

**A DIVIDED COUNTRY – MICROHISTORICAL  
PERSPECTIVE TO THE PRESIDENTS AND AUTHORITY  
IN UGANDA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to examine the developments in Ugandan society through two questions. Firstly, how the cleavage between northern and southern parts of the country evolved after the country gained its independency? Secondly, what has the position of the Acholi tribe been in the Ugandan polity? The study aims to describe in a narrative form the tenures of the Ugandan presidents and the developments of the two phenomena. Methodologically, this study utilizes a variation of microhistory together with the concepts of authority by Max Weber and 'patrimonialism' as Christopher Clapham has defined it.

The observations of these developments have been divided into periods that correlate with the terms of each president of Uganda. The study utilizes second hand research material, such as political biographies and literature, as its primary source. Terms of Yusuf Kironde Lule, Godfrey Binaisa and Tito Okello are observed only through second hand material. The authentic research material consists of speeches by presidents Apollo Milton Obote and Yoweri Museveni. These speeches, together with the second hand material, are used as research material in the observation of Obote's, Idi Amin's and Museveni's terms.

There are two main lines of division between the north and the south. The first divided Buganda from the rest of the country from independence till the rule of Okello. The second division from Museveni's tenure onward changed the economic and political balance as the line moved more towards the north. Uganda has been ruled from the southern Buganda district during its independence. The importance of the Buganda district resulted in the increased importance of charismatic authority and neo-patrimonial structures in the governance. Those integrated into neo-patrimonial networks have been in the political centre of Uganda. Those who have been objects of charismatic authority by the presidents have been basically all other social groups.

The position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity has varied from the political elite and military career during Obote's first term to no position at all or to victims of violence during Amin's regime. Furthermore, the chaotic situation during Obote's second term as well as Okello's term gave rise to guerrilla movement that some of the Acholi ex-soldiers joined as a reaction to the loss of their previous power status. The status of the Acholi today has remained relatively marginal.

Key words: Uganda, East Africa, African politics, Acholi, authority, patrimonialism

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## TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tarkastella Ugandan yhteiskunnan kehitystä kahden eri kysymyksen kautta: Kuinka pohjoisen ja etelän jako on kehittynyt itsenäisyyden aikana sekä millainen on acholi-heimon asema Ugandan politiikassa? Tutkimus kuvaa narratiivien avulla eri presidenttien valtakausia sekä näiden kahden ilmiön kehitystä. Metodologisesti tutkimus hyödyntää mikrohistorian muunnelmaa yhdessä Max Weberin auktoriteetti-käsitteiden sekä Christopher Claphamin mukaisen uus-patrimonialismin käsitteen kanssa.

Kysymysten tarkastelu on jaettu jaksoihin, jotka vastaavat Ugandan presidenttien virkakausia. Tutkimuksen päämateriaali koostuu poliittisista elämänkerroista ja kirjallisuusmateriaalista. Näiden lähteiden kautta tarkastellaan erityisesti Yusuf Kironde Lulen, Godfrey Binaisan sekä Tito Okellon virkakausia. Autenttinen tutkimusmateriaali koostuu Apollo Milton Oboten sekä Yoweri Musevenin puheista, joita käytettiin yhdessä kirjallisuusmateriaalin kanssa tarkasteltaessa Oboten, Aminin sekä Musevenin kausia.

Pohjoisen ja etelän välillä on löydettävissä kaksi pääjakoa. Ensimmäinen erotti Bugandan alueen muusta yhteiskunnasta aina itsenäistymisestä Okellon hallintoon saakka. Toinen merkittävä jako muutti taloudellista ja poliittista tasapainoa, kun se siirtyi pohjoisemmaksi Musevenin kaudella. Ugandaa on maan itsenäisyyden ajan hallittu Bugandan alueelta käsin. Alueen tärkeys on aiheuttanut karismaattisen auktoriteetin ja toisaalta uus-patrimonialististen rakenteiden korostumisen Ugandan hallinnossa. Ne, jotka olivat osa uus-patrimonialistista verkostoa, kuuluivat Ugandan poliittiseen keskiöön, kun taas ne, jotka kuuluivat tämän ulkopuolelle, olivat karismaattisen auktoriteetin harjoittamisen kohteita.

Acholien asema politiikassa vaihteli poliittisesta eliitistä ja sotilasurasta Oboten ensimmäisellä kaudella aseman katoamiseen ja väkivallan uhreiksi joutumiseen Aminin kaudella. Oboten toisen kauden sekä Okellon kauden kaoottinen tilanne synnytti kapinallisia sissiliikkeitä, joihin entiset acholi-sotilaat liittyivät vastareaktionaiemman valta-asemansa katoamiselle. Acholien asema on pysynyt suhteellisen marginaalisena tähän päivään asti.

Avainsanat: Uganda, Itä-Afrikka, Afrikan politiikka, acholi, auktoriteetti, patrimonialismi

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

DRC	Democratic republic of Congo
Frelimo	Frente de Libertacao de Mosambique
Fronasa	Front for National Salvation
HDI	Human Development Index
HSM	Holy Spirit Movement
HSMF	Holy Spirit Mobile Forces
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally displaced people
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
KY	Kabaka Yekka
NRA/C	National Resistance Army/Council
SPLA	Sudan People Liberation Army
TPDF	Tanzanian People's Defence Forces
UBoS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNLA	Uganda National Liberation Army
UPM	Uganda Patriotic Movement
UPDA	Uganda People Democratic Army
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Forces

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

In a warning letter sent to Acholi elders, Kony warned: "You Acholi have refused to support us. We shall now teach you a lesson." In the months that followed, on April 17, 1995, Kony sent his now dead deputy, Otti Lagony and his trusted, Vincent Otti to the latter's home county of Atiak in Gulu to carry out Uganda's largest massacre in a single day. Over 250 people mostly women and children were hacked or shot to death on that black and sad day-dashing all hopes for peace.

– *The Monitor*, 13 January 2008  
Frank Nyakairu

Uganda has efficiently managed to reduce poverty during the last decade. However, northern Uganda remains an exception. The region did not report any major improvements in the well-being of house-holds during the 1990s. The national poverty head count index has declined from 56% in 1992 to 34% in 1999. In northern Uganda, the decline had been much slower with a decrease only from 72% to 64% during the same period. (Ssewanyanya et al. 2007) The poor development in the north attributed to the civil war raging in these parts of the country since 1986. Currently, there are approximately 1.3 million people in the internally displaced people's camps. The aim of this study is to trace the social and political roots of this civil war. This chapter presents the structure of the study and how it proceeds. Secondly, the overall aims of the study will be presented in this chapter, as well as the research questions and what input study is going to make to the wider discussion about the reasons for the longevity of the conflict between the National Resistance Army (NRA) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). We shall also familiarize ourselves with Uganda as a country through statistical information.

The second chapter of the study focuses more closely on the conflict itself by describing how the LRA and its predecessor the Holy Spirit Mobile Force (HSMF) were created after Yoweri Museveni took control in Uganda in January 1986. Multiple theories have been written to explain why the conflict was created first of all, and why it has lasted as long as it has. These theories vary from Morten Boås's Acholi meta-narratives (Boås 2004) to the militarization of the Ugandan politics (Omara-Otunnu 1987). One line of the discussion accuses the Ugandan government of mass murdering the Acholi and covering it under the conflict against the LRA (Olara A. Otunnu). These theories will be examined more closely in the chapter three.

As a research method, this study utilizes an elaboration of microhistory, combined with different concepts of authority. Microhistory will be in a closer examination in chapter five. The method gives us a view of society and its social networks within the examined time periods. Microhistory, as a method, has been described by Cerrutti (Cerrutti 2004) as a trampoline, from which the researcher can take off to look further into a particular society and to its social relations.

The time periods examined in this study start from Uganda's independence in 1962 and end with the aftermath of the latest military coup in 1986. The period is divided into shorter cycles according to the time that each president ruled Uganda. The Ugandan presidents and their tenures from independence until today are the following: Apollo Milton Obote between 1962–1971 (between 1962 and 1966 Obote was Prime Minister), Idi Amin between 1971–1979, Yusuf Kironde Lule 1979–1980, Godfrey Binaisa 1980, Obote for the second time between 1981–1985, Tito Okello in 1985 and, lastly, Yoweri Museveni from 1986 until present day. For each period, there are two specified research questions which are: How the cleavage between the north and the south has evolved during Uganda's independency and, secondly, how the position of an ethnic group called the Acholi has shifted in the Ugandan polity during the independence. The relevance of these questions to the conflict situation has also been noticed by Morten Boås (Boås 2004, 286). In the following chapter, the content and relevance of these questions are considered more closely together with the aims and objectives of this study.

## **1.1 Research focus and the research questions**

The conflict between the NRA and the LRA has now lasted for over twenty years. The situation in northern Uganda has been studied by many scholars and from many perspectives. One particularly relevant study has been conducted by Morten Boås, who has argued for the importance of the so-called Acholi meta-narratives (Boås 2004, 286). The meta-narratives are the outcomes of a story telling and they can be used to construct social reality. In this case Boås has underlined the meaning of two particularly important meta-narratives. The first is the status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity and the second is the question concerning the state of Uganda betraying the Acholi people. The position of the

Acholi in the Ugandan polity, together with the question asking how the cleavage between the north and the south has evolved during the country's independency serve as the research questions of this study.

Although Uganda is a multiethnic state, it would be highly simplified to say that we could fully explain this conflict by ethnic rivalry and hatred, or merely by ethnic nepotism. In order to understand the dynamics of this conflict, we must understand the immediate root causes and the motivations of the actions. In addition to the two research questions, the main cross-cutting issues which will be look at are: how authority practiced by each of the presidents has created and fuelled the conflicts during the independency of Uganda, and how these conflicts are interlinked together. This interlink will be shown in the form of a narrative. The study will examine how these conflicts have formed a continuum to society, and how this continuum connects the history with the present. Regarding the first issue, we will also see how modern authority has been in contradiction with traditional practices. The problems inherited from the colonial and the immediate post-colonial periods, such as the difficulties to connect the modern with the traditional, are prevalent in the African continent (Kivimäki & Laakso 2000, 12). This problem also prevails in Uganda.

In general political actions on the African continent tend to be influenced by ethnicity and tribalism. States in Africa, such as Uganda, are relatively young and people may identify themselves along ethnic and tribal lines rather than in relation to the borders of the nation-states. To fully understand this study, it is important that one understands the meanings of 'ethnicity' and tribe. One basic definition of an ethnic group according to Thomson would be "*a community of people who have the conviction that they have a common identity and common fate based on issues of origin, kinship ties, traditions, a shared history and possibly a shared language*" (Thomson 2000, 58). Ethnicity could be defined as an imagined community that is determined by other factors than geographical borders. The ethnic divisions in Uganda are presented more closely in section 1.3. Like ethnicity, tribes are often taken as a precondition when discussing the reasons of the conflicts in Africa. Some see tribes as a memory from the pre-colonial past. In fact, tribes are modern social creations. African tribes, as concepts have gained importance only over the last 150 years. Only few communities could have been described as having tribes prior to colonialism (Schraeder 2000, 117).

The Great Lakes area has been very conflict sensitive during the 20th century. This study will show that the conflict in Uganda has its roots mainly in domestic problems. Moreover, because of the weakness of the state, this conflict has spilled over the state borders at least to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan. Although we will see that this conflict has domestic roots, it is clear that the different rebel groups acting within the Ugandan borders have gained international support in the forms of equipment and money. This is an effect that results from the weakness of the state structures. The sovereignty of the state in the Great Lakes region is respected neither by the states nor by the rebel groups. This results in a situation where the neighboring countries are willing to create buffer zones inside the borders of a given neighbor country to be able to interfere with the politics of that state, or control the rebel activity coming from that country (see example Fade, J.D and Tordoff 2002). I have acknowledged that the conflict in Uganda has spread across the borders and that the rebel groups have gained assistance from other governments. However, this study will concentrate on the domestic roots and domestic developments. The reason for the internationalization of the conflict, at least in Uganda, is that the weakness of the state structures combined with the type of authority practiced, have created a space where the rebels and the foreign countries may operate across the borders. We will see that the weakness of the state borders is more of a consequence of, rather than a reason for, the conflicts in the Great Lakes area.

## **1.2 Uganda**

Uganda was formed under the British East-African protectorate in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the unification of several kingdoms, which were: the Buganda, the Bunyoro, the Busoga, the Ankole, the Bukonjo, the Chieftaincy of Alur, the Chieftaincy of Teso and the Toro (MyUganda 08.01.07). The Buganda region has always been the most influential one in the Ugandan economic, cultural and, for most of the time, in the political life. The British government kept the monarchial traditions alive during their rule, but the first prime minister of independent Uganda, Apollo Milton Obote, temporarily abolished the system. This happened in 1966, when he forced the king of Buganda and the first president of Uganda, Sir Frederick Edward Muteesa II, to exile. This was the first military coup d'état in the history of the independent Uganda. President Yoweri Museveni again activated the system of monarchies in 2000. This meant in practice that every kingdom had again its

own official king who nevertheless does not possess any political power in the state business (MyUganda 08.01.07). The abolition of the monarchs has been an important act for a leader who has not enjoyed full support of the citizens. This can be explained with the conflict between nationalism and tribalism in the African politics (Wallerstein 2000, 6). This conflict has pervaded also the political history of Uganda. However, this will not be the focus of this present study.

### Uganda in statistics

Uganda lies in East Africa, at the center of the Great Lakes region. It is situated astride the equator. The country is land locked, with Kenya in the east, Sudan in the north, Democratic Republic of Congo in the west, Rwanda in the south-west and Tanzania in the south.



Picture 1: Map of Uganda.

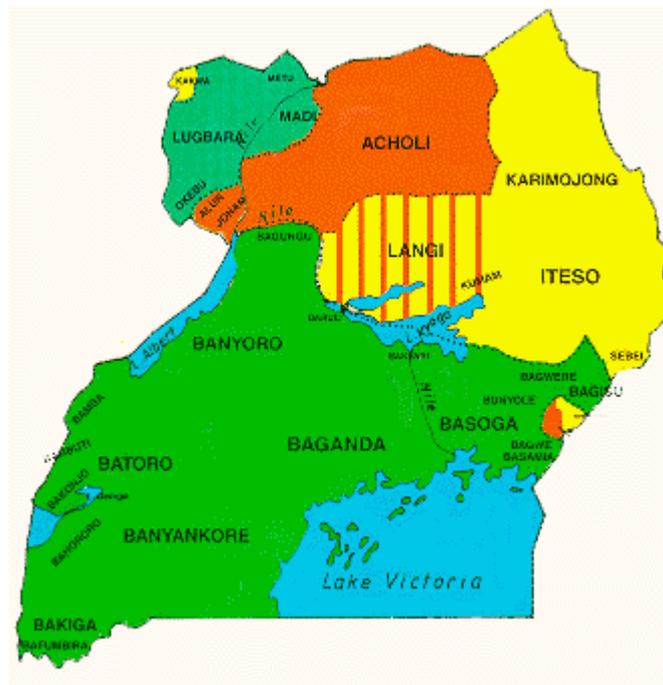
The population of Uganda is currently about 29,195,754. The annual population growth rate is 3.37 %, while the total fertility rate is 6.71 children born per woman (2006 est.). Life expectancy of the population in average is 52.67 years. The estimated AIDS prevalence in 2003 was 6.4%, albeit the rate is currently growing. (World Bank 2008) The AIDS prevalence has been one the main factors lowering the life expectancy. As we can

see from table 1.1 below, Uganda is ethnically divided. The main religions in Uganda are: Roman Catholic 33%, Protestant 33%, Muslim 16% and indigenous beliefs 18%. Altogether there are 46 official languages. (CIA World Fact Book 20.12.06).

Table 1: Ethnic groups by percent of total population

Ethnic group	%
Baganda	16.9 %
Banyole	9.5 %
Basoga	8.4 %
Bakiga	6.9 %
Iteso	6.4 %
Langi	6.1 %
Acholi	4.7 %
Basigu	4.6 %
Lugbara	4.2 %
Bunyoro	2.7 %
Other	29.6 %

Source: CIA World Fact Book



Bantu ■ Luo ■ Luo/Nilotics  Madi Moru ■ Nilo ■

Picture 2: Uganda divided according to tribes. Source MyUganda

Uganda gained its independence from Great Britain in 1962. The current government type is the republic. The country is divided into 69 administrative districts. In 1995 the government restored the legal system based on the English Common Law. In the same

year, the constitution was amended and multiparty system was introduced. The president is appointed to a five-year tenure. The last elections were held in 2006 when Yoweri Museveni was re-elected with 59, 3% of the votes. Kizza Besigye come second with 37, 4% of the votes.

In the globalizing world economy, Uganda's role has mainly been to produce unrefined agricultural commodities. The labor force is concentrated to the agricultural sector, with 82 % of the total labor force in the agriculture and only 5 % in the industry. The rest, 13 %, are in the service sector. Statistics of unemployment are currently not available. Uganda's main agricultural products for export are: coffee, fish, tea, cotton and flowers. The total values of the exports were \$1.004 billion in 2006. The main destinations for exports are Belgium 9.9 %, the Netherlands 9.4 % and France with 7.9 % of the total exports. However, as we take a look at the main import partners, the statistics differ drastically: Kenya 34.1 %, United Arab Emirates 8.5 % and China with 7.1 % of total imports. The value of total imports in 2006 was estimated to be \$2.249 billion. The same year, Uganda's external debt was \$ 1.136 billion. Despite its problems, Uganda's economy grew 5.3 % during 2006. (CIA World Fact Book 30.11.2007)

In the UNDP's human development index (HDI) from 2005, Uganda rates at the level of medium human development with a rank of 154 out of 177 countries. The country's HDI value was 0.505, whereas Iceland, which was number one, had a value of 0.968. The HDI measures country's achievements with three basic dimensions of human well-being: life expectancy, education and purchasing power parity. (UNDP 2007)

## **2. THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN UGANDA – OVERVIEW**

For twenty years, Uganda has suffered of the conflict between the government's National Resistance Army and the Lord's Resistance Army of the rebels. If we look at this conflict as separate from earlier conflicts and rebel activity, as is usually done, it began in 1986 after Yoweri Museveni had taken control of the state machinery. During the civil war between Obote's second government and the NRA, the Acholi fought on the same side as the government. In 1985, before the NRA gained its complete victory, Acholi generals made a military coup d'état and ousted Obote from power. This was the first time in Uganda's history when a group of Acholi controlled the state machinery. However, the weak government of General Tito Okello did not last for long. In January 1986, Yoweri Museveni made a successful military coup d'état and the National Resistance Council took control in Uganda.

### **2.1 Formation of the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces**

After the fall of the Ugandan government's army in 1986 (Uganda National Liberation Army, UNLA), thousands of former Acholi soldiers fled back to their home regions in the north. Former peasants who had been fighting in the army for many years found it hard to adjust back to their previous ways of life. In the Acholi culture, people who had committed killings were held as impure. This was why the former soldiers, who were returning home, were treated as strangers and outsiders. Excombatants were social outcasts and, eventually, the Acholi elders lost their authority over the younger generation, and therefore the northern Gulu district degraded into a power vacuum. These former soldiers of the UNLA began to cause disorder inside their own Acholi tribe (Van Acher 2003, 24). The internal conflict of the Acholi tribe was exacerbated when the new NRA battalion was stationed in Gulu. The NRA battalion consisted of soldiers, who had been fighting against the Acholi in the civil war. The NRA now took their revenge and began to terrorize the Acholi civilians. At this point, many of the former soldiers took their weapons and joined the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA), which had been formed in refugee camps inside the Sudanian borders. The UPDA also terrorized civilian population during its fight against the government army (Behrend 1998, 107-109). Now the situation was that the Acholi civilians were terrorized by the army of the government as well as by the UPDA guerrillas.

Before these events and, at the same time when the Museveni led NRA declared war against Obote and eventually Tito Okello, a young woman called Alice Auma practiced traditional healer rites in her Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) organization in northern Uganda. After Museveni had defeated Obote's and Tito's UNLA troops, and after the Acholi internal and external pressures started to rise, Alice Auma began to allegedly receive orders from a spirit called Lakwena to organize the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF), and to start a war against Museveni's impure regime. At its strongest point in 1986, the strength of the HSMF relied on some 7000 – 10 000 soldiers (Behrend 1998, 107). The army of the HSMF advanced all the way to Jinja, about 30km from Kampala, where the forces of the NRA eventually defeated it. Alice Auma fled to Kenya where she died in a refugee camp on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2007 (The Monitor 22.01.07). After Alice's escape, her practices and discourse were first continued by her father Severino Lukoya, who fought between 1987 and 1989, and then by her alleged cousin, Joseph Kony, who today is the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (Behrend 1998, 108). What is worth noting in the HSMF and also in the LRA is that they were, and are, based on moral and religious values. For example, the NRA and the UNLA are both based on secular ideologies. The HSMF was organized as a conventional army, except that the leader was a spirit, Lakwena. There were also other spirits influencing but they were under Lakwena in the chain of command.

## **2.2 The Lord's Resistance Army**

The early life of Joseph Kony is not well known. What is known for sure is that he comes from Gulu district, and he claims to be a cousin of Alice Auma (Behrend 1998, 115). Kony gathered his own HSM army at the same time as Alice's army was witnessing its own peak. He offered co-operation with Alice's HSMF, but she refused and humiliated Kony, and so their armies began to rival (Behrend 1998, 116). Eventually, the rivalry of these two groups escalated to an open conflict. After Alice's defeat to the NRA troops in Jinja, some of her soldiers switched sides to Kony's HSM. He adopted the religious basis from Alice's HSMF and continued her legacy. Kony's guerrilla army did not engage in full war with the NRA (as Alice did), but he did hold on to guerrilla tactics. In May 1988, the government signed a peace treaty with some factions of the UPDA, while other factions joined to

Kony's HSM. After this, the name HSM was changed to the Uganda People's Democratic Christian Army (UPDCA). This was because the leader of the UPDA factions, commander Odong Latek, gained strong influence among this new joint group. After Odong Latek was killed and Kony regained full command, the name was changed again, now to the Lord's Resistance Army (Behrend 1998, 116). At this point the conflict spread over the state boundaries and several states became involved.

The LRA realized its operations in the northwest corners of Uganda where the bordering countries are The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan. Joseph Kony gained support from the Sudanese government in the form of arms, training and military equipment. The reason why the Sudanese government was willing to support the LRA was because the Government of Uganda supported the rebel group called Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) (Behrend 1998, 116). Today, the LRA has also crossed the borders of the DRC. This was a necessary move after the Sudanese government and the Government of Uganda ended up signing a treaty concerning the end of support to the rebels acting inside each other's territories. Kenya has obtained an important role as a mediator in the peace negotiations between the NRA and the LRA. There have been negotiations between high-level representatives from the NRA and the LRA in Nairobi. Safe-havens inside the borders of Sudan have been arranged for the rebel soldiers, so that they do not have to be afraid of being ambushed by the forces of the NRA. Although the rebels should be safe inside these safe-havens, they are not wanted by the Sudanese government.

There were few differences between the HSMF and the LRA. One was that the LRA began to move across state borders, while the HSMF only influenced the internal politics of Uganda. The formation of the HSMF was mainly a response to an extremely hard external and internal pressure to the Acholi tribe. The LRA, on the other hand, was created without religious basis and it had not been created as much out of compulsion as the HSMF had been. The religious practices were copied from the HSMF. One *raison d'être* of the LRA was that men, who had lived long for an army life, could not adjust to normal living after the conflicts ended (Behrend 1998, 115). Thousands of men who moved back to the northern districts were discriminated against by their own people. This was because, according to Acholi traditions, they were held to be impure by the killings they had committed in the army. These former soldiers were easily recruited to differing rebel

groups that operated in northern Uganda at the time. These men were almost indifferent whom and what they fought for. The common people have suffered enormously during this conflict. Firstly, they were and are hunted by the LRA troops who are making a living of kidnapping and selling children and women (Behrend 1998, 116). Secondly, the government army accused the civilians of co-operating with the LRA, and thus, the civilians cannot rely on protection by the government. There is also a discourse that suspects the government of deliberately commanding HIV positive soldiers to rape Acholi women and girls (Van Acker 2003, 23).

### **2.3 Situation today in Northern Uganda**

As already seen, the northern parts of Uganda perform relatively poorly in term of poverty reduction and human development. The poor development is mainly a result of the conflict, that affects the government’s ability to provide services in the north. The raging conflict has forced many households of the area to abandon their source of income and move to Internally Displaced People’s (IDP) camps.

This “migration” to IDP camps results in economic inefficiency of northern Uganda. The civil war has brought misery, as the LRA has become infamous of its killings, abductions and uses of child soldiers. By 2005, there were 250 IDP camps with a population of over 1.8 million people (Ssewanyana et al. 2007). As the conflict has brought a threat of becoming a victim of serious violence, the overall risk of being a victim of physical violence is not, however, exceptionally high in Northern Uganda, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Men and women in Uganda who have been victims of physical violence at some point of their lives.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
West Nile	83 %	64 %
North	53 %	54 %
IDP in North	70 %	53 %
Eastern	72 %	77 %
Central	53 %	59 %
Western	41 %	56 %

*Source: Uganda bureau of statistics 2007*

Despite the major challenges, the northern parts are not the least developed in Uganda. Karamoja region in Eastern Uganda remains the least developed area, with lower human development indicators than, for example, for Acholi region (Ssewanyana et al. 2007, 4).

At the moment, there are on-going peace negotiations on the soil of Sudan, in southern town of Juba. Rebels of the LRA have retreated inside the borders of the DRC. The latest news of the peace negotiations tell that the LRA has become fractioned, as the Commander Joseph Kony has struggled for maintaining the control of the LRA against its own Vice-commander Vincent Otti. The men who hold the highest positions in the LRA remain on the side of the DRC, but they have sent a negotiator to Juba. The Ugandan news paper, *New Vision*, released news dating the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2007 that Kony has put Vincent Otti and five other high ranking members of the LRA to house arrest ([www.newvision.co.ug](http://www.newvision.co.ug) 15.11.2007). Kony has suspected that high ranking officers are plotting against him to take his position. He has also announced that the arrests do not threaten the peace talks of Juba. One of the main obstacles in the negotiations has been the question whether the LRA commanders should be brought to International Criminal Court (ICC) to answer to the accusations of human rights abuses. The ICC insists that the commanders must be brought to trial, but Kony and others have refused to surrender, if they will be prosecuted.

### **3. PREVIOUS STUDIES AND THEORIES FOCUSING ON THE SITUATION IN NORTHERN UGANDA**

The case of northern Uganda has been studied and theorized widely in academic discussions. This chapter will present three different theories that have created discourses to explain the conflict. The root causes for conflicts are always complicated, and while the theories and discourses presented in this chapter can explain some parts of the complex process, none of these gives a comprehensive description of the developments in the Ugandan society. These developments have enabled the conflict to fuel itself for a long time. The first is the meta-narrative of the status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity. The second is the economic and political marginalization of the northern districts of Uganda. This second discourse is not directly presented but it will come out as part of the other discourses. The third discourse is the militarization of Ugandan politics, and the fourth is the government of Uganda using terror of the LRA to cover its own wrongdoings.

#### **3.1 Acholi meta-narratives**

Morten Boås has conducted research in the Great Lakes region. He has argued that the current pattern of conflict in the Great Lakes region is best understood as a series of local and national conflicts which do not always have that much in common but become intertwined through the weakness of the state system in this region. He approaches the conflict in northern Uganda by using meta-narratives, which as a method connects the past and the present. Boås has presented a few different meta-narratives that have contributed to the political instability in Uganda. One has been the undefined status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity. Secondly, he has argued that the economic marginalization of North and West Uganda has also contributed to political instability. Boås also sees that the National Resistance Army and its leader, Yoweri Museveni, have used these meta-narratives for their own purposes. The NRA wants to show itself as the sole keeper of stability in Uganda. Meta-narratives can be powerful determinants of self and otherness. The question here is mainly about constructing collective memories and experiences. (Boås 2004)

Uganda is an ethnically divided country. Historically speaking the main ethnic line has been between the center and southern Bantu districts on one side and the Nilotic north on

the other. The Acholi identity was created by missionaries. They speed the process by developing a written language and producing written accounts of local histories and customs. In the colonial times, however, the northern parts of Uganda were marginalized. The British officers were mainly interested in Buganda areas. Boås argues that Acholi politics were strongly affected by the cheating done by colonial rulers when they ordered the Acholi to surrender their firearms. The British officers said that they wanted to register every firearm, but instead, they burnt most firearms of the Acholi. Betrayals were repeated by Amin when he murdered the Acholi soldiers, who had first been ordered to return to the barracks. The Acholi also felt betrayed by Museveni when the NRA ordered them to surrender their weapons in 1986. According to Boås, these betrayals came to be dominant meta-narratives of the Acholi. (Boås 2004)

During the short lived regime of Tito Okello, young Acholi men were recruited to his army. Their war against the NRA was disastrous. Surviving Acholi soldiers fled to the north and, in fear of revenge, joined the HSMF and the LRA. According to Boås, there are at least two reasons why the Acholi began to join the HSMF and to rebel against the central government. Firstly, they felt that they had been betrayed numerous times by the government. Secondly, the memories of the massacres committed by Amin's regime increased suspicion towards the NRA. Later on, these same meta-narratives had also been used by the LRA leader, Joseph Kony. Kony strengthens the meta-narrative of being betrayed and he also states that there is no room for the Acholi in the Ugandan polity. This ensures that the Acholi cannot integrate into the Ugandan society. (Boås 2004)

### **3.2 Militarization of Ugandan politics**

Frank Van Acker has argued that the main reason for the conflict to exist is that the army has become a tool for domestic politics. He adds that domestic politics increasingly serves the function of ethnic retaliation. This has hardened the ethnic boundaries and created a sizeable and unemployable class of militariat, which sought violence as the only means to interact with society. Those unemployed excombatants, whose job killing has been, were easy to recruit to the rebel groups that act in the northern districts. When the NRA seized power, the party banned all other political parties and means to challenge the ruling regime. Violence became the only way to oppose to the government and there were plenty

of unemployed soldiers to hire. The Ugandan military has always consisted of a relatively homogenous ethnic base. Obote's soldiers were mainly northerners (Langi, Acholi, and West Nile). Amin favored the Kakwa and the Sudanic people. When Obote returned to power, the northerners also returned. Lastly, after Obote's exile, Yoweri Museveni took the Banyankole and the Tutsi to his army. These rapid structural changes in the army of Uganda ensured that the soldiers and officers were always ill trained and there were, and are, plenty of former soldiers who cannot return to service of the army. According to Acker, the army in Uganda has become a public good for some ethnicities and a public bad for others. The case is the worst with those who are outplayed from participating in the army. The militarization of politics can be seen as a heavy argument when we remember that there have been four military coups in the history of independent Uganda. (Van Acker 2003)

### **3.3 Government uses the LRA to cover up their own human rights violations**

One line of discourse suggests that the government of Uganda uses the LRA to cover their true motifs. Olara A. Otunnu wrote in an article in *Foreign Policy*, that the public only sees the images of children hiding from the LRA soldiers and this is what the government wants. While the public in the developed countries only sees the atrocities committed by the LRA, they do not see the genocide by the government. Otunnu argues that Museveni's government wants to destroy everything that relates to the Acholi. The Acholi people are concentrated to camps and the government forces systematically destroy the Acholi physically, culturally and economically. To justify his argument, Otunnu refers to numerous peoples who have followed persecutions of the Acholi. He also refers to history and, particularly, to the horrors caused by Idi Amin. Amin persecuted the Acholi people and also other northern tribes. Amin's terror has contributed to the meta-narrative of the Acholi terrorized by the government. Otunnu also accuses that Museveni and Kony are allies and that they have a same goal of destroying the Acholi. Otunnu refers to Human Rights Watch and blames that Museveni deliberately orders his soldiers to rape women to spread AIDS. "*Governments soldiers are screened, and those who test HIV-positive are deployed to north, with the mission of wreaking maximum havoc on the local girls and women*". Behind all this killing is that the Tutsi wish to establish a new Tutsi based state to

Uganda. Other explaining factor, according to Otunnu, is that the southern districts are overpopulated, while the north is under populated. (Otunnu 2006, 44-46)

### **3.4 Position of this research among theories explaining the conflict in Uganda**

As the previous theories indicate, multiple discourses can be found that explain the reasons why the conflict in Uganda has lasted so long and why it has been so hard to end the vicious circle of violence. From these theories we can separate few central argumentations. Firstly, the division between the north and the south; secondly, the unclear status of some of the northern ethnic groups in the Ugandan polity, and thirdly, the central position of the Ugandan armed forces in domestic politics. A conspiracy theory can also be found that accuses the government of Yoweri Museveni. Naturally, the situation in Uganda has been complex and I want to stress that there is no single all-explaining theory, but rather a combination of many.

How I wish to contribute to these discourses is by shedding light into the continuity of the conflicts and to their accumulating nature. As I have already noted, my interest is to construct and observe the intellectual and moral relations that the Ugandan leaders have had towards the north – south divide and, on the other hand, to the status of the northern ethnic groups in the Ugandan polity.

The starting point of developing a modern Uganda was set in the pre-colonial and, partly, colonial times. Before the Europeans ventured deeper into the continent, the African “states” were somewhat similar to those of Europe in the middle ages (Herbst 2000, 37). By this is meant that the distribution of the population defined the boundaries, rather than vice versa. In pre-colonial times, African states had defined no borders, and authority radiated from the capital to the periphery (Herbst 2000, 40). The ownership of land was not a crucial question because there was plenty of free land. When the colonialists came, they draw geographic borders that have lasted with minimal changes until today. This is partly due to the decision of the Organization of the African Union (OAU) that African nations should respect the already established borders. After independence of the African countries, the OAU decided that the regime that controlled the state capital was a

legitimate ruler of at the particular state (Smith, B.C 1996). This decision increased the importance of controlling the capital city and areas near by it. How all this relates to Uganda will be shown as follows.

In Uganda, the most densely populated areas are in the south. The strategy of the British officers was that the army soldiers, who were stationed to the south, near Kampala, were brought from the northern parts of the country, because when the soldiers are in an unfamiliar territory they would be easier to control and the threat of armed resistance would be much lower (Omara-Otunnu, Amii 1987). The concentration of state institutions to Buganda district has enforced the importance of the area around the capital city. This has also had an important contribution to the development of the division between the north and the south. Kampala, the capital of Uganda, is located in the area of Buganda Kingdom, at the shore of Lake Victoria. While the political, economic and cultural centers of Uganda were concentrated to Buganda, the importance of controlling the kingdom was crucial for those who wished to control the state of Uganda. This is the question I also wish to explore: How the need to control the area of Buganda Kingdom has affected the cleavage between the north and the south in Uganda and how it has created the present subordinate position of the northern ethnic groups.

What has been missing in the previous studies is the role of authority and patrimonialism as ways to achieve political power and, particularly, how those in power have legitimated their actions of favoring their own ethnic group. In previous studies, patrimonialism has played too obvious a role, as it has been taken as given without really understanding the reasons behind the actions. In Uganda, authority is deeply connected with patrimonialism. It has been a way for the presidents to legitimate their actions, and authority has effectively been operationalized to gather political support. This study examines how the different forms of authority and patrimonialism have been used to gather influence in domestic politics. Saying that corrupted politicians merely favor their relatives and own tribes men is highly a simplification of the complex interaction of traditional and modern social relations.

Just as Boås has noted, I also believe that the conflict in northern Uganda is primarily domestic, but it has, from time to time, spread over national borders, because of the

weakness of the state to effectively control their peripheral areas. By doing this research, I wish to shed light into the question of how the conflict formed and why it still exists.

The last interesting point relates to the methodology utilized in this study. The authentic research material of the study is not very well known. In previous studies of Uganda, the speeches of the presidents have usually not been analyzed or presented. One main contribution of this study will be to show that microhistory may also be used in the observation of a developing country that differs from western culture, and that the observed time period of the society does not have to be far away in history. By observing the speeches combined with other material grants us a passage to see how the objects have experienced the events important to Uganda's future.

## 4. RESEARCH METHOD AND MATERIAL USED IN THE STUDY

In this chapter I will first introduce the microhistorical method. Secondly, I will explain why I chose to utilize this method and the concepts. Thirdly, I will present Max Weber's concepts of authority. The research material places certain constraints for the method and these challenges will be described and resolved as the chapter advances. My interest in this research is to reconstruct the intellectual and moral relations that Ugandan leaders have had towards the cleavage between the north and the south and, secondly, how the position of the Acholi tribe in the Ugandan polity has changed during independency. This type of approach is similar to that of the classical microhistorical study of Carlo Ginzburg. In his study, Ginzburg observed a life of a miller called Menocchio, who lived in sixteenth century Italy (Ginzburg 1982, *The Cheese and the Worm*). Although our studies differ in many ways from each other, there are still similarities in the overall aim and starting point.

Ginzburg's aim of reducing presumptions about ethnic backgrounds and social positions was also one of the one main reasons why this method was chosen for this study. The objects whose "eyes" are used to see further into society represent the political elite of Uganda. These elite consists, and have consisted, of representatives of multiple ethnic groups. That is why the idea of observing social structures with the aim of reducing academic presumptions has been so tempting. The aim is to construct and observe certain developments and social structures in society, and how the people at the center of events used those events and structures to their advantage. That was also the idea in Ginzburg's classical study.

As will be shown in the forthcoming chapters, each of the presidents of Uganda has come from a different ethnic group than the others. This study uses the microhistorical approach to observe what means the Ugandan rulers used to legitimize their actions in the context of the societies of their time. In other words, the overall focus is to study the interaction between society and its leader. The microhistorical method has formerly been utilized mainly to examine the world through the eyes of common peasants. Contradiction has been set between the commoner and the noble. After creation of the class society, the contradiction would take place between the social classes. However, I am aware that it can

be dubious to talk about a class system in the study of African societies. This is because the concept of class is excellent to describe the battle between haves and not haves in the old western societies. In this sense, 'class' belongs to the study of inequality. Wherever inequality exists, relationships between competing groups can be found. Politics is the key element solving conflicts between these groups.

Instead of classes, the contradiction mentioned exists between ethnic groups in Uganda. In a multiethnic society, like Uganda, it is not hard to imagine that one would find subordinate and dominant groups. In Uganda today, subordinate groups are mostly ethnic groups living in the north. For example, Apollo Milton Obote came from a northern tribe (Langi) as did General Tito Okello (Acholi) and father of Amin (Kakwa). The political and economic center of Uganda has been the southern Buganda district. From southern parts came the present President Yoweri Museveni (Ankole).

#### **4.1 Microhistory**

*“Although the lower classes are no longer ignored by historians, they seem to be condemned, nevertheless, to remain silent”* (Ginzburg 1992, xx)

The Preceding quote compresses the idea of microhistory in its purest form. Carlo Ginzburg has stated that with the microhistorical method it is possible to examine the relations between the subordinate and dominant classes (Ginzburg 1992, xiv). The interest in this study is to observe the interaction between society and its leaders. To achieve this purpose, I will reconstruct the intellectual and moral relations each leader of Uganda had towards the two research questions. Traditionally, historical research has been focusing on the lives of important historical persons and events. The microhistorical method focuses on small-scale events and the lives of ordinary people. Microhistory has been utilized by researchers to overcome ethnocentricity, which means getting rid of pre-existing categories and approaching social structure in its own terms (Ago 2004, 41). The method exposes something that is hidden from a traditional study of popular history. Let us now introduce ourselves with two classical microhistorical studies to give some perspective to microhistory in practice.

Good examples of classical microhistorical studies are, for instance Emmanuelle Le Roy Laduire's *Montaillou* (Le Roy Laduire 1975) and Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* (Ginzburg 1976). Emmanuel Le Roy Laduire examined the 13<sup>th</sup> century French village of Montaillou. His research material consisted of hearings of inquisition. In his work Le Roy Laduire described lives and belief systems of ordinary villagers. Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* reminded Le Roy Laduire's study of *Montaillou*. Ginzburg examined the popular culture of the sixteenth century as seen through the eyes of one ordinary man. His material consisted of inquisitional hearings of a miller called Menocchio. Ginzburg states that he opposes ethnocentrism and that this attitude had brought him not to a serial history, but to its opposite, a minute history (Ginzburg 1993, 22). According to Ginzburg, Roger Chartier wrote about *The Cheese and the Worm* that "*it is on this reduced scale only, that we can understand, without deterministic reduction, the relationship between system of beliefs and representations on the one side, and social affiliations on another*" (Ginzburg 1993,22). The benefit of a reduced scale study is that we can observe the belief systems without making any presumptions about person's ethnic or social background. This will be an advantage when we try to construct what kind of action; experiences and social relations are possible in a certain societal context. The research object of this study will be similar to those of the classical microhistorical studies.

Microhistory has been divided into two orientations. One concentrates on culture and the other concentrates on social relations in society. The culturally complex Uganda would be a difficult object for the culturally orientated microhistory, so we will be concentrating on the construction of social relations. Simona Cerrutti describes the differences between these orientations by noting that some researchers are interested in the social contextualization of historical objects and others in inscribing objects into their cultural contexts. The cultural orientation is usually interested in the investigation of fragments of behavior which reveals the cultural meanings actors in the past gave to their social universe. The social orientation, on the other hand, is more interested in the tracing of the social structure as the "tissue of relations" as Cerrutti puts it. Analyzing individual social, political and economic relations is a question of social context. Social rules and cultural norms are viewed via network of obligations. This is why when it's become interesting to study what possibilities for action there were for those individualities under the present research. Objective reconstructions of the resources open to actors and the constraint

imposed on their strategies requires that the researcher act as a critical reviser of their versions of the facts. (Cerutti 2004, 17-21)

As the present approach lies in social contextualization, it is also the essential starting point for analyzing the method. As our main research objects are the presidents of Uganda and, particularly, the reconstruction of their relations towards the questions of the status of the Acholi on the one hand, and the cleavage between the north and the south on the other hand. The idea of tracing individual paths and analyzing their social relations and political strategies comes from social microhistory and from both Ginzburg's and Le Roy Ladurie's classical studies. The methodological core in this study is microhistory, but the research focus may differ. The reason why the original microhistory approach differed was because history is based on events, and narrating it will leave some hypotheses and uncertainties. Of course we can never construct events exactly as a person has experienced them. The research material used in pure microhistory always contains gaps, as the inquisition memorandums did. We have to notice the problem of narrating historical events, which contains discontinuities. There are also some discontinuities in the material of this study. Speeches of Obote and Museveni are supported with the second hand data of political biographies. The accurate description of the research material will follow in the next chapter, but let us now observe how we can solve the problem placed by the nature of the research material.

There are a few reasons why the research material of this study places special attention to the question about discontinuity of historical events. Firstly, most of the material is not directly given by the object of research. This has traditionally been one demand for a microhistorical research in its purest form. The second reason is that the research material has been written by multiple researchers and writers. This means that the material contains even more discontinuities and pre-existing views and opinions than in the normal case of microhistory. Microhistorical research reconstructs a moment of a person's life and puts it into a narrative form. This narration is one thing that I take as a benefit. By writing research in a narrative form, the actions of the objects can be approached from the perspective of one person. The perspective chosen in this study is that of a Ugandan ruler, and it will be examined in the context of the society of his time by using Weber's concepts of authority. The role of the Weber's theory of authority will be to function as a framework

and it will also help us to overcome the problems brought by discontinuities of the research material.

Besides the unique nature of the research material, there is also the fact that Uganda is a considerably multiethnic society that places some restrictions worth noting. Carlo Ginzburg studied how an individual person has seen the world he/she lives in. In his famous book *The Cheese and the Worm*, Ginzburg described how a miller saw the world and the culture surrounding him. Ginzburg argued that the dominant culture, if there exists one, is also affected by culture of the so-called ordinary peasants (Ginzburg 1992, xiv). He was more interested in the cultural features of society.

We cannot expect to find any new historical facts from our research material, because writings of history are always seen through the eyes of the researcher and so they are always filtered by the ideologies of the researcher as well. I will not try to operate as a micro historian, who builds narratives from research material full of discontinuities. Instead, I will observe individuals through Weber's classical concepts of authority and the concept of patrimonialism as defined by Clapham. By analyzing the research material with the concepts of authority, I will try to find new approaches to the conflict in question. Several studies and theories about the origins of the Ugandan conflict can be found. These theories have been presented in chapter 3. Instead of explaining the conflict through ethnic divisions or as a mere competition for resources, I will find a new approach by examining contradictions between modernity and traditionalism.

## **4.2 Why an elaboration of microhistory?**

As we have seen, Uganda has been under the continuous vicious circle of violence since its independence. Reasons for violence are always complicated and in this study it is my purpose to create a new approach for examining the root causes of the conflict. This new perspective is an elaboration of microhistorical method. It can be used to observe how each of the Ugandan post-independence rulers formed their relation to the question of division between the north and the south, and secondly, to the question about the Acholi and their position in the Ugandan polity. The questions will be approached through the lives of heads of state. The research objects of this study possessed a considerable power position

in their society. Power in Ugandan society has been highly centralized, and taking presidents as objects of the study provides the best position for observing the rest of the society as well. Weber's concepts of authority will operate as a guideline of what to analyze and what is relevant for our purposes of research.

As Ginzburg notes, it is reasonable to ask what relevance there is to study small scale events (Ginzburg 1992, xx). The question can be answered in a similar way as Simona Cerutti did when she discussed Ginzburg's study: "*Menocchio life was simply the trampoline from which the analysis could take off to reconstruct a complex cosmology*" (Cerutti 2004, 22). This quote compresses also the idea of this study. The lives of presidents are the trampolines from which we analyze the society of Uganda. Study of the lives of the presidents alone is not particularly interesting as this research is meant to be a master's thesis for social and public policy. What makes this research interesting in the context of social and public policy is how we can link it to the question of authority. By using Weber's concepts of authority we can reveal contradictions between traditional and modern authority. That contradiction is created when modernity is pursued by the leaders for some members of society. We can argue that in Uganda the process of modernization is in a central position when we discuss the conflict in Northern Uganda. With this method and concepts we can also approach the process nature of this conflict.

### **4.3 Research material and process of analysis**

This chapter will describe the material, which was used during the analysis as well as the process of analysis. The focus in this study is in the actions of Ugandan presidents when their regimes were in power. The interest in this research is, first of all, to find out how the heads of state took a stand in the question of the position of the northern ethnic groups in the Ugandan polity.

In this study the authentic research material for both of Obote's tenures consists of three speeches he held. In these speeches, Obote analyzed events of his political career and the role of his UPC party in the Ugandan politics. The name of his first speech is "The role of the UPC in Uganda's independence". His second speech is: "Notes on concealment of genocide in Uganda". He held this speech in Lusaka, Zambia, in April 1990. The title of

Obote's third speech is "*Statement on the Uganda Situation*". This speech was held in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania in 1979. All of these speeches can be found at the official website of the UPC party: [www.upcparty.net](http://www.upcparty.net).

My primary research material of Apollo Milton Obote's regime consists of the following second hand source: *Obote A Political biography* by Kenneth Ingham (1994). This comprehensive political biography of Obote's life focuses on his political career. The second source which has been utilized is Jan Jelmert Jorgensen's *Uganda a Modern History*. This study focuses on Uganda's political history with a focus on economics. The third source which provided research material concerning Obote is edited by Christopher Clapham and it is called *African Guerrillas* (1998). There are two chapters focusing on the conflict in northern Uganda. In the first one, Pascal Ngoga has studied the guerrilla war lead by Museveni and his National Resistance Army. The second chapter is Heike Behrend's study of the HSMF and the LRA. This material gives a wide description of the Ugandan society and, especially, of the politics of Obote during both of his tenures.

For examining the rule of Idi Amin, the material of two eyewitnesses is used. The early days of Idi Amin's regime has been described by Judith Listowel in her book *Amin* (1973). Listowel was working as a journalist in Uganda during time of Amin's coup. She has given an authentic eyewitness description of Amin's character and politics. The second eyewitness description of Amin's rule is given Amin's governments' minister Henry Kyemba. He has described almost the entire period of Amin's regime in his book *Idi Amin verinen valtias (State of Blood)* (1977). Kyemba described the politics of Amin and how a promising political figure turned out to be a monster.

The primary material for both Lule's and Binaisa's tenures has been provided by Ingham, Jorgensen and Ngoga. Tito Okello's military regime was analyzed using the same materials as above together with Sathyamurthy's (1986) book *The Political Development of Uganda: 1900-1986*. Sathyamurthy made a comprehensive study of the Ugandan development from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present day. His focus has been in the political and economic developments of Uganda.

The authentic research material of Museveni's period consists of his speeches. One speech can be attained through the internet and it was held by Museveni to the army officers at

Jinja in 2002. The title of the speech is “Evolution and Modernization of Society”. This speech can be found from the official website of Ugandan government: [www.statehouse.go.ug](http://www.statehouse.go.ug). Other authentic material provided by Museveni himself are the two article collections named: *Selected Articles on the Resistance War* and *Consolidating the Revolution*. Both of these article collections are written by Museveni and they deal with the four year guerrilla war against Obote and Okello. Second hand research material concerning Museveni are provided by Pascal Ngoga in his article “Uganda: the National Resistance Army”, Frank van Acker in discussion paper: *Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army* and Morten Boås in article “Uganda in the Regional War Zone”.

Carlo Ginzburg has described microhistory as if it were a label attached to an empty container waiting to be filled (Ginzburg 1993, 10). In this study, the empty container is the type of the authority in the Ugandan politics. In practice, this method is operationalized in a following way. The second hand research material was read carefully. The actions of presidents relating to the observed research questions were separated from the other material. After the identified sections were separated, it is crucial to compare these findings with the descriptions given by the authentic research material on the same events. These actions were then compared with Weber’s categories of authority and to patrimonialism. The crucial thing is to understand the type of the authority in a given observed action. The type of the authority in the observed action draws us a picture of the relations of each of the president towards my research questions. The pictures that have formed from second hand political biographies were then again compared with the authentic research material described earlier in this chapter. This gives me an idea of how the object personally experienced and legitimized the motivations behind actions. It is also important to read carefully the authentic speeches and to make comparisons between them.

After having formed a picture of the type of the authority in my research material, I placed the separated events back to where they were taken. This enabled me to put these events in a narrative form to form an interpretation of each president’s term. Lastly, the narratives of the different presidents were combined into meta-narrative. It is necessary to note that it would be impossible to form a narration of only those events that directly relate to my research questions. If this would have been done, many interrelated and important observations would have been lost and the benefits of the microhistorical method would have been compromised.

#### **4.4 Position of the researcher in the microhistorical method**

As my primary material is non-authentic, I have to notice my position as an objective researcher. The most important role of the authentic material is to minimize those attitudes that are always present in the researcher when reading second hand historical descriptions. The voices of those who have written my second hand material are juxtaposed with authentic speeches from Obote and Museveni. All of these speeches directly relate to my research questions and they give voice to these two research objects. Through these speeches, two of my objects have a chance to give their own account of the events. For those four presidents that I did not find authentic material of, I have used a wider second hand material base. It has also to be noted that the studies serving as second hand material are not originally focused to observe the authority of a person.

The main academic discipline of the researcher is social and public policy, with familiarity development studies and political science as well. As a social scientist, I have no former experience of utilizing the microhistorical research method, but during this research process I have familiarized myself deeply with wide discussion concerning the utilization of the method. The researcher belongs to the social category of Western middle class male. Regarding East Africa, I have followed the political developments of the Great Lakes area for a long time. In 2005 I visited Uganda and Tanzania. That visit among other things inspired me to do this study

## **5. CONCEPTS OF AUTHORITY**

In the end, every government has to legitimize its rule. Without legitimacy a government has to deploy coercive methods to gain control of society. The nature of authority is central to the question of what measures the government is using to gain support and to maintain effective control of the central institutions. This chapter focuses on concepts that are used in this study to observe the root causes of the conflict in northern Uganda. These concepts help to describe how each of the presidents legitimized their politics and, more importantly, how each leader used authority in differing social contexts. We can also reverse this question by asking how the changing social context changed authority. These concepts will also be used to construct the relation that each leader had towards the surrounding society. Weber has categorized three different types of authority: legal-rational, charismatic and traditional (Weber 1964, 324). After the presentation of Weber's classical definition of the nature of authority, the concept of neo-patrimonialism by Christopher Clapham will be introduced. Clapham has not invented the concept of patrimonial authority but he has used it in his studies of African politics. We will also see from examples that patrimonialism has been, and is, in the centre position of Uganda's political history. Lastly, counter discourses will be presented to challenge Weber's and Clapham's authority concepts.

### **5.1 Weber's concepts of authority**

Max Weber has divided authority into the three types: Legal-rational, traditional and charismatic. Legal-rational authority is nearest to the western tradition of authority. Individuals in public offices possess power over other citizens and they exercise that power in accordance with legally defined structures. What justifies officers to use power over others are the widely accepted political aims and norms (Clapham 1992, 44). These aims are the normative basis of society and reflect the will of the majority. In legal-rational authority, the structures from which authorities operate are widely accepted as the most efficient way to reach the aims. The organizations of offices follow hierarchy in which a lower level official is in the supervision of a higher. What is crucial for these structures to work correctly is that officials strictly separate their private and public persons.

Separating private and public persons means that officials exercise their power accepting restraints placed on it. Officials should also treat all individuals impersonally according to the criteria laid by his office. Whenever officials are changed, new ones immediately begin to act in a similar vein. (Weber 1964, 329-330) This should lead to a situation where corruption of public officials is at a minimum stage. Clapham (1992, 44) states, that this type of pure authority can never be realized in optimum. The conflict appears between the private and the public self, which can never be truly separated. However he continues: *“The legal-rational idea none the less retains central importance, since it’s the only through this ideal that the enormous powers of modern state can be fully realized”* (Clapham 1992, 45). A simplest explanation why African countries fail to create development would be that they fail to create a legal-rational authority. After decolonization many of the African states adopted the state structures from previous colonial administration. Young and fragile states, however, could not create and hold on to institutions that were crucial for legal-rational authority and democracy.

The second type of authority is charismatic and it has been favored by third world authority research since 1950s (Clapham 1992, 46). The type describes a person, who by his own virtue and example has gained a position of authority. Persons are usually added with superhuman powers or qualities. Typical examples are messianic, religious leaders like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. Charismatic authority consists of elements drawn from society’s history, like achievements of guerrilla leaders, heroes of wars long gone or from practices of an indigenous religious figure. These authorities, if successful, can form new institutions tailor-made for them. The administrative staff is not chosen by their abilities to handle offices, nor by their social position, but by their charismatic qualities (Weber 1964, 358). Every war lord has his trusted follower and priests his apprentices; they will be in the position of authority appointed by the supreme leader. Authority which is mainly based on the charisma of a person is legitimate only as long as the governed believe in leader’s divine gift.

The last type of authority is traditional. This type was the typical legitimating force for the authority of medieval European kingdoms. Few dared to question the legitimacy of a ruler who inherited his position from his father or other person in the blood line. The person exercising authority is designated according to traditional transmitted rules (Weber 1964, 341). These usually long lived traditions sanctify the authority position. The power of a

person is handed down from the past in a way that has “always existed”. Traditional authority is usually not an all-powerful divine leader and his or her administrative staffs are giving their personal loyalty to the chief and not to a religious figure. Weber (1964) did suggest that this type of authority is gaining legitimacy for his commands in one of the two ways. First, in terms of traditions that determines the content of command and extent of authority. By overstepping his traditionally limited authority, the leader will endanger his status in the eyes of the obedient. Second, obligations of obedience of the personal loyalty are essentially unlimited. This would mean that tradition leaves the final decision of the extent of authority to a chief himself. The administration staff in this type is usually either people who are related to the chief in traditional ties, or people whose only ties to a chief are loyalty. (Weber 1964, 341) In any case, traditions are the main definers how the system of administration is formed. Ties that define how chief appoints his administration often lead to a situation where all the higher positions in society are in the possession of a definite family, clan or a race. Clapham has expressed the main differences of traditional and charismatic authority: “*Authority [traditional] is ascribed to a person rather than an office-holder, while in contrast to charisma, that person is firmly anchored in a social and political order*” (Clapham 1998, 47).

## **5.2 Neo-patrimonialism and authority**

Clapham has specified that the concept of the traditional authority is of neo-patrimonial type in Third World (Clapham 1992, 47). This specification is important because originally Max Weber created these three concepts of authority with European history in mind. Without Clapham’s previous studies of neo-patrimonial authority in Africa, this study could be criticized for using Western concepts in a foreign context. Patrimonial authority is a version of traditional authority transformed to fit Third World research. As we saw in the beginning of this chapter, traditional authority describes well, for example, medieval administration structures based on the feudal system. Clapham’s neo-patrimonialism is a form of governance in which relationships of patrimonial type pervade the administrative system that is formally constructed in legal-rational terms (Clapham 1998, 48). The basic idea of patrimonial authority is that posts in government institutions are mainly used to gain advantage for the ruler or for his relatives, rather than for the advantage of the

government as a whole. This results a situation where no one really cares what happens if it does not directly affect their interests.

According to Clapham, the basic problem with governance in many parts of the Third World is the certain features of neo-patrimonial rule (Clapham 1992, 72). The problem in neo-patrimonial structures is that the leader can utilize only very limited institutional resources because of the institutional weaknesses of the state. Limited institutional resources are created because institutions are constructed by favoring the leader's family or clan member. More problems will be created because the limits to the powers of office holders are not defined clearly, and it is not clear on whose behalf the officer exercises his powers. The system is held together by oath or kinship ties and not by hierarchies of administration. This means that the system will function as long as the leader is in power. (Clapham 1992, 47-48)

Amii Omara-Otunnu has written that, after the deposition of King of Buganda in 1966, Obote used a system of patronage to gain support inside the army. Obote stressed the meaning of language and ethnicity in increasing his support inside the army. Loyal soldiers and those troops who had the right background gained a huge budget increase. The allocation to the defence establishment in 1966 was \$17 025 000, which was 10 % more than the defence budget of Kenya and Tanzania combined. This system of patronage caused immediate problems in the discipline of the certain troops of the army. (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 78-79) After problems had started to occur in the army, Obote curbed the situation by creating a military police under the control of two of Major-General Idi Amin's associates. The problems brought by the system of patrimonial rule in the army were answered by creating a military police that worked under a high influence of General Idi Amin and not that of President Obote. In this case we can see the attributes of patrimonial relation because Idi Amin came from West Nile district, just as a high proportion of the military police did. It will be shown in following chapters that the previously described creation of military police played a major role in Amin's coup and also in later periods of his regime.

These events that have just been described show one example of how neo-patrimonial rule has been in a major role in the history of Uganda. However, some might argue that this research might have also been realized with different concepts, and previous examples are

naturally not enough to justify the usage of Weber's and Clapham's concepts of authority. There have already been numerous concepts and theories explaining the political history and development of Uganda. In the following chapters I will argue why I chose the concept of authority to be in such a central position in the research. I will do this by presenting Jackson and Rosberg's (1982) classification of types of authority in Africa. Lastly, I will challenge concepts of authority by Weber and Clapham by presenting counter discourses of familiarity syndrome and nepotism. By doing this, I want to engage in a dialogue between the concepts that I use and the concepts that others have used. Through the dialogue, I wish that the reader of this research has a better view of the field of research I am moving in.

### **5.3 Comparison with a previous study of authority in African politics and history**

Besides Christopher Clapham, Jackson and Rosberg have also used the concept of authority in their African studies (Jackson and Rosberg 1982). They argue that politics in Africa are more personalized and less restrained than in the tradition of the Western world. The consequences of such politics have usually increased political instability and occasionally the deterioration of the game of politics into a fight among personal and factional contenders of power. Jackson and Rosberg accept the way Max Weber has conceptualized authority but they want to reshape those concepts before applying it to Africa. They write that "*Our account of personal rule has been influenced by three distinctive traditions of analysis that hold such an authority-centered view of political and social systems: classical political theory, Weber's sociology of authority and comparative government theory*" (Jackson and Rosberg 1982, 8). Weber's concepts of authority offer a point of departure for their research. Weber is also the point of departure in this research. His concepts offer limits and guidelines which will be used together with the microhistorical method. This combination offers us a new way to observe how the rulers have affected certain developments in the Ugandan society. Unlike Weber, Jackson and Rosberg have classified four types of authority. These are: the prince, the autocrat, prophetic rule and tyrannical rule.

Jackson and Rosberg saw African politics as a game, the rules of which have not yet been institutionalized. In the absence of effectively institutionalized rules, the players are not restrained in any way. As the players play the game of politics without visible rules that should be governing the intercourse between civil society and government, the concepts of public interest and common good are not upheld. Personal rule in their point of view is a system of relations linking rulers, not with the public, but with patrons, supporters, clients and rivals who constitute the "system" (Jackson and Rosberg 1982, 19). The system is, therefore, structured by the politicians themselves and not by the institutions. The view in their research has been a rather holistic one. Those four types of authority named earlier describe the nature of authority in the whole continent and not in any particular country in a same sense as this research does. Jackson and Rosberg have classified African leaders to the following categories: The princes were: Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Hailese Lassie of Ethiopia. The autocrats were: Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast, Ahmadou Ahidjo of Cameroon and Omar Bongo of Gabon. The prophets were following: Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Sekou Toure of Guinea. And lastly, the tyrants were: Francisco Macias Nguema Biyogo of Equatorial Guinea and Idi Amin Dada of Uganda.

The conclusion of Jackson and Rosberg is that personal rule is expected to continue, but some features are likely to change. With the passage of time it is reasonable to assume that more stabilized and durable regimes of personal rule are likely to emerge in Africa. Sooner or later an effective ruler or ruling group will be capable to change the course of history. (Jackson and Rosberg 1982, 266) We have to notice that their research was completed before the regime of Yoweri Museveni emerged in Uganda. Museveni is an example of a personal ruler, who has been able to hold on to power for a long time.

Jackson and Rosberg have argued that it is possible to study African authority in a same way that is done in this research. However, there are three main differences between these studies. Firstly, Jackson and Rosberg have concentrated on the macro level, by giving a more overall description how authority is practiced in Africa. In this research, the view is less on the macro level of the whole continent. Instead, this study is concentrated on the history of a single country, Uganda. Secondly, in this study the aim is to understand how Ugandan leaders have affected the gap between northern and southern parts of the country. Jackson and Rosberg concentrated only on classifying different types of authority and they

did not consider how these types have affected the development of a certain significant phenomenon in a single country. In this study the observed phenomenon is the historical gap and today's conflict between the north and the south. We will also observe the place of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity. The third difference is in the concepts. Jackson and Rosberg have created their own four types. In this research, the concepts are Weber's traditional, charismatic and legal-rational and, lastly, Clapham's neo-patrimonial authority.

#### **5.4 Some counter discourses**

In this chapter, I will present counter discourses to challenge Weber's and Clapham's concepts of authority. I am not arguing that there is just one and only way to do this type of research. The fact that I am utilizing Weber's concepts of authority does not exclude concepts like familiarity syndrome and nepotism. However, I argue that these counter discourses are not suitable for the observation of the history of Uganda.

##### **Familiarity syndrome**

Omara-Otunnu created the concept of familiarity syndrome to describe the failure of Ugandan authority. He argues that British officials in the colonial administration strengthened their authority by creating and preserving social distance from the Africans. Omara-Otunnu continues that this created an aura of mystery around British officials. The Africans who succeeded British officials did not possess such an aura of mystery. New officials had grown up on equal terms with those who were now their subordinates. The consequences according to Omara-Otunnu were that a subordinate, who is already on familiar terms with the person placed in authority over him, may have less respect. The new authority may also feel insecure, knowing that his subordinates know him too well to fully respect him. Lacking respect, a subordinate may not carry out all instructions, and the super ordinate may have to resort to violence to secure obedience. (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 8-9)

Omara-Otunnu had used familiarity syndrome in his research on history of Ugandan military. This concept might be a useful tool to explain certain difficulties of administration. However, I do not find this concept particularly useful for this study

because this research covers longer periods of time. As Omara-Otunnu himself notes the effects of familiarity can be reduced by increasing education. It must be admitted that the familiarity syndrome might have something to say about Idi Amin. Amin received very little of formal education and, for example, he did not speak or read English at all. Obote and Museveni had received higher education and the familiarity syndrome probably would have not worked as well with them. Because this study concentrates on following and reconstructing the intellectual relations to the north-south divisions by each of the Ugandan president and also on the status of the Acholi tribe in the Ugandan polity, I find it preferable that the concepts I use would fit better to describe these cases. There is also a second criticism of this familiarity syndrome concept: the multiethnicity of Uganda.

### **Ethnic nepotism**

Tatu Vanhanen has a totally different way of approaching ethnic conflicts. He has tried to create a universal theory, which would explain why people tend to favor their kin. The term nepotism simply refers to action were people favor their own kin over others. Vanhanen wrote "*The origin of evolutionary interpretation of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts can be traced to a central sociobiological theory of kin selection*" (Vanhanen 1999, 10). In the center of his theory is the presumption that people tend to favor groups that are genetically more closely related to each other than members of other groups. This assumption is derived from principles of the Darwinian theory of evolution by natural selection. To the question of how people identify the people sharing same genes, Vanhanen answers by referring to Rushtons argumentation that there is a genetic similarity detector coded in every human being (Vanhanen 1999, 7). Humans favor their own kin to ensure that genes continue to be pure in the next generations. In social science, this kind of presumptions seem questionable. However, the basic question of favoring kinsmen behind it is interesting and prevailing.

Vanhanen states that the reason why conflicts will be canalized through ethnic divisions is that we live in a world of scarcity in which all species are able to produce more progeny than can be supported by the available resources. Politics is one arena through which conflicts will be struggled. In his research, Vanhanen has two hypotheses. Firstly, significant ethnic divisions tend to lead to ethnic conflicts on interest in all societies, and secondly, the more a society is ethnically divided, the more political and other conflicts of

interest tend to become canalized along ethnic lines (Vanhanen 1999, 13). According to Vanhanen, we cannot explain conflicts with cultural factors because conflicts tend to rise in every nation that is ethnically divided (Vanhanen 1999, 229).

Uganda is an ethnically divided country and through out the country's history, ethnicity has been used to gain advance in politics. Why, then, did I not choose to observe ethnic nepotism with the microhistorical method instead of authority? In my point of view, there are few critical reasons why the concept of ethnic nepotism is not fit for describing the history of the independent Uganda. First, Vanhanen argued that we live in a world of scarcity, where conflicts rise when people struggle for survival. This presumption does not entirely hold true in the case of Uganda. Environment in Uganda is conducive and there is plenty of fertile, arable land. It has been argued that Amin's terror was able to continue because of the fertile natural environment that could provide subsistence production during the time of collapsed economy (Omara-Otunnu, A 1987 & Kyemba, H 1977). Secondly, Vanhanen holds on to a presumption that ethnic groups can always be clearly identified and separated from each other. Omara-Otunnu, a Ugandan scholar, has argued that at least in the case of Uganda the boundaries between ethnic groups are not entirely clear. Many groups are separated only by language and not by the looks. "*A man's ability to communicate in a language other than that of the ethnic group into which he was born allows him to some extent to choose his ethnic identity*" (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 81). This quote shows that ethnicity is fluid and also problematic in Uganda. Omara-Otunnu continues with an example that, in a situation where the Baganda were out of favor, a Muganda<sup>1</sup> might identify him as, for example, a Munyoro<sup>2</sup>.

These examples show that ethnic nepotism is problematic, at least in case of Uganda. From the point of view of this research it is not sensible to lean on the concept of ethnic nepotism in the reconstruction of what kind of intellectual and moral relations Ugandan leaders had towards the northern parts of the country. Compared with ethnic nepotism, the concept of authority gives wider tools to observe actions of the Ugandan presidents. The concept of authority does not limit itself to ethnicity only, which would be a limited view of society. Especially useful will be neo-patrimonialism which also describes the structures of governance in addition to authority.

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<sup>1</sup> an individual of the Baganda people

<sup>2</sup> an individual of the Banunyoro people

## **6. ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN UGANDA**

This chapter presents the results of the analysis of this study. The observed time from independence in 1962 to the late 1980s has been divided into five time periods. The phases have been divided in accordance with the tenure of each president. Analysis began from the first tenure of Apollo Milton Obote in 1962-1971. The second period is the time of Idi Amin's regime in 1971-1979. The third period combines the regimes of two short tenure presidents, Yusuf Kironde Lule and Godfrey Binaisa, into one chapter. This is because of their short periods in power. The fourth chapter of the analysis focuses on the second regime of Obote 1981-1985. The fifth chapter covers the six-month regime of General Tito Okello in 1985-1986. The last period analyzed contains the events after 1986 when President Yoweri Museveni took control of Uganda. The results of the analysis of every time period will be presented in the following pattern: first, the overall political development of the term in question will be presented. This will enhance readers general knowledge of the political developments and, also, of the general history of Uganda. After the overall description, the results of the primary analysis will follow. Results will be divided under two subheadings: The cleavage between the north and the south; and the status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity. A concluding discussion is presented at the end of the study.

### **6.1 First term of Apollo Milton Obote (1962-1971)**

Uganda gained its independence from Great Britain in 1962. After the elections, the government was formed by Apollo Milton Obote, who became the first prime minister of the independent Uganda. The first president of Uganda was the king of Buganda, Sir Frederick Edward Muteesa II. He ruled together with Prime Minister Obote from 1962 till 1966. Obote committed coup d'état in 1966, when he used the army to oust President Muteesa II and nominated himself to become president. Obote was a Langi, which is an ethnic group that lives in the northern parts of the country. In addition, his political support was drawn mainly from areas in the north. Obote favored his own tribe and other ethnic groups from the north when he filled offices of his army and government. Exiled Muteesa II was a Muganda and he came from Buganda, which was the former southern kingdom of Uganda. By taking power forcefully, Obote raised opposition towards himself and his

supporters. Obote's regime was cruel towards the Baganda. He fragmented Buganda into four districts and outlawed Buganda's political parties (Listowel 1973, 60). It is not known exactly how many Baganda were killed by Obote's army and his secret police. Obote had to rely on his army to keep the Baganda in order and this left him at the mercy of his army commander Idi Amin.

As a politician, Obote favored a kind of state lead socialism. His political and economic aims were to expand state's ownership. The state was to take control over sixty percent of banks, insurance companies, transportation companies and copper mines. Exports and imports were to become a state monopoly (Listowel 1973, 66). Obote's careless attitudes towards ethnic divisions were to cause increasing problems to Commander Idi Amin. Amin was also becoming more hostile towards Obote and his political adventures. He was a pure soldier without much of a formal education, and he did not understand or appreciate Obote's socialist experiments. The greatest disappointment to Amin was that Obote did not raise the income of Amin's soldiers as was promised. Obote did acknowledge the raising influence of his army commander. At that time it was also widely suspected that Amin had directed state resources for his own use and, what was most worrying in the eyes of Obote, was that Amin controlled illegal trade with Zaire. This filled Amin's bank accounts very rapidly. While he was visiting Singapore in 1971, he made a call to trusted soldiers and ordered them to arrest Amin. Amin, however, managed to hear about Obote's plans, launched a counter-attack and committed a successful coup d'etat second time in Uganda's history (Listowel 1973, 67-73).

## **6.2 Cleavage between the north and the south during the first term of Obote**

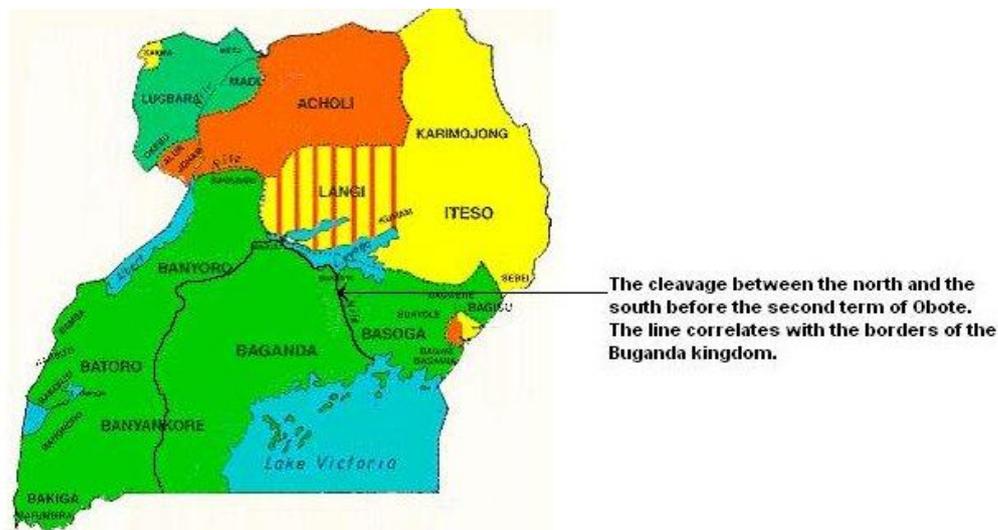
Obote's tenure will be observed first by examining the structure and support of the UPC party. From the support base of the UPC, we will move to observe the structures of its ally party, the KY. Why the support base and structure is so important in this case is because it will allow us to observe the situation and cleavages in the Ugandan post-independence society. What will be argued is that the differences in authority of the UPC and KY lead to a situation where an alliance was impossible and Obote's only option was to move the responsibility of political stability to the army and its vice commander, Colonel Idi Amin. Amin's military coup d'etat and its reasons will be covered more deeply in chapter seven.

Obote's party, the Uganda People's Congress, drew most of its support from professionals and from political notables in Kampala and outside Buganda. The UPC party was not united. Jan Jelmert Jorgensen states that: "*From its founding in 1960 to its demise in 1971, the UPC was largely a national confederation of locally powerful political notables*" (Jorgensen 1981, 221). This means that voters supported the person of a candidate and not so much the political agenda of the party. Single candidates concentrated on constructing their personal patron-client networks. Even in Lango, Obote's home district, the UPC was never really peasant-based. As westernized as the UPC was in terms of language, symbols and values, the importance of personal networks prevented the party from forming a unified actor (Jelmert 1981, 222). The UPC chose its candidates on criteria other than the candidate's proven ability. This meant that the party was represented not by ideologically unified politicians but by individuals from the traditional chiefly structure. The UPC and its bitter rival, the Democratic Party (DP), represented, what in Clapham's terms would be called, neo-patrimonial structures.

Together with neo-patrimonial structures, Obote used authority that in Weberian terms would be identified as charismatic. The charisma was his answer to traditionalism of the Kabaka Yekka party. The traditionalism of the KY rose from the claim of its superior position in the Ugandan polity. Obote used charisma to assure the people of the need for democracy instead of the traditional structures which, according to Obote, the KY party was promoting. Obote has given much credit for the United National Congress (UPC was previously UNC) for leading Uganda to independence in 1962 (Obote 2004). Obote also defended his party as being a democratic movement that demanded the one-man-one-vote principle before the independence and in the first national elections. As the UNC demanded independency for the whole of Uganda, the KY party supporting Kabaka boycotted national elections because it demanded self-governance for Buganda. After the national elections won by the UPC party, the KY which had won local *lukiiko* elections in Buganda joined to ally with the UPC. This was how the southern borders of the independent Uganda were drawn.

Uganda was already a divided country at the time of its independence. At this time, we can see that the cleavage between the north and the south actually took place between Buganda and rest of the country (see picture 3 below). This division was created already during the

colonial times. Obote's political strategy was called the “command heights strategy”, where the central idea was to increase national ownership. This was not because Obote would have been ideologically socialist, but more likely because of the structures of the Ugandan economy. The Baganda were controlling parts of vital economic activity in southern Uganda. They were the only group of African origin that took part in modern economic life. The largest group acting in Ugandan economy was the Asian minority. In colonial times, the Asians were allowed and encouraged to take active part in Ugandan economy. The reason for this was that the Asians were not original inhabitants of East Africa and so they could not easily achieve political power. In other words, an economy in the hands of the Asians was much better for the British administration than an economy in the hands of the Africans.



Picture 3: The cleavage between the north and the south before the second term of Obote

Obote did begin to Africanize the economy of Uganda, despite the economic and political cleavages between Ugandans. During the process, the colonial standards, attitudes, procedures and life-style were maintained by the African elite (Jorgensen 1981, 238). This turned into structural corruption where offices that were formerly controlled by British officials were now controlled by Africans, and new Ugandan officials held on to the old British privileges. The burdens of the increased expenses of the government dispersed into the rural areas. This can be seen from the statistics: Rural income per capita increased an average of 2.2 % in 1960-1969, while at the same time the inflation rate was 4.2 % (Jorgensen 1981, 242). The commanding heights strategy enabled Obote and his supporters to disperse the center of Ugandan economy away from Buganda. Obote's idea was to

create a more equal distribution of income, but the result was an unequal treatment of Ugandans, which continued to grow. As already mentioned, Obote's UPC party drew its support from the urban centers and not so much from rural areas. By holding on to colonial privileges, Obote and the UPC gained stronger support among classes were they were already widely supported. Increasing inequality provoked more ethnic conflicts among the peoples of African origin. This thread of conflicts was apparent between Buganda and the rest of the country. The Baganda were already before independence, willing to separate themselves from Uganda. Obote was reluctant to give more economic power to the Baganda but they were the only ones who had the most experience and education among the peoples of African origin. Obote solved this dilemma by increasing the proportion of the Asian salariat. His intention to create a more equal country turned out to discriminate the Baganda.

The structures of governance in Uganda were nominally legal-rational in Weberian terms. However, Obote could not by-pass ethnic rivalries between Buganda and other parts of the country. The ethnic division forced him to create neo-patrimonial structures, in which supporters were rewarded and opponents were pushed aside. Those who were pushed aside from Obote's personal networks became objects of charismatic authority. Charismatic authority can be seen from Obote's enthusiasm to oppose traditionalism and his pro-democracy attitude at the rhetorical level. Those who gained most were the UPC politicians and especially the old-party members who had held seats in the National Assembly since 1962 (Jorgensen 1981, 243). They were the ones who had seen how the British officials were getting richer and richer and in their eyes it would have been wrong to gain less than the old colonial masters did. The highest burden to cover the expenses fell to the peasants and the Baganda who were, if not completely ousted, at least deprived from the economic and political power of the Asians as well as the Langi and the Acholi groups. If those who gained most were the Asians and the UPC members (who were not Bagandas), then why would have the Kabaka Yekka (Kabaka first) party, which represented the needs of Buganda, accepted to work in alliance with the UPC?

The Baganda were the most privileged group in colonial Uganda. The Baganda worked closely with the British colonialists and they filled most of the Africanized administrator posts. At the time of the independence, most of them were expecting that they would inherit the highest posts that were previously limited to the British officers. As the

Baganda were the most influential ethnic group, they automatically presumed that they would control much larger areas than the southern district of Buganda. However, the Baganda electorates did not win the elections before independence, and their KY party had to cooperate with the winning UPC party which was headed by Obote. As a leader of the UPC, Obote was automatically chosen as Prime Minister of Uganda. The situation in Uganda was difficult because Buganda was not willing to be a part of Uganda if it would be in a subordinate position. The UPC party had to nominate the King of Buganda, Frederic Muteesa II, to be the first president. Without this concession, Buganda would have tried to separate itself from the rest of Uganda (Jorgensen 1981, 216). The coalition of UPC-KY was a combination that was headed by Prime Minister Obote and ceremonially represented by President Muteesa II. As the Baganda became more and more discontent with the policy of the government, the KY could not separate itself from the cabinet. The separation of the KY would have humiliated Kabaka who was now also President and also formally the head of the government. By giving ceremonial presidency to Muteesa, Obote had tied the KY to ally with the UPC.

The reason why the KY and the DP could not form a coalition against the UPC was because Kabaka was a protestant and the DP presented the will of the Roman Catholics (Listowel 1973, 44). It must also be noted that the alliance of the UPC and the KY did profit both sides. The UPC was able to get Buganda joined to form a united country and to gain dominance in a coalition government against the DP. From the perspective of the KY, they were able to obtain a second best position in the post-independence Uganda. The KY party also gained important portfolios in the 1962 cabinet: Finance and economic affairs and health, education and community development (Jorgensen 1981, 218). What was most important in the eyes of the Baganda was that their king was to become president of Uganda, albeit ceremonial one. The struggle for power between the UPC and the KY was to have a significant effect on the tenure of Obote. Obote's UPC party drew its support from outside of Buganda and, more accurately, from the central and northern districts of Uganda. The KY, on the other hand, was a party from and for Buganda. As the Baganda were profiting from the colonial economy which was tightly connected to Britain, they wanted to hold on to their traditionally privileged positions.

If the UPC and the DP were structurally neo-patrimonial parties, the KY was different. The KY's position was similar to what Max Weber described as traditional authority.

Representatives of the KY owned their loyalty, first and the foremost, to Kabaka and not to the government or the prime minister. It was difficult, on the one hand, for President Muteesa to accept his role as a ceremonial head of state and, on the other hand, for the KY members to accept that they did not enjoy the same prerogatives as during the colonial times when they co-operated with the British officers. Kabaka continued to act as if he had authority over matters in Uganda as he formerly did have in Buganda (Ingham 1994, 88). During the period of the UPC-KY alliance there were two differing structures in the governance of Uganda. Obote was in a situation where he had to combine the western style of parliamentary politics and the traditional structures and behavior of the Kabaka Yekka party. In Buganda, it was very much traditional chiefs who determined and chose who was to become elected to represent the KY. The personal loyalties of the Ugandans varied greatly. This is one reason why Obote did not try to personalize his resistance after Amin had forced him to exile in Tanzania. In his speech, Obote announced that he is against personalizing resistance against Amin, even though he had lead the country for almost ten years (Obote 1979).

Eventually in 1966, the co-operation of the UPC and the KY broke down. The last stroke for this unlikely alliance was when Obote ordered a voting for the fate of the so-called lost counties. During the colonial times, Buganda had helped the British army to defeat the kingdom of Bunyoro. As a reward, the British officers had given a slice of Bunyoro territory to Buganda. This made the Buganda and Bunyoro kingdoms bitter enemies. In the voting, the so-called lost counties had a chance to vote if they wanted to be separated from Buganda, and returned to Bunyoro. Naturally Kabaka had no interest in supporting the voting because the Bunyoro tribes living in the counties would be likely to choose to live with the Bunyoro rather than with the Buganda tribes, and it was eventually the result of the voting. The break of the alliance led to a coup where Prime Minister Obote ordered his army's vice-commander, Colonel Idi Amin, to arrest Kabaka and conquer his palace in Entebbe. Obote had to choose Amin instead of his army commander because General Shaba Opolot had recently married a woman who belonged to Kabaka's royal family and Obote could not trust him anymore (Kyemba 1977, 34).

After the coup, Obote became President and Kabaka fled to exile in Britain. When Kabaka and his KY party were made powerless, Obote wanted to end the traditional positions of

the chiefs in Buganda and they were forbidden to sit on kingdom or district councils. Bugandan members of the national assembly refused to swear allegiance to the new constitution (Ingham, 1994 110). Again, Obote had trouble with uniting the people because of the traditional sub-national ties. By holding on to their seats in the traditional *lukiiko*, the Baganda chiefs showed that they acknowledged Kabaka as their only legitimate authority. After the coalition of the UPC and the KY broke, Uganda moved towards a one-party state. As Buganda had been defeated by military force, there was no way Obote could have gained parliamentary majority. At this point, the army commanded by Amin and secret police headed by Obote's cousin Akena Adoko entered parliamentary politics. The fragile government had fallen because it turned out to be impossible to sustain a government where the Democratic Party (DP) could not co-operate with the largest UPC party, and the UPC could not in reality co-operate with the traditional Kabaka and the KY.

### **6.3 Status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity during Obote's first term**

As noted earlier, Obote and the UPC party drew most of their active support from the professionals, businessmen and trade unionists, both from the north and from the south (Jorgensen 1981, 223). Obote himself was a Lango. Inside the UPC, a conflict was formed between the central and leftist factions. The leftist faction claimed that it represented the peasant farmers from the north, a group that had been forgotten by Obote and his central faction. Northern professionals and civil servants formed the center faction of the UPC and, from their point of view, the commanding heights strategy allowed them to control the central economic actors (Jorgensen 1981, 224). This shows that a certain group of the Acholi tribe was very much actively taking part in the political core. According to Jorgensen, Daudi Ocheng, an Acholi who owned land in Buganda and served Kabaka Yekka, is an example of how class interests can sometimes override ethnic identity (Jorgensen 1981, 227). What Ocheng's example shows is a move from one traditional authority being ruled by the Acholi to being ruled by the traditional authority of Kabaka. Why this kind of a move was possible was because of the patron-client structures which cutted across the government. Later on, it was Ocheng who insisted that Colonel Amin's economic wrongdoings in northern Zaire-Uganda border zone should be investigated.

It was mostly the Acholi supporters of Obote who were glad when Obote ousted Kabaka and assumed all state power to him. Acholi district council was one of the councils that voiced Obote's takeover. It was more likely neo-patrimonial and patron-client networks that determined who would gain from politics of the government than factors of ethnicity or class. Ocheng's switch works as an example of a single person changing sides from the Acholi tradition to the Baganda tradition, in which his success would be determined only by his relation to Kabaka. Neo-patrimonial authority in the UPC worked against the Acholi's advantage. Obote was committed to create more equal distribution of development projects between the northern districts. A problem was created when it became clear that the government located new factories to the Lango district rather than to the Acholi district. Politically active Acholi were profiting from Obote's presidency, but those who did not own personal patron-client network to directly profit from Obote's political power were by-passed by Obote's will to support his home district. During Obote's tenure, income distribution in the Acholi district was not more equal but rather more unequal when the income were concentrated to the hands of Obote's supporters. State's weakness was clearly shown in the Acholi district where growing inequality resulted in increasing kondoism or armed robbery. This is why it is not so surprising to read about the feelings of government ministers and civil servants when Obote was ousted by Amin. Others felt relieved because their relatives who had been kept in prison were released. Some were simply disappointed in Obote's government, whereas some, mostly his own tribesmen, were afraid of the coming change (Kyemba 1977, 47).

## **7. IDI AMIN'S REGIME (1971-1979)**

Idi Amin was born to a poor peasant family in Buganda. His parents came from North West of Uganda. Amin was a Kakwa although his mother was a Lugbura. The Kakwa live near the borders of DRC, Sudan and Uganda. The multinational area where the Kakwa live is an example of the results that followed, when colonial powers divided the continent. Amin obtained little, if any, of formal education. He joined the King's African Rifles in 1946. Amin fitted well into the life of a soldier and, by the time of Uganda's independence, Amin was a commander of the first battalion. He was one of the highest ranking African officers and above him were only few British officers. During Obote's regime, Amin was first vice commander and later commander-in-chief. He was widely popular among his soldiers, but he nevertheless had troubles with ethnic divisions inside the army. Idi Amin seized power in 1971 while Obote was visiting Singapore. In Amin's own words, he had no other choice because Obote had created his own rival army consisting mainly of northern Lango and Acholi soldiers (Listowell 1973, 70). After the coup, Amin was appointed full general and President. He also announced that he would be president for a five-year term and, during that period, all political activity would be banned. From the beginning of his term, Amin had difficulties with President Nyerere of Tanzania. Nyerere had given asylum to Obote and refused to recognize Amin regime. Through Amin's time as President, Uganda had continuous clashes with Tanzanian forces.

Amin gained wide economic and political support from Israelis, but this relationship did get worse as Amin could not pay his 9 million pounds of dept. Amin was a Muslim and he wanted to develop further relations with the Islamic Sudan and Libya. Israel, on the other hand was planning a war with Sudan (Listowel 1973, 131). Amin's politics turned towards the Arabs and against the Israelis. The more the Israeli influence weakened, the more the Arab countries, especially Libya, gained influence in Uganda's politics. Amin attacked against Zionism and eventually expelled all Israeli citizens from Uganda. He could do this because Gaddafi's financial support substituted the loss of Israeli's aid. Gaddafi also promised to support Uganda in case of an attack from Tanzania. Israel did give financial to Uganda aid but refused to give arms or modern war machinery. In 1976, Amin offered asylum to the Palestinian hijackers who took control over a French airliner en route to Israel (MyUganda 10.1.07). Besides the Israelis, also the Asians suffered during Amin's

rule. Amin's hands were more or less tied internal economy because of the wide spread corruption and empty state reserves. Asian merchants were successful in their businesses and they had obtained important influence in Uganda's economy. This was a heritage from the colonial period, when the Asians were brought to build infrastructure. Success of the Asian merchants made black Africans envious. They blamed Asians for cheating inexperienced African merchants. By blaming the Asians for the problems of the indigenous African people, Amin tried to gain support of the masses. This policy was a success, and Amin became even more popular when he forced the British government to pull out all Asians who were the British citizens.

Amin was well known of his brutal ways to solve the problems facing his government. This concerned indigenous Ugandans as well. At the beginning of his regime, Amin ordered all Acholi and Langi soldiers to return to the barracks and slaughtered them (Acker 2003, 17). This was how he solved the problems of ethnic conflicts within the army. This particular event left scars between the tribes from the south and the north. The northern tribes could have not forgiven this massacre by the Baganda. Many of the indigenous Ugandans who fell victims of Amin's regime, were from the northern parts of the country and, belonged to the same ethnic groups that had been in power during, the previous regime of Obote. Amin's regime ended in 1979 when the Tanzanian forces made a successful intervention to Uganda and forced him to exile; first to Libya and later to Saudi-Arabia.

## **7.1 Cleavage between the north and the south during the regime of Idi Amin**

If the cleavage during the Obote's first term was between the Baganda tribe and the rest of the country, it changed during Amin's regime. While Amin was in power, the political center remained in Kampala but the cleavage was not anymore between Buganda and the rest of the country, but more likely it was a more abstract line between Amin's supporters, such as the Kakwa and the Nubian, and the rest of the country. During the last years of Obote's first regime, Amin was commander of Uganda's army and he recruited most of the soldiers and police officers from the Kakwa and the Nubian tribes (Kyemba 1977, 21). The

Kakwa tribe lives mainly in the north-west corner of Uganda and the Nubian are originally from Sudan. Amin backed his power with these groups who were loyal only to him.

Amin knew how to gain from his ethnic background. He was connected with large-scale smuggling of gold from eastern Zaire. It was suspected that this smuggling was taking place in Kakwa's home region from where the trucks carrying gold and ivory crossed borders and drove to Amin's home (Kyemba 1977, 34). Daudi Ocheng, a supporter of the KY, insisted that Amin's smuggling had to be inspected and Amin was to be arrested. At that time, Obote was totally dependent on Amin and "his" army, and Obote fired five ministers who supported investigations of Amin's dealings. Eventually, Obote became suspicious of Amin although he had not showed any political ambitions. In 1979, Obote traveled to Singapore to participate in a commonwealth seminar. While Obote was in Singapore, he called to an officer he trusted in Uganda and gave orders to arrest Amin. However, Amin's supporters had heard about these plans and warned Amin. Amin had no option but to start a coup. Obote was away from Uganda and he insisted that his army commander be arrested for smuggling. The situation could be described as if Obote had loaded a gun and pointed it to his own head, and Amin just pulled the trigger.

If Obote had a problem with combining traditional and neo-patrimonial authority, Amin did not have such a problem. By his nature, Amin was jovial and generous (Kyemba 1977, 23). It was usual that Amin reacted quickly and in unpredictable way. This had made it difficult for Obote to control his army general. Amin also gathered his own army from the Kakwa and the Nubian. While still working as Obote's army commander, Amin was co-operating with south Sudanian rebels who were, at the time, fighting against their central government in Khartoum. From this co-operation, the rebels gained money and equipment. Amin on the other hand gained soldiers who were loyal only to him, and this was to be crucial for the survival of his regime. With these Nubian, Amin created a patron-client network before he took power. The Nubian, who originally came from Sudan, did not have personal networks of their own in Uganda; this made them dependable directly on Amin. Amin organized wealth for the Nubians, and the Nubians worked for Amin and not for Obote. After Amin had taken control of the country, the network of patron-client kind changed into neo-patrimonialism. Before Amin was President, he had to pay attention to Obote, but immediately after the coup Amin was alone in control. Henry Kyemba gives us an example how Amin started his staff policy immediately after the coup: "*When I arrived*

*at the airport, one of Amin's men was waiting for me ...the driver was called Ismael and I knew him because I had earlier recommended to Amin that he should be hired as a driver for the army. Now the man was a Major and a vice commander of Kisaru's battalion"* (Kyemba 1977, 48).

Immediately after the coup, Amin was able to transform the patron-client networks to neo-patrimonial authority as civil servants and army officers were recruited on the basis of their personal relations to the president. The three most feared units that trained loyal subordinates to Amin were: Public Safety Unit, Amin's lifeguards and States Research Bureau. These three units were all formed from Kakwa and Nubian groups and they were under the direct control of Amin. Kyemba has described how Amin's men recruited people from the north-western corner of the country. Recruitments were also expanded across border to southern Sudan: *"At night men trained, by Amin's life guard unit, were drawn to their former home villages. In home villages men promised well paid jobs in Uganda and next day those who were interested came to a meeting point where they were transported Uganda"* (Kyemba 1977, 96). Besides recruiting officers among his own tribe, Amin did not make any difference with state money and that of his own. He started to use the Bank of Uganda as his own purse. Amin insisted also that the government should pay the expenses of himself and his relatives. Kyemba notes that the families of Amin's relatives should have food, clothes, furniture's and cars (Kyemba 1977, 64). While Obote had lost his wide support among the citizens, Amin's personal nature helped him to gather popularity among the common peasantry. By the time of the coup, Amin did not enjoy wide support but he knew how to gather it. One example is the decision to bring Kabaka's body back to Uganda to be buried in the traditional Bugandan way. He also insisted that he had allowed Kabaka to escape when his soldiers were besieging Kabaka's palace. By doing this, Amin gained wide popularity among the Baganda. The second example was the expulsion of Asians from Uganda.

The previous two examples show that, besides the patrimonialism and pure kleptocracy, Amin used, in Weberian terms, charismatic authority to widen his support and to legitimize his position in power. Blaming the Asians was a perfect way to gather wide support and to focus public attention away from his own shortcomings. Amin acted as if he was the one who had saved Uganda from Obote and now he was cleaning the country for a future civilian government. The cleaning operation was why he needed five-year tenure of

presidency and, eventually, because he was the one who cleaned the country, he would be a suitable life-time president. Here we saw that the Asians had an important role in Amin's plans.

In a situation where the country's economy was collapsing, Amin decided to blame the Asian minority which had been in control of the economy. Asians were already widely disliked among the dark skinned Africans, and they were mainly eager to leave. When they did leave, they simply locked the doors of their shops and left. The idea was that people of African origin would have simply taken the place of the Asians in the economy. The result was, however, that those enterprises were simply handed over to whoever said that needed one (Kyemba 1977, 78). Those new entrepreneurs mainly just took everything worthy of something and left the shops empty. At first the civil servants took over most of the enterprises, but soon Amin gave an order that they should return back to their old posts. After the civil servants had returned to their offices, the rest of the enterprises were given to the Nubians who were mostly army officers (Kyemba 1977, 78). Amin ensured that the Nubians would support him by sharing the property of the Asians with them. This kind of authority resembles neo-patrimonialism, in which offices are filled according to personal ties. The difference is that Amin's regime made the government offices purely irrelevant if we consider their relevance to governing the state. The only thing that mattered was that the person who held the office would gain as much wealth as possible.

What was the responsibility of the office during the previous regime did not mean anything to the new government. What is meant by this is that the whole governing system of the state was full of officers who just raised salaries but had no defined areas of responsibility. Kyemba has given an example of how soldiers of the army began to promote themselves in their own career: "*I thought that it was extraordinary that a Private was the head of the secret police. When I mentioned about this to Amin, he replied: well let's tell that the man is a Captain. And from that day on he was a Captain*<sup>3</sup>" (Kyemba 1977, 61). Kyemba continues to explain that these kinds of promotions were never made literary, and eventually men just went to see the supply officer and said "*I am a Captain*" or "*I am a Major*" and demanded to have a salary more appropriate for their new rank. Soldiers knew very well that the supply officer would have never dared to confirm the promotions from

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<sup>3</sup> Author's own translation from Finnish

Amin himself. (Kyemba 1977, 61) Neo-patrimonial authority means that the government is organized in a legal-rational way but the officers are not elected but rather nominated according to their personal relations to whoever is in control of the country. The concept of neo-patrimonialism focuses only on shearing the government's offices. Amin's regime differed from neo-patrimonialism in that basically all vital parts of the society were shared according to personal relations of Amin. Basically every office, shop, pharmacy and factory was given to new owners according to their direct personal relation to Amin or to person in favor of Amin. This eventually led to a situation where the whole society was paralyzed.

Even in a situation like this, in which virtually all state resources had been reallocated to guarantee the army's loyalty, Amin had a tremendous problem of holding on to the control of the army. Allocating more and more resources to the soldiers was a driving force in increasing state expenditures. Amin used the state as if it was personal property which he could slice and give away as he pleased. Many of those who did not profit from Amin's regime fled to rural areas where they could retreat to subsistence production. When no one took care of the economy, the situation was eventually that Amin and his "friends" had all the money but the common peasantry had all the food.

## **7.2 Position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity during the regime of Idi Amin**

During Obote's term, political authority had been concentrated to a tiny elite consisting mainly of the Langi. In his army, Obote had favored Acholi soldiers, as was also the case during colonial times. After the coup had been successfully completed and Amin had taken power, his troops started to hunt down Acholi and Langi army officers. Obote was a Langi and most of the army officers of his regime were of Acholi and Langi origin. This was a reason for Amin to be hostile towards these ethnic groups. Amin's troops started to kill Acholi and Langi officers the night before the military coup was to take place. This happened at the Malire barracks, where older Acholi officers were whacked down by Amin's men (Kyemba 1977, 56). Amin's terror against the Acholi contributed drastically to the discourse about the state betraying the Acholi tribe.

This discourse had been created by the colonial times when the northern periphery of Uganda was transformed into a labor producing area for the southern districts. During Obote's regime the Acholi's position in the Ugandan polity was determined within the army. Amin changed the position of the Acholi tribe by blocking their possibility to participate in society through an army career. The discourse of the state betraying the Acholi was stirred up when Amin gave the order that all Acholi officers and soldiers should immediately return back to their barracks. Most of the soldiers who followed these orders were executed. This order affected the confidence of the Acholi tribe towards the central government. Amin did not need the northern tribes in his government. Rebels acting in Southern Sudan were gaining support from Amin and, in return, Amin gained not only loyal soldiers working for Uganda under his command but also loyal troops acting within the Sudanian borders.

If the Acholi politicians had had a chance to participate in the politics during Obote's term, they did not have such a position under the rule of Idi Amin. During Obote's term, Acholi politicians were gaining wealth and power at the same time when the Acholi who were not participating in political or in economic life did not profit much. The position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity had been limited to the privileged persons working directly under Obote's government. Amin saw that Obote's commanding heights strategy was a plan to increase Langi's, and to some degree also Acholi's, influence within society. While Obote was hiring more Acholi and Langi soldiers, Amin wanted to counter-balance the situation by hiring as many Kakwa and Nubian as possible. After Amin stepped in control, his strategy was to eliminate Acholi soldiers and to replace them with the Kakwa and the Nubian. Ethnic origin was used in the rivalry between Obote and Amin for the loyalty of the army.

If we are to observe the changes in the position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity from the point of view of the Acholi, we need to split the Acholi into three categories. These categories were formed during Obote's regime and they were deeply affected by Amin's terror. First were those ministers and civil servants who were profiting the most from Obote's regime economically and also politically. They had the most to lose when Obote was ousted from power. After Amin had taken power, many of the Acholi who belonged to this group disappeared or fled to Kenya or Tanzania. The second Acholi group was the professional soldiers and officers, whom Obote had been hiring with the intention of

forming an army faction more loyal to him than to Amin. This group suffered physically the most in the early days of Amin's regime. Amin needed to create a united army and this was done by killing as many Acholi soldiers as possible. The killed soldiers and officers were replaced by Amin's own candidates, more or less suitable for the jobs. Army's ethnic balance was quickly shifted to the advantage of the Kakwa and the Nubian. Thirdly, there were the peasants who mostly were not economically profiting from Obote's regime. In the country side, Obote's interests were in developing the Lango district and he by-passed the needs of the Acholi. Obote concentrated the economic infrastructure to the Lango district, which caused anger among the Acholi. After Amin had taken power, the Acholi peasants were concentrating on subsistence agriculture. The Acholi farmers had to feed also those Acholi who had escaped Amin's regime by moving back to their home district.

As we have seen, the Acholi was not a unified group which would have experienced homogenous consequences from the military coup. However, experiences from Amin's terror united the Acholi people when the former civil servants and soldiers escaped to their home regions. During Amin's era, the Acholi were stripped of power and haunted by Amin's men. The mass murdering of the Acholi soldiers and the disappointment to Obote's lack of interest to develop the Acholi district created the meta-narrative: state versus the Acholi. All central ethnic groups during Obote's and Amin's regimes, such as the Langi, the Acholi, the Kakwa and the Nubian, were actually marginal groups what comes to wealth and power before independence. Obote favored the Langi and the Acholi during his time in power. Amin, on the other hand, favored the Kakwa and the Nubi. What was common was that both followed the cleavage which divided Buganda and the rest of the country. Neither Obote nor Amin did significantly develop any other areas of the country. Keeping Buganda in the hands of the government was crucial, and this was done by bribing the Baganda or by brutal military force. The rest of the country was secondary. Buganda remained the central area from which the government dispersed its power to the peripheries. After independence, the old elite of the Baganda have not gained significant political power but their region and, more accurately the area around the capital has been a crucial place for the marginal elite groups governing Uganda.

## **8. PERIODS OF YUSUF KIRONDE LULE AND GODFREY BINAISA (1979-1981)**

Amin's regime was overthrown by the combined forces of exiled Ugandans and the army of Tanzania (Tanzanian People's Defense Force TPDF). The liberation of Kampala was accompanied with a wave of looting, first by Amin's retreating men and, after Amin's soldiers had disappeared, by civilians and invading forces (Jorgensen 1981, 331). The first post-Amin president of Uganda had to cope with a situation which had two main sources of unrest. Firstly, the capital city, which had to be controlled if one wished to govern Uganda, was in chaos. Secondly, the new President had to be able to co-operate with Tanzania which had thousands of soldiers in Uganda. The first post-Amin president was Professor Yusuf Kironde Lule, whose regime lasted only for 69 days. He was chosen the next President by Ugandan politicians living in exile in Tanzania. After Lule, came Godfrey Lukongwa Binaisa, who also ruled only for a short period during the year 1980. He failed to gain the trust of Tanzania's President, Nyerere, who still had control over Uganda. The Tanzanian military commission took control until new presidential elections were held in 1981.

Lule enjoyed popularity among ordinary peasants, Obote's "Statement on the Uganda situation" given in 1979 in Dar es Salaam, gives a hint of his and his Tanzanian comrades' plans. Obote announced to the Ugandans that they had to liberate themselves and that they cannot trust or wait for foreign powers to do so. If there were foreign powers involved in the liberation of Uganda, it would have consequences to the new government established after Amin. Obote praised the generosity of Tanzania on many occasions, but added that "*The most expensive way of bringing about a change is the use of a force not composed of Ugandans*" (Obote 1979). He added also that "*a government that will be installed immediately thereafter [coup] will have no moral standing. Because of absence or lack of moral standing, such a government will also lack authority and support of the people sufficient to safeguard life and property of the citizens*" (Obote 1979). By saying these words, Obote assured to Ugandans that he would not run for presidency.

If even an experienced politician, like Obote, did not run for president, why the UNLF would have chosen the politically inexperienced Lule as one? Obote still had quite a wide

support base among the northern tribes. As the forthcoming chapter 9 will show, Lule and Binaisa were chosen to "suffer" the consequences of the forceful invasion of Uganda. It is true that also Ugandan units participated in the coup, but they would have not succeeded without the help of a strong support from the TPLF. In his speech in 1979, Obote also warned that *"a government established by actions of a force not composed by Ugandans is bound to be more indebted to the country which provided that force than to the people it would purport to govern and serve. Material assistance is wholly acceptable"* (Obote 1979). In this speech, a foundation was made for the times to come after the fall of Lule's and Binaisa's regimes.

### **8.1 Cleavage between the north and the south during Lule's and Binaisa's terms**

On 11 April 1979, the Ugandan National Liberation Force (UNLF) announced its new government headed by Yusuf Lule. Lule was popular among the Baganda, not the least because he was a Muganda and he had not been critical towards Kabaka. The Baganda were hoping that a Muganda president would mean a new rise of Buganda. In his first speech, President Lule said, first in English and then in Luganda, that "this is our chance" (Ingham 1994, 155). Among the Buganda, this was interpreted as a promise of a supreme position in the Ugandan polity. Although the cleavage between Buganda and the rest of the country was revived by Lule, he enjoyed popularity also outside Buganda, most likely because he had been a moderate politician and he also had a history of an academic career.

Problems inside the new government were born soon after Lule's nomination. This was due to Lule's actions which suggested that he should have the same executive powers as the president had before Amin's military coup d'etat. Before the joined forces had ousted Amin from Uganda, a conference was held in Tanzania which set up a political body called the National Consultative Council (NCC) (Ingham 1994, 154). The members of the NCC insisted that they have the last word in any decision made by the temporary government or the president. However, Lule by passed the NCC and insisted that the NCC should only have a consultative role in politics. Lule also tried to upset the ethnic balance of the cabinet without consulting the NCC. He nominated Grace Ibingira and Robert Serumaga as members of the cabinet (Ingham 1994, 156). Former was a member of the royal family of

the Kabaka and the latter was a Muganda royalist. Non-Muganda members of the NCC felt insecure and dismissed Lule from the office of the president. This was possible because there was equal ethnic representation in the NCC and, therefore, Baganda members did not have a majority in the voting. During his 69 days as the president, Lule managed to open old wounds between the Baganda and the rest of the country. After Lule was gone, the NCC nominated Godfrey Binaisa as the new president of Uganda.

Lule's time ended because he was centering too much power to himself. His term was short lasting only 69 days, but this short term gives us much to think about. It has been written that Lule was not interested in the ethnic background of a person, but rather he was more interested in the former achievements and the former career of a person. Basically, this is how it should be in legal-rational authority. The problem was that the time was wrong for legal-rational authority, as it would have required that both political and ethnic stability in the government had been reached. By hiring Baganda politicians, Lule destabilized the balance of the cabinet. It would be useless to blame it all on Lule because the reality was that most of the educated and skilled politicians were from the Buganda district. What back up the previous argument are Lule's plans for army recruitments. Lule demanded that the ethnic base of the army had to be equal between ethnic groups but he also demanded changes to the army's recruitment policy which would have set the minimum educational levels for privates and officers (Jorgensen 1981, 333). Again Lule sets education and qualifications before ethnic background, which resulted in the same imbalance as in the cabinet. Before Amin's era, the main ethnic groups of the army had come from the north. Lule's decision would have changed the status of the Acholi and the Langi groups. As we have already seen, one route to the success for these northern groups had been the career opportunities in the army, and one factor determining their position in the Ugandan polity had previously been the army as well. Now Lule demanded that the soldiers and the officers have formal education, which had been mainly available to the Baganda.

In the first days of Binaisa's presidency, there were wide demonstrations from the pro-Lule side in Kampala and also wider in the Buganda district. This demonstration showed that the Baganda felt once again that they were stripped from political power. What is interesting is that those rioters wanted to cause much wider chaos by releasing the previously detained Amin's supporters from Katwe prison (Jorgensen 1981, 333). During the violence, there were at least 89 reported victims. Victims were mostly professionals

like doctors and government civil servants. The situation was made more complicated by the fact that at least one of the murder squads used uniforms of the Tanzanian army (Jorgensen 1981, 333). It would be reasonable to assume that these rioters were supporters of Amin. It would be hard to imagine that the supporters of Lule would release Amin's supporters. The only common goal could have been to create chaos, but for whose advantage? The terror focused towards professionals who were the main beneficiaries of Lule's policy. Secondly, at least one group had been dressed up in the TPDF uniforms. It was the supporters of Amin who had conflicts with the Tanzanian army and they had a chance to steal uniforms by kidnapping soldiers. What comes to Binaisa's rule, he kept repeating the same policy already made by Lule's regime.

Because of the wide-spread unrest in society, Binaisa had to turn to the politics of detaining opposition and those suspected of rioting. He also banned all political activity outside the UNLF which, at the time, was the leading political party in Uganda. It consisted mainly of politicians who had lived in exile during Amin's era (Jorgensen 1981, 334). This had to raise fear that the so called "returnees" would take the control of the Ugandan political arena. Binaisa's actions of favoring his relatives in filling the top posts in economy caused growing hatred. Much of the anger was born in the NCC because Binaisa, like Lule, did not seek approval or consultation from the NCC concerning new initiatives. There were still many in the government who supported Lule and they made strong accusations of corruption in the cabinet and of patronage in Binaisa's staff policies. If Lule is an example of neo-patrimonial authority, Binaisa's authority was closer to mixing neo-patrimonialism and traditional authority. The cleavage in Uganda was still in the south and it drew a line between Buganda and the rest of the country. In times of confusion, the control over the area around Kampala was crucial and rest of the country was not so central to the interest of the government.

At the same time when there was a struggle for power in Kampala, the northern parts of the country were suffering from conflicts between Amin's retreating men and the Tanzanian and Ugandan soldiers pursuing them. During the governments of Lule and Binaisa, Yoweri Museveni had been Minister of Defence and he was taking care of the defence politics. At the same time when Museveni was Minister of Defence he established an army of his own inside the Ugandan army (Uganda National Liberation Army, UNLA). The UNLA consisted of at least three different armies where soldiers had subloyalties. Some were

loyal to Oyite-Ojok (Lango) who supported Obote; some were loyal to Tito Okello (Acholi) who had also supported Obote but was now more loyal to the DP, and lastly, some were loyal to Museveni (Ankole)(Jorgensen 1981, 336). The UNLA had been accused of killing and looting civil population in the north. As Lule and Binaisa were both tied with keeping order in Kampala, the rest of the country was used in power politics. When Lule and then Binaisa were both concentrated on creating their own neo-patrimonial and patron-client network in Buganda, Museveni and also followers of Obote were recruiting supporters outside Buganda. This was a moment when a former periphery (like the Acholi district) was going to play an important role for the future of Uganda.

## **8.2 Position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity during Lule's and Binaisa's regimes**

While in Buganda the government struggled to survive during the chaotic times after Amin's escape, the Acholi district was terrorized by two different armies. First, there were the retreating soldiers of Amin, who were trying to escape from Uganda. Amin's army was followed by soldiers of the UNLA who were in pursuit of them. Amin's retreating men wanted to revenge their defeat. On the other hand, this retreating army was without a proper leader and discipline, and therefore they were able to take advantage of the situation and looted what ever they could. They were followed by the UNLA which was revenging on the Acholi people because they suspected that the Acholi civilians were hiding and supporting Amin's men. As already mentioned, the UNLA consisted of at least three armies which all had subloyalties to persons with differing ethnic background. The situation of the UNLA was made much more complicated by the fact that the army uniforms were available for anyone willing to use them. *"Arms and uniforms were easily acquired by anyone who was prepared to use them. They had been jettisoned or sold by Amin's defeated troops or were seized from stores abandoned by the retreating army."* (Ingham 1994, 159).

Lule was a Muganda and although he was more interested in the political skills of the individuals rather than the ethnic background, his recruitment lead to favor the Baganda. Binaisa, on the contrary, openly favored his relatives in filling political posts. He also failed to sustain the political and ethnic stability of the cabinet. From the point of view of

the Acholi, all this was experienced as the government's ignorance of the Acholi's suffering. Lule's and Binaisa's policies lead to a situation where there was no control over the army. The army was fragmented due to the several subloyalties. Lule's and Binaisa's enthusiasm to practice neo-patrimonialism caused a situation in which it was impossible to gain the army's loyalty. Here we can see how the Acholi district was caught between two different armies, both of which had their own reasons to revenge on the Acholi. The same situation will confront the Acholi district again before Museveni's regime took power. Boås has written about the Acholi meta-narrative and how it reinforces the feeling of a traitorous central government (Boås 2004, 286).

This is not to say that every fraction of the UNLA would have terrorized the Acholi district. It must be remembered that, for example, Tito Okello who was an Acholi and Oyite-Ojok who was a Lango enjoyed wide support inside the UNLA. It was the fragmentation of the army and the lack of control from the central government that enabled some sections to take questionable actions against the Acholi civilians. The fragmentation of the army resulted in a military coup lead by a Lango General, Oyite-Ojok, in 1979 (Jorgensen 1981, 336). The events before the coup show how far the control of the army was slipped from Binaisa and his cabinet. Binaisa wanted to retire General Okello and transfer Oyite-Ojok to a non-command post. Binaisa hoped that he could have support from Tanzania. When they refused, he turned to Kenya but Moi in Kenya was not willing to help Binaisa. When Binaisa announced the dismissal of Oyite-Ojok, the army seized power and handed it to a six member military commission (Jorgensen 1981, 336). Winners of the coup were those who wanted to participate in the elections, albeit under separate party banners than those of the UNLF. This was also a moment when the group of northerners had, again, gained power in Uganda. The elections were held in December 1980 and there were four parties competing. The parties regional bases of support were the following: For the UPC – Lango, Teso, Sebei and Kigezi; for the DP – Buganda, Acholi, West Nile and Busoga; for the UPM – Ankole and Toro. For the conservative party the support was scattered in Buganda (Jorgensen 1981, 337). In the elections, the clear winner was Milton Obote and his UPC party. What is worth noting is that, in the elections, Museveni and his Uganda Patriotic Movement party faced a crushing defeat. Museveni accused that the elections were unfair, which justified him to form the National Resistance Army and to start rebelling from the woods.

## 9. SECOND TERM OF APOLLO MILTON OBOTE (1981-1985)

After the elections of early 1981, Obote, who had been living in exile in Tanzania during eight years of Amin's regime, was chosen to be president of Uganda for the second time. Obote had good relations with Nyerere, and it was widely suspected that Nyerere ensured Obote's victory in the elections (see e.g. Ngoga 1998). Obote, himself, has denied these allegations, but as we have seen in the previous chapter, the table was set for Obote after Lule's and Binaisa's failures.

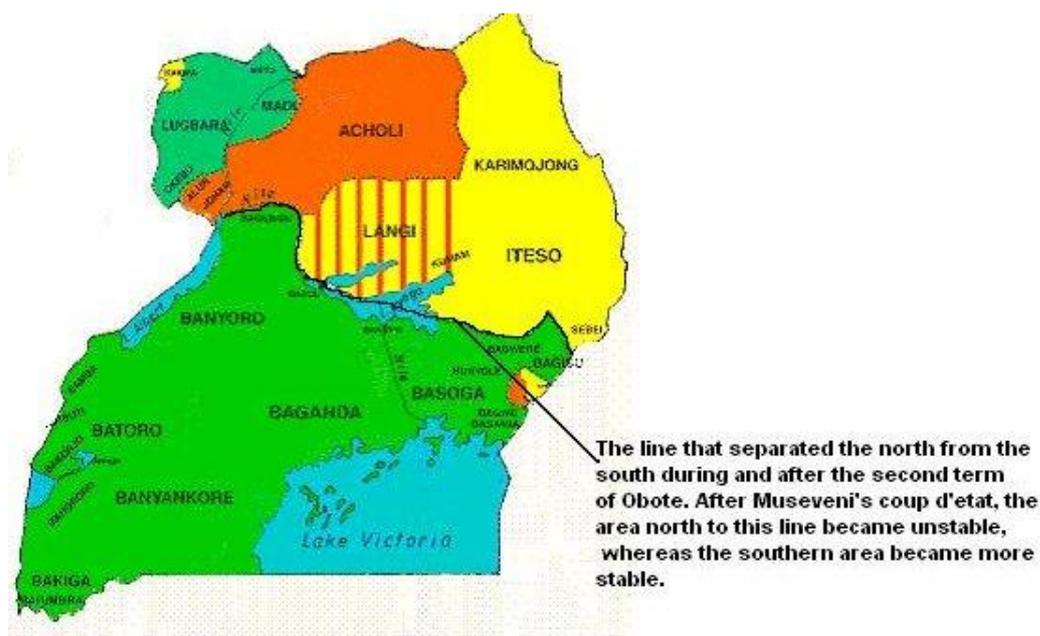
In his speech in 1979 held in Dar es Salaam before the invasion of Uganda, Obote condemned as propaganda the rumors that hinted that Tanzanians were king-makers in the Ugandan business. *"The propaganda about Tanzania being a King-maker is a use to confuse the issue at stake and thereby make Ugandans to slacken their efforts. For eight years, Amin has used such tactics on numerous occasions that possibly only a foreigner but no Ugandan would fail to see through it"* (Obote 1979). Obote uses many occasions in his speech to praise Tanzania and to assure their neutral position in Ugandan business. *"Let every Ugandan know that there is no government in Africa today which respects the will of the African people in their respective countries more than the government of Tanzania"* (Obote 1979). We may never have a clear answer to the true role of the Tanzanians in the elections of 1981, but wide suspicious may be found. The speech I have referred to seems to be titled more towards Tanzanians than Ugandans. Now that we know the course of this history, we can make some assumptions of how long before Obote's and Nyerere's plans were made before the final invasion.

Obote chose representatives to his government mainly from the northern tribes. This continued to divide the already weak country ethnically, politically and economically. However, Obote enjoyed support from foreign countries, because he was held to be an experienced nationalist leader. Foreign leaders mainly turned a blind eye to his previous failures and evidences of wrong doings in the elections (Ngoga 1998, 95). Obote's political opponent and the leader of the Fronasa party (Front for National Salvation), Yoweri Museveni, lost the elections of 1981 where he was contesting under his new Uganda Patriotic Movement party. Museveni changed again the name of his party, now to the National Resistance Movement (NRM), and started a guerrilla war with only 35 men

(Ngoga 1998, 95). We should be critical towards this number of soldiers because in February 1981 spokes men for the movement claimed that they controlled at least 5000 men. This conflict was waged against Obote's regime, until another military coup was committed in 1985. This military coup d'état was committed by Obote's army commanders and the presidency was handed to the chief of defense forces, General Tito Okello, who came from the Acholi tribe. At this point, the NRA and its leader Museveni had gained a wide support in the southern districts. The new weak central government sought a peaceful solution with the NRA (National Resistance Army is the military wing of the NRM). The intermediary in these peace talks was President Moi of Kenya. However, at this point Museveni had little interest in solving the conflict peacefully because his army had grown to a considerable strength and it advanced rapidly towards Kampala.

## **9.1 Cleavage between the north and the south during the second term of Obote**

The chaotic times in Uganda continued during Obote's second presidency. It was also during this second term when Obote gained a bad reputation amongst the international community. Obote was accused of violating human rights by killing political activists and favoring his own tribes men in politics (Ingham 1994, 174). At this time, there were still some supporters of Amin in the northern parts of Uganda where they caused some chaos within the civilian population. However, much more damage was done by both the NRA and the army of the government to the civilian lives. The NRA started to terrorize anyone who was suspected of supporting Obote. Museveni and his NRA party gained most of their support from the southern districts. Obote was supported mainly in the northern districts, but not by all means only in the north. Here, we can see a situation where the cleavage was starting to move towards the north because Museveni was gaining a stronger foot hold in certain southern districts. To be exact, this is the first time in Uganda when we could say that the country is divided between the north and the south as earlier the "south" equaled the Buganda district only. After the elections, the former President Lule attacked against Obote by arguing that he had created this new cleavage and that the north was being favored when the seats of the parliament were allocated (Ingham 1994, 160-170). Other parties which had competed in the elections accused the UPC of winning unfair elections. The NRA withdrew from party politics and started a guerrilla war against the UPC and the government army, the UNLA.

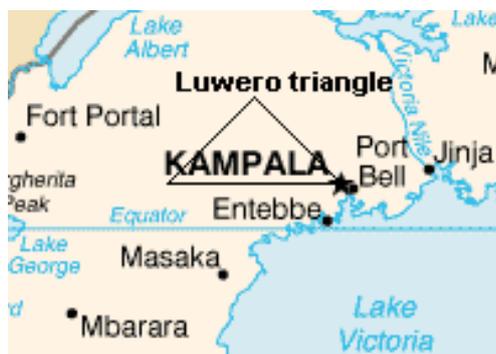


Picture 4: The cleavage between the north and the south during and after Obote’s second term

Before the NRA withdrew to the bush and started the guerrilla war, it negotiated with other opposition parties on how to overthrow Obote’s regime (see e.g. Museveni 1985, 9). Museveni radicalized during his time in the University college of Dar es Salaam. He familiarized himself with different guerrilla tactics and was assured that the only way to unite the Ugandan people was by starting a coup of the masses. Thus, before Museveni started rebelling he had a clear vision of what to do and in what order. This struggle was first and foremost a struggle for power and not so much a struggle to gain economic benefits. Of course, economic benefits were automatically to follow if one got control over the state machinery. Museveni used tribal disparities for his own purposes to gain wider support, particularly among the Baganda, whose support was crucial after he ousted the central government.

At the beginning, the NRA operated mostly from Luwero triangle, which was situated just west of Kampala, continuing about 160 kilometers to the west and north-west. Inside this “triangle”, Museveni raised tribal consciousness and fear that Obote and his Acholi/Langi army would turn to terrorize the south. Even though Museveni was and is a nationalistic politician and highly suspicious towards tribalism and traditional beliefs in Uganda, he knew exactly how to use those beliefs to advance his own ends. *“The fact is that Luwero afforded Museveni a classic ideal situation and ground for putting into effect his design to*

*divide and rule Uganda. In the prosecution of the war in Luwero, he presented the Uganda National Liberation Army [UNLA] founded at the Moshi Conference by the Uganda National Liberation Front [UNLF] as Obote's Northern Soldiers"* (Obote 1990). The war between Obote and Museveni as we could call it, was above all a tribal conflict where political parties were constructed around one person. After Amin, there was no nation-state called Uganda, as Obote had already argued in his speech in Dar es Salaam (see p. 55-56). The conflict between the UNLA and the NRA was tribal because there were no nation-state, and the outcome of the conflict was to reshape the contours of the new Uganda.



Picture 5: The approximate location of the Luwero triangle

The means of the NRA were based mainly on coercion. There were never a large scale rebellion caused by Museveni towards Obote's government, but the strategy was to rely on counter-insurgency. Museveni's soldiers were many times dressed up as government soldiers and this led to confusion among civilians about what was their real enemy (Ingham 1994, 180). The government's army was also turning to violence when it was searching the NRA soldiers in the villages. The ill-disciplined UNLA was not ready to take control of the country's security matters after the better commanded and disciplined Tanzanian army left Uganda. The UNLA consisted of men who were quickly recruited and armed after Amin was exiled from the country. The army consisted mainly of Acholi and Langi soldiers. This deepened the cleavage between the north and the south. Soldiers had their own suspicions against and reasons for hating the civilians of Buganda, because Museveni's attacks against the UNLA and other institutions of government were mainly taking place in Buganda, and the Baganda had been eager to accept Amin as the president (Ingham 1994, 181). The Acholi and Langi soldiers of the UNLA were revenging at the civilians at the same time when they should have been searching rebels of the NRA and protecting the civilian population.

The UNLA army during Obote's second presidency consisted mainly of the Acholi and the Langi soldiers. In other words, Obote gathered men from his own tribe, or people close to it, and these were the same men who were also terrorizing civilians in search of the rebels. Obote, himself, has argued that there were several reasons for raising that army. *"The most important was the direct result of the decision that all the men in the UNLA should undergo training in the laws of war. A large number, some 4,000 men in the UNLA, were found in early 1981, to be barely literate and unable to profit by any such training. A project to keep such men in the UNLA not as combatants but principally to train to be farmers was prepared"* (Obote 1990). Naturally, this was not the whole truth. Obote tried to make his own army sound more acceptable. Those UNLA soldiers that should have been educated on human rights and the rules of war were committing their own killings for whatever reason (see e.g. Ngoga 1998, Ingham 1994, and Behrend 1998).

## **9.2 Position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity during second term of Obote**

Obote had tremendous problems of controlling the UNLA's soldiers. To defend Obote, Ingham states that Obote had inherited the UNLA army that had been created during Lule's and Binaisa's terms (Ingham 1994, 186). This is certainly true, and we have to remember that Lule first tried to stabilize the ethnic balance in the army by favoring educated soldiers. This was one reason why Lule was dismissed from presidency. After Lule, Binaisa tried to increase his influence in the army by dismissing Oyite-Ojok and Tito Okello, and this led to a military takeover. These events show how important the army was for the Acholi.

Ugandan society continued to be highly fractioned. In the north, there were some supporters of Amin. In the southern and in the eastern districts, Museveni was collecting his own rebel army mainly from Banyoro soldiers. Lastly, there was the government's army which mainly consisted of the Acholi and the Lango soldiers. The success of the UNLA very much depended on Major-General Ojok who was alone very much responsible for commanding the army. Ojok was Acholi and he worked closely with Obote. Obote's

regime faced severe losses when Ojok died in a helicopter crash. These problems followed because Ojok had not nominated a suitable candidate to take his place.

The Acholi, together with the Langi, had gained a strong role in the UNLA. However, after the death of Ojok, it proved to be difficult to find a suitable follower to fill his post. General Tito Okello recommended two candidates to the defence council. They were Smith Opon Acak and Basilio Okello, both Acholi. Eventually, Opon was chosen to be the commander. The death of Ojok had driven the army into factions: the Acholi on one side and the Langi on the other (Ngoga 1998, 103). Opon turned out in many ways to be an incapable leader and he could not keep the army united. While the army was getting fractured and lacking a suitable leader, the rebels kept committing strikes to “hard” and “soft” targets. Soldiers responded by attacking as well as revenging on the civilians and basically on anyone suspected of supporting the rebels. Even though many soldiers were imprisoned, civilians could no longer trust the army. At this time, Obote had lost the last means to control the actions of the government army. Also, the northern parts of the country were drawn to this conflict when the NRA opened a campaign of terror in the north-west district in 1984. A rumor was spread that the government was planning a massacre of the Acholi soldiers. This rumor was intended to enforce the Acholi suspicions towards the government. During Amin’s regime, the Acholi soldiers were massacred in two separate occasions and this was one reason that developed what Boås has called, an Acholi meta-narrative of the government destroying the Acholi (Boås 2004, 284). Here, we can see that in some occasions it was possible to hide one’s ethnic background. At the same time when UNLA’s soldiers were robbing and killing civilians while fighting the rebels, the rebels could increase the fear among the civilians by wearing UNLA’s uniforms which had been easy to obtain after Amin’s troops withdrew to Sudan. Only by changing uniform, one was able to change his ethnicity.

At the same time when the rumors of mass murders were being spread, the army lead by Basilio Okello marched from Gulu towards Kampala. It is hard to say who were behind the killings of the Acholi soldiers because the Acholi were the largest ethnic group of the UNLA, and therefore, they also suffered the hardest casualties. Whatever the truth was, the experiences from Amin’s era of the Acholi being murdered by the government were used to legitimize the forth-coming military coup d’etat. During Obote’s second regime, the Acholi were in a central position because of forming the bulk of the government’s army.

As Lule had not succeeded making reforms for balancing the ethnic representation in the army, the uneducated Acholi and Langi remained as a majority in the army. The uneducated and unqualified soldiers were not easy to control, and while Obote had to keep his focus in the district of Buganda where Kampala is situated, the rest of the country was a battlefield between the UNLA and the different rebel groups. The government soldiers did not handle well the situation and, while they were frustrated because of the continuous rebel activity, the soldiers began to revenge their frustration on the civil population. In the worst case, civilians had to fear government soldiers as much as rebels. This proved to be important after Museveni took over from Tito Okello in 1986.

According to Ingham (1994), there were three main factions which Obote had to keep an eye on. Firstly, the opposition party, DP, which wanted to take Obote's UPC party's place. Secondly, threat to Obote was posed by the UPC party itself as some of the more radical groups disliked Obote's moderate policies. Thirdly, there was Museveni who, with his rebels, caused much trouble in Luwero district. (Ingham 1994, 205) The army had gained importance as a tool for internal politics, and it was impossible that one of the factions could have overthrown the government without the support of the army. This raised the Acholi to a central position in the Ugandan polity, because they were in the majority and had the command of the army. It is highly likely that high ranking Acholi officers saw that their time had come to take control over Uganda. The army did not have difficulties to gain support from these three factions and it is highly likely that the army was encouraged to take action by these political actors.

We can see how the neo-patrimonial authority practiced by Obote gave the motivation for different factions to unite for a moment in order to oust the president and the government. Obote had favored his own kind in nominating his cabinet. This gave the DP the motivation to co-operate with the army. The UNLA was given motivation by the fact that the army had no official political power and, on the other hand, Obote had lost his control of the armed forces when Ojok had died. And there had also been the rumors of mass murders of the Acholi. The Acholi had gained their position in the polity by participating in the military actions, and they certainly wanted more power in Ugandan politics.

## 10. REGIME OF OKELLO'S MILITARY GOVERNMENT

Tito Okello's time in power turned out to be short. Obote was overthrown in July 1985 and Tito Okello was chosen as president. Okello's regime collapsed as early as January 1986 when Museveni committed a successful coup d'etat. This short time period will be analyzed in this chapter and the focus will be in the status of the Acholi in the polity.

The new government did not enjoy wide support among the Ugandans but it had control of the armed forces (Ingham 1994, 208). The support of Okello was deteriorated by Museveni, who effectively used his protracted people's war to turn different ethnic groups against each other to his own advantage. For example, Obote had noted that "*Museveni terrorized and brutalized the people of Luwero and in order to win the sympathies of the Baganda; he made such terror and violence to appear as having been wholly the misdeeds of the UNLA*" (Obote 1990). This was the only time in Uganda's history when the government was fully in the hands of the Acholi.

The root causes of the coup came from the internal fractioning of the UNLA, which started after the death of Major-General Ojok. During Obote's regime, the position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity was determined by the army in which the Acholi and the Langi formed the majority. All three factions: the DP, radicals of the UPC and the NRA (Museveni), were gaining from the coup of Okello. Despite the common enemy, Obote, it was not enough to unite these actors for a long time. The coup started when Museveni was in Sweden to collect international support for his "mission" (Ingham 1994, 206). When all the strategic targets of Kampala had been sieged and all main streets barred, the soldiers began to rob the civilians. Tito Okello had made his decision and withdrew to Acholi land. There he collected supporters and formed an army of his own. Ingham describes these events in a following way: "*Too late, Obote began to get an inkling of the plotting that had been going on. While working in his office at 1 a.m. he was informed by a close associate, Dr. Opiote, that the army in Gulu was marching on Kampala under the leadership of Basilio Okello [Tito Okello's army General]*" (Ingham 1994, 206).

With this army, Basilio Okello started to march towards Kampala. At this point, Obote still had a grip of his office, although Kampala was under a siege. The fact that Okello gathered

a new army from the Acholi district, and not from those who were pillaging the capital, shows how fractioned the UNLA was at the time. Soldiers had multiple subloyalties. Some were loyal to Paulo Muwanga (Vice President), some to the commanders working under Obote, and, lastly some were loyal to Tito Okello. When Obote noticed that the troops loyal to him were rapidly decreasing in numbers, he escaped to Kenya where his wife already was. After Obote was gone, the formation of the new government proved to be difficult.

Okello's regime was short-lived. The events during his time mostly relate to his problematic relations with Museveni. In sum, Okello's rise to presidency was the culmination to the mutual beneficial relations between the army and the Acholi. The division between the north and the south remained in the same position as during Obote's regime. The only exception was that, for a very short period of time, Kampala can be partly classified as belonging to the same side as northern Uganda: This was because the Acholi army was in control of the capital

Tito Okello was shown to be an incapable leader and he did not enjoy widespread support. During Okello's regime, politicians held on to their subloyalties. Some were loyal to Muwanga, some to the UPC and others to Okello, or even to Obote. The fractioned government could not stabilize its power. This opened new possibilities for Museveni who had not participated in the government. Okello, leading a paralyzed government, contacted Museveni and tried to negotiate for support. At this point, the UNLA was too fractioned and undisciplined to form a real obstacle for Museveni's plans. In January 1986, Okello escaped from Kampala and Museveni took his place as a head of the state.

## **11. YOWERI MUSEVENI (1986- )**

Yoweri Museveni committed a successful military coup d'état on the 26th of January 1986. Pascal Ngoga had presented several factors that ensured the success of the NRA. Firstly, Obote favored northern tribes over others. It must be remembered that the political center of Uganda has always been in the south. The Baganda, who have traditionally been the most influential ethnic group, could not accept a government formed only of the northern tribes. Secondly, Obote's regime made it quite easy for the NRA to gain full support of the common people. This was because during the conflict, the army of the government killed civilians and made their life difficult on many occasions. Thirdly, Museveni was a strong and a visionary leader who successfully integrated different ethnic groups to advance his politics. (Ngoga 1998, 104). He had gathered experience from guerrilla activity when he was in exile in Tanzania during the 1970s. In the context of Africa, the success of the NRA is remarkable, because it actually achieved its aims almost without any support from foreign countries. At the beginning of his guerrilla war, Museveni obtained some minor weaponry from Gaddafi's Libya and, earlier, he had obtained some training for his men from the Frelimo, which was a group of guerrillas opposing the rule of the Portuguese in Mozambique.

As a politician, one of the first acts of Museveni was to dismantle the institution of chieftainship (Ngoga 1998, 96) He removed the political power of chiefs and gave it to the resistance councils. This reform was made to ensure that the people would be accountable to state authority, not to a chief of a tribe. The monarchial system was activated again by Museveni in 2000. The restored monarchs do not possess any political power in state affairs, but the institution is traditionally important. The government of Uganda has listed some of its key policy goals under Museveni's regime: Democratization process, liberalization of economy and privatization ([www.statehouse.go.ug](http://www.statehouse.go.ug) 11.1.07)<sup>4</sup>. There has been a change in the political rhetoric as well. Unlike his predecessors, the nationalist-minded Museveni has spoken for the unity of the citizens of Uganda. Despite the rhetoric, Museveni's regime has not always been on the road to multi-party democracy. In the early days of his presidency, he announced that the NRA will honor the constitution, which ensures a five-year presidential term. At the same time, he banned all forms of political

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 1

opposition. This one party policy was in practice until 1996 when presidential elections were held, and for the first time, Museveni had an opponent from the opposition party. The second elections were held in the winter of 2006 and, as a start of his presidential campaign, Museveni accused his only opponent Kizza Besigye of rape and treason. Besigye was imprisoned and protests by the opposition were suppressed by force. Museveni won these elections by gaining 59.3 % of the votes. Despite Museveni's enthusiasm towards a nationalist policy, the conflict on-going today in Northern Uganda has its roots in the ethnic divisions. On the other hand, it is also partly a consequence of the early policies of Museveni's regime.

### **11.1 Cleavage between the north and the south during Yoweri Museveni's term**

After Museveni had taken over power, the violent acts that had troubled Buganda ceased (Ingham 1994, 209). Ingham suspects that this was because the NRA had terrorized the civilians. The more probable reason was that those northerners that had worked under Obote and then under Tito Okello had retrieved towards the north. The change that Museveni's rise to power brought was that before Museveni's rule, Buganda had been the unstable area which tried to achieve independency, or at least control the rest of the country. Now the roles were changing and the northern districts became unstable, inferior and difficult to control by the southern central government.

If we think about how the authority contributed to Museveni's success in his strategy, at least two explanations can be found. Firstly, Museveni had gone to the bush already in 1981 when his party had lost the elections. He had had a long time to gather support from ordinary citizens, while the unstable central government distanced itself from those it should have been serving. The neo-patrimonial authority of the former governments had created power vacuums, which gave room for guerrilla groups to act in the north. The NRM could quite easily and efficiently spread its influence around the southern districts before turning its attention to problems in the north. Museveni's political strategy for controlling the south was to dismantle the institution of chieftaincy. "*Local chiefs were stripped from executive, legislative and judicial powers and those powers were given to Resistance Councils*" (Ngoga 1998, 105). The chieftaincy was the legacy from the colonial

era that had made citizens accountable to traditional structures rather than to state officials. This, in result, transformed traditional structures of authority towards the legal-rational type. This was a logical change because the nationalistic strategy of Museveni required strong leadership and now the people would be governed by the central government.

The second reason why Museveni succeeded was that this was the first time that the independent Uganda was governed by a president who came from the south. The area around Kampala had been the political and economic center of Uganda under the colonial rule. After the independence, the Baganda were hoping and insisting that their positions would be superior compared to other groups. However, after the independence, the political center indeed remained in Buganda, but the leaders came from everywhere else but Buganda. Every president before Museveni had to struggle with two problems that Museveni did not have. First of all, the presidents, who were not from the south, all tried to recruit as many civil servants and army officers as possible from, if not directly their home region, but at least near by. Secondly, they had to struggle to keep the capital district in their command while favoring their own home districts. The maintenance of the chiefly institution until Museveni's regime was a solution to the legitimacy problems of the governments. By giving some powers to the traditional chiefs, the presidents and the cabinets could, to some extent, avoid accusations of not developing certain areas.

We can say that Museveni was the first leader in Uganda with a nationalistic ideology. In his articles dating back to the last years of his guerrilla fight, or protracted people's war as he calls it, Museveni accuses the former governments of expanding the significance of tribal disparities on purpose. *"The phenomena of tribalism, nepotism and rampant corruption are products of backwardness. Likewise, characters such as Amin and Obote do not drop from heaven but arise out of this very problem of backwardness"* (Museveni 1985,18). He also saw characters such as Amin and Obote as products of the country's dependency on the developed countries, the foundations of which were laid in the decolonization process. *"They [British] left control mostly to men of low political understanding, most of whom had a low level of modern education. That is how school-drop-outs like Obote found themselves at the helm of state affairs by independence"* (Museveni 1985, 18). In his speeches, Museveni built an image of himself as an anti-tribalistic, nationalistic and progressive leader who would unite Uganda under one flag.

The idea of anti-tribalism is at the very heart of Museveni's thinking. He sees most of Uganda's problems as a result of the tribalistic politics of the past. "*Once the political question is solved, it will be the basis for solving other problems, economic questions, social questions and others*" (Museveni 1985, 32). On the other hand, tribalism is produced by this backwardness according to Museveni. If the main political aims of the NRA were to dismantle the tribalism and non-accountability of the leaders, the other important mission so to say was to educate the masses. By this education, Museveni wished to bring an end to the traditional beliefs, such as witchcraft, that could be very injurious if they were given free reign on the quest for cheap popularity. At this point, it is good to remember that the HSMF and the LRA were both based on religious grounds. The reason why Museveni was so anxious to wipe out traditional beliefs was that, with these belief systems, the political leaders could control the population and keep it undereducated and uninterested in participating in the politics. The education of the masses, developing the economy to more independent direction and social cohesion of the society were, and are, the main means for developing Uganda according to Museveni's plans.

With hindsight, we can say that the cleavage between the north and the south of Uganda remained after Museveni's rise to power. Although Museveni has stressed the importance of national unity, the northern parts of the country have remained, up till today, in a power vacuum. Before 1986, the Ugandan leaders had come from the northern districts, and this kept northern parts integrated in the Ugandan polity. After the fall of Okello's regime, people who had supported the passing government had to escape from the government districts. Those escaping people were the only capable northerners who had knowledge of and links to the state apparatus. This caused loosening of ties that had kept the northern tribes in the center of the polity. Museveni, possibly deliberately, cutted off all ties to the northern tribes.

The roots of the NRC's plans were, and are, in the modernization theory of the stages of development. "*The problem with African leaders, however, is that they do not seem to know that society goes through stages. That is why they are not able to provide solutions*". Museveni describes the development of a society with a metaphor of a growing child. According to him, society is like a child which first grows teeth and then learns to say one word after another (Museveni 2002). How does this relate to the cleavage between the north and the south in Uganda? We have seen that Museveni understood the problem of a

divided country as benefiting mostly the autocrats who are in power. According to Museveni, the governments in Uganda did not have an incentive to educate the masses or to develop the economy of the country. He recognized this as a problem resulting from the neo-patrimonial structures of the former governments. Gaining benefits for one's own tribe or family deteriorates the social cohesion of the society. At the time of the guerrilla war against the government, and later during the wars against the HSMF and the LRA, Museveni was a visionary and a strong leader who leaned to his visions and drew support from those who felt discriminated against.

Despite all the talk of unifying Uganda and treating everyone equally, the northern parts were left without full support from the government. This support would have been crucial immediately after Museveni had dismantled the former government. Patrimonialism helped to shape the post-Amin Uganda during Obote's term. Those days, Museveni and Obote both used patrimonialism to gather large support before the change in rule. Museveni may not have practiced patrimonialism in the same way or to a same extent after he ascended to power. However, reaching a nation-wide social cohesion has remained as an unsolvable problem.

## **11.2 Position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity after Museveni's coup d'etat**

After Museveni had taken control over the state apparatus, the former status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity was crushed. The soldiers of the UNLA fled towards the north. Some crossed borders to Sudan and some moved back to their home villages in north Uganda. The former soldiers hid their weapons in the villages and attempted to lead a peasant life, but only few were successful. This is how Behrend (1998) described the return of the former soldiers back to their origins. The people, who had lived years on plundering and fighting, could not easily adapt to the new situation. The former soldiers begun to terrorize and plunder villages in Gulu (district were most of the Acholi live). The situation was exacerbated when the NRA stationed a battalion in Gulu. Before the coup, these same men had fought against the Acholi and their supporters. Now was the time for revenge. The central government had not established full control over the northern districts or even over the battalion stationed there. Civilians were caught between two camps. On the one

side, there were their own tribes men who could not adapt back to the life of a peasant and, on the other side, there were the troops of the NRA who were terrorizing the civilians as an act of revenge (Behrend 1998, 108).

In this extremely stressful situation, a woman called Alice Auma allegedly became possessed by a spirit called Lakwena, who ordered to build an army called the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces. The creation of the HSMF can be seen as a consequence of the disappearance of the status of the Acholi in the polity. The district of the Acholi was in a state of a chaos. Before the coup, the Acholi could reach high positions in the state apparatus through serving in the army. The loss of this occupation had created a number of jobless men who could not do much else but fight. One may disagree with Behrend who claims that the purpose of the HSMF was to regain the power that the Acholi had lost. More likely, the creation of the HSMF was the only means to control the men who only followed and understood military hierarchy. The march of the HSMF towards Kampala was a compulsory act because the members of the group were former soldiers of the state army and they had seen the rise and fall of the days of its glory. If gathering the former soldiers of the UNLA under one flag was the only means to control them, we must ask the question: If the HSMF would have not begun to advance towards Kampala, what would it have done to keep the men under control and why, then, those men chose to be united under the HSMF?

Alice Lakwena practiced traditional healing and she had traditional authority among the Acholi. The moral discourse, as Heike Behrend calls it, came from this traditional authority (Behrend 1998, 109). Alice Auma purified her soldiers spiritually. In that ritual, all bad spirits were banished away from an individual, and after the ritual, the soldier was considered pure and holy. The purified soldiers had to prove their pureness again and again in the battle. If a soldier was wounded or killed in battle, it was because he was impure and a sinner, because a soldier who was pure could not be hit by a bullet. (Behrend 1998, 110) Those soldiers who fought for the HSMF might have fought for power they had lost, but the army of the HSMF was created to be a structure of control. The HSMF is a continuum for the discourse of the Acholi in the army. Before Amin's regime and immediately after it, the Acholi were the dominating ethnic group in Ugandan army. Life of a soldier was the only option for those who had spent years in military service working for governments that had been supporting them. All this changed after Museveni took over.

Museveni, himself, experienced this situation in a completely different way than the Western researchers have understood. As we have already seen in previous chapter, Museveni put much weight on nationalism or to the “enlightenment” as he himself called his policy. In his speech on the anniversary of the NRM administration in 1987, Museveni attacked against the HSMF by calling it a plan of Okello. *”They [Okello] told their supportters that there was a woman by the name of Alice Lakwena who had risen from the dead, just like Jesus”* (Museveni 2000, 23). To Museveni the spiritual bases of the HSMF presented irresponsibility and primitivity of the former leaders. He declared that those rebels must be completely crushed; driving them to the soil of Sudan would not be enough. According to this study, the will to completely destroy the HSMF represented Museveni’s ambition to “develop” the society in his own terms. There was no room for the forces of primitivity and anti-enlightenment in Museveni’s Uganda. By forces of anti-enlightenment, Museveni primarily meant Okello and Obote who did not want to educate the masses so that they can keep extracting wealth from the resources of Uganda.

The HSMF was eventually defeated by the government forces in a battle near Jinja only 30 km from Kampala. Alice Auma escaped to Kenya, where she recently died. The HSMF had a strong attempt to reconstitute the moral order of the Acholi (Van Acker 2003, 29). This claim was justified by the fact that the HSMF was at the time the only rebel group in the north that had a moral or religious basis. Other groups like the Uganda People’s Army (UPA) or Uganda People’s Democratic Army (UPDA) were secularised. The need for a moral dimension of the HSMF rose from the collapse of the Acholi status in the Ugandan polity. As the survived members of the HSMF escaped back to the north, most of them joined local rebel groups such as the two named above. For the former soldiers working in an army-like organization, there was only one way to gain income and show that they still existed. After the collapse of the HSMF, her father was the first to take Auma’s place and, shortly after, her alleged cousin Joseph Kony who created the LRA. Kony’s LRA was not operating like the HSMF; if the latter was operating as a one big army, the LRA worked in smaller guerrilla groups.

According to Heike Behrend, *“over a period of more than ten years, the war became a mode of production, created a form of life which 'normalized' and banalized violence and brutality”*. *For most of the soldiers, whether they fought on the side of the government of*

*that of its opponents, war became business which was more profitable than peace* (Behrend 1998, 116). In this study, we have seen how the status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity developed during independency. We can see how war became the only way to participate in and interact with the society for the Acholi, rather than the only way to survive. This tendency only got stronger after Museveni took power. The continuing conflict in Northern Uganda made it an area where the sovereignty of the government has been, and still is, seriously challenged. After the sovereignty of the central government deteriorated in the area, the conflict became international. Foreign governments could intervene in Ugandan politics through the groups acting in the north. It has also become evident that rebel groups can cross state borders without problems. At the moment, the LRA is stationed in the DRC.

## **12. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

In this study, we have seen the historical trajectory of two separate but interlinked developments. First, we have seen how the cleavage between the north and the south developed since the independence of Uganda. Secondly, we have seen how the status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity changed depending on who was in control of the state apparatus. In this concluding chapter I will first consider how the elaborated microhistorical method has served our purposes. I will also consider how compatible the concepts of authority were with the microhistory approach.

### **12.1 A variation of microhistory or something completely different?**

In pure microhistory, the observed events are considerably small-scale. For many, such small-scale observing seems irrelevant. This study varies from the so called pure microhistory primarily because of the different scale of observation and, partly, because of the slightly more compromised research material. Instead of focusing on micro scale events, this study has used microhistory to observe changes at the society level rather than only at the individual level. Also by using microhistory, we have been able to construct a continuum of developments in certain areas of society. Lives of the observed presidents have served us like trampolines which have enabled us to look deeper in to the structures of the society, and through their actions we have also been able to observe long term developments at a wider scale in society. The words of Simona Cerrutti have been the guiding principle of this study: *“Microhistory is a method which enables us to penetrate in to a society to trace the social structures as a tissue of relations”* (Cerrutti 2004, 17).

Microhistory needs authentic material to work correctly. The research material in this study consists partly of authentic and partly of second hand data. In chapters 6, 9 and 11 which focused on observing Obote and Museveni, the authentic material has been their speeches and articles. The role of the second hand material in these chapters has been to complement the information of the speeches, because those speeches did not cover the whole time period observed. In addition, the second hand material mainly consists of political bibliographies, written by the persons who had closely followed the politics in Uganda.

How the microhistory is present in this study is in the narrative approach to the analysis of the time periods. The microhistorical method is usually utilized by narrating the observed phenomenon. In this study, we have seen how the observed phenomena have developed during Uganda's independency. By focusing the study on the authority of each of the presidents and on the personal ties of the presidents towards the observed phenomena, we have been able to anchor and focus our viewpoint into the changing environment. As my objects of study have been persons with a high political power status within society, authority has been a logical concept describing the social and particularly the political environment of the time in question. As the political power in the Ugandan polity has been centralized into the hands of few, concepts like neo-patrimonialism and traditional authority have had considerable effects on the ethnic and economic balances in society.

Methodologically, microhistory has served well in describing the long term processes in society. In this study, I have concentrated on two particularly important questions in the course of development of the independent Uganda: First, the cleavage between the north and the south and, second, the position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity. To observe these questions, I have used the social orientation of the microhistory. In this orientation the focus is on the contextualisation of the social relations and phenomena in the observed society. Through these two questions, I have constructed the making of the Ugandan society, and seen the move from the patrimonialism of Obote's first government to Amin's kleptocracy, and again back to the patrimonialism of Obote. Often conflict and patrimonialism also include economic questions and tensions. In the case of Uganda, the economic dimension did not result in as central question as one could have assumed. The economic aspects are often present in patrimonialism. This was easiest to notice in Obote's first term. However, after Obote ascended to the power for the second time, and the conflict between the NRA and the UNLF broke out, patrimonialism was one, and the most important, way to reach power that controlling the state apparatus would automatically bring.

Economic systems are not in a central position in the social orientation of the microhistory. The microhistorical observation of developments of national economy would result in problems. Why then, the social orientation of microhistory suited to observe the Ugandan society? The answer is that, in this case, there have been many parallel phenomena running

side by side with the economic dimension. The conflicts in the history of the independent Uganda have primarily been conflicts over state power. The economic benefits have been in a secondary position. Those will follow as one gains influence in the state apparatus. Only during Amin's regime, the economic aspect was in the centre of patrimonialism. The reasons for Amin's coup were primarily economic. Amin was revealed for smuggling gold from Zaire and, to defend his position, he committed the coup d'etat. Through microhistory we can observe and understand motivations behind this kind of "economic action".

Why social microhistory can be utilized to observe Amin's regime? The answer is, because he used state resources as his own purse, and he also transformed domestic macroeconomic questions into questions concerning his own economic and political survival and welfare. In his speech in 1979, Obote told that Amin was hiding these economic facts from the outside world: "*During the past eight years Amin has made it a practice to mock those he killed, taunt Ugandans in their miseries and deceive the world that neither the destruction of lives of Ugandans on a colossal scale nor that of the economy and social services were issues at all*" (Obote 1979). To observe Amin's regime, I did not need to focus much on macroeconomics, which would, indeed, be difficult with the microhistorical approach.

## **12.2 Cleavage between the north and the south – a memory from the past**

The main results of this study concerning the cleavage between the north and the south can be summarized in the following way. There are two main lines of division between the north and the south. The first divide Buganda from the rest of the country from independence till the rule of Okello. The second division from Museveni's tenure onward changed the economic and political balance as the line moved more towards the north

Uganda has been ruled from the southern Buganda district during its independence. The importance of the Buganda district resulted in the increased importance of the neo-patrimonial structures in the governments that were created on a basis other than the support of the Baganda. The most important reason for the creation of the neo-patrimonial structures before the time of Museveni has been the need to gather the support of the political and the economic elites. For Museveni, however, the need was to gather the support of the masses against those who he felt as enemies of Uganda. The clearest

examples of neo-patrimonialism were both of Obote's regimes. The survival of Amin's regime, on the other hand, was based on a wide spread of kleptocracy and not so much on neo-patrimonial structures.

The importance of the neo-patrimonial structures was highlighted during the conflict between Obote and Museveni, in 1981 and 1985. At that time, Uganda was fragmented into multiple sub-loyalties and the central government had to struggle simply to exist. Obote's advantage at the time was that he could extract resources from the state machinery. His disadvantage, however, was his own history that made him a president that ruled the country from a non-cooperative area. Museveni did not have such a resource base as Obote did. The lack of material resources forced him to count on the support of the masses. The wide support base was available in Uganda because of the bad memories from Obote's last government and because of his alliance with the armed forces of Tanzania. These results are all part of the long time developments in Ugandan society and they cannot be separated and dealt with as independent phenomena in the polity.

The observed time period began from the independence of Uganda in 1962. The first term of Apollo Milton Obote was coloured by the political conflicts between the parties. Behind these party conflicts was one cleavage above all others: The cleavage between the north and the south that had been created already during the British rule. As we have seen, Obote's UPC party was basically organized in legal-rational terms, as was also the opposition party DP. The KY, on the other hand, was structured more on a traditional basis. During the whole period from 1962 until the coup of Amin in 1971, the politics in Uganda was dominated by a strange mixture of traditional and modern party politics. The KY party wanted to separate Buganda from the rest of the country. At the same time, the UPC as the largest party governed the country from Kampala, which is in Buganda district. This conflict came to a sort of an end, when Obote ousted Muteesa II and appointed himself as president. After the loss of the KY, the UPC and Obote had to increasingly rely on the army, because the political stability among the parties and their supporters could have not been reached anymore.

Conflicts also rose from the inequalities within society. The inequality question was made deeper and more complicated by the fact that the UPC was not peasant based, even in the Lango district, which was the home region of Obote. As westernized as the UPC party was,

the personal networks of the party members prevented it from turning itself into a unified actor. Individual party members tried to gain as much personal advantage as possible, while at the same time, the party had to prevent especially the KY and its supporters from gaining more influence in Buganda. Obote's solution to threat of the Baganda was to keep the Asians dominant in the local economy. Giving the economy to the hands of the Asians, at least in the Buganda district, did not form a political threat to the UPC. The Africanization of the Ugandan economy could proceed elsewhere in the country. Thus, during the Obote's first regime the cleavage between the north and the south was in reality between the Buganda district and the rest of the country.

Amin's military coup d'état changed the character of this cleavage. Amin was a charismatic personality who surrounded his cabinet and its crucial units with men whose loyalty he had bought. The political centre of Uganda remained in Kampala, but now the capital was in the hands of the Kakwa and the Nubi. These ethnic groups live mostly in the north-west corner of Uganda. Quite rapidly after Amin had abolished the party politics and named himself as president for a five-year term, it became obvious that again the cleavage separated the Buganda district from the rest of the country. According to this study the difference in the situation compared to Obote's regime was that now Buganda was not trying to loosen itself from the state of Uganda. During Amin's regime, the cleavage was sustained by a wide-spread cleptocracy and the neo-patrimonial structures of the society.

Amin was ousted from power in 1979, when the combined forces of the TPDF and the UNLF made a successful attack from the soil of Tanzania. Before the attack had come to its successful end, the exiled politicians chose Lule to be the new president. As this study observed Obote's speeches and his use of patrimonialism, I can argue that the terms of Lule and Binaisa were planned to be as buffers for Obote's second coming. The time of Lule's regime was coloured by the competition for the executive power between the NCC and the president. Lule was a Muganda and this raised fears among the other ethnic groups, mostly in those coming from the northern districts. The Baganda had their hopes raised after Lule's election and especially the Lango and the Acholi elite wanted to keep the last word for the NCC. Lule was not directly interested in favouring people from his own ethnic group. He had an academic background and one of his interests was to get experienced people to work in his government. A problem was that, after Amin's terror, there were not too many experienced politicians or civil servants available in Uganda, most

had died or lived in exile. Lule's attempts to name more Bagandas to his cabinet lead to his dismissal, and raised Binaisa as president. Binaisa's politics were based more on creating neo-patrimonial structures and favouring his relatives directly, than hiring qualified men to get the jobs done. The neo-patrimonial structures together within the continuing competition for executive power with the NCC lead to the military takeover. Binaisa was not a very popular person and, as Ingham has written, "*as long as Binaisa stayed in power, it was because wide spread confusion within political field and not because Binaisa's ability*" (Ingham 1994, 161).

The elections that were held in the early 1981 ended with the victory of the UPC party, and Obote as the secretary-general of the UPC was nominated as president for the second time. During his second term, Obote gained a bad reputation among the public as well as the international community. The time of his second term was chaotic. This was mainly because of the fragmentation of the society into the several sub-loyalties, which had resulted from Amin's terror. As we have seen in this study, the neo-patrimonial authority of Obote and Museveni contributed to this fragmentation in a negative way.

Several active guerrilla groups terrorizing the lives of peasants also remained in the country. As this would have not been bad enough, Obote totally lost control of the armed forces of the government. Civilians were hunted and robbed by the rebels as well as the government's soldiers. According to this study, the cleavage between the north and the south had started to move towards the north during this period. This movement happened because Museveni's increasing guerrilla insurgency was concentrating to the southern areas and Obote's support came mainly from the north. The final consequences of losing control followed when Basilio Okello marched to Kampala with his army and forced Obote, once again, into exile.

Tito Okello's Acholi government kept control over Uganda by controlling parts of the armed forces. However the UNLA was fractioned into many subloyalties, some of which were loyal to Okello, some to Museveni and some still to Obote. A fractioned army like this one was did not stand long in the way of Museveni's own disciplined forces. Tito Okello's regime was dismantled after six months in power. During Okello's rule, the division between the north and the south remained the same with the exception of Kampala

belonging to the same category as the Acholi dominated north. However, this did not last for long.

One remarkable change that Museveni's coup brought was that now the parts were changing between the north and the south. Before, the southern Buganda had been the main problem area for the governments. After Museveni, the northern district of the Acholi became unstable and hard to control by the central government. This was an important reason for the birth of the HSMF and, later, for the creation of the LRA. Control over the southern Buganda district had been crucial for all of the governments. The new top personnel of the new NRM government had no immediate relations to the northern Acholi district, and it fell into a power vacuum, which soon became filled by the rebel groups and the charismatic leaders.

We have seen how the seeds of the conflict in northern Uganda were laid soon after the independence. The speeches and the articles of Obote and Museveni have given us an authentic description of how the difficult times of Uganda were experienced by the presidents in power and in the centre of the events. After Amin was dismantled in 1979, it was time to build a new nation out of Uganda. In this construction of the nation, patrimonialism was crucial for all parties involved. The patrimonial rule divided Uganda mainly between Obote's and Museveni's supporters. The old tribal divisions were encouraged by both parties, even though both Museveni and Obote denied it. These tribal divisions determined who one was and where he or she came from. By using these divisions it was possible to reshape new contours of the Ugandan polity. Without patrimonialism it would have been difficult for Obote to stay or even come to power. On the other hand, it would have been as impossible for Museveni to challenge this government, which was supported by the armed forces of Tanzania.

After Museveni had overthrown Okello's government, the new crucial question was: How Obote's supporters and other troops with differing loyalties could be included into the polity, which was now affected by this new division. The politics of Museveni was based on anti-tribalism and anti-primitivism, as he called his politics (Museveni 1985). One of the discourses which united the HSMF was the war against the impure government of the NRA (Behrend 1998, 107). The leader of the HSMF, Alice Lakwena, used Museveni's politics against himself in gathering her troops to fight against the impure and unholy

troops of the NRA. In a situation where the Acholi were threatened by their own alienated excombatants and the government troops, the traditional belief systems combined with Christianity stepped in to fill the authority vacuum. As we have seen, the conflict has a strong spiritual dimension. The traditional ways of settling violence are in conflict with the modern idea of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Museveni is preferring modernity over the traditionalism. He called the ICC in 2003 to investigate acts of the LRA, and in 2005, the ICC wanted five top commanders of the LRA to answer their crimes in the ICC (*Helsingin Sanomat* 26.8.2007). While Museveni is remaking the Ugandan polity, even he can not by pass the traditional belief systems that still carry much influence throughout the society.

### **12.3 Position of the Acholi – Transformation from the spine of the army to guerrilla groups**

The question of the status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity is central if we wish to understand, for example, why the district of Gulu has so vigorously challenged the sovereignty of the central government. To answer this question, we need to observe the developments and changes that have happened to the status of the Acholi in the polity. In brief, the position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity has varied from the political elite and military career during Obote's first term to no position at all or to victims of violence during Amin's regime. Furthermore, the chaotic situation during Obote's second term as well as Okello's term gave rise to guerrilla movement that some of the Acholi ex-soldiers joined as a counteraction to the loss of their previous power status. The status of the Acholi today has remained relatively marginal. In this study, we have started this observation from the year 1962, which was the year of the independence of Uganda.

During Obote's first regime, the Acholi were not a unified group but rather a highly divided one. Obote's UPC party was not peasant based. Those Acholi who gained most during Obote's first regime were the political elite of the Acholi. The most profiting group had joined Obote's patron-client network and those who had nothing to offer, remained out side of this network. According to this study, for the Acholi who had no important personal relations, the army was almost the only way to advance economically and to participate in society. This increased militarization of the Acholi. As Jorgensen's statistics show, Acholi

were a highly divided group. This unequal situation began to grow fractions inside the UPC party. To conclude on Obote's first term, I can argue, that the fractioning of the UPC towards the end of Obote's regime shows that the status of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity varied in respect to their personal ties and to their home region.

If some of the Acholi had a chance to participate in politics during Obote's first term, it all changed after Amin took his office. After the coup d'état the participation by the Acholi to politics meant almost a certain death penalty. Amin saw all the Acholi as a potential threat to his position and thus he started to systematically hunt them down (Kyemba 1977, Jorgensen 1981, Ingham 1994). The old army, which had large numbers of the Acholi soldiers, was the greatest fear of Amin. After the Acholi soldiers had been taken care of, Amin hired a number of the Kakwa and the Nubi as soldiers. According to this study, the place of Acholi ceased to exist during the regime of Amin. Most of them either escaped from the country or withdrew themselves to the subsistence production. The soil of Uganda is exceptionally fertile and that is one probable reason why the people did not rise to riot against the tyranny.

After Amin had been ousted, the Acholi district suffered violence from two sides. On the one side, there were the retreating men of Amin and, on the other side, there were UNLA's soldiers who suspected civilians of hiding Amin's men. This shows how separated the northern districts and the capital area were at the time, and on the other hand, how fractioned and undisciplined the UNLA was. It must be remembered that the newly built UNLA had also many Acholi in it, and it was because of the soldiers' subloyalties and lack of capable officers that led the army take advantage of the situation and rob civilians. The incapability of the government to take control of the army was one of the reasons why the army took control of the country with a Lango general, Oyite-Ojok, in command.

It was Obote's second regime that earned him his bad reputation. At this time, Uganda was troubled by the multiple guerrilla groups. Obote and his government had lost their control over the armed forces, and the government army caused at least as much, if not even more, misery to the civilians than the rebels did altogether. During Obote's second regime, the district of Acholi began to be out of government control. The seeds for power vacuum which cleared way for the HSMF and eventually for the LRA was planted, if not earlier then at the least during Obote's second presidency. The chaotic times in Uganda continued

after the military coup d'état by Okello. The country remained divided into many fractions and Tito Okello, who totally relied on the armed forces, had no chance of controlling the society.

The LRA was born as a response to the disappearance of the status of the Acholi in the polity. The position of the Acholi had disappeared in two senses. Firstly, the security situation of the Gulu district has been poor and the Acholi have suffered from violent acts by the rebels and the government soldiers. The Acholi's trust in the central government and to its ability to control the area has deteriorated. Secondly, the economic development of the Gulu district has been poor throughout the history of Uganda. This has increased the participation by the Acholi in the military forces. After changes in the ethnic balance of the government, the participation by the Acholi in the military forces has become more difficult. As an outcome of the decreased participation in the military, the northern districts have been populated by the unemployed and the uneducated excombatants.

## **12.4 Concluding remarks**

In relation to the type of authority used by the presidents, I argue that neo-patrimonialism together with charismatic authority has played a central role in the politics of independent Uganda. The role of neo-patrimonialism has been, first of all, to gather political support to keep presidents in their offices. Those integrated into neo-patrimonial networks have been in the political centre of Uganda. Those who have been objects of charismatic authority by the presidents have been basically all other social groups. The role of charisma has been to unite the divided nation and to legitimize one's position in control.

We have seen that especially Obote and Museveni have legitimated their positions with charisma and they have constructed their charisma by opposing traditionalism. Obote opposed traditionalism of Kabaka, primitivism of Amin. He also accused Museveni of despising international norms and rules. Museveni, on the other hand, has criticised all previous rulers of enforcing tribalism. His argument is that tribalism and backwardness must be evicted if Uganda is to be united into one nation and developed in western terms. The charismatic authority of Museveni has ensured his support among groups not

ethnically close to him. These notifications have been important input to other discourses that focus on the conflict in northern Uganda.

Morten Boås has put much weight on the argument of the weakness of the state apparatus in the Great Lakes area. He has also argued that the conflicts in this area are a series of local and national conflicts, which have spread to be international because of the weakness of the state institutions. In this study, we have seen one reason why the state of Uganda has formerly been too weak to gain sovereignty within its geographical borders. Most of the regimes that have controlled the state politics of Uganda have not been too weak to control the political peripheries of the country but they have focused on effectively controlling only the areas that have been crucial for the government to survive. In the case of Uganda, this crucial area has been the district of Buganda, which was formerly not even enthusiastic to participate in the polity of Uganda. The importance of the Buganda district, during Obote's second regime, has been most crucial for the disintegration of the north from the Ugandan polity. The formation of the situation where the central government has been forced to continuously struggle for the control of the capital area has at least two explanations. Firstly, during the colonial history of Uganda, the British officials centralized all crucial state institutions to Buganda. The second reason was, as this study has shown, the neo-patrimonial structures, which has been practiced in basically every regime except in Amin's regime of kleptocracy.

Why the neo-patrimonial structures of the government have forced it to struggle for control of the Buganda district? All governments before Museveni had come from other parts of the country than from the south, where the political centre had been. The only exception was Lule, but he had to cope with the NCC, which mostly consisted of northerners. When each of the governments created neo-patrimonial structures in Buganda, they discriminated against the Baganda people at the same time. The structures in the governance that favour leader's own tribe and relatives helped him to tighten his control on the crucial state institutions. Of course, familiar people may not be so eager to overthrow your government as their own benefits depend on the government's existence. Strengthening of the state apparatus in the southern Buganda district has slowly disintegrated the northern parts from the polity. All this erupted after the Acholi generals had been defeated by Museveni. After the coup of 1986, there were no legal and widely accepted government to govern in the north.

Boås also highlighted the importance of the economic marginalization of north and west Uganda in contributing to political instability. One of the most important results of this study has been to notice that the question of economic marginalization of some parts of Uganda has been mainly a result of neo-patrimonialism and charismatic authority. Neo-patrimonialism had tied some groups tighter into the Ugandan polity, while those groups not connected to neo-patrimonial networks have been objects of mainly charismatic authority in Weberian terms.

Van Acker has argued that the main reason for the conflict in Uganda has been that the army had become a tool for internal politics. Van Acker catches here something very important, but we could also specify this argumentation by concentrating on the position of the Acholi in the Ugandan polity. As we have seen, there are only certain groups that became militarized, and one of these groups was the Acholi. Their militarization has worked for two purposes at the same time. Firstly, an Acholi army was a tool for internal politics and the politicians used them to secure their own neo-patrimonial structures and patron-client relations. Secondly, for the Acholi, the army did become the only way to interact with the rest of the society as Van Acker also argued (Acker 2004). The army consisting mainly of the Acholi was the most important tool for Obote's government. In his first term, Obote had to use his armed forces to oust Kabaka Muteesa II. After Muteesa had been ousted, Obote had to rely on his army to maintain law and order, whatever form they should take from the government's perspective. Obote had to rely even more on his Acholi soldiers after it became clear that Amin could not be trusted anymore.

The second time that the Acholi army played an important role in shaping the Ugandan politics was during Obote's second term. At that time, Uganda was in a state of chaos and the Acholi (also Langi) army was an important tool for Obote trying to maintain a grip on power. In this study, we have taken an overview of the Ugandan society, and seen how these separated but interrelated processes have played a central role in developing an outcome of a conflict that has lasted for 20 years without an immediate end in sight.

## **12.5 Reflections on the research process**

The motivation for this research came from my deep interest in Third World politics and, especially, from my personal interest towards East Africa. All in all, it can be said that the central aims of this study were reached and I was able to find answers to the research questions. The elaboration of the microhistorical method served well as a tool for a social scientist. With this method, we were able to trace the roots of differing layers of social structures, such as the prevalence of charismatic authority together with neo-patrimonial networks. What is interesting for a social scientist is that, with this method, we can observe the positions of class-like structures in society without utilizing Western definitions of classes. However, as this method is originally utilized by historians, it is not clear how historians would react to this kind of alteration.

The conflict has now continued for over twenty years. At the moment, the process of peace negotiations seems promising, but new questions are rising. Firstly, how the internal fragmentation of the LRA will affect the negotiations? Secondly, how the ICC will regard the outcomes of the negotiations in Juba and will it keep insisting that Kony be judged in the International Criminal Court? The third, and perhaps the most important, question in the near future of Uganda is the question of how to share equally the wealth that will be flowing from the recently found oil field in Lake Albert. From the outcomes of this study, a new question for further study arises. One of the most important questions is, if the LRA surrenders and they are granted amnesty, how the northern parts of the country are brought back to Ugandan polity? To find an answer to this question one would have to observe how united the people of Uganda are in relation to the requirements of nation state. An answer to this question would portend also the future shares of the oil incomes.

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## **APPENDIX 1: THE TEN POINT PROGRAMME OF THE NRA**

1. Democracy
2. Security
3. Consolidation of National Unity and elimination of all forms of sectarianism.
4. Defending and consolidating National Independence.
5. Building an independent, integrated and self-sustaining national economy.
6. Restoration and improvement of social services and the rehabilitation of the war ravaged areas.
7. Elimination of corruption and misuse of power.
8. Redressing errors that have resulted into the dislocation of sections of the population and improvement of others.
9. Co-operation with other African countries in defending human and democratic rights of our brothers in other parts of Africa.
10. Following an economic strategy of mixed economy.