

## **HISTORY OF THE ABANYOLE**

Banyore ancestors came from Egypt or the Sudan. They travelled until they reached Bunyuli in Uganda and thence to Ebusabakhwa (Sakwa Bondo). Continuing their march, they later reached Akala Gem. They then settled here for some time but later migrated again because the country was not suitable. And so they walked and came to Ebuhandu in Bunyore and settled there; then they gradually spread out.

After their arrival here in Bunyore, some of the Abanyole people emigrated to Tiriki: the Ababayi, the Abang'ali, the Abamutsa, and the Abalukhoba clansmen. Others went to Kano, Gem, and Seme. Those who went to Kano (Sagam) did so only recently. One group of the Abamuli clan went to Kadimo but another section (Umuri) is in Gem. Other Abanyole people are in Kisumu Location. However, some of these people left Bunyore only recently.

### **The people they came in contact with**

*Egypt or the Sudan:* They were there with the Baganda, the Bagisu, and with their fellow Abaluyia. Each tribe had its own language. The Abanyole came up the Nile in boats. The Joluo came after them.

*Bunyuli(Uganda):* It was uninhabited.

*Ebusabakhwa:* They found the Barwa (Terik or Nandi) here.

*Akala Gem and Ebuhandu:* They found the Barwa here too; these people are now in Nyang'ori Location.

### **Reasons for migrating**

*Egypt or Sudan:* They emigrated from here because the soil was poor and dry. In addition, rain was scarce. As a result the ancestors of the Abanyole suffered from constant starvation; accordingly, they emigrated in search of a better country where they could live well.

*Bunyuli:* They migrated from here because they were looking for a better and more roomy country. Some of their people remained there.

*Akala Gem:* They just migrated; there was no particular reason.

When they emigrated from Egypt, or the Sudan, they brought with them eleusine, millet, and sorghum, and vegetables. They did not bring any cattle or goats with them; they were tillers. The Abarwa were the pastoralists.

Omwa was the one who led them from the Sudan or Egypt but from Bunyuli they were led by Muhindira. It was also Muhindira who led them into this country. Anyole, the ancestor of the Abanyole, was also among the immigrants into Bunyore. Omwa was the ancestor of the other sub-tribes of the Abaluyia. Furthermore, Ramogi who was the ancestor of the Joluo also came from Egypt or the Sudan.

### **Warfare**

The Joluo of Seme fought with them at Got Arot in Seme. They fought for land. Then the Joluo pushed them farther up into the former section of Seme which is now part of Bunyore. The Joluo of Gem also fought with them at Shinaka as a result of land

disputes. Then the Joluo married Nganyi's daughter and good relations were restored. As a result, the Abasakami, the Abasiokwe and others retained their lands.

However, the boundary which was demarcated by the Europeans placed them in Gem instead of Bunyore among their brethren. It was the Europeans who ended the fighting with the Joluo. This explains why some of the land which previously belonged to the Abanyole is now occupied by the Joluo, both of Seme and Gem Locations. Apparently, the Joluo defeated the Abanyole in the fighting which preceded their occupation of the territories formerly owned by Abanyole. But some of the Abanyole retained their land in those same territories so that they are now in the midst of the Joluo. Typical examples are the Abasakami (Sagam) and the Abamuli (Umuri).

The Abalogoli also fought with them and defeated them in the first battle. Then when fighting broke out again for the second time, the Abalogoli were defeated and driven farther on to Maragoli. The Abatsotso and the Abashisa also fought with them for land at Khwisero. The Abanyole defeated them but the boundary demarcated by the Europeans put Khwisero under Kisa Location.

### **Governmental System**

Every clan or sub-clan had a ruler called "omwami". Before the time of Nganyi the Abanyole did not have one common ruler at the head of all the clans. In those days inter-clan disputes were settled by the rulers (abami) of the clans concerned.

The "omwami" protected the country and kept the peace. He was the adjudicator of cases and disputes; he was assisted in this by his elders. He had the authority in all war matters and he was also the war leader (omuesia) of his people. He was the one who gave the command for hostilities to commence or cease. The "omwami" was neither a rain-maker nor a medicine man nor a sacrificial priest. He was normally nominated by his fellow clansmen but, when he was about to die, he named his successor from among his sons; the nomination was based on integrity and good character. The elders had the right to reject the old ruler's nominee if he was not suitable.

The "omwami" was usually given some meat whenever a cow was slaughtered; people also gave him beer, foodstuffs, and other types of food. In addition, when he judged cases, the fines were his. The "omwami" had his insignia to distinguish him from a common man. He wore brass bracelets on his wrist and a bangle round his neck. He also wore a monkey skin cap on his head. His cloak was usually made of the skin of a calf or goat. In addition, he had a staff and a fly-whisk. All these things were bought for him by his clansmen. They were left to decompose on his grave when he died. The new "omwami" was given his own insignia.

When the "omwami" died, he was buried naked. Some clans, such as the Abasiokwe and the Abumuli, buried their ruler sitting on a cow-hide with a pot on his head; others buried him in a lying position.

### **Genealogies**

Omwa was Abanyole's earliest known ancestor. He was the father of Muhindira who was the father of Anyole, the founder of the Abanyole sub tribe. All these ancestors died at Ekhome (Kima). Anyole had several sons: Amutete, Asiratsi,

Amang'ali, Andongoyi (Tongoyi), Asiekwe, Asakami, Amuli, Mwiranyi, Ambayi, Asikhale, Amuhaya, Muhando, and so on. These sons had different mothers.

Daudi Ochami is the son of Kalo; son of Kotia; son of Ekhubi; son of Nakuti; son of Tuba; son of Kutata; son of Muyokhwa; son of Mutate; they all died in Bunyore.

Ochango Yahuma is the son of Yahuma; son of Mbotsi; son of Olubaya; son of Tsindoli; son of Wanzokha; son of Matakho; son of Amukhoye (Ashiratsi); son of Anyole; they all died in Ebusiratsi in Bunyore. Anyole was the son of Muhindira; son of Kayita who died at Ekhome. Jayiro Atetwe is the son of Nyamonywa; son of Mutabi; son of Nyamonywa; son of Asubwe; son of Asiekwe; son of Anyole.

Source: Gideon Were, *Western Kenya*, EALB, Nairobi, 1967