

**THE EVOLUTION OF LANGO POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, 1800 TO 2017**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I, AWEE FRANCIS, declare that this is a true reflection of my original work and it has never been presented in any other University for any academic award.

AWEE FRANCIS

Signature: ..... Date:.....

**APPROVAL**

I confirm that this dissertation was prepared under my supervision and is ready for submission to the Department of History and Political Science.

**SUPERVISOR**

Associate Professor of History, Dr. Charles Amone

Signature ..... Date .....

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my beloved wife Suzan Awee, my children Lois Awee, Louis Awee and Luke E. Awee, and my brother Sammy Bob Okino. Thank you so much for bearing with me when I was engaged in this tedious work. May God bless you.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the study was to examine the evolution of Lango political institutions from 1800 to 2017. It covered the pre-colonial to post-colonial periods. The study further aimed to show when and how Lango political institutions evolved. Two theories guided the study namely the Structural Regulation of Internal Affairs theory and the Rule of Political Practicality theory. The study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design in which the researcher applied snowball and convenience sampling techniques. The technique helped the researcher to locate the hidden population such as clan leaders and elders that would not have been known. Interview guides were used while conducting the oral interviews. The study revealed that despite the fact that Lango was a decentralised society, it had clan heads as the main political leaders from pre-colonial to post periods. The study concluded that the Lango originated from Abbysinia (Ethiopia) and that the Lango are of Galla stock. The study further examined the relationship between the Lango and other ethnic groups such as Acholi, Labwor, Karimojong, Iteso, Kumam and Banyoro and it showed that the relationship was based on raids, trade and intermarriages. It revealed that Lango political institutions evolved gradually during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods and that is why the Lango political institutions is currently headed by a Won Nyaci ( a representative of clan leaders).

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

- CA: Constituent Assembly
- DC: District Commissioner
- HSM: Holy Spirit Movement
- IDP: Internally Displaced Person
- IGPP: Inspector General of Protectorate Police
- KY: Kabaka Yekka
- LC: Local Council
- LCHC: Lango Cultural Heritage Centre
- LCLF: Lango Cultural Leaders Foundation
- LDA: Lira District Archives
- LMC: Lira Municipal Council
- LPC: Lango Parliamentary Caucus
- LPI: Lango Political Institutions
- LRA: Lord's Resistance Army
- NAO: Native Authority Ordinance
- NCO: Native Courts Ordinance
- NLO: Native Law Ordinance
- NRA: National Resistance Army
- NRM: National Resistance Movement
- PC: Paramount Chief
- RDC: Resident District Commissioner
- UNC: Uganda National Congress
- UPC: Uganda People's Congress

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Abolition:** Refers to putting to an end the cultural institution that has proved to be a threat to the central government.

**Bride wealth:** This was a marriage payment made by the groom or kin to the kin of the bride in order to ratify a marriage.

**Centralised Societies:** These were highly organised and well-developed political, social and economic institutions. They had organised political authority centered on a chief or king.

**Chiefdom:** These were notional forms of socio-political organisation in which political and economic powers was exercised by a single person over many communities.

**Decentralised societies:** These were societies that were mostly divided into several clans. The clan elders were used to maintain law and order in such societies.

**Egalitarian society:** The society where every person was entitled to rights, receive equal treatment and opportunities.

**Paramount chief:** This refers to rulers of multiple chiefdoms or the rulers of exceptionally powerfully chiefdoms that have subordinated others.

**Political Institutions:** This refers to organised structure of rules and principles within which organisations operate.

**Rebellion:** This refers to the resistance against the legitimate system of governance either elected democratically or by consensus.

**Restoration of institutions:** Refers to the bringing back of the traditional institutions that were formerly abolished by the system of governance.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The Lango are one of the ethnic groups in the present-day Northern Uganda. According to Driberg<sup>1</sup>, the term “Lango” is both plural and singular although the non-Lango prefer to call them “Langi”. Their language is *Leb-Lango*. Epila<sup>2</sup> further noted that, the current districts predominantly occupied by the majority of Lango are Lira, Apac, Dokolo, Otuke, Alebtong, Kole, Amolatar, Oyam and Kwania. Driberg<sup>3</sup> added that, the Lango belong to the Nilo-Hamitic (*Ateker*) group, which includes the Labwor, Iteso, Kumam, Karimojong, Dodoth, Turkana and Toposa. However as noted by Crazzolaro<sup>4</sup>, the Lango share a lot of material culture with the Lwo stalk in East Africa. According to Uganda Bureau of statistics (UBOS)<sup>5</sup>, the population of Lango people in Uganda by 2017 National Population and Housing Census records was at 2.5 million people, approximately 5.75% of the estimated 40 million Ugandans at that time. Lango land is bordered by Acholi and Labwor in the North, Iteso and Kumam in the East. Lake Kyoga and the Nile constitute a natural frontier between Lango and their Bantu neighbours, that is, the Basoga, Baganda, Banyala, Baruli, and Banyoro, including the Lwo Chope found in Kiryandongo district.

There are limited geographical boundaries that separate Lango with the Acholi in the Northern direction, Iteso and Kumam in the Eastern direction. All Lango neighbours

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<sup>1</sup> Driberg.J.H. *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p.42

<sup>2</sup> Epila. J. S. Otara, *Eco culture of the Langi*, The plain Nilotes of Central –Northern Uganda, Kampala, FountainPublishers, 2013, p. 15

<sup>3</sup> Driberg.J.H. *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p.42

<sup>4</sup> Crazzolaro. J. P., “Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos PublishersLtd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>5</sup>UBOS, *The National Population and Housing Census Report*, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2018, p.4

share similar climatic conditions and the same land tenure system. Lango land forms part of the extensive plateau north of Lake Kyoga with an elevation of about 1,050m. According to Tosh<sup>6</sup> the land is generally flat with an igneous type of rock outcrops and these can be identified by the names of the hills, which are mainly situated north of Lira town today. He gave examples of Ngetta hill, Akia hill and Obim hill. He added that, the land rises gradually towards the watershed with River Aswa in the north, falling away abruptly on the northern side of the Eastern rift valley. The Northern demarcation of Lango land is therefore marked by the Otuke and Opit hills.

This research analysed the evolution of Lango political institutions from 1800 to 2017. The research focused on how and why the political institutions emerged and their roles in shaping the traditional clan systems in Lango. The study further examined the relationship between the Lango and other ethnic groups such as Acholi, Labwor, Karimojong, Iteso, Kumam and Banyoro. Like other pre-colonial societies in Uganda, Lango did not survive colonialism. Therefore, the study also examined the changes that colonialism brought to the Lango political structure such as the rise of *Won Nyaci* which was introduced by the British from centralised societies like Buganda and Bunyoro Kingdoms. Furthermore the study analysed the effects of the restoration of traditional institutions in 1995 in the Lango political systems.

According to Tarantino<sup>7</sup>, a Catholic priest who worked in Lango in the 1940s and 1950s, the Lango are believed to have migrated from Abyssinia (present day Ethiopia). He associated them with the Ateker family such as Iteso and Toposa. He acknowledged the Lango use of Lwo language as noted by Crazzolaro<sup>8</sup>, as a means of survival because

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<sup>6</sup>Tosh. J. *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.64

<sup>7</sup>Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.10

<sup>8</sup>Crazzolaro. J. P., "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos

the areas occupied by Lango were predominately for Lwo speaking ethnic group. Tarantino<sup>9</sup> added that, the first three Lango clans that migrated were *Atek, Arak and Okarowok* under different clan heads and in the successive years several other clans emerged up to two hundred and fifty (250 clans). Their first settlement in Uganda was in Otuke hills (present day Abim District). Driberg<sup>10</sup> also noted that, from Otuke hills further migration and settlement took place up to the present day Lango land. This information therefore motivated the researcher to investigate the extent to which these clan leaders exercised their political powers over the clans in their control in order to establish their political systems.

Currently traditional leadership is a topical issue and has been shared in churches, cultural meetings and above all the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda. Traditional leadership stems from pre-colonial societies in Africa which was categorised as centralised and decentralised societies. According to Kevin<sup>11</sup>, centralised societies were well developed with political, social and economic institutions. Kevin<sup>12</sup> added that, the system had organised central political authority (Chief or King). He further gave examples of societies such Zulu kingdom in South Africa, Mali kingdom in West Africa, Buganda, Bunyoro, and Toro kingdoms in Uganda.

On the other hand, Artkinson<sup>13</sup> noted that, decentralised societies were characterised by lack of chiefly institutions and instead were divided into several clans as the basis of their political authority. The examples of decentralised societies in Uganda includes the Lango,

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Publishers

Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>9</sup>Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.10

<sup>10</sup>Driberg.J.H. *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p.42

<sup>11</sup>Kevin. S., *History of Africa*, Macmillan Education Ltd, London 1989, P.68

<sup>12</sup>Ibid

<sup>13</sup>Atkinson .R.R., "The Evolution of Ethnicity among the Acholi of Uganda: The Pre-Colonial Phase", *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 36, No.12, No.4 (2006)

Alur, Karimojong and Iteso. Wright<sup>14</sup> argued that, the clan elders were used to maintain law and order in such societies. He further observed that, decentralised societies also lacked properly organised military machinery. They did not have standing armies and in this case each clan organised its small force for maintenance of security, that is, every elder was concerned about the security of his clan. The study therefore intended to examine the evolution of political institutions of a decentralised society like Lango in Uganda.

According to Tosh<sup>15</sup> and Epila<sup>16</sup>, the first traditional leaders of Lango included Odyek Owidi who was the Awitong of *Atek* clan, Bua Atyeno who was the leader of *Abwor* clan, Owiny Akullu who was the leader of *Arak* clan, and Icaya (Isaya) Ogwanguji who was the leader of *Oki* clan. He further observed that, those clan heads were assisted by *Jago* in their respective clans. *Jago* was the head of a village setting of about 50 to 100 families living in nearby areas. *Jago* also had a council of elders who assisted him in his work. Therefore, it is against this background that this study was carried out to provide historical information to explain why Lango political institutions were not fully examined by the previous writers on the Lango way of life from 1800 to 2017 because the available literature such as Driberg<sup>17</sup> and Tosh<sup>18</sup> recognised Lango as a stateless society yet the society had a government before colonialism and could occasionally be called for whenever a need arose and this would be led by a military general called *Twon Lwak* (Bull of the people) chosen to lead the warriors selected by clan heads (*Owitong*) from the different clans that united as a single force to eliminate the

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<sup>14</sup>Wright .M.J., “Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji”, *The Uganda Journal, the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No.,3(Sept., 1957),p.87

<sup>15</sup>Tosh. J. *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978,p.64

<sup>16</sup>Epila. J. S., *Eco culture of the Langi*, The plain Nilotes of Central –Northern Uganda, Kampala, FountainPublishers, 2013, p. 15

<sup>17</sup>Driberg.J.H. *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p.42

<sup>18</sup>Tosh. J. *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978,p.64

enemies. However, it should be noted that, the role of *Twon Lwak* could only be dissolved after the war and could receive no significant position in society after the war apart from sharing the booty got from the war.

According to Ingham<sup>19</sup>, when the British entered Lango by 1894, they found that the political system in place (the clan system) could not help them to effectively establish themselves in Lango. They then sought for the help of the Baganda agents such as Semei Kakungulu who was able to provide the Baganda agents to work as chiefs in Lango. After fully establishing their rule in Lango by 1911, Tosh<sup>20</sup> observed that, the Baganda chiefs had outlived their duties in Lango. They had become very unpopular because of their brutality to the local people hence faced rejection. He further noted that, the Baganda chiefs serving in Lango were then replaced by the local chiefs in Lango. However, these Lango chiefs worked for the interest of the colonial government and not their clans. The change from a traditional chief to a colonial chief jeopardised the activities of Lango political institutions. Further more Huddle<sup>21</sup> argued that, towards the attainment of independence, the British realised that there was need to have a constitutional head to represent every ethnic group from societies that did not have kings, such as Lango. Such societies were given the opportunity to choose a person to represent their interest in the Legislative Council. This therefore led to the rise of Won Nyaci in Lango. According to Odwee<sup>22</sup>, Won Nyaci was a representative of clan leaders. He added that, the Won Nyaci was chosen by the council of *Owitong* (Clan heads) to represent their interest. Consequently Yokosafati Engur was chosen as the first Won Nyaci of Lango in 1956 and

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<sup>19</sup>Ingham .K., “The British Administration in Lango District, 1907-1935”, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19.No.2( Sept., 1955), p.156-168

<sup>20</sup>Ibid

<sup>21</sup>Huddle.J.G, “The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango Disrict”, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>22</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of the Lango in Uganda And the Pride of African People* , Lisa Publishing company limited, Kampala, 2012

served for only two years because of the political changes that engulfed the country at that time (Lango land riots of 1958).

On the other hand, it should be noted that, the national politics of Uganda by 1967 led to abolition of all traditional or cultural institutions in Uganda, Lango inclusive. Mutibwa<sup>23</sup> observed that, the activities of some cultural institutions were contradicting with the work of the central government and therefore, viewed them as setbacks to the progress of the newly acquired independence henceforth it was abolished by Obote on suspicion that cultural institutions would jeopardise his work as a president of Uganda. However according to Kasfir<sup>24</sup>, in 1995 the NRM government decided to restore traditional or cultural institutions as long as their activities do not interfere with government business. Many communities in Uganda such as Buganda, Bunyoro, Toro, Acholi to mention but a few restored their cultural institutions as early as 1990's but Lango delayed up to 2006.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Whereas there are several publications about the rise, growth and development of centralised societies in Uganda which include Buganda, Bunyoro and Toro, more information is still required to document the history of decentralised societies. When the British arrived in Uganda, they quickly compiled the history of centralised societies and used the existing political structures in centralised societies to extend their rule to other parts of Uganda, Lango inclusive.

Despite the existence of the traditional political leadership of Lango society, the British went ahead and established the "Ganda system" (patrilineal inheritance system). It was a system whereby leadership was passed on from father to son. However, for the case of

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<sup>23</sup> Mutibwa.M. P, *A History of Uganda*, The Frist 100 years 1894-1995, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2016, p. 222

<sup>24</sup> Kasfir Nelson, "The Restoration of Buganda Kingdom Government", *The African Journals, The Journal Of Modern African Studies*, Vol.57, Issue NO.4 2014), p.20

Lango, the British first appointed the Baganda chiefs to rule in Lango but when the chiefs became unpopular, they appointed traditional leaders from Lango to rule on their behalf and these were mainly clan heads (*Owitong*). However, the roles of these clan leaders serving colonial masters were completely different from their traditional roles.

The application of the Ganda system among the Lango was interpreted that, the British were not satisfied with the strength of Lango political systems. That was the reason why they brought in the idea of *Won Nyaci* in Lango political system so that it would be equated to a centralised system. However, the traditional institutions were abolished in both centralised and decentralised societies from 1967 to 1995 and this made the office of the *Won Nyaci* not to have much influence in the Lango political systems. After the restoration of traditional institutions in Lango, the *Won Nyaci* wanted to make its office hereditary and this brought conflicts in the Lango political system. It is upon this background that this research was conducted.

### **1.3. General Objectives**

The major objective of the study was to examine the evolution of Lango political institutions from the pre-colonial to post-colonial period.

#### **1.3.1. Specific objectives**

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To trace the migration and settlement of the Lango in their present land.
- ii. To analyse the relationship between Lango and her neighbours.
- iii. To examine the political developments in Lango from 1894 to 2017.
- iv. To examine how the restoration of traditional institutions has affected Lango from 1995 to 2017

#### **1.3.2. Research Questions**

- i. How did the Lango migrate and settle in their present land?

- ii. What was the relationship between Lango and her neighbours?
- iii. How did the political changes affect the Lango political systems from 1894 to 2017?
- iv. How has the restoration of traditional institution affected Lango political systems from 1995 to 2017?

#### **1.4. Scope of the study**

The content scope focused on the evolution of Lango political institutions from the pre-colonial to post-colonial period. The research traced the migration and settlement of the Lango in their present land; it further analysed the relationship between Lango and her neighbours; it also examined colonial developments in the Lango political institutions from 1894 to 1962, and finally examined the restoration of the Lango political institutions in the post-colonial period from 1967 to 2017.

The study covered a period from 1800 to 2017. The year 1800 was considered as a starting point because that is when the first clan chiefs held their first meeting and political seats whereas 2017 was chosen as the ending year because of the rival faction that emerged between His Highness *Won Nyaci* Odur Yosam Ebi and Odongo. R. Okune as a rival *Won Nyaci* therefore making the Lango to have two traditional leaders serving concurrently.

The geographical scope of the study was represented by three sample sub-counties which included; Adekokwok, Aduku and Adwari. These areas were selected for the study because the researcher believed had vital information for the study since they were originally occupied by prominent traditional clan leaders of Lango society such as Ogwangujji, Odora and Obua. The following map can explain the area of the study.

### A sketch map of Lango showing the area of study



**Figure 1:** Area of the Study

#### **1.5. Significance of the study**

The findings of the study brought out unique features of the Lango political institutions at different epochs. This is important in showing that whereas the colonial administrators had thought that Lango society had no political systems hence they introduced the Ganda political structure which failed to work.

The findings of the study would further be used to create more information about the political organisation of the decentralised societies in Uganda. This would add in new knowledge to what the previous writers had done about decentralised societies.

The findings of the study would benefit the people of Lango politically, economically and socially.

#### **1.6. Theoretical Framework**

A number of leadership theories on segmentary societies have been developed. However, this study was guided by two theories. That is, the structural regulation of internal affairs and the rule of political practicality theories as analysed below:

### **The structural Regulation of Internal Affairs**

The first theory that the researcher used is referred to as the Structural Regulation of Internal Affairs. According to Ayitney<sup>25</sup> the theory states that, a quarrel between members of two sub-lineages is an exclusive matter of the immediate parent lineage and a dispute between two members of the same minimal lineage is of concern to that unit only. He further observed that the principle tends to limit the arena of concern to the smallest relevant unit. Therefore, the theory works best in a small-scale political unit hence it fits the study because Lango society was managed in a segmentary way. The theory guided the researcher because Lango political system is divided into small clan units (the major of the theory). It also guided the researcher to reach the clans and their leaders in their small units. For example, the researcher was able to reach *Atek* clan divided as *Atek Adyang Okwer Kic*, *Atek Odyek Owidi*, *Atek Oduto Ogole* and *Atek Adok*.

### **The Rule of Political Practicality**

On the other hand, the second theory that the researcher used is referred to as the Rule of Political Practicality. As observed by Ayitney<sup>26</sup> the theory states that, political units must be practical. He further observed that, a political unit must defend itself, which implies a minimum size, and it must have internal cohesion so that interaction is possible. The theory suggests no office holders but only representative of groups. The theory is applicable in Lango where there are no rulers but clan leaders (*Owitong*) selected to represent the collective will of their respective clans. The theory therefore guided the researcher to establish the evolution of Lango political institutions which brings out the principle of the theory (political units must be practical). For example in Lango, one was meant to fight and win in a battle in order to become a clan leader

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<sup>25</sup> Ayitney George, B.N., "Indigenous African Institutions", University of Pretoria Press, 1999, p.59

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

(*Awitong* meaning tip of the spear)

### 1.7. Literature Review

Despite the fact that the global, the African and the Ugandan history of decentralised and centralised societies is growing, the Lango political institutions require more scholarly studies to augment the works of Driberg<sup>27</sup> and Tosh<sup>28</sup>. This is because the two wrote about the history of stateless societies and Lango in particular and mainly emphasised on social and economic ways of life and as well as the clan system when looking at the wars between Lango and her neighbours. Therefore, the researcher intended to document the political way of life of the Lango so as to have a complete historical documentation.

Globally, different scholars have taken keen interest in the history of political institutions. For example, Weber<sup>29</sup> observed that, decentralised societies did not have supreme leaders such as kings but were led by clan leaders and so he emphasised the organisation of leaders in centralised societies. He noted that, centralised societies have a king at the top followed by his junior officers and that the kings' authority is final (unquestionable) by the subjects. He further noted that, in centralised societies, the economies are very strong partly because of taxes collected internally, and also tributes from conquered states. Although Weber noted the history of societies in Uganda, he concentrated on the history of centralised political institutions and not decentralised societies like Lango. Scholars like Durkheim<sup>30</sup> and Schmitter<sup>31</sup> who wrote about decentralised societies mainly and they dealt with it's the definition and not the political

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<sup>27</sup>Driberg. J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p. 31

<sup>28</sup>Tosh. J., *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History Of An East African Stateless society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.89-90

<sup>29</sup>Max Webber, *Segmentary Societies in Europe*, New York, University Press, 1920, p. 101

<sup>30</sup>Durkheim. E., *Theories of Decentralized states in Europe*, Paris, University, 1910, p. 15

<sup>31</sup>Schmitter. P.C., *Comparative Politics*, New York, John & Hopkins University Press, 1936, p. 24

structure of decentralised societies like Lango. Therefore, most scholars on the global perspective have concentrated much on the centralised societies leaving out the political institutions of decentralised societies. Hence need for this research to narrow this gap. At the African perspective, Kevin<sup>32</sup> and Ayithey<sup>33</sup> observed that, in both centralised and decentralised societies, the traditional leaders played important roles in the emergence, growth and day to day running of such societies. They were the custodians of peace and the traditions of their respective states or kingdoms. They further observed that the institution of traditional leadership existed in Africa in the pre- colonial, colonial and even during post-colonial periods and some of the examples of traditional leaders at the African level are; Paramount chief of Mpezeni in Zambia, Sultan of Sokoto in Nigeria, Olowo of Owo in Nigeria, Oba of Benin and Shaka of Zulu in South Africa. They further stated that traditional leaders were highly democratic in their unique ways but they did not bring out clearly how these leaders operated in decentralised societies. In addition to that, both Kevin and Ayithey mentioned only examples from other African countries and not in Uganda and hence the need to fill the gap through the study of evolution of political institutions among the Lango.

At the Ugandan perspective, scholars like Driberg<sup>34</sup>, documented that political leaders existed in Lango traditional society. He further gave examples like Ekongoro who was a paramount chief, Mugaicha and Obiyamarokakare. However, he did not bring out when the first development of the political institutions of Lango started which is the intention of the study. Other scholars like Tarantino<sup>35</sup> described the origin, migration, settlement and the different clans of the Lango. Although Tarantino acknowledged the existence of clan leaders, his major emphasis was on clan systems, population increase, and not the

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<sup>32</sup>Kevin. S., *History of Africa*, New York City, Palgrave Macmillan Publishers, 2005, p. 56

<sup>33</sup>Ayithey George. B.N., "Indigenous African Institutions", University of Pretoria Press, 1999, p.16

<sup>34</sup>Driberg. J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p.205

<sup>35</sup>Tarantino. A., *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.10

political institutions therefore the need for this study to bring out the history and the development of Lango political institutions as an example of a decentralised society.

Tarantino<sup>36</sup> and Nzita<sup>37</sup> observed that, the Lango originated from Abyssinia. “The Lango believe that they came from mountains, which had abundant rainfall. This land could have been Kaffa and this presupposed indeed that the Lango originated from Abyssinia (Ethiopia)”. Their original home was North of Lake Turkana where they used to live along with the Jie and the Karimojong and this implies that the Lango are closely related to the Dodoth, Lotuko, Toposa, Turkana of Kenya, Iteso, Kumam and Karimojong of Uganda who comprise of the Ateker family in Uganda. It should be noted that, much as Tarantino and Nziza tried to identify the origin of Lango, they did not clearly examine the Lango political leadership after their settlement in present day Uganda. Therefore the study enabled the researcher to establish that it was the Lango traditional leadership that spear headed the migration of the Lango from their cradle land to their present settlement.

Similarly, Driberge<sup>38</sup> in his writing focused much on the migration and settlement of the Lango. He said that, the Lango never settled together in one area but continued to migrate within and outside Lango land. He further noted that the clans showed the tendency to sub divide due to migrations and some of the sub divisions lost traces of the original prohibitions. The question then arises that, how can people move to new places and even create sets of sub division without any form of formal political leadership? Therefore, it is the gap created by Driberg that motivated the researcher to carry out this study in order to establish the formal political leadership in Lango.

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid

<sup>37</sup>Nzita . R., *Peoples and Cultures of Uganda*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 1993, p.32

<sup>38</sup>Driberg. J.H, *The Lango A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., London, 1923, p.190-191

According to Odwee<sup>39</sup> the organisation structure of Lango was very clear immediately they arrived at Ngetta between 1810 and 1820. He noted that there were formalities of state authority in place in form of federal clan organisation and the overall Lango was governed through the council of elders formed through age sets, a well-established system which probably was unknown to the British. He added that, why did the British in 1915 abolish the *Aworon* system of quinquennial system that built up the Lango state power and maintained the five territorial divisions for a century before the British came? It is true that Odwee mentioned that Lango had political institutions before colonialism but he does not show how these political institutions were structured hence the need for this study to present the structure of Lango political institutions.

Accordingly, Tosh<sup>40</sup> wrote about the relationship between Lango and their neighbours using the economic perspective. He did not follow the historical perspective to analyse the rise and development of Lango political institution. He argued that Lango traded with the Sudanese on the Victoria Nile in the 1860's. Therefore, Lango became tenuously connected with overseas markets for the first time. Karugire<sup>41</sup> added that, the Sudanese also known as Nubians or Khartoumers created a demand for ivory, which was passed on to the Lango by Banyoro traders and to a limited degree by the Sudanese traders themselves. Gray<sup>42</sup> further noted that, in north – western Lango where the Sudanese operated directly, people acquired firearms in small quantities probably during 1880's among the *Jo Arak* of Aber and *Jo Olwa* of Iceme and were majorly in the hands of clan leaders. Although Tosh talked about the clan leaders and even showed their roles in the economic organisation, he did not emphasise the political

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<sup>39</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of Lango People in Uganda And The Pride of African People*, Kampala, Lisa Enterprises Ltd., 2012, p.18

<sup>40</sup>Tosh, J., *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History Of An East African Stateless society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.89-90

<sup>41</sup>Karugire, S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.27

<sup>42</sup>Gray John Miller, "Notes On The Lango", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.16, No.22 (1956), p.149

organisation of the Lango. Therefore, this study came in to bring out the political roles of these clan leaders.

Further observation was made by Karugire<sup>43</sup> that, Lango was very instrumental during pre – colonial period as far as her relationship with neighbours was concerned. He asserted that Lango played a great role in Bunyoro by helping kings such as Kamurasi and Kabalega in the fight during succession disputes. He further noted that, Lango helped Bunyoro fight their arch-enemy Buganda kingdom during the same period. However, Karugire<sup>44</sup> did not clearly show the organisation and how the Lango political institutions influenced the collaboration with Bunyoro but only recognised the roles of Lango clan leaders on Bunyoro affairs as great warriors who could achieve great results when relied upon. However there is clear evidence that these great warriors had political organisation and leadership much as Karugire did not emphasise about it. Therefore, this study brings out how the Lango political institutions played an important role in Bunyoro and other areas that were not captured by Karugire’s scholarly writings.

Concerning colonial development in Lango, Tosh<sup>45</sup> observed that, Lango traditional leadership changed from highly informal and parochial clan leadership of the nineteenth century to the powerful and bureaucratic chieftainship through which the Lango were administered during the early twentieth century. However, how this kind of chieftainship so alien to the egalitarian values of the indigenous culture was established in Lango which was not fully exhausted. Therefore, the researcher intended to establish how the British integrated their indirect rule in Lango using the Ganda model since they did not have a unitary leader that commanded respect from his subjects.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid

<sup>44</sup> Karugire.S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.27

<sup>45</sup> Tosh.J., *Clan leaders and Colonial chiefs in Lango*, The Political history of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 44

In relation to the above, Tosh<sup>46</sup> only acknowledged the role of clan leaders in Lango during the colonial period but did not do much justice about the existence of the same in the precolonial period. When he said that “Lango had no political head and he further referred to Lango as a stateless society”. Similarly the same view was shared by Epila<sup>47</sup> but he emphasised the economic and social way of the Lango leaving out their political way of life. Therefore, the study intended to find out the political leadership behind these organised economic and social way of life of the Lango. Tosh<sup>48</sup> further examined Lango leadership but strictly at a localised position and with less little authority which is contrary to today’s understanding of clan leadership. He further noted that a clan leader did not have retainers or courts; neither did he have a recognised office. This view was contrary to what was happening in Lango society and it is upon this that the study comes in to examine the evolution of Lango political institutions.

On the other hand, Mutibwa<sup>49</sup> observed that, during the British occupation of Lango land, they used the Baganda agents with an intention of making Lango a centralised society and yet Lango was already decentralised. As noted by Gray<sup>50</sup> the British established their posts in Kakungulus’ former bases at Bululu in South-East in 1907 and Palango in the South-west in 1909. He further noted that, on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1911, the two districts of Bululu and Palango as known by then were merged to form Lango. Therefore, as elsewhere in the protectorate, the Baganda agents were introduced in

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<sup>46</sup> Tosh. J., “Colonial Chiefs in a Stateless Society”, A Case- study from Northern Uganda, *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge University Press, Vol.14, No.3 (1973), P.473-490

<sup>47</sup> Epila. J.E.S., *Eco culture of the Langi*, The plain Nilotes of Central –Northern Uganda, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2013, p.21

<sup>48</sup> Tosh. J. A., *Clan leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, Oxford University press, New York, p.6

<sup>49</sup> Mutibwa.M.P, *A History of Uganda*, The Frist 100 years 1894-1995, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2016, p. 222

<sup>50</sup> Gray John Miller, “Kakungulu in Bukedi”, *The Uganda Journal*, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1, (March, 1963), p.34-35

Lango. The question is, weren't there political leaders in Lango? Why did the British use Baganda agents? Does this explain the mixed reactions? Therefore this was the intention of the study to examine the rise and development of Lango political institutions.

More still, Odwee<sup>51</sup> observed that, the position of the Won Nyaci was a colonial creation which was the British intention to make Lango be like a centralised society such as Baganda. He added that right from colonial time, Won Nyaci was a government agent and more of a public servant because he was even on the government pay roll. Although Odwee<sup>52</sup> recognised the existence of the Won Nyaci, he only attributes it to colonial creation. He does not clearly show political institutions that governed Lango society in the precolonial period. Therefore, the study came in to show that even before colonial influence in Lango; there already existed established political structures.

The 1995<sup>53</sup> constitution of the Republic of Uganda Chapter Sixteen, article 246 (a) states that, subject to the provisions of this constitution, the institution of traditional leader or cultural leadership may exist in any area of Uganda in accordance with culture, customs and traditions or wishes of the people to whom it applies. The constitution added that, in any community such as Lango where the issue of traditional leaders had not been resolved, the community members were to use the methods prescribed by the parliament. The same constitution also prohibited compulsory allegiance to a traditional leader or even contribute to the cost of maintaining a traditional leader.

Odwee<sup>54</sup> observed that, the restoration of traditional institution in Uganda was done due to continuous demands and pressure from kingdom areas especially Buganda. He

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<sup>51</sup>Odwee Julius Peter., *The Tri-Centenary of Lango People in Uganda And The Pride of African People*, Kampala, Lisa Enterprises Ltd., 2012, p. 45

<sup>52</sup>Ibid, p.46

<sup>53</sup>The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, S.I. 354/1995; Act 13/2000.

<sup>54</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of the Lango in Uganda And the Pride of African People* , Lisa Publishing company limited, Kampala, 2012

further noted that, before the abolition of traditional institutions in Uganda, centralised states such as Buganda, Bunyoro and Tooro had enjoyed a high degree of economic, political and social independence from the central government whereas the decentralised societies such as Lango did not enjoy such privileges and therefore were reluctant to embrace the restoration of traditional institutions. Much as Odwee<sup>55</sup> clearly stated the reasons for restoration of traditional institutions in centralised states, he did not explain why areas that initially did not have kings or a unitary traditional leader such as Lango were encouraged to restore traditional leaders. Therefore, this study has tried to explain why traditional leadership was restored in Lango and why the people of Lango adopted the idea of paramount chief and not sticking to their prior leadership through clan chiefs.

In conclusion, all scholars who have written about the Lango society mainly focused on the origin, ethnic identity, language, economic activities, religion, culture and other social aspects of Lango society and completely had an oversight on the evolution of Lango political institutions. For example, while other scholars have dealt much on writing about the political structure of centralised societies such as Buganda and Bunyoro thereby creating room to study about decentralised societies like Lango. For example, scholars such as Driberg<sup>56</sup>, focused on Lango ethnic grouping and culture while Tarantino<sup>57</sup> focused on the origin of the Lango, Bruno<sup>58</sup> focused on language while Karugire<sup>59</sup> mainly focused on the relationship between Lango and her neighbours. Owing to the above views and many more, it is therefore the intention of the study to be conducted about the evolution of Lango political institutions.

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid

<sup>56</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., London, 1923, p.150-161

<sup>57</sup>Tarantino. A., *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.7

<sup>58</sup>Bruno.M., , *A practical Lango Grammer and Dictionary*, 1991, p.15

<sup>59</sup>Karugire.S.R, *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.43

## **1.8. Research Methodology**

This section discusses how the study was conducted. It focused on the research design, study population, sampling techniques, research instruments, data sources and collection procedures and data analysis that was applied in the study.

### **1.8.1 Research design**

In this study, a qualitative research approach was used. Therefore, face-to-face interviews were conducted, and documents reviewed. A thorough analysis was done while comparing the written literature with the raw data from the field and it was concluded that there were relationships between the oral literature and the written records about Lango political systems. For example, both oral tradition and the available literature agreed that Lango did not have a king but were led by clan leaders who would be united only under a military leader whenever there was an invasion by foreigners or whenever they were going for an expedition such as raids.

### **1.8.2 Study Population**

The population interviewed included both men and women which constituted of elderly people, clan leaders, (former and current), opinion leaders / government officials and religious leaders that were selected from three sub-counties in Lango. The clan leaders were *Won Nyaci*, *Owtitong* (head of different clans), *Twale* (Prime Minister), *Rwodi* (Chiefs) and *Jagi* (Asst. Chiefs). The above population was selected because the researcher believed that they were resourceful as far as getting data to accomplish the study was concerned. The selection of the elderly people was based on the rationale that by the virtue of their age they were in position to provide historical knowledge or information about the development of Lango political institutions. For example, the chiefs were the custodian of the laws, the elders knew the history of the Lango people while the government officials kept the records about the political system and the

religious leaders had evidently attended the inauguration ceremonies of clan leaders.

### **1.8.3 Sampling technique**

Since a qualitative approach was used, the researcher applied snowball and convenience sampling techniques. Here the researcher got the advantage in that one informant would recruit future informants that were acquainted with the Lango political systems. As the sample built up, enough data was gathered and they were useful for the researcher while compiling the field work report. More so, the techniques helped the researcher to locate the hidden population that would not have been known and at the same time, the techniques were cheap in terms of money and time. In addition to the above mentioned the respondents were conveniently accessed at their appropriate time and willingly gave information about Lango political systems that enabled the researcher in writing this dissertation.

### **1.8.4. Data sources**

Both primary and secondary data sources were used in order to get qualitative information on the evolution of Lango political institutions. As far as primary data sources are concerned, the researcher organised interviews using an interview guide (appendix 2) on evolution of political institutions among the Lango and interviewed the clan leaders, the elders, the opinion leaders and religious leaders in order to find out their views on its development. On the other hand, the secondary data sources for this study were on-line sources such as journals about Lango history, culture, articles about Lango people, their organisation, and textbooks about the general history of Lango were printed for research purposes. Therefore, the documentary review was carefully done and only relevant information was extracted and used in data analysis.

Furthermore, the researcher also visited other data sources such as the National Museum at Kamwokya in Kampala, Kyambogo University Library, Makerere University Library and Lango Cultural Heritage Centre in Lira where data was got and used in the study.

#### **1.8.5 Data collection procedures and methods**

The interview guide (appendix 2) was used as a tool in data collection. Face to face conversations were made between the researcher and the informants with the objective of collecting detailed and relevant information for the purpose of the study. The researcher interacted with the informants face to face because it proved to be flexible and enabled him to collect data in a detailed qualitative manner. The interview guide was structured in such a way that it enabled free discussions and open answers to be given by the respondents hence creating a conducive atmosphere for the research hence enabling the researcher to answer the objectives of the study.

#### **1.8.6. Data processing and data analysis**

The data from interviews was recorded in a notebook, sorted, coded, edited and transcribed into the main themes of the study, which was guided directly by the objectives of the study. The researcher used the narrative method to analyse the data and incorporated the results from the documents reviewed. The narrative method was applied by recording interview responses and data collected from documents reviewed. The editing was done for correctness and accuracy as a way of minimising false information about the subject of the study.

#### **1.8.7 Conclusion.**

This chapter discussed the background of the study on evolution of Lango political institutions. The background revealed the origin and ethnic groupings of the Lango as Abbyssinia and Ateker family respectively. It also showed the political systems in Lango from pre-colonial to post-colonial periods. It further reviewed the literature about the

history and development of Lango political systems tracing from early migrations, settlement areas and current dispensations. It, as well, discussed the conflicts that occurred as a result of restoration of traditional institutions in Lango as a motivation for the study. The chapter discussed the general objectives of the study while analysing specific objectives about the evolution of Lango political institutions. Research questions were generated from the specific objectives and the chapter finally discussed the scope, significance, theoretical frame work and methodology adopted for the study. Therefore, it is upon this background that chapter two comes in to discuss the migration and settlement of the Lango in Uganda.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT OF LANGO, 1800 to 1890

#### 2.1 Introduction

Can the history of any people be meaningful without any sense of the place or environment in which they live or lived? This question has one implication that human history does not take place in a vacuum. Therefore, this chapter discusses the origin of the Lango clearly indicating the period of migrations, ethnic grouping, reasons for migration and the eventual separation from Ngetta to the different areas where they are currently settled.

#### A sketch map showing Lango dispersal from Otuke settlement

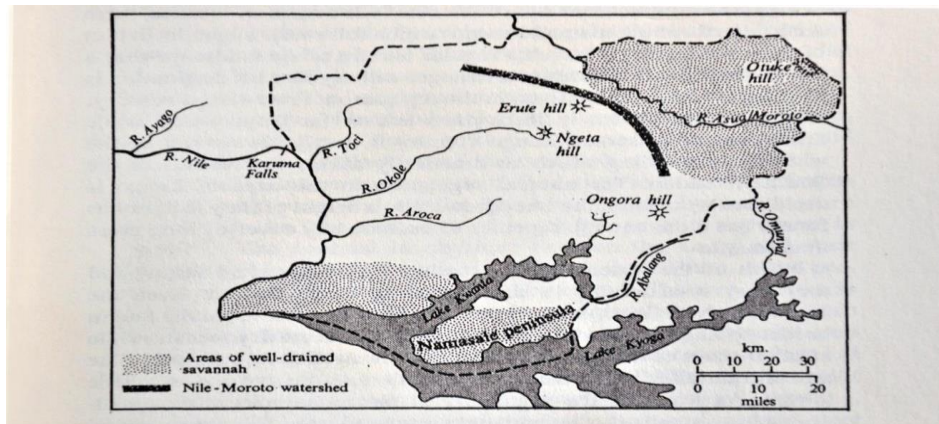


Figure 2: Location of Otuke Hills, adopted from John Tosh, 1978.

The origin, movement and settlement of the Lango in Uganda had its first settlement in Otuke hills. Before their settlement in Otuke hills, the Lango migrated from Abyssinia through Southern Sudan in the areas of Agoro ranges and finally entered and settled in Uganda at Otuke hills as illustrated in the map above.

#### 2.2 Origin of the Lango

The origin of the Lango of Northern Uganda has been a topic of debate by pre-colonial writers and anthropologists up to date. Many writers such as Westermann<sup>60</sup> and

<sup>60</sup>Westermann. W., "The African Today", *The international institute of African Studies and Cultures*, Oxford University Press, 1934, p.35

Driberg<sup>61</sup> have tried to link them with the Nilotic groups like the Acholi, Jopadhola, Alur and the Jalu of Kenya. Meanwhile other writers such as Tarantino<sup>62</sup> have contested such classification as being historically incorrect and forth linking them to the Ateker groups of Uganda like the Iteso, Karimojong, Jie, Turkana and Toposa. Other authorities such as Webster<sup>63</sup>, Ogot<sup>64</sup> and Crazzolara<sup>65</sup> have also tried to solve the problem by concluding that the Lango of Northern Uganda are a result of fusion of several ethnic groups involving the Lwo, Sudanic clans and the Ateker. However, basing on oral tradition Odwee<sup>66</sup>, a retired police officer observed that, “we went to Ethiopia and even found the remnants of Lango living there and they affirmed that, the only connection between Lango and Lwo came as a result of the need for survival since the Lango were few in number. He also noted that, the Lango had to marry the Lwo girls so as to build the relationship between the two so that in times of the war, the Lwo could not entirely kill the Lango since they were their in-laws”. Olang<sup>67</sup> a clan leader of Bako Olang added that, he went to Ethiopia and found the remnants of Lango there. Therefore, basing on the evidence above from the elders in Lango, it is right to assert that the Lango indeed originated from Abyssinia but only met with the Lwo communities during the course of their migration to Otuke areas. This interaction created the need for the Lango to defend themselves from the occupants of the area (Lwo communities) and this required some form of leadership. So the Lango organised themselves into clans under different leaders thereby evolving the Lango political systems.

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<sup>61</sup>Driberg J.H., “Rain Making Among The Lango”, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland Publications, Vol.49 ( Jan., -Jun.,1919), p.52-73

<sup>62</sup>Tarantino. A., *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.7

<sup>63</sup>Webster. J. B., *The problem of Lwo History*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 48

<sup>64</sup>Ogot.B. A., *Zamani: A Survey Of East African History*, Nairobi, Longman Kenya Ltd., 1968. p. 68

<sup>65</sup>Crazzolara. J. P., “Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos PublishersLtd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>66</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, a retired Police officer , 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>67</sup>Olang Joe Erik, a clan leader, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

In relation to the above, Ayoo<sup>68</sup> a retired sub county chief noted that, the Lango originated from Ethiopia and completely disregarded associating the origin of Lango with the Lwo. He agreed that, there was an interaction between the Lango and the Lwo at some point because of migration where they met with the Lwo speaking communities such as Acholi. He further argued that, the earlier observation made by Driberg<sup>69</sup> one of the colonial officials who worked in Lango during the second decade of the twentieth century when he wrote about the Lango and linked their origin to the Lwo who migrated from Sudan in the fifteenth century to the present day Uganda and Kenya. He quoted from Driberg<sup>70</sup> as follows; “To revert the question of the Lango origin however, they are the Nilotic tribe whose language shows close affinities with Shiluk and their movements must be coordinated with those of other tribes of the same family, which exhibit a strong centrifugal tendency, the Shiluk migrated in three directions, that is, South, Southeast and Northwest. The division that wandered southwards is the Acholi. From this group, a number of smaller divisions branched off into South, south west and Southeast. Examples are Alur, Jopadhola and Jaluo”. According to Tarantino<sup>71</sup>.The quotation above was based on mere assumptions because Driberg was misled by the direction that the Lango took during their migration and did not consider the fact that these people could have met on their way since migration was the nature of the pre-colonial society. To disqualify the above argument, he added that, even the Acholi referred to the Lango as *Omiro* (foreigners). This meant that they were not part of the Lwo group of people that found their way into East Africa during the fifteenth century. The places that Driberg named as the original home of the Lango such as Giriki, Wera, Oburyu, Kito and Morokau were

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<sup>68</sup> Ayoo Michael, a retired sub county chief, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>69</sup> Driberg. J.H, *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p. 110

<sup>70</sup> Ibid

<sup>71</sup> Tarantino.A., “Notes On The Lango”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13, No.2, (September, 1949), 145-153

mere Lango settlements after Abyssinia. More so, even the name Kito that Driberg used is an *Ateker* word-meaning mountain. However, from those settlements mentioned, the Lango had to defend their ethnic identity since they were referred to as *Omiro* by forming systems of governance that were not familiar to the Lwo system thereby developing their political systems.

According to Tarantino<sup>72</sup> a Catholic Priest who worked in Lango in 1940's and 1950's, Lango migrated from Abyssinia (present day Ethiopia). He questioned the assumptions of Westermann<sup>73</sup> and Driberg<sup>74</sup> which claimed the origin of the Lango to be of Lwo because they speak Lwo language. He observed that;

The Lango are completely different from the Lwo since there was no concrete evidence to prove that they were indeed akin to them. He therefore noted that, the Lango are closely related to the groups like the Bako, and Dime in Ethiopia, Toposa, Lutuko, Turkana, and Masai of Kenya, Iteso, Karimojong, Kumam, Abwor, Dodoth, Jie (Lango Olok) of Uganda.

Therefore, the Lango elders such as Okino<sup>75</sup> a retired clan leader of Atek and Ogwang<sup>76</sup> a clan leader of *Atek Adyang Okwer Kic* agreed with Tarantino's view and stated that; "if the Lango were akin to the Acholi, then they could not again refer to the Lango as *Omiro* (foreigners)". Therefore, it is clear that the Lango of Northern Uganda are not in any way akin to the Lwo origin and that is why their clan system is different from the Lwo. For example Lango are led by clan leaders whose authority does not extend beyond his own clan whereas among the Lwo, a clan leader can have control over clans outside his own.

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<sup>72</sup>Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p. 51

<sup>73</sup>Westermann, "The African Today", *The international institute of African Studies and Cultures*, Oxford University press, 1934, p. 49

<sup>74</sup>Driberg. J.H, *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p. 42

<sup>75</sup>Okino Ibrahim, a retired clan leader, 92 years old, an informant interviewed on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

<sup>76</sup>Ogwang Robert, a clan leader, 88 years old, an informant interviewed on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

As observed by Tarantino<sup>77</sup> and Wright<sup>78</sup> the animal body parts in Lango share similar names with the Ateker group of people and is completely different from the Lwo names of animal body parts. For example, the Lango name for the rib is *amara* while for the Lwo is *rege*, the thigh is *amuro* while for the Lwo is *emm*, the intestines is *amonten* while the Lwo name is *cin*. On a related note Olang<sup>79</sup> a clan leader of *Bako Olang* observed that, the animal body parts still testify that the Lango are of Ateker group. He further noted that, the Lango came from Abyssinia from the land of Opobo people, and a land of great mountains where there was abundant rainfall. He observed that;

I went to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) where I got some remnants of the Lango, who spoke the language similar to that of Iteso and Karimojong of Uganda, I interacted with them further about their cultural practices and they were similar to that of the Lango of Uganda.

Therefore, this view is similarly shared by most elders in Lango that, *kwarewa oya itung kide* (our ancestors originated from the Far-east) hence pointing to the direction of Ethiopia as the origin of the Lango. Basing on the quotation above, the Lango maintained their political systems as applied to the Iteso and Karimojong thereby developing its political systems.

According to Bruno<sup>80</sup>, the Lango accent is different from the Lwo. The way certain words are pronounced and the names given are different from Lango meaning that, the Lango learnt Lwo dialect and mixed it up with their original dialect. For example, the Lwo word like *Lapwony* is pronounced in Lango simply as *Apwony* (teacher). Omach<sup>81</sup> a retired teacher noted that, the Lwo names are situational. Examples are Komakech

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<sup>77</sup>Tarantino.A., "Notes On The Lango", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13, No.2, (September, 1949), 145-153

<sup>78</sup>Wright .M.J., "Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji", The Uganda Journal,*the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No., 3( Sept., 1957),p.87

<sup>79</sup>Olang Joe Erik,clan leader of Bako Olang, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>80</sup>Bruno.M., , *A practical Lango Grammer and Dictionary*, 1991, p.15

<sup>81</sup>Oamch Ario, a retired teacher, 71 years old , an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> Janaury, 2019

(unlucky), Okwera (rejection), and Kumagum (blessed) while the Lango names have no meaning apart from being named after an elder or in memory of someone of great significance such as a war leader. As observed by Bruno<sup>82</sup> that, one of the chief nations of the late kingdom of Unyoro is the Lango people who although often grouped with Nilotic Negros are really of the Galla stock and speech. They form in fact an important link in the chain of Hamitic peoples who extend from Galla land through Unyoro and Uganda Southwards to Lake Tanganyika. Tarantino<sup>83</sup> noted that, the Lango preserved their mother tongue amidst Bantu and Negroid populations and distinguished their independent spirit, living in small groups and recognising no tribal chiefs except those chosen to defend the common interest in the time of war. Therefore, up to now it is very easy to distinguish the Lango accent from the other Lwo speaking groups. The words spoken are pronounced differently. For example *Okere* in Lango means a baby while in Lwo, *Latin* means baby and even the counting of months is also different, for instance January in Lango is *Orara Atidi* while in Lwo, *Dwe me acel*, February in Lango is *Orara Adwong*, while in Lwo, *Dwe me aryo* and April in Lango is *Omuk while* in Lwo, *Dwe me angwen*. Therefore, the Lango language is closely related to the Galla pointing to the fact that the Lango migrated from Ethiopia and these enabled the Lango to develop its political systems.

Crazzolara<sup>84</sup> and Ogot<sup>85</sup> while writing about the origin of Lango claimed that, the Lango are part of the Lwo because of the similarities between clans. Their argument is based on the fact that Lango share some clan names with the Acholi which compose the biggest population of the Lwo in Uganda. They argued that, clans such as *Ogora*, *Oyima*,

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<sup>82</sup>Bruno.M., *A practical Lango Grammar and Dictionary*, 1991, p.15

<sup>83</sup>Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers,2004, p. 51

<sup>84</sup>Crazzolara. J. P, "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos PublishersLtd., (1960), P.174-214

<sup>85</sup>Ogot. B. A., *Zamani: A Survey Of East African History*, Longman Kenya Ltd., Nairobi, 1967, p.27

and *Abwor* in Lango came as a result of the movement of the Southern Lwo which is also found in Acholi land. On the other hand, Tarantino<sup>86</sup>, in reaction to the question of Lango clans asserted that, the present Lango are direct descendants of the *Arak*, *Atek*, and *Okarowok* clans who migrated from Fareast (*Kide*). He argued that Crazzolaro<sup>87</sup>'s evidence is not sufficient because of those few similarities between Lango and the Lwo groups such as Acholi clans. He said that, the similarities in clan names could have come up because the Lwo were neighbours with Lango and there could have been a possibility of some members breaking off from the main clans and started their own clans with borrowed names from the Lwo. He added that the word Lango-Omiro that Crazzolaro used meant foreigners meaning that the Lwo did not know the Lango but referred to them as foreigners (Lango-Omiro)

Similarly as observed by Omach<sup>88</sup>, *Ogora* clan that came from Agoro range and settled around Ogur in Lango are believed to have interacted with the Lwo that they met during the course of their migration to the present Lango land. He further noted that, the word clan itself in Lango is *Atekere* while in Lwo is *Kaka* hence the claims by Crazzolaro<sup>89</sup> and Ogot<sup>90</sup> do not justify the origin of Lango because the people who first settled in Ogur came from different directions, some from the North East of Lango while others came from Eastern Lango but not only *Ogora* clan as he claimed. Therefore, *Ogora* clan cannot make good history because they are even so minuet in Ogur in terms of population compared to other bigger clans such as *Atek*, *Arak*, *Otara*, *Ocukuru* and

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<sup>86</sup>Tarantino.A., "Notes On The Lango", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13, No.2, (September, 1949), 145-153

<sup>87</sup>Crazzolaro. J. P., "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>88</sup>Omach Ario, retired teacher, 71 years old, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>89</sup>Crazzolaro. J. P., "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers

Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>90</sup>Ogot.B. A., *Zamani: A Survey Of East African History*, Nairobi, Longman Kenya Ltd., 1968. p. 68

*Bako Olang*. Hence to assert that the similarity between *Ogora* clan and Agoro range is an evidence to justify the Lango origin is farfetched and misleading. As a result of the migration and settlement of the Lango and the Lwo it led to assimilation of some clans and these made the Lango clans to develop their own political systems so as to preserve their ethnic identity.

Further more, Driberg<sup>91</sup> and Tarantino<sup>92</sup> observed that, there are many similarities between the Lango and the Ateker family compared to the Lwo group, evidence that the Lango are closely related to the Ateker group in terms of their origin. These range from the clan names to cultural practices that are compatible with each other. For example, Tosh<sup>93</sup> argued that, clans such as *Atek, Arak and Okarowok* of Lango are also found in Teso with similar names. In addition to that, important ceremonies like *Etogo, Wiro Moo, and Kayo cogo* are also practiced in Iteso. As observed by Odwee<sup>94</sup>, a retired police officer, the Lango have a lot of similarities with the Iteso of Eastern Uganda because they both originated from Abyssinia thereby affirming to the oral tradition in Lango that they both belong to the Ateker family. He added that, the similarities between clan names, animal body parts and cultural practices between Lango and the Ateker family, Iteso in particular point to the fact that Lango originated from Ethiopia. Therefore, the origin of the Lango played a role in the growth and development of Lango political institutions through providing a sense of identity, language and culture which eventually led to the rise of different clans leading to evolution of clan heads as a political system.

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<sup>91</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

<sup>92</sup>Tarantino. A., "Notes On The Lango", *The Uganda Journal, the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2 (September, 1946),p.233-234

<sup>93</sup>Tosh. J., *Clan Leaders and Colonial chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 251

<sup>94</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, retired police officer, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

### 2.3 Causes of the Lango Migration

Just as it was in other pre-colonial societies, the causes of the Lango migration were not exceptional but centered on political, economic and social factors. All these factors combined brought in challenges for both human beings and their animals thereby forcing the Lango to move to other areas where they could practice their political, economic and social freedoms.

According to Driberg<sup>95</sup> some Lango clans such as *Ogora* and *Otengoro* migrated from their cradle land (Abyssinia) due to the struggle for grazing grounds. This was because the main economic activity of the Lango by then was cattle keeping. Tarantino<sup>96</sup> added that, as the population of the animals increased, competition for the grazing land emerged from the different clans thereby forcing some clans to move to areas where they could graze their animals without any form of interference. Similarly, Ayoo<sup>97</sup> a retired sub county chief noted that, as the animals increased in number, it raised the challenge of overstocking on a small piece of land hence the outbreak of diseases for both animals and people. As observed by Quam<sup>98</sup>, in such circumstances the people were left with no options but to migrate to other areas to decongest the animal population in wider areas. Therefore, these challenges enabled the evolution of Lango political institutions through raising warrior groups to defend their newly acquired land and animals.

Further more, Odada<sup>99</sup> observed that, some Lango clans like *Ober* and *Acuta awele* also migrated due to the differences that arose as a result of some cultural ceremonies that

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<sup>95</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

<sup>96</sup>Tarantino. A., "Notes On The Lango", *The Uganda Journal, the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2 (September, 1946),p.233-234

<sup>97</sup>Ayoo Micheal, a retired sub county chief, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>98</sup>Quam.D.M: "Creating Peace in an Armed Society, Karamoja Uganda, *African Studies quarterly*, Vo.1, Issue1, 1997

<sup>99</sup>Odada.M.A.E,"The Kumam: Langi or Iteso?" *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.35,Part 2( 1971), p.139

brought in competition for clan leadership. As earlier observed by Driberg<sup>100</sup>, oral tradition in Lango has it that the ancestors of the Lango loved meat and alcohol, and they were the main foods served during the cultural ceremonies. Apuna<sup>101</sup> an elder, asserted that, by the time the Lango left their cradle land; there were mainly three clans, namely; *Atek*, *Okarowok* and *Arak*. She argued that, the reason for the many clans that emerged in Lango was the struggle for food during the major ceremonies such as *Kayo Cogo*, *tweyo lao*, *myelo rudi* (these were ceremonies conducted to remove a bad omen, to cause healing or for twin dances at the birth of twins). Bua<sup>102</sup> a retired clan head added that, they played significant roles in the Lango community during the nineteenth century. He argued that, those who were not satisfied with the meat and the alcohol apportioned to them would exit the ceremony in protest claiming that there was unfairness in the distribution, and then broke out of that particular clan and start their own clans although closely related to their original clan. For example, Huddle<sup>103</sup>, noted that *Atek Adyang Okwer Kic* broke out from *Atek Adyang* due to disagreements during traditional ceremonies. Therefore, this meant creation of new clan leadership thereby evolution of clan system through forming a cluster of clan leadership.

Further more, Odada<sup>104</sup> Lango clan sections migrated because of the anti-social behavior that was practiced by either themselves or their immediate neighbours that were thought to endanger one's life. Such unaccepted behaviours as observed by Driberg<sup>105</sup> were: The practice of witchcraft, quarreling, murder, and greed for property. Such behaviours caused internal conflicts resulting into migration to new places. As

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<sup>100</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

<sup>101</sup>Apuna Lakeri, an elder, 92 years old, an informant interviewed on 11 February, 2019

<sup>102</sup>Bua Otim, a retired clan head, 85 years old, an informant interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>103</sup>Huddle.J.G, "The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango District", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>104</sup>Odada.M.A.E, "The Kumam: Langi or Iteso?" *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.35, Part 2( 1971), p.139

<sup>105</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

observed by Odwee<sup>106</sup> a retired police officer that “I went to Ethiopia in the year 2016 and interacted with some communities who confirmed to me that Ethiopia experienced internal conflicts among the different ethnic groups that resulted from quarrels and mistrust thereby forcing many ethnic groups to migrate, Lango inclusive”. He added that, the remnants of Lango are still in Ethiopia, although some are lost in Burkina- Faso and Southeastern Sudan. Therefore, basing on the conflicts that arose, it enabled the movement of the Lango in different groups under different clan leaders hence evolving the Lango clan system.

Crazzolaro<sup>107</sup> observed that, the migration of the Lango was because of the Nyamudere famine of 1580 and the lesser famine of 1620’s. These famines made the Ateker people and some Lango to move South of Agoro and spread west as far as River Aswar and East to the Lapono Mountains. The famine devastated some of the Lango to the extent that both people and their animals began to die of starvation. As observed by Webster<sup>108</sup>, when the Lango left Abyssinia, some group of people settled around Agoro areas in Southern Sudan but later saw the need for further migration because they were hit by recurring famine that caused suffering for people and their livestock. Ejang<sup>109</sup> a clan woman leader argued that, because of the long droughts, people lacked food for both human beings and animals, diseases such as rinderpest and malnutrition broke out culminating to death and untold suffering thereby forcing the Lango to migrate from Agoro areas to Otuke areas, a place believed to have had abundant land, grass, and water needed for people and their animals. Therefore, such famine prepared the Lango clan

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<sup>106</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, a retired police officer, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>107</sup>Crazzolaro. J. P., “Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers

Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>108</sup>Webster.J.B., *The problem of Lwo History*, London, Cambridge University press , 1976, p.11-28

<sup>109</sup>Ejang Betty, a clan women leader, 57 years old, an informant interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

leaders to organise their people into clan system so that in case another famine re-occurred, people would encounter it with ease hence developing the Lango political institutions.

Similar to the above, Odyomo<sup>110</sup> observed that, there was the re-occurrence of famine around 1785 to 1792 which sparked off further migration of the Lango. This great famine caused many hostilities and kidnapping between the Lango and their neighbours especially the Karimojong and the Jie communities. As a result, some clans emerged during this chaotic period and migrated to different places. Odada<sup>111</sup> noted that, *Atula* clan (currently *Arak Odwarkori*) emerged that period. He added that, *Atula* was one of the Karimojong children kidnapped by the Lango during this period. When *Atula* grew up, he started his own clan and became the clan leader of the *Atula* clan. Therefore, *Atula* contributed to the evolution of Lango political institutions through providing leadership and expansion of the Lango clans.

More so, Odyomo<sup>112</sup> and Zamani<sup>113</sup> when the Lango reached Otuke areas in around 1820's, ill feelings developed between the Lango and their Jie neighbours. This was because the Lango enjoyed a surplus of food while the Jie were obliged to sell their children to the Lango in return for food. The two started fighting for food and this forced the Lango to migrate from Otuke areas because of the fear of constant attacks from the Jie communities. As observed by Opio<sup>114</sup>, from Otuke the Lango gradually separated from the Jie because of food scarcity. Crazzolaro<sup>115</sup> noted that, the Jie constantly

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<sup>110</sup>Odyomo .P., "The Luo origin", *International Journal of African Historical studies*, Boston, 1972

<sup>111</sup>Odada .M.A.E: "The Lwo movements", *Journal of African studies*, Cambridge University press, 1978, p.87-98

<sup>112</sup>Odyomo .P., "The Luo origin", *International Journal of African Historical studies*, Boston, 1972

<sup>113</sup>Zamani, B.A. Ogot, *A Survey of East African History*, Nairobi, Longman Kenya Ltd, 1968.p.105

<sup>114</sup>Opio Julius, an informant interviewed on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>115</sup>Crazzolaro. J. P., "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

raided the Lango to the extent that people did not have time to do economic activities and were left with no other options apart from migrating to long distant areas away from the Jie. Therefore, the difficulties endured in encountering new communities on their way as they separated from the Jie using strong leaders built the clan political systems.

Tosh<sup>116</sup> observed that, population pressure occurred at different places where they first settled and this led to famine, competition for grazing grounds, hunting grounds, shortage of water, and the general insecurity at large leading to further migrations. Adefuye<sup>117</sup> noted that, when the Lango settled in Otuke, they became stable and able to grow a lot of food and reared animals in reasonable numbers. As a result, the quality of life improved and population increased. He added that, the population increase came with its own challenges such as competition for grazing areas, water and land for farming since they were already practicing a mixed economy. Uzoigwe<sup>118</sup> noted that, this resulted into internal bickering within the different clan sections thereby causing further migration to other areas believed to be less populated. Therefore, the population increase enabled the growth and development of Lango political institutions through expansion of the clans and provision of warriors for security.

Uzoigwe<sup>119</sup> added that, the migration of the Lango was also caused by the special hunting expedition (*Dwar –Aworá*) which occurred by 1850. This was the name of the scouting expeditions. He asserted that, Hutchison<sup>120</sup> noted that “these trained warrior youths looked for new places where there were wild animals, grass for cattle, water and

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<sup>116</sup>Tosh . J.A., *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p.85Ibid p.90

<sup>117</sup>Ade Adefuye: “Palwo Economy, Society and Politics”, *Transafrican Journal of History*, Gideon Were Publications, Vol.5, No.2 (1976), p. 1-20

<sup>118</sup>Uzoigwe.G. N: “The Beginnings of Lango Society”. A review of Evidence. *The Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol.6, No.4, (June 1973), p. 397-411

<sup>119</sup> Ibid

<sup>120</sup>Hutchison.H.N., *The Living Races In Africa* , Cambridge University Press, London 1902, p.102

open locations of about one square mile (*alapata or barr*) for mass settlement as a village”. Okello<sup>121</sup> asserted that, only skillful and courageous men of about 60 to 80 in number, accompanied by few girls for cooking, and 4 to 5 elders for wisdom took up the mission that lasted for about one to two months at the distance of about 20 to 25 kilometers away from the major settlement. If they took long but returned with much wild meat, that would be the next direction for migration. Therefore, the hunting areas provided more land for the Lango settlement which enabled the clan leaders to exercise their authority over the clans and this also led to formation of new clans.

According to Crazzolaro<sup>122</sup> and Zamani<sup>123</sup> the outbreak of rinderpest in the 1890’s also caused further migration of the Lango from Otuke areas. This led to the death of many cattle that paralyzed the whole of Lango since cattle keeping was one of the major means of their livelihood. They added that, the disease was believed to have been brought by the Europeans (Italian army) who imported sick animals from India to East Africa when they were fighting in Ethiopia. The disease spread like wild fire from Ethiopia across East Africa up to Lango of Uganda. Okino<sup>124</sup> observed that, the disease made the Lango to migrate westwards looking for safer places for their cattle since they highly valued animals. He asserted that, this explains why the Lango population is currently spread to different areas of Lango land such as Lira, Apac, Oyam, Kole, Dokolo, Kwania, Amolatar and Otuke districts. The migration due to rinderpest led to population distribution westwards and this enabled the establishment of more Lango clans in the new settlement areas thereby strengthening the political clan system.

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<sup>121</sup>Okello Opio, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>122</sup>Crazzolaro. J. P., “Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>123</sup>Zamani, B.A. Ogot, *A Survey of East African History*, Nairobi, Longman Kenya Ltd, 1968.p.105

<sup>124</sup>Okino Ibrahim, a retired clan leader, 92 an informant interviewed on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

## 2.4 The movement and settlement of the Lango to their present land

The movement of the Lango from Abyssinia through Southern Sudan to Otuke areas, then to Ngetta, and the eventual settlement on their present location was a gradual process. Oral tradition in Lango has it that, their first settlement in Uganda was around Otuke hills (present day Abim district), the imposing hill which marks the boundary between Lango and the Labwor neighbours. Their movement and eventual settlement in their present location seemed to have taken a long time possibly ranging from 1700 to 1900. Therefore, the movement of the Lango from their cradle land was not straightforward. It involved moving in small migrating bands but not the whole clan.

As observed by Tarantino<sup>125</sup>, the first three clans to have migrated from Ethiopia to Otuke were *Atek*, *Arak* and *Okarowok* under different clan leaders. Driberg<sup>126</sup> noted that;

Many elders in Lango agreed that, the Lango migration from Agoro to Otuke were led by the military leaders (Twon Lwak). He recalled some of the Twon Lwak as: Ekwang Ario (1785), Ongora Okubal (1814), Opyene Nyakanyola (1818), Arim Oroba (1860), Ogwal Abura (1872) and Agoro Abwango (1894)

It should be noted that, before Lango left their cradle land to their present settlement, they had lived around Otuke hills for about two hundred years dated back as early as 1600. Therefore, the existence of these warriors helped in the building of the Lango political institutions through providing leadership and the warrior class to defend its growth and development from invaders.

According to Tarantino<sup>127</sup> the first group of Lango migrants to Otuke was believed to have come from the East. These were areas believed to have been previously occupied

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<sup>125</sup>Tarantino . A, *Lango Ikare Acon* ( Lango in the Past), Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.7

<sup>126</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

<sup>127</sup> Tarantino. A., "Notes On The Lango", *The Uganda Journal, the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2 ( September, 1946),p.233-234

by the Para-Nilotic groups such as the Iteso, Karimojong or Jie in particular. The second group came from several locations in the South – eastern Sudan. He added that, the group from Agoro range of hills on the Uganda –Sudan border, north of Otuke moved southwards and settled for a while in the area immediately north of Otuke before moving into their present homeland. Zamani<sup>128</sup> asserted that, this group came when they already knew Lwo dialect. He further noted that, another group that came later was known as Kote –Magos. As observed by Crazzolaro<sup>129</sup> and Zamani<sup>130</sup> When they arrived, they found a well-established Para-Nilotic population, which for its livelihood depended less on pastoralism than the traditional simsim, millet, groundnuts and sorghum. The agriculturalists were known to be the Jie as *Ngiseera* or *Iseera* believed to have migrated from Agoro hills in Southern Sudan as well. According to Tosh<sup>131</sup>, when the pastoralists first reached central Jie land from Kote- Magos, a significant proportion of the Iseera migrated to the south–west. They stopped first at Kotidani River, North of the Labwor hills and then continued through Labwor to Otuke hills. This view was supported by Ogowang<sup>132</sup> a clan leader who asserted that; “While at Otuke hills further migration and settlement took place up to the present day settlement in Lango land. The Lango went westwards when they were already speaking Lwo language and practicing a mixed economy of seed agriculture and pastoralism, which was well suited for their new environment”. Therefore, the Lwo language played the role of providing security to the Lango from the neighbouring Lwo communities because they could easily understand each other when they

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<sup>128</sup> Opii Allan ,an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June,2019

<sup>129</sup> Crazzolaro. J. P., “Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos PublishersLtd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>130</sup> Zamani, B.A. Ogot, *A Survey of East African History*, Nairobi, Longman Kenya Ltd, 1968.p.105

<sup>131</sup>Tosh. J., *Clan Leaders and Colonial chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 251

<sup>132</sup>Ogowang Robert, a clan leader , 88 years old, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

were communicating with their Lwo neighbours hence minimizing mistrust due to language barrier thereby enabling the Lango to have peaceful co-existence with her Lwo neighbours giving room for evolution of Lango political systems.

Tarantino<sup>133</sup> observed that, the movement and settlement of the Lango was directed by the use of physical features as their compass guide. Such physical features were water bodies, big trees and rocks like Ngetta near the present Lira town, Ongora near Abako in Alebtong district, Agaya at the boarder of Kaberamaido and Dokolo districts, Ibuje (Aribiribi) in Kwania district, Ader in Kole district, Moro and Opit bordering Oyam and Gulu districts. Omara<sup>134</sup> a former member of parliament of Otuke constituency agreed with Tarantino<sup>135</sup> and observed that, the movement of Lango from Otuke to present settlement took place at different times and by different routes. These further asserted that, the first group went westwards as far as the Nile and settled by 1780 and formed Lango settlement of the Jo Aber clan. Therefore, these physical features aided further migration because it was easy to follow and locate the earlier migrants thereby expanding the areas occupied by Lango hence political organisation to guard the land.

Driberg<sup>136</sup> also noted that, the Lango of Uganda today are believed to have departed from Kotido between 1870 and 1900 and passed via Awila, Angolebwal and Morulem in Abim. He added that, the Otuke areas enabled Lango to practice great hunting expeditions, and at the same time had much food that was used to marry and also buy children from the Jie communities to increase the population and also raise the warriors. According to Crazzolara<sup>137</sup>, from Otuke the Lango took two directions from about

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<sup>133</sup>Tarantino. A., "Notes On The Lango", The Uganda Journal, *the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2 ( September, 1946),p.233-234

<sup>134</sup>Omara Daniel Atubo, a former M.P of Otuke Constituency, 73 years old, an informant interviewed on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

<sup>135</sup>Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon* (Lango in the past), Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004 , p.7

<sup>136</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

<sup>137</sup>Crazzolara. J. P., "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos PublishersLtd., (1960), p.174-214

1790. One group known as *Lango Tiro* and members of the *Opii* clan (slaves) passed through Aloi in 1814, then reached Barr and Akia in 1818 while the main body consisting mainly of the Iseera with assimilated Lwo passed via Patongo, then reached Adwari, Apala, Ogur and Ngetta around 1814 and these led to the settlement of *Ogora*, *Arak*, *Palamyek* and *Atek* clans. He added that, from Ngetta two brothers called Kal Oding and Kak Orwako decided to return to Kotido and settled at *Won Kau* (the returnees). The movements through different communities sharpened the Lango to train great warriors whose success in wars enabled the building of Lango political institutions.

According to Zamani<sup>138</sup> and Crazzolaro<sup>139</sup> while at Angolebwal and Awila hills, Lango absorbed some Lwo who had already lost Lwo dialect in their vocabulary while at *Didinga* and *Anywak* in Agoro area and had already become bilingual. They became known by the nick name *Lango Omiro*. They added that, while within Labwor still at Awila and Angolebwal, again a fresh famine called Laparanat broke out in 1785 and 1792, creating another wave of dispersal up to Ngetta hills near the present Lira town. Tarantino<sup>140</sup> observed that, while at Ngetta a meteorite rock from the stars fell from the sky in 1820 landing in between Ngetta, Erute and Obim rocks. The Lango then said *Ongeto akina Jo Lango* (meaning that the incident resulted into the splitting of the Lango people who had settled there). Angweri<sup>141</sup> noted that, the current Ngetta rock is not the one that fell from the sky but took up a memorial name. He added that, some of the clans that departed from Ngetta consisted of *Atek Odyek Owidi*, *Atek Adyang*, *Ocukuru*, *Palamyek*, *Bako Acol*, and *Ogora*, to different areas. Therefore, in

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<sup>138</sup>Zamani, B.A. Ogot, *A Survey of East African History*, Nairobi, Longman Kenya Ltd, 1968.p.105

<sup>139</sup>Crazzolaro . J. P., “Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers

Ltd.,(1960), p.174-214

<sup>140</sup>Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon* (Lango in the past), Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004 , p.7

<sup>141</sup>Angweri Sam, a retired Bishop of PAG, 68 years old, and informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

those areas where they scattered, they established themselves and formed new clans with clan heads which later built their clan system.

Tosh<sup>142</sup> and Odwee<sup>143</sup> also observed that, the Ngetta incident forced Lango to make the last dispersal. The first group went westwards as far as Aber and reached between 1850 and 1860 and Atura in about 1860's. Other clans went as far as Acora, Atongwil and Karuma by 1870 while others reached Iceme in 1880s'. Another clan took the eastern direction and their first settlement was in Aloji between 1840 and 1850, some clans went as far as Dokolo by 1875, Agaya in 1880, and Awelo in 1885. These routes were mainly taken by *Oyima*, *Wii Jobi*, *Arak*, *Onywal Ipyeda*, *Otengoro Olang* and *Bako Olang* clans. Ogwang<sup>144</sup> noted that, whenever these clans settled, immediately they formed their clan sections basing on their family lineage and the authority of the clan heads were exercised upon its members hence promoting Lango political institutions.

Similar to the above, Tarantino<sup>145</sup> and Odwee<sup>146</sup> added that, the Lango summed up their migration by some clans like Arak and Okii taking south-west direction and went through Bala, Cegere, Kidilane and Ibuje by 1880. Their first settlements were at Boroboro and Amac, while some went as far as Nambyeso between 1870 and 1880. Other clan members such as Oyima proceeded to Akokoro between 1888 and 1890. They further argued that, some members from Oyeopyen and Atek from the southeastern group broke off from Nambyeso and crossed Olweny swamp then went to Iguli in Dokolo between 1875 and 1880. Ogwang<sup>147</sup> noted that from this group, some clans

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<sup>142</sup>Tosh . J., *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p.85

<sup>143</sup> Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of the Lango in Uganda And the Pride of African People* , Lisa Publishing company limited, Kampala, 2012

<sup>144</sup>Ogwang Robert, a clan leader, 88 years old, an informant interviewed on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>145</sup>Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon* (Lango in the past), Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004 , p.7

<sup>146</sup>Odwe Julius Peter, an informant interviewed on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

<sup>147</sup>Ogwang Alele, retired chair person LCV, 72 years old, interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

settled in Kwera and Kangai by 1885 while others entered Kaberamaido in 1890's. As observed by Driberg<sup>148</sup>, this group found the Kuman settlement already at the shores of Lake Kyoga such as Agaya, Kabulubulu, Bululu and the inland at Kalaki, Lwala, Otuboi and Anyara hence made no further movements. Some of the clans that took this direction were *Pedi Cungkal*, *Atek Oduto Ogole*, *Bako*, *Arak*, *Okii Bura*, and *Atek Omwonopel*. The encounter between Lango and the Kuman communities they found already in those areas sharpened the Lango warrior class to fight for survival and as well as defending their occupied areas hence building the Lango clan system. Therefore, it is worth noting that the movement and settlement of the Lango was a gradual process and was characterized by the small movements of the clan sections under different clan leaders. It is estimated that Lango took about two hundred years to reach Ngetta before spreading to the different areas occupied by the Lango of today in Northern Uganda.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The chapter discussed the origin of the Lango tracing it from Abyssinia to the settlement areas such as Agoro in Southern Sudan, Otuke hills, Ngetta hill and the final dispensation to different areas in Lango land. It stated that the original clans in Lango were basically three, that is, *Atek*, *Arak* and *Okarowok* clans although Lango currently has more than two hundred clans. It also discussed that the Lango were led by clan leaders throughout their migration up to their settlement areas where more clans evolved as a result of disagreement that resulted from cultural ceremonies and the outbreak of diseases. It further discussed the causes of the Lango migration namely; outbreak and re-occurrence of famine, struggle for grazing grounds, anti-social behaviour by some members, conflicts with neighbours and the population which led to their migration to different places. Their movement from Otuke areas ranges from 1700 to 1900 and the

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<sup>148</sup> Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

process was gradual under different military warriors (*Twon Lwak*). It also discussed that the final movement of the Lango occurred in Ngetta as a result of the meteorite of the stars that fell and made the Lango to be scattered to their final dispensations. Therefore, it is upon this that chapter three comes in to discuss the relationship between Lango and her neighbours.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGO AND HER NEIGHBOURS

#### 3.1 Introduction

According to Otara<sup>149</sup>, the Lango are peaceful and humble people but when provoked they react just like any other pre-colonial societies. They cherish co-existence with the non-Lango communities surrounding them. The reasons for relationship between Lango and her neighbours were driven by the desire for political, social and economic survival at that time. The chapter therefore discusses the ways in which Lango related with her immediate neighbours from pre-colonial to post-colonial periods. The neighbours of Lango are: Bunyoro, Acholi, Karimojong, Labwor, Iteso and Kumam. The following map can explain the location of the Lango neighbours as illustrated below:

#### A sketch map showing the ethnic groups neighbouring Lango

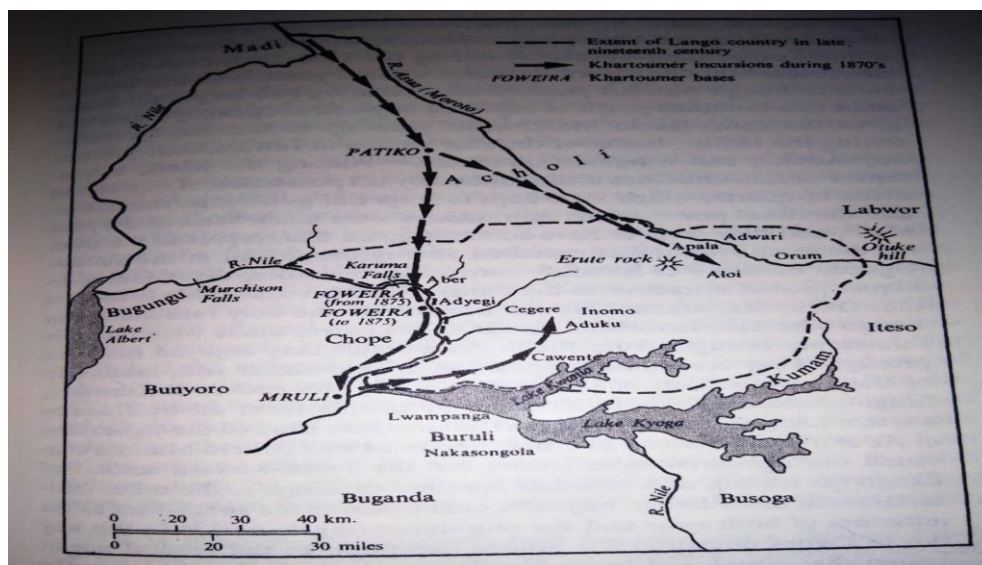


Figure 3: Ethnic groups neighbouring Lango, adopted from John Tosh, 1978.

From the map above the Banyoro are located in the south-west of Lango, Acholi are located in the North of Lango, Labwor and Karimojong in the East of Lango while the Kumam and Iteso are located in the South East of Lango.

<sup>149</sup>Epila. J. S. Otara, *Eco culture of the Langi*, The plain Nilotes of Central –Northern Uganda, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2013, p. 15

### **3.2 The relationship between Lango and Bunyoro.**

Bunyoro is located in the South-West of Lango. The major physical barrier between Bunyoro and Lango is River Nile. Despite the geographical barrier, there was a cordial relationship between Lango and Bunyoro. The relationship can be analysed politically, socially and economically as discussed below.

According to Wright<sup>150</sup>, there was a strong political relationship between Lango and Bunyoro. It was upon this relationship that the Lango fought on the side of Bunyoro between 1851 and 1852. On a related note, Tosh<sup>151</sup> added that, the Lango campaigns affected the balance of power within Bunyoro itself. He noted that, the Lango were seen by these aggressive rulers as people with authority at a regional level. It was believed according to Bunyoro tradition that the first significant Lango intervention in Bunyoro affairs was during the succession war between Kamurasi and Olimi Rwakabale. Tosh<sup>152</sup> added that, Kamurasi enlisted Lango help and in the battle near Lwampanga on the left bank of the Nile, Olimi was defeated and killed. He further noted that, the Lango leaders (warriors) also sided with Kamurasi to fight in Toro. He stated that the Lango were not hostile to royal authority in Bunyoro. Therefore, the success of the collaboration between Lango and Bunyoro helped in the establishment of Lango political systems when the clan leaders who participated in those wars gained experience on how to deal with internal aggression among themselves thereby building their clan systems.

Further more Driberg<sup>153</sup> observed that, Lango fought into and beyond Bunyoro, assisting the bickery factions abetting rival claimants to the throne. This was because

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<sup>150</sup>Wright .M.J., “Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji”, *The Uganda Journal, the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No., 3( Sept., 1957),p.87

<sup>151</sup>Tosh.J., *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, *The Political History of an East African Stateless Society*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p.90 p.93

<sup>152</sup> Ibid

<sup>153</sup>Driberg.J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe in Uganda*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd, London, 1923, p.107

of the second invitation by the kings of Bunyoro such as Kamurasi and Kabalega in 1897 to 1899 during struggle against colonial rule by the early resisters. Bridges<sup>154</sup> argued that the Lango clan leaders like Owiny Akullo of *Arak* clan allied with Bunyoro to fight against the colonialists together with their agents the Buganda. It is on this basis that Awor<sup>155</sup> emphasised that, “there was always a good relationship between Bunyoro and Lango clan chiefs like Owiny Akullu to the extent that the Kings of Bunyoro especially Kabalega consulted and allied with some Lango clan chiefs during Bunyoro’s expansionist wars and resistance against colonialists”. Therefore, the fundamental change that Lango clan leaders gained from these expeditions in Bunyoro was the building of the warrior class of young people with the military experience got from Bunyoro hence, the young warriors were commanded by their respective clan leaders to defend and protect their clan systems.

Further more; Tarantino<sup>156</sup> observed that, Lango clan system also grew as a result of the good relationship with Bunyoro. While in Bunyoro, Lango saw strong villages rising against one another and killing the members mercilessly. He added that, the Lango warriors saw women and children killed in the heat of battle or being sacrificed afterwards to the lust of revenge. As observed by Angweri<sup>157</sup>, a retired Bishop of P.A.G and grandson of Owiny Akullu asserted that, such raids in Bunyoro did not only strengthen the relationship between Lango and Bunyoro but also built confidence in fighting wars, and defending themselves in case of any aggression. For example,

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<sup>154</sup>Bridges . R.C: “Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango”: The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, c.1800-1939 by John Tosh, *History*, Wiley Publishers, Vol.65, No.214 (1980), p.255-256

<sup>155</sup>Awor Amena, chair Person LC I, 55 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019

<sup>156</sup>Tarantino. A.,“Notes On The Lango”, The Uganda Journal, *the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2(September, 1946),p.233-234

<sup>157</sup>Angweri Sam, a retired Bishop for PAG, 68 years an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

Bridges<sup>158</sup> observed that, Owiny Akullo through his clan *Arak* of Aber raided the Acholi neighbours in Ocini and captured land, women and children. The capture of the women and children led to increased population of the Jo Aber and as well as enrollment of the abducted children into the clan warrior group in order to defend the clan system.

The good relationship between Lango and Bunyoro helped Bunyoro to resist the British colonial rule and this is depicted by Tarantino<sup>159</sup> when he observed that, Bunyoro again allied with Lango to fight the extension of colonial rule. When the British commanders and Buganda agents such as Semei Kakungulu and Apollo Kagwa unleashed their forces in 1895 against the Omukama in Hoima, Kabalega was defeated and forced out of his palace and chased up to Budongo forest where he put up a stronghold. Tarantino<sup>160</sup> added that, from Budongo forest Kabalega sought the military intervention of a Lango chief called Owiny Akullu who responded quickly by gathering his troops and headed to Bunyoro. Owiny Akullu and his men crossed the Nile at a risky point, which came to be known as *Adag Lango* (Lango hater) because some soldiers died there. As soon as Owiny Akullu reached Budongo forest, he linked up with Kabalega, planned their military tactics, and Owiny Akullu led the combined forces and made several strikes against the British at a place called *Kijunjuba* in Masindi and inflicted heavy defeats against the British and their allies forcing them to withdraw towards Buganda. Ogwang<sup>161</sup> a retired chairman LCV noted that, the battle lasted for three years before the British renewed their attacks on Bunyoro by 1898. Much as they lost the war at the end, the clan leaders that participated learnt to be more militarily organised in order to

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<sup>158</sup>Bridges . R.C: “Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango”: The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, c.1800-1939 by John Tosh, *History*, Wiley Publishers, Vol.65, No.214 (1980), p.255-256

<sup>159</sup>Tarantino. A., “Lango Wars”, The Uganda Journal, *the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2 (September, 1946),p.12-16

<sup>160</sup>Tarantino. A., “Notes On The Lango”, The Uganda Journal, *the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2( September, 1946),p.233-234

<sup>161</sup>Ogwang Alele, a retired chairman LCV 72 years old , an informant interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

defend their clan system from invaders.

As noted by Tarantino<sup>162</sup>, Lango clan leaders learnt courage, and fighting techniques which even enabled some people like Akona to become great clan leaders because of what they saw happening in Bunyoro and beyond. He gives an example of Akena, whose mother was a Madi captive resolved to win for himself a mastery over the Lango at the point of the spear. Akena's struggles with the neighbouring clan leaders were long and persistent especially with *Ogwali* of Chegere so much that songs were sung about them. Ogwang<sup>163</sup> noted that, he was told by his grandfather that, one of his great grandparents Olong fought as a young soldier for Kabalega and when he came back to Lango, he was full of courage that he greatly helped in the war between Lango and her Acholi neighbours. Therefore, the ideas of warfare and resilience gained from wars in Bunyoro encouraged the establishment of the Lango clan system.

In addition to the above, Karugire<sup>164</sup> observed that, the second intervention in Bunyoro affairs by Lango traditional clan chiefs came when the British renewed their campaign against the Banyoro with a much larger force and better preparation. After several battles, Kabalega saw that he was losing and personally approached Owiny Akullu again to appeal for his help for the second time. Karugire<sup>165</sup> recorded that Owiny Akullu readily accepted and the two leaders crossed the Nile at Namasale to Lwampanga where they linked up with Kabaka Mwanga who had also himself fled to escape colonial persecution in Buganda. The three joined forces and put up an entrenched base in Masindi from where they resorted to guerrilla tactics. However, the

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<sup>162</sup>Tarantino. A., "Notes On The Lango", *The Uganda Journal, the journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10, No.2 (September, 1946), p.233-234

<sup>163</sup>Ogwang Alele, a retired chairman LVC, 72 years old, an informant interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

<sup>164</sup>Karugire.S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.27

<sup>165</sup> Ibid

British were well prepared with powerful weapons hence they lost the battle since many of their fighters had died. In addition to that, Ajal<sup>166</sup> chairman LCIII noted that, after realizing that their efforts were yielding no results, Owiny Akullu fled with his friends out of Bunyoro and crossed into Lango where he left them hidden at the bank of river Abalang in Kangai in the present day Dokolo district as he continued northwards to mobilise more Lango clan warriors for offensive operations against colonial rule. As noted by Driberg<sup>167</sup>, the British forces later followed Omukama Kabalega and Kabaka Mwanga and captured the duo with the aid of local people (one man called Okutu) after serious torture on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 1899 under the command of the British army led by Major Macdonald. Therefore, much as Kabalega and Mwanga were defeated in Lango by the British, the Lango clan leaders such as *Jo Arak Oyeopyen* led by Okwanga Acur and *Okii Koltum* led by Okoda Alengo showed great resistance to colonialist thereby protecting the clan political system. According to Nzoigwe<sup>168</sup> and Tosh<sup>169</sup>, Lango had a good relationship with Bunyoro which enabled Lango to acquire material wealth from Bunyoro and this strengthened political position of the clan chiefs in Lango. As noted by Opii<sup>170</sup>, Lango visited Kamurasi in 1860's and Kabalega in the 1870's. On request of the kings of Bunyoro, Lango clan leaders voluntarily provided military support whenever called upon. Opii<sup>171</sup> added that, Owiny Akullo and his warriors made successful campaigns in Bunyoro and not only brought plunder from the enemy in form of cattle and captives but also other rewards such as hoes, beads, salt and sweat potato plants, which were not found in Lango at the time. The livestock also helped the

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<sup>166</sup> Ajal Okwir, chairman LCIII, 50 years old, an informant interviewed on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>167</sup> Driberg, J.H. *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p.45

<sup>168</sup> Nzoigwe, G.N: "Pre-colonial Markets in Bunyoro –Kitara". *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 14, No.4 (Sep., 1972), p.422-455

<sup>169</sup> Tosh, J.A., *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p.85

<sup>169</sup> Ibid p.90

<sup>170</sup> Opii Allan, a retired auditor, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>171</sup> Ibid

young warriors to marry (to pay for bride wealth). Therefore, the involvement of the Lango in Bunyoro with Kamurasi, Kabalega, Rionga and others contributed greatly to the development of clan leadership through gaining military skills that were needed to maintain the clan system.

According to Karugire<sup>172</sup>, the two communities participated in pre-colonial trade. He noted that, the inter-ethnic trade between the two communities strengthened both economic and political organisation between them. Bunyoro on their side supplied Iron, salt, bracelets and wires which were imported for use as body ornament. Tosh<sup>173</sup> also observed that, Lango supplied foodstuffs like millet, sorghum, simsim, goats and poultry. This was barter trade conducted by itinerant traders from Bunyoro to Lango. Karugire<sup>174</sup> added that, the Banyoro were very common in Lango during this period. They crossed from Lake Kwana shores into the whole of Lango in order to acquire the goods of their demand. Therefore, when the demand for iron and salt deposit in Kibiro increased and the fact that the Lango did not have expertise in iron smelting, they preferred to import from their highly skilled neighbours the Banyoro from the west. Therefore, it is the trade in iron that enabled the Lango clan leaders to acquire spears and arrows that helped in defending the clan system. Also, the clan leaders acquired wealth became well known and were able to build their warriors using the wealth acquired from the trade. For example, Odongo Aja of *Atura* and Owiny Akulu of *Aber* were able to build strong clan systems.

Tosh<sup>175</sup> further observed that, the relationship between the two communities was evidenced by the hospitality of clan leaders to traders (foreigners). One more

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<sup>172</sup>Karugire.S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.43

<sup>173</sup>Tosh . J.A., *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p.83-84

<sup>174</sup>Ibid

<sup>175</sup> Tosh . J.A., *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p.83-84

important point to note was that these traders used to sell and sleep in the homes of prominent clan leaders for protection and security. The trade made the clan leaders popular both in the eyes of the local people and the clan members because of the ability to host foreigners. This was confirmed by Akullu<sup>176</sup> a women leader and Omara<sup>177</sup> a former M.P of Otuke Constituency asserted that, “before colonial rule in Lango, it was very difficult to host a foreigner and those who were able to host foreigners were considered to have had special qualities which earned them a lot of respect in the society”. They further gave an Example of such a popular clan chief, Owiny Akullu from Min-akullu hosted a number of these foreigners and it earned him greater political position in the area of Ocini and this was also evidenced by Kabalega who made personal efforts to build for Owiny Akullu a house in Kamdini whereby all the building materials were ferried from Bunyoro. Therefore, the hospitality by some prominent traders made them popular in Lango communities and they were eventually selected as clan heads hence developing the clan political system. As evidence of the good relationship, Kabalega named one of his sons after a Lango Chief, Prince Tito Owinyi who later ascended Bunyoro throne. The hospitality enabled the clan leaders to learn new skills and ideas for leadership thereby maintaining their clan system. This was manifested in marriage, and even the rewards given to the Lango from Bunyoro. Gifts like women, slaves, guns, animals and plants were given. As noted by Angweri<sup>178</sup> a retired Bishop of P.A.G and a grandson of Owiny Akullu that, his great grandmother was a Munyoro that was given to his great grandfather as a gift for Lango’s support against the British aggression in Bunyoro. On a related note, Karugire<sup>179</sup> asserted

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<sup>176</sup>Akullu Margaret, Women leader, 55 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>177</sup>Omara Daniel Atubo, former M.P Otuke Constituency, 73 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June,2019

<sup>178</sup>Angweri Sam, a retired Bishop of P.A.G , 68 years old, an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>179</sup>Karugire S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann, 1980, p.32

that, there were always intermarriages between Lango and Bunyoro. He added that, a sack of sweet potatoes was given to clan chiefs and warriors as a reward for their contribution in Bunyoro Kingdom. The significance of the intermarriage was that, it increased the Lango population which was badly needed to defend their clan system because Lango by then were few in number.

### **3.3 The Relationship between Lango and Acholi.**

The Acholi borders Lango the in the northern direction. There are limited physical barriers separating Lango from Acholi apart from river Aswa, River Tochi, Min-Akullu swamp and Okee swamp. The relationship between Lango and Acholi can be best described politically and socially as being both friendly and hostile depending on the prevailing circumstances.

Politically, Lango and Acholi engaged in a series of wars such as of Koch, Patiko, Atiak, Puranga and Pajule with the clans of Acholi during pre-colonial period which enabled Lango to acquire land for settlement thereby establishing their political clan systems. The wars were mainly caused by the desire to capture slaves and also to capture cattle and goats. This is confirmed by Tarantino<sup>180</sup> that, Lango engaged Acholi in series of wars especially over land for grazing and hunting. The fierce battles between Lango and Acholi were the areas of Aromo, Ayami, Puranga, Patongo, and Min-akullu. According to Odida<sup>181</sup> a clan leader noted that, the battle of Min-akullu was led by a Lango chief, Owiny Akullu with his private troops of about 150 men. He asserted that, the chief himself was a skilled fighter that could not miss the target. He defeated the Acholi in the battle, and captured land between Kamdini and Bobi from the

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<sup>180</sup>Tarantino .A, "Lango Wars'', The Uganda Journal, *the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13 .No.2,(Sept. 1948), p.230-235

<sup>181</sup>Odida Tom , a clan leader, 69 years old, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2019

present day Gulu district in a single battle in the late 1880's. Odongo<sup>182</sup>, a clan chief asserted that, the defeated Acholi fled the battle, and Owiny Akullu is said to have shouted after them, "*pe dok otuku keda tyen me aryo, Min-Akullu*" (They will not joke with me again, for my mother is Akullu). This is emphasised by Atim<sup>183</sup> a Vice chairperson LC I that, the name min-Akullu in Acholi is referred to as Miina-kulu (surrender to me the river), a negotiation that the Lango and Acholi chiefs had for the territory that borders present day Oyam and Omoro districts in northern Uganda. Therefore, the success in battles by such individual characters like Owiny-Akullu enabled the growth and development of Lango political institutions through settlement in the conquered areas by different Lango clans who carried on with their clan system of *Awitong* where each clan was independent of each other. Besides that, the capture of the slaves especially children also helped in forming the warrior class of young people to defend the Lango clan system.

Furthermore, Tosh<sup>184</sup>, observed that, Lango used to raid Acholi for mainly cattle and women although other valuables found during the raids would also be taken. As observed by Artkinson<sup>185</sup> "the relationship between Lango and Acholi was full of raids and counter raids". He added that, by 1875, the Lango "lived only by raiding and they were the terror of the lands". The relationship between Lango and Acholi just as it is portrayed by Tosh<sup>186</sup> was also confirmed by Atim<sup>187</sup> a clan elder that;

There has been a bitter relationship between Lango and Acholi due to the raiding carried out by the Lango on Acholi land. This was caused by disputed claims of hunting tracks especially in the uninhabited land north of Karuma falls. She

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<sup>182</sup>Odongo Ronald, a clan chief, 75 years old, an informant interviewed on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2019

<sup>183</sup>Atim Caroline, Vice chair person LC I, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>184</sup>Tosh . J.A., *Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango*, The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p.85

<sup>185</sup> Atkinson. R: *The roots of Ethnicity*, The origins of Acholi of Uganda, Kampala, Fountain, 1999

<sup>186</sup>Ibid p.90

<sup>187</sup>Atim Carolina, clan elder, 66 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

noted that, in 1870's the Lango who wanted livestock and human captives (women and children) raided the Acholi of Min-akullu, Atiak and Omoro

As a result of the raids, a large number of children and women were brought back to Lango as booty. Although, the success in these raids led to population increase in Lango which enabled the creation of more clans and clan heads for development of clan systems, it also created a bitter relationship between the Lango and Acholi. Basing on the analysis above, to the Lango though it was a bitter relationship with Acholi, it helped them to build and develop their political institutions by expanding the clan system of *Awitong* for every clan.

Although the Lango and Acholi relationship was bitter due to raids, there were also intermarriages between these two communities. The captives especially the women got from the raids were married to Lango men. The marriage led to the rise of important Lango clan leaders born of non Lango women (Acholi women). As such Uzoigwe<sup>188</sup> a clan elder, observed that,

Many important Lango leaders of the nineteenth century were born of non- Lango mothers or believed to have been foreigners captured in infancy. For example, Akena of Adyege whose mother was an Acholi and believed to have been captured at infancy together with his mother became a great war-leader in Lango. He led the Lango warriors to fight for Bunyoro princess during their internal conflicts.

However, it should be noted that, the spoils of the war were not the prerogative of the clan leaders despite their crucial role in the organisation and conduct of military campaigns. Both the livestock and captives were distributed among the warriors of the clan section. The marriages also played a political role in the sense that they acted as an alliance such that if a civil war broke out between the two ethnic groups, gruesome murdering would not take place because of the women married in such communities.

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<sup>188</sup>Uzoigwe. G. N: "The Beginnings of Lango Society". A review of Evidence. The Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol.6, No.4, (June 1973), p. 397-411

As stated by Odwee<sup>189</sup>, the success in these raids enabled individual characters like Ongora Okubal of *Atek* clan, Ogwal Abura of *Okii Bura* and Agoro Abwango of *Palamyek* to emerge as clan heads of their respective clans hence defending the clan system.

As observed by Carzzolara<sup>190</sup> the use of a common language between Lango and Acholi eased the communication in the political clan system of Lango. He added that, this was manifested in the sharing of the Lwo language. Ogwang<sup>191</sup> a technician noted that, many non-Lwo speaking communities find it very difficult to distinguish between *leb Lango* and *leb Acholi* languages because of the Lwo dialect. As stated by Opak<sup>192</sup> a retired Journalist, Lango adopted the Lwo language because of one main reason and that is, the Lango as an ethnic group were few in number compared to their neighbouring Lwo communities, so the best approach was to adopt the Lwo language as a means of survival from the threatening Lwo communities surrounding them. Therefore, the common Language spoken by the different clans as a result of interaction with the Acholi enabled the growth and development of Lango political system because they were united with a common language

### **3.4 The Relationship between Lango and Labwor**

According to Nzoigwe<sup>193</sup>, Labwor is located in the eastern part of Lango. The major physical barriers between Lango and Labwor are the Otuke and Labwor hills. Initially Labwor and Karimojong were under one district called Kotido until Labwor

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<sup>189</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of the Lango in Uganda And the Pride of African People*, Lisa Publishing company limited, Kampala, 2012

<sup>190</sup>Crazzolara. J. P., "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers

Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>191</sup>Ogwang George, a technician, 56 years old, an informant interviewed on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>192</sup>Opak Source, a retired Journalist, 80 years, an informant interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2019

<sup>193</sup>Nzoigwe. G.N: "Pre-colonial Markets in Bunyoro –Kitara". *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 14, No.4 (Sep., 1972), p.422-455

was given a district of Abim. More so, Tarantino<sup>194</sup> noted that, the Labwor belong to the Ateker family although they portray the Lwo characteristics in their way of life. The Labwor practice a mixed economy of subsistence agriculture, and the keeping of domestic animals which is closely related to Lango since the weather patterns of the area is the same. Therefore, the relationship between Lango and Labwor can be analysed socially and economically as seen below.

Thomas<sup>195</sup> observed that, the marriage institution bound a good relationship between Lango and the Labwor neighbours. He noted that, during pre-colonial time, the Labwor used to exchange their women and girls with foodstuffs with Lango. This led to the intermarriage between the two ethnic groups which have persisted up to date. Olong<sup>196</sup> a clan leader argued that, “Lango interacted with the Labwor through intermarriages from pre-colonial time until now. He added that, the number of people married between the two communities especially in *Gotojwang* up to date is countless.” Therefore, the marriage itself was political because it acted as an alliance between Lango and Labwor such that in case of war, the Labwor would side with the Lango warrior to defeat a common enemy. Besides that, the marriage alliance also ensured peace between the two communities thereby enabling Lango to live a more settled life without insecurity hence building its political institutions.

Thomas<sup>197</sup> further argued that, the relationship between Lango and Labwor can be traced right from pre-colonial period. He noted that, the Lango who were agriculturalists and not skillful in iron work like the Labwor led to their relationship. As earlier noted

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<sup>194</sup> Tarantino .A, “Lango Wars”, The Uganda Journal, *the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13 .No.2,(Sept. 1948), p.230-235

<sup>195</sup>Thomas .H.B.,“The Name Lango As Tittle For The Nilo-Hamites”, The Uganda Journal, the Journal of the Uganda Society, Vol.15,No.1( March 1952), p.65-73

<sup>196</sup>Olong Danoadit, clan leader, 79 years old, an informant interviewed on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>197</sup> Ibid

by Tosh<sup>198</sup> that, “the death of Lango cattle from the great rinderpest of 1890’s left Lango with no alternative but to resort to agriculture”. This made the demand for their type of hoes to be very high because they were not good at blacksmith. As observed by Karugire<sup>199</sup>, they had to go to Labwor land where such hoes were made. They would go in groups from different villages well- armed to be able to guard from attacks. As noted by Aron<sup>200</sup>, the contingents of the Lango were led by leaders such as *Adwong Wangtic* (clan cultural head), *Won Arum* (the head of a gazetted hunting area) and *Adwong Awi* (the one with the largest Kraal). The Lango supplied the Labwor with food stuffs in exchange for hoes which were badly needed at home. Besides the hoes, other iron implements such as spears and arrows were also exchanged with food from Lango. Therefore, the interaction between Lango and Labwor enabled the growth and development of Lango political institutions through acquisition of iron implements that were badly needed for defense thereby protecting their political systems.

Similar to the above, Tosh<sup>201</sup> and Karugire<sup>202</sup> further noted that, the Lango related with Labwor through participating in pre-colonial trade and in the times of famine. The medium of exchange was barter whereby a number of commodities were presented from both sides. On the side of Lango, they supplied Toke (the seed of malakwang) during scarcity while the Labwor supplied Lango with beads, pottery, baskets, goats and children. Okino<sup>203</sup> a retired clan leader noted that, Lango bartered with Labwor, This is further noted by Apuna<sup>204</sup>, “I am a Labwor a grandchild from Gotojwang whose mother was bartered by my grandparents for *toke* during the famine of 1900’s (Gotojwang

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<sup>198</sup>Tosh John, “Colonial Chiefs in a Stateless Society”: A Case from Northern Uganda, *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge University Press, Vol.14, No.3(1973), p.473-490

<sup>199</sup>Karugire .S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.40

<sup>200</sup>Aron Gwec, a clan elder, 70 years , an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>201</sup>Tosh.J. A, *Clan Leaders and Colonial chiefs*. A Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 64-68

<sup>202</sup>Karugire.S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.27

<sup>203</sup>Okino Ibrahim, a retired clan leader, 92 years, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019

<sup>204</sup>Apuna Lakeri , an elder 92 years old, an informant interviewed on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

famine)'. Gray<sup>205</sup> further noted that, the trade was done from *Mako Dyere* (friendship formation) which enabled blood friendship between Lango and Labwor. The trade in children in particular led to the development of Lango political institutions because the children played the role of population increase and also provided the warrior group that was needed to defend the clan system.

### **3.5 The Relationship between Lango and Karimojong**

According to Sandra<sup>206</sup>, the Karimojong are located in the eastern part of Lango. It is situated slightly after the Labwor land. The Karimojong occupy the present day districts of Kotido, Kaabong, Moroto, Napak, Nabilatuk and Nakapiripirit. The relationship between Lango and the Karimojong can be described as political, social and economic in nature as discussed below:

Politically, Tarantino<sup>207</sup> observed that, the Lango and Karimojong were neighbours for a very long time owing to the fact that they all originated from Abyssinia. He further noted that disputes arose between the two communities over shortage of water which led to repeated disputes among the two. According to Uzoigwe<sup>208</sup>, they also competed for the hunting grounds which the Lango claimed to have first discovered west of Otuke hills. The climax of the disputes was the famine which forced the Karimojong to sell their children to the Lango in exchange for food. As earlier noted by Sandra<sup>209</sup>, all these scenarios prepared the Karimojong for war with Lango because all the circumstances around seemed to be in favour of Lango. Given the frequent attacks from the

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<sup>205</sup> Gray John Miller, "Notes On The Lango", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.16, No.22 (1956), p.149

<sup>206</sup> Sundra Gray: "Cattle Raiding, Cultural Survival and Adaptability of East African Pastoralists, *Current Anthropology*, The Wenner Gren Foundation publisher, Vol. 44 (2003)

<sup>207</sup> Tarantino.A., The origin of the Lango, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13, No.2( Sept.,1949), p230-235

<sup>208</sup> Uzoigwe. G. N: "The Beginnings of Lango Society". A review of Evidence. The Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol.6, No.4, (June 1973), p. 397-411

<sup>209</sup> Sundra Gray: "Cattle Raiding, Cultural Survival and Adaptability of East African Pastoralists, *Current Anthropology*, The Wenner Gren Foundation publisher, Vol. 44 (2003)

Karimojongs, the Lango started to move away in small bundles of clans and those who led those clans became the clan leaders of their respective clans wherever they went henceforth developing the Lango political clan system.

The relationship between Lango and Karimojong can be traced as early as 1740s' when both societies had settled in Otuke areas. According to Thomas<sup>210</sup>, it was believed that Lango had more cattle than the Karimojong, so the latter resorted to frequent raids. Ayoo<sup>211</sup> a retired sub county chief noted that, oral tradition in Lango has it that one of the causes of the Lango migration from Otuke areas to their present location was because of conflicts between Lango and Karimojong over cattle. The conflict resulted into counter raids which made life very difficult hence the Lango decided to move away so that they could be free from Karimojong disturbances. Therefore, the most significant contribution of these raids to Lango clan system was that, it resulted into the abduction of Odyek Owidi, a Karimojong child by 1750's. He grew up in Lango and became so strong that he fought and won battles in many communities surrounding Lango and became a clan leader of *Atek Odyek Owidi* that he expanded using the war booty. The raids strengthened the clan system so much that , many strong warriors such as Abwango of Bar, Abura of Aloi rose up to defend their clans militarily hence developing the political system of the Lango. Haddon<sup>212</sup> observed that the relationship between the Lango and Karimojong was seen during the search for water and pasture during the dry season since Karamoja is located in semi-arid areas. So, during dry season there was acute shortage of pasture and water for both human beings and their animals. Zamani<sup>213</sup> observed that, as a result the Karimojong were left with no option but to force themselves

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<sup>210</sup>Thomas. H.B., "The Name Lango As a Title for Nilo-Hamites", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.15, No.1( March 19), p.65-73

<sup>211</sup>Ayoo Michael, a retired sub county chief, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>212</sup>Haddon.E.B, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.10.No.2( September, 1956), p52-71)

<sup>213</sup>Ogot. B. A., *Zamani: A Survey Of East African History*, Longman Kenya Ltd., Nairobi, 1967, p.27

to Lango land so as to access water and pasture for their herds of cattle. This is further noted by Quam<sup>214</sup>, the competition for scarce resources particularly water and pasture during the dry season and the high value placed on cattle have produced a culture of raiding and warfare by Karimojong against their neighbours within which men are noted for their bravery and wealth. Omara<sup>215</sup> a former M.P for Otuke constituency added that, as a result of the hostility between the two communities, the Lango organised themselves under different clan leaders and trained the young warriors who were not only meant to guard against the Karimojong raiders but also to protect and maintain the Lango clan system.

### **3.6 The Relationship between Lango and Iteso**

Iteso are located in the South Eastern direction from Lango. The Lango and Iteso as observed by Atieno<sup>216</sup> share common origin, that is Abyssinia (present day Ethiopia). During their early migration, both Lango and Iteso moved gradually up to Otuke hills where they stayed together for a period of about two hundred years and then further migrations occurred with each group taking different directions. As noted by Odada<sup>217</sup>, the oral tradition in Lango and Iteso refer to the descent from a people called Itunga, one of whose clan was known as Ateker and this confirms the impression that there was a strong movement of non-Lwo speaking people from Otuke areas. The relationship is analysed socially and economically as seen below.

As earlier noted by Odada<sup>218</sup> oral tradition in Lango and Iteso refers to the descent from a people called Itunga, one of whose clan was known as Ateker and this confirms

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<sup>214</sup>Quam. D. Michael. "Creating Peace in an Armed Society, Karamoja Uganda, African Studies quarterly, Vo.1, Issue 1, 1997, p.50-56

<sup>215</sup>Omara Daniel Atubo, former M.P, Otuke Constituency, 73 years old, an informant interviewed on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

<sup>216</sup>Atieno.E.S. A History of East Africa, Nairobi, Longman Group Limited, 1977, p. 43-45

<sup>217</sup>Odada.M.A.E, "The Kumam are they Langi or Iteso", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol. 35, part2, 1971, P.139

<sup>218</sup>Odada.M.A.E, "The Kumam are they Langi or Iteso", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol. 35, part2, 1971, P.139

the impression that there was a strong movement of non –Lwo speaking people from Karamoja region. Aron<sup>219</sup> a clan leader added that, both Lango and Iteso share a lot in terms of material culture such as clan names and animal body parts. For example *Atek, Arak and Okarowok* clans, names of the body parts of the animals such as *Amuro* (thighs) and *Aboi* (offals) are all shared by the two communities. Therefore, the relationship between Lango and the Iteso can be attributed to the clan leadership system which traces its origin from the Ateker family. Under this system, every clan had a clan head traditionally known as *Awitong* ( Tip of the spear) among the Lango whose duties were to ensure law and order in their respective clans, and as well as mobilised the young people to defend their land from attackers hence developing the Lango clan system.

Further more, the relationship between Lango and the Iteso was characterized by raids. According to Tosh<sup>220</sup> Lango raided for the livestock, women and children which were needed for the building of their political clan systems. The main purposes for the raids were to capture women and children to increase population”. Another reason for raiding Iteso was to acquire more cattle, which were needed for paying bride price since marriage in Lango required many cattle. However, the capture of women and children did not introduce a slave element into the Lango political system nor did it provide clan leaders with a personal following of uprooted foreigners, but it increased the population of the clans that captured them. The war captives were rapidly absorbed into kinship system and the acquisition of “sons” or “daughters” in this way lay within the reach of ordinary clan members. Therefore, the acquisition of the young boys in particular helped in the building of the political clan system because they

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<sup>219</sup>Aron Gwec, a clan leader, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2019

<sup>220</sup>Tosh.J., Tosh.J., *Clan Leaders and Colonial chiefs*. A Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 64-68

provided a warrior class of people badly needed to defend their respective clans.

According to Tarantino<sup>221</sup>, the Lango also related with the Iteso through intermarriages between the two communities. As noted by Ogwang<sup>222</sup> former chairman LCV, the Lango intermarried with the Iteso freely right from the pre-colonial period, and even up to date. He added that, intermarriages acted as a political alliance in that if there were disputes between the two communities, clan leaders would sit together to solve the disagreement amicably without shedding blood because they are related through marriage. Therefore, the intermarriages between Lango and Iteso created a political alliance which enabled a peaceful environment for the evolution of its political clan system without interference from neighbours.

A further analysis of the Lango social relations with the Iteso revealed that, Lango related with the Iteso during the hunting seasons, mainly during the dry season. As noted by Gray<sup>223</sup>, the two communities hunted together until the creation of the National Game Parks in Uganda. He further argued that, the Lango would hunt together with the Iteso in the areas of Amuria, Katakwi, Usuk, Olilim, Omoro, Dokolo, Abako, Bata, and Obalanga. Odur<sup>224</sup> a retired Parish chief added that, the hunting was done in the great hunting areas locally called *Arum* in Lango. Therefore, the Lango desire for adventuring new hunting areas prompted them to pick some youths, elders with wisdom and some few women to go for about two months in search of new hunting areas. As a result, the successful hunters who managed to kill the most feared wild animals naturally would be made clan leaders. This therefore played a fundamental role in defining leadership among the Lango and consequently development of the Lango

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<sup>221</sup>Tarantino. A., *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.10

<sup>222</sup>Ogwang Alele, former chairman LCV, 72 years old, an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>223</sup>Gray John Miller, "Notes On The Lango", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.16, No.22 (1956), p.149

<sup>224</sup>Odur Agong, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

political systems.

The social relationship between Lango and the Iteso was manifested through the Lango people giving to the Iteso land for settlement. The main reason for this late migration was the search for economic survival. Opii<sup>225</sup> a retired auditor argued that, there is a population of Iteso immigrants in Lango. He further named places like Atiiri -Olilim in Otuke with vast chunk of land, Bata in Dokolo, Omoro in Alebtong, and Lira Municipal (Teso Bar Division). The settlement in Teso Bar started as a small business community in 1980's while dealing in a local beer known as *Ajono*. The business has attracted many Iteso in the area, which was once almost vacant. Therefore, the migrants have been integrated into Lango culture through accepting *Leb Lango* and Lango names, and subordination to the Lango clan system.

The two communities participated in the pre-colonial trade. According to Karugire<sup>226</sup>, the major medium of exchange was barter. Lango on their side supplied commodities such as peas, sorghum, and millet while Iteso supplied commodities mainly livestock such as cattle, goats and chicken to exchange with Lango. According to Adefuye<sup>227</sup> that, the professional traders were not involved in cultivation but very active in this trade and knew the market prices of these items. Aron<sup>228</sup> a clan leader added that, up to date Lango is still transacting with Iteso in markets such Otuboi, Obalanga, Omoro and Amugo. Therefore, the trade exposed Lango to new political ideas outside their land. The organisation of the trade, the provision of security to the traders and as well as the participants in the trade became fundamental in the evolution of the Lango political institutions because those who acted as trade organisers became clan leaders.

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<sup>225</sup>Opii Allan, a retired auditor , 70 years old,an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>226</sup>Karugire.S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.30

<sup>227</sup>Ade Adefuye: "Palwo Economy, Society and Politics", *Transafrican Journal of History*, Gideon Were Publications, Vol.5, No.2 (1976), p. 1-20

<sup>228</sup>Aron Gwec, a clan leader, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

### 3.7 The Relationship between Lango and the Kumam

According to Odada<sup>229</sup>, the Kumam belong to the Ateker family together with the Lango, Iteso and Karimojong. They live in the areas of South- East of Lango. Nzita<sup>230</sup> noted that, the Kumam are found in the areas of Abako, Bata, Awelo, Kangai, Dokolo, Aputi and Namasale. He added that, the Kumam also have bigger settlements in the Western part of Iteso in the districts of Kaberamaido and Kalaki. Their Language is Kumam and they compose a small population within the area they occupy. The political, social and economic relationship between Lango and Kumam can be analysed as below.

Odada<sup>231</sup> argues that, the Lango raided the Kumam during the nineteenth century and these raids created hostilities between the two communities which eventually prepared each group to prepare for defense under a strong clan system. Ahmed<sup>232</sup> observed that, during those raids the Lango captured women and children, cattle and goats. The Kumam mourned (*kumu*) for their losses and organised for vengeance where they also inflicted pain on the Lango living in the east and south of Kaberamaido. Opio<sup>233</sup> a clan leader noted that, the raids on women and children by the Lango played significant roles in the development of the Lango clan systems. The clans such as *Oyeopyen* and *Omwonopel* that raided the Kumam increased their population hence gaining fame. The capture of the children especially the boys played a role of providing the warrior class of young people that were needed to defend the clan and as well as to mount more raids on the neighbours so as to maintain their independence. Therefore, the constant venture and success in Kumam land built courage among the Lango to maintain political clan system.

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<sup>229</sup>Odada.M.A.E, "The Kumam: Langi or Iteso?" The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.35,Part 2( 1971), p.139-152

<sup>230</sup>Nzita. R., *Peoples and Cultures of Uganda*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 1993, p.32

<sup>231</sup>Ibid

<sup>232</sup>Ahmed.S., *State formation in East Africa*, Nairobi , Heineman Education Books,1948, p.25

<sup>233</sup>Opio Julius, a clan leader, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

The two communities share a similar political system which was based on clan system. According to Odwee<sup>234</sup> a retired police officer, the Kumam had a loose political structure based on the clan leaders known as Wegi Atekere or Odonge Atekere. Odyomo<sup>235</sup> observed that, although they did not have a centralised system of government, both the Kumam and the Lango had a leader at the top of every clan that would unite the members of their clan under his leadership and management. In Lango, the clan leader was referred to as *Awitong*, chosen as a result of his bravery during raids or wars thereby reflecting the choice of a typical clan leader.

The relationship between Lango and Kumam was also based on the common language affiliated to the Lwo dialect. As observed by Tarantino<sup>236</sup> and Odada<sup>237</sup> the Kumam speak Luo dialect as a result of the fusion between Ateker family and the Lwo speaking communities as early 16<sup>th</sup> century during the migration wave. Okello<sup>238</sup> noted that, the Lango share a lot with Kumam in all spheres of life. For example, as noted by Crazzolaro<sup>239</sup> and Zamani<sup>240</sup> some phrases in Kumam are directly copied from *Leb-Lango*. These include names of people, places and roads like *Yo Lango* (meaning path), *Pacu Lango* (home), and *Yat Lango* (medicine). As a result the Kumam maintained contacts with the Lango because of the easy communication channel. Basing on the fact that Lango and the Kumam shared a common Luo dialect, a cross section of the Kumam living in Dokolo, Amolatar and Kyoga region generally were assimilated into Lango culture thereby evolving the Lango political clan system.

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<sup>234</sup> Odwee Julius Peter, a retired Police officer, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>235</sup> Odyomo .P., "The Luo origin", *International Journal of African Historical studies*, Boston, 1972

<sup>236</sup> Tarantino. A., Tarantino. A, *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.15

<sup>237</sup> Odada. M.A.E, "The Kumam: Langi or Iteso?" *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.35, Part 2( 1971), p.146-147

<sup>238</sup> Okello Opio, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>239</sup> Crazzolaro. J. P., "Notes on the Lango-Omiro and on the Labwor and Nyakwai, *Anthropos*, Nomos Publishers Ltd., (1960), p.174-214

<sup>240</sup> Ogot. B.A, Zamani: *A survey of East African History*, Longman Kenya Ltd., Nairobi, 1968

Odada<sup>241</sup> further argued that, Kumam and Lango had troubles in the areas of Kaberamido and Kyoga over hunting grounds. He added that, those areas were full of wild animals, fertile soils and uninhabited land as well. In Lango culture, killing a wild animal such as a leopard, buffalo or lion would earn one traditional leadership. According to Tosh<sup>242</sup> and Driberg<sup>243</sup>, the Lango warriors and hunters therefore used the opportunity to fight and defeat the Kumam in the hunting grounds so that they would establish themselves in the area as clan leaders in order to enjoy other benefits such as the fertile soils and free land for settlement. As a result the great warriors from different clans emerged as clan leaders in their respective clans and formed settlements in those communities surrounded by the Kumam but lived an independent life from each other hence maintaining the clan political system.

According to Karugire<sup>244</sup>, the two communities traded during pre-colonial period. He noted that the medium of exchanged was barter trade. On the side of Lango they supplied domestic animals like cattle, goats and sheep while on the side of the Kumam they supplied food crops such as millet, sorghum, beans and groundnuts. Odada<sup>245</sup> added that, the trade led to the development of the present day markets in Kumam land such as Otuboi, Kalaki, Lwala, and Ochero. Okello<sup>246</sup> asserted that, during the trade there were people who acted as middlemen to link the sellers with the buyers, and also as well as to negotiate the prices of the commodities. He argued that, for one to act as a middleman, he should have been a popular figure in Lango communities and the people accorded such a person respect. Therefore the trade played a role of raising the middlemen who

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<sup>241</sup>Odada. M.A.E, "The Kumam: Langi or Iteso?" The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.35,Part 2( 1971), p.146-147

<sup>242</sup>Tosh . A, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.138-139

<sup>243</sup>Driberg . J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p. 205

<sup>244</sup>Karugire .S.R., *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p.40

<sup>245</sup>Odada. M.A.E, "The Kumam: Langi or Iteso?" The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.35,Part 2( 1971), p.146-147

<sup>246</sup>Okello Opio, a clan leader, 78 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

eventually became clan leaders because of the leadership roles they played during the trade hence evolution of the Lango political institutions.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the ways in which the Lango related with her neighbours as originating from the political, social and economic demands of the related communities. The neighbours discussed were; Bunyoro, Acholi, Karimojong, Labwor, Iteso and Kumam. The overall relationship was basically built on raids, intermarriages and trade systems which enabled the Lango to build a strong clan system that stood the test of time. As discussed above, from the raids, Lango increased its population and also used the captured young men to build the warrior class that was needed to defend the clan system and also to help for further raids to attain more wealth for their respective clans. The intermarriages on the other hand played the role of political alliance in such a way that, in case of any attacks on the Lango, the clans with a marriage alliance could consult such a community for military help against the invaders thereby protecting the existing clan system of the Lango. Meanwhile, the pre-colonial trade also brought iron implements such as spears, arrows and hoes that enabled the growth of the clan system through provision of the weapons for defense and the hoes for food production which led to food security. Therefore, it is upon this relationship that chapter four comes in to discuss the political developments in Lango.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN LANGO (1894 to 1962)

#### 4.1 Introduction

According to Ingham<sup>247</sup>, the declaration of Uganda as a British Protectorate in 1894 brought fundamental changes in the Lango clan political systems. For example, the introduction of Baganda agents, introduction of colonial administrators, and the use of Lango traditional clan leaders as colonial chiefs among others. He added that, the colonial office in Entebbe then embarked on signing of a number of treaties for effective administration. For example, the colonial administrators signed treaties with Buganda, Busoga, Toro and Ankole. These treaties enabled the British to recruit the agents that helped in the extension of the British rule to different parts of Uganda, Lango inclusive. Notably; Apollo Kagwa and Semei Kakungulu who worked tirelessly as colonial agents in Western and Eastern Uganda respectively in the extension of the British rule in Uganda. Therefore, the chapter discusses the changes brought by colonial rule in the Lango political systems and the reactions of the clan leaders to these changes.

#### 4.2 The changes in the Lango political clan system

As observed by Ingham<sup>248</sup>, the establishment of the British colonial rule in Lango was not a straightforward event. It was done in phases by different people mainly the Baganda agents with Semei Kakungulu as their leader. In trying to digest the role of the Baganda agents in the extension of the British colonial rule, Roberts<sup>249</sup> and Karugire<sup>250</sup> observed that, the British attitude towards the Baganda was very unique in the Ugandan context and even the rest of the East Africa. For example, the English elites coming to

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<sup>247</sup>Ingham .K., “The British Administration in Lango District, 1907-1935”, *The Uganda Journal*, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19.No.2( Sept., 1955), p.156-168

<sup>248</sup> Ibid

<sup>249</sup>Roberts. A. D, “The Sub-Imperialism of the Baganda”, *the Journal of African History*, Vol.3, No.3, Cambridge University Press, 1962, p.435-450 p. 18-40

<sup>250</sup>Karugire. S. R, *A Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980. p.104-107

Uganda were instructed to look upon Buganda as role model in East Africa, the pre-eminent position that England had for Europe. As observed by Beverly<sup>251</sup> and Bridges<sup>252</sup> the Baganda held a special position in the eyes of the British and as such, they were employed as agents of colonial expansion. However, Bua<sup>253</sup> disagreed with this assertion and argued that the Baganda were only being used to transplant the *Ganda* system of political organisation which the British found to their benefit. Therefore, whatever the case the intention of the British was to change the Lango political clan system which they thought could not meet their interest of colonisation of Uganda as a whole. The following map illustrates the directions in which the British colonialists entered Lango land.

**A sketch map showing colonial penetration of Lango 1894 to 1909**



**Figure 4:** Colonial penetration of Lango 1894 to 1909, from John Tosh, 1978

From the sketch map above the colonial penetration of Lango took two flanks, that is, the eastern which was penetrated through Bugerere to Dokolo and the western which was penetrated through Mruli to Kungu at the shores of River Nile. According to Tosh<sup>254</sup>,

<sup>251</sup>Beverly Gartrel: “British Administrators, Colonial Chiefs and the Comfort of Tradition”. An example from Uganda, *African Studies Review*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 26, No.1 (March 1983), P.1-24

<sup>252</sup>Bridges . R.C: “Clan Leaders and Colonial Chiefs in Lango”: The Political History of an East African Stateless Society, c.1800-1939 by John Tosh, *History*, Wiley Publishers, Vol.65, No.214 (1980), p.255-256

<sup>253</sup>Bua Otim, a retired clan head , 85 years old, an informant interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> Janaury, 2019

<sup>254</sup>Tosh.J. A, *Clan Leaders and Colonial chiefs*. A Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, P.115

the protectorate government regarded eastern Lango in light of Bukedi and was supervised from Mbale by 1908 under a colonial agent Semei Kakungulu while the western Lango was seen in the view point of Bunyoro and was supervised from Hoima by 1909 under colonial administrator Fowler. Wright<sup>255</sup> noted that, much as the officials were aware that they were dealing with a single people, they maintained a separation of eastern Lango from western up to 1911. The purpose of dividing into two regions was to prevent them from coming together to fight the colonial in their land. Odwee<sup>256</sup> and Ogwang<sup>257</sup> a former chairman Local Council V argued that, the east had posed small scale clan resistance to the colonial agents because the agents such as Semei Kakungulu used too much power to force Lango to accept colonial rule whereas According to Robert<sup>258</sup> the colonial agents in the western flank made some negotiations with the clan leaders in Lango before formal administration of the protectorate government hence a peaceful penetration in the western flank. Therefore, the penetration of the colonial rule taught the Lango clan leaders that in order to preserve and maintain their clan political system, they were to implore new tactics such as negotiations in order to accommodate colonial rule within their system thereby developing the Lango political system.

According to Gray<sup>259</sup> and Ingham<sup>260</sup>, the long term cause for the extension of the British rule in Lango was the fleeing of the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Mwanga and the *Omukama* Kabalega of Bunyoro to Lango. They argued that, it was from this interaction between

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<sup>255</sup>Wright.M.J.“The early Life of Rwot Isaya Ogwangujji”, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.22,No.2(September, 1958), p.135

<sup>256</sup>Odwee.J.P, *The Try-Centenary of Lango People in Uganda And the Pride of African People*, Kampala, Lisa Enterprises Ltd., 2012, p. 51-52

<sup>257</sup>Ogwang Alele, a former a chairman LCV, 72 years old, an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>258</sup>Robert .A.D: “The Sub Imperialism of the Baganda”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol.3, No.3, Cambridge University Press, 1962, p.435-450

<sup>259</sup>Gray John Miller, “Kakungulu in Bukedi”,*The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1, (March, 1963), p.34-35

<sup>260</sup>Ingham. K, “British Administration in Lango”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19, (September , 1935), p.156-157

the two kings and Lango clan leaders that made the British realize the existence of clan heads in Lango. This is further noted by Odwee<sup>261</sup> when he observed that, following the increased use of higher military weapons by the British and their allies, the two kings made tactical withdrawal from the frontlines in Bunyoro and Buganda in 1897 and then they crossed the Nile at Kungu and Lake Kwania near Aputi and settled at Kangai peninsula in Lango. He added that, it was at this point that the Lango witnessed a bitter experience with the colonial masters that made them to resist at the beginning of colonial rule. As asserted by Odur<sup>262</sup>, a retired parish chief argued that, the manner of brutality in which the two kings were captured in Lango made the Lango clan leaders to retreat from aggression against the colonial rule. Gray<sup>263</sup> added that, the Lango clans that hosted these two kings in the area were the *Okii Koltum, Arak Oyeogweng, Arak Oyeopyen, Okarowok, Okii Ngurapuc, and Palamyek*. He further noted that, “the day of attack on the two kings was in the evening of 8<sup>th</sup> April, 1899, when Major Macdonald’s agents arrested one Lango clan head known as Okutu. After serious torture, Okutu who did not know both Luganda and English heard the names, Kabalega and Mwanga, then directed the colonialists through signs to where the two kings were hiding and both were captured alive and exiled”. Therefore, the capture of these two kings in Lango not only exposed the ability of the clan leaders to ally with the kings from centralised system of governance but also showed the strength of Lango political clan system that was able to resist foreign forces hence the development of the Lango political institutions.

According to Ingham<sup>264</sup> and Tosh<sup>265</sup> the strength of the Lango political clan heads was

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<sup>261</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Try-Centenary of Lango People in Uganda And the Pride of African People*, Kampala, Lisa Enterprises Ltd., 2012, p. 53

<sup>262</sup>Odur Agong, a retired Parish chief, 65 years, an informant interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>263</sup>Gray John Miller, “Kakungulu in Bukedi”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1, (March, 1963), p.34-35

<sup>264</sup>Ingham. K, “British Administration in Lango”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19, (September, 1935), p.156-157

further seen by the British after the establishment of their colonial administrative camps in Bululu, Kyoga and Kwania. They argued that, Lango clan heads and their warriors attacked these camps killing the colonial agents such as Musubira who was killed in 1903 to the extent that the colonialists called for more reinforcement from Buganda and Kazana was sent as his successor. Omach<sup>266</sup> noted that, “Lango clan heads were very strong people who could even kill British colonialists and their agents at their own camps.” Therefore, the intentions of the Lango clan leaders of *Arak Oyeopyen* led by Okwanga Acur and *Okii Koltum* led by Okoda were to preserve the independence of the Lango clan systems from foreign interferences.

Ingham<sup>267</sup> further observed that, in 1907, the protectorate government decided to open a station at Bululu and the agent Kazana at once placed himself and his achievements at the disposal of the British authorities. He added that, in 1908 more posts were established at Dokolo, Ekwera, Kangai and Awelo on the Namasale peninsula and in the same year the first station was opened in Lango at Ijuje. In this, the advance into Lango land was prosecuted from two sides at once. However, Omara<sup>268</sup> a former M.P, noted that, the establishment of the government stations was far from being a final achievement especially in Dokolo, Ekwera and Awelo where there was whole-hearted opposition from a cross section of clan leaders who were determined to protect and preserve the Lango clan system by any means at their disposal at that time. He further noted that, Opige Acon of Irong allied with other Lango clans such as Okullo Irongtong of *Otengoro* and Okwanga Acur of *Arak Oyeopyen* until agreement was reached to have a peaceful means.

Therefore, the reactions of these clan leaders showed that, Lango recognised no greater

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<sup>265</sup>Tosh.J. A, *Clan Leaders and Colonial chiefs*. A Political History of an East African Stateless Society, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, P.115

<sup>266</sup>Omach Ario, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>267</sup>Ingham .K., “The British Administration in Lango District, 1907-1935”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19.No.2( Sept., 1955), 156-157

<sup>268</sup>Omara Daniel Atubo, a former MP. Otuke Constituency, 73 yearsold, an informant on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

authority than a war leader who came at a forefront of affairs of his clan only during the annual cattle raids on neighbouring villages.

According to Tosh<sup>269</sup>, the appointment of Lango clan chiefs by the colonial commissioners Knowles, Fowler and Jervoise in 1909 to serve in the protectorate government brought fundamental changes in the Lango clan systems. He added that, clan chiefs such as Odora of *Oyakori* clan in Kungu who later established himself at Ibuje, Arum of *Ocukuru* clan and Otwal of *Arak* clan in Aber (the successor of Odongo Aja). Tosh<sup>270</sup> further argued that, the interaction between these three clans, that is; Odora, Arum and Otwal brought tremendous changes in the Lango political system when handling invaders. For example, they developed positive attitude, preferred diplomacy and negotiations as opposed to the old clan system of surprise attacks and raids in defending the clan system. Emuna<sup>271</sup> noted that, although these clan leaders were appointed as colonial chiefs and their roles had now changed to colonial administrators, they still recognised the clan political systems at their respective clans.

According to Wright<sup>272</sup> and Huddle<sup>273</sup>, in the successive years 1911 onwards, several clan leaders were appointed as colonial chiefs in Lango. They noted that, Haldane .J.O, the District Commissioner of Palango opened a post at Lira and eight months later, Kings African Rifle (K.A.R) was stationed in Ngetta. For example, clan leaders such as Isaya Ogwanguji and Olet were appointed to be chiefs (*Rwode*) of Erute in 1911, Odora was made a chief in Aduku in

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<sup>269</sup>Tosh. n Tosh, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.148.

<sup>270</sup>Tosh . A, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.138-139

<sup>271</sup>Emuna Engol, an informant interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

<sup>272</sup>Wright.M.J., “Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji”, *the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No., 3( Sept., 1957),p.131-135

<sup>273</sup>Huddle.J.G, “The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango Disrict”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

March 1913; Arum was made a Chief in Ibuje in 1913, Opige in Dokolo in 1917, Opiocaki in Kangai in 1917, and Owiny Akullu in Ocini from 1917 to 1939. Much as the colonial system seemed to have distorted the Lango political systems, the colonial chiefs in Lango still pledged allegiance to their respective clans. They could still perform their clan duties outside the mandate of their government appointment thereby developing and maintaining the Lango clan system.

Wright<sup>274</sup> and Huddle<sup>275</sup> further argued that, with the help of these local chiefs in 1917, the colonial government was able to build some health centers such as at Aduku and Aber in different places. They also built accommodation and offices for the chiefs at both county and Sub County levels in Erute, Oyam, Kole, and Moroto. The government also drilled boreholes in the communities and these were useful especially during dry season and at the same time they also opened access roads in Lango hence connecting Lango to neighbouring communities. These clan heads (now county chiefs) accepted the coming of the missionaries such as Church Missionary Society, Comboni and Mill Hill fathers in Lango which led to Christianity and education in Lango. Ajal<sup>276</sup> chairman LCIII noted that, the first people to receive Christianity in Lango were clan leaders. The examples of clan leaders who welcomed the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) and accepted to be baptised in the protestant faith were chief Odora Arimo of Kungu in 1903, chief Arum of Ibuje in 1905, and chief Odongo Aja of Aber in 1906 respectively and were baptised by the Anglican Arch Bishop Russel J.K. Therefore, the conversion of the clan leaders into Christianity enlightened them about education and as result they were

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<sup>274</sup>Wright.M.J.,“Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji”, *the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No.,3( Sept., 1957),p.131-135

<sup>275</sup>Huddle.J.G, “The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango Disrict”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>276</sup>Ajal Okwir, chairman LCIII, 50 years old, an informant interviewed on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2019

able to send their children to school. After attaining good education, some of their children then returned home and served as both clan leaders and as well as government servants hence improving the quality of clan political systems of governance.

Tosh<sup>277</sup> and Ingham<sup>278</sup> added that, there were complaints about the Baganda agents that were exercising so much influence that even the appointed chiefs were prevented from developing their talents in leadership. They added that, the people complained that, too few young Lango men were coming forward to act as chiefs and above all, the agents were using a lot of force in implementing the government policies without considering the people's grievances. Therefore, this kind of administration never made a smooth presence of the British to the Lango because Lango cherished a life of self-rule ("*Lango Loye Kene*"). Wright<sup>279</sup> argued that, in 1912 a wide range decision had to be taken to see Lango leaders take charge of their affairs. New Chiefs had to be appointed at all subcounty level and even in some Counties. All the non-Lango had to be withdrawn including the Assistant District Commissioner (ADC) Tufnell at Palango on whom Lango had been bitterly complaining. Therefore, all these efforts made by the clan leaders encouraged the protectorate government to enforce dramatic changes in order to accommodate local leadership from Lango to lead their own people thereby preserving the clan system amidst the forces of change that the government had put in place.

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<sup>277</sup>Tosh. A, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.138-139

<sup>278</sup>Ingham .K., "The British Administration in Lango District, 1907-1935", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19.No.2( Sept., 1955), p.156-163

<sup>279</sup>Wright.M.J., "Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji", *the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No., 3(Sept., 1957),p.131-135

Similarly, Huddle<sup>280</sup> and Tosh<sup>281</sup> observed that, the functions of the colonial chiefs were defined by the ordinances given by the protectorate government. Besides maintaining law and order, and collection of taxes in Lango, the Lango clan heads (county chiefs) were also tasked to implement the three ordinances that were promulgated by the colonial government. Mutibwa<sup>282</sup> added that, the ordinances were: The Native Authority Ordinance (NAO) No.17 Of 1919, The Native Courts Ordinance (NCO) No.24 of 1919 and the Native Law Ordinance (NLO) No.32 of 1919. These ordinances defined the powers of the chiefs. For example, who to detain, prevent law breaking, keep security and restrict the production of alcohol and the ordinances ensured that the chiefs themselves obeyed the law as well as respecting the customary laws. However, this arrangement meant that the chiefs who were appointed were not guided by spiritual or cultural consideration, a situation that undermined traditional authority in Lango. Chiefs were entitled to free and compulsory labour from their subjects. However, Aron<sup>283</sup> noted that, the powers that these chiefs exercised were far over and above those possessed by their illiterate former counter parts. Therefore, these changes and ordinances enabled quality leadership in the Lango clan system through the guidance and bureaucracy copied from the colonial system of governance.

#### **4.3 Reactions to the political changes**

The reactions to the changes brought by colonial rule in Lango political systems were both positive and negative because it involved a series of resistances by different clans and individual clan leaders although some areas of Lango responded with diplomacy through negotiations. All these reactions were guided by different clan leaders who wanted to protect the interest of their respective clans because Lango did not have a unitary leader.

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<sup>280</sup>Huddle.J.G,“The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango Disrict”, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3,(September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>281</sup>Tosh . A, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.162-163

<sup>282</sup>Mutibwa. P. Mukasa, *A History Of Uganda*, Fountain Publishers, 2016, p. 69-75

<sup>283</sup>Aron Gwec an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

According to Gray<sup>284</sup>, the Lango clan heads put a very stiff resistance to Semei Kakungulu, a colonial agent operating in the areas of Bukedi as it was known, eastern Lango inclusive. He added that Semei Kakungulu made friendship with the Iteso in 1896 and decided to attack Lango but the results were disastrous because it provoked constant raids towards him by the Lango clan leaders. Ogot<sup>285</sup> added that, with the assistance of Teso warriors, he attacked the Lango territory, and this was Semei Kakungulu's first attempt to bring Lango under the British control in the Eastern flank. Gray<sup>286</sup> noted that Semei Kakungulu was forced to make a disorderly retreat because he had lost fifty of his men and twenty seven guns and so, the Lango managed to stay out of British areas of influence for a while. Although Semei Kakungulu had the second expedition in Lango in 1899, he was equally repulsed by the Lango clan heads. The clans that defended the Lango political systems were *Okii Koltum*, *Arak Oyeopyen*, *Arak Oyeogweng*, *Okarowok*, *Okii Ngurapuc*, *Palamyek* and *Okii Palamyek*. Therefore, the military resistance showed by these clans revealed Lango's attitude towards colonial rule as something negative that had come to disorganise their clan system hence they were to defend themselves so as to maintain their political institutions.

As observed by Tarantino<sup>287</sup>, in 1897, the Omukama of Bunyoro and the Kabaka of Buganda decided to run to Kangai in Lango in order to hide from colonial rule, but the British colonial government looked for them for nearly two years. He noted that, the Baganda and Banyoro were askaris being constantly sent into Lango to find and arrest the two fugitive kings. However, these foreign askaris did not behave well towards the

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<sup>284</sup>Gray John Miller, "Kakungulu in Bukedi", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1, (March, 1963), p.37-38

<sup>285</sup>Zamani, B.A. Ogot, *A Survey of East African History*, Nairobi, Longman Kenya Ltd, 1968.p.105

<sup>286</sup> Gray John Miller, "Kakungulu in Bukedi", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1, (March, 1963), p.37-38

<sup>287</sup>Tarantino.A., "Notes On The Lango", The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13, No.2,( Sept., 1949), p.234-235

Lango because they started seizing Lango property wherever they went. Abak<sup>288</sup> a clan leader noted that, this angered the Lango who were determined to show the foreigners that they had not lost their old strength (the clan system). Gray<sup>289</sup> noted that, all the askaris were armed with rifles whereas firearms were scarce among the Lango, most of whom had spears only. He further argued that, the clan leaders such as Otwal of *Arak Oyeopyen*, Etik of *Okarowok* joined forces with Owiny Akullo of *Arak* of Aber and when next agents and askaris arrived, confident that because of their rifles the Lango would be too frightened to attack. Tarantino<sup>290</sup> added that, Owiny Akullo descended on them and put them to flight and about seventy of the foreigners were killed and those who escaped across the river never again returned to annoy Lango. Therefore, the reactions of the clan leaders towards the misconduct of the British colonial government askaris showed that they had the courage and determination to protect and defend their clan systems of governance.

Further more; Gray<sup>291</sup> noted that, a spirited fight to defend the Lango clan system as was revealed during the capture of Mwanga and Kabalega in Kangai in 1899. He added that, oral tradition in Lango has it that the battle between the colonial agents and the Lango clan chiefs who were protecting Kabaka Mwanga and Omukama Kabalega lasted for about Six hours until the Lango clan leaders were overpowered and the two kings were captured while hiding underground at Kangai village. Ingham<sup>292</sup> and Huddle<sup>293</sup> added

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<sup>288</sup>Abak John, a clan leader of *Otengoro Okwer Yic*, 60 years old, an informant interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>289</sup>Gray John Miller, "Kakungulu in Bukedi", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1, (March, 1963), p.34-35

<sup>290</sup>Tarantino.A., "Notes On The Lango", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13, No.2,( Sept., 1949), p.234-235

<sup>291</sup>Gray John Miller, "Kakungulu in Bukedi", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1, (March, 1963), p.34-35

<sup>292</sup>Ingham .K., "The British Administration in Lango District, 1907-1935", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19.No.2( Sept., 1955), p.156-163

<sup>293</sup>Huddle.J.G, "The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango Disrict", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

that, The Lango clan leaders and the warriors who collaborated with the two kings were commanded by Oyom Adar, Acope, and Omara Iel of *Okarowok* clan who were Kabalega's camp commandants. Other clan heads that participated in the battle were Okwanga Acur and Owiny Aleka of *Arak Oyeopyen* clan, and Okoda Alengo and Otim Ario of *Okii Koltum* clan. Ogwang<sup>294</sup> noted that, the existence of the village, *Acogodano* (human skeletons) in the present day Kangai sub county was because many clan heads and warriors were killed from there during the battle of the capture of the two kings in Lango. He added that, the spot where Mwanga and Kabalega settled is now Kangai Secondary School. The road to Kaberamaido divides the camp for Mwanga on the *Anyarudir* (South) and for Kabalega on the *Nyarolum* (North), but close to each other about 200 meters apart. Therefore, much as the Lango clan leaders lost the battle in protection of Omukama Kabalega and Kabaka Mwanga, it showed their ability to defend their independence and as well as preserve their political system.

Tosh<sup>295</sup> observed that, between 1896 and 1899, Lango clan leaders posed stiff resistance to colonial rule in the areas of Aber and Ocini especially when the British punished the Lango clan heads that had allied with the Sudanese mutineers who had taken refuge in Lango. He added that, at Ocini Owiny Akullu (clan head of the *Arak* clan) put a strong resistance to the colonial agents which made them advance to Kamdini in 1896 and in 1899 near Lake Kwania. He further noted that, the situation caused heavy casualties on the side of the colonial agents. As remarked by Wright<sup>296</sup>, "the situation in western Lango made the British government to think of peaceful means to penetrate Lango because the clan leaders had ensured that no amount of force would coerce its people to

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<sup>294</sup>Ogwang Alele, an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>295</sup>Tosh. A, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.162-163

<sup>296</sup>Wright .M.J., "Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji", *The Uganda Journal, the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No., 3( Sept., 1957),p.87

accept foreign rule”. Therefore, the colonial agents ceased fire and embarked on peace talks with the prominent clan leaders. Owing to that, Owiny was made a colonial chief at Ocini for ten years. Angweri<sup>297</sup> argued that, even when the Baganda agents were eventually withdrawn, the clan leaders who were believed by the colonial masters to be familiar with their people were appointed as colonial chiefs in Lango thereby making the colonial penetration in Lango to take a short period. Therefore actions of the clan leaders of Aber and Ocini revealed the existence and strength of Lango clan system and to this effect in 1907, the Lango clan leaders attacked and closed the temporary camp of the British colonial agents at Bululu.

As observed by Ingham<sup>298</sup> and Huddle<sup>299</sup> the agents’ camps were attacked by clan leaders of *Okii Koltum* and *Okarowok* because the agents were using a lot of force on the Lango and more so, they had sided with the Kumam to take away the Lango hunting grounds between *Otuboi* and *Omunyal*, along Okile on the shores of Lake Kyoga. Gary<sup>300</sup> added that, when Musubira replaced Kakungulu, again he was attacked at *Alwa* near kaberamaido in the same period by Okwanga Acur (*Arak Oyeopyen* clan), Okoda Alengo, Otim Ario (*Okii Koltum* clan). Therefore, these attacks revealed to the British that the Lango were politically organized and wanted to protect their independence from any form of foreign interference.

Tosh<sup>301</sup> noted that, more resistances to colonial rule in Lango were shown when the colonial agents reached Dokolo in 1907. He stated that, clan leaders such as Opige of

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<sup>297</sup> Angweri Sam, an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>298</sup> Ingham .K., “The British Administration in Lango District, 1907-1935”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.19.No.2( Sept., 1955), p.156-163

<sup>299</sup> Huddle.J.G, “The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango District”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>300</sup> Gray John Miller, “Kakungulu in Bukedi”, *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.27, No.1,(March, 1963), p.34-35

<sup>301</sup> Tosh . A, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.162-163

*Atek* and Okullo Iryontong of *Otengoro* launched more attacks on the colonial agents at different camps in June 1907 in the areas of Kyoga, Cakwara, Awelo, and Aputi. Tosh<sup>302</sup> added that, Kazana was deployed as the chief agent working with Kabagambe and Kamyia for tax collection. However, in the same year Okwanga Acur of *Arak Oyeopyen* attacked Kamyia and killed him with sixteen staff. Ingham noted that, this situation led to the major operation by the Inspector General of Protectorate Police (IGPP) in June 1907 in the areas of the eastern shores of Abalang swamp but still the use of force could not settle the conflicts between clan leaders and colonial agents not until agreements were reached to have a peaceful means of resolving the conflicts. Atim<sup>303</sup> asserted that, the name Dokolo was derived from *Adagkolo* (I don't want violence). Therefore, much as the attacks revealed Lango as a violent ethnic group, it also portrayed the strength of Lango clan political system against the British colonial agents.

Wright<sup>304</sup> observed that, there was a small scale resistance in 1919 in Adwari, an area which borders Lango and Acholi and was the last to be taken by the colonial administration. He noted that a post had been opened there by a colonial administrator Driberg in February, 1918 but faced stiff resistance from Olong who was a prominent chief. He always opposed the government policies and would incite his clan members to resist against the government officials because he saw colonial government as an interference with his clan system. Tosh<sup>305</sup> added that, the trouble started on 24th January, 1919 when Obua (a colonial chief) in charge of Adwari and the agent, Kamulale went to Munabya's village (Munabya was one of Olong's loyal men) to collect a fine of

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<sup>302</sup>Ibid

<sup>303</sup>Ibid

<sup>304</sup>Wright .M.J., "Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji", *The Uganda Journal, the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No., 3( Sept., 1957),p.134-135

<sup>305</sup> Tosh . A, *Clan Leaders and colonial Chiefs in Lango, The Political History of an East African Stateless society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.162-163

one bull, and to collect an Acholi woman whose husband Oto had come from Patongo to fetch her. They reached the village soon after dawn and were received peacefully by Munabya, who said he was going to fetch the bull but instead went and mobilized the warriors to attack the visitors from all sides. In the attack eleven people were killed including an agent, Kamulale, Oto and nine Baganda but Obua and his son escaped. The organisation of the attack was so powerful that it attracted men from the neighbouring communities of Orum and Aloi. Odwee<sup>306</sup> on 26<sup>th</sup> January, the same year, a colonial chief Isaya Ogwanguji based in Lira reacted and selected the best Jagi (chiefs) from Lira that is, Ojuka of Lira, Oki of Bar, Oyugi of Akalu, Ocato of Aloi and Atwi of Apala. Olong was captured alive and his entire teams of accomplices were followed and severely punished. This marked the end of their resistance. Therefore, much as the Adwari resistance was subdued before it had spread to a wider area, it showed the determination of the clan leaders.

According to Wright<sup>307</sup> and Huddle<sup>308</sup>, in 1956, another reaction re-occurred to the colonial authority and this was led by district leaders who also mobilised their clan leaders against colonial government. They argued that, before the incidence the colonial authority had communicated some issues on Lango land but the Lango did not understand because most people did not know English and would depend on their interpreters that were also not very conversant with English language. According to Odyek<sup>309</sup>, an agricultural officer, there was a rumour that the colonial authority had a plan to register Lango land for private titles which had been rejected by Lango clan

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<sup>306</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of the Lango in Uganda And the Pride of African People*, Lisa Publishing company limited, Kampala, 2012, p.51

<sup>307</sup>Wright .M.J., "Rwot Isaya Ogwanguji", *The Uganda Journal, the Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.12., No., 3( Sept., 1957),p.134-135

<sup>308</sup> Huddle.J.G, "The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango Disrict", *The Uganda Journal, The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>309</sup>Odyek Ebil, an agricultural officer, 55 years old, an informant interviewed on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

leaders. He added that, when they saw many district leaders roaming within the district in Land Rover vehicles, an interpreter claimed that the word “Land Rover” meant “land robbing” means of transport. This meant that the authority was planning to rob Lango land”. Odwee<sup>310</sup> asserted that, the real mission was a campaign for Lango to construct water dams, as samples of the soil were also being taken for testing to identify suitable crops to be grown in Lango for commercial purposes. Enyang<sup>311</sup> added that, on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1956 when an African Minister for lands was to address Lango District Council on land tenure system of individual land ownership, a crowd of people stormed the District Council offices and every officer escaped. She added that, the chaos continued the next day unceasing even when the Officer in charge (O/C) Police of Lango at Lira helplessly watched. She further noted that despite the fact that the District council solicited for support from their clan heads, this showed that the Lango clan heads were still important despite the colonial interference. Bua<sup>312</sup> noted that, the situation also coincided with the arrival of the new governor Sir Fredrick Crawford who had been transferred from Kenya to Uganda. He asserted that the new Governor had sent his cattle ahead being driven by the Nandi to open up a ranch in *Otwal* Sub County but were brutally attacked by Lango. He added that, the Nandi and the cattle never reached their destination because the Lango warriors militarily attacked them at Ayer near Okole River and killed several cattle. The remaining cattle near Dokolo had to be diverted to Amolatar for Nakasongola at the supervision of armed British colonial soldiers. Although the colonial government responded by arresting most of the district council members and clan heads including Engur Yokosafati, the strength and determination of the clan system was revealed and from that time on wards, Lango adopted a non-

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<sup>310</sup>Odwee Julius Peter , an informant interviewed on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

<sup>311</sup>Enyang Anikiton, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019

<sup>312</sup>Bua Otim, an informant interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

violence approach to protect their political system.

Huddle<sup>313</sup> observed that, another important change brought by colonial rule in Lango was the creation of the “constitutional head” which in Lango was referred to as *Won Nyaci*. He noted that, in 1945 the Lango Native Council (LNC) chose Yakobo Adoko to be *Won Nyaci*. He was to be an equivalent of Kyabazing of Busoga (Paramount chief). *Won Nyaci* “owner of all”. He further noted that the governor rejected the title and decided that post should be called *Rwot Adwong* (senior chief). Therefore, in 1949, Yakobo Adoko was elected as *Rwot Adwong*. However, Odwee<sup>314</sup> noted that, towards the attainment of Uganda’s independence, the British proposed that every ethnic group should have a leader who they called a “constitutional head” to represent his people in the Legislative Council (LEGCO). He argued that, such a person would be equated to the kingdom leaders such as of Buganda, Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole”. As earlier referred to by Huddle<sup>315</sup>, the “constitutional head” of Lango was named *Won Nyaci*”. This was done after the district council meeting which was held in 1954. He added that, the council resolved that Engur Yokosafati was the best person to represent Lango in the Legislative Council because of his active participation in the political mobilisation of the Lango when Uganda National Congress (UNC) reached Lango in 1953. Therefore, Engur Yokosafati was rewarded as the first *Won Nyaci* of Lango in 1954. However, Odwee<sup>316</sup> noted that, when Engur Yokosafati participated in the land riot of 1956, he was arrested though released years later and disqualified from being a member of the Legislative Council. He added that, the arrest had already created a leadership vacuum

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<sup>313</sup>Huddle.J.G, “The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango District”, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>314</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of the Lango in Uganda And the Pride of African People* , Lisa Publishing company limited, Kampala, 2012 , p.51

<sup>315</sup>Huddle.J.G, “The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango District”, The Uganda Journal, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

<sup>316</sup>Odwee Julius Peter, *The Tri-Centenary of the Lango in Uganda And the Pride of African People* , Lisa Publishing company limited, Kampala, 2012 , p.51

which was filled by Apollo Milton Obote in the Legislative Council (LEGCO). As a result Otim Benayokasi became the second Won Nyaci who served for only two years (1965 to 1967), and witnessed the abolition of traditional institutions in Uganda in 1967.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter discussed the changes that colonial rule brought in the Lango political systems. It examined the role of the Baganda agents in effecting these changes. For example launching frequenting attacks on Lango settlements in the areas of Dokolo and Kwania and as well as establishing their posts in areas such as Bululu and Kwera so as to deal with the clans that were resisting colonial rule. It also analysed the roles played by prominent clan leaders such as Odora, Otwal and Arum who used diplomacy to welcome colonial rule in Lango. The chapter also looked at key resistances in the areas of Aber led by Owiny Akullo and Adwari led by Olong to oppose the use of the Baganda agents and chiefs that were misbehaving in Lango. Much as the British used the indirect system of administration through the services of the Baganda agents, they could not fully achieve their objectives not until some clan leaders were appointed from Lango, such as, Odora, Olet , Ogwangujji and Elia and that is when the colonial aim of subduing Lango was fulfilled. However, it should be noted that the system failed in Lango because it was imposed on the people without regard to the variation of the traditional clan system in its people since Lango was a decentralised society. The analysis covered the transition from segmentary leadership during pre-colonial period to a more bureaucratic system during colonial period. Therefore, one notes that, right from the pre-colonial time, Lango political clan heads existed and were strong even during the colonial time until the post-colonial time when they were abolished. It is upon this background that chapter five comes in to discuss the restoration of Lango political institutions from 1995 to 2017.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE RESTORATION OF LANGO POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS (1995 TO 2017)

#### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the changes that colonial rule brought in the evolution of Lango political institutions and the reactions that followed suit with the view that it was an imposition of a system on a culture that had its own political structures that had worked for centuries. As observed by Mutiibwa<sup>317</sup>, Obote constitutionally abolished the operations of traditional institutions on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1967. Therefore the operations of traditional institutions such as in Buganda, Bunyoro, Busoga, Alur, Acholi and Lango inclusive were declared illegal henceforth. He added that, this action did not go well with the people of Uganda especially in areas where traditional institutions were highly cherished. He further noted that, following the increased demand by the public for the government to restore traditional institutions, the 1995 constitutional promulgation allowed the restoration of traditional political institutions in Uganda as long as it did not interfere with government business. However, the Lango took long to restore their traditional institutions due to some reasons as noted by Driberg<sup>318</sup>, the highest cultural leadership in Lango was *Awitong* (Clan leader). Therefore, Won Nyaci was a colonial creation by the British to be a representative of *Owitong*, although not equated to a position of a king. Another factor for the delay as observed by Tarantino<sup>319</sup>, a leader was chosen by consensus and not by majority vote or other methods. He added that, the process of choosing a traditional leader in Lango would take hours or days under a tree.

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<sup>317</sup>Mutiibwa.M. S *A History of Uganda, The First 100 Years 1894-1995*, Fountain Publishers , Kampala, 2016, p.222

<sup>318</sup>Driberg . J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p. 205

<sup>319</sup>Tarantino.A.,” Notes On The Lango”, *The Uganda Jorunal , The Journal of the Uagnda Society*, Vol.13, No.2( (September, 1949), p.145-153

More so, Driberg<sup>320</sup> and Tarantino<sup>321</sup> also noted that, Lango rated ability and competence very highly while choosing a traditional leader and the position was not hereditary. For example, *Awitong* was often an energetic, resourceful and a visionary person able to win wars and to keep the clan united, safe and prosperous. All these factors explain why it took long for Lango to select a person who would represent the clan leaders (*Owitong*) at a national high table of kings and paramount chiefs. This chapter therefore focuses on how the restoration of traditional political institution has affected Lango political institutions and the conflicts that have come as a result of the restoration.

## **5.2 The effects of the restoration on Lango political system.**

According to Okino<sup>322</sup> a news reporter, observed that, His Highness Won Nyaci, Odur Yosam Ebie was installed on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2006 at Akii Bua memorial stadium in a colourful ceremony attended by many dignitaries such as Gilbert Bukenya who represented the government and other cultural leaders from Acholi, Teso, Bunyoro and Alur also attended. He added that, His Highness Won Nyaci called upon the *Owitong* (Clan heads) to mobilize their clan members to support him so that Lango would be united under one leadership in order to bring peace and prosperity in the Land. Olang<sup>323</sup> a clan leader of *Bako Olang* who attended the inauguration noted that, the cultural leaders were tasked with the responsibility of mobilising the different clans in Lango with varying opinions to support the Won Nyaci as their representative in cultural matters. As early on observed by Tosh<sup>324</sup>, the Lango originally did not have a unitary leader but fragmented through loose clan heads known as *Owitong*. He added that, the

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<sup>320</sup>Driberg. J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p. 205

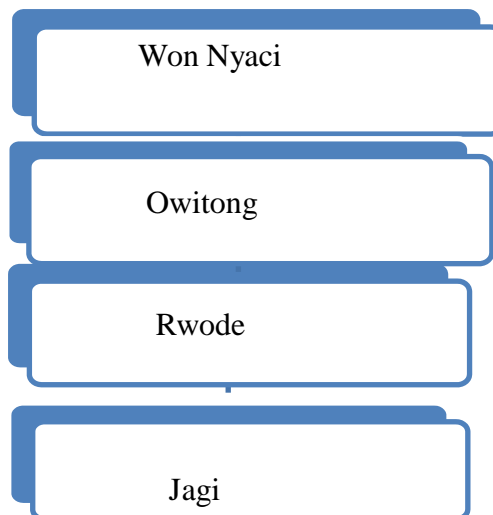
<sup>321</sup>Tarantino.A., "Notes On The Lango", *The Uganda Journal*, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.13, No.2( (September, 1949), p.145-153

<sup>322</sup>Okino Bonny, a news reporter, 50 years old, Inauguration of the Won Nyaci in the New Vision, New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Limited, Kampala, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2006, p.14

<sup>323</sup>Olang Joe Erik, a clan leader, 70 years old, interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>324</sup>Tosh John, "Colonial Chiefs in a Stateless Society": A Case from Northern Uganda, *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge University Press, Vol.14, No.3(1973), p.473-490

Won Nyaci was charged with the task of breaking this old tradition and usher Lango into a new era where *Owitong* would form the Won Nyaci cabinet, deliberate matters and command respect from their subjects on behalf of the cultural institution. Therefore, the year 2006 was a turning point in the history and development of Lango political institutions because the Won Nyaci was inaugurated as a Lango cultural leader. Opii<sup>325</sup>, a retired auditor added that, the cabinet of the Won Nyaci consists of His Highness, Won Nyaci as the chairman, followed by ministers appointed from the *Owitong* and the members that consist of mainly *Owitong* or their representatives in the council. Omach<sup>326</sup> a retired teacher added that, The *Rwodi* and *Jagi* act as coordinators at sub counties and village levels respectively. He further noted that, the roles of these lower chiefs are to collect the views from their clans and team up with their respective *Owitong* in order to present their views to the office of Won Nyaci accordingly. The structure of the Lango political institutions from 2006 to 2017 can be summarized as below.



According to Kasfir<sup>327</sup>, the main reason for the restoration of traditional institutions in Uganda was a fulfillment of National Resistance Army (NRA) to their supporters and

<sup>325</sup>Opii Allan, a retired Auditor, 70 years old interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>326</sup>Omach Ario, a retired teacher, 71 years Old, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>327</sup>Kasfir Nelson, "The Restoration of Buagdna Kingdom Government", The African Journals, *The Journal Of Modern African Studies*, Vol.57, Issue NO.4 2014), p.20

mainly the Baganda during the bush war struggle. He added that, although this was a promise given to the Baganda, other people in Uganda benefit from it Lango inclusive. As reported by Okino<sup>328</sup>, “some elders especially in Buganda on many occasions approached Museveni and reminded him of the bush war support that he got from Buganda, and that Museveni had promised that, after winning the war, Buganda would be rewarded with the restoration of kingship and their property”. Stefan<sup>329</sup> added that, as a result Museveni convened a meeting of the Army Council in Gulu on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 1992 concerning the restoration of traditional institutions and the meeting resolved that the restoration of traditional institutions was fine as long as the leaders were not to engage in partisan politics. He further noted that, the Army Council also resolved that all the property and cultural sites of the kingdoms of Buganda, Toro, Bunyoro, Busoga and Ankole that were confiscated by the government in 1967 after the banning of the traditional institutions were to be returned. Ogwang<sup>330</sup> a clan leader noted that, as a result of the meeting in 1993 some enthusiastic Baganda elders organized the inauguration of Prince Ronald Muwenda Mutebi as the Kabaka of Buganda at a colourful ceremony held at Naggalabi in Budo although unconstitutionally but a presidential decree. Therefore, the restoration of traditional institutions was done in the interest of the Baganda not Lango and this explains why Lango took so long to restore traditional institutions because they did not see any immediate benefit from such a system. Okello<sup>331</sup> further noted that, the Lango traditional institutions did not lose any property during the abolition of traditional institutions and besides the new position of the Won Nyaci was not fully understood among the Lango hence it was subject of no

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<sup>328</sup>Okino Bonny,” NRA fulfills its Promise to Buganda” in the New Vision, New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Limited, Kampala Archive, Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> - August, 1997 to October, 2013, p.6

<sup>329</sup>Stefan Lougren, “Power of the Buganda”: Uganda’s King Returns, The Christian Science Monitor , 1996, p.25

<sup>330</sup>Ogwang James , a clan leader , 58 years old, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> February , 2019

<sup>331</sup>Okello John, a retired clan leader, 82 years old interviewed on 10 February, 2019

immediate response.

According to Mutebi<sup>332</sup>, the reason for the restoration of the traditional institution was the strategy by National Resistance Movement (NRM) government to have a grip in power since they were trying to unlock what was abolished by the previous governments. He added that, “the restoration of those institutions would popularise the NRM government before the traditional leaders because the traditional leaders command respect from their subjects”. Opii<sup>333</sup> argued that, the material things given to those institutions in form of money, cars, facilitation of tours, and construction of cultural centres aim at promoting or mobilising support from the subjects to the NRM government. He further noted that, the mobilization of political support using traditional leaders has caused fights and divisions in the Lango political systems because some clan leaders are fighting for materials things and forgetting the principles of a typical Lango traditional leader. This has therefore jeopardised the activities of Lango clan leaders because they are engaged in verbal wars instead implementing development plans for the cultural institution.

According to Mutiibwa<sup>334</sup>, the 1995 the constitutional promulgation allowed the restoration of all traditional political institutions and also the creation where it had never existed if they so wished. He added that, chapter sixteen, article 246, clause 1-3 of the constitution emphasized the restoration of traditional leaders in all societies of Uganda. However, Lango delayed the restoration up to 2006. As noted by Huddle<sup>335</sup>, the creation of the constitutional head (Won Nyaci) by the British created confusion in Lango and this accounted for the delay of the restoration of Lango political system. As observed by

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<sup>332</sup>Mutebi .G. Fredrick, “Settling The Buganda Question”, Article No.6, Reflections from Contemporary Uganda, Indiana University Press, 2011, p10-25

<sup>333</sup>Opii Allan, a retired Auditor, 70 years old interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>334</sup>Mutiibwa.M.P, *A History of Uganda*, The Frist 100 years 1894-1995, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2016, p. 222

<sup>335</sup> Huddle.J.G, “The Life Of Yakobo Adoko of Lango Disrict”, *The Uganda Journal*, *The Journal of the Uganda Society*, Vol.21, No.3, (September, 1957), p.184-189

Ogwang<sup>336</sup>, a former chairman LCV noted that, the restoration created optimism in Lango political system. He added that, the 1995 constitution did not give guidelines on how a traditional leader should be elected where it had never existed before. Okino<sup>337</sup> a news reporter added that, this situation created problems for Lango clan heads in 1996, a year after traditional institutions were constitutionally allowed in Uganda because the current leadership qualities do not much with the old Lango choice of a traditional leader. Odyek<sup>338</sup> an agricultural officer, noted that, this situation created room for some opportunists to infiltrate in the Lango cultural institutions and this has led to fights because they want to make the position of Won Nyaci a life time service and as well as a hereditary, contrary to the typical Lango leader whose services were only needed for a certain period of time and thereafter would be retired to give room for fresh people with new ideas.

According to Angweri<sup>339</sup>, a retired Bishop, the restoration of traditional institutions has also led to confusion on the choice of the Won Nyaci due to the introduction of vote cast as opposed to the traditional way or methods of choosing leaders as recorded by Driberg<sup>340</sup> and Tarantino<sup>341</sup> that, leaders were chosen by consensus and not by majority vote or other methods. Ogwal<sup>342</sup> a technician added that, traditionally the process would take hours or days “but now the candidates for the post of *Awitong* or *Won Nyaci* are involved in campaigns as if it’s a political rally, voters are bribed with money and this has diluted the choice of the Lango traditional leader” because those with money are chosen even if they are not so rich with the cultural knowledge of Lango.

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<sup>336</sup>Ogwang Alele, a former chairman LCV, 72 years old, an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>337</sup>Okino Bonny, a news reporter, 50 years old, an informant interviewed on January, 2019

<sup>338</sup>Odyek Ebil, an agricultural officer, 55 years old, an informant interviewed on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>339</sup>Angweri Sam, retired Bishop of P.A.G, 68 years old interviewed on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>340</sup>Driberg. J.H., *The Lango, A Nilotic Tribe of Uganda*, London, T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923, p. 205

<sup>341</sup>Tarantino. A., *Lango Ikare Acon (Lango in the past)*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2004, p.10

<sup>342</sup>Ogwal George, a technician, 56 years old, an informant interviewed on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

Opio<sup>343</sup> a clan leader also argued that, because of bribes, people who are incompetent but financially stable have risen to become clan leaders in Lango. He also added that, the restoration of traditional institutions has also presented a case whereby old people were favoured to take up the leadership position of Won Nyaci at the expense of young energetic people. This explains why there is a general opinion among the young people in Lango that, traditional institutions are meant to benefit the old people both politically and economically and not the young generation, and yet they are the people to carry on with the Lango political systems.

The restoration of the traditional institutions also drew mixed reactions from the people of Lango. Okello<sup>344</sup> a retired clan leader argued that, it's a constitutional right for any community to have a traditional leader whether it had existed before or not meanwhile Opio<sup>345</sup> a clan leader observed that, the Won Nyaci does not command respect from the entire Lango, because Lango people know their clan leaders (*Owitong*) as the top most leader in every clan. He added that, Won Nyaci cannot command respect in Lango except from his own clan. He stated that, "Won Nyaci is only a representative of clan heads in a gathering where traditional leaders are required to present their views". Therefore, following the general opinion of the people, Won Nyaci as a title is accepted in Lango as a representative of the clan leaders (*Owitong*) but not as a unitary leader equated to a king or paramount chief. This implies that the restoration of traditional institutions has not yet gained deeper roots in Lango although the clan political systems are functioning, with each clan acting independently as it was in traditional Lango.

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<sup>343</sup>Opio Julius, clan leader, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

<sup>344</sup>Okello John, a retired clan leader, 82 yaers, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

<sup>345</sup>Opio Opio Julius, a clan leader, 65 years old, an informant interviewed on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

Further observation was made by Okino<sup>346</sup> a news reporter that, the restoration of traditional institution led to the formation of Lango Cultural Foundation (LCF) in 2010. He added that, the foundation aimed at fostering development in Lango through infrastructures such as Lango Cultural Centre (LCC), education and Sports, roads and entrepreneurship opportunities and promotion of formal education for the Lango children and those outside Lango who would wish to benefit from its programs. As earlier noted by Mutiibwa<sup>347</sup> the institution of traditional leaders Act 2011, “permits him or her to promote development, preservation and enrichment of all the people in the community where he or she is recognised”. However, Akullo<sup>348</sup> a women leader noted that, the LCF soon entered into serious conflicts because it attracted the Lango who are in the diaspora such as in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) who were willing to support the foundation activities. She added that, even locally the government also pledged financial support and showed willingness to fund the projects of LCF but the leaders began to fight for the money before it materialized and this jeopardized the original aim of the foundation. Opii<sup>349</sup> further asserted that, as a result of these conflicts of interest, all the funders withdrew in order to give room to LCF to sort out their differences. Therefore, following the confusion that erupted from the creation of the Lango Cultural Foundation, it has led to sharp divisions among the different clan leaders (*Owitong*) leading to the election of two Won Nyaci serving and representing Lango clan leaders concurrently.

### **5.3 The causes of the conflicts in the Lango political system**

According to Atim<sup>350</sup> a woman councilor, the failure of the Won Nyaci to respect the decision made by the council of *Owitong* caused the conflict. She noted that, the

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<sup>346</sup>Okino Bonny, News paper reporter, 50 years old, an informant interviewed on January, 2019

<sup>347</sup>Mutiibwa.S.M: *A History of Uganda, The First 100 years 1894-1995*, Kampala, Fountain publishers, 2016

<sup>348</sup>Akullo Margaret, Women leader, 55 years old interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>349</sup>Opii Allan, a retired Auditor, 70 years old interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>350</sup>Atim Ogwal, Woman Councilor, 67 years old, an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019

disagreement within the Lango cultural institutions started in November, 2012 when the *Won Nyaci* Yosam Odur Ebii decided with a handful of loyal chiefs to undertake a statehouse sponsored trip to Europe and United States of America a head of the Lango conference that was to be held in December, 2012. She argued that, as a result the clan leaders led by Wakili Okello, the former speaker of the clan leader's Council disagreed with the *Won Nyaci*, over the conference. Awor<sup>351</sup> chairperson LCI added that, the clan leaders opposed the tour and demanded that the conference be postponed to March, the following year. She argued that, the clan leader's Council also ruled against the invited guest of honour (Museveni Kaguta) to preside over the event, claiming that it was meant for the sons and daughters of Lango ethnic group. However, the *Won Nyaci*, Yosam Odur and some clan leaders such as Ochen Jacob a minister for information in the Lango Cultural Foundation went ahead and invited Museveni who accepted to preside over the event. Oculi<sup>352</sup> a clan leader asserted that, this action drew outrage from the majority of clan leaders notably Otoa Tony and Omodo Omodo. Therefore, the failure of the *Won Nyaci* to respect the decision of the council brought division and persistent conflicts in the Lango political system.

According to Omara<sup>353</sup> a former MP. Otuke Constituency, some clan leaders such as Otoa Tonny, Omodo Omodo and Odongo Okune accused *Won Nyaci* of practicing partisan politics as opposed to the traditional leader's Act 2011, which opposed such behaviour by a cultural leader. He added that, siding with one political party would mean dividing his subjects because they hold different political views. As reported by Okino<sup>354</sup> a news reporter that, also the UK based Lango elder's Council chaired by John Charles

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<sup>351</sup>Awor Amena, Chair person LCI, 55 years old interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019

<sup>352</sup>Oculi John , a clan leader of Atek adyang , 57 years , an informant interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2019

<sup>353</sup>Omara Daniel Atubo, former MP. Otuke Constituency, 73 years old interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019

<sup>354</sup>Okino Bonny, The New Vision, <http://www.newvision.co.ug>, New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Limited, Kampala, Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> – November , 2012, p.25

Ogole condemned the leadership style of Yosam Odur Ebie and condemned his compromises with the government. He added that, the UK Lango Council argued that, the compromises have jeopardized the activities of Lango Cultural Leaders both within Uganda, and in the diaspora. Okino<sup>355</sup> further observed that, “the Lango in diaspora had rejected Yosam Odur as their Won Nyaci and demanded an immediate election to be organised by the *Owitong* for his replacement”. Abak<sup>356</sup> a clan leader of *Otengoro Okwer Yic* added that, the reason why the Lango in the diaspora rejected the Won Nyaci was because he sent a congratulatory message to Museveni upon his re- election as the President of the republic of Uganda during the 2011 general elections. He quoted the message as follows; “As Lango chiefdom, we recognise the election of Museveni as President of Uganda for the next five years, and I also want to congratulate you and the NRM party for wining in this election which was highly competitive, said His Highness Won Nyaci Yosam Odur Ebie”. Therefore, the message was viewed as evidence of partisan politics, and an open declaration of his political affiliation. Given the fact that within the Won Nyaci cabinet, there are clan leaders with different political views, it led to continued conflicts within the Lango political systems.

Further more, Ajal<sup>357</sup> a chairperson LCIII, blamed the conflicts in the Lango political systems on the failure of the warring parties to embrace peace and reconciliatory moments to resolve the conflicts. He noted that, in August, 2012, the rival clan heads denounced Yosam Odur Ebie and appointed Benjamin Okii from *Okii Bura* as a Won Nyaci and yet Yosam Odur was still serving in office. He added that, this situation drew the attention of the government, and through the office of the Prime Minister,

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<sup>355</sup>Okino Bonny, The New Vision, <http://www.newvision.co.ug>, New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Limited, Kampala, Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> – November , 2012, p.25

<sup>356</sup>Abak John, Clan leader *Otengoro Okwer Yic*, 60 years old interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>357</sup>Ajal Okwir, Chairman LC III, 50 years old interviewed on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2019

mediation between the two factions were formed. Odida<sup>358</sup> a clan leader added that, Rebecca Amuge Otengo, the state minister for Northern Uganda was to head the government team and the rival clan chiefs were led by Benjamin Okii and the meeting was held in Hotel Margarita in Lira town. He added that, Benjamin Okii the rival Won Nyaci was ready to cooperate to end the conflict since the government had intervened but Won Nyaci Odur camp rejected the peace talk and through their spokesperson, Willy Omodo proposed to explore other avenues including the court to end the conflict. Odongo<sup>359</sup> a parish chief added that, the Odur went to the High Court and the ruling was in his favour because the High Court declared Benjamin Okii's camp as illegitimate and illegal to transact any business on *Tekwaro Lango* (Lango Culture). Therefore the court ruling left the Lango political systems more divided than before because it created two camps, that is, those in support of the ruling Won Nyaci and those against him. Since the clan leaders were not willing to embrace peace talks and reconciliation to end the conflicts, the factions continued to exist in the Lango political systems.

According to Okello<sup>360</sup> a clan leader, the entertaining of baseless rumours in the Won Nyaci cabinet caused panic within his council. He further argued that, there were unfounded rumours that another group had emerged and announced that plans were under way to install another Won Nyaci of Lango (Charles Olet from *Arak clan* on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2014). He added that, the rumours claimed that about one hundred fifty clan leaders were mobilised from different clans to do the job and these included *Abwor*, *Okii Bura*, *Atek Adyang* and *Oyima* clans, and that each clan contributed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Uganda shillings each to enable the ceremony to be colourful.

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<sup>358</sup> Odida Tom, a clan leader, 69 years old interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2019

<sup>359</sup> Odongo J.B., Parish Chief Adwari Sub county, 59 years old interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>360</sup> Okello William, clan leader, 68 years old interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

Olong<sup>361</sup> a clan leader also argued that, Okello Wakili, the speaker of the rival group had revealed to the press the list of dignitaries invited to attend the occasion. Therefore, the cabinet of Won Nyaci was set on panic because the rumours had divided the clan members and each group looked at one another as a potential threat. If the Won Nyaci Council had not entertained such rumours then the Lango political system could not have entered to endless and disgraceful factions.

Further more, Omara<sup>362</sup> a former MP. Otuke constituency observed that, the lack of a strong constitution to govern the operations of the Lango political systems has plunged it into endless conflicts. He noted that, the constitution would clearly state the qualities of a Won Nyaci. For example, experience about Lango culture, the age, education if necessary among others. He argued that, this would avoid scenarios as observed by Omach<sup>363</sup> a retired teacher that, on the morning of Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 the public woke up to the radio announcement that Odongo Okune had been sworn in as a Won Nyaci of Lango without the entire people of Lango celebrating his enthronement. Opak<sup>364</sup> a retired journalist added that, due to lack of a strong constitution that would regulate the term of office of the Won Nyaci, some people want to make it hereditary which is contrary to the Lango political systems and this has led to continued conflicts among the Lango clan leaders because there are those opposed to it.

Finally Opak<sup>365</sup> a retired journalist observed that, the year 2017 saw the climax of the factions of the Lango political system by the installation of another Won Nyaci from a different group of clan leaders. He added that, this scenario made Lango political

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<sup>361</sup>Olong Danoadit, clan leader, 79 years old interviewed on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>362</sup>Omara Daniel Atubo, a former MP. Otuke Constituency, 73 years old, an informant interviewed on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

<sup>363</sup>Omach Ario, a retired teacher, 71 years old, an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>364</sup>Opak Source, a retired journalist, 70 years old, an informant interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>365</sup>Ibid

institutions to have two Won Nyaci serving concurrently. Omach<sup>366</sup> a retired teacher added that, the climax of the conflict was the installation of Odongo Okune as Won Nyaci of Lango. Omach<sup>367</sup> argued that the decision was reached after the faction group battling with court orders not to install another Won Nyaci in Lango because the term of office for the Won Nyaci Yosam Odur was still on going. Opii<sup>368</sup> a retired auditor added that, the ceremony was done in secret after confusing the public with a different date in future purported to be 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2017. He noted that, the conflicting dates were intended to beat the security forces that were well prepared to crash the rival faction. The ceremony was then secretly conducted in Lira Hotel on the night of Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 and officially announced on 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2017. As noted by Okino<sup>369</sup>, a retired clan leader, the ceremony was attended by eighty clan leaders, good enough to satisfy the Constitution of the Lango Cultural Foundation to constitute a quorum to endorse a newly elected Won Nyaci. Therefore, currently the Lango political systems is divided into two, that is, Won Nyaci Odur Yosam Ebii camp, and Won Nyaci Odongo Ronald Okune camp as well.



Yosam Odur Ebii



Odongo Ronald Okune

<sup>366</sup> Omach Ario, a retired teacher, 71 yaers old , an informant interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

<sup>367</sup> Ibid

<sup>368</sup> Opii Allan, a retried Auditor , 70 years old interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2019

<sup>369</sup> Okino Ibrahim, retired clan leader, 92 years old, an informant interviewed on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

## **5.4 Conclusion**

The chapter discussed the origin of Won Nyaci, the circumstances under which it was introduced in Lango during colonial and its abolition within a very short period of time. It further discussed the reasons as to why Lango delayed to restore its traditional institutions even when the 1995 constitution had accepted the restoration of traditional institutions. The Lango delayed to restore its traditional institutions because traditionally the process would like a lot of time and more so, certain qualities like bravery, wisdom, ability to mobilise clan members were considered. Lango also delayed to restore its traditional institutions because they lost no property from the abolition of traditional institutions in 1967. The chapter further discussed how the restoration of traditional institutions has affected the Lango political systems. For example, the voting of clan leaders as opposed to appointment during the traditional Lango, the use of money to campaign for positions in the cultural institutions and above involvement in partisans has caused conflicts in the Lango political systems. It further discussed the causes of the conflicts that has persisted in the Lango political systems. For example, the failure by the Won Nyaci to respect the decision made by the council of Owitong, the practicing of partisan politics by clan leaders, entertaining rumours by the council of Owitong, failure of the council members to embrace peace and reconciliatory moments to solve the conflicts and above all lack of a strong constitution to govern the operations of Lango political systems. Therefore, all these factors led to the division in the Lango traditional institutions whereby two people are serving concurrently with the claim of Won Nyaci title (representative of clan leaders)

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Introduction

The study was driven by the desire to examine the evolution of Lango political institutions from the pre-colonial to post-colonial period. The study specifically traced the migration and settlement of the Lango in their present land as well as analysing her relationship with the neighbours. It further examined changes in the Lango political institutions with a critical look at the restoration of traditional institutions in post-independent Uganda. The study covered a period from 1800 to 2017. The geographical scope focused on Lango Sub-region in the areas of Adekokwok, Aduku, and Adwari Sub Counties. In addition to that, a qualitative research approach with a case study design was used and the research was guided by two segmentary theories which revealed that, clan political systems played great roles in segmentary societies like Lango.

#### 6.2 Conclusion

The established facts revealed the origin of the Lango as Abbyssinia, and that they belonged to the Ateker family that composed of Turkana, Karimojong, Iteso and Kumam. It also showed the political systems in Lango from pre-colonial as based on the clan system. The study established that, the pre-colonial Lango society was governed in a segmentary way because Lango was a decentralised society. The highest rank of political leadership was achieved at clan level as a “clan Head” referred to as *Awitong* for one person and *Owitong* for many clan heads. Each of these clan leaders did not have influence over the neighbouring clans. The clan heads would only come together during wars because there was no standing army but the society had warriors who could be called upon whenever they were needed and there after dissolved when not needed. The study further reviewed the literature about the evolution of Lango political

institutions by tracing it from early migrations, settlement areas and current dispensations of its people. This was confirmed through the writing of some Europeans such as Driberg, Tarantino and Tosh who devoted a lot of time in Lango to establish the history of its people. Tarantino affirmed that the Lango indeed originated from the Galla stock. John Tosh on the other hand also supported this view. Likewise all the informants interviewed agreed that the Lango originated from Ethiopia because oral tradition in Lango has it that they came from the East (*kide*). It as well discussed the conflicts that occurred as a result of restoration of traditional institutions in Lango. The study also discussed the general objectives of the study while analysing specific objectives about the evolution of Lango political institutions. Research questions were generated from the specific objectives and the study finally discussed the scope, significance, theoretical frame work and methodology adopted for the study.

The study further discussed the origin of the Lango tracing it from Abbysinia to the settlement areas such as Agoro in Southern Sudan, Otuke hills, Ngetta hill and the final dispensation to different areas in Lango land. It stated that the original clans in Lango were basically three, that is, *Atek*, *Arak* and *Okarowok* clans although Lango currently has over one hundred clans. It also discussed that the Lango were led by clan leaders throughout their migration up to their settlement areas. It concluded that more clans evolved as a result of disagreement that resulted from cultural ceremonies and the outbreak of diseases that caused them to migrate under different clan leadership. It further discussed the causes of the Lango migration such as the outbreak and re-occurrence of famine, struggle for grazing grounds, anti-social behaviour by some members, conflicts with neighbours and over population. It revealed that all these contributed to their migration to different places. Their movement from Otuke areas ranges from 1700 to 1900 and the process was gradual under different military warriors

(*Twon Lwak*). It also discussed that the final movement of the Lango occurred in Ngetta as a result of the meteorite of the stars that fell and made the Lango to be scattered to their final dispensations hence the justification for the current location of the different Lango clans.

The study further discussed the ways in which the Lango related with her neighbours as originating from the political, social and economic demands of the related communities. The neighbours discussed were; Bunyoro, Acholi, Karimojong, Labwor, Iteso and Kumam. The study concluded that, the overall relationship was basically built on raids, intermarriages and trade systems which enabled the Lango to build a strong political clan system that stood the test of time. From the raids, Lango increased its population and also used the captured young men to build the warrior class that was needed to defend the clan system. Furthermore the raids also helped Lango to attain more wealth for their respective clans. On the other hand, the intermarriages played the role of political alliance. Meanwhile, the pre-colonial trade also brought iron implements such as spears, arrows and hoes that enabled the growth of the clan system through provision of the weapons for defense and the hoes for food production which led to food security. Therefore, the relationship enabled the Lango gain fighting skills, courage and the spirit of unity learnt from the neighbours which led to the evolution of the Lango political systems.

The study established the changes brought by colonial rule in the Lango political systems. It showed that the British used the Baganda agents to effect these political changes. For example they launched frequent attacks on Lango settlements in the areas of Dokolo and Kwanja and as well as establishing their posts in areas such as Bululu

and Kwera so as to deal with the clans that were resisting colonial rule. It further revealed the roles played by prominent clan leaders such as Odora, Otwal and Arum who used diplomacy to welcome colonial rule in Lango. The study also looked at key resistances in the areas of Aber led by Owiny Akullo and in Adwari led by Olong to oppose the use of the Baganda agents and chiefs that were misbehaving in Lango. It established that the British took a period of ten years to fully capture Lango land because the people proved to be too hostile to alien rule introduced to them. As observed by Tosh and some other informants, the Lango engaged the British in several fighting to resist the colonial rule. However, later, peaceful means were used and the Lango political clan heads were used by the British to replace the Ganda agents which made Lango to accept colonial rule. It established that the agents were not accepted because they were too cruel to the local people and that led to their rejection. Much as the British used the indirect system of administration through the services of the Baganda agents, they could not fully achieve their objectives not until some clan leaders were appointed from Lango such as Odora, Olet, Ogwangujji and Elia and that is when the colonial aim of subduing Lango was fulfilled. The study covered the transition from segmentary leadership during pre-colonial period to a more bureaucratic system during colonial period. Therefore, one notes that, right from the pre-colonial time, Lango political clan heads existed and were strong even during the colonial time till the post-colonial time when they were abolished.

The study established that the origin of Won Nyaci started with the British colonial rule in Lango because they wanted a constitutional head to represent Lango in the Legislative Council. It also showed the reasons as to why Lango delayed to restore its traditional institutions even when the 1995 constitution had accepted the restoration of

traditional institutions. The established facts were: The Lango delayed to restore its traditional institutions because traditionally the process would take a lot of time and more so, certain qualities like bravery, wisdom, ability to mobilise clan members were considered. Lango also delayed to restore its traditional institutions because they lost no property from the abolition of traditional institutions in 1967. The study further found out how the restoration of traditional institutions affected the Lango political systems. For example, the voting of clan leaders as opposed to appointment of leaders during the traditional Lango, the use of money to campaign for positions in the cultural institutions and above all involvement in partisan politics caused conflicts in the Lango political systems. The study also established the causes of the conflicts that persisted in the Lango political systems. For example, the failure by the Won Nyaci to respect the decision made by the council of *Owitong*, the practicing of partisan politics by clan leaders, entertaining rumours by the council of *Owitong*, failure of the council members to embrace peace and reconciliatory moments to solve the conflicts and above all lack of a strong constitution to govern the operations of Lango political systems. Finally, the study established that, the Lango traditional institutions has two traditional leaders serving concurrently with the claim of Won Nyaci title (representative of clan leaders).

### **6.3 Areas for further studies**

Whereas the study revealed the evolution of Lango political institutions, it does not show its contribution to the Lango society since its restoration. The study does not also adequately provide solutions to the challenges facing Lango political institutions like the causes of the division which led to the emergence of two Won Nyaci. Therefore, these are the areas that call for further studies in Lango political institutions.

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## APPENDICES

### 1. Appendix 1

#### Introductory letter

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Awee Francis, a Master of Arts student of Kyambogo University. I am now at the stage of collecting data needed to complete a purely academic research titled “The Evolution of Lango Political Institutions, 1800 to 2017”. You are one of the respondents selected to provide this data by accepting to be interviewed. The interview will take between 35 to 50 minutes. The data will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and shall only be used for the purposes of this study. Please feel free not to answer any question you are not comfortable with. Your participation in the interview is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw if deemed necessary. Thank you

Yours’ sincerely



Awee Francis

### Appendix 2

#### Interview guide for clan leaders, elders and government officials in Lango

##### A. The migration and settlement of the Lango

1. Where did the Lango migrate from?
2. What were the causes of their migration
3. How did they spread to their current location?
4. a) Who were the immediate neighbours of Lango?
5. Describe the relationship between Lango and her neighbours.

## **B. Political changes in Lango.**

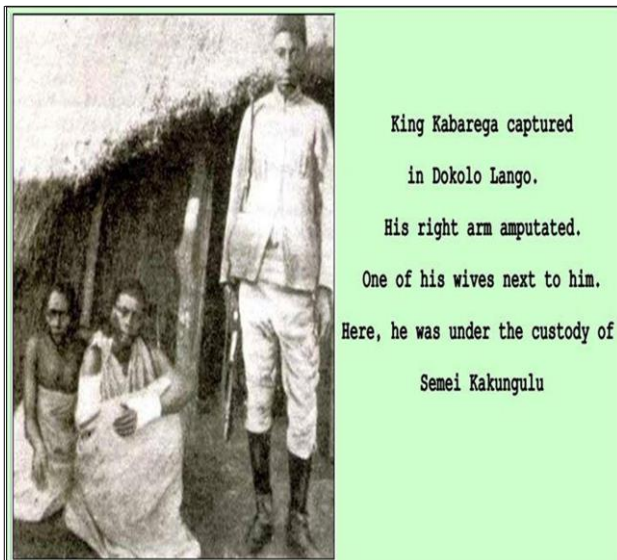
1. When was Lango colonized by the British?
2. Who were the British colonial agents in Lango?
4. What changes did the British make in the Lango political systems?
5. How did the Lango react to the changes brought by colonial rule?

## **C. The restoration of Lango political institutions**

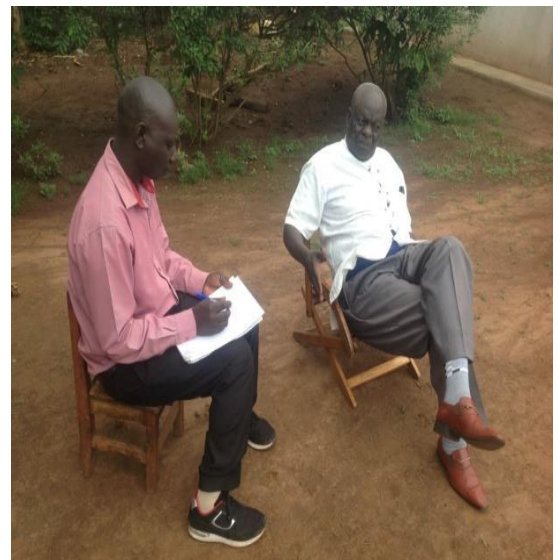
1. How did the restoration of political institutions affect the Lango political systems?
2. What are the causes of the conflicts in the Lango political systems?

## **Appendix 3**

### **Photographs**



Omukama Kabalega in 1899 in Lango,



Interview with *Awitong* Olang. J.Erik,

