NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

A History of Motherhood, Food Procurement and Politics in East-Central Uganda to the Nineteenth Century

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Field of History

By

Rhiannon Stephens

EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

December 2007

Abstract

A History of Motherhood, Food Procurement and Politics in East-Central Uganda to the Nineteenth Century

Rhiannon Stephens

This study explores the history of Bugwere, Busoga and Buganda, societies in present-day east-central Uganda, from the late first millennium and it does so through a focus on motherhood. Motherhood – as ideology and biology – impacted on almost every aspect of life in these societies, but did so in historically specific and changing ways. The reconstruction of the history of these societies over a thousand years is based on a range of sources and methodologies: historical linguistics, comparative ethnography and the analysis of oral traditions. The use of a range of sources allows us to move outside of the traditional focus of royal palaces, while still recognizing the ways in which political authority shaped the lives of commoners. As the ancestors of Bagwere, Basoga and Baganda, people speaking North Nyanza, expanded their settlements on the western shores of Lake Victoria-Nyanza and moved towards intensive banana-cultivation, motherhood shaped the ways in which they organised their communities and food procurement. At this time in a lightly populated land, people were preoccupied with creating durable settlements. To meet this challenge, they placed women's maternity at the center of

networks which cut across patrilineages and patriclans, and in some areas across linguistic divides. These networks of contrasting and reinforcing ties of obligation underwrote the centralisation of political power in royal families in varying ways and at different times throughout much of the region. As a form of governance which embodied social reproduction – ideologies and realities of motherhood lay at the heart of emergent states. By tracing the changes in social conceptions of motherhood, in practices and ideologies of food procurement and in political life through to the nineteenth century, this dissertation shows how people in this region adapted to new physical and social environments. In the increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse eastern borderlands, this meant giving prominence to social motherhood in the organization of households and political authority. In Buganda, to the west, the growing centralization of power gave a new focus to biological motherhood as the state increasingly moved to co-opt broader conceptualisations of social motherhood to its own ends.

Acknowledgements

Many people at Northwestern University have advised and supported me through this project and I am sincerely grateful to them: Jonathon Glassman, Caroline Bledsoe, Rae Moses, Stefan Kaufmann, Kathryn De Luna, Pamela Khanakwa, Neil Kodesh and my colleagues in the Department of History and the Program of African Studies. I am most grateful to David Lee Schoenbrun for my methodological and intellectual education, for his support and enthusiasm and for challenging me to always do better.

This project would not have been possible without the good humour and generosity of many people in Uganda who gave up their time to teach me words and talk to me about their history. My work in Uganda was greatly facilitated by the Medeyi family – Margaret, Denis and Joseph in particular, the Kunena family and my research assistants Faith Kanyago and Alice Nabirye. I am grateful to the Makerere Institute of Social Research and Grace Bantebya of the Department of Gender Studies at Makerere University for supporting my application for research clearance and to the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology for granting clearance. I also extend my thanks to the helpful staff at the East Africana Library at Makerere University, the Uganda National Archives at Entebbe, the Bishop's House Archives in Jinja, the Uganda Christian University Archives and the archives of Budaka parish. The members of the Lugwere Bible Translation and Literacy project of the Summer Institute for Languages were generous with their time and connections. I would like to thank Sam Mubbala and Gareth Dalzel in particular.

In Europe, I was assisted by the staff of the White Fathers' Archives in Rome, the Mill Hill Fathers' Archives in London and the Church Missionary Society Archives in Birmingham.

In the United States, I must thank in particular Ron Atkinson and David William Cohen for their great generosity in sharing with me the transcripts of interviews conducted in Bugwere and Busoga in the 1960s and 1970s and for the warmth with which they welcomed me during my visits to Columbia and Ann Arbor. I am very grateful for Ron's enthusiasm for my project and generosity of spirit from its outset.

For their financial assistance I would also like to thank the Northwestern University Graduate School for a Presidential Fellowship, a Graduate Research Grant and a Research Year Fellowship, the Program of African Studies for a Morris Goodman award, a Hans Panofsky award, a Melville Herskovits Field Research award and a Jane Guyer and Akbar Virmani award and the Department of History for several Travel Grants.

My interest in African History was sparked in secondary school by Gunvant Govindjee. At the School of Oriental and African Studies my interest in both African History and African languages was fostered by Richard Haywood, Ridder Samsom, Lutz Marten, Zainab Yahya, Richard Rathbone, David Anderson and Wayne Dooling. Many others have encouraged and inspired me along the way, including Grace Carswell, Andrew Reid and Shane Doyle.

Most of all I thank Jarod Roll for his constant encouragement.

Trugarez & weebale nnyo!

For Menna and Janig

Table of Contents

Page

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter One

Introduction

In the second half of the first millennium people speaking proto-North Nyanza lived on the north-western shore of Lake Victoria-Nyanza. By the nineteenth century, their descendants spoke four different languages – Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga and Rushana – and inhabited a large swath of land from the western shores of the lake, along its northern fringe and inland all the way to the foothills of Mount Masaaba [see map in figure 2.3]. The North Nyanza region thus includes as range of ecologies from the undulating hills and swamps of Buganda and southern Busoga, through the drier plateaus of northern Busoga and Bugwere to the steep hillsides of Bushana.[1] The political landscape was also diverse. In the west sat the Ganda kingdom with its elaborate capital city based around the palaces of the king, the queen mother and the queen sister. Due north of Lake Victoria-Nyanza were a multitude of small Soga states, each with its own royal palace but all on a considerably smaller scale than those of Buganda. Across the Mpologoma River on the eastern fringes of Lake Kyoga were several small Gwere states that resembled those of Busoga. The Bashana appear to have focused their political organization along clan lines. This dissertation traces the history of people speaking North Nyanza languages from the late first millennium to the nineteenth century, but it does so through the lens of motherhood.

[1] The prefix *bu-* denotes place. Bushana is simply the place where people who speak Rushana and identify themselves as Bashana live. It is not a statement of an ethnically or linguistically homogenous place nor does it necessarily reflect any political reality.

Motherhood is an effective entrée into the social, cultural and political changes that characterized the North Nyanza region because as both institution and practice it lies at the heart of social reproduction. While the biological processes of pregnancy and childbirth and practices of nurture and sustenance allow reproduction to occur, the social reproduction of a community requires adherence to its moral logics. Thus, for example, people who spoke proto-North Nyanza followed patrilineal descent and reproduction – if it was to be socially recognized as legitimate – had to occur within marriage.[2] Motherhood, then, occurred within a bounded ideological space, although the form of that space never went unchallenged. By examining the boundaries of that ideological space – whether in the form of marital practices or clan-based taboos during pregnancy – and examining the challenges to those boundaries this dissertation uncovers a much broader history of North Nyanzan life.

North Nyanzan communities mobilised ideologies of motherhood in the ways that they organized themselves socially, in the ways in which they procured food for their households and beyond, and in the political formations they developed. Although speakers of proto-North Nyanza and its daughter languages followed patrilineal descent in clans and lineages, they also used motherhood to create kin networks which retained great importance to individuals throughout their lifetimes. Such networks reached well beyond the classic 'mother's son-sister's brother' relationship, although that at times and under specific conditions was particularly powerful. How did the maternal-kin networks change as the descendants of proto-North

[2] And yet, ideas about who should be a mother and when in her life that should occur affected biological aspects of maternity through social pressure to conform to the moral logics of her community. Lynn Thomas. as Lynn Thomas has discussed for colonial Meru, but which must have occurred widely through space and time, may have involved aborting a pregnancy that was not socially-sanctioned. Lynn M. Thomas, *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 33.

Nyanzans developed their societies under diverse conditions? What role did such networks play in the healthy social reproduction of communities in a northern borderland of the Bantu-speaking world?

Social reproduction also required the provision of nourishment to the household. People who spoke proto-North Nyanza farmed the land, the practice of agriculture in the Great Lakes region being well over a thousand years old at the time that they lived. And yet to describe them as farmers elides as much as it elucidates, for hunting and fishing and the gathering of wild foods and insects were also important. The literature on Buganda tends to focus on two aspects of food procurement: bananas and the gendered division of agricultural labour. This has led both to a rather narrow conceptualization of the work of feeding a family and to an emphasis on banana cultivation as an explanatory framework for cultural and political developments.[3] I move beyond this framework by asking, what was the role of motherhood in the organization and practice of food procurement? Answering this question allows me to see the changing cultural importance of bananas across the region, but also the role of other crops in ceremonies and rites associated with social reproduction. Starting from this perspective makes it possible to move beyond deterministic explanations of gendered labour couched in the relative difficulty and ease of particular activities to one that looks to the ideological constructs of North Nyanzans and their descendants.

---

[3] Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History*, trans. Scott Strauss (New York: Zone Books, 2003); Holly E. Hanson, *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003); Conrad P. Kottak, "Ecological Variables in the Origin and Evolution of African States: The Buganda Example," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 14, no. 3 (1972): 351-80; Henri Médard, *Le Royaume du Buganda au XIXe Siècle: Mutations Politiques et Religieuses d'un Ancien État d'Afrique de l'Est* (Paris: Karthala, 2007); Christopher C. Wrigley, "Bananas in Buganda," *Azania* 24 (1989): 64-70; idem, "Buganda: an Outline Economic History," *Economic History Review* 10, no. 1 (1957): 69-80; idem, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

By the time that proto-North Nyanza was spoken, royalty dominated the political landscape. The centralisation of power in royal families placed reproduction at the heart of the political charters of emergent states. For a royal family to maintain its hold on power it must successfully reproduce itself, otherwise there is no heir to take over the throne. In the kingdoms that emerged in the North Nyanza region from the late first millennium, queen mothers reigned alongside their sons. While this is by no means unique, it is not a universal feature of royalty either.[4] The history of North Nyanzan social organization and food procurement suggests that the role of motherhood in the emergence of states and the maintenance of political power grew out of broader conceptualizations of motherhood and social reproduction. By exploring the particular roles ideologies of motherhood played in range of polities that existed at various moments across the region, this dissertation shows how North Nyanzans developed different ideas about motherhood and politics in the face of new social, ecological and political realities.

An Institutional History of Motherhood

This dissertation is, then, a history of motherhood as a social institution in the North Nyanza-speaking region. There are two motivations for such an approach; motivations which remain in dialogue with one another. In order to move beyond our culturally constrained vision

[4] For queen mothers in other regions of Africa, see, Edna G. Bay, "Belief, Legitimacy and the Kpojito: An Institutional History of the 'Queen Mother' in Precolonial Dahomey," *Journal of African History* 36 (1995): 1-27; idem, *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics, and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998); Suzanne P. Blier, "The Path of the Leopard: Motherhood and Majesty in Early Danhomé," *Journal of African History* 36 (1995): 391-417; Sean Hanretta, "Women, Marginality and the Zulu State: Women's Institutions and Power in the Early Nineteenth Century," *Journal of African History* 39 (1998): 389-415; Flora E.S. Kaplan, ed., *Queens, Queen Mothers, Priestesses, and Power: Case Studies in African Gender* (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1997); Annie M. D. Lebeuf, "The Role of Women in the Political Organization of African Societies," in *Women of Tropical Africa*, ed. Denise. Paulme, trans. H. M. Wright (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 93-119.

of motherhood as "biological and invariant" and to view it instead as contingent and historical, we need to conceptualise motherhood as an institution.[5] In so doing it becomes possible to see the social, cultural and economic factors which impinge on motherhood and which make it culturally and historically specific rather than universal. Writing institutional history allows us to understand how particular institutions came to have the forms they did in different societies without resorting to a model of "a single automatic evolutionary process from 'simple' to 'complex'."[6] The speech communities descended from proto-North Nyanza covered, in the nineteenth century, a range of political formations from the clan-based leadership of the Bashana to the elaborate state structure of Buganda. And yet all four speech communities sprang from a common ancestor. Writing the history of this region through the institution of motherhood allows me to explore the social and ideological dynamics that resulted in this diverse situation in what is a relatively small geographical space.

In writing such a history, I take inspiration from a number of scholars who have written histories of African social institutions, such as gender, kinship, initiation and age-sets, that span several centuries. They have done so in the face of the methodological challenges that emerge from an absence of written sources from the period under study.[7] Their work demonstrates the

---

[5] Heather Jon Maroney, "Embracing Motherhood: New Feminist Theory," in *The Politics of Diversity: Feminism, Marxism and Nationalism*, ed. Roberta Hamilton and Michèle Barrett (London: Verso, 1986), 405.

[6] Jan Vansina, *How Societies Are Born: Governance in West Central Africa Before 1600* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 3. For a refutation of evolutionary claims about political development in Africa, see Susan Keech McIntosh, *Beyond Chiefdoms: Pathways to Political Complexity in Africa* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[7] Christine Choi Ahmed, "Before Eve was Eve: 2200 Years of Gendered History in East-Central Africa" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996); Christopher Ehret, *An African Classical Age: Eastern and Southern Africa in World History, 1000 B.C. to A.D. 400* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998); Catherine Cymone Fourshey, "Agriculture, Ecology, Kinship and Gender: A Social and Economic History of Tanzania's Corridor 500 BC to 1900 AD" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002); Rhonda Marie Gonzales, "Continuity and Change: Thought, Belief, and Practice in the History of the Ruvu Peoples of Central East

rich possibilities of such histories, in contrast to the assertions of R.R. Radcliffe-Brown over half a century ago, when he declared, "We cannot have a history of African institutions."[8] Their work also shows that none of these social institutions, motherhood included, existed (or exists today) in a vacuum – each of them shaped and was shaped by the others and by political, economic and ecological developments. Ultimately it is the way in which motherhood interacted with other aspects of North Nyanzan life that offers the most promising avenues of historical inquiry. My approach, thus, explicitly examines its place in broader networks of social relationships, the connections between mothers and various forms of food procurement and the role of ideologies of motherhood in state formation and the maintenance of political power.

In conceiving of motherhood as a social institution, I also understand it as composed of several parts. In this I build on other scholars who have broken the work of mothering into its various components.[9] My approach is somewhat different. I have developed a tripartite understanding of motherhood as social, ideological and biological. This allows me to focus on

---

Tanzania, c.200 B.C. to A.D. 1800" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002); David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, A Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EEAP; Oxford: James Currey, 1998); idem, "Gendered Histories between the Great Lakes: Varieties and Limits," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 29 (1996): 461-92; Jan Vansina, *Paths in the Rainforests: Toward A History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).

[8] "For European countries we can thus trace the development of social institutions over several centuries. For most African societies the records from which we can obtain authentic history are extremely scanty or in some instances entirely lacking except for a very few short periods of the immediate past. We cannot have a history of African institutions." Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown, "Introduction," in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1950), 1.

[9] Esther N. Goody, *Parenthood and Social Reproduction: Fostering and Occupational Roles in West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 8; Maroney, "Embracing Motherhood". Studies on fostering and adoption in West Africa have demonstrated the alienability of the work of raising a child and the value placed on the education of children by urban women. See, for example, Caroline Bledsoe, "'No Success without Struggle': Social Mobility and Hardship for Foster Children in Sierra Leone," *Man (N.S.)* 25, no. 1 (1990): 70-87; Mona Etienne, "The Case for Social Maternity: Adoption of Children by Urban Baule Woman," *Dialectical Anthropology* 4, no. 3 (1979): 237-242.

the work the institution of motherhood performed across society, rather than on the work of individual mothers. While it is useful to break down the social institution of motherhood into these three parts, they are not hermetic units but, rather, points in a web of practices and meanings that can only be understood in relation to one another. Furthermore, while it is possible to see all three aspects in North Nyanzan societies from the late first millennium to the nineteenth century, the balance between them has varied according to political and social factors.

Biological motherhood, perhaps, needs the least explanation referring as it does to women who conceived, gave birth to and raised their own children. There were limits on who could become a biological mother, however, as well as limits on when that might occur. In the Ganda state, for example, efforts were made to restrict the reproductive potential of princesses and some of the king's wives. Although some women could not achieve biological motherhood, there were other ways for them to become mothers.

On the most basic level, social motherhood refers to the possibility for women in the past to adopt or foster children from co-wives or other kin. It is, however, also about wider social conditions which shaped whose maternity was recognised. For Lusoga-speakers, for example, ideal forms of inheritance required the senior wife to have a son to inherit from his father. In both peasant and royal households, a senior wife who did not have a son adopted a son of a co-wife from her lineage to raise as her own.

Ideological aspects of motherhood move away from the realities of reproduction and are rather about the mobilisation of motherhood in social and political organisation. Kinship in North Nyanza followed patrilineal descent, but motherhood was also of great importance in the configuration of rights and duties through kin and clan networks. Ideologies of motherhood

were not just about controlling women, but also had powerful impacts on men and the activities they pursued. Taboos on contact with women by men engaged in specific forms of hunting and fishing were based on ideologies of motherhood and reproduction. Finally, the incorporation of ideologies of motherhood into state structures lay at the heart of political complexity in the region, as the importance of the queen mother makes clear. The particular ideology of motherhood mobilised in this manner changed most in Buganda as the state centralised and consolidated power. In this context, an ideology of motherhood based on biological reproduction came to dominate both in the political charter of the state and in commoner households across the kingdom.

Motherhood in the Academy

At a time when historians of Africa were predominantly interested in state histories, anthropologists were writing about motherhood as part of their broader studies of kinship and social structure.[10] In the intervening decades the bulk of studies on motherhood in Africa have been by anthropologists and have ranged from a focus on the relations of production and reproduction to the challenges infertility poses to individual women and their communities.[11]

[10] Edward E. Evans-Pritchard, *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1951); Meyer Fortes, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi: the Second Part of an Analysis of the Social Structure of a Trans-Volta Tribe* (London and New York: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1949); Lucy P. Mair, *African Marriage and Social Change* (London: Cass Library of African Law, 1969); Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage* (London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1950).

[11] The major contribution to the former is Claude Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), but see also Jack Goody, *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain* (Cambridge and New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1976). Feminist approaches to this question include the case studies in Sharon B. Stichter and Jane L. Parpart, ed., *Patriarchy and Class: African Women in the Home and the Workforce*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988). Some of the key studies on infertility are Janice Patricia Boddy, *Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men, and the Zār Cult in Northern Sudan* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); René Devisch,

Recently, however, Africanist historians have begun to take motherhood seriously as a category of historical study.[12] This development has coincided with a similar flowering of the history of motherhood in European studies and further afield.[13] Understanding motherhood as being affected by political and economic factors has been an important part of developing it as a subject worth studying in its own right.

One of the most important scholars of social reproduction in recent decades is Claude Meillassoux. The economy, in his analysis, determines the relations of reproduction. Meillassoux is primarily concerned with communities whose economic basis is largely one of subsistence. The "material, and more particularly, the nutritional needs" of the group are paramount in this circumstance. As a result, the "conditions for reproduction of the mother-child group and its reproductive capacity are subordinated to the nature of the productive cell of which

---

Weaving the Threads of Life: The Khita Gyn-Eco-Logical Healing Cult Among the Yaka (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg, *Plundered Kitchens, Empty Wombs: Threatened Reproduction and Identity in the Cameroon Grassfields* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Marcia C. Inhorn, *Quest for Conception: Gender, Infertility, and Egyptian Medical Traditions* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994); John M. Janzen, *Ngoma: Discourses of Healing in Central and Southern Africa*, Comparative Studies of Health Systems and Medical Care no. 34 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

[12] See for example, Jean Allman, "Making Mothers: Missionaries, Medical Offices and Women's Work in Colonial Asante, 1924-1945," *History Workshop Journal* 38 (1994): 23-47; Nancy R. Hunt, "'Le Bébé en Brousse': European Women, African Birth Spacing and Colonial Intervention in Breast Feeding in the Belgian Congo," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21 (1988): 401-432; idem, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1999); Schoenbrun, *Green Place*; Thomas, *Politics of the Womb*.

[13] See for example, Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Patricia Crawford, "The Construction and Experience of Maternity in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLaren*, ed. Dorothy McLaren and Valerie A. Fildes (London: Routledge, 1990), 3-39; Mary Dockray-Miller, *Motherhood and Mothering in Anglo-Saxon England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); Rivkah Harris, *Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia: The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000); John C. Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, ed., *Medieval Mothering* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996).

it is part."[14] In societies which subsist largely on hunting and gathering wild foods, people live in 'bands' with limited social adhesion. The lack of social control over the reproduction of the community reflects the mobility of people between groups. Procreation stems from sexual relationships, not from marriage. These relationships are fluid and the "children are adopted by members of the band as a whole and do not necessarily follow their genitor's movements."[15] In agricultural communities, the investment of labour in land "encourages the formation of permanent and indefinitely renewed social ties." Because agricultural production allows for accumulation of wealth which is transferred from one generation to the next, filiation becomes a concern.[16] Social controls in the form of marriage and residential rules become paramount as men seek to ensure their position as *pater* as well as *genitor*. Women, the essential element for reproduction, are circulated by male elders in a reciprocal manner, in order to ensure that there are enough people of reproductive age in each unit.[17] Elders must control women's and girls' movement as their power rests on the provision of reproductive women for junior males. Women are unable to "*acquire a status based on the relations of production*" and so their reproductive capacities are subordinated to men, "they are *dispossessed of their children*" and are unable "to create descent relations."[18] Meillassoux, thus, gives us a set of theoretical tools for studying the organization of reproduction; tools which I draw on in this dissertation. And yet there are two drawbacks to his approach. The first is that his theoretical toolbox is not

---

[14] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 13.

[15] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 16.

[16] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 23.

[17] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 44.

[18] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 77. Emphasis in original.

universally applicable, even within the African subsistence agriculture context. The second, and more important, is that his emphasis on the relations of production subsumes both reproduction and any possibility of female agency through motherhood.

An alternative approach which privileges reproduction is Nancy Hunt's micro-history of a Baptist missionary maternity clinic in which she highlights how ideas about reproduction and natality resonate throughout Congolese society and beyond.[19] Hunt has shown how colonial natalist policies designed to expand the workforce led to government campaigns to undermine breast-feeding and child-spacing by Congolese women.[20] In *A Colonial Lexicon* she explores the meanings local people gave to childbirth and its medicalization.[21] "Maternity wards" became a sign "of rising middle status in Belgian colonial Africa." This aspirational value accorded to medicalized childbirth is neatly summed up in a verbal jest common among the Congolese intelligentsia, "*Me*, I was born in a maternity ward. But, *you*, you were born in a hut."[22] The relations of production, then, contributed to the ways in which reproduction was practiced, but so did other factors such as age, gender and cultural practices.[23] Because she puts reproduction at the centre of her analysis, Hunt is able to show both the impact of these various factors on childbirth and how medicalized childbirth came to symbolize much larger social, economic and cultural processes. My approach, which places motherhood as the focus of study, shifts the

[19] Hunt, *Colonial Lexicon*.

[20] Hunt, "Le Bébé en Brousse."

[21] This is in contrast to her earlier work and to work on the medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth by other scholars, including Carol Summers, "Intimate Colonialism: The Imperial Production of Reproduction in Uganda, 1907-1925," *Signs* 16, no. 4 (1991): 787-807; Megan Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

[22] Hunt, Colonial Lexicon, 13.

[23] Hunt, Colonial Lexicon, 8.

emphasis away from a particular moment of reproduction to a more general conceptualization of it. In so doing, I view mothers as members of civil society and as political beings, even while recognizing that production systems may work to subordinate them.

The period from the time that proto-North Nyanza was spoken through to the nineteenth century was one which saw the rise (and fall) of several polities, from the dominant Ganda state of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the multiple micro-states in Busoga and Bugwere. By investigating the history of how North Nyanzan people themselves understood motherhood, we can begin to uncover how political power was shaped by men and women who mobilized reproductive labour and built states. General theories of state formation argue that independent peoples were forced to give up their sovereignty under one of three forms of coercion: military, ideological, or economic.[24] Peter Robertshaw, however, has recently argued that the mobilization of reproductive labour was key to the centralization of power in the Great Lakes region, but assumes that such mobilization was performed by men.[25] The importance of examining women's roles in the rise of states, rather than explanations of a purported universal

---

[24] Robert L. Carneiro, "A Theory of the Origin of the State," *Science* 169, no. 3947 (1970): 733-738; Aidan Southall, "The Segmentary State in Africa and Asia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30, no. 1 (1988): 52-82; Timothy Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

[25] Peter Robertshaw, "Women, Labor, and State Formation in Western Uganda," in *Complex Polities in the Ancient Tropical World*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus and Lisa J. Lucero, *Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association* 9, no. 1 (1999): 51-65. In this argument he draws on earlier Marxist and feminist scholarship which argues that control over social reproduction is central to state formation and itself leads to women's subjugation by state institutions. Frederick Engels, and Eleanor Burke Leacock, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State: In the Light of the Researches of Lewis H. Morgan*, trans. Alick West (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1972); Christine W. Gailey, *Kinship to Kingship: Gender Hierarchy and State Formation in the Tongan Islands* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); Eleanor Leacock, "Interpreting the Origins of Gender Inequality: Conceptual and Historical Problems," *Dialectical Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (1983): 263-284; Reyna Rapp, "Gender and Class: An Archaeology of Knowledge Concerning the Origin of the State," *Dialectical Anthropology* 2, no. 4 (1977): 309-316; Karen Sacks, *Sisters and Wives: The Past and Future of Sexual Equality* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979).

subjugation of women in states, has been asserted, yet remains understudied.[26] Studies of African states persuasively demonstrate the necessity of viewing women as actors in states.[27] However, it is studies on spirit mediumship in the Great Lakes region which have placed women as social and biological reproducers at the heart of political centralization.[28] Spirit mediums both worked to alleviate problems of infertility and mediums themselves became symbolic mothers. Emerging states in the Great Lakes regions, aware of the power wielded by spirit mediums, attempted, with varying success, to co-opt that power into the royal centres.

In North Nyanzan societies, mothers performed much of the work needed for political centralization through their enactment of social reproduction as the bearers of children and the procurers of nourishment. Beyond that, mothers were the loci of networks of social relationships that cut across lineages in contrast to intra-lineal networks formed through fathers. The linguistic evidence indicates that speakers of proto-North Nyanza viewed women as agents in their marriages and thus as active participants in the creation of such networks. It was only by

---

[26] Irene Silverblatt, "Women in States," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 17 (1988): 427-460.

[27] Sandra T. Barnes, "Gender and the Politics of Support and Protection in Precolonial West Africa," in *Queens, Queen Mothers, Priestesses, and Power: Case Studies in African Gender*, ed. Flora E.S. Kaplan (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1997), 1-18; Bay, "Belief, Legitimacy and the Kpojito"; idem, *Wives of the Leopard*; Blier, "The Path of the Leopard"; Hanretta, "Women, Marginality and the Zulu State"; Hanson, *Landed Obligation*; Lebeuf, "Role of Women"; Nakanyike B. Musisi, "Women, 'Elite Polygyny,' and Buganda State Formation," *Signs* 16, no. 4 (1991): 757-86; idem, "Transformations of Baganda Women from the Earliest Times to the Demise of the Kingdom in 1966" (Ph. D. diss., University of Toronto, 1992); Laurence D. Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 23 (1990): 455-73; Schoenbrun, "Gendered Histories,"; idem, *Green Place*; John K. Thornton, "Elite Women in the Kingdom of Kongo: Historical Perspectives on Women's Political Power," *Journal of African History* 47 (2006): 437-60.

[28] Iris Berger, "The *Kubandwa* Religious Complex of Interlacustrine East Africa: An Historical Study, c. 1500-1900" (Ph. D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1973); idem, "Fertility as Power: Spirit Mediums, Priestesses and the Pre-Colonial State in Interlacustrine East Africa," in *Revealing Prophets: Prophecy in Eastern African History*, ed. David M. Anderson and Douglas Johnson (London: James Curry, 1995), 65-82; Jim Freedman, *Nyabingi: The Social History of an African Divinity* (Tervuren: Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, 1984); Neil Kodesh, "Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Collective Well-Being in Buganda" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 2004); Renée L. Tantala, "The Early History of Kitara in Western Uganda: Process Models of Religious and Political Change" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1989), Schoenbrun, *Green Place*.

building on and exploiting these cross-lineal connections that ambitious men and their mothers were able to work to centralise political authority. In the multi-lingual context of South Kyogan societies, mothers were bridges between communities and it was the non-Luo mothers who gave political legitimacy to the rule of their Luo sons. For many North Nyanza women, then, access to power was mediated through relationships with men and for the overwhelming majority of women any authority would have been limited to the household and lineage. But women were not simply seeds in a political *mweso* (or *bao*) game played by men for they too had power and agency.

Chapter Outlines

Writing the history of motherhood over the *longue durée* in Uganda requires using sources beyond the traditional scope of historians. Those sources – historical linguistics and comparative ethnography – have formed the basis of a number of studies of Africa's deep past.[29] Chapter 2 sets out the methodological issues involved in generating and using linguistic evidence and the use of comparative ethnography and oral traditions. My classification of the North Nyanza languages both shows its integrity as a sub-group in the Great Lakes Bantu branch and shows that the emergence of the present-day languages was the result of three different

[29] Please see works listed in f.n. 7. Other works include Kathryn De Luna, "Beating Around the Bush: Wild Resource Use in Central African Political Culture, ca. 1000 B.C.E. to ca. 1900 C.E." (Ph.D. diss, Northwestern University, in preparation); Edda L. Fields, "Rice Farmers in the Rio Nunez Region: A Social History of Agricultural Technology and Identity in Coastal Guinea, ca. 2000 BCE to 1880 CE," (Ph.D. diss, University of Pennsylvania, 2001); Kairn A. Klieman, *"The Pygmies Were Our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Times to c. 1900 C.E.* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003); Marie Allen Macmaster, "Patterns of Interaction: A Comparative Ethnolinguistic Perspective on the Uele Region of Zaire ca. 500 B.C. to 1900 A.D." (Ph.D. diss, University of California, Los Angeles, 1988); Anita Marie Pfouts, "Economy and Society in Northern Namibia 500 BCE to 1800 CE: A Linguistic Approach (Ph.D. diss, University of California, Los Angeles, 2003); Vansina, *How Societies Are Born*.

divergences. By the turn of the first millennium, North Nyanza had given way to Luganda and South Kyoga. People speaking South Kyoga lived further east in the lands due north of Lake Victoria-Nyanza. As this speech community gradually settled lands further afield, it took gave way to Lusoga and East Kyoga. Less than five hundred years ago, people speaking East Kyoga lived to the east of the Mpologoma River. Probably as a result of political dislocation, this group split with some settling in the foothills of Mount Masaaba, speaking a dialect which became Rushana. The dialect of those who remained near Lake Kyoga became Lugwere.

Chapter 3 provides the reproductive context in which the themes of social organization, food procurement and political complexity played out. Speakers of proto-North Nyanza and their descendants faced a range of opportunities and challenges as they settled new lands, expanded their communities and gave political allegiance to different state players. Towards the beginning of the period, the need to build sustainable communities placed a premium on social motherhood. With the growing investment of wealth in banana plantations in Buganda, however, a different conceptualization of social reproduction that emphasised biological reproduction came to the fore. To the east, the growing diversity of the areas where speakers of South Kyoga and their descendants lived led to a renewed importance for social motherhood as a means to manage interactions between groups.

Chapter 4 examines the central role given to motherhood – social, biological and ideological – in social organization. The relationship between marriage and motherhood was key in North Nyanzan moral logic because the contract formed between lineages in marriage and through the birth of children within marriage created seriated networks throughout society. Speakers of proto-North Nyanza placed particular importance on women's acts of marriage and

on maintaining the relationships formed by her motherhood. Those relationships spread well beyond the 'mother's brother-sister's son' formula to include a mother's father and other kin. In Buganda, however, this was increasingly narrowed to the classic formula and a maternal uncle's rights in his sister's children came to predominate over his responsibilities to them. In Busoga, however, the multi-ethnic context which saw Luo-immigrants dominate the political scene of some states placed a greater premium on the relationship between a Luo son and his mother's Soga kin as a means of legitimating government.

The focus switches to food procurement in chapter 5 with an examination of agricultural developments and practices associated with hunting and fishing. Bananas have long been used as an explanatory framework for the gendered division of labour and for state formation and expansion in Buganda. The evidence for banana farming across North Nyanzan societies shows that significant innovation in this field occurred before the break up of proto-North Nyanza around the turn of the first millennium. In addition, this broader perspective demonstrates that banana cultivation cannot in itself explain either gendered work or the specific form of the Ganda state. By examining the role of a range of crops in ceremonies and rites associated with social reproduction and taboos on certain forms of hunting and fishing, another mode of analysis becomes apparent. In this, it is ideological understandings of reproduction which shape the relationship between gender and food procurement activities and which in turn feed into political centralization.

Chapter 6 examines how the mobilisation of motherhood in social organization and food procurement came together first in early North Nyanzan polities and then in the states of Buganda, Busoga and Bugwere. Kings inherited their positions from their patriliny, but the

political acumen of their mothers and support of maternal kin were crucial in the success of one contender over another. While the South Kyogan states had a royal clan, any ruler needed support from commoner clans in order to legitimate his reign. In this context, the connections formed through his mother were a key means of building broader support. Motherhood was an integral part of the political charter of the Ganda kingdom, manifest in the considerable power wielded by the queen mother. As the kingdom expanded competing factions attempted to redefine the ideological basis of the state and in so doing placed a growing emphasis on the biological reproduction of women in the royal households.

Chapter Two

Motherhood and the Sources:

Language, Ethnography and Oral Traditions

We do not have documents that tell us about the many and varied societies and cultures that lived in the region that is now Uganda in the millennium before the mid-nineteenth century. There are no diaries of ordinary people describing their quotidian lives, telling us about their experiences of maternity and mothering. Nor are there written constitutions explaining the purpose and meaning of having a queen mother to govern alongside her son. Uganda is not unique in this regard for mass literacy is everywhere a modern phenomenon and written constitutions are by no means universal and so the solutions we find to the absence of written sources should speak beyond the field of precolonial African history.[1] Those solutions involve collecting evidence from a diverse array of sources and carefully studying whether they speak to or against each other, and in either case, understanding what that means. The sources I draw on are historical linguistic reconstructions of words spoken by people in the past; the oral traditions and histories of Baganda, Basoga and Bagwere; and comparative ethnographic reconstructions using ethnographies from the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the next section of this chapter, I outline the methodologies that are used in the genetic classification of languages and how I developed my classification of the North Nyanza languages: Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga and Rushana. I then show how I use that classification to

[1] For a good overview of the various sources deployed by Africanist historians, see John E. Philips, *Writing African History* (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2006).

reconstruct historical vocabulary to the various stages in the history of North Nyanza. In the last two sections of the chapter I set out the ways in which I use ethnographic evidence and oral traditions to illuminate the reconstructed vocabulary and to make separate historical arguments of a shallower time depth. First, however, it is worth setting out the relationship of North Nyanza languages to other Bantu languages and ultimately to proto-Bantu. North Nyanza is a sub-group of West Nyanza which is in turn a sub-group of Great Lakes Bantu. Great Lakes Bantu is one of several 'children' of Kaskazi, one of two offspring of Mashariki Bantu[2] which is in turn descended from Savanna Bantu, a grandchild of proto-Bantu.[3]

Writing History from Words

Just as the words we speak today name and describe not only the physical world we inhabit, but also our spiritual and ideological worlds, so did the words spoken by those in the past. By reconstructing the vocabularies of now dead ancestors to languages spoken today, we can uncover the material, spiritual and ideological worlds the speakers of those languages inhabited. The first step in reconstructing such vocabularies is a genetic classification of the languages to establish a historical framework in which to place those words. Genetic classifications establish which languages are descended from the same proto-language, an explicitly historical relationship. As speakers of a language move apart in space and time, the

[2] Mashariki Bantu is also referred to as 'narrow Eastern Bantu' and, depending on the classification, simply as 'Eastern Bantu.' For further discussion on this matter, please see Christopher Ehret, "Bantu Expansions: Re-Envisioning a Central Problem of Early African History," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34 (2001): 5-41.

[3] Please note that this classification is from Ehret, "Bantu Expansions." There are competing interpretations of the data for proto-Bantu and its descendant language groups, however, the existence of an eastern branch is widely accepted.

versions of the language they speak diverge, initially into dialects and then into distinct languages. Those dialects and languages retain core lexical and grammatical features in common with the others that diverged from the same initial or proto-language. The new languages are the children of the proto-language, which in turn has its own parent and its own siblings. This means that there are also cousins and grandparents, to further develop the kinship metaphor. While this metaphor is helpful in understanding the genetic relationships between languages, a biological metaphor better reflects that when the proto-language gives way to its daughters it ceases to exist. Rhonda Gonzales, setting out the metaphor, writes, the "biological process of mitotic division provides an especially apt metaphor of how language divergence takes place. Just as the single mother cell divides leaving no visible parent and each daughter cell produced carries the genetic make-up of its parent," so a proto-language gives way to daughter languages "each of which retains many of the linguistic features of the ancestral language." On division, the 'mother cell' ceases to exist. "Similarly, the mother language evolves into its daughter languages and the proto-language no longer exists."[4] The major difference between the two processes is that "a proto-language can divide into not just two, but sometimes several daughter languages."[5] Cells, in contrast, can only divide into two daughters. It is also important to remember that languages are spoken by people and it is those speakers who initiate the break up of a language into dialects and then different languages by changing the words they speak and

[4] Rhonda M. Gonzales, "Continuity and Change: Thought, Belief, and Practice in the History of the Ruvu Peoples of Central East Tanzania, c.200 B.C. to A.D. 1800," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002), 27. Gonzales borrowed the metaphor from Christopher Ehret, *An African Classical Age: Eastern and Southern Africa in World History, 1000 B.C. to A.D. 400* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 24.

[5] Ehret, *African Classical Age*, 24.

the ways they pronounce those words. The agency of speech communities can get lost in the ways we write about the genetic relationships between languages.

There are two main tools used in the process of establishing the genetic heritage of languages: lexicostatistics and the comparative method. Lexicostatistics is based on the comparison of vocabulary across a set of languages in order to identify similarities. While any part of the lexis of a language can be used for lexicostatistics, there is a set of words (usually a maximum of 200) that are commonly used because they belong to parts of the vocabulary in all languages that are more resistant to change than others. This is known as 'core vocabulary'.[6] The lexical items that form 'core vocabulary' are selected precisely because they are not culturally specific[7] and so glosses of them are likely to be found in all languages. This contrasts with 'peripheral vocabulary' which forms the bulk of any language but is less likely to be universal. For example, Amerindian languages would not have a word for a lion or rhinoceros. Core vocabulary includes basic nouns, pronouns, numerals, basic adjectives and verbs.[8] It is not that core vocabulary never changes, but rather that it changes at a slower rate[9] because fewer of the forces driving change in vocabulary operate on these meanings precisely because of their

[6] The idea of 'core vocabulary' was first developed by Morris Swadesh in the early 1950s and has been further developed by several linguists and linguistically-minded historians since. For Swadesh's initial list please see "Lexico-Statistic Dating of Prehistoric Ethnic Contacts: With Special Reference to North American Indians and Eskimos," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 96, no. 4 (1952): 456-57. The list I used is the same as that used by David Lee Schoenbrun which he reproduces in *The Historical Reconstruction of Great Lakes Bantu Cultural Vocabulary: Etymologies and Distributions* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1997), 266-313.

[7] Developing a 'culturally universal' list, however, has proved a more difficult task that Swadesh initially envisaged. Early versions of 'core vocabulary' included items such as 'snow' and 'sea (ocean)' which do not occur in several Bantu, and other, languages for climatic and geographic reasons. See, Swadesh, "Lexico-Statistic Dating," 456-57.

[8] Please see appendix 1 for the Core Vocabulary list I used in this study.

[9] For an example of this from the English languages please see Terry Crowley, *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 172.

universality. The items that constitute the list of core vocabulary have been chosen by noticing what meanings are retained across languages.

After collecting this core vocabulary for all of the languages under study as well as for some neighbouring and outlying ones for verification purposes the word lists are then compared for regular sound correspondences in order to establish cognates. Cognates are words with similar meanings in different languages that are derived from a common source, even if they now look dissimilar. For example, table 2.1 lists the word for 'ashes' in some West Nyanza

Table 2.1: The word 'ashes' in some West Nyanza languages.

Soga	*eivu*
Ganda	*evvu*
Kiga	*eizu*
Zinza	*amaβu* (pl.)
Nyambo	*iju*
Haya	*ijwi*

languages. We can see that they look quite different from each other, but using rules of regular sound changes we can ascertain that they are in fact all descended from one original form, which David Schoenbrun has reconstructed as the proto-Great Lakes Bantu word *-*jIbU*.[10] This exercise is repeated for all 100 words in the list of core vocabulary.

Once we have established which words in the core vocabulary list are cognate and which are not, we count how many words are cognate between each pair of languages. If two languages have a number of cognates, the simplest explanation is that they are descended from the same language and the higher the number the closer to the present the parent language must have existed. This is because the cognates represent the vocabulary used by people who spoke the parent of the languages compared. Common descent from one parent language is the most

[10] David Lee Schoenbrun, "Great Lakes Bantu: Classification and Settlement Chronology," *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* 15 (1994): 133.

efficient explanation for high rates of cognation because independent innovation of similar words by different languages and the borrowing of large numbers of core vocabulary items are rare occurrences. By looking at the cognation rates we can see the degrees of relationship between languages with the higher rates reflecting a more recent divergence and lower rates reflecting an older split. Once it has been established that a group of languages are related we establish sub-groups by looking at ranges of cognation: the higher the ranges the closer the level of relation between the languages, the lower the ranges the more distant the level of relation.

Lexicostatistics allows us to develop a first stage classification of the languages under study. However, there are two main reasons why it is necessary to complement the evidence produced from lexicostatistics with further evidence using the comparative method. The first reason is that linguists agree that a genetic classification based on lexicostatistics alone is less reliable that one that includes evidence from a wider range of data, both in terms of the vocabulary considered and beyond the lexicon into grammatical and phonological features.[11] The second reason is that the evidence from lexicostatistics does not always provide us with data which are sufficiently unequivocal to confidently establish sub-groups. In the current study, this was most powerfully the case for the smaller sub-groups that existed closer to the present-day than the larger groups from which they are descended. As we shall see below, once evidence from the comparative method is introduced those divisions become much easier to establish.

---

[11] For a clear statement on this by two important linguists working on Bantu languages, see Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson, "Towards a Historical Classification of the Bantu Languages," in *The Bantu Languages*, ed. Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson (London: Routledge, 2003): 166. For an overview of the methods used in language classification, including a discussion of the shortcomings of lexicostatistics, see Derek Nurse, "The Contributions of Linguistics to the Study of History in Africa" *Journal of African History* 38 (1997): 359-91. For a concise, yet thoughtful, overview of the reasons underlying different approaches to the classification of languages between linguists and historians, see Kairn Klieman, "Comments on Ehret, 'Bantu Expansions'," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34 (2001): 48-52.

The comparative method involves looking at various features – phonological, lexical, and morphological – in the languages under study and establishing which are shared and which are innovations. Comparative linguists often focus on phonological (or sound) changes and correspondences between languages. This involves finding regular sound correspondences between the languages and using those correspondences to establish which words are cognate across a substantially broader vocabulary than for lexicostatistics. Looking again at the ashes example in table 2.1 we can see that Soga and Ganda have a /v/ where Haya and Nyambo have a /j/. Having determined that this is a possible phonological correspondence we then both look for further examples of the same correspondence between the languages and check for counter-examples so that we can be sure of the exact context of the correspondence. In this example, we know from Schoenbrun's work that the underlying form from which these other forms, or reflexes, derive from is **-jIbU*. We also know from work by other linguists that the consonant shift from /b/ to /v/ or from /b/ to /j/ is conditioned by the qualities of the vowel which follows it.[12] By doing this for many different words to verify each sound change or correspondence and to build up a critical mass of evidence of phonological correspondences and changes it is possible to classify languages according to that evidence. Using the same example again, we see that Soga and Ganda share a phonological feature and Haya and Nyambo share one, too. These features allow us to tentatively group them accordingly. Furthermore, we can see that all the glosses of 'ashes' in this example are cognate, so while we can see a closer correspondence

[12] Proto-Bantu had seven vowels - a, e, i, I, o, u, U - where i represents a high mid-close (or lax) front vowel, I represents a high close front vowel, u represents a high mid-close (or lax) back vowel, and U represents a high close back vowel. These contrasting pairs of front and back vowels affect the consonants next to which they appear. For further discussion of this please see Derek Nurse, *Classification of the Chaga Dialects: Language and History of Kilimanjaro, the Taita Hills, and the Pare Mountains* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1979), 91-93.

between Soga and Ganda and between Haya and Nyambo, all four languages must be related at a higher, or older, level.

Lexical innovations are another feature we look at when using the comparative method. If a word is cognate among a group of languages but is not found anywhere outside of that group then the simplest explanation is that they inherited it from a single parent language. For example, proto-West Nyanza speakers innovated a new word with the meaning 'good,' *-luungi*, from an older verb with the meaning 'to be straight' or 'to put straight'.[13] This word is not found in languages outside of West Nyanza and so we can be quite confident that it was innovated in proto-West Nyanza.[14] (Of course, this confidence is mitigated by the problematic nature of proving a negative, especially considering the number of languages involved and the lack of comprehensive documentation for several of them.) Some innovations such as this are derived from pre-existing verbs or other words in the language while others are borrowed and adapted from neighbouring languages. As with the phonological correspondences, it is important have a critical mass of evidence that all points in the same direction for the classification to be reliable.

[13] Schoenbrun, "Great Lakes Bantu," 146.

[14] The only exception being Otetela which is spoken in the South-western part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Otetela, while a Bantu language, is not closely related to the West Nyanza languages. The occurrence of *-luungi* in Otetela and West Nyanza must be either independent innovation or is evidence of intercommunication between the two areas. This one example does not indicate a close relationship between the languages. Schoenbrun, "Great Lakes Bantu," 146.

North Nyanza and its Place in Great Lakes Bantu

The classification of Great Lakes Bantu[15] has been ongoing for over a century,[16] using various methods of classification, from lexicostatistics to comparative morphology, and using varying numbers of the Bantu languages spoken in the region.[17] While some criticisms have been levelled at Schoenbrun's classification (most notably that the western boundaries of the sub-group were not sufficiently tested and that the classification relies on lexicostatistics and lexical innovations to the exclusion of non-lexical morphological innovations),[18] it is the most comprehensive classification available. As such it is the framework that I use for the subclassification of North Nyanza. It is worth noting, furthermore, that the place of North

[15] This sub-group of languages is variously referred to in the literature as 'Zone J', 'Group 9', Lacustrine and Interlacustrine, for the purposes of clarity, however, I will use Schoenbrun's 'Great Lakes Bantu' throughout. His adoption of the term 'Great Lakes Bantu' follows "the spirit of the conference on the 'ancient civilisation of the people of the Great Lakes' where 'Great Lakes' or 'Grands Lacs' was substituted for 'Interlacustrine'." David Lee Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat: Ancient Agriculture Between the Great Lakes" *Journal of African History* 34 (1993): 5.

[16] Starting with Harry H. Johnston, *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919).

[17] Among which are: Yvonne Bastin, André Coupez and Bernard de Halleux, "Classification Lexicostatistique des Langues Bantoues (214 Relevés)," *Bulletin des Séances du Académie Royale du Sciences d'Outre-Mer* 27, no. 2 (1981): 173-199; Christopher Ehret and others, "Lacustrine History and Linguistic Evidence: Preliminary Conclusions" (University of California, Los Angeles, n.p., 1973); Derek Nurse, "Towards a Historical Classification of East African Bantu Languages," in *Bantu Historical Linguistics: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*, ed. Jean-Marie Hombert and Larry M. Hyman (Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 1999), 1-41; Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson, "The Bantu Languages of East Africa: A Lexicostatistical Survey," in *Language in Tanzania*, ed. Edgar C. Polomé and C.P. Hill (London and New York: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1980), 26-67; idem, "Historical Implications of the Language Map of East Africa," in *L'Expansion Bantoue: Actes du Colloque International du CNRS, Viviers, France, 4-16 Avril 1977*, ed. Larry M. Hyman, Jan Voorhoeve and Luc Bouquiaux (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1980), 685-714; David Lee Schoenbrun, "Early History in Eastern Africa's Great Lakes Region: Linguistic, Ecological, and Archaeological Approaches. ca. 500 B.C. to ca. A.D. 1000," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1990); the classification in the previous is summarised in: idem, "Great Lakes Bantu," 91-152. For North Nyanza (though with a focus on Lusoga and Luganda) the most important work is Martin J. Mould, "Comparative Grammar Reconstruction and Language Subclassification: The North Victorian Bantu Languages" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1976) and on Greater Luhyia: idem, "Greater Luyia," in *Studies in the Classification of Eastern Bantu Languages*, ed. Thomas H. Hinnebusch, Derek Nurse and Martin J. Mould (Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 1981), 181-256.

[18] Nurse, "Classification of East African Bantu Languages," 8-9.

Nyanza within Great Lakes Bantu is not questioned by any of the critiques of Schoenbrun and is further demonstrated by other classifications such as Ehret, Mould, and Nurse and Philippson.[19] North Nyanza's geographic and genetic location within Great Lakes Bantu means that the most important intra-group relations it has are with Rutara and Luhyia. I will discuss the relationship with these sub-groups as well as the subclassification of North Nyanza itself, in greater detail below. First, however, I outline Schoenbrun's Great Lakes Bantu classification.

Great Lakes Bantu consists of five sub-groups: Greater Luhyia, West Nyanza, Western Lakes, RuGungu and East Nyanza as can be seen in the outline classification in figure 2.1. North Nyanza together with Rutara form West Nyanza and this genetic 'sister' relationship is why Rutara is important for the historical reconstruction of North Nyanza vocabulary. To the east the languages of North Nyanza border on the languages of Central Luhyia (see diagram in figure 2.2 and map in figure 2.3) and so Greater Luhyia is important for the historical reconstruction of North Nyanza vocabulary because of the high possibility of areal forms moving across the two groups. In addition to this contact between Central Luhyia and North Nyanza, contacts with various Nilo-Saharan and Central Sudanic groups over the past two millennia has resulted in a significant amount of transferred vocabulary in Great Lakes Bantu in general and in North Nyanza in particular.

[19] Ehret and others, "Lacustrine History,"; Mould, "Greater Luyia,"; Nurse and Philippson, "Bantu Languages of East Africa."

Figure 2.1. Schoenbrun's classification of Great Lakes Bantu[20]

I. **Luhyia** (55%)*
- A. Central Luhyia (67%)
  - 1. North Luhyia (80%)
    - a. South Masaaßa
    - b. Dadiri
  - 2. Nyole
  - 3. Saamya
- B. Southern Luhyia
  - 1. iTakho

II. **West Nyanza** (60%)
- A. North Nyanza (68%)
  - 1. Soga
  - 2. Gwere
  - 3. Ganda
  - 4. Syan (Shana)
- B. Rutara (76%)
  - 1. North Rutara (85%)
    - a. Nyoro-Tooro
    - b. Nkore-Kiga
  - 2. Kereße
  - 3. Zinza
  - 4. South Rutara (90%)
    - a. Haya
    - b. Nyambo

III. **Western Lakes** (58%)
- A. Rwenzori (80%)
  - 1. Koonzo
  - 2. Nande
- B. Kivu (63%)
  - 1. Forest (66%)
    - a. Tembo
    - b. Shi
    - c. Huunde
    - d. Haavu
    - e. Fuliiru-Viira (90%)
      - i. Fuliiru
      - ii. Viira
  - 2. West Highlands (78%)
    - a. Rwanda
    - b. Rundi
    - c. Ha
    - d. Haangaza
    - e. Shuußi
    - f. Vinza
- C. Bwari

IV. **Gungu**

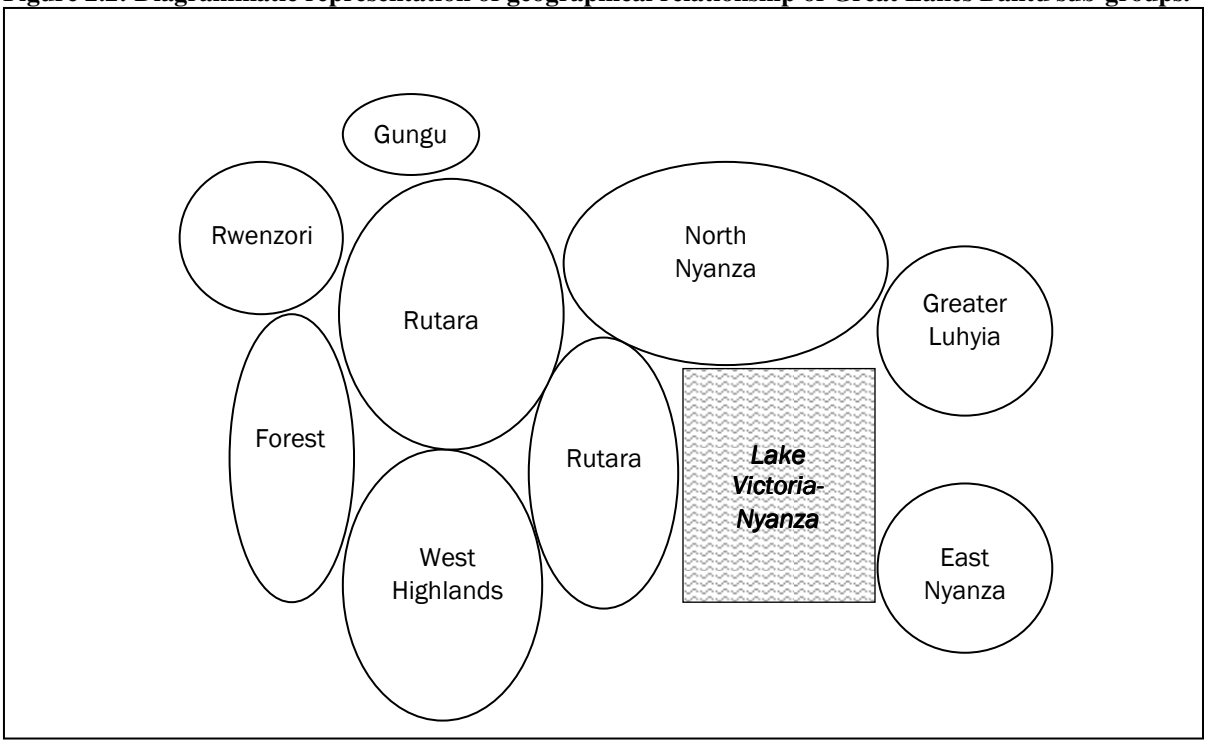
V. **East Nyanza** (60%)
- A. Suguti (85%)
  - 1. Jiita
  - 2. Ruri
  - 3. Regi
  - 4. Kwaya
- B. Mara (68%)
  - 1. South Mara (81%)
    - a. Zanaki
    - b. Ngoreme
    - c. Nata
    - d. Shashi
    - e. Zu
  - 2. North Mara (75%)
    - a. Gusii
    - b. Kuria
    - c. Simbete

Key:
Nyole indicates languages spoken today
Luhyia indicates sub-group of Great Lakes Bantu

*Percentages in parentheses are of shared cognates within each group or sub-group and thus reflect the degree of relationship between the languages.

[20] Schoenbrun, "Great Lakes Bantu," 93-95. See this also for a discussion of the relationship between Schoenbrun's classification and earlier classifications of Great Lakes Bantu.

Figure 2.2: Diagrammatic representation of geographical relationship of Great Lakes Bantu sub-groups.



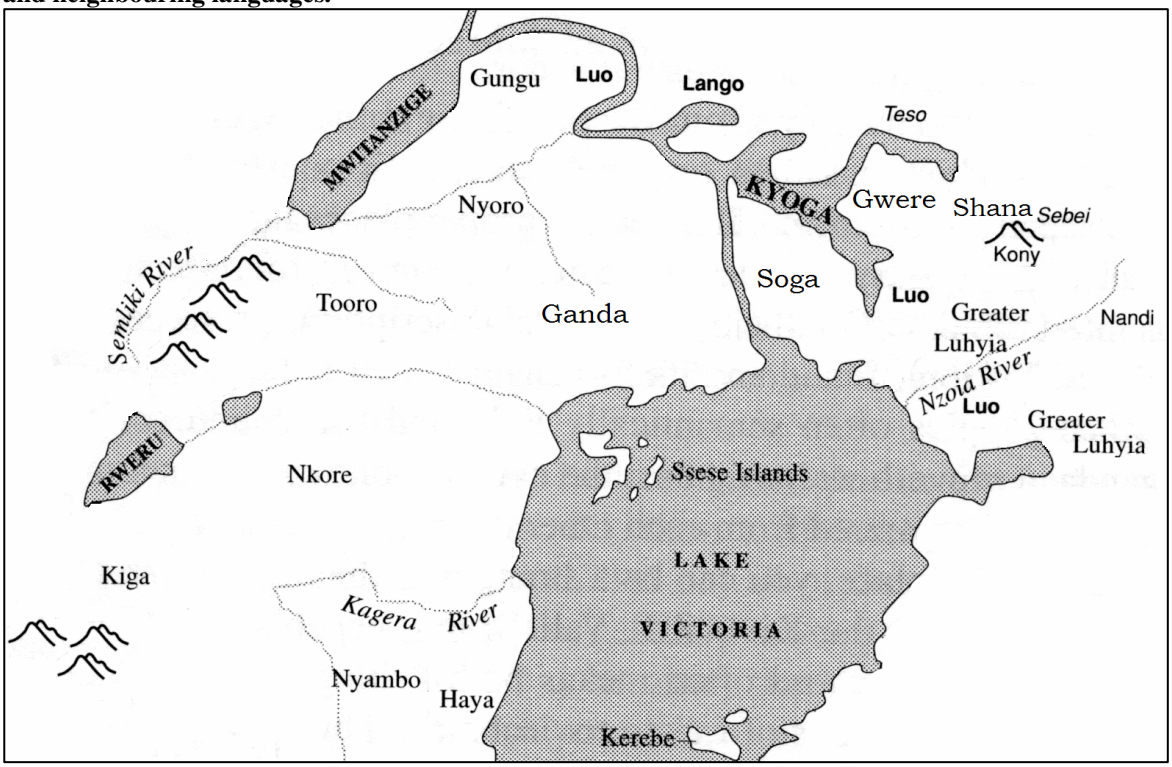
The Sub-Classification of North Nyanza

The first step I took towards my own sub-classification of North Nyanza was to look at the possible existence of dialects within North Nyanza languages and whether this impacts our understanding of North Nyanza as consisting of four languages, namely Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana[21] and Luganda. The issue of dialects is really only relevant to Lugwere and Lusoga. Luganda used to have several different dialects, however, in 1947 a standard version of Luganda

[21] Rushana is known in the existing literature as Orusyan. It was first documented by George W.B. Huntingford in the 1920s and had not been studied since, although his data were only published in the 1960s. Due to the small number of speakers in the 1920s and the fact that later investigators were unable to locate them, it was assumed that the language had died out (see George W. B. Huntingford, "The Orusyan Language of Uganda," *Journal of African Languages* 4 (1965): 145-169). I was able to locate the speech community and collect data for the language. Speakers of the language refer to it as Rushana and to themselves as Bashana and I use these labels in referring to them. They are referred to as Bumatyek or Bumachek by KupSabiny speakers and as Bakama by speakers of Lumasaaba.

was introduced and today these distinctions have died out. [22] There is no mention of dialects in Huntingford's work on Rushana[23] and none of my informants were aware of dialects in Rushana.

Figure 2.3: Map showing Luganda, Lusoga, Lugwere and Rushana with reference to Lake Victoria-Nyanza and neighbouring languages.[24]



For Lugwere, the dialect situation was unclear. Some of my informants claimed that there were two dialects – but the alternative dialect they would name was Lukenyi which is spoken by a group of people who are specialised in fishing and who live along the shores of Lake Kyoga in both Bugwere and Busoga. Not much research has been conducted with the Bakenyi

[22] Catherine (Kasolina) Nakibuuka Matovu, "A Synchronic Description of Lusoga in Terms of its Relatedness to Luganda." (Ph.D. diss., Makerere University, Kampala, 1992), 39-40. The disappearance of dialects in Luganda was further confirmed by Neil Kodesh during fieldwork in Buganda, 2001-2. Personal communication.

[23] Huntingford, "Orusyan."

[24] Adapted from David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, A Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Oxford: James Currey, 1998), 23.

and it is not clear what the level of linguistic homogeneity is among them. The wordlist I collected for Lukenyi was from the Bugwere side of Lake Kyoga but still clearly indicated that it is a distinct language rather than a dialect of Lugwere.[25] Other of my informants on Lugwere stated that there was dialectal variation within Lugwere with some people speaking 'pure Lugwere' in the south and eastern parts of Bugwere and others speaking 'Lugwere Lumiza' to the north and west which my informants claimed was Lugwere 'mixed' with Ateso, a Nilo-Saharan language bordering Lugwere to the north.

From the outset it was apparent that there are a number of dialects of Lusoga. Each of the precolonial states in Busoga has a variety of Lusoga named after it, for example people in Bugabula speak Lugabula, with up to eleven varieties.[26] However, Kasolina Matovu was unable to identify phonological, lexical or morphosyntactic features that distinguished between these varieties. She notes that all varieties of Lusoga with the clear exceptions of Lulamoogi and Lusiki and, to a lesser extent, Lukooli are essentially the same, in linguistic terms, with only minor differences, despite the political and social weight given to the locally perceived distinctions.[27] There is a standardised version of Lusoga recently developed by the Lusoga Languages Authority in association with the Catholic Cultural Research Centre and which draws on the dialects other than Lulamoogi and Lusiki. Despite the introduction of standard Lusoga my informants were very much aware of the existence of different dialects. Their awareness

[25] Further research on the Bakenyi would be of significant linguistic and historical interest, as well as elucidating the level of linguistic and cultural homogeneity or heterogeneity among them.

[26] Matovu, "Synchronic Description of Lusoga," 14. Those eleven are: Lugabula, Ludiope, Lunholo, Lukigulu, Lulamoogi, Lusiki, Lukooli, Lugweri, Lutembe, Luuka and Lukhonno.

[27] Matovu, "Synchronic Description of Lusoga," 14.

followed Matovu's analysis that Lulamoogi and Lusiki were distinct whereas the remaining varieties were all referred to as either 'Lusoga' or 'Lutenga'.

During my fieldwork I collected nine 100-wordlists for Lugwere covering every county in what is considered Bugwere, namely Pallisa, Butebo, Kibuku and Budaka. I also collected four 100-wordlists for varieties of Lusoga, namely Lugabula, Lukigulu, Lulamoogi and Lusiki.[28] The burden of labour involved in collecting these wordlists fell largely on my informants. Each of them is fluent in English in addition to their mother tongues. In order to elicit the data, I stated a word from the list in English and my informant told me the word in his or her language. In order to ensure I transcribed the word accurately, I asked my informants to repeat each word, often several times. Anyone who speaks two or more languages will appreciate just how difficult it can be to recall words on the spot. This work was all the more difficult for the very patient and long-suffering informants who took the time to work with me on the long lists of cultural vocabulary, work which took several days for each language.

My cognate count for all the 100 wordlists together with the lists for Rushana and Luganda gave me a clear indication of the situation for both Lugwere and Lusoga. The cognate percentages for the Lugwere wordlists are in table 2.2 below. There is no significant dialectal variation in Lugwere. The cognate range for the Lugwere wordlists with each other was 90-99% and the group average was 94%. This clearly shows that any variation is idiolectal (i.e. individual speakers' particular quirks) rather than dialectal. This is further confirmed by the geographical pattern of variation which did not give any real indication of clumping of differences according to location, and particularly not according to the north-south narrative I

[28] Please see appendix 1 for these 100-wordlists.

Table 2.2: Cognate percentages for Lugwere wordlists

A								
99	B							
93	99	C						
94	97	98	D					
92	94	94	98	E				
94	97	94	97	97	F			
93	95	92	94	93	97	G		
94	96	91	93	93	91	95	H	
92	94	90	90	92	92	90	95	I

Letters refer to the village in which the list was collected. A-Bulangira 1; B-Budaka; C-Kaderuna; D-Kamonkoli; E-Iki-Iki; F-Lyama; G-Bulangira 2; H- Kakolo; I-Kasodo.

had been given by some of my informants.

In Lusoga, however, the lexicostatistical data confirmed the existence of dialects. The overall range of cognation was 86-96%. However, the 96% cognation was between Lugabula and Lukigulu, which had already been shown by Matovu to have minimal differences. I then averaged the cognate percentages of Lukigulu and Lugabula (which share the highest percentage of retentions) with the remaining two varieties, a method known as 'group averaging'.[29] This gives the results seen in table 2.2 where the cognate range is 88-91% with a cognate average of 90%. While this does show dialectal difference, it is well within the parameters for dialects

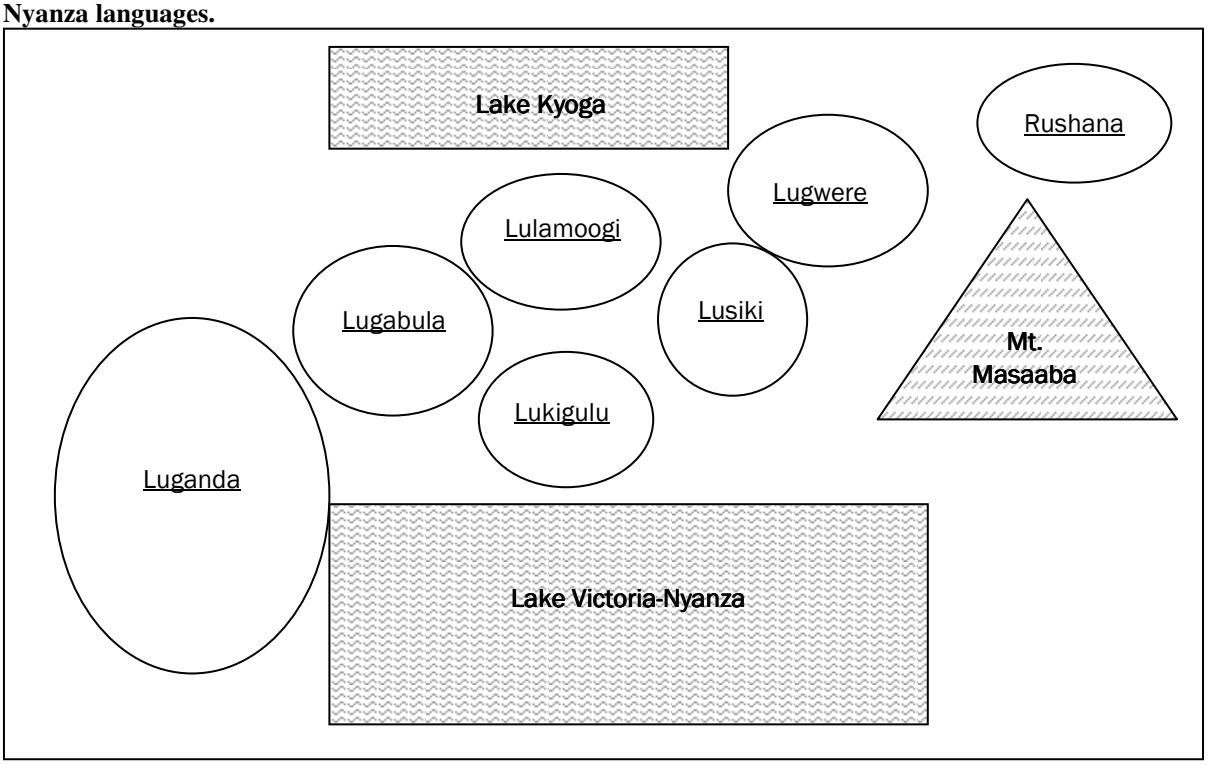
Table 2.3: Cognate percentages for Lusoga dialects

Lusiki		
90	Lulamoogi	
88	91	'Lusoga'

rather than indicating separate languages. The cognate rates for the dialects of Lusoga are higher with each other than they are with Lugwere, Luganda or Rushana. Lusiki which is geographically closest to Lugwere does, though, have the highest cognation rate of any of the dialects with Lugwere. Lugabula, which is geographically closest to Luganda, has the

[29] Please see Schoenbrun, "Early History," 114-5 for a detailed explanation of the history of this method and its application to Bantu languages.

Figure 2.4: Diagrammatic representation of geographical relationship of Lusoga dialects with other North Nyanza languages.



highest cognation rate with Luganda of all four dialects (see figure 2.4). This pattern suggests that Lusoga has dialect chaining, that is that the dialects form a continuum from one end of Busoga to the other with the dialects at either end showing some influence from the neighbouring languages.

Having determined the dialect situation in North Nyanza, I used lexicostatistics to confirm the boundaries of North Nyanza with both Rutara and Greater Luhyia. I did this by using Schoenbrun's 100-wordlists for the two groups[30] and my own data for Lusoga, Lugwere, Rushana and Luganda. My results closely mirrored those of Schoenbrun[31] set out in figure 2.1

[30] These can be found in Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 265-313.

[31] The full results of Schoenbrun's analysis for Great Lakes Bantu, including North Nyanza, Rutara and Greater Luhyia can be seen in "Great Lakes Bantu," 94-95 (figure 2. Lexicostatistical Chart).

above.[32] This reconfirmed the classifications of both Schoenbrun and Mould[33] showing North Nyanza as a sister sub-group to Rutara and clearly distinct from Greater Luhyia. With all these steps in hand, I took a closer look at North Nyanza itself.

Of the nine 100-wordlists I collected for Lugwere, I selected as representative the one with the highest cognate percentages with all the other wordlists. This wordlist was collected in an area that does not border Busoga, minimising the chance of cross-border 'interference'. For Lusoga I selected the wordlist for Lulamoogi because it has the highest cognate percentages with the other dialects and is also immediately bordering on neither Bugwere or on Buganda. The results from the lexicostatistical analysis can be seen in table 2.4. The first thing to note from

Table 2.4: Cognate percentages for North Nyanza

Luganda			
73%	Lusoga		
69%	80%	Lugwere	
61%	71%	81%	Rushana

these figures is that a straight four-way split of North Nyanza is unlikely. Luganda has significantly lower cognate percentages with rest of the group, indicating that the first split yielded Luganda and proto-South Kyoga. This leaves us with three scenarios outlined in figures 2.5-2.7. The first possibility is that South Kyoga had a simple three-way split into Lusoga, Lugwere and Rushana (figure 2.5). This is not, however, likely because the cognate percentage for Lusoga and Rushana is ten points below that for either language with Lugwere.

[32] Please see appendix 1 for my results.

[33] Mould, "North Victorian Bantu Languages,"; idem, "Greater Luyia," 181-256.

Figure 2.5: Options for the sub-classification of North Nyanza - 1

North Nyanza
1. Proto-Luganda
2. South Kyoga
   A. Lusoga
   B. Lugwere
   C. Rushana

We are then left with the two remaining options: that South Kyoga split in two with either Lusoga (figure 2.6) or Rushana diverging first (figure 2.7).

Figure 2.6: Options for the sub-classification of North Nyanza – 2

North Nyanza
1. Proto-Luganda
2. South Kyoga
   A. Proto-Rushana
   B. Soga-Gwere
      i. Lusoga
      ii. Lugwere

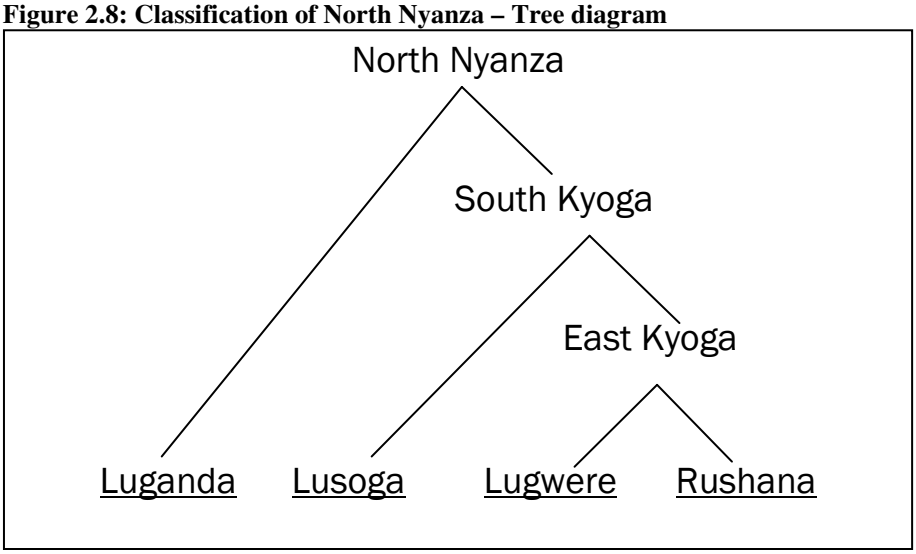
Figure 2.7: Options for the sub-classification of North Nyanza – 3

North Nyanza
1. Proto-Luganda
2. South Kyoga
   A. Proto-Lusoga
   B. East Kyoga
      i. Lugwere
      ii. Rushana

The lexicostatistic data do not give us a clear indication of which of the two possibilities reflects the reality of the historical situation because there is only one percentage point difference in the cognation rates between Lusoga and Lugwere and between Lugwere and Rushana. It thus became essential to look at evidence from the comparative method. In this case I focused on phonological and lexical evidence – identifying innovations in the sub-groups of North

Nyanza.[34] Using the comparative method, I was able to confirm the validity of North Nyanza and of South Kyoga. All of the evidence for the break up for South Kyoga pointed in the direction of Lusoga diverging first, leaving what I am terming proto-East Kyoga, which in turn diverged into Lugwere and Rushana, as is laid out in figure 2.7 above. A family tree diagram for North Nyanza showing the two intermediary stages can be seen in figure 2.8.

Figure 2.8: Classification of North Nyanza – Tree diagram



Another way to represent the series of splits that occurred from the time West Nyanza (North Nyanza's parent) was spoken to the emergence of the four languages spoken today is through Venn diagrams. These are particularly useful in creating a visual representation of not only the break up of language groups but also of the ongoing connections between the daughter languages which leads to the emergence of areal forms in the vocabulary. Figures 2.9-2.12 illustrate the sequence of events which occurred in the divergence of North Nyanza into Lugwere, Rushana, Lusoga and Luganda starting from the emergence of North Nyanza from its parent.

[34] See appendix 2 for the evidence. Once I have collected more data on Rushana, I hope to add morphosyntactic evidence to test this classification.

Figure 2.9: Representation of proto-West Nyanza divergence and contact

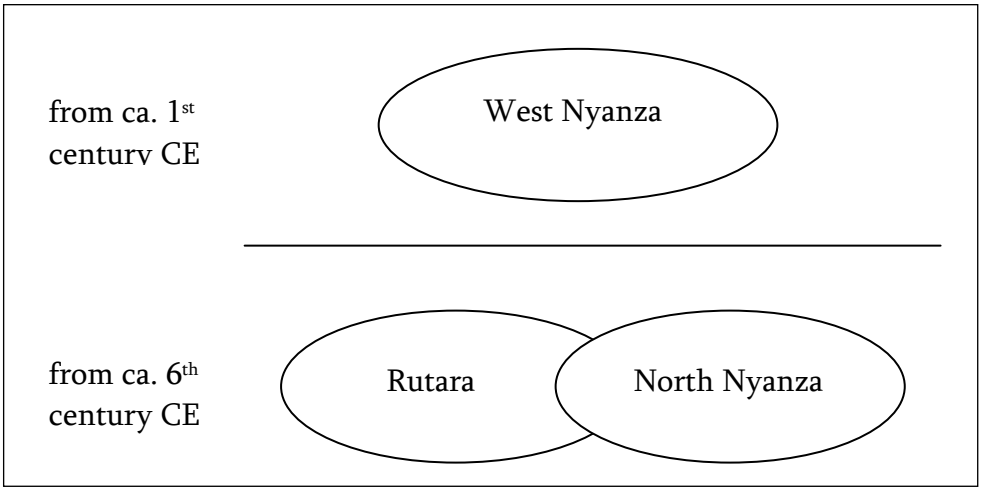


Figure 2.10: Representation of proto-North Nyanza divergence and contact

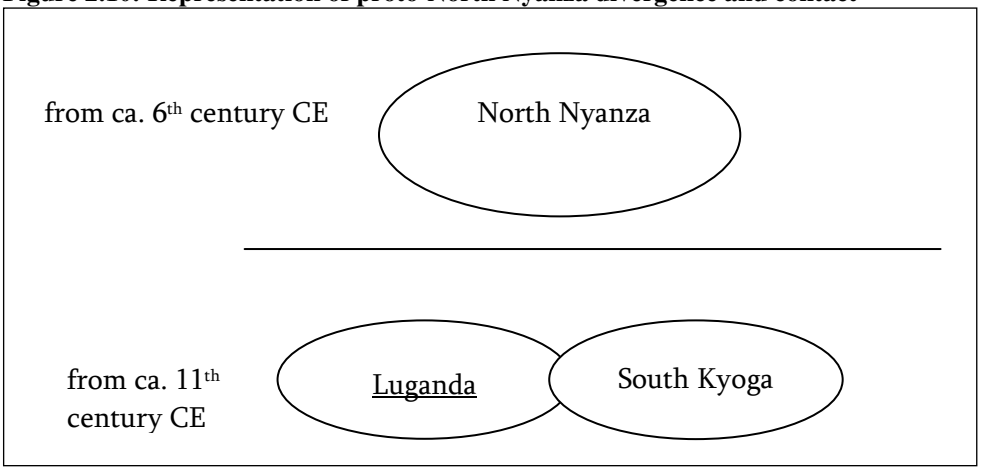


Figure 2.11: Representation of proto-South Kyoga divergence and contact

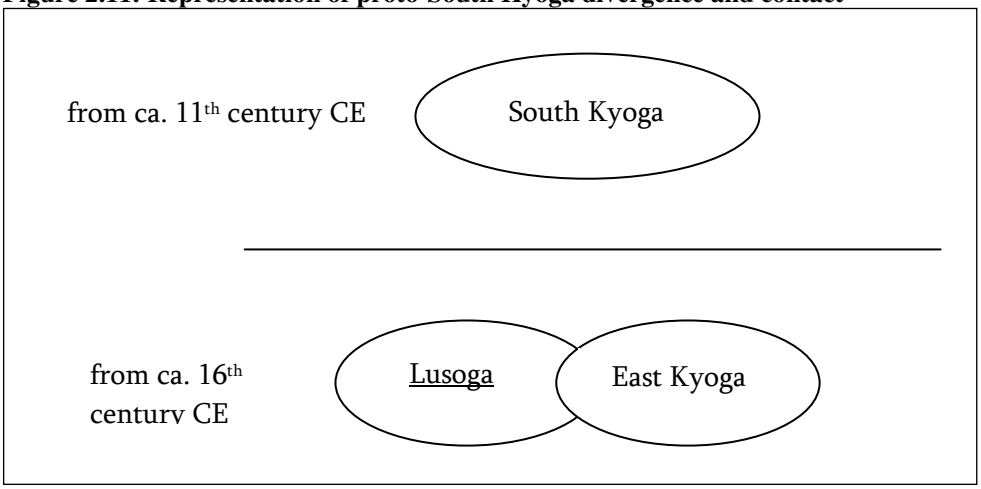
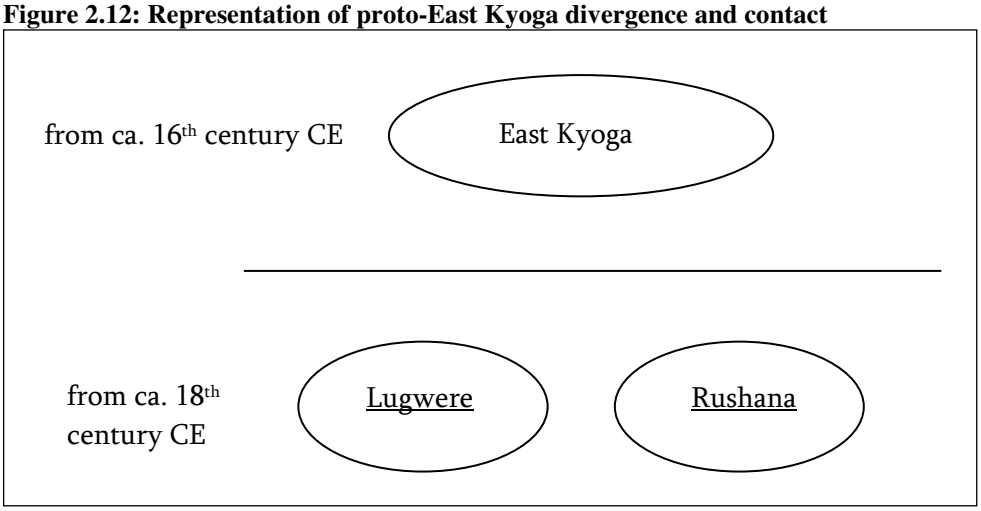


Figure 2.12: Representation of proto-East Kyoga divergence and contact



For the sub-classification of North Nyanza, then, lexicostatistics was useful in confirming the validity of North Nyanza as a sub-group and its relationship to Rutara and Greater Luhyia. It was less helpful in determining the sequence of events in the break-up of North Nyanza into its constituent languages. While the evidence for an initial split of Luganda leaving South Kyoga was reasonably clear, there was little evidence to suggest the form of the secondary split. By introducing the comparative method to the analysis, I was able to establish the order of the subsequent splits and reinforce the classification derived from the lexicostatistical analysis.

Mapping North Nyanza

There are two main approaches to locating proto-languages geographically: the 'principle of least moves' and the 'wave model'. Both of these approaches lie in the models of classification of languages and the representations of those classifications. The 'principle of least moves' is based on the tree diagram which depicts languages splitting from their proto-language. The principle under-girding the method is to find the simplest explanation for the location of languages today. This approach starts from the geographical location of languages

spoken today and moves backwards up the tree. At each stage we look for the mid-point between the languages and give equal strength to each language, regardless of the number of speakers today. [35] This approach led to the widely accepted designation of westernmost Cameroon as the homeland of proto-Bantu.[36] However, it does not sit well conceptually with our understanding of the ways in which languages and their speakers spread, whereby dialects start to form at the edges of speech communities which gradually move apart spatially and linguistically until they form different languages. The 'wave model' starts from this premise and maps language groups and their component languages as a series of waves outward from the proto-language homeland.[37]

Using the 'principle of least moves', the homeland for speakers of proto-North Nyanza would have been located along the Victoria-Nile River (flowing from Lake Victoria-Nyanza to Lake Kyoga) in the north and following the shore of Lake Victoria-Nyanza southward, perhaps as far as the Kagera River. Proto-South Kyoga speakers would have lived further to the east along the Mpologoma River. And the speech community of proto-East Kyoga would have clustered further again to the east at the base of Mount Nkokonjeru in the foothills of Mount Masaaba. However, this model requires a series of backwards movements that do not sit easily

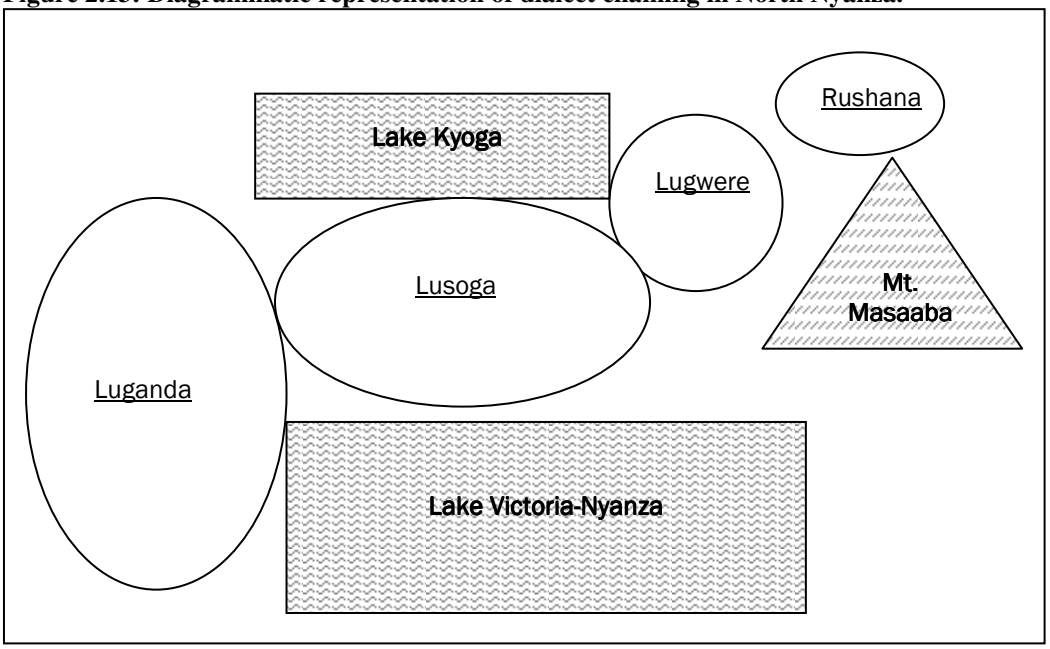
[35] Schoenbrun, "Early History," 106-7 and 122.

[36] Jan Vansina, "New Linguistic Evidence and 'the Bantu Expansion'," *Journal of African History* 3 (1995): 176. While Vansina recognises that the principle of least moves has allowed scholars to map the likely proto-Bantu homeland, he argues that it is less reliable in fleshing out the details of more recent language divergence.

[37] For figurative representations of the different models in proto-Bantu, please see Vansina, "New Linguistic Evidence," 177.

with our understanding of the place of North Nyanza within Great Lakes Bantu and the location of proto-Great Lakes Bantu speakers at the western edge of the region.[38]

Figure 2.13: Diagrammatic representation of dialect chaining in North Nyanza.

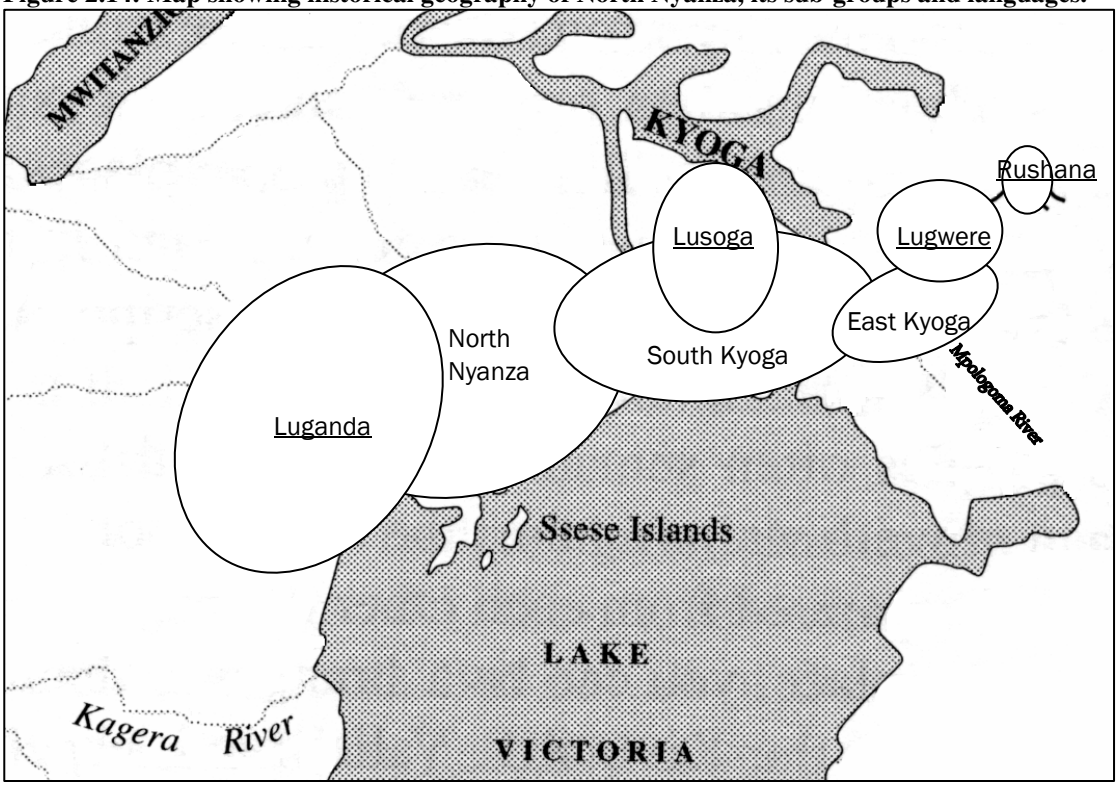


The languages descended from proto-North Nyanza form a dialect chain (see figure 2.13) and so fit well with the 'wave model' method of locating proto-languages in space. Applying the 'wave model' we locate proto-North Nyanza along the north-western shore of Lake Victoria-Nyanza with pre-Luganda spreading out south-, west- and northwards (see map in figure 2.14). South Kyoga emerged out of the eastward spread. Lusoga spread north and south while East Kyoga was the result of the further eastward spread. Oral historical records suggest that Rushana formed as a result of a migration of a group of East Kyoga speakers in order to avoid conflict. This would explain its geographical isolation from the rest of the North Nyanza languages. Ultimately the differences in the results of the two models are not all that great, especially because the physical environment along the northern and western shores of Lake Victoria-

[38] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 40-41.

Nyanza are largely similar and would have been affected in much the same way by oscillations in climate.

Figure 2.14: Map showing historical geography of North Nyanza, its sub-groups and languages.[39]



A Chronology for North Nyanza

The genetic classification of languages tells us the order in which proto-languages were spoken. It is an obvious point, but the proto-language from which another language is descended must have been spoken before the latter otherwise the proto-language could not be its genetic parent. Such classifications, then, are essentially a sequence of language divergences. The sub-classification of North Nyanza set out in figures 2.4 and 2.5 above gives us a relative chronology for when the languages were spoken. We know that proto-South Kyoga existed at the same time

[39] Adapted from Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 23.

as proto-Luganda but before proto-East Kyoga and we know that proto-East Kyoga existed at the same time as proto-Lusoga but before either Lugwere or Rushana. This sub-classification means that it is possible to reconstruct lexical items back to the different speech communities that existed at the various stages in the dissolution of North Nyanza and we can make historical arguments on the basis of those reconstructions. However, this chronology does not provide us with dates.[40]

Glottochronology derives from lexicostatistics and allows us to calculate approximate dates for the existence of speech communities in the past.[41] Linguists have noted that while changes in core vocabulary are random, the accumulation of those random changes "tends towards a normal distribution."[42] For African languages, that rate of accumulation of random changes has been calculated as a replacement of about twenty-six or twenty-seven words of the one hundred core vocabulary items every one thousand years.[43] This can then give us

[40] Where sufficient archaeological evidence is available, it is possible to match the lexical items in proto-languages with the material remains of the objects they name from the locations where it is posited speakers of the proto-languages lived. We can then use the dates derived from radiocarbon or thermo-luminescence dating to establish when those proto-languages existed. For a particularly thorough example of this method, see Jan Vansina, *How Societies Are Born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004).

[41] For an early overview of the method by its founder, please see Morris Swadesh, "Towards Greater Accuracy in Lexicostatistic Dating," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 21, no.2 (1955): 121-37. For recent expositions of the method, see, among others, Christopher Ehret, "Writing African History from Linguistic Evidence," in *Writing African History*, ed. John E. Philips (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2005), 106-08; Edda L. Fields, "Before 'Baga': Settlement Chronologies of the Coastal Rio Nunez Region, Earliest Times to c. 1000 CE," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 37 (2004): 246-49; Catherine Cymone Fourshey, "Agriculture, Ecology, Kinship and Gender: A Social and Economic History of Tanzania's Corridor 500 BC to 1900 AC," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002), 74-85; Gonzales, "Continuity and Change," 35-36; Kairn A. Klieman, *"The Pygmies Were Our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Times to c. 1900 C.E.* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003), xxvii-xxviii.

[42] Christopher Ehret, "Language Change and the Material Correlates of Language and Ethnic Shift," *Antiquity* 62, no. 236 (1988): 566.

[43] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 59 (fn.43). Schoenbrun uses the calibration derived by Christopher Ehret.

approximate dates for the divergence of languages in daughter languages. However, it is important to emphasize that those dates are approximations which should then be correlated with archaeological evidence wherever possible for further confirmation. There are several critics of this methodology, most notably amongst linguists.[44] Christopher Ehret argues that the criticisms levelled at glottochronology "have all too often been expressed as simple disbelief, an unscholarly substitute for argumentation from evidence." This 'disbelief' stems from a misapprehension of the underlying premise of glottochronology; a misapprehension which expresses itself as understanding the method as "involving *a regular and predictable* rate of vocabulary change." As noted above, glottochronology is actually concerned with the "accumulation over time of individual word replacements, each of which is *random and unpredictable*."[45] Jan Vansina, a historian who used glottochronology in his work until recently, notes that he became convinced of its fallibility by reading Michael Mann's work which shows "that different statistical procedures yield different percentages of cognation and hence different dates."[46] However, important works have demonstrated clear correlations between dates derived from glottochronology and those from carbon-dating.[47] Such correlations do not address the specific critiques of glottochronology as a method, but serve to strengthen it by demonstrating that it locates speech communities and the physical objects they name in the same place at the

---

[44] See Crowley, *Introduction to Historical Linguistics*, 183-186 for a summary of these.

[45] Ehret, "African History from Linguistic Evidence," 106. Emphasis original.

[46] Vansina, *How Societies Are Born*, 8, f.n.17. He draws on Michael Mann's work in Yvonne Bastin, André Coupez and Michael Mann, *Continuity and Divergence in the Bantu Languages: Perspectives from a Lexicostatistic Study*, Annales Sciences Humaines no. 162 (Tervuren: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1999).

[47] Among others, Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 32-37, 46-48; Christopher Ehret, "Testing the Expectations of Glottochronology Against the Correlations of Language and Archaeology in Africa," in *Time Depth in Historical Linguistics*, ed. Colin Renfrew, April McMahon and Larry Trask (Cambridge: MacDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2000), 373-99.

same time. These works also pose a challenge to Vansina's critique; a challenge which he does not address.

According to glottochonological calculations, West Nyanza split into North Nyanza and Rutara approximately 1500 years ago, or ca. 500 C.E. Luganda began to break away from North Nyanza leaving South Kyoga about 1000 years ago, or ca. 1000 C.E., while South Kyoga split into Lusoga and East Kyoga at some point between 500 and 1000 years ago. Finally East Kyoga split into Lugwere and Rushana less than 500 years ago. As I noted earlier, there is very little archaeological data for the North Nyanza region, and what little there is focuses on Buganda. However, these glottochronological dates match those calculated by Schoenbrun for the Great Lakes Bantu region which were shown to correlate with the archaeological evidence.[48]

For the more recent past, we can make use of kinglists from Buganda and Busoga to derive approximate dates for developments after the formation of states.[49] This involves counting generations of rulers and assigning an approximated average number of years reign to each, except in the cases where we know the reign was particular brief or where siblings succeeded each other to the throne. Following Roland Oliver's lead, this is usually taken to be twenty-seven years.[50] David Cohen, however, notes that because of the preference for fraternal succession in many of the Soga states it is necessary to find correlations between the states and,

---

[48] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 46-7.

[49] Please see appendix 4 for the lists themselves.

[50] This figure was first proposed in Roland Oliver, "The Traditional Histories of Buganda, Bunyoro and Nkore," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 85 (1955): 111-17; see also idem, "Ancient Capital Sites of Ankole," *Uganda Journal* 23, no.1 (1959): 51-63 and idem, "The Royal Tombs of Buganda," *Uganda Journal* 23, no.2 (1959): 124-33. With regards to Buganda, M. Semakula M. Kiwanuka rounded the figure up to thirty years; see *A History of Buganda: From the Foundation of the Kingdom to 1900* (London: Longman, 1971), 285-86.

where possible, with Buganda.[51] But again, these dates are approximations and this methodology also has its critics.[52] The most important criticism is that the kinglists themselves are unreliable, having been produced in the context of the arrival of European explorers, missionaries and officials. David Henige has gone so far as to assert that because of this the Ganda kinglist is "an accurate representation neither of the oral resources of mid nineteenth-century historiography nor of the number of" kings.[53] Christopher Wrigley, again with reference to Buganda, has noted the existence of competing versions of the kinglists as well as arguing that the bulk of all versions is composed of mythic figures.[54] Other historians of Buganda and Busoga, however, have held greater confidence in the accuracy of the lists for the past few hundred years.[55] In my opinion we are wrong to dismiss these lists as fabrications. While the critiques of them must be taken into account, to dismiss them entirely as a form of evidence about the past (weighted as they are towards a very particular version of that past) would be to throw the proverbial baby out with the bath water (or, to continue Henige's metaphor, killing the whole because the 'disease of writing' has infected part).[56]

---

[51] David William Cohen, *The Historical Tradition of Busoga: Mukama and Kintu* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 62-68.

[52] See for example, David Henige, "'The Disease of Writing': Ganda and Nyoro Kinglists in a Newly Literate World," in *The African Past Speaks: Essays on Oral Tradition and History*, ed. Joseph C. Miller (Folkestone: Dawson, 1980), 240-61.

[53] Henige, "Disease of Writing," 250.

[54] Christopher C. Wrigley, "The Kinglists of Buganda," *History in Africa* 1 (1974): 129-139; idem, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 20-42.

[55] Among others, please see Kiwanuka, *History of Buganda* and Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*.

[56] Indeed, as Jan Vansina notes with regards to extrapolating political structure from descriptive accounts that while we should be wary of over-enthusiastic extrapolation from very limited data, we "should beware of being hypercritical… Otherwise there would be no history left." "The Use of Process-Models in African History," in *The Historian in Tropical Africa*, ed. Jan Vansina, Raymond Mauny and L.V. Thomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 378.

Reconstructing North Nyanza Cultural Vocabulary

In order to write the history of North Nyanza from the words people used to talk about the physical, social and cultural worlds they inhabited, the first step is to reconstruct some of that vocabulary. The genetic classification of North Nyanza plays a central role in this because changes took place in the vocabularies at the different stages in the language tree – when North Nyanza existed as a proto-language, when proto-South Kyoga was spoken and when proto-East Kyoga was spoken. By tracing those changes I can make historical inferences about why people speaking a particular proto-language chose to adopt a new word, alter the contours of an existing word's semantic field or stopped using an old one.

The historical reconstruction of vocabulary involves distinguishing cognates, internal innovations and loan words. Cognates, as we have seen, are words with similar meanings and forms in different languages. They are connected by regular sound changes, so while they may look dissimilar it is possible not only to identify them as cognate but also to work backwards through the sound changes to posit the original form. The important point for historical analysis is that if a word has cognates in other languages, then it must have been inherited from a parent language. For the case of North Nyanza, if a word is cognate in Luganda and Rushana then it must have existed in proto-North Nyanza. However, if it is only in Lusoga and Rushana and not in Luganda then we can reconstruct it to proto-South Kyoga. Internal innovations, in contrast, were not inherited but rather created by the new speech community, though they could then be inherited by its descendants. Sometimes these are entirely new words, but more often it is possible to trace their etymology back in time. Adjectives, for example, are often derived from existing verbs as we saw above with the example of the adjective 'good' in West Nyanza. Bantu

languages are particularly rich in their potential for deriving new words from existing ones and have quite regular mechanisms for doing this.[57] Tracing the etymology of words in this way allows us to develop an intellectual history of each word.

Etymology and phonology are also important in establishing that particular words are loan words, or transferred innovations. These are words 'borrowed' by speakers of one language from another language with whose speech community it has contact, either as a neighbour or a trade partner. Such words may be from languages either unrelated or distantly related to the recipient language or they may be from more closely related languages. In either case borrowing most commonly occurs between neighbouring languages. The former are identified by the fact that their phonology does not fit exactly with the recipient language although they will have been modified to fit in as far as possible. Such loan words indicate that the institution or object named is likely to be of foreign origin, because people are unlikely to borrow a foreign word to name an indigenous practice or institution unless there are strong social status pressures[58] or a substantial change in the content of the practice or form of the institution.

In order to reconstruct words to various proto-languages, it is generally considered necessary to have reflexes – the different iterations of the original word in the daughter languages – of the word in at least two of the daughter languages. In addition, the relationship between the two or more reflexes should be "relatable according to a system of regular sound

---

[57] For overviews of Bantu derivational mechanisms, see Yvonne Bastin, *Les Relations Sémantiques dans les Langues Bantoues* (Brussels: Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer, 1985); Thilo C. Schadeberg, "Derivation" in *The Bantu Languages*, ed. Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson (London: Routledge, 2003), 71-89. For an overview of the Bantu noun class system, see Francis Katamba, "Bantu Nominal Morphology," in *The Bantu Languages*, ed. Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson (London: Routledge, 2003), 103-20.

[58] Ehret, "Language and Ethnic Shift," 570.

correspondences."[59] There is another criterion which is that the reflexes should preferably not be from adjoining languages where the possibility of cross-linguistic borrowing is high.[60] For North Nyanza, then, if there are only two reflexes ideally they should be from Luganda and Rushana and not from Luganda and Lusoga. An example of two such reflexes which can be reconstructed to proto-North Nyanza is the word for 'stone'. They are *ejjinja* in Luganda and *iyinza* in Rushana and can be reconstructed as the proto-North Nyanza form **-jinja* (in noun class 5).[61]

In order to reconstruct cultural vocabulary for North Nyanza that speaks to the history of motherhood and the ways in which motherhood shaped and was shaped by political discourse and developments in agriculture, I have reconstructed a range of lexical items.[62] These include words specific to practices of child-bearing and child-rearing, words for social and political structures and statuses and agricultural terms. Their etymologies and the history they tell us form the basis for much of what follows in the next five chapters.

Comparative Ethnography and the Deep Past

While the reconstructed vocabularies for proto-North Nyanza and its daughters provide the historian with the basis for writing a history, we cannot tell from words alone the contexts in which they were used. Drawing on the ethnographic record allows us to reconstruct some of

[59] Christopher Ehret, *Southern Nilotic History: Linguistic Approaches to the Study of the Past* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 14.

[60] Schoenbrun, "Early History," 130.

[61] Please see above for a brief discussion of noun classes in Bantu languages.

[62] These reconstructions are based on the data I collected in Uganda in 2004-2005. I collected 1500-wordlists of cultural vocabulary for Luganda, Lusoga and Lugwere and a shorter list for Rushana. For Lusoga I collected separate lists for Lugabula, Lulamoogi and Lusiki. The 1500-wordlist of cultural vocabulary is a standard list developed by historians using historical linguistics to study the history of Eastern Africa at the University of California, Los Angeles.

those contexts. We cannot, however, directly transpose ethnographies from the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries back in time. That would be as anachronistic as transposing them forward to the present day. The Buganda kingdom of the mid-nineteenth century, as it was encountered by John Hannington Speke and his compatriots, was radically different to the world in which proto-North Nyanza speaking people lived a thousand years earlier. That does not mean we must dismiss ethnography as a source, but rather that we need to be careful and methodical in the ways in which we make use of it in order to elaborate the vision of earlier societies that we derive from the linguistic evidence.

Jan Vansina has set out several criteria by which to assess the reliability and thus the usefulness of ethnographic data for any given area. These are: "quantity of materials, number of authors," the relationships between authors, "the diversity of their backgrounds," their professional competence, gender, linguistic competence, insider or outsider status, length of stay, "the variety of genres, and the dates of observation."[63] Schoenbrun applied this test to the ethnographic material available for Buganda, Busoga and Bugwere, as part of his larger analysis of material for the Great Lakes region. He determined that the quality of the ethnography for Buganda is excellent, that for Busoga is very good, but that for Bugwere is inadequate.[64] I concur with his assessment for Buganda and Busoga, but while it is true that there is not much material available for Bugwere, by pulling together various sources and the material from ethnographic interviews conducted during my fieldwork, I would re-categorise the quality of material as adequate. For the Bashana, on the other hand, there is virtually no ethnographic data.

---

[63] Jan Vansina, *Paths in the Rainforest: Toward a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 28-29.

[64] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 53.

The little that exists can be found in works on the Sebei (or Sabiny) by John Roscoe[65] and, later, by Walter Goldschmidt and Robert B. Edgerton.[66] In this case, then, the quantity and quality of the material is inadequate.

Having established the quality of the ethnographic material, the question remains as to its use. The main use of it is in elaborating the meaning and usage of the reconstructed vocabulary. By relating ethnographic descriptions to specific words that we know were used by proto-North Nyanza speakers or one of the speech communities descended from them it is possible to develop a richer and more nuanced picture of the meanings given to those words and thus develop a greater understanding of the past. It perhaps easiest to explain this by illustrating a specific example. The term for a female escort of a bride in Rushana is *emperekesa*, in Lusoga it is *émperekézí* or *omúgherekézi* depending on the dialect, and in Luganda it is *emperekeze*. In Lugwere the term is different. Because of the distribution of these cognate terms, we know that it was innovated by speakers of North Nyanza. It is also easy to trace the etymology to the proto-Bantu verb **-pédikid-* which has the meaning 'accompany (someone)'.[67] Turning to the

---

[65] John Roscoe, *The Bagesu and Other Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate: The Third Part of the Report of the Mackie Ethnological Expedition to Central Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), pp. 83-85. Roscoe uses the ethnonym *Bakama* which is how the Bagisu today refer to the Bashana. However, he argues that the Bakama migrated to Mount Masaaba from Bunyoro along with another group whom he terms the *Bagweri*. He does not give any linguistic data for the Bakama and notes that they formed a clan among the Sebei. It may be that the groups he refers to as Bakama and Bagweri are two clans of the Bashana. Further research may be able to clarify this situation significantly.

[66] Robert B. Edgerton, *The Individual in Cultural Adaptation: A Study of Four East African Peoples* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971); Walter Goldschmidt, *Culture and Behavior of the Sebei: A Study in Continuity and Adaptation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976); idem, *The Sebei: A Study in Adaptation* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1986). Please note that the Sebei name for the Bashana is Bumachek or Bumatyek and this in how they are referred to in these works.

[67] The **mperekezi* is discussed in detail in chapter 3. Please see Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 33 in appendix 3. See also Yvonne Bastin and Thilo Schadeberg (eds.), "Bantu Lexical Reconstructions 3," Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, www.metafro.be/blr (accessed 28 August 2007), Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 2427. (Hereafter referred to as "BLR 3".)

ethnographic evidence, however, it is possible to add significant levels of detail to the role played by the **mperekezi*. In Soga and Ganda ethnography we see that she not only accompanied a bride on her wedding day but remained with her for a considerable period of time, even becoming a second wife in the household. Because of the lacunae in the Shana evidence it is harder to be certain that the practices associated with the **mperekezi* also date to the time when proto-North Nyanza was spoken. However, because we know that Lusoga and Luganda are from different branches of North Nyanza and because we can be confident of the antiquity of the term itself, it is reasonable to suppose that these practices are as old as the noun itself.

Early ethnographic records are particularly rich for writing about Buganda and Busoga in the nineteenth century. For Bugwere, I have often had to rely on ethnographic data gleamed from Ronald R. Atkinson's oral historical interviews conducted in the 1960s and data from the ethnographic interviews I conducted during fieldwork in Pallisa district in 2004. I openly recognize that this is not ideal. All my informants for the ethnographic data identified themselves as being over sixty years of age (some much older) and in the interviews I asked them to tell me about practices that they had learned about from their parents' and grandparents' generations. Wherever possible, I have married evidence from my interviews with that from other sources. However, given the limited research that has been conducted in Bugwere, there are times when this has not been possible. In these cases, I have attempted to winnow out evidence that is clearly influenced by colonial and post-colonial events and also to marry the evidence with similar practices in Busoga and Buganda. Similarly, it is for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that the lack of material on the Bashana is most problematic, for not only are

there just a few scattered details about them in the ethnographic record, but no oral traditions have been collected. In stark contrast, there is a wealth of oral history and oral traditions available for Buganda, Bugwere and Busoga.[68]

Oral Traditions, Oral History and the Past

The use and abuse of oral traditions and oral history in the writing of African history has preoccupied many people and filled many pages. The initial approach of Africanist historians was to view oral traditions as relatively straightforward sources. By collecting as many different versions as possible and looking for common elements they aimed to reconstruct the 'original' version.[69] Early critics of this method focused on ways in which improve on the method so as to make oral traditions equate to archival sources,[70] while asserting that such traditions could not be used for creating chronologies.[71] But they did not question the fundamental basis of the approach. Later came a shift in understanding of oral traditions from stable reports of historical events to unique narratives shaped by the context and worldview of the teller. This challenged

[68] The material for Bugwere consists of the *Bugwere Historical Texts* (n.p.) collected by Ronald Atkinson in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. He has very generously shared this material with me. The bulk of the material for Busoga is the *Collected Texts of Busoga Traditional History* (n.p.) collected by David Cohen in the 1960s. He has very generously given me access to this complete collection, some of which is available in published form as David William Cohen, *Towards a Reconstructed Past: Historical Texts from Busoga, Uganda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), and some of which is available on microfilm as idem, *Selected Texts of Busoga Traditional History (microform)* (Baltimore: s.n. 1969). An early history of Busoga by a Soga intellectual also narrates several traditions associated with various polities in the region, Y.K. Lubogo, *A History of Busoga*, transl. Eastern Province (Bantu Language) Literature Committee (Jinja: East African Literature Bureau, 1960).

[69] This reconstruction took place inside and outside of the academe. Jan Vansina focused on the crucial role of the historian in performing this task in *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985) while Bethwell Ogot allowed Luo elders to decide on a unified version in *History of the Southern Luo. Volume One: Migration and Settlement* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967).

[70] See for example, David P. Henige, *Oral Historiography* (London: Longman, 1982).

[71] David P. Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Traditions: Quest for a Chimera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).

the search for 'historical truth' in early work using such traditions and has led to an emphasis on colonial and postcolonial history, with an implicit suggestion that these traditions cannot be used to write about the deeper past.[72] However, historians are again turning to such sources to write about precolonial events.[73] Neil Kodesh, for example, has convincingly shown that not only can we make use of oral traditions to write about the precolonial history of Buganda but also that by incorporating the insights about performance and sites of memory into our approach to what these sources tell us about early events, we can make more nuanced and convincing use of them.[74]

What then is the nature of the oral historical data available for North Nyanza societies? First of all, it is important to note that they are not uniform in nature. Ganda oral histories differ from Gwere and Soga materials. In Buganda, the relationship between European interest and Ganda writing is complex. Early travellers wrote down traditions in a piecemeal fashion. Later in the nineteenth century, missionaries and others worked closely with leading Ganda intellectuals to craft a coherent dynastic corpus. Once published – often serially in local papers – this called forth counter-narratives from a variety of different corners among the Ganda

---

[72] See for example, Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

[73] Among others see Suzanne P. Blier, "The Path of the Leopard: Motherhood and Majesty in Early Danhomé," *Journal of African History* 36 (1995): 391-417; Renée L. Tantala, "Verbal and Visual Imagery in Kitara (Western Uganda): Interpreting 'The Story of Isimbwa and Nyinamwiru'," in *Paths Toward the Past: African Historical Essays in Honor of Jan Vansina*, ed. Robert W. Harms (Atlanta: African Studies Association Press, 1994), 223-243.

[74] See Neil Kodesh, "History from the Healer's Shrine: Genre, Historical Imagination, and Early Ganda History," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 3 (2007): 527-52; idem, "Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Collective Well-Being in Buganda" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 2004), 10-16. It is worth noting that his approach emerged out of insights from both historical linguistics and comparative ethnography, which were initially part of the focus of his research. On the renewed recognition of the role of oral tradition and oral history in writing African history, see also Tom C. McCaskie, "Denkyira in the Making of Asante, c. 1660-1720," *Journal of African History* 48 (2007): 1-25.

intelligentsia. Between the 1850s and very early in the first decade of the twentieth century, "Ganda oral historical data" had taken a distinctive, coherent shape; a shape which never extinguished competing versions, despite its promotion to the status of orthodoxy in the work of Uganda's first generation of academic historians. Neither Bugwere nor Busoga has such a corpus of oral traditions and it appears that there was less emphasis on retaining such traditions, perhaps due to the fact that the political systems in both were markedly less centralised than in Buganda. What does exist for Busoga and Bugwere are bodies of oral history interviews that address the origins of different clans and the various political formations. The commonality between all three bodies of evidence is that there are multiple sources which allow me to read the oral historical data in a performative manner. These sources are particularly helpful in reconstructing the history of more recent centuries as state formation became a central political feature in the region. Scattered among the traditions, for example, are references to queen mothers directly intervening in the government of their state, such as Kabalu of Luuka in Busoga and Nanteza of Buganda.[75]

*****

All the sources available to historians must be used critically and with attention to their inherent biases and weaknesses. This is the case whatever period in time is being studied and whatever part of the world. However, when the sources do not speak directly to us, as is the case with historical linguistic and ethnographic material, particular problems arise. It is not possible to identify individual actors in these sources and instead we must write about the actions of speakers of a language. At times, the resulting text can seem like the ideological charter of a

[75] These are discussed in detail in chapter 5.

particular society with little room for dissent. But dissent is present. It is present in the very fact that we can trace changes in social institutions and in the ideologies which surround them. Such changes are the result of conflicts over the meaning and content of those institutions. Oral traditions, too, are complicated sources of evidence, shaped as they are by the moment and authors of their transcription. They often cannot be taken as literal descriptions of past events. But they provide a wealth of detail, sometime it seems unintentionally, that allow us to see what was important enough to be remembered.

While North Nyanza people and their descendants, then, do not speak to us through writings, they do speak to us in several other mediums. The reconstruction of historical vocabulary allows me to write the history not only of proto-North Nyanza speaking peoples and Baganda, Basoga and Bagwere, but also of proto-South Kyoga and proto-East Kyoga speaking peoples. Without historical linguistics and linguistic classification we would not even know that these communities had existed. And by using the very words that women and men in these societies used to talk about the physical, social and ideological worlds they inhabited it is possible to navigate around the elite men who transcribed oral traditions and who were often the informants for ethnographers. Comparative ethnography adds depth and complexity to the evidence I derive from the reconstructed vocabulary as well as allowing me to write in detail about practices during the nineteenth century. Oral traditions and other oral historical evidence allow me to write the history of motherhood after the dissolution of North Nyanza into the speech communities that exist today as well as being another source for illuminating the meanings of the reconstructed vocabulary. When all of these sources are brought together I am able to read the history of motherhood in them and it is to that which I now turn.

Chapter Three

Becoming a Mother in North Nyanza

From about one thousand five hundred years ago the North Nyanza dialect of West Nyanza began to be sufficiently distinct from its Rutara sister-dialect for the two to be considered separate languages. Unlike in the division of cells, one of the metaphors used to describe language break-up, there was no clear moment when the two dialects became separate languages, just a gradual growing apart. The emergence of North Nyanza as a distinct language thus marked both the continuation of culture and language and the innovation of new words alongside the beliefs and practices they described. As the most central aspect of social reproduction motherhood was a locus for both cultural stability and change. Mothers themselves were the conduits for continuities in culture and language and agents in the introduction of innovations. They were also intermediaries between their kin and their children who belonged to different clans and, frequently, to different linguistic and cultural groups. Exogamous marriage was the moral norm for North Nyanzans, the societies descended from them and the Bantu and Nilotic groups with whom they intermarried. Mothers were the bridge between their children and their kin, two groups who at the very least followed different taboos and who quite possibly spoke widely divergent languages. A Nilotic woman who married into a North Nyanzan homestead brought with her the language and culture of her childhood, and vice versa. It was through such relationships and cultural bridgings that South Kyoga speakers and their descendants introduced Nilotic words about fostering and for the mother of twins into their languages.

While the fundamentals of motherhood – pregnancy, childbirth, nurturance – are universal and unchanging, the practices and the ideologies which shape those fundamentals have been shown to vary in time and place, often with deeply political resonances. [1] In order to understand the broader political and social repercussions of the particular shapes motherhood had in North Nyanza, this chapter sets out some of the social and cultural aspects of becoming a mother for North Nyanzan women and their Ganda, Soga and Gwere descendants. While biology dictated certain aspects of reproduction, the social and moral logics of North Nyanzans were also important in marking legitimate motherhood and in making motherhood a possibility for those denied it by biology. Before turning to how women became mothers, the chapter briefly sets out what we know about the ecological, socio-economic and political context in which speakers of proto-North Nyanza lived their lives.

At the Turn of the First Millennium

Towards the end of the period during which proto-North Nyanza was spoken as a single language and as its daughter languages began to emerge, a potter on the shores of Lake Victoria-Nyanza made a ceramic figure of a human head and body. Pieces of this figure, known as the "Luzira Head" after the location where it was found in 1929, are one of only two archaeological finds of the kind in the region.[2] And yet they point towards a number of developments that

[1] Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Patricia Crawford, "The Construction and Experience of Maternity in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLaren*, ed. Dorothy McLaren and Valerie A. Fildes (London: Routledge, 1990), 3-39; Mary Dockray-Miller, *Motherhood and Mothering in Anglo-Saxon England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); John C. Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, eds., *Medieval Mothering* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996).

[2] Andrew Reid and Ceri Z. Ashley, "The Strange Case of the Luzira Head," in preparation.

occurred on the northern and western shores of the lake at the turn of the millennium, a period now recognised by archaeologists as a transitional phase from the Early Iron Age to the Late Iron Age.[3] This technological shift which involved the development of new pottery styles and the intensification of agriculture occurred across a large region extending beyond the Great Lakes. For North Nyanzans and their neighbours, however, medium-term climatic variation affected which types of food they could successfully grow and where those crops would do best. Using evidence from pollen cores and from the historical records of the level of the Nile in Cairo, we know that North Nyanza- and Rutara-speakers experienced a wet period from 850 to 950, followed by a dry period from 950 to 1100 and another wet period from 1100 to 1200.[4] It was during these centuries around the turn of the millennium that North Nyanzans began investing more time in banana cultivation leading to "concentrations of populations around the best banana-bearing lands." These settlement concentrations became the "new centers of the social relationship of clanship" and North Nyanzans innovated the term **kika* [22] to describe 'dispersed patriclans,' abandoning the West Nyanza term *rugàndá* and thereby marking a new era in social and political relations.[5]

These developments in settlement and clan organization were accompanied by a growth in social inequality and the consolidation of political power by royal families. Growing social inequality was a phenomenon that was occurring broadly across the Great Lakes region at this

---

[3] Reid and Ashley, "Luzira Head."

[4] David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, A Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Oxford: James Currey, 1998), 221.

[5] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 172.

time.[6] It can be seen in the archaeological record through the excavation of glass beads from this period on Bugala Island in Lake Victoria-Nyanza, at Ntusi and Munsa in the grasslands to the west and at the Kibiro salt-works on Lake Albert-Mwitanzige. These beads must have come from the Indian Ocean trade networks.[7] The fact that they had to pass through several intermediary stages to reach the Great Lakes region would have served only to increase their value and thus strengthen their utility as markers of the wealth and power of the person possessing them. The linguistic evidence for the growth in social inequality lies in the new meanings given to the ancient noun **-bánjá* which brought together notions of 'debt' and 'setting up a new home.' Such changes point to the ways in which differential access to land served to create networks of client-patron relationships.[8]

The second, and related, development was the consolidation of political power by emergent royal families with the concomitant move away from hereditary chiefs to appointed chiefs.[9] The major kingdoms of the Great Lakes region, such as Bunyoro, Ankole and Buganda, only began to emerge towards the middle part of the second millennium. This earlier period of political centralisation would have unfolded in numerous locations across the North Nyanza-speaking world, a world that was most likely still sparsely populated. As aspiring leaders sought to expand their political power they would have to convince their followers that they could protect the social well-being of the community. Royal families embodied successful reproduction; an embodiment made manifest in the office of the queen mother who reigned

[6] Reid and Ashley, "Luzira Head."

[7] Reid and Ashley, "Luzira Head."

[8] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 176-77.

[9] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 185.

alongside her son. But the successful reproduction of the community, especially in the uncertainty of changing climates and the creation of settlements in new lands to the north-east, also required the labour of mothers – productive and reproductive.[10] The potter who set about making the Luzira head, some one thousand years ago, did so in this context. Although our knowledge about the precise setting in which the head and other figures were made and the purpose for which they were intended remains limited, these ceramics may have been related to a leader's ability to address the social and sexual health of the community. Motherhood was central to North Nyanzan conceptualisations of social health and thus to efforts by individuals and groups to take and maintain political power. While this is discussed in depth in chapter 6, here we focus on the ways in which women achieved motherhood and the changing cultural and social mores that accompanied it.

Infertility and Social Motherhood

The usual way for a North Nyanzan woman to become a mother was through pregnancy and childbirth. North Nyanzans used the same word to describe giving birth as their proto-Bantu speaking ancestors some four thousand years earlier, **-bịád-* [4].[11] This verb could also be used to describe the begetting of children by men, though the primary meaning does appear to be that applied to women. Some women, however, faced difficulties in becoming a mother through this

[10] This draws on Peter Robertshaw, "Women, Labor, and State Formation in Western Uganda," in *Complex Polities in the Ancient Tropical World*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus and Lisa J. Lucero, Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association 9, no. 1 (1999): 51-65.

[11] Yvonne Bastin and Thilo Schadeberg (eds.), "Bantu Lexical Reconstructions 3," Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, www.metafro.be/blr (accessed 28 August 2007), Reconstruction Number (R.N.) Main 226. (Hereafter referred to as "BLR 3".); Malcolm Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages*, vol. 3 (Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1970), 48, Comparative Series (C.S.) 136.

most conventional of ways: they or their husband might be infertile. In the case of infertile women, North Nyanza speaking people again used the same word as their proto-Bantu ancestors, *-*gumbà*,[12] and it is self-evident that childlessness was neither a new phenomenon nor one peculiar to North Nyanza society. While infertility or barrenness in a woman could have many causes, ranging from the physical to the spiritual, the North Nyanza speech community felt no need to innovate new words to describe these various forms. It was the consequence of an absence of pregnancies and children that mattered most to them, not the cause of that absence.

North Nyanzans dropped the word innovated by their West Nyanza-speaking ancestors which described the condition of being childless or kinless, *-*cweke*.[13] David Schoenbrun argues that, as they moved into the new lands of both the drier interior and the fertile lake shores, West Nyanza speakers needed to ensure growth in their communities and thus the prospect of childlessness was a grave threat.[14] The noun *-*cweke* is in many respects about the lack of an heir – both to inherit wealth and social position and to continue the lineage and society more broadly. North Nyanzans, however, allowed for collateral succession, so that a man's brother or his brother's son could be his heir.[15] As a result of this change, they no longer needed a word for the unfortunate situation that *-*cweke* described. In the patrilineal West Nyanza society property, title and land were predominantly inherited through and by men. In that context, if, as

[12] Bastin and Schadeberg, "BLR 3," R.N. Main 1505; Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu*, vol. 3, 235, C.S. 894.

[13] David Lee Schoenbrun, *The Historical Reconstruction of Great Lakes Bantu Cultural Vocabulary: Etymologies and Distributions* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1997), 180-81, Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 275.

[14] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 196-97.

[15] This possibility is reflected in the Ganda kinglist where brothers succeeded to the throne on several occasions, see Appendix Four. For inheritance in Busoga, see J. F. Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples: Notes on the Protectorate of Uganda Especially the Anthropology and Ethnology of its Indigenous Races* (London: Hutchinson, 1905), 124.

appears to be the case, the proto-Bantu word *-*gumbà* [16] referred to the infertility of women, then *-*cweke* is likely to have been restricted to describing the situation of men. The possibility of collateral succession would have rendered *-*cweke* largely irrelevant, as male childlessness became less of an immediate threat to the future of the North Nyanzan community. Indeed, it is quite possible that North Nyanzans moved towards this particular form of succession as a way to counter the challenge posed to the social reproduction of their communities by *-*cweke*.

While North Nyanzans did not admit that a man could be barren, they did recognise that men could suffer from impotency. The noun they used to describe such a man, **mufiirwa* [10], was derived from the verb *-*fa* 'to die' and gives a literal translation of 'one who is bereaved.' The bereavement suffered by such a man was both the loss of anticipated children and the ending of his lineage.[16] Furthermore, a man with no children would have no one to tend to his spirit after his death. If a woman's husband was impotent, she was socially sanctioned to leave him and find another husband.[17] The main reason for this, we can surmise, was that his impotency was an impediment to her becoming a mother. If she remained with him, not only did her husband's lineage not gain the children it expected, but neither did her patrilineage gain the nephews and nieces it anticipated from the marriage of its daughter. Her husband's impotence threatened the social reproduction of the two lineages and so broke the contract made between them through the marriage.

---

[16] Miss Laight and Yekonia K. Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 2 (1934/1935): 126. (Note that this was initially erroneously published under the name of Ezekeri Zibondo. A letter rectifying the error was published in *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 3 (1935): 255).

[17] GW-ETH-KAD-F-17/11/04, interview by author, 17 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05, interview by author, 21 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author. Please see chapter 2 for a discussion of the use of ethnographic material collected during fieldwork.

A woman who found herself in a childless marriage faced a difficult and lonely life and a double death, for most North Nyanza clans would not name children after a barren woman and so she would not be remembered after her death.[18] She would suffer from a lack of status in her marital home with access to less land for cultivation and no labour to assist her, and she could expect a lonely and poverty-stricken old age. An important possibility available to her emerged from the practice of a bride being accompanied to her marital home by a sister, whether real or classificatory. This companion, who was known as an **mperekezi* [33], would generally stay with the new wife for a prolonged period and should she become pregnant by the husband she became one of his wives.[19] Because of her relationship with the **mperekezi*, if the wife did not conceive herself she could still lay some claim to her **mperekezi*'s children. On the other hand, when a woman's **mperekezi* did not remain with her, an infertile wife could go to her lineage or the wider clan to ask for a young woman to join her in her marriage. She could then lay claim to one or more of the children that issued from the new union.[20]

The practice of fostering by childless women in this manner continued among South Kyoga speakers and their descendants but appears to have been abandoned by Baganda. It is

---

[18] Laight and Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," 127; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04, interview by author, 11 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b, interview by author, 16 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-ETH-KIT-F-21/01/05, interview by author, 21 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[19] Lucy Philip Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1934; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), 85 (page citations are to the reprint edition). For further discussion of the **mperekezi* please see chapter 4.

[20] John Roscoe, *The Northern Bantu: An Account of Some Central African Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 200; GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04, interview by author, 27 October 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05. In Lusoga this is referred to as *okuleeta ekibeewo* which gives a literal translation of 'to bring a helper,' (SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05, interview by author, 20 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author).

likely that the ending of this practice by Luganda-speakers coincided with a change in who could be the heir. For North Nyanzans and, later, for South Kyogans, the heir was ideally a son of the senior wife or **kaidu* [24]. In Busoga, from about five hundred years ago, the importance of the senior wife as the mother of the heir was such that almost every clan history names the clan of the *kairu*[21] of the clan founder in addition to naming the founder's mother or her clan. For example, the abaiseBabiro name their founder as Kagondo and note that his wife was a mwiseMubbala,[22] the abaiseKisui name their founder as Kyomukaba whose wife was a mwiseMuhaya,[23] and the abaiseNkwanga name their founder as Ibudi whose wife was a mwiseMukobe.[24] This reflects the political importance of the connection between a woman's children and their maternal kin in Busoga.[25] It also marks the senior wife as having a distinct position within the household from her co-wives; a position that derived from her future role as mother of the heir. If she had no sons of her own, she adopted a son from a co-wife to raise as the heir.[26] The necessity for the senior wife to enter social, if not biological, motherhood points to the intertwined nature of marriage and maternity and to the centrality of motherhood to social reproduction. The senior wife had to be a mother in order for there to be an heir for her husband – whether he was the king or a peasant.

---

[21] The Lusoga reflex of **kaidu*.

[22] David William Cohen, *Collected Texts of Busoga Traditional History* (n.p.), Text 1. (Hereafter referred to as *CTBTH*.)

[23] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 248.

[24] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 767. Please see idem, *CTBTH*, varia for a complete listing.

[25] Please see chapter 4.

[26] Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 200; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05.

In Buganda after the break up of North Nyanza, by contrast, the son of any wife could be selected as the heir. This shift had important consequences for the selection of a new king,[27] but it also meant that there was some opportunity for upward social mobility by women in the households of a wealthy men and chiefs. There is a Luganda proverb which asserts just that: *Ddungu ayizze, ng'omuzaana azaalidde nyinimu ddenzi* ('Ddungu [the god of hunting] has brought home his catch, says the slave woman who has given birth to a son for her master').[28] Not only would a slave woman's position improve by virtue of having borne a son for her master, but "*she might even become the mother of the heir*" the highest position a commoner woman could achieve.[29] If her son did become the heir she could, despite her slave background, be assured of a secure old age. A second proverb reinforces the security provided to any woman whose son became the heir to his father: *Ndifiira ku biggya bya baze, nga y'azaala omusika* ('I will die at my husband's graveside, says the woman who gave birth to the heir').[30] Such a woman had a secure position in her husband's household, even after his death. While this change in inheritance preference meant that wives of lowly backgrounds had a chance at becoming the mother of the heir and acquiring the influence within the household that this brought, it also gave a new emphasis to biological, rather than social, motherhood. The success of individual women in acts of biological reproduction determined their potential to be the mother-of-the-heir not their social position within the household. This development coincided

---

[27] This is discussed in detail in chapter 6.

[28] Abasi Kiyimba, "Gender Stereotypes in the Folktales and Proverbs of the Baganda" (Ph.D. diss., University of Dar-es-Salaam, 2001), 114.

[29] Kiyimba, "Gender Stereotypes," 114. Emphasis in original.

[30] Kiyimba, "Gender Stereotypes," 113.

with the co-optation by the emergent Ganda state of an ideology of motherhood which appears to have undermined women's agency as mothers in lineage and clan politics.[31]

Fostering served several purposes in North Nyanza and its daughter societies, only one of which was to provide a son for a senior wife. It was also a way of marking the rights various kin – maternal and paternal – held in the children and, more basically, a means of redistributing children in order to balance labour and produce among members of the lineage and of the society in general.[32] Speakers of North Nyanza made a clear distinction between the acts of giving a child out to be fostered or adopted and of taking a child in to the family. It is likely that the North Nyanza verb for 'foster a child out' was *-*wereka* [40]. This meaning was derived from an older verb used by speakers of Great Lakes Bantu, namely *-*pereka* 'to entrust, hand over temporarily'. This verb in turn was derived from *-*pédik-* 'hand over', which is an ancient Bantu word.[33] Speakers of North Nyanza's sister language, Rutara, innovated the different but related meaning of 'entrust cattle' for *-*hereka*, their reflex of the verb. It seems likely that North Nyanzans and Rutarans inherited the verb from their West Nyanza-speaking ancestors who had given it the meaning of 'entrust a valuable life' without specifying between humans and cattle. The reason that there is some uncertainty whether this was the North Nyanza verb for 'foster a child out' is the distribution of the reflexes. It is only found in Luganda which is the North Nyanzan language closest to Lunyoro and Runyankore, the Rutaran languages that have the

---

[31] See chapter 6.

[32] As Claude Meillassoux puts it, "individual procreative capacity is not linked to productive capacity…". The balance is redressed "through redistributing offspring rather than produce." *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 58.

[33] Bastin and Schadeberg, "BLR 3," R.N. Main 2427; Malcolm Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages*, vol. 4 (Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1970), 44, Comparative Series (C.S.) 1462.

reflexes meaning 'entrust cattle'. However, the antiquity of the underlying verb and its prevalence throughout Great Lakes Bantu language sub-groups is evidence in favour of the innovation in meaning having occurred first in West Nyanza and then narrowing in North Nyanza. The temporary nature of such fostering in North Nyanzan society suggested by the etymology of this verb was further stressed in Buganda. This is reflected in the Luganda proverb, *Mperese efa waaboyo mirembe* ('If a foster child dies at home there will be peace [but if she or he dies at the foster home there will not be peace]').[34] After the fostering process had occurred, the birth parents of a child fostered out retained an interest in the child and her or his wellbeing.

At some point after the break up of North Nyanza, either when South Kyoga was spoken or even after it had in turn dissolved into Lusoga and East Kyoga, *-*wereka* [40] ceased to be used except by Luganda speakers. No new word was innovated to refer exclusively to the act of fostering a child out. Speakers of South Kyoga and its descendants instead used the two ancient verbs with the meanings 'give' or 'distribute', namely *-*wa* and *-*gaba*. The exception to this were speakers of Lugwere who gave a new meaning to a verb borrowed from their Ateso speaking neighbours to describe the practice of fostering out or entrusting. The Lugwere reflex of this verb is *-*jooka* [21]. It is predominantly used to mean 'entrust livestock' but also has the meaning 'foster a child out'. The Ateso verb *ai-jukar* is of proto-Nilo-Saharan origin where it had the meaning 'prod' or 'push'. As we will see below, Bagwere also borrowed a Nilotic verb to describe the practice of fostering-in a child. And yet we know that the practice of fostering

[34] Henri Le Veux, *Premier Essai de Vocabulaire Luganda-Français d'Après l'Ordre Étymologique* (Algiers: Imprimerie des Missionaires d'Afrique (Pères Blancs), 1917), 1025*; Ferdinand Walser, *Luganda Proverbs* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1982), 252, #2798.

children between families or households was well established before Bagwere had extensive contacts with Iteso. That Bagwere borrowed a new term for an existing practice suggests two possibilities. The first is that there was something sufficiently different in Teso fostering as experienced by Bagwere that they felt the need to adopt an Ateso word to name the practice. The second, and they are not mutually exclusive, is that Ateso-speakers who married into Lugwere-speaking households dominated the discourse on fostering in their new linguistic environment. The innovation of this term also points to fostering being practiced across and between the communities. Because men could marry another wife if they did not have children with one, fostering would have been most important to women and they would have been the primary actors in such practices. In contexts where fostering occurred between linguistic or ethnic communities, women as future (social) mothers were conduits for the flow of meanings and practices between distinct groups.

North Nyanzans inherited the verb **-fuura* [11] for 'foster a child in' from their West Nyanzan speaking ancestors who innovated it from an older Great Lakes Bantu verb. The word **-fuura* had the meanings 'to pour' and 'to bend a bow' in Great Lakes Bantu but West Nyanza-speakers gave it two new and related meanings. The first of these was 'to change' and the second meaning was 'to adopt'. The dual meanings of change and adopt indicate some degree of permanence to the transaction with the child changing parents and home. West Nyanzans may have innovated this verb and the practice it described in response to the threat posed by **-cweke*, the condition of being childless or heirless. This would explain an underlying notion of permanence, something which fell away in North Nyanza along with the concept of **-cweke*.

After the break up of North Nyanza, Luganda speakers continued to use *-fuula*[35] to talk about fostering-in, but South Kyogans used the more general term **-yamba* [42] 'help'. Lusoga speakers later derived a noun from the verb **-yamba* to describe an orphan, *kateyamba*, which has the literal meaning 'helpless person'. It is likely that this verb was used only to describe the fostering of a needy child and was not used in the context of a senior wife or *kairu* fostering a co-wife's child.

South Kyogans also borrowed a verb from neighbours speaking Nilo-Saharan languages, namely **-piita* [35] which could be applied both to children and to calves. This is reminiscent of the older West Nyanza meanings for **-wereka* [40] discussed above. In Dholuo, spoken today in Western Kenya, the transitive verb *pidho* has the meaning 'foster',[36] while in Ateso, the speakers of which live interspersed with the Bagwere, the verb *ai-pit* means 'breed, rear'.[37] After the dissolution of South Kyoga, Basoga retained only the meaning related to livestock and Bagwere used the verb only to refer to the practice of fostering children. The borrowing of this term from speakers of an unrelated language again suggests that fostering occurred cross-culturally and not only within individual cultural and linguistic groups. David Cohen has noted that among the best understood Luo group in Busoga – the Owiny Karuoth – marriage ideally occurred with non-Luo and furthermore, the sons of Owiny Karuoth men should be raised by the Bantu kin of their mothers.[38] Although Cohen makes no mention of it, it is likely that the inverse was also true.

---

[35] The Luganda reflex of **-fuula*.

[36] Asenath Bole Odaga, *English-Dholuo Dictionary* (Kisumu: Lake Publishers, 1997), 75.

[37] J.H. Hilders and J.C.D. Lawrance, *An English-Ateso and Ateso-English Vocabulary* (Nairobi and Kampala: The Eagle Press, 1958), 51.

[38] David William Cohen, "The Face of Contact: A Model of a Cultural and Linguistic Frontier in Early Eastern Uganda," in *Nilotic Studies: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Languages and History of the Nilotic*

The adoption by South Kyoga speakers of the Luo term for fostering points to this having been a widespread practice. The presence of Luo loan words for practices such as fostering and elopement[39] in South Kyoga gives us insight into Bantu-Luo relations beyond the court and into the lives of non-elite Luo-speakers.[40]

Women who faced obstacles to becoming mothers because of their own infertility or their husbands' impotence, thus, had other possibilities to access social motherhood. As North Nyanza and then South Kyoga gave way to their daughter languages, the different social and political contexts that emerged were reflected in approaches to social motherhood. In Busoga, where social motherhood was given prominence with the requirement that the heir be the son of the senior wife, such opportunities remained prevalent. In Buganda, where women largely accessed social status through biological motherhood, the options for fostering came to be more limited.

Prenatal and Postpartum Practices

For all North Nyanza women and their Ganda, Soga, Gwere and Shana descendants biological reproduction would have been the most common route to motherhood. In order to ensure successful biological reproduction a pregnant North Nyanzan woman, *-*ba nda* [1],[41] had

---

Peoples, Cologne, January 4-6, 1982, ed. Rainer Vosser and Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst, vol. 2 (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1982), 352-53.

[39] For a discussion of terms related to elopement, see chapter 4.

[40] This builds on work by David William Cohen on the 'Bantu borderlands' and the ways in which Luo- and Bantu-speaking peoples interacted in those borderlands. See "The Cultural Topography of a 'Bantu Borderland': Busoga, 1500-1850" *Journal of African History* 29 (1988): 57-79; idem, "The Face of Contact."

[41] This translates literally as 'to be a womb/stomach'.

to follow several avoidances. These were known by the same name as the food avoidance totems of clans,[42] **miziro* [43]. The word is probably of proto-Bantu origin and taboos and avoidances are an ancient feature of Bantu societies.[43] By imposing these **miziro* on the women who had married a clan member, a man's kin marked the pregnancy and thus the child as belonging to them. Among the societies descended from North Nyanza, many of these avoidances were specific to individual clans and so we can be confident that this was also case for North Nyanzans. One general avoidance practiced by pregnant North Nyanza women was to avoid shaking hands, particularly with men.[44]

In Buganda there were a number of general food avoidances that all pregnant women were supposed to follow, regardless of which clan they had married into. These included rock salt (as opposed to salt produced from reed ash) and *gonja* bananas.[45] There were also general behavioural avoidances for pregnant women, including not passing a man in a doorway or

---

[42] For more on the history of clans in the region, please see Neil Kodesh, "Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Collective Well-Being in Buganda" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 2004) and David William Cohen, *The Historical Tradition of Busoga: Mukama and Kintu* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). See also, David Newbury, *Kings and Clans: Ijwi Island and the Lake Kivu Rift, 1780-1840* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991).

[43] Bastin and Schadeberg, "BLR 3," R.N. Der. 1400 (Derived from R.N. Main 1394); Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu*, vol. 3, 218, C.S. 822. For a discussion of pregnancy taboos in some other Bantu societies, see Rhonda Gonzales, "Continuity and Change: Thought, Belief, and Practice in the History of the Ruvu Peoples of Central East Tanzania, ca. 200 B.C. to A.D. 1800" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002), 110.

[44] Ronald R. Atkinson, *Bugwere Historical Texts* (n.p.), Text 24. (Hereafter referred to as Atkinson, *BHT*.); Mair, *African People*, 39; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a, interview by author, 16 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05.

[45] Julien Gorju, *Entre le Victoria, l'Albert et l'Edouard: Ethnographie de la Partie Anglaise du Vicariat de l'Uganda* (Rennes: Imprimeries Oberthür, 1920), 327; Apolo Kagwa, *Ekitabo kye Mpisa za Baganda [The Customs of the Baganda in the Luganda Language]* (Kampala: Uganda Printing and Publishing, 1918), 180-1; Mair, *African People*, 39; John Roscoe, *The Baganda: An Account of their Native Customs and Beliefs* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1911; reprint Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints, n.d.), 49 (page citations are to the reprint edition). *Gonja* bananas are sweet bananas that are usually roasted or boiled.

stepping over his feet,[46] not sitting on a man's bed or washing from the same water pot as him. These last two can be understood as code for adultery in part because of the unlikelihood of their occurring unless a woman was in an intimate relationship with a man and in part because doing them would have the same result as adultery, namely the disease *amakiro* [25].[47] *Amakiro* afflicted women throughout North Nyanzan societies and was always associated with adultery during pregnancy, either by the expectant mother or her husband. If left untreated, its most extreme symptom was believed to be that the mother would attempt to eat her baby immediately after it was born.[48] In Bugwere, the most common cause given was adultery on the part of the husband but it would also afflict a pregnant woman who had herself committed adultery. [49] In Busoga the main cause was said to be sitting on a stool on which a man had sat.[50] This, too, can be understood as code for extra-marital sex. *Amakiro*, then, was the physical representation of broader social anxieties about the need for the *pater* and the *genitor* to be same man.

Aside from the general avoidances for all pregnant Baganda women, there were also clan-specific avoidances. A woman who had married into the Oribi clan, for example, "might not lift up the leaves of the *ntula* – one of the forbidden fruits – to look underneath for the berries," and one who had married into the Wild Rat clan "had to take a stick with her when

---

[46] This symbolised sexual intercourse. See the discussions on *kukuza* in chapter 4 and chapter 5.

[47] Gorju, *Vicariat de l'Uganda*, 326; Kagwa, *Mpisa za Baganda*, 181; Mair, *African People*, 40; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 49.

[48] Mair, *African People*, 40; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04; GW-ETH-KAD-F-17/11/04; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; SO-ETH-NAK-F-08/03/05, interview by author, 8 March 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author. For a study of *amakiro* from a modern psychiatric perspective, please see John L. Cox, "Amakiro: A Uganda Puerperal Psychosis?" *Social Psychiatry* 14 (1979): 49-52.

[49] GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04; GW-ETH-KAD-F-17/11/04.

[50] SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; SO-ETH-KIS-M-23/01/05, interview by author, 23 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-ETH-KIT-F-21/01/05.

walking along a narrow path, and push aside the grass so that it did not touch her." Should a pregnant woman break the avoidance of her husband's clan she risked miscarriage or a still-birth.[51] By following these *miziro* or taboos a woman marked her pregnancy and the child that would ensue from it as belonging to her husband's clan.

Other than not shaking hands and avoiding adulterous relationships, the avoidances for pregnant Basoga women were all clan-specific. A woman married to a mwiseBandha, for example, was not to eat salt during her pregnancy,[52] one married to a mwiseKisige should not step over the exposed roots of a tree but instead walk around them, [53] while a mwiseIbaale woman should not allow a man who was not her clansman to touch her.[54] In all these cases, if a woman breached the avoidance she risked miscarriage. In the abaiseKaibaale clan, should a woman give birth when visiting her natal home she would bring *kitalo*[55] on her family. The risk was particularly grave if she gave birth to twins.[56] *Kitalo*, in this context, was the consequence of a serious breach of clan avoidances, such as committing incest, and purification rites had to be performed should it arise. In Soga moral logic, childbirth occurred within marriage at the father's homestead and children belonged to their father's clan. If a child was born in its mother's natal home this complicated his or her social identity, something which had

---

[51] Mair, *African People*, 40-1.

[52] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 14.

[53] SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05.

[54] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 41. Note that in this case the taboo is from the expectant mother's clan and not from her husband's clan.

[55] *Kitalo* glosses as "omen, taboo after incest, fabulous, incestuous, marvel, forbidden, unmentionable, banned, prohibited, proscribed, outlawed, inviolable". *Dictionary Lusoga-English English-Lusoga* (Jinja: Cultural Research Centre, 2000), part I, 69.

[56] SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05.

consequences for both the maternal and paternal kin: the rights of paternal kin to the child as a member of their lineage and clan was challenged and the ability of the child to carry out ritually dangerous tasks for its maternal kin could also be undermined by being born among them.[57]

In Bugwere, too, most of the **miziro* for pregnant women were clan-specific, although there was considerable overlap among them. For example, in the Bakatikoko, Bakalijoko and Balalaka clans pregnant wives were forbidden from eating intestines.[58] And in several clans, if a pregnant woman was called from behind she should either turn without answering or she should not turn around at all.[59] The Bakatikoko forbade their daughters-in-law from visiting their parents' home when they were pregnant, while the Bakalijoko forbade them from entering their parents' house although they could visit the compound.[60] It is likely that this was, as in Busoga, to avoid the problematic and potentially dangerous consequences of a woman giving birth in her natal home.

The taboos controlling behaviour and consumption during pregnancy, thus, tend to be explained in the ethnographic literature and by informants in terms of the physiological consequences of breaking them, although, this is not always the case. In Busoga and Bugwere, in particular, the concept of *kitalo* is invoked, pointing to the broader social repercussions if a woman violated the cultural restrictions her husband's clan imposed on her. The multiple clan-specific avoidances suggest an anxiety within patrilineages and patriclans to lay claim to the

---

[57] As David William Cohen notes, although Soga princes were often raised in their mother's homes they should be born in their father's palace. *Womunafu's Bunafu: A Study of Authority in a Nineteenth-Century African Community* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 27.

[58] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 38; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a.

[59] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text, 24, Text 38, Text 47; GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04.

[60] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04.

children born to their sons' wives, women who married into the clan but who retained their natal clan identity. From the time that North Nyanza began to give way to Luganda and South Kyoga through to the division of South Kyoga into Lusoga and East Kyoga, the people speaking these languages experienced medium-term climatic change in the form of drier and wetter cycles with the last of these being dry and running from 1200 to 1450.[61] While the impact of this climatic variation was greater in the savannah to the west, North Nyanza-speakers and their descendants were also affected. This period from the late first millennium to the fifteenth century was one of creating new communities to the east in areas where population densities were probably thin. Towards the end of the period South Kyogans had increasing contacts with speakers of Luo languages. Such contacts resulted in marriage alliances across the communities as newcomers sought to establish their position. In contexts such as this, there was a premium on incorporating outsiders (Bantu and non-Bantu-speaking) in order to establish more numerous and thus more secure settlements. There was also a premium on claiming children born to the sons of the community. Through clan-specific taboos members of the patriclan marked the unborn child as theirs and reminded the future mother that although she was not of her husband's clan, the fruits of her labour – productive and reproductive – belonged to it.

After a woman had given birth, clan customs also dictated the manner in which the placenta should be disposed of. North Nyanzans innovated a new noun for placenta **kitani* [40] and they viewed it as the twin of the new-born infant. This belief is expressed in the Lugwere proverb, *Aminamina ekitani abyalisya eirongo* ('She who keeps turning over the placenta causes the birth of twins'). The proverb is understood to mean that if you keep looking for a problem it

[61] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 221.

will arise, but it derives from the belief that the placenta had the potential of becoming a baby.[62] The North Nyanzan belief that the placenta was almost a baby meant that it was also understood to have a spirit or *muzimu*[63] and so had to be correctly disposed of and respected in order to avoid any misfortune being brought upon the family and lineage. The placenta was buried either at the base of a banana plant or inside or by the doorway of the house, [64] according to clan custom. Regardless of clan, if the placenta was buried under a banana plant, different types of banana plants were selected according to the sex of the child and if it was buried in the house or at the doorway it was buried on the left-hand side for a girl and on the right-hand side for a boy.[65] This continued after the break up of North Nyanza with, for example, the Bakatikoko clan of Bugwere burying the placenta at the base of a banana plant. Gwere custom dictated that a *mwiwa* (the child of a female lineage member) had to eat the first harvest of fruit from the plant and the parents should never eat its fruit.[66] In Buganda, only the grandparents could eat the fruit or drink the beer of a banana plant under which a placenta had been buried.[67] Just as with the

---

[62] Andrew Wabwezi, "The Bagwere Proverbs" (B.A. diss., Makerere University, 2004), 15-16.

[63] Mair, *African People*, 42; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 54-55. Please see Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 182-83, R.N.278 for the etymology and distribution of this noun, and see Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 196-98 for a discussion of history of these particular spirits in the Great Lakes region.

[64] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 14, Text 41, Text 287, Text 380, Text 458, Text 515; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 52, 57; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 214; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; SO-ETH-KIT-F-19/01/05, interview by author, 23 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05.

[65] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 14, Text 287 and Text 380; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 52, 57; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 214; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a. See chapter 5 for a discussion of the relationship between specific forms of food production and rites surrounding childbirth.

[66] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a.

[67] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 54-55.

pregnancy taboos, the clan-specific practices with regard to the placenta were a way of marking the fact that the child and its placenta 'twin' belonged to the father's clan.

At the time that North Nyanza was spoken, towards the end of the first millennium, a new mother and her baby remained secluded in the house in which she had given birth until the stump of the infant's umbilical cord had dried and fallen off. When they emerged from seclusion, a ceremony was performed to establish the legitimacy of the child and therefore his or her membership in the father's clan.[68] As with the placenta, the umbilical cord was treated according to clan customs – in some clans it was discarded along with other rubbish swept out of the house, while in others it was preserved in barkcloth.[69] The umbilical cords of twins, however, were always preserved in elaborate barkcloth and shell wrappings.[70] After the break up of North Nyanza, the practice of keeping the umbilical cord became less widespread. In Bugwere and Busoga umbilical cords were kept or discarded entirely according to clan custom. For example, the Bagolya, Bakatikoko and Baganza clans in Bugwere were known for preserving umbilical cords whereas the Bakalijooko discarded them.[71] In Buganda the umbilical cords of all infants were kept at least until they had been used in the test of legitimacy. In that ceremony the umbilical cord was dropped in a container of water: if it floated the child was

---

[68] Mair, *African People*, 56-59; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 61-62; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 214; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b.

[69] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 63; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 213; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05.

[70] Twins were feared and respected in North Nyanza and in its daughter societies and special precautions and rites were performed at their birth. Mair, *African People*, 48; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 70; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05.

[71] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04.

recognised as a member of the clan and if it sank the mother was accused of adultery.[72] This had to be performed before the child was named because children were given the names of deceased clan members. After the cords had been tested in this manner, they were either kept or not according to the practice of the child's clan.[73] This ceremony reflects an intensification among Baganda of the anxiety over the need for the *pater* and *genitor* to be recognised as the same man.

Baganda performed a ritual when the new mother and her infant were brought out of the house in which they had been in seclusion after the birth. This was performed some time before the ceremony to test the legitimacy of the infant as a member of her father's clan. The ritual was referred to as *kukuza eggwanga ly'ekika* which Lucy Mair translates as "to protect all the people of the clan."[74] The verb *kukuza* literally means 'bring up, rear, allow to grow' but the verb is used to talk about several different rituals that are performed throughout the life-cycle. During the 'bringing out' the new mother and her husband performed a series of acts that symbolized sexual intercourse and which removed the taboo requiring abstinence on the part of the new father with reference to all women.[75]

In Bugwere, the *okutoolaku* or 'bringing out' of the new mother and her child coincided with the ceremony to test the legitimacy of the child and *kwerula*[76] or the giving of a clan name to the child. The new mother's parents were informed that she was to be brought out and they

---

[72] Gorju, *Vicariat de l'Uganda*, 337; Mair, *African People*, 56-59; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 61-62.

[73] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 62-63.

[74] Mair, *African People*, 43.

[75] Gorju, *Vicariat de l'Uganda*, 338; Mair, *African People*, 42-43; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 55. See chapter 4 and chapter 5 for discussion of the *kukuza* rite in other contexts.

[76] "To name, give a name at birth especially a name of one of the ancestors," "Lugwere-English wordlist" (Summer Institute of Languages Lugwere Translation Project, n.p.).

brought a cow and other food.[77] Meanwhile, the *isenga* or paternal aunt of the new father roasted groundnuts, sesame, white peas and Bambara nuts and the new father's *mwiwa* (the child of a female lineage member) gave them to the new mother to eat. This was called *kulya embenenwa* or eating 'embenenwa'.[78] It was believed that the baby of a woman who had committed adultery would fall sick and die if she ate the *embenenwa*.[79] Once the child had been shown to be a member of his or her father's clan then an ancestor's name was chosen. The particular way of doing this varied from clan to clan, in some the mother-in-law would hold the child, putting her to her mother's breast while naming her. In another clan, two chicks would be given different names then they would be thrown onto the roof. The name of whichever fell down to the ground first would be given to the baby. In yet other clans a diviner might be consulted.[80] Usually the first name to be given was that of the father's maternal grandmother or his paternal grandfather. But there were people whose names were not used, including lepers, people who had committed suicide and barren women.[81]

Basoga called the ritual of "bringing out" the new mother and her baby *kufulumya* (*omwana*) and it varied from clan to clan. The main difference was in the food used to test the legitimacy of the child – some clans used only sesame and other seeds like in Bugwere, while

---

[77] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 24.

[78] The only translation I was able to get for this is from a wordlist compiled by the Summer Institute of Language Bible Translation Project for Lugwere which gives the meaning as 'cartilage'. All my informants insisted that the only meaning was as a name for this meal given to a new mother on coming out of her post-partum seclusion. It is possible that the roasted nuts and sesame had the consistency of cartilage and so the same noun was used.

[79] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b.

[80] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 24; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b.

[81] GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04.

others also used small fish called *enfulu*.[82] The use of *enfulu* occurred in clans which have strong traditions connected to fishing.[83] Once this ritual had been performed the child was welcomed as a new member of the clan. The timing of *kufulumya* depended, in some clans at least, on the agricultural calendar. During the millet sowing season, it had to be performed almost immediately because lineage members could not sow the millet until the ritual was completed.[84] Perhaps due to its status as one of the longest cultivated of the staple crops, millet appears to have been closely linked to fertility. This is likely to be the reason for the prohibition on sowing the crop while a member of the household remained in postnatal seclusion.[85] A few days later the name of a clan ancestor would be given to the child. In Busoga, the naming of a child was called either *okugulika omwana*[86] or *okwalula omwana*.[87] In order to choose a name, two chickens were named and thrown onto the roof of the house, as in Bugwere, and the name of the first to descend was given to the baby.[88] Here, also, there were ancestors whose names were not used: those who had committed suicide and those who had suffered from epilepsy. And

[82] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 268, Text 380, Text 493, Text 515; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 216; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05. *Enfulu* resemble whitebait.

[83] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 268 – Comment by Cohen inserted in the text.

[84] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 287 and Text 468.

[85] Please see chapter 5.

[86] This means 'to name after the ancestor'. *Lusoga-English*, part I, 41.

[87] Cohen translates this as 'differentiate' and connects it to distinguishing the girls and boys (*CTBTH*, Text 515, fn. 13.) but the Lusoga verb meaning 'differentiate or separate' is *kwâwulá* and *kwálúlá* translates as 'to hatch' (*Lusoga-English*, part I, 2, 3). Given the use of chickens in the naming process and the symbolism involved in giving a child a clan name, it is not difficult to see why this word would have been chosen. In addition, none of my informants and none of the pre-existing ethnography suggested that the naming ceremony was particularly connected to publicly gendering infants.

[88] SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05; SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05; SO-ETH-KIT-F-21/01/05.

should more than one child named after the same ancestor die in infancy, the spirit of that ancestor was held responsible and his or her name would no longer be passed on.[89]

All of these rituals were more elaborate if a woman gave birth to twins and additional ceremonies were performed. Twins were both honoured and feared in North Nyanzan societies but the parents of twins were granted special respect and this was demonstrated by giving them honorific titles. It is likely that this practice existed in North Nyanza, but because each of the daughter societies has different titles it is not possible to reconstruct the North Nyanzan titles. Baganda called the mother of twins *Nnalongo* which is a contraction of *nyina wa balongo* "mother of twins". In neighbouring Busoga she was called *Nabirye* the etymology of which is less straightforward but is derived from the name given to a first born girl twin, Babirye.[90] While the Luganda term fits into the pattern seen in West Nyanza languages, the Lusoga term is quite distinct. The Lugwere term *mabangi* was borrowed from speakers of Nilo-Saharan languages. The noun for twin in Ateso is *ibaŋit*,[91] while in Lwo the noun for the mother of twins is *min baŋŋi*.[92] As with the terms connected to the fostering of children, that this noun was borrowed from Nilotic speakers strongly points to the role of mothers from both communities in introducing new terms to name shared social institutions within the family.[93]

---

[89] Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 214.

[90] Shigeki Kaji suggests that the Nkore form of this name for the eldest girl twin – Ba:bírye – is derived from the verb *-rya* 'eat'. *A Runyankore Vocabulary* (Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2004), 218.

[91] Hilders and Lawrance, *English-Ateso*, 31.

[92] Alexander Odonga, *Lwo-English Dictionary* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2005), 23.

[93] Further research looking at eastern Uganda more broadly and the many and varied groups which live there today and which lived there in the past would extend our understanding of the nature of those interactions and the extent to which Bantu terms were adopted by speakers of other languages.

*****

From the time that North Nyanza was spoken in the late first millennium through to the break up of South Kyoga into Lusoga and East Kyoga in the mid-second millennium, the people speaking these languages had to negotiate the settlement of new lands, the transition to more permanent and more densely populated communities and the emergence of new polities. It is in this context that this exploration of how women became mothers is set. As North Nyanzans gradually expanded into new lands and as they negotiated the medium-term climatic variability that characterized this period, they placed a premium on developing sustainable communities. While their West Nyanza-speaking ancestors had focused their anxieties about the future health of the community on the condition of being heirless **-cweke*, North Nyanza speakers resolved this potential problem through collateral succession and social motherhood. Practices of fostering, particularly between female members of the same kin group, underlay this conception of social motherhood. From the early second millennium, once Luganda and South Kyoga were being spoken, the situation changed. Baganda sought to reinforce existing communities that were centred on fertile banana plantations. They expressed a growing concern that the *pater* and *genitor* be the same man through an emphasis on biological motherhood as the way for a woman to secure her position within the household and the development of post-partum rituals to test legitimacy. South Kyogans meanwhile faced the ongoing challenges of establishing new communities as they settled further east to the north of Lake Victoria-Nyanza. In this context, social motherhood remained strong. Indeed, it was strengthened through the growing interactions between speakers of South Kyoga and people speaking Luo languages from the mid-millennium onwards. While marriage alliances were a key mode of incorporating new people

into communities, fostering was also important. Its importance in cross-linguistic or cross-cultural contexts is demonstrated through the borrowing of Luo and Ateso words for long-established North Nyanza practices. Although for different reasons, in both contexts – that of sustaining communities through the control of who had access to assets and that of establishing new communities through the incorporation of outsiders – patriclans worked hard to mark their sons' children as belonging to the clan. They did this through requiring the women who married into the clan to follow specific taboos during pregnancy and perform specific post-partum rituals.

Becoming a mother in North Nyanza, thus, required being enmeshed in a network of clan and lineage relations. Establishing the lineage and, hence, the clan of the child was important, both to the patrilineage to which she or he would belong and to the kin of the mother. As we will see in chapter 4, the children of a female lineage member had an important, even vital, role in the affairs of her clan and lineage. That role could only safely be performed by children whose paternity, and hence whose clan, was well established. North Nyanzan women who faced the social and moral disaster of infertility were not automatically denied motherhood as the possibility of fostering a child from a related co-wife existed. This was, however, contingent on a woman's status in her husband's household. As Luganda speakers diverged from their South Kyoga speaking relatives, they restricted this option as a growing emphasis on biological motherhood meant that the senior wife no longer had to be the mother of the heir. The continued importance that South Kyoga speakers and their descendants placed in social motherhood, reflected in the necessity for the senior wife to be a mother, had broader implications for social organisation in those regions. It is motherhood's role in social organisation that we turn to next.

Chapter Four

Motherhood, Marriage and Kinship

Living on the north-western shore of Lake Victoria-Nyanza towards the end of the first millennium, speakers of proto-North Nyanza inhabited a changing world. This was a time of technological transition from what archaeologists call the early Iron Age to the late Iron Age, of agricultural change as North Nyanzans increasingly cultivated bananas, and of political innovation as power bases increasingly centred around royalty. Towards the beginning of this period, North Nyanzans would have placed a premium on the creation of secure communities as they gradually expanded across the landscape creating new settlements with each generation. As they did this, they used the relationships and alliances created through marriage and motherhood to protect the current and future well-being of their communities. These forms of social organization in turn shaped the ways in which ambitious men and their mothers mobilised political support and sustained the control of political power within royal families across generations. While the Luganda-speaking descendants of North Nyanzans gradually created denser settlements, South Kyogans lived in situations which more closely approximated the internal frontier model.[1] People speaking proto-South Kyoga from the early second millennium onwards slowly settled to the east and north-east of the North Nyanzan heartland. In so doing, they not only created new, and thus at times precarious, settlements, but they also interacted with

[1] Igor Kopytoff, *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987). See also, Kairn Klieman, *"The Pygmies were our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Times to c. 1900 C.E.* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003), 69-78 in particular; David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, A Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Oxford: James Currey, 1998), passim.

people who spoke different languages and practiced different cultures. The latter was particularly the case towards the end of the South Kyogan period and into the centuries during which Lusoga and East Kyoga were spoken. On this ongoing internal frontier, South Kyogans and their descendants used a conceptualisation of social motherhood both to ensure the health of their communities and to live with and alongside Luo-speaking immigrants. Baganda, by contrast, faced different pressures and opportunities which centred around growing political centralisation and increasing competition for the most fertile agricultural land. As we saw in chapter 3, they gave a greater prominence to biological motherhood in social and political organization.

Studies of the social organization of African communities, including marriage and motherhood, tend to place men at the centre of the story. In this analysis, marriage is about men exchanging women and forging new relationships through the transaction; motherhood is about men gaining new members for their group, at the levels of household, lineage and clan.[2] How does our understanding of social organization change when we place mothers at the heart of the analysis? North Nyanza and its descendant linguistic groups followed patrilineal descent and yet, when we re-examine social relationships such as that of maternal uncle and sororal nephew, it is clear that the label patrilineal does not adequately describe the social and ideological realities of people's lives in the region. This chapter traces the history of two interrelated facets of life in North Nyanza – the connections between motherhood and marriage and the claims and

[2] See among other, Edward E. Evans-Pritchard, *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951); Meyer Fortes, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi: the Second Part of an Analysis of the Social Structure of a Trans-Volta Tribe* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949); Claude Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage* (London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1950); Paul Riesman, *First Find Your Child a Good Mother: The Construction of Self in Two African Communities* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

responsibilities that connected a woman's children to her kin. In so doing I seek to develop a new understanding of the changing ways in which people in east-central Uganda organized the communities in which they lived; an understanding that recognises the importance North Nyanzans gave to the networks of connections that were formed by and through mothers.

Motherhood – in the moral logic of North Nyanza society – occurred within marriage. Because North Nyanzan descent followed the male line it was of the utmost importance that children should have a socially recognised father. Recurring themes about the dangers of adultery[3] strongly suggest a concern that the *pater* and *genitor* be the same man. Yet the historical linguistic evidence also tells us that North Nyanzans gave women active roles in marriage, in contrast to other speech communities in the Great Lakes region. By following the evidence from word etymologies and comparative ethnography, this chapter looks at the new social meanings given to marriage and to motherhood within it in North Nyanza society and examines the ways in which those new meanings unfolded as that society broke up.

People speaking proto-North Nyanza and the languages descended from it formed a northern borderlands world in which they interacted with people speaking different languages and following different cultural practices. This was particularly the case for the speech communities which settled the lands to the east and north of the proto-North Nyanza homeland. From about the sixteenth century, as Lusoga came to be clearly distinguished from East Kyoga, Basoga came into increasing contact with Luo-speakers. The history of the Luo and their migration southwards from the Bahr-al-Ghazal through northern and eastern Uganda and to

[3] We saw in chapter 3, for example, how adultery by either party during a woman's pregnancy could lead to the potentially fatal disease *amakiro*.

south-western Kenya shows a pattern of interaction with existing populations.[4] While in some places such interactions led to the integration of existing populations into Luo culture,[5] in Busoga this was largely reversed as the Luo adopted Lusoga as their language.[6] David Cohen has written extensively on the political influence of these once Luo-speaking groups in Busoga, forming as they did the ruling lineages in many Soga states.[7] Interactions between Luo and Soga peoples led to changes throughout Soga society, including in marriage and fostering. It was not only in Busoga that interactions with Luo groups had such effects. To the east, speakers of East Kyoga also adopted aspects of Luo social and cultural life. More recently Bagwere came into contact with speakers of another branch of Nilotic languages – the Iteso – and, again, incorporated elements of Teso culture into their own. The interactions of the ancestors of North Nyanza-speaking peoples with other linguistic and cultural groups are fairly well documented, especially in the economic fields of cultivation and herding.[8] More recent political connections between (once-)Luo-speaking groups and speakers of Great Lakes Bantu languages have been the focus of considerable study, especially with reference to Bunyoro and, less convincingly,

---

[4] For an overview of the Luo migration, please see David William Cohen, "The River-Lake Nilotes from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century," in *Zamani: A Survey of East African History*, 2nd ed., ed. Bethwell A. Ogot (Nairobi: Longman, 1974), 135-49. For a more detailed history, please see Bethwell Alan Ogot, *A History of the Southern Luo. Volume One: Migration and Settlement* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House. 1967).

[5] David William Cohen, *The Historical Tradition of Busoga: Mukama and Kintu* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 126.

[6] David William Cohen, "The Face of Contact: A Model of a Cultural and Linguistics Frontier in Early Eastern Uganda," in *Nilotic Studies: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Languages and History of the Nilotic Peoples, Cologne, January 4-6, 1982*, ed. Rainer Vosser and Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst, vol.2 (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1982), 341.

[7] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*; idem, *Womunafu's Bunafu: A Study of Authority in a Nineteenth-Century African Community* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

[8] David Lee Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat: Ancient Agriculture Between the Great Lakes." *Journal of African History* 34 (1993): 9-22.

Buganda.[9] The emphasis in these studies is on an immigrant elite introducing centralised governance. Writing about Soga states from the seventeenth century, Cohen has shown how immigrant Luo-speakers formed new states or took power in existing one by creating networks of relationships with the indigenous population. They did this through exogamous marriage and by sending sons to live with their maternal non-Luo kin.[10] Working from the linguistic evidence it is clear that the repercussions of exogamous marriage patterns ran throughout society. It is those wider social interactions which facilitated the maintenance, if not the seizure, of power by this 'outsider' elite. Mothers were at the very heart of those interactions.

Marriage and Maternity

Women and girls in North Nyanza, and mothers in particular, found themselves at the centre of intersecting webs of patrilineages and patriclans. At birth they belonged to their father's lineage or **ssiga*[11] and to his clan or **kika* [22], but their mother's patriclan also had rights in them. As adults, it was taboo for them to marry someone of either their father's or their mother's clan. When they married into a third clan and became pregnant they had to follow the

[9] The Luo origin of the Nyoro rulers was first described by the missionary J.P. Crazzolara in his work *The Lwoo*, vol.1 (Verona: Editrice Nigrizia, 1950), 91-93, 101-04. Cited in Renée L. Tantala, "The Early History of Kitara in Western Uganda: Process Models of Religious and Political Change" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1989), 14-15. An early overview of the argument of the Luo influence in Buganda, Bunyoro and Nkole by one of its most prominent proponents is in Roland Oliver, "The Traditional Histories of Buganda, Bunyoro, and Nkole," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 85 (1955): 111-17. See also Christopher Wrigley, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 202-06.

[10] David William Cohen, "The Political Transformation of Northern Busoga, 1600-1900," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 22, no. 87 (1982): 465-88. In Busoga, ruling clans of several kingdoms are of Luo origin and the Soga kingdoms "were founded as a result of, or as a reaction to, the appearance of immigrant families… [among whom] were Nilotic Lwo groups." idem, *Mukama and Kintu*, 1. See also, idem, *Womunafu's Bunafu*.

[11] David Lee Schoenbrun, *The Historical Reconstruction of Great Lakes Bantu Cultural Vocabulary: Etymologies and Distributions* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1997), 85, Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 117.

avoidances and taboos of their husband's clan.[12] Their children belonged to that clan, again with the mother's clan retaining certain rights in them. The patrilineage and patriclan, however, had particularly strong interests in the children born to its sons. In the North Nyanzan moral world motherhood was supposed to occur within the confines of matrimony. This was because many people beyond the biological parents held interests in the children born to a woman. Those various interests were physically represented in the form of bridewealth given by the lineage of the man to the lineage of the woman.

The ideal form of marriage for North Nyanzans was not a single event but a process involving a number of stages.[13] A girl's parents, paternal aunt (**isenga* [19]), maternal uncle (**koiza* [26]) or other guardian, recognizing that she had reached physical maturity would look for a suitable husband for her. At the same time, her **isenga* instructed her about married life – how she should behave towards her husband and her in-laws, including in her sexual life with her husband.[14] As part of this preparation for marriage, she would teach her niece the art of 'labia-pulling' which elongated the labia minora (**enfuli* [13]) and was intended to make sex more pleasurable.[15] Once a suitable spouse had been agreed on, negotiations would start over the bridewealth he and his family should bring to his future in-laws (**bako*[16]).

---

[12] Ronald R. Atkinson, *Bugwere Historical Texts*, Text 24 (n.p.) (Hereafter referred to as *BHT*); David William Cohen, *Collected Texts of Busoga Traditional History*, Text 41 (n.p.) (Hereafter referred to as *CTBTH*). See also chapter 3.

[13] The importance of viewing marriage as processual is derived from Caroline Bledsoe and Barney Cohen, ed., *Social Dynamics of Adolescent Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1993), 48, but also builds on Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown, "Introduction," in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1950), 49.

[14] In Lusoga sexual instruction by the paternal aunt is referred to as 'collecting firewood' *okúghéréra*.

[15] Henri Le Veux, *Premier Essai de Vocabulaire Luganda-Français d'Après l'Ordre Étymologique* (Algiers: Imprimerie des Missionaires d'Afrique (Pères Blancs), 1917), 149; GW-ETH-BUD-F-30/11/04, interview by

North Nyanzans inherited a word from their Great Lakes Bantu-speaking ancestors to describe the action of the man and his relatives bringing bridewealth to his fiancée's family, **-kwa* [27]. David Schoenbrun posits that the nominal forms of this verb, **-kwe*[17] and **-kwano*,[18] found across the Great Lakes Bantu region and which he glosses as 'brideprice,' are derived from the noun **-ko* 'in-law'.[19] This, in turn, he reconstructs back to the Savannah great-grandparent of Great Lakes Bantu. Jan Vansina, however, suggests a proto-Western Bantu origin for **-ko* and a proto-Bantu origin for the related term **-kóéd-* 'to marry'.[20] Yvonne Bastin and Thilo Schadeberg have reconstructed the verb **-kó-* to proto-Bantu with the meaning 'give bridewealth'.[21] They reject Guthrie's reconstruction of the noun **-ko* 'relative by marriage'.[22] According to their analysis, North Nyanzans retained the same word to talk about the payment of

---

author, 30 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a, interview by author, 16 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04, interview by author, 11 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-ETH-KAL-F-21/01/05, interview by author, 21 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author. In Lugwere it is this process, and not the sexual instruction in general, that is described as 'collecting firewood' *okutyaba nkwi*.

[16] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 91, R.N.128.

[17] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 94-5, R.N.133.

[18] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 94, R.N.132.

[19] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 91-2, R.N.128.

[20] Jan Vansina, *Paths in the Rainforest: Toward a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 283-85, Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 33, R.N.35, R.N.36 and R.N.37.

[21] Yvonne Bastin and Thilo Schadeberg (eds.), "Bantu Lexical Reconstructions 3," Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, www.metafro.be/blr (accessed 28 August 2007), Reconstruction Number (R.N.) Main 7240. (Hereafter referred to as "BLR 3".)

[22] Bastin and Schadeberg, "BLR 3," R.N. Refused 1857. For Malcolm Guthrie's reconstructions see, *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages*, vol. 3 (Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1970), 287, Comparative Series (C.S.) 1092; see also 304, C.S. 1176 and 305, C.S. 1177.

bridewealth as their proto-Bantu-speaking ancestors. This makes the proliferation of other terms related to marriage in proto-North Nyanza and its daughter languages particularly intriguing.

The practice of giving bridewealth as part of the marriage contract is an ancient practice among Bantu-speaking and other communities. In North Nyanza, a marriage which followed the giving of bridewealth was the ideal sphere within which motherhood should occur because it connected all those with an interest in the offspring born to the marriage. As Cohen has noted for Busoga, "the goods paid over as brideprice would have been circulated through the lineage of the bride, with the understanding – in fact it is a highly durable contract – that if the marriage should break up a reasonably equivalent mix of goods would be returned to the lineage of the husband."[23] Through the distribution of the bridewealth among the lineage of the bride and their commitment to return it (or its equivalent) should the marriage fail, the two patrilineages became enmeshed in economic as well as social relationships. Claude Meillassoux's analysis of the relations of reproduction asserts that the "kinship relations resulting from marriage" are "relationships that form around the reproduction of individuals." While such relationships also result from birth, birth is subsumed within marriage because it is "only an event regulated by rules fixed at marriage".[24] For Cohen the relationship between "kinship relations resulting from marriage" and those resulting from birth is more complicated for the latter outlive the former. Even if a marriage should fail, if children had been born to it the *bako* relations formed would continue through the interests of the two lineages in those children.[25] This better reflects the

[23] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 51.

[24] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 38.

[25] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 99. See also, Radcliffe-Brown, "Introduction," 49, 51.

importance of relationships formed through the mother which, as we shall see, shaped much of North Nyanzan social life, as well as being crucial in politics.

Except for Luganda, all of the languages descended from North Nyanza have retained the verb **-kwa* to describe the act of bringing the bridewealth. Baganda use various terms to describe the bridewealth itself, with the most common of them being *òmwandù* and *òmùtwâlo*. The primary meanings of *òmùtwâlo* are 'load' or 'ten thousand' and it is derived from the verb *kùtwâla* meaning 'take' or 'carry'. The ethnographic record shows that in the nineteenth century, at least, bridewealth in Buganda was in large part paid in the form of cowries.[26] This would explain the use of the noun *òmùtwâlo*, because cowries were counted in much bigger numbers than, for example, cows or goats. The term *òmwandu* is, however, older and etymologically richer. Schoenbrun has reconstructed the term to Great Lakes Bantu in the form **-jàandu* (noun class 3/4) with the gloss "wealth, property (often reckoned in women or concerning the transfer of women)." In North Nyanza the meaning of **-jàandu* was extended to include widows who, on the death of their husband, were often inherited by his heir.[27] By the late nineteenth century, the most important meanings for *òmwandu* in Luganda were 'royal store for loot', 'loot of women, slaves and goods', 'harem' and 'wealth'.[28] This strongly suggests that the Ganda raiding expeditions of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the importation of vast

[26] Henri Le Veux, "Au Temps Jadis: Le Mariage des Baganda (au Victoria Nyanza)," Archives of the Kampala Archdiocese, Rubaga, Ref. 903, Folio 4, n.p., 7; Lucy Philip Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1934; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), 135-36 (page citations are to reprint edition).

[27] David Lee Schoenbrun, *Comparative Vocabularies for Violence, Vulnerability, and Social Standing in Great Lakes Bantu: Etymologies, Semantics and Distribution* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag), In Preparation.

[28] Le Veux, *Vocabulaire Luganda-Français*, 12.

numbers of women captives into Buganda[29] warped older understandings of the social value of women and the networks their maternity created.

Aside from the bridewealth given to the father and brothers of the bride, her mother also received special recognition. In Bugwere this took the form of a goat which was given to her after the wedding night.[30] Baganda grooms gave their mothers-in-law clothing in recognition of the taboo of avoidance that existed between them. They also gave them one thousand cowries "called *kasimu*, from the verb *kusima*, to approve, 'because he is pleased with her daughter'."[31] While the use of cowries may be a relatively recent development, especially in the quantities Lucy Mair describes, the underlying practice of giving a *kasimu* is probably older. Because there are similar practices in Bugwere and Buganda we can reconstruct the practice back to North Nyanza where the gift marked both an appreciation of the work of mothering and a recognition of the taboos created by the marriage between the groom and his mother-in-law.

Aside from the gifts they received, Baganda mothers were prominent in the preparations for and rites associated with marriage. It was they, and not the paternal aunt or any other woman, who had to wash the bride on the last day of her prenuptial seclusion.[32] Similarly it was the bride's mother who, together with her father, performed the cleansing rite, known as *kukuza*, immediately after the bride left her childhood home and on her first return visit with her husband. Mair noted that, "only her actual parents could do this, and to this day if the mother

---

[29] Richard Reid, *Political Power in Precolonial Buganda: Economy, Society and Warfare in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 116-23; Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 177, 236.

[30] GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04, interview by author, 27 October 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[31] Mair, *African People*, 82.

[32] Mair, *African People*, 84.

has left her husband she is expressly fetched back for it and may stay with him for the whole period between the two occasions."[33] The *kukuza* rite consisted of a man stepping over the outstretched legs of his wife and symbolised sexual intercourse.[34] It was also performed in relation to fishing and hunting practices[35] and in several other contexts and can be understood as marking moments of both danger and creation. In this particular context it marked the moment of becoming the parents of a married daughter, a moment which changed the status of the parents and entered them into a new set of relationships with their son-in-law and his kin. The apparent requirement for the biological mother to perform this Ganda ceremony reflects the shift among Baganda to an emphasis on biological rather than social motherhood; a shift that we saw in chapter 3 with reference to practices of fostering. At the same time, the ceremony itself points to an ongoing recognition of the importance of mothers as the link between her natal kin, her children and her daughter's marital kin. It also points to Cohen's argument about the enduring nature of *bako* or in-law relationships even after the failure of marriage if children had resulted from it. The mother of the bride remained the central nexus of those relationships and as such had to perform the rite because her daughter's marriage created a new layer of *bako* relations.

For North Nyanzans, once the bridewealth had been transferred from the man's lineage to the woman's, she was taken by her paternal aunt and a companion, usually a younger 'sister'

---

[33] Mair, *African People*, 88-89.

[34] Mair, *African People*, 247-48; John Roscoe, *The Baganda: An Account of their Native Customs and Beliefs* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1911; reprint Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints, n.d.), 357 fn.1 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

[35] Please see chapter 5 for a discussion of its practice in these contexts.

(possibly her actual sister but just as likely a younger female lineage- or even clan-member).[36] There are two nouns in North Nyanza languages to describe this companion and they have slightly different etymologies. The first is **mperya* [32] which has reflexes in Lugwere and the Lulamoogi dialect of Lusoga, as well as in Lunyoro. It was derived from the verb **-pa* 'give' with a suffix yielding the meaning 'give to' or 'cause to be given to'. The Lunyoro reflex indicates that this could be a noun of West Nyanza origin, however, this is by no means certain. If we discount the older origin because of the paucity of evidence, another possibility is that it was innovated by speakers of South Kyoga. But, again, this is uncertain because of the narrowness of the distribution and because of the extensive historical contact between Bagwere and Balamoogi, including intermarriage. The third possibility is that the noun was innovated either by Lulamoogi speakers and borrowed by Bagwere or innovated by Lugwere speakers and borrowed by Balamoogi. What is interesting about the noun **mperya*, however is that its etymology suggests that the 'companion' was an active participant in the wedding. It was she who 'gave' the bride to her groom.

The second word to describe the bride's companion is **mperekezi* [33] and was used by speakers of North Nyanza. The noun has reflexes in all the languages descended from North Nyanza except Lugwere and was derived from the verb **-perekera* 'accompany, escort'. The etymology of this term gives the bridal companion less agency than its counterpart in Lulamoogi and Lugwere. An **mperekezi* escorted the bride to her husband's home; she did not give the bride to her husband. Both the **mperya* and the **mperekezi* were part of the public performance

[36] Gertrude Logose, "Eirya lye Kigwere," (unpublished mss. prepared for Summer Institute of Languages Lugwere Transcription Project); Mair, *African People*, 84-85; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 90; SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05, interview by author, 20 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

of the creation of the wider relationships which resulted from the marriage; relationships formed through the 'giving' of the bride to her husband and his family. The ethnographic evidence reinforces this depiction of the **mperekezi* that we get from its etymology: she is described as a young girl who often remained in the bride's marital home after the marriage ceremonials were complete, becoming a junior wife in the household.[37] As an assistant to a new wife, and perhaps later as her junior wife, the **mperekezi* both embodied a woman's wider social support network – that of her maternal and paternal kin – and physically assisted with the labour a wife was expected to perform.[38] Later in her marriage a wife could expect the assistance of her children in that labour; as a new bride the burden fell to her and her **mperekezi*. While the 'ideal' form of marriage served to publicly mark the new social relations between lineages and clans and, through the payment of bridewealth, to compensate a lineage for the loss of its member, the assistance a woman received from her **mperekezi* meant that she too benefited from following the moral order of North Nyanza society.

People speaking the grandparent of North Nyanza, Great Lakes Bantu, innovated a new verb to describe the act of a man marrying a woman, **-túèr(er)-*.[39] We know that this word was inherited by West Nyanza speakers because it was retained by those speaking Rutara and its daughter languages. North Nyanzans, however, did not keep this word in their vocabulary and instead innovated a series of words to describe the process of marriage. They replaced **-túèr(er)-* with the verb **-gasa* [14], glossing as 'marry (of a man)'. Drawing on Lucy Mair's assertion that the Luganda reflex of this verb, *-wasa* is the causative form of *-wata* 'peel

[37] Mair, *African People*, 85.

[38] I am indebted to David Schoenbrun for this insight.

[39] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 104, R.N.150.

(bananas, potatoes, etc.)',[40] Holly Hanson argues that this demonstrates the centrality of banana cultivation to Ganda society.[41] However, the verb 'peel' in Luganda has a long vowel and is more accurately represented as *-waata* and the causative form ('make someone to peel') as *-waasa*. Given the distribution of the reflexes of the verb **-gasa* in North Nyanzan and Rutaran languages, a more plausible and likely explanation is that it derives from a West Nyanza verb with the meaning 'to mate, copulate'. While economic and cultural mores often impinge on marriage customs, it is sexual and social reproduction that is its most basic foundation.

North Nyanza speakers not only innovated a new word to describe a man's marrying, they also innovated a verb to describe the act of a woman marrying, **-bayira* [3]. It is quite uncommon for Bantu languages to have an active verb glossing as 'marry (of a woman)' rather than a passive counterpart of the verb for 'marry (of a man),' that is 'be married (by a man).'[42] Indeed West Nyanzans used the passive form **-túèr(er)w-* when talking about women getting married.[43] This reflected the social reality that a woman's lineage identity was complicated at marriage as she (and any children she would have) became part of her husband's lineage, while her husband retained his lineage identity.[44] Although North Nyanza women also faced a situation where their husbands and children had a different lineage to their own, the apparently new importance placed on relationships forged through mothers shifted the emphasis somewhat.

---

[40] Lucy Philip Mair, "Native Marriage in Buganda," *International Institute of African Languages and Cultures Memorandum* 19 (1940): 13.

[41] Holly E. Hanson, *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003), 29.

[42] In Swahili, for example, the verb *kuoa* describes the act of a man marrying a woman, while its passive counterpart *kuolewa* translates as 'to be married' and describes the act of a woman being married by a man.

[43] See the attestations in Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 104, R.N.150.

[44] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 101.

On marriage North Nyanza women stood to become the mothers of children who would be of enduring importance to their own lineages and clans as well as to their husbands' patriclans. North Nyanzans thus viewed women as active participants in the process of their marriages and so innovated a new verb, **-bayira*, to describe this.

Women were important as mothers because of the networks of social relationships which flowed through them and which they generated by bearing and raising children. As mothers they were essential to the reproduction of the household – not only in the biological bearing of children, but also in the provision of food which sustained those children and other members of the household. In polygynous North Nyanza households, each woman was responsible for producing food for her children, while it is likely that the father of the children would divide his days between his wives.[45] Because each mother was responsible for her own gardens and food production, she had the opportunity to develop surpluses for trade and thus develop some economic independence in the household. This may be another reason why North Nyanzans saw women as agents in marriage and thus innovated the active verb **-bayira* [3] to describe the act of women marrying. This reflects the recognition by North Nyanzans of the importance of women and their (re-)productive capacities to the society.[46]

Women's marriages, moreover, did not only serve to create alliances between established lineages in North Nyanza society. They were also one of the primary means of integrating

---

[45] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b, interview by author, 16 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04; SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05, interview by author, 21 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[46] Indeed, Peter Robertshaw argues that it was women's agricultural contribution to social reproduction that enabled the states of Buganda and Bunyoro to emerge, "Women, Labor, and State Formation in Western Uganda" in *Complex Polities in the Ancient Tropical World*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus and Lisa J. Lucero, Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association 9, no. 1 (1999): 51-65.

newcomers, whether from another part of North Nyanza or from outside the linguistic and cultural group altogether. In such a situation, the woman's brother and father often retained significant control over her children. This appears to have worked in two ways. The first was that the while the newcomer would have few alliances in the immediate region and thus little social authority, he may have nonetheless been prestigious and could make use of his connection with his *bako* or in-laws to establish himself or his children in the new locale. *Bakungu*, or chiefs,[47] wishing to extend their sphere of influence could marry local women or send sons to marry local women in this way.[48] Second, a newcomer with no particular prestige could marry a local woman with a well-established lineage to improve his situation or that of his descendants.[49] The oral traditions, particularly of Busoga and Bugwere, have many successful examples of such alliances.[50] According abaiseIgaga tradition, for instance, in the mid- to late-seventeenth century, a man called Nantamu migrated to north-eastern Busoga, an area then ruled by Kafamba of the abaiseMukose clan. Nantamu arranged for a woman in his following to marry Kafamba and on Kafamba's death, Nantamu became ruler. During Nantamu's reign, a Luo man called Lamoogi moved into the area from the east. He married a woman from Nantamu's following

[47] *Bakungu* were initially hereditary chiefs when the term was innovated by Great Lakes Bantu speakers but changed to appointed chiefs sometime around the turn of the second millennium CE as North Nyanza was breaking up into pre-Luganda and South Kyoga and as new forms of kingship and chiefship began to emerge. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter 5, but see also Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 104, 184-89; and idem, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 139-42, R.N.208, R.N.209 and R.N.210.

[48] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 1; Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 74; idem, *Mukama and Kintu*, 14; idem, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 28, 117-18; Renée Tantala, "Gonza Bato and the Consolidation of Abaisengobi Rule in Southern Kigulu," Makerere University, Kampala Department of History Research Seminar Paper, 21 August 1972 (n.p.): 10, 13.

[49] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 17; Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 184.

[50] For example, Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 4 and Text 12; W.H. Long, District Commissioner, "Notes on the Bugwere District," c.1933, J.R. Mc D. Elliot Papers, Rhodes House, Oxford, 459-61; Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 41 and Text 74.

and took power "without fighting."[51] Although this dates to a time long after the break up of North Nyanza it is indicative of the ways in which marriages facilitated the incorporation of incomers and the peaceful transfer of power between groups. The active role played by women's marriages in such situations may also help explain why North Nyanzans innovated the verb **-bayira* [3].

North Nyanzans innovated another word connected to marriage that was specific to women. This was the noun **-rya* [28] which glosses as 'marriage or married state (as applied to a woman)'. The speakers of North Nyanza derived this noun from the proto-Bantu verb **-dí-*[52] 'to eat'. Rather than reinforcing the generally accepted view of marriage for women as a state in which they cooked for and fed others, this suggests that marriage was a state in which women themselves ate. What does this mean? One explanation lies in women's control of food production for themselves and their children. On getting married a girl left her childhood home in which she cultivated for her mother and entered her husband's home as a woman and mother-in-waiting in which she cultivated for herself and, in due course, for her children.

Aside from these innovations, North Nyanzans gave a new meaning to a word they inherited from their West Nyanzan ancestors, **-gole* [15]. Schoenbrun has reconstructed this word back to Great Lakes Bantu with the meaning 'maternal power'.[53] However, Rhonda Gonzales' recent work on the Ruvu peoples of Tanzania has shown the term to be older than was previously thought. Speakers of proto-Ruvu gave it a somewhat different meaning by placing it

---

[51] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 41. See also, idem, *Mukama and Kintu*, 179-80.

[52] Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu*, vol. 3, 151, C.S.550.

[53] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 83, R.N.114. For the various meanings and mobilisations of the concept of **-gole* across the Great Lakes Region, see idem, *Green Place*, 138, 140-41, 151-54.

in the diminutive noun class *ki-* and using it to refer to girls whose breasts had developed but were not yet menstruating and so "had not yet reached [their] full maternal potential."[54] The people speaking Kaskazi, the parent language of both proto-Ruvu and proto-Great Lakes Bantu, used the term to designate "mature females," referencing women who had achieved their maternal potential.[55] North Nyanzans used the term to refer to the maternal potential of brides and newly-wed women, but retained some of the original meaning as they also used it to refer to the most senior woman of the house. This latter meaning appears to have dropped away as South Kyoga split from North Nyanza. The gendered aspect of the noun was also dropped by South Kyogans as they used it to refer to both brides and bridegrooms. This 'de-gendering' is paralleled in Lusoga by the verb 'elope' discussed below. It is worth noting here that the term *mugole* was, from the late nineteenth century onwards, used by Catholic missionaries in Buganda to describe a newly baptised person.[56] This is apparently in reference to the spiritual marriage between the baptismal candidate and Christ. However, this seems to have remained separate from its original and continued use by North Nyanza speakers and their descendants to refer to brides and newly-wed women.

As banana cultivation became more important, during the time that North Nyanza was spoken,[57] perennial banana gardens became a key form of wealth. Women were important to the

---

[54] Rhonda Gonzales, "Continuity and Change: Thought, Belief, and Practice in the History of the Ruvu Peoples of Central East Tanzania, ca. 200 B.C. to A.D. 1800" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002), 115.

[55] Gonzales, "Continuity and Change," 114.

[56] Le Veux, *Vocabulaire Luganda-Français*, 215.

[57] For a more detailed discussion of the development and intensification of banana farming by North Nyanzans and their descendants please see chapter 4 of this dissertation; David Lee Schoenbrun, "Cattle Herds and Banana Gardens: The Historical Geography of the Western Great Lakes Region, ca. AD 800-1500" *African Archaeological Review* 11 (1993): 39-72 and idem, *Green Place*, 79-83.

development and maintenance of this form of wealth: as mothers to the children who helped to cultivate the banana gardens and increase the production from them and specifically as mothers to the sons who would inherit the banana gardens and thus keep the wealth within the patrilineage.[58] Here, then, we see a direct connection between biological reproduction and social reproduction in the person of the mother. The adoption of intensive banana cultivation was most extensive among Baganda for whom *matooke* or steamed bananas came to be the staple food and banana-based drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) the principal beverage.[59] Among Baganda, too, banana farming came to be a gendered activity with women taking on most of the labour involved.[60] The increased importance of women as providers of the staple food supply may explain the innovation by Luganda speakers of yet another word to describe marriage, *obufumbo*, along with a series of related words: *-fumbirwa* 'get married (of a woman)', *omufumbo* 'a spouse' and *-fumbirira* 'look after a newly-wed wife'. All of these are derived from the verb *-fumba* 'cook' which can be traced back at least as far as Great Lakes Bantu. While some or all of these words are found today in Lusoga, Lugwere and Rushana as well as in Luganda, we know that they are recent areal spreads because their reflexes have not undergone the relevant sound changes in each language. This makes sense because Christian missionaries, who were located first in Buganda and used a Luganda translation of the Bible in Busoga and Bugwere, adopted these words to exclusively describe Christian marriage.

Speakers of South Kyoga do not appear to have innovated new words for marriage. In fact, the next wave of new terms came only once the four languages that are spoken today had

[58] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 175.

[59] Christopher C. Wrigley, "Bananas in Buganda," *Azania* 24 (1989): 65.

[60] This is explored in greater depth in chapter 5.

emerged. One innovation is found in both Lugwere and Lulamoogi, the two languages that also share a separate noun to describe the wedding companion of a bride, discussed above. The adoption of a new verb to describe marriage in these two languages may be connected to the innovation of the noun *mperya*, although there is no direct evidence to demonstrate this. This new verb – *kusuna mukali* 'marry a woman' and *kusuna musaiza* 'marry a man' – is simply derived from the verb *-suna* meaning 'get'. The Bashana also innovated a new verb to describe the act of marrying: *-bimbirra* [5] 'marry (of a man)', with the derived form *-bimbirrikana* 'marry (of a woman)'. This verb may be derived from the ancient verb 'to swell' and thus refer to the pregnancies that should ideally follow marriage.

Although the ideal form of marriage followed the format outlined above, not all relationships between men and women conformed to social expectations. North Nyanzans inherited from their West Nyanza speaking ancestors a verb for the act of a woman (unmarried or married) eloping. That verb, **-hambuka* [17a], was derived from a much older verb *-pamba* meaning 'seize.'[61] The counterpart to **-hambuka* is **-hambula* [17b] and it describes the act of a man eloping with a woman. The etymology of these verbs suggests that North Nyanzans and their West Nyanzan ancestors viewed elopement as involving coercion on the man's part as he 'seized' the woman he desired.[62] While the extent to which this reflected the reality of such events is unclear, this vision of the relationship between men and women in this context would have had an ideological function with resonance into broader gender relations. Whether or not physical violence occurred as part of **-hambula* it was a socially violent act for members of the

[61] Schoenbrun, *Violence*.

[62] Indeed Le Veux's translations of the two terms reflect this idea of agency of the part of the man and passivity on the part of the woman: -wambuka "Partir avec son séducteur," -wambula "Débaucher une femme et l'emener. Ravir." *Vocabulaire Luganda-Français*, 998*.

seized woman's lineage. Bridewealth was not paid and so the contractual bond between *bako* or in-laws that it signified was not formed. Not only did the woman's lineage not receive compensation for her loss, but neither were the ongoing relationships formed through her and her marriage created.[63] For the woman, too, elopement had a violence that went beyond any physical violence during the act itself. For in a marriage ensuing from elopement a new wife would not have the companionship and assistance of an **mperekezi* and so would face greater hardship in her new home.

Basoga and Bagwere use different verbs to describe elopement and it is only in Luganda that the verbs *-hambuka and *-hambula are still used. It is possible that the verbs *-banduka* [2a] 'to elope (of a woman)' and *-bandula* [2b] 'to elope (of a man)' are of South Kyogan origin. However, because the two reflexes of these words are found in immediately adjacent areas, namely Bugwere and Busiki, the inhabitants of which have a long history of inter-relationships, it would not be wise to assert that this is the case. A more likely etymology for these verbs is that they were innovated by Lugwere speakers and adopted by Basiki as a result of intermarriage with their neighbours across the Mpologoma River. This is a further reflection in the linguistic record of the ways in which disparate communities were meshed together through marital alliances – whether socially sanctioned or not. What is striking, however, is that the underlying verb, *-banda* 'force one's way through', is one of violence. While the use of a violent term to describe elopement makes sense in the context of the violation of a wider set of relationships that it involves, it is less clear why Lugwere speakers replaced the older violent verb with a newer one.

[63] I am indebted to David Schoenbrun for this insight.

One of the etymologies of the Lusoga verb *-páálá* [34] suggests that it is the result of interaction with people speaking a different language, this time one completely unrelated to the North Nyanza languages. The Luo speak a Nilotic language and moved into the area east of the Victoria-Nile River sometime after the final break up of North Nyanza into all four of its descendant languages.[64] In Busoga, extensive interaction between Luo and Basoga gradually led to the incorporation of the Luo immigrants into Soga society, although the clans descended from Luo immigrants retained an ideological affiliation to Luo culture.[65] Despite their adoption of Lusoga, they made their own contributions to the language which are visible in the linguistic record. The Lusoga verb with the meaning 'elope' may be an adaptation from the Luo noun *por* 'elopement'. This noun and the related verb in Lwo (spoken today in northern Uganda and southern Sudan) *pooro* are not sex specific being applied as they are to both the act of a woman eloping with a man and of a man eloping with a woman. The Lusoga verb *-páálá* is likewise a single verb and does not have the sex specificity and consequent gender tensions of its Luganda and Lugwere counterparts. Early descriptions of marriage in Busoga noted that elopement was a common practice and that in general the woman had already agreed to it, rather than being taken by force. After the elopement had occurred the woman's husband and brother would come to an agreement on the payment of bridewealth.[66] This apparent normalisation of a transgressive act

---

[64] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 1.

[65] Cohen, "Face of Contact," 341.

[66] J.F. Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples: Notes on the Protectorate of Uganda Especially the Anthropology and Ethnology of its Indigenous Races* (London: Hutchinson, 1905), 112-13; John Roscoe, *The Bagesu and Other Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate. The Third Part of the Mackie Ethnological Expedition to Central Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), 126; idem, *The Northern Bantu: An Account of Some Central African Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915; reprint, London: Frank Cass, 1966), 209-10 (page citations are to the reprint edition). Cohen, citing the above, notes that "elopement, though common, was not considered the ideal approach to marriage." (*Mukama and Kintu*, 9).

may explain also explain the innovation of a new term to describe it. The second possible etymology for *-páálá*, however, is that it was derived from an older verb **-pád-* 'vex, persecute'. This leaves the issue of the social violence of elopement a rather more open question.

Once all the ceremonies and activities surrounding marriage had been completed, North Nyanzans had a variety of nouns for 'wife' which tended to reflect the position and seniority of each woman in a polygynous household. The senior wife in a North Nyanzan household was called **kaidu* [24].[67] This noun was innovated by North Nyanza speakers, suggesting a new importance for the senior wife, as opposed to say the wife who had borne the most children or the wife who had borne the first son in the household. This suggestion is significantly strengthened by the fact that this innovation coincided with the change in meaning of the noun **-gole* [15] discussed above. What is less clear is the etymology of **kaidu*. Both R.A. Snoxall and Père Le Veux connect it to the word for a male slave in Luganda, *omuddu*.[68] The implicit suggestion is that wives, senior or not, in Buganda were no more than slaves. Schoenbrun, however, is of the view that the meaning 'male slave' was only given to the noun **omwiru* (the underlying form of *omuddu*) after the twelfth century and quite possibly much more recently. The older and original meaning glosses as 'peasant' or 'farmer.'[69]

---

[67] GW-ETH-KAA-M-02/12/04, interview by author, 2 December 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[68] R.A. Snoxall, *Luganda-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 211; and Le Veux, *Vocabulaire Luganda-Français*, 118 and 643.

[69] David Lee Schoenbrun, "Violence, Marginality, Scorn and Honour: Language Evidence of Slavery to the Eighteenth Century," in *Slavery in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa*, ed. Henri Médard and Shane Doyle (Oxford: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), 43-44.

After their divergence into distinct speech communities, Baganda, Bagwere and Basoga innovated new words to describe the senior wife. In Luganda this took the form of the development of two terms – one for royal and chiefly households and one for commoner households. Baganda retained the North Nyanza term for 'senior wife' to refer to the senior wife of the king, with an important modification: they suffixed *lubaale* to the noun, giving *kaddulubaale* which has the literal meaning of 'senior wife of a *lubaale*'. *Lubaale* is the term for deity in the Ganda indigenous belief system; a belief system with which the power of the royal palace was interconnected. The embodiment of the connection between state power and national religion in the person of the senior wife of the king is further explored in chapter 6. The senior wife of a polygynous commoner, on the other hand, was called *nnalugongo*. Below the senior wife in the royal household were two wives: *kàbejja* and *`nnasaza*.[70] Pointing to her power and influence over the Ganda king, it was the *nnamasole* or queen mother who selected all three of the senior wives for her son.[71] And indicating the ongoing importance of maternal kin connections across generations, the *`nnasaza* was selected from the king's paternal grandmother's clan, though not from her lineage. This was also the case for chiefs and possibly for commoners.[72]

---

[70] There is some disagreement over whether *kàbejja* was the title of the second wife of the king and *`nnasaza* that of the third (see Le Veux, *Vocabulaire Luganda-Français*, 274, 713; Snoxall, *Luganda-English Dictionary*, 249, 251; and Laurence D. Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 23 (1990): 469.) or vice versa (see Roscoe, *Baganda*, 83; and Abasi Kiyimba, "Gender Stereotypes in the Folktales and Proverbs of the Baganda" (Ph.D. diss., University of Dar-es-Salaam, 2001), 69.). Kagwa does not label them as either second or third, but he does list *kàbejja* before *`nnasaza* (Apolo Kagwa, *The Customs of the Baganda*, transl. Ernest B. Kalibala, ed. May Mandelbaum Edel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934, reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1969), 68 (page citations are to the reprint edition). The most likely explanation is that they ranked jointly immediately below the *kaddulubaale* and above all the other wives.

[71] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 468, citing Tor Irstam, *The King of Ganda* (Westport, CT: Negro Universities Press, 1970), 38.

[72] Kiyimba, "Gender Stereotypes," 69; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 83.

In Bugwere, reflecting the less differentiated political situation there, a distinction between royal and commoner wives did not emerge. New terms were innovated by Bagwere to refer to the senior wife, although they also retained the North Nyanza noun. The senior wife in Bugwere, then, was referred to by any of the following: *kaidu*, *omukali omukulu* and *omukali omuyalaikoke*. This multiplication in terms for one social position suggests that Lugwere-speakers changed aspects of what it meant to be a senior wife. An indication of the ongoing importance of the senior wife, however, may be seen in the Lugwere proverb: *Olwulya tiwende* ('Being the newly married wife does not mean being the most loved').[73] This suggests that it was not the youngest, newest wife in a household who was necessarily most cherished and respected, but rather that the senior wife who organized the household and mothered the heir may well have been the one to hold that position.

In Busiki, in the eastern part of Busoga, the senior wife was called *kaido*, while in the west and south of Busoga she was referred to as *kairu* (*-lubaale*).[74] The suffixing of *lubaale* may be the result of the growing influence of the Buganda state to the west. Another Lusoga term for the first wife in a polygynous household, *nákándhá*, recognised her role in establishing the household deriving as it does from the verb *-ándha* 'to lay (foundation)'.[75] This reflected her role as the mother of the heir in laying the foundation for the future of the lineage, as well as being the foundation for the household of her husband. As we saw in chapter 3, the heir to the head of the household was ideally a son of the senior wife. If she did not have a biological child,

---

[73] Andrew Wabwezi, "The Bagwere Proverbs" (B.A. diss., Makerere University, 2004), 35.

[74] Lloyd A. Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy: A Study of Integration and Conflict in the Political Institutions of an East African People* (Cambridge: W. Heffer for East African Institute of Social Research, 1956), 83. Fallers notes that he follows the orthography used by the *Ndi Mugezi* newspaper published in Kamuli, Bugabula County, 1.

[75] *Dictionary Lusoga-English English-Lusoga* (Jinja: Cultural Research Centre, 2000), part I, 111.

she raised the child of a co-wife as her own. In the moral logic of Soga society the senior wife had to be a mother in order for there to be an heir for her husband – whether he was the king or a peasant. This emphasis on social motherhood reflected the broader mobilisation of motherhood in social and political organization.

Motherhood in Social Organization

Speakers of North Nyanza lived in a society that they organized patrilineally. Not only did children belong to their father's lineage, but they also belonged to his clan. Indeed, North Nyanzans inherited this form of social organization from their Great Lakes Bantu-speaking ancestors who had, some one thousand to fifteen-hundred years earlier (that is from around 500 B.C.E.), shifted from a system that followed matrilineal as well as patrilineal heritage to one that was exclusively patrilineal.[76] Yet, the evidence points to a more complex form of social organization than this labelling of the society as patrilineal suggests. Women were at the heart of this more complicated picture. As mothers they were the essential link between their clan and lineage members and their children. A woman's children were known as **baihwa* [18] by her fellow clan and lineage members. This term marked the relationship between the two that existed despite the prevailing patrilineality. In addition to that relationship, a mother's brother had a particular interest in his sister's children: he had rights in them and responsibilities towards them.

[76] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 96-97.

North Nyanzans did not innovate the term **baihwa* [18] to describe their sisters' children and it has in fact been traced back to proto-Bantu.[77] Schoenbrun notes that for Great Lakes Bantu speakers what is important about the noun **-jIpùà*, the Great Lakes Bantu form of **-ihwa*,[78] is that it describes "the new member of the group, lost to the group which gave the wife and gained by the group which received the wife."[79] This interpretation is derived from the possible etymologies he proposes for **-jIpùà*. The first views the noun as a passive form of **-pa* 'give' "with a reflexive object infix **-jì-*, thus, yielding the meaning 'the one who has been given away.'" The second possibility is that it is derived from the passive form of the verb **-gÌp-* which glosses as "to pull out or cut (grass)". In this case the noun describes "removal of the child from one lineage to the other."[80] It is true that **baihwa* in North Nyanza were 'lost' to the patrilineage, but the relationship between a mother's kin and her children suggests a continued importance of **baihwa* to their maternal kin. It was they who washed the bodies of their aunts and uncles in preparation for burial and who assisted in the special ceremonies for twins and at other ritual occasions.[81] Furthermore, when a **mwihwa*[82] succeeded to political office his

---

[77] Bastin and Schadeberg, "BLR 3," R.N. Main 3498 **-jìpʊ́á*. See also, Malcolm Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages*, vol. 4 (Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1970), 188, Comparative Stem (C.S.) 2091.

[78] This is the stem form of the noun without the singular or plural class marker.

[79] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 86-7, R.N.120.

[80] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 97.

[81] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 37, Text 47, Text 48; Miss Laight and Yekonia K. Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 2 (1934/1935), 120-144. (Note that this was initially erroneously published under the name of Ezekeri Zibondo. A letter rectifying the error was published in *Uganda Journal* 2, 3 (1935), 255.); Mair, *African People*, 46-48; SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05. Renée Tantala lists some of the ritually dangerous tasks Nyoro *baihwa* were expected to undertake for their mother's brothers. "The Early History of Kitara," 297. Many of the rights and responsibilities of baihwa and their maternal uncles in Bunyoro were recorded in John H.M. Beattie, "Nyoro Marriage and Affinity," *Africa* 28 (1958): 19-21.

[82] The singular form of **baihwa*.

maternal kin could expect to benefit from their connection to power through him.[83] So while **baihwa* did not belong to their mother's lineage or clan they were not entirely 'lost' to their maternal kin group. Indeed it was the very distance created by their belonging to another lineage and clan that permitted them to carry out many of the ritually dangerous duties required of them. The continued connection between a mother's kin and her children was a strong feature of North Nyanzan social and political life.[84] The fact that this connection was created through the mother helps to explain why her act of marriage was as important as her husband's and why North Nyanza speakers innovated the new verb **-bayira* [3], discussed above, to describe it.

The concept of **baihwa* [18] continued to play a similar role in South Kyogan social organization. After the break up of South Kyoga, however, there was significant innovation in the institution and role of **baihwa* in Bugwere and Busoga. Among the Bagwere, *baiwa*[85] had a number of ritual duties that their Soga and Ganda counterparts did not share. In addition to performing burial rites and playing a central role in twin ceremonies, they were involved in rainmaking ceremonies and the new millet ceremony – both of which were intimately connected with fertility.[86] A *mwiwa* would eat the first harvest from a banana plant under which a placenta had been buried and participated in the *kulya embenenwa* ceremony which was performed when

---

[83] Renée Tantala, "Community and Polity in Southern Kigulu," Makerere University, Kampala Department of History Research Seminar Paper, 27 November 1972 (n.p.), 12; Tantala, "Gonza Bato," 18; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 191.

[84] Renée Tantala's work on Bunyoro-Kitara notes that there too "matrilateral links were recognized and were fairly significant as part of the bwihwa relationship (the mother's brother/sister's son relationship)." It is quite possible that North Nyanzans recognition of matrilateral ties was inherited from their West Nyanza speaking ancestors, but an in-depth exploration of the broader range of this relationship lies beyond the scope of this work. Tantala, "Early History of Kitara," 90.

[85] This is the reflex of **baihwa* in both Lugwere and Lusoga. The singular form is *mwiwa*.

[86] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 37, Text 48, Text 47, Text 45. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.

a new baby was first brought out of the house in which he or she was born.[87] *Baiwa* also played a prominent role in the purification rites that took place if two members of the same clan had sexual relations with each other.[88] And *baiwa* could turn to their maternal uncle for assistance should they encounter the social disaster of being expelled from their paternal clan.[89] There does not seem to have been a stigma attached to Bagwere *baiwa* living in their maternal uncle's household, in contrast to the situation in Buganda, as we will see below. In Bugwere, then, there was not only a continued importance for the connection between a woman's children and her kin and clan but, in fact, an increased emphasis on this relationship. That this increased emphasis was expressed by the involvement of *baiwa* in ceremonies associated with fertility serves to underline that Bagwere did not see them so much as being 'lost' to the clan, but rather as a central part of healthy social reproduction. As was the case in North Nyanzan society, it was their very distance from the clan which allowed Gwere *baiwa* to perform tasks that were ritually dangerous for clan members, but which were essential to the well-being of the clan.

A major change in the institution of *baiwa* among the Basoga was that many of the patrilineal clans (*bika* [22]) innovated specific names for them. These names, particularly those for girls, often reflected the name of the eponymous founder of the clan. For example, the abaiseIruba clan named their female *baiwa* Nairuba[90] and the abaiseIhemula clan named their female *baiwa* Naihemula.[91] While it is not yet possible to conclusively date the start of this

---

[87] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b. See also chapter 3.

[88] GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04.

[89] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 16.

[90] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 125.

[91] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 95.

practice, Cohen's work on how Luo-speaking immigrants took power in Soga states is suggestive. Writing about the Owiny Karuoth in particular, he notes that while the sons of Karuoth men were raised in the households of their Lusoga-speaking maternal kin, daughters tended to remain in their father's household. He goes on to argue that "the daughters may have been crucial in the cultural exchange between Karuoth and non-Karuoth…and oriented toward a bilinguality and a cultural education in two different worlds." This cultural straddling was intensified through their marriage to non-Karuoth men.[92] By giving particular names to their daughters' children, Owiny Karuoth and others living in Busoga, marked the ongoing connection with them and reinforced their role as cultural intermediaries.

As in North Nyanza speaking communities, Soga *baiwa* had central roles in ceremonies and rites associated with the birth and naming of twins and with funerals and successions.[93] The connection between a *mwiwa* and his or her maternal kin was strong in Busoga and a grievance committed against a powerful *mwiwa* could lead to warfare, as occurred between Busiki and Nkono in the eighteenth century.[94] For Basoga, *baiwa*'s ritual connections with their mothers' kin groups led to strong political ties between them. Because a clan benefited greatly from the accession to the throne of a *mwiwa*, powerful clan members would get involved in succession disputes.[95] Indeed, while members of a mother's kin group stood to benefit from a *mwiwa*'s success, the *mwiwa* was often dependent on his maternal kin for that success. There was, then, a

---

[92] Cohen, "Political Transformation," 473.

[93] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 10; Laight and Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," *passim*.

[94] Y.K. Lubogo, *A History of Busoga*, transl. Eastern Province (Bantu Language) Literature Committee (Jinja: East African Literature Bureau, 1960), 9-10. This episode is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6. This contrasts with the relationship between *baihwa* and their matrilateral kin in Bunyoro where a *mwihwa* could be called to go to war for his mother's kin, but the converse could not occur (Beattie, "Nyoro Marriage," 20).

[95] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 14-16.

situation of mutual dependence which served to reinforce the connections between *baiwa* and their maternal kin.

The Baganda, too, placed the concept of *bajjwa*[96] at the heart of their social organization. *Bajjwa* retained their ritual role, particularly in ceremonies marking the birth and naming of twins.[97] Furthermore, the maternal uncle or *kojja* had particularly strong rights to his sister's children, unless their father gave him compensatory payment for each child. And, should a *mujjwa* prince succeed to the throne, his maternal clan benefited greatly from their connection to him.[98] Despite this, the Baganda had a complicated relationship with their *bajjwa*. A *kojja* could abuse his rights in them. Indeed any *bajjwa* who lived with their *kojja* because they had not been claimed and compensated for by their father were treated with disdain in the household. As Mair noted, such a child "had none of the advantages of belonging either to his father's or his mother's family…but…he was not his uncle's child either, and in the latter's household he had no rights."[99] There was in Buganda a growing tension at the heart of the *mujjwa-kojja* relationship that led the dominance of the *kojja*'s rights over his responsibilities towards his nieces and nephews. As we see in chapter 6, this coincided with growing power of the Ganda state which led to an increased emphasis on patrilineality over any matrilineal ties, as older ideologies of motherhood were co-opted and transformed by the state.

---

[96] *Bajjwa* (sing. *mujjwa*) is the reflex of **baihwa* (sing. **mwihwa*) in Luganda.

[97] Mair, *African People*, 46-48.

[98] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 460.

[99] Mair, *African People*, 62. The Ganda situation has some parallels in the role of *baihwa* in Bunyoro where there was "a manifest ambivalence in the *bwihwa* relationship" (Beattie, "Nyoro Marriage," 18).

The developments in the relationship between **baihwa* [18] and their maternal kin from the time North Nyanza was spoken to the period when all the descendant languages were well established were paralleled in the evolution of the specific relationship between a maternal uncle and his nieces and nephews. Speakers of Mashariki Bantu, the grandparent of Great Lakes Bantu, innovated a word for 'maternal uncle', **-ny-[VN or CV]-rume*, with a literal meaning of 'male mother'. North Nyanzans inherited this term, but shifted the meaning so that the word referred to 'male-in-laws'.[100] They then innovated a new noun, **koiza* [26], to describe a mother's brother. The etymology of this noun is unclear. There is a Lunyoro verb *-koija* with the meaning 'be greedy or gluttonous' and it is common for nouns to be derived from verbs. Thus it is possible that there was a West Nyanza verb **-koija* from which North Nyanza speakers derived the noun **koiza*. If this etymology is correct it reflects the right of the maternal uncle to make demands of his nephew.[101] However, because the verb is found only in Lunyoro and in no other Rutaran or North Nyanzan languages, it is possible that the Lunyoro verb was derived from the North Nyanza noun for maternal uncle. The Lunyoro verb may thus reflect the perceived greed of maternal uncles among a neighbouring people.

That North Nyanzans innovated a new noun to name the maternal uncle suggests a change or evolution in his role during the time that North Nyanza was spoken as a language. From ethnographic evidence we know that it was not only the maternal uncle who had rights in his sister's children, for the maternal grandfather could also make claims on them. It appears that, at least initially, it was the latter who could demand compensation from his son-in-law for

[100] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 97, R.N.136.

[101] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 93, R.N.130.

some of the children born to his daughter[102] though this right may well have passed on to the **koiza* [26] on the grandfather's death. Yet, it was only the maternal uncle who was renamed. One explanation for the renaming lies in the political developments of the period which opened up new possibilities for power. The North Nyanzan period saw the continuation of a political evolution that was initiated by West Nyanzans, namely "the emergence of instrumental kingship" with at least "some control over land."[103] This manifested itself in the consolidation of power by what became royal families. It is likely that the institution of the queen mother emerged along with early states in North Nyanza[104] and thus that ideologies of motherhood were at the heart of political complexity. This meant that a **mwihwa* [18] relied on his maternal kin to support his claims to power and, in turn, his **koiza* benefited from his **mwihwa*'s political success. In this analysis, the **koiza* of a politically successful man would have wielded considerable authority in the region's early polities.[105]

After Luganda had emerged as a distinct language, the *kojja*[106] became the most important relative on the maternal side. In addition to the benefits he could expect to derive from his adult nephew's political success, a Ganda *kojja* could claim his sister's children, particularly

---

[102] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 27-28; Henri Le Veux, *Manuel de Langue Luganda Comprenant Grammaire et un Recueil de Contes et de Légendes* (Algiers: Imprimerie des Missionaires d'Afrique (Pères Blancs), 1914), 456; Long, "Notes on Bugwere," Elliot Papers, 459; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 217; Tantala, "Gonza Bato," 15; Tantala, "Community and Polity," 12.

[103] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 194, but see 184-95 for an overview of the whole process.

[104] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 193. See also chapter 6.

[105] Maternal kin were an essential 'non-royal' support base for competing princes and their mothers at a time when lineage ties dominated North Nyanza polities. It seems most likely that it was only later that rulers created multiple sources of non-royal support by creating alliances (frequently on the basis of marriage) with unrelated commoners. According to Cohen the kingdom of Luuka is one example of a more recent polity following such a pattern (*Womunafu's Bunafu*, 29).

[106] This is the reflex of **koija* in Luganda.

the first-born girl, unless their father paid a further gift for them.[107] We saw above that a child not redeemed by her or his father faced an uncertain future in the *kojja*'s household, for while this right of the *kojja* derives from matrilineality it was the patrilineage that marked a child's place in society. Should a *mujjwa* be properly compensated for by his father, however, he "was entitled to ask for anything he liked in his mother's brother's house and, if his request was refused, to help himself."[108] This contrast points to a tension within Ganda society which more completely came to emphasise patrilineal descent to the exclusion of maternal connections than was the case in North Nyanzan society or, later, in Soga and Gwere society. In Bugwere *baiwa* who were expelled from the paternal clan could turn to their *koiza* for assistance and be accepted into his household. In Buganda only a *mujjwa* who had been publicly recognised by his patriclan could rely on his *kojja'*s support. A *mujjwa* who was expelled from his patriclan could not expect to be accepted as an equal by his mother's kin. This points to a tension in Ganda society whereby relations formed through mothers remained at the heart of social organization, but a patrilineal (and patriarchal) ideology was of ever greater importance. The shift towards a male dominated ideology may have resulted from the shift to banana cultivation and the centralisation of wealth in immovable banana gardens alongside the emergence of an increasingly centralised state which co-opted and in the process distorted the older ideologies based around motherhood.

The right of the maternal uncle to claim some of his sister's children is enshrined in the foundation myth of the Baganda, the story of Kintu and Nnambi. When Kintu and Nnambi came to Buganda they were followed by Nnambi's brother Walumbe. After Nnambi had given birth to

---

[107] Le Veux, *Vocabulaire Luganda-Français*, 546; Mair, *African People*, 61-62.

[108] Mair, *African People*, 63.

three children, her brother asked Kintu for one (*endobolo*[109]) to cook for him, but Kintu refused. Walumbe replied that he would, then, kill the children. Some time later when Nnambi had several more children, Walumbe reminded Kintu that he had asked for a child to raise (*ampereze*) but that Kintu had refused. Now that Kintu had many children, Walumbe once more asked for his share of them and again Kintu refused. This time Kintu explained his refusal by invoking the right of Nnambi's father, Ggulu, to claim his share of the children (*endobolo*). If Kintu gave the *endobolo* to Walumbe, he would have none to give Ggulu when he came to claim them for himself. When Kintu refused for the second time to give up some of his children to him, Walumbe made good on his promise to kill them, thereby bringing death to Buganda.[110]

By refusing to recognise his brother-in-law's right to his *endobolo* of his nephews and nieces, Kintu broke an ancient social more and thus brought death into his land. And yet, the moral of this tale is more complicated. For the maternal uncle is the one who brought death and his behaviour reflected growing tension within Ganda society between the recognition of patrilineal descent and the rights of maternal kin. In addition to highlighting the rights of the *kojja*, this story points to the tension between the rights of the *kojja* in his *bajjwa* and the older

[109] *Endobolo* means 'sample, share, daughter of my sister, daughter of my slave' and is derived from the verb -*lobola* 'to take a share'. Le Veux, *Vocabulaire Luganda-Français*, 546. The extension of the meaning to name the daughter of a sister is an innovation in Luganda with Lusoga retaining only the meaning of 'fraction or share'. See also Mair, *African People*, 62.

[110] This summary is primarily based on the version of the story given in Le Veux, *Manuel de Langue Luganda*, 456. Other versions can be found in: Harry H. Johnston, *The Uganda protectorate: An Attempt to Give Some Description of the Physical Geography, Botany, Zoology, Anthropology, Languages and History of the Territories under British Protection in East Central Africa, Between the Congo Free State and the Rift Valley and Between the First Degree of South Latitude and the Fifth Degree of North Latitude*, vol. 2 (London: Hutchinson, 1902), 700-05; Apolo Kagwa, *Engero za Baganda* (London: Sheldon Press, 1951), 1-8; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 460-64. Benjamin C. Ray notes that Kagwa "refers to Walumbe incorrectly as Kintu's brother" in *Ekitabo kya Basekabaka be Buganda na be Bunyoro, na be Koki, na be Toro, na be Nkole*, 3rd ed. (Kampala: Uganda Bookshop and East African Publishing House, 1927, reprinted 1971), 1 (*Myth, Ritual, and Kingship in Buganda* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 216, fn.5). For a detailed discussion and interpretation of the story of Kintu and Nambi please see, Neil Kodesh, "Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Collective Well-Being in Buganda" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 2004), 100-26.

rights of the maternal grandfather in them. In the historical texts of Busoga and Bugwere there are several examples of maternal grandfathers raising their daughters' children,[111] and so the shift in favour of the *kojja*'s claims over the children of the female lineage members in Buganda must have occurred after the break up of North Nyanza.

The emphasis on the relationship between a maternal uncle and his *bajjwa* was particularly marked within the royal realm. A prince was unlikely to succeed to the throne without the assistance of his mother (who would become queen mother on his accession) and her relatives. The role of his maternal kin was recognised by the successful prince who would appoint his *kojja* to the important chiefship of *ssaabaganzi*.[112] The connection between the king and his *kojja* continued into the next generation as each of the king's sons was introduced to the *ssaabaganzi* immediately after being weaned. The *ssaabaganzi* in his turn gave each of his great-nephews "a well-dressed skin to wear".[113] Those great-nephews would have been of a different clan again from their father, for the children of the *kabaka* belonged to their mother's clan, in as much as they belonged to any, and yet there remained a connection with their paternal grandmother's clan.

South Kyogans and their descendants did not give the **koiza* as much power within the kin group as their Luganda speaking neighbours. But, the special relationship between a maternal uncle and his **baihwa* that had led to North Nyanzans innovating the term **koiza*

---

[111] Long, "Notes on Bugwere," Elliot Papers, 459; Tantala, "Gonza Bato," 15; Tantala, "Community and Polity," 12; Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 27-28. See chapter 6 for a more detailed discussion of these relationships within the political context.

[112] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 460.

[113] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 73; please see also 104-110 for a description of the role of the *Ssaabaganzi* in the preparations and rites following the death of the king.

continued in these societies. In Busoga the benefit a *koiza* could accrue from the political success of a nephew was significant. If the nephew succeeded to a chieftainship or kingship he would award his *koiza* the post of *katikkiro* or prime minister.[114] This was very much a reciprocal relationship, just as in Buganda, for a *mwiwa* was unlikely to win the succession to his father's throne without his maternal kin's assistance even though there was a preference for the successor to be the son of the senior wife.

The renewed and durable connection between a woman's children and her kin and clan in what are consistently described as patrilineal and even patriarchal societies challenges the conventions of this labelling. Meillassoux argues that in a patrilineal system, "a married woman['s]…*descent relations are always subordinate to her conjugal relations*."[115] Furthermore, women are "deprived of actual rights over their progeny" and so "the relations women maintain with their children do not involve obligation, as do those between children and their father."[116] But, as we have seen, a mother's father or brother could claim at least some of her children if they were not compensated for their loss. Even when compensation was paid, children performed ritual functions for their mother's lineage and clan. And, the mother of a prince who succeeded his father to the throne could and did make significant claims based on her motherhood.[117] So, while fatherhood was the central ideology around which kin networks (including fictive kin networks such as clans) were organized, motherhood was also key to the organization of social relationships in North Nyanza and its descendant societies.

---

[114] Tantala, "Gonza Bato," 18.

[115] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 76. Emphasis in original.

[116] Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money*, 77.

[117] See chapter 6.

*****

As we have seen, the North Nyanza speech community responded to the particular challenges it faced in building sustainable societies by placing motherhood at the heart of their social organization, despite following patrilineal descent. In so doing they created seriated networks of kinship and obligation that reached outside of the patrilineage and the patriclan. They also used exogamous marriage to create another network of relationships. Using marital alliances in this way was by no means unusual, what was different in North Nyanza, however, was that they innovated a new verb to describe the act of a woman marrying. This suggests that North Nyanzans saw women as agents in their marriages and saw women's marriages as doing important work. As the Luganda and proto-South Kyoga speech communities diverged, they faced different challenges and opportunities. Luganda-speakers moved towards intensive banana cultivation which led to increasing competition for the lands most suitable for bananas. Here patrilineal ideology came to dominate the social landscape. As their work of political centralization slowly gave birth to the Ganda state, they placed the older North Nyanzan ideology of motherhood at the heart of state institutions while simultaneously changing the form and meanings of that ideology, as we shall see in chapter 6. For South Kyogans and their Lusoga- and Lugwere-speaking descendants, the premium on creating enduring communities first in new lands and later alongside people speaking distinct languages meant that the connections formed by and through mothers were, if anything, more important than in North Nyanzan times. The many and varied tasks that the children of a female clan-mate (**baihwa* [18]) performed for their maternal kin reflect his. Such logics also permeated processes of political centralization with princes needing the support of their mothers and her kin group and

clan-mates in order to succeed to the throne. As Lusoga and proto-East Kyoga in turn diverged, speakers of both languages faced increasingly diverse population landscapes. In this context, the connections forged through motherhood in exogamous marriage were crucial. The importance of women as mothers, however, was about all aspects of social reproduction – not merely in creating new persons and raising them, nor merely in forming the loci of networks of social and political support, but also in food procurement. This is the focus of chapter 5.

Chapter Five

Food Procurement and Social Reproduction:

Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing[1]

The lands in which North Nyanzans and their descendants lived and worked range from swamps and lakesides to drier plateaus.[2] While drought was a perennial threat and medium-term climatic variation an ongoing challenge,[3] agricultural crops tended to thrive in these areas of relatively high rainfall. Towards the beginning of our period, when proto-North Nyanza was still spoken as a language, bananas were becoming more important alongside the grain crops of sorghum and millet and the yams and legumes which supplemented these staples. By the time that European travellers visited the area in the nineteenth century, banana crops were central to economic, social and cultural life in several parts of the Great Lakes region, most famously in Buganda. These early reports of Buganda as a state dominated by banana-cultivation have shaped much of the subsequent literature with scholars pointing to bananas as the explanation for the extent and complexity of the Ganda kingdom. And yet, while bananas clearly dominated the

[1] Thanks to Kathryn de Luna for pointing out that the phrase 'food procurement' better represents the work that mothers in North Nyanzan households performed than the more common phrase 'food production,' personal communication. See also, Kairn A. Klieman, *"The Pygmies Were Our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Times to c. 1900 C.E.* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003).

[2] David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, A Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Oxford: James Currey, 1998), 165-66, 220-22; see also Peter Robertshaw and David Taylor, "Climate Change and the Rise of Political Complexity in Western Uganda," *Journal of African History* 41 (2000): 19-24. For a discussion of the use of palynological data in reconstructing the ancient historical environment of the Great Lakes region and beyond, see David Lee Schoenbrun, "Treating an Interdisciplinary Allergy: Methodological Approaches to Pollen Studies for the Historian of Early Africa," *History in Africa* 18 (1991): 323-48.

[3] See chapter 3.

agricultural landscape on Buganda, their longer and broader history in North Nyanza and the continued economic and cultural importance of other crops suggests a more complicated picture.

North Nyanzans and their descendants associated a range of food procurement activities with healthy social reproduction and, thus, political centralization. North Nyanzan agricultural practices contributed to the nourishment and ritual well-being of social life. In turn, moral and social constructs, in particular social and ideological conceptions of motherhood, determined who performed various tasks of food procurement. By the late first millennium, agriculture had been practiced in the Great Lakes region for at least three millennia. But, hunting and fishing continued to be important both to supplement the diet and as part of cultural and social life. The exclusion of women from certain forms of hunting and fishing – those regarded as both most dangerous and most prestigious – was part of the North Nyanzan conception of healthy social reproduction. The taboos around such activities point to ideological connections between them and the work of physical reproduction performed by women.

Banana Farming and Gendered Work

Bananas are not an indigenous species in Africa, but archaeological evidence is increasingly pointing to their antiquity in the Great Lakes region. Recent work suggests that people may have been cultivating bananas in these lands as early as the fourth millennium BCE.[4]

[4] B. Julius Lejju, Peter Robertshaw and David Taylor, "Africa's Earliest Bananas?" *Journal of Archaeological Science* 33, no. 1 (2006): 102-13. This more or less fits with the working hypothesis proposed by E. De Langhe, R. Swenne and D. Vuylsteke which argues that plantains were brought to Africa "more than three thousand years ago" and that they "would have entered the rainforest [of central Africa] at least 2000 years ago." Other banana varieties, however, arrived significantly later. "Plantain in the Early Bantu World," *Azania* 29-30 (1994-1995): 152. In contrast, Gerda Rossel argues that the plantain was only introduced to the East African coast between the fourth century BCE and the sixth century CE and furthermore that "the establishment of the plantain as a food crop in the area would probably not have taken place before the 8th century." The East African Highland banana (the most common beer banana) "arrived or spread later." The evidentiary basis for Rossel's argument is diverse, but she

While bananas may have been present in the region for several millennia, it seems clear from linguistic and other archaeological evidence that it was only more recently that they began to be systematically cultivated. Speakers of West Nyanza in the early to mid-first millennium CE innovated a term for "a new sort of bill-hook for pruning banana trees"[5] suggesting that they were developing specialized skills which would only have arisen with an increase in intensity of cultivation. The highly diverse and intensive banana cultivation encountered by early European travellers to the region, however, is likely to have developed less than a thousand years ago. David Schoenbrun argues that because of the "large number of completely unique terms for varieties of both AAA *Musa* (East African beer bananas, and by far the most numerous) and AAB *Musa* in modern Lakes Bantu languages" the development of intensive banana farming began after the break up of the most recent branches of the Great Lakes Bantu language family.[6] This dates the practice as emerging no earlier than 1400, although near Lake Victoria-Nyanza the transition to such an agricultural system may be a few centuries older.[7] Christopher Wrigley, while recognising the need for further research, argues that this development occurred only "well into the millennium's second half" pointing to a royal decree by King Ssemakookiro in the late eighteenth century regarding the maintenance of banana groves.[8] The vast number of banana

---

relies largely on written texts for the dating of the arrival of bananas in Africa. *Taxonomic-Linguistic Study of Plantain in Africa* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 1998), 220-21.

[5] David Lee Schoenbrun, "Cattle Herds and Banana Gardens: the Historical Geography of the Western Great Lakes Region, ca AD 800-1500," *African Archaeological Review* 11 (1993): 50.

[6] Schoenbrun, "Cattle Herds," 52.

[7] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 82.

[8] Christopher C. Wrigley, "Bananas in Buganda," *Azania* 24 (1989): 69.

varieties present in Buganda in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the detailed taxonomy[9] that accompanied them does suggest that Buganda was a centre of innovation in banana cultivation. And yet, the linguistic evidence suggests that the move to intensive banana cultivation occurred earlier that Wrigley suggests, before Luganda existed as a separate language from North Nyanza.

Using the evidence then available, Schoenbrun reconstructed two proto-North Nyanza terms for banana varieties: **-kono* and **-wogolowa*[10] – both cooking varieties. With new language data, I have been able to reconstruct five further terms: **-fuba* [12], **-subi* [38], **-njaaya* [30], **mbwazirume* [7] and **-kago* [23]. Of these one is a beer banana (**-subi*) and **-fuba*, **-njaaya* and **mbwazirume* are varieties of cooking bananas. While these are substantially fewer in number than the varieties developed and named by Luganda speakers, they attest to the growing importance of banana farming in the economy of North Nyanzans. Importantly, the last term, **-kago*, is a generic term for cooking bananas. As Schoenbrun has noted, the innovation of "new nouns for generic types of banana according to their use…followed the long process of incorporating bananas into the diverse and highly productive food system of the region…and reflects the increased importance of *Musa* as an item of both nutritional and social value."[11] This new evidence, then, suggests that the transition to an agricultural economy in which bananas were significant on the north-western shores of Lake

[9] It is possible to list well over 90 varieties. In addition there is a detailed Luganda taxonomy for the parts of the banana plant.

[10] Schoenbrun, "Cattle Herds," 71, Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 42 and R.N.44.

[11] Schoenbrun, "Cattle Herds," 51.

Victoria-Nyanza dates to the late first millennium.[12] The innovation by proto-North Nyanza speakers of two other terms related to banana cultivation further indicates the importance of bananas at this earlier time. The first of these was a new term for a banana plantation – *-*suku*[13] – marking the land on which bananas were cultivated as requiring a distinct label. The second was a term for 'harvesting bananas' – *-*juunja*.[14] The innovation of a specific term for harvesting bananas as opposed to other crops points to the importance – social and economic – of bananas in North Nyanzan times.

It is a common trope in studies on Buganda that the intensive cultivation of bananas lies at the heart of state formation and expansion. According to this analysis, the maintenance of banana groves and the harvesting of the fruit required limited labour and so could be undertaken entirely by women and children. While adult male labour was required to clear forested land and plant the initial suckers, once the banana plantation was established men were free to engage in other activities. Prominent among those other activities were politics and warfare. According to this analysis, because women could do the bulk of economic work, men had the time to engage in state-building.[15] Even putting aside the economic and gender determinisms of this argument,

---

[12] The dating of banana agriculture would benefit greatly from further archaeological evidence, but the significant difficulties in conducting archaeological work in Buganda does not make this a very likely prospect. For a summary of these difficulties, see Andrew Reid, "Bananas and the Archaeology of Buganda," *Antiquity* 75, no. 290 (2001): 811-12.

[13] Schoenbrun, "Cattle Herds," 71, R.N.43.

[14] The verb *-*juunja* has reflexes in Luganda and Lugwere clearly pointing to its innovation during by speakers of proto-North Nyanza. David Lee Schoenbrun, "Early History in Eastern Africa's Great Lakes Region: Linguistic, Ecological, and Archaeological Approaches, ca.500 B.C. to ca. A.D. 1000" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1990), 530, table IIA.

[15] Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History* (New York: Zone Books, 2003), 64; Holly Elizabeth Hanson, *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003), 37; Conrad P. Kottak, "Ecological Variables in the Origin and Evolution of African States: The Buganda Example," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 14, no. 3 (1972): 355-56; Henri Médard, *Le*

a number of troubling questions remain. Buganda was not the only region of Africa in which women performed the bulk of agricultural work nor the only part of the Great Lakes region to see intensive banana cultivation. Indeed, early European travellers reported that southern Busoga was a site of more intensive banana cultivation even than Buganda.[16]

Other approaches to the relationship between state formation and banana farming are more convincing. Schoenbrun's analysis sees banana cultivation as a spur to political centralisation, but not because men were free to engage in political life. Rather, banana plantations represented "the investment of labor and the generation of surplus value in the form of perennially fruiting trees." The heads of homesteads, lineages and clans "who controlled these islands of fertility and wealth used them to attract followers who desired access to such lands."[17] By wielding the power to assign land, such people were able to build up followings of those indebted to them and thus build up political prestige and instrumental power. For while the recipients of the land held the theoretical right to move away should they resent the demands of

---

Royaume du Buganda au XIXe Siècle: Mutations Politiques et Religieuses d'un Ancien État d'Afrique de l'Est (Paris: Karthala, 2007), 63; Christopher Wrigley, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 234-6. (While Wrigley modifies his earlier argument regarding the causal connection between climate and soil fertility and state formation, he does not question the analysis that the 'ease' of banana cultivation allowed its delegation to women. See for example, idem, "Buganda: an Outline Economic History," *Economic History Review* 10, no. 1 (1957): 71.) Please see Neil Kodesh, "Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Collective Well-Being in Buganda" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 2004), 166-70 for an overview of approaches to bananas and state-formation in Buganda. But see Richard J. Reid, *Political Power in Pre-Colonial Buganda: Economy, Society and Warfare in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 24-26 for a powerful argumentation of the case against such an understanding of agricultural and other work in Buganda.

[16] Including the Reverend Robert Pickering Ashe, Frederick John Jackson, Carl Peters, Gerald Portal, Captain Eric Smith, Trevor P.B. Ternan, Bishop Alfred Robert Tucker, G. Wilson. See Brian W. Langlands, "The Banana in Uganda – 1860-1920," *Uganda Journal* 30, no. 1 (1966): 43-44. Although, we should bear in mind that the relative perception of Buganda must have been affected by the disruption of warfare and population dislocation in the late nineteenth century. "Agricultural production was deeply undermined from the late 1880s; large tracts of land both around the lake and further inland – notably in Singo and Bulemezi, which were badly affected by war – were laid waste of people and, thus, cultivation." (Reid, *Political Power*, 37).

[17] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 83.

their patron, the reality of the long-term investment required of banana gardens would act against any easy mobility. Building on Schoenbrun's analysis, Henri Médard argues that the relationship between banana cultivation and the state was reciprocal. He notes that banana farmers lacked the mobility of cereal producers thus facilitating state control through such means as taxation and corvée labour. At the same time, however, the state provided the political stability which gave people the confidence to invest in permanent banana groves that took several years to mature and the state army protected them from raids by neighbouring armed forces.[18] This model of the Ganda state as peacemaker, however, fails to account for the flourishing of banana cultivation in neighbouring Busoga which was subject to repeated raids by the dominant Ganda army from at least the eighteenth century.

By bringing the evidence that suggests a deeper history to intensive banana farming in North Nyanza to bear on these models of the connection between a banana dominated economy and state formation it is possible to add further nuance to the analyses offered. Not only did North Nyanzans inherit knowledge of banana cultivation from their West Nyanza ancestors, but they expanded significantly on that knowledge and its application. By exploiting the happy fact of the suitability of the environment in which they lived for banana cultivation they were able to propagate new varieties of brewing and cooking bananas. The more varieties available to them, the less the risk posed by events such as disease on the banana plants.[19] Because North

[18] Banana plantations, like olive groves in the Mediterranean and Middle East, were regularly razed by enemy troops. The consequences of such actions would be a multi-year hiatus before a new crop of bananas could be harvested. Cereal farmers, in contrast, could hide their crops in silos buried in the ground and would only need to wait six months or a year for a new crop. Médard, *Royaume du Buganda*, 69.

[19] Research on the history of banana diseases and pests in the region would be invaluable in developing a deeper understanding of banana cultivation and place the current crisis of banana wilt in historical perspective. For a statement on recent disease problems in the region, see W. Tushemereirwe and others, "An Outbreak of Bacterial Wilt on Banana in Uganda," *InfoMusa* 12, no. 2 (December 2003): 6-8.

Nyanzans not only innovated new terms for banana varieties but also for a banana grove or plantation and for harvesting bananas, we can be confident about the increased importance of banana cultivation for them. The increasing emphasis on bananas in the agricultural economy during the time that North Nyanza was spoken as a language would have led to more permanent settlements around the lands best suited to banana cultivation and increased competition for control of that land.[20] This in turn facilitated the development of small units of political centralisation. Banana cultivation, then, in all likelihood played a role in the development of political complexity in the region, but cannot alone be used to explain the singularity of the Ganda state.

The connection between women and bananas in Buganda is also a dominant theme in studies of that society. While the connection is clearly a social and cultural one, many authors present it in terms that approximate biological determinism. In this analysis, the maintenance of banana gardens requires only light levels of labour – as opposed to the cultivation of yams, for example, where the soil must be dug each year – and so could be left to women and children.[21] In addition, the preparation of food from bananas also requires relatively light labour – as opposed to the pounding of yams or the grinding of millet. Because of the lighter cooking work, "women were able to take over nearly all the labour of food production apart from the clearance of land."[22]

---

[20] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 180-81.

[21] Médard, *Royaume du Buganda*, 63. Indeed, Médard argues that one woman could produce sufficient bananas to feed 10 people. John Roscoe, however, asserts that a "woman with a good garden could supply three or four men with food." (*The Baganda: An Account of their Native Customs and Beliefs*, (London: Macmillan, 1911; reprint Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints, n.d.), 431). Reid, however, notes that "it is certainly not clear that bananas were as easily produced as has been suggested." (*Political Power*, 25).

[22] Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 60; Wrigley, "Bananas in Buganda," 64.

There are several problems with this analysis, not least in its attempt to explain Buganda's exceptionalism without reference to practices in neighbouring societies. Ethnographic evidence for Busoga and Bugwere demonstrates that the predominance of women in banana cultivation in Buganda was not an inevitable consequence of the adoption of the banana as a major crop. In both these societies men and women worked in the banana gardens as well as co-operating in the cultivation of other crops.[23] This suggests that during the time that banana cultivation began to be practised more intensively by proto-North Nyanza speakers, it was not the work of women alone. We should also be hesitant in labelling the work of banana cultivation, harvesting and cooking as 'light,' even if we do so in relative terms. One of the nouns that North Nyanzans innovated to describe a variety of cooking banana – **-fuba* [12] – cautions against such labelling for this word is derived from the verb **-fuba* meaning 'work hard, put out effort'. A dialectical model may be more useful in understanding the processes at work in gendered division of labour in Buganda and the expansion of the state: the demands of the state on male labour at the palace, in road construction and in the army would have left women at home to undertake the bulk of agricultural and domestic labour; in turn the fact that women could manage the labour themselves because new fields did not need clearing for each season, made it possible for social reproduction to continue when adult men were called away. In order to develop a better understanding of the relationship between gender, agricultural labour and bananas, then, it is necessary to examine developments in the other North Nyanza societies.

---

[23] J.F. Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples: Notes on the Protectorate of Uganda Especially the Anthropology and Ethnology of its Indigenous Races* (London: Hutchinson, 1905), 120; John Roscoe, *The Bagesu and Other Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate: The Third Part of the Report of the Mackie Ethnological Expedition to Central Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), 111; GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b, interview by author, 16 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04, interview by author, 27 October 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

As the proto-South Kyoga-speaking descendants of North Nyanzans moved eastwards around Lake Victoria-Nyanza, they faced three important challenges to their efforts to build new and durable communities. The first of these was that they were moving into unfamiliar, although similar, lands. While this was a slow process that unfolded gradually over generations, micro-climatic variability would have affected a new settlement's ability to successfully feed itself through cultivation. Secondly, as South Kyogans moved away from their North Nyanzan homeland, a century-and-a-half-long dry period was giving way to a century-long wet period. This medium-term climatic change put greater pressure on communities attempting to establish themselves in new areas. Finally, especially towards the end of the time that proto-South Kyoga was spoken as a single language but perhaps earlier, these new communities formed a northern borderlands of the Great Lakes Bantu world; a borderlands in which they increasingly lived with Luo-speaking people and their descendants. Luo immigrants from the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries came to dominate the political landscape of the Soga-speaking world, but practiced a different form of economy: one based on cattle rather than agriculture. In chapters 3 and 4 we saw that as South Kyogans built these new communities and their descendants worked to maintain them that they relied on a conception of social motherhood to create networks of kin-based connections that spread across the region. South Kyogan conceptions of motherhood – social, ideological and biological – also informed their approach to bananas and other crops.

The innovation of several terms for banana varieties and for a banana plantation by North Nyanza speakers points to an intensification in their cultivation at that time and yet this trend does not appear to have continued for speakers of South Kyoga in the early second millennium. South Kyogans innovated only one new term for a banana variety - **sagasaga* [37]. It may well

be that as South Kyogans moved into new lands further to the east they did not have the security to develop extensive plantations and relied rather on annual crops. In addition, although the lands immediately to the north of Victoria-Nyanza were ideally suited for banana cultivation, this was not necessarily the case further inland. Here cereal crops, especially millet, were the safer choice.

While South Kyogans did not place bananas at the heart of their agricultural economy their Lusoga speaking descendants turned increasingly to bananas as their staple crop. This importance given to bananas is reflected in the innovation of at least eight new terms for varieties of banana: *bikoyekoye, kalyankoko, malira, mpululu, naminwa, ntinti, ntuudhu* and *weete*.[24] While these do not even nearly approximate the numbers of varieties and terms for them in Luganda, it is worth noting that Europeans travelling through Busoga in the 1890s "provided a picture of a more complete cover under banana for this area than was given even for south Buganda."[25] Frederick Jackson wrote of Busoga that "Bananas at that time [1890], except in marshy depressions and narrow strips of neutral ground between sultanships, were practically continuous, mile after mile, as far as the Nile."[26] In 1891, Captain Eric Smith described Busoga as "a land of bananas and plenty."[27] Gerald Portal wrote to his mother that it took five days to cross the vast banana plantations of Busoga and reach the Nile.[28] At the dawn of the twentieth

---

[24] Rhiannon Stephens, "Field Notes," in author's possession. Further research may well uncover significantly more terms for varieties of bananas in Lusoga dialects.

[25] Langlands, "Banana in Uganda," 43. But see f.n.16 above.

[26] Frederick Jackson, *Early Days in East Africa* (London: E. Arnold, 1930; reprint, London: Dawsons, 1969), 256 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

[27] H.B. Thomas, "Captain Eric Smith's Expedition to Lake Victoria in 1891," *Uganda Journal* 23, no. 2 (1959): 142. Cited in Langlands, "Banana in Uganda," 43.

[28] Gerald Portal, *The British Mission to Uganda in 1893* (London: Edward Arnold, 1894), 213.

century, J.F. Cunningham noted that "the traveller at once knew when he entered Busoga owing to the endless banana plantations."[29] Although the south was particularly suited to banana cultivation, even the area bordering Lake Kyoga was described in 1899 as being plentiful in "bananas, sheep, and fowls."[30] This depiction of the Busoga at the turn of the twentieth century suggests that bananas were more important there than the linguistic record indicates. One reason for the comparatively few names for banana varieties that I was able to collect may be the dislocations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Busoga suffered a number of famines in the second half of the nineteenth century followed by a severe outbreak of sleeping sickness in the early twentieth. The colonial government's response to the latter was to clear swathes of land bordering the northern shore of Lake Victoria-Nyanza,[31] which appear to have been the most productive zones for banana cultivation. The dislocation caused by the forced removals may have broken some of the chains of knowledge about banana agriculture. In addition, if the soil and micro-climates in the resettlement zones were less suitable for banana cultivation than the land to the south, farmers may have been forced to restrict the varieties they cultivated to those able to survive in the new areas. And, it is worth noting, the descriptions of Busoga as covered in banana plantations do not mention the varieties that grew in them. It may

[29] Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples*, 107.

[30] R.T. Kirkpatrick, "Lake Choga and Surrounding Country," *Geographical Journal* 13, no. 4 (1899); reprint, *Uganda Journal* 10 (1946): 161. Cited in Langlands, "Banana in Uganda," 44.

[31] Please see Kirk A. Hoppe, *Lords of the Fly: Sleeping Sickness Control in British East Africa, 1900-1960* (London: Praeger, 2003) for a discussion of British colonial policy on sleeping sickness.

be that Basoga farmers successfully grew bananas using a much narrower range of cultivars[32] than their Baganda neighbours.

Bananas were of great significance to Basoga as a food crop. J.F. Cunningham argues that the reliance on bananas as the staple food was partially responsible for the severe suffering during years of drought, such as 1899. "The people at that time had no other food crop of importance to depend on," he noted, "and felt the pinch of hunger severely, while several thousand people are said to have lost their lives from starvation."[33] And yet, despite the predominance of bananas in the agriculture and diet of people in Busoga both men and women worked in the banana groves as well as sharing the cultivation of other crops.[34] The segregation of economic work in neighbouring Buganda along gender lines was, thus, not an inevitable, perhaps not even a likely, consequence of the adoption of bananas as the dominant staple food.

Soga rituals associated with motherhood and other aspects of social reproduction gave a central role to bananas. The placenta and dried umbilical cord of a new-born baby were buried at the base of specific banana plants.[35] Some clans specified a type of banana to be eaten by a new mother during her post-natal seclusion and during that seclusion she slept on a bed of dried

[32] Cultivars is the term used to describe varieties of edible bananas: "As edible bananas are seedless, they are reproduced through ramifications of their rhizome, the suckers. Since these can be transplanted, artificial vegetative propagation is possible. Thus the presence of edible banana varieties beyond the area of origin can only be due to human intervention. These varieties are generally called 'cultivars' (cultivated varieties)." De Langhe, Swennen and Vuylsteke, "Plantain in the Early Bantu World," 148.

[33] Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples*, 110.

[34] Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples*, 120; Roscoe, *Bagesu*, 111; SO-ETH-KAL-F-21/01/05, interview by author, 21 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[35] Please see chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of this.

banana leaves.[36] At the other end of life-cycle, mourners wore strips of banana fibre "round their heads and necks and waists," while women wore skirts of banana leaves.[37] A few days after burial banana beer would be brewed and "a gourd of it was poured over the grave."[38] Bananas and their products were also associated with the social position of the chief or senior wife. During the 'Burning the Dead Banana' rite for a chief's funeral, a dried piece of banana leaf "was taken from the pillow of the chief wife" and burned at a cross-roads.[39] And the origin myth for the kingdom of Bugweri refers to a banana garden from which only the chief wife in the family could harvest bananas.[40] In chapter 3 we saw that in Busoga a senior wife should have a son (biological or not) in order for her husband to have an heir so that social reproduction followed its 'correct' course. These examples from the oral traditions and ethnography are a further indication of the important role Basoga gave to the senior wife.

East Kyoga and early Lugwere speakers faced similar conditions to their South Kyogan ancestors. If anything they faced even greater insecurity. The lands to the north-east of the Mpologoma waterway were drier than those to the west and south. Furthermore, by the time that East Kyoga began to be spoken as a language the area was a 'corridor' for a variety of groups of

---

[36] For example, the abaiseBandha prescribe the *ntinti* banana. David William Cohen, *Collected Texts of Busoga Traditional History* (n.p.), Text 14 and Text 287. (Hereafter referred to as *CTBTH*.)

[37] Miss Laight and Yekonia K. Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 2 (1934/1935), 121. (Please note that this was initially erroneously published under the name of Ezekeri Zibondo. A letter rectifying the error was published in *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 3 (1935), 255).

[38] Laight and Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," 123-24, 125.

[39] Laight and Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," 125. Cross-roads were ritually important in both Busoga and Bugwere.

[40] Cohen, *CTBTH*, 614.

people speaking Nilotic languages.[41] While encounters between East Kyogans and other peoples were by no means entirely negative and confrontational (it is, for example, evident that marriages occurred across the groups[42]) warfare and the resultant social and political instability was quite common.[43] Despite this, banana cultivation was an important part of Gwere agriculture, with Bagwere innovating several new terms in relation to it.[44] Lugwere has at least four unique terms for varieties of banana: *kabuluka, kasaaye, mawolu* and *nalywanda*. Lugwere speakers also innovated a new term which describes both the banana plant and a banana grove: *mpandu*. This word is also found in the Luhyia language Lunyole, however, it appears to be an innovation in one of the two languages, borrowed into the other, rather than an older inherited form.

This renewed interest in naming bananas and banana plants points to the importance of bananas in Gwere agriculture. Another new term points to their importance in Gwere culture. This is the word for a dry banana leaf: *kisoigi* [37]. In addition to naming a dry banana leaf it also names a funeral ceremony, a small version of which is performed some three weeks after burial and a major version performed a year or so later.[45] Female mourners wore banana leaf skirts called *bibenga* during the *-soigi* ceremony, embodying the connection between dry banana leaves and funeral rites. As a sign of their bereavement and mourning they did not replace the

---

[41] David William Cohen, "The River-Lake Nilotes from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century," in *Zamani: A Survey of East African History*, 2nd ed., ed. B.A. Ogot (Nairobi: Longman, 1974), 135-49.

[42] See chapter 3 and chapter 4.

[43] The social upheavals caused by warfare were such that at one point the Bagwere moved en masse to northern and eastern Busoga to escape the predations of Baloki raiders. (W.H. Long, District Commissioner, "Notes on the Bugwere District," c.1933, J.R. Mc D. Elliot Papers, Rhodes House, Oxford, 456-57).

[44] Further research on Rushana might indicate whether this innovation occurred during the time that East Kyoga was spoken or only more recently after its dissolution into Lugwere and Rushana.

[45] "Lugwere-English Wordlist," Summer Institute of Languages Lugwere Bible Translation Project (n.p.).

skirts with fresh leaves each day but continued to wear the same ones until the leaves had dried out.[46] In the Lulamoogi dialect of Lusoga the name Soigi is given to a daughter born to parents who have suffered the death of several children and is translated as 'condolence.'[47] The most likely etymology for the word is an original connection with funerals or specific clothing worn by the bereaved. As bananas grew in significance for Lugwere speakers and dry banana leaves began to feature prominently as symbols of mourning, the word began to be applied to the dry leaves themselves.

While banana leaf clothing appears to have been restricted to Gwere women, with the men preferring animal hides and barkcloth,[48] banana cultivation was not so strictly gendered. The heavy work of clearing land for a new banana grove would have probably been the province of men, but both men and women were responsible for weeding and maintaining the grove once it was established.[49] Indeed in Bugwere, as we will see below, it was the cultivation of crops other than bananas which was gendered raising the need for alternative explanations of the gendered division of agricultural labour in Buganda.

The evidence regarding the cultivation of bananas by Bashana remains very thin.[50] However, it is clear that bananas continued to form part of their agricultural economy after the break up of East Kyoga and the apparent Shana migration to Mount Masaaba. Writing about the

---

[46] GW-ETH-BUT-M-01/12/04, interview by author, 1 January 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[47] *Dictionary: Lusoga-English English-Lusoga* (Jinja: Cultural Research Centre, 2000), part I, 131.

[48] Long, "Notes on the Bugwere District," 458; GW-ETH-BUT-M-01/12/04.

[49] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b; GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04.

[50] I was unable to collect linguistic data on bananas for Rushana due to logistical constraints. I hope to remedy this situation during future research.

Sebei, Walter Goldschmidt noted that "there is a rite to increase the fertility of plantains, manifestly a recent introduction by the Bumachek."[51] It is not clear from the context whether Goldschmidt is asserting that bananas were introduced by the Bashana or whether they introduced the specific fertility rite for them. Either way, bananas appear to have been a significant part of Shana cultural and economic life by the early twentieth century at the latest. It is highly likely that as they migrated eastwards and settled in the Sipi region of Mount Masaaba they brought with them the knowledge and skills of banana cultivation.

By looking at the historical linguistic and comparative ethnographic data across North Nyanza languages, it has been possible to make a number of important interventions in the academic debate about the role of banana cultivation in Ganda history. Firstly, the new linguistic evidence suggests that the shift to more intensive banana-growing occurred at the earlier end of the spectrum scholars have previously proposed. Speakers of proto-North Nyanza innovated a number of terms for banana cultivars, including a generic term for 'cooking banana'. They also innovated terms related to the physical space and work involved in banana cultivation. We can, then, be confident that this agricultural transition occurred in the final centuries of the first millennium, well before the emergence of Luganda as a distinct language. As speaker of proto-South Kyoga and its descendants settled the lands immediately north of Lake Victoria-Nyanza, they took their knowledge of banana cultivation with them and used that knowledge in the creation of new communities. Secondly, while in Buganda by the eighteenth century it was women who performed the bulk of agricultural work, this was not an automatic consequence of

[51] Walter Goldschmidt, *Culture and Behavior of the Sebei: A Study in Continuity and Adaptation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), 160. Bumachek or Bumatyek is how the Sebei refer to the Bashana.

the dominance of bananas in food production nor does it tell us that North Nyanzans and their descendants viewed banana cultivation as light work. Finally, people speaking proto-South Kyoga and Luganda and their North Nyanzan ancestors made clear connections between the role bananas played in the social reproduction of their communities and the major events in the life-cycle. This was not an unchanging relationship. In fact it is by tracing the developments in the ways people speaking North Nyanza languages used banana plants and their products to mark such events that we can see innovations in their conceptions of healthy social reproduction.

Grains, Legumes and Social Reproduction

Even though North Nyanzans increasingly emphasized bananas in their agriculture and diet, both millet (*Eleusine*) and sorghum continued to be important crops. We know from the linguistic record that these crops were cultivated in the Great Lakes region before speakers of Great Lakes Bantu lived there. Speakers of Central-Sudanic languages in the western part of the region grew sorghum and millet.[52] In the east, Sog Eastern Sudanic speakers also cultivated sorghum.[53] The third ethno-linguistic group that we know lived in the region some two millennia ago were the Tale Southern Cushitic and they too cultivated both sorghum and millet.[54] Because speakers of Mashariki Bantu[55] – the grandparent of Great Lakes Bantu – moved into the

[52] David Lee Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat: Ancient Agriculture Between the Great Lakes," *Journal of African History* 34 (1993), 10.

[53] Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 15.

[54] Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 16.

[55] In his earlier work Schoenbrun uses the term Eastern Bantu to refer to the parent language of Great Lakes Bantu and other eastern African Bantu languages (e.g. "Early History," and "We Are What We Eat."). In his monograph and other more recent work, he uses the term Mashariki Bantu (*Green Place* and "Social Aspects of Agricultural Change between the Great Lakes, AD 500 to 1000," *Azania* 24-25 (1994-95): 270-82). The term

region from the forests to the east, they likely learned the skills of cereal agriculture from the speakers of Cushitic and Sudanic languages who already inhabited the area.[56] Along with those skills and knowledge came the words with which to name and talk about these new crops.[57] While Great Lakes Bantu speakers undoubtedly inherited the practice of grain cultivation from their Mashariki-speaking ancestors,[58] they expanded on their knowledge at least in part through contact with farmers speaking Central Sudanic languages. One of the ways in which this is recorded in the linguistic data is through the loan of the Central Sudanic term for millet –*-*Do* – into Great Lakes Bantu where it took the form *-*lo*.[59] The term for sorghum used by Great Lakes Bantu people and many of their descendants – *-*pémbá* – is likely of Mashariki origin and appears to have been derived from an existing Bantu term.[60] However, because of the preponderance of terms for grains and food prepared from grain crops of Central Sudanic origin

---

Mashariki is widely used by other historians and linguists studying languages descended from it and is the term used here. Please see chapter 2 for the relationship between North Nyanza languages and Mashariki Bantu.

[56] Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 27.

[57] See Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 29-32 for a list of loan words in Mashariki or Eastern Bantu, Great Lakes Bantu, West Nyanza and Western Lakes. For a comprehensive listing of agricultural terms in all four language groups see idem, "Early History," 480-582.

[58] Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 21; idem, "Early History," 193.

[59] Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 30, Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 9; idem, *The Historical Reconstruction of Great Lakes Bantu Cultural Vocabulary* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe, 1997), 60, Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 68.

[60] Schoenbrun, "Early History," 502; idem, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 62, R.N.74. See also Yvonne Bastin and Thilo Schadeberg (eds.), "Bantu Lexical Reconstructions 3," Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, www.metafro.be/blr (accessed 28 August 2007), Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 7570. (Hereafter referred to as "BLR 3".); Malcolm Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages. Volume 4: A Catalogue of Common Bantu with Commentary* (Farnborough: Gregg, 1970), 48, Comparative Series (C.S.) 1475.

in Great Lakes Bantu we can be confident that at least until 500 BCE it was the former who were the predominant grain farmers in the region.[61]

By the time that proto-North Nyanza came to be spoken speakers of Great Lakes Bantu languages dominated the region's linguistic landscape. North Nyanzan communities and their descendants, however, constituted a northern borderland of profound multilingual interactions. As in aspects of social and political life discussed in previous chapters, the engagement with people speaking other languages led to cross-cultural borrowings related to the cultural and economic aspects of food procurement. Speakers of North Nyanza inherited from their West Nyanza speaking ancestors a new term for 'dense porridge made of millet flour': **-(y)ita*.[62] In addition to it's nutritional value, **-(y)ita* had a cultural role in North Nyanzan life as the ceremonial eating of the first porridge from the newly harvested millet was an important ritual event. The performance of this ceremony helped ensure the social reproduction of the community by guarding against future crop failure.[63] Sorghum too continued to be cultivated, but its primary function was in beer brewing. To that end, North Nyanzans retained **-weemba*[64] but limited its meaning to 'millet or sorghum for brewing beer.'[65] This restriction of meaning does not imply a reduced importance. It may even suggest the opposite, for the cultural importance of **malwa* [20] or millet beer was great – in marking important events, in prestations

---

[61] Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 21.

[62] Schoenbrun, "Early History," 527.

[63] Ronald R. Atkinson, *Bugwere Historical Texts*, Text 13, Text 44, Text 45, Text 46, (n.p.) (Hereafter referred to as Atkinson, *BHT*); John Roscoe, *The Northern Bantu: An Account of Some Central African Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 235.

[64] The North Nyanzan reflex of **-pémbá*.

[65] Schoenbrun, "Early History," 530.

to chiefs and royalty and in socialising. Another innovation of North Nyanzans was a term for a granary raised on stilts: **kyagi* [41]. Because rain fell throughout the year in the lands near Lake Victoria-Nyanza, farmers growing grain crops which had to be stored from harvest to harvest needed to keep the grains clear of the ground to prevent excessive humidity destroying them. A **kyagi* consisted of a large basket with a thatch roof raised on a tripod.[66] In addition to keeping the millet and sorghum dry, this would also reduce the risk of rodents taking a share of the harvest.

After the final break up of North Nyanzan languages, Lugwere speakers continued to place much emphasis on millet cultivation for food and sorghum cultivation for beer, alongside the ongoing importance of bananas.[67] And just as for North Nyanzans, both products had cultural as well as nutritional importance. *Malwa* or millet beer was consumed and shared with the ancestors and other important spirits at ceremonies, weddings and funerals.[68] One of the most important ceremonies in Bugwere was *okwakira obulo obwita obuyaka* which marked the first eating of millet porridge – *obwita* – from the new crop.[69] This was performed by each lineage group which gathered together for that purpose. The head of the lineage made offerings of livestock and millet beer at the three household shrines or *bibaali* – the *kibaali ky'oluwuuga* (the courtyard shrine), the *kibaali ky'oGasani* (the shrine to Gasani) and the *kibaali ky'oIseja*

[66] GW-15-KAI-M-29/10/04, interview by author, 29 October 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; GW-15-BUD-F-15/11/04, interview by author, 15 November 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-15-BUG-F-22/01/05, interview by author, 22 January 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-15-WAI -F-08/03/05, interview by author, 8 March 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author; SO-15-BUE-M-10/03/05, interview by author, 10 March 2005, Busoga, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[67] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 25.

[68] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 37, Text 41, Text 45.

[69] The following is from Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 44, Text 45 and GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b.

(the shrine to Iseja).[70] The women of the lineage would have threshed, dried and ground the millet in preparation and on the day cooked the *obwita* or millet porridge. Along with lineage members, the *baiwa* (the children of female lineage members) also participated. It was they who drank the *malwa* in the shrine to Iseja. Only once the ceremony of *kwakira obulo obwita obuyaka* had been performed could the new millet be eaten. As well as marking the completion of the millet harvest, Bagwere recognised the role of the spirits in the success of the crop when they sowed the grains. This ceremony was called *kuwulukya esigo* – 'bringing out the seeds.' Rather than each tending to her own fields, women would come together and sow the millet grains in each woman's field in turn while calling aloud to the spirits to 'give us germination'. [71]

That Bagwere marked both the start and end of the millet cycle indicates the cultural importance of the crop. According to the ethnographic evidence available, it was women who sowed the seeds, who threshed the harvested stalks, who dried and ground the grains into flour and who prepared the millet porridge. Millet porridge was eaten when a new-born baby was first brought out of the house in which she was born.[72] And a woman's children, though not lineage members, participated in her lineage's ceremony marking the successful completion of the millet harvest. In Bugwere it was millet, not bananas, that was most closely connected to motherhood and to healthy social reproduction. Gwere motherhood both depended on a good harvest of millet in order for rituals surrounding the birth of children to be performed and helped ensure a

---

[70] Gasani was the 'supreme being' in Bugwere and Iseja was the spirit responsible for congenital physical deformity. Each household had a shrine or *kibaali* (pl. *bibaali*) in the vicinity of the homestead to both Gasani and Iseja. Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 47; Long, "Notes on the Bugwere District," 470-71; GW-ETH-BUT-M-01/12/04.

[71] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b.

[72] GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b. Please see chapter 3 for a description of *kuwulukya omwana* 'bringing out the baby'.

good harvest through the participation of *baiwa* (the children of female lineage members) in the *kwakira obulo obwita obuyaka* ceremony. Motherhood was essential not only to the biological reproduction of the group, but also to its sustenance.

What makes this particularly interesting is that either Lugwere speakers or their East Kyoga-speaking ancestors adopted a new name for the granary in which millet and sorghum would be stored from one harvest to the next. This word, *kideero* [9], was borrowed from speakers of a Luo language. Although there are no Luo speakers living in the areas bordering Bugwere today, we know that several groups speaking Luo languages lived in the area during the slow migration from the Bahr-el-Ghazal to the north-eastern shore of Lake Victoria-Nyanza.[73] Because East Kyogans already had a word for a granary and grain cultivation was a well-established practice for them, their adoption of this term suggests close social relationships between the two groups. Indeed, the most plausible explanation is that Luo-speaking women married into East Kyoga-speaking households and vice versa. Such women would have quickly learnt the language of their new home, if they did not already know it, but at the same time would have brought their own language and culture with them.[74] A further indication that these relationships were quite common is that East Kyoga speakers also borrowed the Luo term for 'homestead': *dala*, again adding the class seven prefix and lengthening the vowel to form *kidaala* [8]. As mothers to Bagwere children, Luo-speaking women grew the millet which played such a central role in social reproduction as well as bearing the new members of the household into which they had married.

[73] Cohen, "River-Lake Nilotes," 135-49.

[74] For a similar, though more tentative, argument please see, Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat," 28.

After the break up of South Kyoga, speakers of Lusoga continued to grow millet. Although it is likely to have varied across the different microclimates of the region, by the turn of the twentieth century, J.F. Cunningham reported that Basoga grew millet among other crops, but that it was bananas that formed the core of their diet.[75] John Roscoe noted that millet ("*bulo*") was grown for food while "large millet" was preferred for brewing beer.[76] Like their Ganda neighbours, Basoga retained the North Nyanza terms for a granary, millet and sorghum, suggesting that little innovation occurred in this area of cultivation. However, millet continued to be of cultural significance. Sources from at least two clans on the ceremonies for 'bringing-out' new-born babies and their mothers from their postnatal seclusion emphasise that until all the babies of the lineage were 'brought-out', the new millet-sowing season could not commence.[77] Before the millet could be sown, the field and the seed had to be 'activated' through words spoken by a healer and while she was sowing the seeds the farmer "might not speak to anyone until she had finished."[78] When a newly-married man and woman harvested their first millet crop, they took a portion to the man's father before consuming any of it themselves.[79] This is reminiscent of the new millet ceremony in Bugwere, though it occurred within in a specific context, rather than for each harvest. That it was part of the process for establishing a new household, however, also indicates the ongoing importance of millet in social reproduction.

---

[75] Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples*, 110.

[76] Given the context it is most likely that he is using "large millet" to refer to sorghum, Roscoe, *Bagesu*, 111.

[77] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 287, Text 468.

[78] Roscoe, *Bagesu*, 111.

[79] Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 235.

Performing rites at the time of planting and at harvest was a common practice for speakers of North Nyanza and their descendants and such rites were practiced in connection with several crops. Baganda marked the cultivation of certain legumes and sweet potatoes in this way.[80] A mother was supposed to call her eldest son to eat the first dish of *mpindi* peas. According to Roscoe's informants, if she failed to call him, she would "incur the displeasure of the gods and fall ill."[81] In this practice we can see the close connection that Baganda drew between a woman's role in food production and biological reproduction. Yet, despite the dominance of bananas in Ganda society, it was with reference to other food crops that such rites were practiced. This suggests that the importance given to bananas over all other crops in studies of Buganda may have been over-stated.[82]

In Bugwere millet had great cultural significance, but *mpindi* peas also played a role in social reproduction and cultural life. *Mpindi* was the only crop with a dedicated *musambwa* or 'territorial nature spirit.'[83] The *musambwa* for *mpindi* was Nakiriga. Before the new crop could be sown, Nakiriga's medium made offerings to the *musambwa*. The women of the village gathered together and cooked millet and sesame seeds. Each women took a portion of the *obwita* (millet porridge) sprinkled with ground sesame seeds to her pea-field for that season. While singing 'give me *mpindi*, I will give you *obwita* and sesame' she threw small pieces of the food

[80] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 428.

[81] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 428.

[82] See for example, Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 29.

[83] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 197. See 197-203 for a discussion of the history of such spirits and their role in West Nyanza society.

in each part of the field.[84] It was at harvest time, however, that the *mpindi* crop was most important in terms of social reproduction. The *mpindi* were harvested by mature, but unmarried, girls who then used the *mpindi* to cook a dish called *magera* in a rite known as *kwesumbirira* or 'cooking for oneself.' All the people of the village gathered to eat the *magera* and millet porridge and to see which girls were eligible for marriage.[85]

Men, Women, Hunting and Fishing

Bananas, while reasonably reliable and relatively less labour-intensive than other staples, have one significant disadvantage over other crops and over millet in particular; a disadvantage which lies in their nutritional value. As Kottak notes, the "caloric value of the banana is inferior per unit weight to that of wheat, rice, millet, maize, and the major grain staples of the world, and to manioc or cassava flour."[86] Where bananas make up the bulk of the diet, they must be supplemented by protein- and vitamin-rich food stuffs such as meat, fish and legumes.[87] During the time that North Nyanza was spoken, it is most likely that both bananas and millet were consumed as staples, perhaps with variation according to microclimates. In addition, legumes such as cowpeas and various bean varieties and groundnuts were cultivated and eaten. However, fish and meat were also important components of the diet, even if they may have been consumed less regularly than other foodstuffs. Just as many scholars regard banana cultivation as having

[84] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 45.

[85] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 45; Stephens Interview GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04.

[86] Kottak, "Ecological Variables," 356.

[87] In Kottak's analysis, in order to get the "minimum daily requirement of 55 grams of protein" from bananas "one would have to consume 5.5 kilograms of" the fruit. ("Ecological Variables," 356).

been entirely the realm of women in Buganda, so they view the work of hunting and fishing as entirely the realm of men. Indeed, many argue that it was because women could manage banana plantations by themselves men were free to hunt and fish as well as to participate in military and political activities.[88] Other scholars have noted both that we should be hesitant to assume that hunting in the deep past was uniformly a male activity and we should recognise that the English gloss 'hunting' covers a multiplicity of activities.[89] The latter was undoubtedly true for North Nyanzans. Different animals were hunted using different methods: some, such as elephants, were hunted by small groups of highly skilled men while others, such as small mammals, required the participation of large groups who corralled the quarry.[90] A wide range of methods were also applied in fishing, depending on the fish sought and the particular water environment involved.[91] It is clear that North Nyanza women performed certain types of fishing,[92] particularly in inland areas, however, the ethnographic record suggests that women were excluded from hunting. But, trapping of small animals, especially those that encroached on cultivated fields, was likely also an important means of adding protein to the North Nyanzan diet and was likely to have been performed by women.[93] Trapping did not have the same prestige

---

[88] Médard, *Royaume du Buganda*, 63; Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 60.

[89] Kathryn de Luna, "Bantu Hunters: A Revision of the Story of Bantu Expansion and the Development of Farmer States," (unpublished research paper), 2 fn.2.

[90] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 46; Apolo Kagwa, *The Customs of the Baganda*, trans. Ernest B. Kalibala, ed. May Mandelbaum Edel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1969), 133 (page citations are to the reprint edition); Roscoe, *Baganda*, 448-49; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 238-40.

[91] Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 149-151; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 392-99; Roscoe, *Bagesu*, 118; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 238

[92] Stephens Interview GW-15-KAI-M-17/11/04.

[93] Jan Vansina notes that in the forest regions to the west of the Great Lakes, "Certain crops attract certain animals… Such observations were used to tie trapping directly to farming. The fields were protected by traps

associated with it as hunting and as Eugenia Herbert has noted, when "women kill small animals or children snare birds, it usually isn't even defined as hunting."[94] Despite this, trapping can be assumed to have been a much more reliable method of food collection than hunting.[95] The linguistic evidence for trapping, however, indicates little innovation by North Nyanza speakers and does not clearly point to the gendering of the practice.[96] In the absence of further ethnographic and linguistic evidence, this must then remain at the level of informed speculation for North Nyanza speakers and their descendants.

Whatever the original motivation behind hunting (as opposed to trapping or gathering insects) being an exclusively male activity for North Nyanzans, by the nineteenth century their descendants explained this exclusion in ritual terms. By concentrating on the rituals surrounding both hunting and specialised fishing, we are able to see that North Nyanzans and their descendants connected these activities with biological and social reproduction in ways that are reminiscent of similar practices and ideas surrounding both hunting and iron smelting elsewhere in the region and across sub-Saharan Africa.[97] When Ganda hunters gathered in the morning, the

---

especially [sic] designed for the major predators expected… Thus a yam field also produced bushpigs and beans produced antelopes." *Paths in the Rainforest: Toward a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 90.

[94] Eugenia W. Herbert, *Iron, Gender, and Power: Rituals of Transformation in African Societies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 165. This lack of prestige may well explain the lack of ethnographic evidence for the practice. Early ethnographers largely interviewed male informants and were themselves restricted by their own perceptions of prestigious behaviour and gendered activities.

[95] According to Vansina, "Trapping achieved two things which hunting did not, in that it caught all sorts of animals which hunters did not get and it gave a more regular supply with less expenditure of energy than hunting." (*The Tio Kingdom of the Middle Congo: 1880-1892* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 124). Cited in Herbert, *Iron, Gender, and Power*, 165.

[96] See Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 242, R.N.370; Vansina, *Paths in the Rainforest*, 286 Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 48.

[97] Herbert, *Iron, Gender, and Power*.

leader of the hunt blew a horn. This served both to call the hunters together and to "warn women from the path, because it was believed that if a huntsman met a woman when he was setting out, the hunt would be a failure, and the animals would escape."[98] Hunting was similarly organised in Bugwere, although the sources do not refer to any taboos regarding meeting women.[99] In Busoga, a hunter would sleep outside the night before a hunt to ensure that "neither he nor his weapons came in contact with his wife or any other woman during the night."[100] The avoidance of women was continued during the hunt.[101] On returning home, a Ganda hunter must not find another man at his home. If he did so, "he speared him slightly, just enough to draw blood." And if he found a woman who was not his wife at his home, "he beat her and said, 'Go and accuse me'." If these taboos were not followed, the next hunt would result in failure. [102]

Ideas about social reproduction lay at the heart of these restrictions. The fertility of a woman – whether a wife of the hunter or not – threatened the fertility of the hunt and also the fertility of the woman. Herbert has emphasised the importance of recognising not just the destructive aspect of hunting, but also its creativity.[103] A successful hunt would bring meat to the household and skins to give to the chief or even the king in prestation which would put the

---

[98] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 449.

[99] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 46.

[100] Roscoe, *Bagesu*, 118.

[101] Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 239.

[102] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 450.

[103] Herbert, *Iron, Gender, and Power*, 170-71.

householder in favour with his patron and bring prestige to the hunter.[104] Elsewhere in Africa, direct associations were drawn between hunting and human reproduction.[105] While the ethnographic evidence does not point in that direction for North Nyanzan societies, a Luganda proverb serves to connect the two: *Ddungu ayizze, ng'omuzaana azaalidde nyinimu ddenzi*, ('Ddungu [the god of hunting] has brought home his catch, says the slave woman who has borne her master's son').[106] This suggests that Baganda at least, if not their North Nyanza ancestors, were aware that hunting and childbearing shared the same tension between destructive and creative potentials. Both hunting and childbearing held the potential for social mobility – by becoming the mother of the heir in a household or by killing a prestigious animal, such as a leopard. Both, too, held dangers. For Baganda it was, explicitly, social reproduction – not simply biological reproduction – that could affect and be affected by contact with hunting. If a man returned from a hunting trip that could last some time and found another man in his home, this threatened both his position as the male head of the household and his position as the socially-recognised father or *pater* to his children. This meant that he must symbolically defeat his potential usurper, through cutting him with his hunting spear.

While the potential for hunting and trapping would have varied according to local environments, fishing was a much more restricted practice. However, even quite far from Lakes Victoria-Nyanza and Kyoga, or from the smaller lakes such as Lake Wamala, as well as from the

---

[104] Kathryn de Luna's current research will shed significant light on such questions for Southern Africa, "Beating Around the Bush: Wild Resource Use in Central African Political Culture, ca. 1000 B.C.E. to ca. 1900 C.E." (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, in preparation). For the Great Lakes region, see her research paper "Bantu Hunters."

[105] For example, among the Ndembu. Herbert, *Iron, Gender, and Power*, 169.

[106] Abasi Kiyimba, "Gender Stereotypes in the Folktales and Proverbs of the Baganda" (Ph.D. diss, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 2001), 114. This proverb is discussed in chapter 3 with reference to social mobility accessed through motherhood.

major rivers fish remained an important part of the diet and of certain ritual events. Like hunting, fishing for speakers of North Nyanza and its descendant languages appears to have been divided into two main types. For some it was an activity that formed part of food procurement activities for the household and was mainly performed using special basket fish-traps.[107] According to the ethnographic record, women dominated this form of fishing and they practiced it in nearby swamps. The second form of fishing was a specialised activity dominated by men who lived in villages on the lake shore. The fish caught by specialist fishermen was dried and traded to communities further inland.[108] Fish were also given in prestation to chiefs and heads of state. Fishing on the lake could be as hazardous as hunting on land and these dangers (and its benefits) were similarly connected to social reproduction. While making a drag-net, a Ganda fisherman lived apart from his wife "until the first catch of fish had been taken."[109] The catch was not divided among the fishing crew until the owner of the net "had cooked and eaten some of it" and had performed the *kukuza* rite with his wife. This involved symbolical sexual intercourse performed by a man stepping over the extended legs of his wife.[110] Similar practices were followed with regards to the setting of fish traps and line-fishing.[111] When the wife of a fisherman was pregnant, "he presented her with a basket of small fish" to eat or to share.[112] In

---

[107] Stephens Interview GW-15-KAI-M-17/11/04.

[108] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 391.

[109] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 393.

[110] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 393. For a discussion of the *kukuza* rite, see Lucy P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London: Kegan Paul, 1934; reprint, New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), 42-43, 247-48 (page citations are to the reprint edition). See also chapter 3 and chapter 4 of this dissertation for a discussion of *kukuza* in connection to marriage and childbirth.

[111] Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 150; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 394, 395.

[112] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 395.

Buganda, then, direct connections were drawn between specialised fishing activities and social reproduction through avoidances and gift-giving. Similarly in Busoga, during the time that a man "was making a line or a net no woman might approach him. He lived apart from his wife."[113] It seems likely that such proscriptions were practiced by fishing people who spoke proto-North Nyanza. It also seems likely that just as North Nyanzan hunters recognised a connection between the creative and destructive powers of the hunt and social reproduction, so their fishing counterparts recognised a similar connection with specialised fishing.

North Nyanzans used proto-Bantu verbs to describe fishing in general – *-*vuba*[114] and 'fishing with a line' – *-*loba*.[115] East Kyoga speakers or their Lugwere speaking descendants innovated a specific term to describe the type of fishing with a basket performed by women – *-toga*. This is probably related to the Luganda word *-togereza* which glosses as "feel about in the mud to catch."[116] Gwere ethnographic material makes no reference to ritual precautions with regards to this form of fishing, however, it was clearly gendered as a female activity. In contrast to the specialised fishing that occurred on the lake and river shores in Busoga and Buganda, this form of fishing was not threatened by nor threatened the potential for motherhood.

*****

[113] Roscoe, *Bagesu*, 118.

[114] The proto-Bantu form is *-*dùb*-. (Bastin and Schadeberg, "BLR 3," R.N. Main 1244; Malcolm Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages. Volume 3: A Catalogue of Common Bantu with Commentary* (Farnborough: Gregg, 1970), 196, Comparative Series (C.S.) 731).

[115] The proto-Bantu form is *-*dòb*-. (Bastin and Schadeberg, BLR 3, R.N. Main 1088; Guthrie, Comparative Bantu, vol.3, 174, C.S. 638).

[116] R.A. Snoxall (ed.), *Luganda-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 313. Snoxall gives the following illustration of usage: "`*Omùvùbì àtogèreza ensônzì mù `ttòsî* 'the fisherman feels about in the mud for mud-fish'."

The procurement and consumption of food in North Nyanza was shaped by the environment in which North Nyanzans lived and the varieties of foodstuffs available to them. It was also shaped by cultural factors – which foods of those available were preferred, whose labour went in to their acquisition, and the ways in which North Nyanzans understood them to interact with issues of fertility and social reproduction. Bananas were an important part of this, from the time of North Nyanza onwards. Indeed, changes in the use of banana plants and their products in rituals and ceremonies performed at birth and death reflect important developments in the ways North Nyanzans and their descendants conceptualised social reproduction and the role of motherhood therein.

Much has been made of the gendered nature of banana cultivation in Buganda. However, bananas themselves did not automatically determine the division of labour for it seems likely that in North Nyanza they were cultivated by both women and men. At the very least the gendering of banana cultivation did not occur in Busoga and Bugwere. As a result, arguments that the light work involved in growing bananas permitted its relegation to the female sphere while men engaged in warfare and politics are not convincing. Rather than explain the Ganda state through the gendered division of work, it seems more plausible to explain the gendering of agriculture as a result of growing state demands on male labour. As the growing state made demands on male labour for fighting and infrastructure projects, the ability of women to perform the work of food procurement meant that social reproduction could continue in the face of such demands.

For speakers of proto-North Nyanza, it seems that it was other crops, notably millet and *mpindi* beans, that were cultivated only by women. The continued cultivation of millet by South Kyogans and their descendants reflects in part the drier environments in which they lived from

the early second millennium onwards. But it also reflects their ongoing cultural importance. Similarly, legumes such as *mpindi* beans were important nutritional supplements as well as being used in key ceremonies of social reproduction. Both these crops held the potential to affect the healthy reproduction of the community and precautions had to be taken at their sowing and harvesting to ensure their successful cultivation. While bananas have come to dominate the physical and academic landscape of east-central Uganda, studying the cultural importance of other crops allows us to see that North Nyanza people had a diverse understanding of the relationship between the crops they grew and the sustenance and reproduction of their communities.

While trapping and basket-fishing in small streams and swamps were the most efficient means of supplementing the diet with meat and fish, they were not understood as being affected by or affecting a woman's potential for motherhood in the same ways as more specialised forms. Indeed women and children, as well as men, performed these forms of food procurement in North Nyanza. Hunting animals in the bush and fishing on lakes, by contrast, held the twin potentials of danger and prestige; potentials which they shared with pregnancy and childbirth. It was, thus, men who performed these tasks avoiding contact with women to protect both the expedition and the social reproduction of the household. Where, as in Buganda, the possibilities for acquiring social status through prestations of fish or game to the court were greatest, the taboos associated with these activities were elaborate and pointed directly to their parallels with motherhood.

The role of bananas in the centralization and maintenance of political power in Buganda has been rightly noted by several scholars. The causal connections between bananas and state

formation in this literature, however, vary. The dominant argument is that banana cultivation is relatively easy work and can thus be relegated to women, allowing men to focus their energies on warfare and politics. More nuanced analyses examine how the permanent nature of banana plantations gave greater economic and thus political value to plots of land.[117] The long history of banana cultivation in the region, however, suggests that it was a factor in political centralization more widely than just in Buganda. Examining food procurement, including grain and legume cultivation alongside bananas and hunting and fishing, this chapter has developed an analysis centred on social reproduction. By exploring the gendering of different forms of food procurement, it shows how a logic of social reproduction was understood through the ritually-marked creative labours of men and women. The emergence of states in the region and their longevity depended on the ability of leaders to incorporate ideas of social reproduction into state ideology and ensure successful social reproduction for their subjects. The ways in which state players drew on ideologies of motherhood to gain and maintain political power are explored in chapter 6.

[117] Here I am paraphrasing Steven Feierman in *African History: From Earliest Times to Independence* ed. P. Curtin, S. Feierman, L. Thompson and J. Vansina (New York: Longman, 1978; 2nd edition 1995), 170. Quoted in Reid, *Political Power*, 23.

Chapter Six

Political Power and Ideologies of North Nyanzan Motherhood

In the mid-eighteenth century King Ssemakookiro of Buganda assassinated one his wives, the mother of the future king Kamaanya. He also executed several of her relatives, Kamaanya's maternal kin. This was an attempt to challenge the role of motherhood at the heart of political power. Royal succession in Buganda was largely determined through mothers – through the political acumen and influence of an ambitious prince's own mother and through the support of her relatives and clan-members. Ssemakookiro's acts of violence against his wife and his in-laws were an attempt – albeit unsuccessful – to change this political charter. The centrality of motherhood – as ideology and practice – to the social reproduction of the state though the role it played in succession pre-dates the Ganda kingdom. Just as motherhood played an important ideological role in the social organisation of North Nyanza and its daughter societies, so too was it to be found at the heart of political power. While kings inherited the right to their position from their fathers, the selection of one prince over another was often dictated by the political power of his mother, the woman who would become queen mother with power to rival that of her son.

Building on developments during the time that proto-West Nyanza was spoken, successful North Nyanzan leaders converted their positions into hereditary ones thereby creating royal families. The consolidation of political power into royal families meant that the state itself reflected the successful social reproduction of the whole society. In order for the royal family to maintain its hold on power by transferring leadership from one generation to the next, it had to

produce the next generation. Royal families were, thus, an embodiment of successful reproduction. The importance of this was made manifest in the office of the queen mother. As North Nyanza gave way to its daughter languages and as they in turn diverged, the role of motherhood in states continued but underwent significant changes in each society. In Buganda, the most powerful of the states to emerge in this region, the appropriation of motherhood into state ideology led to a distortion of maternity at the heart of government as kings attempted to severely curtail the reproductive rights of royal women. Here, biological motherhood was emphasized over social motherhood, while it was the latter that was predominant in the smaller states of Busoga and Bugwere. This meant that a successful act of physiological reproduction by a royal wife in Buganda held greater significance for her future in the royal household than it did for her Soga and Gwere counterparts.

Buganda is one of the most studied of Africa's precolonial kingdoms[1] and many scholars have noted the powerful offices reserved for women in its government. Despite statements such as "the queen-mother was a power in the land at least equal to her son,"[2] the scholarship has

[1] Among others, see Holly E. Hanson, *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003); Apolo Kagwa, *The Kings of Buganda*, trans. and ed. M.Semakula M. Kiwanuka (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971); M. Semakula M. Kiwanuka, *A History of Buganda: From the Foundation of the Kingdom to 1900* (London: Longman, 1971); Neil Kodesh, "Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Collective Well-Being in Buganda," (Ph.D. diss. Northwestern University, 2004); Henri Médard, *Le Royaume du Buganda au XIXe siècle: Mutation Politique et Religieuse d'un Grand Etat d'Afrique de l 'Est* (Paris: Karthala, 2007); Nakanyike Beatrice Musisi, "Transformations of Baganda Women: From the Earliest Times to the Demise of the Kingdom in 1966," (Ph.D. Diss. University of Toronto, 1992); idem, "Women, 'Elite Polygyny' and Buganda State Formation." *Signs* 16, no. 4 (1991): 757-86; Benjamin C. Ray, *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship in Buganda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Richard J. Reid, *Political Power in Pre-Colonial Buganda* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002); Karen Sacks, *Sisters and Wives: The Past and Future of Sexual Equality* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1979); Laurence D. Schiller, "Royal Women of Buganda," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 23 (1990), 455-74; Christopher C. Wrigley, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[2] Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 67.

almost exclusively focused on the person and office of the king and his ministers and chiefs.[3] The first scholar to explicitly address royal women in Buganda was Karen Sacks, whose analysis centres on the division of women into sisters and wives.[4] Sisters are equals in their kin group, but only after bearing and raising their own children to adulthood. Wives usually have young children and live and work for their husband's household.[5] She notes that while "the queen mother and the king's sister [*lubuga*] wielded political and economic authority", the "other sisters of the ruling and prior kings had no power… No royal sisters were allowed to rear children or marry." Within the royal family, it was not possible for a woman to be both a sister and a wife.[6] Laurence Schiller drew on *Sisters and Wives* in his study of Ganda royal women and the power they wielded.[7] He argues that the queen mother held real political power because she was the king's mother and "the chief's link to a kabaka's main support group, his matrilineal clan."[8] The queen sister's importance lay more "in the ritual areas of inheritance and tomb tending than formal or informal political power at court."[9] Princesses "had special rank and status… but they had no official position of power" and the influence a princess held depended

[3] The most notable exceptions being Holly E. Hanson, "Queen Mothers and Good Government in Buganda: The Loss of Women's Political Power in Nineteenth-Century East Africa," in *Women in African Colonial Histories*, ed. Jean Allman, Susan Geiger and Nakanyike B. Musisi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002): 219-36; Musisi, "Transformations"; Sacks, *Sisters and Wives*; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda."

[4] Sacks, *Sisters and Wives*.

[5] Sacks, *Sisters and Wives*, 6.

[6] Sacks, *Sisters and Wives*, 214.

[7] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda".

[8] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 472.

[9] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 466.

on her "personality and relationship with the kabaka."[10] The king's wives represented "the physical links of political alliances between clans and king, and they used their influence to secure places for their relations."[11] To understand the apparent contradiction between Ganda women's general lack of power and autonomy and the significant power some women wielded in the palace we need to recognise that "the hierarchy of political status took precedence over the hierarchy of gender status."[12] Nakanyike Musisi's 1992 dissertation on Ganda women addressed the lacuna in the literature on Buganda which viewed history as the work of men. While she discusses the roles of the women at the palace, she is most interested in understanding the inter-relationship between gender relations and the emergence of the precolonial Ganda state. [13] For Musisi, the most salient feature of life for women in the palace was the level of "state control" over their lives, especially with regard to marriage and reproduction. She poses the crucial question with regard to the queen mother: "under what circumstances did she wield political power, and why?" Perhaps drawing on Sack's analytical framework of sisters and wives, Musisi explains the queen mother's position with reference to her status as a widow, rather than as a mother. [14]

The emphasis on male actors in the Ganda historiography is in large part a consequence of the sources available to us and the time and manner in which they were transcribed. The late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were a period of dramatic change in Buganda as

---

[10] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 466, 468.

[11] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 470.

[12] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 471.

[13] Musisi, "Transformations," 52, 70-86.

[14] Musisi, "Transformations," 77.

colonial rule followed more than a century of expansionary warfare and political instability. It was also a time during which elite Ganda men from outside the royal family worked to entrench their political authority at the expense of the women who held power both through political office and through royal blood. The emphasis in the Ganda historical traditions is thus on the king and his chiefs. There is, however, sufficient evidence to be found in them – when reread through the lens of motherhood – to support a relatively rich and nuanced understanding of the political roles of women in Buganda. In Busoga too, the emphasis has been on the political lives of men, often ignoring completely offices held by women[15] and yet there are important oral traditions that relate the active roles played by queen mothers and their kin. The material for Bugwere often hints at the power wielded by the wives, mothers and sisters of rulers although it all too often falls short of substantive description. By building on the evidence for motherhood's deployment in social organization, food procurement, and role in political change, we can begin to see a rich history in which ideological and social motherhood were central to legitimate authority.

The Political Roles of Princesses

In the middle part of the first millennium, people speaking West Nyanza and its dialects – what would become North Nyanza and Rutara – made changes to their political system. The "revolutionary innovation" of this period, according to David Schoenbrun, "lay in the invention

[15] Lloyd A. Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy: A Century of Political Evolution among the Basoga of Uganda* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965). A notable exception is David William Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu: A Study of Authority in a Nineteenth-Century African Community* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) which appears to reflect a growing awareness on Cohen's part of the need to incorporate women into the study of political authority.

of concepts of hereditary nobility and the link that was created between nobility and the institutions of instrumental control over people."[16] In other words, kings, queens and other members of royal families were able to assert their control over chiefs by making chiefships, such as **bukungu*[17] and **butongole*,[18] appointed rather than hereditary offices, in theory at least if not always in practice. This development was marked by West Nyanzans' innovation of two terms of hereditary power: **mukama* 'king' and **mulangira* 'hereditary royal'.[19] The noun **mukama* was derived from an older verb **-kama* with the meaning 'milk, squeeze' and points not only to West Nyanzans conviction that the king had the "responsibility for 'feeding' his people",[20] but also to the symbolic importance of pastoralism at the heart of political authority. The etymology of **mulangira* points to a different aspect of power. It was derived from a West Nyanza verb **-lánga* which glosses as 'report, announce, foresee future, prophecy.' Thus the status of **mulangira* embodied the 'creative' as opposed to (or perhaps in addition to) the

[16] David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, A Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Oxford: James Currey, 1998), 185.

[17] David Lee Schoenbrun, *The Historical Reconstruction of Great Lakes Bantu Cultural Vocabulary: Etymologies and Distributions* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1997), 141-42, Reconstruction Number (R.N.) 210.

[18] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 169-70, R.N.257.

[19] Please see Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 185-95 for an extensive discussion of the emergence of these two terms and the offices they named, as well as for a discussion of the broader implications of this change in the political organisation of West Nyanzan societies. For **mulangira* see also idem, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 146-47, R.N.217.

[20] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 213, n.76.

'instrumental' side of power and governance.[21] It appears likely that this etymology reflected a reality in which at least some **balangira* were mediums for deities.[22]

It seems that the term **mulangira* encompassed all hereditary royals – male and female – in West Nyanzan society. Speakers of North Nyanza, however, divided their hereditary royals along gender lines, assigning the original term to male royals or princes while innovating a new term, **mumbeeza* [29] (with the plural **bambeeza*) to their female counterparts. The division of hereditary royals into two groups and the innovation of a new term for them suggest that the role or standing of princesses in North Nyanza was new. The basis for this new role or standing for **bambeeza* may lie in their connections to an alternative locus of power in North Nyanza, namely the shrines of deities. In both Buganda and Bugwere, princesses were frequently wives for deities[23] and it is likely that this was the case in the North Nyanzan political system too. Shrines were centres of healing and as such of creative power; a power which was often wielded in contestation to the power of political state. Neil Kodesh has argued that the practice of Ganda princesses marrying deities stemmed from efforts by the king to control their reproductive power and to "channel the collective energies and authority surrounding spiritual complexes toward the royal center."[24] In the early states of North Nyanza **bambeeza*, through their marriages to

---

[21] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 146-47, R.N.217; 211-12, R.N.324; idem, *Green Place*, 12-13 and *varia*.

[22] Julien Gorju, *Entre le Victoria et l'Albert: Ethnographie de la Partie Anglaise de Vicariat de l'Uganda: Origines, Histoire – Religion – Coutumes* (Rennes: Impriméries Oberthür, 1920), 223; Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 18; John Roscoe, *The Baganda: An Account of Their Native Customs and Beliefs* (London: MacMillan, 1911; reprint, Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints, n.d.), 74, 303, 307, 308 (page citations are to the reprint edition); Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 468. *Balangira* is the plural of *mulangira*.

[23] This is implied rather than explicitly stated in Ronald R. Atkinson, *Bugwere Historical Texts*, Text 44 (n.p.) (Hereafter referred to as Atkinson, *BHT*). It is explicitly stated in Apolo Kagwa, *The Customs of the Baganda*, trans. Ernest B. Kalibala, ed. May Mandelbaum Edel (New York: AMS Press, 1969 (1934)), 120; idem, *Kings of Buganda*, 84; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 74, 303, 307, 308.

[24] Kodesh, "Royal Gaze," 299-300.

powerful deities, created networks of connections between deities their mediums and followers and the royal family. Naming princesses and thus marking them as distinct from princes, may have been part of an attempt by state players to co-opt their standing as intermediaries between these two centres of authority.

In Busoga, *bambeedha*[25] had a number of roles in the political life of the numerous kingdoms that rose and fell in the lands between Lake Victoria Nyanza and Lake Kyoga. A tradition which relates the transfer of power in Bukooli from the abaiseNaminha to the abaiseWakooli in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, records that the current ruler called the *bambeedha* to witness his naming of the man he wanted as his successor.[26] Princesses were frequently at the centre of marriage alliances either between two royal families from different kingdoms or between a royal family and a commoner family[27] in order to reward loyal service or to tie the family's loyalties to the state. More directly powerful were those *bambeedha* who reigned as queen sister alongside the king. From the traditions it appears that such a position existed in at least some, if not all, of the Soga kingdoms.[28] Where the office of queen sister existed, she participated in the coronation ceremonies alongside the new king, as in Bunha. The installation ceremony for the new ruler or *Menha* involved "two chairs made of stones. That is the chair for *Menha*, the one who is installed on the stone, and the other is for *Lubuga*, Queen

[25] The Lusoga reflex of **bambeeza*. The singular form of the noun is *mumbeedha*.

[26] David William Cohen, *Collected Texts of Busoga Traditional History* (*CTBTH*) Text 15 (n.p.) (Hereafter referred to as *CTBTH*). See also idem, *The Historical Tradition of Busoga: Mukama and Kintu* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972, 147-49 and the 'Chronology Chart,' 202-03.

[27] See for example, Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 41, Text 202; idem, *Mukama and Kintu*, 149.

[28] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 330, Text 333, Text 603; Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, 133.

Sister."[29] As we shall see below, this recalls not only the installation ceremonies in Buganda but also those of Bugwere.

Although there is not a great deal of evidence, it seems that Bagwere *bambeeza* had similar roles to their Basoga counterparts. One version of the traditions regarding how Lyada, a non-royal, came to rule a Gwere polity in the nineteenth century explicitly refers to him marrying the daughter of an elder of the royal Banagwere clan.[30] Another version asserts that although he was given Bagwere wives, they were *bakopi* (commoners) and not of the royal clan.[31] Whether the women involved were of royal descent or not, marital alliances were clearly both a route to political power and a means of shoring up power once it had been achieved.[32] An outsider would not have kin networks to draw upon for support. By marrying into local families he created a series of *bukwe* or 'in-law' relationships which he could draw on for his own political ambitions. Furthermore, he could be sure that the maternal kin of his sons would support their future claims to power. *Bambeeza* are also likely to have wielded creative power as the guardians of royal graves, including that of Nagwere, the founder of Bugwere.[33] The skulls and the drums were a prominent feature of the installation ceremonies for a new ruler.[34] Together with the role of *bambeeza* in taking care of the graves of the deceased rulers, this allows us to infer that they may have had some influence in the selection of the heir to the throne. As in Busoga, one of the

[29] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 333.

[30] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 23.

[31] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 1.

[32] See also Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 3-7, where he shows how an outsider ensured political success for his sons by marrying into a powerful family.

[33] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 44.

[34] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 11, Text 41, Text 43, Text 46.

princesses would be installed as queen sister along with her brother. While the Soga historical texts do not shed light on how a particular queen sister was selected among the sisters of the heir to the throne, it seems that in Bugwere it was his eldest sister who had that privilege.[35]

The *bambejja*[36] of Buganda have received much more scholarly attention than their Soga and Gwere counterparts. Their roles were very similar and as the strength and scope of the Ganda state grew, they too were able to wield more power. Many princesses 'married' *balubaale*[37] and were thus able to mobilise creative power to influence the king. The more influential of the princesses could also wield instrumental power. It was a *mumbejja* – Nassolo – who organised the successful rebellion against her brother King Kagulu in the early eighteenth century.[38] And, some one hundred years later, King Ssuuna appointed his sister Nakuyita as the second in command of a military campaign against one of the Soga kingdoms.[39]

A crucial distinction between the Ganda princesses and those of South Kyogan societies was in relation to marriage. As we have seen, princesses in Busoga and, in all likelihood, in Bugwere married important commoners or royals from other polities in order to create alliances. Not only was this not the case in Buganda, but furthermore princesses did not marry at all nor were they permitted to have children.[40] There has been some debate over why this was the case.

---

[35] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 41.

[36] The Luganda reflex of **bambeeza*.

[37] The deities of the Baganda.

[38] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 63.

[39] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 121. See also, Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 197, fn.1, 200, fn.1.

[40] Gorju, *Vicariat de l'Uganda*, 95, fn. 1; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 85, 187; John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1863; reprint, London: Dent, 1969), 207 (page citations are to the reprint edition). As Kodesh notes, this was an ideological statement rather than a reflection of

One of the earliest commentators on Buganda, John Hanning Speke, who visited the kingdom in 1862, wrote that princesses could not marry because they became the wives of the king. He dated the practice to the reign of King Kimera and the foundation of the kingdom.[41] In the historical traditions, as they were transcribed by the early Ganda intellectual and historian Apolo Kagwa, there is a suggestion that the prohibition was introduced as recently as the late eighteenth century by King Kamaanya and continued into the nineteenth century by King Ssuuna.

> Kamaanya forbade his sisters, the daughters of King Ssemakookiro, to get married. It so happened, however, that one of the princesses wanted to get married very badly, but Kamaanya beat her and even put her in custody. When Ssuuna came to the throne, his aunt Princess Nabinaka said: 'Because Kamaanya prevented us from getting married, I too shall do something nasty to his daughters.' So she went and challenged Suuna thus: 'Why have you neglected all your sisters and left them to commoners? There is nothing to prevent you from making them your wives. Take them to your palace and marry them.' Suuna fell an easy prey to this suggestion and took all his sisters to wife.[42]

The historian Semakula Kiwanuka who translated and annotated Kagwa's collection of traditions, straightforwardly ascribes the prohibition to Kamaanya's desire to marry some of the princesses himself.[43] Schiller highlights Kagwa's suggestion that the prohibition was introduced only in the eighteenth century to connect it to "the kabaka's increasing exclusion of all princesses and princes from power."[44] Musisi, meanwhile, ascribes it to "the class interests of the royal family and male dominated social order."[45] Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza argues that

---

reality ("Royal Gaze," 297 no. 78). Princesses were prohibited from having socially sanctioned and socially recognized children.

[41] Speke, *Journal*, 207.

[42] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 136.

[43] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 137.

[44] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 467-68.

[45] Musisi, "Transformations," 80.

the *bambejja* could not marry because, in the gender system of Buganda, they were males or, in her terminology, 'female-men'. This is supported by nineteenth century reports that princesses were greeted as *ssebo* 'sir' rather than *nyabo* 'madam' and that non-royal men were expected to kneel when greeting them in contravention of the social norm.[46] Kodesh draws together the dedication of princesses as wives to *lubaale* and the prohibitions on their marrying men and on having "socially recognized offspring" as part of the attempt by Ganda kings to bring the power that coalesced in shrines under the control of the palace.[47]

Looking at this issue from the perspective of the fact that there was no royal clan in Buganda suggests another explanation for the prohibition on princess marriages that builds on these earlier analyses. In Claude Meillassoux's analysis of the patrilineal system (by which Ganda clans operated) women are exchanged between male elders in different communities in order to ensure both the reproduction of the community and the reproduction of the power of the male elders in the community.[48] The exchange of women between Ganda clans was essential in order for their social reproduction to occur because they practiced exogamous marriage and tabooed sexual relationships between clan members as incestuous. Not allowing princesses to marry broke the circle of exchange and thus marked the royal family as distinct – it was not a clan, but something else entirely.[49] Furthermore, as we saw in chapter 4, a woman's children and

---

[46] Sylvia A. Nannyonga-Tamusuza, *Baakisimba: Gender in the Music and Dance of the Baganda People of Uganda* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 20, 83.

[47] Kodesh, "Royal Gaze," 297-98.

[48] Claude Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[49] In *Kingship and State*, Christopher Wrigley notes that because there was no exchange of women involving the royal family wife-givers had to be otherwise compensated. As the predilection of kings for marrying a great number of wives became common there was an increased need to find more resources to compensate the wife-givers (172).

her fellow clansmen and women retained strong ties.[50] Indeed a Ganda child's position in his or her (father's) clan depended at least partially on recognition from the mother's clan. The relationship between *bajjwa* and their maternal kin was an essential feature of social organisation and healthy social reproduction. Although they had strong relationships with their mothers' clan, *bambejja* had no clan because their father – the king – had no clan.[51] There was no one to call their children *bajjwa*. In terms of the ideological underpinnings of Ganda society it was impossible for princesses to marry and have the socially recognized children that were the primary purpose of any marriage in Buganda. This suggests that the prohibition on marriage by *bambejja* dates to an early period in the kingdom, but it is also possible that this fundamental tension in the absence of a royal clan merely served to justify later attempts by kings to control the social reproduction of royal women.

Although many *bambejja* held significant authority through their roles as wives to *balubaale* or deities, the most powerful of them was the one enthroned as *lubuga* [6] or queen sister alongside her brother the king.[52] She had her own palace and controlled her own estates with her own administration formed of chiefs who raised taxes for her.[53] Furthermore, she heard court cases and held the power of life and death over the people in her jurisdiction.[54] On the

---

[50] Sacks' draws on this in developing her theory of women as 'sisters' holding ongoing rights in their kin group, *Sisters and Wives*.

[51] Martin Southwold, "Succession to the Throne in Buganda," in *Succession to High Office*, ed. Jack Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 85. See Kodesh, "Royal Gaze," for a thoughtful analysis of the history of relations between the royal family and the Ganda clans.

[52] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84, 187.

[53] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 236-37, 244-45; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 463.

[54] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84, 236-37, 266, Southwold, "Succession to the Throne in Buganda," 83.

death of the king, the *lubuga* took the title *nnalinnya*[55] and became responsible for guarding the shrines in which the deceased king's jawbone and umbilical cord were kept.[56] This was where the spirit or *muzimu* of her brother resided and so the *lubuga/nnalinnya* held significant creative power even after leaving office. The *nnalinnya* of the deceased king played a prominent role in selecting the new *lubuga*. She should not have the same mother as the new king nor should she have any brothers by her own mother.[57] This both ensured that there would be no competition for the kingship from a full sibling of hers and that two lineages, and in all likelihood two clans – that of the queen mother and that of the mother of the queen sister – had vested interests in the success of the new heads of state. Although they described her as the wife and queen to the king, the European missionary ethnographers and Christian Ganda ethnographers took great pains to point out that the king and his queen sister did not have sexual relations.[58] Christopher Wrigley believes that the 'marriage' of the king and the *lubuga* was a relic of the "long-abandoned custom of royal incest" which "was embedded in the tradition but could survive there only in the guise of fantasy."[59] It is of course worth noting again that both King Kamaanya and his son Ssuuna 'married' some of their sisters – whether this was in order to have sexual relations with them or simply an attempt at controlling their reproductive power is difficult to judge. The historical texts from Busoga clearly refer to royal incest between a king and his queen sister in

[55] Literally, 'I will soon ascend'.

[56] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 283-84.

[57] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84, 191.

[58] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84.

[59] Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 157.

the foundation myth of Bugweri.[60] However, as David Cohen remarks in his annotations on the texts, the incest is recorded as being between the Lwo sibling immigrants who founded the state and there is little to suggest that incest was common, even in royal settings. Given the strong taboo placed on relationships defined as incest, including with any member of the mother's clan as well as any member of a person's own clan, we must assume that any socially sanctioned relationships between siblings were limited to royalty in North Nyanzan societies and even there it does not appear to have been widely practiced.

An interesting aspect of the institution of the *lubuga* [6] is its existence in commoner Ganda households. Just as the heir to the throne could not become king without a *lubuga*, neither could an heir to his father inherit without a sister (real or classificatory) to be nominated as *lubuga* and participate in the funeral and inheritance rites.[61] Lucy Mair explains this by reference to blood-brotherhood ceremonies in which if a man was not married he "was provided with a fictitious wife" and posits that for both blood-brotherhood and inheritance "the relationships which the ceremony creates will affect not the man only, but his whole household." Because matters of inheritance were "purely clan affairs" the fictional wife had to be of the same clan and so could not be the heir's own wife.[62] The explanation of this practice in terms of marriage is not particularly satisfying. On the one hand it does not explain why even when the heir was a woman a *lubuga* was still appointed. And on the other hand, the model falls short

---

[60] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 330, Text 603; Y.K. Lubogo, *A History of Busoga* (Jinja: East African Literature Bureau, 1960), 55-57. Please note that Bugwere and Bugweri are distinct with Bugweri being a Soga state.

[61] Lucy Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1934; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), 212-14 (page citations are to the reprint edition); Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 465-66; Southwold, "Succession to the Throne in Buganda," 124 fn. 4.

[62] Mair, *African People*, 213.

because a man's sister would not be part of his household, just as the royal *lubuga* had her own palace and estates away from those of her brother. By looking at the intellectual history of the noun *lubuga* it is possible to develop an alternative analysis of these two institutions: the royal *lubuga* and her commoner or *mukopi* counterpart.

One possible etymology for the noun *lubuga* [6] reflects her power over her subjects. In this etymology Luganda speakers derived the noun from an older verb, possibly of proto-Mashariki origin, **-bug-* which glosses as 'speak (with authority)'. By using the class 11 prefix, *lu-*, the noun class for languages, Baganda classified 'speaking with authority' as its own form of language. In so doing they emphasized the importance of 'powerful speech' to the standing the queen sister. The second etymology traces its derivation from an ancient Bantu noun **-buga* with the meaning "free or clear land near home."[63] West Nyanza speakers innovated the noun **mbuga* from this older word to describe a chief's compound. And the same root is used in the Luganda *kibuga* which refers to the royal capital. The two are not necessarily exclusive for acts of **-bug-* 'speaking (with authority)' were performed in the **mbuga* and **kibuga*. The term *lubuga*, then, is intimately connected with the spatial configuration of power and with the 'civilisation' or domestication of the landscape. It seems likely that the innovation of this institution was connected to claims to plots of land by lineages and clans. By marking the land as inherited by a man and a woman of the clan – and not by a man of the clan and his non-clan wife – the claim to the land was reinforced at each succession. Although this practice is unique to Buganda in the North Nyanza region, it seems likely that the institution of the *lubuga* during the rites of succession and inheritance emerged first among commoners and was later borrowed

[63] Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 71-72, R.N.96; see also 34, R.N.4.

into the trappings of state. However, while the position of *lubuga* in clans was limited to Buganda, the office of queen sister is widespread not only throughout North Nyanza but also West Nyanzan societies. While this suggests that the political office is the older of the two, it is of course possible that the *lubuga* of clans and inheritance was originally a much more general practice across the region and was retained in that form only by Baganda, while other societies emphasised the political office.

Clanship and Royalty

After North Nyanza had given way to its daughter languages of South Kyoga and Luganda, a clear distinction emerged between the two new linguistic communities with regards to royalty and clanship. In the society speaking South Kyoga each royal family belonged to a royal clan, whereas the nascent Baganda chose not to have a royal clan. Whether it was Baganda or South Kyogans who were the innovators in this case is unclear. Schoenbrun posits the Ganda model as possibly reflecting "an older set of conditions for the emergence of instrumental kingship" under which clan leaders gave land to the king's people in order to enmesh them in "local moral economies".[64] Yet, Buganda's exceptionalism in the West Nyanza region in not having a royal clan suggests that this was most likely an innovation after speakers of pre-Luganda and South Kyoga diverged. Because one clan did not dominate, all clans could theoretically form networks of relationships with the head of state – through marriage and chiefships – although the traditions suggest that some clans were more successful at this than

[64] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 194.

others.[65] The lack of a royal clan in Buganda served to increase the importance of the relationship between a ruler and his maternal kin because the more open political competition for succession meant that contenders had to have support from powerful sources outside the royal household. However, the possibility for any son of the king to be his heir was an ideological shift away from the social motherhood of the senior wife towards the biological motherhood of any wife who bore a son and whose kin networks were strong enough to support his claim.

In Bugwere, probably from the early seventeenth century, the Banagwere were the royal clan and its members claimed first-comer status.[66] The popular etymology for the name Banagwere is that the clan and the polity were founded by Nagwere.[67] Nagwere's rule was, however, legitimated through his grandmother. According to the origin myth of the Banagwere, Kintu travelled through what was to become Bugwere on his way to Buganda from Mount Masaaba in the east. He stopped at Naboa where he was the guest of Luba and indeed 'married' Luba's daughter. Kintu continued on his travels before his child, Mugoya, was born. Mugoya was, therefore, raised in his maternal grandfather's compound. He, in turn, had a son called Nagwere whose descendants ruled until the early twentieth century.[68] The Banagwere clan's first-comer status thus derived from the maternal and not the paternal line.

---

[65] Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 49. See Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 18-67 for a full listing of the clans of the kings' wives and chiefs.

[66] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 4. I am grateful to Ronald R. Atkinson for sharing his chronology of the Bugwere polities with me. Personal Correspondence.

[67] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 4.

[68] This version is the one transcribed in W.H. Long, District Commissioner, "Notes on the Bugwere District," c.1933, J.R. Mc D. Elliot Papers, Rhodes House Library, Oxford, 460.

Queen Mothers and Maternal Kin Networks

The office of the queen mother exemplifies the mobilisation of an ideology of motherhood by North Nyanzans in the political arena. This office embodied both the connection between a woman's clan and her children and afforded power to a commoner on the basis of her maternity. As with the office of the queen sister, the ethnographic and linguistic evidence for that of queen mother do not neatly come together to allow a confident statement of the age of this institution. Queen mothers existed across the Great Lakes region, pointing to a great historical depth for the office. They were to be found in, amongst others, Rwanda, Nkore, and Buhaya as well as in Buganda, Busoga and Bugwere. And yet, the titles given to the office varied across the region, suggesting its innovation was more recent. In many of these societies "people made the words for queen mother with the same word-building artistry. They added the relevant term for adult woman to the corresponding term for king."[69] This model, however, was not used by those speaking North Nyanzan languages. In Buganda the term *nnamasole* [31] was innovated to name the office and in Busoga, or at least in Bugabula, the term *nakazaire* was used.[70] These two terms not only differ from each other, but also break from the model of word-building used in naming the office elsewhere in the region. This linguistic evidence thus indicates later independent innovations of the office. Indeed, Schoenbrun notes that the distinct Luganda term "suggests quite strongly that these innovations all occurred after the break up of the most recent subgroups of Great Lakes Bantu…and that they all referred to different political processes in

[69] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 192. See also idem, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 114, R.N.163 & 151, R.N.225.

[70] The evidence for Busoga is extremely thin and I have attestations for this term only in reference to Bugabula (Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 125). I have been unable to get the Lugwere term and it may well be completely lost, or of course may never have existed.

those royal domains…that unfolded after the sixteenth century." Schoenbrun is aware of the tension in the evidence available to us and goes on, "However, it is certainly fair to argue that the office of the queen mother came into existence virtually simultaneously with the named position of king."[71] In Busoga the king of each state had a different title. Several, but not all, of these titles derived from the eponymous founders of the states. The ruler of Busambira, for example, was referred to as Kisambira, that of Busiki as Kisiki, of Buzaaya as Muzaaya, of Bukono as Nkono and of Bukooli as Wakooli.[72] There is no suggestion that each of these micro-states independently innovated the institution of hereditary ruler. Despite the linguistic evidence for the institution of queen mother, then, there is little reason to view it as a more recent invention than kingship. Indeed, once it is placed in the broader context of the emphasis on motherhood in social organisation, the view that queen mothers are as old as the state in this region is further strengthened. First, however, we should examine the institution itself.

The queen mother was appointed to her office at the same time as her son was made king and his queen appointed. In the polities the emerged among people speaking proto-North Nyanza it is likely that the queen mother was ideally the senior wife or **kaidu* [24] of the deceased king.[73] Succession would not always have been uncontested especially when the maternal kin of princes had so much to gain from the accession of their **mwihwa* [18] and so we must recognise the potential for dissonance between ideal succession and the contended realities.

---

[71] Schoenbrun, *Green Place*, 192-3. Holly Hanson, in contrast, draws on the linguistic evidence to argue that this office must have emerged after 1500, *Landed Obligation*, 49.

[72] David William Cohen, *Towards a Reconstructed Past: Historical Texts from Busoga, Uganda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 90 fn. 127.

[73] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 41; Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 917; idem, *Mukama and Kintu*, 14; Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, 135. Please see chapter 3 for a discussion of the senior wife in society at large.

Part of the kingdom would be under the queen mother's direct control in the form of estates.[74] Although it is difficult to gauge, the extent of such estates may be expected to have varied according to the influence individual queen mothers were able to wield within government. Aside from her own estates, her power, in all likelihood, lay in her ability to influence others in power, including her son, his queen sister and the chiefs. It would also have depended on the relative strength of her lineage and clan and their ability to support her when disputes arose. As well as her kin group in general benefiting from their proximity to power, the queen mother's brother (real or classificatory) would be appointed to an important chiefship or **bukungu*, possibly even the position of prime minister.[75]

It seems likely that much of the shape that the institution of queen mother held in North Nyanza polities continued in the later polities of people speaking South Kyoga. A significant portion of the elaboration of the office that existed in Buganda by the nineteenth century was a result of the expansion of that kingdom and the efforts at increasing centralisation of power in the capital. The polities of South Kyoga were on a different scale entirely from the later Ganda state and the offices of king, queen mother and queen sister were likely to have been simpler affairs. But there were undoubtedly regalia associated with these political positions. In Bugwere polities from the late eighteenth century onwards, a leopard skin, a shield and a spear were used in the installation ceremony at which the new king, his sister and his father's senior wife

---

[74] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 125; Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 95; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 44-46; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 459.

[75] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 9; Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 31; Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 104; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 460; Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 190. For **bukungu*, see Schoenbrun, *Cultural Vocabulary*, 141-42, R.N.210.

participated.[76] Emphasis in Bugwere was placed on the social motherhood rather than the biological motherhood of the queen mother, for it was the eldest wife of the deceased *omwami* who was installed with the new *omwami* even though she may not have been his birth mother.[77] A similar situation existed in many of the Soga kingdoms where the heir was ideally the son of the senior wife or **kaidu* [24].[78] If she had no biological sons, she would raise the son of a co-wife as her own.[79] As we saw in chapter 3, this situation pertained regardless of the status of a woman's husband – whether he was the king or a peasant. In the Soga historical texts, every clan gives if not always the name of the mother and the senior wife of the clan founder at least their clans,[80] highlighting the ongoing social importance of these positions through the twentieth century.[81] This points, too, to the intertwined nature of marriage, maternity and social reproduction in the region.

From the mid- to late-sixteenth century people speaking Luo languages gradually moved into northern and eastern Busoga.[82] Prominent families among the Luo came to dominate the Soga political landscape and either took control of or founded several states, especially in the

---

[76] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 41.

[77] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 41.

[78] Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, 135; Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 917; idem, *Mukama and Kintu*, 14.

[79] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 917; John Roscoe, *The Northern Bantu: An Account of some Central African Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 200.

[80] Cohen, *CTBTH*, varia.

[81] This is particularly compelling, in my opinion, because by the time David Cohen conducted these interview in the 1960s and 1970s women had long been excluded from traditional political office. That clans offered this information, apparently often without solicitation, reflects the importance of the networks created through women.

[82] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 124-5.

north.[83] The basis for the political authority wielded by the ruling Luo dynasties lay in the connections that they were able to create with the Lusoga-speaking people among whom they lived. Those connections were predominantly based on marriage alliances and on the children that ensued. Cohen has noted that the Luo groups practised a form of exogamous marriage that required marrying not only outside of the clan but also outside of the groups who claimed Luo origins.[84] For the ruling lineages this meant that the heir was always the son of a Soga woman, placing him at the heart of a web of networks that connected his Luo-origin patriliny and his Soga maternal kin. As Cohen writes, "Not a single ruler in Bugabula, Buzaaya, or Luuka (all of them descended from once Lwo-speaking people) to the end of the nineteenth century was born of a mother of a clan of Lwo origin."[85] State formation in precolonial Uganda is frequently depicted as resulting from the immigration of Luo (or pre-Luo) speakers. [86] This requirement for the king's mother (and thus his queen mother) to be Soga demonstrates that these states derived much of their legitimacy through the motherhood of Soga women. The Luo immigrants, while they brought with them some of the ideological underpinnings of the states they ruled, also incorporated into those states the ideology of motherhood which lay at the heart of Soga social organization.

---

[83] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 1-2.

[84] David William Cohen, "The Political Transformation of Northern Busoga, 1600-1900," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 22, no. 87 (1982): 470; idem, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 86.

[85] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 86.

[86] For an early overview of the argument of the Luo influence in Buganda, Bunyoro and Nkole by one of its most prominent proponents see Roland Oliver, "The Traditional Histories of Buganda, Bunyoro, and Nkole," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 85, no.1/2 (1955): 111-17. See also Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 202-06.

In at least some of the Soga kingdoms the queen mother was a powerful person.[87] She had her own estates,[88] that is she directly controlled certain estates in the kingdom. This meant that the chiefs in those estates answered to her, rather than to her son. Queen mothers played crucial roles in the accession of their sons. Although the senior wife and her son would have been the primary candidates, political realities meant that much depended on the ability of a king's wife to mobilise not only her clan but also other powerful clans behind her son.[89] By mobilising such support some queen mothers became very influential in their kingdoms.

Kabalu,[90] queen, queen mother and 'queen grandmother' of the kingdom of Luuka from the late-eighteenth century was a power-broker and even ruled the kingdom herself for a time. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Luuka was a fairly inconsequential state governed by King Nhiro. Kabalu's family lived north of Luuka beyond the kingdom's reach, but sought an alliance with the palace through her marriage to then Prince Inhensiko. Although not Inhensiko's first wife, by the time he inherited the throne from his father, she was his senior wife in the palace. Together they had a son, Wambuzi Munhana. Inhensiko had many children from different wives, sixteen sons of which "survived to maturity, but as the eldest surviving son of

---

[87] Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 16; idem, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 36. While it is apparent that the office of queen mother existed, nothing has been written about it. This is undoubtedly the result of a number of factors – efforts by elite Soga men to shore up their own authority, the biases of colonial ethnographers who both underplayed the political evolution of Busoga in contrast to Buganda (see Joan Vincent, *Teso in Transformation: The Political Economy of Peasant and Class in Eastern Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) for a discussion of the Ganda-centrism of Europeans in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Uganda) and sought to emphasise the degradation of women, and the biases of western academics in the mid- to late-twentieth century. Cohen refers to the existence of the institution, but he almost never explicitly discusses it (*Womunafu's Bunafu*, 90, 107 being rare exceptions). Lloyd A. Fallers in his seminal work on the political structure of Busoga ignores it entirely. In his analysis, Soga government consisted only of men (*Bantu Bureaucracy*).

[88] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 125.

[89] Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, 135; Cohen, *Mukama and Kintu*, 14.

[90] The following is taken from Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 21-25; idem, *CTBTH*, Text 717.

the senior wife, Wambuzi was in the best position to succeed to the throne upon his father's death."[91] Cohen notes that the peaceful transition of power to Wambuzi suggests that Kabalu was able to create alliances with powerful chiefs in the kingdom as well as mobilise her clan members to support his claim.[92] In the late 1820s or early 1830s, the Ganda army sacked King Wambuzi's capital and occupied the kingdom. Wambuzi sought shelter among his mother's kin to the north.[93] By abandoning his capital, King Wambuzi faced the possibility of losing his throne altogether. It was his queen mother, Kabalu, who protected him and, therefore, protected her own position. "Queen Mother Kabalu… is said to have protected the king and to have held together the families that had fled to the north. She is credited with having disciplined the ambitious brothers of King Wambuzi during a time when they might have forced their way to the throne through alliance with the Baganda."[94] King Wambuzi died in the late 1830s or early 1840s and was succeeded by his son Kakuku. Some ten or fifteen years later, King Kakuku, along with several of his chiefs, was killed in Buganda for having insulted Kabaka Ssuuna. On hearing of her grandson's death, Kabalu attempted to play kingmaker once more and have Kakuku's son, Mudhungu, enthroned. Mudhungu was both too young and too far away (he was then living at a palace of the king of Bugabula) for the succession to go smoothly and the throne was seized by his uncle Kalogo. His accession to power was disputed and King Kalogo survived only a year before being overthrown. The kingdom then entered a period of instability.[95] Some

[91] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 25.

[92] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 25, 189 fn. 3.

[93] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 78.

[94] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 90.

[95] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 106-07.

of the historical texts record that Kabalu herself ruled Luuka while she was working to have Mudhungu installed as the heir and was driven off by Kalogo.[96] Queen Mother Kabalu is one of very few royal women in Busoga to have been remembered in such detail in the historical traditions and it is likely that both she and the situation of the kingdom during her life were exceptional. Luuka was small and weak when she married into the royal family and she was able to use the influence of her kin to her advantage. But her story is certainly illustrative of the ways in which queens and queen mothers were able to wield significant instrumental power.

Queen Mother Kabalu was able to wield such influence in Luuka because she could rely on the support of her fellow clan members. Members of the queen mother's clan stood to gain significant political advantage through the accession to the throne of their *mwiwa* and so he could rely on their support for his reign. In some cases a *mwiwa* could also rely on their vengeance should he be wronged. Although the attempt at vengeance was posthumous, an example of the support for a king by his maternal kin can be found in the traditions of the kingdoms of Bukono and Busiki. In the late-eighteenth century Wakauli succeeded his father King Kisozi to the throne of Bukono. The historical tradition of Bukono narrates that King Wakauli was a blood-thirsty tyrant who delighted "in shedding blood, and he accordingly killed many of his subjects." The people of Bukono rebelled against their ruler and killed him. However, Wakauli's maternal relatives lived in the neighbouring kingdom of Busiki and when they heard of their *mwiwa*'s assassination they gathered an army to attack Bukono. The attack

[96] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 560, Text 935. The Ganda traditions record that King Muteesa sent an expedition to Busoga and a "woman called Kabaalu was plundered." (Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 152.) The chronology for Luuka is quite well substantiated (Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 166-86) and so this would suggest that after Kabalu, mother of Wambuzi, died another woman named Kabalu came to rule the kingdom.

was unsuccessful and King Wakauli was succeeded by his brother Ntumba.[97] Although ultimately unsuccessful the attempted invasion of Bukono by Wakauli's maternal kin indicates the lengths to which clan members were prepared to go in order to defend their *mwiwa*, their connection to political power.

The office of queen mother in Buganda appears to have been part of the political structure of the kingdom from its foundation. In the historical traditions of Buganda, the first two kings were Kintu and Cwa, however they are widely understood as being mythical figures.[98] The third king, Kimera, took power following an interregnum.[99] He came from Bunyoro where he was born to Wanyana, a wife of King Wunyi of Bunyoro, having been fathered by King Cwa of Buganda's purported son, Kalimera. Kimera was raised in secret in Bunyoro and went to Buganda with Wanyana as an adult where he took the throne. In an indication that the office of queen mother is as old as the kingdom, Wanyana had her own palace at Lusaka.[100] Whether Kimera is a historical figure or a mythical one and what the tradition of his ascent to the Ganda throne tells us about the origins of the kingdom have been much debated in the literature.[101] What is generally agreed, however, is that his reign either instituted or symbolised the institution of the trappings of kingship in Buganda. Alongside those trappings was the construction of a

[97] Lubogo, *History of Busoga*, 9-10.

[98] Among others, see Kodesh, "Royal Gaze"; Ray, *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship*; Wrigley, *Kingship and State*.

[99] The following is based on various iterations of the tradition of Kimera: Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 19-20; Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 15-17; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 215-216.

[100] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 215. Kagwa notes only that Wanyana was buried at Lusaka after her death (*Kings of Buganda*, 16).

[101] Please see Kodesh, "Royal Gaze", 200-216 for a thorough overview of these debates.

separate palace for the queen mother, marking her political authority alongside that of her son.[102] Despite in all likelihood inheriting the office of queen mother from their North Nyanza speaking ancestors, Baganda innovated a new noun to describe her and the office she held: *nnamasole* [31]. Père Gorju has posited an etymology for this noun from the Luganda word *busole* 'small puppies'. [103] Although this etymology is not stated elsewhere in the literature it could be a reference to the paraphernalia of hunting which formed part of the king's regalia and his practice of keeping his own hunting dogs.[104] It could also refer to the *nnamasole*'s own hunting retinue, marking her power as derived from this symbolically important activity. N.B. Nsimbi's etymology has the noun deriving from a plant *kyegamansole*, the leaves of which Kimera's mother Wanyana is supposed to have made use of during her first weeks in Buganda.[105] By tracing the verbal root **-sola* across the Great Lakes Bantu languages, we can trace an alternative intellectual history for this noun. The **-sola* is of ancient, possibly proto-Bantu, origin and has two related meanings: 'choose' and 'pay tribute'. In proto-Great Lakes Bantu it also had the meaning of 'uproot (e.g. ground-nuts)'. By deriving the name for their queen mother from this noun, Luganda speakers reflected the power of the Ganda queen mother to levy taxes on her estates.

---

[102] Musisi dates the origin of the office of *nnamasole* to the reign of Nakibinge in the sixteenth century and the honour he bestowed upon his wife, Nanzigu ("Transformations," 77). However, this seems to be based on a misreading of the tradition relating to King Nakibinge and his wife Nanzigu who could not become queen mother because she gave her child away. Nanzigu is recognised among all other authors as being one of the titled wives of the king. See Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 23; Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 187; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84-85.

[103] Gorju, *Vicariat de l'Uganda*, 139, fn. I. "Nous aimons à croire que 'Mère des petits chiens' fut un nom de tendresse que valut à la mère du roi son rôle de 'puissance suppliante'." [We would like to believe that 'Mother of the puppies' was an affectionate name which the mother of the king earned from her role of 'persuasive power'.] My translation.

[104] Speke, *Journal*, 236.

[105] N.B. Nsimbi, "Baganda Traditional Personal Names," *Uganda Journal* 14, no. 2 (1950): 206.

The office of *nnamasole* [31] of Buganda was a powerful one.[106] She shared with her son and his queen sister or *lubuga* [6] the title of *kabaka* and she was the most powerful commoner in the kingdom.[107] Speke described her position thus:

> "The mother of the king by this measure became queen-dowager, or N'yamasoré [sic]. She halved with her son all the wives of the deceased king not stationed at his grave, taking second choice; kept up a palace only little inferior to her son's with large estates, guided the prince-elect in the government of the country, and remained until the end of his minority the virtual ruler of the land; at any rate, no radical political changes could take place without her sanction."[108]

On acceding to her office the *nnamasole* lived in a separate palace from that of her son. Early on in the kingdom's history this palace was permanently at Luuka. However, the traditions record that in the late-sixteenth or early-seventeenth century, King Ssekamaanya "loved his mother, Nakku of the Civet Cat clan, so much that he built her a special palace at Busawuli. Thus she did not live at Lusaka in Kagoma which was the capital of Wanyana, the mother of Kimera, and which had become the traditional capital of all the intervening queen mothers."[109] In order to continue to mark the separation of the powers of the queen mother and the king, all the new palaces built for the succeeding women to become *nnamasole* had to be separated from their sons' palaces by a stream.[110] Though apparently on a slightly smaller scale than the king's, her

---

[106] The *nnamasole* has been written about by several authors. Most prominent among them are: Hanson, "Queen Mothers," 219-36; Musisi, "Transformations," 76-78, 93, 96, 116-17, 121-22, 130, 134-42; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 458-63; Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 67, 150-54, 189-90, 209, 225-27.

[107] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 459. Indeed Wrigley asserts that "the queen-mother was a power in the land *at least equal to her son*" (*Kingship and State*, 67). My emphasis.

[108] Speke, *Journal*, 207.

[109] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 36. Roscoe notes that even after the *nnamasole*'s palace was built close to the king's it continued to be known as Lusaka (*Baganda*, 237).

[110] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 203; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 458-59; Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 150.

palace otherwise replicated his and by the early nineteenth century, at least, included large retinues of women.[111] She had her own chiefs in "a hierarchy which mirrored the kabaka's in structure and titles" and which ranged from *katikkiro* or prime minister at the top to estate managers at the bottom.[112] She also governed parts of the kingdom directly. These estates, as they are referred to in the literature, were extensive and were "scattered around every province"[113] extending her power into each part of the kingdom. She raised taxes on these estates to maintain herself and her retinue.[114] The *nnamasole*'s people did not fall under the jurisdiction of the king or his chiefs. Instead she held her own court in which she held the "power of life and death over her own people".[115]

In addition to wielding direct power over specific parts of the kingdom, the *nnamasole* [31] was understood to be able to influence her son. On the one hand she was seen as a restraining influence with one Ganda intellectual asserting that a motherless prince could not become king because "there would be no one to check him if he behaved too evilly."[116] It is worth noting that the mother could be replaced by her sister or another kinswoman if she died, as was the case during the reign of King Kamaanya in the late eighteenth century whose *nnamasole* was Nnamisango the "youngest sister of Kamaanya's real mother."[117] On the other hand,

---

[111] Speke, *Journal*, 207, 246.

[112] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 459.

[113] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 458.

[114] Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 95; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 244-46.

[115] Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 459.

[116] Ham Mukasa, "Some Notes on the Reign of Mutesa," *Uganda Journal* 1, no. 2 (1934): 128.

[117] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 104.

however, some queen mothers incited their sons to fight. Nanteza, who was *nnamasole* for both Jjunju and Ssemakookiro in the mid- to late-eighteenth century, was so angry with King Jjunju for killing a pregnant wife of Ssemakookiro that she encouraged the latter to rebel against his brother. According to the traditions, she did this by sending Ssemakookiro "seventy fighting men [*bazira*] with the following challenge: 'If you are a woman, get married to these men'."[118] He duly rose to the challenge by gathering his followers and rebelling against King Jjunju.[119] The independence of the *nnamasole* and her sovereignty over her palace is reflected in the actions of King Ssemakookiro's son, Kakungulu, who rebelled against his father and led an army supported by Bunyoro in an effort to take the throne. After his defeat, Kakungulu stayed with *nnamasole* Nanteza, his grandmother, for some time before returning to Bunyoro. King Ssemakookiro did not follow him to the *nnamasole*'s palace and despite the king fearing further rebellion from him Kakungulu was able to safely take refuge with Nanteza. [120]

Just as in wider society the son of any wife could become his father's heir so in the palace could any prince succeed his father.[121] Because the position of queen mother was such a powerful one, royal wives and their families set out to create alliances with influential chiefs in order to ensure that their *mujjwa*[122] became king and his mother became *nnamasole* [31]. In the traditions, histories of intrigues by royal wives go all the way back to the reigns of Kimera and

---

[118] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 92. See also Wrigley, *Kingship and State*, 225.

[119] For the full episode, see Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 90-94.

[120] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 98.

[121] With the notable exception of the eldest prince (Roscoe, *Baganda*, 188). See chapter 3 for a discussion of inheritance in commoner society in Buganda.

[122] The child of a female clan member. See chapter 4 for an extensive discussion of the relationship between a woman's children and her clan members.

his grandson, Ttembo. King Kimera[123] sent his son, Lumansi, to raid for cattle at Kalagala's place in Busoga. Lumansi fell sick and died on his way to Busoga leaving two widows and four children. One of the widows was Nattembo, the mother of Ttembo. When her son had matured Nattembo[124] told him that Kimera had killed Lumansi and she worked to persuade him that he must avenge his father's death. Ttembo did so during a hunting party, clubbing his grandfather on the back of the head. Ttembo succeeded his grandfather and Nattembo took the office of *nnamasole* and all the power that accompanied it.[125] Nattembo's machinations meant that she gained her own palace and that she was transformed from the somewhat precarious position of the widow of a prince into the dramatically more powerful one of queen mother. In the sixteenth century, another widow endeavoured to become queen mother. This was Nannono, wife of Nakibinge. She is famous for helping her husband in a war against Bunyoro. The traditions describe her sharpening "reeds for her husband when his supply of spears was exhausted."[126] When Nakibinge was killed and the army retreated she reigned for some time as regent. This is explained in two ways: on the one hand none of Nakibinge's children from his other wives was

---

[123] The following is compiled from Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 20; idem, *Kings of Buganda*, 16-17; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 215-16.

[124] In *Kings of Buganda*, Kagwa has Nakku, Lumansi's mother, telling this to Ttembo. While she would have been the more powerful of the two women, being the wife of the king, she had more to lose and less to gain from Kimera's death than Nattembo as the widow of a prince.

[125] There is again a discrepancy between Kagwa's version in *Kings of Buganda* (18) where he has Nattembo as Ttembo's sister and *Customs of the Baganda* (20) where he lists her as Ttembo's mother. The latter is much more plausible as the name Nattembo itself means 'mother of Ttembo.' Other versions also list her as Ttembo's mother, for example Roscoe, *Baganda*, 231.

[126] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 28. In *Customs of the Baganda*, Kagwa records that "the warriors all had lost their spears" and so "Nanono cut reeds to sharp points and gave these to the soldiers to use as spears" (24). What her actual role was is unclear, though it is hard to picture a lone woman sharpening reeds to supply a whole army. What does seem to be clear to us and would have also been clear to an audience listening to the tradition in Buganda is that she was on the battlefield with the king and his soldiers. See also, Musisi, "Transformations," 110.

old enough to take the throne and on other hand she herself was pregnant. Nannono hoped to give birth to a son and so become *nnamasole* and rule as regent for her son until he came of age. In the event her child was a girl and Mulondo, the son of another of Nakibinge's wives was elected by the chiefs.[127] Although biology ultimately conspired against her, the fact that Nannono was able to hold off the election of a successor to her husband is an indication of the power that some of the king's wives were able to wield in the kingdom. It is hard to imagine, however, that she would have been able to do so without the strong support of her clan members and of at least some of the important chiefs.

King Mulondo, according to the traditions, was still young when he ascended the throne. Although the traditions do not directly state that his mother (and the *nnamasole* [31]) Namulondo acted as regent until he reached maturity they do refer to her power and influence. The stool on which he sat "so that he could look big enough in the Councils" was named after her,[128] a physical symbol of the *nnamasole*'s influence especially over a young king. Namulondo's brothers also appear to have been important figures in King Mulondo's administration. It was they who made his stool and when Namulondo died during his reign, they brought several of her female relatives for Mulondo to select an heir to the office of *nnamasole*.[129] This reflects a common pattern in Buganda whereby the relatives of the *nnamasole* could expect to receive significant benefits from the political success of their kinswoman and their *mujjwa* or nephew. The tradition that relates the reign of King Ndawula in the late seventeenth century, for example,

---

[127] Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 24; idem, *Kings of Buganda*, 28-29.

[128] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 30.

[129] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 30-31.

records that "he gave the village of Kikaaya to his mother's relatives".[130] One of the *nnamasole*'s brothers – the *kojja* of the king – would be appointed to the chiefship of *ssaabaganzi*[131] and, although it was not common practice, at least one king appointed his *kojja* to the post of *katikkiro* or prime minister.[132] The king could not, however, count on the loyalty of his maternal relatives regardless of his behaviour. The tradition of King Mwanga I suggests that while the connection between *bakojja* and royal *bajjwa* was an important one it could be trumped by that between a king's maternal relatives and their patrilineal clan members. When he ascended the throne, Mwanga was advised to kill the son of Nkunnumbi, his *kojja*, to ensure his own longevity and a long reign. Nkunnumbi was so distraught at his son's murder that he smuggled a knife into the palace and stabbed King Mwanga to death.[133] Kiwanuka rightly notes that Nkunnumbi's fellow Ndiga clan members did not protest Mwanga's assassination because King Namugala who succeeded him was his full brother and so their connection to the kingship remained.[134]

The tradition of King Mawanda who reigned in the early eighteenth century highlights the close relationship between the power of the king and of the queen mother as well as invoking the tension between creative and instrumental power in the kingdom. Mawanda's soldiers set fire to the shrine of the *lubaale* Nakibinge in Bbumbu. According to the tradition, a "spark from

---

[130] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 59.

[131] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 104; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 460.

[132] Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 31. Wrigley sees this as having been quite a common occurrence: "the *katikkiro* had regularly been the king's mother's brother" (*Kingship and State*, 190).

[133] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 77.

[134] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 77.

the burning shrine flew up and burnt the queen mother's breast." The wound only healed after the king's men rebuilt Nakibinge's shrine.[135] While on other occasions it was the king himself who suffered after challenging the creative power of the *balubaale* and their mediums (such as the case of King Tebandeke who himself became a medium[136]), this time it was the *nnamasole*'s turn to suffer the consequences of her son's actions.

The King's Wives

The queen mother had, of course, first been a wife to the king. Although polygyny was likely to have been practiced by kings in North Nyanza, it also seems likely from both the linguistic and ethnographic evidence that one of his wives was appointed as the senior wife or **kaidu* [24].[137] The **kaidu* of a North Nyanzan king could expect to become queen mother, whether through her son inheriting from his father or through the social construction of maternity: she was recognised as the mother of the king because of her position in the household and it was not necessary for her to be his biological mother.[138] The *kaidu* was able to wield some power – through her influence over the king as his senior wife, through her position as

[135] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 74.

[136] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 56-58.

[137] See also discussion on the senior wife in chapter 3. Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 11, Text 41, Text 42, Text 46; Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 719, Text 759, Text 917; J. F. Cunningham, *Uganda and its Peoples: Notes on the Protectorate of Uganda Especially the Anthropology and Ethnology of its Indigenous Races* (London: Hutchinson, 1905), 125; Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, 83; Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 67-68; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 469; GW-ETH-KAA-M-02/12/04, interview by author, 02 December 2004, Bugwere, digital recording and transcript in possession of author.

[138] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 41; Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 670, Text 917; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 200.

head of the royal household and her rank in the court, [139] and through her anticipated power as the future queen mother. In Bugwere the *kaidu* is certainly remembered as having been able to influence the actions of her husband. The *kaidu* of King Sika of the Banagwere clan who ruled sometime in the early nineteenth century was Kalimo and she performed the rituals of inheritance with her husband. However, she used her influence over Sika to limit the redistribution of food from the court. This, together with his defeat at the hands of the neighbouring king, Iwa, led to Sika being overthrown in favour of his brother, Mukamba.[140] The *kaidu* was also responsible for managing the wives in the royal household, including resolving any disputes that arose.[141] The senior wife of the heir to the throne performed the ceremonies of inheritance with her husband, sitting on the leopard skin with him.[142] King Tuluwa who reigned in the eighteenth century is remembered as a rainmaker and his *kaidu* was responsible for looking after his rainmaking drums.[143] This suggests that the senior wife of a Gwere king was responsible for his instruments of creative power.

In the kingdoms of Busoga the senior wife of the king had considerable power. According to the historian Y.K. Lubogo, she had her own estates in the kingdom on which she collected taxes, she could demand corvée labour from the people living in her estates for works such as building and maintaining her palace, she could punish directly those who insulted her

---

[139] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 11; Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 23-25; Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 67-68; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 469.

[140] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 11; Long, "Bugwere District," 463.

[141] GW-ETH-KAA-M-02/12/04.

[142] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 11, Text 42, Text 46.

[143] Atkinson, *BHT*, Text 42.

and could confiscate "any person's property." He goes on to note that for these reasons, "senior wives were often respected and much feared."[144] The office of *kairu* in the kingdoms was replicated in the households of chiefs across Busoga.[145] The senior wife drew her power through two relationships – that with the current king, her husband, and that with the future king. As *kairu* she would become queen mother on the death of her husband. Ideally, her son would succeed his father, however, when she did not have a (suitable) son of her own[146] she adopted a sister's son (or the son of a female clan member) born to the king.[147] It is unlikely that succession would have always passed off without dispute and a senior wife undoubtedly formed alliances with important chiefs in the kingdom to support her son's accession to the throne. She could also count on the support of her lineage and clan members, especially because in Busoga princes tended to be raised in their mothers' natal homes and not in the king's palace.[148] This meant that princes had very strong connections to their maternal kin. Indeed, Cohen argues that this practice occurred precisely to "bridge the prestigious bearing and exogenous culture of the northern ruling families in Busoga with the commoner homes of the Bantu-speaking local families."[149] The case of Kabalu, *kairu* and then queen mother of Luuka, demonstrates the way in which a senior wife could take advantage of her proximity to the king to ensure her son's inheritance. In the kingdom of Bugabula the senior wife had specific roles to perform during the

---

[144] Lubogo, *History of Busoga*, 152.

[145] Cunningham, *Uganda*, 125.

[146] A prince suffering from leprosy or mental illness would not be eligible to inherit the throne (Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 917).

[147] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 917; Roscoe, *Northern Bantu*, 200.

[148] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 27.

[149] Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu*, 28.

funeral of her husband, the king.[150] This may well have been a further opportunity to influence the succession.

In Buganda, as we have already seen, the queen mother was not always, by any means, the *kaddulubaale*, or senior wife, of the previous king. However, the lack of guaranteed future power did not necessarily diminish the *kaddulubaale*'s power during the lifetime of her husband. Both from her title and from her primary responsibility within the royal household, we know that the *kaddulubaale* was the repository of creative power within the palace. By suffixing *lubaale* to *kaddu* - the Luganda reflex of **kaidu* [24] – Baganda drew a direct connection between the senior wife of the king and the principal figures in the Ganda spiritual world. Her main task was to look after the "fetiches and amulets" of the king.[151] Her power may have waxed and waned along with the extent to which the *kabaka* and the palace managed to bring the creative power of the kingdom under their control.[152] Despite the multitude of royal wives in the palace from the early eighteenth century onwards,[153] the continued importance of the *kaddulubaale* is marked by the fact that in King Muteesa's late-nineteenth century palace she alone among the wives had a separate house for receiving visits by the *bambejja* (princesses) and the *balangira* (princes).[154]

---

[150] Cohen, *CTBTH*, Text 719.

[151] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 84.

[152] See Kodesh, "Royal Gaze," for an analysis of the struggle over creative power in Buganda.

[153] See also Musisi, "Elite Polygyny," 757-86; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 468-70.

[154] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 524.

Reproductive Power in the Palace

One of the most striking features of the royal women in Buganda is the limitations placed on their social maternity. Only the king's wives could become mothers in the sense of bearing socially sanctioned children and restrictions existed even within this cohort. According to Roscoe, sons born to royal wives from a number of clans were "killed at birth, and only girls allowed to live."[155] This was because those clans should not have a *mujjwa* or 'sister's son' on the throne. The historical traditions support that none of the recorded kings of Buganda was a *mujjwa* of any of these clans.[156] On acceding to office, the *nnamasole* [31] too faced limitations on her reproductive power. For fairly obvious reasons she was not allowed to remarry – as her husband would be in a position of authority over the king – nor was she allowed to have any more children – as they would be potential challengers to the throne. [157] There were not, however, limitations on her sexual life and Roscoe noted that "as there were many medicine-men who knew how to prevent such accidents [i.e. pregnancies], the King's Mother did not hesitate to follow her inclinations." [158] Even accounting for the prudery of Victorian missionaries, it seems clear that the *nnamasole* had considerable sexual freedom. Marriage and motherhood were social constructs in Buganda which enabled legitimate social reproduction. Women's sexuality, especially that of powerful women, could be outside the confines of social reproduction and thus

[155] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 137. For a listing of the relevant clans, see 138-40.

[156] For a full listing of the kings and their mothers and wives please see: Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 18-67.

[157] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 237; Schiller, "The Royal Women of Buganda," 459.

[158] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 237. Musisi asserts that the *nnamasole* was neither to remarry nor have sexual relations. She bases this interpretation on King Ssuuna II's execution of several chiefs that he suspected of having liaisons with his mother ("Transformations," 77-78).

was not restricted in the same manner within the royal centre.[159] This included *bambejja* or princesses. As we have already seen, *bambejja*, including the *lubuga* [6], were not permitted to marry. Connected to that prohibition was a sanction against them having children recognised as their own. Roscoe noted that princesses were free to have sexual liaisons, but should this result in pregnancy, "they secured the aid of some skilled person to bring about a miscarriage." The threat of execution apparently hung over princesses and their lovers who had children.[160] Roscoe suggests that this prohibition points "to a time when other customs prevailed, possibly succession through the female line," something with which Musisi concurs.[161] Kodesh, however, points to the similarities in behaviour between Baganda *bambejja* and female mediums in other parts of the Great Lakes region. The fecundity of spirit wives, in particular, "could be redirected for the benefit of a particular individual or community." As we have already seen, Kodesh draws on this to argue that efforts to control the reproductive rights of *bambejja* was part of an effort by Ganda kings to draw the power that developed around shrines to the palace.[162]

Transgressions by women in the royal centre against the controls on their reproductive rights and subsequent efforts by kings to clamp down on such transgressions coincided with turbulence in the political life of the kingdom. The nineteenth century saw a remarkable level of upheaval in Buganda. There had been considerable expansion of the kingdom, or at least of its

---

[159] Musisi touches on the sexuality of women in the palace in her dissertation, but it is a topic that deserves further study, "Transformations," 74.

[160] Musisi, "Transformations," 80; Roscoe, *Baganda*, 85.

[161] Roscoe, *Baganda*, 187; Musisi, "Transformations," 81. Musisi points to the tradition that Buganda was ruled by a woman, Nakku, during the interregnum between Kings Cwa and Kimera. This period is widely understood to be mythical rather than historical and we should hesitate to read the tradition as referring categorically to a lone female head of state.

[162] Kodesh, "Royal Gaze," 299-300.

sphere of influence, during the eighteenth century and the frequency of the warfare required for such expansion undermined social stability by increasing levels of violence. By the early nineteenth century opportunistic raids on Busoga and other neighbouring areas were commonplace, in part to appropriate women and children who could be sold into the East African slave market. When King Ssuuna II Kalema ascended to the throne in the 1820s, he was still very young[163] as was his mother "who was one of the most beautiful women in the country."[164] Ssuuna is remembered for having executed "countless numbers" of chiefs that he suspected of being his mother's lovers.[165] When a rumour reached King Ssuuna that his mother was pregnant he was so enraged that he sent a general in his army to uncover "the queen mother so as to look at her breasts and check whether she was really pregnant." In addition to this humiliation, the *nnamasole*'s [31] estates were plundered and several of her chiefs arrested, despite the rumour having been shown to be false.[166] Given that Ssuuna's first prime minister was quickly replaced by another, it seems likely that it was *nnamasole* Nakazi Kanyange who served as regent.[167] King Ssuuna's actions can, therefore, be interpreted as his attempt to exert his authority in the land once he had come of age. However, Ssuuna also ordered vicious raids on his *lubuga* [6] and other powerful princesses.[168] This suggests that just as the kingdom was

[163] Kagwa gives his age as twelve years, but the precision of this is rather doubtful (*Kings of Buganda*, 115).

[164] Note by Kiwanuka in Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 115.

[165] Kiwanuka note in Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 115.

[166] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 127. In so doing he broke a whole series of taboos regarding conduct between a mother and her son and specifically between a king and his *nnamasole*.

[167] This is also suggested by the fact that he apparently saw a good deal of his mother, in contravention of the general constitutional rule that the king and his *nnamasole* should not meet following the completion of the installation ceremonies. Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 119, 120, 131.

[168] See Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 115-39 for the history of Ssuuna's reign.

weakening as a result of the warfare and instability that had lasted several decades so the old tripartite headship of state was challenged as the king attempted to take all the power to himself. In his renewed efforts to control the fertility and hence maternity of women in the palaces, King Ssuuna was attempting to co-opt and corral the ideological power that motherhood held in Buganda in order to shore up his own position. This process began in the second half of eighteenth century with the reign of King Ssemakookiro who executed several of his son Kamaanya's maternal relatives, including his mother, Ndwadewaziba, "because he had wanted his son to ascend the throne without any relatives."[169] Despite this effort by Ssemakookiro to break the role of motherhood in upholding political power, King Kamaanya deliberately sought out his mother's remaining relatives and appointed them to several chiefships. In addition, his mother's younger sister, Namisango, was *nnamasole*.[170] However, in an indication of instability at the heart of the kingdom, Kamaanya broke the taboos of incest and 'married' some of his sisters.[171]

There are very few details on the conventions governing the actions of the queen mother in Busoga and Bugwere. It is possible that there too she faced restrictions on her maternity after acceding to office for, just as in Buganda, any new children could pose a threat to the king. What is clear is that the restrictions on the reproductive rights of princesses and some of the king's wives did not exist, indeed the alliances created through the marriage of princesses to other rulers were an important means of maintaining and expanding power. Furthermore, the

[169] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 104, 107.

[170] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 104.

[171] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 137.

primacy given to the senior wife or *kaidu* in Bugwere and Busoga emphasised social motherhood whether within the royal realm or among commoners. In Buganda, the stronger and larger state co-opted the importance that the ideology of motherhood held in Ganda society into its constitution and stressed the biological over the social. Initially this took the form of drawing on symbolic motherhood by looking to maternal ties in the assignation of political power while at the same time restricting the real motherhood of the *nnamasole*, the *lubuga* and the *bambejja*. As the kingdom expanded its reach over neighbouring areas and the numbers of royal wives, concubines and female slaves in the capital grew almost exponentially[172] a shift seems to have occurred. Queen mothers saw their chiefs killed and their estates plundered, as did queen sisters and the more powerful princesses and kings "took to wife" their sisters and attempted to bar them from taking lovers. [173] These actions were part of an attempt by Ganda kings to control political struggles through controlling royal women's reproductive power. And yet, even by the mid-nineteenth century when King Ssuuna died, the ideology of motherhood in the constitution of Buganda held sufficient sway for Mukaabya Mutesa to be chosen over his brother Kikulwe because of who their respective mothers were.[174]

*****

Motherhood – social, ideological and biological – was as the heart of political authority in North Nyanza and its descendant societies. It helped to determine which son would succeed the king and granted power to his mother. It was the centre of networks of relationships along

[172] See Kagwa, *Customs of the Baganda*, 18-67 for a listing of the numbers of women in the royal household.

[173] Kiwanuka note in Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 137.

[174] Kagwa, *Kings of Buganda*, 141-143.

which political authority was delegated in the form of chiefships. It seems unlikely that this was a throwback to a time when Buganda was ruled by queens as is suggested by Musisi and others.[175] It is more plausible that this grew out of wider practices which placed motherhood at the heart of social organisation through the relationship between a mother's kin and her children. Efforts by kings to reduce the political power of the *nnamasole* and the *lubuga* grew along with the political stakes in Buganda as the kingdom expanded its reach. This coincided with a dramatic increase in the number of women, free and unfree, in the royal and chiefly households, an increase which appears to have undermined the position of wives in the palace and beyond.[176] Even before those turbulent times, the size of the kingdom and the extent of the centralisation of power in Buganda had resulted in the co-optation of an ideology of motherhood into the state. This was at the expense of the maternity of the queen mother and other women in the palace. It also gave a greater weight to biological motherhood over social, in contrast to political developments in Busoga and Bugwere. Out of this emerged the situation that European missionaries and colonial officials entered and the new constitution of the Uganda Agreement of 1900 which sidelined women from political power and emphasised the authority of the *katikkiro* and other male chiefs.[177]

[175] Musisi, "Transformations," 81.

[176] Musisi, "Elite Polygyny," 772-73.

[177] See Hanson, "Queen Mothers and Good Governance," for an exploration of the role of nineteenth century developments in denuding the queen mother of political power.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

The Uganda Agreement of 1900 between Buganda and Britain created a new political order which codified the balance of power in the kingdom at the end of the nineteenth century. The opportunities available to chiefs through the integration of Buganda into long-distance trade with the East African coast had increased their power at the expense of that the royal family.[1] The simultaneous creation of private property made those who held political office in 1900 wealthy, but stripped power away from the offices themselves. Thus, *Nnamasole* Evailin Kulabako, the mother of King Daudi Cwa, and her brother, the *ssaabaganzi*, received as private property the estates they had governed through their political positions. On their deaths, the estates were inherited by their personal heirs, not by the heirs to their political offices. The office of the *ssaabaganzi*, in particular "ceased to have meaning in the new order of power and disappeared in all but name at the death of the person who had been holding the title in 1900." The *nnamasole* "was no longer the king-maker, or the protector, defender, and regulator of the king's power."[2] She had become solely the biological mother of the king.

British officials were not concerned with Ganda royal women and they do not figure in colonial papers associated with the Uganda Agreement. As Holly Hanson notes, "it is only because these relationships [of power] were inscribed in land ownership that they can be

[1] Holly E. Hanson, "Queen Mothers and Good Government in Buganda: The Loss of Women's Political Power in Nineteenth Century East Africa," in *Women in African Colonial Histories*, ed. Jean Allman, Susan Geiger and Nakanyike B. Musisi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 227-28.

[2] Hanson, "Queen Mothers," 230.

discerned."[3] This points to a more widespread difficulty of writing a history such as this one for it brings together two methodological challenges. The first is of writing the precolonial history of people who adopted writing systems only recently. The second is writing about women who are all too often absent from the oral traditions and ethnographic records. These are challenges which many other historians have faced and overcome and this work owes a great intellectual debt to them. By drawing on a range of evidence, including historical linguistic evidence and reading sources for evidence that is not immediately apparent, I have written a history of motherhood in North Nyanza. This history shows that placing motherhood at the centre of analysis helps explain apparent tensions in social and political organization in this region and beyond. Tracing changes in the ways in which North Nyanzans and their descendants used moral logics to create the boundaries within which motherhood as a social institution existed, I have illuminated aspects of settlement, agricultural and political history.

Studies of queen mothers across Africa have shown the power wielded by these women before the advent of colonial rule. In the early polities created by people speaking proto-North Nyanza in the second half of the first millennium, queen mothers reigned alongside their sons. After the turn of the millennium in the South Kyogan communities to the east of the Victoria-Nile River, queen mothers and kings acceded to power according to an ideology of social motherhood. This privileged one royal wife over the others according to her status in the household and allowed her to become queen mother even if she did not have a biological son of her own. In Buganda, as power was centralised into one state towards the middle of the second millennium, a different model of king-making emerged. Here, biological motherhood came to be

[3] Hanson, "Queen Mothers," 230.

more important for the son of almost any wife could theoretically succeed his father. His mother's political skill and the strength of her clan thus determined which individual prince took the throne.

This history of motherhood in North Nyanza, however, takes us well outside the palace fence into commoner households. In these households women created networks of connections through their motherhood, networks which cut across clan and lineage divisions and even across linguistic and ethnic boundaries. As people settled new lands and worked to build sustainable communities, these networks made different groups of people vested in a community's success. North Nyanzans' conceptualizations of motherhood and of social reproduction more broadly also affected who performed the different tasks of food procurement as they engaged with new environments and ecological change. Writing an institutional history of motherhood allows for the exploration of the changing realities of commoner women and not just of royal women. It also shows how the ideological understandings of motherhood held by men and women cut across the royal-commoner divide.

References

I. List of Interviews

During my fieldwork I conducted interviews to collect 100-wordlists, 1500 lists of cultural vocabulary, ethnographic data and oral histories. IRB restrictions prevent me from listing the names of informants, but below is a list of the interviews conducted. The original recordings, transcriptions and translations (where applicable) are in my possession.

Ganda

GA-15-KLA-M-7/05/05
GA-15-KLA-F-6/06/05
GA-15-KLA-F-10/06/05

Gwere

GW-1-KAS-M-1/5/10/04
GW-2-BUD-F-7/10/04
GW-2-KAG-M-9/10/04
GW-2-KAD-M-9/10/04
GW-2-KAM-M-10/10/04
GW-2-KIB-F-10/10/04
GW-2-LYA-M-10/10/04
GW-2-KAK-M-11/10/04
GW-2-BUL-F-11/10/04
GW-2-KAI-M-12/10/04
GW-2-IKI-F-12/10/04
GW-2-KAS-M-13/10/04
GW-15-NKT-M-17/11/04
GW-15-KAI-M-28/10/04
GW-15-KAI-M-29/10/04
GW-15-KAI-M-10/11/04
GW-15-KAI-M-14/11/04
GW-15-KAI-M-17/11/04
GW-15-NAB-F-29/10/04
GW-15-NAB-F-04/12/04
GW-15-KAD-M-26/10/04
GW-15-KAD-M-27/10/04
GW-15-IKI-F-26/10/04
GW-15-BUD-M-09/11/04
GW-15-BUD-M-12/11/04
GW-15-BUD-M-18/11/04
GW-15-BUD-M-04/12/04
GW-15-BUD-F-11/11/04
GW-15-BUD-F-15/11/04
GW-ETH-BUD-F-30/11/04
GW-ETH-BUL-F-27/10/04
GW-ETH-BUL-F-11/11/04
GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04a
GW-ETH-IKI-F-16/11/04b
GW-ETH-NAB-F-29/10/04
GW-ETH-KAA-M-02/12/04
GW-ETH-KIB-M-13/11/04
GW-ETH-BUT-M-01/12/04
GW-ETH-IKI-F-26/10/04
GW-ETH-KAD-F-17/11/04

Kenyi

KE-2-GOG-F-11/10/04

Shana

SH-2-BLG-M-05/05/05
SH-2-BLG-M-02/06/05
SH-15-BLG-M-02/06/05
SH-ETH-KLA-M-18/06/05

Soga

SO-2-BUG-M-18/01/05
SO-15-BUG-M-20/01/05
SO-15-BUG-M-24/01/05
SO-15-BUG-F-22/01/05
SO-15-KIT-F-19/01/05
SO-ETH-NAU-F-21/01/05
SO-ETH-KIS-M-23/01/05
SO-ETH-KAL-F-21/01/05
SO-ETH-NAK-F-08/03/05
SO-15-NAM-M-11/03/05
SO-15- WAI -F-08/03/05
SO-15-NAM-M-09/03/05
SO-15-BUE-M-20/03/05
SO-2-NAA-M-10/03/05
SO-15-NAA -M-12/03/05
SO-2-NAE-F-08/03/05
SO-ETH-BUG-M-18/01/05
SO-15-BUG-M-23/01/05
SO-15-BUG-F-20/01/05
SO-15-BUG-F-24/01/05
SO-ETH-KIT-F-19/01/05
SO-ETH-BUG-F-20/01/05
SO-ETH-KIT-F-21/01/05
SO-15-NAM-F-21/03/05
SO-ETH-BUN-M-09/03/05
SO-2-WAI-F-08/03/05
SO-15- WAI -F-11/03/05
SO-15-BUE-M-10/03/05
SO-15-MAG-F-20/03/05
SO-15-NAA -M-10/03/05
SO-15-NAA -M-19/03/05

II. Lexical Sources

This section contains the lexical sources consulted in establishing the distributions of the reconstructed forms set out in appendix 3.

A. Individual Languages in Alphabetical Order by Language

Bemba

Guthrie, Malcolm. *A Vocabulary of Icibemba*, ed. M. Mann. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1995.

Kasonde, Alexander R.M. *A Classified Vocabulary of the Icibemba Language*. Munich: Lincom Europa, 2002.

Bobangi

Whitehead, J. "Bobangi Wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary, 1899. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Bukusu

K.W.L. "Bukusu-English Wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary, 1998. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Chewa
Moxley, Jerry. "Chewa Mtenje Wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Ganda
Le Veux, Henri. *Premier Essai de Vocabulaire Luganda-Français d'Après l'Ordre Étymologique*. Algiers: Imprimerie des Missionaires d'Afriques, 1917.

Murphy, John D. *Luganda-English Dictionary*. Publications in the Languages of Africa, 2. Washington: Consortium Press for Catholic University of America, 1972.

Snoxall, R.A. *Luganda-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

Gusii
Nyakoe O'Matenyo, F. *English-Ekegusii Companion*. Nairobi: Bookwise, 1981.

Gwere
Atkinson, Ronald R. "Lugwere wordlist." n.p.

"Lugwere-English wordlist." Summer Institute of Languages Lugwere Translation Project. n.p.

Kagaya, Ryohei. *A Gwere Vocabulary*. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2006.

Ha
Nakagawa, Hiroshi. *A Classified Vocabulary of the Ha Language*. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 1992.

Haavu
Birusha, Aramazani. "Description de la Langue Havu (Bantou J52): Grammaire et Lexique." Ph.D. diss., Université Libre de Bruxelles, 1984-1985.

Haya
Kaji, Shigeki. *A Haya Vocabulary*. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2000.

Hunde
Kaji, Shigeki. *Vocabulaire Hunde*. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 1992.

Jita
Downing, Laura. "Jita-English Wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary, 1999. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Kalanga
Mathangwane, Joyce. "Kalanga Wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary, 1995. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Kerewe
Odden, David. "Kerewe Wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary, 1994. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Kuria
Muniko, S.M., B. Muita oMagige and Malcolm Ruel. *Kuria-English Dictionary*. Monographs from the International African Institute. Hamburg: LIT, 1996.

Lozi
Jalla, A. *Dictionary of the Lozi Language*. London, 1937. Reprint Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Luo
Capen, Carole A. *Bilingual Dholuo-English dictionary, Kenya*. Tucson, 1998.

Odaga, Asenath Bole. *English-Dholuo Dictionary*. Kisumu: Lake Publishers, 1997.

Lwo
Odonga, Alexander. *Lwo-English Dictionary*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2005.

Masaaba
Siertsema, Berthe. *Masaba Word List English-Masaba Masaba-English*. Tervuren: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1981.

Nande
Fraas, Pauline A. *A Nande-English and English-Nande Dictionary*. Washington, D.C.: Laubach Literacy Fund, 1961.

Ndebele
Pelling, J.N. *A Practical Ndebele Dictionary*. 2nd ed. Harare: Longman, 1974. Reprint, Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Nkore-Kiga
Kaji, Shigeki. *A Runyankore Vocabulary*. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2004.

Taylor, Charles. *A Simplified Runyankore-Rukiga-English and English-Runyankore-Rukiga Dictionary in the 1955 Revised Orthography with Tone-Markings and Full Entries Under Prefixes*. Kampala: The Eagle Press for the East African Literature Bureau, 1959.

Nyambo
Rugemalira, Josephat. "Nyambo wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary, 1993. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Nyamwezi
Maganga, C. and Thilo C. Schadeberg. *Kinyamwezi: Grammar, Texts, Vocabulary*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1992. Reprint, Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

Nyoro
Davis, Margaret B. *A Lunyoro-Lunyankole-English and English-Lunyoro-Lunyankole Dictionary*. Kampala: Uganda Book Shop. 1952.

Rundi
Rodegem, F.M. *Dictionnaire Rundi-Français*. Tervuren: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1970.

Rwanda
Jacob, Irenée. *Dictionnaire Rwanda-Français, en 3 Volumes*. Butare, Rwanda: Institut National de Recherche Scientifique, 1984.

Schumacher, P. *Dictionnaire Phonetique Français-Runyrwanda et Runyarwanda-Français*. Kabgayi, Rwanda: Vicariat Apostolique, 1956.

Shana
Huntingford, George W.B. "The Orusyan Language of Uganda." *Journal of African Languages* 4, no.3 (1965): 145-69.

Shi
Pères Blancs. "Dictionnaire Français-Mashi." Bukavu, n.p.

Polak-Bynon, Louise. *Lexique Shi-Français Suivi d'un Index Français-Shi*. Tervuren: Musée de l'Afrique Centrale, 1978.

Soga
Dictionary Lusoga-English English-Lusoga. Jinja: Cultural Research Centre, 2000.

Swahili
Johnson, Frederick. *A Standard Swahili-English Dictionary*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1939.

Kamusi ya Kiswahili Sanifu. Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi: Oxford University Press for Taasisi ya Uchunguzi was Kiswahili, 1981.

Swati

Rycroft, D.K. *Concise SiSwati Dictionary SiSwati-English/English-SiSwati*. Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik, 1981.

Tembo

Kaji, Shigeki. *Lexique Tembo I: Tembo-Swahili du Zaïre-Japonais-Français*. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 1985.

Teso

Hilders, J.H. and J.C.D. Lawrance. *An English-Ateso and Ateso-English Vocabulary*. Kampala: Eagle Press for the East African Literature Bureau, 1958.

Venda

Murphy, M. Lynne. "Venda wordlist." Comparative Bantu Online Dictionary, 1997. www.cbold.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/ (accessed 12 September 2007).

B. Sources for Reconstructed Forms and for Multiple Languages

Bastin, Yvonne and Thilo Schadeberg (eds.). "Bantu Lexical Reconstructions 3." Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren. www.metafro.be/blr (accessed 28 August 2007).

Ehret, Christopher. *A Historical-Comparative Reconstruction of Nilo-Saharan*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2001.

_____. *The Historical Reconstruction of Southern Cushitic Phonology and Vocabulary*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1980.

Guthrie, Malcolm. *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages*. Farnborough: Gregg International, 1970.

Schoenbrun, David Lee. *Comparative Vocabularies for Violence, Vulnerability, and Social Standing in Great Lakes Bantu: Etymologies, Semantics and Distribution*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, In Preparation.

_____. "Fieldnotes." n.p.

_____. *The Historical Reconstruction of Great Lakes Bantu Cultural Vocabulary: Etymologies and Distributions*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1997.

III. Other Works

A.D.F.T. "The Uses of the Banana." *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 2 (1934): 116-19.

Ahmed, Christine Choi. "Before Eve was Eve: 2200 Years of Gendered History in East-Central Africa." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996.

Allman, Jean. "Making Mothers: Missionaries, Medical Offices and Women's Work in Colonial Asante, 1924-1945." *History Workshop Journal* 38 (1994): 23-47.

Atkinson, Ronald R. *Bugwere Historical Texts* (n.p.).

Barnes, Sandra T. "Gender and the Politics of Support and Protection in Precolonial West Africa." In *Queens, Queen Mothers, Priestesses, and Power: Case Studies in African Gender*, ed. Flora E.S. Kaplan, 1-18. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1997.

Bastin, Yvonne. *Les Relations Sémantiques dans les Langues Bantoues*. Brussels: Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer, 1985.

Bastin, Yvonne, André Coupez and Bernard de Halleux. "Classification Lexicostatistique des Langues Bantoues (214 Relevés)." *Bulletin des Séances du Académie Royale du Sciences d'Outre-Mer* 27, no.2 (1981): 173-199.

Bastin, Yvonne, André Coupez and Michael Mann. *Continuity and Divergence in the Bantu Languages: Perspectives from a Lexicostatistic Study*, Annales Sciences Humaines no. 162. Tervuren: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1999.

Bay, Edna G. "Belief, Legitimacy and the Kpojito: An Institutional History of the 'Queen Mother' in Precolonial Dahomey." *Journal of African History* 36 (1995): 1-27.

_____. *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics, and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998.

Beattie, John H.M. "Nyoro Marriage and Affinity." *Africa* 28 (1958): 1-22.

Berger, Iris. "The Kubandwa Religious Complex of Interlacustrine East Africa: An Historical Study, c. 1500-1900." Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1973.

_____. "Fertility as Power: Spirit Mediums, Priestesses and the Precolonial State in Interlacustrine East Africa." In *Revealing Prophets: Prophecy in Eastern African History*, ed. David M. Anderson and Douglas Johnson. London: James Currey, 1995.

Bledsoe, Caroline. "'No Success without Struggle': Social Mobility and Hardship for Foster Children in Sierra Leone." *Man (N.S.)* 25, no. 1 (1990): 70-87.

Bledsoe, Caroline and Barney Cohen, ed. *Social Dynamics of Adolescent Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1993.

Blier, Suzanne P. "The Path of the Leopard: Motherhood and Majesty in Early Danhomé." *Journal of African History* 36 (1995): 391-417.

Boddy, Janice Patricia. *Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men, and the Zār Cult in Northern Sudan*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

Bowers, Toni. *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680-1760*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Carneiro, Robert L. "A Theory of the Origin of the State." *Science* 169, no. 3947 (1970): 733-738.

Chrétien, Jean-Pierre. *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History*. Trans. Scott Strauss. New York: Zone Books, 2003.

Cohen, David William. *Collected Texts of Busoga Traditional History* (n.p.).

_____. "The Cultural Topography of a 'Bantu Borderland': Busoga, 1500-1850." *Journal of African History* 29 (1988): 57-79.

_____. "The Face of Contact: A Model of a Cultural and Linguistic Frontier in Early Eastern Uganda." In *Nilotic Studies: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Languages and History of the Nilotic Peoples, Cologne, January 4-6, 1982*, ed. Rainer Vosser and Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst, vol. 2, 339-55. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1982.

_____. *The Historical Tradition of Busoga: Mukama and Kintu*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

_____. "The Political Transformation of Northern Busoga, 1600-1900." *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 22, no. 87 (1982): 465-88.

_____. "The River-Lake Nilotes from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century." In *Zamani: A Survey of East African History*, 2nd ed., ed. Bethwell A. Ogot, 135-49. Nairobi: Longman, 1974.

_____. *Selected Texts of Busoga Traditional History (microform)*. Baltimore: s.n. 1969.

_____. *Towards a Reconstructed Past: Historical Texts from Busoga, Uganda*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

_____. *Womunafu's Bunafu: A Study of Authority in a Nineteenth-Century African Community*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Cox, John L. "Amakiro: A Uganda Puerperal Psychosis?" *Social Psychiatry* 14 (1979): 49-52.

Crawford, Patricia. "The Construction and Experience of Maternity in Seventeenth-Century England." In *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLaren*, ed. Dorothy McLaren and Valerie A. Fildes, 3-39. London: Routledge, 1990.

Crazzolara, J.P. *The Lwoo*, vol.1. Verona: Editrice Nigrizia, 1950.

Crowley, Terry. *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Cunningham, J. F. *Uganda and its Peoples: Notes on the Protectorate of Uganda Especially the Anthropology and Ethnology of its Indigenous Races*. London: Hutchinson, 1905.

Curtin, Philip, Steven Feierman, Leonard Thompson and Jan Vansina, ed. *African History: From Earliest Times to Independence*. New York: Longman, 1978; 2nd ed. 1995.

De Langhe, E., R. Swenne and D. Vuylsteke. "Plantain in the Early Bantu World," *Azania* 29-30 (1994-1995): 147-60.

De Luna, Kathryn. "Bantu Hunters: A Revision of the Story of Bantu Expansion and the Development of Farmer States," (unpublished research paper).

_____. "Beating Around the Bush: Wild Resource Use in Central African Political Culture, ca. 1000 B.C.E. to ca. 1900 C.E." (Ph.D. diss, Northwestern University, in preparation).

Devisch, René. *Weaving the Threads of Life: The Khita Gyn-Eco-Logical Healing Cult Among the Yaka*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Dockray-Miller, Mary. *Motherhood and Mothering in Anglo-Saxon England*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.

Earle, Timothy. *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.

Edgerton, Robert B. *The Individual in Cultural Adaptation: A Study of Four East African Peoples*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971.

Ehret, Christopher. *An African Classical Age: Eastern and Southern Africa in World History, 1000 B.C. to A.D. 400*. Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1998.

_____. "Bantu Expansions: Re-Envisioning a Central Problem of Early African History." *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34 (2001): 5-41.

_____. "Language Change and the Material Correlates of Language and Ethnic Shift," *Antiquity* 62, no. 236 (1988): 564-74.

_____. *Southern Nilotic History: Linguistic Approaches to the Study of the Past*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971.

_____. "Testing the Expectations of Glottochronology Against the Correlations of Language and Archaeology in Africa." In *Time Depth in Historical Linguistics*, ed. Colin Renfrew, April McMahon and Larry Trask, 373-99. Cambridge: MacDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2000.

_____. "Writing African History from Linguistic Evidence." In *Writing African History*, ed. John E. Philips, 86-111. Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2005.

Ehret, Christopher, Gary Okihiro, Terry Stamps, Barbara Turner and Sherilyn Young. "Lacustrine History and Linguistic Evidence: Preliminary Conclusions." University of California, Los Angeles, n.p., 1973.

Engels, Frederick, and Eleanor Burke Leacock. *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State: In the Light of the Researches of Lewis H. Morgan*, trans. Alick West. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1972.

Etienne, Mona. "The Case for Social Maternity: Adoption of Children by Urban Baule Woman." *Dialectical Anthropology* 4, no. 3 (1979): 237-242.

Evans-Pritchard, Edward E. *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer*. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1951.

Fallers, Lloyd A. *Bantu Bureaucracy: A Study of Integration and Conflict in the Political Institutions of an East African People*. Cambridge: W. Heffer for East African Institute of Social Research, 1956.

Feldman-Savelsberg, Pamela. *Plundered Kitchens, Empty Wombs: Threatened Reproduction and Identity in the Cameroon Grassfields*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 1999.

Fields, Edda L. "Before 'Baga': Settlement Chronologies of the Coastal Rio Nunez Region, Earliest Times to c. 1000 CE." *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 37 (2004): 229-53.

_____. "Rice Farmers in the Rio Nunez Region: A Social History of Agricultural Technology and Identity in Coastal Guinea, ca. 2000 BCE to 1880 CE." Ph.D. diss, University of Pennsylvania, 2001.

Fortes, Meyer. *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi: the Second Part of an Analysis of the Social Structure of a Trans-Volta Tribe*. London and New York: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1949.

Fourshey, Catherine Cymone. "Agriculture, Ecology, Kinship and Gender: A Social and Economic History of Tanzania's Corridor 500 BC to 1900 AD." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002.

Freedman, Jim. *Nyabingi: The Social History of an African Divinity*. Tervuren: Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, 1984.

Gailey, Christine W. *Kinship to Kingship: Gender Hierarchy and State Formation in the Tongan Islands*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.

Goldschmidt, Walter. *Culture and Behavior of the Sebei: A Study in Continuity and Adaptation*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976.

_____. *The Sebei: A Study in Adaptation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1986.

Gonzales, Rhonda Marie. "Continuity and Change: Thought, Belief, and Practice in the History of the Ruvu Peoples of Central East Tanzania, c.200 B.C. to A.D. 1800." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2002.

Goody, Esther N. *Parenthood and Social Reproduction: Fostering and Occupational Roles in West Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Goody, Jack. *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain*. Cambridge and New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1976.

Gorju, Julien. *Entre le Victoria, l'Albert et l'Edouard: Ethnographie de la Partie Anglaise du Vicariat de l'Uganda*. Rennes: Imprimeries Oberthür, 1920.

Hanretta, Sean. "Women, Marginality and the Zulu State: Women's Institutions and Power in the Early Nineteenth Century." *Journal of African History* 39 (1998): 389-415.

Hanson, Holly E. *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003.

_____. "Queen Mothers and Good Government in Buganda: The Loss of Women's Political Power in Nineteenth-Century East Africa." In *Women in African Colonial Histories*, ed. Jean Allman, Susan Geiger and Nakanyike Beatrice Musisi, 219-36. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

Harris, Rivkah. *Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia: The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature*. Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 2000.

Henige, David. *The Chronology of Oral Traditions: Quest for a Chimera*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.

_____. "'The Disease of Writing': Ganda and Nyoro Kinglists in a Newly Literate World." In *The African Past Speaks: Essays on Oral Tradition and History*, ed. Joseph C. Miller, 240-61. Folkestone: Dawson, 1980.

_____. *Oral Historiography*. London: Longman, 1982.

Herbert, Eugenia W. *Iron, Gender, and Power: Rituals of Transformation in African Societies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Hoppe, Kirk A. *Lords of the Fly: Sleeping Sickness Control in British East Africa, 1900-1960*. London: Praeger, 2003.

Hunt, Nancy R. "'Le Bébé en Brousse': European Women, African Birth Spacing and Colonial Intervention in Breast Feeding in the Belgian Congo." *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21 (1988): 401-432.

_____. *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1999.

Inhorn, Marcia C. *Quest for Conception: Gender, Infertility, and Egyptian Medical Traditions*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.

Irstam, Tor. *The King of Ganda*. Westport, Connecticut: Negro Universities Press, 1970.

Jackson, Frederick. *Early Days in East Africa*. London: E. Arnold, 1930. Reprint, London: Dawsons, 1969.

Janzen, John M. *Ngoma: Discourses of Healing in Central and Southern Africa*. Comparative Studies of Health Systems and Medical Care, no. 32. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Johnston, Harry H. *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919.

_____. *The Uganda Protectorate: An Attempt to Give Some Description of the Physical Geography, Botany, Zoology, Anthropology, Languages and History of the Territories under British Protection in East Central Africa, Between the Congo Free State and the Rift Valley and Between the First Degree of South Latitude and the Fifth Degree of North Latitude*, vol. 2. London: Hutchinson, 1902.

Kagwa, Apolo. *The Customs of the Baganda*. Trans. Ernest B. Kalibala, ed. May Mandelbaum Edel. New York: Columbia University Press, 1934. Reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1969.

_____. *Ekitabo kya Basekabaka be Buganda na be Bunyoro, na be Koki, na be Toro, na be Nkole*. 3rd ed. Kampala: Uganda Bookshop and East African Publishing House, 1927. Reprinted 1971.

_____. *Ekitabo kye Mpisa za Baganda [The Customs of the Baganda in the Luganda Language*]. Kampala: Uganda Printing and Publishing, 1918.

_____. *Engero za Baganda*. London: Sheldon Press, 1951.

_____. *The Kings of Buganda*. Trans. and ed. M.S.M. Semakula Kiwanuka. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971.

Kaplan, Flora E.S., ed. *Queens, Queen Mothers, Priestesses, and Power: Case Studies in African Gender*. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1997.

Katamba, Francis. "Bantu Nominal Morphology." In *The Bantu Languages*, ed. Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson, 103-20. London: Routledge, 2003.

Kirkpatrick, R.T. "Lake Choga and Surrounding Country." *Geographical Journal* 13, no. 4 (1899). Reprint, *Uganda Journal* 10 (1946): 160-62.

Kiwanuka, M. Semakula M. *A History of Buganda: From the Foundation of the Kingdom to 1900*. London: Longman, 1971.

Kiyimba, Abasi. "Gender Stereotypes in the Folktales and Proverbs of the Baganda." Ph.D. diss., University of Dar-es-Salaam, 2001.

Klieman, Kairn. "Comments on Ehret, 'Bantu Expansions'." *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34 (2001): 48-52.

_____. *"The Pygmies Were Our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Times to c. 1900 C.E.* Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003.

Kodesh, Neil. "Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Collective Well-Being in Buganda." Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 2004.

_____. "History from the Healer's Shrine: Genre, Historical Imagination, and Early Ganda History." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49 (2007): 527-52.

Kottak, Conrad P. "Ecological Variables in the Origin and Evolution of African States: The Buganda Example." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 14 (1972): 351-80.

Kopytoff, Igor, ed. *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987).

Laight, Miss and Yekonia K. Lubogo, "Basoga Death and Burial Rites," *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 2 (1934/1935): 120-32. (Note that this was initially erroneously published under the name of Ezekeri Zibondo. A letter rectifying the error was published in *Uganda Journal* 2, no. 3 (1935): 255.

Langlands, Brian W. "The Banana in Uganda – 1860-1920." *Uganda Journal* 30, no. 1 (1966): 39-63.

Leacock, Eleanor. "Interpreting the Origins of Gender Inequality: Conceptual and Historical Problems." *Dialectical Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (1983): 263-284.

Lebeuf, Annie M. D. "The Role of Women in the Political Organization of African Societies." In *Women of Tropical Africa*, ed. Denise. Paulme, trans. H. M. Wright, 93-119. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.

Lejju, B. Julius, Peter Robertshaw and David Taylor. "Africa's Earliest Bananas?" *Journal of Archaeological Science* 33, no. 1 (2006): 102-13.

Le Veux, Henri. *Manuel de Langue Luganda Comprenant Grammaire et un Recueil de Contes et de Légendes*. Algiers: Imprimerie des Missionaires d'Afrique (Pères Blancs), 1914.

_____. "Au Temps Jadis: Le Mariage des Baganda (au Victoria Nyanza)," Archives of the Kampala Archdiocese, Rubaga, Ref. 903, Folio 4, n.p.

Logose, Getrude. "Eirya lye Kigwere." Manuscript written for Summer Institute of Languages Lugwere Translation Project, n.p.

Long, W.H. "Notes of the Bugwere District." c.1933. J.R.McD. Elliot Papers, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

Lubogo, Y.K. *A History of Busoga*. transl. Eastern Province (Bantu Language) Literature Committee. Jinja: East African Literature Bureau, 1960.

Macmaster, Marie Allen. "Patterns of Interaction: A Comparative Ethnolinguistic Perspective on the Uele Region of Zaire ca. 500 B.C. to 1900 A.D." Ph.D. diss, University of California, Los Angeles, 1988.

Mair, Lucy Philip. *African Marriage and Social Change*. London: Cass Library of African Law, 1969.

_____. *An African People in the Twentieth Century*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1934. Reprint, New York: Russell and Russell, 1965.

_____. "Native Marriage in Buganda," *International Institute of African Languages and Cultures Memorandum* 19 (1940).

Maroney, Heather Jon. "Embracing Motherhood: New Feminist Theory." In *The Politics of Diversity: Feminism, Marxism and Nationalism*, ed. Roberta Hamilton and Michèle Barrett, 398-423. London: Verso, 1986.

Matovu, Catherine (Kasolina) Nakibuuka. "A Synchronic Description of Lusoga in Terms of its Relatedness to Luganda." Ph.D. diss., Makerere University, Kampala, 1992.

McCaskie, Tom C. "Denkyira in the Making of Asante, c. 1660-1720," *Journal of African History* 48 (2007): 1-25.

McIntosh, Susan Keech. *Beyond Chiefdoms: Pathways to Political Complexity in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Médard, Henri. *Le Royaume du Buganda au XIXe Siècle: Mutations Politiques et Religieuses d'un Ancien État d'Afrique de l'Est*. Paris: Karthala, 2007.

Meillassoux, Claude. *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Mould, Martin J. "Comparative Grammar Reconstruction and Language Subclassification: the North Victorian Bantu Languages." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1976.

_____. "Greater Luyia." In *Studies in the Classification of Eastern Bantu Languages*, ed. Thomas H. Hinnebusch, Derek Nurse and Martin J. Mould, 181-256. Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 1981.

Mukasa, Ham. "Some Notes on the Reign of Mutesa," *Uganda Journal* 1, no. 2 (1934): 116-33.

Musisi, Nakanyike Beatrice. "Transformations of Baganda Women from the Earliest Times to the Demise of the Kingdom in 1966." Ph. D. diss., University of Toronto, 1992.

_____. "Women, 'Elite Polygyny,' and Buganda State Formation." *Signs* 16, no. 4 (1991): 757-86.

Nannyonga-Tamusuza, Sylvia A. *Baakisimba: Gender in the Music and Dance of the Baganda People of Uganda*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Newbury, David. *Kings and Clans: Ijwi Island and the Lake Kivu Rift, 1780-1840*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.

Nsimbi, N.B. "Baganda Traditional Personal Names." *Uganda Journal* 14, no.2 (1950): 201-15.

Nurse, Derek. *Classification of the Chaga Dialects: Language and History of Kilimanjaro, the Taita Hills, and the Pare Mountains*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1979.

_____. "The Contributions of Linguistics to the Study of History in Africa." *Journal of African History* 38 (1997): 359-91.

_____. "Towards a Historical Classification of East African Bantu Languages." In *Bantu Historical Linguistics: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*, ed. Jean-Marie Hombert and Larry M. Hyman, 1-41. Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 1999.

Nurse, Derek and Gérard Philippson. "The Bantu Languages of East Africa: A Lexicostatistical Survey." In *Language in Tanzania*, ed. Edgar C. Polomé and C.P. Hill, 26-67. London and New York: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1980.

_____. "Historical Implications of the Language Map of East Africa." In *L'Expansion Bantoue: Actes du Colloque International du CNRS, Viviers, France, 4-16 Avril 1977*, ed. Larry M. Hyman, Jan Voorhoeve and Luc Bouquiaux, 685-714. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1980.

_____. "Towards a Historical Classification of the Bantu Languages." In *The Bantu Languages*, ed. Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson, 164-81. London: Routledge, 2003.

Ogot, Bethwell. *History of the Southern Luo. Volume One: Migration and Settlement*. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967.

Oliver, Roland. "The Traditional Histories of Buganda, Bunyoro and Nkore." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 85 (1955): 111-17.

_____. "Ancient Capital Sites of Ankole." *Uganda Journal* 23, no. 1 (1959): 51-63.

_____. "The Royal Tombs of Buganda." *Uganda Journal* 23, no. 2 (1959): 124-33.

Parsons, John Carmi and Bonnie Wheeler, ed., *Medieval Mothering*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1996.

Pfouts, Anita Marie. "Economy and Society in Northern Namibia 500 BCE to 1800 CE: A Linguistic Approach." Ph.D. diss, University of California, Los Angeles, 2003.

Philips, John E. *Writing African History*. Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2006.

Portal, Gerald. *The British Mission to Uganda in 1893*. London: Edward Arnold, 1894.

Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred Reginald. "Introduction." In *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, 1-85. London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1950.

Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred Reginald and Daryll Forde. *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*. London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1950.

Rapp, Reyna. "Gender and Class: An Archaeology of Knowledge Concerning the Origin of the State." *Dialectical Anthropology* 2, no. 4 (1977): 309-316.

Ray, Benjamin C. *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship in Buganda*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Reid, Andrew. "Bananas and the Archaeology of Buganda." *Antiquity* 75, no.290 (2001): 811-12.

Reid, Andrew and Ceri Z. Ashley. "The Strange Case of the Luzira Head." In preparation

Reid, Richard J. *Political Power in Precolonial Buganda: Economy, Society and Warfare in the Nineteenth Century*. Oxford: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002.

Riesman, Paul. *First Find Your Child a Good Mother: The Construction of Self in Two African Communities*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992.

Robertshaw, Peter. "Women, Labor, and State Formation in Western Uganda." In *Complex Polities in the Ancient Tropical World*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus and Lisa J. Lucero, Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association 9, no. 1 (1999): 51-65.

Robertshaw, Peter and David Taylor. "Climate Change and the Rise of Political Complexity in Western Uganda." *Journal of African History* 41 (2000): 1-28.

Roscoe, John. *The Baganda: An Account of their Native Customs and Beliefs*. London: Macmillan, 1911. Reprint Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints, n.d.

_____. *The Bagesu and Other Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate: The Third Part of the Report of the Mackie Ethnological Expedition to Central Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924.

_____. *The Northern Bantu: An Account of Some Central African Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915.

Rossel, Gerda. *Taxonomic-Linguistic Study of Plantain in Africa*. Leiden: CNWS Publications, 1998.

Sacks, Karen. *Sisters and Wives: The Past and Future of Sexual Equality*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979.

Schadeberg, Thilo C. "Derivation." In *The Bantu Languages*, ed. Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson, 71-89. London: Routledge, 2003.

Schiller, Laurence D. "The Royal Women of Buganda." *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 23 (1990): 455-73.

Schoenbrun, David Lee. "Cattle Herds and Banana Gardens: The Historical Geography of the Western Great Lakes Region, ca. AD 800-1500." *African Archaeological Review* 11 (1993): 39-72.

_____. "Early History in Eastern Africa's Great Lakes Region: Linguistic, Ecological, and Archaeological Approaches. ca. 500 B.C. to ca. A.D. 1000." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1990.

_____. "Gendered Histories Between the Great Lakes: Varieties and Limits." *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 29 (1996): 461-92.

_____. "Great Lakes Bantu: Classification and Settlement Chronology." *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* 15 (1994): 91-152.

_____. *A Green Place, A Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Oxford: James Currey, 1998.

_____. "Social Aspects of Agricultural Change between the Great Lakes, AD 500 to 1000." *Azania* 24-25 (1994-95): 270-82.

_____. "Treating an Interdisciplinary Allergy: Methodological Approaches to Pollen Studies for the Historian of Early Africa." *History in Africa* 18 (1991): 323-48.

_____. "Violence, Marginality, Scorn and Honour: Language Evidence of Slavery to the Eighteenth Century." In *Slavery in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa*, ed. Henri Médard and Shane Doyle, 38-76. Oxford: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Nairobi: EAEP; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007.

_____. "We Are What We Eat: Ancient Agriculture Between the Great Lakes." *Journal of African History* 34 (1993): 1-31.

Silverblatt, Irene. "Women in States." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 17 (1988): 427-460.

Southall, Aidan. "The Segmentary State in Africa and Asia." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30 (1988): 52-82.

Southwold, Martin. "Succession to the Throne in Buganda." In *Succession to High Office*, ed. Jack Goody, 82-126. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966.

Speke, John Hanning. *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*. Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1863. Reprint, London: Dent, 1969.

Stichter, Sharon B. and Jane L. Parpart, ed., *Patriarchy and Class: African Women in the Home and the Workforce*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1988.

Summers, Carol. "Intimate Colonialism: The Imperial Production of Reproduction in Uganda, 1907-1925." *Signs* 16, no. 4 (1991): 787-807.

Swadesh, Morris. "Lexico-Statistic Dating of Prehistoric Ethnic Contacts: With Special Reference to North American Indians and Eskimos." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 96, no. 4 (1952): 456-57.

_____. "Towards Greater Accuracy in Lexicostatistic Dating." *International Journal of American Linguistics* 21, no. 2 (1955): 121-37.

Tantala, Renée L. "Community and Polity in Southern Kigulu." Makerere University, Kampala Department of History Research Seminar Paper, 27 November 1972 (n.p.).

_____. "The Early History of Kitara in Western Uganda: Process Models of Religious and Political Change." Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1989.

_____. "Gonza Bato and the Consolidation of Abaisengobi Rule in Southern Kigulu." Makerere University, Kampala Department of History Research Seminar Paper, 21 August 1972 (n.p.).

_____. "Verbal and Visual Imagery in Kitara (Western Uganda): Interpreting 'The Story of Isimbwa and Nyinamwiru'." In *Paths Toward the Past: African Historical Essays in Honor of Jan Vansina*, ed. Robert W. Harms, 223-43. Atlanta: African Studies Association Press, 1994.

Thomas, H.B. "Captain Eric Smith's Expedition to Lake Victoria in 1891." *Uganda Journal* 23, no. 2 (1959): 134-52.

Thomas, Lynn M. *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003.

Thornton, John K. "Elite Women in the Kingdom of Kongo: Historical Perspectives on Women's Political Power." *Journal of African History* 47 (2006): 437-60.

Tuck, Michael. "Syphilis, Sexuality, and Social Control: A History of Venereal Disease in Colonial Uganda." Ph. D. diss., Northwestern University, 1997.

Tushemereirwe, W., A. Kangire, J. Smith, F. Ssekiwoko, M. Nakyanzi, D. Kataama, C. Musiitwa and R. Karyaija. "An Outbreak of Bacterial Wilt on Banana in Uganda." *InfoMusa* 12, no. 2 (December 2003): 6-8.

Vansina, Jan. *How Societies Are Born: Governance in West Central Africa Before 1600*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004.

_____. "New Linguistic Evidence and 'the Bantu Expansion'." *Journal of African History* 3 (1995): 173-95.

_____. *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

_____. *Paths in the Rainforests: Toward A History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990.

_____. *The Tio Kingdom of the Middle Congo: 1880-1892*. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

_____. "The Use of Process-Models in African History." In *The Historian in Tropical Africa*, ed. Jan Vansina, Raymond Mauny and L.V. Thomas, 375-89. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Vaughan, Megan. *Curing their Ills. Colonial Power and African Illness*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Vincent, Joan. *Teso in Transformation: The Political Economy of Peasant and Class in Eastern Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.

Wabwezi, Andrew. “The Bagwere Proverbs.” B.A. diss., Makerere University, 2004.

Walser, Ferdinand. *Luganda Proverbs*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1982.

White, Luise. *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000.

Wrigley, Christopher C. “Bananas in Buganda.” *Azania* 24 (1989): 64-70.

_____. “Buganda: an Outline Economic History.” *Economic History Review* 10, no. 1 (1957): 69-80.

_____. “The Kinglists of Buganda.” *History in Africa* 1 (1974): 129-139.

_____. *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Appendix One

Lexicostatistic Data

Part 1: 100-wordlists of Core Vocabulary: Lugwere, Lugabula, Lulamoogi, Lusiki, Rushana and Luganda

These are the 100-wordlists I collected from informants during my fieldwork in 2004-2005 and which form the basis of the lexicostatistical part of the classification of North Nyanza languages set out in chapter two. I have only included the Lugwere wordlist collected for Budaka which I used in the lexicostatistical counting rather than all nine wordlists for Lugwere because of the very high degree of agreement between the lists.

English	Lugwere	Lugabula	Lulamoogi
1. I	nze	nze	nnze
2. you [sing.]	iiwe	iwe	iwe
3. we	iiswe	ifwe	ife
4. who?	naani	ani	yaani
5. that [dem.]	eco/eedi	eco/cire	eeco
6. all	jonajona	byonabyona	byonabyona
7. many	ebiingi	biingi	biinji
8. other	giindi	eciindi	ebiindi
9. one	moiza	ndala	moiza/cimo
10. two	ibiri	ibiri	ibiri
11. three	isatu	isatu	isatu
12. four	iina	iina	iina
13. five	itaanu	itaanu	itaanu
14. big	-nene	kinene	ecinene
15. small	kitono	kitono	ecitono
16. long	kiwaanvu	kireeyi	eciwaanvu ecireeyi
17. short	kiimpi	ciimpi	eciimpi
18. old, worn	kikaire	cikaire	ecikaire
19. new	kiyaaka	ciyaaka	eciyaaka
20. good	kisa	ciruunji	ecisa

English	Lugwere	Lugabula	Lulamoogi
21. ripe	mweengi	lyenvu	eceenvu
22. unripe	kibisi	cibisi	ecibisi
23. white	ceeru	ceeru	eceeru
24. black	kiraguzu	cirugavu	ecirugazu
25. red	kitukuliki	cimyuufu	ecimyuufu
26. man	musaiza	musadha	omusaize
27. woman	mukali	mukazi	omukali
28. person	muuntu	omuuntu	omuuntu
29. fish	nyanyi	eceike	ecenyanza
30. bird	nyonyi	nhonhi	ecinyonyi
31. dog	mbwa	embwa	eembwa
32. louse	nsekere	nsekere	ensekere
33. tree	kisaale	muti	omusaale
34. seed	nsigo	ensigo	ensigo
35. leaf	kikoola	eikoola	ecikoola
36. root	muli	omuzi	omuziisa
37. bark	kikutu	eciwadho	eciwu
38. skin	iidiba	olususu	olususu
39. meat	nyama	emaamba	emaamba
40. egg	iigi	igi	eiji

English	Lugwere	Lugabula	Lulamoogi
41. horn	iiziga	eyiga	eiyiga
42. tail	mukira	mucira	omucira
43. feather	coiya	eryooya	eiviiri
44. hair	nziiri	envwiiri	enziiri
45. blood	isaaye	musaayi	omusaaye
46. bone	iguumba	eiguumba	eiguumba
47. head	mutwe	mutwe	omutwe
48. heart	mwoiyo	mutima	omutima
49. liver	iini	eini	eini
50. ear	kitwi	kutu	ekutu
51. eye	liiso	liiso	eriiso
52. nose	niindo	nhiindo	enyiindo
53. mouth	munwa	munwa	omunwa
54. tooth	liino	liino	eriino
55. tongue	lulimi	lulimi	olulimi
56. nail/claw	caala	lukumu	enkumu
57. foot/leg	kigere	cigere/mugulu	ecigere/omugulu
58. knee	kizwi	ekivu ekikiryaivu	eivi
59. hand/arm	ngalo	mukono	omukono
60. belly	kida	nda	olubuto

English	Lugwere	Lugabula	Lulamoogi
61. neck	ikoti	nkoto	enkotho
62. breast	ibeere	ibeere	eibeere
63. sun	isana	ndhuba	enjuba
64. moon	mweeri	omweezi	omweezi
65. star	nkota	munyeeye	emunyeenye
66. water	maizi	maadhi	ameizi
67. rain[n.]	nkeendi	maadhi	oikeendi
68. cloud	kireri	ekireri/ekire	ecireri
69. smoke	mwoosi	mwoosi	omwoosi
70. fire	musyo	muliro	omuliro
71. ashes	ikoke	iivu	eivu
72. earth	itakali	itaka	eitakali
73. sand	musenye	omusenho	
	nsenye	mucaanga	omucaanga
74. stone	ibaale	eibaale	eibaale
75. path/road	nzira	enjira/akajira	eenzira/akazira
76. mountain	lusozi	lusozi	olusozi
77. cold	mpewo	obwiinogovu	ecinogovu
78. night	wiire	bwiire	vobwiire
79. name	liina	liina	eriina
80. fat [n.]	masavu	isavu	amasavu

English	Lugwere	Lugabula	Lulamoogi
81. milk	mata	mata	amata
82. drink	kunywa	kunhwa	okunywa
83. eat	kulya	kulya	okulya
84. bite	kuluma	kuluma	okuluma
85. burn [intr.]	kwooca	kwiya	okwiya
86. burn [tr.]	kwooca	kwooca	okwooca
87. see	kuβona	kuβona	okubona
88. hear	kuwulira	okuwulira	okuwulira
89. know	kumanya	kumanha	okumanya
90. sleep	kugona	okulambaala okweebaka	okulambaala
91. die	kuffa	kufwa	okufa
92. kill	kwiita	kwiita	okwiita
93. fly	kuguluka	kuguluka	okuguruka
94. go	kwaaba	okuja	okwaaba
95. come	kwiiza	okwiidha	okwiiza
96. stand	kweemerera	kweememera	okwememera
97. sit	kutyaama	kutyaama	okutyaama
98. say	kukoba	okukoβa	okukoba
99. give	kuwa	okuwa	okuwa
100. swim	kusaanya	okwewuga	okwewuga

English	Lusiki	Rushana	Luganda
1. I	nze	nze	nze
2. you [sing.]	iiwe	iiwe	ggwe
3. we	iife	iswono	ffe
4. who?	naani	naani	ani
5. that [dem.]	eeco	keico	-li
6. all	byonabyona	byoona	-onna
7. many	biinji	biingi	-nji
8. other	ebiindi	ebiindi	-ndi/-lala
9. one	moiza	kimoizh	-mu
10. two	ibiri	bibir	bbiri
11. three	isatu	bisatu	ssatu
12. four	iina	bityen	nnya
13. five	itaanu	bitan	ttaano
14. big	nene	kinene	-nene
15. small	mutono	kidaamb(i)	-tono
16. long	obuwaanvu	kiwaanvu	-wanvu
17. short	obuumpi	kiimpi	-mpi
18. old, worn	omukaire	ca kairire	-kadde
19. new	kiyaaka	kiyaaka	-pya
20. good	kisa	kiten	-runji

English	Lusiki	Rushana	Luganda
21. ripe	ceengi	ca soriger	-ngede/eng'gevu
22. unripe	cibisi	kibisi	-bisi
23. white	ceeru	kifenyi	-eeru
24. black	cirugazu	kiraguzi	-ddugavu
25. red	cimyuufu	kilaandu	-myufu
26. man	musaiza	musheija	musajja
27. woman	mukali	mukar	mukazi
28. person	muuntu	muuntu	muntu
29. fish	eengege	onyin	cennyanja
30. bird	enyonyi	onyinyi	nnyonyi
31. dog	eembwa	oombwa	mbwa
32. louse	ensekere	nseker	nsekere
33. tree	omusaale	kisare	-ti
34. seed	eensigo	kasigu	-sigo/-peke
35. leaf	eikoola	kikoor	-koola
36. root	omulaandira	eendi	-kolo/-sika
37. bark	ekiwuuju	kikoba	-kuta
38. skin	eidiba	kikoba	eddiba/olusus
39. meat	emaamba	enyama	-nnyama
40. egg	eigi	iigi	-jjii

English	Lusiki	Rushana	Luganda
41. horn	eiziga	imez	-jjembe
42. tail	omucira	omukira	-cira
43. feather	eiziiri	cooya	ecoya
44. hair	enziiri	enzir	-viiri
45. blood	omusaaye	rem	-saayi
46. bone	eiguumba	iguumba	-ggumba
47. head	omutwe	omutye	mutwe
48. heart	omwoiyo	mwoiy	mutima
49. liver	eini	kini	-bumba
50. ear	kutwi	kutu	kutu
51. eye	eriiso	eriiso	eriiso
52. nose	enyiindo	enyiindo	nnyiindo
53. mouth	omunwa	munwa	omumwa
54. tooth	eriino	eriino	erinnyo
55. tongue	olulimi	rurimi	olulimi
56. nail/claw	eenkumu	caara	-aala
57. foot/leg	ekigere	kiger	kigere/-gulu
58. knee	ekizwi	kuzu	evviivi
59. hand/arm	omukono	kigaro/engaro	mukono
60. belly	eendera	kida	olubuto

English	Lusiki	Rushana	Luganda
61. neck	eenkoto	iikoto	-lago/-siingo
62. breast	eibeere	ibeer	ebbeere
63. sun	eenjuba	iisana	-juba
64. moon	mweezi	omweer	omweezi
65. star	munyeenye	oonkota	emmunyeenye
66. water	maizi	meiz	amazzi
67. rain[n.]	amaizi	iceendi	enkuba
68. cloud	ecireri	namufweer	kire
69. smoke	omwoosi	mwoos	omukka
70. fire	musyo	mwuuro	omuliro
71. ashes	eikoke	ikoki	evvu
72. earth	eitakali	itokoor	ettaka
73. sand	omucaanga	musenyi	omusenyu
74. stone	eibaale	iyinza	ejjinja
75. path/road	eenzira	enzirra	ekkubo/olugudo
76. mountain	olusozi	rumye	olusozi
77. cold	obwiinogoki	bwiinugoki	-nyogovu/empewo
78. night	bwiire	bwiire	kiro
79. name	eriina	riino	erinnya
80. fat [n.]	amasavu	inore	masavu

English	Lusiki	Rushana	Luganda
81. milk	mata	mata	amata
82. drink	okunywa	kunywa	kunywa
83. eat	okulya	kurya	kulya
84. bite	okuluma	kuruma	kuluma
85. burn [intr.]	okwiya	kwiya (roast)	kwaka/kuteta
86. burn [tr.]	okwooca	kwooca	kwooza
87. see	okubona	kubona	kulaba
88. hear	okuwulira	kuwurra	kuwulira
89. know	okumanya	kumanya	kumanya
90. sleep	okugona	kugona	kwebaka
91. die	okufwa	kufa	kufa
92. kill	okwiita	kwiita	okutta
93. fly	okuguluka	kupuruuka	kubuuka
94. go	okwaaba	kwaaba	kugenda
95. come	okwiiza	kwiiza	kujja
96. stand	okweemerera	kweema/kutoroke	kuyimirira
97. sit	okutyaama	kuterem	kusutama/kutuula
98. say	ookoba	kukoba	kugaamba
99. give	okuβa	kumuwer	kuwa
100. swim	okwewuga	kuzenya kiliingwe	kuwuga

Table A1.1: Chart of North Nyanza internal cognate count.

Shana															
79	Bulangira 1														
81	99	Budaka													
82	93	99	Kaderuna												
82	94	97	98	Kamonkoli											
81	92	94	94	98	Iki-Iki										
81	94	97	94	97	97	Lyama									
78	94	96	91	94	93	97	Bulangira 2								
80	93	95	92	95	93	91	95	Kakolo							
78	92	94	90	93	92	92	95	90	Kasodo						
78	86	88	89	90	89	91	89	87	93	Kenyi					
74	85	87	85	86	85	88	86	84	88	87	Siki				
71	80	80	79	81	81	84	81	79	84	85	90	Lamoogi			
69	77	78	78	79	79	82	77	76	78	81	90	90	Kigulu		
69	76	78	77	77	76	79	76	75	79	83	86	92	96	Gabula	
63	76	75	72	71	69	73	72	70	70	69	71	75	77	76	Ganda

Table A1.2: Chart of North Nyanza with Rutara and Greater Luhyia cognate count.[1]

	Zinza	Nyambo	Haya	Kerebe	Nyoro	Nkore	Ciga	Ganda	Soga	Gwere	Shana	Dadiri	Masaaba	Saamya	Nyole
Zinza		77	82	82	69	70	73	59	56	46	52	47	43	43	45
Nyambo	77		85	77	71	70	72	55	55	44	51	44	39	46	43
Haya	82	85		83	75	71	75	60	59	46	52	46	44	49	49
Kerebe	82	77	83		72	73	72	57	55	44	52	49	53	49	52
Nyoro	69	71	75	72		84	74	57	56	52	45	43	43	46	45
Nkore	70	70	71	73	84		95	57	53	50	44	43	37	42	40
Ciga	73	72	75	72	74	95		58	54	52	45	45	39	43	43
Ganda	59	55	60	57	57	57	58		73	65	56	34	40	45	51
Soga	56	55	59	55	56	53	54	73		77	66	56	47	53	63
Gwere	46	44	46	44	52	50	52	65	77		79	55	48	51	63
Shana	52	51	52	52	45	44	45	56	66	79		57	50	41	54
Dadiri	47	44	46	49	43	43	45	34	56	55	57		84	69	64
Masaaba	43	39	44	53	43	37	39	40	47	48	50	84		66	63
Saamya	43	46	49	49	46	42	43	45	53	51	41	69	66		67
Nyole	45	43	49	52	45	40	43	51	63	63	54	64	63	67	

[1] For non-North Nyanza languages, cognate counts were made using the 100 word-lists in David L. Schoenbrun, "Great Lakes Bantu Classification and Settlement Chronology," *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* 15 (1994): 91-152.

Appendix Two

Comparative Method Evidence: Lexical and Phonological Innovations

Abbreviations:

EB	Eastern Bantu
GLB	Great Lakes Bantu
NN	North Nyanza
NS	Nilo-Saharan
PB	Proto-Bantu

Table A2.1: Lexical innovations in North Nyanza.[1]

	Item	History	Distribution
1.	*mpologoma* 'lion'	Replaced GLB **-tale*.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana
2.	*-kumbi* 'hoe'	Replaced Bantu **-bago*.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana
3.	*-bayira* 'marry (of a woman)	Replaced GLB **-túèr(er)w-*.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga
4.	*koiza* 'maternal uncle'	Replaced Mashariki **-ny-[VN or CV]-rume*. Probable areal spread to Greater Luhyia.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga
5.	*-tono* 'small'	Replaced GLB **-tooya/*-tuuya* and **-ke*.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga
6.	*-wanvu* 'long'	Replaced West Nyanza **-rai*.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana
7.	*-jinja* 'stone'	Replaced GLB **-βaale*. N.B. Schoenbrun has this limited to Luganda, however, it is also in Rushana, confirming it as a North Nyanza innovation.	Luganda, Rushana
8.	*-sekere* 'louse'	Replaced GLB **-da*. Also in Lunyole, but, this is the only attestation outside NN and Lunyole borders NN so it must be an areal form.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana
9.	*musota* 'snake'	Replaced PB **-jókà*.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga.
10.	*-meka* 'how many'	Replaced PB **-ngá*.	Luganda, Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana.

[1] See also David L. Schoenbrun, "Great Lakes Bantu: Classification and Settlement Chronology," *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* 15 (1994): 148-49.

Table A2.2: Phonological innovations in North Nyanza.[2]

1.	PB *t > f /_ụ	e.g. *-*fumo* ‘spear’
2.	PB *d > v /_ụ	e.g. *-*dugavu* ‘black’

Table A2.3: Lexical innovations in South Kyoga.

	Item	History	Distribution
1.	-*yaaka* ‘new’[3]	Replaced EB *-*píá*.	Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana.
2.	*moiza* ‘one’	Replaced PB **mòì*.	Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana.
3.	-*(y)ire* ‘night’	Replaced GLB *-*dó(o)*.	Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana.
4.	-*koba* ‘say’	Replaced GLB *-*gaamba*. From NS **kob/*kop* ‘to make noise or sound’.	Lugwere, Lusoga, Rushana.
5.	*manye* ‘urine’	Replaced WN *-*kali*. Possible areal spread as also in Lumasaaba.	Lugwere, Lusoga.

Table A2.4: Phonological innovations in East Kyoga.

1.	NN *f > s /_ụ	e.g. -*sumo* ‘spear’
2.	NN *v > z /_ụ	e.g. -*rugazu* ‘black’
3.	NN *j > z	e.g. *musaiza* ‘man’

[2] See also Martin Joel Mould, “Comparative Grammar Reconstruction and Language Subclassification: The North Victoria Bantu Languages,” (Ph.D. Diss. University of California, Los Angeles, 1976).

[3] Schoenbrun posits this as of “likely North Nyanza origin” while noting it to be an areal spread, Schoenbrun, “Great Lakes Bantu,” 149.

Table A2.5: Lexical innovations in East Kyoga.

	Item	History	Distribution
1.	**nyanyi* 'fish'	Replaced WN **cenyanja*.	Lugwere, Rushana.
2.	**kisito* 'compound (for cattle and/or people)'	Replaced GLB **-ka*.	Lugwere, Rushana.
3.	**mpanya* 'billy goat'	Replaced compound: goat + male.	Lugwere, Rushana.

Appendix Three

Reconstructed Vocabulary

Reconstruction Number: 1
Gloss: be pregnant
Root: **-ba -da*
Protolanguage: Bantu
Etymology: Compound verb formed from *-ba* "to be" and the proto-Bantu noun **-da* "stomach, womb" (Schoenbrun, 73, R.N.98; "BLR 3" R.N. Main 773 **-dà* 9 "abdomen, intestines; pregnancy; inside")

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga *okuli nda* "be pregnant"; (CRC, part I, 83) *okúlíndá* 'to wait, to conceive, to be pregnant'
Gwere *kuba kida* "to be pregnant"; (SIL) *-bba n'ekida* "be pregnant"; (Kagaya, 38) *ó-áma-bundá* "pregnant woman (lit. one who has a stomach)";
Shana *olina kida* "she is pregnant"
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 36) *ainá olubûnda* "he (or she) has a big abdomen. N.B. This sentence can mean 'she is pregnant' if one refers to a woman"; (Kaji, 261) *enda* 9,10 "pregnancy"; **Kerewe** (Odden, CBOLD) *kugil' eenda* or *kutwaal' eenda* "be pregnant"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 180) *n'énda* "pregnant, adj."; **Nkore** (Kaji, 302) *enda* 9,10 "pregnancy";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *een-da* "stomach, belly, abdomen"; *en-da (ndala)* "descendant (lit. "(from) one belly)"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema, 67) *aa-kanì-là*, *ali ni lu-ta* "she is pregnant";
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands: Ha (Nakagawa, 17) *inda* "pregnancy"; *ukuronk(a)'inda* "to become pregnant"; *ukubhâana(a)'inda* "to become [sic. be] pregnant"; **Rundi** (Rodegem, 63) *gutwâra inda* "être enceinte"; *kubá ku-nda* "être en travail, éprouver les douleurs de l'accouchement";
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *i:n-da* "stomach; pregnancy; womb"
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 2a
Gloss: elope (of a woman)
Root: **-banduka*
Protolanguage: Lugwere (possibly South Kyoga)
Etymology: Possibly derived with a reversive suffix from proto-Bantu **bànd* "force one's way through" ("BLR 3" 2005) R.N. 8493. Forms a pair with R.N. 2b.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga Siki *kubanduka* "marry (of woman)";
Gwere *kubanduka* "to elope (of a woman)"; (SIL n.d.) *-banduka* "sleep in someone else's house"; (Kagaya, 16) *óku-bandúká* "cohabit with a man (without her parents' permission) (for a woman to-) (preferred by old people)";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux 1917, 37-38) *-banda* "se frayer un chemin"; *-banduka* "1.darder fort; être brûlant. 2.eclater soudain. 3.se rompre. 4.se lever d'un bond"; (Snoxall 1967, 13-14) *kù-banda* "open up a way"; *kù-bânduka* "1.be scorching hot (of sun). 2.burst (of pea-pod, blood-vessel, etc.). 3.break off suddenly. 4.jump up suddenly. 5.be possessed; cry for no apparent reason."
Soga (CRC, part I, 6) *okúbándá* "to crash, to knock, to butt, to gore, to biff";
Rutara: Nkore (Kaji, 345) *okubá:ndIka* "to push (thick undergrowth) aside with a stick";
Nkore-Kiga (Taylor, 48) *kubanda* "force a way; come unexpectedly";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 5) *-banda* "hit, strike, bump, hurt, knock, cut"; (Fraas, 6) *-banda* "plant beans"; *ekibande* "lump, ball of ore, (as money to buy wife, will be made into hoes, axes, etc.)";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 22-23) *kubanda* "presser de haut en bas"; *kubandagara* "pousser, se dépêcher, se hâter"; *kubândika* "appliquer sur"; *kubandūka* "se décoller";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 5) *-bánd-* "break open cooked (pumpkin)"; *icí-bandé* "mass of iron from smelter"; (Guthrie, 53) *ifim-manda* "small bits of metal";

Reconstruction Number: 2b
Gloss: elope (of a man)
Root: **-bandula*
Protolanguage: Lugwere (possibly South Kyoga)
Etymology: Possibly derived with a reversive suffix from proto-Bantu **bànd* "force one's way through" ("BLR 3") R.N. 8493. Forms a pair with R.N. 2a.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga Siki *kubandula* "marry (of man)";
Gwere *kubandula* "to elope (of a man)"; (Kagaya, 16) *óku-bandúlá* "cohabit with a woman (without her parents' permission) (for a man to -) (preferred by old people)";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 37-38) *-banda* "se frayer un chemin"; *-bandula* "v.caus. of *–banduka*"; (Snoxall, 13-14) *kù-banda* "open up a way"; *kù-bandula* "1.break open (a door, etc.); rip open. 2.split and strip. 3.rouse sb. into frenzy. 4.get off on a hard journey. 5.flog";
Soga Siki *kubandula* "marry (of man)"; (CRC, 6i) *okúbándá* "to crash, to knock, to butt, to gore, to biff"; *okúbándúlá* "to flog, to remove e.g. a roof";
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 22) *okubándula* "to depart"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 345) *okubá:ndIka* "to push (thick undergrowth) aside with a stick"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 48) *kubanda* "force a way; come unexpectedly";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 5) *-banda* "hit, strike, bump, hurt, knock, cut"; (Fraas, 6) *-banda* "plant beans"; *ekibande* "lump, ball of ore, (as money to buy wife, will be made into hoes, axes, etc.)";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 22-23) *kubanda* "presser de haut en bas"; *kubandagara* "pousser, se dépêcher, se hâter"; *kubândika* "appliquer sur"; *kubandūla* "décoller, détacher se qui est presser";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 5) *-bánd-* "break open cooked (pumpkin)"; *icí-bandé* "mass of iron from smelter"; (Guthrie, 53) *ifim-manda* "small bits of metal";

Reconstruction Number: 3
Gloss: marry
Root: **-bayira*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology: Possibly from the verb *–waya* 'deviate, isolate oneself' but the etymology remains unclear.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 1012*) *-wayira* "prendre mari'; *-wayiza* "donner en mariage"; *omuwayize (omukazi)* "une mariée"; (Snoxall, 334) *kù-wayira* "marry (of woman)"; *kù-wayiza* "give in marriage; marry off";
Soga Siki *kubayira* "to marry/elope"; Gabula *kubayira* "marry (of woman)"; *kubayiza* "marry (of man)"; Lamogi *kubahira* "to marry (of woman)"; (CRC, 6i) *okúbáyírá* "to marry"; *okúbáyízá* "to marry (for a man)"; *okúbáyízágáníá* "to intermarry";
Gwere (Kagaya, 14) *óku-baílá* "cohabit with a man (without her parents' permission) (for a woman to -) (<Soga?)"; *óku-baílyá* "cohabit with a woman (without her parents' permission) (for a man to -) (<Soga?)";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 1011*) *-waya* "s'écarter, s'isoler"; (Le Veux, 1012*) *-wayira*, *-wayiriza* "imputer à faux; mettre sur le compte de, se plaindre de (à tort)"; *-wayîra* "rallonger, enter; raboutir"; (Snoxall, 334) *kù-waya* "deviate";
Greater Luhyia: Masaaba (Siertsema, 107) *khu-baya* v.t. "tame"
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 30) *-hayika* "support, keep from falling, as arch in wall";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 29) *kubáyuka* "parler insolemment"; *ibâyi* 5/6 "1.akène de l'Erlangea spissa S. Moore (flowering shrub). 2.*kwandura ibâyi mwibágara* être malade au moment où l'on s'occupe des travaux des champs. 3.*kubá ibâyi* être intelligent, garder un silence méprisant";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 4) *-báil-* "dismember (animal)"; **Swahili** (Johnson) *paya*, *payapaya*, *payuka* "talk foolishly (idly, indiscreetly, unintelligibly, etc.), talk nonsense, blurt out secrets, blab, be delirious";

Reconstruction Number: 4
Gloss: give birth
Root: **-bɟ́ád-*
Protolanguage: Proto Bantu
Etymology: Proto-Bantu verb ("BLR 3") R.N. Main 226 **-bíad-*; (Guthrie) C.S.136.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda *okuzaala*; (Le Veux, 1018) *-zala* "1.procréer, engendrer; enfanter"; *-zâlanwa* "être de la même souche, avoir mêmes géniteurs"; (Snoxall, 352) *kùzaàla* "1.beget; bear. 2. produce; give rise to. 3.per ext. stand sponsor for"; *òlùzaàla* or *ènzaàla* "confinement, childbirth"; *kùzaàlanwa* "be of same parentage";
Soga Lusiki: kubyaala; Lulamoogi: kuzaala; Lugabula: kuzaala; (CRC, 145i) *okúzaalá* "to give birth, to bring forth, to bear, to deliver, to beget, to breed, to father"; *okúzaalánwá* "to have common parentage";
Gwere *kubyaala* "give birth"; (SIL, n.p.) *-byala* "to give birth"; (Kagaya, 41) *óku-byalá/óku-byaalá* "bear (a child) (for human beings) (to -), give birth (to -)";
Shana *kubyaara* "give birth";
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 262) *okuzâ:la* "to bear a child; to give birth to"; Nyoro: Davis: okuzāra 'bear, give birth to, beget, produce, give rise to'; okuzāranwa 'have common parentage'; **Kerewe** (Odden, CBOLD) *kuzaala* "give birth"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 84) *kuzáàra* "have (a child); produce (a thing)"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 302) *okuzâ:ra* "to bear a child; to give birth to"; Kerewe: Hurel: -zara 'enfanter, produire';
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *xuu-saala* "produce (said of a woman): bear, give birth, beget"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema) *khusaala* "give birth";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 42) *-itsara* "give birth to a person";
Forest:
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem. 550) *kuvyâra* "produire du fruit, engendrer (homme, femme, animal, terrain), procréer, enfanter, mettre au monde, accoucher";
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *okw-i:Bœra* **"**give birth**"; Kuria** (Muniko) *-biara* "(of animals) give birth"; **Gusii** (O'Matenyo) *okobiara*, *okoibora* "to bear";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 25) *-fyál-* "bear (child)";
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 5
Gloss: marry
Root: *-bimbirra*
Protolanguage: Rushana > East Kyoga
Etymology: from proto-Bantu **-bímb-* "swell" with reference to pregnancies ensuing from marriage. The first innovation is in East Kyoga with semantic narrowing to 'swell'. The second innovation is in Rushana with the extension of meaning to 'marry'.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *bbimba* "to swell (especially due to injury)"; *bbimba kidda* "bloat"; (Kagaya, 26) *óku-bbimbá* "swell <after being bitten by an insect> (to -)";
Shana *kubimbirra* "marry (of man)"; *kubimbirrikana* "marry (of woman)";
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 56) *-bimba* "mousser, écumer, baver, fermenter"; *-bimbya* "faire cuire"; *-bimbira* "1.mousser, fermenter. 2.bomber la poitrine. 3.être gonflé, ballonné"; *lu-bimbi* "la partie de terrain qui a été cultivée en un jour"; (Snoxall, 21-22) *kù-bimba* "foam; froth; effervesce"; *kù-bimbya* "1.make to foam, etc. 2.make to boil, cook"; *kù-bimbiira* "1.foam; ferment. 2.bulge; jut out. 3.be swollen (stomach)";
Soga (CRC, part I, 8) *okúbímbábímbá* "to threaten (rain)";
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 254) *okubimbililwa* "to feel like vomiting by eating nauseous food";
Kerewe (Odden, CBOLD) *kuziimba* "get a bump, swell, over-eat"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 49) *kubîmba* "be disabled";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu *xuu-bimba* "bulge, be enlarged, swell up"; *xuu-bimba* "cover (child asleep, anthills to get ants etc.), cover up"; *xuu-bimbula* "open (eyes, for 1st time, like pup), open (book)"; *luu-bimbula* "openly";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 9) *-bĭmba* "be fast, rapid, like water boils, bubble up, basket full to overflowing, up to the limit, reached extremity, fast like car, water boils with foam";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 553) *kuvyîmba* "enfler, être gonflé; se tuméfier, bouffir, être boursouflé";
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *oku-fw':mba* "swell";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 18) *-fimb-* "cover, thatch"; ~ilil- *comp.*; *-fímb-* "swell, as part of body"; *-fímbil-* "get to dislike strongly, become jealous of"; **Bobangi** (Whitehead, CBOLD)

Bêmbana “to accord, agree together, be harmonious, live in peace, be reconciled. be in tune”; *Bembe* “to drag or draw along, pull away or open, trail”; *bembele* “to draw aside, draw towards, receive back, be reconciled to, restore to favour”; *bembisa* “to adopt (child), bring back (a person stolen, runaway or bought), foster, redeem (but not out of pledge)”; **Bantu** (“BLR 3”) R.N. 238 and (Guthrie) C.S.143*-*bìmb-* “thatch hide”; (“BLR 3”) R.N. Main 240 and (Guthrie) C.S.144 *-*bímb-* “swell”;

Reconstruction Number: 6
Gloss: queen sister/official sister (of heir)
Root: -*buga* 11
Protolanguage: Luganda
Etymology: Either from the Bantu noun *-*buga* ‘clear/free land near home’ (Schoenbrun, 71-72, R.N.96) or from a possible Mashariki verb *-*bug-* ‘speak (with authority)’.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 558) *Lubuga* “reine-soeur. Par ext. soeur officielle d’un Grand, d’un héritier”; (Snoxall, 182) *Lùbugà* “queen-sister”;
Soga (Cohen CTBTH, Text 333) *lubuga* “queen-sister”;
Gwere
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 77-78) *-buga* “1. presser sans trêve, importuner. 2. agir fièvreusement”; *mbuga* “1. parvis, place devant résidence. 2. Résidence d’un chef”; *kibuga* “ville, grand village où résidence d’un personnage important; La capitale”; (Snoxall, 26) *kù-bugà* “1. urge on. 2. hurry (sb.) away. 3. pester (to do)”; *kù-bugààbugana* “be very busy, bustle about”; *kù-bugà* “1. toss about (in illness), be at last gasp. 2. fuss around (as in preparation for important visitor)”; *kù-bugààbuga* “be delirious”; (Snoxall, 130) *èkìbugà* “town; capital”; (Snoxall, 203) *èmbugà* “place where chief lives”; Mair (1964: 15-16) *-buga* ‘courtyard in front of house’
Soga (Cohen 1972) *mbuga* “palace or residence of chief or ruler”; (CRC, part I, 60) *ekíbugá* “town, city”; (CRC, part I, 94) *émbugá* “chief’s place, court of law”;

Gwere (Atkinson, n.p.) *mbuga* "fenced (chief's?) compound"; (SIL, n.p.) *-buga* "city, government headquarters"; *-galagala membuga* "shamba boys/girls"; (Kagaya, 35) *éí-búga* "calabash bottle"; *éki-búga* "town";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 13) *-buga, -buwa, -buya* "say, speak, command, talk"; *-buga na* "speak to in passing, superior to inferior"; *buga, bwa, olu, olu(g)wa* "reputation, what people say of one";
Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 21) *éembuga* "dehors";
West Highlands: Ha (Nakagawa, 35) *ukuvúga* "to speak"; *imvúgo* "speech"; **Rundi** (Rodegem, 42) *kubúga* "manger vulgairement"; *kubúga ikŏri* "percevoir l'impôt";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 8) *-búk-* "divine"; *kabúka* "diviner".

Reconstruction Number: 7
Gloss: 'cooking banana'
Root: **-bwazirume* 9/10
Protolanguage: North Nyanza (with Rutara areal?)
Etymology: Compound noun formed from *mbwa* 'dogs, biting flies' and *zirume* 'they should bite'.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (ADFT, 118) *mbwazirume* "Matoke (eaten cooked)"; (Roscoe, *Baganda*, 431) *mbwasirume* "variety of plantain";
Soga
Gwere *mbwazirume* "cooking banana";
Shana
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 78) *(e)mbwá-ilúma* 9,10 "kind of cooking banana"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 79) *mbwá-zirúme* "cooking banana, 'matooke'";
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 8
Gloss: 'homestead'
Root: *-*daala* 7/8
Protolanguage: East Kyoga or Lugwere
Etymology: from Luo dala 'home'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Murphy, 183) *ekidaala* "temporary outdoor structure with open sides and a canopy, usually constructed with banana leaves. It is used for social events, wedding parties, etc."
Soga
Gwere *kidaala* "one-family homestead"; (SIL, n.p.) *-daala* "home, homestead"; (Atkinson, n.p.) *ekidala* "homestead";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia: Saamya (DLS, n.p.) *ɛdala* "homestead";
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu: Luo (Capen, 28) *dala* "1.home, 2.town, settlement, village, 3.compound, community"; (Odaga 89) *dala* "home";

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Snoxall, 43) *èddalâ* "step, rise in rank; scaffolding"; *àmàdaala* "ladder";
Soga (CRC, part II, 63) *éídáála* "step"; *amádáála* "ladder";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-daala* "ladder, step, status, rank title, name of honour";

Reconstruction Number: 9
Gloss: 'granary'
Root: *-*deero* 7/8
Protolanguage: East Kyoga or Lugwere
Etymology: from Luo dero 'granary'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga
Gwere *kideero* "granary"; (SIL, n.p.) *-deero* "granary"; (Kagaya, 43) *éki-deeló* "granary";
Shana
Rutara:

Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu: Luo (Capen, 30) *dero* "granary, store basket, grain crib, bin"; (Odaga 82) *dero* "granary"; **Lwo** (Odonga, 54) *dero* "granary for storing millet, groundnuts etc., barn";

Reconstruction Number: 10
Gloss: impotent man
Root: **-fiirwa* 1/2
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology: derived from *-fa* 'die'; lit. 'bereaved person'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Snoxall, 211) *òmùfiìrwa* "impotent man";
Soga (CRC, 97) *omúfíírwá* "an impotent man";
Gwere *mufiirwa* "impotent man"; (SIL, n.p.) *-fiirwa* "impotent"
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:
Checked:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Snoxall, 74) *kù-fiìrwa* "1. be bereaved of. 2. be died for";
Soga (CRC, part II, 10) *okúfiirwá* "to be bereaved, bereavement";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *–fiirwa* "to suffer loss, lose, loss of war";

Reconstruction Number: 11
Gloss: foster in/adopt
Root: **-fuura*
Protolanguage: West Nyanza
Etymology: From *fuura* 'change, bend' (v.tr.). This in turn appears to be derived from the proto-Bantu verb **-kʊ-* 'die'. Reflexes only in Luganda and Lunyoro so must be hesitant about positing a West Nyanzan origin for the verb, but reflexes are different in the two languages which suggests that they are the result of inheritance rather than more recent innovation and borrowing.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda *kufuula omwana* "to adopt";
Soga
Gwere
Shana
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis) *fōra omwāna* "adopt";
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Snoxall, 81) *kù-fuula* "1. cause to become; make into. 2. change; remake (of clothes). 3. turn-over, head-first"; *kù-fuuka* "2. become. 2. be made. 3. change";
Soga (CRC, part I, 33) *okúfúúlá* "to turn into, to make, to turn upside down or inside out, to convert, to change";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-fuula* "turn inside out"; (Kagaya, 63) *óku-fuulá* "1.turn over (to -) (vt), wear inside out (to - unknowingly). 2.due (to -)";
Rutara: Nkore-Kiga (Taylor, 52) *kufoora* "change colour"; **Kiga** (Taylor, 52) *kufoora* "bend (a bow)";
Forest: Hunde (Kaji, 96) *ipfûla* "annoncer"; **Shi** (Polak-Bynon, 32) *óokufoola* "se préparer à tirer (arc, fusil); ajuster le tir";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 88) *gufōra* "bander (un arc)";
Other Bantu: Swati (Rycroft, 96) *kú-tfóla* "find, get, obtain; adopt";

Reconstruction Number: 12
Gloss: 'cooking banana'
Root: **-fuba*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza (with Luhyia areal?)
Etymology: Noun derived from verb *-fuba* "work hard".

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Snoxall, 108) *kàfubà* "type of boiling plantain"; (ADFT, 119) *kafuba* "gonja (the sweet kind)";
Soga
Gwere *kifuba* "cooking banana";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *lii-fuba* "banana"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema, 120) *khìfuba* "big cook. banana";
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Snoxall, 76) *kù-fuba* "exert oneself; work hard";
Soga (CRC, part I, 32) *okúfúbá* "to contend, to try one's best, to struggle, to be keen, to be diligent, to work hard, to make an effort";

Reconstruction Number: 13
Gloss: labia minora
Root: **-fuli*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza, with Greater Luhyia areal?
Etymology: Noun derived from Great Lakes Bantu verb **-fulika* "hide, cover".

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 149) *nfuli; kifuli, kafuli* "1.nymphes 2.tablier des Hottentotes"; (Snoxall, 239) *ènfulì* "labia minora";
Soga (CRC, 114i) *énfulí* "labia minora";
Gwere *mafuli* "(pulled) labia"; (SIL, n.p.) *mafuli* "labia minora"; (Kagaya, 58) *éí-fulí, áma-fulí* "female genitals";
Shana

Rutara:
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *ka-ma-fuli* "labia minora"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema) *kamafuli* "labia minora"
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 306) *okufútika* "to suppress a matter not to be made public";
Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 32) *óokufulika* "cacher, dissimuler";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 90) *igifūri* "cachette, recoin, cache"; *urufūri* "malpropreté, endroit caché, clandestin";
Other Bantu: ("BLR 3") R.N. 3991 **-kùdik-* "hide, cover";

Reconstruction Number: 14
Gloss: marry
Root: **-gasa*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology: Derrived from West Nyanza verb **-gasa* 'mate, copulate'.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 1007*) *-wasa* "1.prendre épouse. 2.être en instance de mariage"; *-wasibwa* "être épousée"; *-ewasiza* "épouser"; *-wasisa* "1.donner en mariage. 2.épouser au prix de (*yāwásisa mwenge gwokka*)"; (Snoxall, 334) *kùwasa* "marry (of man)"; *kùwasisa* "1.give in marriage. 2.marry at price of"; *kùwasiriza* "1.with *`ddala* marry properly, with due formalities. 2. marry at price of; give as marriage dowry. 3.get married to"; (Musisi, 1991, 767) *okuwasa* "to get pregnant; to marry" ("The root from which the verb *okuwasa* (to marry) is derived is cognate to the verb "to make pregnant," which has no relationship to patrilineality and patrilocality. Thus the innocent verb "to make pregnant" (*okuwasa*) took on new meaning – that is, patriarchy/patrilocality – during this period.")
Soga Lamogi *kuhasira* "to marry (of man) [somehow obscene]"; (CRC, 38i) *okúghasá* "to mate (animals)";
Gwere (Kagaya, 280) *óku-waká* "copulate (to -)";
Shana
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis): kugŏsa 'mount (hen or female bird)';
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 25) *-haka* "breed (v.) of animals";
Forest:

West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 138) *guháka* "porter, être pleine (femelle); être près de vêler (vache)";
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 15
Gloss: wife with children
Root: **-gole*
Protolanguage: Great Lakes Bantu (this particular gloss)
Etymology: Lexical innovation from proto-Kaskazi "maternal power" (Gonzales, 2002, 113-15; see also Schoenbrun, 83-84, R.N.114).

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 215) *mu-gole* "maîtresse de maison. – Les esclaves, les autres femmes nomment ainsi leur maîtresse, *mugole wa'fe*"; *mugole* "1.epousée. 2 par ext. néo-baptisé"; *bu-gole* "noce"; Murphy: omugole 'bride; mistress of the house; newly appointed official; new member; newly ordained priest or minister; newcomer; recent arrival'; omugole omusajja 'bridegroom'; omugole omukazi 'bride'; obugole 'wedding; state of being a newlywed'; embaga ey'obugole 'wedding; wedding feast'; ekyambalo ky'obugole 'wedding garment'; (Snoxall, 213) *mùgòlê, òmùgolè* "bride, mistress of house"; (Snoxall, 27) *bùgòlê, òbùgolè* "wedding";
Soga Siki *mugole* "bride, bridegroom"; Gabula *mugole* "bride, bridegroom"; *bugole* "wedding"; (CRC, 99i) *omúgóle* "a bride"; *omúgóle omúkazí* "bride"; *omúgóle omúsaadhá* "bridegroom";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-nabya mugole* "bride preparation"; (Kagaya, 76-77) *ómu-góle* "bride"; *ómu-góle ómu-saizá* "bridegroom"; *éki-góle/óbu-góle, ébi-góle* "wedding ceremony";
Shana *mugore* "bride; bridegroom"; *bugore* "wedding";
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 259) *omugóle* "bride. N.B. It should be noted that during the wedding ceremony, not only the bride but also the groom is called by this name. It is only the day after the marriage in church that the groom is called *kishwé:la* 9. The bride continues to be called by this name (even for years!) until the family has a new bride."; *okwa:liká omugóle* "to seclude the bride in the house for about one year after the marriage, exempting her from any outside work ([lit.] to ripen the bride)"; **Kerewe** (Odden, CBOLD) *omugólé* "queen"; **Nyambo** (Rugemalira, CBOLD) *omugólè* "bride"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 6) *abagóre* "bridal pair; young wives"; *bagóre* "mistresses (of)"; (Taylor, 109) *omugóre* "bride, young wife, bridegroom"; *mugóre* "mistress of"; Nyoro, Nkore: Davis: omugole 'bride, bridegroom, mistress of servants'; obugole 'wedding'; **Nkore** (Kaji, 300) *omugóre* "bride; bridegroom";
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori: Nande (Kavutirwaki, CBOLD) *omugole* "queen, married woman"; **Nande** (Fraas, 22) *omugole* "queen, chief calls favourite wife, or first wife, wife of chief or headman; (mother of mugole is still more important)";

Forest: **Shi** (Polak-Bynon, 36) *óolugolè* "cocquillage pour parure (porté sur le front par les femmes)"; *óomugolí* "femme de chef de colline; toute femme mariée digne, ayant enfants"; **Tembo** (Kaji) *múóli; báóli* "reine, reine mère; femme (quand on évite de citer le nom)"; *búóli* "dignité de reine"; **Shi** (Pères Blancs) *lugole* "coquíllage que les femmes portent au front"; *cigole* "jeu indigene (avec mushushu mis au paquet)"; *mugoli* "femme de chef de colline"; *bugoli* "dignite de mugoli"; **Haavu** (Birusha) *-goli* 1/2 "1. femme d'un roi ou d'un chef dynastique. 2. femme d'un prince";
West Highlands: **Ha** (Nakagawa, 16-17) *umugóre* "wife"; *umugóregore* "woman"; *umugóre mukúru* "principal wife"; *umugóre mutôonyi* "last wife"; *umugór(e)'intonyi* "the most loved wife'; **Rundi** (Rodegem, 123) *umugòre* "femme"; *igòre* "femme, femelle (pej)"; *inágòre* "femme pauvre"; *agapfâgòre* "petite femme, naine"; *akagòre* "petite femme; femme facile; femme de petite vertu"; *ubugóre* "sexe feminin, le fait d'être femme; féminité"; *bugòre* "chez les parents de la femme, du côté de l'épouse"; *kugoreka* "être féconde, pousser, grandir (haricots)"; *urugòri* "couronne, diadème de maternité, la diadème était fait d'écorces de papyrus ou de tiges de sorgho, la femme qui avait mis au monde son septième enfant, portait un diadème plus large qu'elle gardait très longtemps; on devait, lorsqu'on l'enlevait, offrir des libations aux mânes. Diadème de maternité fait de tiges de sorgho déployées, que les femmes portait sur le front pour souligner leur fécondité et attirer le bonheur sur leur enfant"; **Rwanda** (Jacob) *umugoré* "femme, épouse"; *kuuzana umugoré* "se marier, prendre femme"; *gukóra kigoré* "agir gauchement"; *cusókoza kigoré* "se peigner à la manière des femmes"; *ingoré* "femelle"; *igitsína goré* "genre féminin"; *ubwéenge goré* "intelligence féminine"; *urugoré* "jeton divinatoire qui tombe à la gauche de la planchette"; *ubugoré* "fait d'être femme, sexe féminin, féminité"; *urugolí* "1.couronne, bandeau ou diadème de maternité (en tiges de sorgho déployées, porté par les femme pour souligner leur fécondité); *guhóneesha urugolí* perdre sa femme, perdre une jeune fille nubile; *gutéga urugolí* être mère, porter la diadème; *inká y'úrugolí* vache qu'une femme reçoit de ses parents lorsqu'elle va leur montrer son nouveau-né; *kuvúna urugolí* perdre sa femme; 2.boissons qu'une mère offre à ses parents lors de la présentation d'un nouveau-né";
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu: **Proto-Ruvu** (Gonzales, 113) **goli* "pre-pubescent girl"; **Proto-Kaskazi** (Gonzales, 113-15) *-gore/-goli* "maternal power"; "Within early Ruvu societies when an older girl began to develop breasts she was metaphorically described as "having milk." At that time she was in her **chigoli* life stage. This relatively short life stage referred to the period before menstruation onset, but after her breasts began to form. This usage is similar to the way Langi use *muhinja*, their reflex of the **-hinza* root. This period likely lasted no longer than a year or two. The implication of the interim *chigoli* phase in a female's life appears to add still another dimension to the historical importance of a young woman's approaching reproductive years among, at least, early Ruvu peoples…" "Based on the range of meanings of that **-goli* carries in the various descendant languages of Kaskazi, it appears that its original application was to mature females. The proto-Ruvu substituted a different noun class prefix, **-ki*, on the root. It would then translate as 'small/young **-goli*,' in keeping with a shift of application of the word to a girl who had not yet reached her full maternal potential." "Among early Ruvu peoples, and probably more widely among other Kaskazi groups, it certainly appears that a girl's approaching fertility was something to be acknowledged at this stage, but not necessarily celebrated in an elaborate way. That was not true for her next life stage. Interestingly, however, the interim

chigoli life stage could have served a functional purpose. It would have provided lineage members with ample time to prepare for the complex initiation rituals tied to her next and seemingly more important transition."

Reconstruction Number: 16
Gloss: barren woman
Root: *-*gùmbà* 1/2
Protolanguage: Proto-Bantu
Etymology: Proto-Bantu noun.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 236) *-gumba* "stérile, agénésique. *Mukazi mugumba*"; *-gumbawala* "être ou devenir stérile"; *-gumabawaza* "rendre stérile"; (Snoxall, 98) *-gumba* "barren"; *kù-gumbawala* "become sterile"; *kù-gumbawaza* "make sterile";
Soga *mugumba* "barren woman"; (CRC, 99i) *omúgúmbá* "barren woman from the verb *okúgúmbaghá/okúgúmbaghálá* 'to become barren'";
Gwere *mugumba* "barren woman"; (SIL, n.p.) *-bba mugumba* "to be sterile, unproductive, childless"; (Kagaya, 83) *ómú-gúmba* "barren woman, man who has no spermatozoa";
Shana *mugumba* "barren woman";
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 190) *omugumba* "sterile, barren"; *obugumba* "sterility"; *okugumba:la* "to become barren"; Nyoro: Davis: -gumba '(female) barren'; -gumbahara 'become barren'; orūnyu 'disease of plaintains, poor soil'; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 123) *ow'éngumba* "barren (woman)"; *engumba* "barren (animals)"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 216-17) *engu:mba* 9,10 "sterile; barren. N.B. This word can refer to both a woman and a man"; *obugu:umba* 14 "sterility"; *okugu:mbahara* "to become sterile, barren";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *kumba* "childless, barren (man or woman)"; *buu-kumba* "barrennes (of humans and land)"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema) *-kumba* "barren (man)"; *-sumba* "barren (woman)"; *bukumba* "barrenness (of humans and land)";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 145) *omugumba* "barren person, also finished bearing"; *-gumbaha* "be barren, sterile (person)"; *-gumbahya* "cause to be, make to be barren";
Forest: Hunde (Kaji, 79) *ngumba* 9,10 "femme stérile"; *buumba* 14 "stérilité"; *iumbaha* "être ou devenir stérile"; **Shi** (Polak-Bynon, 38) *óokuguumba* "ê. stérile (humains, animaux)"; *éenguumba* "personne ou animal stérile";
West Highlands: Ha (Nakagawa, 18) *ingumba* "barren woman or animal"; **Rwanda** (Schumacher) *ingūmba* "femme, femelle stérile"; *kugūmbaha* "être stérile"; *kugūmbaha* "devenir stérile, être tendu (arc)"; *kugumbahīsha* "rendre stérile, avoir femme, bête stérile; renforcer arc";
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *omu-gu:mba* "barren woman"; *omgumba* [sic?] "sterile man (or woman)"; Kuria: Muniko: omogomba 'a barren woman' –gombaha '(of a woman) to pass the menopause, become barren';
Other Bantu: Bemba (Kasonde) *ing'umba* "barren woman"; **Bobangi** (Whitehead, CBOLD) *BokÓmbã* "barrenness, unfruitfulness"; *Ekômbã* "barren woman or animal, childless woman";

Proto-Bantu (Guthrie) C.S.894 **-gùmba* "barren woman"; ("BLR 3") R.N.1505 **gùmbà* "barren woman";
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 17a
Gloss: elope (of a woman)
Root: **-hambuka*
Protolanguage: West Nyanza
Etymology: from the proto-Bantu verb **-hamba* 'take by force, seize'. Forms a pair with R.N.17b. See also, (Schoenbrun, *Violence*, R.N. 87).

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 998*) *-wambuka* "partir avec son séducteur"; (Snoxall, 332) *kù-wâmbuka* "1.run away; abscond. 2.elope (of a woman)";
Soga
Gwere
Shana
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis) *hambuka* "elope (of a married woman), leave home and live with a man (of a girl)"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 55) *kuhamba* "2.assault (a woman), seize";
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Snoxall, 331) *kù-wâmba* "take captive; lay hold on, nab; book, reserve for buying"; *òmù-wâmbi* "captor; one who books (or reserves for self) article to be purchased";
Soga (CRC, 37i) *okúghambá* "to capture, to sow, to overturn"; *omúghambé* "captive";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-wamba* "to take captive, capture"; (Kagaya, 280) *ómu-wambé* "captive";
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis) *hamba* "take by force, carry off, ravish"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 55) *kuhamba* "1.plant (a few beans)";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *xuu-amba* "to seize, catch (also: catch disease), grasp, hold"; *xuu-amba-amba* "1.to continually handle, fondle. 2.soil, make dirty by handling, tamper with"; *omu-ambe* "captive"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema, 125-26) *khu-hamba* "seize, catch (also to catch a disease), grasp, hold"; (Siertsema, 14) *umùhambè* "captive";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 26) *-hamba* "hang on, grasp, take hold, cling, grab, hinder, retard, seize, grasp"; *-hambya* "support another"; *-hambana* "embrace, wrestle, take hold of each other"; *-hambula* "unloosen grasp, free, affair turns out badly, no one to help, have trouble, un-grasp, get

best of, win in game, get loose after thought tight"; *erihamba* "new place, new gardens, beginning of village";
Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 16) *óomwaambali* "sujet, serviteur";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 139-40) *ihâmba* "enterrement, funérailles, inhumation"; *guhâmburuka* "se délier; se détacher";
East Nyanza: Kuria (Muniko, 55) *-ihamba* "to claim what is not one's own; to take on too big a task";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 4) *-bamb-* "hunt and kill (animal)"; **Bobangi** (Whitehead, CBOLD) *Bãmba* "to clasp, grasp, grip, hold fast, lay hold of, seize"; **Swati** (Rycroft, 2) *kú-bamba* "catch, capture; grasp, grip, take hold of; arrest"; **Chewa** (Mtenje, CBOLD) *famba* "to seize, kidnap; to seize a person unawares, to steal men, carry or 'lift' cattle or goats, but not things"; **Lozi** (Jalla, CBOLD) *bamba* "to catch, to handcuff"; **Bantu** ("BLR 3") R.N.8301 **pámb* "take, seize";

Reconstruction Number: 17b
Gloss: elope (of a man)
Root: **-hambula*
Protolanguage: West Nyanza
Etymology: from the proto-Bantu verb **-hamba* 'take by force, seize'. Forms a pair with R.N.17a. See also, (Schoenbrun, *Violence*, R.N. 87).

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 998*) *-wambula* "1.débaucher une femme et l'amener. Ravir"; (Snoxall, 332) *kù-wâmbula* "1.run off with wife or daughter of another";
Soga
Gwere
Shana
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis) *hambuka* "elope (of a married woman), leave home and live with a man (of a girl)"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 83) *kuyamba* "elope (used of a woman)";
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 998*) *-wambula* "2. Egarer un companion, perdre un enfant en voyage"; (Snoxall, 332) *kù-wâmbula* "2.lose (companion or child, e.g. during journey, etc.)"; (Snoxall,

331) *kù-wâmba* “take captive; lay hold on, nab; book, reserve for buying”; *òmù-wâmbi* “captor; one who books (or reserves for self) article to be purchased”;
Soga (CRC, 37) *okúghambá* “to capture, to sow, to overturn”; *omúghambé* “captive”;
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-wamba* “to take captive, capture”; (Kagaya, 280) *ómu-wambé* “captive”;
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis) *hamba* “take by force, carry off, ravish”; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 55) *kuhamba* “1.plant (a few beans). 2.assault (a woman), seize”;
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *xuu-amba* “to seize, catch (also: catch disease), grasp, hold”; *xuu-amba-amba* “1.to continually handle, fondle. 2.soil, make dirty by handling, tamper with”; *omu-ambe* “captive”; **Masaaba** (Siertsema, 125-26) *khu-hamba* “seize, catch (also to catch a disease), grasp, hold”; (Siertsema, 14) *umùhambè* “captive”;
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 26) *-hamba* “hang on, grasp, take hold, cling, grab, hinder, retard, seize, grasp”; *-hambya* “support another”; *-hambana* “embrace, wrestle, take hold of each other”; *-hambula* “unloosen grasp, free, affair turns out badly, no one to help, have trouble, un-grasp, get best of, win in game, get loose after thought tight”; *erihamba* “new place, new gardens, beginning of village”;
Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 16) *óomwaambali* “sujet, serviteur”;
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 139-40) *ihâmba* “enterrement, funérailles, inhumation”; *guhâmburura* “délier; détacher; défaire”;
East Nyanza: Kuria (Muniko, 55) *-ihamba* “to claim what is not one’s own; to take on too big a task”;
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 4) *-bamb-* “hunt and kill (animal)”; **Bobangi** (Whitehead, CBOLD) *Bãmba* “to clasp, grasp, grip, hold fast, lay hold of, seize”; **Swati** (Rycroft, 2) *kú-bamba* “catch, capture; grasp, grip, take hold of; arrest”; **Chewa** (Mtenje, CBOLD) *famba* “to seize, kidnap; to seize a person unawares, to steal men, carry or ‘lift’ cattle or goats, but not things”; **Lozi** (Jalla, CBOLD) *bamba* “to catch, to handcuff”; **Bantu** (“BLR 3”) R.N.8301 **pámb* “take, seize”;

Reconstruction Number: 18
Gloss: child of female clan member
Root: **-ihwa*
Protolanguage: proto-Bantu
Etymology: Proto-Bantu origin, but with some semantic shift in Great Lakes Bantu (Schoenbrun, 86-87, R.N.120).

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda òmujjwà (Le Veux, 267) *mu-jjwa* “enfant de la fille, de la soeur, de la tante maternelle. En vertu de l’exogamie cet enfant appartient, en effet, à un clan différent, au clan de son père. Par contre l’enfant du fils, du frère, de l’oncle – appartenant au même clan que son grandparent, son oncle, son cousin propres – sera appelé par ceux-ci *mwana*”; (Snoxall, 214) *mù`jjwa, òmujjwà* “nephew, niece, i.e. son or daughter of a man’s sister only. His brother’s children would be alluded to in the same terms as his own”;

Soga *omwiwa* "child of sister/female clan-mate"
Gwere *mwiwa* "child of sister/female clan-mate"; (SIL, n.p.) *-iwa* "nephew, niece, generation younger"; (Kagaya, 100) *ómw-iwá* "cousin (son of father's sisters)";
Shana
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 185) *omwî:wa* "sister's child [Ego masculine]"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 120) *omwîhwa* "sister's child"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 209) *omwî:hwa* 1,2 "nephew, niece. N.B. This word refers to children, male or female, i.e., nephews or nieces, of the speaker's siblings of the opposite sex. Children of the speaker's same sex siblings are in the category of the sibling's children";
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 272) *omuhwa ?* "nephew on father's side";
Forest: Hunde (Kaji, 78) *mwîhwa* "enfant (garçon ou fille) de la soeur (Ego: masculin)"; **Shi** (Polak-Bynon, 40) *óomwiíhwaa* "neveu, nièce; toute femme qu'un muShi appelle sa soeur";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 194) *umwîshwa* "neveu ou nièce: fils ou fille de la soeur d'un individu de sexe masculin"; *ubwîshwa* "relation de parenté entre un homme et les enfants de sa soeur (considérés come ses enfants)";
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 29) *úmw-ipwá* "sister's son"; **Bantu** (BLR 3) R.N.3498 **jìpúá* 'nephew, niece' (C.S.2091); **Great Lakes Bantu** (Schoenbrun, 86-87), R.N.120 **-jIpùà* "nephew, niece";
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 19
Gloss: paternal aunt
Root: **isenga*
Protolanguage: Bantu?
Etymology: Compound noun formed of 'father' and 'possessive' and 'woman' or 'father' and 'woman'. See Schoenbrun, 99-100, R.N.141.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza: isenga
Ganda (Le Veux, 860) *senga* "tante paternelle"; (Snoxall, 296) *`ssèngâ* "aunt on father's side";
Soga *isenga* "paternal aunt"; (CRC, 131) *sôngá* "aunt (sister of father)";
Gwere *isenga* "paternal aunt"; (SIL, n.p.) *-senga* "maternal [sic.] aunt"; (Kagaya, 98) *ó-íse-nga* "aunt (father's sister)";
Shana *isenga* "paternal aunt";
Rutara: Kerewe (Hurel) *sengi* "ma tante paternelle";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *baa-seenge* "aunt"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema) *senge* "aunt (father's sister)"; [Southern Masaaba] *senge* "father's or mother's sister";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 100) *songali* "aunt or uncle on father's side";
Forest: Hunde (Kaji, 76) *máshenge* "tante paternelle"; **Shi** (Polak-Bynon, 49) *nyáamàsheenge* "ma tante paternelle";

West Highlands: Ha (Nakagawa, 16) *sengé* "father's sister"; **Rwanda** (Schumacher) *másēnge* "tante paternelle"; **Rundi** (Rodegem, 408) *sengé* "ma tante paternelle, la soeur de mon père";
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *se:ng"* "aunt (father's sister)";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Kasonde) *maayoseenge* "paternal aunt"; **proto-Bantu** (BLR 3) R.N.7721 **cengai* (noun class 1a) 'father, father's sister' from source item R.N.501 **cé* 'his father';
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 20
Gloss: millet beer
Root: **-jàdúá*
Protolanguage: Proto-Bantu with gloss 'beer'; Great Lakes Bantu with gloss 'millet beer'
Etymology: Proto-Bantu

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 609) *amâlwa* "(Mot lunyolo, lusoga, etc.) Cidre de bananes fait avec du malt d'éleusine"; (Snoxall, 199) *àmalwâ* "Nyoro, Soga etc., beer made from millet only";
Soga Gabula *amalwa* "millet beer"; Lamoogi *amalwa* "millet beer"; Siki *malwa* "millet beer"; (CRC, 46i) *éírwa* "millet beer";
Gwere *malwa* "millet beer"; (SIL, n.p.) *-lwa* "beer from millet, millet beer, local beer, diluted beer"; *-lwa engonera* "sour millet beer"; *nyonta yamalwa* "thirst for millet beer"; (Kagaya, 165) *áma-lwá* "alcoholic drink made from millet or cassava (not distilled, but strong beer)";
Shana
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 105) *elyá:lwa, amá:lwa* "general term for alcoholic drink"; **Kerewe** (Odden, CBOLD) *amaalwa* "beer"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 97) *amáárwa* "beer (made from millet)"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 105) *amá:rwa* "alcoholic drink in general and banana beer in particular";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *ka ma-lwa* "millet beer, sorghum beer, maize beer";
Masaaba (Siertsema, 8) *kamalwa* "millet, sorghum, maize beer";
West Highlands: Rundi/Rwanda (Schoenbrun, n.p.) *amarwa ya uburo* "millet beer";
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *oBw-a:lw[?]* "liquor; beer";
Other Bantu: Bantu (Guthrie) C.S.1901 **-yàdúá* "beer"; ("BLR 3") R.N.3165 **-jàdúá* 'beer'.

Reconstruction Number: 21
Gloss: foster out
Root: **-jooka*
Protolanguage: Lugwere
Etymology: from Teso (?) verb meaning 'to send'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:

Ganda
Soga
Gwere *kujooka* "foster out (also for animals)";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu: Lwo (Odonga, 63) *dwok* "return, take back"; **Teso** (Hilders, 41) *ai-jukar* "send (*p.t.* sent); push"; **Nilo-Saharan** (Ehret) R.N.316 *$\underset{o}{ɗ}wík^{h}$ 'to prod, push (physically or verbally)";

Reconstruction Number: 22
Gloss: patriclan
Root: *-*ka* 7/8
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology: Derived from proto-Great Lakes Bantu *-*ka* 5/6 "household" (Schoenbrun, 89, R.N.123) with noun class change to 7/8 for augmentation from immediate family to clan.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza: Ganda (Le Veux, 269) *ki-ka* "famille totémique"; *ka* "domi" *E-ka ye* "chez lui"; *ma-ka* "domicile, 'home'"; *'Semaka* "chef de maison"; (Snoxall, 133) *èkìkâ* "1. clan. 2. family";
Soga (CRC, 49i) *eká* "at home"; (CRC, 63i) *ekíka* "clan, clanship, family, type, model, brand (*ekíka ky'ekintú*), kindred";
Gwere (SIL n.d.) *-ka* "1.home. 2.clan, tribal sub-grouping, type"; (Kagaya, 101) *éki-ká/ékyi-ká* "clan, kind, sort";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Rutara: Nkore (Kaji, 215) *ekíka* 7/8 "lineage, extended family"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 43) *ekíka* "empty kraal"; **Nkore** (Davis, 71) *ekika* "1.deserted kraal. 2.sub-clan";

Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 42) *eka* "at home, at one's home, village";
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 29) *úmu-kááya* "inhabitant (of village);" *úbu-kááya* "abstr. of preceeding"; (Guthrie, 122) *úmu-kóa* "clan"; **Swati** (Rycroft, 47) *lí-khâya* "home, domicile" (loc.: *ékhâya*); *úm-khâya* "someone from one's own home or district"; *úm-khâya* "1.household. 2.knob-thorn. 3.place for divining"; **Proto-Bantu** ("BLR 3") R.N.8106 **ká* 5 'enclosure, home, clan, family' from source item R.N.1738 **káájà* 'home village, residence'; see also: R.N.3664 **kaajaku* 9 'cow' and R.N.8104 **ká* 'cow'.

Reconstruction Number: 23
Gloss: 'cooking banana' [generic: cooking banana]
Root: **-kago*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza (with Luhyia areal)
Etymology:
DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 729) *enkago* "variété de bananier femelle"; (Snoxall, 242) *ènkagò* "the *ttoke* or female plantain. *contr.* `*mbi`dde*";
Soga Gabula *nkago* "cooking banana";
Gwere *nkago* "cooking banana"; (SIL, n.p.) *kunya nkago* "as hard as getting juice out of a variety of banana meant for eating other [sic] than juice";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *lii-xako* "medium sized cooking banana (general term for banana wh. can be cooked when unripe)"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema, 147) *likhako* "medium sized cooking banana (general term for banana wh. can be cooked when unripe)"; **Nyole** (DLS, n.p.) *ɛxago* "cooking/roasting banana";
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 24
Gloss: senior wife
Root: **kaidu*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology: from same origin as *mwiru* 'peasant' or 'farmer' (see Schoenbrun, 2007)?

DISTRIBUTIONS

North Nyanza: kaidu
Ganda *kaddulubaale* "senior wife"; (Le Veux, 278) *ka-ddu-lubale* "première épouse du roi (par primauté)"; (Snoxall, 108) *Kaddulubaalè* "1.chief wife of king, and of chief. 2.queen consort";
Soga Siki *kaido* "senior wife"; Lamoogi *kaidu* "senior wife"; (Cunningham) *kairu* "senior wife"; (Fallers) *kairulubaale* "senior wife of king";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-idu* "first wife among many";
Shana:
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu: Proto-Bantu ("BLR 3") R.N.6153 **jídù* 'male slave, dynastic ritualist'; R.N.3414 **jídù* 'black' (derived from source item R.N.6142 *jid* 'black');
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 25
Gloss: disease of pregnancy
Root: **-kiro* 6
Protolanguage: from proto-Bantu noun for 'dirt, blackness'?

DISTRIBUTIONS
Etymology:
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 379) *makiro* "nymphomanie"; (Snoxall, 197) *àmàkirò* "nymphomania";
Soga (CRC, 91) *amákiró* "magic disease that causes a desire to devour the child sometimes by the mother after delivery";
Gwere *makiro* "disease of pregnant women that if left untreated leads to mother eating baby postpartum"
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 48) *erikiro* "? place where throw leaves, ash pile";

Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 43) *éemikero* “douleurs de femme enceinte”;
Other Bantu: Proto-Bantu (“BLR 3”) R.N.6160 **kído* ‘dirt, blackness’;

Reconstruction Number: 26
Gloss: maternal uncle
Root: **koija* 9/2
Protolanguage: North Nyanza with Greater Luhyia areal?
Etymology: possibly from West Nyanza verb **-koija* ‘be greedy’, but needs further confirmation.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza: **koiza*
Ganda (Le Veux, 403) *kojja* “oncle maternel”; *Bukojja* “lignée maternelle”; *Omwana ali mu bukojja bwe*; (Snoxall, 152) *kò`jjâ* “uncle, mother’s brother”;
Soga Siki *koiza* “maternal uncle”; [but note: (CRC, 107) *dháadhá* “brother of the mother”;]
Gwere *koiza* “maternal uncle”; (SIL, n.p.) *-oiza* “maternal uncle”; (Kagaya, 118) *ó-kóíza* “uncle (mother’s brother), cousin (son of mother’s brother)”;
Shana:
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *xooca* “uncle (mother’s brother only); **Masaaba** (Siertsema) *khooza* (CS) “uncle (mother’s brother only)”;
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis) *koija* “be greedy, gluttonous”;

Reconstruction Number: 27
Gloss: pay bridewealth
Root: **-kwa*
Protolanguage: Possibly Savannah Bantu, although the preponderance of Great Lakes Bantu suggests that the Pende and Nyamwezi attestations might be areal spreads of a proto-Great Lakes Bantu innovation
Etymology: From proto-Bantu *-kó-* "give bridewealth".

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza: kukwa
Ganda (Le Veux, 471) *-kwana* "se lier avec"; *omukwano* "amitié, accord; ami, allié"; (Snoxall, 164) *kù-kwâna* "make friends with"; *òmùkwâno* "friendship"; *kù-kwanga* "give as present to";
Soga (CRC, 76) *okúkwa* "to pay"; *okúkwa omúkazí/omwândú* "to pay dowry";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-kwa* "pay dowry, marry"; *-alikwa* "co-wife"; *bikweramu* "dowry"; *giwebwayo okukwa* "used for dowry"; *-kwera* "to pay a dowry (consisting of chickens?)"; *-kweramu* "for marriage, dowry"; (Kagaya, 4) *"omw-alíkwa* "co-wife";
Shana *kumukwa* "to pay dowry for";
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 260) *eikûla* "bride price";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *xuu-xwana* "to marry (e.o.)"; *xuu-xwa* "give, pay dowry, marry (said of a man)"; *buu-xwale* "wedding, marriage"; *xuu-xwalixa* "marry (be married, said of a woman)"; *baa-xwe* "(all) in-laws, (only) parents-in-law"; *buu-xwe* "dowry, genitals"; *omu-xwe* "an in-law"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema) *khukhwa* "pay dowry, marry (of a man)"; *bukhwale* "marriage";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 53) *omukwi* "relative of wife, son-in-law call, son-in-law calls father-in-law"; *obukwi* "place where *omukwi* lives";
Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 46) *óomukwii* "gendre";
West Highlands: Ha (Nakagawa, 16-17) *inkwâano* "wedding present, betrothal present, mahali"; *ugukwá/ugúkwa* "to give betrothal present"; *umúkwe/umukwé* "son-in-law"; **Rundi** (Rodegem, 252) *gukwá* "livrer les gages matrimoniaux"; **Rwanda**: (Shumacher) *gúkwa* "donner dot (mariage)";
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 34) *úmu-ko* "relative by marriage"; **Nyamwezi** (Maganga & Schadeberg, CBOLD) *bukwiâ* [?] "bridewealth, payment of bridewealth"; *-kwaa* "pay bridewealth"; **proto-Bantu** ("BLR 3") R.N.7240 **kó* 'give bridewealth'; "BLR 3" reject (Guthrie) C.S.1092 *kó* (noun class 1/2; 14/6) 'relative by marriage' and C.S.1175 *kúed* 'marry';
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *aa-kwara* "she is pregnant (last 4 months)"; *xuu-kwara* "become pregnant"; *xuu-xwaala* "to have sex; to cause sb. to cook; to marry"; *buu-xwe* "dowry, genitals";
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu: Bemba (Guthrie, 34) *úlu-ko* "race, tribe"; *-kóeel-* "become very dirty, as cloth"; *íci-kó* "dirtiness, dirt"; *úbu-kóéésho* "ceremonial defilement"; **Swati** (Rycroft, 52) *kú-khwéla* "1.

ascend, climb, mount; ride. 2.copulate (of male animals). 3.accomplish, overcome. 4.(pass.) suffer from, have pain in";

Reconstruction Number: 28
Gloss: marriage
Root: **-rya/-lya*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology: from proto-Bantu verb **-dí-* 'eat' (Guthrie) C.S.550, ("BLR 3") R.N. Main 944.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 122) *eddya* "mariage. *Sirina ddya* 'je suis malheureux en ménage'; *ku-tta ddya* '1.mettre de la brouille dans le ménage. 2.vieillir dans la première union'"; (Snoxall, 45) *èddya* "married state (as applied to a woman) pl. *àmàlya*";
Soga (CRC, 46) *eiryá* "marriage, home of a married woman pl. *amályá*"; (CRC, 103) *ómúlyá* "bride"
Gwere *bulya* "wedding ceremony"; *-rya/omwirya* "marriage"; *mulya* "bride"; (SIL, n.p.) *bya mulya* "traditional bride ceremony"; (Kagaya, 167) *éí-lya, ámá-lya* "marriage (preferred by old people)"; *ómú-lya* "wife of son (from father/mother)";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 29
Gloss: princess/female hereditary royal
Root: **-mbeeza* 1/2
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology:

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 620) *omu-mbejja* "princesse du sang"; (Snoxall, 220) *òmùmbejja* "princess";
Soga (CRC, 86) *omúmbéédha* "princess"

Gwere (Atkinson, n.p.) *bambeeza* "female royals"; (SIL, n.p.) *-mbeiza* "1.the queens [who] are the wives of kings, princess of the royal family. 2. sisters of the king";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 30
Gloss: 'cooking banana'
Root: **-njaaya*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology:

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 611) *manjâya* 'gonja (grosse variété);" (Snoxall, 199) *manjaayâ* "the biggest kind of roasting (*gonja*) plantain"; (ADFT, 118) *manjaya* 'gonja (the sweet kind)'; (Rossel, A5) *manjaya* "False Horn Medium Green Subhorizontal (Ssese and Masaka)"; (Rossel, A6) *manjaya* "Horn Medium Green Subhorizontal, 0-5 hands (Ganda Kawanda)";
Soga
Gwere *manjaaya* "cooking banana"; (SIL, n.p.) *-njaya* "type of edible fruit"; (Kagaya, 169) *ó-mángyááya/ó-mángyáya* "banana (a kind of -) (it is hard (though sweet), so it is cooked after peeling)";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *mandyaye* "kind of beer banana, 3 or 4 fingers to a hand, also eaten fresh"; **Gisu** (Rossel, C16) *manjaya* "ABB 'Bluggoe'"; (Rossel, C17) *manjaya* "ABB 'Silver Bluggoe'";
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 31
Gloss: queen mother
Root: *nnamasole*
Protolanguage: Luganda
Etymology: From the noun *-solo* 'tax, tribute' or the verb *-sola* 'choose, select (among harvest)'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda *nnamasole* "queen mother"; (Le Veux, 708) *'namasole* "reine-mère"; (Snoxall, 250) *`nnàmasòle* "queen mother; queen dowager";
Soga
Gwere
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 756) *ensole* "jeune chien; petit chien d'agrément"; (Le Veux, 915-16) *-sola* "arracher à la pioche des pistaches"; *-sola* "ebiseler; eplucher"; *omusolo* "tribut, paye; impôt"; (Le Veux, 918) *-solôza omusolo* "percevoir l'impôt, imposer"; (Snoxall, 291) *kù-sola* "dig up (ground-nuts, etc.)"; *kù-solooza* "1.collect; assemble. 2.requisition. 3.gather tribute; levy taxes"; *mùsòlô, òmùsolò* "tax, tribute";
Soga (CRC, 105) *omúsoló* "a levy, tax";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-solo* "tax (n.)"; *-solonga* "to collect together"
Shana:
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 221) *okushola* "to pay a tax"; (Kaji, 270) *okushola* "to harvest peanuts, bambara nuts, etc."; **Kerewe** (Odden, CBOLD) *kusola* "choose; scrape";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *ku-mu-solo* "tax";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 99) *-sola, -solola, -soloma* "havest, take potatoes out of ground, take out of, divide, separate by taking out of, pick out of, choose from among"; (Fraas, 100) *-sola,-solera* "pay tax to Government"; *omusole, omunyisole* "person of initiative";
Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 68) *óomusole'* "jeune homme, adolescent (pl. *éemisole'*)"; *óokusoleha* "être adolescent, musclé (garçon)";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 449) *kusora* "trier du grain; prendre grain par grain; récolter des arachides; jouer au tric-trac; choisir ce qui est destiné au tribut coutumier"; *omusóre* "jeune homme pubère";
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *oku-sora* "choose";

Other Bantu: Bobangi (Whitehead, CBOLD) *Solo* "to choose destine, elect, nominate, pick prefer, rather, select, sort"; **Proto-Bantu** ("BLR 3") R.N. Main 6982 *còd* "pay tax" (neologism?); R.N. Main 636 *còd* "choose";

Reconstruction Number: 32
Gloss: female escort of bride
Root: **-perya* 9
Protolanguage: West Nyanza? Or Lamoogi innovation with areal spread to Nyoro & Gwere?
Etymology: From proto-Bantu **-pá* 'give' ("BLR 3") R.N.2344 with class prefix for noun referring to a person and causative suffix. That of all the Rutaran languages, the reflex is found only in Lunyoro raises some questions about its antiquity. There are well known connections between Bunyoro and the northern part of Busoga where Lulamoogi is spoken and so it is possible that the verb may simply have been borrowed into Lunyoro from Lulamoogi. The form of the suffix is unusual in Lunyoro which further suggests that the word was borrowed into that language, rather than inherited from West Nyanza.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga Lamoogi *mperya* "escort of bride";
Gwere *mperya* "escort of bride"; (SIL, n.p.) *-perya* "escort, young girls (sisters of the bride) who escort her in marriage"; *-pereka* "to escort or accompany on a journey or visit"; (Kagaya, 50) *ókw-elékélá* "escort (to -)";
Shana
Rutara: Nyoro (Davis) *empedya* "bridesmaid"; *-hedya* "attend on a bride";
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 33
Gloss: female escort of bride
Root: **-perekezi* 9
Protolanguage: Mashariki?
Etymology: derived from the proto-Bantu verb **-perekera* 'accompany, escort'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda emperekeze; (Le Veux, 1025*) *emperekeze* "demoiselle de compagnie de la mariée"; *omuwerekezi* "individu de la suite, de l'escorte"; (Snoxall, 208) *èmperekezê* "bridesmaid";
Soga Siki *emperekezi* "escort of bride"; Gabula *emperekeze* "escort of bride"; (CRC, part I, 95, part II, 68) *mpérékéze*, *émperekézí*, *omúgherekézi* "companion, maid, escort";
Gwere
Shana *emperekesa* "escort of bride";
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu: Swati (Rycroft, 81) *um-phelekételi* "companion, escort";
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 1025*) *-werekera* "accompagner, escorter, reconduire"; (Snoxall, 337) *kù-werèkera* "escort on way, see part of way home; see off";
Soga (CRC, part I, 39) *okúgherekérá* "to escort, to accompany, to see off";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-pereka* "to escort or accompany on a journey or visit"; (Kagaya, 50) *ókw-elékélá* "escort (to -)";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *xuu-elekesya* "to escort"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema) *khu-hèlékhésà* "to escort";
Forest: Hunde (Kaji, 128) *ihéreketsa* "accompagner";
West Highlands: Ha (Nakagawa, 31) *uguhérekeza* "to see off, to go together, to accompany"; **Rundi** (Rodegem, 156) *guhérekeza* "reconduire un visiteur, lui donner un pas de conduite"; *impérekezi* 9/10 "vache que la famille d'un voleur de bétail devait joindre à la vache volée, lors de la restitution"; **Rwanda** (Schumacher) *gúherekeza* "reconduire";
Other Bantu: Swati (Rycroft, 81) *ku-phekelétela* "accompany, escort; see off; agree with"; **Kalanga** (Mathangwane, CBOLD) *pelekedza* "accompany part of the way, escort someone, take half-way"; **Ndebele** (Pelling, CBOLD) *-phelekezela* "accompany"; **Venda** (Murphy, CBOLD) *-fhelekedza/-fheletshedza* "to accompany"; **Proto-Bantu** ("BLR 3") R.N. Main 2427 **-pédik-* "hand over"; R.N. Der.2428 **-pédikid-* "accompany (someone)";
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 34
Gloss: elope
Root: *-*paala*
Protolanguage: Soga
Etymology: Either from the Bantu derived verb ("BLR 3") R.N.Der.8976 *-*pád*- "vex, persecute" or from Lwo/Luo *poorro/por* 'elope' from Nilo-Saharan *$*p^h$ōr* 'to flee'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga (CRC, 124) *okúpáálá* "to elope";
Gwere
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu: Lwo (Odonga, 218-19) *poor* "elopement of a girl to her boyfriend"; *poorro* "1.to elope/running away to a boyfriend. 2. a man eloping away with a girl in order to marry her"; **Luo** (Odaga, 61) *por* "elope (n.)";

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 803) *-pala* "s'enfuir affolé, éperdu; fuir à la débandade"; (Snoxall, 270) *kù-paala* "rush about; rush off in panic";
Soga (CRC, 124) *okúpáálá* "to get lost, to walk away without permission"; *okúpáálúúká* "to get lost, to go into exile, to become pale, to fade";
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *xuu-para* "make uproar";
Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 26) *-hāla, eri* "(to) be defiled, polluted, ceremonially unclean, unholy, certain things very bad to have around"; *-hālya* "defile, be sacriligeous, impure, one has cursed God, can never be forgiven, has no one to plead for him";
Forest: Shi (Polak-Bynon, 53) *óokuhalála* "vexer, molester";
Other Bantu: Proto-Bantu ("BLR 3") R.N. Der.8976 *-*pád*- "vex, persecute"; derived from: R.N. Main 2353 *-*pád*- "scrape, scratch";
Other non-Bantu: Nilo-Saharan (Ehret) *$*p^h$ōr* "to flee";

Reconstruction Number: 35
Gloss: foster in/adopt
Root: *-*piita*
Protolanguage: South Kyoga?
Etymology: *pīt̪ from 'to rise' in Proto-Nilo-Saharan to 'breed, raise child or animal' with specific meaning of 'foster' in Dholuo. Borrowed into Lugwere and spread into Lusoga? Or borrowed into South Kyoga with narrowing of meaning in Lusoga.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga (CRC, 125) *okúpíítá* "to breed, to make grow fat, bit or long, to look after with a lot of care"; *énhaná émpiité* "a fattened calf";
Gwere *kupiita* "to foster in/adopt"; (SIL, n.p.) *-piita* "rear, tame (an animal), keep (domestic animals, birds)";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu: Luo (Odaga, 75) *pidho* "foster (vt)"; Dholuo (Kenya): Oomo: pidho 'to bring up a child, or an animal; to plant a plant or a crop'; **Lwo** (Odonga, 217) *pitto* "(vt) 1.to plant/planting. 2.set up. 3.rear, breed (cattle). 4.feeding children, nourishing baby, bringing up children; pitto litino ki pitto latin lakere, feeding the children and bringing them up and nourishing the baby"; **Ateso** (Hilders) *ai-pit* "breed (past tense bred); rear"; **Nilo-Saharan** (Ehret) **pīt̪* "to rise"; Kunama bido- 'to rear up (of animals)' Astab:Nub:Dongolawi bita:n 'child, offspring, son, fruit, seed' Kir-Abb:PNil [*pit̪ 'to grow' (WNil: Ocolo pit̪ 'to raise, rear, grow'; SNil:Akie pit 'to grow (of plants)'): Loan from language in which NS *p>*p (Koman?)] PRub *ibit- 'to grow' (Ik íbit- 'to grow': Soo ibitac- 'to grow (of person);). Possible shared semantic innovation tying Astaboran and Rub together as a subbranch of Eastern Sahelian: shift of meaning from 'to rise' to 'to grow'.

Reconstruction Number: 36
Gloss: 'cooking banana'
Root: **sagasaga*
Protolanguage: South Kyoga
Etymology:

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga Gabula *sagasaga* "cooking banana";
Gwere *sagasaga* "cooking banana"; (SIL, n.p.) *sagasaga* "type of edible fruit";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 388) *-sagasaga* "avoir une nombreuse famille, se multiplier; être fécond; être prolifique";

Reconstruction Number: 37
Gloss: 'dried banana leaf'
Root: **-soigi*
Protolanguage: Lugwere
Etymology: from *-soiga* 'kill wounded animal/person'?

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga (CRC, 131) *Sóigí* (Lulam.) "consolation (nickname for a girl whose mother lost many children)"
Gwere *kisoigi* "dried banana leaf"; (Schoenbrun, n.p.) *ɛkịsoyịgị*, *ɛkịsoojjị* "dried banana leaf"; (SIL, n.p.) *soigi* "dry banana leaf; time when a small ceremony three weeks after burial takes place"; *soigi ekinene* "the major and last funeral rites. It is done after one or a few years"; (Kagaya, 247) *éki-sweigí* "banana leaf (dried -)";
Shana
Rutara:

Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 912) *-sogga* "achever un mourant"; (Snoxall, 290) *kù-sogga* "spear to death wounded man, or animal";
Rutara: Nkore (Taylor, 73) *kushogoita* "kill a sick animal"; **Nyoro/Nkore** (Davis, 163) *soigana*, v.i. "play a game of shooting with grass stalks (ensungu)"

Reconstruction Number: 38
Gloss: 'beer banana'
Root: **-subi*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza (with Rutara areal?). Independent innovation in Nande or areal form with spread of banana cultivars; see also Rossel, C14.
Etymology:

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Snoxall, 142) *kìsùbî* "beer-making banana"; (Rossel, C13) *kisubi* "AB 'Kisubi'";
Soga Siki *cisubi* "beer banana"; Lamoogi *cisubi* "beer banana"; Gabula *cisubi* "beer banana"; (CRC, 69) *kísúbi* "banana for brewing beer"; (Rossel, C14) *kisubi* "AB 'Kisubi'";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-subi* "type of banana (eaten raw when ripe, used for brewing banana beer, used for making juice or beer)"; (Kagaya, 115) *ó-kisúbi, é-kisúbi* "banana for brewing alcoholic drink (sweeter than "ombiide")";
Shana
Rutara: Haya (Rossel, C14) *kisubi* "AB 'Kisubi'"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 79) *kishúbi* "banana for beer-making";
Greater Luhyia: Luhyia (Rossel, C13) *kisubi* "AB 'Kisubi'"; **Gisu** (Rossel, C13) *kisubi* "AB 'Kisubi'";
Ruwenzori: Nande/Koonzo (DLS, n.p.) ɛβịsụβị "cooking/roasting banana"; (Rossel, C14), *kisubi* "AB 'Kisubi' (a recent introduction according to the people)"
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 39
Gloss: placenta
Root: *-*tani* 7/8
Protolanguage: North Nyanza
Etymology: From the proto-Bantu verb *-*tá-* 'throw away, throw, lose, put, trap, play game do' ("BLR 3") R.N. Main 2708.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 386) *kitanyi* "placenta integral"; (Snoxall, 143) *èkìtanyì* "placenta, after-birth";
Soga Siki *citani* "placenta"; Gabula *ecitani* "placenta"; Lamoogi *ekitani* "placenta"; (CRC, 70i) *ekítaní* "placenta, afterbirth";
Gwere *kitani* "placenta"; (Kagaya, 257) *éki-taní* "afterbirth";
Shana
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 40
Gloss: foster out
Root: *-*wereka*
Protolanguage: GLB 'entrust person/animal'; NN: 'entrust person'; R: 'entrust cattle'
Etymology: Proto-Bantu B *-*pédik-* 'hand over'; in GLB meaning shifts to temporary hand over

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 1025*) *-wereka* "confier un enfant à élever"; *Omwana wāmuwereka wa*? *Mbawerese mwana wange*. PROV. *Mperese efa waboyo mirembe*; (Snoxall, 337) *kù-werèka* "place (child) in care of sb. else to be brought up";
Soga
Gwere
Shana
Rutara: **Nyoro** (Davis) *-hereka* "entrust, give in charge (esp. cattle)"; *-herekurra* "take out of custody or charge"; *empereka* "cow, etc. entrusted to another"; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 56) *kuhéreka* "entrust"; (Taylor, 107) *empéreka* "cattle entrusted to another";
Greater Luhyia:

Ruwenzori: Nande (Fraas, 31) *-herekya* "commit person or animal, something living into another's hands to care for for a long time, a paid-for-girl, (yet, not a girl, for she does not stay in one place) pig, or give to another to sell";
Forest: Hunde (Kaji, 107) *ihereka* "mettre un remède magique dans le champ contre le maraudage"; *hereko* 9,10 "remède contre le maraudage"; **Shi** (Polak-Bynon, 54) *óokuhereka* "agir magiquement contre coleur (dans champs)"; (Polak-Bynon, 55) *óobukereko* "procédé magique contre voleur";
West Highlands: Rundi (Rodegem, 156-57) *guhêreza* "offrir, présenter"; *impĕrezwa* "offrande, don, dîme";
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu: Proto-Bantu (Guthrie) C.S. 1462 **-pédik-* "hand over";
Other non-Bantu:

Reconstruction Number: 41
Gloss: 'granary'
Root: **-(y)agi*
Protolanguage: North Nyanza-Luhyia areal.
Etymology: Possibly from the verb *-waga* 'prop' or from a possible Bantu noun **-jaga* 'wicker work' ("BLR 3") R.N.9328.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 4, 479) *kyagi* "'silo aérien, silo en meule, grenier indigène pour les céréales"; (Snoxall, 165) *èkyagì* "small granary raised from ground on posts"; (Snoxall, 329) *kù-waga* "prop, stay, support"; *òlùwaga* "central supporting post of house";
Soga Siki *ecaaji* "granary"; Gabula *caji* "granary"; (CRC, 76) *ekyâgí* "barn, granary";
Gwere
Shana
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *si-sy-aki* "granary"; **Masaaba** (Siertsema, 40) *khi-khy-aki* (B) "granary"; **Nyole** (DLS, n.p.) *ɛkyaagi* "granary"; **Saamya** (DLS, n.p.) *ɛsyákį* "granary"'

Reconstruction Number: 42
Gloss: foster in/adopt
Root: *-*yamba*
Protolanguage: South Kyoga
Etymology: from West Nyanza verb *-*yamba* 'help'

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda
Soga *kuyaamba* "to adopt, foster";
Gwere
Shana *kuyamba* "adopt";
Rutara:
Greater Luhyia:
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands:
East Nyanza:
Other Bantu:
Other non-Bantu:

POLYSEMY
Ganda (Le Veux, 980) *-yamba* "aider, secourir"; (Snoxall, 345) *kù-yamba* "help, aid"
Soga (CRC, part I, 144) *okúyámbá* "to assist, to help, to aid, to come up trumps, accommodating, to oblige";
Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-yamba* "to protect, assist"; (Kagaya, 291) *óku-yambá* "assist (to -), help (to -)";
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 267) *okwamba* "to help"; **Nkore** (Kaji, 309) *okuya:mba* "to help";

Reconstruction Number: 43
Gloss: taboo
Root: *-*ziro* 3/4
Protolanguage: Proto-Bantu
Etymology: proto-Bantu ("BLR 3") R.N.Der.1400 **gìdò* 3/4 'taboo, abstinence' (derived from R.N. Main 1394 **gìd* 'abstain from, avoid, refuse, be taboo, be punished'); cf. Schoenbrun, 189, R.N.288.

DISTRIBUTIONS
North Nyanza:
Ganda (Le Veux, 689) *omuziro* "totem"; (Snoxall, 232) *òmùziro* "1.bone at base of vertebral column, coccyx. 2.totem";
Soga (CRC, 109) *omúzíró* "totem, taboo, forbidden";

Gwere (SIL, n.p.) *-ziro* “taboo, the social behaviour of a person”; *okulya ebyomuziro* “taboo food”; (Kagaya, 299) *ómú-zílo* “totem (Everybody of this tribe has his own totem such as buffalo and he can neither hurt nor eat the totem animal. He (She) cannot marry one who belongs to the same totem.)”;
Shana
Rutara: Haya (Kaji, 212) *omuzilo* “taboo”; **Nkore-Kiga** (Taylor, 119) *omuziro* “taboo”; **Nkore** (Kaji, 247) *omuzIro* “taboo. N.B. This is what one should avoid doing, otherwise bad things may happen. For instance, if a child sits on a cooking stone, his father is said to die”;
Greater Luhyia: Bukusu (KWL, CBOLD) *omu-silo* “thing one should not do on account of magic or taboos (e.g. leaving a baby's bedding outside after sunset, so that an enemy may steal and curse it, thus harming), rite”;
Ruwenzori:
Forest:
West Highlands: Ha (Nakagawa, 36) *umuziro* “tabooed word”; *ukuzira* “to taboo (a word)”;
Rundi (Rodegem, 582) *umuziro* “défense, prohibition, interdit, vitance”;
East Nyanza: Jita (Downing, CBOLD) *omu-siro* “taboo”;
Other Bantu: Bobangi (Whitehead, CBOLD) *Ekilã* “an article, the use of which is abstained from, forbidden thing, illicit act, prohibited article of diet, etc., a tabooed thing”;
Other non-Bantu:

Appendix Four

Kagwa's List of Buganda's Kings

King	Generation Back	Approximate Dates of Reign (Kiwanuka)
Kintu		
Cwa		
[Kalemeera]		
Kimera	18	
[Lumansi]		
Ttembo	17	1374-1404
Kiggala	16	1404-1434
Kiyimba	15	1434-1464
[Wampamba]		
Kayima	14	1464-1494
Nakibinge	13	1494-1424
Mulondo	12	1524-1554
Jjemba	12	1524-1554
Ssuuna I	11	?
Ssekamaanya	10	1584 [sic]-1584
Kimbugwe	10	1584 [sic]-1584
Kateregga	9	1584-1614
Mutebi	8	1614-1644
Jjuuko	8	1614-1644
Kayemba	8	1614-1644
Tebandeke	7	1644-1674
Ndawula	7	1644-1674
Kagulu	6	1674-1704
Kikulwe	6	1674-1704
Mawanda	6	1674-1704
[Musanje]		
Mwanga	5	1704-1734
Namugala	5	1704-1734
Kyabaggu	5	1704-1734
Jjunju	4	1734-1764
Ssemakookiro	4	1734-1764
Kamaanya	3	1764-1794
Ssuuna II	2	1824 [sic] -1824
Muteesa	1	1824-1854

While the use of actual years starting from the year of Muteesa's death and counting backwards suggests precision, it is important to stress that this is not the case. These are merely approximations using a formula which assigns, in this case, thirty years to each generation. The reader will have noted that in the text, I use formulations such as 'early eighteenth century' intentionally to avoid any suggestion of precise dating beyond the nearest generations to the present.

This list draws on both the version reproduced by Christopher Wrigley[1] and that reproduced and dated by Semakula Kiwanuka.[2] Princes who did not rule but whose sons did are included and indicated through the use of brackets.

[1] Christopher C. Wrigley, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 31.

[2] M. Semakula M. Kiwanuka rounded the figure up to thirty years; see *A History of Buganda: From the Foundation of the Kingdom to 1900* (London: Longman, 1971), 285-86.

Curriculum Vita

Rhiannon Stephens

Born

Southampton, UK.

Education

Ph.D. History – Northwestern University, Illinois, December 2007

M.A. History – Northwestern University, Illinois, June 2002

B.A. (hons.) Swahili and History – School of Oriental and African Studies, London, June 2000

Publications

"East Africa, 1500-1900," Encyclopedia of Women in World History, Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

"A Study of Swahili-English Code-Switching in England," *SOAS Working Papers in Linguistics* 10, 2000: 333-354.

"Haji Gora Haji, Zanzibar" translated by Rhiannon Stephens, 30th International Poetry Festival, Rotterdam, 1999.