

HISTORY OF THE ABALOGOLI

Migratory movements

According to Simioni Jumba (author of *The Mulogoli History and Family*), the ancestors of the Abalogoli originally lived in Arabia. When their ancestors migrated from Arabia, they travelled up to the Red Sea, and then crossed it into Egypt. They continued travelling, this time in a boat on the Nile, until they eventually arrived in Uganda. They emigrated because the Arabs used to capture and sell people; and also used to eat them.

After reaching Uganda, the migrants travelled farther. They crossed the lake (Victoria) and went to Seme. When they left Seme they moved to Maseno; then they came here into Maragoli. The Abalogoli came here ahead of the Abanyole. According to other informants the ancestors of the Abalogoli came from Egypt; they did not originally come from Arabia.

Their journey from Uganda

When the migrants left Uganda following the lake, they later arrived at Rusinga. At this point one group lost their way and continued their journey on the lake until they finally reached Kisii. After this separation, the other group (the Abalogoli) travelled as far as Seme. The group which came this way was the spearhead of the entire team of the migrants when they left Uganda. Those who went to Kisii were at the rear; accordingly, they lost their way at Rusinga as they did not know the direction in which the people who came this way had travelled.

In all these journeys they always took with them an “ekituba” for kindling fire. And so the people who went to Kisii lit a fire on a hill and, likewise, those who came here also kindled one. Then the two groups saw smoke on both sides; and they knew that they had lost one another. The party which went to Kisii was led by Chimagati and Lugaga; those who came here were led by Mulogoli.

The people they came in contact with

Egypt: They lived here with the Arabs, the Kikuyu, the Meru, the Embu, the Baganda, the Basoga, and their fellow Abaluyia. Every tribe had its own language.

Uganda: They found there a short people with huge heads called Ngui. It is not known which language they spoke.

Rusinga, Seme, Maseno, and Maragoli were all uninhabited when they came there.

Genealogies

Mulogoli was the forbear of all the thirty-two clans of the Abalogoli. One of his wives had the following sons: Musali who founded the Abasali clan; Mukizungu who founded the Avakizungu clan; Mukirima who founded the Avakirima clan; Mmavi who founded the Avamavi clan; and a daughter called Kabogoyi. The following were the sons of his other wives: Muyonga, Mutemboli, Muhunami, Musianiaga, Mumigangu, Mguga, Musuba, Mmuku, Musanga, Msalia, Mugihayo, Mkubera, Mgisindi, Mdzalala, Mmugezi, Msaina, Mdamayi, Mmuhevi, Mmundega, Mgisisi and others.

Simioni Jumbo is the son of Lisingu, son of Kadukire; son of Mbunda. Tomasi Mwaisiagi is the son of Mutiba; son of Muhihia; son of Madanji; son of Mmalaha; son of Namiri; son of Lobobo; son of Mmavi; son of Mulogoli. Mmavi died in Seme and Mulogoli died at Maseno; the rest from Mutiba down to Lobobo died here.

Sakayo Ayuya is the son of Lwimbuli; son of Lubonga; of Ahoya; son of Ikomba; son of Mahi; son of Lugobo; son of Mmavi; son of Mulogoli.

Governmental System

We used to be ruled by the “weng’oma” (the one of the drum). His duties were to protect and to care of the country; to prevent wars; and to stop fighting; and to bring peace and harmony among the people. The weng’oma was neither a war leader nor a rainmaker nor a magician; he was not a sacrificial priest. He had to give his consent before his people could go to war. He had his elders who discharged the functions of foretelling the future, rain-making and officiating at sacrifices.

The weng’oma had also adjudicators whom he empowered to settle disputes. He did not judge cases himself. His basic function was to take care of the “ing’oma” (drum). People usually gave him beer, foodstuffs, and meat whenever a cow was slaughtered. The legal proceeds were also his. However, he was not given any cattle, goats or sheep.

The weng’oma was usually elected by the entire community and he was the leader of all the Abalogoli. The elders usually appointed only a good man to be the weng’oma. The weng’oma wore the skins of a calf and of the “indibiri” animal; he also had a leather band of the skin of a certain animal resembling a camel. In addition, he had a spear and a long knife like a sword. When he died, he was buried naked in the doorway in a lying position’.

Warfare

Apart from the Masai and Nandi who used to attack them, raiding their cattle, they did not have any large-scale fighting.

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