

## Chapter 1

### **Part-time Herdboys in Periphery: Herding Camps as Workplace among Youth of the Sabinu, Eastern Uganda**

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#### **Abstract**

The introduction of free primary education circa 2000 changed the life course of young people in rural East Africa. It has also led to a significant change in young people's attitudes toward their livelihoods, which used to follow the traditional life course of the village. This paper describes the attitudes of male teenagers and men in their twenties toward the traditional livelihood of cattle herding in a rural village in eastern Uganda in 2000 following the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997. In the research area, the herds of cattle kept by each household were small. In addition, the expansion of commercial maize cultivation throughout the second half of the 20th century, and the intensification of cattle raiding by neighbouring ethnic groups after independence from the protectorate, changed the meaning and value of cattle grazing itself. Young people value going to secondary school, visiting town, or engaging in some kind of small 'businesses'. However, in village life, small businesses are usually run by women, and there are very few business opportunities for male youth. For those who did not go on to higher education after primary school or who dropped out of primary school, being a herdsman can lead to a business such as selling milk. In other words, they engaged in herding as a part-time job, instead of as a traditional livelihood, as their fathers' generation did.

**Keywords:** public education, youth in rural area, commercialization, marginal space



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## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this paper is to draw an ethnographic picture of the relationship between commercial agriculture, the spread of public education, and the changing lifestyles of rural youth in East Africa.

In traditional ethnography, young people were considered to be in the process of becoming adults, were seen (perhaps by the elders of the ethnic group, but also by ethnographers) as liminal existence or existence on the way to becoming elders who embodied the ethnic culture. In recent years, they have often been treated as actors in social change, as expectations of social mobility have increased with the spread of public education. Durham provides a more complex view of this situation, in which the state or a society's gaze on youth is perceived by the youth themselves, and acts as a 'social shifter', internalising and exploiting it to create new dimensions. What he meant was that; it is a society that sees young people as agents of social change and young people exercise their agency within that society. He says, 'Youth as a category always in the process of being remade in socio-political practice' (Durham 2004). However, it is in urban areas that the dynamics are more acute. In rural areas, unlike in urban areas where the population is a major consumer and voter, the meaning of the practices of young people is more difficult to interpret. Mains (2011) portrayed the lifestyles of secondary-educated youth in rural town in Ethiopia as they chilled out and had no fixed future. This paper describes the situation of East African rural youths in a kind of stagnation in a contemporary context.

The introduction of free primary education in the second half of the 1990s in rural East Africa has significantly changed the life course of young people (though, the changes began much earlier, during the British Protectorate). Classical ethnography has sporadically reported that public education brought over by the British during the colonial and protectorate periods caused friction and conflicts with traditional ways of life, such as between grazing tasks and school attendance (Goldschmidt 1976; Shiraishi 2018). To a greater extent, the policy of free primary education involved

children attending public education, thus primary school enrolment rates rose, but the problem of congested classrooms and drop-out rates remains.

Apart from such problems in the education system, the rising aspirations of children and young people of going on to higher education have not gone unnoticed by village households and parent-child relations. On the one hand, there are problems relating to pay for secondary and tertiary education, there are tensions between children and their parents. On the other hand, there are reports that traditional mutual aid relationships in rural communities have been strengthened in this context, such as through the activation of rotating saving associations (Vokes and Mills 2015). This has encouraged greater involvement in the cash economy, and the alternative lifestyles and life courses of children and young people.

Uganda, where this paper is set, implemented the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy of free primary education in 1997. This paper describes the attitudes of rural boys and young men in eastern Uganda immediately after the introduction of the UPE policy, as they engage in the traditional domestic task of cattle herding. Through this, I will try to interpret the local meanings of their activities.

## **1.2 Research area and research outline**

The Sabiny are ethnic groups living in eastern Uganda, belonging to the Southern Nilotic speaking people (Greenberg 1963). They are linguistically and culturally related to the Nandi, Kipsigis, and other 'Nandi speaking peoples' or 'Kalenjin peoples', who are also a major political force in Rift Valley Region in Western Kenya (Lynch 2011). According to the administrative divisions of Uganda, the Sabiny settlement corresponds to the whole of the former Kapchorwa District (now Kapchorwa District, Kwen District, and Bukwo District), which stretches across the northern slopes of Mount Elgon, with a population of approximately 190,000 people in 2002 (UBOS 2006). With an annual rainfall of approximately 1400–15000mm, the people cultivate maize (*Zea mays*), beans, and bananas (*Musa spp.*) under rain-fed agriculture.



Figure 1: Village youth in gathering.

The altitude of the village is 1650m. If you walk up the cliff paths, it takes less than an hour to reach the town of the Resident District Commission (RDC) at an altitude of 1950m. The town has dozens of shops and restaurants, a regular market twice a week, a district hospital, and a post office, and is always crowded with people from all over the district. However, the grazing camps, the main settings of this study, are scattered around the slopes at an altitude of approximately 1000m, near the foot of the mountains, about an hour's walk down through uninhabited bushland from the village. The area is deserted even during the daytime, with only occasional herders with herds of cattle or goats, or some girls passing by to collect firewood.

The material used in this study was obtained through participant observation conducted in 2000–2002 in a village in Kaptanya Sub-County, located in the northwest of the mountain. The research was intermittent, with each stay lasting between two and eight months. During my stay in the research area, I stayed with a household, using English and local language, *Kupsabiny*, to communicate, and recorded my observations in a notebook and with photographs. The research data are qualitative rather than quantitative.

## **2.0 Village social economy and the youth**

### **2.1 Socioeconomic profile of the area**

In the Sabinu society, herding cattle was once the traditional task of young men, but it is now marginalised in a twofold sense. First, because the cultivation of commodity crops such as maize and beans has marginalised pastoralism, and second, because with the rise in primary school enrolment, much of the interest of teenagers is directed towards secondary schooling.

In the first half of the 20th century, agriculture in the village was limited to home consumption, with goat and cattle farming being the main livelihoods. The cultivation of maize gradually spread in the village after a villager brought ox plough and a hand-ground maize mill from western Kenya around 1950. Since the 1990s, when the regime became more stable, hybrid maize has also become popular, and people not only grow maize for their own consumption, but also sell it. In 2000, I stayed for research purposes; approximately 60% of the households growing maize in the village were selling maize and beans in 100kg bags, and most of the arable land in and around the village was under cultivation. However, from the time Uganda gained independence from the protectorate in 1962 to around 1990, when the regime stabilised, there was a period of darkness, marked by a series of raids from the neighbouring ethnic group Karimojong (Goldschmidt 1976, 1986; Eaton 2010).

Each household in the village sells its maize, beans, and other crops through the village middleman. After the maize harvest, some people grow and ship cash crops, such as groundnuts and sunflowers (the seeds of which are used to make cooking oil). Bananas are harvested by women from time to time, and sold in the town market. Arabica coffee, a 'traditional' cash crop, has been grown only on a small scale by a few households, although the unit price is higher than that of the abovementioned crops. The spread of cattle ploughing and the cultivation of maize and beans have allowed more households to establish a cash economy on a smaller scale. These crops are the main source of income for each household in the village. There is a small shop (*duka*) in the village that sells daily necessities, such as

sugar, salt, tea leaves, soap, and paraffin. Annual crops are harvested, dried, and then sold in 100kg bags to middlemen. In addition, the owner of the general shop is also a middleman for maize and other products, so they routinely buy small quantities at a price per unit measured in empty cans in exchange for goods for their shop.

After the implementation of the UPE policy, parents, half in sympathy with their children's enthusiasm for higher education, were worried about school fees after secondary school. As mentioned above, crop sales alone are not sufficient to cover these costs. Married women's rotating saving associations also became active, but were mostly targeted at building new tin-roofed houses (Shiraishi 2006). Secondary school fees for children are often covered by selling livestock, such as cows and goats, holding family meetings to collect donations, and collecting donations from fellow members of churches and mosques. The growing enthusiasm for higher education has caused tension between parents and children. Teenagers believed that higher education was a matter of money and that it was up to the parents to manage it. Parents expected their children to help with the family business, such as farming or animal husbandry, as a source of income. Of course, many young people would rather raise money for the church or sell their cattle. However, they still have to wait for their fathers to do so.

Table 1: Heads of cattle per household in the village.

heads	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9-15	n.d.
no. of households	18	6	8	7	2	1	2	3	2	3	1

Each household had a small number of cattle. The elders of the village often said that they used to own a considerable number of cattle before and after independence. However, as can be seen in Table 1, only a few households owned more than 10 cattle in 2000, and there were a significant number of households without cattle. Many elders say that cattle are an important household asset, but also can be stolen overnight by neighbouring tribes.

Figure 2 shows the village's agricultural calendars. The main crops, maize and beans, are sown and harvested during the rainy season, which usually runs from April to September. At the beginning of the rainy season, the fields were ploughed using ox ploughs. The ploughing is carried out by two oxen pulling a plough, that is, the ploughing was carried out by two oxen pulling a plough. The work is carried out by a father-son duo; one holds the harrow handle, and the other wields the whip and calls out the name of the oxen (the cattle are named in *Kupsabiny* after their colour and pattern, but the oxen's names are in *Kiswabil*). This work begins when the son becomes a teenager. In the rainy season, each household sows, and as grazing goats and cattle in the village would destroy the crops, the herd is managed in a grazing camp called *kaptich* (cattle house), down the cliff from the village where the grazing environment is more suitable. After the crops have been harvested, the fields are open to anyone who wants to graze their cattle or goats.

seasons	dry season			rainy season						dry season		
month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
maize	ploughing		ploughing	sowing					harvest			
beans				sowing				harvest				
sunflower		harvest								ploughing	sowing	
cattle	village		camp						village			

Figure 2: Farming calendar in research area

It is believed that the plains at the foot of the mountains provide good pasture for cattle. In particular, it is believed that the cattle that plough the fields, which is hard work, must be fed good grass or they will become emaciated, sick and die. The people explain that if the cattle are made to walk back and forth every day along the rocky cliff roads between the plains and the hillside villages, they will injure their legs and become ill. This is the 'reason' for managing the herd in grazing camps in the bushland near the foot of the mountains. It is usually in September, October and November, after the rainy season has turned into the dry season and the maize harvest has been completed, that the people look after their cattle in the village and take day trips to the bushland on the outskirts of the village. At this time of



the year, the cattle have plenty of downed maize stalks and undergrowth to eat after the harvest.

## 2.2 Who the herders are: Youth in the village

Although the spread of maize cultivation has reduced the number of livestock kept, livestock remains an important household asset in the Sabiny society. Livestock herding is usually the task undertaken by young men. Boys start herding goats (*warek*) when they are 6-7 years old and herding cattle (*took*) when they are over 10 years old. These are usually tasks assigned to fathers. When they marry, become young fathers and have cattle of their own, they leave the herding to their younger brothers, or only herd the cattle except during the busy farming season. The activities of the young herders in the grazing camps are described in more detail in the next section. Before that, the social position of the youth among the modern Sabiny people will be explained.

Boys are circumcised (*wonset*) before they reach the age of 20 (Figure 3). Before he is circumcised, the boy, with the help of his friends or his

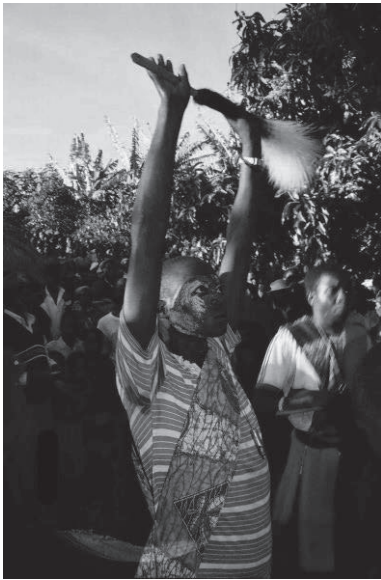


Figure 3: A boy at the moment of circumcison (*wonset*).

father, builds a bachelor hut on his father's compound and begins to sleep in it. Usually, within a year of circumcison, he is married. After marriage, the father gives the son land to support his family. The son has the right to use the land, but not the right to dispose of it, for example by renting or selling it to others. If a son lends or sells land for his use without telling his father, this becomes subject to discussion at an extended family (*kota*) or clan (*aret*) meeting. After the death of



the father, the family property, including land and cattle, is divided and inherited.

Even though they do not have the right to dispose of the land, the married sons start farming with their wives on the land given to them, sell the crops and develop the ability to manage the household. Nevertheless, many of them are still looking for other sources of cash income other than just from the sale of their main crops of maize, beans and bananas. The introduction of new cash crops such as groundnuts and sunflowers, and the brokering of small livestock (*wareke*) such as goats, is a typical example.

Even if they do go on to secondary school, the chances of them taking a leave of absence or dropping out of school because they cannot afford fees, and their prospects are less certain. Pupils who once attend secondary school want paid jobs, and typically do so by going on to the Teacher's Training College (TTC) to become primary school teachers. As of 2000, international NGO staff were on the list of ideal salaried positions. The Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF; i.e. the Ugandan government army) or its subsidiary Local Defence Unit (LDU) were known to be salaried positions available to primary school leavers and dropouts. By 2000, about 20% of the young people in the study area were already enrolled in secondary schools, but many had fallen behind on their fees and were absent from school. This was the case for several of my research assistants, and for others who joined the government army after secondary school because they did not have the financial means to go to TTC or university. Some of these secondary school students did not marry for some time after they were circumcised.

As mentioned earlier, during the rainy season, the village cattle herd is based on a grazing camp near the foot of the mountain, away from the village, and grazed by herders. The herders are boys and young men in their mid-teens to early thirties. They are entrusted with a herd of cattle by their fathers and other members of the family and stay in the camp with a herd of 10-20 cattle per herder. Secondary school students may also be assigned by their fathers to herd cattle in the camp during long holidays.

The way in which the owner manages the cattle outside the village during the rainy season is to order his son, grandson, or nephew to do so, to employ a boy who is not related to him as a herdsman, or to leave them with an acquaintance who lives in the plains. The household with which I stayed during my research had entrusted heifers and cows used for ploughing maize fields to an old man living on the plains at the foot of the mountains. If one of the cows gave birth, the owner was informed, but it was customary for the milk to be freely available to the person who had entrusted it to him until the owner came to collect the calf (*kimanakan*). In other words, in this case, the owner had entrusted the old man with a castrated cow that needed to be well-fed, and, in return, he had entrusted him with a heifer. The owner left the rest of his cattle to the village herdsman. In return, he would give them maize flour and sugar about once a week. The herdsman would receive this from several families who had cattle in his care, and this would provide him with food for a week. The amount of maize flour given by each family was not measured exactly per head of cattle. This is negotiated between the herders and owners of the cattle. The households that provide herdsman do not provide this maize flour.

The risk of raiding is an ever-present feature of grazing in this camp. The plundering and cattle rustling of the neighbouring Karimojong ethnic group, which had become militarised and intensified, continued well into the 1990s. Whether it is a raiding party of 20 men on a moonlit night or a cattle rustler approaching in the dark with five men, Karimojong troops are armed with AK47, automatic rifles. Even though the grazing camps are equipped with automatic weapons for self-defence, a camp with only two herders on duty cannot adequately defend itself against invading enemies. Camp A (detailed in the next section), where I slept, was then armed with only one automatic rifle. The gun was used to intimidate the enemy and to communicate with the village, and the herders were not held responsible for the removal of herds of cattle from the camp by raiders or cattle rustlers. In the event of a raiding party arriving at the camp, the first thing to do is

to open fire and inform the village of the emergency. At the same time, the herders in the neighbouring camps cooperate with each other and retreat to the hillside in the direction of the village and wait. Hearing shots, the men of the village shout '*Ann!* (Where?)' and blank shots ring out throughout the village. (mobile phones were not widely available in 2000). The men quickly form a chase party, descend the mountainside cliff path, met the herders, receive detailed reports of what had happened along the way, and follow the tracks of the cattle and the enemy. The herders in the camp told me that, in such an emergency, they would run at once from the camp to the village up the cliff road and back.

### **3.0 Herding camps as workplace**

#### **3.1 Days in the camps**

Grazing camps are scattered in the bushland near the foot of the mountain, and about an hour's walk down the cliff road from the village. There are two types of camps: cave camps, built on rocky ledges at the bottom of the cliffs, and house camps, where the cows are enclosed by a fence made of branches and where the herders and calves sleep in huts. Each camp is called a unique name, either after the name of a particular place, or the name of its founder. The users of these camps were mainly people from the study area. As the area where the camps are located is uninhabited, it is possible to build new camps, but at the time of the survey, none had been built within the last 4–5 years, and all had been in use for many years. The herders, together with their herds of cattle, spend their nights on these camps. Sometimes, they move with the herd from one camp to another after a while, as described below. The plains at the foot of the mountains are semi-marshy and rich in grass, so the movement is not due to grazing conditions, but for the convenience of the herders. The owners of the cattle have little influence on the management of the cattle in the camps, and it is left to the herders to decide.

Table 2 shows the herders who spent time with their cattle herds in each camp at the beginning of August 2000, from Camp A to Camp I, the

number of cattle in each herd, and the number of cattle owners who left their herds with their herders. The herders who stayed in Camps A, B, C, D, and E were the owners of the cattle themselves, two of their brothers, ten sons of the owners, and two hired hands. They were mainly young men in their late teens to early thirties, and they knew each other. However, Camps F, G, H, and I consisted of six herdsmen who originally lived on the plains or had no specific residence in the village but were almost exclusively resident in the camps, all of whom were aged between 50 and 70 years old. The following is a description of the daily life of the former group of young herders in the camp.

Table 2: Cattle camps, herders and cattle groups

camps	Herdsmen ID and age grade	No. of cattle (milking cow)	No. of owners
<b>A</b> house	[1] 30s	22 (3)	4
	[2] 20s	17 (2)	5
	[3] 20s	24 (1)	5
	[4] 20s	10 (0)	3
<b>B</b> cave	[5] 10s	23 (0)	2
	[6] 20s	5 (0)	1
	[7] 10s	21 (2)	6
	[8] 10s	15 (0)	4
<b>C</b> cave	[9] 20s	5 (1)	2
	[10] 10s	15 (3)	3
	[11] 10s	16 (2)	1
<b>D</b> cave	[12] 20s	13 (0)	3
	[13] 30s	9 (0)	2
<b>E</b> house	[14] 30s	7 (0)	4
<b>F</b> house	[15] 60s	10 (2)	2
	[16] 50s	2 (0)	1
<b>G</b> house	[17] 60s	34 (5)	6
<b>H</b> cave	[18] 70s	37 (1)	6
<b>I</b> cave	[19] 70s	27 (1)	3
	[20] 70s	41 (3)	4
<b>total</b>		353 (26)	67

The size of each camp and number of cows in each camp varied. However, as discussed in the next section, Table 2 shows the use of each

camp at a single point in time. As the herders move between camps with their cattle, and half of the young herders are always in the village in shifts, only half of the 'duty' herders are in the camp at any one time. It can be seen that there are two or three young herders in a camp. In the following, we will examine the actual life in the camps through the example of Camp A, the largest camp at the time of the survey, where four herders were staying.

Camp A had two herders. The herder's day started by milking the cows around 6am. As of 20 August 2000, there were eight lactating cows in Camp A. Half of them were milked both in the morning and evening, while the other four were milked only in the morning. While one herder was milking, another would fetch water from the stream, boil it in a stove and prepare posho (*kominyeet*). After milking, we would have a simple breakfast of milk and posho. The maize flour to make posho is supplied by the owner of the cow, but sometimes the owner will supply sugar and tea leaves, in which case we can have milk tea as we do in the village.



Figure 4: Herders at a cattle camp (*kaptich*).

As the village and the camp are within an hour's walk, people often come and go from the village. Visitors from the village come to the camp in the morning hours before the herders go out to graze. The herders welcome them as the host of the camp and, if they can afford it, make tea

Table 3: Visitors' purposes at camp A

	Purpose of the visit			
	buying milk	treatment /castration	taking/leaving cattle	meeting herder
men	7	18	5	12
women	17	0	0	4
total	24	18	5	16

with milk, and serve it to them. Table 3 shows the number of visitors and the purpose of their visits during the 18 days at Camp A. Cattle owners who are informed by the herders that their cattle are injured or sick come for treatment after they get medicine in town. It is also at the camp that the castration of bulls usually takes place. The owners of the cattle bring their heifers, which are tethered to their property in the village, to the camp temporarily to mate while grazing. They also temporarily bring cows back to the village to be ploughed to sow sunflowers in the fields after the maize harvest.

The milk from the lactating cows deposited in the camp was freely available to herders. The most frequent visitors to the camp from the village were wives who bought this milk. The herders prepare plastic containers with a capacity of approximately 300ml and sell them for 250 UGX. per cup. The proceeds were split between the herders in the camp. This income is not small for them. Even the herders, who are paid in cash by the owners, are more interested in the proceeds of the milk than in often delayed wages (around 1,500–2,000 UGX. per month). The owners know that the young herders count on this milk sale. For example, one week the camp sold 65 containers of milk, amounting to 16,250 UGX, which were split between the two herders.

After breakfast and the reception of visitors, the herders finally set off for the pasture at around 9am. They follow the herds of cattle down to the plains at the foot of the mountains, where the cattle are first watered by the river before heading for the pasture. The sunshine on the plains is much harsher than in the village, but the herdsmen keep track of the herd, which

is gradually spreading out and changing places every 10–20 minutes. Sometimes they pause in the shade of a tree and listen to the portable radio they have brought as they watch the herd. The plains are semi-marshy and many areas are covered with grass, so grazing can be done within 10 km of the camp. My impression is that grazing itself is not very hard work. After grazing, the herders returned to the camp at approximately 5pm. After the evening milking, the herders bathe in the stream and then start preparing a supper.

After the evening meal is a pleasant time for laughing and chatting over a cup of milk tea. The topics of conversation include gossip and reminiscences, for example, about the failures of a certain person who usually behaves well in the village, about how he and his friends offended a school teacher, about how a herdsman was bitten by a poisonous snake named 'mountain master' while grazing. For the young herdsmen at the camp at night, there are no adults or teachers of whom to be aware, unlike in the village. Camp life is indeed much more inconvenient and boring than in the town or village, but it is also a place of freedom and openness for young herders. They go to bed before 10pm, but if the cattle make any strange movements or noises in the middle of the night, or if there is any noise or people around them, the herders become nervous. Herders regularly exchange information about raiding and cattle rustling with herders living on the plains and from other camps while grazing. They are all on their guards. This is especially true for dark, moonless nights.

### **3.2 Part-time herdboys**

Table 4 shows the herders who stayed at Camp A from mid-June to mid-August during the rainy season of 2000. This figure shows, first, that the herders are on duty on a weekly rotation and that the herders grazing in the camps are half of the total 'on duty' herders. Second, the number of herders using a camp fluctuates as herders and herds move from one camp to another. In the following, we discuss this rotation system in more detail and the changes in camp membership.



Two herders stayed at Camp A at all times throughout this period. The off-duty herder returns to the village for a week. He reports to the owners of the cattle in his herd on the state of his cattle, for example, injuries and illnesses, which bulls were mating with which heifers during the grazing season. He also shares with the owners the information he has exchanged with other herders about the latest developments in raiding and cattle rustling. The herder also receives a supply of maize grain and sugar from the owner for the next shift. They also visit the houses of the wives who bought milk on credit in the camp and collect the money.

Table 4. Turn takings of herders at camp A

(from 12th June to 28th August, 2000)

week	Herder [1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[7]	[9]	[10]	No. of herders
1st	○	○	—	—	village	village			2
2nd	—	—	*	○*	↓	↓			2
3rd	*	—	—	—	○	○			3
4th	○	○	—	—					2
5th	—	—	○	○*					2
6th	*	○	—	—					2
7th	—	—	○	○*					2
8th	○	○	—	—			village	village	2
9th	○	○	↓	↓			↓	↓	2
10th	—	—	camp L	camp L			○	○	2
11th	○	○					—	—	2

As shown in Table 4, each herd is not always managed by one person (circle), but sometimes by an agent (\*). If for some reason a herder is unable to graze his herd for a certain period of time, the owner may ask another son to take his place, or the herder himself may ask his brother (often a younger brother) to take his place. For example, in the case of herder [1], he left to visit an acquaintance during the third week, leaving behind two inexperienced herders, [5] and [7], both in their teens, at Camp A. He entrusted his full brother to act for him. In the sixth week in Table 2, herder [1] visited the barracks in the foothills plains to join the UPDF, so he left his half-brother to take over for him. In the case of herder [4], his two younger brothers, who go to primary school, stayed at the camp only

on weekends when school was not in session and took over the herding duties from their older brother. In this way, schoolchildren are often in charge of herding not only on weekends but also during long holidays.

Some owners also employ herdsmen for a fee. Herder [3] was a man who was hired by the owner in the second week. However, due to delays in the payment of the owner's payment and other reasons, a disagreement arose between the man and the owner, and this hired herder quit. Therefore, the owner's son was ordered and took over as the herder (fifth and seventh weeks).

These arrangements between herders, or between owners and herders, result not only in the rotation of herders herding a certain herd, but also in the movement of herders and herds between several camps. In the case of the herders in Camp A shown in Table 4, herders [3] and [4] moved to another camp after the eighth week. Figure 2 shows the movements of the herders and herds in Camp A over a longer period. Figure 2 shows the movement of herds using Camp A from March to September 2000, the latter part of the period overlapping with Table 4.

The first herder to arrive at Camp A with his herd in the rainy season of 2000 was a herder [1]. He used the same Camp A in 1999, the previous year, and the herd seemed to shift around him to stay at Camp A in 2000. In late March, herder [1] invited the owner of the herd [3] to come to Camp A with herd [4]. In late March, herder [1] invited the owner of herd [3] to come to Camp A with herd, who left the herd to herder [1] that week and sent his son herder [3] to Camp A the following week. At about the same time, another herder [4], who had stayed at Camp A with herder [1] the previous year, came with his flock [4].

Figure 5 shows the shifts among the herders using Camp A during the rainy season of 2000. The first herder to arrive at Camp A in mid-March was herder [1]. He used the same camp in the previous year, 1999. From Figure 5, it can be seen that he was the only herder who stayed at Camp A throughout the rainy season in 2000, while the other herders stayed at the

	Herder and heads of lactating cows/cattle							
	[1]	[3]	[4]	[2]	[5]	[7]	[9]	[10]
	3/22	2/24	0/10	1/17	0/23	2/21	1/5	3/15
Mar	<i>vil.</i> ↓							
Apr		<i>vil.</i> ↓	<i>vil.</i> ↓					
May								
Jun				I ↓	<i>vil.</i> ↓	<i>vil.</i> ↓		
Jul					↓ B	↓ B		
Aug		↓ L	↓ L				<i>vil.</i> ↓	<i>vil.</i> ↓
Sept								

Figure 5: Cattle gourps staid at camp A

camp only for a period of time. In late March, the herder [1] invited an owner to come to Camp A with the herd. The owner left his herd in the care of herder [1] that week and sent his son, herder [3], to Camp A the following week. At about the same time, another herder [4], who had stayed at Camp A the previous year with herder [1], came with his herd.

In June, herder [2] who had been staying at Camp I was about to move camp because of a dispute with another herder, when he was invited by herder [1] to come to Camp A during grazing. In addition, in late June, herders [7] and [5] joined them. This resulted in a total of 117 cattle staying at Camp A at the end of June, of which eight were lactating cows. According to herder [1], the camp herders built more bovine enclosures, but herders [5] and [7] decided that it was too difficult for them to graze a herd of over 100 cows and left Camp A a week later. They invited herder [6] to move with him to Camp B, where there was no one staying at that time. Herders

[5], [6], and [7] belonged to the same extended family and were of the same age.

Thus, during July, herders [1], [2], [3], and [4] stayed at Camp A to manage the grazing of the whole herd in weekly shifts. Herder [3] was temporarily entrusted with the herd by his father, but he protested to his father to hire a herdsman to replace him as soon as possible, and his father hired another herdsman, who moved to another camp L with herdsman [4]. Herdsman [4] is the grandson of herdsman [3]'s father, and the move to Camp L was in accordance with herdsman [3]'s father's wishes. The departure of these two herders forced the remaining herders [1] and [2] to stay at Camp A for two consecutive weeks.

Herder [1] called herders [9] and [10], who had been herding from their village in mid- August, to Camp A and again set up a four-person herding team. The two herders [9] and [10] had heard rumours in late July that the Karimojong, a neighbouring tribe, were hiding out in the plains, looking for an opportunity to steal cattle, so they temporarily evacuated their herds and made day trips from the village. Raiding is said to have been at its worst in the period around 1980. During this period, enemy troops numbering up to 50 came into the village and carried out violence and looting. At the time of the survey, young herders in the village remembered their childhood fears, and none of them had any direct experience of fighting. Their first-hand knowledge of raiding came from small-scale experiences in the camps or stories told to them by village elders, and, in this sense, they are somewhat amateurish.

As described above, the herdsmen based at Camp A from the beginning of the 2000 rainy season to September have changed, except for the main herder [1]. However, it can be seen that the two on-duty herders always stayed at the camp, and the two off-duty herders were coordinated by the herder [1] so that a weekly rotation of four herders could be arranged. It should be noted that this ensured that the camp always had a certain number of lactating cows. This system of running the grazing camps was common to all the camps where the young herders of the village stayed.

#### 4.0 Conclusion

The herders in the camps were young men in their late teens to early thirties who had been ordered or hired to herd by their fathers, step-fathers of extended families, or grandfathers. While they enjoyed living in camps away from their villages with their grazing mates, they described their work as 'easy but hard', and 'dangerous', with the risk of looting from neighbouring ethnic groups. One night in the camp, a young herdsman laughed and said to me: 'It is true that the work in the grazing camps is very hard. Life in the grazing camp is pleasant. However, in reality, it is better to be in the village and do the maize business. In the camp, you can get malaria and the Karimojong can shoot you at any moment. No one likes to be here, do you?'. For them, herding is a rather dull and uninspiring job. Besides, being a herder exposes them to risks that are not part of village life.

The value of pastoralism is a living and persisting tradition for the young people of the Sabiny. For instance, the herders' practices that we have seen so far in this paper include, having one herder take care of several herds in the camp and graze them together, inviting a herder he knows to stay and graze with him in the camp where he is staying, having a herder take turns, with his full brother or half-brother and leaving his herds to him for a time, and schoolboys taking charge of the grazing during the holidays. These are not new practices, as they have been practiced for many years in the study area. However, the cattle herds are not as large as they used to be and the pastoral sector itself has become minor with the spread of maize cultivation, although its grazing is still considered a duty of the male members of the household and extended family. This situation has marginalised the value of herding cattle. It is an activity somewhat outside the mainstream, from the responsible work of young men and elders to secondary schooling or marriage and farming after circumcision, and its value may have changed to that of work for boys and young men, or for school holidays and off-farm work.

One story illustrates this change in thinking about cattle grazing as a traditional livelihood. One day, I was talking to a man in his fifties. He was

a pioneer in his village, successful in his education, having completed secondary education in the village, followed by technical school; in his twenties, he worked as a medical assistant in a medical institution in the capital, Kampala, before returning to the village. Most young people were familiar with his background. His estate is well laid out, and he is the only person in the village with a small orchard where he grows oranges. He is a Muslim, does not try to show off, and has the air of a quiet, stern intellectual. The subject happened to be my research in the grazing camp. He then began to reminisce about his boyhood.

'I had also slept in cave camps in my boyhood. That's what we all do. My sons, who are now in secondary school, will go to the camp to graze our cattle when they come back from school holidays. However, after months of sleeping in camps and chasing cattle during the day, your head will start to get dull... after months of sleeping in camps and herding cattle during the day, they will become dull-witted.' According to him, life in the camp is much less crowded than in the village, and far from being lively, it is a peaceful and quiet world. It is true that you get a lot of information about grazing, such as where the grass is now, and whose bull is with whose heifer. It must be a part of the growing up as a herder. However, such a life is far from being in contact with and doing 'something new in this age' that have never been done before. There is no new life in cattle camps because there are no people to meet and with whom to exchange ideas. This was what he said in the summary.

This man's narrative seems to me to be a good example of the 'model' of this age of educated person. At the same time, this man's narrative represents the way rural elders look at young people today, though many elders do not speak out as this man did, because they do not want to reveal the matter of school fees. Young people know that better than anyone. The idyllic life in the camps is now far removed from the way of life of those who are busy moving between villages and towns. In other words, they find their place in society without becoming 'dull-witted' by balancing

school life, village and town life, and the persistent tradition of herding. Young men who work as herders in the camp are living in the modern age.

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