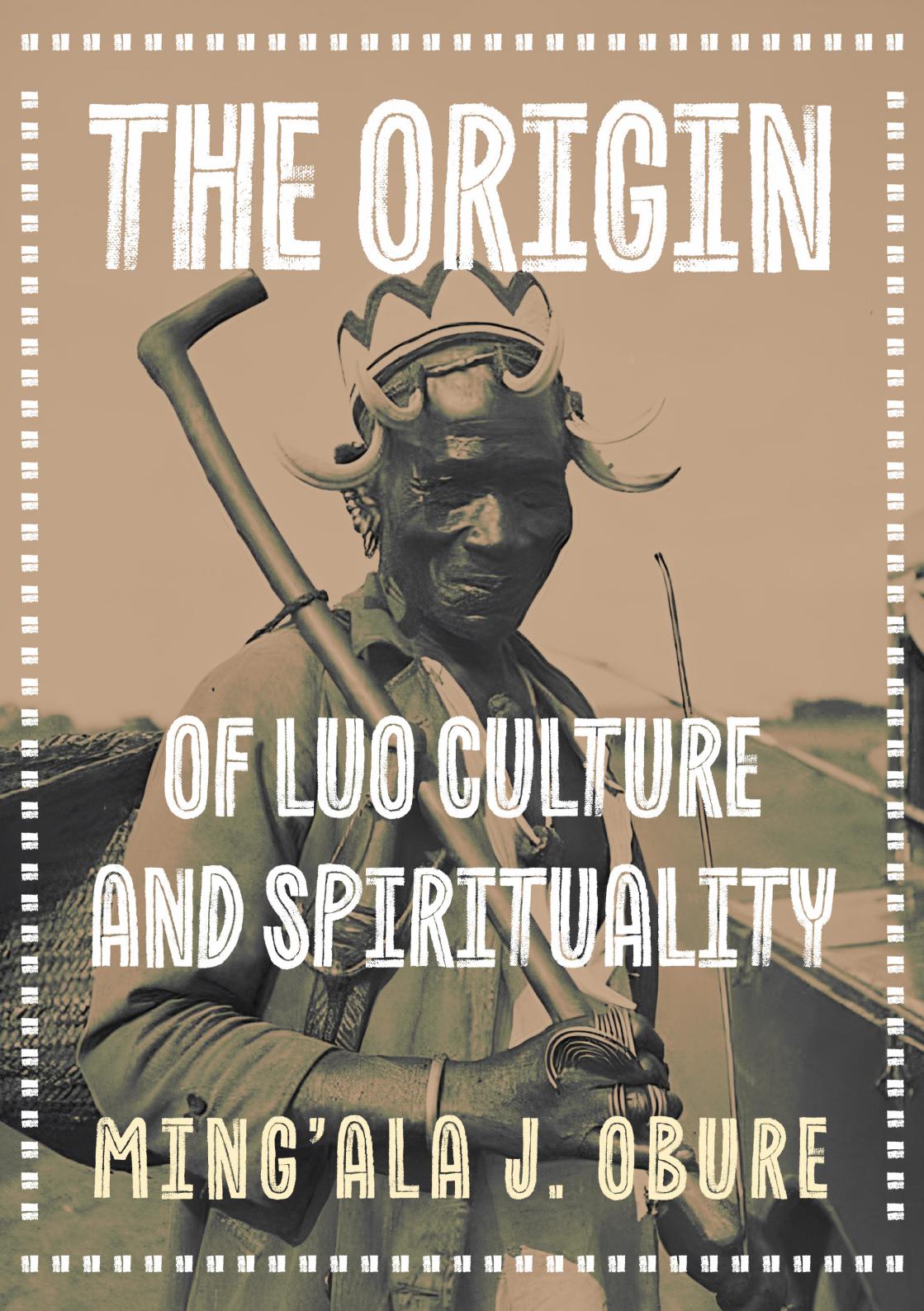


THE ORIGIN



OF LUO CULTURE
AND SPIRITUALITY

MING'ALA J. OBURE

THE ORIGIN OF LUO CULTURE AND SPIRITUALITY

MING'ALA J. OBURE

ANSWERING THE QUESTION, WHY ARE WE?

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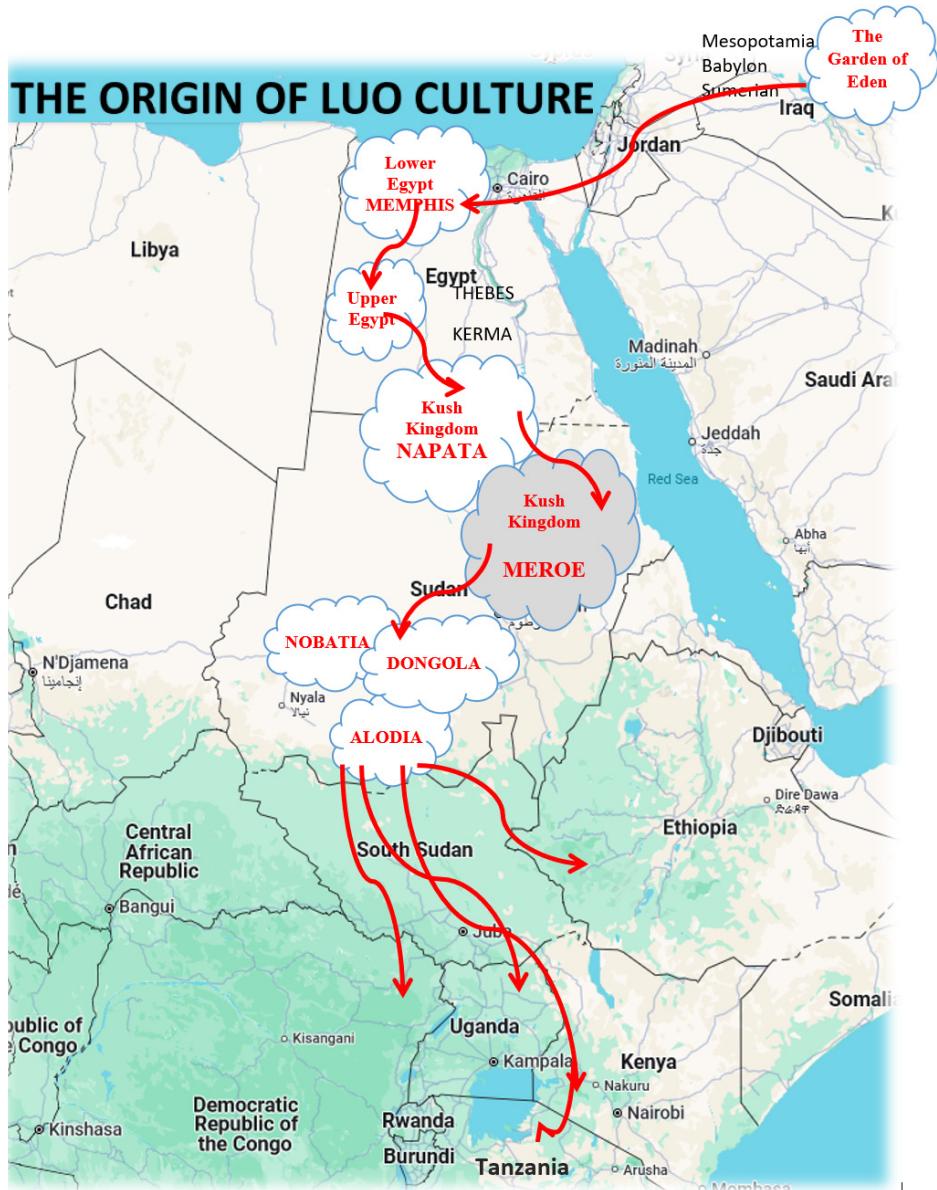
COVER IMAGE

A portrait of a man taken in Kisumu area in 1936, wearing Luo ornamentation, on the road next to a vehicle. On his head is worn a bead work hat (*ogut tigo*) with the extended skin ledge in which warthog teeth (*leke njiri*) are stuck protruding out and curving upwards. The ears are adorned with multicoloured beads sewn on a tiny chain usually forming a beautiful earring (*ngaga*) for old men.

He has a walking stick on the shoulder (*okwajo*) on which he is hanging a woven shopping basket (*okapo*). He has a necklace (*rek*) made of ostrich egg shell, and a round block of something suspended on the necklace as well.

He also has a sheathed dagger hanging across his shoulder. There is a metal wrist ring (*minyonge*) and the fingers are all heavily adorned with all sorts of metal rings (*tere*). His bodily clothing remains mainly European.

THE ORIGIN OF LUO CULTURE



Wan Wan Wan Nikuop Kitwa gi Timbewa

The Luo Nation is a monolithic and distinct community that traces its roots back to Noah's lineage. In subsequent generations, it transformed into various sub-tribes while still retaining similarities in its culture, traditions, language, and other aspects of their lives.

The Long Trek Route by Proximate Years



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PROLOGUE

This book explores the origin of the culture and spirituality of the Luo-speaking people, who are spread across six countries in Eastern Africa. Culture plays a crucial role in defining a people's identity, their belief-systems (spirituality or religion), and patterns of behavior. The renowned historian Prof. B.A Ogot examines the genesis of the 21st-century Luo popular culture, highlighting their heritage and ancestral roots. In the introductory chapter of his book titled "A History of the Luo speaking People of Eastern Africa", he traces their origin to a place called Bahr El Ghazal in South Sudan. He also explores the origins of African people, their composition, and ethnic diversity, highlighting issues related to their identity.

The book further provides an account of the creation story from the time of Adam and Eve, through Noah and his sons and identifies the emergence of the genealogy of the Luo-speaking people down to the contemporary Luos. Furthermore, it tracks the thread of their identity and lineage to the present period while capturing their experiences in the course of their movement. Many historical records have established that ancient Egypt was occupied by the descendants of Ham and that the other two sons of Noah remained in the Arabian Peninsula and later on, moved to Europe, Asia, and America. Therefore, Ancient Egypt was predominantly ruled by the descendants of Ham whose reign continued for nearly 30 dynasties, with the succession rotating mostly within his family. The 25th dynasty was known as the Kushite/Nubian dynasty, founded in 664 BC and lasted for about 332 Years. They are commonly referred to as the black pharaohs or rulers of Egypt whose identity as a people has been traced from the Kushite dynasty to Bahr El Ghazal where the Nubians had their last Kingdoms before migrating to other countries in eastern Africa.

Numerous books and articles have been written about the Luos, their history, cultural practices,

origin, genealogy, etc. Nevertheless, the history preceding their migration to Bahr El Ghazal in South Sudan remains largely under-explored. More often, inconclusive historical accounts of their past are usually provided through books and articles that depict their history in a disconnected or fragmented way. Since such gaps frequently remain unexplored, this book attempts to consolidate and keep a continuous thread of the whole history of the Luos from Noah's time to the present time. Given the clear biblical outline of Noah's lineage to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the history of the Luos can effectively be traced.

Their migration from Egypt to Wau in southern Sudan took over 1000 years. They remained united throughout the period; even as various names were used to refer to them before finally being called Luos. This book demonstrates that names like Nubians, Kushites, and Aethiopians referred to the Luo-speaking people. They were initially called the "Luo" or "Luwo" around the 13th century while in the Nile Valley, as they migrated from South Sudan into Uganda, Ethiopia, Congo, and eventually Kenya and Tanzania. This migration occurred several years after they had "abandoned" civilization, leading to the fragmentation into the various Luo subgroups that exist today across six countries in Africa. Since ancient times their culture has remained distinct and defined who, why, and what they are today.

This book concludes by delving into the ancient history of spirituality generally and how it influenced the Luo belief system and spiritual/religious practices, tracing it all back to creation time in the Garden of Eden. It takes the advantage of free thinking to use the synergy between archaeological works or evidence and biblical evidence to stretch imaginations and reasoning beyond what is academically plausible. This section has relied a lot not on the authors own beliefs but research, reasoning, imaginations and understanding. It is mostly meant to challenge imaginations and reasoning around belief systems in relations to real life experiences and observations.

*"Kaka Joluo, wan wan wan nikuop kithmewa/kitwa gi timbewa"
(As Luos, we are who and what we are - why? – because of our cultural identity)*

INTRODUCTION



In his groundbreaking book “A History of the Luo Speaking Peoples of Eastern Africa,” Prof Bethwell A. Ogot traces the Luo’s history back to a place in South Sudan called Bahr El Ghazal and documents their migration pattern from South Sudan into several countries in the eastern Africa region. The book states that “colonialism re-wrote many of life rules,” which significantly changed our knowledge about our history and origin. Most of the changes were geographical; however, the most detrimental ones blurred our identity. As a result, these changes have significantly distorted the history of Africans in general and particularly the once-unified Luo-speaking people, who were ultimately divided as a nation. The Luo-speaking people are a monolithic group that has remained culturally distinct for centuries despite the split into various clans scattered across several countries in Eastern and Central Africa. Today, they are concentrated in five main regions:

South Sudan, along the White Nile, the Bahr El Ghazel and adjacent wetlands (Naath/Nuer, Pari, Jieng, Collo, Luo); northwest Uganda and adjoining areas between Lake Onekonyo (Albert), the Victoria Nile, and Lake Kyoga (Acholi, Padhola, Paulo, Alur, Langi, Kumam); eastern Congo (Alur); southeastern Ethiopia (Anywaa, Naath), and in Kenya and Tanzania (Jo-Luo).

Although various Luo clans have settled in different African countries, they continue to share similar cultural practices, a common language, a single ancestry, and belief systems that have endured over the centuries. This suggests that before their migration and settlement in various geographical locations, they were once part of a united community living together. Therefore,

identifying the historical period when they lived as a single people is crucial for tracing their lineage, as illustrated in the Book of nations in Genesis 10. This book aims to trace their origins from Noah's time to pinpoint the exact moment in history when the larger Luo community split into sub-tribes and separated from other groups with a common ancestry. Many books and articles have been written about the history of Luos, including their cultural practices, origin, genealogy, etc. However, more lingering questions about their history beyond South Sudan and Egypt remain unanswered.

This book aims to trace and consolidate human history from biblical times in the Garden of Eden to the emergence of a distinct group known as the Luos. As described in this book, the Luo people inhabited and ruled Egypt as black Pharaohs for over 300 years before their kingdom was deposed.

Their migration from the upper Nile region in Egypt to Wau in South Sudan took over 1000 years. Throughout this period, they remained united and culturally distinct, as they still are today. During their migration, they were given various names, including Nubians, Kushites, Aethiopians, and Luos. Most of these names were derogatory, but they hold historical significance. They were for the first time referred to as the Luo ("Luwo") during the 13th century along the Nile Valley, before moving from South Sudan into Uganda, Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Kenya. This migration occurred long after they had "abandoned" civilization and disintegrated into the numerous Luo sub-groups we have today.

IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN

God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden. He granted them dominance over all animals, instructed them to cultivate the land, and allowed them to eat freely from all the plants and animals in the garden. Adam in Dholuo translates to "Oloo," which means "made from soil." In Genesis 4:1, Adam and Eve had two sons: Cain and Abel. Afterward, the Bible discusses the first conflict between brothers, Cain and Abel, which resulted in the first murder on earth.

Genesis 5 lists Adam's descendants, including Seth, who became the ancestor of Lameck, the father of Noah. Noah in Dholuo translates to Anam, meaning "remained on top of water or a lake." According to the biblical account, there were ten generations from Adam to Noah, or Noe' or Noach, which suggests that Noah was the tenth and last of the pre-flood patriarchs. The lifespan of the Biblical patriarchs before the flood (First World/dispensation) was considerably longer than that of their post-flood counterparts- those after the flood (Second World/dispensation).

For instance, the average life expectancy during the First World was approximately 850 years. Methuselah, Noah's grandfather, lived the longest on earth and died at 969 years. By the middle of the Second World, the average life expectancy had decreased to less than 300 years. For example, the patriarch Jacob lived to be 147 years old (Genesis 47:28). Although Moses lived to the ripe age of 120 (Deuteronomy 34:7), by the end of the Second World, the average life expectancy had already dropped to around 70–80 years (Psalm 90:10). This is similar to the average life expectancy in both the modern world and the biblically recorded.

The following is Noah's lineage:

After 130 years, Adam became the father of Seth; Adam lived a total of 930 years.

After 105 years, Seth became the father of Enosh; Seth lived a total of 912 years.

After 90 years, Enosh became the father of Kanan; Enosh lived a total of 905 years.

After 70 years, Kanan became the father of Mahalalel; Kanan lived a total of 910 years.

After 65 years, Mahalalel became the father of Jared; Mahalalel lived a total of 895 years.

After 162 years, Jared became the father of Enoch; Jared lived a total of 962 years.

After 65 years, Enoch became the father of Methuselah; Enoch lived a total of 365 years.

After 187 years, Methuselah became the father of Lamech; Methuselah lived a total of 969 years.

After 182 years, Lamech became the father of Noah; Lamech lived a total of 777 years.

After 500 years, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

The Bible states that Adam lived for 130 years and begot a son called Seth. By the age of 800, he had sired more sons and daughters, and he died at the age of 930. The list goes up to Lamech the father of Noah and ends with Noah's three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

The Bible further explains God's displeasure with 'human wickedness' as well as the 'evil meditations of their hearts. As a result, God ordered rain that flooded the earth with water and wiped out everything. However, He spared Noah, his wife, and his three sons with their wives – to fill the world again. According to the Qur'an, Noah had four sons: Ham, Shem, Yam, and Japheth. Yam was not a believer and refused to get into the Ark. Instead, he climbed a mountain, and when the floods came, he drowned and died.

Before the floods, all people on earth lived in one place, probably the Garden of Eden or Land of Semer – which is believed to be the location of the present-day Babylon Province in Iraq. No migrations to faraway places had been reported. Thus, migrations only began during the "second world" after the first world was destroyed by water.

The book of Genesis 10 provides the Table of Nations, detailing how Nations emerged from the three sons of Noah. It also shows how Noah distributed land among all his grandsons by their fathers, leading to the first dispersion and the formation of Nations occupying distinct regions or locations on the map of the inhabited world. This dispersion marked the first long-distance migration on earth and settlement in diverse regions according to divine allocations.

COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF ALL NATIONS FROM NOAH (2316 BC)



Noah is considered the father of all nations following the flood that destroyed the First World. This account is a crucial aspect of this book, as it provides evidence for the existence of the First, Second, and what we now refer to as the Third World. In this context, there was the first world, the second world, and now the third.

Noah's family marked the beginning of the second world dispensation. The complete accounts of his sons—Japheth, Ham, and Shem—are significant, as they are the ancestors of his grandsons and subsequent generations. Even critics of the Bible acknowledge that the tenth chapter of Genesis is a “remarkably accurate historical account of the origin of all nations.” This acknowledgment supports the claim that the true origin of the Luo Nation (encompassing all Luo-speaking people in Africa) begins with the family of Noah.

As you will discover later in this book, all Luos are part of a distinct nation that descends from Noah's grandson, Cush. Cush was the firstborn son of Ham; his brothers were Mizraim, Put (or Phut), and Canaan. Cush is believed to be the ancestor of the Nubians, the black people who ruled Egypt for over 300 years. They are the forebears of the Luo people, who are spread across Eastern and Central Africa, including South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Congo.

After the decline of their rule during the 25th dynasty in Egypt, they migrated south as a unified group, forming two successive kingdoms—first in Napata and then in Meroe—before ultimately moving into Bahr El Ghazal region as they gradually abandoned civilization and disintegrated into the many small clans we recognize today.

The Sons of Noah

After the floods, Noah's family multiplied and repopulated the earth. In this section, we analyze the settlement and migration patterns of Noah's sons and how they eventually gave rise to the many distinct nations we recognize worldwide today. This analysis will help us trace the lineages that moved into Africa and formed the various countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including the specific lineage from which the Luo-speaking people descended.

The Luo nation, like any other successful group, has remained a cohesive and culturally distinct community, with its origins rooted in the family of Noah. Over time, they have evolved into multiple recognizable clans, sharing many similarities in culture, traditions, language, and other aspects, often having more in common than differences.

The table of nations in Genesis chapter ten lists all the sons of Noah who survived the floods and concludes by stating, "These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations: from these, the nations spread out over the earth after the flood." This provides a comprehensive account of the origins of all nations that exist in the Third World today.

HOUSE OF JAPHETH: JAPHETHITES (EUROPEANS AND THE PERSIANS)

The following are the sons of JAPHETH: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshek, and Tiras. The Bible describes them as the Maritime, coastal, or seafaring people. The posterity of Japheth went first into the northern part of Asia (Asia Minor) and then spread into Europe. Gomer: Gomereans were called the Galatians or Greeks.

The descendants of Gomer have been assigned to the Caspian and Black Sea areas, as well as Germany (Teachers' Bible Commentary). They include Wales and Britain from Ashkenaz Wales, Brittany (Old Testament Commentary), and Germany, according to (Flavius Josephus). Riphath went to North Europe (Old Testament Commentary); The Phrygia also went to North Europe (Flavius Josephus). Togarmah are the Armenians (Old Testament Commentary).

MAGOG are mostly Caucasians and include Russia, Medes or Persians, Kurds in Kurdistan, and Armenians in Armenia.

MADAI are the Ionians. Ionia was an ancient region on the central part of the western coast of Anatolia in present-day Turkey (Old Testament Commentary); it is also believed they belong to the Medes (Flavius Josephus).

JAVAN is considered the country of Cyprus (Flavius Josephus) or Greece (Teachers' Bible Commentary). Elishah and Tarshish are believed to be in Spain, Tuscany, Tarsus in Cilicia (Old Testament Commentary) and (Flavius Josephus). Kittim Cyprus (Henry M. Morris) Dodanim Rhodes (J. R. Dummelow's Commentary)

TUBAL are the Tibereni (J. R. Dummelow's Commentary). MESCHECH The Moschi is in the southeast of the Black Sea between Eastern Europe and Western Asia (J. R. Dummelow's Commentary). It includes Moscow (Teachers' Bible Commentary). TIRAS are the Thracians (Flavius Josephus).v

HOUSE OF SHEM: SEMITES (ARABS, PERSIANS, HEBREWS, ISRAELITES)

The following are the sons of Shem: Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. From Shem to Abram, there were ten generations spanning 450 years. Muslim tradition holds that Shem was given the ‘middle of the earth’ as his land and became the father of the Arabs, Persians, and Byzantines (Eastern Roman Empire). Shem was the great-grandfather of Eber (Hebrew = Eberite), who is the ancestor of all Hebrew-speaking people. Eber had two sons named Peleg and Joktan. Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. His descendants are primarily centered in Israel but can also be found in Australia, Canada, Germany, Palestine, Panama, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Shem was the great-grandfather of Eber, from whom Abraham descended. Abraham is the ancestor of David and Jesus Christ. Some Assyrians also descended from Ashur, from which the name “Assyrians” is derived. Arpachshad refers to the Chaldeans, as mentioned by Flavius Josephus. Peleg’s time is noted in the Bible with the phrase “in his time the Earth was divided” (Genesis 10:25). Some historians believe that the tectonic movements that separated the continents as we know them occurred when Peleg, the first son of Eber, was born.

Sheba became part of the larger Semitic family in the Middle East. It is noteworthy that there is also a grandson of Cush named Sheba. Therefore, it is important to understand that they are not the same as Sheba, whose descendants eventually settled in Abyssinia. This confusion has led many writers to mix up Semites and Cushites, even claiming that the Abyssinians are Semites; the same applies to Havilah. Ophir is believed to have been located 60 miles north of Bombay, according to Unger’s Bible Commentary. Havilah, Jobab, and Lud were associated with the Lydians of Asia Minor.

Asia Minor, also known as Anatolia, constitutes most of the Asian part of modern Turkey and the Armenian highland. The majority of people in this region today speaks Turkish. The seas surrounding Asia Minor include the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea. Aram refers to the Aramaeans of Syria, who established the great city of Damascus and significant parts of Mesopotamia. The Aramaic language, which replaced the ancient language of the Jews during their dominance in the region, was widely spoken during Jesus Christ’s time. Jesus and his disciples used Aramaic to spread the gospel. The Aramaic word for God is “Aalah.” The people in a region known as Uzbekistan are referred to as the Uz. Other names listed include Hul, Gether, and Mash.

HOUSE OF HAM: HAMITES (AFRICANS AND SOME ARABS)

Ham was the second son of Noah. The following are the four sons of Ham; Cush was the eldest, followed by Mizraim, Put or Phut, and Canaan (Genesis 10:6-7). They are called the Hamites, and biblical historians believe they comprise most of the people who migrated and filled the continent of Africa. Some of them, like the Canaanites, remained and are only found within the Arabian Peninsula; there is no trace of the Canaanites in Africa. Some of Cush’s sons and grandsons settled in the Arabian Peninsula, except for one grandson of Cush, Sheba, the son of Raamah, whose movement to Africa is well documented. Consequently, according to biblical accounts and existing historical records, only the descendants of Mizraim, Put, and Cush formed

the African Nation. Indeed, many migrations, intermarriages, and assimilations have resulted in the disappearances and emergence of certain groups, creating very distinct nations that never existed at the beginning. Having accounted for the other two sons of Noah (Japheth and Shem), it is now certain that the Luo-speaking people descended from Ham. To identify from which lineage among the sons of Ham the Luos descended, we have to analyze the migration and settlement pattern of all four sons of Ham, namely Cush, Mizraim, Put or Phut, and Canaan.

CUSH is mentioned in the Bible (Genesis 10:6-7) as the first son of Ham and the father of Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteka. He is believed to be the ancestor of many African nations. The original settlement of Cush is believed to have been in the Upper Nile valley, from where they spread mainly to the South and some to the Arabian Peninsula.

According to (www.historyfiles.co.uk) and biblical accounts, the descendants of Seba, the first son of Cush, also referred to as the Sabeans, settled in southern Egypt along the Nile River or northern Sudan. It is these same Sabeans who, later on, migrated to the region now called Nubia. Some descendants of Seba moved to settle in Northern Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

The other son of Cush, Raamah, had two sons, Sheba and Dedan. Sheba, the first son of Raamah, is believed to be the great ancestor of the tribes that occupied the lands of Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia and Eritrea). Today, they include all the Cushitic-speaking people in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti, and Kenya. The second son of Raamah, called Dedan, is believed to be the great ancestor of the Dedanites, a tribe in southern Saudi Arabia today. Encyclopedia Britannica says Dadan or Dedan is an Ancient North Arabian kingdom. It was located in northwestern Arabia and is known for its Ancient North Arabian inscriptions dating back to the 6th to the 4th centuries BC. Dedanite was used in the older phases of the kingdom's history since the name of their capital was Dedan; today, the city is called Al-Ula, located in northwestern Arabia, some 110 km southwest of Teima. (<https://www.britannica.com/place/Lihyan>).

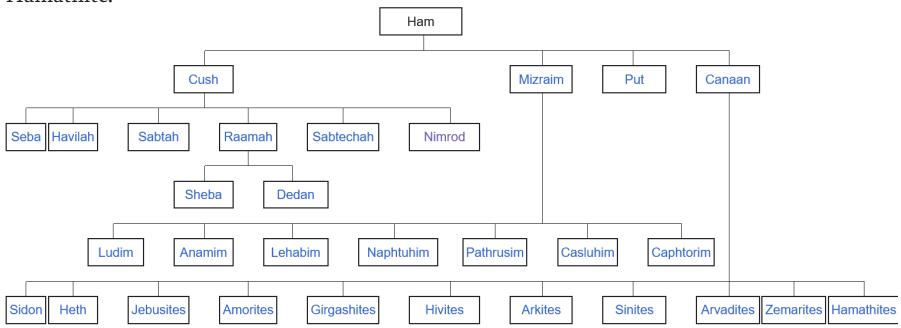
The other sons of Cush were Havilah, Sabtah, and Sabteka. According to some bible commentaries, Havilah and Sabtah populated the coasts of the Red Sea. They settled on both sides of the Red Sea in South Arabia along the Red Sea and possibly also lived on the side of Egypt along the Red Sea (J. R. Dummelow's Commentary). According to Genesis 10:8-12, Cush also had a son called Nimrod; he created the first kingdom on earth. He was a mighty hunter and the founder of Babylon and Nineveh, the two cities remembered for rebelling against God. He conquered Assyria and became the first ruler to disobey the sovereignty of another nation. That is the complete account of the Cushites.

MIZRAIM is the ancestor of the Egyptians (Arabs in Northern Africa). The people of Mizraim consist of modern-day Egyptians as well as Libyans, Palestinians, and Tunisians (Peter Salemi, 2011). The following were the sons of Mizraim the Ludim, Anamin, Lehabin, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, Kasluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and Capthorim. They were the ancestors of the early Egyptians (Henry M. Morris). According to Yates, Mizraim is "the correct Hebrew word for Egypt," it refers to the two Egypt, the Upper Egypt and the Lower Egypt, with their capitals in Memphis and Thebes.

The country's ancient name was Kern, meaning the Land of Blacks. The Greek word Aegyptos was first used after translation when the Macedonians invaded the ancient kingdom. It is from the family of Mizraim that Hagar, the slave woman who gave Abraham a son called Ishmael, came from. It is also from these same people that when Ishmael came of age, her mother got him a wife. According to the Bible (Genesis 10:14), some of the sons of Mizraim (athrusites and Kasluhites) became Palestinians. Casluhim was the great ancestor of the Palestinian Arabs. Today, the Tunisians "appear to have some elements from Casluhim and Caphtorim, the sons of Mizraim." Specific African oral histories describe Goliath, a Philistine, as "Goliath the Berber" because many tribes claim descent from Jalut (the Goliath of the Bible). (Tribe and Society in Rural Morocco, which discusses the role of Goliath in Moroccan Berber genealogies). Ludim were the Moors; they also became Arabs and occupied Libya. Anamin, the sons of Mizraim, could be located in Libya since a people of Cyrene called Anami mentioned in a cuneiform text of the time of Sargon II" (The Amazing History of the World's Races, p.16).

CANAAN: This is Noah's grandson, who was cursed for his despicable behavior during Noah's drunkenness event. These peoples populated the land of Canaan, Palestine, from Sidon to Sodom and Gomorrah. Canaan was the ancient biblical national that became evil and notorious for sexual immorality; their land was taken away and given to Abraham's descendants. They remained in the Middle East, specifically in Palestine and Israel. Sidon and Sodom identified with the city of Sidon and Sodom mentioned above.

Heth, Jebusites were the original inhabitants of Judea, Amorites, Girgashite, and Hivite. His descendants settled near Mount Hermon, the current location of modern-day Jordan. Arkites and Sinites were the descendants of most people living in Lebanon. Arvadite, Zemarite and Hamathite.



PUT or PHUT SON OF HAM: Put is the third son of Ham, the son of Noah. Phut is often associated with the ancient region of North Africa, particularly Libya and Mauretania. He is also believed to be the great ancestor of some African Nations within the Sub-Saharan region, which extends to the southern part of Africa.

According to the biblical account in Genesis 10:6, Put is listed among the four sons of Ham, the son of Noah. His brothers are indicated as Cush, Mizraim, and Canaan. However, from the

biblical perspective, there is no mention of who his sons were and which lands they migrated to or occupied.

SUMMARY OF THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT OF NATIONS

The list in the table of nations as outlined in Genesis 10 may appear incomplete, as many biblical commentaries have claimed. However, most fail to believe that many distinct nations we have today emerged as later generations from the original list provided in the bible. Therefore, the list may be complete but contains only the first nations to be formed; with time, the population increased, and many other distinct nations were formed. Its seeming incompleteness may also be sacred by design, possibly intended in the biblical sense not to be exhaustive to allow clarity only in the lineages of God's prophets and to show generally that all the peoples on earth today descended from a single ancestor – which is a fundamental fact and the most crucial point.

The descendants of Japheth settled primarily in Asia Minor and Europe. It is during their modern migration that they reached the Americas and found that the Americas had been inhabited by people of Asian descent from ancient times. The descendants of Ham populated Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, and the rest of Africa; some moved into the Southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, and the sons of Canaan primarily occupied their original Canaan land and remained in the Middle East. The sons of Shem occupied the Arabian Peninsula and Tigris-Euphrates valley, spreading eastward and beyond into Asia.

It is important to note that only the initial nations appear here. All the people descended from Noah and spread rapidly all over the world. There were many overlapping migrations in which the various families were commingled, and through intermarriages, many groups became assimilated into other groups, and many other unique nations emerged.

Having accounted for all the descendants of Noah and his sons Japheth, Shem, and Ham. It is now clear that only the descendants of Ham, particularly from the houses of Cush, Mizraim, and Put, populated Africa. From the house of Cush, the descendants of Sheba, son of Raamah, formed other Cushitic-speaking people spread in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, and many other countries in Northern Africa. All sons of Mizraim and their descendants formed the Arab nations in the Northern part of Africa (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria). Put's descendants are also found in Egypt, Libya, and Mauritania. It is also believed that some descendants of Put are the ancestors of many nations in sub-Saharan Africa.

However, as other Cushitic groups moved into the rest of the African continent, there is one particular culturally distinct group that, due to their unique predisposition, remained in Egypt much longer than the rest and became the originators of one of the earliest ancient civilizations in Africa commonly referred to as the Nubian Civilization. Herodotus called them the Sebeans from the name Seba. Cush, son of Ham, had a son called Seba, whose people were also called Sebeans; they are among the ancient "Egyptians" who formed the Kerma Kingdom, which, upon its fall, moved southwards and later became known as the Nubians. Due to their cultural ties and unity, this group refused to split and remained united and formed a series of many more kingdoms as they migrated southwards deep into Sudan and eventually reached present-day South Sudan where they finally, in the 13th century, got the name Luo/Luwo.

Later in this book, you will learn more about the group and how they have been labeled with different names, leading to more confusion about their history, identity, and ancestry. However, a critical phenomenon about the group is that throughout history, they remained culturally distinct and united and permanently moved as one unit despite the numerous battles they fought.

This phenomenon explains why Luo-speaking people are the only nation with various subtribes spread across six countries but still have ties that transcend cultural practices, traditions, language, architecture, physical outlook, customs, and many more similarities than differences. To address certain historically contentious discourses, the following questions have been formulated: Who are the Nubians? What is their true identity? How did they come to be known as Nubians?

THE NUBIANS



What is the significance of a name and its associated symbolism? A great deal, indeed. Before analyzing the migration and settlement patterns of the Nubian people, it is essential to shed light on their history and the true identity encapsulated in their names. This focus is crucial because names can obscure certain realities, particularly when used symbolically or to suggest specific experiences. For example, there has been a consistent effort by certain biased historians to distort the history of the Luo-speaking people, seeking to undermine their historical connection to the black pharaohs of Egypt, ancient civilizations, and power associated with their possible future unification for a common course. Furthermore, these historians have actively attempted to refute the notion that particularly the Luo nation may have played a significant role in the creation of some of the magnificent architectural wonders of ancient Egypt within the broader context of African civilization.

Consequently, this discussion will analyze particular names that emerged at various points in history and may have been used interchangeably, potentially leading to both accidental and intentional blurring of the history, true identity, and ancestry of the Luo-speaking people.

THE ORIGIN OF SOME COMMON NAMES

1. **NUBIA/NUBIAN:** Nubia, Nubian, or Nubiаns did not exist until around 747 BC, during/ shortly after the 25th dynasty, when Egypt was divided into Lower and Upper Egypt. After the separation, the South (Upper Egypt) traded in Gold, Ivory, Incense, animal skins, etc, with the North (Lower Egypt), who supplied them with linen, papyrus, wheat, etc. The people from the South provided the North with Gold and became known as the gold people (suppliers of Gold). The ancient Egyptian word for Gold at the time was «NUB.» As a result, they described the people from the South as «Nubia» to denote gold people,

which was a word crafted in their casual language.». Early historians used the English language and added the suffix «ans» «means» to associate people with particular places and thus it explains how the name Nubians was formed.

2. **EGYPT:** While in Egypt, the Greeks learned that the original people who occupied and ruled the land (who later became known as Nubians) called it «remetch en Kermet», in their native language - meaning «land of the blacks or people of the black land.» The Greeks translated the words to a Greek word for land and called the place Aegyptus (Aigyptos), meaning «black land or land of the blacks.» As a result, the name Egypt was formed and used for the first time. Comparatively, the Luo men of today still call themselves «wuod lowo rateng,» meaning «son of the black soil or land.» In Genesis 9:20, Noah is also called «a man of the soil». Hence, it confirms that these phrases have been culturally passed on through generations for thousands of years from Noah's time.
3. **KUSH/KUSHITES:** After crafting the name Egypt, the Greeks did not stop at that; they made several translations and crafted more names that define who we are today. After the Nubians had been driven out of Egypt, the Egyptians (now made up of the Persians and Arabs) began to refer to the Nubians as people from outside. They called them «Kush Kush,» a derogatory word that was crafted for them to mean «people with burnt faces.» Burnt means charcoal black, and the Nubians were the only people whose blackness could be compared with charcoal. Even today, they are still among the darkest African ethnicities except for those with fairer complexions due to intermarriages with other African communities with lighter skin tones or interracial marriages. Therefore, the descendants of Sheba (in Ethiopia) who were and are still lighter skinned did not fit this description. That is how later historians began to mistakenly interchange or confuse «Cush for Cushites» with «Kush for Kushites,» but they had different meanings and referred to other people. Cushites were the descendants of Cush, the son of Ham, while Kushites (Kush) only referred to Nubians.
4. **ETHIOPIA:** Greek historian Herodotus picked the meaning of KUSH through oral History in his research. In his writings, he did the same thing other Greek historians had done: he translated the meaning of the derogatory word «Kush» into Greek and called them «Aethiopians.» The term Aethiopians came from the Greek word «Aethiops,» which is made up of two Greek words joined together: (Aithō meaning «burn» + öps meaning «face; therefore, Aithiops meant «burnt face»), then he added the suffix «ians» for people just like Europe-ians, and came up with the word Aethiopians. (<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/aethiops>). This, therefore, should mean that from ancient times, the names Nubian, Kush, and Aethiopian referred to the same people. The everyday use of the word Kushites to refer only to the people from the Sheba nation in Abyssinia is inaccurate; Sheba was the son of Raamah, son of Cush, so they are Cushites, not Kushites. The term Kushites should only be used to refer to the Nubians.

Furthermore, it is due to the same mix-up that the descendants of Sheba or Cushites became widely known as Aethiopians, and that is how the country they occupied acquired the name Ethiopia. Another name for Ethiopia might have been Nubians, the group from which the

Luo-speaking people descended. During that ancient time, there was no country called Ethiopia; from the biblical perspective, the land was called Abyssinia. For this reason, in this book, the names Nubian and Kushite are strictly used to refer to all people of Nubian descent. In contrast, Aethiopian or just Ethiopia may be used with reservation to refer to the Abyssinians.

Prof. Bethwell A. Ogot, in his groundbreaking research on the origin of the Luo people, called the Nubians and all other people who settled along the Nile River, the Nilotes. Most of them later migrated to Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia. He further divided Nilotc people into River-Lake-Nilotes, Plain-Nilotes, and Highland Nilotes. This was after taking a broader view of the Nilotc groups who settled in all these countries.

That should set the records straight as far as all the important names associated with the Luo speaking people are concerns.

Having accounted for all the sons of Ham and the sons of his first son called Cush , we discovered that the descendants of the first son of Cush, known as Seba, settled in the southern part of Egypt along the Nile River and were also called the Sabeans. According to Herodotus, «the Kerma Kingdom was ruled by the Sabeans who were called by other names such as Nubians.» Manetho also wrote, «Kerma was ruled by kings or rulers who exercised power over a centralized state and maintained influence over a vast area, including regions far south into Sudan.» The two historians agree that Kerma was the Nubian Kingdom and the Nubians were Sabeans who were the direct descendants of Seba, the first son of Cush.

Herodotus¹ (a Greek who lived in the fifth century, 484 – 425 BC) and Manetho (an Egyptian priest who lived in the early 3rd century BC) have provided the missing link connecting Nubians to Cush through Seba, not directly linking Nubians to Cush as is generally known confusing with the Abyssinians who are also Cushites but are not Nubians. The Abyssinians are descendants of Sheba, son of Raamah, a grandson of Cush, while the Nubians are descendants of Seba, the first son of Cush. Even early historians regard Herodotus as the father of history as a discipline. Manetho is said to have been a priest who loved History and, through oral History, collected a lot of facts and published them widely.

Manetho also described the Sabeans as black, tall people with a very distinct culture and an organized leadership system. The group migrated out of Egypt around 525 BC when Kerma Kingdom was attacked by the Persians, who invaded and killed their King (570 – 526 BCE) and captured many of his soldiers and subjects.

According to Herodotus, the Kushites remained united after the Persians killed the Kushite king of Upper Egypt. They fled south into Northern Sudan and established a new kingdom called the Napata Kingdom, the first Kushite kingdom outside of Egypt. During this time, they acquired a new name: the Nubians. Over the years, through conquests, trade, and migration, the Nubians moved further south and interacted with various communities in Sudan and neighbor-

¹ Herodotus was a Greek historian and geographer from the Greek city of Halicarnassus (now Bodrum, Turkey), under Persian control in the 5th century BCE, and a later citizen of Thurii in modern Calabria, Italy.

ring regions. After the fall of the Napata Kingdom, they continued their migration south and established their most successful kingdom ever, with its capital at Meroe, which became known as the Kush Kingdom or Meroitic Kingdom.

For another 1,300 years, the Kushites remained united as they fought several battles and migrated deeper into present-day Sudan and South Sudan. Throughout this period, they were referred to by various names, including Ta-Seti, Kush, Meroe, and Aethiopians. As they moved southwards, they formed many different united kingdoms, which were intermittently attacked by the Persians, Egyptians, Greeks, Axumites, and ultimately the Islamic crusaders. These conflicts contributed to their eventual disintegration and the abandonment of civilization in the South Sudanese regions known as Wau and Bahr El Ghazal.



Head of Amasis II, c.550 BCE

In his research, Professor Bethwell A. Ogot traced the Luos' history back to Bahr El Ghazal. As we have observed, over time, the same people have been known by different names, such as Kush and Nubians. Eventually, as they crossed the Nile River into their modern-day locations, they generally acquired the name Luo, which remains with them today. Currently, the Luo-speaking people are divided into many small clans, each with distinct clan names that identify them from other subclans within the larger Luo group.

THE NUBIAN DYNASTY IN EGYPT

Ancient Egypt was ruled by kings known as pharaohs. They established a dynasty system where rulers passed power through hereditary lines within the same family. A dynasty could maintain control for a long time until another dynasty overthrew it or until no heirs remained to rule. Some dynasties fell due to internal strife or family infighting, while others faced invasions from external forces.

In total, Egypt had more than 30 dynasties, most believed to descend from the extended family of Ham. Foreign invaders, such as the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, overthrew a few dynasties. Initially, Egypt operated as one nation, and all the Hamites lived together. We know little about the rulers or events before 3150 BC other than what is mentioned in the Bible. The recorded history of ancient Egyptian states begins around 3150 BC.

According to Manetho, the earliest known Pharaoh who unified Egypt and controlled the entire navigable length of the Nile River was Pharaoh/King Menes. He is credited as the founder of Egypt, at least in recorded history, with his rule dating back to around 3100 BC. He became the first Pharaoh of the first dynasty, one of the 30 documented dynasties that ruled for three millennia, showcasing Egypt as one of the best examples of historical social continuity.

We recognize that the Luo-speaking people, historically called Nubians or Kush, were connected to ancient Nubian kingdoms in Egypt. The question is which of the 30 dynasties belonged to the Kushites, Nubians, or Aethiopians. To answer this, we need to analyze all 30 dynasties to identify any documented history linking the Nubians/Kush to specific dynasties.

- **Note:** Luo-speaking people exhibit dominance, intelligence, fearlessness, and pride, influencing political systems across various countries. Convincing evidence suggests that efforts to disassociate the Luo-speaking people from identities like Nubian and Kush—thus generalizing these terms for all people of African descent—were intentionally promoted. This disassociation may aim to obscure the fact that the black pharaohs in ancient Egypt were indeed Luos and that many ancient African civilizations can be directly associated with Luo-speaking people.

Dynasties 1 to 6 — Early Dynastic Period (c. 3100–2686 BCE)

List by name of Kings (Pharaohs) and by dynasties:

1st Dynasty: Narmer (Menes), Hor-Aha, Djer, Djed, Merneith, Den, Anedjib, Semerkhet, Qa'a.

2nd Dynasty: Hotepsekhemwy, Raneb, Nyenetjer, Peribsen, Khasekhemwy.

Old Kingdom (c. 2686–2181 BCE)

3rd Dynasty: Djoser, Sekhemkhet, Khaba, Huni.

4th Dynasty: Sneferu, Khufu, Djedefre, Khafre, Menkaure, Shepseskaf

5th Dynasty: Userkaf, Sahure, Neferirkare Kakai, Shepseskare, Nyuserre Ini, Unas

6th Dynasty: Teti, Userkare, Pepi I, Merenre I, Pepi II, Nitocris

The capital of ancient Egypt during the first six dynasties (Old Kingdom) was Memphis, near modern-day Cairo. The earliest historian of Egypt, Manetho, called this Old Kingdom Hut-ka-

Ptah (meaning «Territory of the god of craftsmen and architects»). Modern-day scholars often group these dynasties into several periods. Dynasties one to six formed the Old Kingdom. This period marked the development of centralized administration and early Egyptian statehood.

The second dynasty saw a period of continued centralized government but with much internal conflict. Pharaoh Khasekhemwy of the Second Dynasty is credited for restoring unity after lengthy internal disputes.

The third dynasty marked the beginning of the Old Kingdom, while the fourth dynasty is often regarded as its golden age. It was during this period that the Pyramids of Giza were constructed. In the fifth dynasty, the focus shifted from pyramid building to advancements in administration and religion. The sixth dynasty saw a decline in centralized power, resulting in political fragmentation and economic challenges, which ultimately led to the First Intermediate Period.

Dynasties 7 to 10 — First Intermediate Period (c. 2181–2055 BCE)

List by name of Kings (Pharaohs) and by dynasties:

7th to the 10th Dynasty Fragmented and local rulers, minimal records.

From 2181–2055 B.C. (a period encompassing dynasties 7-10 and part of the 11), the central government in Egypt was weak, and different regional leaders often controlled the country. The kings of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and tenth dynasties continued to rule from Memphis, but after that came a century of anarchy. By the tenth dynasty, the decline persisted, and Thebes gained power, laying the ground for unification. Due to increasing droughts and a lack of food, the Old Kingdom eventually collapsed.

Dynasties 11 to 13 — Middle Kingdom (c. 2055–1650 BCE)

List by name of Kings (Pharaohs) and by dynasties:

11th Dynasty: Mentuhotep II, Mentuhotep III, Mentuhotep IV

12th Dynasty: Amenemhat I, Senusret I, Amenemhat II, Senusret II, Senusret III, Amenemhat III, Amenemhat IV, Sobekneferu

13th Dynasty: Numerous kings with fragmented rule, Hyksos rulers (15th Dynasty) in the north, Theban rulers (17th Dynasty) in the south.

Dynasties 12 and 13, as well as part of the 11th, are called the «Middle Kingdom» and lasted from 2030 BC – 1640 B.C. At the start of this Dynasty, a ruler named Mentuhotep II (who reigned until about 2000 B.C.) reunited Egypt into a single country. His reign was marked by the revival of monumental building projects assisted by Imhotep.

- **Imhotep** was a highly revered figure in ancient Egyptian history, known for his contributions as an architect, engineer, physician, administrator and statesman. He lived during the 27th century BCE and served as the chief architect and vizier to Pharaoh Djoser of the Third Dynasty. His most famous achievement was designing the Step Pyramid of Saqqara, the first monumental stone structure and the earliest pyramid in Egypt, he is credited for designing and supervising the building of many Pyramids in ancient Egypt. Beyond architecture, Imhotep was revered as a physician and is often considered the world's first

known Doctor and the first Engineer in recorded history, his legacy was so profound that he was later deified, becoming one of the few commoners in ancient Egypt to achieve divine status. Ancient texts attribute medical knowledge to him, including treatments for various diseases and surgical techniques. His wisdom and advancements in medicine led to his deification many centuries after his death, and he was worshipped as a god of healing. His contributions to architecture and medicine highlight the sophistication of ancient Egyptian civilization, making him one of history's most remarkable polymaths.

Under Mentuhotep II, the Pyramid building resumed in Egypt, and many texts documenting the civilization's literature and science were recorded. Among the surviving texts is the Edwin Smith surgical papyrus, which includes a variety of medical treatments that modern-day medical doctors have hailed as being advanced for their time. (Owen Jarus, 2016). In the 12th Dynasty, there was expansion into Nubia, and they took control over trade routes. The construction of the Fayum irrigation projects was done under Amenemhat III. During this period, Sobekneferu became Egypt's first confirmed female ruler.

Dynasties 14 to 17 — Second Intermediate Period (c. 1650–1550 BCE)

13th to 17th Dynasty: Numerous kings with fragmented rule, Hyksos rulers (15th Dynasty) in the north, Theban rulers (17th Dynasty) in the south.

During Dynasties 14-17, Egypt was attacked by a group called the «Hyksos» from the Levant (an area that encompasses modern-day Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria), leading to the second collapse of the central government in Egypt, with part of the country being occupied by the «Hyksos.» They introduced horses, chariots, and composite bows to Egypt. The 17th Dynasty came with the Theban rulers (Seqenenre Tao, Kamose), who resisted the Hyksos and paved the way for the expulsion of the Hyksos and the establishment of the New Kingdom.

Dynasties 18 to 20 — New Kingdom (c. 1550–1069 BCE)

18th Dynasty: Ahmose I, Hatshepsut, Thutmose III, Amenhotep III, Akhenaten, Tutankhamun, Horemheb

19th Dynasty: Ramesses I, Seti I, Ramesses II (The Great), Merneptah

20th Dynasty: Setnakhte, Ramesses III–XI

The 18th dynasty was founded by Ahmose I, who expelled the Hyksos and unified Egypt again. It was during the 18-20 dynasties that Egypt reunited again, forming the «New Kingdom». Hatshepsut led major trade expeditions and built impressive monuments like her mortuary temple. It lasted between 1550 and 1070 B.C. and was known as Egypt's Golden Age, marked by empire expansion and monumental building. The key rulers were Hatshepsut (female pharaoh who led trade expeditions), Thutmose III (military expansion), Amenhotep III (art and diplomacy), Akhenaten (religious reform, Aten worship), Tutankhamun, Horemheb.

The 19th dynasty was known for having strong military rulers and restoring stability. The key rulers at the time were Ta-Seti I and Ramesses II (Ramesses the Great), who extensively built and fought the Battle of Kadesh against the Hittites. Ramesses II signed the first known peace treaty with the Hittites, leading to a prosperous period. In the 20th Pharaoh Ramesses III re-

elled invasions by the Sea Peoples, but generally, his rule marked the beginning of the decline of the New Kingdom; there was increasing internal strife, economic challenges, and weakening of central authority leading to the Third Intermediate Period. Many scholars believe that the 18th to 20th dynasties (New Kingdom) marked the beginning of Kushite rule in Egypt; however, well-documented Kushite dynasties came four dynasties later.

Dynasties 21 to 24 — Third Intermediate Period (1069–664 BCE)

21st to 24th Dynasty: Fragmented rule with rival kings in Tanis and Thebes.

The decline of the New Kingdom continued into the 21-24 dynasties (a period from 1070–713 B.C.), and a weakening government characterized it. During this time, cities and civilizations across Egypt and part of the Arabian Peninsula were destroyed by a wave of people known as the «Sea Peoples.» Around this period, the Egyptian unity collapsed, and they never reunited again. From this time on, Egypt remained divided into two (Lower and Upper Egypt).

It was after the establishment of the two stable governments, one in the North (Lower Egypt) and another in the South (Upper Egypt), that the name Nubia emerged. The North and the South became good trading partners, with textile and incense coming from Lower Egypt while gold and ivory from Upper Egypt. The people from the North began to call their Southern trading counterparts the «gold people.» The ancient Egyptian word for gold was «Nub,» so they called them «Nubia,» meaning «the gold people.»

During the 21st to 24th dynasties, there was a divided rule in Egypt after the Local rulers in the Nile Delta declared independence, further weakening central authority. The North was known as the Bubastite Dynasty, ruled by Shoshenq I, who campaigned in Canaan (mentioned in the Bible), and the south was known as the Kushite Dynasty (Nubian Dynasty), originating in Nubia (modern Sudan). The Kushite dynasty became wholly independent, and due to its good governance, the Kushite Kingdom in the south began to flourish and gain power.

25th Dynasty — Kushite/Nubian Dynasty - Late Period (664–332 BCE)

By the 25th dynasty, the Kushites/Nubian Dynasty (kingdom) was so powerful that they attacked the North in Sais, but King Tefnakht resisted their advancement. However, after several attempts, the Nubians defeated, conquered the North, and unified Egypt again. This marked a period of restoration of traditional culture and resumption of the monumental building of the kingdom. The Nubian Dynasty ruled a unified Egypt for 332 years; they were the so-called black pharaohs of Egypt. The dynasty was ruled by three pharaohs, namely Piye, Shabaka, and Taharqa.

However, this unity did not last long. The Assyrians attacked them and eventually conquered Egypt under the leadership of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal.

The 26th Dynasty

In the 26th dynasty, Psamtik I expelled the Assyrians, restored Egyptian independence, and revived trade and cultural ties with Greece. Nonetheless, their peace did not last long. The Persians conquered Egypt and it became part of the Achaemenid Persian Empire under kings

Cambyses II, Darius I, and Xerxes I.



The Nubian Empire 3150 BC to 30 BC, Source: World History by Alaina Tayler

The 27th Dynasty (First Persian Period)

The Persian invasion ushered in a period of Persian rule in Egypt, as it became part of the Persian Empire. During this period, Persian kings ruled Egypt, including Cambyses II, Darius I, and Xerxes I.

The 28th to 30th Dynasties

From the 28th dynasty through the 30th Dynasty, Egypt experienced a series of foreign conquests and occupations, marking the end of native Egyptian rule, with Nectanebo II as its final ruler. By this time, the Kushites had their stable kingdom in the south, the capital of which was Napata.

NUBIANS AFTER THE 25TH DYNASTY

The 25th Dynasty ended when Psamtik I (founder of the 26th Dynasty) expelled the Nubian rulers from Egypt around 656 BCE. This decline was primarily facilitated by the support of the Assyrians, who sought to weaken Kushite control over Egypt. The Kushites retreated to their stronghold in Nubia, specifically to Napata, which was their political and cultural capital. After fleeing Egypt, the Kingdom of Kush remained a significant power in the southern region for several dynasties. Nubian kings continued to rule from Napata and maintained cultural and religious practices that had been influenced by their time in Egypt, such as the worship of Amun and the construction of pyramids.

Around 525 BC, the Persians, under the leadership of Cambyses II, began their conquest of

Egypt by attacking the North (Lower Egypt). At the time, the North was under Pharaoh Ahmose II of the 26th Dynasty. He was an Egyptian nationalist and hired Greek mercenaries to prepare for the upcoming invasion. Unfortunately, the Greeks betrayed him, giving the Persians an easy victory and his consequent death in the battle. Herodotus recorded a series of possible reasons behind the Persian invasion based on oral history collected from the Persians and the Egyptians of his time. The reasons are not contextually relevant; what is critical is that the Persians attacked and defeated the Egyptians in the battle at Pelusium in the Nile Delta, giving way to access the South. After defeating the Egyptians, Cambyses II led an army South into Nubia, achieving some success but suffering from a lack of supplies, so he failed to win decisively. The failed invasion happened during the reign of a Nubian King called Amaninatake (538-519 BC). Continued efforts by Cambyses II to take over Nubia took several years but failed. However, these frequent attacks gradually continued to push the Nubians further south.

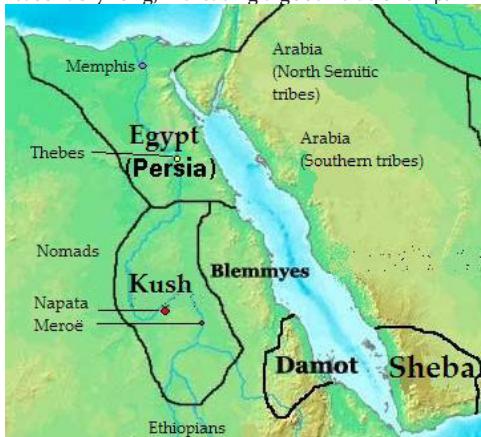
- *Herodotus reports that Cambyses wanted to conquer Kush. He sent "spies" to the pharaoh of Kush disguised as messengers bearing gifts. However, Herodotus explains that the Kushite pharaoh realized that the Persian messengers were spies. The king mocked Cambyses' gifts before the messengers and returned them with a bow. The messengers were instructed to deliver the following message to Cambyses: "When the Persians draw their bows (of equal size as mine) as easily as I do, then he (Cambyses) should march against the long-lived Ethiopians [Kushites]" (Herodotus iii. 21). Cambyses was infuriated and, in response, led a large army to Kush. However, when he "had passed over the fifth part of the way" (Herodotus iii. 25) in the barren deserts of Nubia, Cambyses' army ran out of supplies. Herodotus writes that the Persian army got so hungry that the soldiers resorted to cannibalism. Cambyses eventually gave up the expedition and turned back.*

While he was still away from home (in 522 BC) trying to conquer Nubia, a revolt broke out in Iran. He (Cambyses II) rushed home to salvage the situation but died during the journey. Darius I succeeded him.

During Darius's reign, Lower Egypt experienced a series of internal revolts. The third revolt in 404 BC was successful; they remained independent until 343 BC. In total, the Persians' rule in Lower Egypt took about 200 years before their conquest was ended by the Macedonians (Greeks) in 332 BC when Alexander the Great overthrew Darius III. By this time, Alexander the Great had conquered Persia and destroyed cities like Thebes in 335 B.C. He conquered Tyre and Jerusalem in 332 B.C. and occupied Babylon in 330 B.C. He pushed the Nubians further South, established himself in Egypt, and settled at the present-day city of Alexandria, named after him. Later, he relocated the capital thereto from Memphis. So, the Greeks under Alexander the Great ruled both Lower and Upper Egypt and confined the Nubians to the South, where they established the Napata Kingdom. The Kingdom of Kush, with its capital at Napata, remained a significant power in the southern region after the retreat from Egypt. Nubian kings continued to rule from Napata and maintained cultural and religious practices that had been influenced by their time in Egypt, such as the worship of Amun and the construction of pyramids.

In 305 BC, during the reign of Kushite Pharaoh Nastasen and decades after the death of Alexander the Great, a Macedonian General called Ptolemy crowned himself King of Egypt. Ptolemy eventually founded the Ptolemaic dynasty that ruled Egypt until 30 BC. The political relations between the Ptolemies and the Kushites are obscure. Even the political borders between Ptole-

maic Egypt and Kush are vaguely defined in records. Nevertheless, the two kingdoms co-existed reasonably long, indicating a good relationship.



Egypt & Nubian (Kush) Kingdom after 525 BC

According to some sources, at the beginning of the Ptolemaic dynasty, the southern border of Egypt extended to a portion of Lower Nubia (beyond the northern border of present-day Sudan). However, an inscription from Napata revealed another failed invasion from the north during King Nastasen's reign. He narrates how he had defeated the troops of "Kambasuten" and taken all his ships. He pushed the Kush boundary back north beyond Egypt's borders. Archeological reports also show evidence of Kushite occupations far back north during and/or after the reign of Ptolemy IV. Archeological evidence also shows areas with several Egyptian fortresses in Lower Nubia that were re-occupied by the Kushites after the war. They pushed the Egyptians north while maintaining their capital at Napata. Two dynasties passed in Egypt and then came Ptolemy VI. His reign was marred with internal wrangles between him and his brother, who was not happy with how he ascended to the throne; being a mama's boy, he ruled side by side with his mother, Cleopatra I. His rule ended abruptly with the unexpected death of his mother.

The entry of the Romans into Egypt was a gradual process that comprised both conflicts and collaborations with a series of Ptolemaic dynasties. By around 50 BC, the Romans had taken control over most of Egypt and made it a Roman Province in 30 BC. The province's establishment was followed by the appointment of Publius Petronius by the Roman Emperor to govern the province of Egypt. In 23 BC, while Egypt was still politically unstable during the transition period, the Nubians attacked them from the South to take back their ancestral land but failed.

The Roman governor of Egypt then, Publius Petronius, became furious and ordered the invasion of the Nubian Kingdom (in Napata) in response to the Nubian attack. It is said that the Roman Army went up to the city of Napata, the center of the Kingdom, and left after "sucking" the King. As a result, the Nubians were forced to migrate further south and settled on the east bank of the River Nile, which was just 200 km northeast of the current city of Khartoum. The Nubians established another Kingdom, one of the most prosperous in the history of the Nubian

Kingdoms, commonly called the Kingdom of Kush. It lasted many hundreds of years; the capital of the Kingdom was a big city called Meroe. The city of Meroe became famous and wealthy and even traded with most parts of the world, including the whole Mediterranean region, including Arabia, India, China, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

By 26 BCE, the Kingdom of Kush was well-established, wealthy, and had a powerful military. At this time, Egypt had become a Roman province. The trade between Meroe and other regions was tremendous, and it grew more popular and influential by the day; this attracted the attention of the Romans and made them jealous. Tensions arose between Rome and Meroe, leading to a conflict that led to what was called the Meroitic War (25–21 BC), during which Kushite forces sacked Aswan but eventually reached a peace treaty with Rome – Mano Jaluo owadgi Anyango.

The Kingdom of Kush remained independent but began to experience a gradual decline due to changing trade routes, desertification, and external pressures. By the 4th century CE, the Kingdom of Kush was weakened and eventually fell to the rising Kingdom of Axum (in modern-day Ethiopia and Eritrea). The Nubians left a lasting cultural legacy, including their distinctive pyramids at Napata and Meroë, which remain archaeological treasures. Modern Nubian populations in Eastern and Central Africa continue to celebrate their rich heritage, including languages and traditions that trace back to the ancient Kushite civilization.

4

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE KUSH KINGDOM

The Nubian society was heavily influenced by their time in Egypt, culture, architecture, religion, and traditions. Ancient history and recent discoveries have shown that Nubian society emerged simultaneously with its northern counterparts. They once lived together as one society and were entirely indigenous, albeit born out of a shared Cushitic culture. After the split between Lower and Upper Egypt, the two cultures (Upper and Lower Egypt) evolved in competition with one another, both continuing with the building of pyramidal structures (the tumuli at Kerma were sometimes more prominent than the pyramids at Giza) and their unique art forms. The Nubians continued with the culture of building pyramids throughout their Kingdoms' history down to Meroe and beyond. More than two hundred pyramids mark the site of the city of Meroë in three groups, of which many are in ruins. They have the distinctive size and proportions of Nubian pyramids.

After the fall of 25th dynasty, the Nubians moved further south to form their own kingdom and the Napata officially became the capital of the Kingdom of Kush. The Egyptians in the North, under different foreign dominations (the Assyrians, then Persians, then Greeks, then Romans), persistently invaded the Nubian Kingdom in the South. Still, they could not take control of them. Instead, they only succeeded in pushing them southwards until they left Egypt completely and settled in their new kingdom, whose capital was known as Napata, under King Alara. While in Napata and when the North was still in transition (establishing Egypt as a Roman Province), Nubians invaded the North. In retaliation, the Romans attacked the Nubians and took over Napata.

After the fall of Napata, the Nubians moved further south and formed another kingdom known as the Kush Kingdom, with its capital at Meroe. It quickly became a major powerhouse in the

Northeastern Africa region. The Kush kingdom became the wealthiest and most stable of all the Nubian Kingdoms in History; it was the richest and most economically successful of all African ancient civilizations. The technological advancement in Meroe went much higher than in Egypt in all aspects. The success of the kingdom as a regional power has puzzled and continues to baffle historians and archeologists. The Kingdom of Kush lasted over 1200 years (800 BCE – 350 CE). Some sources indicate that Meroe existed long before as an outpost city when Napata was still the capital of the Nubian Kingdom.

- *Although it is all in the past, the success and legacy of Meroe has immense significance in showing or demonstrating that even the 21st century Nubians (the Luo speaking people) have the innate potentially to lead Africa to even greater heights. Africa do not need political leaders but people who are naturally visionary. It has been done and it can be done. This is the African Dream – Visionary Leadership.*

Without the usual characteristics of a complex society, they had a writing system, an extensive bureaucracy, and significant well-planned urban centers with modern features such as well-organized streets between well-arranged and magnificent buildings – mainly pyramids, tombs, and places of warship. They were technologically more advanced, practiced mechanized irrigation in the Nile valley, extensive mining of minerals which fed the most advanced iron metallurgy and industry, and due to advanced technology, they produced more gold than anywhere else in the world at the time (it is this gold that earned them the name Nubians centuries earlier). They were involved in international trade with China, India, Arabia, Assyria, and their northern neighbors, Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa. Archeologists discovered a vast gold processing factory with many grindstones three feet in diameter and several hundreds of kilograms dating to the early Kush period. Some of the ancient Kush inventions still stand today. The same gold-grinding technology using stone balls is still being used today.

As early as 400 CE, the Nubians used wheels for spinning pottery and water wheels for irrigation. The art and architecture found in the ruins of Meroe reveal a sophisticated society of innovative artisans and the constant advancement and assimilation of new artistic techniques from other faraway lands they visited during trade expeditions. Notable architecture of the Kushites includes stone temple complexes such as the Lion Temple at Naqa and the steep-sided – solid pyramids found at Meroe and Jebel Barkal.

The stone-cutting technology used in Meroe remains a mystery. Artworks include narrative tomb wall paintings and unique eggshell-thin pottery with geometric patterns traded all over the Mediterranean. The stoic granite and bronze statues of kings and gods convey their religious beliefs. The kingdom of Kush had a very elaborate justice system with a clear concept of truth, balance, order, harmony, law, morality, and the personification of these concepts as a god who set the order of the universe from chaos at the moment of creation.

THE MEROETIC ALPHABET AND LANGUAGE

By the 3rd century, the Nubian Kingdom had developed a completely new language with its indigenous alphabet, the Meroetic alphabet, consisting of twenty-three letters; it was developed in Meroe and replaced the Egyptian script widely used then. The new alphabet was used to

write the Nubian language throughout the Kingdom of Kush – the idea of a national language emerged. There are a few terminologies deciphered from the Meroetic language that can still be found common among all the Luo-speaking people today.

Meroitic demo	transcription hiero	Hintze	Rowan	Meroitic demo	transcription hiero	Hintze	Rowan
፩	â	a-		፩	â	l(a)	
፪	ê	e	schwa	፪	ê	ch(a)	
፫	ô	o	u	፪	ô	kh(a)	
፬	î	i		፪	#	se	s
፭	yy	y(a)		፩	yy	s(a)	s(e)
፮	ë	w(a)		፩	ë	k(a)	
፯	û	b(a)		፩	û	q(a)	
፱	ï	p(a)		፩	ï	t(a)	t(e)
፲	æ	m(a)		፩	æ	te	t
፳	œœ	n(a) n(e)		፩	œœ	to	tu
፴	œ	ne	n	፩	œ	d(a)	r(a)
፵	œ	r(a)	?	:	:		word divider

Ancient Nubian Alphabets used in the Kush Kingdom

For example, in the Meroitic language, the title for the King was “Qore” pronounced as “kor” and the title for small chiefs within the Kingdom was “Reth or Rot”. The Luo-Shilluk still refer to their chiefs as Reth and the Luo-Acholi and JoLuo in Kenya call them Ruoth. Although the many Luo clans no longer have Kings, the Luo in Kenya still refers to their ultimate cultural leader as Ker (from the ancient title Qore). By the time of publishing this book in 2025, the sitting Ker of all the Luo people in Kenya was called Ker Odungi Randa.

SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE IN THE KINGDOM OF KUSH

The Kush social hierarchy was similar to the Egyptian one; the general idea behind their social structure was the same as the Egyptian one, meaning they continued with some of their traditions from the north. However, there were significant structural modifications and increased levels in the hierarchy. In the old system in Egypt, the Pharaoh was at the top; the nobles, craftsmen, artisans, and farmers were in the middle; and the laborers and slaves were at the bottom. In the Kush Kingdom, they abolished the title Pharaoh and replaced it with Qore. King, whom they now called Qore, was at the top, and a few more levels were added. Instead of having a broad, noble class, it was split up into viziers and high priests, royal governors, and district governors. A vizier was the Qore’s attendant and a tax collector. The vizier and the high priests controlled the temples and were one step higher than the other nobles.

After the viziers came to the royal governors, they worked directly with the Qore, helping with lawmaking and tax regulations. Just a step below were the district governors; they ruled the districts and towns of Kush and carried on the rules and laws of the royal governors. Scribes were on the third level of the metaphorical pyramid and were the most honored besides the Qore and the nobles. The scribes were educated, and they recorded events in the Kush empire. They also supervised stone inscriptions by artisans to record important events. Artisans, or craftsmen, were much appreciated in both Egypt and Kush. They crafted pots, woven art, paintings, and stone carvings.

Their work could not be signed, as most artisans worked within groups where different groups handled different tasks, and most projects were collaborations. This could be the origin of division of labor and specialization. At the bottom of the hierarchy were farmers and laborers. In the Kush Kingdom, there is no mention of slaves; it is possible that the culture of keeping slaves was abolished in the Kush Kingdom. Characteristically, slavery could not fit in a society founded on truth, honesty, justice, fairness, and shared prosperity. This could be true because the idea of keeping slaves has not been part of the traditions and culture of all the Luo clans who descended from the Kush or Nubians. The concept of having laborers is different than having slaves. The laborers worked on construction projects, grew crops, and were decently paid. There were many smaller sub-classes between the more significant, broader levels. The Luos invented the basics of the system of government that is widely used in the modern world today.

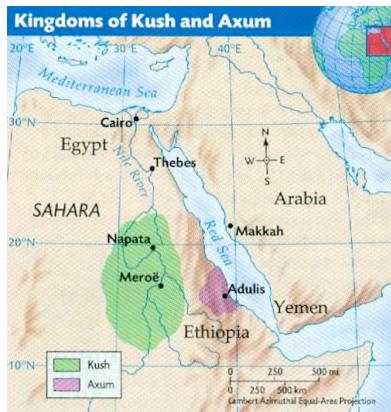
THE DOWNFALL OF THE KUSH KINGDOM

The kingdom of Kush thrived and flourished for more than 1000 years. However, by the fourth century CE, their influence began to diminish, and they were increasingly overshadowed by the Axumite Kingdom, whose influence was spreading fast in the region. Axum or Aksum, the capital of the Axumite Kingdom, was situated in the present-day Ethiopian highlands in the Tigray region, not far from where the Red Sea empties into the Gulf of Aden. The city is called Axum till today.

In 400 AD, Axum attacked and destroyed Meroe, and the Kush kingdom collapsed. King Ezana led the invasion of Meroe and was also the first African King in that era to convert to Christianity, making Ethiopia the first country in Africa other than Egypt to accept Christianity.

What led to the weakening and the eventual collapse of the Kush Kingdom is still a matter of debate among historians. Many historical theories explain why and how a wealthy and supposedly strong Kingdom became weak enough to be conquered by a relatively minor and less prosperous Kingdom such as the Axumite Kingdom. Among other possible reasons is economic decline; the decline in trade routes has been cited as one of the most probable reasons.

The Kush economy relied heavily on trade, especially along the Nile River and with regions like Egypt, the Mediterranean, and sub-Saharan Africa. Over time, trade routes shifted away from the Nile towards Red Sea routes dominated by Axum, reducing Kush's economic significance, and this shift empowered Axum. The port city for Axum was the Red Sea port of Adulis. Axum traded trinkets, wine, cloth, and finished iron goods with the people of the interior for iron ore, hides, and gold.



Source: *Africa Is Not A Country: It's A Continent*, by Dr. Arthur Lewin

These were shipped from the port of Adulis and traded in Arabia, Persia, Constantinople, and India. At a time when the economy of the Kush Kingdom was on the decline, the trade route of the Axumite Kingdom remained vibrant.

At its prime, in the fourth and fifth centuries AD, the Axumite kingdom controlled Ethiopia, modern-day Eritrea, and Sudan. The other reasons related to economic decline are the depletion of resources and the overexploitation of natural resources, including deforestation for iron production, which led to environmental degradation and reduced agricultural productivity. The rise of Axum as a militarily and economically powerful state posed a direct threat to Kush. Axumite rulers sought to control the Nile trade and expand their territory into Kushite lands. The third possible reason was that after Rome annexed Egypt in 30 BCE, Kush's relationship with its northern neighbor changed. Roman control over trade and military incursions into Nubia disrupted Kushite trade routes, leading to loss of trade routes and instability. Another reason is that Kush may have experienced political instability from internal conflicts and a weakening centralized authority, making it vulnerable to external threats.

In the 4th century CE, King Ezana of Axum launched a military campaign against Kush, culminating in capturing Meroë, the Kushite capital. This defeat marked the Kushite Kingdom's end and Axum's rise as the dominant power in the region. Axum's control over key trade routes and military superiority ensured its ascendancy over Kush.

THE LAST THREE NUBIAN KINGDOMS

After the fall of the Kingdom of Kush in the 4th century CE, the Nubians were neither exterminated nor absorbed by any other kingdom. They reorganized themselves and regrouped into several successor kingdoms (Nobatia, Makuria, and Dongola) that thrived in Nubia (modern-day Sudan and South Sudan). These new kingdoms continued the legacy of Kush, adapting to changing political, economic, and religious conditions.

However, some biased historians have published articles and consistently claimed that “The 200 years from the fall of Kush to the middle of the 6th century is an unknown age in Sudan. Nubia was inhabited by a people called the Nobatae or the X-Group”. They claim they are still “at a loss to explain the origin of the people.” These claims are misleading and refutable.” This is because historians and archeologists have provided a detailed account of the historical events of the Nubian people, including the kingdoms they formed from 2500 BC while in lower Egypt “Memphis” to 400 AD when the kingdom of Kush collapsed. Hence, it is possible that archeologists and historians intentionally ignored a part of the history that occurred 200 years after the fall.

This historical omission was most probably designed to delink the successive generations of Nubian descent, particularly the Luo-speaking people, from their rich history of the greatest African civilization. In essence, it would eliminate the belief that the descendants of the Black Pharaohs of Egypt still exist. This explains why the people in all the last three kingdoms formed after the fall of Kush are hardly referred to as Nubians or Kush but rather the X-Group.

Moreover, some persistent unanswered questions that people have continued to ask include: What became of the Kush people? Did the Kush people become extinct? Why did these last three kingdoms retain the culture and traditions of the Kush people? Interestingly, the same book that called the post-Kush groups the X-Groups further reveals something through a hypothesis on page 131, where the book states that “.....the X-Group could be the heirs of Kush since crafts and customs of the Kushan city of Meroe dominated their whole cultural life”.

Let's call the hypothetical X-group period the Black Hole Period. This period has been used successfully to obscure the transition of and the disintegration of the Kush kingdom into the various Nubian-related tribes in South Sudan and beyond, hence effectively delinking them from their ancient history. This black hole period explains why renowned and unbiased Luo-Nilo-Saharan-modern-historians such as Bethwell A. Ogot could only begin writing the history of the Luo from Bahr El Ghazal. Yet the last two of the three Kush kingdoms, Dongola and Olodia, were in present-day South Sudan, where all the Luo-speaking people in East and Central Africa claim to have originated.

Based on these accounts, this book portends that the last three kingdoms formed further south after the fall of Kush were the successors of the Kush/Nubian Kingdom. They were known as the Nobatia, with its capital at Pachoras; the Makuria, with its capital at Dongola; and the Olo-dia or Alwa or Anwa, with its capital at Suba or Soba. On a closer analysis, the three kingdoms were originally one. Still, the names kept changing as they gradually migrated further south away from the Islamic crusaders and created new capitals with different rulers. All three kingdoms had a standard traditional theory that their old kingdom was destroyed during an invasion by King Ezana of the Ethiopian kingdom of Axum. Therefore, these three Kingdoms were formed as a result of the fragmentation of the Nubian Kingdom upon its collapse.

KINGDOM OF NOBATIA (350 - 590 AD)

The Nubian Kingdom of Nobatia was the first of the three smaller kingdoms formed in the south after the invasion of Kush. Some sources have indicated that Pachoras was founded as an outpost town in the former Meroitic province of Akine. Thus, when Axum attacked Meroe, a

group of Kushites escaped into the outpost town and later formed a kingdom around it. According to the information in the history files website, the traditional theory in Nobatia was that their old kingdom was destroyed during an invasion by King Ezana of the Ethiopian kingdom of Axum. So, the king, or at least some part of the royal family, or just an individual, led his family and a group of others and moved to Pachoras or Pacholas and re-founded the kingdom as Nobatia. Going by the history of how words mutated along the way, the name Nobatia may have been crafted from the word Nubia to mean something about their traditions and history.

According to an oral Nubi mythology, there once lived a Nubian King, Qore Alara, who had a son called Alramulah, a renowned trader in gold and jewelry. The ancient Nubian word for gold was “mul.” Alramulah was a gold merchant until Meroe collapsed. During the attack by the Aksumites, he was captured and later released. He then escaped with his people to Meidob and formed his kingdom. He is believed to be the first king of Makuria. The Luo word for gold is “mula,” while something made of gold or golden is called “ramula.” It is, therefore, possible that “Alramulah” and later Ramula was a name given to a man for his love for gold or jewelry or trade in gold. There is a place in Siaya County in Kenya called Gem Ramula, dotted with artisan gold mines. The mutation of names/words throughout the history of the Luo is a phenomenon. Around 543 AD, a missionary named Julian tried to convert people in Nobatia Kingdom to Christianity on behalf of the Eastern Roman Empire. The new religion was adopted with considerable enthusiasm. This was the time when the Nubians first converted to Christianity. According to historyfile.com, “It is around this time, perhaps coincidentally, that records for Nobatia Kingdom stops and those for Dongola kingdom seem to start, suggesting a relocation of the capital or a re-founding of another kingdom at a new location due to circumstances unknown.” That marked the beginning of the Dongola kingdom.

Bethwell Ogot, 1967, while conducting a study in the region, found out that there was a group of people of Nubian descent who called themselves people of Padhola; he then called them Jo-Padhola (“jo or ja” is a prefix in Dholuo added to a word to mean “people of.” Some historians believe that the name Padhola may have originated from Pacholas, the name of the capital city of the Nobatia Kingdom. The Luo people have a culture of calling themselves by the name of their capital city. For example, Luos in Nyanza-Kenya often call themselves Jo-Kisumu, Ja-Bondo, Jo-Siaya, Jo-Migori, etc. Modern-day writers about the history of Luos have gone a step further to link it with a Luo name “Adhola,” to make Jo-Padhola meaning the people of Adhola; they claim that Adhola could be the name of the man who led a group of Luos out of Sudan in the 15th century.

KINGDOM OF MAKURIA (590 - 1314 AD)

The kingdom of Makuria had its capital in Dongola (Dungula), located in the southern part of modern-day Sudan. The territory initially covered the area along the Nile from the Third Cataract to somewhere between the Fifth and Sixth Cataracts. Hailing the best-known Nubian kingdoms formed after the fall of Kush, it still contained some gaps in the recorded history and probably was the most potent Nubian kingdom in the post-Kush period. Makuria became a dominant power in Nubia and attempted to expand its influence back into the former Kushite territories. Therefore, the Nobatia kingdom may have been just an earlier form of the Dongola kingdom. It seems that a transfer of the capital may have occurred at the start of the seventh

century (605AD), perhaps at the same time when the kingdom was converted to Christianity. Old Dongola was built in the sixth century as a fortress within Nobatia, but a settlement quickly developed around it, and it turned into a town. The urban sprawl and increased human settlement might have necessitated the transfer of capital from Pachoras. The Dongola kingdom also had limited control over the trade routes, mines, and oases to the east and west. At its peak, the Dongola kingdom had an estimated population of about 6000 people. During the early second millennium (1001AD), the Nubians (people who spoke a Nubian-related language) arrived and occupied Meidob Hills in Jebel Meidob, in the north-eastern corner of the Darfur region.

- *It's important to note that there was a nomadic tribe of a people called Fur which roamed the area before the arrival of the Nubians. Upon the arrival of the Nubians, they were permanently driven out of the region.*

The Meidob hills were and still are a concentration of volcanic mounds and deep ravines. The depression on the mountain's western side was known as the Malha Crater, which contained valuable deposits of rock salt and muddy salt. The crater also contained freshwater springs and a small lake. The Nubians (now inhabitants of Meidob Hills) gathered the salt and sold it to the Arab traders from Egypt, the Mediterranean, and other trade markets. Furthermore, the freshwater lake or swamp on top of the plateau covered with fresh grass attracted a lot of Gazelles. The place was called Bahr El Ghazal by the Arab traders who visited the area to buy salt. The Arabic phrase "Bahr El Ghazal" loosely translates to "Lake of the Gazelles" and "Nam Nyikeye" in Dholuo.

The Arabic word "Bahr," which means a flat grassland with a water source, has been adopted and used by the Luos in Kenya for centuries, retaining its original meaning. The names of Luo Nyanza places, such as Bar Kalare, Bar Chando, Bar Korwa, and Bar Olengo, borrow heavily from the Arabic word "Bahr." They all refer to a flat grassland with a water source where domestic and wild animals can graze and drink. It would be interesting to find out if other Luo-speaking people adopted the word – Bahr (Bar in dholuo).

The region is now inhabited mainly by the Dinka People, some of the many South Sudanese Nilotic ethnic groups. So, the Nubians who created the Pachora and Dongola were Luo-speaking people. In 1967, modern historians such as Bethwell A. Ogot confirmed this hypothesis by tracing the origin of Southern Luos back to the Wau and Bahr El Ghazal regions.

KINGDOM OF ALODIA (NUBIA), 570 - 1480 AD

The Nubian Kingdom of Alodia (Aloa or Alwa, the Arabic form of the name found in Arabic literature) was a medieval Nubian state formed during the murky, undocumented period of the sixth and seventh centuries. The name Anwa is also referred to in some texts. They also share the traditional theory that their old Kingdom was destroyed during an invasion by King Ezana of the Ethiopian Kingdom of Axum.

Their King Anwa led the royal family together with others, who moved to Subah (Soba) after the attack and founded the Alodia Kingdom. The Alodia Kingdom was formed around its capital at Subah (Soba) near what is now known as Khartoum, making it the southernmost of the

three kingdoms. Alodia's territory stretched from the south of the Fifth Cataract to the foot of the Ethiopian uplands. Alodia inherited much of the cultural and political traditions of Kush, including its agricultural and trade practices. Some sources claim that the Alodia kingdom existed alongside the Dongola kingdom, while others think Dongola came first. Like Nobatia and Makuria, Alodia adopted Christianity and became a vibrant Christian state.

However, interestingly, an analysis of the names by one of the region's early historians, Edward Dawson (1916), suggests that the name Alodia, which Arabs recorded as Alwa or Aloa, might mean Ala, a god or a more Germanic wahl as 'Gaul'. Alodia could be the people of Al, ie. God. God in Semitic languages (including peoples with a Semitic priesthood) is rendered as El in Hebrew, Al or Allah in Arabic, and Ela in Yoruba. When the Axum conquered Meroë at the start of the sixth century BC, some of the original inhabitants of the location fled west. They ended up establishing themselves in what is now Nigeria and Benin. In Yoruba, 'Olu' means a chief, ruler, or owner, a chief priest in Ifa, and Ogboni, a chief priest, is an Oluwo. An owner in modern Yoruba is 'oluwa'.

His analysis has produced words consistent with LUWO, LUO, and LWO, which many communities of Nubian-related languages prefer to associate with. The community around Lake Victoria in the Nyanza region in Kenya has Nubian ancestry and calls themselves LUOs. Luwo in Dholuo means "taking a path"; it may also mean "being a supporter of someone," this second meaning brings in the context of leadership, which is found in Yoruba, Ifa, and Ogboni. In his analysis of Alodia, you see words like "Gaul," which is also consistent with Luo's mythology about one of their ancestors, Geilo. Geilo is also believed to be the ancestor of the Luo-Anyuak people in South Sudan, and they occupy the exact territory of the Alodia kingdom as described in ancient history.

The name of the first king of Alodia is King Anwa, which is also very close to the Luo-Anyuak, which in some texts is written as Anwak or Anywak or Anuak. The name of the capital of the Alodia Kingdom, Subah (Soba), is also consistent with the name of one of the LUO subgroups in Nyanza, Kenya, called Luo-Suba or Luo-Abasuba. It is possible that the Luo-Suba people, who were the last to arrive in Nyanza, may be originally Luos from the Alodia Kingdom who preferred to call themselves by the name of the capital of their ancient Kingdom and may have no link whatsoever with any Bantu group as has been known save for the mere influence as they passed through Uganda.

These consistencies can be used as proof that the Luo Nation, with clans in South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Congo, and possibly Nigeria, are the direct descendants of Nubians or Kush who were the inhabitants and rulers of all the Nubian Kingdom/Kushite Kingdoms right from upper Egypt to Meroe and later disintegrated to form Nobatia, Dongola and Alodia kingdoms. Their migration and spread into other eastern African countries happened in the 14th century when they refused to accept Islam and characteristically chose to move away. Some of them moved into the Southern jungles away from the reach of the Mohammedans.

THE NUBI PEOPLE

Today, a clan in South Sudan still uses the name Nubi, possibly from Nubia in ancient times. Immediately after the fall of Kush, the kingdom's inhabitants scattered, and most of them moved south of Meroe. There is one group that ran into the Nuba Mountains for safety. At that time, the area was covered in thick forest, so the invaders could not reach them. They managed to regroup inside the forest, formed a community, and became the first group to abandon civilization and adopt a new life of hunting, gathering, farming, and cattle rearing. They lived a secluded life for many years and managed to keep the name Nubi from Nubia.

Since they were deep inside the forest, away from influence from other communities, they developed a new culture and unique language but still maintained the elements of the original Nubian language and culture. They settled more in the north than their counterpart groups, which moved far south, by 700AD, they were the first to be reached by the Mohammedans and converted to Islam. The rest of the groups formed new smaller kingdoms and continued with Nubian culture. They became the last known Nubian kingdoms formed after Kush (the Nobatia, the Makuria, and the Oloodia). Let's find out more about these previous three Nubian Kingdoms.

5

THE ARRIVAL OF THE ISLAMIC EMPIRES AND THE NUBIAN EXIT FROM SUDAN

As early as 652 CE the Arab Muslim forces from Egypt, under the Rashidun Caliphate, attempted to conquer Makuria but were repelled at the Battle of Dongola. The Nubians, known for their skilled archers, successfully defended their capital. During the 10th and 11th centuries, the Mamluk sultan sent several military expeditions to Makuria Kingdom but they never succeeded as well. However, every time they attacked, they left the Kingdom of Makuria devastated and socially, economically, and politically drained. They often led to a lot of chaos and depression in the kingdom. By the 12th and 13th centuries, Dongola was no longer strong enough to control the whole region and this opened the countryside for Arab immigration and their mission to spread Islam. By this time all the Nubians had converted to Christianity so they strongly resisted Islamization.

Dongola became weak and once the Arab nomads, particularly the Juhaynah people, learned that the land beyond Aswan which could support their hard had no political authority or power to turn them back, they began to migrate southwards in mass. It had become almost impossible to convert them to any other belief system, the Arabs had no option but to fight them. Converting them to Islam was now impossible. The Arabs remained relentless with their military expeditions. By the end of the 14th century, the Makuria kingdom had become weakened, it didn't take long before it was crashed by one of the military expeditions from the Arabs.

By the beginning of the next century, Dongola had been completely abandoned. This led to the final disintegration of the Dongola-Nubians and it was followed by mass migration deep into the southern jungles and some groups crossed the river Nile and migrated out of Sudan into Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and DRC. These groups formed the first waves of the Luo groups to migrate out of Sudan. Alodia, further south and less exposed to early Islamic invasions, survived

longer than Makuria. It remained a Christian kingdom but was increasingly isolated as Islam changed direction to spread northward.

While a lot was happening in the region, the Olodia or Alwa kingdom remained stable and flourished, it extended from present-day Kabushiyah to Sennar (Sannah) and from the Ethiopian escarpment to the White Nile. History has it that Olodia preserved the ironworking techniques of Kush, and its capital at Subah possessed many impressive buildings, churches, and gardens. Here Christianity remained the state religion.

By the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century, an Arab confederation led by Abdullah Jammah of the Funj Sultanate launched a devastating assault on the Christian kingdom of Olodia, it is said that Abdullah Jammah was well prepared for the ambush, he went in with such a big army in a surprising manner that it was impossible for Subah to remain standing. That was the end of Olodia kingdom. By the beginning of the 16th century Subah had been completely abandoned. The collapse of Subah once again resulted in a mass multi-directional migration into Uganda, Ethiopia and the DRC.

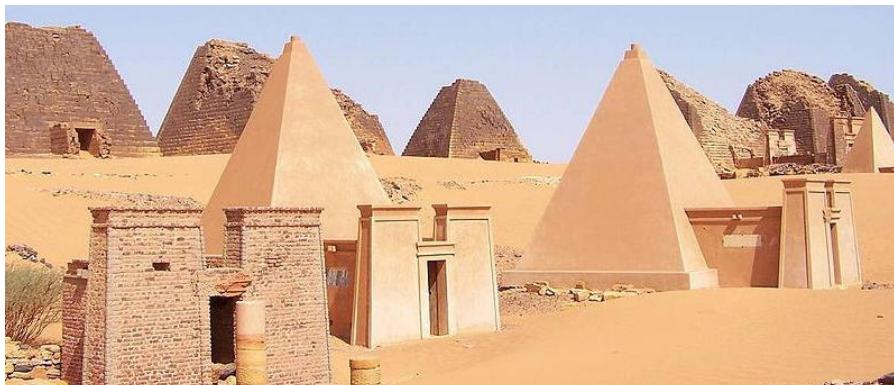
These groups formed the second set or waves of Luo groups who migrated out of present-day South Sudan into Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, and DRC. Part of the people in this second wave might have been the ones who eventually arrived in Kenya late and became the Luo Abasuba people. They kept the name of their kingdom capital which was called Suba. "Aba" is a prefix from a Bantu language added to Suba to mean "a man from Suba". Interestingly, within the Olodia kingdom, there was an outpost town called Sennah, it is still a city in Sudan today. Coincidentally or logically, there is an Island in Lake Victoria called Senna and it has been occupied by the Luo Abasuba for centuries.

At this point, it is important to mention that, the collapse of the Nubians' last kingdom of Alo-dia and their eventual disintegration into many small groups that were not economically viable marked the beginning of the end of the great Luo Civilization. Their disappearance into oblivion gave room (left a vacuum) for the anti-Luo/pro-Egypt historians to claim wholly and label all Nubian civilization as Egyptian civilization without any mention of the Nubians. Since then, many efforts have been made to erase (kill all archaeological evidence) any Nubian footprint from the "Egyptian civilization." The most conspicuous of these campaigns is the defacing of all statues of ancient Nubian rulers of Egypt by breaking their blunt noses. Egyptian rulers would have long, pointed noses. In some cases, all black-painted statues have been repainted brown.

All these efforts demonstrate attempts to disassociate the Nubians (Luos) from the architects of the ancient civilization in Egypt. The influence of ancient Nubian Architecture can still be seen in how all Luo-speaking people build their houses. Though grass thatched, they maintained the pyramidal style from ancient times, something you cannot find in the north. In the Arab world, there are no traces of architecture of houses with pyramidal peaked roofs. The style is only found in Africa, especially among the Luo-speaking people and the communities that they have influenced culturally.



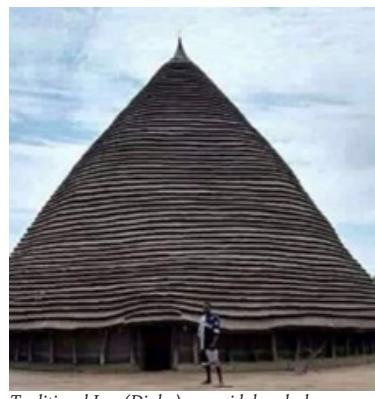
Statues of various rulers of the late 25th Dynasty–early Napatan period. From left to right: Tantamani, Taharqa (rear), Senkamanisken, again Tantamani (rear), Aspelta, Anlamani, again Senkamanisken, Kerma Museum



Pyramids of the Kushite rulers at Meroë (300AD)



Aerial view of Luo homestead



Traditional Luo (Dinka) pyramidal peaked grass thatched house (1940)



Pyramidal Nubian architecture into architecture of modern houses (2023)

ORIGIN OF THE NAME LUO

The term Sudan is derived from the Arabic phrase "bilad al-sudan", which means "land of the blacks." Arabs first used it during the Nubian - Arab trade interactions, especially during trade visits to the Nubia region. For more than 4000 years, the Nubians inhabited the Nile River Valley and depended on it for their livelihood. They practiced farming, cattle rearing, and fishing, among other economic activities as they migrated south. By 1000AD, all the Nubian Kingdoms had collapsed and the Nubians disintegrated into smaller groups. As a result, some embraced cattle rearing and crop farming, while those who lived by the riverside practiced little fishing. When the time came for them to move out of Sudan after the collapse of their last kingdoms, they had to cross the river Nile (Nalo). Nalo in Dholuo means meandering or going zig zag. They could not manage a direct crossover since the river was wide, deep, and fast. Some chose to settle in the nearby hills and plains, while many decided to walk along or "Luwo" the river valley as they searched for a shallow, narrow section to cross. "Luwo" in dholuo means "walking along". From then on, the people who remained behind in the hills and plains referred to the groups walking along the river valleys as "Joma Luwo Aora" or "jo luw aora." "Aora" means river. With time, the phrase "jo Luwo" became synonymous with them, and the name Jo-Luwo stuck.

Possibly for easy pronunciation, it changed from Jo-Luwo to Jo-Luo. That is just one of the many stories about how the name Luo emerged. The key point to emphasize is that Sudan (now South Sudan) was the place where the group was first called Jo Luo, and subsequently, it is the birthplace or origin of the Luo Nation as a distinct group of people. Sudan is the place where the Luo people buried their placenta, expressed in their language as "Kuma ne oyikie biechwa."

The name was first used in South Sudan between the 13th and 14th centuries, suggesting why most tales and historians writing about the origin of the Luo nation start from South Sudan. However, the history of the Luo Nation, as detailed in this book, traces back to ancient Egypt, when its people were referred to as the Nubians, the Kushites, and the Aethiopians. This represents the true origins of the Luo Nation.

HOW THE NUBIANS/LUOS ABANDONED CIVILIZATION

By 600 BC, the Nubian civilization had attained remarkable advancement in culture, trade, and technology. Their continuous progress in these areas positioned them as a leading force in the

world by the time of the fall of Meroe, distinguishing them as pioneers in both technological and civilizational achievements.

- *In the early years of the 16th Century, they had lost a lot in terms of civilization and technology as they adopted new lifestyles and rudimentary technologies. Numerous inquiries have arisen regarding the circumstances surrounding this civilization's decline and the reasons behind its regression to a primitive and rudimentary lifestyle. Following the fall of Kush, countless inhabitants perished in the conflict, while some were taken captive, and others fled with nothing but their lives—and perhaps their families. Consequently, the survivors dispersed in various directions, resulting in significant social and economic disintegration and fragmentation.*

However, a decline, especially in technology, began during the Nubians' last three kingdoms: Dongola, Makuria, and Alodia. Several factors contributed to the steep decline and shift from an advanced to a "primitive" and rudimentary culture. These factors also culminated in abandoning the civilization that covered the entire African continent by the 16th Century.

A combination of factors, such as the disintegration and fragmentation into tiny units that were not socially and economically robust or viable, led to the abandonment of certain aspects of their civilization and technologies that were not practicable in such smaller units. Over time and after several generations, the remaining elements of their ancient civilization and technologies that were not put into practice were lost. As a result, they adopted new technologies and ways of life that seemed rudimentary but were found practicable in their new environments and contexts. The saying "Necessity is the mother of invention" captures the Nubians' civilizational erosion. Compelled by the urge to survive in their new environments, they switched to rudimentary practices, gradually abandoning their technical expertise.

The expansion of Islam and the Arabization of the region are other factors that contributed to the decline of their civilization. The spread of Islam in the 7th Century significantly influenced the Nubian societies as they were pushed deep into the forested areas to avoid Islamic domination and conversion to Islam. Over time, Makuria and Alodia's political structure weakened, partly due to internal conflicts, the rise of powerful neighboring states, and invasions by external forces, such as the Funj Sultanate in the 16th Century.

These pressures and isolation at specific periods in their lives led to a decline in the complexity of political and military systems. By the 14th Century, many Nubian societies had converted to Islam and adopted Arabic as their primary language. As a result, their indigenous culture and traditions were eroded over time, while many other groups resisted and opted to cross borders and the Nile River into neighboring countries.

The third major factor was a decline in trade due to changes in trade routes and/or going into isolation, which cut them off from competition and eliminated the need for surplus production, leading to a subsistence lifestyle that eventually impacted negatively on both their economic growth and technological advancement. The last factor, likely the least significant since it occurred much later, was the colonial influence of European powers, notably the Ottoman Empire and Egypt. As these foreign nations gained control over the region, Nubia became a marginal

territory. Colonialism further degenerated traditional Nubian governance, political structure, social systems, and infrastructure.

During wars, many skilled experts may have been captured or killed. In their new environment, in the jungle, many technologies used in the mines, irrigation, building pyramids, and factories in Kush were no longer applicable. After a long time (many generations) of disuse, all the skills/technologies that were not in use were passed through generations and became extinct and were lost completely. Few technologies and skills that were found applicable in their new simple life, such as iron smelting to make hoes, spears, and arrows for hunting, continued to be used.

In their new simple life, they moved around more frequently than before. As a result, they did not need permanent buildings such as the pyramids. Instead, they built temporary grass-thatched houses. However, the architecture of their houses remained that of the pyramids - their homes (made from rudimentary materials such as wood, mud, and grass) were characterized by geometrically shaped walls with pyramidal peaked roofs.

After many generations, many advanced technologies were forgotten, and people moved on with what was necessary, such as iron smelting, building temporary houses, livestock keeping, fishing, hunting, and gathering. That is how the Luo-speaking people lost much of their ancient civilization. The societies that emerged later were different from their predecessors in many ways, including holding limited technological advancement, which may be perceived as "primitive" in comparison to the former Kingdom of Kush.

In the face of these events, their ancient contemporaries and trade partners, such as those in the Middle East, Asia, China, and Europe, continued to advance. That explains why Europeans, Asians, Americans and others came as much more civilized and technologically advanced people than Africans.

6

THE MIGRATION OF THE LUO-SPEAKING PEOPLE FROM SOUTH SUDAN IN THE 16TH CENTURY

The migration of the Luo-speaking people, who are believed to be descendants of the ancient Nubians, is a significant chapter in African history. This movement occurred in the 16th Century, as the Luo dispersed from their cradle in South Sudan into various neighboring regions, shaping the demographic and cultural landscapes of East Africa. The reasons for this migration were multifaceted, encompassing environmental, political, and socioeconomic factors.

The Luo trace their origins to the Nile Valley, historically associated with the ancient Nubians, a civilization known for its rich contributions to African heritage. In the 16th Century, environmental changes, such as droughts and diminishing resources, and pressure from external forces, such as the expansion of Islam, likely drove the Luo to seek freedom, fertile lands, and water sources elsewhere. Political instability, including conflicts with neighboring groups, also played a role in propelling this movement.

As they migrated, the Luo-speaking people dispersed and settled in different regions, including present-day Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, Congo, and Tanzania. They integrated with and influenced the local communities they encountered, contributing to developing diverse cultural and linguistic traditions. For instance, the Luo introduced advanced techniques in fishing, iron smelting, and agriculture, skills honed from their life along the Nile Valley. Their rich oral traditions and historical narratives also became integral to East African heritage.

PRESENT LOCATION OF THE LUO-SPEAKING PEOPLE (NUBIANS)

The migration of the Luo-speaking people from South Sudan in the 16th Century illustrates the dynamic interplay between environmental challenges and human adaptability. Through their resilience and resourcefulness, the Luo-speaking people left an indelible mark on East Africa,

linking them to the legacy of the ancient Nubians while forging new identities in their adopted lands. The following sections detail the various Luo groups and their current locations:

THE LUO SPEAKING PEOPLE IN SOUTH SUDAN

The Luo-speaking people who remained in South Sudan after the 16th-century migration are primarily known as the Anuak (Anyway) and the Luo Shilluk (Chollo). They trace their lineage to the ancient Nilotc cultures, including the Nubian Kingdom of Kush, and have maintained their distinct identities despite historical changes. These groups stayed near the Upper Nile and retained many aspects of their original culture and language, even as other Luo-speaking groups dispersed into neighboring countries like Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania.

The Anuak (Anywaa)

The Anuak are primarily found in the southeastern part of South Sudan and the Gambella region of Ethiopia. They inhabit the fertile lands along the Sobat River and its tributaries. Sobat River takes its name from an ancient Nubian capital of the Anuak kingdom called Aloida, the capital was called Sobah. The Anuak have traditionally been agrarian, relying on farming and fishing for sustenance. Their societal organization is centered around clans and communal living, reflecting the broader Luo cultural heritage. They have a deep spiritual connection to their environment, reflected in their rituals and myths emphasizing harmony with nature. Their oral literature is rich with folktales, proverbs, and songs that preserve their history and moral teachings.

The total population of Anyuak found in Sudan, Ethiopia and elsewhere in the worlds is estimated to be around 300,000 people. Many of the Anyuak people now follow Christianity. It is one of the first of the Nilotc groups to become almost entirely Christian, following the Shilluk people.

Notable People:

Akway Ojulu: A respected leader who worked to protect Anuaks' rights and cultural identity.

Omot Obang Olom: A political leader advocating for peace and development in Anuak territories.

Nyikang: A legendary figure in Anuak oral traditions, often regarded as a cultural hero and ancestral leader.

The Luo Shilluk (Chollo)

The Shilluk are one of the most prominent Luo-speaking groups that remained in South Sudan. They established a strong kingdom along the White Nile, particularly in Upper Nile State., with its capital historically located at Fashoda (now Kodok). Fashoda, or Pachora, was an ancient Nubian capital of the kingdom of Nobatia; the Luo Shilluk have kept the name to date.

The Luo Shilluk is the only tribe in South Sudan still having a functional Kingdom organized under a central ruler, the Reth(king), and became a powerful political entity in the region. The Shilluk have a sophisticated hierarchical ruling structure. The King is the ultimate authority; the kingdom is divided into areas overseen by Chiefs, and each village is also overseen by a sub-chief and elders. The Shilluk are known for their strong cultural identity, which includes

unique spiritual traditions and a deep connection to the Nile River. Their main religion is still their traditional belief system, but more Shilluk are becoming open to Christianity. Very few are known to have converted to Islam. They are renowned for their cattle-herding and agricultural practices, growing millet and sorghum as staple crops. The Shilluk have a rich oral tradition, including epic poetry and songs that recount their history and honor their rulers.

According to available information, the Luo Shilluk population in South Sudan is considered a smaller tribe, with estimates placing the total number of Luo Shilluk worldwide at around 518,000 people.

Notable People:

Reth Kwongo Dak Padiet: A modern Shilluk king who has worked to preserve the cultural heritage of the Shilluk people and promote peace in South Sudan.

Dr. Lam Akol Ajawin: A prominent political figure, academic, and diplomat who has served in various leadership roles in Sudan and South Sudan.

James Okech Dak Padiet: A historian and cultural advocate documenting Shilluk traditions.

Peter Nyaba: An academic, politician, and former Minister of Higher Education in South Sudan, recognized for his advocacy for education and development.

Notable Contributions and Legacy

Cultural Preservation: Both the Shilluk and Anuak have preserved their languages, oral traditions, and unique social systems, offering valuable insights into the history and culture of the broader Luo-speaking peoples.

Political Influence: The Shilluk kingdom remains a symbol of resilience and identity for the Shilluk people, while the Anuak have influenced regional politics in the Upper Nile and Gambella regions.

Adaptation and Survival: Despite challenges like colonial rule, civil wars, and displacement, these groups have retained their cultural heritage and adapted to modern changes.

THE LUO SPEAKING PEOPLE IN ETHIOPIA

The Luo-speaking people who migrated to Ethiopia from Sudan after the 16th Century primarily include the Anuak (Anywaa). The Anuak are the most prominent Luo group in Ethiopia, settling mainly in the Gambella region, near the borders with South Sudan. Their migration was part of the broader dispersal of Luo-speaking people from their cradle in South Sudan during this period.

The Anuak in Ethiopia

The Anuak are believed to have migrated to Ethiopia from South Sudan in search of fertile lands and water sources and to escape conflicts and environmental pressures. They settled along the Baro River and its tributaries in western Ethiopia, establishing communities that thrived on

fishing, farming, and cattle rearing. The Gambella region provided a conducive environment for their agricultural practices and supported their riverine way of life.

The Anuak in Ethiopia have maintained much of their linguistic and cultural heritage, preserving their Luo dialect and traditional governance systems based on clan structures. Over time, they adapted to their new environment and interacted with neighboring ethnic groups, such as the Nuer and the Oromo, influencing and being influenced by these communities.

Significance of the Migration

The migration of the Anuak into Ethiopia reflects the adaptability and resilience of the Luo-speaking people. Despite their dispersion, they maintained a distinct identity and played a significant role in the social and economic fabric of the Gambella region. Their presence in Ethiopia also highlights the interconnectedness of the Nile Valley civilizations and the broader East African region.

THE LUO SPEAKING PEOPLE IN CONGO (DRC)

The Luo-speaking people who migrated into the Congo after the 16th Century were primarily the Alur. The Alur settled in areas of the northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly in the Ituri and Haut-Uele provinces, close to the borders of Uganda and South Sudan. This migration was part of the broader dispersal of the Luo-speaking people from their origins in the Nile Valley of South Sudan.

The Alur in the Congo

The Alur established themselves in fertile highlands and plains near Lake Albert and the Semliki River basin, where they adopted a lifestyle that integrated farming, fishing, and herding. They retained their Luo linguistic and cultural identity while adapting to the local environments and interacting with neighboring groups, such as the Lendu, Hema, and other ethnic communities in northeastern Congo.

The Alur developed hierarchical political systems, often centered around kingship, which helped maintain order and unity within their communities. Their governance structure reflected broader Luo traditions but was adapted to the challenges of their new environment. The Alur are known for their rich oral history, which links them to their Luo heritage and the broader Nile Valley civilizations.

According to available statistics, by 2024, the total population of Alur in the DRC stands at 1,437,000 people while the total population worldwide stands at 2,808,000. The Alur are also found in Uganda where their population is estimated to be around 1,371,000.

Significance of the Alur Migration

The Alur exemplifies the adaptability of the Luo-speaking people as they migrated into diverse environments while maintaining their linguistic and cultural identity. Their movement into the Congo enriched the region's demographic and cultural landscape, contributing to the complexity of the Ituri-Haut-Uele area.

While they share roots with other Luo-speaking groups, their history, and experiences highlight how the Luo adapted to and influenced the regions they settled in.

THE LUO SPEAKING PEOPLE IN KENYA

The Luo-speaking people who migrated to Kenya from Sudan after the 16th Century are collectively known as the Joluo. This group is part of the larger Luo ethnic group that originated in the Nile Valley, tracing their ancestry to the ancient Nubians and the Kingdom of Kush. The Luo of Kenya settled in the western part of the country, particularly around Lake Victoria, covering four counties, namely Kisumu, Migori, Homa Bay, and Siaya, where they have profoundly influenced the region's culture, economy, and politics.

The Luo people in Kenya according to the 2019 census was 5,066,966 people. This made them the fourth largest ethnic group in the country, after the Kikuyu, Luhya, and Kalenjin. The total population of Kenyan Luos residing in Kenya and those living elsewhere in the world are estimated at 7.1 Million.

Notable Aspects of the Luo of Kenya

1. Adaptation to the Lake Victoria Basin

The Luo of Kenya settled around Lake Victoria, where they became expert fishermen, farmers, and herders. Their proximity to the lake shaped their economy and culture, making fishing a significant livelihood. They introduced advanced fishing techniques and developed trade networks, exchanging fish and agricultural products with neighboring communities.

2. Language and Cultural Identity

The Luo of Kenya have retained their language, Dholuo, a key identity marker. It belongs to the Nilo-Saharan language family. They preserved their oral traditions, including "Luo kit gi timbegi," storytelling, proverbs, and songs and music accompanied by instruments such as Orutu, Nyatiti, Ohangla, Asilili, and Onanda, which link them to their historical roots and reinforce communal values. The Ramogi dance is a famous cultural expression among the Luo.

3. Social and Political Organization

The Luo of Kenya traditionally organized their society around clans, with leadership provided by elders, and the highest cultural leader is Ker. This system emphasized consensus and communal decision-making. Over time, they adapted to modern political systems and have produced influential leaders, such as Tom Mboya, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, and Raila A. Odinga, a former Prime Minister of Kenya, who have played pivotal roles in Kenya's national politics. Other notable leaders include Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o, the governor of Kisumu County; James Orengo, the governor of Siaya County; Grace Ogot, Phebie Asiyo, and Gladys Wanga, the governors of Homabay County.

4. Cultural Contributions

The Luo are renowned for their rich cultural expressions, including music, dance, and art. Their traditional instruments, such as the nyatiti (a lyre), Orutu, and Onanda, and their vibrant dances, like the Ramogi dance for men and Dudu dance for women, are celebrated across East Africa.

Their unique burial and mourning practices, emphasizing respect for ancestors and praise for the dead over their past deeds to the community, are deeply rooted in their historical traditions. They are known for their bravery and hard political stance in the face of dictatorial regimes.

5. Resilience and Adaptability

The Luo adapted to the changing socio-political landscape of Kenya while maintaining their distinct identity.

6. Education and Modernization:

The Luo of Kenya have a strong tradition of valuing education, which has propelled many of them into influential roles in Kenya's social, political, and economic spheres. They have embraced education and modernization, with many pursuing higher education and excelling in various professions, including engineering, medicine, law, and academia. Luos have produced some of the most brilliant people in Kenya who have excelled in multiple fields. Luo of Kenya has embraced modernization, as seen in building modern houses in palatial homes with sophisticated technologies deep in their rural villages.

Notable People from the Luo in Kenya

The Luos in Kenya produced some of the most brilliant people in Kenyan history. They have excelled in various fields, including academia, engineering, medicine, law, and literature.

1. Notable people in politics and public service include:

a) *Jaramogi Oginga Odinga*: A key leader in Kenya's struggle for independence and the country's first Vice President. He was a champion of African socialism and a founding father of Kenya's political landscape. He was the father of Raila Amolo Odinga.

b) *Raila Amolo Odinga*: A prominent political figure and opposition leader in Kenya. Raila has served as Prime Minister and remains a central figure in the country's politics.

c) *Tom Mboya*: A visionary trade unionist and politician, Mboya played a significant role in Kenya's independence movement and post-independence economic planning. He is credited with contributing to the writing of the first Kenyan Constitution.

d) *Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o*: Nyong'o comes from a Luo sub-clan called JoSeme Kodongo in Kisumu County, from a clan with a long lineage of chiefs (Ruoth) who ruled Seme (the present-day Seme sub-county) for more than half century. He is a renowned academic and politician, currently serving as the Governor of Kisumu County (2017 – 2027). He is also the father of Oscar-winning actress Lupita Nyong'o. Nyong'o is one of the most brilliant ministers of economic planning Kenya ever had.

2. In academia, we have people like *Prof. David P. S. Waswo* (1923 – 2014), a Kenyan zoologist, conservationist, and university administrator. *Prof. Bothwell Allan Ogot* (1929-2025) was a Kenyan historian and eminent African scholar. *Prof. Walter E.O. Ochoro* (1946 - 2019) was a Kenyan economist, worked in the Department of Economics at the University of Nairobi for over 35 years. *Prof. Ominde Hongo Simeon* was one of the world-renowned authorities in Geography. He was the

first Indigenous professor at the University of East Africa. In 1976, he founded the Population Studies and Research Institute. Prof. Ochieng Obado was a distinguished professor in the Department of Forestry at Moi University and had one of the most successful tenures as a National Forest Conservator in Kenya.

3. In the field of Engineering, Science, and Technology, we have:

a) *Eng. Philip Okundi*: A respected engineer and politician, Okundi served as the Managing Director of the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) and Chairman of the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK). He was instrumental in advancing Kenya's telecommunications sector.

b) *Eng. Odero Okumu*: was one of the early brilliant telecommunication engineers who helped Telkom Kenya establish the telecommunication infrastructure.

c) *Prof. Thomas Odhiambo*: He was a renowned scientist and founder of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), a globally renowned research institute based in Nairobi. He advocated using science to address agricultural and environmental challenges in Africa.

d) *Dr. Achieng' Ojwang'*: A molecular biologist known for his groundbreaking work in genetics and disease control, particularly in malaria and HIV research.

e) *Prof. Jaconiah Oliver Achola Ndinya (1946 - 2010)*: He was a microbiologist and professor at the University of Nairobi. He was one of the pioneer HIV/AIDS researchers in Kenya. Was involved in the HIV Vaccine research. He published over 153 publications including books and Journals.

Comparison with Other Luo Groups

Compared to other Luo groups in the region, the Luo of Kenya have the highest population and had greater exposure to colonial and post-colonial systems, which have impacted them positively and negatively and influenced their integration into national politics and modernization efforts.

One notable characteristic of Luos in Kenya that dates back more than 2000 years to their ancient Nubian history is strong resistance to all forms of oppression and external domination. An important characteristic of Luo men is that they are never submissive, if he is too submissive he is not a pure Luo. It is naturally impossible to unjustly or forcefully rule the Luos-in-Kenya politically, economically, or otherwise; they are always ready to work together on equal terms with any administration. They are always open to fair competition with anyone and always prepared to accept a deserving win and readily reject undeserving win. This has been seen severally in Kenyan general elections. Their contribution in this space especially in defending the constitution has been recognized by all Kenyan tribes.

Historical Significance

The migration of the Luo into Kenya and their subsequent settlement around Lake Victoria mark an essential phase in the dispersal of the Luo-speaking people. Their ability to adapt to new environments while preserving their cultural heritage showcases their resilience and endu-

ring connection to their Nilotc roots. Today, the Luo of Kenya are vital to the country's cultural and political fabric, lending their ancient Nubian heritage to modern-day Kenya and contributing to politics and national development.

THE LUO SPEAKING PEOPLE IN UGANDA

The migration of the Luo-speaking people from Sudan into Uganda after the 16th century marked a significant phase in the history of East Africa. These groups, who trace their roots to the ancient Nubians and the Kingdom of Kush, dispersed across northern and eastern Uganda, each carving out distinct identities while retaining their Luo heritage. The major Luo-speaking groups in Uganda include the Acholi, Alur, Langi (Lango), and Jopadhola. Each group has contributed uniquely to Uganda's cultural, political, and socioeconomic landscape.

The Acholi People

The Acholi settled in northern Uganda (found on both sides of the border between Uganda and South Sudan), particularly in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts. They established a chiefdom-based governance system, with leaders called Rwot, who managed clans and resolved disputes. The Acholi are renowned for their rich oral traditions, including folklore, music, and the bowl dance.

According to publicly available data, the Acholi people in Uganda are estimated to number around 1.4 million individuals, primarily residing in the northern districts of Kitgum, Pader, and Gulu. Their total population including Acholi in Uganda, South Sudan and elsewhere in the world is estimated at about 2,460,000 people.

Notable People from the Acholi

Alice Lakwena: Founder of the Holy Spirit Movement, blending spirituality with rebellion in the 1980s.

Joseph Kony: Leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), infamous for its insurgency in the region.

Norbert Mao: Politician and former leader of the Democratic Party in Uganda.

The Alur

The Alur migrated westward, settling in northwestern Uganda and parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly near Lake Albert and the Albert Nile. They maintained a centralized kingship system, with their rulers, Rwoth, reflecting their Luo heritage. The Alur are skilled fishermen and farmers, and their culture is deeply intertwined with the Nile and Lake Albert.

According to publicly available statistics, the Alur people in Uganda have a population of approximately 1,371,000, primarily residing in the Nebbi, Zombo, Pakwach, and Arua districts. The total population of Alur people worldwide stands at 2,808,000.

Notable People from the Alur

Okot p'Bitek: Celebrated poet and author of Song of Lawino, a critique of colonial influences on African culture.

Dr. Akena Adoko: A lawyer and scholar who contributed immensely to Uganda's academic and legal systems.

Philip Ogal: A respected cultural leader advocating for Alur heritage preservation.

The Langi (Lango) People

The Langi, who settled in central northern Uganda, are pastoralists and agriculturalists. Unlike the Acholi and Alur, the Langi are only found in Uganda, they developed a more egalitarian and clan-based governance system. They are known for their resilience and adaptability, maintaining their distinct identity while blending with other Ugandan cultures.

According to available data, the Langi also sometimes called "Lango," people in Uganda and the rest of the world are estimated to have a population of approximately 3,245,000 people, residing primarily in the Lango sub-region, north of Lake Kyoga; they are considered one of the major ethnic groups in Uganda. They are predominantly Christians. The primary religion practiced by the Langi is Roman Catholicism.

Notable People from the Langi

Apollo Milton Obote: Uganda's first Prime Minister and second President, was instrumental in the country's independence and early governance.

Dr. Ben Kiwanuka Okech: Advocate for education and healthcare development in Lango.

Rebecca Amuge Otengo: A politician and former State Minister for Northern Uganda Reconstruction.

The Jopadhola

The Jopadhola, also known as Adhola, settled in eastern Uganda, particularly in Tororo District. They are primarily agriculturalists, cultivating crops like millet and cassava. Their culture reflects their Luo roots but has also been influenced by neighboring Bantu communities. The Jopadhola emphasize clan unity and communal cooperation.

The Adhola people in Uganda are also called the Badama People, they are estimated around 671,000 people. They are mainly Christians (95%).

Notable People from the Jopadhola

James Alfred Obita: A prominent political figure in Uganda's opposition during the 1980s.
George William Nyombi Thembo: Politician and former State Minister for ICT.

Patricia Ojara: A renowned educator and women's rights advocate.

Notable Contributions and Legacy

These Luo-speaking groups brought advanced knowledge of governance, agriculture, and ironworking, contributing to Uganda's cultural and economic growth. Their distinct traditions, such as the Acholi's dances and the Alur's music, continue to enrich the country's cultural heritage. Politically, individuals like Apollo Milton Obote and Norbert Mao have played pivotal roles in shaping Uganda's history.

Despite facing challenges, these groups have demonstrated resilience, preserved their cultural identity, and adapted to modern changes. Their migration and settlement in Uganda remain a testament to the Luo people's enduring legacy across East Africa.

THE LUO SPEAKING PEOPLE IN TANZANIA

The Luo-speaking people who migrated to Tanzania from Sudan after the 16th century primarily belong to the Luo of the Mara Region, commonly called the Luo-Abasuba. This migration was part of the more considerable dispersal of Luo-speaking communities across East Africa, with some moving southward into the Lake Victoria Basin. The Luo in Tanzania settled in the Mara Region near Lake Victoria after passing through Uganda and into Kenya before crossing to Tanzania. Along the way, they interacted with neighboring Bantu-speaking communities, which shaped their identity and heavily impacted their language. This has brought a lot of confusion making people to think that they have Bantu ancestry.

According to available information, the Abasuba people in Tanzania, also known as the Suba community, are primarily concentrated in the Ranya District of the Mara Region, with an estimated population of around 80,000 individuals; they speak mutually intelligible varieties of the Suba language, with groups like the Hacha, Kine, Rieri, Simbiti, Surwa, and Sweta being considered part of the Suba community in Tanzania.

The Luo Abasuma people are also found in Kenya where there is a bigger community, according to 2019 census, their population was estimated to be around 157,787 people. They migrated to Kenya from Uganda and settled on the two Lake Victoria islands of Rusinga and Mfangano, others also settled on the mainland areas including Gembe, Gwassi, Kaksingri of Suba South and Migori and are believed to be the last Luo clan to have settled in Kenya from Uganda. In total the Luo Abasuba People in East Africa and the rest of the world are estimated to be around 250,000 people.

Notable Characteristics of the Luo in Tanzania

Integration with Local Communities: The Luo in Tanzania, particularly the Abasuba subgroup, intermarried with Bantu-speaking groups such as the Kuria and Zanaki, resulting in a unique cultural blend. Despite this integration, they retained elements of their Luo heritage, including aspects of language, naming conventions, and cultural practices.

Economic Activities: The Luo in Tanzania were traditionally fishermen, utilizing the rich resources of Lake Victoria for sustenance and trade. They also engaged in small-scale farming, cultivating crops like millet, sorghum, and cassava and keeping cattle.

Language and Identity: Over time, the Luo in Tanzania adopted Kiswahili as the country's national language and some Bantu dialects while preserving certain Luo words and phrases, maintaining a connection to their roots. Their identity reflects a hybrid of Luo and Bantu cultural elements. This has confused many observers into thinking that they were originally Bantus who became assimilated into the Luo, but it's the other way around.

Social Organization: Like other Luo-speaking groups, the Luo in Tanzania maintained a clan-based system emphasizing communal living and respect for elders. Leadership within the community was traditionally based on wisdom and consensus rather than centralized kingship.

Notable People from the Luo in Tanzania

Joseph Nyerere: A brother of Julius Nyerere (Tanzania's founding father who was also a Luo), Joseph was a cultural advocate and a key figure in preserving the heritage of the Luo Abasuba in Tanzania.

Grace Akech Onyango: An influential cultural leader and advocate for girls' education in the Mara Region, helping to bridge traditional values with modern aspirations.

Samuel Nyangena: A historian and writer who documented the interactions between the Luo-Abasuba and other ethnic groups in Tanzania, emphasizing their contributions to regional history.

Comparison with Other Luo Groups

Unlike the Luo in Kenya and Uganda, who maintained stronger ties to their original Luo language and traditions, the Luo in Tanzania experienced more linguistic and cultural assimilation due to prolonged interactions with Bantu-speaking communities. While other Luo groups developed centralized leadership systems (e.g., the Acholi and Alur), the Luo in Tanzania favored egalitarian clan-based governance.

Legacy of the Luo in Tanzania

The Luo-Abasuba have significantly influenced the Mara Region's culture, particularly in fishing, farming, and traditional music and arts. Their ability to integrate while preserving key aspects of their identity reflects their resilience and adaptability. Today, they are recognized as an essential part of Tanzania's multicultural fabric, contributing to the nation's unity in diversity.

ORIGIN OF RACES AND ETHNICITY

Why, Then, Are We So Different – Genetically and Physically?

We all descended from the same father, Noah; today, we belong to varying races across and within the continents.

Why? How? What Happened?

The diversity of human races and ethnicities emanates from biological and historical factors. Genetic variation is one of the leading determinants of multiracial diversity. While all humans are descendants of common ancestors such as Noah and his sons, genetic variation occurs naturally over time due to mutations and genetic recombination. This variation leads to differences in physical appearance, such as skin color, facial features, and other traits. In population gene-

tics, the founder effect refers to the loss of genetic variation when a small number of individuals from a larger population establish a new population.

Ernst Mayr was the first scientist to explain this phenomenon in 1942, using existing theoretical work by experts such as Sewall Wright. As a result of the loss of genetic variation, the new population groups may be distinctively different, both genetically (genetic makeup) and phenotypically (physical appearance), from the parent population from which they came or derived. In extreme cases, the founder effect is thought to lead to new species' speciation and subsequent evolution.

This, combined with migration and climatic differences, may explain the significant variations in physical characteristics between Semites, Hamites, and the Josephites as we know them today. The same applies to the slight variations identifiable within and between various Nubian or Luo-speaking people. Human history is marked by migrations, conquests, trade, and intermixing between different populations.

These interactions have contributed to blending genetic traits and creating new populations with diverse characteristics. Geographic isolation and adaptation are other essential factors that shape racial and ethnic diversity. As human populations migrated to different parts of the world, they encountered different environmental conditions (climate, diet, pathogens), leading to varied adaptations. Over many generations, these adaptations influenced the physical characteristics of various populations. Cultural and social factors significantly impact the establishment of diversity. Human societies have developed unique physical features, cultures, languages, and social structures throughout history. Cultural factors also created differences in how people identified themselves and how others perceived them. The idea or the concept of race, tribe, or ethnicity, however, are social constructs created by people themselves. The concept of race as we understand it today is essentially a social construct shaped by historical, political, and economic factors probably to achieve specific malicious objectives. It has no strict biological basis, as genetic variation exists within and across traditional racial categories.

One of the reasons for including biblical and hardcore ancient history was to demonstrate that, yes, the Nubians/Luo-speaking people are a distinct part of Noah's more prominent family. The biblical history further reveals that they lived and ruled in Egypt before migrating through Sudan to Bar El Ghazel. After abandoning what was considered the greatest civilization in African history, they eventually became fragmented into clans.

From when the Nubians left Egypt to when they crossed the Nile and left South Sudan, they were not called LUOs. It was also essential to contextualize the Nubians' migration as a unit and connect it with all the tribal groupings that emerged after the disintegration of their Nubian ancestry. While all humans share a common ancestry, the diversity of races and ethnicities we observe today results from a complex interplay of genetic, environmental, historical, and social factors over thousands of years. These factors have contributed to the rich tapestry of worldwide human diversity.

IMPORTANT LUO CHARACTERISTICS IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Throughout the Nubians' history, from the time of the Kushite Dynasty in Egypt, they have exhibited specific characteristics that set them apart from all other Hamites. Similar cultural characteristics are observed among all the Luo-speaking people today, most of the characteristics have been passed through generations for thousands of years.

One notable characteristic is that throughout history, the Nubians have consistently rejected foreign rule, setting themselves apart from their northern counterparts, who often accepted it. Whenever their kingdoms were defeated, they never became subjects. Instead, they would retreat as a unit and reunite to form a successor kingdom, continuing with self-rule.

The Kushites moved south and established the Napata Kingdom and after the fall of Napata, they migrated further south and established a new kingdom known as the Kush Kingdom, with its capital at Meroe. Following the collapse of Meroe, they moved even further south and formed the kingdoms of Nobatia, Makuria, and, finally, Alodia. Their eventual disintegration into smaller groups after the fall of Alodia was actually to resist the Islamic domination, which had gone too deep into the south.

In contrast, after the Kushite dynasty in Egypt ended and their final exit from Egypt, the remaining parts of Egypt came under the control of various successive foreign powers, including the Persians, Macedonians, Greeks, Romans, and lastly Arabs who crossed from the Arabian Peninsula. The kingdom of Kush had a very elaborate justice system with a clear concept of truth, balance, order, harmony, law, morality, and the personification of the idea of one God who set the order of the universe from chaos at the moment of creation. All Luo-speaking people have a strict moral code called "kitwa or kithmewa." The Luo in Kenya call it "kitwa gi timbewa"; this

is a general code guiding everyone at the societal level, just like it happened in Meroe. In actual fact it was an unwritten constitution just like the Common Law of England which is also widely known as unwritten constitution.

The Luo-speaking people in Eastern Africa were among the communities that mounted the strongest resistance to colonization and foreign domination. The Luo people have permanently moved south to demonstrate unity, togetherness, and oneness. Throughout history, the Kushites have carried their civilization, culture, and traditions along. As a result, thousands of years later, they still share a common culture, language, traditions, and values. It was a characteristic of unity, togetherness, and oneness among the Luo people.

To earn respect and honor among the Luo people, men and women had to possess specific attributes passed down through generations since ancient times. These traits include truthfulness, trustworthiness, fidelity, honesty, courage, a competitive spirit, fairness, respectfulness, and a love for knowledge.

Additionally, Nubians never practiced slavery because their culture highly valued a passion for the well-being of everyone, leaving no room for such practices. This explains why they are good managers and especially good at human resources management; they cherish hard work.

Corruption, dishonesty, and lack of mutual respect were shunned. The noble behaviors that made the Luos distinct from other communities are waning rapidly. Until very recently (1960s/70s) the Luos in public service openly rejected corruption, this is changing very rapidly – unfortunately. Shortly, the admirable norms and conduct of the Luo communities may become unrecognizable among other cultures. Luo leaders worldwide should actively encourage and conserve these positive traits to prevent further weakening of their culture, particularly among the younger generation. Most importantly, they should emphasize their strengths in good governance, leadership, and the management of public affairs for the common good.

Lastly, the Nubians demonstrated remarkable resilience; in the face of numerous disruptions, they survived and remained distinct and still share common culture, language and values. It is doubtful that their historical declines were due to mismanagement or laziness. Instead, they were likely weakened or forced to relocate mostly due to overwhelming external pressures beyond their control.

THE POSITION OF ANCIENT NUBIAN QUORE (LUO KER/ RUOTH)

In ancient Nubian kingdoms, especially the Kingdom of Kush, selecting a king was based on a blend of hereditary principles, military prowess, and religious competence. These three fundamental criteria have remained unchanged among the Luos into the 21st century.

Hereditary Lineage

Royal succession in ancient Nubia was often based on a patrilineal system, where kingship was passed down through the male bloodline. However, there were rare instances where the succession could follow a matrilineal system, particularly in cases where the king's son was not seen as capable or legitimate.

The royal family-maintained power through a strong bloodline, and the king's closest relatives, especially the sons of queens, were seen as potential heirs. This was the essence of the hereditary system, whose primary function was to make kings. As the Luo saying goes, "Kings are made, not born." This is why kingmakers were integral to the royal family; they prepared the king's sons for kingship. From a young age, the king's sons had to be groomed to be kings. Kingmakers were required to teach them everything they needed to know about being a victorious king: to bring them up in an environment conducive to making an all-rounded future king. The most common practice involved members of the royal family initiating the selection process upon the king's death.

Divine Right and Religious Authority

Like many ancient African kingdoms, Nubian kings were seen as divine figures, often associated with gods such as Amun and Atum. The king's role was not only political but also religious. He was seen as the earthly intermediary between the gods and the people. This had to be seen during selection or coronation.

Selection Process

The selection process for kingship was not permanently fixed. In some cases, it involved councils of nobles or priests who would determine the next ruler; in such cases, they were required to be people of high level of honesty, dignity, and strong religious background. Selection was considered based on the candidate's qualities, such as leadership ability, military strength, wisdom, and connections to the gods. This divine connection played a significant role in the king's selection process, during the coronation of a new king, and in lending legitimacy to the king's rule. Therefore, any sons from the royal family who were considered divinely favored or had strong religious ties could be more likely to be chosen as a king. The gods could pick anyone to be king, so all sons were required to grow up in the king's way. The selection and coronation of a new king had to be flawless, and any slight hitch could lead to the reselection of another king. Any slight hitch was believed to signal that the gods were not happy with the selection, and a new selection had to be made.

Military and Political Factors

Besides familial and divine considerations, military success was essential in selecting a king. A ruler had to demonstrate a strong personality and ability to defend and expand the kingdom. Military leaders could sometimes claim the throne with sufficient support from the army or key nobles.

Overall, becoming a king in the ancient Nubian kingdoms required a combination of divine favor, military skill, political acumen, and familial ties. While the kingship was often hereditary, the selection methods could be flexible, allowing for adaptation to changing circumstances within the kingdom. Among all the Luo-speaking people, Quore or Ker's position was and still is the highest and most respected in the land. In the 21st century whether it's done through selection or election, the coronation process is still very divine and must be completely flawless. Even the candidate nocking his left leg on a stone during coronation process is not acceptable.

THE ROLE OF KER OR RUOTH (QUORE/KING) IN THE 21ST CENTURY: BALANCING TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Most Luo-speaking communities still organize themselves around some centralized leadership system called Ruoth/Reth/Rwot or Ker. It is generally a system dating back to their time in the Kingdom of Kush, where the position was held by Quore (King).

Today, all countries are led by democratically elected governments to which all citizens subscribe. However, Luo communities still need good guidance on cultural and development matters affecting local communities everywhere, which is why the positions have been maintained in one way or another, depending on the country's laws and regulations. In the 21st Century, the role of Ker/Ruoth, whichever applies, is evolving as societies transition from traditional governance structures to more modern, democratic systems.

The position can remain a vital institution for communities like the Luo-speaking people, whose history is deeply rooted in the centralized governance systems exemplified by the ancient Kingdom of Kush under leaders like Quore. Nevertheless, its relevance will depend on how it adapts to contemporary challenges and opportunities.

Here are some possible roles or functions of the Quore/Ker/Ruoth in the 21st Century.

PRESERVATION OF CULTURE AND IDENTITY

- One of the most critical roles of a Ker/Ruoth in the modern era is to act as a custodian of cultural heritage. In a rapidly globalizing world, many traditional practices, languages, and customs face the threat of erosion.

The office of Ker/Ruoth (Quore) can:

- Promote preserving and teaching traditional languages, music, art, and folklore. Among the Luo in Kenya, the Dholuo language is dying slowly, and most of the younger generation in the rural areas, especially those under 20 years of age, do not speak fluent Dholuo; Kiswahili is taking root fast.
- Serve as a unifying symbol of identity, connecting people to their historical roots while inspiring pride in their heritage.
- Lead initiatives to document and archive traditional knowledge for future generations.
- Be at the forefront of discouraging outdated, retrogressive, and harmful cultural practices while encouraging the adoption of progressive changes in lifestyle and ways of life, including technology.

MEDIATION AND LEADERSHIP

While such cultural leaders as Ker or Ruoth (Chiefs of Kings) of the 21st Century may no longer wield absolute political power, they can play an essential role as mediators and moral leaders, for instance:

- Acting as impartial arbiters in resolving conflicts within or between communities, helping to maintain social harmony, especially touching on communal boundaries and resources.
- Settling land disputes, overseeing cultural practices, and addressing intergenerational challenges.

- Offering moral leadership by promoting values like integrity, respect, and communal responsibility.
- It may provide political advisory, leadership, or guidance, especially when an entire community is at a political crossroads.
- Organizing annual cultural festivals to promote unity and encourage the preservation of progressive cultural practices and traditions.

ADVOCACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Modern Ker or Ruoth can use their positions to advocate for social and economic development that targets certain geographical areas or socioeconomic sectors within their communities in high-level meetings with policy decision-makers in government. They can:

- Partner with governments, non-governmental organizations, and international bodies to bring resources and opportunities to their communities.
- Advocate for education, healthcare, and infrastructure development while ensuring that these initiatives respect cultural values.
- Use their influence to promote environmental conservation, especially in regions dependent on natural resources. Lake Victoria is the largest natural freshwater body for Luo in Kenya. As such, ensuring responsible exploitation should be a primary concern of all Ker and Ruodhi around the Lake. Work with relevant Government departments to discourage overexploitation or irresponsible fishing methods.

Symbol of Continuity in a Changing World

In rapidly changing world, Ker or Ruoth can symbolize stability and continuity. They remind their people of shared history and traditions while encouraging resilience and adaptability. By embodying tradition and progress, they can inspire their communities to thrive in the modern world without losing their cultural essence.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Adapting the role of Ker or Ruoth in the 21st Century is not without challenges:

- Ker or Ruoth must navigate the tension between traditional authority and the modern democratic governance system, ensuring they complement rather than conflict with elected leaders.
- They must embrace technology and globalization to remain relevant while resisting the loss of their cultural identity.
- In a world where resources are limited, Ker or Ruoth must always be careful to avoid corrupt practices that can bring down the dignity of his position.
- In cases where Ker/Ruoth is appointed or elected for a full-time role or just ceremonial, age is important. In as much as the position doesn't befit a young person, in a fast-moving world such as now, a significantly older adult who cannot read and respond to SMS or one who needs a hearing aid to use a phone - is equally unfit. A full-time role may also require one past the age of employment.

Opportunities exist for kings to redefine their roles as cultural ambassadors, mediators, and advocates for sustainable development, ensuring their communities prosper while staying true to their roots or cultural identity.

Conclusion

The role of a Ker or Ruoth in the 21st Century is no longer about wielding absolute power but about leading with wisdom, humility, and vision. By acting as cultural custodians, moral leaders, and advocates for development, the position of Ker can remain relevant and impactful, helping their people navigate the challenges of the modern world while preserving their identity and heritage. The legacy of leaders like Quore from the Kingdom of Kush, who led the kingdom to the top of the world, can serve as a reminder of the power of centralized leadership rooted in cultural pride and unity. This legacy can still inspire and guide the Luo nation today.

Last but not least, the position must not be seen by the holders as a bridge to amass wealth, this can create a loophole for corrupt practices within the office.

All the above roles should be applicable to all holders of cultural positions below Ker/Ruoth.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD KER IN THE 21ST CENTURY

In the ancient Kush culture, especially the Kush Kingdom, Quore was made, not born; that is why all sons of a King were brought up in the way of a king by the Kingmakers. Sons of Kings were never brought up by their mothers. When they came of age, and the King needed to hand over power, he chose the best one for a King, put his blessing on him (Crowned Prince), and left the rest for the gods.

In the 21st Century, clans with a hereditary Kingship system may have an easier way of selecting a king – for they shall have made them. Still, in cases where Ker or Ruoth is either appointed or elected, there are some bare/minimum qualities that one should have to befit the position and role of the office. In the 21st Century, a Luo Ker/Ruoth (king) or leader would embody traditional values and modern leadership qualities to remain relevant and practical.

Here are some key attributes such a leader might possess:

1. *Wisdom and Knowledge:* The Ker/Ruoth is expected to be wise, well-versed in Luo customs (kitwa gi timbewa), and knowledgeable about contemporary community issues, such as education, technology, and national/global politics. Wisdom comes from God, and the Ker/Ruoth must be a believer in God. Luos were never atheists.
2. *Charisma and Vision:* A modern Ker/Ruoth must be charismatic and visionary, inspiring trust and hope in their people while guiding them toward socioeconomic progress.
3. *Commitment to Cultural Heritage:* Preserving and promoting Luo traditions, language, and cultural practices would remain central to the Ker/Ruoth's role, ensuring modernization—especially progressive ones, do not erode them. This must not be in the lips but in practice.
4. *Integrity, Justice, and Truthful:* The Ker/Ruoth should demonstrate fairness, transparency, and a strong moral compass, ensuring justice is served and promoting harmony within the community. There should be one whose words carry the qualities of a currency and have no tolerance for vices such as corruption, clannism/nepotism.
5. *Adaptability and Progressiveness:* In the 21st Century, the Ruoth must balance tradition with modernity, embracing technological advancements, education, and innovation while respecting cultural norms.

6. *Mediator and Diplomat*: The Ker/Ruoth should be able to act as a unifying figure, especially in resolving conflicts within the community and forging strong relationships with other communities and governments.
7. *Advocate for Education and Development*: A modern Ker/Ruoth would champion education, healthcare, infrastructure, and economic opportunities, ensuring the community thrives in the contemporary world.
8. *Environmental Stewardship*: Given the Luo people's connection to water and nature, the Ker/Ruoth should advocate for sustainable environmental practices to protect resources like Lake Victoria, rivers, forests, and other surrounding ecosystems.
9. *Inclusivity and Gender Sensitivity*: The Ker/Ruoth must promote inclusivity, ensuring that all community members, regardless of gender, age, social, or economic status, are valued and have a voice in decision-making.
10. *Connection to the People*: A 21st -century Ker/Ruoth would maintain close ties to its people, understand their needs and aspirations, and be approachable and empathetic.
11. *Global Outlook*: Here, a considerable amount of education is critical, as is a strong command of at least the English language. While deeply rooted in Luo culture, going forward into the 22nd Century, the Ker/Ruoth must also have a global perspective, fostering opportunities for the community in trade, partnerships, and cultural exchange worldwide.
12. *Spiritual Guidance*: As a cultural and sometimes spiritual figure, the Ker/Ruoth would uphold moral and spiritual values, guiding the community toward unity and peace. Ker/Ruoth must believe in God since most Luo-speaking people converted to either Christianity or Islam and have remained so since the 15th Century. Luos are not atheists.
13. *Strong Personality and Courageous*: Last but not least, Strong personality and courage were the most important qualities for Kings, especially when military strength was critical. These qualities are important in a world where competition for resources is very stiff. You need the courage to represent your people effectively, especially when demanding justice and fairness.
These qualities reflect the dual demands of upholding tradition while navigating the complexities of modern leadership. A successful Luo Ker/Ruoth in the 21st Century would seamlessly integrate these aspects to lead effectively.
14. *Age*: To effectively deliver on the roles of Ker/Ruoth, the entry point in terms of age is very critical. He must be old enough to lead elders – at bare minimum and young enough to keep pace with the fast-moving world.

All the above qualities should be applicable to all holders of cultural positions below Ker/Ruot.

COMMON WORDS & NAMES AMONG ALL LUO-SPEAKING PEOPLE

The Luo-speaking people share linguistic ties that trace back to their origins in the ancient Nubian Kingdom of Kush, and some words have persisted across time and regions. These words often reflect their shared cultural heritage, including governance, kinship, spirituality, and daily life.

Here are some examples of words that have remained common among Luo-speaking people and likely date back to their Kushite roots:

COMMON WORDS

Reth/Ruoth/Rwot: This term means a king or ruler. It is used among the Shilluk (Chollo) and Luos in Kenya. The Reth version of the word belongs to the Shilluk, Ruoth is for the Luo in Kenya, which refers to the chiefs, and Rwot is for king among the Acholi. It reflects their long-standing tradition of centralized leadership, which may have roots in Kushite governance systems from ancient times.

Chieng': Means the Sun or a bright day. The term is widely used among Luo communities, such as the Luo of Kenya and the Alur, to refer to the sun or a bright day. It symbolizes the importance of time and nature in their daily lives.

Kuon: This is basically bread, specifically a staple food made from grains like millet or sorghum. Today, Luo in Kenya mainly uses corn flour to make kuon, a bread-like food that accompanies vegetable or meat stews. It is common across Luo groups; this word reflects the agricultural practices inherited from their ancestors, including those in the fertile lands of Kush.

Nyik or Nyako: Meaning a Girl or daughter. This term is shared among many Luo-speaking groups, illustrating the gender for continuity in kinship terminology.

Dhala/Dala: Means Clan or lineage. Luo communities use this term to identify family or ancestral lineage, which is crucial in preserving their cultural identity. The Luo in Kenya use the term Dala to mean home, the smallest unit of a clan after Ot, which means a house.

Pi: Is Water. This is a core word across all Luo-speaking groups, reflecting their standard historical connection to rivers, especially the Nile, central to the Kushite civilization.

Jo/Ja: This means people or a community. Often used as a prefix (e.g., Joka or Jo-cholla), this term identifies a group of people belonging to a place, lineage, or tribe. This communal identity is a hallmark of Nubian culture.

Kwe: Meaning peace or harmony. The term symbolizes the value placed on social harmony, a concept deeply rooted in ancient Kushite and Luo traditions. Kwe was a fundamental principle of peace and harmony in the Meroe.

Cultural Significance of the Common Words

These shared words underscore the continuity of linguistic and cultural traditions among the

Luo-speaking people, linking them to their origins in the Nubian Kingdom of Kush. These terms are not just linguistic relics but also encapsulate the values, governance systems, and ways of life passed down through generations. The enduring presence of these words highlights the resilience and adaptability of the Luo language and Nubian culture, even as its speakers migrated and adapted to new environments across Africa.

COMMON NAMES

Specific names are commonly shared among the Luo-speaking people across Uganda, South Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Congo due to their linguistic, cultural, and historical connections. These names often carry significant meanings rooted in nature, life circumstances, or ancestral beliefs. Below are some familiar names and their meanings:

Nature and Environment-Inspired Names

Achieng' for a girl and *Ochieng* for a boy: "Born during daylight" or "Sunshine."

Akoth for a girl and *Okoth* for a boy: "Born during the rainy season or rainfall."

Atieno for a girl and *Otieno* for a boy: "Born at night."

Amondi for a girl and *Omondi* for a boy: "Born early in the morning."

Anyango for a girl and *Onyango* for a boy: "Born between late morning and early afternoon or just in the afternoon."

Akello for a girl and *Okello* for a boy: "Born after a long journey." For Luo of Kenya, it is given to a child born after twins.

Adhiambo for a girl and *Odhiambo* for a boy: "Born in the evening."

Names Reflecting Life Circumstances

Ajwang' for a girl and *Ojwang'* for a boy: "Born during a difficult time or struggle, especially born after the father's death."

Akech for a girl and *Okech* for a boy: "Born during famine or hardship."

Abiero for a girl and *Obiero* for a boy: "Firstborn of a father's father's younger wife."

Akeyo for a girl and *Obiero* for a boy: "Born during harvest time."

Ayoo for a girl and *Oyoo* for a boy: – "One who brings joy or happiness."

Ancestral and Spiritual Names

Nyakango: A name linked to ancestral spirits or a historical figure in Luo mythology.

Nyandeng: "Gift of the gods" or "blessed one."

Ongwen: "White creature" or "child born pale," symbolizing purity or uniqueness.

Nyikwach: "Leopard," symbolizing bravery and strength.

Lakwena: A messenger or "one sent by the spirits."

Regional Variations

While many names are shared across regions, slight variations exist in pronunciation and spelling:

Uganda: (Acholi, Alur, and Jonam Luo): Opiyo (firstborn twin), Odongo (second twin), Olara (peaceful), Adong (a response to something profound).

South Sudan: (Shilluk, Anuak): Nyikang (ancestral hero), Dak (one who waits or is patient), Oyath (a protector or medicine).

Kenya: (Jo-Luo): Obiero, Ouma (one born during planting season), Owino (one born after another child has died).

Tanzania: (Luo-Abasuba): Osewe, Akech, Nyang'idiNyang'idi (born during a celebration).

Congo (Alur, Lugbara-related Luo): Odera (he who receives blessings), Otika (hardworking), Apara (protector of the family).

SHARED CULTURAL THEMES

Twins: Names like Opiyo (first twin) and Odongo (second twin) are widespread across all Luo-speaking communities.

Seasons and Time: Many names reflect the time or season of birth, symbolizing the community's connection to nature.

Resilience and Strength: Names like Ojwang and Okech reflect the people's resilience during challenging times.

SHARED CHARACTERISTICS WITH KUSH

In the entire history of the Luo people, the Kingdom of Kush had the greatest everlasting impact on their culture and life. A lot of who we are, what we are and why we are can be traced back to our time in Meroe. Memory of the Kingdom of Kush, the most prominent Nubian civilization, and shared critical cultural traits and codes of conduct has been passed through generations over centuries making them to resonate very loudly even today. Here are some cultural norms that have become natural traits among the Luos yet they were first introduced in our lives several thousands of years ago. These may include:

1. Respect for Leadership and Authority

Kush: The kingdom had a centralized leadership structure with highly respected kings, queens, and spiritual leaders with absolute powers. This instilled absolute obedience and respect to leadership and authority.

Luo: All Luo communities organize themselves around a centralized leadership system emphasizing on respect for elders and traditional leaders (like clan leaders and spiritual guides), ensuring respect for authority. The positions of Ker, Ruoth, and Min Piny (wife to Ker/Ruoth) are still very respected.

2. Role of Women in Society

Kush: Women, including queens like Amanirenas, played prominent roles in governance and leadership.

Luo: Women in Luo culture have vital roles, especially in family and community decision-making, reflecting a legacy of strong female influence. Min Piny (wife to Ker/Ruoth) is still a res-

pected position expected to act as a role model to all women in society.

3. Spirituality and Religious Practices

Kush: The Kushites had strong religious traditions tied to nature, ancestors, and deities, with priests playing a crucial role. After the fall of Kush, they converted to Christianity and Islam but only after gaining a clear understanding that Christianity and Islam were about the same God they worshipped.

Luo: Many Luo communities maintain spiritual practices, including ancestral veneration and belief in a supreme being (Nyasaye), mirroring the Kushite reverence for divine forces.

4. Art and Music

Kush: The Kushites excelled in art, including intricate pottery, sculptures, and musical instruments. In the Kush culture all celebrations were accompanied by feasting, music and dances including exhibition of arts.

Luo: The Luo have a rich tradition of music, dance, paintings, and storytelling, with instruments like the nyatiti orutu reflecting this cultural continuity.

5. Cultural Identity and Unity

Kush: The Kushites maintained a strong cultural identity and pride in their Nubian heritage despite external influences. This was so much that many of the customs, such as language, unity, integrity, justice, fairness, and fidelity, have endured for over 2000 years.

Luo: The Luo people emphasize their cultural identity, language, and heritage, fostering unity and pride in their ancestry. The Luos still attach much importance to cultural values such as unity, integrity, justice, fairness, fidelity, and other key values and principles.

6. Community Support and Social Bonds

Kush: Community welfare and mutual assistance were vital, as well as shared labor and resources.

Luo: The Luo emphasize communal living and mutual support through practices like Harambee (Saga), especially supporting education, health, and even death (coming together for a cause).

7. Conflict Resolution and Justice

Kush: The Kushites valued diplomacy and established systems of justice overseen by noblemen.

Luo: Traditional Luo systems emphasize conflict resolution through council of elders (jodong dhoot), ensuring fairness and harmony.

8. Connection to the Nile and Water Resources

Kush: The Nile was central to the Kushite civilization for agriculture, trade, livelihood, and spirituality. River Nile influenced the Kush culture a great deal, it provided fish for food, water for livestock and agriculture. River Nile had spiritual value.

Luo: Many Luo communities have historically settled near water bodies especially Lake Victoria, their love for fish, livestock and agriculture and valuing water as a life-giving and spiritual resource – is age old.

9. Respect and Connection with the Dead

Kush: In ancient Nubian culture, there was a belief that the spirit of the dead lives on, there was strong connection with the spirit of the dead. Dead bodies were preserved in mortuaries. The burial places (tombs and graves) were specially prepared by building huge pyramids for burying respected people. "Coffins/Tombs" were carved out of monolithic granite rocks and engraved with praises of the departed. Burial ceremonies were carried out with elaborate rituals that went for days and months.

Luo: Luos, especially in Kenya, have the most elaborate and expensive funeral/burial ceremonies compared to all other communities. They use the costliest coffins; bodies of the dead are stored in the most exquisite morgues, and final burial places are built using concrete and tiled with granite stones.

All these practices date back 2500 years ago. People have complained publicly about funerals being too expensive and flamboyant, the truth is that the standards have been downgraded over time; Luos don't bury in stone-carved monolithic-granite-rock tombs anymore, we no longer build stone pyramids for the dead anymore; in fact, these days people build cheap concrete mausoleums instead.

In a journal article by Margret Hay, she puts it that among the Luos of Kavirondo by 1900, funerals often were marked by several days of feasting and dancing, and people wanted to look their best. Thus, the most flamboyant (and popular) photo opportunities for resident Europeans or travelers came when they encountered people on their way to or from a funeral (Margret Hay 2002).

These shared values and practices reflect a deep historical connection to African heritage and demonstrate how ancient traditions can adapt and endure in modern communities. Culture dies hard; it does not change but transforms from one form to another.

10. Kingmaker Phylosophy (Bringing up Boys as Future Kings)

Kush: In the Kush kingdom all sons of the king were brought up by kingmakers who were only men. During meals, the king ate with all his sons together with the king makers in his chambers where it was forbidden for women to enter. Within the chambers the sons were taught about the culture and history of the kingdom, especially the struggles and they were taught about what it takes to be a good king.

Luo: In the same spirit of kingmaking, every Luo man tried to make his own successor by bringing up boys differently from the girls and in a special way, teaching his sons the history of the clan, their past struggles and how to keep the lineage going. Sons eating together in their father's chambers was fundamental– Traditionally a Luo man had his own chamber (Duol) in the homestead. All his wives brought food to the Duol and during mealtimes all the sons were

required to gather for the meals at the father's chambers. It was forbidden for any son to eat with the mother in the kitchen where mothers had meals with their daughters.

Eating together in the Duol had many fundamental functions:

Fostering unity: Naturally eating together brings people together and help them to form a long-lasting bond. This ensured unity among the sons. It helped the father to identify innate characteristics in each of the sons, characters such as greed, selfishness, sharing spirit, fairness, arrogance, kindness, patience and many others. Such traits naturally display more clearly especially when food was scarce. This helped the elders to pick one of the sons who could take the family leadership after him.

Cultivating the spirit of sharing: Eating together helped the sons to get used to sharing from very early age. This was very useful because when the sons become of age they required to share land and cattle among themselves without fighting.

THE ORIGIN OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION AMONG THE LUO PEOPLE

Spirituality and religion are closely interconnected, but individuals and communities often perceive them differently based on their belief systems. Spirituality is defined as a person's connection to the supernatural, particularly to God, while religion refers to organized practices and rituals that reflect one's faith or spiritual beliefs. At their core, both spirituality and religion arise from belief systems, which are comprehensive frameworks consisting of values, fundamental principles, and moral codes to which individuals and communities adhere. Belief systems shape our understanding of reality, influenced by cultural narratives, societal norms, and personal experiences. They impact how we interpret the natural world and metaphysical dimensions.

Belief systems are not static entities but are inherently dynamic and subject to evolution over time. Such transformations often mirror shifts in societal values, cultural practices, and external influences, including socio-political changes and globalization. The variations observed in cultural practices, the evolution of language in social discourse, and the interaction with environmental factors provide profound insights into the gradual and often involuntary shifts in belief systems. These changes may take considerable time to manifest and are typically recognized only after an extended period of reflection and observation, underscoring the complex interplay between belief systems and the socio-cultural milieu.

In the context of the Luo community, the concept of spirituality and religion has attracted a substantial body of academic literature, comprising both books and articles that investigate their potential origin. The question of whether the ancient Luos were monotheists or polytheists remains a topic of debate. While it is widely believed that they worshipped the sun as an embodiment of God's omnipotence, it is also suggested that they honored the mystical forces of nature. Conclusively, the truth about their spiritual and religious practices is rooted in their

ancient history, which dates back to the biblical foundations of spirituality and religion in the Garden of Eden. Over 6,000 years since the creation of humanity, cultural evolution has profoundly transformed the belief systems of various human societies. The Luo people originally practiced monotheism, believing in a Supreme God known as Nyasaye Obonyo Nyakalaga, who is viewed as one omnipresent God. In addition to this Supreme Being, they acknowledged lesser deities or gods referred to as nyiseche, who were seen as subordinate to Him. Beneath this hierarchy, there were spirits called jugi, who occupied the lowest rank in their spiritual structure. Therefore, the spiritual and religious beliefs of the Luo community were centered around three fundamental concepts: the Supreme God, the lesser gods, and the spirits. They also believed in the existence of the spiritual realm. The ancient spiritual practices of the Luos reveal parallels to Biblical monotheism, suggesting a common origin of human spirituality and religion (Subsequent sections of this book explore the spirituality and religious practices of the ancient Luo people in greater detail).

THE THREE DIVINE DISPENSATIONS SINCE CREATION

According to Biblical teachings, God has engaged with humanity throughout various eras, resulting in transformations in spiritual, religious, and cultural practices and relationship with Him. This concept is exemplified by the recognition of divine world dispensations, in which God's will and laws regarding humanity vary in each world dispensation. The three principal dispensations are loosely described in this book as First Dispensation, Second Dispensation and Third Dispensation while in biblical theology they are called the Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian. Each of these distinct periods represents a unique way in which God conveyed His divine purpose and will to humanity. However, the nature of the divine will and purpose varied according to specific spiritual principles that are characteristic of each dispensation. This framework demonstrates the idea of progressive revelation of beginnings and ends, highlighting the evolving understanding of God's purpose throughout human history.

THE WORLD AND THE EARTH

The Bible distinguishes between the "world" and the "earth." For instance, it mentions that God used water to destroy the world in response to human wickedness. In this context, the "world" pertains to a specific period and location, whereas "earth," as referenced in Biblical geography, refers to the entirety of the planet.

THE WORLD

The book of Hebrews states that the Lord Jesus Christ is the creator of the "worlds" (plural). The verse reads:

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Hebrews 1:2, KJV)

"Through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. (Heb. 11:3 KJV)

The Greek word used for "worlds" in these two verses is **αἰών** (pronounced "aion"), which means an age or a period defined by specific prevailing conditions on Earth. In the Biblical context, the

term "world" does not refer to other planets in outer space but rather to particular periods and the prevailing conditions that existed during those ages on Earth, whether in the past, present, or future. Therefore, the term "world," as used in a biblical context, suggests that it is temporary and pertains to a specific period or dispensation within a particular geographical area, which has a defined beginning and end.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the term "dispensation" refers to "a political, religious, or social system prevailing at a particular time." Divine dispensations relates to God's own arrangements of beginnings and ends. Each dispensation has its own set of rules, guidelines, commands, and promises that govern human affairs during that entire period. Nevertheless, the end of the world is a divine phenomenon that signifies a transition from one world dispensation to another rather than simply denoting destruction.

THE EARTH

The Earth is a planet that uniquely supports life, distinguishing it from the other known planets in the Solar System. It is a spherical mass of matter existing within the dimensions of time and space. The Earth plays a crucial role in our current world as well as in historical worlds and potential future worlds, as referenced in texts such as Matthew 12:32, Mark 10:30, and Hebrews 2:5. However, the concept of "world" extends beyond the Earth itself; it includes celestial bodies, the natural environment (with its diverse flora and fauna), human populations and settlements, and the prevailing socio-political systems that define contemporary life on the planet.

Many scriptural passages clarify the Biblical distinction between "the world" and "the earth." The following verses offer a detailed examination of the theological implications and meanings associated with each term. This analysis deepens our understanding of their nuanced differences and how "the world" relates to Divine Dispensations.

"And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth." (Isaiah 23:17 KJV)

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:" (Gal 1:4 KJV)

"And I saw a new heaven {single tense} and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; there was no more sea." (Revelation 21:1 KJV)

By analyzing the content of the Sumerian tablets alongside the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Quran, we can understand that there have been changes in the divine ordering of world affairs since the creation of humanity. This leads to the conclusion that different divine dispensations have occurred throughout history. One of the most notable examples is the biblical account of God destroying the world with a flood, which marks the end of what can be referred to as the First World Dispensation. The Sumerian texts offer insights into the reasons behind God's decision to change the entire system and the relationships that existed during this First World Dispensation.

In the First World dispensation, the supreme God allowed himself to “physically” or visibly co-exist with the gods (Engels) under Him and humans as subordinates to the gods. Humans worshiped and served the gods, God being a jealous God changed the system of authority since He did not want to share authority with any other being.

God, being a jealous God, changed the system of authority because He did not want to share His authority with any other being. As stated in Exodus 20:5-6, "You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.

A closer examination reveals that different systems of divine order existed before and after the Flood, signaling the end of one divine dispensation and the onset of another. This pattern also applies to the time before and after the birth of Jesus Christ, marking a significant transition between divine dispensations. From this perspective, it becomes evident that the dispensation in which Adam and Eve lived concluded during Noah's time, all of which took place on the same earth we occupy today. Thus, the timeline from the creation of humanity (Adam and Eve) to the present can be divided into three distinct divine dispensations: The First World, the Second World, and the Third World Dispensations.

Out of the three world dispensations, two have concluded, and the third has entered a transition stage or what is commonly referred to as “the end-times.” Our world is currently in a transition stage, with four additional centuries remaining before we reach the end and the beginning of a new era; going by what happened in the second dispensation, this transition is expected to conclude in another five centuries. Arguably we can say that the second world did not face physical destruction but ended through a transition from the First World dispensation to the current dispensation. This transition began several centuries before and continued after the birth of Jesus Christ, Prophet Muhammad, and many others. This is why Hebrews 1:2 refers to the Son of God as the maker of the worlds- His coming initiated a completely new world dispensation.

The conclusion of the Second World Dispensation coincided with the birth of Christ, marking the dawn of the Third World Dispensation, commonly known as the modern world, which is the one we inhabit today. Bible historians estimate that the first world commenced with the creation of Man in the Garden of Eden around 3976 BC and concluded with Noah's flood approximately 2316 BC. The duration between the first and second dispensations was about 1,660 years. The second world represents the start of the post-flood era, which dates back to roughly 2,316 BC and extends beyond the births of Jesus Christ and Prophet Mohammed. The second dispensation itself lasted around 2,320 years. As a result, the transitional phase between the second and third world dispensations lasted nearly ten centuries (from 5 BC to 5 AD). This transition occurred a few centuries both before and after the births of Jesus Christ and the time of Prophet Mohammed.

The present era is designated as the Third World Dispensation. This period is distinct from both the time preceding the birth of Jesus Christ, the eras associated with prominent biblical figures such as Abraham, David and Moses. Consequently, one can assert that the dispensation contemporary to us is neither the original state in which Adam and Eve existed nor the dispensation experienced by Abraham, Moses and David.

According to biblical accounts, over successive generations, the descendants of Adam and Eve fell into sin, which resulted in God's disfavor. In response to this moral decline, God chose to terminate the First World Dispensation by sending a flood to eradicate all living beings. The narratives indicate that only Noah, his family, and a pair of each animal species were preserved. Fortunately, Noah and his household survived to perpetuate cultural, spiritual, and religious practices, albeit excluding the traditions and customs that had contributed to the moral degradation prompting the divine judgment.

The mysterious gaps in our knowledge about events in the First and Second Worlds seem to have a divine origin. Similarly, the preservation and gradual accumulation of knowledge about the Three Worlds through revelation and the inspiration of the spirit of God also appear to be divine. The insights gained from archaeological discoveries are also significant; given the vastness of the world, it seems that divine intervention is necessary to accurately locate buried findings. Hence, it is reasonable to suggest that God used water to destroy the First World, allowing silt to cover and preserve evidence of what took place during that time, He also obscured clear knowledge and understanding of the Second World but preserved its evidence by burying it underground. Additionally, He inspired the writing of significant texts, such as the Bible, the Injil of the Quran, and various other religious texts to convey these truths. These texts document historical events and provide ethical guidelines and principles for living in the Third World Dispensation. Over millennia, oral history has transmitted a significant portion of knowledge regarding cultural practices and organizational systems across different World Dispensations.

The biblical creation story, along with our immense knowledge of humanity's origins, was conveyed through cultural traditions and oral narratives long before the advent of literacy and the formal documentation of history. Furthermore, tangible archaeological evidence corroborates these narratives. Examples include ancient cities, rivers, and mountains mentioned in both the Bible and the Quran, many of which continue to exist and can be observed today. Therefore, if God destroyed the world with water, there should be numerous archaeological pieces of evidence related to the existence of the First Dispensation and the events that occurred during that time. Presumably, these artifacts are strategically buried underground and are intended to be revealed gradually for future reference.

As regards culture, it is dynamic, and a thorough examination of its evolution, from the first human civilizations to the end of the First World Dispensation, can provide valuable insights into the characteristics of early cultures. This historical perspective can deepen our understanding of the foundational elements that influenced the development of early human societies. This exploration can also enhance our understanding of the origin of religious beliefs and spirituality, especially in the context of the Luo community. The Dholophones (Dholuo speaking people), the people primarily associated with the Luo-speaking communities, are understood to be descendants of Ham, the second son of Noah. According to certain historical interpretations, this group is believed to have migrated from their ancestral homelands, where they resided in ancient Egypt for several centuries. Over time, they traversed through modern-day Sudan and South Sudan, finally settling in their present geographical locations. This migration reflects a significant historical narrative that connects the Dholophones to broader cultural and ancestral lineages within the context of Biblical genealogy. Throughout history, from Noah's time to the

present, cultures, traditions, and religious belief systems have undergone significant transformations. However, some aspects of the original culture, traditions, and religious beliefs must have been passed down from Noah and his sons through thousands of generations to today. As a result, certain elements of our current religious belief systems can likely be traced back to ancient times, even as far as the first human civilizations in the Garden of Eden.

THE ANCIENT SUMERIAN CIVILIZATION IS POTENTIALLY THE SAME AS THE BIBLICAL GARDEN OF EDEN

Historically, Mesopotamia is recognized as the cradle of agriculture and is associated with some of humanity's earliest civilizations. It is located in the Babylon province of modern-day Iraq, with ancient borders extending into parts of Syria, Turkey, and Iran. This area lies between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which flow from north to south and empty into the Persian Gulf. The Bible, specifically in Genesis 2:10-15, also positions the Garden of Eden between these two rivers. Among the civilizations linked to this region are the Babylonians and Assyrians, with the Sumerian civilization being the earliest of them all. Given that the Garden of Eden represents the first human settlement on Earth, it can be seen as the inception of human civilization. Consequently, the Sumerian Civilization and the Garden of Eden may be viewed as identical. Archaeological evidence, including Sumerian tablets unearthed in Mesopotamia, indicates that a civilization thrived in this area well before 3500 BCE, cementing its status as one of the earliest known civilizations in human history.

This book reveals that the Sumerian Civilization may have existed during the First World Dispensation. It further proposes that Sumer and the Garden of Eden are, in fact, in the same location. It argues that the people commonly referred to as the Sumerians could be the ten generations of the descendants of Adam and Eve, leading up to Noah and his sons. The Sumerians established a complex society characterized by a structured lifestyle that encompassed agriculture, education, trade, religion, art, astronomy, and counting systems or mathematics. This book proposes the presumption that Sumerian Civilization happened in the Garden of Eden during the First World Dispensation and that in the ensuing discussions Sumer/Sumerians and the Garden of Eden can be used interchangeably.

THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM OF ANCIENT SUMERIANS (IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN)

The Sumerians were predominantly an agricultural society, relying on irrigation from four key rivers, including river Tigris and Euphrates, to cultivate crops such as barley, wheat, and dates. While farming was integral to their way of life, they also engaged in trade among various regions and cities, exchanging goods such as textiles, pottery, and metalwork. Sumerian cities, including Ur, Uruk, and Lagash, served as vibrant centers of commerce. The cities featured markets and workshops that provided a variety of goods for both local and regional trade.

THE SOCIAL-CULTURAL STRUCTURE OF THE ANCIENT SUMERIANS

Sumerian society was highly organized and divided into distinct classes. At the top of this hierarchy was the king, who was regarded as having divine authority, representing the will of the gods. Beneath the king were the priests, who held considerable influence in both religious and political affairs. The middle class comprised merchants, artisans, and scribes, while the lower class consisted of farmers and laborers. In terms of their spiritual and religious practices, they

were polytheistic, worshipping many gods linked to natural forces and various aspects of life. Each city had its patron deity, and large temple complexes known as ziggurats were constructed for both worship and administrative purposes. The Sumerians believed in an afterlife, but they perceived it as a bleak and dismal existence rather than a paradise. Priests wielded considerable influence, conducting rituals and interpreting the will of the gods.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY AND EDUCATION AMONG ANCIENT SUMERIANS

One of the Sumerians' most significant contributions was the invention of cuneiform writing, which stands as one of the earliest forms of written communication. They utilized clay tablets and styluses to document laws, trade transactions, literature, and religious texts. Education primarily catered to scribes, who underwent training in specialized schools to master writing, mathematics, and administrative tasks. Among their remarkable literary achievements is the Epic of Gilgamesh, which is one of the earliest known works of literature, rooted in Sumerian myths and legends.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Sumerian art and architecture profoundly reflected their religious and social values, manifesting in the construction of monumental temples and palaces adorned with intricate carvings and statues. A distinctive feature of Sumerian artistic expression was the use of cylinder seals, which were small, engraved stone objects employed to mark ownership and authenticate documents. Architecturally, the Sumerians demonstrated significant advancements, notably the incorporation of arches and domes, techniques that later influenced a variety of subsequent civilizations. The Sumerian society can thus be characterized as sophisticated, establishing foundational elements that would shape the trajectory of future civilizations. The shipbuilding technologies exemplified by the construction of Noah's Ark serve as a testament to their technological prowess. Moreover, the Sumerians made groundbreaking contributions in writing, governance, and architectural practices, which have left an indelible mark on human history. Despite the eventual decline of Sumerian political power, their cultural and technological innovations continued to resonate and influence subsequent Mesopotamian empires, including the Babylonians and Assyrians, as well as other civilizations that followed.

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE SUMERIAN TABLETS AND THE CREATION STORY

Noah was born during the First World dispensation, which influenced his experiences within the cultural, religious, and societal frameworks of that era. It is plausible that he transmitted significant elements of this cultural heritage to subsequent generations through his sons. A critical inquiry arises: to what extent have our cultural practices, traditions, religious beliefs, spirituality, and general ways of life in the 21st century been influenced by the First World dispensation? What have we inherited and adapted through generations, particularly within the Luo-speaking populations of the 21st century?

To address this inquiry, it is essential to analyze the Sumerian tablets, which are among the earliest written records in human history, dating back to approximately 3,500 years BC. By examining these ancient texts, we can identify and delineate components of cultural practices in the First World dispensation that have persisted into contemporary times. This analysis may provide insight into the continuity and evolution of cultural elements from the ancient past

to the present. These ancient clay tablets, inscribed with cuneiform script, provide valuable insights into one of the earliest civilizations, addressing aspects such as governance, economy, mythology, and religion. Among the most cogent texts found on these tablets are the Sumerian creation stories, which narrate the origins of the universe, the gods, and humanity.

One of the most significant Sumerian creation myths is "The Eridu Genesis," which describes how primordial deities formed the world. According to this myth, the universe began as a chaotic sea from which the gods emerged, indicating that the belief in multiple gods is ancient. The chief god, Enki, played a crucial role in shaping the land, rivers, and all life itself. The creation of humans by the gods in ancient Sumerian mythology serves as a foundational narrative illustrating the relationship between divine beings and humanity. In this context, humans were created to provide sustenance and worship in exchange for protection and guidance from the gods (The theory concerning divine creation will be extensively examined in subsequent sections).

Another significant myth within Sumerian tradition is the Enuma Elish, commonly associated with Babylonian mythology. This epic narrative describes the cosmic conflict between the primordial goddess Tiamat and the younger deities, culminating in the formation of the heavens and the earth. The Sumerian creation myths exerted considerable influence on subsequent cultures, including the Akkadians and Babylonians, as well as biblical texts. The discovery and analysis of ancient tablets have greatly enhanced historians' and archaeologists' understanding of early human attempts to comprehend existence and the divine. Furthermore, insights gleaned from the inscriptions on these Sumerian tablets, while congruent with biblical accounts, offer additional layers of detail regarding the biblical creation narrative.

THE ANCIENT LITERATURE OF THE SUMERIANS

The Sumerian texts offer a captivating narrative. In the biblical accounts, the ages of Adam and his descendants indicate that the concepts of counting, time, and writing were highly developed. The existence of inscriptions on stone tablets further reinforces this notion. The construction of Noah's Ark also points to advanced shipbuilding technology during the First World dispensation. Their religious system was intricate, featuring one supreme God alongside numerous lesser deities. According to ancient texts, each Sumerian city was under the protection of its deity, with humans serving as subordinates to these gods. One of the Sumerian tablets details the creation of mankind, a story preserved on a tablet from Nippur, an ancient Mesopotamian city founded around 3500 BC. The creation of Earth (Enuma Elish), according to the Sumerian tablets, begins with the following passage.

*"When in the height heaven was not named,
And the earth beneath did not yet bear a name,
And the primeval Apsu, who begat them,
And chaos, Tiamat, the mother of them both
Their waters were mingled together,
And no field was formed, no marsh was to be seen;
When of the gods none had been called into being,
And none bore a name, and no destinies were ordained;
Then were created the gods in the midst of heaven,
Lahmu and Lahamu were called into being..."*

The Sumerian text sheds light on ancient Sumer's belief system regarding the divine hierarchy and humanity's creation. It posits the existence of a singular, Supreme God who, in turn, created a pantheon of lesser gods tasked with the stewardship of the Earth. In this creation narrative, it is noteworthy that humanity had not yet been formed. Sumerian mythology articulates that, in the primordial landscape, the gods held dominion over the Earth. Upon their arrival, they were faced with significant labor demands as they endeavored to cultivate the land and extract its resources, thereby rendering it hospitable. However, the burden of their toil proved to be untenable, leading to a rebellion among the deities who sought assistance in their endeavors. The text poignantly captures their discontent:

*"When the gods like men
Bore the work and suffered the toll
The toil of the gods was great,
The work was heavy, the distress was much."*

This excerpt illustrates the theme of divine struggle and the subsequent desire for relief from labor, which is a compelling aspect of Sumerian cosmology and reflects deeper questions of creation and responsibility within their religious framework. Anu, the God of gods, recognized that the labor burden of the gods was too great to bear and agreed to the idea of creating humans. His son Enki, also known as Ea, proposed that they create man in their own image to bear this labor. With the assistance of his sister Ninki, Enki proceeded with the creation. Anu's decision to approve this idea introduces the concept of a God having both a son (Enki) and a daughter (Ninki) who worked together in the creation of humanity. In the process, a god was put to death, and his body was mixed with clay. From this mixture, the first human being was created in the likeness of the gods. This narrative suggests that at creation a human being composed of two elements: a god (soul or personality and spirit) and body (clay or earth), and the third one which is the spirit came after. The human soul carries the personality or the likeness or image of the gods - not of God.

Genesis 1:26 states, "Let us make man in our image," indicating a plural sense. This scripture implies that every human possesses a divine likeness-they carry the image or soul of the gods. This aspect of human creation is what distinguishes ordinary humans from Jesus Christ. While Jesus was born in body and flesh like everyone else, His soul (personality, image or likeness) was of God not gods; He is the only man "created" in the likeness or image of God. All other humans are born of flesh and blood but possess the likeness (souls or images) of the gods. Thus, in this understanding, Jesus was God, and all humans are lesser gods. The Luo people aptly express this belief with the notion that everyone has their own god (nyasache) while God is for all (nyasachwa). The following Sumerian text about the creation of man captures the composition of man:

*"You have slaughtered a god together with his personality
I have removed your heavy work
I have imposed your toil on man.
In the clay, god and man shall be bound,
To a unity brought together;*

*So that to the end of days
The Flesh and the Soul
Which in a god have ripened –
That soul in a blood-kinship be bound.”*

Based on the foregoing Sumerian text, a god was put to death, and his body (personality or soul of a god) was mixed with clay, and from the mixture a man was created. The text further demonstrates that in the clay, god and man were bound. From this, we learn that humans have the soul of the gods inside the body, which is flesh and blood, and that is what it means to say that man was created in the image of god, not God. It is not the physical image but the soul (in the likeness). It also implies that god (soul and spirit) lives inside (bound) the body, which confirms that the body of humans is the temple (house) in which the gods live. Each of our bodies carries a god or is the temple of a god, making every human being a lesser god.

The first man was created in Eden, a term derived from Sumerian that denotes 'flat terrain.' Within the Epic of Gilgamesh, Eden is referenced as the divine garden situated in the Mesopotamian region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Consequently, the Sumerian texts align with the biblical description found in Genesis 2 regarding the location of the Garden of Eden. Thus, polytheism (belief in multiple deities) originated at the dawn of civilization in the Garden of Eden and was passed down through successive generations, culminating in its prominent practice in ancient civilizations in Mesopotamia, Babylonian, Egypt and eventually in Nubian culture. This same tradition has been preserved and adapted by the Luo people into the 21st century.



Sumerian tablet depicting Enki in the creation story (ancient-origins.net, world-myth.com)

According Sumerian literature, initially, human beings were created for their strength, they could not reproduce independently. Later, with the assistance of the gods Enki and Ninki, humans were modified to enable reproduction. As the demand for labor increased, it became tedious to continually create new humans. Enki devised a brilliant plan to make humans capable of reproducing on their own, leading to the creation of Adapa, a fully functional and inde-

pendent human being. Adapa and Adam are essentially the same person. Adam and Eve were not the first human beings to be created, many human beings were created before them but Adam and Eve were the first humans to be created with the ability to reproduce. This modification occurred without the approval of Enki's brother, Enlil, which sparked a conflict among the gods. Enlil emerged as the adversary of humanity; some might interpret Enlil as resembling the spirit known as the devil. Sumerian tablets indicate that humans served the gods while enduring significant hardship and suffering. With Enki's guidance, Adapa ascended to the realm of Anu but failed to answer a question regarding "the bread and water of life." This narrative may correspond to the biblical story of the fruit that Adam and Eve consumed in the Garden of Eden.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SUMERIAN AND BIBLICAL CREATION STORIES

There is an ongoing debate regarding the similarities between the Sumerian creation story and the biblical account of Adam and Eve. This book avers that the content of the Sumerian Tablet closely resembles the biblical narrative, suggesting that the tablet serves as archaeological evidence of events that may have occurred in the Garden of Eden as narrated in the bible. Variations in the details of these stories are possible and expected, particularly given that they may have been passed down through oral traditions before being recorded in the tablets and the Bible or Quran. The following table outlines some of the most significant similarities between the Sumerian and biblical creation narratives.

Sumerian Text	Biblical Text
It is said that the Sumerians created an advanced civilization with its system of elaborate language and writing, architecture and arts, astronomy and mathematics	in the Old Testament the concept of time, counting and architecture seemed to have matured. The Bible talks about Age and time during the time of Adam and Eve. The building of Noah's Ark demonstrates the presence of advanced technology which could only happen in a very advanced civilization.
The Sumerian tablets were discovered in Nippur, an ancient Mesopotamian city founded in approximately 5000 BC. Mesopotamia is located between two rivers Tigris and Euphrates.	Genesis 2:10-15: The Garden of Eden is located between two rivers Tigris and Euphrates, the same location as Mesopotamia. The flood during Noah's time destroyed all things except archeological evidence of the existence of the first world, this Sumerian tablet could be one of them.
Sumerian mythology claims that, in the beginning, human-like gods ruled over Earth. When they came to the Earth, there was much work to be done and these gods toiled the soil, digging to make it habitable and mining its minerals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Genesis 2:15: God put man in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. → God created man in his image. → Angels are also believed to be in the image of God. → The Bible talks about precious minerals.

Anu, the god of gods.	There is one supreme God above all other gods. The Bible talks about one supreme God who created heaven and earth, also referred to as "God of gods" and "Lord of lord" in Deuteronomy 10:17,
A god was put to death, and his body was mixed with clay. From that material, the first human being was created by Enki with the help of his sister Ninki, in their likeness/the gods.	According to the Bible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → God created man from the earth. → Genesis 1: 26 says let's make man in OUR image (plural). → Adam was put to sleep, sleep here may be equated to death; God removed one rib. Eve was created from Adam's ribs.
In the clay, god and man shall be bound; To a unity brought together; The Flesh and the Soul	The Bible talks about our body as the temple of God. Thessalonians 5:23 – Talks about body, soul, and spirit all in one. The soul resides inside human body which is flesh and blood. To the end of life on earth, at death, they separate.
Initially, human beings were unable to reproduce on their own but were later modified with the help of Enki and Ninki. Thus, Adapa was created as a fully functional and independent human being. This 'modification' was done without the approval of Enki's brother, Enlil, and a conflict between the gods began. Enlil became the adversary of man, and the Sumerian tablet mentions that men served gods and went through much hardship and suffering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → In Genesis 1:28: God commanded man to "be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it". → Adapa could be Adam, created as a complete human. → In the bible, we have Cain, Abel, and Seth as brothers. → The Bible talks about Cain killing Abel. → An adversary of man could be the concept of the devil. → Genesis 3:19: God said Adam will work hard labour till death.
Adapa, with the help of Enki, ascended to Anu where he failed to answer a question about 'the bread and water of life'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Genesis 3:9: Adam and Eve failed to answer God after eating the forbidden fruit.

Clearly the two stories have more commonalities than differences pointing to the possibilities of having the same origin or a story told by different people who are talking about the same event.

GOD'S PRESENCE AND VISIBILITY SCENARIOS

While the divine nature of God is believed to be unchanging, the way in which God has appeared to and interacted with humanity have evolved throughout biblical history. Looking back into biblical history from the beginning of humanity to date one may notice that the manner of God's interaction, appearance and communication with man changed especially from one

dispensation to the next. In the First World dispensation, God allowed himself to have physical co-existence with the gods or Engels and humans in the Garden of Eden. God's presence, appearance and communication was somewhat physical, direct and more or less face to face type of interaction. The bible tells us in Genesis 3:8 that Adam and Eve "...heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden." This could mean that the presence of God was physical, they heard sounds of Him walking and His voice. The verse also mentions the "presence" of God "among the trees" of the garden. It was a presence that Adam and Eve acknowledged and thought they could hide from. So, God's Garden-Walk included both sound and some sort of physical presence among the trees.

In Genesis 2:7, God is depicted as forming man from the dust of the ground with His hands, then breathing into him the breath of life. The act of "forming" (Hebrew: "yatsar") in Genesis 2:7 is understood as the physical process of creating a thing by shaping something raw into a particular form, often associated with the activity of a potter. All these verses reinforce the theory that in the First World dispensation God may have physically coexisted with the deities and humans and had direct physical interaction with them.

In the Second World dispensation, God abolished His physical coexistence with deities and humans, establishing new forms of presence, visibility and communication. He also ended the polytheistic system, where humans were subservient to multiple gods, requiring instead that they worship one supreme, unseen God. In this structure, humans are composed of a physical body (clay, flesh, and blood) and a soul, united as one. The abolition of direct God-to-human physical interactions culminated in the emergence of three visibility scenarios.

In the first scenario, human bodies remained physically visible to one another, allowing humans to see and interact with one another directly. Procreation continued unimpeded while maintaining the bond between body and soul. This has enabled humans to continue filling the earth, interact directly with each other and work the earth to make it habitable. However, God remained invisible to the human body.

In the second scenario, at a higher level beyond human bodies, the souls referred to as the gods within humans became visible to one another in an invisible realm. In this realm, human souls could see and communicate with each other at a higher level that transcends the physical body. Within an individual the body and the soul remains connected. The souls of two people can see and communicate with each other without involving their individual human bodies. Human interactions at this level are mostly instinctive. However, God remained invisible to the human soul as well.

Finally, in the third scenario, God remains invisible to humans, souls and spirits. Humans could not perceive God with their physical eyes, nor could they see Him through their souls or spirits. However, humans can communicate with God only via the Holy Spirit. As a result, God created the Spirit Realm, which can be understood as a "space" where souls, spirits and the gods can interact and perceive each other in their spirit forms. However, God retained the ability to see and watch over all beings both physical and in spirit forms.

THE SPIRITUAL REALM

The spiritual realm is viewed as a reality that exists beyond the physical world. It encompasses entities and forces that are not perceivable by human senses. View it as a place or space beyond the physical where human's spiritual components (the soul and the spirit) interacts with God (through the Holy Spirit) and other spiritual entities (souls of ancestors, angels/gods, and other unknown spirits. Humans can interact/connect to the spirit realm through spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation and carrying out rituals. However, the human soul and spirit can only join the spirit realm after death. The physical body is inherently linked to the soul which is connected to the human spirit. Through the spirit, the soul can connect and communicate with other souls, deities, and the Holy Spirit (spirit of the supreme God) within the spirit realm. While God is not visible to all beings (including souls, deities, and spirits) even within the Spirit Realm, He possesses the ability to communicate directly with them at that level.

As part of the Second dispensational reforms, God let human beings to live alone with plants and animals and dominate the physical world. He also created the Supernatural world (spirit realm) for all other supernatural beings (spirits, departed souls, gods and angels) to live in as a layer on top of the physical world and it was good. Later on, as part of the third world dispensational reforms, He introduced the Holy Spirit into the supernatural world to be the dominant spirit above all other supernatural beings and it was good. Hebrews 9:27 says that after death we will face judgement, this is the point where a decision is made where the human spirit departs to either join the supernatural world to be with/under the Holy Spirit or among other spirits in the spirit realm. The bible call it paradise “..for believers paradise is a place of rest and joy in the presence of God”.

In the Luo religious system there were priests who mastered the art of connecting to or interacting with the spirit realm and gained specialized spiritual capabilities which gave them different roles in the society. In the Luo culture there were diviners (Jabilo), medicine men or native doctors (Ajuoga), spiritualist (Jasepe) and so on, all played key roles in the ancient Luo societies. The concept of death emerged in the first world and was carried over into the second and third world. However, death pertains exclusively to the demise of the physical body (flesh and blood). From the dawn of time, when a human being died, the soul and spirit would be liberated to continue their existence; the spirit returned to God, while the body, constituting clay, flesh, and blood, returned to the earth (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Souls remain free to navigate the challenges of existence. It is this ongoing struggle with life's adversities after death that prompts human souls to seek reincarnation to experience life anew. Therefore, for human souls, the phrase "rest in peace" (R.I.P) does not apply; this expression pertains only to the body, which returns to dust, and to the spirit, which transcends back to God, the source from which it originated. This understanding demonstrates the rationale behind the Luos' belief in life after death and their pantheon of gods.

The spirit is the only eternal aspect of our being that seeks communion with God and understands His divine will should we choose to connect with Him through the Holy Spirit. The spirit realm upholds the presence of God throughout the earth, thus rendering God omnipresent. Although God had changed the system to monotheism, people continued to conform to the traditional belief system passed down through generations, allowing polytheism to persist despite

God's will. With the changes in the Second and the Third dispensation, God granted humanity the free will to choose whom or what to worship, accompanied by consequences rather than punishment, which reflects an element of volition.

Following the birth of Jesus Christ, in the beginning of the Third World Dispensation, on the day of Pentecost, God introduced the concept of the Holy Spirit and made it an entity of the spirit realm. However, He still retained the formerly established spiritual entities or beings, such as the lesser divinities in the spiritual dimensions. Notably, the introduction of the Holy Spirit into the spirit realm created a new dimension of spiritual connection with God. Out of all the spiritual entities in the spiritual realm, the Holy Spirit became the most superior and the only one that connected man with God. Romans 8:9 states that believers are "in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you". It goes a head to say that "...anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ/Holy Spirit does not belong to Him". Regarding this, humans (body and soul) who align with the Holy Spirit can establish a direct connection with God, while those who choose to align with inferior spirits or the souls of the dead can only communicate with those beings and not the supreme God.

The process of aligning oneself with the Holy Spirit or other spiritual entities is often described as a spiritual awakening, which is closely related to the concept of salvation. However, an opposing viewpoint suggests that only alignment with the Holy Spirit qualifies as a true spiritual awakening or salvation, excluding connections with other spirits, souls, and deities. This phenomenon raises an important question: What terminology should be used to describe the intentional choice to engage with spiritual entities outside the context of the Holy Spirit? Which after thousands of years of cultural transformation became the mainstay of spirituality among the Luo people, at least before they converted to Christianity. This inquiry encourages a deeper examination of the distinctions between various spiritual alignments and their implications for individual experiences of transcendence and meaning.

At the outset of the second world dispensation, God forbade the worship of other gods, and therefore, humans were no longer subjects of the gods or souls of the dead. Instead of having many gods, He placed the soul (god) inside man to make man whole. Hence, humans became small gods consisting of souls of gods, flesh, and blood. Consequently, God gave them free will to choose whom to worship between Him, through the Holy Spirit or other gods. In the third world dispensation, only God is recognized as the supreme spiritual entity, while humans are considered lesser gods in flesh and blood, tasked with labor on earth and procreation. God remains omnipresent as it was in the first and second world but communication with Him during the third dispensations is only through the Holy Spirit. The role of the Holy Spirit herein is solely to act as the communication link between God and man, who is a lesser god in flesh and blood. The physical image of a person as relates to this concept is not in the likeness of God, but only the soul has the image of the gods – may be of those who existed at creation. Considering this, the presence of other gods walking the Earth outside the spirit realm is merely a figment of imagination, existing only within certain belief systems rather than being part of God's creation. Many aspects of spirituality practiced by the Luo people align with the various scenarios and levels of spiritual connection to the Spirit Realms.

ANCIENT SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AMONG THE LUO SPEAKING PEOPLES

Western religions were built around formal institutions, whereas Luo spirituality took a more customary approach that focused on the pursuit of knowledge, truth, and connections to supernatural powers. Despite the spiritual enrichment gained after converting to Christianity, critics argue that Western religion focused primarily on expanding Western cultural hegemony and imperialism.

The foundation of spiritual and religious beliefs among the Luo people dates back to the onset of humanity. The Luos believed in one Supreme God called Nyasaye Obongo Nyakalaga, which means "One Omnipresent God," the creator of all things. This understanding aligns with creation stories found in the Sumerian tablets and biblical texts. In addition, the Luos believed in many lesser gods, known as nyiseche, each intended to meet people's diverse needs. This belief is consistent with the Sumerian narrative, which mentions numerous gods involved in performing different functions on Earth. It further indicates that the Luo belief system may have been culturally transmitted through generations over thousands of years.

Religious, historical, and archeological accounts of ancient civilizations also document that ancient Egyptians practiced polytheism, the belief in many gods. Similarly, the Luo people believed that every individual has their god referred to as nyasache, who, along with their ancestors (the souls of deceased relatives), is responsible for that person's fortunes, welfare, and well-being. This notion is also reflected in Sumerian texts, which suggest that god and man are connected as one; in this view, the human body serves as a temple where god resides. The belief that each person carries a divine presence within them likely stems from these ancient creation narratives and has been culturally passed down through generations to the present day Luo.

The history of the Luo people extends far back, well before the era of ancient Egypt. According to historical accounts, the Dholophones, or Luo-speaking people, are believed to be descendants of Ham, the second son of Noah. They initially settled in Egypt for centuries, where they were known as Nubians, before migrating through what is now Sudan and South Sudan to their current regions. Throughout their history, the Luo have maintained certain aspects of polytheistic practices, evolving their belief systems over time while preserving key elements that have endured for thousands of years. Central to Luo spirituality is the belief in life after death, which shapes their understanding of existence and their relationship with the spiritual world/the spirit realm. The Luo people often turn to the gods and the spirits of their ancestors for guidance in everyday life, relying on them to address societal challenges. They usually consult God when faced with natural calamities such as droughts, famine, floods, and pandemics.

Although the ancient Luos did not worship the sun, they prayed to God while facing it at sunrise and sunset. This ritual raises the question: What is the spiritual significance of praying while facing the sun? The Luo people believed in one God, who was the most powerful being in the entire universe and the only source of power on earth. Hence, they worshipped Him while facing the sun, believing that it embodied His omnipotence and infinite mystery and power.

As earlier demonstrated in the Sumerian text, God created gods and put them on earth to labour for their livelihoods. When labor became unbearable for them, they complained to God to allow

them to create man to take over the work of labor and stewardship of the earth, and God accepted. The extract below illustrates the justification for the creation of Humans.

..a god was put to death, and its body was mixed with clay to create man in their image.

So, god and man were bound together in one.”

The above excerpt implies that humans are physical beings made of flesh and blood with the soul and the spirit, which are gods. When a man dies, the body returns to the earth while the soul and the spirit transcend to the spiritual realm. The ancient Luos also deeply understood this phenomenon from the olden times: that the body is a “temple or vessel” where your god (soul and your spirit) lives. Through rituals, there were special people among the Luo who were able to connect to the spiritual realms and communicate directly with the souls and spirits of the dead. Furthermore, they honored various gods associated with different assignments, such as fertility, healing, and rainmaking. They also consulted them on certain problems facing individuals in the community.

THE INTEGRATION OF BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT IN HUMANITY

The body, soul, and spirit are structurally interconnected at various levels of our existence. According to Genesis 2:7, the soul and spirit grant humanity its essence and continuity. A human being possesses a physical body equipped with senses that allow us to interact with our environment and others. These interactions trigger our thoughts, feelings, emotions, and experiences, which the soul processes. The soul serves as the seat of our emotions, intellect, will, experiences, and personality, embodying what it means to be human. It processes our thoughts, desires, and feelings while acting as the bridge between the body and spirit, as highlighted in Hebrews 4:12.

Our body is connected to soul which connects us to the spirit. The spirit represents the highest level of our being and establishes our direct link to the spiritual realm and God, as noted in Job 32:8. The primary role of the spirit is to facilitate interaction with God, other souls, and divine beings; it is the channel through which we connect to the spiritual world. In this realm, communication is immediate and direct. Our spiritual connection enables us to experience intuition, faith, and spiritual awareness. The spirit is eternal, breathing life into the union of body and soul. Through intentional thought or prayer, our souls and spirits can connect or disconnect from the spiritual realm, allowing us to communicate with our kin, whether they are living or deceased.

One form of communication that occurs at the level of the soul through the spiritual realms is called telepathy. This phenomenon allows two people, even if they are 2,000 kilometers apart, to have similar ideas at the same time.

- *For example, two brothers living in Europe and America might simultaneously have a vision that their father, who is in Africa, has had an accident. When they contact him to inquire about his condition, they may both find out that he did experience an accident around the same time and in a similar manner to how they each foresaw it.*

In the culture and traditions of the Luo people, spirituality played a central role in all aspects of life. The community had a profound understanding of the interconnection between the body, the soul, and the spirit. The Luo recognize that all living entities, including humans, plants as well as both domestic and wild animals, are imbued with spirits. However, they uniquely understand that only human beings possess souls residing within their bodies, while the spirit represents the highest level of existence.

Culturally, the Luos comprehend that life is sustained by a delicate balance shaped by the interactions among the spirits of all living things on Earth. This understanding informs their belief that a Luo do not simply die without reason. As such, deaths arise from underlying causes which may not necessarily be natural – especially premature deaths. Some concepts exceed the scope of this discussion, yet it is essential to acknowledge that certain gifted individuals, referred to as priests among the Luo, delve deeply into Luo spirituality. They cultivate profound connections with the spirit realms, acquiring significant powers to influence the spirits and souls of both the living and the dead within the community. Consequently, they can bring about various fortunes, both positive and negative, as per their desires, including impacts on life and death.

Most Luo cultural practices and rituals centered around appeasing various spirits, including the souls of the dead and deities, while seeking harmony with the natural elements in their spiritual framework. Achieving this proper alignment brought numerous benefits, such as the discovery of medicines for different ailments, the naming of children, and the liberation of individuals or families from various forms of bondage, even the torment by angry souls and spirits of the deceased. The Luo people also believed in reincarnation, which reflected their belief in life after death, primarily expressed through their naming system; it was taboo to name a child after the living. Children could only be named after their deceased relatives.

- *For example, a child could be born and be given any random name by the parents. However, if the soul of a deceased relative sought to continue living through a newborn, it could cause the child to cry out to “demand” that a particular name of the deceased relative be given to him/her. To address this issue, the parents would call out the names of their deceased relatives until the child recognized the correct one, which would immediately cause a stop to their crying. As a result, the soul of the deceased person entered the child as soon as the name was spoken. This process allowed the souls of the dead to continue living in new bodies through newborns. The expectation for these reincarnated souls was that if the deceased had been a very bad person, they would be given a second chance at life, strive to retain only the good traits and characteristics from their previous life while discarding the negative ones. In the Luo culture, names are highly significant and symbolic and can greatly impact the lives of the recipients. In Luo culture native names called “nying mar juuk” may carry spiritual powers. Therefore, most parents avoided naming their children after wicked people and even consulted ritualists to prevent the souls associated with those names from entering their newborns through the naming process. However, they were prohibited from naming newborns after the living; only the names of the deceased were permitted.*

In the ancient Nubian culture of the Kingdom of Kush, there was a strong belief in life after death that influenced many societal practices. The Nubians preserved the bodies of their royalty through a process known as mummification and built grand pyramids as burial sites. These traditions have continued to the present day. The Nubians performed rituals in which

food offerings were placed in tombs so that the souls and spirits of the deceased could return to partake of them, demonstrating the affection of the living for the dead. In the Luo community, contemporary funeral events involve not only grieving for the deceased but also paying tribute to them through feasting. Similarly, the Luo culture emphasizes meticulous care for the deceased and conducts elaborate burial ceremonies and rituals, reflecting a deep-rooted belief in the continuity of life after death and the enduring presence of souls and spirits among the living.

SPIRITUALITY AND MYSTICISM AMONG THE LUOS

Contemporary pastors, evangelists, and other gifted individuals within religious communities often claim the ability to perform miracles including healing the sick, restoring relationships such as marriages, and casting out demons. Furthermore, they use "charms" (such as oils and water) for cleansing and various rituals in the name of God. Similarly, Luo traditional priests including medicine men, diviners, and spiritualists fulfilled comparable roles in their communities. These traditional practitioners engaged in healing, reconciliation of marriages, exorcisms, and cleansing rituals to solve a multitude of societal problems.

While some practices defy explanation or exceed the scope of this discussion, it is essential to recognize that certain gifted individuals among the Luo, going by different titles such as Ajuoga, Jabilo, Jasepe, Jajuok, Janawi etc, delved deeply into Luo Spirituality, acquiring profound powers through their connection to the spirit realms and gaining spiritual connections with spiritually unholy beings/spirits. They possessed the ability to influence both the spirits and the souls of the living, thereby shaping various outcomes, including the granting of good fortune or the instigation of calamities, even death. Similar to modern religious figures known by various titles such as healers, evangelists, prophets, and miracle workers, native Luo medicine men also undertook specific roles based on their distinct spiritual gifts and abilities. The spiritual capabilities of these individuals remained accessible only to those divinely chosen, enabling them to bridge the human and spirit realms. Through this connection, they mastered the art of influencing specific groups of spirits, souls, and deities to achieve particular outcomes in the lives of the living. Some of the titles given to the native medicine men within Luo culture include Jabilo (diviner), Ajuoga (medicine man), and Ja-juogi/Sepe (spiritualist), etc.

Diviners or (Jobilo) in the Luo culture belonged to a rank of medicine men with the ability to predict the future as well as perform protection rituals for the good of the community and individuals. They used charms (ndagla) to protect households and individuals from sorcery or misfortunes. Furthermore, they had the remarkable ability to infuse items with powerful charms, bestowing these enchanted objects upon ordinary individuals who lacked such protective powers. By doing so, they gifted these people a protective spiritual energy. These people could then place these charms within their homes or carry them on their person to create a formidable shield against malevolent spirits lurking in the shadows.

On the contrary, Ajuoga (Native doctors) is a person endowed with the spiritual gift of healing. They use herbs and charms to treat physical ailments. Additionally, they can influence the souls of the living, facilitating healing for individuals experiencing mental challenges. They can even cause harm to others remotely, manipulating a person's spirit and soul causing even death without direct physical contact.

Spiritualists (JoJuogi/Sepe) are individuals possessed by powerful spirits known as Juogi. They can transcend the physical realm, accessing the spirit world to manipulate people's souls, primarily for healing purposes. In situations of unusual or chronic diseases, a spiritualist can delve into the spirit realm, summoning the spirits of plants or animals such as snakes, bees, tortoises, birds, and monkeys to aid in identifying remedies for these ailments. The Luo believe that all living things (both plants and animals) harbour spirits. At a higher spiritual level, these spirits can unite to offer solutions or inflict harm. This elevated communication enables animals to access medicinal herbs for self-treatment. Humans, too, can engage with this high-level communication system to discover a wide array of remedies for nearly all conditions. With sufficient spiritual connection, ajuoga can command snakes, bees, elephants, and various other animals to act according to their wishes like the "baba nyukis" of your world. The Luo distinguish between spirituality, which they regard as divine, and religion, which they consider as secondary to spirituality.

By favoring religion over spirituality, the Luo have arguably closed themselves off from nature's potential solutions.

The Luo people possessed strong connections to their deities and the spirits of the deceased, underpinned by a robust faith that enhanced the efficacy of their native medicine men. This community viewed life through a spiritual lens, believing that both positive and negative experiences were intertwined with the spiritual realm. Within the Luo community, spiritualists, diviners, and native doctors undertook both spiritual and religious roles, performing rituals that addressed a wide range of societal and individual challenges. These medicine men provided remedies for illnesses, facilitated dispute resolution, offered protective spells, and upheld community traditions. Moreover, they claimed the ability to inflict harm on adversaries from afar, emphasizing Luo's strong belief in spiritual interconnectedness.

WHY IS JESUS CHRIST CONSIDERED GOD WHILE HUMANS ARE VIEWED AS LESSER DEITIES (GODS)

We learned through the Sumerian texts that in the First World dispensation, God, humans and many other gods/angels lived together and interacted in a direct, almost physical manner. However, their relationship was hierarchical: the supreme God was at the top, followed by the gods, with humans as subordinates to the gods. Initially, before the creation of man, the gods toiled on the earth to make it habitable and sustain themselves. Over time, the workload became unbearable, and the gods complained to God, requesting permission to create man in their likeness to share the labour.

Anu, the God of gods, recognized that the burden was too great and approved the creation of humans. His son Enki, also known as Ea, proposed creating a man in their image to bear the workload. With the help of his sister Ninki, he successfully created a man. This narrative suggests that some god had a son (Enki) and a daughter (Ninki) who worked together in this process.

The Sumerian text says that "a god was put to death, and his body was mixed with clay. From that mixture, the first human was fashioned in the likeness of the gods".

This story tells us that a human consists of clay/earth and a divine essence (the likeness or image of the gods, not of God). Consistent with the foregoing narrative, in Genesis 1:26, the Bible states, "Let us make man in our image" (using plural). Biblical text shows that at the creation time God was not alone. On the other hand, the Sumerian text tells us that it was not actually God but Enki and his sister Ninki. This scriptural directive implies that every human being is, in some sense, a god; we possess the likeness or image (which encompasses our soul or personality) of the gods.

This aspect of human creation distinguishes ordinary humans from Jesus Christ. While Jesus was born in a flesh-and-blood body like all humans, His soul was divine; He is the only individual "created" in the image or likeness of God himself. All other humans are born with flesh and blood but carry the image (personality or soul) of the gods. This is why Jesus Christ is considered God, while all of us humans are viewed as gods. The divine presence resides within our bodies, which is why it is referred to as the temple of God.

HOW THE LUO PEOPLES EMBRACED CHRISTIANITY

Earlier chapters highlighted that the Luo people were associated with the Nubians shortly after leaving Egypt, more than 2,000 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. By the time Jesus was born in the Middle East, the Nubians had already settled in present-day South Sudan. Before converting to Christianity, the Luos practiced monotheism while also honouring many gods, who were believed to perform specialized functions a practice influenced by their Egyptian heritage. King Ezana of the Axumite Kingdom was the first African to convert to Christianity in 324 AD. He was converted by his teacher, Frumentius, who later established the Axumite Coptic Church, which eventually evolved into the modern Ethiopian Orthodox Church. This pivotal moment occurred just before King Ezana overthrew the Kush Kingdom in 400 AD, marking the Luo people's initial encounter with Christianity.

The Kush Kingdom was historically the most prosperous of all Nubian kingdoms. Following its decline, the Luo people gradually began converting to Christianity, particularly as their last three kingdoms adopted the faith. However, after the fall of these kingdoms, the Luo people disintegrated and lost much of their Christian beliefs. They embraced a system of spirituality focused on worshipping one God (referred to as Nyasaye Obonyo Nyakalaga), while also recognizing the presence of lesser gods (nyiseche) and spirits (juogi).

HEAVEN & HELL

In many spiritual traditions, particularly within Christianity, "body" refers to the physical form made up of flesh and blood, "soul" encompasses the mind, personality, will, feelings, and emotions, while "spirit" is considered the innermost part of a person, representing their connection to the spirit realm or connection to a higher power or the divine. Its eternal nature often sees it as the part that survives physical death.

Body: The physical, tangible part of you, interacting with the world through the senses.

Soul: Is the non-physical Bridge between the body and the spirit. The mental and emotional aspects, including thoughts, feelings, personality, and conscience, have the power to make choices between good and bad and feel guilty or not guilty.

Spirit: The non-physical part that connects to a higher power, often associated with faith, intuition, and the essence of who you are. The spirit is often considered the part that directly experiences a connection with God or a higher power (spirit realm).

Human Being: Humans are made up of these three distinct parts: body, soul, and spirit. While separate, these aspects are seen as intertwined or interlinked, with the spirit influencing the soul and the soul impacting the actions of the body and vice versa.

The spirit realm is seen as a “space” where all spirits exist freely, including spirits of all living things, such as plants and animals, and the souls of the dead, including the holy spirit - exist in the spirit realm. The Holy Spirit is also part of the spirit realm but is considered divine or of God and more superior spirit than all other spirits. This book posits that the Holy Spirit was introduced into the spirit realm by God on the day of the Pentecost as part of the changes God made in the Third Word dispensation. One of the changes God made in the Second Word dispensation was to give man the free will of choice. Through our souls, one can choose to have a spiritual connection (worship) with any of the spirits, souls, and gods in the Spirit Realm. The deliberate choice or conscious decision to worship (have a spiritual connection with) any of the spirits in the spirit realm is called Spiritual Awakening, Christians call it Salvation. Salvation, as Christians call it, is the deliberate choice or conscious decision to worship or have a spiritual connection with the Holy Spirit of God. It is this particular connection with the Holy Spirit that is associated with the concept or idea of heaven.

STATE OF BEING IN HEAVEN OR HELL

In the Bible, heaven is God's dwelling place, a place of peace, love, and a community of righteous people. Heaven is a state of being, not a physical place. People who have made the conscious decision to worship God by deliberately choosing to have a spiritual connection with the Holy Spirit shall enjoy the state of being in heaven. I will explain why...

In the spirit realm, there are all manner of spirits, including the Holy Spirit, spirits of all plants and animals, the souls of all dead people, and the gods or Angels. The spirits, souls, and gods in the spirit realm have powers to influence the life of the living negatively or positively. Spiritually "Gifted" Individuals may also have powers to connect to the spirit realms, manipulate some spirits, and use them to cause problems to the living, including deaths. Now, individuals who have made the conscious decision to worship God by connecting to the Holy Spirit, which is the most superior spirit of all spirits, souls, and gods in the spirit realm, shall have power over all these elements of the spirit realm. What that means is that the life of people connected to God through the Holy Spirit shall have complete protection and shall not be tormented or manipulated by inferior spirits or souls or gods. They shall have power over all spirits of plants and animals and shall have full control of their destiny. What that means is blessings, peace, joy, happiness, love, unity, and prosperity, long life while here on earth. A paradise with God and that is what is called the state of being in heaven. The opposite is being accessible to all manner of spirits, souls, and gods, which can torment or manipulate and kill at will, and that is the state of being in Hell. As Revelation 21:3 says “Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. God's dwelling place which is heaven is among the people and he dwells with them.”

In the Luo culture, some people were believed to be living their lives in "heaven" while still on earth. They were called "Jopolo," while people suffering like hell here on earth were called "Jopiny." The concept of being in the two states of being existed long before Christianity came with Salvation.

In this 21st century, in this Third World Dispensation, Salvation is only through
The Holy Spirit = The Spirit of God = The Spirit of Jesus Christ.

JALUO NONG'EYO NYASAYE CHON.

AMEN.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ming'ala J. Obure was born in Seme Kowe and grew up in Jusa Village. As a young boy growing up, he loved to be with elders and became fascinated by the depth of knowledge the elders had about Luo spirituality, culture, nature and the world around them. It was all at their fingertips, oral and unwritten. Their only system of referencing was by asking another elder. That is why and how he grew up to be a strong Luo culture enthusiast with a lot of interest to gain understanding of the spirituality of the Luo and cultural history of the people, especially those in Kenya. As a practicing Christian, he loves to read the bible for spiritual nourishment and often get tempted to compare "biblical culture" with Luo culture and spirituality.

Ming'ala Obure is the founder and sponsor of Semeluo History, Cultural Heritage and Development Information Centre. The organization has conducted extensive research, particularly among the Luo subclan called JOSEME and documented their history and genealogy. They have published some of their work in multimedia platforms.

However, he is neither a historian nor religious.
