

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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“The Tri-Centenary of Lango People in Uganda” is an expanded version of a letter of guidance that I had written to the Lango Cultural Foundation on the 11th November 2012. The letter was a basis of providing my ideas to the Foundation. A few months later a Lango lady resident in USA called Silvia Nyana Owing came to my home in Dokolo to interview me on important matters of Lango history. I gave to her a copy of this letter because it contained some vital history she wanted. Later in June 2012, I was called by Silvia, expressing her advice that the letter that I gave contained very rare findings on Lango history and that I should have the document published. She later contributed USD 1,000.00 to the cost of its publication. This was a fundamental feedback, considering that I have earlier circulated similar write ups to Lango leaders but no such feedback has ever been given to me. I must recognize Silvia for this.

To convert the document into a book was easy as in the last five years I had already made considerable effort on the writing of Lango history. During my assignment to oversee the implementation of Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda, I committed all my rest time to research on Lango history wherever I was—in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan. In 2006 my clan leader the *Awitong* Charles Olet tasked me to write the history and genealogy of the clan *Okii Ogwang Koltum* which then doubled as ready history of Lango. The challenge required a wide knowledge and interaction with majority of clan members. So wherever I went to do Police duty, time was spared to interact with elders of all categories and ethnicity in order for me to obtain history both Lango and our clan.

When time was not allowing I had to find many contact persons to act as research assistants who did a lot to mobilize both the actual information and the relevant sources for me to interview face to face and sometimes on telephone when I could not practically reach the sources. These assistants included Okello Makmot, Oyugi Quirinus, Obua Sam and Police constable Etum of Omoro. Members of the clan included Elonge Alfred and Omara Tom of Dokolo, J B Okello Odongo of Atura, Willy Kinston Ekora of Aboke, Oye Danis son of Omedi Gideon of Anai Okii, Emor Tom Guba of Akia, Okec David of Amac, Odongo Apala Tekulo, and Ogwok Desderio of Nambyeco. And two others were Jusper Ebong Adomgo of Aduku and Francis Okii of Ngai. These people made a commendable job for which no material pay was made. I commend their selflessness.

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To all those who may be specifically and not specifically mentioned in this book, thank you very much.

Foreword

I have been on research about this matter of Lango people and a book is soon to be published where the findings confirm that Lango are not in any way Lwo and not even originating from them. Lango are Lango, people whose history seemed not to have been well studied. The incomplete research may have been the one responsible for misleading both the Lango people and the world that Lango people are Lwo or Nilotic or Nilo-Hamites etc. An example is what I read on my Email authored by one Dorothy saying Lango is named as Lwo- Lango or Lango is Lwo, I saw that it is not the correct mention. Many other writers have even expressed doubt as to who are these people due to the dichotomous profile of Lango people. It is true that there are many common issues that make Lango appear to belong to the Lwo group of people. Such are seen as the proximity of residence, companionship, language, some cultural similarity and some areas of origin. However “*The Tri-centenary of Lango people in Uganda*” confirms that Lango are a different people. While Lwo originated from Bar el Gazel in South Sudan in about 1100 AD, the Lango originated from the Falashas or Solomonian ancestry at AXUM in Abyssinia, in about 900 AD, passing via Nazareth in Addis Ababa and reaching their cradle land of Omo valley, north of Rudolf in about 1250. The similarity is that Lango people spread out to Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Congo just as Lwo. In terms of Language, it is only the Lango and Kumam in Uganda who speak about 50% of the Lwo dialects. The rest of Lango people, the Bari/Lotuko group, Maasai/Samburu, Karamojong/Teso/Jie/Turkana may speak as little as 3% but more of Hebrew and other vocabulary also existing in the Lango and Kumam vocabulary. Both the Lango people and the world over have a right to a comprehensive truth about history on the Lango people.

We can therefore be in a position to learn a lot from history because people are different, and so are their cultures. People live in different ways, and civilizations also differ. People speak in a variety of languages. People are guided by different religions. People are born different in colors, and many traditions influence their lives with varying colors and shades. People dress differently and adapt to their environment in different ways. People express themselves differently. Music, literature and art reflect different styles as well. History is for the benefit of human self, generally thought to be of importance to man that he should know himself. Where knowing himself means knowing not his mere personal peculiarities, but: Knowing what is to be the kind of person you are; Knowing who you are and nobody else; and Knowing yourself means knowing what you can do. And since many appear not to know what Lango can do until it is researched, revealed and is tried. To know what Lango has done will make proof of the good deeds to be used.

The history and culture of Lango in form of Socio-Cultural, Socio-Political security, Socio-Economic and Socio-Spiritual have been identified and are a wealth for people to copy some for use in the modern time. The key missing linkage under study was mainly to identify the Lango people, origin of migration, by blood lines and routes of migration. It was also important to learn about their detail timing of the migration activities, clan groupings and what they contributed to the world during their existence in Uganda. The Lango were of great food security people since 1750 after experiencing the great *Nyamdere* famine of 1710-20. When the one of *Laparanat* of 1780-90 and 1889-94 came they were self-sufficient in food security. They combined the principles of rudimentary agriculture with animal keeping and hunting game animals throughout their life at least up to 1973. They had created schools for citizen training in order to build a capable civil service to manage the affairs of the community. In terms of security, male

bones were well prepared from childhood, causing progressive development in every five years. This strategy was fundamental in the protection of Ugandans against external threats and later was instrumental in liberating Uganda and Zanzibar. The culture or truth telling build a society that was trusted and morally reliable based on the fear of God to whom they committed their prayers at the time of need. They practiced the language that has contributed in maintaining a language and tradition that is as old as 6000 years.

If all the above findings have been a long time missing value, then *The Tri-Centenary of Lango People in Uganda* should be a long awaited resource and new linkage to unlock the values of the past people for use now and celebration by the today and the future generations of the world. The new linkages contained here have been the contribution of both the people and God. As not all the missing linkages and truth may not have been revealed by the book, the future researchers are invited to exhaust the remaining aspirations.

b) An evaluation of a cultural value

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth. I also greet you in the name of our Lango motto “*note en teko*” and of the Uganda National motto “*for God and my country.*” Thank you very much for the effort of our people and friends to have put confidence in the civil development activities and our cultural leaders in different capacities. I also wish to recognize the Cultural Foundations’ continued effort and contribution in making Lango people live under one leader, united in one place, culture, heritage and love.

The main reason for writing this book is that I would like to make a contribution so that the Lango Cultural Foundation may make use of it to strengthen our people, their culture, heritage and values that help to promote the existence, importance and development participation of Lango people, not only within the sub region, but also in Uganda and world over.

When the colonial British first entered Uganda in 1862, they recognized the great strength of the Lango socio-cultural/spiritual/political/economic/security values and later made sure that they should quite very carefully and friendly worked with the Lango people and in-deed the Lango people did a commendable role in the development of Uganda and other parts of the world. Unfortunately, not all the great and important things the Lango achieved were not recorded neither recognized by governments and leaders

However in some cases there are those who loved the Lango culture and made their contributions. The contributions left behind provide indelible marks showing that the Lango people themselves may be the wonders of the world. Such people include Jack Herbert Driberg and Fr. Angelo Tarantino. While Tarantino in 1954, making a very important reference for Lango history and culture, wrote in Lango language a book entitled *Lango Ikare Acon*, in 1918, J H Driberg the only colonial ADC who took a long time in Lango and wrote extensively on the Lango in 1923, with conclusive land mark evaluation of Lango people then, saying that they

were “*brave and venturesome warriors who have won the fear and respect of their neighbors.....not being idle witnesses to watching of the misfortunes of their neighbors.... treating facts of life with an unabashed frankness and with no sense of false modesty. Highly motivated into hard working economic production.... and most of all, intensely religious, believing implicitly in the Godly creed(of O’owe or Yahaweh), that bounded them up in every action of their social life....believing them to be the last people in the world to be dragooned into any line of thought or action of negative value. ”*

Therefore, because of the great role played by Lango people in Uganda for the last 300 years of citizenship, Lango and Ugandans should not be blind of that contribution. ***If it is important for all of us, we the current leaders, elders, technocrats and people of Lango should do justice to recognize the significance of those who made these events and records, and to publish and celebrate, through a distinguished centenary, the great historical and heroic contributions made by our past and existing people.*** This arrangement can be organized and celebrated ***as a centenary of Lango day to begin on 31st October 2014,*** a day when Lira was created as the centre and Headquarters of one unified Lango people in the modern world.

The arrangements required to be in place should be well planned for early and be communicated early enough to all stakeholders as well as to all our people still in Diaspora to contribute ideas. We will have done real justice in our time and to our people and help to historically and culturally educate our young people, many of whom urgently need this information and the events to come.

b) Culture is part and parcel of life

One man has the ability to develop a new skill, but another to judge whether it will be a curse or a blessing to its user. This invention called writing will cause those who use it to lose the learning of their minds by neglecting their memories since through reliance on letters and computers, they will lose the ability to recall things within themselves¹The toll can be seen these days in many so called educated elites rushing to a calculator to add simple primary school mathematics. It makes people wise without true wisdom. They claim to know a good deal while they are really quite ignorant of many things and they become public nonsense. The old Lango culture practiced mental storage of information and retrieval through folklore system. A youth is made to be in position to memorize all ancestors by family tree without writing it.

According to Plato, you cannot write down the truth. It is only represented in the living dialogue of different partners. Writing has only a supplementary function to help people memorize what has been said orally and heard or seen, and either touched or felt. It would be a logical way of thought if this superiority of the spoken language above writing would correspond to a presence for cultures that have primarily oral form of communications and tradition. The different stocks of Lango people thought have a wealth of oral culture and traditions stand to lose a lot in this global village because most of the culture is not even ***being practiced mentally as the old Lango Otem class system is no longer operational*** anywhere. The challenge is the modern way of life these days when communities are so much broken apart due to scattered migration, education

and employment. If we cannot dialog our culture in practice we rather archive them in the writings where some distant future generations may make or give value to it.

c) The relevancy of history and geography

History repeats itself. Issues to be addressed come of age. Knowing that history repeats itself, any issue that may appear as being invented is all about the past, present and future, which are all here as history. Discussion agenda of today were once parts of the past. We are here to recall, recognise and review them. The Tri-centenary of Lango is the security of Lango culture that is embedded in its history with traces along the migration roots and routes in form of an unending dialogue between the present and past. As Lango constantly get haunted by the need to be known as to who are they in this present, they are also haunted by the need to relate their past to this presence. History tells the story of people on earth. Tomorrow looks to be a mystery due to yesterday, today looks promising for the answers to the mystery. Yesterday is the key to the causes and reasons. Our discussions thus seek to know about the past. Cultural leaders should study history of problems and draw appropriate solutions to today's problems.

Geography is where history happens. When we talk of many events we have to know about where they happened. Geography is the study of where an event happened and confirms that time and place exists together; provides the truth of where an event has happened; and considers the relationship between people and places. The Lango Tri-centenary agenda is about history and geography. Cultural values and events about Lango have history and geography. People move to various areas as a demand for better orders in their life time and not to create disorders. ***“History tells the story of people on earth; history connects the past and the present, history helps us understand our world, historians find out what happened in the past and historians find out the whys of history. Historians recognize the importance of geography; that geography establishes the setting for history by telling location of places. By use of maps as tools of geography examine routes of movements and focuses on areas with similar characteristics. Therefore the themes of geography relate to history.”***²

d) The importance of history.

History about the Lango people tells unending dialogue between past and present, keeping indelible heroic events of social, political and many others. The history about Lango is one of the oldest and longest of all histories in the world which traces its roots and routes as far back as BC 4,000. They have been identified to have originated as far back as from the son of Adam called Seth. Writers of history and religion put the origin of Adam at about 4,004 BC. This can also be how far Lango can trace its origin and history. Professor R.G Collingwood analyzed the importance of history in his book of “The Idea of History.” stating that ***“History is for the benefit of human self, generally thought to be of importance to man that he should know himself.”*** Where knowing himself means knowing not his mere personal peculiarities, but:

- Knowing what is to be the kind of person you are.
- Knowing who you are and nobody else, and

- Knowing yourself means knowing what you can do.

And since most people do not know what he (**Lango**) can do until it is revealed or is tried, ³ said “The only clue is to know what man (**Lango**) has done that makes proof of the deeds.” The value of this history can teach all Lango the potentials possessed by Lango people in their history about what Lango had been and what Excellencies they did that may be put to practice when dealing with today’s challenges. *“Kit yo ame atir mito bed tye dang I loc me lobo. Ka okwia kop acon, otwero tiyo ginoro oyotoyot kede tamo tammoro ame pe konyo, ame pe atir, nwongo Jo anak keken en ongeyo onyo oniayang gin omio odito acon otio amanaca.”* Fr Anjelo Tarantino stated this in Lango as the wealth of history of East Africa, meaning, that an upright policy ought to be part of a moral public management with historical input. If we are ignorant of our past, we end up with easy action which is useless, not strategic, as just a hand full knew or understood may have not related to the past.

e) History as a fundamental truth and basis of strategy.

As it may be recognized in the Lango folklore given below, Lango strongly used lore not only to tell the truth but provide the foundation for a strategic management. The basic value contained the investigative mechanism so that realities can be adduced and very distant truth is made use of to solve problems. This lore went as follows:

*“The event was at the time of famine in a certain area. where an elderly lady was reported to have gone into a nearby bush to look for food. In deed while in the bush she got some (**obwol**) mushrooms which she picked as raw food and started returning home. On the way she was bitten by (**omelu**) a tsetse fly, an act that made her to attempt to slap the fly, but because she was a blind person, she ended up slapping the mushrooms into peaces. There was a bird Lango calls **itutu** watching and the act excited it so much that it had to laugh. This **itutu** normally eats (**twol**) snakes, and when the nearby snake heard the bird laugh, it thought it had been seen by **itutu** and the snake had to rush for refuge in a hole occupied by the (**katalang**) black ants. Unfortunately the black ants have never been at peace with the snake, so the ants had to raise an alarm which was responded to by so many animals (**presumably people**). Among those who answered the alarm were the (**opukopuk**) tortoise, (**lyec**) elephant etc. In the process of rushing to the scene, the elephant erored in accident and stepped on the back of the tortoise and thereby friction caused resulted into fire that extensively burnt peoples estates with much damage including property of the King. In taking the action, the tortoise was therefore arrested for the offence of setting fire.”*

During the interrogation of the tortoise, the defence was that the mistake was of the elephant that stepped on its back and the friction caused the fire. So the tortoise was innocent, and thus the elephant was arrested. The elephant pleaded that he was merely answering the alarm raised by the ants and which led to the arrest of the black ants. The elephant was released but the plea of black ants was that it was the snake which attacked them and this led to the arrest of the snake and release of the ants. Plea of the snake was that it was due to the **itutu** which attempted to kill it for food. The **itutu** was arrested as the snake was released. The plea of the **itutu** was that there

was a funny incident of an elderly woman slapping the mushroom that made it laugh. The old woman was traced and claimed innocence as she was blind and the tsetse fly bit her and instead of beating the fly instead she beat the mushroom. The *itutu* was released as the fly was arrested and the fly was found to have had no reason to bite the old woman, consequently the fly was punished by making it to take over the blindness of the old woman.

*This is one of the many folktales Lango used in the past to create wisdom among their people. The lore teaches a principle of systematic verification of information that is relevant for identifying a problem, the causes including the root causes, and the appropriate solutions and justice. However, investigations and identifications of the problems, decision and actions are not enough. There are lessons learnt from the several problems noted. The old woman and some other people remained blind and living under food insecurity, *itutu* is not in good terms with the snake; the snake is not in good terms with the ants, the arson remains a repeatable event, much property was damaged and remains a big loss, the mechanism for response to disaster seem not to be in place and the strategy for a secured future is needed. Certain priorities ought to be addressed. Can the lore be a model to assist in a process of managing a strategy as a SWOT and PEST analysis?*

f) The sources

The laws of nature are universal principles by which the creator uses to govern the universe. In conducting our research of the missing links in history, we can make use of the laws of nature to interpret the events that contain pieces of history. As primary sources the living and dead body of a person contain more accurate history and that is why genealogy of man can be traced as far as millions of years ago. There are people in the society with outstanding spirit to unlock the needed history that is embedded in the culture by way of language, names and habits. For all humanity, the body shape, size, appearance and the De-oxy-ribo-Nucleic Acid (DNA) or the language of genes possess the messages of our ancestors even with many evolutions. A great number of elderly people became very useful sources.

Languages are known to be evolving and migrating just as people as long as they are active and productive. In lexico – statistics dating, the research will make use of the roots of the Lango vocabulary. The principle will help to determine the age and historical linkages with other languages and people in order to develop a family tree. The assumption is that all languages have a basic root and vocabulary. The vocabulary would then be used to reconstruct the missing link and identify the truth. The meaning of one word above in a language can lead to a very wide clue to facts and truths of every important pieces of the unrecorded history. The fundamental source of history is also a place that enables people to exist, migrate, settle and interact. Such places receive and or impact a contamination, keeping its record at the place in the people or their property including mountains and valleys. They are useful sources of history including ethno-botany (eg palm trees), ethno-zoology (cattle) and ethno-archeology (remains of works and bodies of man).

Most importantly is to seek the kingdom of God first. Before putting any plan into actions we must ask ourselves three questions: Is this plan of work in harmony with God's truth? Will it work under real life conditions? And is my attitude about the plan or action **pleasing** to God? The almighty is the way, the life, the light and the door. All that is in the past and present was his work and record. Research work is an act of going into the darkness. We don't need darkness, but light in order to enter into the darkness and discover the missing links in history. To get the light we must obey God and request his spiritual intervention by imparting wisdom on our clues and efforts of the people of elderly sources in order for the critical memories to come. Whatever we want for the living generation can only be available by the power of God to distinguish and release the hidden information in the effort to obtain the history of Lango.⁴The findings of this book will among other methods and sources depend on Gods inspired idea to facilitate the unlocking of the missing links contained in the people and their anthropology. The key resources will be elderly people **of at least over** 60 years old. A study of all lore brings out values of culture relationship between people of the past and present.

References:

1. Prof Sophie B. Oluwole of Nigeria: Philosophy and Oral Tradition
2. Gerald Leinwand: The Pageant of World History
3. R.G Collingwood: The Idea of History
4. The Gospel according to John 6:23

2.0 WHO ARE THE LANGO PEOPLE?

2.1 Some knowledge by other writers

Lango people exist under many categories of ethnic names of identity. There was at least a root name or the etymology that eventually recognizes that all these varying ethnic groups are of Lango origin. By the time of coming of the British colonialists in 1862, it was only the Lango of Lira in Uganda and a smaller group in Agoro of Southern Sudan who had continued to retain the name Lango as their ethnic name. It is no wonder because the last group of Lango to enter Uganda in 1714 departed from Agoro and came with the name **Lango Tiro**. They were in 1908, asked by the British as to what name they call themselves, to which they overwhelmingly replied “**wan Lango**” meaning that they are of **Lango people**. This is why the first colonial station at **Ibuje** was named **Pa'lango**, a name emphasized by the remnants of **Lwo** people then in the neighborhood saying the place was occupied by Lango. The rest of Lango had over the period of migration to other places like the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania, Bari/Lutuko in Sudan and the Iteso completely changed their name.

By 1270, about four groups of stocks of Lango people had existed and formed part of the people of the Kingdom of Ethiopia. Due to population expansion and migration these people are now found in various locations of the Eastern Africa, located in Ethiopia, Sudan, Congo, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Reference is outlined here below for the various ethnic stocks of such Lango people now settled in many places, giving the time of distinction, sub-stock and location. Altogether there are 48 different ethnic people, all of Lango origin though some may have been just absorbed and assimilated. The table below shows the year of becoming an independent group, stock and location. Some of these ethnic names are now extinct. This information should help to correct the history of the stock name as **Lango** and not to be called **Hamatic**, neither **Nilo-Hamitic**, nor **Western**, nor **Eastern** and nor **Plain Nilots** which has been the calling by some Kenyan and Ugandan historians. I think that these writers were unable to get to the cultural roots and routes of Lango and their blood lines.

2.2 The etymology of the word and name Lango

a) The Lwo origin of the version

In Acholi or old **Lwo-Didinga** and **Anywak** language, the name Lango means “**enemy**” a word which is applied exclusively to mean enemies who are human beings. Meanwhile other enemies are called “**merok**”, something else that can kill a person such as wild animals. When the Lwo met the early Lango people, they also called them the **merok** people. This is the word later on was used as abusive or nick name for Lango as **Lango Omiro**, having derived it from **merok** adapted with a Lango prefix “**O**” to make **Omiro**. The name **Omiro** later became more prominently used by the Kumam and Itesot than the Acholi and it is from where the British got it. The Lwo also use the word Lango indiscriminately in reference to strangers and people who

don't belong to their social ethnic stock. The Lwo in Kenya associate the word **Lango** with a cattle rustler or thief.

There are other associated words also of Lwo nature such as "**Lango Olok**" which also Lwo used to name the **Jie people** for their being the evasive speakers, "**Dano nono lango lok dok twatwal**" meaning that the person beats about the bush.² Yet from the Karmojong version "**Olok**" was derived from the conduct of **Jie**, who were seen as people who keep moving up and down in search for survival- "**bedo loloka**" means keeps moving and changing abode here and there. There is also the name **Lango dyang** which Lango associated with the Karamojong, meaning the Lango of cattle. **Lango turkan**, are the **Turukana Lango group** who stayed in caves.

b) Combination of Lwo and Hebrew versions.

However, the etymology from the LWO DIDINGA, the ancestors of Lwo people during their early interface with the ancient Lango, in about 1550--1600, indicate that Lango as a word was derived from two pieces of words then called "**ANGO**" and prefix "**L**" or "**NGO**" and the prefix "**LA**" for which the first was of Lango people who were fond of answering their presence or identity when called. Such were who are you, and would answer as "**AN**" or "**ANGO**", meaning **me** or **I**.³ On hearing that statement several times from the Lango utterances which is still a practice among the Lango of today, the Lwo then asserted the identity or naming of these strangers as "**LANGO**" through their characteristic Lwo prefix "**L**" added to "**ANGO**" or "**LA**" being added to "**NGO**" to make "**LANGO**."⁴

The research into the etymology of the word source confirms that **Lango** as a word is from Hebrew root words associated with **ango** or **an** or **ngo** and **anga**. These are words of first person's singular commonly used by the Lango people. The Lango use **an** for **I** or **mean ango** for what, meanwhile the Maasai⁵ say **nanu** and sometimes only **A** for **I**. The Bari in Sudan say **nan** for **I**, "**Nan tintin do piom**" meaning I give you water.⁶ The research confirms that **an** or **ango** is derived from the Hebrew language arising from the words "**me**" or "**I**" which in Hebrew is "**anee**" meaning **me** or **I** in English. In Lango, "**anee**" is "**an**" also meaning **me** or **I**. The trend is the same with the Falashas (Beta Israel) in the declension of the separate personal pronouns say "**an**" for "**I**" as their first person singular⁷ This confirms that the old Lango people who lived in Ethiopia used to speak some form of Hebrew language. The word **anee** also translates into a person or someone is **ango** or **an** for **I**, or **ngai** or **nga** for **whom** or **who**. Then, because of this practice, the Lango neighbors became accustomed to knowing and calling the Lango people that way and this was way back from about the year 1550--1600 while at the shores of Lake Rudolf, after departing from Addis Ababa.

c) The spiritual context of the version of the name.

For those who are very conversant with the Christian theology in the bible will remember that the Hebrew name for God is **Jehovah**, a mispronunciation of **Yahweh known to be** the original name of God. The Lango, Iteso and Kumam people have retained in their language this name as **O'owe** for the Lango and **O'okwe** in both Ateso and Kumam⁸ which are only invoked through

prayers at the time of need for the spiritual intervention of God. In the early sixties, Lango elderly women used to pray or call on God when there is dangerous rainfall by saying “*O’owe! O’owe! O’owe!, pit otino mot. Pit otino mot*” meaning O’God! O’God! O’God! Please peacefully feed the children, peacefully feed the children. The hostile rain would certainly calm down, showing that the God *Yahweh* or *O’owe* heard the plea. Ordinarily Lango name for God is *Jok* which was derived from Lwo by Lango Tiro. *Jok* was also a misnomer of *Jehovah* by picking “*J*” and “*O*” to derive another pronunciation to become *Jok*. The New International Version Bible interprets the name *Yahweh* as being derived from the Hebrew word for “*I AM*” meaning *I* or *me*. The words *I AM* is connected to the name God told Moses that “*I AM WHO I AM.*” In Exodus 3:14. when God insisted in telling Moses that, “*This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.*” The same was with Abraham, Genesis 12:1-3; 15 & 17, Isaac Genesis 26:2-5, and Jacob Genesis 28:13-15. In all these cases God used the name “*I AM*” to show his unchanging nature.⁹ So if the Lango people insisted in telling the Lwo people that “*an*” or “*ango*” whenever they were asked by the Lwo or J.H Driberg or any other person, it should be believed that the Lango were also “*insisting on their unchanging nature as a human being,*” the beings of the image of God. They could not be any more or less than a human being, thus, “*angoor I AM or the human being, or wan Lango*” in reply to the question on who are you?

d) Application of a vocabulary on the name Lango.

No one had yet gone deep to find out the correct composition and group name of the Lango people, than describing them as Nilo-Hamatic, etc.¹⁰ Therefore, following the above finding, it is clear that the name **Lango** is no where near the classification of or part of the group called **Nilotic, Hamitic** or **Nilo-Hamites**, and **whether Plain** or **Highland** as classified by Professor Ogot. First of all, the use of the word Nile is a much more recent creation in 1840’s when the Arabs and Europeans were searching for the source of the great river now called the Nile. When they asked Dinkers about the source of the great River, were replied as “*ni le*” which meant I don’t know. So the explorers went ahead to name the water River *Nile*, joiner of *ni* and *le*. The name Nile is therefore much younger than the Lango existence in the area and its group cannot derive its name from the Nile that came up much later in the vocabulary of the populations around. Following the Jewish culture of naming people, which was characterized by the names of *Patriarchs*, Hebrew people were named after their ancestors and not places where they were found. Examples are with Israelites, a name after the Patriarch Israel; Miciri (Egyptians), after Mizram, the son of Shem and Cushites, after Cush, the son of Ham. So people are best named according to their blood lines rather than place of aboard or like a citizen. Since Lango are now known to have originated from Solomon, their correct people’s name should have been *The Solomonic people*, if they are too far to be called Israelites or Semitic. However, as their ancestors settled for AN/ANGO, or a person, they should go with **Lango** as their common community name and not the place names such as Nilotic and Plains people.

By classification or just naming of a people, it is also clear here that the name Lango has no plural for it. As a person it is *Lango*, for people even plural it is also *Lango*. To make plural for other purposes one can call it **Jo Lango** or *Lango people*. As a language, it is *Lango* language, and as a territory, it is *Lango* country or land. The need for plural if for people, it is associated with the suffix when it is not involving Lango. The example is *mooita* for foreigners. Driberg being the earliest writer about Lango in 1918 never wrote anywhere the plural name as *Langi*. He had asked these people whether they were *Omiro* and they rejected, saying “*wan Lango*” or “*Wan Jo Lango*.” Even the word *Jo*, even if it relates so, it is a *Lwo* dialect, not of Lango origin. So it can see here that Lango then didn’t say “*wan Langi*.” To call Lango in plural as **Langi** is wrong. The name **Langi** seems to have been the making of the other Ugandan academicians and civil servants during the colonial and post-colonial era. One of them is **Fr. Anjelo Tarantino**, an Italian priest who in his 1954 book of *Lango I Kare Acon*, kept on referring to Lango people as *Langi*. Tarantino had worked in Acholi and came to Lango when speaking some Acholi words. He commonly used most Acholi words when writing the book *Lango I Kare Acon* and must have imported the suffix “*i*” from the calling of Acholi which also has the suffix “*I*” The British themselves never used the plural at all. An example is from the writings of these Europeans on their various literatures and kept using separate subjective words to create their needed plural as double word. This was in form of suffix as opposed to Lango which translates into a prefix to define the plural nature of the application. Such are *Jo Lango* or *Lango people*; *kweyi Lango* or Lango hoes, *yoe Lango* or Lango roads, etc.

2.3 The names *Atekere* and *Itunga*.

Some historians have sometimes named the stock of Lango people as either *Ateker* group or *Itunga*. Both words are in practice in the vocabulary of some of the Lango people. The Lango of Lira only uses *Atekere* which they call *Iteker* or just *Tekere* which means a clan. However *Tekere* also means the start or beginning. J H Driberg who researched so much on the Lango in 1916 attached other meaning of *Atekere* as also ally and friendly community. When doing research on the Lango clan of *Okii Ogwang Koltum* it was found that they call a clan *Tekere* meaning people who are descendants of one ancient great paternal grandfather, tracing back to about 200 years ago or more and consist of a genealogy of about 10 generations.¹¹ The Itesot use the two words *Ateker* and *Itunga*, where *Ateker* means both **clan** and **tribe**. To the Itesot, they call people *Itunga* (plural) and *Itunganan*¹² (singular) a person is Fr Brunno Novelli who was trying to relate the word to a linguistic classification like how the Bantu arise from “*ntu*” and thus named the Plain Nilotes as the people of root word “*nga*”. This follows the answer when an *Itunga* is asked “*Ngae iyong?*” (Who are you?) And they answer “*itunganan ayong*” I am a human being). He then proposed a collective name of these people to be the *Itunga*.¹³ Samburu call a person *l-cungana* while the Maasai call a human being *ol-tungani* and people *ol-orere*.¹⁴ The fundamental root of the two words, *Atekere* and *Itunga* confirm linguistic connection with Hebrew and the Falasha languages. The Lango lived with the Falashas and the

departed in about 1100 AD. Hebrew has a word *ateek* which means something ancient or something of long ago. The word is close to another Hebrew word *tekheel*,¹⁵ meaning “at first” or “in the beginning.” The Lango vocabulary has a word *tekwaro* meaning culture and clan name *tekere* and is also *atekere* in Kumam/Teso all meaning are related to the Hebrew root words of *ateek* and *tekheel*. The word *Itunga* also is rooted to Hebrew language of the first person singular *an* and the first person plural *anan*. When Brunno indicated an answer of “*itunganan ayong*”, the suffix *Anan* has connections with *I and me*. *Therefore*, while *atekere* refers to a past origin or beginning, *Itunga* refers to people as *I* or *us* and in Ateso groups of people are called *Itunganan*.

2.4 The various divisions of Lango people

A lot of writings have been made indicating the possible groups and stock of people identified and sometimes just referred to as Lango people. An example is the Kalegins, especially the Pokots, the Marakwet, Nandi and the Sabiny. Locally in Uganda other writers have also written badly to the extent of doubting as to who are the Lango people, even when the Lango people are self-explanatory by their conduct and cultural values. J.H. Driberg who spent a lot of time with the Lango at Lira could not differentiate between Lango and Lwo or Acholi. He later classified the Lango as the Nilotic people of Uganda. When you travel to Kitgum you can easily get the difference just as the Lwo of Kenya all whom know that Lango are not part of the Lwo. Even some of the present Lango and Acholi still know the Lango as originated from Lwo people. Onyango ku Odongo and J B Webster in their book at least made the distinction by discovering that the Lango people consist of different stocks that include the *Bari* and *Lotuko* among others in Sudan, then the *Maasai* in Kenya and Tanzania. The Maasai largely consist of the Maasai as the main body and sections of Samburu and Njemps as new ethnic divisions that now count themselves as tribes. Even when Pazzaglia clearly outlined all these people he failed to recognize the Lango of Lira as one of these people¹⁶. The Lango who are in Uganda as *Jie-Karamojong-Turkana* have been named by Fr Buruno as *Koten group*. The *Teso-Kuman*, who are largely members of *Iseera* are made up of mainly the three popular big clans of the Arak (*irarak*), Atek (*itekok*) and Okarowok (*ekarobwok*). The present Lango of Lira are the only group that insisted in retaining the name *Lango* as their community name.. They consist of the breakaway group of *Iseere*, then combining with the late comers the *Tiro* group from Sudan who left behind the last remnants at Agoro Mountains, the *Dongotono* and *Logir* group. The *Tiro* had sections that became big and had many clans of Lango who consisted of *Okii* clan, *Otengoro*, *Bako* and *Ober*, Some of the *Bako* broke off from Toror hills of Panyangara in Kotido and went to Kangole and Nabilatuk of Karamoja. Today they are now the Karamojong. A group of other clans common in Lango also are found among other tribes like the *Palamyekat* Palam in Katakwi are known as *Ipalama*, *Otengoro* are in Acholi, Teso, Kumaam and *Jo Padhola*. The clan called *Guna* reported to be part of *Otikokin* clan and the clans of *P'Okure*, *P'Ucet in Lukung*, *P'Lema* and *Koc Adaca* were identified by J P. Crazzolaro as Lango clans resident among the Acholi.

When the Lango was departing from **Awila** and **Angolebwalin** Abim for Otuke area, two families named **Kal Oding** (those who face North) and **Kal Orwako** (those who face East) withdrew from the migration stop over point of Awila and returned to Kotido to stay with the **Jie** people and are now consisting of over four clans. Some are resident at **Wot Okauin** Nakapelimoru Sub County. The name *wot* in Lango means going and kau is remnant of Hebrew word that means a return. Sometimes the word kau means a **cowardice** if it an act of withdrawal in form of are turn journey.

However among the Lango in Lira area there are clans of Lwo origin, some of whom they came with from Kotido as either friends or were refugees in need of security. They are identified as include **Ojimo, Abwori, Ayom** and **Acore**, The clan of **Lira** were found at Ngeta and at other locations in 1814—1920 and absorbed as Lango people now. The **Jo Alyec**, wherever they are, mainly living to the North of Lira are said to be of **Madi Opi** who accompanied **Lango Tiro** right from Agoro in Sudan. The name **Iseera** is key to the identity of most Lngo people. In Teso, it was the main name of the Iteso language alongside **Ingoratok** before applying the current **Ateso** a name given by the **Karamojong**. The name **Serere**, now a new district of the Iteso people has been associated with the **Iseera** too.

The Kumam and the Jie have retained the name as clan name. An example is, Ibaseere¹⁷ among the Kumam and **Ngisera** among the Jie resident in the town area of Kotido. Among the Maasai the name is **Aiser** and **Siria** as sub clan names. The Maasai claim that their great ancestor was **Naiser**, a name close to **Iseera** and may have influenced the calling of the name **Maasai**, from **Naiser** and subsequently from or influenced the calling of **Iseera**. Among the Bari/Lutuko stock is retained among the Bari as a clan name called **Sera** meaning a group of sub clans and **Lungaser** or **Kingaser**, meaning children of close relatives. Among the Lutuko, it is the **Isara**, name of a rain maker in 1953. Following this finding, the **Iseera** is much widely used among the group of people¹⁸ The **Iseera** was a section of **Atekere** group that departed from **Moru kau** in Southern Sudan in about 1650 as advance party of migrating Lango and who distinctively knew themselves in clan formations of **Irarak**, **Atekok** and **Ikarebwok**, J B Webster also noted that **Tiro** group was once an **Atekere** of **Iseera** group but later spoke a different language. They are the ones whose language was bilingual, of Lango and some Lwo.

2.5 The summary of the Lango people by their promised land.

Table 1. List of Lango people

	ETHNICITY	YEAR	SUB-STOCK	STOCK	HOME COUNTRY
1	FALASHA	950	JEWS	JEWS	ETHIOPIA
2	BARI	1520	BARI	LANGO	SUDAN/UGANDA
3	POJULU	1650	„	BARI	S. SUDAN
4	NYANGBARA	1700	„	„	„
5	KUKU	1650	„	„	„
6	KAKWA	1700	„	„	SUDAN/UGANDA/CONGO

7	MONDARI	1750	„	„	SUDAN/CONGO
8	NYEPU	1750	„	„	„
9	LIGO	1750	„	„	„
10	LOTUKO	1550	BARI	LANGO	„
11	LOPIT	1760	LOTUKO	BARI	„
12	LOUNDO	1780	„	„	„
13	LOMIYA	1780	„	„	„
14	LUKOYA	1750	„	„	„
15	LULUBA	1700	„	„	„
16	MAASAI	1550	MAASAI	LANGO	KENYA
17	MAISER	1600	ISEERA	MAASAI	KENYA&TANZANIA.
18	SIRIA	1700	„	„	„
19	MUHARUSHA	1750	„	„	TANZANIA
20	AITOKIKOKI	1780	„	„	„
21	KONYOKIE	1850	„	„	KENYA
22	KAPUTIEI	1850	„	„	„
23	WUASINGISHU	1880	„	„	„
24	SAMBURU	1650	SAMBURU	„	„
25	NJEMPS	1750	„	„	„
26	MUKUGODO	1820	„	„	„
27	NDOROBO	1820	„	„	„
28	BUNA	1580	IDONGIRO	FALASA	ETHIOPIA
29	KARO	1580	„	„	„
30	BAKO	1580	„	„	„
31	DIME	1580	„	„	„
32	ISEERA	1580	ISEERA	LANGO	EXTINCT
33	KOTEN	1650	„	LANGO	„
34	TIRO	1650	„	„	„
35	KUMAM	1750	ISEERA/ TIRO	„	UGANDA
36	ITESO	1760	„	„	UGANDA
37	ITESIYO	1780	ISEERA	„	UGANDA/KENYA
38	KARAMOJONG	1760	ISEERA/ KOTEN	„	UGANDA
39	TURKANA	1750	KOTEN/KOTEN	„	KENYA
40	JIE	1760	ISEERA/ KOTEN	„	UGANDA
41	TOPOSA	1780	ISEERA/KOTEN	„	SOUTH SUDAN
41	DODOTH	1780	„	„	UGANDA
42	JIYE	1770	JIE	„	SOUTH SUDAN
43	NYANGATOM	1800	JIE	„	S/SUDAN / ETHIOPIA
44	LANGO	1714	ISEERA /TIRO	„	LIRA IN UGANDA

45	LANGO	1750	TIRO	„	SOUTH SUDAN
46	DONGOTONO	1850	„	„	S/SUDAN & UGANDA
47	LOGIR	1850	„	„	„
48	LOGIRE	1850	„	„	„

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3.0 THE ROOTS AND ROUTES INTO UGANDA.

3.1 The bloodlines and relative Lango people

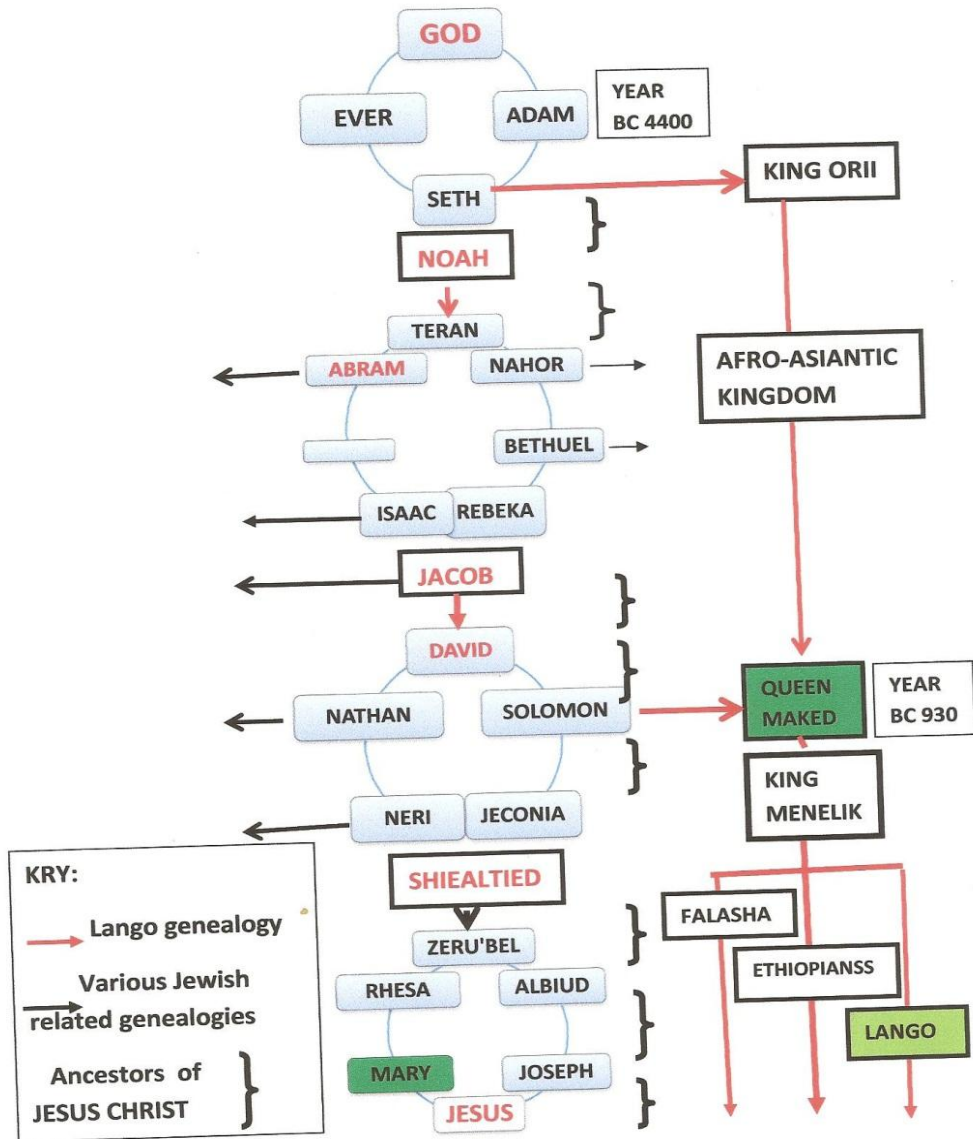
Tracing from the ancient oral traditions, the Lango people as given by the definition of the words that give the name, are originating and or descendants of the Afro- Asiatic people and at the same time Jewish of the Semitic. In the early fifties and sixties, it was still common practice in the villages folklore, especially of the Lango of Lira to practiced Jewish culture of recognizing **Patriarchs** or Paternal ancestors by head so that every male must permanently remember the ancestral line of birth. This teaching, as given below under roots and routes, greatly contributed to the tracing of the ancestral origin. This is how King Solomon was known as **Mwa-Mwa**. **Mwa-Mwain** Lango means *apat ataa*, a person who though known, was not living in the same community or not seen physically by the people, or just one who lives elsewhere. **King Solomon** never came to Ethiopia although he produced a son with **Queen Makeda** whose name was **Menelik**, a name given by his mother while his father gave **Dauudi** or **DavidII**.

The book of *Kibre-Negest* states that David II and his entourage came from Jerusalem via Cairo, ending their journey at Debre Makidda, the capital of the Queen of Sheba.¹ Legends recorded during the study of the **Falasha**² people of Ethiopia quoted that Solomon the King had a son with the Queen from the South where he had named **Menelek**. This son was afterwards sent by Solomon to Abyssinia as King of Ethiopia. They add: *“that because the Jews of Palestine had argued Solomon to send his well-beloved Menelek to so far a country- he in return prevailed upon them, that each father should send his first born son with Menelek to Abyssinia.”*The legend says they married native women and hence were naturalized with Abyssinians.

The Queen of Sheba called Makeda was a royal leader of the Serbian Empire located in the current Yemen that existed around 1200- 950 BC. The Serbians were the surviving descendants of the Afro-Asiatic Kingdom established by **King Orii**³, the second son of Seth who was son of Adam. The structures of both the roots and routes of blood and kingdom lines of the descendants that subsequently produced the Lango are drawn below. The teaching of how to remember ancestors is one Lango cultural value used in identifying the roots of Lango people. For illustration, the author has demonstrated this great testimony by naming his great ancestors by heart as here it is. **Julius Ocur** son of **Odwe Erukana**, son of **Olwal Akullo**, son of **Odwe Adilo**, son of **Adonyo Dyangcero**, son of **Jole**, son of **Ijok (Ojok)Won Okwia**, son of **OkelloOkii**, son of **Alele Adwong**, etc. This listing may not be so much in practice in the present days for most Lango people. The structural drawing given below defines everything.

Figure1. The genealogy of Lango people⁴

THE GENEALOGY OF LANGO PEOPLE



3.2 The roots and evidence of origin

Many Historians including Fr. Cresolara, J.H Driberg, Fr. Angelo Tarantino, John Tosh and many others have written about Lango migration. The farthest source as the cradle land, they could reach was assumption of Ethiopia. However, recent research that I have conducted has proven that the Langi originated from Jerusalem, The Israeli Jewish ancestors descended from king Solomon had settled in AXUM, city, North of Ethiopia, bordering Eritrea by BC 950. The first known such person was MENELIK (Serbian name) or DAUDI the 2nd, a son to King Solomon. The Lango/Teso/Kumam people still use the most ancient names of Hebrew and Noah's time such as **Erii/Orii**, a name to the grand child of Adam, **Edau/Dau** being the shot name of King **Daudi**. This history can be collaborated by use of the old Lango oral tradition of reciting (*rabo nying kwaro*)⁵ of one's ancestry as below.

“Nyingi nga, nyingaApe, Ape mene. Ape Dau. Daumene. Dau Cuny, Cuny mene Cung Odit. Odit mene. Odit Nam. Nam mene. Nam Opong. Opong mene. Opong Dolo. Dolo mene. Dolo Oguti mene. Oguti mene, Oguti Apala. Apala mene. Apala Omyek. Omyek mene. Omyek Otim. Otim mene. Otim Ako (Akoi). Ako mene. Ako Owino. Owinomene Owino Acali, Acalimene. Acali Awany. Awany mene. Awany Onyang. Onyang mene. Onyang Ogema. Ogemamene, Ogema DAUDI(MENELIK).Daudi mene. DaudiMwa-Mwa.

This confirms that, probably when the Lango lived in the old time they could recite ancestry up to a man called DAUDI. Though it is commonly known that the name DAUDI came through Christianity, the name DAUDI existed long before among the Lango, which at later stage was shortened as DAU. The name DAU is still alive with Lango of today and in Kumam and Itesot is EDAU. The word MWA-MWA refers to a person who had never been seen. Therefore in this case, Mwa-mwa is a person but father of DAUDI who is KING SOLOMON who never reached ETHIOPIA but had lived with the mother of DAUDI called MAKEDA or QUEEN OF SHEBA) when she visited Jerusalem in about 950 BC. SABEA was the Kingdom located in the place of current Yemen. MAKEDA later settled at AXUM where MENELIK or DAVID II was born and became the first King of Abyssinia.

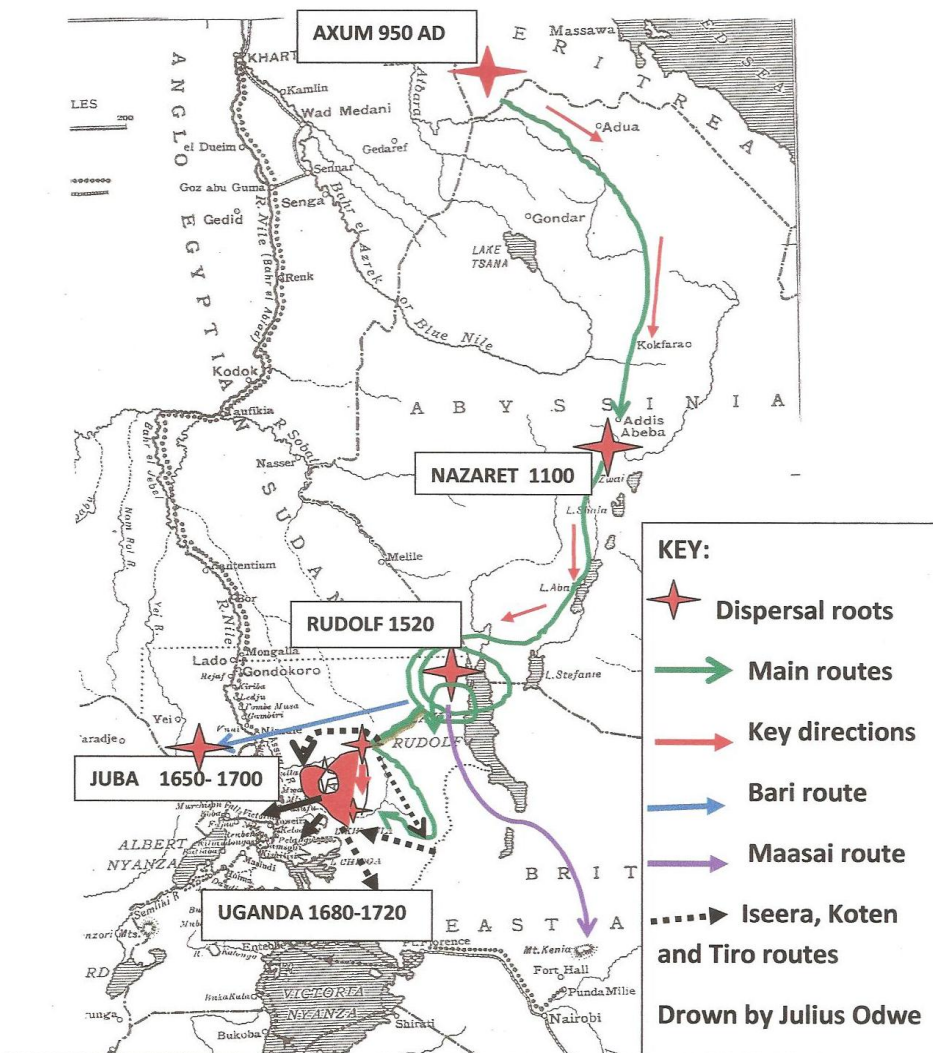
This history then marks the beginning, origin and migration of Lango people who then departed Axum in 950 AD, about 1,000 years later from time of MENELIK, reaching Nazareth near ADDIS ABABA in about 1,100 AD, moved down to KAFA region⁶ in the South West or to *Anyar-Oding*(North) of Lake Rudolf in about 1250. They were settled at this home land up to about 1520--1550, and due to a large population pressure and the advancing OROMO (GALLA) people from SIDAMO side, a split of Lango into three stocks occurred as- the BARI, MAASAI and later the mainstream LANGO.

The transition of migration started around 960AD when Queen Guditi destroyed the remnants of the Aksumite Empire, causing a shift in its temporal power centre that later regrouped more to the southern highlands in the area of Addis Ababa. According to other Ethiopian traditional

accounts, the last of Queen Gudit dynasty was overthrown by Mara Takla Haymanot in 1137. While at the new location again fighting for power continued, causing the Zagwe dynasty to take over. Zagwe ruled large parts of the territory from approximately 1137 to 1270. **Mara Takla Haymanot** was *Nəgusä nəgäst* of Ethiopia, and the founder of the Zagwe dynasty. Zagwe wounded power when the last King Za-Ilmaknun was killed in battle by the forces of Yekuno Amlak of the Solomonic dynasty who recovered their lost power.⁷

3.3 Dispersals and migrations from Abyssinia

Map 1. Migration routes from Abyssinia to Uganda



3.4 Dispersal and migrations away from Lake Rudolf

Other than the Maasai people who mainly depended on the water courses and available open grassland (known as *barr* or *alapatu* in Lango, *kalapata* in Karamojong, and *ilapat* in Ateso) where ever they are led for their cattle as the main bearing for direction of migration, the other groups including Lango depended on Mountains for the reference as past and new locations. Each time a hill of mountain was noted by climbing and viewing the next point from the present, Lango should find another at a 30 to 50 miles observation point in order to be sure of where next to move. If no immediate mountain is seen within 30 to 50 mile range, a double up is made through hunting expeditions to facilitate visioning of the next one or more hills or mountains. You can therefore note this on all the rougths of migration of the Bari/Lotuko and the Iseera/Tiro/Koten groups when they make references to many mountains passed of settled around on migration. The Lango count so many of that from Ethiopia, at Moru Akipi, Moru Kau, Didinga, Agoro, Toror, Angolebwal and Otuke before reaching Aloii and Ngetta hills. The actual sport from which the Lango stock was reportedly a point of departure was to the West and North of Lake Rudolf, lacated as part of Kaffa Region, around the great bend of Omo River where Buma and Karo of Ethiopia now occupy.⁸ The **Bari** departed for South Sudan in about 1520-1530, Lotuko who are part of Bari are recorded to have invaded the Lwo people at Tekidi by the years 1544-1571. It was reported that they were accompanied by the brown people who were ivory traders. This is the time when OWINY II, the last Lwo King fled to the Nile as part of the subjects went south to Kaberamaido.⁹ **Maasai** also decided to depart for northern Kenya/ Rift Valley in about 1550--1560 and the Lango later formed into three sections of **Iseera**, **Koten** and **Tiro** in about 1560—1580 and moved as the last stock from the cradle land, to settle around Moru Kau/Kito hills in South Sudan. **Iseera** departed **Moru Kau** in Southern Sudan in about 1670-1690 for Kabong and Kotido via Kidepo Valley. **Koten** in a few years later through **Moru Asigar** or **Moru Apolon**, then **Lango Tiro** the last in 1710-1720 from AGORO region of Southern Sudan. Though some as Kramojong now remained at Koten hill, majority of the three again converged at Nakapelimoru and Panyangara of Kotido in about 1720-30. The last Lango group of **Tiro** consisted mainly of the Lango clans of **Okii**, **Otengoro**, **Bako** and **Ober**. The **Iseera** consisted mainly of the clans of **Arak**, **Atek** and **Okorowok**. The **Koten** consisted mainly of the six clans of **Ribo**, **Obal**, **Olipa**, **Kadanya**, **Omong** and **Todoi**. The great famine of 1720 called *Nyamdere* was reported to be the main cause of both Lango **Tiro** and Lango **Koten** to get into mass movement in this period leading them to join **Iseera** in Kotido.¹⁰ Research conducted by many historians identified the chronology of dispersals¹¹ from the valley of Omo following the push of Oromo people by the Somali. The Oromo met the Lango who were then pushed further West of Rudolf which caused westward migration pattern between 1520 and 1550 and to the area between latitude 5⁰N and 6⁰N and the subsequent progressive migration that followed. Between 1520 and 1570 Oromo migration was noted to have been

combined with wars and violence along the South East, South and later South West of Abyssinia which interrupted many communities including the Lango people.¹²

About **1530—1550**. The group consisting of Bari/Lotuko migrated westwards into Sudan through Kidepo valley, Torit plains and the Imurok Hills where they displaced the Madi.

About **1550-1570**. The Maasai and Samburu move along the Rift Valley into the present Kenya.

About **1560 -1580**: Last group, which was the contingent of *Iseera*, *Koten* and *Tiro*, migrate towards South West close, to Uganda. and settled around the hills of Moru Kau, Giriki, Wera, Oburu and Kito. Kito was considered the highest mountain around and bear the identity of the old Lango land. Soon after at this point is where the group broke up into three, the *Iseera* as the main body, *Koten* and *Tiro*.

About **1670-1690** the main body, the *Iseera* departs to the South West, for Kotido via Kidepo valley and Kaabong. This is the group consisting of the three main clans of *Araki*, *Atek* and *Okarowok*. About **1670-1680**: Tiro group departs West wards to

Didinga and Agoro mountain areas and meets the Lwo who cause them to be bilingual and later in **1710--1720** departs for Kotido from Sakari Hills North of Agoro, leaving behind a small Lango section now *Dongotono*, *Logir* and *Logire*.¹³

About **1670—1720** the Turkana, Jie and Karamojong inclusive, depart Moru Kau and arrive at Koten in Uganda, via *Moru Asigar* or Moru Apolon.

Turkana and Jie move ahead up to Nakapelimoru in Kotido and join the Iseera and Tiro.

3.5 Dispersal and migration away from Kotido and Koten

Final destinations were achieved in about **1730--1810**: Turkana return to Kenya via Koten 1730-1740; the Toposa, Jiye of Sudan and Nyangatom depart in reverse to Sudan in 1740; Kumam via Toror hills of Kotido depart for *Kokorio*¹⁴ at the shores of Lake Bisina in Katakwi 1740-1750;

The Iseera group who became part of Itesot depart for Katakwi in 1750-1770 and later spread out to Kumi, Ngora and Serere. Lango Iseera and Tiro depart Kotido for Awila/Angolebwal/Otuke in 1760-1780. In the same period Karamojong migrate South wards from Koten to River Apule in Moroto¹⁵ as Dodoth move North West in 1770. On the way to Apule some Karamojong youth break out and went far ahead to join the *Iseera* at Kumi and Ngora to create *Itesot* people.

According to A C A Wright and J C D Lawrence, the youthful Karamojong went grazing and later disappeared via Napak hills. There had three groups, the first led by Okong and Angisa departed from Koten much earlier and had a stopover at Ngariam,/Magoro/Angisa stretch. The second one led by Alekilek settled at Kamalinga of Napak and Akisim hills. The arrival of these immigrants at Magoro was confirmed by Olemo¹⁶ of Magoro to be in about 1850—1860. But

these people had a distinction mainly called Iteso, and are those now who live in most of Katakwi, Bukedea, Palisa, Tororo and Kenya. The Iseera also went through Ochomai to Omito of Kafir shallow crossing spot of Bisina Lake and are the ones who populated Kumi, Ngora and Serere.¹⁷ Amuria becomes populated by a mixture of Itesot, Iseera, Kumam and Lango

Tiro/Iseera

The Lango of today in Uganda departed from **Kotido** in about 1760-70, passing via **Awila**, **Angolebwal** and **Morulem** in **Abim** located near the hill seen below called **Angolebwal**.¹⁸The view is from the southern end, north of Kapelebyong. This is where they spent some time before entering the current land from **Otuke**. It is in this location where Lango practiced great hunting expeditions and had much food stock which was used to marry and also by the children of the **Jie**. In taking two directions from about 1790-1800, one group mainly of **Tiro** origin with some Madi members of the Opii clan passed through **Aloi** in 1814, reaching **Barr** and **Akia** in about 1818, while the main body, consisting mainly of **Iseera**, with some **assimilated Lwo**, went via **Patongo**, reaching **Apala**, **Ogur** and **Ngeta** also in about 1814. It was also noted that two families led by two brothers called Kal Oding and Kal Orwako decided to return to Kotido and settled at **Wot kau**. **Wot kau** means returnees.¹⁹Part of the cause of departing from Kotido was population pressure from the Koton group in about 1760, causing the Iseera to split into many sections, some coming along with Tiro as Lango while others went as Teso, Kumam and a few remained as Karamojong.

Figure2. Photograph of Angolebwal hill



While at **Angolebwal** and **Awila hills**, they absorbed some Lwo and the Tiro who had already had a lot of Lwo dialect in their vocabulary while with the Didinga and Anywak in Agoro area had already become bilingual. They became known by the nickname **Lango Omiro**, Again while within Labwor at Awila/Angolebwal and Otuke area a fresh

famine called **Laparanat** broke out in 1785-1792, creating another wave of dispersal.²⁰ In 1820, a meteorite of one of the stars fell from the sky, landing between **Ngeta**, **Erute** and **Obimo** rocks, The Lango then said **ongetakino jo Lango** meaning that the incident resulted into the splitting of Lango people who had settled there and thus naming of the place **NGETTA**. This Ngetta rock is not the one which fell from the sky but took up a memorial name²¹From here Lango made the last dispersal where the first group went West reaching **Aberin** 1850--1860, **Atura** in about

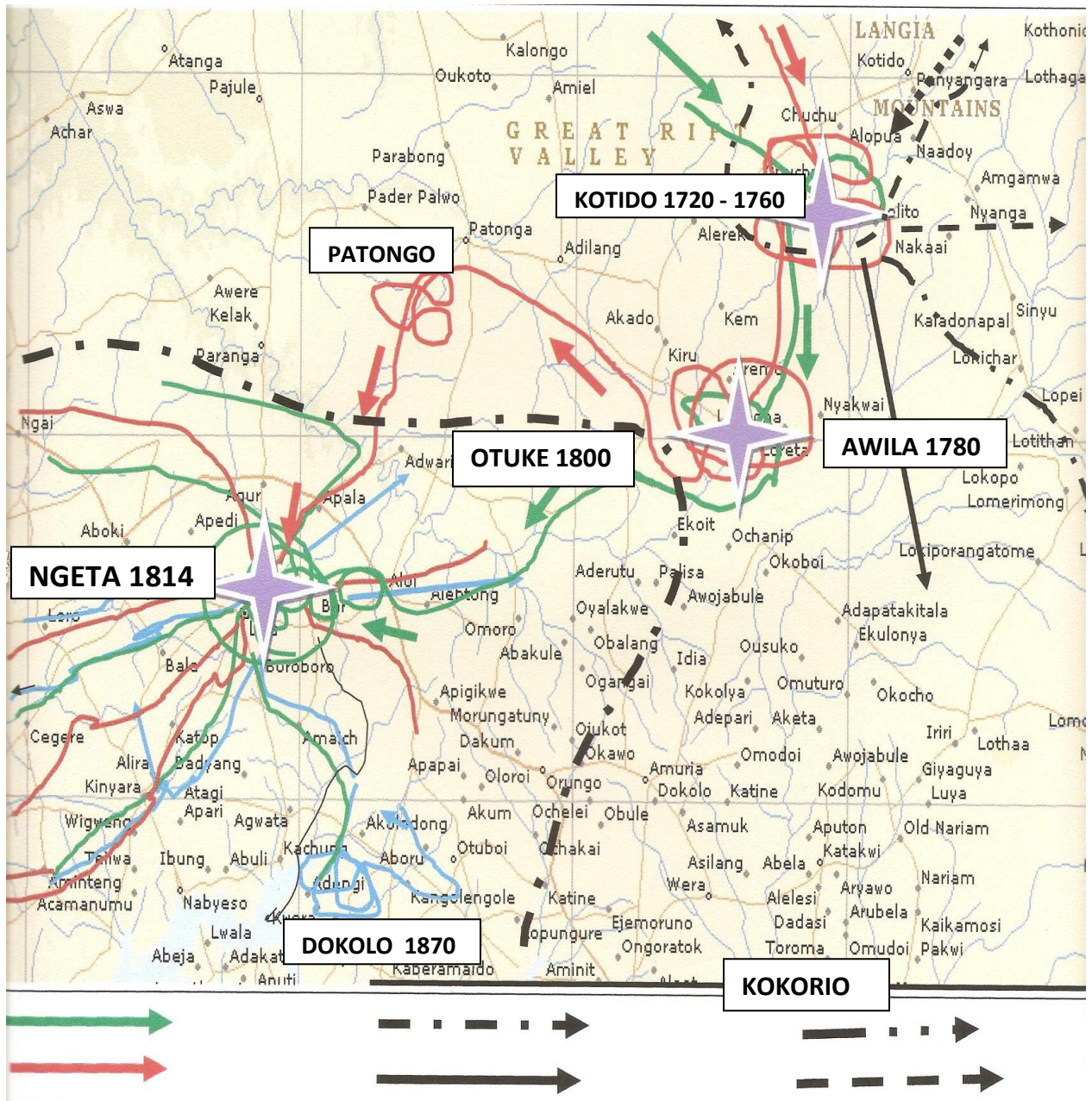
1860²² **Acora** after **Atongwil** and **Karuma** in 1870, and **Iceme** 1880s. The next group took to the east, again through **Aloi** 1840-50, reaching **Dokolo** in about 1875, **Agaya** 1880 and **Awelo** 1895. The South Western group went through **Bala**, **Cegere**, reaching **Kidilane** and **Ibuje** in about 1880. The second southern group taking **Boroboro**, **Amac** up to **Nambyeso** 1870-80 and **Cawente** 1880-1885, and **Akokoro** in 1888-90.²³ The second South Eastern group had broken off from the Nambyeso group at **Amach**, taking Adip across minor **Olweny swamp**, then to **Iguli in Dokolo in 1875--1880**, **Kwera** 1885 and **Kangai** 1885, entering Kaberamaido in 1890²⁴ and found the Kumam had already settled at Lake Kyoga shores of **Agaya**, **Kabulubulu**, **Bululu** and inland at Kalaki, Lwala, Otuboi and Anyara.

In most of the places where Lango arrived and settled, they either found remnants of Lwo or they had departed a few years ago. This evidence has been strongly confirmed by them being found at Otuke as debris of cooking stones (*tuke*) that is why the place is called **Otuke**. Then of those found behind are Alira at Ngetta and Amac, others of different clans were at Aber, Atura and Kidilane. Sites found long abandoned are those with palm trees called *tugo*, were very many in Acholi, Lango and a few in Kaberamaido and Soroti at Arapai. Where these palm trees are seen, you confirm sites of the old settlements of Lwo in migration. The big sites are found at locations of Amac/Agwata/Kachung, Otwal/Ngai/Acaba, Kaberamaido and Kabulubulu, and Arapai. *Tugo* was the relief food reserve for Lwo.²⁵ At Kachung they spent some years because of water flooding of Olweny swamp and thus, the word *cung* became **Kachungor** standing to wait for floods to run out. At Kaberamaido they settled briefly to grow their ground nuts which did very good yield and thus the name **Kaberamaido**, a Lwo name from the statement “**kan aber amaido**” a place that yields much ground nuts. This could have been before **Nyamdere** and **Laparanat** famine of 1720 and 1785. So to track the routes of Lwo migration you simply trace through places of mass *tugo* trees.

Other than famine and population pressures in causing migration, there was at no time the Lango departing any of their territory due to losses in wars. The other causes of migration that have never been recorded anywhere, are the special hunting expeditions called **dwarawora**²⁶ The Lango had this military like hunting expeditions of **awora** which they used in search of better places for migration. The etymology of the name **awora** has not been explained, but noting from the Karamojong version which is for search of grazing land, the role is allotted to youthful people called **Asapan** or the scouts. The scouts of Lango were trainee or probationer military men called **aworon**. If the scouting party consisted of many **aworon**, then the scouting expedition of the **aworon** group was termed **awora** and thus the name of those hunting/scouting expeditions. They look for places where there are enough game, grass for cattle, water and open locations of about one square mile called **alapatu**, now only known as **barr**, for mass settlement as a village. Only skillful and courageous men of about 60-80 in number, accompanied by a few girls for cooking and four to five elders for wisdom take up the mission that lasts one to two months at a distance of about 20 -25 kilometers away. If they take long but return with much game meat, that would be the next direction for migration, The Lango further resorted to much hunting also after 1850 in order to allow them occupy the whole area within a short time. The other reason later was

because a lot of their cattle were killed by **rinderpest** in the 1890's.²⁷ It is the Italian Army that introduced the disease in East Africa when they imported the sick cattle from India for ratio when they were fighting Ethiopia. The disease spread out like wild fire from Ethiopia across East Africa.

Map 2. Migration routes of Lango people from Kotido to Ngetta.



Map showing the Lango dispersal routes alongside others: where black arrow is the Kumam who first departed in 1750-1760, then advance party of Iseera and Teso that headed to Kokorio at the

Northern shores of Lake Salisbery, Turkana and Jie of Sudan on arrows with single dots departed in about same period, followed by LangoTiro in **green** and **red** for Lango Iseera all in 1760-1780 and lastly the Karamojong on **dash arrow** and the last Itesot. The **pink stars** indicate dispersal points of Kotido, Abim and Ngeta, the Otuke and Patongo were just temporary transit points for the Lango people who arrived at Ngeta in about 1810-1815

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