been in government service for several years. He was promoted from WM to be jago of Agwata in 1922, and was then transferred to Abako and Dokolo. He was dismissed from this last post by Captain Philipps in 1934. After a period as a cattle trader, he resumed his official career after the War, first as WM, and then as jago. He is now retired and infirm. His testimony was particularly useful for the early colonial period.

Interviewed at his home, 13 October.

ALIRO, Yolam

Clan: Otikokin. Address: Abukamola, Omoro. Born in Omoro about 1904, the nephew of chief Enoka Acol.

He was baptised at Boroboro in 1930, and after the War served as a WP for a short time. Otherwise, he has been a farmer all his life. A useful informant on a wide range of topics.

Interviewed at his home, 11 November.

ALYAI, Yokonani

Clan: Abwor. Address: Awungu, Iceme. Born in Aboke, probably during the 1880's.

He was baptised in about 1933, while he was WP in Iceme. For most of his life he has been a farmer. A very useful informant on pre-colonial history.

Interviewed at his home, 27 August.

AMAN, Matayo

Clan: Oyima. Address: Awila, Akokoro. Born in Apac during the 1880's.

He has never been baptised and has been a farmer all his life. His testimony was a very valuable check on that of Yakobo Adoko (q.v.).

Interviewed at his home, 26 May.

APENYO, George

Clan: Otikokin. Address: Alololo, Omoro. Born in Aloi about 1890.

He was baptised in about 1933. After serving as WP and WM, he was appointed jago of Bata in 1927, and then transferred to Amugo. Since 1938 he has been a farmer. Despite a very discouraging first interview, his testimony proved in the end to be very helpful on the history of his clan and the arrival of the Government.

Interviewed at his home, 10 and 13 November.

APIO ALIT, Saida

Actually a Munyoro, but - as her name indicates - she regards herself now as a Lango. Address: Ngeta, Lira. Born in Bunyoro about 1885.

Daudi Odora met Apio during one of his visits to Bunyoro. She was his wife from about 1903 to 1913. She never received Christian instruction herself, but later in life she became a Muslim. Her memory is not very good, but she was able to give some interesting details about Odora.

Interviewed in Ngeta, 14 May.

APUNYO, Mustio

Clan: Olwa. Address: Okiyere, Otwal. Born in Anyeke during the 1890's, the son of Okaka, leader of the Jo Olwa.

He is a Catholic and has been a farmer all his life. He was not a very articulate or helpful informant, despite his interesting parentage.

Interviewed at his home, 25 August.

ATO, Kosia

Clan: Arak me Elwia. Address: Ocini, Aber. Born in Ocini, probably during the 1890's, the son of chief Owiny Akulo, and brother of Leoben Okodi (q.v.).

After attending Gulu High School, Ato served as WM. Between 1928 and 1939 he was *jago* of Aber, Ngai and Abako. Since then he has been a farmer. He was a very much less useful informant than the other leading members of his clan in Aber.

Interviewed at his home, 22 and 23 July.

AWONGO, Kezeron

Clan: Arak me Opelo. Address: Opejal, Adwari. Born in Adwari about 1901.

He was baptised in about 1927 but has been a farmer all his life. During a long interview he was an excellent informant, especially on the Khartoumers and the Adwari disturbances of 1919.

Interviewed at his nephew's home, 15 November.

AWOR, Anna

Clan: Atek me Anamajeo. Address: Iceme trading centre. Born in Aboke during the 1880's.

As a young woman she married Odyek Arima, a protégé of Olong Adilo and *jago* of Iceme from 1917 to 1927. She now lives in the home of her son, Ezekeri Olwa (q.v.). She provided useful information on her husband's life.

Interviewed at her home, 29 August.

AYENA, Koranima

Clan: Adyegi. Address: Adyegi, Aber. Born in Cegere, probably during the 1890's.

He has been baptised, but apart from a short time as WP in the 1940's he has been a farmer for most of his life.

A very articulate informant, though a little too reluctant to admit ignorance on any matter.
Interviewed at his home, 23 and 24 July.

AYIKA, Matayo

Clan: Omolo Atar. Address: Ami, Ibuje. Born during the 1880's.
He was baptised as a young man, and then served as WP for about twenty years during the 1920's and 1930's. He is now a farmer. He was particularly helpful on pre-colonial fighting techniques.
Interviewed at his home, 1 July.

BUA, Enoci

Clan: Atek me Okide. Address: Angeta, Omoro. Born in Omoro about 1900.
He was baptised in about 1933. After serving as a WP, he was jago of Adwari from 1935 to 1943, since when he has been a farmer. He was a good informant on both pre-colonial history and the early colonial period.
Interviewed at his home, 12 November.

ECUN, Adonia

Clan: Apala. Address: Abunga, Bar. Born in Bar about 1896.
He was baptised in about 1924 and then worked as a catechist until about 1938. Otherwise he has been a farmer all his life. Not a particularly good informant.
Interviewed near his home, 18 September.

EJOK, Festo

Clan: Inomo. Address: Apac trading centre. Born in Apac about 1900.
He was baptised during the 1920's in Kampala, where for twenty years he worked as a houseboy. Before 1921 he had been a servant of Odora at Aduku. He is now a farmer. He provided only a small amount of information.
Interviewed at his home, 28 May.

EKAK, Enoci

Clan: Eling. Address: Adyeda, Aduku. Born in Aduku about 1904.
After being baptised in about 1927, he worked in Kenya and in Teso District as a porter and a railway worker. Since the 1940's he has been a farmer. He provided a little information about the situation in Aduku when Odora arrived there in 1911.
Interviewed at his home, 5 November.

EKIN, Lakana

Clan: Omolo me Odyekonywal. Address: Abunga, Bar. Born in Bar during the later 1890's.
He was baptised in about 1925, but has been a farmer

all his life. He was a helpful source on pre-colonial Bar.
Interviewed at the home of Luka Abura (q.v.), 17 September, and near his own home, 18 September.

EKOC OPIGE

Clan: Palamyek. Address: Adagmon, Dokolo. Born in Abako about 1890, the son of Opige, the clan leader.

Although he has had instruction from both Catholics and Protestants, Ekoc has never been baptised. Between the Wars he served for two periods as a WP, since when he has been a farmer. A particularly good source on the Baganda in Lango.

Interviewed at his home, 14 October.

ENIN, Peter

Clan: Arak me Oyakori. Address: St. Catherine's School, Boroboro. Born at Kungu in about 1910, the son of chief Daudi Odora.

During the 1920's, Enin attended a number of schools in and out of Lango; he had been baptised as an infant. Since 1930 he has had clerical jobs with the local administration, and has served in both the Uganda Police and the K.A.R. In recent years he has been very active in local church affairs. He is passionately interested in his father's life, having written an account of it in Lango (see Bibliography). A very concise and thoughtful informant. He was previously interviewed by Dr. Louise Pirouet and J. N. Odurkene.

Interviewed at his own home, 1 and 14 May, and jointly with Elia Adupa (q.v.), 2 and 12 May.

ENOKE, Suleman

Clan: Okabo. Address: Apoi, Akokoro. Born in Akokoro about 1885.

Baptised in Buganda in about 1925, having already served as WP in Akokoro. Otherwise he has been a farmer all his life. An excellent informant.

Interviewed at his home, 28 May.

ENGOLA, Nasan

Clan: Olwa. Address: Orupu, Iceme. Born in Iceme in about 1909.

Attended Gulu High School, and also Makerere Technical School during the 1920's. Then he worked as a carpenter for the local administration for several years, before occupying a succession of posts as jago from 1949 onwards. In recent years he has been closely involved in one of the new Group Farms in Lango. He is articulate and intelligent, and is the author of two vernacular histories (see Bibliography). He was previously interviewed by J. N. Odurkene.

Interviewed at his home, 29 August.

ENGOLA, Yokana

Clan: Olwa. Address: Tekworo, Alito. Born in Iceme about 1901, the son of chief Olwa Akoli.

After attending Gulu High School, he served as a clerk and a WP during the 1920's, and then as a WM. He was jago of Alito from 1936 to 1944. Until 1965 he was a member of Oyam County Council. He is now a farmer. He was reasonably informative on his father's life.

Interviewed near his home, 29 August.

ENGOLA, Yubu

Clan: Oki me Wonadyang. Address: Omarari, Omoro. Born in Omoro in 1922.

He was baptised in 1936 and attended the local primary school. From 1951 to 1964 he occupied a succession of chiefly posts, but is now a farmer. He was well informed on the whole range of Omoro history, and his testimony was quite exceptionally articulate and well-ordered (see Appendix). Extensive knowledge of oral tradition is unusual in a man so relatively young, but Engola got most of his information from the former leader of the Otikokin clan, Oyanga Apenyo, to whom he was related.

Interviewed at Omoro trading centre, 13 November.

GACI, Yakobo

Clan: Ocukuru. Address: Aketo, Ibuje. Born in Inomo, probably during the late 1880's.

He was baptised in the mid 20's, and then served as a WP until 1948. He is now infirm. He is regarded as the head of all Jo Ocukuru in Ibuje. His testimony on the history of the Ocukuru clan was first-rate.

Interviewed at his home, 24, 25 and 26 June.

IKWE, Suleman

Clan: Okarowok me Omwono. Address: Atura, Aber. Born in Atura about 1910.

He was baptised in Bunyoro in about 1928, and during the 1930's worked intermittently as a headman in roadwork. He was a WP in the 1950's. He is now chairman of the local Cooperative Union. His historical knowledge is not very extensive.

Interviewed at his home, 24 July.

ITOT, Fancio

Clan: Arak me Elwia. Address: Akaka, Aber. Born in Kamdini (Aber) in about 1896, the son (and heir) of the clan leader, Odongo Aja.

After being invested as his father's formal successor in 1906, Itot left Lango altogether in about 1913. He lived in Kampala, Kenya and Tanganyika until about 1935, when he returned to Aber and served as an askari. He was baptised as a Catholic in Mombasa in about 1921. He has never been a chief, and is now a farmer. His testimony was extremely useful for personal details relating to his father.

Interviewed at his home, 25 July.

LODO, Ibrahim

Clan: Otengoro me Amute. Address: Abuli, Abyece. Born in Agwata during the 1880's.
He has had Protestant instruction, but now subscribes to the African Orthodox Church. As a young man he served as WP and WM in Aduku. A good informant, and particularly forthcoming about pre-colonial ewor ceremonies.
Interviewed at his home, 8 August.

OBALA, Misaki

Clan: Atek me Omwara. Address: Ayeolyec, Akokoro. Born in Aduku in about 1900.
He was baptised in Buganda, probably during the 1920's, and has been a farmer all his life. He was not very helpful, but was able to provide a little information on this somewhat obscure clan in Akokoro.
Interviewed at his home, 22 May.

OBIA, Lajaro

Clan: Alaki. Address: Aboko, Aduku. Born in Cawente in about 1900.
He is a member of the African Orthodox Church. Except for a few years as an askari during the 1920's, he has been a farmer all his life. A useful source on pre-colonial Aduku.
Interviewed at his home, 14 August.

OBIA, Yakobo

Clan: Ogora Acol. Address: Ongoceng, Aduku. Born in Aduku in about 1905, the son of the rain-maker, Lingo.
He was baptised in about 1928, and then served as WM in Aduku until 1940. He was a good source on his father's life.
Interviewed at his home, 15 August.

OCAM, Zakalia

Clan: Oyima. Address: Ayeolyec, Akokoro. Born in Akokoro in about 1900.
He was baptised in about 1926, but apart from a few years as a catechist, he has been a farmer for most of his life. Not a very knowledgeable informant.
Interviewed at his home, 21 May.

OCEN, Alessandro

Clan: Inomo. Address: Adagmon, Dokolo. Born in Kwera in about 1885, the brother of chief Ogwal Ajungu.
He took Catholic instruction but was not baptised. He has served as a WP in Dokolo, but has been a farmer the rest of the time; now infirm. He was particularly helpful on the Baganda period in Dokolo.
Interviewed at his home, 15 October.

OCO ABOLLI

Clan: Okide me Obwor. Address: Alwitomac, Dokolo. Born in Dokolo in about 1900.

He has never been baptised and has been a farmer all his life. He was quite a useful source on one of the subordinate clans of Dokolo.

Interviewed at his home, 10 October.

ODONGO OPIO, Yosua

Clan: Bako. Address: Opejal, Adwari. Born in Aloi in about 1890.

He has been baptised, but has never held any position of employment. He is now blind and infirm. He was better than most Adwari informants, and was particularly helpful on the disturbances of 1919.

Interviewed at his home, 29 October.

ODWE, Festo

Clan: Oki me Okarowok. Address: Alango, Adwari. Born in Aloi in about 1901.

He was baptised in about 1931, and since then has done a number of jobs as bricklayer and cleaner. His testimony was not very clear or helpful.

Interviewed at his home, 28 October.

ODWONGO, Gideon

Clan: Palamyek. Address: Agwiciri, Agwata. Born in Angai in about 1905, the son of chief Odur Acar.

After he had been baptised in about 1929, he served as WP and WM. He was *jago* of Angai from 1938 to 1940, and is now a farmer. A reasonable informant.

Interviewed at his home, 18 October.

OGWAL, Reuben

Clan: Arak me Ngila. Address: Boroboro, Adekokwok. Born in Awelo in about 1904.

He was baptised in 1920 and has served the Church of Uganda all his life. He was one of the first Langi to be ordained and is also a Canon. He is at present working full time on the Lango version of the Bible. He is greatly interested in history and all aspects of traditional lore, and is the author of two vernacular accounts (see Bibliography). He was a useful source on Odora and the early history of the church in Lango; he also discussed his more general ideas about early Lango history.

Interviewed at his home, 21 and 23 April; also at the home of Miss Mildred Browne (C.M.S. missionary), 17 November; Dr. John Lamphear participated in this last interview.

OGWAL, Yokonia

Clan: Oki. Address: Alito trading centre. Born in Alito in about 1895, the son of the clan leader, Owani Adilo.

Between 1918 and 1925 he served as an askari and as WP. He was baptised in about 1925, and was then a WM in Alito. From 1927 to 1943 he was jago of Iceme. He is now infirm and nearly blind. He provided useful information on both Alito and Iceme. His brother, Pilipo Okelo, prompted him on some points of detail, but did not affect the substance of the testimony.

Interviewed at his home, 17 November.

OGWANG, Anderea

Clan: Ocukuru. Address: Alenga, Ibuje. Born in Ibuje in about 1890.

After baptism he served as a catechist during the 1920's; he then became an askari in about 1937. From 1945 until 1961 he held a number of posts as WP and WM. He is now a farmer and neighbourhood leader. His testimony was indispensable for the pre-colonial history of Ibuje.

Interviewed at his home, 24, 25, 26 and 27 June.

OGWANG, Bejaleri

Clan: Okiyere. Address: Okiyere, Otwal. Born in Ayer, probably during the 1890's.

He belongs to the African Orthodox Church. Except for service with the K.A.R. in the First World War, he has been a farmer all his life. In a short interview he provided useful information on his own clan, and on the first Arabs and Europeans in northern Lango.

Interviewed at his home, 30 August.

OGWANG ABOR, Zedekia

Clan: Bako me Olang. Address: Angwecebange, Dokolo. Born in Dokolo, probably during the 1890's.

He has never held government office. He appeared to be a very accommodating informant, but he failed to keep an appointment for a second session.

Interviewed at his home, 9 October.

OGWANG ABURA

Clan: Olwa. Address: Awungu, Iceme. Born in Iceme in about 1885.

He has never taken religious instruction and has been a farmer all his life. He was a very useful informant, except that by the second session he had lost interest.

Interviewed at his home, 26 and 27 August.

OGWANGGUJI, Isaya

Clan: Oki. Address: Akia, Adekokwok. Born in Lira during the 1890's, the son of the clan leader, Olet Apar.

While still almost a boy, Ogwangguji was trained by the Baganda and received Christian instruction; he was baptised in 1918. He was jago of Lira from 1915 to 1918, rwot of Erute from 1918 to 1957, and during the 1950's rwot adwong,

or executive head of the African Local Government. During the late colonial period, he was one of the most influential chiefs in Lango, and a bitter rival of Yakobo Adoko (q.v.). Unfortunately his memory is now much impaired, and his testimony had only limited value, although he is an experienced interviewee.
Interviewed at his home, 30 April and 2 May.

OGWEL OKOLLA

Clan: Atek me Bako. Address: Oluro, Orum. Born in Adwari in about 1895.
He has never been baptised. From about 1922 to 1944 he was a WP in Orum. He was a helpful informant, especially on the Adwari disturbances of 1919.
Interviewed at his home, 31 October.

OGWETE, Simon

Clan: Arak me Elwia. Address: Alebtong school, Aloi. Born in Loro in 1933.
He was baptised as an infant. He attended schools in Lango and also Gulu High School. Since the 1950's he has been a teacher; he now teaches at Alebtong primary school. Despite reports that he was very well informed about the life of chief Owiny Akulo, his testimony had little value.
Interviewed at his school, 19 November.

OGWETE, Thomas

Clan: Amwa. Address: Atura, Aber. Born in Anyeke in about 1901.
He was baptised in about 1919, and then worked as an askari for several years. He was then briefly a cotton-buyer, since when he has been a farmer. He was not a good informant, but supplied some material on his own clan and its relations with the dominant Jo Arak in pre-colonial times.
Interviewed at his home, 22 July.

OJABA, Isaka

Clan: Arak me Ngila. Address: Abuli, Abyece. Born in Agwata, probably during the 1880's.
He is a pagan and has never worked for the government, but he has been a neighbourhood leader. His testimony was very useful indeed.
Interviewed at his home, 6 and 7 August.

OJOK, Ciriwano

Clan: Oyima. Address: Ayeolyec, Akokoro. Born in Amac around 1890.
He was baptised in Buganda during the 1930's, and has been a farmer all his life. Cooperative but not very knowledgeable.
Interviewed at his home, 21 May.

OJOK, Matayo

Clan: Atek me Okwalopi. Address: Abuli, Abyece. Born in Abyece around 1890.
He received teaching but was never baptised. He has been a farmer all his life. His own clan has never been a large one in Abyece, but he was a very useful informant.
Interviewed at his home, 6 and 7 August.

OJUKA, Tomasi

Clan: Arakit me Bako. Address: Iguli, Dokolo. Born in Kwera during the 1880's.
Ojuka began as a houseboy and gun-bearer of the Baganda, but in 1911 he was taken up by Ogwangguji (q.v.) at Lira, serving as askari there. Then in 1918 he succeeded Ogwangguji as *jago* of Lira. Between 1934 and 1943 he was *rwot*, first of Kaberamaido and then of Dokolo. He then resigned in order to concentrate on hunting and farming; he is now infirm. Ojuka was a quite outstanding informant; his knowledge was voluminous and clearly presented; he had a remarkable memory for names (see Appendix).
Interviewed at his home, 15 and 16 October (the second session lasted 4 hours).

OKADDE, Anderea

Clan: Atek me Okwerowe. Address: Abukamola, Omoro. Born in Omoro about 1900.
He was baptised as a boy and then worked as a catechist outside Omoro. From about 1937 until 1946 he held junior chiefly positions. Since 1946 he has been almost continuously a member of Lango District Council, and he is now also a Court Assistant. Okadde has obviously taken a deep interest in history over many years. He gave the longest uninterrupted exposition of any informant (45 minutes), and was exceptionally articulate and acute in discussion. He was an indispensable source not only on the history of Omoro, but also on wider aspects of Lango history.
Interviewed at his home, 11 November, and at Omoro trading centre, 13 and 14 November.

OKEC, Mohammed

Clan: Olwa. Address: Awungu, Iceme. Born in Iceme in about 1900, the son of chief Olong Adilo.
He attended Gulu High School as a boy, and was baptised 'Yayiro', but after a quarrel with local members of the church he became a Muslim in the 1930's. After working as a driver for the government, he was a WP from about 1929 to 1942. Since then he has been a farmer. He was a good source on all aspects of Iceme history, including his father's life.
Interviewed at Awungu trading centre, 26 and 27 August.

OKELO, Erieza

Clan: Oyima. Address: Akokoro sub-county headquarters. Born in Akokoro in about 1911.

He was baptised and attended school in Akokoro for two years. In 1940 he was appointed to his first post as chief. He has been jago of Akokoro since 1960. He proved to be surprisingly informative on a small number of topics.
Interviewed at his office, 30 May.

OKELO, Joseph

Clan: Ober me Oitoleyi. Address: Angwecebange. Born in Dokolo in about 1912.
Baptised as a Catholic at Lwala mission in about 1924. He attended mission school in Lwala between 1920 and 1925, and then went to the government school for clerks in Lira. He was a clerk from 1927 to 1934. Since then he has occupied a succession of posts as jago and rwot. He retired in 1965 and is extremely prosperous. His testimony had little value, but he was helpful in arranging an interview with Amnoni Abura (q.v.), whose testimony he then supplemented on a number of points.
Interviewed at his home, 14 and 15 October.

OKELO, Kezekia

Clan: Ober me Pala. Address: Angeta, Omoro. Born in Abako in about 1895.
He was baptised in about 1924 and worked as a catechist until 1932. After 1932 he held two appointments as WP, but has been a farmer for most of his life. A very useful informant.
Interviewed at his home, 12 November.

OKELO, Lazaro

Clan: Olwa. Address: Awio, Iceme. Born in Iceme around 1900.
After baptism he served as a catechist in and around Lira from about 1919 to 1925, and in southern Lango from 1925 to 1930. He then worked for the Veterinary Department for three years. He was a WM from 1934 to 1941, and a jago from 1941 to 1960. He now lives in very prosperous retirement. He is very interested in history and has written a vernacular account (see Bibliography). An extremely useful informant, able to enlarge on his written account in many ways (see Appendix).
Interviewed at his home, 28 August.

OKELO, Sira

Clan: Arak me Oyakori. Address: Aganga, Ibuje. Born in Kungu about 1914.
After baptism he had about two years' schooling in Bunyoro. He then worked for twenty years as a tailor at Masindi Port. He is now a successful farmer, producing bananas for the market. As Daudi Odora's nephew he proved a useful source on the early colonial penetration of south-western Lango.
Interviewed at his home, 1 July.

OKELO ABAK

Clan: Ogora Atar. Address: Tarogali, Ibuje. Born in Ibuje during the 1880's.

He has never been baptised, and apart from two years as an askari has never had government employment. He served in the K.A.R. during the First World War. He is effectively leader of the clan, and also a rain-maker (won kot). A first-rate informant (see Appendix).

Interviewed at his home, 30 June.

OKELO ELWANGE, Benedikto

Clan: Alipa. Address: Awila, Akokoro. Born in Abyece during the 1890's.

After serving as a WP and WM, he was jago of Abyece from 1926 to 1934, and it was at that stage that he was baptised a Catholic. He was dismissed by Captain Philipps, and since then has been a farmer. He moved from Abyece to Akokoro some years ago, in order to inherit a wife. Okelo was rather uncertain about pre-colonial history, but his testimony was very useful for the colonial period.

Interviewed at his home, 15 August.

OKELO OLET

Clan: Atek me Okic. Address: Alango, Adwari. Born in Aloi in about 1903.

He has never been baptised and has been a farmer all his life. Since about 1938 he has been a neighbourhood leader. The standard of his testimony was below average.

Interviewed at his home, 28 October.

OKELO OYANGA, Abiramo

Clan: Atek me Okwerokic. Address: Adagmon, Dokolo. Born in Abako in about 1890.

He received Catholic instruction in Buganda, and has been a farmer all his life. His testimony was particularly helpful on the Baganda period in Dokolo.

Interviewed at his home, 17 October.

OKI, Misaki

Clan: Arak me Elwia. Address: Ocini, Aber. Born in Aber in about 1900, the adopted son of chief Owiny Akulo.

From about 1919 to 1924 he attended Gulu High School; he then served as WP and WM. He was jago of Ngai from 1927 to 1932, and of Aber from 1932 to 1940. He completed his government service with a second spell at Aber from 1950 to 1959. He is now a prosperous farmer, and a very influential neighbourhood leader. He proved a useful informant, though not in the same class as other members of the clan.

Interviewed at his home, 17 and 22 July.

OKODI, Leoben

Clan: Arak me Elwia. Address: Ocini, Aber. Born in Aber in about 1900, the son of Owiny Akulo.
After attending Gulu High School for three years (1920-23), he served as both WP and WM in Ocini from about 1925 to 1948, but he was never promoted. He has been a neighbourhood leader since about 1952, and he is now a farmer. Most of his knowledge of the past was derived from his father; he was a quite outstanding informant, both for detail and range of testimony.
Interviewed at his home, 17, 18 and 25 July (two sessions).

OKORI, Bartolomayo

Clan: Arak me Oyakori. Address: Teboke, Cegere. Born in Cegere in about 1900.
After baptism he served as a catechist for several years before the Second World War. Since then he has been a farmer. A helpful informant on pre-colonial history, especially the early settlement of western Lango.
Interviewed at his home, 21 July.

OKOT, Jemusi

Clan: Oki me Atek. Address: Opeta, Otwal. Born in Ayer, probably during the 1890's.
He was baptised in about 1928, but has been a farmer all his life. He was helpful on only a limited number of topics.
Interviewed at his home, 29 August.

OKWE, Yosia

Clan: Ongweo. Address: Atura, Aber. Born in Atura around 1905.
He was baptised as a young man, but has been a farmer all his life. He was a useful informant on one of the traditionally subordinate clans of Aber.
Interviewed at his home, 22 July.

OLET, Elia

Clan: Oki. Address: Akia, Adekokwok. Born in Lira in about 1909.
Between 1917 and 1925 he attended Gulu High School and King's School Budo (the first Lango to do so). After six years as the D.C.'s interpreter, he was appointed _jago_ of Bala in 1934, but two years later he was promoted to _rwot_ Maruzi. He served as a _rwot_ until 1964, except for two years with the K.A.R. in Burma during the War. Of all informants interviewed, he was one of the least inhibited in discussing the colonial period. He was able to talk in English for much of the interview.
Interviewed at his home, 10 July.

OLIR, Edwardi

Clan: Atek me Olel. Address: Ocini, Aber. Born in Anyeke in about 1895.

From about 1914 until 1928 he was an askari under chief Owiny Akulo, and during that time he was baptised. Otherwise he has always been a farmer. A concise and helpful informant, particularly on Delmé-Radcliffe's expedition in 1901.
Interviewed at his home, 23 July.

OLUGO, Erisa

Clan: Okarowok me Malakwang. Address: Akaka, Aber. Born in Aber around 1905.
After serving for two years as a catechist, he received technical education at Kabarega School, Masindi. He worked as a carpenter during the 1930's, but is now a farmer. From 1948 to 1950 he was a District Councillor. A reasonably useful informant.
Interviewed at his home, 18 July.

OLUGO, Yakobo

Clan: Pukica. Address: Kamdini, Aber. Born in Aber around 1904.
He was baptised as a Catholic in about 1926, but later became a Protestant on account of his wife's religious persuasion. He was a WP from about 1928 to 1937. He is now a farmer and a neighbourhood leader. A very useful informant, both for pre-colonial Aber, and for government punitive expeditions.
Interviewed at his home, 24 July.

OLUMA, Yakobo

Clan: Ocukuru. Address: Camarum, Cegere. Born in Ibuje in about 1909, the son of chief Arum.
He attended Kabarega School, Masindi, for about three years, and then worked as a clerk. From about 1930 to 1939 he served as a WP and WM. Since then he has been a farmer. He provided some useful information about his father's life.
Interviewed at his home, 29 June.

OLWA, Ezekeri

Clan: Atek me Anamajeo by birth, but Olwa by adoption. Address: Iceme trading centre. Born in Iceme in about 1920, the son of chief Odyek Arima.
He attended Gulu High School from 1933 to 1936. Since then he has worked as a Court clerk, and as an assistant in the Veterinary Department. He served in the K.A.R. from 1940 to 1945. In a very short interview he provided a little information about his father, and filled out the account of his mother, Anna Awor (q.v.), who was present.
Interviewed at his home, 29 August.

OLWOL, Erieza

Clan: not recorded. Address: Amac sub-county. Born in Aduku in about 1895.
Between about 1915 and 1918 he attended school in Aduku and in Gulu, and also worked for short periods as a catechist

in several places including Abyece. He taught at Aduku school for two years, and then became a clerk at Loro in 1921. From 1926 to 1933 he was a WM in Loro. From 1933 to 1941 he was a jago, and from 1941 to 1952 a rwot. Since then he has been Chief Judge of Lango and Chairman of the Lango District Appointments Board. He retired in 1963. He was a helpful informant on the early colonial period, especially the evangelisation of Lango.

Interviewed at his home, 30 April.

OMARA, Tito

Clan: Oki. Address: Apiotweotoke, Aloi. Born in Aloi in about 1895.

Between about 1927 and 1952 he worked as a WP and WM, and was only baptised after he had retired from government service. He is now a farmer, with large herds of cattle. A good informant on both pre-colonial history, and on clashes with the Baganda agents.

Interviewed at his home, 19 November.

OMARA, Yosia

Clan: Inomo. Address: Loro trading centre. Born in Loro about 1890, the son of the clan leader, Okulo Cagara.

After his father had been killed by the Baganda in 1911, Omara was made jago of Loro, and continued in this post until 1935. Since then he has been a farmer. He was an early convert to Christianity in this part of Lango; he was baptised in Lira in about 1916. After severe early doubts about my credentials, he proved to be a forthcoming and useful informant, both about his father and about his own early life.

Interviewed at his home, 13 September.

OMARA EKAK

Clan: Eling. Address: Anwangi, Abyece. Born in about 1890 (he has forgotten his exact place of birth).

He has never been baptised and has never had employment. He was met quite by accident, and was not a very responsive informant.

Interviewed near his home, 12 August.

OMWA, Yosia

Clan: Okarowok me Anyeke. Address: Bar-Odilo, Cegere. Born in Akokoro in 1899.

He worked as an askari under Yakobo Adoko (q.v.) from about 1917 to 1920, and during that time he was baptised. Between 1923 and 1934 he held a number of posts as WP and WM, mostly in Akokoro. A very articulate and knowledgeable informant, particularly on his own clan's relations with the dominant Jo Oyima in pre-colonial Akokoro.

Interviewed at his home, 27 June.

OMWA AYO, Pilipo

Clan: Arak me Ococ. Address: Aketo, Ibuje. Born in Inomo during the 1890's.

He has never been baptised and has always been a farmer. He was extremely helpful on the history of a clan which, although less powerful than the dominant Jo Ocukuru, has always been important in Ibuje.

Interviewed at his home, 26 June.

ONAP AWONGO

Clan: Atek me Anamajeo. Address: Awungu, Iceme. Born in Aboke during the 1890's.

He has never been baptised and has always been a farmer. He proved to be a knowledgeable informant on pre-colonial Iceme.

Interviewed at his home, 28 August.

ONGOM, Kezekia

Clan: Bako me Kuni. Address: Oke, Adwari. Born in Aloi in about 1895.

He joined the African Orthodox Church in about 1925, and was acting WP for a short time. Otherwise he has been a farmer all his life. He is now infirm. His testimony was confused and unclear on most points.

Interviewed at sub-county headquarters, 27 October.

ONGONA, Nasaneri

Clan: Alipa. Address: Abuli, Abyece. Born in Cawente in about 1900.

He has never been baptised and has been a farmer all his life. He was reserved in manner and not very informative.

Interviewed at his home, 5 August.

ONYA, Yakobo

Clan: Ocukuru. Address: Opejal, Adwari. Born in Alito in about 1910.

He has been baptised but has never had employment. He is still farming. His testimony provided very little help.

Interviewed near his home, 29 October.

ONYANGA EWOI

Clan: Okarowok me Bako. Address: Omito, Adwari. Born in Adwari during the 1890's.

He has never been baptised, nor has he been employed. He is now infirm. One of the few really adequate informants interviewed in Adwari; he was particularly helpful on pre-colonial relations with non-Langi.

Interviewed at his home, 30 October and 1 November.

OPETO, Stanley

Clan: Oyima. Address: Akokoro trading centre. Born in Akokoro in about 1902; he is the father of Milton Obote.
He was baptised in about 1921. During the early 1930's he was a WM. Then from 1935 to 1940 he was *jago* of Akokoro, since when he has been a reasonably prosperous farmer. His life-style does not appear to have changed as a result of his son's rise to power. Apart from autobiographical details, Opeto provided little help.
Interviewed at his home, 30 May.

OPIE, Barikia

Clan: Arak me Opelo. Address: Awio, Iceme. Born in Aloi during the 1890's.
He served in the K.A R. during the First World War. He was baptised about 1921 but has never held government office. He used to be a neighbourhood leader. A reasonably good informant.
Interviewed at his home, 26 August.

OPIO, Israel

Clan: Okiyere. Address: Otwal centre. Born in Iceme in about 1906.
He was baptised in about 1925. He has worked as a tailor, but has never been employed. His historical knowledge was not very extensive.
Interviewed near his home, 30 August.

OPONE, Dominiko

Clan: Alipa. Address: Abuli Catholic Church, Abyece. Born in Abyece in about 1919, the son of chief Ogwal Agir.
He was baptised a Catholic in 1938 and attended primary school at Ngeta mission. Since then he has been a catechist. He provided useful information about his father's life and showed quite a sense of narrative.
Interviewed at Abuli church, 8 August.

ORAMA, Joseph

Clan: Ogora me Oki. Address: Omito, Adwari. Born in Apala during the 1890's.
Between about 1918 and 1925 he was WP and then WM in Adwari. Since then he has been a farmer, and he is now a neighbourhood leader. He was not baptised until about 1952. His testimony was somewhat rambling and confused.
Interviewed at his home, 29 October

ORURO, Pilipo

Clan: Okarowok me Eling. Address: Anwangi, Abyece. Born in Abyece in about 1906, the son of the clan leader, Amwata.
After baptism he attended Gulu High School, and then from 1922 to 1925 he worked as a clerk. Between 1925 and 1935 he was a WP and WM. He was *jago* of Abyece from 1935 to

1943, and was promoted to rwot in 1944. Since his dismissal in 1954 he has been a farmer; he appears to have made a big success of this. He was a good informant, and his testimony included some reflections on the position of government chiefs during the colonial period.
Interviewed at his home, 12 and 13 August.

OTIM, Lasto

Clan: Atek me Okwerawele. Address: Abuli, Abyece. Born in Agwata during the 1880's.
He served in the K.A.R. from about 1915 to 1928, but for the rest of his life has been a farmer. He has never been baptised. He was quite helpful with regard to the ewor ceremony, but in general he was a confused and difficult informant.
Interviewed at Abuli primary school, 6 August.

OTIM, Silvesto

Clan: Bako me Otengoro. Address: Angwecebange, Dokolo. Born in Dokolo in 1927.
He was baptised a Catholic in 1947. For several years he was a trader at Dokolo, but he is now a farmer. His testimony was not very extensive or helpful.
Interviewed at his home, 10 October.

OTIM, Yeromia

Clan: Arak me Bako. Address: Angwecebange, Dokolo. Born in Dokolo around 1890, the son of chief Owiny Aleka.
After baptism in about 1925, he attended school in Lira and Mbale for seven years. In the mid-30's he was a teacher in Lira. From about 1936 to 1959 he was a skin trader and cattle trader, but he is now a farmer. An extremely useful informant, both for pre-colonial and colonial history.
Interviewed at his home, 8 and 10 October.

OTWAL, Nekomia

Clan: Arak me Elwia. Address: Akaka, Aber. Born in Aber, probably during the 1890's.
He was an askari under the Baganda in Aber. From about 1922 to 1951 he was a WP and WM in Aber; he was baptised during the 1920's. He is now retired and infirm. His testimony was somewhat erratic and difficult to assess, but on some points of detail it proved to be helpful.
Interviewed near his home, 16 and 18 July.

OWENO, Yusto

Clan: Ogora Atar. Address: Alwala, Ibuje. Born in Ibuje in 1925, the grandson of the clan leader, Abak Omoti.
He was baptised in about 1933 and then attended school before going to Canon Lawrance College, Boroboro, to train as a teacher. He has been a teacher since 1943, and now works at Alwala primary school. He was a District Councillor from 1948 to 1959. Oweno is interested in the life of chief Daudi Odora, with whom his clan had close affinal links. He has

written a vernacular account (see Bibliography), and his testimony was a useful corrective to the accounts of Odora's own clansmen, e.g. Peter Enin (q.v.).
Interviewed near his home, 25 May.

OWINO, Nasaneri

Clan: Otikokin. Address: Omarari, Omoro. Born in Omoro during the 1890's, the son of the clan leader, Oyanga Apenyo.
He was baptised and served in junior chiefly positions, before becoming jago of Omoro in 1940. He retired in 1954, and since then he has been a farmer. He also served on the Lango District Appointments Board. Owino was particularly helpful on the migration and early settlement of the Langi, but otherwise his testimony was not very noteworthy.
Interviewed at his home, 11 November.

OWUCO, Adonia

Clan: Ogora me Imatomot. Address: Omito, Adwari. Born in Aloi during the 1890's.
He was baptised in about 1931, but has never been employed. He is now infirm. His testimony was not very extensive or illuminating.
Interviewed at his home, 28 October.

OYAKA, Erieza

Clan: Oki. Address: Ayira, Bar. Born in Adekokwok in about 1906.
He was baptised in about 1924. From about 1925 until 1943 he served as a WP and WM. Since then he has been a farmer. His testimony, like several others in Bar, was disappointing.
Interviewed at his home, 19 September.

OYET, Paulo

Clan: Omolo. Address: Iceme trading centre. Born in Iceme in the late 1890's.
As a boy he worked for several years in the household of chief Olong Adilo, from whom he learnt much about the past. He was baptised and went to school in Gulu, and then from 1920 to 1928 worked as a catechist. After only three years as a WM, he was promoted to jago in 1931 and served two terms at Ibuje. From 1951 to 1964 he was a rwot. On retirement, he took holy orders in the Church of Uganda. He now owns a large store and a 'hotel' in Iceme. He was a helpful informant, though on rather a limited range of topics.
Interviewed at his home, 28 August.

OYOM IYIM

Clan: Oyima. Address: Kamdini, Aber. Born in Aber during the 1890's.
He has never been baptised. During the 1920's he served in the K.A.R. for a short time, and he has also been a hunter for Europeans in the Chobe Game Reserve. He is now a farmer. His testimony lasted only a short time, and was of limited value.
Interviewed at his home, 24 July.

B. NON-LANGO INFORMANTS

ERAU, Yusufu

A Kumam of the Basere clan. Address: Adagmon, Dokolo.
He was born near Soroti (Teso District) in about 1890/95, and a section of his clan settled in Dokolo in about 1929. He was baptised in about 1935. He has been a farmer all his life and is now infirm. Erau was a useful informant on Lango-Kumam relations and the arrival of the government in Bululu District.
Interviewed at his home, 16 October.

ISENGEZE, Zakalia

A Munyoro of the Bapina clan. Address: Ojwina, Lira.
He was born about 1880/85 in Hoima. He was baptised in about 1904 and for several years worked as a houseboy for one of the C.M.S. missionaries in Hoima. In 1907 he and his brother, Zedekia Rwakaikara, were sent by Rev. Arthur Fisher as catechists to Odora's hom at Kungu, where they stayed for about a year. When Odora moved to Ibuje as chief in 1909, they were both invited back to serve as askaris. Odora then sent the brothers as his agents to Cawente, and Isengeze stayed there from 1910 until 1917. Until his retirement in about 1940 he occupied a succession of clerical posts in the Lango administration. He was a useful informant on Odora's career between 1904 and 1917.
Interviewed at a friend's home in Akalu, and at his own home, 16 May and 5 June.

JUMA ARBAM

A Nubian who lives at the trading-centre in Akaka, Aber.
He was born in Masindi about 1915. He received two years' education in a Moslem school at Gulu, and then worked as a tailor in Lira. From 1940 to 1951 he served with the K.A.R. overseas, and since then has worked in Aber cotton-ginnery.
Juma gave information about his father's life. His father came from the Sudan with Emin Pasha. He was then employed as a serjeant by the Uganda Government, and he took part in Delmé-Radcliffe's Lango Expedition of 1901.
Interviewed at his home, 18 July.

RWANGIRE, Zekeri

A Munyoro of the Balebeki clan. Address: Aduku sub-county headquarters.
He was born near Masindi in Bunyoro in about 1895. As a young man he was baptised, and he worked as a catechist in Lango from about 1913 until 1926, mainly at Aduku in the time of Daudi Odora. During the next twenty years he served first as a clerk, and then in the Medical Department in a junior capacity. Rwangire's testimony was somewhat confused, and he was very vague about dates.
Interviewed at his home, 14 August.

APPENDIX

FOUR EXAMPLES OF ORAL TESTIMONY

The four examples given here fall into two groups, illustrating the two ways in which oral testimony has been retained. The first group consists of two summarised testimonies. The two examples given reflect the way in which the vast majority of testimonies were adapted to a form in which they could be conveniently used as source material. The second group consists of verbatim transcriptions. Only a very small number of these was actually made, since both transcription and translation were extremely time-consuming.

A. SUMMARISED TESTIMONIES

These are summaries in only the most technical sense. The questions put to the informant have been omitted; the testimonies have been pruned of repetition; and in some cases the sequence of material has been rearranged according to chronology or theme. But in each case, every substantial item of historical information has been included. Each summary was made soon after the interview ended, the information being carefully transcribed from the tape-recording. The summaries which follow may therefore be regarded as full and accurate records.

The two informants represented here have been chosen with a view to their contrasting credentials as informants. The first one, a senior elder of no education at all, is as immersed in traditional culture as it is possible for a Lango to be today. The second informant is a much younger man with considerable experience of government employment; his clear and articulate exposition was the result of a more conscious concern with the past.

The rest of the interviews which I conducted in Lango were recorded in a form similar to that presented here. The transcripts are in manuscript, and in my possession. About a quarter of the original material was retained on tape in an edited form. These tapes, together with a critical guide, will shortly be deposited with the British Institute in Eastern Africa, Nairobi.

Summary of interview with Okelo Abak at his home in Tarogali, Ibuje, 30 June 1969

Early migration of the Jo Ogora Atar

Okelo's father, Abak Omoti, was born near Alito rock (1). He led the people from Alito to Orem (in Aduku), then to

---

1. Alito rock is situated in north-central Lango, between Lira town and the Acholi border.

Oporowie (Apac), and then to Tarogali. While the Jo Ogora Atar were in Alito, their leader was a man called Omare, who was Abak's elder brother; their father was called Omoti. Omare sent Abak away to find his own hunting tract, because he was a strong young man, and so Abak left Alito. Long before they lived at Alito, while they were still near Otuke, the Jo Ogora Atar and the Jo Ogora Acol (1) were one and the same clan; but a fight broke out between them and so they separated. The clan got their name 'Atar' (white) because a very old woman once slept in the ashes and came out all white.

Another group of the Jo Ogora Atar branched off and migrated to Apoi (in Akokoro), where the Jo Okabo lived. This section was led by a lineage brother of Abak's, called Olila. When Olila's men were chased away from Apoi by the Jo Okabo, they settled in Kwibale (also in Akokoro). Olila's son was killed there. When Abak heard that his brother's son had been killed, he went and brought Olila's people to settle near him in Tarogali. Their place was called Oding.

The settlement of Tarogali

Abak settled in Tarogali because there was so much game and fishing there. In the other places along the way from Alito there had been animals in plenty, but there had been other homesteads as well. Tarogali was the only place that Abak really wanted to settle in. He possessed no cattle when he arrived, because he was a poor man; he simply came on account of the game. He had to fight his way to Tarogali - fight and then press forward.

Abak did not direct the people exactly where to settle. They knew where to put their own houses. The village was very large, with very many houses close together in one compound. Each group within the village ate its own food separately - say about ten households in a group.

With Abak there came nine men; they were all lineage brothers, and they all brought wives and children. They were: Bamma, Elida, Oguta, Atala, Obura, Ekwom, Amuca, Ongom and Pole. Other members of the clan then followed them from Alito.

Members of the Jo Ogora Atar in Tarogali used to visit other branches of the clan at Amac and Aduku.

The arrival of other clans in Tarogali

At the time when the Jo Ogora Atar settled in Tarogali, there were no other people there, or anywhere in Ibuje. The Jo Ocukuru came a long time afterwards. Nor were there any Langi living further west (towards the angle of the Nile at

---

1. This clan is more frequently called the Jo Ocukuru, and is now the dominant clan in the Ibuje area.

Masindi Port). The Jo Oyakori arrived later, and Abak told them to go further west and settle in a place where there were no other people; the place where they actually settled was Te Acoda (also in Tarogali); they stayed there for a long time, until the death of their leader, Angole Acak. The two clans were related, because while they were both in Alito, Angole's son, Ocika, had married the sister of Omare.

When Abak arrived, there were no Baruli living on this side of the Nile; but when the Baruli saw that Abak had settled here, they came across one by one. The reason they came was that they feared the wild animals on their own side, especially the wild pigs. They settled peacefully, farming and fishing, and Abak had no objections. They came from a place called Carana, nearly opposite Tarogali on the other bank of the Nile. This was when the Jo Ocukuru had already settled in Ibuje.

Before they arrived in Tarogali, the Jo Ocukuru were already related by marriage to the Jo Ogora Atar. So there was no fighting when they came to settle. They were the first clan to join Abak, to be followed by the Jo Arak me Oyakori. Then the Jo Atek me Omwara settled in Tarogali. Other clans who came at one time or another were: the Jo Arak me Otwal who came and intermarried with the Jo Ogora Atar, but who later joined the rest of their clan in Aber; and the Jo Okabo, who later moved on to Apoi (in Akokoro).

The border between the Jo Ogora Atar and the Jo Ocukuru is marked by a swamp between the villages of Alenga and Tarogali.

A pre-colonial battle

On Ibuje rock there were two clans which were very strong - the Jo Arak me Ococ and the Jo Obanya. They once attacked the Jo Ocukuru, killing many of them. So Arum, one of the important men in the Jo Ocukuru, ran to Tarogali, to ask for Abak's help. Abak told him that he was just like a woman: the people who had attacked him were so few that Arum should have chased them away like goats, and now he was running away. All the same, Abak sounded his horn to summon his men, and they asked where the fight was; Abak answered that Arum had appealed for help. So they went and defeated Arum's enemies. During the battle, Abak was challenged by a man on the other side called Eryong; but Abak marked out a line on the ground with magic medicine and dared the enemy to cross it; when they did, they lost all their strength and were defeated.

The Jo Arak me Ococ were chased away to Apac. However, some of the Ococ people had helped Arum in the battle; they had avoided killing their fellow-clansmen, and had killed men of the Jo Obanya instead. When the rest of the Jo Arak me Ococ were chased away to Apac, these people stayed behind with Arum in Ibuje.

The extent of Abak Omoti's authority

Abak used to settle disputes between members of the Jo Ogora Atar. He never took cases to anyone else. Other clans like the Jo Atek me Omwara used to bring their disputes to him.

Abak wore a special skin garment, and two iron bracelets on each arm, which were called okom. He was the only man in the clan who could wear okom.

Abak was a rain-maker (won kot) (1). When he held a rain-making ceremony, other clans used to come along, but they did not participate. They did not shake the tree which the Jo Ogora Atar shook (2). They came only for the beer which was served at the end of the ceremony. Okelo Abak succeeded his father as won kot, and the ceremony today is the same as it was in Abak's time (3).

Relations with the Banyoro

Abak only went to Bunyoro once, and on that occasion he was speared by a gun (4). Langi came from the east on their way to Bunyoro, and they took Abak along with them. All the important men in the Jo Ogora Atar went, and also Arum of the Jo Ocukuru. When they reached the Nile, they found people from the other side waiting to ferry them over. The boats were at Kungu, Aganga, Rwekasaza, Palango and Ibuje. Ogwal Atigo was the leader who took the Langi across the Nile, but he did not rule the Langi. They went to help a Munyoro called Odongo, who lived at Doyo rock; this man was not a Muchope (5).

Abak also once purchased a Munyoro girl who had been brought over to Otwal's place at Kamdini (in Aber) and was then brought to his home.

When Kabarega ran away to Lango, Abak did not help him. He stayed in Itao for only a few days befor continuing to Kamdini. His pursuers did not pass this way, though they were not far away; when Okelo Abak was a boy, he remembers hearing the sound of the guns.

---

1. This combination of clan leadership and ritual authority in the same person was very rare in pre-colonial Lango.

2. One of the main features of the ceremony of lamo kot ('praying for the rain') is the pouring of water into the branches of a tree, followed by the shaking of the tree; both men and women may participate in this stage of the ceremony.

3. Two days after this interview, I participated in the lamo kot ceremony at Okelo Abak's invitation. South-western Lango was badly hit by drought at this time.

4. Presumably a bayonet.

5. My question here was prompted by the fact that Odongo is a Lwo name; in this instance it must have been a Lango nickname for a Munyoro.

Relations with the Jo Arak me Oyakori

Abak Omoti and Angole Acak, the leader of the Jo Oyakori, were friends and in-laws. But later on, there was trouble. A he-goat belonging to the Jo Ogora Atar strayed into the village of the Jo Oyakori; the Jo Ogora saw it when they went for a dance there, and they asked to have it back. But the Jo Oyakori said it was their own goat and refused to return it. So there was a fight. Angole Acak's brother, Ongom Adilo, was speared in the neck, but he was protected by the bracelets which he wore round his neck. The two clans did not kill each other because they were related by marriage.

The ceremony of ewor (or iwor)

At the time of iwor, people used to gather together and then follow a route to a certain place, and then return. On their way, if they met any children they would just push them aside; but if they met a grown man, they would beat him. It all used to start in the east. The people who lived near Otuke did not go right across Lango, but only as far as the next village; those people would go to the next place, and so on. The people of Tarogali used to go to Aganga and return, and then the people of Aganga went to the next place. When a group of people like this reached their destination, they brought with them news of iwor; the other people gave them beer-flour which they took home with them; and then they danced (1).

Forced labour under the government

When the government arrived, they made Abak an important man. People were ordered to work in his fields. In the old days, people only went into other men's fields when beer was going to be made. But after the government had arrived, people were forced to work. They came individually, by turns, to work in Abak's fields. Previously there had not been this compulsion.

Abak's relations with Arum

Abak and Arum went to Kungu to meet the Europeans. Arum was appointed chief (rwot), but it should have been Abak, since he had been the first one to settle anywhere in Ibuje sub-county. In fact, Abak asked to become chief, but instead the government appointed Arum. Abak became his deputy (katikiro). After that, Abak forgot about his ambition to be chief, and was friends with Arum. He served as Arum's deputy for a long time. When there was a small case, Abak used to settle it. But when there was a difficul case, he sent it to Arum; but the parties to the case still had to come to Abak first.

Abak Omoti never had instruction from a catechist. He was succeeded as clan leader of the Jo Ogora Atar by Adupa, who was the son of Abak's brother, Onyac.

---

1. This confused and unilluminating account is typical of oral descriptions of the age ceremonies in Lango.

Okelo Abak's experience of the government

Okelo read at Alwala. But he was never baptised, because someone falsely accused him of illicit intercourse and speared him; he then stopped reading. For two years Okelo worked as askari for Arum. His job was to collect chickens, which the people were forced to give.

Summary of interview with Yubu Engola at Omoro trading-centre, 13 November 1969

The Langi at Otuke

While the Langi were living at Otuke, they lived peacefully alongside the Karamojong, without trouble. But later on the Karamojong had a famine, and they stole food from the Lango granaries. The Langi felt that they must migrate to another place if they were to avoid losing their food-supplies.

At that time, the Langi were living on the Morolem (1) side of Otuke hill. The Karamojong lived further east, while the Jie were further north. There was a certain rock which separated the Langi from the Karamojong. The Langi and the Labwor lived on either side of a swamp called Ongolebwal (2); the langi and the Labwor each had their own settlements in different places, the Labwor living near a rock called Oyoroit (3). It was said that the Langi originally came from the Karamojong country.

At the time when the Langi left Otuke, they had no trouble with the Labwor. Later on, the Labwor were troubled by famine, and they used to bring their children to the Langi to sell in exchange for food, while others just stole food.

Separation of clans and migration

When the Langi were at Otuke, they were already divided into the clans of Atek, Okarowok, Otengoro, Arak, and a few more; but there were not as many clans as today. Clans split up because people married their clan-sisters.

All the Langi left Otuke at the same time, because of the trouble with the Karamojong. Then they separated and migrated along a number of different routes; but all the Langi went westwards as far as the Nile. When they found they could go no further, they started to retrace their steps and passed through Lira.

---

1. Morolem is deep in Labwor country, i.e. east of Otuke, and is now the site of a large Verona Fathers Mission.

2. Nangolebwal hill, near Morolem.

3. Loyoroit river, in northern Labwor.

Informant's family connections

Engola belongs to the Jo Oki me Wonadyang. His father was Opio Amak, who was son of Okwir Odingo Aleng, who was the son of Won Adyang, who was the son of Kode who migrated from Otuke. Opio Amak's mother (Engola's grand-mother) was a Karamojong war captive. Engola's mother was the daughter of Oyanga Apenyo, the leader of the Jo Otikokin (1). Oyanga Apenyo also had a son called Okuk Awira (2), and it was he who told Engola about the past.

Early migration of the Jo Oki

Kode, of the Jo Oki me Wonadyang, left Otuke and seems to have died somewhere near Lira. He was succeeded as leader of the clan by his son, Won Adyang. Actually, up to that time, the clan had been called Jo Oki me Atek. Won Adyang himself owed his name to the fact that he used to exchange any bull calves he had for cow calves, so that his herd would multiply. The Jo Oki me Wonadyang split off from the rest of the Jo Oki me Atek because they sat down to eat apuny (3) with the Jo Otikokin. The rest of the Jo Oki me Atek ate apuny with the Jo Ober, and they changed their name to Jo Atek me Ober. The Jo Wonadyang do not marry with Jo Atek me Ober or with Jo Atek me Odyekowidi, but they can intermarry with Jo Otikokin - witness Engola's own father.

Wonadyang died in Akia (4). He was succeeded by Okwir Odingo Aleng, who settled in Alebtong, near Aloi. Oyanga Apenyo of the Jo Otikokin was also living there. Okwir was killed while hunting on the southern side of the Moroto river. In those days Omoro itself was all bush.

Settlement in Omoro

When Oyanga Apenyo migrated from Alebtong to Omoro, several important men of the Jo Oki me Wonadyang went with him. These were Opio Amak, Atyang Aluko and Olwit Amuko. They all migrated together and were led by Oyanga Apenyo, who was Atyang Aluko's okeo (sister's son). The reason for the migration was that a disease had killed many of the Jo Oki and Jo Otikokin, including Oyanga Apenyo's own children. The two clans settled together in Amuk village; there were three cattle pens, belonging to Oyanga Apenyo, Acuru Aryam (Jo Otikokin) and Atyang Aluko (Jo Oki).

Later, they were joined by another group of Jo Otikokin which included Acol, Owuni, Icel and Okwany Awaitum. This

---

1. The Jo Otikokin were one of the two most important clans in Omoro on the eve of the colonial period.

2. Danieri Okuk Awira was chief of Adwari sub-county from 1929 to 1934

3. Apuny was the final burial rite, held every two or three years. Since it was an etogo function, several clans took part.

4. Akia is a paco near Lira, in Adekokwok sub-county.

group had been living in the south, at Bata; they had been visiting Oyanga Apenyo, and they decided to migrate to Omoro because there was plenty of land there. After their migration, they stayed for a time as visitors in Amuk village. Then they settled in their own village called Akany, about three miles away.

Other clans in Omoro

When Oyanga Apenyo first settled in Amuk, there were no other Langi living in Omoro. In fact the whole place was actually called 'Oyanga'; it was the Baganda who named the place 'Omoro'. After the Jo Otikokin and the Jo Oki, the first clan to settle was the Jo Atek (1); they were led by Goi Arop and settled at a place called Inur, now in Angeta paco. They were followed by a different Atek clan (2), who were led by Oyuru Abwango. Then came the Jo Arakit, all of whom settled in Amuk village; their leader was Onyanga Waitum. Next came the Jo Ngurapuc, led by another man called Oyanga. Then came the Jo Ocukuru; they were led by Owiny Agel, and their number also included Odur Onymoi and Arwat Abal; they had come from Bata and settled at Akany village. Lastly, there came the Jo Ober, who were led by Awany Alel (there was another man of the same name who belonged to the Jo Atek me Adyang me Okwerkic).

As men went to live with their wives' families, the clans began to get mixed up. This happened in Amuk, but the Jo Oki and Jo Otikokin still outnumbered all the people who came from other clans to settle in Amuk.

Oyanga Apenyo's authority

Akany village was ruled by Acol (3). His father, Opita Lobomo, had died in Alapata (in Bata); at that time, Acol had been old enough not to need adoption by another father, but he did not marry until he reached Akany. Although Acol ruled Akany village, he in turn was ruled by Oyanga Apenyo, because Acol was his nephew. Oyanga settled disputes in Acol's village and led him to battle. Each of the other clans in Omoro dealt with its own disputes.

When there was to be a battle against the Iteso, Oyanga Apenyo sent word to Goi Arop who would tell all the other clan leaders to bring their men too. If there was a fight between two different groups in Omoro - say the villages of Angeta and Abukamola - Oyanga would settle the matter; Goi Arop might come to Oyanga and tell him that the people were intending to fight among themselves. Then Goi and Oyanga would go and settle the matter before it came to fighting. But in that sort of case, the clans would not have appealed voluntarily to Goi and Oyanga, because they would have had far to travel.

---

1. Jo Atek me Okwerowe.

2. Jo Atek me Okide.

3. Enoka Acol was later first sub-county chief of Omoro (1916-27) and first county chief of Moroto (1927-34).

On one occasion, Okwany, the son of Oyanga Apenyo's brother, killed Ogwal Apelo on account of illicit sexual intercourse. This Ogwal was a man of Oyuru Abwango's. So Oyuru came and raided some of Oyanga's cattle. Apart from that, Oyanga Apenyo was never involved in fighting against any of the clans whom he led in battle against the Iteso.

Relations with the Iteso and Acholi

Oyanga Apenyo used to lead the other clan leaders of Omoro against the Iteso. In those days the border with Teso was as it is today, only about 3½ miles from Oyanga's village. The Iteso came and attacked Omara of the Jo Bako, the father of Ikel Abura, but they never attacked Amuk village.

Oyanga Apenyo was never involved with the Acholi, either in trade or in battle.

The defeat of the Arabs

Omato Ali was an Arab who came with the Acholi in order to raid cattle from the Langi. He invaded the area of Ading, which is between Adwari and Apala, and he was killed on his very first visit to Lango. The Arabs had guns. The Langi were led by a man called Oluju (who had no connection with Oluju Akor of Orum). The Langi watched Omato Ali secretly; they waited until he was asleep at night, and then Oluju killed him. The cattle he had robbed were then recovered.

Relations with the Banyoro

Oyanga Apenyo used to fight in Bunyoro under the leadership of Agoro Abwango. He used to lead men from all the clans in Omoro, but some of them stayed behind in order to protect the homesteads. Oyanga would spend between one and three months at a time in Bunyoro. Some of the Langi returned qhickly from Bunyoro because of a tick (kwodo) disease there: if the man bitten by a tick kept quiet about it, he survived, but if it was mentioned that he had been bitten, then he died from the bite. Kabarega used to present Agoro Abwango with captives if the expedition was successful, and Agoro would then distribute them to the other rwode whom he had invited to come with him.

Kabarega also used to give and to sell hoes to Agoro Abwango; Agoro then sold to the rwode of Omoro, who would supply the ordinary people with hoes. Banyoro traders did not visit Omoro itself. The hoes were actually called Ja Olum, and Engola himself has seen hoes of this kind on Kabarega's grave. However, most of the Langi in those days used sharpened sticks instead of hoes. It is only since the arrival of the Government that hoes have become common among the local farmers.

Trade with the Labwor

The Langi also used to obtain hoes from the Labwor, but this was a dangerous business. Usually the Langi had to go to

Labwor to get the hoes, and Engola's own uncle was killed there. The Labwor themselves only came to Omoro when there was famine in their own land; then they would bring their daughters to sell to their Lango friends.

The Arrival of the Government

It was Oyuru Abwango of the Jo Atek me Okide who brought the Baganda and the Europeans from Soroti (1) to Omoro. He did so because he wanted to take vengeance on Oyanga Apenyo and recover his cattle, and he appealed to the Government to help him. Oyanga Apenyo had been warned that enemies were coming to seize his cattle, so he sent his cattle to friends in the west. He sent some of them to a clan-brother named Odero Anyanga in Aloi; and he sent the rest to a man of the Jo Arakit called Ocet Abal, who lived at Apado, in Alebtong near Aloi; but these cattle were robbed by chief Ogwangguji of Lira for his own use. The rest of the cattle were pursued to Aloi by the government forces, who had arrived at Oyanga's home to find no cattle there. Oyanga Apenyo was then arrested by the government. The first man the government had arrested had been Goi Arop (also known as Obira), whom they had then told to lead them to Oyanga, which he did. The third man arrested was Okeng Ongolomoi of the Jo Atek (2). The government also confiscated the cattle belonging to Goi and Okeng and brought them all to the same cattle-pen.

Besides Oyuru Abwango, there was a Kumam called Aoja who claimed that Oyanga had seized some of his cattle, so he was given some of the confiscated livestock. Oyuru Abwango and his clan-brother, Ocet (no connection with Ocet Abal), claimed that they should receive all the rest of the cattle. But the government said that Oyanga's cattle must not be finished completely, and so he was allowed to keep some of them. Then the leaders were told to remain together in peace, which they have done to this day. The families of Oyanga and Oyuru intermarry, and there is no hatred between them.

During the government expedition, three men of Akany village were killed.

The early colonial period in Omoro

When Opige of Dokolo raided northwards with his government guns, he reached Ongora hill (3), but he did not get as far as Omoro.

When the Langi of Adwari fought against the Baganda, none of the Omoro men went to help them.

The Baganda who ruled Omoro behaved roughly; they used to use people as seats to sit on when they were drinking beer.

---

1. There was already a government post nearby at Orungo in Teso country, and until 1923 Omoro was administered as part of Teso District from Soroti.

2. Jo Oki me Atek.

3. In Abako sub-county.

Amulani Kewaza was the leader of the Baganda from 1914 until 1926, and after he left there were no more Baganda in Omoro. The Baganda were only rough in the early days, before Enoka Acol was made jago/1916/. Acol, known as Acol Amak before he was baptised Enoka in 1932, was the first jago of Omoro; Oyuru Abwango was never made jago. Acol was a Protestant, and he never joined the abamalaki (1). He was a good chief. After he had retired, he went to live in Okwon village in Omoro, where he died in 1938.

Engola's own father, Opio Amak, was won paco of Omarari, under Amulani Kewaza, and died in 1926. Oyanga Apenyo died about two years after Engola himself began to pay poll-tax.

B. VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTIONS

Of the two transcriptions given below, the first has been chosen with a view to the light which it casts on aspects of pre-colonial political authority in Lango; the second has been included mainly because of its strong narrative appeal. The first example represents a received tradition, entirely at second-hand; the second one is a record of personal reminiscence. Both types of testimony were important.

The translation is the joint work of Kassim Ochen and John Tosh.

Part of an interview with Lazaro Okelo at his home in Awio, Iceme, on 28 August 1969: The settlement of disputes in Iceme in the time of Olong Adilo (ca. 1895-1910).

You say that two chiefs used to meet and discuss something which had gone wrong between them. Can you give us an example ?

This kind of meeting could arise from adultery or theft. A decision would be made in the meeting. The clan which had done wrong was told to come to such-and-such a place. If they agreed to this, the defendants got ready with all their fighting equipment on the prescribed day. And so the meeting was held in that place. The two sides sat down thirty yards apart.

Then the leader of the plaintiff's side stood up and interrogated the other side, while the defendant's rwot sat on the ground. The man who had committed the offence was spoken of: "Let him state truthfully whether he did it or not'. Then the defendant's rwot told him to stand in the middle where the case was being discussed, while the two leaders stood and listened to his words. The rwode were sitting on the ground with many other people listening to the discussion.

---

1. The abamalaki were a separatist Christian sect and originated in Buganda. According to F.B.Welbourn (East African Rebels, p.47), Acol was a member.

If the defendant admitted to the crime, it was then settled what fine he should pay: "He will pay this much, since he had admitted he did it". Then there was no more argument; there was friendship.

But if he refused to pay, and if his rwot and fellow clansmen who were sitting on the ground refused to pay (for the matter concerned the whole clan, and people couldn't disassociate themselves from it), then the plaintiffs would say, "These people are mocking us - they did this crime wilfully. Since that is so, let us fight !" That is how trouble could arise. If the people on the plaintiff's side agreed to fight, they began fighting right away, saying, "What you did was an insult to the whole of our clan !"

Then the fighting really got under way. Sometimes the wrong-doers were chased away. In fact they usually were. If you were chased away, you were pursued right up to your home. The other side seized your goods - cattle, goats, chickens and crops - and took the whole lot away with them. The fugitives would run away from their village; for in those days there weren(t villages everywhere; there was still much empty bush. So they went in search of people whom they could join, and with whom they could find food. They built temporary grass houses, called kima. People were still on the move in those days, and kima huts were for watching elephants.

The other side went home singing because they had defeated the enemy. When they reached home, the women greeted them with a cry of victory, and they fetched the rwot's drum from inside, and proceeded to beat it. The drum made a noise which sounded like "Tungi dang co ! Tungi dang co !" (1). And so the drum was beaten. Then they performed the victory dance, because they were glad that they had defeated the enemy. As they danced, the women shouted the victory cry. On a later day, the spoils were divided up. Some people were given livestock to eat, and others were given livestock to take away. Some of the goods were left for the rwot, and some of the food was taken by the ordinary people. And so the matter ended.

But if the affair had been settled without disturbance and the compensation had been fixed exactly, everyone departed without any bother at all. But their friendship wasn't dispersed. Each side returned home, having said good-bye without any trouble.

Can you give us an actual example ?

Here is an example. Once, Bua Ario, a man of the Jo Arak, visited rwot Okaka's home and committed adultery with Okaka's wife. People heard about it after Bua had gone home. If he had been still there, he would have been killed on the spot, but he had gone home. After he'd left, word was sent

---

1. Literally, this refrain means something like "These people are real men !" As the final syllable is long, the rythm of the words is very similar to a drum-beat.

to Bua arranging a meeting. Then Okaka's people went to discuss the case. But Bua wouldn't agree to pay the compensation, so then Okaka's men started a battle, and they carried off Bua's goods. Bua fled northwards to Acholi, to a place called Awere. And his possessions were taken away as compensation for his adultery with rwot Okaka's wife.

Where did Bua live ?

He lived in a place called Amiatigo, in Otwal.

Did Olong Adilo go with Okaka to settle that case of adultery ?

Yes.

Which was really called rwot - Olong Adilo or Okaka ?

Olong Adilo. Okaka was Olwa Abelli's brother. Since Olong had succeeded his father Olwa, he was the rwot.

So what was Okaka called ?

He was also called rwot, because he was the son of a rwot.

Do you mean that they were both called rwot, but that Olong Adilo ruled Okaka ?

Yes, he ruled Okaka, because he took after his father.

Part of an interview with Tomasi Ojuka at his home in Iguli, Dokolo, on 16 October 1969: The Kioga Expedition (1907) and the establishment of administration in south-eastern Lango.

We'd like you to tell us about the coming of the Government and the Baganda in detail, just as you told us about Kakungulu.

The first European to come was called by the Langi 'Langalanga' (1). He came and spent the night at Opige Anyomoloi's place (2). He had soldiers with him like the K.A.R.; indeed I think they were K.A.R. He arrived in the morning. When it was nearly mid-day the Langi sounded the alarm all round Dokolo saying "Strangers are here ! Strangers are here !". Then the Langi gathered with shields and spears in order to fight the strangers. When they had reached the place where the fight was to be, Langalanga's askaris lined up and fired repeatedly and chased the people away. They shot one Lango in the head, and the bullet ripped out his eyes and cut through the bridge of his nose. I think that

---

1. This term is usually associated with Delmé-Radcliffe, commander of the Lango Expedition of 1901 which went nowhere near Dokolo. In south-eastern Lango the nick-name refers to Captain Edwards, commander of the Kioga Expedition.

2. Opige, leader of the Jo Palamyek, lived within present-day Alwitmac paco, near the Abalang river.

man died just recently; he used to live in Amwama (1). The shot did not kill him; it just ripped out his eyes. Then the K.A.R. chased the Langi away. And then they said, "Let's find some food." They stayed in Dokolo for two days and stole goats.

Then they went to Angai, - both the European and his askaris. They did nothing in Angai. From Angai they went to Agaya, covering all the villages, and firing at random in the villages and even in the bush. Then they went to Aputi.

I was with my uncle Okot in Aputi at the time. While the askaris were at Agaya, the Langi there sent word that strangers had arrived. Then the people of Aputi collected their women together and ran with them near a stream, in order to hide them in the bush with their goats. Next morning at dawn, the askaris left Agaya for Aputi. When they reached Aputi, they spread out into the bush and killed two people by shooting them in the long grass: a boy called Apel, and an old blind woman called Egwe. They remained in Aputi for two days and then proceeded to Awelo. After leaving Awelo they crossed over the Lake. The European came firing guns as he went along and covering the bush at random (2). He killed some people and seized goats. Then he disappeared.

I think that Langalanga came in July one year, and then Jervoise (3) arrived with the Baganda. He came to Dokolo, and he too stayed at Opige's place. Then he called together the elders from the villages and said, "We have come without wanting to fight; we would like to talk things over with you." Then he said, "Build a fort." And the people proceeded to make a fort for the Baganda, just where Dokolo centre is today. Jervoise placed a chief there, a Muganda called Isaka Mugema (4), together with an assistant, Daudi Mwanga. And they settled there.

Then the European, whose headquarters was at Bululu, went on safari to see the land. He had many police askaris with him. After six months, be built a fort at Bata, where he placed a chief called Eria Kintu, who was a Muganda. Then he retraced his steps and built a fort at Agwata and placed Daudi Kapalaga as chief there. A little later, the Baganda went from there to Angai in order to see the land. They fought against the Langi of Angai who killed a Muganda called Patiris; this was before the post there had been built. When a report had been sent in and Jervoise learnt that a Muganda had been killed, be built a fort at Angai and posted a Muganda chief there, called Sira Bamwani. Then he quickly went and built a post at Kwera and placed there a chief called Temuseo

---

1. Amwama <u>paco</u> lies in the north-west of the sub-county, towards Amac.

2. This description corresponds very closely to the official report of the tactics adopted during the expedition.

3. It was not Jervoise who established the first agent at Dokolo, but Coote.

4. Isaka Nziga.

Mukasa. But Isaka Nziga Mugema was the chief who ruled them all. His assistant in Dokolo was Daudi Mwanga.

Was Langalanga the same person as Jervoise ?

No.

How long after Langalanga did Jervoise come ?

Not long. Langalanga came in July, and Jervoise in January.

You say that Langalanga stayed at Opige's place; but did he burn houses and kill many people there ?

Yes.

Did many of the Dokolo Langi fight against Langalanga ?

Yes, many did. Langalanga came about this time of morning /about 11.00/ and when it was about 2.00 o'clock the Langi went to attack, but the fighting got too hot for them.

Did they actually face the fight ?

Yes, with shields and spears.

Were many Langi killed ?

Some were, but not many.

About how many ?

I don't know. But they did shoot someone's eyes out. As I observed on many occasions, the technique of the Europeans was first to tell their askaris to shoot into the air and not to aim to kill people. Then the Langi would push forward, and this would make the askaris fire directly at them. But first they fired upwards, perhaps three times. When they saw that the Langi were still pressing forward, they would begin to fire at them; and their guns could then not be stopped.

....

What happened to you when you went to live at your uncle's home in Aputi ?

I went to Aputi to live with my uncle, and I was there when Langalanga's forces came that way. On the day that his troops left Agaya and went towards Aputi, I ran away with the goats to hide in the bush with my uncle. Then somebody ran up and said, "Heh ! The enemy are on their way and will soon be upon us !" I then set off at the double with three people, - Olal, Odude and Okulo - leaving my uncle behind where the goats were. With these three men, I went in search of a hiding-place, for fear of Langalanga. While we were running away, we came upon Langalanga's askaris as they were crossing the path, and they saw us at a distance. Now the other three

were fully grown men; as I was only a boy, they outpaced me and I dropped behind. As we ran in one direction, the askaris came after us from the other direction. When they crossed the path, they saw us running, with the adults leading and me behind, for there was nowhere to take cover. Then they opened fire, "Bang ! Bang ! Bang !"

I dropped to the ground, and then crept up behind an anthill to hide. I stayed there for a little while and then scrambled onto the top; I stood up and saw Langalanga's men very close - as close as that house over there [about 60 yards]. Then I went back onto the path and started running again. I passed through a village called Adonyo-Imo, through Omara Ibule's homestead, and I noticed that the village was deserted. Then I started running along the path again, and then I branched off into the grass and went through the bush. I crept quite a long way through the long grass, as our mother had showed us how to, and then I lay down on the ground.

Langalanga's askaris spread out in the bush at random. Their guns could be heard firing here, there and everywhere. On that very day, a boy called Apel and an old woman called Egwe were killed. Some of the askaris were in the bush, while others were cooking in a village where they had slaughtered some goats. When the askaris saw smoke rising from a hearth, they just opened fire, and if you were unlucky you got hit. This went on until six in the evening, and then, very cautiously, I left my hiding-place. When I reached home, I found that the people were lamenting my death - they were weeping bitterly. My uncle and the women of the village thought that I'd been killed. When they saw me, they shouted, "Hurrah ! The boy is alive; he has not been killed after all !"

Next morning, Langalanga's men went on to Awelo.