

## *Uganda*, H B Thomas and R Scott, London, 1935

(This chapter extract, that describes the peoples of Uganda, was the first major work on the Protectorate since Harry Johnston's *Uganda Protectorate*, 1902, [but not Kigezi, not yet part of the Protectorate], is given for historical analysis only as many of its racial paradigms have since been rejected.

It is however useful for some of its descriptions, population numbers and colonial attitudes. The book is one of the first English attempts to integrate the Bantu expansion theory into the colony's history. Previous works such as the two editions of *Handbook of Uganda* do not refer to the theory and instead classifies some western peoples as 'semi-pygmy'; i.e. the Bakiga.

The most important rejection is that of race (and associated eugenic) theory that classified people by skull and other physical measurements. However, there is no relationship between physical and cultural characteristics, ethnicity or identity. Discussions of variations in physical characteristics, height, skin colour, skull shape, etc., across Africa, as elsewhere, are highly charged: contentious and controversial.

There are also major biases in past and present literature – why, for instance, is all height research focused on those of short stature but not tall? In the past it may be because pygmies were not seen as quite human whereas the tall were often royalty, aristocrats and local leaders – the same equivalent social status as the investigators – and therefore it would be undignified and generally 'bad form' to be subjecting them to science. The intellectual momentum of this philosophy is partly why this bias continues today.<sup>i</sup>

However, the causes of physical variation from a biological perspective are little understood. Unlike more temperate zones, more favourable to preservation of organic material such as human remains, there is little archaeology for much of Central Africa so it is extremely difficult to make any physical comparisons between present and past generations.

Any historical reconstruction over 2500 years old will be highly speculative [mostly based on stone tools and pottery], the next thousand years are less murky – little windows open up, i.e. iron production – until to about 500 years ago which is the outer limit of oral traditions. Language history analysis fleshes out the picture but becomes more and more speculative after 500 years. Multiple sources are needed to make any half-decent reconstruction of the past and even then will be only very vague and general.

Conceptually, physical variation can be seen as the result of the temporal relationship between genetic inheritance – that entails significant percentages of randomness in transmission from generation to generation – and external influences: environment type and resources of food, fuel and shelter; climate and how it varies in weather events, short-term cycles or long-term change; and catastrophes.

However, in the case of humanity then one must include the cumulative effects on the environment through the development of agriculture – crop and livestock – and tool technology, and the statistically random impact or feedback all might then have on the transmission of genetic inheritance.

Secondly, the Hamitic theory was invented – with no evidence whatsoever – by John Hannington Speke in the 1850s while travelling in East Africa. Unfortunately, is still in use: for instance, some Wikipedia articles on the origins of people from what is now Northern Uganda.

According to early Jewish sources, Ham was fathered by Noah, then over 500 years old, c. 100 years before the Flood. They fell out over some disputable sexual transgression that led to curses and migrations. It later became popular to associate Ham and his descendants with migration to Africa and foundation of African kingdoms and, through Speke's fantasy, was accepted by European intelligentsia who incorporated the belief into their ideologies for the invasion, conquest and colonisation of Africa.

While it may seem innocuous, this fake fantasy history became the basis of colonial administration in the mandated territory of Urundi-Ruanda [now Burundi and Rwanda] and was a major inherited ideological factor in post-independence mass murder and genocide of both countries.

In reality there is no such classification or identity of Hamite. In the south the pastoral kingdoms are all derived from Bantu-speakers that developed cattle-keeping as a stand-alone strategy some 500 years ago and subsequently conquered agricultural clans. In the north, most are migrants of northern pastoral origins and speakers of Nilo-Saharan languages.

Thirdly, with the exception of the Bamba (or Baamba that have attracted much literature) and to a lesser extent the Bakonjo, the peoples of Western Uganda from Sudan to Rwanda are barely described.

Fourthly, there is a heavy positive bias to the description of the Baganda, not surprising due to British-Baganda alliances and British dependence on them to act as administrators and agents in other parts of the Protectorate. They were hardly likely to criticize their royal allies who always had preferential treatment.

HB Thomas, 1888-1971, was a Land and Survey Officer in Uganda Protectorate's civil service and also published *A history of Uganda land and surveys and of the Uganda Land and Survey Department*, 1938, among other works. He was heavily involved with the Uganda Society as Vice President and editor of its annual Journal [for his papers see <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F35689> and <https://janus.lib.cam.ac.uk/db/node.xsp?id=EAD/GBR/0115/RCMS%20150>]. R Scott was also a Protectorate civil servant. All footnotes are by the authors; the endnote from the intro is by this editor.)

## Chapter 5: The Native Peoples of Uganda

Since no comprehensive ethnological survey has been undertaken in Uganda, an account of the indigenous tribes must necessarily be a framework which, though susceptible to elaboration at certain points, must remain skeletal if a due sense of perspective is to be maintained. Johnston (*The Uganda Protectorate*) made a rapid study of the majority of native populations in the Protectorate, and Père Gorju (*Entre le Victoria, l'Albert et l'Edouard*) and Czekanowski (*Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse der Deutschen Zentral-Afrika-Expedition, 1907-1908: Forschungen im Nile – Kongo Zwischengebiet*) afford much interesting information regarding the peoples of western Uganda. Roscoe<sup>1</sup> (notably in *The Baganda*) and Driberg (*The Lango*) give fully detailed accounts of particular tribes. Apart from these works, little ethnological matter relating to Uganda has been published, and many essential data is not yet available. It

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<sup>1</sup> It should be stated with regret, that the greater part of Roscoe's work subsequent to *The Baganda* is marred by a superficiality which was in part due to his allowing conclusions which he knew to be accurate in their application to that tribe to sway his judgment when dealing with other tribes.

is proposed here to attempt only a sketch of the native population in broad outline, to show the relation between tribe and tribe rather than their individual characteristics.

Following the nomenclature adopted in Seligman's analysis of the races of Africa<sup>2</sup>, it appears that the peoples of Uganda whose claims to be regarded as indigenous rest upon the occupation of areas within the Protectorate for more than a century and a half, may be classified as Bantu, Nilotes, Half-Hamites, Hamites, and Negritos. Later arrivals have been relatively few in number and comprise Bantu from the south-west (Banyaruanda, Baziba, and Bazinja) who have migrated to find work, Arabs and Swahili from the coast of the Indian Ocean, Sudanese tribesmen introduced by the Egyptian Government as soldiery and, of course, Europeans and Asiatics. It may be noted here, however, that a large proportion, consisting of Nilotic and Half-Hamite tribes, of the population now accepted as native settled in Uganda within the last six hundred years.

The 1931 Census returns show, on analysis in the light of previous returns and other statistics, that the native population consists of 2,322,627 Bantu, 698,628 Nilotes, 469,933 Half Hamites, 25,272 Hamites, and an inconsiderable number of Negritos. This manner of grouping must, however, be regarded as having very general application. The people classed as Hamites, the Bahima, for example, lost their Hamitic language and have for the most part as much negro blood in their veins as many of their neighbours of undistinguishable descent. Conversely, the greater part of the Bantu comprises tribes in which the Hima strain has brought about some modification of the original stock. Again, the Baamba, who have been classified as Bantu, are akin in certain respect to the Negritos of the Congo region, as are also the Lendu, who have been classified as Nilotes. It may, however, be accepted that culturally the native population is divisible broadly into Bantu, Nilotes and Half-Hamites<sup>3</sup>.

An analysis on the basis of language admits of a greater degree of precision in the definition of tribal groups. Bantu languages are spoken by some 2,348,000 people inhabiting the Buganda and Western Provinces, Busoga, Bugwere, Bugishu, and part of Budama in the Easter Province and Bunyoro in the Northern Province. Gang, a Nilotic language of the Shilluk group, is spoken with dialectal variations by 493,000 people in Chua, Gulu and Lango, the southern part of the West Nile District, the Budama District, Teso District, and Kibanda county in Bunyoro; languages apparently of the Bari group by the Kakwa (16,515) and Kuku (1,123) in the West Nile; and languages of the Moru-Madi group by the Lugbara (139,348) and Lendu (2,670) of the West Nile and the Madi (40,307) who extend from that district to the neighbouring Gulu District. Half Hamitic languages are spoken by the Teso (392,301) and Karamojong (63,849) and by the Sebei, Bugishu District (13,477), the last-mentioned being of the Suk-Nandi group, the others akin to Turkana.

The differences between the Bantu languages in the Protectorate have been described as "no greater than between the Romance languages of Europe, Spanish, French, Italian, and Portuguese"<sup>4</sup>. The generalisation illustrates very concisely the relation between the majority of Bantu languages spoken in Uganda: derived from a common stem, they have been subject to influences which have produced almost uniform modifications in their structure but great diversity in their superficial texture. It does not, however, cover certain languages of great philological interest. In the first place, the language of Bagishu

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<sup>2</sup> *Races of Africa*

<sup>3</sup> Popularly and inaccurately Nilotes and Half-Hamites are often grouped together and referred to as Nilotic tribes

<sup>4</sup> Crabtree *A Manual of Lu-Ganda*

(172,226), and particularly of those inhabiting the southern part of their district, has a markedly archaic character and retains certain elements which have long since disappeared from all other Bantu languages in Uganda<sup>5</sup>. Again, the Banyuli (45,665), the Bagwe, and Basmania (together 21,954) have languages similarly distinguished, though to a much lesser extent, from those of the main Bantu tribes. The Bakonjo (20,000) of Ruwenzori have also conserved their language in a primitive form.<sup>6</sup> The Baamba (24,310) and probably also the Bahunde (1,476) are assignable to a linguistic family centred in the Congo.

The two great Bantu groups in the Protectorate consist of the Lunyoro- and Luganda- speaking peoples. These languages have a strong family resemblance and, while it is a matter of argument which has undergone the more extensive development, there can be no doubt but the Luganda has acquired a greater consistency and more nearly approaches standardisation than any other indigenous language. The central *bloc* of the Luganda-speaking population is estimated to consist of about 650,000 Baganda, to whom should be added 300,000 Basoga, whose own language at one time nearly resembled Lunyoro but has been substantially modified by recent influence from Buganda, Lunyoro is spoken not only the Bunyoro (239,000 including 'naturalised Baganda subjects), but also by the Batoro (148,177) and with minor modifications by the Banyankole (277,500), The dialects of the Bavuma (3,752), Banabwera (1,754), Bakoki (13,500), Basese (4,565), Bakunta (4,000), and the languages of Babumbiro and Baziba (of whom about 4,000 are permanently settled in Uganda), the Bakiga (138,971), Baligenyi (2,500), Bagwere (79,350), Bakenyi (7,530) Bahororo ( 32,555) Banyaruanda (76,844) and some 53,000 Basoga also appear to fall into this group. It may be emphasised that it is usually difficult and sometime impossible to determine whether a give dialect is more closely related to Lunyoro or Luganda, and that members of either group find little difficulty in establishing contact with the members of the other.

The Gang of the Acholi tribe (137,792) may be accepted as the standard form of the language in Uganda and appears to differ but slightly from that spoken in the southern Sudan. The Lango (176,406), Akokolemo or Kumam (43,916) who live in the south-west of the Lango district, Alur, (80,639), and Chopi (4,701)<sup>7</sup> all speak closely related dialect of Gang. The language of the Jopadola (49,683) of the Rudama district, though nearly akin, has undergone modifications to which Gang itself has not been subjected.

One further linguistic element in the population may be noticed, The Nubi (5,528), a Muhammadan community consisting of old Sudanese soldiers formerly employed in the Protectorate service, their descendants and those of their slaves have as natal tongue a very debased form of Arabic which their converts and imitators have also adopted. This same jargon is widely used as a lingua franca in the southern Sudan and northern Uganda.

There is reason to assume that before the Bantu influence had its transforming effects the inhabitants of Uganda were a people having the characteristics of the Bushmen, but, as it is not strange in view of the fact that the country lay in the line of the main Bantu migrations, their successors do not appear to owe any physical or cultural inheritance to them. It is generally accepted that these Bushmen were not closely related to the Negro types in the Congo forests, so that the few hundreds of pygmies (Batwa and, in the Kayonza region of Kigezi, Bambute) now living in the Protectorate cannot be regarded as the descendants

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<sup>5</sup> Vide Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, pp. 894-6

<sup>6</sup> Vide Johnston: *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. ii pp. 16-17

<sup>7</sup> The Shifalu of Emin Pasha. In no way related to the Bantu Chopi tribe of Mozambique

of the primeval inhabitants, and are probably later immigrants than the Bantu among whom they live. There is, however, a circumstantial tradition among the Baganda of a pygmy tribe called the Banakalanga inhabiting the Mabira Forest in Kyagwe. It has been satisfactorily established that the tribe does not now exist, but a man of poor physical development is known in this area as *Nakalanga* and whole families of dwarfish stature have been observed. There are, in certain parts of the Protectorate, small, distinct tribal groups which are regarded by their neighbours as aboriginal, notably the Nangeye of Chua and the Okebo of the West Nile. They are characterised by their skill in iron-working, but sufficient knowledge of them has not been acquired to support any definite statement regarding their origin or kinship with other tribes.

The Baamba, a larger tribal group, have not yet been assigned definitely to a proper ethnographical category in relation to kindred tribes, but appear to have sprung from pygmy stock. There has been considerable difference in authoritative opinion as to their origin, however, and Sir Harry Johnston, Stuhlmann and Struck<sup>8</sup> inclined to the view that they are a branch of the Bantu-speaking peoples. Their language, Kuamba, certainly is Bantu, and there is no question but that some of the Baamba clans have a strong admixture of Bantu blood. A careful student of the Congo pygmies, Dr Paul Schebesta, has, however pointed out that no part of the pygmy stock has been able to conserve the race uninfluenced by extraneous forces,<sup>9</sup> and the Baamba, who occupy part of Toro district to the west of the Ruwenzori range and a further area in Belgian Congo, and who have no tribal unity, have long been subject to the influence of neighbouring Bantu tribes. They regard themselves as the aboriginal inhabitants of a much more extensive territory to the north-west,<sup>10</sup> who have been forced into their present restricted home by Bantu encroachments. It may be observed, to-day, that those Baamba of clans which come least into contact with Bantu society resemble the pygmy people, known as Batwa, of the Congo forest. Baamba art, which finds expression in drawing and wood-carving and which attains to a comparatively high standard, is without Bantu affinities, and suggests influenced derived from the north-west. In so far as physical characteristics are concerned, the Baamba are related to the Bambute and Banande of the Congo, having brachycephalic skulls, broad, depressed noses with a high index, flattened faces, narrow chins, slender limbs, and short stature.

By weight of such evidence as is available concerning their physical, linguistic, and other cultural affinities, the Baamba may, therefore, be regarded as comparatively late arrivals who had neither the impulse nor the opportunity to press eastwards into lands occupied from a far earlier date by Bantu of a type very different to themselves. There is no reason to discount Johnston's theory, which has received authoritative endorsement, of a great concentration in the region of the Great Lakes of these peoples, negroes with a tincture of Hamitic blood, who dispersal (in perhaps the third millennium B.C.) sent Bantu-speaking migrants over southern and eastern Africa.<sup>11</sup> Since the Bantu languages of Uganda rank as the most primitive in the family and are at the same time assignable to the subdivision known as Eastern Bantu, it seems safe to assume that the migrations did not arise from causes involving the complete evacuation of the area now included in the Protectorate and took place over a considerable period. That part of the population which remained in occupation of their lands is the basic stock from which the present Bantu tribes have developed.

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<sup>8</sup> Johnston: *The Uganda Protectorate*, vol. ii p. 897; Stuhlmann: *Mit Emin Pasha in Hera von Afrika*; Struck: *On the Ethnographic Nomenclature of the Uganda Congo Border*, *Journal of the African Society*, 1910

<sup>9</sup> P Schebesta, *Meine Forschungareise in Belgisch-Kongo, 1929-30*, *Africa* vol. iv, 1931

<sup>10</sup> Czekanowski: *Forschungen im Nil-Kongo Zwischengebiet*

<sup>11</sup> *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. i, pp. 17-29

These tribes fall into two groups, of which the smaller contains the Bagishu, the Banyuli, the Basamia, the Bagwe, the Baligenyi, the Bakonjo, and the Bakenyi, and the larger the remaining Bantu tribes of Uganda (excepting always the Baamba and, more doubtfully, the Bahunde). It will be noticed that the principal tribes among those of the smaller group have already been classed together as having languages which have retained a more archaic form than those of the tribes placed in the larger. This line of distinction is, however, only one factor in the separation of the two groups. There are wider cultural differences between them which have been attributed to the fact that the dominant tribes in the larger group, the Baganda, the Banyoro and Batoro, and the Banyankole have been subjected, comparatively recently, to the domination of those Hamitic invaders, the (historically important) Bahima... The rise of that shadowy confederacy which has been given the grandiose title of the Empire of Kitara and its disruption, and the formation from its constituent elements of separate Bahima kingdoms need not therefore receive further attention here. It is sufficient to state that the Hamitic invaders exercised a powerful but probably superficial influence on the Bantu agriculturalists whom they brought under their sway, imposing on their institutions a new pattern, but above all modifying them physically. The influence ascribed to the Hamites spread, moreover, beyond the sphere of their direct rule, often no doubt by force of arms<sup>12</sup> but also by gradual infiltration. All the tribes which have absorbed the elements of this culture – that is, all Bantu tribes of the Protectorate not belonging to the smaller of the two groups under discussion – together with certain kindred peoples of Tanganyika Territory and Ruanda-Urundi, have enough in common to distinguish them as a group from other members of the Bantu family, and are conveniently described as ‘Lacustrine Bantu’.

Before proceeding to a further examination of these two groups it should be stated that the Banyankole and Bahororo, who have been classified linguistically as Bantu, should be divided into Bahima and Bairu. The former consist of the descendants of the Hamitic invaders and among them, although the original stock has been much altered by intermarriage with the Bantu majority which was contemptuously labelled Bairu or ‘serfs’, the Hamitic type persists with sufficient vitality to justify their place in a category apart. The typical Muhima of pure descent is tall, with a well-proportioned body and limbs, and possesses features which approximate to those of the Gala; his nose is longer, more prominent and finer, and the lower part of his face narrower than the average negro. Some are light in colour – a dark bronze – but all have woolly hair. When, however, it has been stated that the Banyankole and Bahororo comprise a separate and comparatively large element identifiable as being of the Hamitic type, no further distinction having close precision can be drawn on the basis of physical characteristics between the tribes of either of the local groups of Bantu, or between the groups themselves. Among, in particular, the Banyoro, the Batoro, and the Baganda the evidence of partial Hamitic descent are not uncommonly to be observed they are particularly noticeable in young children whose profiles are gracefully reminiscent of the bas-reliefs of Akhnaton and his family. These tribes, however, can only be described as Bantu with an admixture of Hamite blood which has produced modifications neither sufficiently general nor intensive to have transformed the character of the people. The great majority of the Bantu in Uganda are of negro type: they are usually dolichocephalic, have the facial characteristics of the negro and woolly hair, but vary in colour between light chocolate and very dark brown; they are well built and of medium stature, often inclined to stockiness.

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<sup>12</sup> Mainly through the militant expansion of the Bunyoro, perhaps at a stage when their Hamitic overlords differed from the original invaders to the extent that the Normans differed from the Norsemen

There appears to be sufficient reason to assume that the Bantu peoples of Uganda were all, at the time of the later Hamitic invasions, of the physical type just described<sup>13</sup>, but this does not imply that existing tribal divisions necessarily date from a subsequent period. The extent to which the dissensions of the Bahima gave sharp definition to certain groups and brought them into opposition one with another must, however, be considered a subject for speculation only. In *The East African Problem*, Driberg suggests that the differences between the Baganda, the Banyoro, and the Banyankole are fundamentally political, having at basis the extent to which the Bahima were able to maintain their position as an exclusive ruling caste among the Bantu of the areas they occupied. He points out that in Buganda the Bahima were not able to establish themselves in force, as the country was unsuited to cattle-keeping, and that they accordingly mixed freely with the earlier inhabitants, and draws the conclusion that a more intelligent and progressive community was born of this miscegenation. In Ankole, on the other hand, the Bahima were able to impose themselves as a dominant aristocracy, and, while not refraining from mixed marriages, to prevent their own fusion with the numerically superior peasantry. In Bunyoro a middle course was steered. The aristocracy remained and the peasantry remained, but between them there was an intermediary class of 'freed men' – the Banyoro who had given their name to the whole tribe. The theory, however, has to depend on a number of assumptions which require further scrutiny as, for example, that there is an almost uniform lack of enlightenment among the original Bantu, and that the actual linguistic developments are consistent with the political movements postulated. Further, the tribes chosen to illustrate it represent a very considerable part, but not the whole body, of the Lacustrine Bantu inhabiting Uganda, and the condition of the neglected remainder does not give support to the general lines of argument.

Certain areas in the west of the Protectorate now included in the districts of Ankole and Masaka provide the best pasture lands in Uganda, and areas almost as well suited for cattle, but less extensive, lie immediately to the south of the present Bunyoro district and were formerly included in the Bunyoro Kingdom. It is, therefore, natural that the largest population of cattle-keeping Bahima should have become established in Ankole, and that the corresponding section of the population of Bunyoro should be proportionately smaller but still considerable. Buganda, however, did not contain enough land of the type suited to the needs of a pastoral population to maintain a large number of Bahima, but consisted, in the main, of lands which are ranked among the most fertile in the Protectorate, and which, having favourable climatic conditions, are capable of extensive cultivation without so much exertion or risk as attends agricultural operations elsewhere in Uganda. Ankole is drier and less fertile, as also are large parts of Bunyoro. It is reasonable to postulate that the movement of the Bantu peoples – all of them agriculturalists – during the long period between the principal migrations and the Bahima invasions would result in the settlement of the heart lands by the people most adequately equipped to hold them. The process of selection would bring the most advanced of the Bantu tribes to Buganda and portions of Bunyoro and Busoga<sup>14</sup>, while the less capable members of the group would be obliged to content themselves with scraping a living on the worse soils of Ankole and the remainder of Bunyoro and Busoga and in the uncongenial climate of Toro. It is to be noted that Luganda in its purest form is the language of central and more fertile section of the Baganda Province, whereas the dialects of the Sese and Buvuma

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<sup>13</sup> In *The Bakitara* Roscoe indicates the squat prognathous type encountered in Bunyoro as probably representative of the pre-Bahima population. The same type is to be remarked, though not commonly, in all the Bantu tribes in Uganda, but there seems to be no strong reason for assuming that the more refined majority evolved from it.

<sup>14</sup> The Basoga have a persistent tradition, which is shared by some of the Baganda clans, that they moved into their present fertile lands from an area in the neighbourhood of Mount Elgon.

Islands and of the outlying and less desirable areas belong to the Lunyoro group. Since, moreover, it cannot be shown that Luganda developed from Lunyoro, or vice versa, and since they appear, rather, to be parallel growths from the same stem, it may be suggested that Luganda had already acquired its separate character, and the Baganda a degree of organisation, before they entered the central area which they now occupy and by consolidated effort thrust the Lunyoro-speaking peoples, who were their predecessors, beyond the confines of this specially favoured region.

Certain further geographical factors appear to be worthy of consideration in any attempt to analyse the differences between the peoples concerned. The nature of the country enabled the Bahima in Ankole (and, further south, in the present Kigezi district) to dominate the whole area from their grazing grounds, while following a semi-nomadic life. In Bunyoro, on the other hand, the pastures lay at a distance from the best agricultural areas, which are grouped closely together, and the control of the Bantu population was not, therefore, compatible with migratory habits. Conditions in Buganda favoured a very different regime. The area of high fertility is compact and central, it was well provided with natural frontiers, and was capable of carrying a large, settled population. Those circumstances would facilitate and even encourage the political organisation of the people while making impossible the survival of a ruling class which had not its roots in the land; and would probably be favourable to the growth of the social and domestic arts, which, with the system of government, appeared to early travellers the manifestation of the outstanding intelligence of the Baganda. It has subsequently been remarked by competent observers, however, that, given the same opportunities for development, many of the peoples of the Protectorate are intellectually on a level with the Baganda, while some appear likely to surpass them.

The religion of the Lacustrine Bantu appears to have been little affected by Hamitic influences; it has remained fundamentally Bantu, its basis being the belief in ancestral spirits. A creator, though not always regarded as the supreme being, was recognised, but in Buganda had a lowly place in the tribal pantheon, and in other Bahima states was associated with a host of other deities – notably the Bachwezi – but not in a position of special honour. In religion, however, as in political matters, it is impractical to determine which elements are indigenous and which were produced by contact with the Bahima.

Of the other group of Bantu tribes in the Protectorate, the Bagisha and the Bakonjo inhabit Mount Elgon and the Ruwenzori range respectively. Taking into account the archaic form of their languages, it may be presumed that they settled in these areas at an early date and that the subsequent migration of other tribes on the flats left them untouched. The Baligenyi of north-eastern Bugishu are a composite tribe, formed of Bagishu who have descended to the lowlands, Bagwere, Basoga and Sebei. The Banyuli, the Bagwe, and the Batamia, who inhabit the southern part of the Budama district, appear to be closely related to the Bantu Kavirondo of the contiguous area in Kenya, and to have settled in their present homes as a result of westward migrations from these areas. The water-nomads of Lake Kyoga, the Bakenyi, appear to be the survivors of a much earlier people than their neighbours. Their huts are on floating islands, they have few possessions, and the family is the unit of society.

The northern districts of the Protectorate were populated by migrants from the north or north-east, of a type very different from the Bantu. These peoples, known collectively as Nilotes, are closely related to tribal groups long established in Sudan, and it may be assumed that their arrival in Uganda in search of new lands occurred relatively recently, perhaps synchronising with, and being responsible for, the cessation of the flow of Hamitic invaders into the country from the north-east. It appears probable that the

first great wave of Nilotes swept down through eastern Uganda, the majority establishing themselves in Kenya (the Jalu) but a considerable rear-guard remaining in Uganda (the Jopadola, who are known as Badama to the Bantu). Some circumstance, it may be the occupation by the Half-Hamitic Teso of the country which now has their name, thrust a barrier across the line of further southern migration, and the Nilotic Lango and Acholi remained in the north. The former occupied the district immediately north of Teso; the latter, organised on the basis of clans, spread over the Gulu and Chua districts. The Alur, a kindred people, advanced into the southern part of the West Nile district and the Chopi established themselves in northern Bunyoro. At a slightly later date, the Madi and the Lugbara, overflowing from the Sudan, settled in large numbers in the north of the Gulu and West Nile districts. They were followed by outlying sections of the Kakwa and Kuku tribes, whose languages belong to the Bari family.

These Nilotes are preponderantly mesaticephals, and are divisible into two groups. The larger consists of tribes, the Lango, the Acholi, the Alur, the Jopadola, the Chopi, the Kakwa and the Kuku, who have a comparatively large element of the Hamitic in their composition. They are normally very dark-skinned and have narrower lips and better formed, thinner noses than is usual among negro races; they are of medium stature and well proportioned, the great majority being of excellent physique. The Lugbara and the Madi, who form the other group, are of a different physical type, being related in this respect as in language to the mesaticephals of the Congo. Their features are usually coarse and their noses broad, and they are darker than the other Nilotes; they show the same admirable physical development but are inclined to be burly. The pseudo-Mongoloid characteristics<sup>15</sup> which occur also in the southern Sudan and Nigeria are common in individuals of both tribes. All peoples of both groups remove certain teeth (usually the two front incisors) from the lower jaw, and practise cicatrization.

The people of each group have sufficient cultural affinities to show that they are closely akin; between the two groups there is evidence of a much more remote relationship. Apart from the physical characteristics, the principal connecting link between the groups is their rain-making ceremonies, which, where the Madi and Lugbara are concerned, involve the use of zealously guarded sacred stones. While, among the tribes of the other group, the original ritual with tribal stones would appear to have become obsolete, there seems little doubt, in view of the practices of their near relations in the Sudan, that they also inherited this culture, but, particularly the Uganda Lango, abandoned it in favour of apparently more effective ceremonies with a Hamitic derivation.

The Acholi, Lango, Jopadola and Lugbara have essentially monotheistic religions. Jok, the supreme Being of the Acholi and Lango, being regarded with a reverence which appears almost Semitic in spirit. Although he is recognised in his different manifestations – a development not unusual even in more highly intellectual religions – this does not detract from his fundamental oneness. Among the Jopadola, the conception of Jok has been merged in the Bantu belief in Were, a benevolent spirit whose chief services to mankind are in connection with fertility; and the Alur have modified Jok by borrowing largely from Banyoro mythology, even going as far as to identify him with the spirit of Kabarega. It is probable that the Madi had also a monotheistic religion at one time, but the divinity has been localised in sacred trees and in the process has lost universality.

All the Nilotes are agriculturalists and keep cattle, where the nature of their country permits, as an important but secondary occupation. There is no social distinction attached by them to cattle-keeping,

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<sup>15</sup> Seligman: *Pagan tribes of the Nilotic Sudan*, p. 20

and, as will be shown, their attitude towards land has a similar democratic bias. Their economic development has been slow, by comparison with that of the principal Bantu tribes, but this is due neither to lack of intelligence nor absence of will to advance. Their robustness (due no doubt to their balanced diet of grain and meat) and cheerfulness have made them invaluable as labourers in the better-developed parts of the Protectorate, and they supply the armed forces with the larger part of the serving troops.

The third, and last, great subdivision on a racial basis of the tribes of Uganda consists of the Half-Hamites – the Teso, with whom may be classed the Gang-speaking Akokolemo, the Karamojong, with the closely allied Jie and Dodoth of the Karamoja district, and the Sebei. Except for the last, these peoples apparently represent a fusion between Nilotes and Hamites, in whom the Hamitic strain predominates. The arrival of the Teso in the swampy area to the north-east of Lake Kyoga which they have made their home, probably at the same time as the Nilotes were advancing southward in disconnected waves, was the result, according to their own traditions, of their being forced out of their former lands by the Karamojong. Both peoples have very similar languages, allied to Turkana, but the Teso are now agriculturalists and the Karamojong have always been semi-nomadic pastoralists. The members of both tribes are well but not heavily built and very dark skinned; the majority is apparently mesaticephalic<sup>16</sup>.

There was formerly no tribal organisation in either tribe, and the family was the most important unit in social life. Both acknowledge a supreme being (Teso, Ajokiti; Karamojong, Akuji), but whereas the Teso believe in reincarnation – but not in an after life nor in the transmigration of the soul – and engage in ancestor worship, the Karamojong do not believe in the continuance of the spirit after death.

The Sebei, who are now settled in the highlands of Mount Elgon in the north of the Bugishu district, form the only branch in the Protectorate of the Suk-Nandi division of the Half-Hamites. They themselves relate that they formerly occupied a far wider area in the plains until, weakened by a pestilence, they were forced up the mountains by the Karamojong. They worship a supreme being, (Jinteti, but have other gods and spirits, and witchcraft formerly played an important part in their lives. They were formerly pastoralists, but are now turning more and more to agriculture.

It will have been patent throughout the foregoing sketch that the population of Uganda has no natural unity and only that degree of cohesion which results from their being included within the artificial boundaries of the protectorate. It should, however, be stated that, through the application of all tribes, in accordance with the principles discussed towards the end of the preceding chapter, of the advanced administrative organization evolved by the Baganda, the beginnings of political unity are making themselves apparent. Nevertheless, there exists no indigenous civilisation suited to the needs and according with the traditions of the whole people. It has therefore been sought, in so far as is consistent with the advancement of the population as an entity, to preserve for each tribe the best elements in its own culture. The resulting developments in every sphere of native life are indicated in succeeding chapters.

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Clarke, well known physician, philanthropist and politician, in one of his articles in *New Vision* c. 2012, asked why Africans have less nasal hair than Europeans when Africa is far dustier than Europe and therefore would be more advantageous for Africans from an evolutionary perspective.

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<sup>16</sup> Sir Harry Johnston considered that the Karamojong had physical affinities with the Bantu, but has not afforded any substantial evidence in support of this contention, and probably had limited opportunities of observation.