

## PRE – COLONIAL SOCIETIES IN EAST AFRICA

### NYAMWEZI

#### ORIGINS

- The Nyamwezi are Bantu speaking who belong to the central and Northern Tanzania Bantu.
- They are closely related to other tribes such as Sukuma.
- They are an example of a de-centralized society.
- They had fairly organized political, social and economic features.
- They first settled in central Tanzania around Tabora between 1000—1500 AD.
- They migrated from the Congo basin and entered Tanganyika through the western part.
- They used the route between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Edward.
- The name Nyamwezi means people from the moon.
- It was given to them by the coastal traders who saw them coming from the direction of the new moon (west).
- Originally, they lived in small chiefdoms bound together by ethnic association.
- During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they developed centralized administration during the reigns of Mirambo and Nyungu Ya Mawe.

#### The structure of the Nyamwezi

##### Political organisation

- ❖ The Nyamwezi lived in small independent chiefdoms of about 1,000 people.
- ❖ They were united together by ethnic clan ties.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi had a decentralized system of administration.
- ❖ Each chiefdom headed by a chief with the title **Ntemi**.
- ❖ The position of the Ntemi was hereditary i.e. his son / close relative succeeded him upon his death.
- ❖ The Ntemi had political powers and was in charge of law and order in his chiefdom.
- ❖ In case of population explosion in one chiefdom or succession disputes, splits were done and a new chiefdom would be created.
- ❖ The Ntemi was assisted by a council of elders called **Wanyampala**.
- ❖ **Wanyampala** comprised of old, experienced and knowledgeable elders.
- ❖ Chiefdoms were further split into small political units headed by clan heads called **Gunguli**.
- ❖ Other important chiefs among the Nyamwezi included ritual officer (**Mgawe**), Army commander (**Mtwale**) information officer (**Kikoma**) Tax /revenue officer (**Minule**).

- ❖ All these took orders from the Ntemi.
- ❖ Each chiefdom had an army with a commander appointed by the Ntemi.
- ❖ Before going for any battle, the Ntemi had to bless the army.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi copied the royal regalia from neighbouring societies such as Bunyoro.

### **Social Organization**

- ❖ The Ntemi was the religious leader of his people and linked them to their ancestors.
- ❖ The Ntemi was the fountain of the society and received a lot of respect from his people.
- ❖ The Ntemi could marry as many wives as he wanted.
- ❖ Upon the death of the Ntemi, his body would be buried upright with beer, food and weapons.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi also believed in life after death and the spirits of the dead.
- ❖ Ntemi would always preside over sacrifices to ancestors on behalf of his people.
- ❖ The Ntemi was supposed to stop any calamity that would hit his people, their fields and animals.

### **Economic Organisation**

- ❖ The Nyamwezi were farmers and mainly grew cereals e.g. millet and sorghum.
- ❖ The Ntemi always mobilized his people to grow enough food, settle land disputes and guard against misuse of land.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi also kept animals for example goats and cattle.
- ❖ The Ntemi and his chiefs always kept large herds of animals.
- ❖ Tax collection was also part of their economy and the Nyamwezi always collected food as tax.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi had established food granaries which were directly under the Ntemi.
- ❖ These were used to feed his body guards, members of his palace and other people in case of hunger and famine.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi also carried out some fishing to supplement their diet.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi locally traded with their neighbours e.g. the Vinza for salt and Zinza for Iron.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi also participated in the long distance trade with the coastal Arabs.
- ❖ They controlled the central trade route and provided slaves, bee wax, Ivory.
- ❖ In return they got guns, beads and clothes.
- ❖ Raiding on their neighbors was also a major economic activity carried out by the Nyamwezi.

## **Mirambo's Empire**

- Mirambo was born around the 1830s in Nyamwezi land to one Ntemi chief.
- He spent his early years in Bugomba where he had been captured by the Ngoni.
- He mastered the Ngoni tactics of warfare and used them to build a strong army of the RugaRuga.
- It was this army that helped Mirambo to build a big empire.
- Mirambo attacked the Vinza, Sukuma and Iramba to extend his influence.
- By 1876, Mirambo established his capital at Urambo.
- His empire extended Northwards and Eastwards to control the central caravan trade route from Tabora to Karagwe, Ujiji, Buganda and Bunyoro.

## **Why Mirambo was able to build such a big empire**

- ❖ Mirambo was a person of boundless courage and energy which he used to build his empire.
- ❖ He personally led his army in battle which encouraged and gave morale to his army to fight on.
- ❖ Mirambo spent a lot of years in Bugomba as a captive of the Ngoni which helped him to master the ngoni military tactics.
- ❖ He used the ngoni military tactics to build a strong army called Ruga-Ruga that was very instrumental in his rise to prominence.
- ❖ He absorbed the conquered people, recruited the youth into his army to boost his fighting force.
- ❖ Mirambo was a man of high determination who took no nonsense from any one. E.g. he insisted on homage and tributes from foreigners passing through his territory.
- ❖ The acquiring of guns and gun power from the coastal Arabs helped Mirambo to extend his empire wide.
- ❖ Mirambo highly paid the Ruga –Ruga who helped him to build such a big empire.
- ❖ Mirambo's empire was strategically located in central Tanganyika which made it the center of trade.
- ❖ Mirambo exploited the weaknesses of his neighbours like Vinza, Zinza, Sukuma, Ha and Samba to acquire territories from them.
- ❖ The Nyamwezi lived in small chiefdoms that were weak and disorganized and this made it easy for Mirambo to conquer them.

- ❖ Mirambo was also far-sighted and an ambitious man who knew what he wanted and always looked for a way of getting it.
- ❖ Trade also helped Mirambo extend his power and influence because it brought in revenue or taxes e.g. He controlled two trade routes, one to Ujiji and the second one to Bunyoro and Buganda.
- ❖ Mirambo also established diplomatic ties with many Europeans, Arabs e.g. He invited missionaries to come to his area.
- ❖ Mirambo also made friendly relations with many African chiefs. He tried to establish diplomatic ties with Muteesa 1 of Buganda, sultan of Zanzibar and Tippu Tip.
- ❖ Mirambo equally respected foreigners/strangers passing through his land. This brought in many visitors that he benefited from in terms of skills and trade.

### **The collapse of Mirambo's empire**

- ❖ The death of Mirambo led to collapse of the empire because it lacked a strong foundation.
- ❖ The empire was built around Mirambo's personality and without him it was bound to collapse.
- ❖ Mirambo's successor Mpandashalo was too weak and could not keep the empire intact.
- ❖ The empire was too big to be ruled effectively by one person.
- ❖ Mirambo always found it hard to enforce law and order from his subjects due to the vast size.
- ❖ Unity was also lacking i.e. Mirambo had left the various areas he had conquered under their traditional rulers and upon his death many of them declared themselves independent.
- ❖ Mirambo's neighbours were not happy about his success e.g. the Sukuma and this encouraged various states under him to rebel.
- ❖ Mirambo's army of the Ruga-Ruga was not dependable and became a menace after his death e.g. looting and burning people's property.
- ❖ The confusion created by the RugaRuga forced the Germans to occupy Tanganyika in 1885.
- ❖ The decline of the Long distance trade and abolition of slave trade also led to the collapse of his empire.
- ❖ Mirambo lost contact with the Arabs who used to supply him guns and gunpowder.
- ❖ Mirambo's chiefs were weak since many were appointed just because they belonged to the ruling class. They did not merit their positions which further weakened Mirambo's empire.

- ❖ Increasing Europeans interests in E.A finally brought Mirambo's empire to an end in 1885.
- ❖ The Germans came under the excuse of abolishing slave trade and stop the Ruga- Ruga and they stamped their authority in Tanganyika.

### **NYUNGU YA MAWE'S empire**

- Nyunguyamawe was born in Unyanyembe near Tabora among the Nyamwezi.
- He was a prince from the royal family of Unyanyembe.
- Nyunguyamawe was a praise name meaning 'Pot of stone' (the pot that never breaks).
- Nyunguyamawe was also able to build a big empire using the services of Rugaruga mercenaries.
- He also employed the Ngoni fighting methods.
- ❖ In 1874, he abandoned his people and formed his capital at kiwele.
- ❖ He attacked the Kimbu in the East and also captured the trade route between Tabora and Ufipa.
- ❖ Nyunguyamawe was a brave and ruthless military strategist.
- ❖ He could not hesitate to risk the lives of his soldiers and he referred to them as **Mapimpiti** meaning Logs, to achieve his targets.
- ❖ Nyunguyamawe also created a centralized system of administration.
- ❖ All conquered areas were given new chiefs called Vitwale (plural) or Mtwale (singular).
- ❖ He divided his empire into six provinces each under a Mtwale directly appointed by him.
- ❖ The Vitwale were directly appointed by Nyunguyamawe and were his eyes and ears. In most cases they were his relatives.
- ❖ Nyunguyamawe created a highly disciplined army.
- ❖ His army underwent physical and psychological training and didn't lose morale after his death.
- ❖ Nyunguyamawe did not bother establishing good relations with Europeans.
- ❖ He heavily taxed them which displeased them.
- ❖ In December 1884, Nyunguyamawe died as a one eyed man.
- ❖ He was succeeded by his daughter Mgalula who ruled successfully until 1893.
- ❖ When she died, her daughter took over and ruled until the Germans captured her capital at Kiwele and conquered it.
- ❖ This marked the end of NyunguyaMawe's empire.
- ❖ The Germans replaced the Vitwale with new chiefs called Akidas.
- ❖ The Germans later introduced direct rule.

## **THE KIKUYU SOCIETY**

### **Origins**

- These were Bantu speaking people under the Eastern Bantu group.
- They are also known as the highland Bantu.
- They first settled in areas around Kenyan highlands near Nyeri, Kiambu and Fort Hall.
- Their origin is based on myths and legends.
- Kikuyu traditions claim that their god (Mumbere) had three sons i.e. Gikuyu, Kamba and Maasai.
- He asked them to choose between a bow, a digging stick, and a spear.
- Gikuyu fell for a digging stick, Kamba for a bow and Maasai for a spear.
- Gikuyu and his wife Mumbi had nine daughters.
- It's these nine daughters who gave rise to the present 9 Kikuyu clans.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE KIKUYU**

### **Political Organization**

- ❖ The Kikuyu had a decentralized system of administration.
- ❖ Their political system was based on clans with each handling its own affairs.
- ❖ Each clan was made up of age groups called **Riika**.
- ❖ These were further sub-divided into age sets each having its own name marking a particular event.
- ❖ The Kikuyu had an army and the commander represented them on council of elders called Kiama.
- ❖ This army composed of Junior and senior warriors.
- ❖ Junior warriors were supposed to clear gardens for planting, defend the village against attack and construct houses and fences.
- ❖ Families sharing the same terrace made up a territorial unit called **Mbari**.
- ❖ Each Mbari was under a council of elders headed by **Muramiti**.
- ❖ The position of the Muramiti was not hereditary but was entrusted to any experienced elder.
- ❖ The Muramiti performed judicial functions.
- ❖ Members of the council of elders must have paid some goats and beer and must have circumcised the elder son of their houses to qualify.

### **Social Organization**

- ❖ Religiously, the Kikuyu believed in a supreme god called Ngai.
- ❖ Ngai who manifested himself through the sun, moon, rainbow, thunder and lightning.
- ❖ Kirinyaga (Mt Kenya) was believed to be Ngai's home.

- ❖ Shrines were built around the slopes of Mt Kenya.
- ❖ Ngai could only be approached by community elders as a group but not as individuals.
- ❖ Ngai was consulted at all stages of life e.g. at birth, marriage and death.
- ❖ The Kikuyu highly respected the spirits of the ancestors whom they believed to possess powers to punish and bless.
- ❖ Therefore sacrifices were offered to appease the spirits of ancestors.
- ❖ The Kikuyu society was also organized on clan basis and each clan was made up of age groups.
- ❖ Riika was further sub-divided into age sets and initiation from one age set to another was after circumcision done on both boys and girls after every five years.
- ❖ Inheritance of property always followed the mother's line (matrilineal).
- ❖ Land and children were all owned by the mother.

### **Economic Organization**

- ❖ Agriculture was their main activity and they mainly grew cereals like Sorghum, Maize and Peas.
- ❖ Land was highly respected by the Kikuyu.
- ❖ A man with no land was not allowed to marry because his wife could not feed the family without it.
- ❖ On top of agriculture, the Kikuyu herded cattle, goats, sheep and kept bees.
- ❖ Fishing and rearing of fowls like chicken was a taboo among the Kikuyu i.e. their social laws did not permit the consumption of fish and fowls.
- ❖ Division of labour existed among the Kikuyu.
- ❖ Men cleared the land, herded and milked animals as women planted and harvested crops and looked after the homes.
- ❖ The Kikuyu traded with their neighbours like the Masai, Embu, Pokomo, and Kamba for products like milk and butter.
- ❖ With the development of LDT the Kikuyu supplied Ivory, Slaves, Bee wax, and Skins e.t.c to the coastal Arab traders.
- ❖ The Kikuyu also hunted wild animals and gathered fruits from the forests around the Kenyan highland.
- ❖ The Kikuyu also carried out Iron working and made Iron implements like hoes for agriculture and spears for hunting.

### **THE ITESO SOCIETY**

#### **Origins**

- They are a branch of the plain Nilotics called the Jie.
- They migrated from southern Ethiopia.

- They fall under a smaller group of the Ateker.
- They are related to the Turkana, Kumam, Maasai and Karamojong.
- They first settled in Karamoja for some time and lived there for some time.
- In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Iteso left Karamoja.
- This was due to cattle rustling, over stocking, over population and lack of water and pasture.
- They then moved southwards and settled along the shores of Lake Bisina.
- It is from here that they acquired the name Itesots.
- Due to more pressure, others moved to Eastern Uganda and Western Kenya.
- They are settled in districts such as Kumi, Soroti, Tororo, Mbale, Kaberamaido and Amuria.

## **Structure of the Teso Society**

### **Political Organization**

- ❖ The Itesots had no centralized system of government.
- ❖ They were organized in clans called Ateker.
- ❖ The clans were the centres of power and it was made up of several extended families.
- ❖ Each clan had a common taboo.
- ❖ The Emuron was the most important chief among the Itesots.
- ❖ He had religious and Political powers, a rain maker and also helped barren women to conceive.
- ❖ Other important chiefs included Aruwon (military leader) who was chosen because of his bravery and Ekaraban (Village ambassador) who settled disputes.
- ❖ Clan meetings (Etems) were important among the Iteso because they handled cases like divorce, adultery and murder.
- ❖ Age- Set system (Aturi) existed among the Itesots on which wars and raids were conducted.
- ❖ Boys of the same age worked and fought together.

### **Social Organization**

- ❖ Social ceremonies were very important e.g. Marriage and birth of twins were marked with jubilations, dances, food and beer.
- ❖ Religiously, the Itesots believed in a supreme being who had lesser gods for example Apa – the god of peace and Edeke – the god of calamity.
- ❖ The Emuron was the religious leader and always offered sacrifices to Edeke on behalf of his people.
- ❖ The Iteso were bound together by strong ties of Kinship and members of the same ancestry regarded themselves as brothers.



- ❖ Itesots had an age-set system (Aturi) which was always formed at a time of Initiations and it marked a change from child hood to adult hood.
- ❖ A man was the head of the family and therefore his sons were supposed to inherit the father's property upon his death.
- ❖ Status among the Iteso depended on how many cows one had i.e. those who less herds were always despised and minimized.

### **Economic Organization**

- ❖ Initially, the Iteso were pastoralists and they kept cows, sheep and goats.
- ❖ They also reared birds e.g. chicken and turkey.
- ❖ The Iteso later adopted farming and they grew crops such as millet, sorghum and Groundnuts.
- ❖ Hunting was another activity among the Iteso and this promoted unity and socialization.
- ❖ The Iteso also carried out some trade and they exchanged hides and skins and Ivory for backcloth, beads and iron implements from Bunyoro and Busoga.

## **THE CHAGGA**

### **Origins**

- They are Bantu speaking people who belonged to the Highland and coastal Bantu.
- They comprise of that group of Central and Northern Tanzania Bantu that continued with their migration from the Congo basin.
- They are closely related to other Bantu tribes like Gweno, Sukuma and Shamba.
- They entered Tanzania through the West using the route between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Edward.
- Their migration took place between 1000 – 1300 AD
- They settled around Mt. Kilimanjaro in Northern Tanganyika.
- The Chagga decided to settle around Mt. Kilimanjaro permanently and came to be known as the highland Bantu.

### **Political organisation**

- The Chagga had a decentralized system of administration with chiefs at the centers of authority.
- The chiefs were distinguished elders in society with political and religious powers.
- Chiefs were always encouraged to extend the political frontiers of their chiefdoms.

- Chiefs were also in charge of administering justice in their chiefdoms.
- The Chagga had political rivalries with their neighbours especially the Masai over grazing lands.
- Below the chiefs were other influential leaders called judicial counselors.
- Judicial counselors were directly appointed by the chiefs.
- Judicial counselors were also charged with tax collection.
- Below the judicial counselors were the clan heads who were prominent and influential.
- Clan heads were also used in maintenance of law and order in their clans.

### **Social organisation**

- The Chagga were organized on clan basis.
- They had several clans with each clan having a clan head.
- Chiefs also served as chief priests and presided over religious ceremonies.
- They believed in a god called Ruwa.
- Ruwa was considered not to have been the creator of the world.
- Ruwa was believed to have freed mankind and provided him with fruits and plants to feed on.
- They believed in the powers of ancestors i.e. life after death.
- Sacrifices were therefore offered to appease the spirits of the ancestors.

### **Economic organisation**

- ✓ Agriculture was the important economic activity among the Chagga.
- ✓ They grew crops such as bananas, millet and coffee.
- ✓ Irrigation was carried out to support agriculture during the dry season.
- ✓ They applied manure in their farms and also carried out crop rotation.
- ✓ They also kept animals like cattle, goats and sheep.
- ✓ They also practiced iron working and made implements like spears, pangas and arrows.
- ✓ They carried out trade with their neighbours and exchanged their surplus goods for salt.
- ✓ They later participated in the long distance trade with the coastal Arabs.

**N.B** By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they had developed a system of kingship.

## **THE GALLA**

### **Origins**

- The Galla are of Cushitic origin.
- They are a branch of the plain Nilotics who migrated from southern Ethiopia.
- They are thought to have originated from Ethiopia then moved to Somalia and finally entered East Africa.

- They are a nomadic pastoral tribe that occupies the Eastern parts of Kenya.

### **Political organisation**

- The Galla traditional structure was connected to the age set system based on ten groups.
- Every male belonged to a single group throughout his life.
- Each age set was headed by a leader called Abba-Boku for 8 years.
- Abba-Boku presided over meetings and formulated laws governing his age set.
- Abba-Boku was seen as a ritual and natural affairs expert.
- Abba-Boku was assisted by 3 other elders all from distinguished families.
- From the age of ten, boys were supposed to train as warriors.
- The Galla thus became a fierce warrior society respected over a wide area.
- They carried spears and shields into the battle fields.
- Each age group came up for promotion every eight years and when this happened, its leader had to take his people to a new territory.
- This would eventually lead to the expansion of the Galla territory.

### **Social organisation**

- The Galla believed in a supreme being called Waqa.
- Waqa was believed to be the controller of everyone's destiny.
- He always granted favours and protection especially in times of battle.
- There existed both good and bad spirits living in lakes, rivers, mountains and trees.
- Later on, some became Muslims due to interaction with the Muslims from Ethiopia.
- They had the age set system where every male belonged to a particular group throughout his life.
- Hunting of animals was carried out as a test of manhood.

### **Economic organisation**

- ✓ They were a pastoral society who moved from place to place in search of water and pasture.
- ✓ They kept animals such as cattle, goats, sheep, camels and donkeys.
- ✓ Their constant movements in search of water and pastures brought them into conflicts with other tribes like the Masai and Somali.
- ✓ They carried out small scale agriculture and grew grains, peas, beans, vegetables and pepper.
- ✓ Limited fishing and hunting were also carried out.
- ✓ Traded with their neighbours like the Somali, Ethiopians and Swahili Arabs.

## **THE MASAI**

### **Origins**

- They fall under the pastoral group of the plain Nilotics.
- They moved from the area West of Lake Turkana around the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- They existed in two groups i.e. the Kwavi and PurkoMasai.
- They occupy the area called Machakos in southern Kenya and some are found in Northern Tanzania.

### **Political organisation**

- They were a decentralized society with no central authority.
- They were divided into sixteen independent clans.
- The clans were the basis of their political organisation.
- Each clan had its own territory, cattle brand, pasture and water supply.
- Leadership was exercised through the age set system.
- Age sets were linear and their names were unique and never repeated.
- The most active age set was Moran comprised of junior warriors.
- It was led by a military captain called Olaiguanani.
- Once elected, the Olaiguanani was presented with a ceremonial club Oriakha to symbolize his new status.
- He organized cattle raids and arranged the distribution of the war booty.
- A successful raid was a sign of social success and prestige.
- The elders in society administered the clans and maintained law and order.
- From the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, Laibon became the center of political power.
- A young man became a member after circumcision performed at 18 years.
- After initiation, the boys became junior warriors called illmuran.
- The illmuran lived separately in manyattas where they were drilled in military techniques.
- From junior warriors, they progressed to senior warriors and finally senior elders.

### **Social organisation**

- The Masai believed in a supreme creator called Enkai.
- Enkai was the source of life and punished bad people.
- The Laibon prayed to the Enkai on behalf of his people.
- Senior elders helped organize society especially during difficult periods.
- Women and children were the lowest members of the society.
- The junior warriors (Moran) were charged with defending the homesteads.
- They conducted raids and surveyed areas for grazing.
- Women were also initiated every year.

- They built temporary structures called Manyattas because they are always on the move.

### **Economic organisation**

- ✓ The PurkoMasai were pastoralists who kept cattle, goats and sheep.
- ✓ The KwaviMasai were cultivators who grew crops like finger millet and sorghum.
- ✓ They traded with other communities like the Kikuyu and exchanged their hides and skins for beans, tobacco, sugarcane and millet.
- ✓ Women did the marketing of goods.
- ✓ There were established markets where goods would be exchanged.
- ✓ Iron working was carried out and they made spears, arrows and ornaments.
- ✓ They carried out raids and hunting.
- ✓ Practiced small scale fishing to supplement their diet.
- ✓ Art and craft was also practiced and they made jars and bowls.

### **THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY MASAI CIVIL WARS**

- These were a series of wars that were fought between the Kwavi and PurkoMasai.
- The Kwavi were agriculturalists while the Purko were predominantly pastoralists.
- The wars were fought in two separate intervals i.e. in 1815 and in 1840.
- The first major war took place in 1815 in the Uasin-Gishu plateau which ended in the defeat of the KwaviMasai.
- In 1840, the Kwavi reorganized themselves with the help of the Laikipia and they drove the PurkoMasai out of the rift valley.
- Between 1870 and 1875, the Purko decisively attacked and defeated the Kwavi killing many of them.

### **Causes of the Masai civil wars**

- The Purko who were the pastoral Masai always despised the Kwavi who were farmers leading to the wars.
- The Purko claimed that the Kwavi were finishing their land and that very soon they would not have enough grazing lands for their animals.
- The Kwavi farmers also claimed that animals of the Purko were destroying their farms during grazing leading to the wars.
- The Kwavi always expected help from their neighbours the Laikipia and this gave them morale to fight against the Purko.

- The succession disputes between the leaders of the Masai after the death of Laibon Mbatien also led to the outbreak of the wars.
- The Kwavi Masai had always defeated the Purko who had for long wanted revenge for their losses.
- The Purko were always a proud society who took a lot of pride in fighting and when they got the opportunity, they had to engage the Kwavi in warfare.
- The two groups had participated in long distance trade and had acquired guns which encouraged them to fight against each other.
- The Purko always believed that the Kwavi had deliberately spread animal diseases which claiming many their animals' lives.
- The youths among the Kwavi were always blamed for stealing the animals that belonged to the Purko which led to the wars.
- The Purko believed that they were the rightful owners of all the Masai land and didn't want it to be taken over by the Kwavi.
- The desire to control the trading activities in the area also led to conflicts between the two groups.

### **Effects of the Masai civil wars**

- Many people died during the course of the wars.
- A lot of property was destroyed during the wars e.g. farms and homesteads.
- The wars created a period of insecurity in Masailand.
- There was depopulation in the area as many people migrated to safer areas.
- The Purko emerged victorious and the Kwavi were greatly weakened.
- The wars greatly weakened Masai supremacy in Kenya and the Nandi emerged as the most powerful tribe in Western Kenya.
- The wars resulted into famine and suffering in Masailand due to neglect of agriculture.
- The succession struggles ended with the separation of the Masai e.g. Laibon Sendeyo and his group occupied Tanzania and Laibon Lenana's group remained in Kenya.
- Natural disasters like small pox and locust invasion further weakened the Masai influence.
- The Masai were easily colonized by the British due to the decline in their power.
- The Masai were tricked into signing treaties with the British which forced them into reserves.
- Masailand was later on taken over by the British colonialists.

## **THE ACHOLI**

### **Origins**

- They fall under the bigger group of the Luo speaking communities.
- They currently occupy Northern Uganda in districts such as Gulu, Pader and Kitgum.
- They emerged out of intermarriages between the Luo, Ateker and Sudanic Madi.
- They originally lived in Bahr-el-Ghazel in Southern Sudan.
- Their migration took place between 1200 – 1350 AD.
- They entered Uganda through Northern Uganda following the Albert Nile.

### **Political organisation**

- The Acholi had a decentralized system of administration with no central authority.
- Political power was centered around the Rwoth chief.
- Rwoth was the political head and religious leader of his people.
- He ruled on the advice of a council of elders from all major clans.
- Rwoth gave favours according to work done.
- Political affairs were handled by the clans with each having its own rituals and regalia.
- Each family belonged to a particular clan that shared a common ancestry.
- Clan councils upheld traditional, religious and legal customs.
- The family was the basic social unit.
- The man had a lot of power over his wife and children.
- The Rwoth appointed village heads called Jogos.
- The duty of the Jogos was to maintain law and order in their respective villages.
- The Jogos were also charged with tribute and tax collection.
- The Acholi had no standing army but the youth were supposed to defend the chiefdoms in case of war.
- The youths were also supposed to carry out raids for cattle.

### **Social organisation**

- They believed in a supreme god called Jok-Lubanga as the creator and sustainer of the world.
- The Acholi always prayed to him through the spirits.
- The Rwoth was the religious head of his people.
- He was believed to have direct links with the ancestors.
- Inheritance followed the father's line.
- Land was communally owned.
- It was the duty of the clan heads to protect it on behalf of his people.

### **Economic organisation**

- ✓ Their main economic activity was pastoralism and they kept short horned cattle.
- ✓ They also carried out agriculture and grew crops such as millet, peas, beans and sorghum.
- ✓ They highly valued cows for prestige, bride wealth and rewards.
- ✓ Fishing was also carried out by those who stayed near the rivers.
- ✓ They traded with their neighbours like the Langi, Banyoro and Sudanese.

### **Revision questions**

1. Describe the **political, social and economic** organization of any two of the following societies;  
(a)Kikuyu (b)Nyamwezi (c)Itesot(d)Karamojong (e)Galla(f)Chagga(g)Maasai (h) Acholi
2. a) Describe the **origins** of the Nyamwezi.  
b) What were the ways of life of the Nyamwezi before the coming of Europeans?
- 3 .a) Describe the **career and achievements** of **Mirambo**.  
b) What caused the **fall/collapse/decline** of his empire?
4. a) Describe the career of **Nyunguyamawe**.  
b) Why did his empire **last/survive** longer than that of Mirambo?
5. a) What caused the 19<sup>th</sup> century **Maasai civil wars**?  
b) What were the **consequences/results/effects** of these wars?
6. a) Explain the **relationship** between the Maasai and Kikuyu during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.  
b) What led to the **decline** of Maasaipower and influence?