Ancestral and Spiritual Naming of Children among the Jopadhola Lwo of Eastern Uganda

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Social Justice Education, OISE

University of Toronto

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Abstract

This study brings Indigenous understandings to the anti-colonial resistance by the Jopadhola Lwo people of Eastern Uganda. The Jopadhola Lwo people link with ancestors in the naming ceremonies for their children.

For the study, I employed Indigenous methodology to understand how a minority people resist assimilation. I interviewed elders in Dhopadhola Lwo. The Indigenous methodology is the Padhola elders’ agency for educating the researcher. The study objectives investigated: the Indigenous naming practices and how these are understood in contemporary contexts; the Indigenous practices and the possibilities for decolonization; the understanding of the interface of society, culture, and Nature, the nexus of body, mind, and soul, and the spirit from naming ceremonies of Padhola; and the implications for transforming schooling in African and Euro-American contexts.

The research findings revealed:

1. Name variations of Padhola with ongoing ceremonies for *Apipili* and *Yao Rut*. 

ii
2. Resistance to foreign names as Njawala or twigs.
4. Ancestors reveal children’s names in dreams.
5. Indigenous education resists Christianity.
6. The Jopadhola elders are not worth their salt if they do not resist foreign influence and advocate for a return to traditional education.
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Finally, I extend my thanks to Elder Okoth Ogola of Moriwa Sule Clan and his wife, Jennifer Okoth Ogola of Tororo, for introducing me to places in Padhola I had not known. You also provided me with transport and encouragement. Thanks to my, cousin Professor Laban Erapu, who has read this work. Thank you to my mother and all the Padhola matriarchs. Following in the footsteps of A. C. K. Oboth Ofumbi, this study is dedicated to Shem Nyamai, the Elders of Padhola, and Were, the Creator of the Universe!
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Chapter 1

Introduction

This dissertation examined the ancestral and spiritual naming practices of children among the Jopadhola Lwo of Eastern Uganda. The Jopadhola are a minority group of Lwo-speaking people whose Lwo identity is in danger of disappearing unless they retain it through their ancestral names. The study gives a historical overview of the Jopadhola Lwo of Eastern Uganda in pre-colonial times, their beliefs, and how they have continued to live. The study listens to the Jopadhola Lwo elders tell their stories as a collective voice on how they name their children and retain their identity in an enclave. The study of the ancestral and spiritual naming system of the Jopadhola fosters multi-centred ways of learning and presents a counter knowledge by an Indigenous people as a move away from the familiar. The Jopadhola community is eager to share knowledge within a worldview that fosters a suitable environment for Indigenous education. This study used an Indigenous methodology to collect the data in the local Dhopadhola Lwo language. Indigenous knowledge is that knowledge about the identity, governance, science, trade, technology, history, customs, norms, health, religion, values, and the very existence of Indigenous nations. The historical attempts to erode indigeneity itself were introduced at the advent of Christianity and other forms of social violence. However, today the Jopadhola Lwo still conserve their indigeneity through the resilience of Indigenous naming ceremonies for their children at birth.

Throughout this study, Lwoo, Lwo and Luo are used interchangeably. The words originate from the verb “luwo,” which means “to follow,” reflecting the historical movement of the Lwo/Luo people along the Nile River in search of fertile uninhabited land. Later on, an actual
ancestor called Lwo emerged. The Jopadhola prefer the spelling, Lwo, which is more prevalent among their people. Historically, the Luo are the larger group or nation consisting of ethnic groups of linguistic relatives who are descendants of a common ancestor. Anthropological records indicate that Luo ethnic groups are found in the countries of east, north, and central Africa: Ethiopia and Eritrea, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. The spelling “Luo” has been adopted or retained mainly by the Luo of Kenya and Tanzania as the name for their ethnic group. The Luo speaking people of Uganda prefer the spelling Lwo (Crazzolara, 1951, 1954; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976, 1980; p’Bitek, 1971).

With regard to the naming system, every child born into a Padhola Lwo homestead goes through a naming ceremony at birth and is given an ancestral name. Homesteads in any Luo culture are extended families of clan social units, living together or close by, who are considered blood relatives. Traditionally, the people immortalize their ancestors by participating in naming ceremonies linked to kuunu or kuni shrines (Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). For example, Kenyan Luo Ocholla-Ayayo (1980, p. i) dedicated his book on the Luo Culture to the Luo ancestors, signifying the continuity of ancestors. Links with ancestors are celebrated in naming ceremonies, where children are given Indigenous names, some according to circumstances when they are born, some according to seasons, others according to harvests or epidemics, as well as specific names for twins. All the names given are patrilineally arranged and accompanied by their ceremonies. The naming ceremonies necessitate growing a lot of food to be consumed at such ceremonies. Ocholla-Ayayo said, “In the Luo tradition, it has never been a custom to eat meat, drink milk or eat fish without the Luo millet bread, kuon. Also, fish nutrients [were] never used
without *kuon*” (p. 19). All these foods are available for feasting, especially during naming and other ceremonies throughout the year.

Nagongera is the place with many rock shelters where some Padhola shrines are located. Within the Lwo culture, rocks are the threshing floors. However, during the Sewe raids, they were also shelters for women and children (Ogot, 1967). Situated within the rocks are clan shrines or *kuunu* from where sacrifices to the deity are offered before and after any event, including naming the children, thus maintaining pre-colonial beliefs. According to Ogot (1972),

[Colonially imposed beliefs were] merely outward signs and symbols but the majority of the Jopadhola still believe sincerely in their own “Old Testament.” The Jopadhola have again rebuilt the shrine of *Bura* and during certain tribal festivals, both Padhola Christians and non-Christians assemble at the central shrine to re-dedicate themselves for the tasks ahead. (p. 133)

Padhola Christians assemble at the central shrine and usually practice two belief systems: colonial and pre-colonial. Moreover, the rebuilding of the shrines that were earlier burned down by Christian “teachers” challenges the notion that the dominant religion among the Jopadhola is Christianity.

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The naming practice of the Jopadhola is a route to rethink current social relations in a racialized and colonized world. The Jopadhola are a minority with a long history as Luo-speaking people who wish to retain their identity. Although they live among the Bantu majority, they retain their distinct way of reproducing their Luo names through the ancestral and spiritual naming of children. Ogot (1967, p. 61) referred to the Padhola and Kenya Luo as the non-Bantuized Luo who moved away from Pawiir, in the north-Eastern corner of Bunyoro, into Alurland, Acholiland, and the modern Lango region, and later southwards about 14 to 15
generations ago. The Jopadhola and the Lwo, in general, also named the places they passed through. Naming places or something in the area signifies ownership or power over the place.

Indigenous people tend to retain their knowledge the same way they have done for centuries, even during times of continental migration, such as that of the Luo-speaking Jopadhola (Oboth-Ofumbi, 1960; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976; Ogot, 1967; p’Bitek, 1971). It is fair to note that the post-colonial leaders following the nominal political independence have not genuinely redeemed Indigenous knowledge or mainstreamed it in their current education systems (Fanon, 1963/2004; Memmi, 1967; Vrasidas & McIsaac, 1999).

In Uganda, where the British ruled through the natural rulers, there was no provision for the separation of Indigenous knowledge from colonial education. There was also no provision for the protection of Indigenous education. In fact, the use of natural rulers was a ploy to stem resistance. Moreover, the natural rulers perhaps could not, by themselves, protect Indigenous knowledge during the colonial administration since some of them were deported to far-away places. Indigenous knowledge, however, remained with the elders, some of whom are still living today (Crazzolara, 1951; Fanon, 1963/2004; Karugire, 2001; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967; p’Bitek, 1971; Southall, 1977; Vrasidas & McIsaac, 1999).

The Jopadhola Lwo, in particular, will not support the distortion of their identity, their knowledge, or the norms in their cultural enclave. The Jopadhola elders expect their people to observe their norms and kwer with regard to naming their children, and they willingly share their knowledge with researchers where there is mutual trust. For example, there is preserved knowledge in Padhola on how to co-exist with sexual minorities, which they willingly share.

For methodology purposes, such knowledge is only shared with researchers who respect the Padhola community. Women in Padhola also enjoy a relatively equitable and independent
status. On the other hand, Mogensen (2002) posited that women of Padhola are not heard or that they do not speak. Moreover, Indigenous African women’s contributions to the production of knowledge are not new, since women have always been the primary educators of children. Okeke, Okafor, and Uzochukwu (2006, p. 491) talked about “African governments only paying lip service” where women’s status is concerned.

This study is an opportunity for Indigenous elders, as important members of society, to provide counter strategies for continuity (Fanon, 1963/2004). Learners will appreciate that “all cultures can contribute scientific knowledge” (Odora Hoppers & Richards, 2012, p. 85). Theoretically, this study of ancestral and spiritual names of a minority is an attempt at reclamation of self-hood—or a pilgrimage that anyone can take up (Cajete, 1999; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008; Tisdell, 2003). Scholars and learners acting as passive instruments for implementing epistemological inequities must rethink their previous views. The study of the resilience of a minority identity through their naming system is a viable means to achieve justice through Indigenous agency (Abdi, 2006; Cajete, 2005; Dei & Simmons, 2010; wa Thiongo, 1995).

Many Indigenous peoples have their names ignored as non-names by the mainstream society. The computer, for example, automatically underlines these names in red and suggests other possible spellings. This is because of the material fed into the computer systems, which is Eurocentric and totally inadequate. Indigenous people have to add their names to the dictionary to overcome pre-determined exclusion. This study on ancestral and spiritual ways of naming children among a minority group will give hope for healing through reconnecting with one’s identity to people already traumatized, to the extent that most people (and not only among the Jopadhola) tend to use Western names at the expense of diminishing their identity (Fanon, 2008).
For an Indigenous person in such circumstances, it is traumatizing to have to pronounce or spell one’s name over and over to the non-Indigenous people (Fanon, 1965, 2008). Such encounters exhibit a power-over relationship with the dominant system, which is what influences some people to change to Western sounding names.

The Jopadhola ancestral naming system attaches values to their people’s names, whereas the dominant society seems indifferent to them. The study of the Jopadhola ancestral and spiritual naming is an example of alternative knowledge on the right to an authentic self. The traumas that people go through are responsible for all manner of evil, violence, and mental stress among Indigenous people and other minorities. Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001) contended that “there are numerous examples throughout human history, of the use of colonial power to subvert the Indigenous identity” (p. 302). The Indigenous identity or Indigenous people, in some instances, have had their cultures suppressed through compulsions that infringed on their cultures during the colonization period (Mamdani, 2002, p. 160). Such compulsions are the assimilation tendencies that further marginalize Indigenous people’s identities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The post-colonial education in Uganda negatively influences the ancestral and spiritual naming of children among the Jopadhola Lwo of Eastern Uganda because of the addition of foreign names. The post-colonial education sways the Jopadhola children from their Indigenous cultures in order to give them a colonial identity. Throughout Uganda, schools are mainly founded on Anglicanism and Catholicism, which are the two Christian denominations that required children be baptized with foreign names. Post-colonial education, therefore, alienates Jopadhola Indigenous children from the naming systems of their society. However, the
Jopadhola society has steadfastly resisted their children’s alienation by reproducing the ancestral and spiritual names through ongoing naming ceremonies and rituals.

1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to understand the child naming ceremonies as part of the Jopadhola Lwo lineage, as they have persisted since pre-colonial times. To continue with their Lwo lineage requires that the Jopadhola remember their ancestors by naming children after them. This naming system has continued until today. The coming of Christianity into Padhola was through stealth and force, whereby armed British colonialists were led by their Baganda agents who wanted to settle past scores with the Jopadhola as a means of occupation. When the colonialists entered Padhola, they used the Baganda *catechists* to burn the shrines of Padhola. They recruited a few foreign Baganda *chiefs* and *catechists* in the area to try and force the people into Christianity. However, the Baganda chiefs and their colonial masters were roundly rejected, resisted, and denied recognition in Padhola. The colonial administration also used the pretext of church-founded schools to try to erode the Jopadhola names by making Christianization a pre-condition for access to school (Ogot, 1967).

My study objectives answer the following questions:

1. What are Indigenous naming practices and how are these to be understood in contemporary contexts?

2. What do these practices mean for Indigenous knowledge and possibilities for decolonization?

3. How can we understand the interface of society, culture, and Nature and nexus of body, mind, and soul, and how are the nexus of body, mind, soul, and spirit from these naming ceremonies practiced by an Indigenous community?
4. What are the lessons for transforming schooling and education in African and Euro-American contexts?

1.4 Research Questions

The central research questions of this study were:

1. What are the practices of naming children among the Indigenous Jopadhola Lwo people, and what lessons can we learn from them?

2. What do naming ceremonies among the Jopadhola Lwo tell us about African Indigenous knowledges?

3. What are the implications of the Jopadhola Lwo’s ancestral and spiritual naming of children, their naming ceremonies, and rituals for schooling and education?

The Jopadhola naming patterns are similar to those of other Luo-speaking groups in different geographical locations: for example, the Anwyak of Ethiopia or the Luo of Kenya. In the Lwoo, Crazzolara (1950) told us that Luo names appear to remain constant regardless of where the people migrate. In studying the Luo migrations, Crazzolara (1950, 1951 & 1954), an Italian priest, asked, “Now in the extraordinary case of the division and separation of a whole nation, what would happen to its names?” (p. 2). Crazzolara (1954) later referred to the Luo-speaking people as the “Luo nation,” for they consider themselves a nation with enduring Luo names. On the study of the Luo-speaking people, Crazzolara (1950) referred to the pattern of naming among the Luo and stated,

Under primitive conditions, names are not the outcome of much reflection, but rather of chance. So it was with these people. A great part of them came to be called by their old collective name Lwoo, whilst others, as a result of ingrained habit, continued to call themselves by their particular local names. Seldom, however, is their old name quite forgotten. The same phenomenon may be observed in the case of clan names. (p. 2)
This study counters Crazzolara’s (1951) notion of chance being what has determined Lwoo naming over the centuries. The Catholic priest and researcher, Crazzolara (1950), in an earlier volume of his book, recorded that the Jopadhola are one among the Luo groups who had marched with the bulk of the Lwoo, but who eventually remained behind and retained their particular local name by which they had been known even in the country of origin. Crazzolara (1950) also said, “Among those (Lwo retaining their names) are the Collo of Sudan, the Anywaah of Ethiopia, and the Jopadhola of Eastern Uganda” (p. 3). Moreover, it has been rather fashionable for scholars to study African ethnicities from the usual Western perspective (Abel & Richters, 2009; Evans-Pritchard, 1965; Mogensen, 2002). It is, however, necessary to question if the scholars have learned anything from cultures they are studying if everything is conceptualized in a way that leaves no room for change (Atkinson, 1992; Mogensen, 2002; Simonse, 1992; Whitehead, 1981).

1.5 Contextualizing Jopadhola Lwo Naming System

The Jopadhola education about the ancestral and spiritual naming of children connects with the efforts and desires of Indigenous people in North America to foster relevant Indigenous education (Battiste & Henderson, 2009; Cajete, 1999; Massaquoi & Wane, 2007; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976; p’Bitek, 1971; Smith, 1999). In fact, these names are themselves expressions from Indigenous cultures and their resilience. To a great extent, not understanding Indigenous people’s culture is a very serious concern for Indigenous people and their descendants who have been given ancestral names. My experience with my own surname “Jagire” is sometimes a struggle, especially when required to spell it most of the time. This name is, however, sacred in my own community, both as a name and a proverb. It is disrespectful to mispronounce a culturally sacred name.
1.5.1 Indigenous cultures

The dominant knowledge system negates Indigenous knowledge. For example, there were attempts at changing and anglicizing Cameroonian Roger Milla of the 1988 World Cup from his Indigenous African surname “Milla” to “Miller,” which changes the Indigenous meaning (“Roger Milla,” 2016). If Milla were to accept such a change, he would stand to offend his Kumba ethnic group that has named Milla a prince of his tribe (Harari & Ominsky, 1994). It is the authority of elders and their responsibility to educate the community and see that the values of Indigenous names are continual.

1.5.2 Authority and responsibility of the elders

Indigenous people have preserved the knowledge that earlier anthropologists may have missed due to language barriers during colonial administration. Elders have authority and responsibility that must be recognized in disseminating Indigenous knowledge. For my study, I used Indigenous methodology to collect my data, which entails the use of linguistic skills for identifying Lwo names of places and people. It is the Indigenous methodology that validates what colonialism had eroded in the people’s culture. Indigenous writer Oboth Ofumbi (1960), from Padhola, expressed fear that unless our children are taught our culture, they are likely to abandon it and follow only foreign cultures to the detriment of this community: “rupir pama ri donjo pa nonin m’omore kod wan bende woth tek tek” (p. 1), meaning because of interaction with other cultures that either come to Padhola or because of the Jopadhola’s frequent travel to other cultures.
1.6 Conceptualizing Black/African

Throughout this dissertation, I will use interchangeably the concepts of African, African descent, and Black within the contexts of continental Africa or in the diaspora of North America, which all depict historical contacts with different racial groups. The distinction between Black and African is blurry. It is also historical that Africans were not isolated, as there was early contact with Arabs, Chinese, Malay, Persians and other non-Black Africans on the continent. All these nationalities traded with Africans before European colonization. Black Africans already had contacts with light skinned people before European colonization of the continent. According to Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976), Luo migration southward along the Nile River started after their contact with some hostile light-skinned people in their earlier contacts with the Egyptian empire. I want to look at Luoness as synonymous with Upper Egypt. Alenyo (2009) and Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) elaborated that the Luo and Nubians, or the Nubi or Jo-Nub, were neighbours throughout Luo history. Using linguistic evidence, many names are identifiable in Luo (Okello-Paito, 2009). A recent resident of Egypt was given a book written by Grace Ogot (1990) on Luo culture, The Promised Land, and here is his review:

A friend of mine who lives in Kenya gave me this book. It hit me hard. How can Kenya and Egypt be so similar regarding family ties and traditions, and how local traditions are sometimes considered part of religion, sometimes overwhelming it? It gave me an idea why Egypt should explicitly revert back to her African roots. (ElGohary, 2012, para. 1)

Grace Ogot (1990), in the Promised Land, shared the Luo culture in this novel, which demonstrated how the cultures practiced unawares in Egypt, which Alenyo (2009) and Okello-Paito (2009) portrayed as Luo residency of the ancient Egyptian Empire. The Jopadhola are Luo, and their kin are the Luo of Western Kenya and northern Tanzania, on whose culture Grace Ogot’s book was based.
Africans had mingled easily with Arabs, Portuguese, and other Bantu peoples to give rise to a modern Swahili culture. Kiswahili is now the *lingua franca* of east and central Africa. In Kiswahili, the continent is referred to as Afrika, and a Black-bodied person is Mwafrika, which is quite acceptable. In Kiswahili, Black people refer to themselves as *watu weusi* or “Black people” (Awde, 2000, p. 14; see also Kaligula & Lodhi, 1980; Richards, 1985). *MwaAfrika* is the Kiswahili concept for one’s Africanity (see Mazrui, 1972).

The concepts of African and Black are also found among Indigenous Jopadhola Lwo people. Africa has dynamic societies, where the concept of Black people is usually salient in the statements of continental Africans, just as in North America. The Black concept is also more political among Indigenous Africans. Both *African* and *Black* are used as mutually intelligible and acceptable (Dei & Calliste, 2000; Dei, Hall, & Rosenberg, 2000; Howard, 2009; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976; Odera Oruka, 1990; Ogot, 2004; Ominde, 1970). Other concepts used in this study include dominant pedagogies, the familiar, colonial education, Indigenous education, Indigenous knowledge, Luoness, dispersal, invisibility, marginalization, post-colonial, pre-colonial, culture, norms, values, encounters, and anti-colonialism.

Asante and Asante Welsh (1985) argued that “Western intellectuals had taught the world that Africa had no culture; or wrote as if ancient Egypt was not in Africa or that the people of ancient Egypt were not Africans” (p. 3). However, according to oral knowledge among the Indigenous Africans, ancient Egypt was very much a part of Black Africa (Diop, 1974; Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Diop (1974) said, “Anthropology has failed to establish the existence of any white Egyptian race; if anything, it tends to establish the opposite” (p. 132). On the other hand, among the Lwo Indigenous people, oral tradition is replete with their ancestry in the ancient Egyptian empire. As such, the concept of Blackness is widely used among
continental Africans in Lwo legend, whereby Okello-Paito (2009) said the Luo also had their contact with non-Black people. According to Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976), such historical encounters with non-Black people bring up the “question of the origin of the Lwo and reasons for migration and settlement in many parts of East Africa” (p. 25). The Nilotic migration was along the Nile, with links to Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt. According to Taban Lo Liyong (2006), this migration explains why “Africans moved south carrying with them their cultural knowledge, religions, their gods, and systems of governance” (para. 5).

Moreover, according to Diop (1974), “In other regions of Black Africa, the events occur exactly as in Egypt with regard to the killing of a monarch. This practice also existed in ancient Meroe, i.e., Nubia, Uganda-Rwanda” (p. 139), when there was/is a need for change of monarchs. Such customs are found in the legends of Indigenous Africans, especially about the Nilotic monarchies. Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) asserted that “the Lwo inhabitants had been dispersed by the Lotuko Brown Men War from their blissful settlement of Tekidi. In the former times they had lived in one monolithic kingdom, organized politically upon segmentary principles” (p. 161). The use of the colour-conscious concept of Black among Indigenous and continental Africans signifies encounters with non-Black people who prompted their migrations (see also Mike, 1998; Seligman, 1932). For the Lwo-speaking people, this encounter with non-Black people was a first in the Egyptian empire. Legend tells of the Lwo as neighbours of the Nubi, contemporarily known as Nubians (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster further contended that Father J. P. Crazzolara’s “collection of oral traditions among the Nilotes, only places Lwo origins to Bahr el Ghazal near Rumbek, but does not extend far enough to cover Lwo evolution” (p. 25). Bahr el Ghazal, in the Sudan itself, is not an Indigenous name, but Arabic, signifying a re-naming. It is fair to say that Indigenous
knowledge studies in the colonial era by anthropologists recorded the relevant aspects of Lwo traditions, but did not go deep enough to mention the complexities, such as the colour concepts.

The Jopadhola too have had their own encounters with Europeans, and concerning who they are, they steadfastly call themselves wa ji m’achol or “we’re Black people” (Oboth-Ofumbi, 1960, p. 6). The Jopadhola will not readily say “we Africans,” but rather “we are Black people;” hence, wa ji m’achol symbolized contact with non-Black people (p. 6). The Jopadhola also speak in parables and proverbs, which makes it twice as hard for anyone new to understand or figure out the meanings of their concepts. On a first approach, the Jopadhola are generally skeptical towards strangers. This study also examined a strategy of protection of Jopadhola education from an early stage, beginning at the naming ceremonies, hence the need to engage the cultural concepts. Oboth Ofumbi (1960) stressed continuity for the Jopadhola Lwo culture. For their over protectiveness towards their culture and identity, Ogot (1967) referred to the geographical area of the Jopadhola in Eastern Uganda as “Luo Island” (p. 84). Non-Luo people studying the Jopadhola refer to Padhola as the Luo Enclave” (p. 84). They are the only Lwo-speaking people with Lwo names in an area surrounded by Bantu and Nilo-Hamitic speaking people (Cohen, 1972). In fact, Ogot (1967) has said of the Jopadhola:

Within these settlements the people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliations. By the beginning of this century (20th) they had expanded into all parts of modern Padhola. How this happened and how this small group of settlers, numbering perhaps a few hundred (originally), managed to survive and to preserve its identity as a tiny Luo island in a hostile sea of Bantu and “Nilo-Hamitic” people is the story which we must consider. (p. 83)

The concept of Blackness may explain the meaning of Acooli, an ethnic group closely related to the Jopadhola because of their Luoness and kinship. Acooli means “I am Black” in the Luo dictionary (Crazzolara, 1954; Odonga, 2007). Some records, however, indicated that the Acholi name was probably given by Arab traders after an encounter with the Collo (Shilluk)
Lwo-speaking people further north in the Sudan (p’Bitek, 1971). However, Acooli is Lwo, sometimes with the contemporary spelling Acholi, which still refers to Blackness; it means “I am Black” (Odonga, 2007, p. 7). The Luo of Kenya refer to themselves or their area as Rateng ka, which still means “this Black people’s place.” Similarly, in the Kiswahili language, the people promptly refer to themselves as sisi watu weusi or “we are Black people.” They may also say sisi watu wa Bara la Afrika or we people from mainland Africa (Kalogula & Lodhi, 1980; Mazrui, 1992). The political concept of Black could have started with Indigenous people in Africa upon their contact with people who were not Black.

1.7 Significance of the Study

I acknowledge that there is substantial literature and interest in the larger Luo/Lwo-speaking people. However, the Lwo people have not been studied in the context of their ancestral naming system, their resistance to assimilation, or how they reinforce the norms of their culture, as I am doing among the Jopadhola. The study on the Jopadhola Lwo integrates how a small group of Indigenous people survive as a minority, constantly preserving their culture, knowledge, and identity, all of which are the core of the ongoing naming conventions for their children. The resilience and survival of this minority group have implications for questioning marginality, invisibility, and suppression of Indigenous education in the global education system. Moreover, Ogot (1967) said, “The problems of assimilation which features prominently in the early histories of other Luo people are significantly lacking in Padhola until two or five generations ago when the Iteso were infiltrating into the area” (p. 120), which means there is a steadfast preservation of the Luo minority’s culture. The preservation of Jopadhola Luo identity demystifies the Luo-speaking people’s culture and contends for the representation of Indigenous education.
Luoness is a process of preserving an ancient civilization by a people minoritized in their diverse areas of residence after dispersals. Like other people throughout continental Africa, a very early migration saw the Luo-speaking people scattered in many countries of east and central Africa. The Luo-speaking people are not the only people who are where they are today because of migration. Other groups also migrated after dispersals. For example, the Bantu speakers dominating Uganda today also entered the country a long time ago through the Congo on their way from Cameroon in West Africa, from whence they dispersed (Mazrui, 1986). Mazrui and Mazrui (1998) have said that historically, the Bantu are said to have originated in Eastern Nigeria and the adjoining areas of Cameroon to move or continue to move all over the continent. This study also has implications for descendants of Africans in the diaspora in North America for wholeness in their history and culture, where Indigenous students do not see their representation in what they learn in all levels of educational institutions (see Dei, 2008). A number of non-Indigenous scholars are beginning to collaborate with the Indigenous scholars and are also increasingly noticing the lack of ontological benefits through dominant pedagogies (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999). There is a traumatizing trend towards Indigenous learners whose base in Indigenous education is usually excluded. Indigenous education systems, when critically examined, may have answers to the dominant system of education. For example, Semali and Kincheloe (1999) stated, “Indigenous knowledge is an ambiguous topic that immediately places analysts on a dangerous terrain. Not only are scholars unsure what we are talking about, but many analysts are unsure who should be talking about it” (p. 2). Indigenous people are the custodians of such complex knowledge, which they practice informally on a daily basis.

The significance of this work is that it is an agency for people of African descent to be who they really are. Other Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can also learn from the
contributions of the ancestral naming system of the Padhola, in order to empower themselves, value their cultures, and decolonize current dominant knowledge. African naming systems can, therefore, be taught to learners of African descent, even those in the diaspora. This naming system is something young learners must have access to, with implications for African-Americans learning about African culture. A strong African cultural base is needed for educating children in the diaspora to retain cultural values for holism and identity in a dynamic world (Asante, 2003; Odora Hoppers & Richards, 2012).

This study will particularly stir up members of the Jopadhola Lwo community to remain proud of their cultural heritage by accessing Indigenous education in the community and becoming guardians of their traditions. The ancestral and spiritual names thrive, preserve, and extend the Lwo culture to future generations (Asante & Asante Welsh, 1985; Crazzolara, 1950, 1951, 1954; Dei, 2000; Fanon, 1963/2004; Oboth-Ofumbi, 1960; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976; Odera Oruka, 1990; Ominde, 1970; p’Bitek, 1966).

The ancestral and spiritual names celebrated during the ceremonies give the bearers wholeness in the face of racialization challenges. The survival of the naming system encourages an Indigenous worldview for multi-centred ways of knowing. Dei (1996) contended that to ensure equity in knowledge representation, there must be room for “a multiplicity of perspectives in academic discourse, knowledge, and texts” (p. 176). The study is for learners to access crucial counter-alternative strategies for their decolonization. Education is pedagogically fairer when all knowledges contribute equally to the growth of learners globally by fostering the dissemination of counter knowledge. Abdi (2006) contended that it is time for the reculturation of Africa.

This dissertation unravels the resilience of pre-colonial knowledge (Abdi, 2006; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976; Richards, 1985). The promotion of colonial education over Indigenous education
faced criticism and resistance for encouraging racially segregated schooling (Abdi, 2006; Whitehead, 1981). Whitehead (1981, p. 72) erroneously saw any resistance to the anti-British education only as a “wave” of some “anti-colonial sentiments,” thus typically justifying only British education. This, however, is what the Indigenous people resist steadfastly through an alternative Indigenous education.

Foreign education attempts to break the will of Indigenous people. Unfortunately, this takes place all over the African continent and other places where Indigenous people live. Dei et al. (2000) contended:

A study of Indigenous knowledges brings a complex array of theoretical and methodological issues to the table that conceptualizes Indigenous knowledge as a body of knowledge associated with the long-term occupancy of a certain place. This knowledge refers to the traditional norms and social values, as well as to mental constructs that guide, organize, and regulate the people’s way of living and making sense of their world. (pp. 5–6)

It is fair to note that Indigenous knowledge and all that it stands for was frustrated and sidelined, resulting in its going underground. However, the Jopadhola naming ceremonies thrived in the face of the colonial challenges, with Padhola norms spiritually observed. One shall see more of the norms of naming in Chapter 5. Ocholla-Ayayo (1976, p. 46) called these Luo names *Nying Juok* or the “soul names.” Ocholla-Ayayo gave as an example the name *Otieno-Achach* as a soul or a spirit name (p. 46). He further elaborated that the name *Achach* is a virtue-boasting name (see also Odera Oruka, 1983, 1990). Another example of a boasting name is “*Ochieng’ Oking.*” *Oking* is “as hard as a granite rock,” which is meant to refer to the person named as an “immortal being” (p. 46).

The Jopadhola legend states that the leader or the king who led the Jopadhola during the Luo migration into Eastern Uganda, named Adhola, was the brother of Owiny (Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). Owiny or Uwiny led the Kenya Luo into their present area of residence and their naming
system. Ocholla-Ayayo (1976) affirmed that this has similarities to their Lwo kin in Padhola, which was the subject of my study (see also Crazzolara, 1954; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967). For boasting naming purposes, the Luo dictionary defines Thuon as bull and its characteristics as “resistance, force, strength, courage, and bravery” (Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976, p. 47). The same applies to the Jopadhola, especially when they name children after people associated with Thuon or Othuon. For a girl, her pride is in being called Nyathuon, or daughter of the bull. It is also associated with the word miseni, or bravery of the Jopadhola, as a coveted virtue (Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). Similarly, Ocholla-Ayayo (1976, p. 47) stressed the importance of “honorific names” or “virtue boasting names” as important for women. Women retain boasting names, which are used by parents-in-law throughout marriage (Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976). My own experience is an aunt who is always referred to as Nyarwoth or daughter of the chief. Children of a clan are never allowed to know such a woman’s real names easily. In her marital clan, a woman who is a descendant of a chief always has an honorary title, and her real names are not used.

Fanon (1963/2004) reminded readers about the primary role of elders as educators and said, “Elders are held in respect in traditional societies and generally invested with an undeniable moral authority” (p. 68). Fanon also noted that “they (elders) are ridiculed by the European system in an attempt to demean them. The dominant European education introduced to the colonized later became a tool of ridicule” (p. 68). However, Ocholla-Ayayo (1976) stated, The concept of respect for elders is a limitless concept. It is not simply between a child and a grown-up person, but it is hierarchical for all living members of the society and also for the dead. For example, among the Lwo a child may not call his parents, grandparents or those elders standing in those lines by their name as that would be regarded as disrespectful. (p. 61)
Indigenous education is not commonly considered a viable alternative system of education. However, the role of Indigenous elders is that of preserving ancestral and spiritual values for scholars to learn something new from other cultures (Dei & Calliste, 2000; Holmes, 2000; Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Wangoola, 2000). How often have people with an Indigenous background or other students in institutions of higher learning been told never to call people they consider elders by their first names? It causes an embarrassment, as it is unsettling, and may take others time to unlearn from their Indigenous education that teaches otherwise. It is also a taboo for young Indigenous students to call teachers considered elders by their names.

The naming ceremonies are dynamic and have continued for centuries, where the role of women, apart from being priests, medicine persons, and skilled potters, remains prominent in the naming ceremonies (Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976, 1980). A picture on the internet about a naming ceremony in Ethiopia made me curious, as it looked so similar to the naming ceremony that the Jopadhola Lwo practice. That particular ethnic group in Ethiopia has their naming ceremonies similar to those of the Jopadhola of Eastern Uganda. The Anywak, or the Anuak people, are Luo-speaking people and practice similar methods of names with the Jopadhola (Crazzolara, 1951). The Azande of Sudan, Central African Republic, and Congo also have a similar naming ceremony in their culture (Freeman, n.d.).

With regard to northern or southern Lwo, the Jopadhola are considered part of the southern Lwo (Crazzolara, 1950; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976, 1980; Ogot, 1967). The Jopadhola share many names and clan names with their Luo kin in the geographical north. Yona Okoth, the former Anglican Archbishop of Uganda, contended that his Indigenous education was acquired while still young and was the base from which he operated even in his
canon duties (Tieng Adhola Cultural Institution, 2000). Ogot (1980) also argued, “The African converts tended to look upon Christianity as just another version of the Vision of Reality” (p. 133). In 2012, Luke Orombi, another former Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, reminded people that his clan, the Amor, is also present among the Jopadhola Lwo, stressing that the Amor of Alur and the Amor of Padhola are brethren and cannot marry (Henry Luke Orombi, n.d., Father and Mother’s Clan pedigree section, para. 1). Orombi, from West-Nile, expounded that his clan is also found among the Bagungu, who are now Bantu-speaking residents of Bunyoro, but are now called Kimori. Indigenous education is a base for an Indigenous person’s humanity, and without it, there is great injustice to the person’s soul.

Indigenous education is valued spiritual and cultural knowledge preserved from childhood (Ocholla-Ayayo, 1980, pp. 4–6). It is usually retained once made known to someone at an early age. From early childhood, an Indigenous person immerses himself or herself in the knowledge of a community, which is to be exercised for a lifetime. Jopadhola Luo ancestral names for children are shared across distant geographical regions within Uganda and other countries where the Luo reside.

1.7.1 Unilingual colonial state

European administration in Uganda attempted to create a unilingual colonial state by trying to impose Luganda, a foreign language of the Omwa or foreigners, on the Jopadhola. However, this prompted internal resistance to the colonial attempts at realigning the social order at the creation of modern Uganda (Johnston, 1926; Ogot, 1967). Luganda, to the Jopadhola, was a language of the adversary that they resisted in order to maintain their Luoness. The colonial administration tried to lump together the Jopadhola and Bantu groups into the multi-ethnic administrative district of Bukedi, which eclipsed their Luo identity (Johnston, 1926; Ofumbi,
However, the Jopadhola preferred to live in self-isolation in forested areas so as to preserve their Luo identity (Ogot, 1967). Southall (1977, p. 166) mentioned how local patriots fought to preserve their freedom. The Lwo names as well as their virtues and functions were preserved (Crazzolara, 1950; Fanon, 1963/2004; Ogot, 1967, 2005; p’ Bitek, 1971; Southall, 1977). Here, then, is a critical body of knowledge hitherto not deeply examined, even though it is a centuries’ old thriving system of continuity.

The Indigenous knowledge system fosters equity and holism from an alternative system that does not marginalize anyone. If or when accepted among learners and educators globally, Lwo Indigenous knowledge systems have strategies for equity that they share and which are worth learning from.

Basically, the Eurocentric/White-centric curriculum and pedagogy are a tragedy because they are imposed on Indigenous people in learning institutions (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999). White pedagogy traps the marginalized and leaves very little room for alternatives within the prescribed formal education system. The casualties of such pedagogy have allies in a counter insurgency of promoting Indigenous knowledges as allegedly liberating. A marginalizing pedagogy actually discredits Indigenous knowledge, whereas Indigenous knowledge is accessible to interested scholars for their everyday lives. To this end, it is fair to note that insensitive exclusions and status quo reinforce each other to silence critical voices (see also Dei, 2000; Fanon, 1963/2004; Titchkosky, 2011; Opini & Wane, 2007).

The Jopadhola Lwo people share some, but not all, of their minority status with other smaller, but notable, groups on the continent. For example, there is a well-known lingua franca, Kiswahili, which is widely spoken in many countries of Eastern Africa. It has important concepts from the continent of Africa on intermingling and the birthing of a vibrant culture, whereby a
common language is now widely spoken by other Indigenous people. Despite the Swahili being a minority coastal people, the Kiswahili language is widely spoken (Awde, 2000; Kaligula & Lodhi, 1980). Therefore, as the Jopadhola are a minority similar to the Swahili, the critical study of the Jopadhola Lwo naming system can make inroads globally in the production of counter knowledge for decolonization purposes.

1.7.2 Preservation of Lwo culture and its distinctiveness

The Jopadhola have preserved their Luoness in ways not known even to their neighbours, making them a distinct group. Not only do they speak a language different from their neighbours, they also practice different sets of norms. Their neighbours are mainly Bantu ethnic groups with a history that differs significantly from that of the Lwo. However, the Bantu never succeeded in assimilating the Jopadhola because they reinforce their norms and customs all the time—for example, through naming and other ceremonies religiously fulfilled over the centuries. The resilience of the Jopadhola culture in the midst of other communities is, therefore, worth studying. For example, how did the Jopadhola not get Bantuized like other Luo groups in Bunyoro or Busoga who lost their language, but only retained some of their Lwo clan or praise names (Cohen, 1972; Lubogo, 1960; Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Only the Luo “praise names” (i.e., empako) remain among the Bantu-speaking Banyoro, who are not Luo, but have adamantly held on to the Luo praise names. In Bunyoro, the Luo-descended nobles are the Luo Babiito, the ruling class. As a general Luo culture, the Jopadhola would rather assimilate other people in order to expand, but will never allow themselves to be assimilated (Crazzolara, 1950; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967).

Also, the Jopadhola have sometimes been studied as an Indigenous group, but mainly for development purposes (Mogensen, 2002). However, that method of study does not go deep
enough into the social institutions of understanding the people, which is rather superfluous. In contrast, my study engages the Indigenous knowers who share their knowledge. For example, Mogensen (2002, pp. 421–436) dwelled on “confronting suffering” among the Jopadhola and depicted the deity Juok, who is worshipped and around whom rituals are directed as the source of this suffering, but without explaining how a figure that is worshipped can at the same time cause suffering. Similarly, Abel and Richters (2009, p. 340) also dwelled on the “suffering and survival tactics, and healing among Jopadhola women in post-war Uganda.” Here again suffering is the focus of their study, with a probable strategy to develop the Jopadhola. Such researchers are oblivious to the Indigenous structures and foundational education that have sustained the Jopadhola for centuries and which actually ensure their survival and resistance to impositions on their culture.

The Jopadhola, as a dynamic and complex society, require a closer examination to discover how they assimilate other people into their ethnic group, but, at the same time, resist assimilation by other groups. The friendship pact with the Bagwere and Bagisu neighbours will be discussed in the data chapter. Other literatures on Lwo-speaking people show that Lwo ethical norms are both rigid and static concerning important customs that revolve around ancestors. Ocholla-Ayayo (1991) said, “But these norms were not impossible to attain” (p. 26). Furthermore, according to Ocholla-Ayayo (1976), “Traditional education is ‘normative education’ that puts normative beliefs into the minds of the young members of the society” (p. 60). On the other hand, gradual changes cannot be ruled out alongside customary regulations with room for co-existence with neighbours. Ocholla-Ayayo (1976) also reiterated that through traditional education, the youth “gain respect for elders which cannot be gained in formal education and its instructions” (p. 60). Ocholla-Ayayo (1980) also made further observations:
The Luo in Tanzania now resemble the Bantu groups in material culture, for example, in certain techniques of basketry, musical instruments and certain types of knives. Similarly, we find the Alur; a Luo group of West Nile in Uganda now resemble the Madi-Lugbara group in material culture, for example, the cross-section of their ironwork, wooden hoes, and cotton stool not known to the Luo, shape and basketry technique and the wearing of “vegetable” dress by women. (p. 146)

Compare the above to the Jopadhol’a’s adopting of attire made of barkcloth, or bongi, from the Baganda’s lubugo, which never survived the colonial period and Baganda rule. When the Luo live next to the Bantu groups, they blend some of their techniques into their own, but that is never long-lasting or permanent. The issue of resemblance in culture is, therefore, uncertain, since it is the Luo who tend to Luoize their neighbours, where neighbours start giving some of the Luo names to their children. Okello-Ayot (1979) talked of a whole group of a formerly Bantu-speaking people, the Abasuba, becoming Luo in less than a generation.

While retaining their distinctiveness, the Jopadhola Lwo are not indifferent to certain aspects of their neighbours’ cultures. For example, they grow Indigenous crops similar to those of their neighbours. Ogot (1967) actually noted that after the Jopadhola made war with their neighbours, they later made peace and became friends with them. Sometimes through war and defending their positions, they acquired their neighbours’ food crops, such as the banana, which was mainly for the Bantu, but which they later indigenized as their own. Oboth Ofumbi (1960) noted that the Jopadhola also married women from the neighbouring ethnic Bantu and Nilo-Hamites. However, despite these intermarriages, the Jopadhola preserved their Lwo identity by retaining ancestral and spiritual names for their children since their arrival in the Tororo area. Ogot (1967) contended that the Jopadhola claim their current geographical area as their “Promised Land” (see also Grace Akinyi Ogot, 1990). The Jopadhola arrived in Eastern Uganda around the 1490s (Ogot, 1967). Where the Luo came from, whether Sudan or farther north from the Egyptian empire, is the subject of another study. However, Alenyo (2009), Crazzolara
(1950), Okello-Paito (2009), and Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) are some of the authors, among others, who linked Padhola Luo ancestry to Egypt, with Sudan as only a dispersal area, as shall be seen in the context and history chapter.

1.8 Outline of the Thesis

The dissertation is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the dissertation and the topic on “Ancestral and Spiritual Naming of Children among the Jopadhola Lwo in Eastern Uganda” as a study of Indigenous knowledge. It introduces how the Jopadhola have held onto ongoing ancestral naming ceremonies, making them a distinct Lwo-speaking enclave in an area dominated by Bantu-speaking groups. The Jopadhola are a minority Indigenous group whose naming practices have held out against the possible erasure of their culture and their possible disappearance or assimilation by numerous neighbouring Bantu cultures. The study of Indigenous naming, therefore, is a workable catalyst for decolonization for the current ways of knowledge production, especially since the use of Indigenous knowledges has, until now, usually been thwarted in favour of mainly European-based knowledge. This chapter also introduces key concepts, some of which are in the local Padhola language and a few in Kiswahili, all translated into English.

Chapter 2 is the “History and Context” and looks at the existing literature focusing on the Lwo, their history, legends, and current practices. As a point of departure, the chapter focuses on extensive Luo migration along the Nile Valley, examining the origin of the Lwo, their culture, military encounters, and the retention of their identity. Using linguistic skills, Luo names among the Bantu-speaking people are pinpointed in the kingdoms of Uganda. Lwo dispersals birthed groups and, among them, are the Jopadhola. The Jopadhola will be studied in the context of their continuity. The Lwo assimilation of other people is also examined, featured in the works of

Chapter 3 adopts the “Anti-Colonial Discursive Framework” and theorizes colonialism. This framework is used for the study of the Jopadhola for their agency and voice against colonialism. This chapter examines prominent works of anti-colonialism, such as Cabral (1998), Césaire (1998), Dei and Kempf (2006), Fanon (2008), Memmi (1967), Nkrumah (1998), and Toure (1979), and other leaders of anti-colonial resistances in Africa and other places where Indigenous people live and resist domination.

Chapter 4 is the “Method and Methodology,” suggesting the qualitative research method for studying the situated Indigenous knowledge among the Jopadhola, but it settles for the Indigenous methodology. The choice of a qualitative research method reduces the possibility of a power relationship between researchers and researched during the face-to-face contact. Here, I examine selected works for Indigenous methodology as best suited for studying the ethnicity of the Jopadhola. Indigenous people have evidence of their self-preservation as a form of resistance to colonial influences, which have been voiced in interviews using their Indigenous language. Permission is obtained from the cultural leader before interviewing elders of the community on the ancestral and spiritual naming of children. The ethics of the Jopadhola kingdom are followed, where respect for elders is stressed. The Indigenous methodology uses oral interviews.

Chapter 5 presents the “Data Findings.” In Part I and Part II both male and female elders are engaged in oral interviews conducted in the local Lwo language in the Tororo district of Eastern Uganda. We engaged in dialogues, conversations, and narratives as components of culture and preserved Indigenous education. Interviews are then translated from the Dhopadhola
Lwo language into English, followed by an analysis and deeper examination of a minoritized people’s knowledge systems or how they are transmitted and preserved. Indigenous philosophy investigates a counter knowledge among the elders. It is established that there is a system of Indigenous education that elders want continued for the younger and future generations. The current dissemination of education invisibilizes Indigenous knowledge. This part also discusses the future dissemination of knowledge and how not to further marginalize Indigenous knowledge.

Chapter 6 presents the analysis and discussion from Indigenous perspectives and the implications of Indigenous education for current formal education. Indigenous education becomes more visible, as elders question the relevancy of current curriculum as colonizing. The system of ancestral and spiritual names suggests how marginality can be overcome in an atmosphere of mutual respect when the younger generation begins to take Indigenous education seriously in their lives. The unlearning of colonialism and racism in the dominant education will be threshed out with views on reforming knowledge production with questions about the relevancy of Western education for minority students. Elders’ views are analyzed for their anti-colonial resistance.

Chapter 7 presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations. It summarizes the research objectives and gives recommendations for the future. It also mentions a few limitations and how they can be overcome as a lesson for future studies among Indigenous people. The summary traces the Lwo origins and how the Jopadhola have retained their identity in the midst of other non-Luo groups. It stresses what can be learned from the Jopadhola: a small minoritized but dynamic and distinct group in Eastern Uganda that co-exists with but also resists dominant groups by retaining age-old practices and ceremonies for their identity. The study asserts
ongoing Lwo naming practice that must be strengthened through Indigenous education for continuity. The culture of the Lwo-speaking people, which straddles the whole of the Nile Valley from Egypt to Lake Victoria (or Nyanza), is with the Jopadhola people in their names, customs, rituals, and norms that can be passed on to future generations in learning institutions, even to Africans in the diaspora.
Chapter 2
History and Context

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is largely a historical accounting of migration along the Nile Valley and how it impacts on the Luo-speaking people from whom the Jopadhola sprang to retain their Indigenous naming practices. The Jopadhola are a branch of Lwo or Luo-speaking people who now live in Eastern Uganda surrounded by the Bantu and Nilo-Hamites. The chapter traces the migration southwards of the Luo mass of people, makes visible the Luo-speaking, and traces their origins and dispersals, their wish to preserve their identity in the face of assimilations and counter assimilations, and their legends and survival. The Jopadhola now live in their enclave as a result of a historical Luo migration. Throughout this research report, Indigenous words will be introduced, and an overview of the terms and concepts is presented in Appendix A.

The migration of Africans is often conceptualized as a negative predicament. However, migration is sometimes forced, but at other times, it is carefully planned as in the case of the Luo-speaking people. Concerted efforts have been exerted to try to control migration, especially that of Africans. Migration by Africans is usually seen as a recent phenomenon whereby laws are sometimes enacted to curb waves of migration from southern countries; however, for the Luo and other Africans, it is sometimes a necessity. Only recently, Papademetriou (1998) made an observation whereby the “‘receiving’ (European) countries consistently apply clear immigration rules, monitor the effectiveness of experiments and employ prudent management and can stop problems before they spin out of control” (p. 27). Papademetriou wrote about European
countries, which he noted are rich, but are now mending their constitutions to prevent further migration into that continent.

With all that said from Western-centric perspectives, on the other hand, migrations in Africa are continually viewed as a positive social phenomenon. For example, internal migrations within Africa were what shaped and impacted on the geographical locations where people are situated within Africa. From a north country, which Luo oral narratives connect to Egypt as recorded in Luo names and songs, the Luo made their legendary southward migration that led to the home of the Indigenous Jopadhola Lwo people of Eastern Uganda.

2.2 The Luo Migration and Impacts along the Nile

2.2.1 Introduction

The migration of the Luo-speaking people evolves into the concept of Luoness. Writing about one Lwo group is also writing about what relates to other Luo-speaking groups. I examine the Luo in this study to make visible the Jopadhola, hitherto marginalized and stigmatized for their Luoness in the region of their residence. A map of Lwo/Luo migration along the Nile Valley to Lake Victoria is presented in Figure 1. I prefer the use of “we” because the knowledge about the Luo-speaking people is collective, and I must also be accountable to the Luo-speaking people for the mistakes I might make. Therefore, I try as much as possible to reflect the authenticity of knowledge from the Luo-speaking people. Using an anti-colonial discursive framework from Indigenous knowledge, the literature traces the background of the Luo, their migration, and the phenomena of preservation of knowledge about Luo/Lwo-speaking people.
Figure 1. Map of Lwo/Luo Migration along the Nile Valley to Lake Victoria
Sources looked at include:

- *The Lwoo* (three volumes) by Italian priest, researcher, and anthropologist Father J. Pasquale Cazzolara (1950, 1951, 1954) on Lwo migrations, traditions, and clans;

- *Lwo History (Ludama)* by Charles Oboth Ofumbi (1960), written in Lwo about the Jopadhola identity, their clan’s knowledge, and customs;

- *The History of the Southern Luo* by Ogot (1967), which traces Luo history from a cradle land or lands; and

- *The Religion of the Central Lwo* by Okot p’Bitek (1971) about Luo rituals, their relations to kingship, as well as Luo expansions into Bunyoro, Alur, and Acholi, and places where the Luo are found.

- *The Central Lwo during the Aconya* by Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) traces the origins, traditions, and expansion of the Luo and the founding of Luo kingdoms in Bantu-speaking areas, where Luo rituals prevail in Bunyoro, as well as Luo southward movements into Padhola, Busoga, and Western Kenya (see also Simonse, 1992, p. 53).

- Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) discussed Luo encounters with the predecessor Chwezi rulers of Bunyoro.


- *A History on the Tradition of Busoga* (Cohen, 1972) and *Towards a Reconstructed Past: Historical Texts from Busoga, Uganda* (Cohen, 1986) indicate the presence of Luo names and clans in Busoga, where large groups of Luo clans were assimilated.

• Terence Okello-Paito (2009) wrote about *Luo Origins of Civilization*.

• There is also *The History of the Luo* by George W. Alenyo (2009), who contended that the Egyptian Empire has a culture originating with the Luo because of the Luo names of people and places along the whole of the Nile Valley.

• Frunkfort (1948) has noted: “There are alive today in African groups of people who are the true survivors of that great East African substratum out of which the Egyptian culture arose” (p. 6). The survivors of that Egyptian culture are varied, but the Luo stand out as the most prominent of them (see also Okello-Paito, 2009, p. 1).

• Alenyo (2009) also had a “biblical perspective” on the spiritual and cultural connections of the Luo to the Jewish exile in Egypt. Alenyo also contended that Jewish exiles returned to Canaan after incorporating some of the earliest Luo Indigenous knowledge from the Nile Valley into their own.

• *The Luo English Dictionary* by Odonga (2007) is a guide for Luo words in diverse geographical areas along the Nile Valley.

Luoness straddles the Nile Valley up until the arrival of Jopadhola in their *uninhabited* residency in Eastern Uganda. The phenomena of Luoness, Luoization, or Lwooization include assimilations and counter assimilations. The perspectives take a divergent counter path to the contemporary North American post-modernist approach, whereby Indigenous knowledge is not merely about romanticization, but is also an independent education system.
The study of the Luo or their knowledge has mainly remained underground, studied as something that exists, but is not thriving. However, Indigenous education, in fact, thrives and competes with the dominant education. In Uganda, for example, the Luo-speaking people are known for their eagerness to share their knowledge (Okello-Paito, 2009). The Luo, however, tend to protect Indigenous knowledge for its authenticity.

### 2.2.2 Kingship and the Luo

Writing primarily about the Luo-speaking people as a marginalized group in Uganda, it is fair to state that a recent phenomenon makes it fashionable to deny any connections to Luoness. For example, Luo names are targeted for ridicule, which creates an atmosphere for denial to links with Luo heritage. Such a trend of hostility to Luoness must be attributed to the introduction of formal Eurocentric education that diminishes Indigenous education. However, this colonial formal education has left a loophole for a wave of anti-Luoness through stereotyping and discrimination, where Luo-speaking people are viewed as foreigners in a country they have lived in and ruled for probably more than a thousand years. Without a doubt, the pre-colonial era in Uganda was a time of Luo influence, as seen all over the courts of the kingdoms they are known to have founded in the country (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Identifying Luoness can be traced through Luo ancestral names that are also salient among non-Luo-speaking people in their royal courts throughout Uganda. Indigenous knowledge uplifts the Lwo from their marginality, especially in Bantu-speaking kingdoms of Uganda, but currently, connection to Luoness is generally denied, especially in Buganda, since formal education has exacerbated chauvinistic sentiments towards people with Luo ancestral names (Kasasira & Wanambwa, 2008).
The Jopadhola are a people who bear Luo names, and their visibility in their Luo enclave in Eastern Uganda decolonizes the established colonial education system that has marginalized them due to their Luoness. We will also discuss the gate of the Buganda king’s court’s Indigenous Luo concept of Wangkach or Wankaki in the data findings and analysis section as decolonizing current formal education.

The origin of organized kingship in Uganda for which the Luo take credit will now be reviewed. The organization of kingship in Uganda is by Indigenous Africans. When one speaks of importing kingship into the modern Uganda era, it is by pre-Luo Indigenous African communities from the Luo as another group of Indigenous Africans, not foreigners (see Ogot, 1967; Cohen, 1972). The pre-Luo Uganda societies did not import kingship from outside of Africa. In the preface of African Origin of Civilization, Diop (1974) has advocated the linguistic approach to link the history of Black Africa to that of Egypt. As my location is within the Indigenous Luo society, the linguistic approach identifies Luoness as significant to decolonizing the colonial epistemology. Okello-Paito (2009, pp. 6-7) used oral knowledge and analyzed texts from his own Acholi Luo background by linking and pinpointing Luo names of kings and places in ancient Egypt. For example, Okello-Paito contended that “most of the diaspora scholars continue to confuse ancient Itiyopianu with modern Ethiopia. Itiyopianu is a Luo phrase connected to those who served a Luo deity Anu, and it means “those who serve or work for Anu” (p. 7). However, as Okello-Paito also argued, “The people referred to as the Luo were the builders of ancient Itiiyo-pi-Anu civilization known as Koch, Cush, Kush, or Quoch” (p. 7). However, the suggestion that Itiyopianu must not be mistaken for modern-day Ethiopia does not mean that the Luo-speaking people are not found in Ethiopia, or that Ethiopia is not derived from a Luo name. Today, more than five Luo-speaking groups who followed the Blue Nile practice
their Indigenous culture in Ethiopia and Eritrea. According to Crazzolara (1951), “The Anywak live within the boundaries of Eastern Sudan and the rest in Ethiopia” (p. 146), even though colonial education only speaks about a single dominant culture in that country. However, there are Luo-speaking people in Eritrea called Jo-Nath who had moved together with other Luo groups such as the Anywak of Ethiopia (Crazzolara, 1954). Colonial education overshadows these Luo groups by the Semitic or bigger cultures in their geographical areas. However, the Luo of Ethiopia retain their Luoness by giving their children Luo ancestral and spiritual names, like Ocua, Cwaa, Ukiru, or Oboth (Crazzolara, 1951). Similar names are found in Padhola (see Crazzolara, 1951; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). Some of the names, like Ocua and Cwaa, are also found in the Luo-founded kingdoms of Bunyoro, Buganda, and Toro in Uganda (Cohen, 1972).

Pinpointing Luoness is a means of resilience for decolonizing dominant education, whereby the ancestral names manifest the norms of the Luo-speaking people as a counter knowledge system. Luoness connects scattered people who have preserved an Indigenous knowledge system. For example, “the Anywaah Lwo of Ethiopia have honorific names and titles for their clans in accordance with the general Lwoo custom: for instance, Jo-wat-Cwaa or Jo-wat-Naadhí” (Crazzolara, 1951, p. 150), which is a persisting knowledge system also found among the Luo of Kenya as well as the Jopadhola Lwo. As will be discussed later, the Lwoo are also assimilators of people they come into contact with, without fighting. The Luo are not a dominant group numerically, but a minority keen on preserving their culture and Luo names that can be shared with others. Crazzolara (1951, p. 151) suggested that Jo-wat-Naadhi, who are now one of the Lwoo clans among the Anywaah of Ethiopia, might have been assimilated. Jo, as in the above names, refers to people in relation to a superior or an elder. Jo also means related by blood. The prefix Jo- is often combined with another word, as in Jo-wat-Cua. Pa means “of” or “belongs
to.” Sometimes, the prefix Jo- is omitted, as in “Pa-Luo, Padhola or Patiko and Pawiir” (p’Bitek, 1971, p. 2). Luoness, therefore, is a complex social system of continuity that flouts a voluntary assimilation system, where neighbours begin to imitate the Luo and eventually become Luo by peaceful association and by adopting Luo names. Such a complex system must not permanently remain hidden, but must be studied for decolonization.

2.2.3 Early origin of Jopadhola southward journey

The southward journey of the Luo ended at some point when the people indigenized themselves in their current respective areas of residence. The Jopadhola are today in Eastern Uganda, where they have resisted assimilation. They had moved as a mass of Luo-speaking people, but split in order to find suitable areas to practice their culture. Ogot (1967) contended that clan feuds had to have a remedy, which was migration, and he gave an example: “A section of the Luo decided to adopt the remedy their forefathers had always employed in such circumstances—they migrated” (p. 159). Migration was for the preservation of Luo identity, and wherever the Luo dispersed, they retained their same naming system.

According to Oboth Ofumbi (1960), “The Jopadhola Lwo arrived in Padhola around 1500 and moved as [the] Lwo mass lwak or kitipa” (p. 6). After their encounter with other non-Luo groups around mainly the northern parts of Uganda, the Adhola grouped together, and the main Luo mass, lwak, kept moving southwards. Today, despite isolation from other Lwo groups, the Jo-Padhola people have indigenized themselves in Eastern Uganda. The Jopadhola cannot be discussed alone without their connection to other Lwo kin. An Acholi Lwo proverb says wat omogo icogo or “kinship clings to the born; a relative must never be forgotten” (see Crazzolara, 1950, p. 150). The Jopadhola’s determination to remain Lwo is reflected in the retention of ancestral names.
Other Lwo groups, especially the Alur, are mutually intelligible with the Jopadhola. However, the Alur live in the West Nile district of Uganda, while the latter are at the border with Kenya. In his book, *The Alur Society*, Aidan Southall (1956, p. 3) has said that the Alur speak a “Nilotic” language belonging to the Lwo groups, but because of migration, these groups live in different geographical areas. They are, however, linked through Lwo names since they have a common ancestor with shared customs and clans.

### 2.2.4 The Luo myth of the bead and the spear

The retention of myths continually educates Indigenous people about their origins and current existence. Luoness is usually synonymous with the myth of the bead and spear. The resilience of such a myth in Luo language—even where Luo is no longer spoken or where the giving of Luo names has mostly ceased—has outlived colonization. Luo names gradually cease to exist, not because of colonization, but due to an ongoing gradual internal assimilation by some of their neighbours where Luo-speaking people are extremely few. On the other hand, common myths that have the bead and spear among the scattered Luo groups continue to link Luo descendants to their common Luo ancestry.

On the other hand, Lienhardt (1975) has mentioned Father Crazzolara and Professor B. A. Ogot as the “only two pioneers in this field, having already indicated something of that confrontation between Nilotic legends from which, if slowly, all that can be known about the Nilotics might emerge” (p. 214). However, to decolonize formal education, it is better to mention that Luo elders themselves are the pioneers in such a study. Moreover, Lienhardt, in mentioning the concept of the Nilotic, which is not entirely inaccurate, should have acknowledged that Crazzolara (1950, p. 60) and Ogot (1967) are scholars who particularly studied the Nilotics in the context of the Lwo-speaking people. Both Crazzolara and Ogot employed linguistic skills in
Luo, Crazzolara having learned it while Ogot is a Luo. Ogot and Crazzolara, therefore, present tremendous advantages for collecting and studying the narratives of the elders because of their Luo language skills. Linguistic skills enable researchers to understand a people’s culture, which is then portrayed more accurately to other learners.

The linguistic skills will also allow the people to understand, for example, that the myth of the beads and spear found among Bantu kingdoms of Uganda, especially in Busoga and Bunyoro, signifies contacts with the Luo or their connections. Such friendly cultural contacts have usually been delinked through colonial education. Another example of Luo connection is the Wanga kingdom of Western Kenya, which is now Bantu speaking, but was Luo founded according to Ogot (1967). In the Wanga kingdom, the presence of the Luo myth of the spear and the bead is permanently engrained among their royals. However, the Luo ruling clans’ desire to set up kingdoms among the non-Luo resulted in non-Luo assimilation to the extent of forgetting to speak Luo. An interview with Wanga royals revealed that they probably still have Luo ancestral names. A thorough study about the Bantu-speaking Wanga people’s Luo past is a future study for scholars of the Wanga kingdom and other assimilated communities.

The very existence of the myth of the spear and beads in non-Luo areas is a sign of their Luoness. Lienhardt (1975, p. 213) in a chapter called “Getting Your Own Back: Themes in Nilotic Myth” has discussed two myths of the Nilotics, “The Myth of the Bead” and the “Myth of the Spear” that should be discussed as relevant to Indigenous learners.

Lwo phenomena are, therefore, not without the Lwo ancestral names and the myth of the bead and the spear. Oluoch Imbo (2002), a Kenyan Luo, retold the story of the bead and the spear as follows:

A woman named Nyilak and her husband, Ocak, had three sons: Labongo, Gipir, and Fifol. Labongo became a great ruler in Bunyoro. One day an elephant came to raid the
millet field, and Gipir, who was at home, took Labongo’s spear in his haste and speared the beast. The spear stuck on the elephant and the elephant carried it away into the forest. When Labongo returned, he demanded that his brother return the same spear to him. Gipir followed the tracks of the elephant for several days, recovered the spear, and brought it back home to his brother. During his search for the elephant and his brother’s spear, Gipir came across some beads in the forest. The beads seemed precious to him. One morning, Gipir was threading the beads. Labongo’s wife came to admire them and her child swallowed one of the beads. Gipir remembered his brother’s insistence on getting his spear back and he determined that his precious bead should be returned to him immediately. The child’s belly had to be slit open and the bead recovered. The two brothers could not live together anymore. Gipir and his followers moved westward and crossed the Nile. An axe was driven into the bottom of the river to mark the final separation. (pp. 40–41).

According to Oluoch Imbo (2002), a Kenya Luo, this myth suggests a much later Luo dispersal in Bunyoro, which is just one centre of the Luo dispersals. The spear and bead myth is usually the trigger for more dispersals and further migration, usually originating with Northern Luo (see also Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). The myth of the spear and bead is also synonymous with Luoness wherever Luo names are recorded. Maquet (as cited in Ocholla-Ayayo, 1980) stated, “The Nilotic civilization is usually described as the ‘civilization of spears’ where there are sacred spears as a symbol of power” (p. 97). The story of the bead took place at Rumbek or Bar el Ghazal (Ogot, 1967). Apparently, the spear and bead myth explains the Luo groups’ disagreements, splits, and migrations in the Lwo society. Major dispersals of the Luo-speaking people are connected to the myth of the spear and bead, usually after a disagreement. Every Luo must know this myth to be able to retell to the younger generation when they are older, symbolizing the myth’s resilience and continuity (Crazzolara, 1950; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967; Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976).

The dominant knowledge fixes Luo cradle land in the Sudan. However, Okello-Paito (2009, p. 4) argued that from Tekidi/Napata, the Luo only passed through the central Sudan, but are, in fact, descendants of ancient Egyptians who looked to Uganda and the source of the Nile
as their home. Alenyo (2009) mapped the Nile Valley from Egypt to Uganda as Luo territory, with most of modern Uganda as Luo territory. Similarly, all the major kingdoms of Uganda are led by Luo-descended royalties (Cohen, 1972; Ogot, 1967). Alenyo can be taken seriously on this assertion, as these kingdoms have Luo names preserved in their royal courts. It is, then, the Indigenous knowledge that legitimizes a counter colonial education.

At this point, the very concept of Lwo may present some conflicting claims. On the one hand, it means to follow, which is luwo, an early favourite by Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976). The version of luwo is also synonymous with Lwo migration along the Nile as an act of following the Nile River southwards looking for uninhabited land. Uninhabited land is sought for the preservation of Luo customs. The Luo probably usually resist another stronger culture dominating them, as it is the Luo customs that reveal who Lwo are to other Lwo-speaking brethren. The other Lwo groups may not know that they hurt the Jopadhola by not acknowledging them freely as Lwo due to their isolation in south-Eastern Uganda. In keeping with the Luo customs, the Jopadhola are saying: “This is who we are, sons and daughters of Lwo, with Lwo ancestral and spiritual names intact.”

2.2.5 The Great Ancestor Lwo

To understand the Jopadhola identity, earlier knowledge from the Luo must be consulted. There was one great ancestor of the Lwo according to Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976), and this is the legend retold to scholars:

Lwo, the ancestor was old; there was a great famine where they were living in a settlement called “Dog Nam.” According to the Lwo speaking people “nam” means “some wide open water” and “dog” means “mouth” or “shore.” The uttermost southern Lwo: the Jopadhola and Luo of Kenya; and the Alur Lwo spelling is “dhok” and for them it is “Dhok Nam” (Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967). “Dog Nam” settlement means “Lake Shore Settlement.” It is not known exactly [in] which lake shore the Didinga settlement was situated. But this lake shore settlement must be around the vicinity of the River Nile.
At this juncture, however, “it was believed that Lwo the great ancestor could not survive.” (p. 40)

Since the narratives established that the Luo were affected by a great famine in Egypt, they had to move to more fertile areas in order to escape this famine. Today, the Nile straddles the desert from the Delta to a more arid area, then through to the Sudan. Only the southern part of the Sudan is fertile. The Lwo, therefore, moved towards the source of the Nile. Okello-Paito (2009) contended that the ancient Egyptians looked to Uganda as their home, and there was then prior knowledge about the fertility of the more southerly areas towards Lake Nyanza (Victoria). Following the Nile Valley direction is the concept of luwo, which means to follow, mentioned previously, with Lwo names of places and kings or Pharaohs of Egypt evident along the way. In the Luo language “gy” or “ji” means “people” as it forms the concept of Egypt itself (Odonga, 2007; Okello-Paito, 2009). Since the colonial era, there was a rewriting of the pre-history of Africa. However, such rewriting ignored legends and narratives of the people, many of which are recorded in Lwo ancestral names continually reproduced for children. It is time for legends to decolonize the bogus colonial knowledge about Indigenous Africans.

From the obscurity of pre-history, Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) cited a Luo legend and wrote:

After summoning his three sons for a family conference, Lwo the ancestor spoke to them with emotion from his dying bed. He told them that someone had secretly polluted the Nam with blood and he could not survive the famine. Lwo then instructed his sons to move the Didinga people away from the angry Nam and find a new settlement. After giving these instructions, Lwo passed away. Olum, being the eldest, assumed the leadership of the Didinga people. After consulting the fortune teller, Olum was told to lead his people to the southern part of the lake. But Amolo, the junior wife, disagreed and secretly consulted another fortune teller who told her that her sons should move northwards. Alipere was the senior wife and the mother of an only son, Olum, who was the eldest. Olum’s fortune teller instructed him to move southwards, for Lwo had two wives. Amolo and her sons, Okang and Dermor, travelled northwards and settled in Wipaco after a hot argument between the two fortune tellers. (pp. 40–41)
Moreover, Luo legend cited by the great ancestor Lwo tells of the poisoning of the river in Egypt as a trigger for Luo migration along the Nile. Exodus 7:20 also tells of Moses the Hebrew striking the Nile River with his rod and turning it into blood (Holy Bible, King James Version). Luo narratives link the Luo to all the events of Egypt, even the poisoning of the water that turns into blood. Such events are authenticated in Luo legends as part of Indigenous education, which counters dominant colonial omissions of Indigenous knowledge (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976).

Moreover, the role of Amolo, the wife of the great ancestor Lwo, secretly consulting another fortune teller for the next destination of migration signifies women’s matrilineal roles in the Luo society as a counter system for understanding the role of women in an Indigenous society (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Gender roles among the Lwo women are those of influence in decisions taken in their Indigenous society (Ominde, 1970). Women’s influential roles will be discussed more in the coming data chapter. The Lwo marriage system enables mothers to determine their sons’ positions in the homestead, and fortune telling remains a spiritual obligation for rightness among the Luo today, with women at the forefront (Ocholla Ayayo, 1976). The Jopadhola still consult fortune tellers at child birth for the ancestral name to be given.

The Luo legend quoted by Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) said,

At the time, great ancestor Olum settled in Tekidi, but the northern party settled at a place called Wipaco. Moreover, the adoption of the name Lwo followed the abandoning of a former name, Didinga. There are people today still called Didinga in Sudan. (pp. 42–43) However, it is not known if the Didinga are related to the current Lwo of Uganda. At one time when Olum’s Lwo column had encountered the Muru, there was fear about what Amolo’s fortune tellers had warned about (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Fortune tellers are
sometimes pillars in Lwo societies, consulted for almost every move taken, which has defied the colonial system that attempted to outlaw it as *witchcraft*.

In regards to the persistence of fortune telling among the Lwo, Evans-Pritchard (1965) noted that “even in sickness, a Luo first asks a diviner which agent is responsible for his or her illness” (pp. 86–87). Fortune telling is not regarded as superstition, but rather as part and parcel of one’s pre-colonial spiritual life defying Christian spirituality. The metaphysics of one’s life precedes and determines the prevailing circumstances in this Indigenous society (Ogot, 1972). Cleansing ceremonies also continue to this day for people named Ocola and Acola. For example, in the *Promised Land*, a novel on Luo culture and expansion to new areas in Tanzania, Grace Ogot (1966, p. 115) contended that the omission of such a ceremony brings serious consequences. Hence, Ogot said,

> The omission of this ceremony (cleansing) added to Nyapol’s fear of the fiendish-hated enemy. Nyapol, by being married to an Ochola, believes in being cleansed properly, failure for which the babies might die for living so far from one’s own people. A letter to the in-laws to come insists on ceremonies to free Nyapol from her bonds. (p. 115)

Cleansing requires structural ceremonies that reinforce the Luoness of a person, even in the diaspora, according to Nyapol in Grace Ogot’s *Promised Land*. Cleansing or knowledge about it is a spiritual duty for safeguarding the newborn child from an early death, as children are considered ancestors. The naming ceremonies will be discussed more in the data chapter.

According to Ocholla-Ayayo (1980), even Ocholla is a spirit name given to a child born after the father’s death, which requires cleansing ceremony.

### 2.2.6 The norms of the Luo and assimilations

Large numbers of people living near the Luo sometimes abandon their own languages or cultures and start practicing Luoness by giving their children Luo names. Knowledge about the
Luo assimilating other people, such as the Lango “Nilo-Hamites” (Crazzolara, 1950; Ogot, 1967), is contrary to colonial knowledge that ignores ethnic groups’ evolution to what they are today. The Lango people had a previous language, but now speak Luo and give many Luo names to their children (p’Bitek, 1971). Lango assimilation was gradual and voluntary, whereby the assimilated people initiated the move and must not be compared with assimilation by coercive colonial systems. Another example of voluntary assimilation is that of the Luo-Abasuba of Kenya who now give their children Luo ancestral names. Luo names are now also found among the Samia neighbours to the Luo-speaking people of Kenya and Uganda. The Bantu-speaking Samia now have significant Luo names, such as Apio or Opio for twins and the twin’s followers’ names, Akello or Okello, or even regular Luo names of Onyango or Anyango. The adoption of Luo ancestral names sometimes arises out of friendship or intermarriage (Okello-Ayot, 1979).

After abandoning Luo names, the Luo remnants in Busoga retain only their Luo clans and totem (see Lubogo, 1960). The counter-assimilation of the Luo is best discussed as a study of the “Wakooli of Busoga.” The phenomena of assimilation among the Luo signify a parallel functioning system. Colonial education could have triggered animosity towards the Luo-speaking people, now prevalent in the Ugandan society where Indigenous education was non-existent.

Grace Ogot (1966) summed up the retention of Luo identity as follows:

Can a hunter go to the wilderness without his spear? Can you go and cut wood without an axe? It is better for a man to live with his relatives. The strangers, amongst who you want to live, may not be good people. They may be unfriendly and you may not find favour among them. You know the fate of the strangers who live amongst us here? They have no voice in the running of our land. They’re lonely because they’re not accepted by our people. Is this what you want? (p. 31)

The Luo-speaking people, therefore, retain a level of conservatism for their continued existence. Ominde (1970) noted as follows:
Girls among the Luo-speaking people are born to a ready-made pattern of life where they are expected to follow this pattern from earliest childhood. A woman’s or mother’s life therefore tends to show great conservatism even when she comes into contact with other non-Luo speaking people. This conservatism is maintained through early training of children and is still carried on in almost the same traditional way. (p. 30)

Mothers are the first to teach their children how to speak. What girls learn from their mothers remains with them the rest of their lives. In fact, women strongly influence Luo culture through early training (Ominde, 1970). Luo women married to non-Luo husbands give Luo names to their children and introduce their Luo language and customs to neighbouring communities.

2.2.7 Tekidi/Napata and Lwo retention of Indigenous knowledge

Luo origins and influence on governance in Uganda connect with Tekidi, where reference to Tekidi is quite common throughout Uganda today. However, reference to Tekidi or kidi,” while its Luo connections are omitted in current education, has fostered unhealthy social relations in the country. There are earlier Luo concepts in modern Uganda, especially in governance (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). For example, kidi means a foundation stone, or Tekidi generally in Lwo refers to “at the foot of the mountain” (Odonga, 2007; Okello-Paito, 2009). This is the legendary dispersal place for the southward Lwo, including Jopadhola (Crazzolara, 1950). Okello-Paito (2009, p. 5) credited the Indigenous scholars of Northern Uganda with exposing the “fallacies” of accounts of colonial-era scholars. Similarly, Girling (1960) said that “in many parts of the Acholi district were men with small exercise books with written accounts of the past, taken from the lips of their grandfathers and other old men” (p. 202; see also Okello-Paito, 2009, p. 16). Both Crazzolara (1950) and Girling agreed that the Lwo are eager to record and preserve their knowledge in order to share it.

In Padhola, Oboth Ofumbi (1960) has written in Lwo signifying the trend of Lwo speaking people to share knowledge. Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976, p. 80) noted that
the central Lwo settlement at Tekidi or “on the foot of the mountains” had a great kingdom making steady progress in many fields of human endeavour. But the kingdom was destroyed by the first Brown men to have met the Lwo. Teaching such knowledge openly decolonizes current knowledge that does not take indigenous knowledge seriously.

In identifying early Lwo names, Okello-Paito (2009) contended that:

An Acholi folk tale records the last Indigenous Egyptian Pharaoh Amacic (Harmacichis), or better known in Lwo as Amasis, is still remembered as a hate figure who participated in the destruction of Tekidi, the grand capital of Koch; and as a traitor who colluded with foreigners in his inability to stand firm in the face of foreign aggression. The aggressor wanted Armacichis’ daughter for a wife, hence the folk tale and song “Got Amacic yee. Got Amacic ni immi dako, Got Amacic.” (p. 8)

Apparently, the destruction of Tekidi/Napata resulted in farther migrations southward, which also saw the Luo founding and organizing new kingships among the non-Luo-speaking people in Uganda. Knowledge about who destroyed the Luo kingdom at Tekidi decolonizes the dominant knowledge that teaches Africans to believe that the art of governance comes from outside Africa.

Moreover, legend in Acholi is also relevant for the Jopadhola, as both are Luo. The Jopadhola look to the Acholi legend, as they have a common ancestor. However, certain literatures portrayed the Luo as kingless, despite the Jopadhola having kings until the imprisonment of King Majanga just before 1905, which was the colonial administration response for his resistance (Crazzolara, 1950; Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967). Jopadhola kingship is only muted by colonial scholars who write that the Jopadhola and the greater Lwo-speaking people have no kings (Namono, 2008, p. 323). Indigenous elders’ narratives in a decolonizing process must correct such distortions. For example, Namono (2008) only quoted Hardwich, an English colonial administrator, who misspelled the name of Were as “Wera” (p. 324). The Lwo have kingship in their background and that is why there are Lwo names in all of the kings’ courts in Uganda. Mutations about such knowledge are the result of colonial literatures not consulting
Indigenous knowledge. Namono’s pro-colonial perspectives about the Jopadhola allowed the misspelling ofWere, the Jopadhola concept for the omnipotent God (see also Ogot, 1972). Hardwich’s misspelling of Wera also belittled Indigenous people’s beliefs, which was a trend for colonial domination. Namono, therefore, validated the colonial trend in the misspelling. To decolonize such writings, the Indigenous people must apply their perspectives to counter Western-centric education.

Luo legend also clarifies the Jopadhola southward journey from Napata or Tekidi with an earlier interconnection with the people of Nubia who the Luo call Jo-Nub or Jo-Nubi, which suggests an early inter-cultural exchange among the two peoples (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). In fact, Ocholla-Ayayo (1980, p. 19) has said that the Luo of Wau learned to make alcohol from the Nubians as neighbours, hence the Nubian gin, changa in Kenya or enguli in Uganda. The Nubian gin is the so-called “kill me quick” which is a Nilotic Luo beverage used for ritual purposes (Ocholla-Ayayo, 1980, p. 19). Contacts between the Luo and the Nubi began at Napata-Tekidi-Lukwor. The existence of Indigenous cultural contacts between the Luo and Nubi decolonizes writings that target ancient Nubia only for its “loss” of Christianity without mentioning their Indigeneity or relations with their neighbours, the Luo and their migration southwards.

Knowledge by the Luo also decolonizes the exoticization of Luxor in Upper Egypt since originally it was Lukwor in Luo. In fact, “Thebes” has the translation Thebe or Tebbe in Acholi Luo that means “seat of government” (Okello-Paito, 2009, p. 8). Thebes, however, is normally written about as originating in Greece. Thebbe then is the seat of government that was transferred to Uganda as Entebbe, a place where the kings of Buganda have a shrine (Okello-Paito, 2009). Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976, p. 66) contended that “kwor” means an
unsettled enmity as a result of killing on account of a serious quarrel; thus “Luxor” is in reality a corruption of Lukwor. Ancestor Ocola named his grandson Kwor because the baby was born after the land had been tainted with the blood of Lwo’s son. In Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (197, p. 66), Luo legend tells us that “Lukwor was the son of Abam, one of Ocola’s sons whose wife was pregnant at the time Lwo junior murdered his son. When Ocola died of old age, even though Kwor’s father was still strong, Kwor assumed the leadership of the Tekidi settlement. Kwor was healthy and grew up to be the most handsome and kind-hearted young man in Ocola’s family. He, Kwor, was so admired that everyone identified himself and herself with him by calling themselves citizens of Kwor” (see also Crazzolara, 1950, Oboth Ofumbi, 1960, in Padhola). There is a system in the Lwo community whereby people from a whole age group name themselves after famous persons as to this day (see Oboth Ofumbi, 1960).

Adults of the king’s age group can also rename themselves after their king as a means of identifying with the virtues of the king. In the data analysis, we will discuss how young men renamed themselves after a popular King Ngor in Padhola. Crazzolara (1951, p. 31) notes, “Men of the same age as the Keere (king), proudly added the name Ngor to their own in his honour. Ngor in gratitude to his people and in full accord with his age-group decided to celebrate a feast of thanksgiving to Weere (God) for his assistance in a time of war and famine, so that people might rejoice after so much suffering.”

The Luo naming systems have not changed but we now see in European texts how a Luo name, Lukwor, becomes “Luxor” (Okello-Paito, 2009, p. 5). However, Napata or Tekidi and Lukwor were named in Kush or Cush, which is Koch in Lwo, as the area of the upper and southern Egyptian empire. Alenyo (2009) contended that Cush means Black but has been changed to mean dark. In Lwo, “Koch” means black (Odonga, 2007). Koch is also a clan found
in most current Luo ethnic groups. *Koch* is as well a concept the Padhola Lwo use daily in their
language (see Oboth Ofumbi, 1960).

Luo names of the Upper Nile are older than the Bible story written by Greeks and
Hebrews. The book of Isaiah: 18:1, says of the Cush (Koch):

The land of whirling wings
Along the rivers of Cush
Which sends envoys by Sea
In papyrus boats over the water

Go, swift messengers,
To a people tall and smooth-skinned
To a people feared far and wide,
An aggressive nation of strange speech

The footnote of this quotation in the New International Version (1978) Bible mentions the land
of the Cush as the area of the Upper Nile. The Lwo are the tall and smooth skinned people who
are associated with the Nile River (see also Alenyo, 2009).

Today, even though Koch currently is only a clan among the Luo, it is synonymous with
Cush. The Koch clan is however found in Acholi, Alur, Padhola, Busoga, and Bugwere. Ogot
(1967, p. 103) quotes an oral tradition that notes that “the Koch clan is one of the older ones in
Padhola having arrived during the Padhola and Seewe wars, from Bugweri country of Busoga,
via Bunyole.” Seewe is Lwo for the Maasai whom the Jopadhola defeated in an encounter
prompting them to move away for good into modern Kenya (Ogot, 1967). Moreover, Ogot has
quoted an Acholi historian, Lacito Okech, who has written that “the Koch is actually a splinter
section of the Jo-Nam (people of the Nile) in [the] current Alur kingdom in the vicinity of
Watlee or Pakwach, with some of them in Acholiland.” In the process of expansion, clans
usually splinter and move on. The Jopadhola and Kenya Luo are organized in clans and are the
non-Bantuised Luo with brethren in Pawiir in the North Eastern corner of Bunyoro and Koch
clan manifests itself in all Lwo groups symbolizing their interconnectedness.
Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) suggested that “current differences in dialect and physical features existing between the Shilluk people and Acholi or Alur or even Jopadhola Lwo originated only from Tekidi” (p. 55). However, it is possible that different features between the Lwo groups can be attributed to intermarriage with non-Lwo groups. They can also be attributed to the different geographical areas of their current settlements, and the influence of the languages of their neighbours upon the Luo.

Though the name Olum is common, it is not easy to find someone with the name Lwo. It is now the name reserved for identity or reconnection for the greater nation of all Luo-speaking people. As previously mentioned, Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976, p. 55) provided an elaborate legend about the causes of a quarrel among the sons of Olum at Tekidi, leading to a further dispersal of the Lwo speaking people.

[Thus] two sons of Olum, Ocola and Lwo quarreled over a blessed spear from the ancestral shrine where spears are sanctified customarily. Ocola had picked his brother Lwo’s or Labongo’s spear to go and chase away elephants drinking at a pool after they had destroyed crops. Ocola threw Lwo’s spear at a lone elephant that ran away with the spear stuck in it. (p. 55)

Disputes that cannot be resolved among the Lwo traditionally lead to the moving away of one party among the Luo.

Whereas the Lwo of Eastern Uganda or Western Kenya look to their northern Lwo kindred for a legend that unites them; those from the north also look at the legend from the Luo of the south to explain why they split. Hence “wat omogo icogo” or “kinship clings to the bone” in Lwo (see Crazzolara, 1951).

According to p’Bitek (1966) and Ogot (1967), too many quarrels depict the Lwo speaking people as unforgiving of one another, whereby problems are solved by migrating away from home. That is how the Luo are scattered all over the north and east as well as parts of
Central Africa, whereby every quarrel in the Lwo phenomena connects with the myth of the spear and bead. Quarrels are also common among the Jopadhola as some have since moved on to Bugerere just like their ancestors Adhola and Owiny moved from Tekidi. There is the concept of *kuun* in Padhola which seems related to the founding of *kuunu* shrines away from the main family homestead. *Kuun* is going away permanently never to return. Going away from the family homestead necessitates establishing another shrine for the permanency of new places of settlement.

Splits between brothers can be contained by following clan norms and strict religious practices of cleansing to prevent calamities, the Jopadhola being a very religious people (see also Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Grace Ogot, 1968). For example, Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) recorded that:

> The elder son of Lwo when queried if it was safe to travel towards an unknown place in such a manner, answers that it is wise to leave everything to *Jok Kene (kende)* or to God alone because Jok alone has power over the universe and everything therein. (p. 61)

Among the Luo, God is invoked in any unresolved matter whereby people swear not to reconcile. That is how the southward party became known as “those who have trust in God”, in Lwo language, “Jo-ka-Jok.” Among the Jopadhola *Jwok* is the great Spirit Being (see Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967). This legend may explain why the Jopadhola remain a very religious people surrounded by many shrines called *kuunu*. They are skeptical towards the Christian religion and it is usually hard for them to entertain any change in their Indigenous belief system.

Moreover, Ogot (1972) notes that the Jopadhola practice a monotheist religion with a Supreme Being, Jok, worshipped in shrines in the area looked at as “holy land” (see also Ogot, 1967). In Padhola, religious ceremonies bind the people together (see Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). The better spelling among the Jopadhola for the Supreme Being is usually Jwok or Juok rather than
Jok (see Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). Jok spelling is more closely linked to Kenyan Luo or the Acholi of northern Uganda, but the meaning is the same with only a variation, especially among the Jopadhola. Moreover, invoking the name of Juok where a person has ended his own son’s life requires cleansing, and failure to undertake this leads to someone’s ostracization. In the data chapter, we will later see how the names of murderers are never given to children.

According to Oboth Ofumbi (1960) in Padhola, the murder of any clan member is forbidden, unforgivable, and ostracizing. If someone kills another accidentally or during a fight, even his descendants in generations to come will be shunned, whatever kind of cleansing such a person goes through. Ogot (1972) says that there is the concept of tipo or the spirit of the murdered person returning to take revenge against a killer, and no children are named after murderers (see also Ocholla Ayayo, 1976). The resilience of the Indigenous Jopadhola’s ways of life defines who they are in relation to their resistance to the establishment of the colonial rule, which also calls into question the relevance of current Western-centric education and calls for a thorough transformation.

### 2.2.8 The Jopadhola Lwo and the Promised Land

It was through migration that the Jopadhola are in Padhola today. Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) have stated that:

Lwo, a son of Olum, travelled on and on until he reached present Padhola. One of Lwo’s sons, Adhola, had a small tropical ulcer when the party left Tekidi. Lwo left his son to die in the wilderness, saying he had no remorse for useless men, ordering the party to march on. But the sick man also had a new wife who refused to move with the bigger party but decided to remain by her husband and die with him if necessary. Her action also stirred up the emotions of a few young men who were very close to the sick man. So they too decided to stay behind with the couple. Adhola was finally treated using healing herbs found in bushes. (p. 61)
After his recovery, Adhola stayed in Padhola since the wife gave birth. This is the small party that decided to settle in the unoccupied land permanently; this land is currently the home of the Jopadhola Lwo (see Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Legend, according to Oboth Ofumbi (1960), is that Adhola’s wife gave birth to the first priestly clan, Nyapolo. Ogot (1967, p. 58) also has said that “the Jopadhola found and regarded this land as uninhabited and settled here as the first inhabitants” (see also Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). Moreover, Ogot (1967, p. 85) says, “Padhola colonists were settling in a virgin territory. They believed that this was their Canaan, the Promised Land, preserved for them by God.” Ogot (1972, p. 122) further says that “the Jopadhola Lwo arrived in their current territory in the middle of 16th century but had to fight external foes.” Ogot (1967) has also added that the Jopadhola preferred to stay in “self-isolation.” The hostility of neighbours made the Jopadhola view them as external foes, but some remain their neighbours even today. Continuity through “self-isolation” is a way through which the Jopadhola preserved Padhola as a Lwo speaking enclave though surrounded by the Bantu and Nilo-Hamites, or the Teso, as only recent immigrants. Though disagreements traditionally are the cause of splits among the Luo mass, there is no record of any major quarrel between Adhola and Owiny. Okot p’Bitek (1966), however, depicted Owiny as perhaps a more restless person who wanted to go as far as possible until stopped by the Lake where his descendants are the Luo of Kenya and Tanzania. According to Ogot (1967),

Padhola traditions are unanimous that they found nobody and the place was thickly forested. Evidence from place-names reflects not only the topography of the region when the first Jopadhola settlers arrived but also amply illustrates how the main lines of Padhola settlement in Bukedi were laid down by the topography of the country. (p. 80; see also Oboth Ofumbi, 1960).

Being the first people in a virgin territory indigenizes the Jopadhola people in the area with new arrivals seen as “foreigners.”
According to Ogot (1967, p. 3), the present Padhola territory, administratively called:

West Budama, is divided into three ecological zones with contrast between them of primary importance for not only Padhola history but also its cultural institutions. The Jopadhola are also keen to protect their shrines situated here in Padhola. The lowest and most thickly forested area is known to Padhola as Lul, which means forest. The southern part of Padhola is called Mawele. (p. 3)

Ogot has also noted that the outer part of Padhola:

Iyolwa, was only occupied more recently. Previously, these were buffer zones between the Jopadhola and other ethnic groups with fundamentally different cultures. The Eastern side of Padhola called Yo Woko was settled much later. This is the highest and coolest part of Padhola. There is also the present East Budama, which the Jopadhola Lwo previously strictly maintained as a no-man’s land to protect them from the Jo-Seewe, or the Masai, until the arrival of the Omia from Kenya sides. (p. 63)

Both Oboth Ofumbi (1960) and Ogot (1967) contended that the Jopadhola called the Maasai Seewe, as legend has it that “they lay together on the ground like maggots, hence kudin seewe in Padhola.” Padhola fought battles with the Maasai, who withdrew to modern Kenya almost 12 generations ago. Though the Lwo respect the prevailing ethnic names of their neighbours, they also give their own names to their neighbours, usually descriptive of their first encounter or their later relationships.

The Jopadhola coin names for neighbouring ethnic groups according to what they eat, their trade, or the name of the place they come from. For example, they call their neighbours, the Banyole, Omwa (i.e., foreigners). Moreover, according to both Oboth Ofumbi (1960) and Ogot (1967), the Jopadhola also call the Bagisu neighbours Jo-Misowa, and the Baganda with whom they fought in their land Jo-Ngaya or Magere or Wagande. Such names are not usually considered derogatory, but rather are meaningful Lwo concepts for defining the neighbours or people encountered in their territory. The Baganda are not particularly neighbours to Jopadhola, but they were in Padhola as enemies or colonial agents of the British, hence their description as Jo-Ngaya (i.e. foreigners). Crazzolara (1950) also contended that despite the cultural animosity
and names given to neighbours, nothing in their culture stops the Jopadhola from marrying foreign girls. For example, according to Crazzolara, the son of a king named Abongo married a Munyole girl, but was lured to his death at the in-laws’ home, igniting a battle to retrieve his body from the Bunyole.

The Jopadhola Lwo, however, do not have the monopoly to name their enemies. The Bantu-speaking people also have a role in naming the Jopadhola Lwo in their own languages, such as “Badama” after an Adhola war cry *Widoma* (you are in trouble). Oboth Ofumbi (1960) stated that the Jopadhola directed the war cry *Widoma* at their Bantu enemies in the battlefield, thus telling them “you are in trouble.” A name that depicts a group’s bravery on the war front also recognizes their military prowess. It may be accepted as a boasting name that Ocholla Ayayo (1980) has talked about. The result of this war cry is that Padhola is now acceptably called “Budama,” as the name has never been abandoned since contact with *Omwa*.

According to Ogot (1967),

The leaders of the clans of Padhola refer to themselves as “brothers” and regard their ancestors as sons of one man called “Adhola.” Any clan which does not trace its genealogy back to Adhola is disparaged in an attitude that fosters a monolithic view of Padhola history or who they are currently. (p. 67)

However, Ogot explained that the evolution of Padhola society cannot be entirely in terms of “blood relationships” because there is the possibility of amalgamation of certain or less-related clans into a tribe. Crazzolara (1950) contended that being liberal, the Lwo also assimilate captives or foreigners (i.e., *Omwa*) who are not accepted outright into existing clans, but they are allowed to form sub-clans. Ogot, however, has noted that not all sub-clans are originally Lwo, as some were Luoized through intermarriage and the giving of Luo names.

However, general legend in Padhola is unanimous that Adhola was the brother of Owiny or Uwiny who settled at Kavirondo in the Lake region of Kenya, though there are disputes on
this. For example, Ogot (1967) contended that Adhola was actually the son of Owiny. However, legend in Padhola has been unequivocal that Owiny and Adhola were sons of Lwo the elder and led big groups southwards, and they probably want it to remain that way. Oboth Ofumbi (1960) also maintains that Adhola is the brother of Owiny. In fact, to the Jopadhola, the Luo of Kenya are the Jo-P’Owiny or the people of Owiny, whereby the Luo of Kenya have “appropriated” the name Luo for themselves. However, Luo is the name for all Luo-speaking people and not only for the followers of Owiny. According to Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976), Adhola was the son of Lwo, and Owiny’s actual name is also Lwo, the son of Olum who extracted the beads from his son’s belly to give back to his brother Ocola after a quarrel. In this way, Adhola is the son of Lwo, who is later referred to as Owiny, the father of the Kenyan Luo. This account may explain why the Luo of Kenya are more numerous than the Padhola, who are but a tiny “Luo Island.” Ogot (1967) said, “The Luo adopted the remedy their forefathers had always employed—they migrated to South Nyanza” (p. 159) in Kenya after parting ways with Adhola, who stayed in Eastern Uganda.

Though fewer in numbers, for the Jopadhola, Luoness is in their Luo names. As Luo, Padhola traditions maintain the myth of the bead and the spear, with women wearing beads around their waists or as bead skirts (cip) and mothers wrapping the babies’ and toddlers’ waists and wrists with beads for their weight gain (wega or kiwega nyathi). Crazzolara (1951), Oboth Ofumbi (1960), and p’Bitek (1971) have all elaborated on the myth of the bead and spear. There is a stage where mothers determine a baby’s health through the visibility of curves around the wrists, neck, and ankles. It is believed in Padhola that the wearing of beads around these parts of the body enhances weight gain for babies as a sign of good health after they have been accorded their respective ancestral and spiritual names.
The sustenance of Luoness is, however, not synonymous with purity, because according to Ogot (1967), some clans in Padhola have mixed backgrounds. It is not only the older Oruwa clan who are all today full-fledged Jopadhola Luo that are considered mixed, but there are also some newer ones continually assimilated into Padhola dynamic society. Ogot (1967, p. 67) contended that Oruwa connotes a history of a mixture with non-Luo descendants. To a person who speaks Luo, Oruwa translates into a confession or a complaint that “I have been mixed” or “they have mixed us” culturally, hence nono oruwere. This is probably due to foreign visitation or amalgamation of clans or perhaps a complex process of intermarriages with non-Luo clans. Oboth Ofumbi (1960), however, does not see the Oruwa as alien, but as a Padhola clan that has the custody of Luo emblems and drums.

The Lwo have provisions that allow aliens to form sub-clans by attaching themselves to a major Lwo clan (Crazzolara, 1951). According to Owor (2012), Oruwa might have come about after an amalgamation of two clans, with the major one absorbing a smaller one from Gem in Western Kenya. Either way, when children are given Padhola names through ceremonies, they are already Jopadhola, who are not foreignizable. Ogot (1967) opened a Pandora’s box when he said, “We cannot therefore explain the evolution of Padhola society entirely in terms of blood relationships—important though these were” (p. 67). Oboth Ofumbi (1960, p. 59), however, has insisted that Oruwa is a son of Adhola who birthed four sons: Lapa, Demba, Lusi, and Menya (see also Okello-Paito, 2009). As has already been noted, according to Okello-Paito (2009), Menya is actually one of the older Luo names of the Egyptian Pharaoh Menes or Mena of ancient Egypt. Even where Menya is present among the Basoga Bantu clans, it is an indication of a clan’s Luoness, since the concept of Menya means “shine on me” in Lwo. It is sometimes not
surprising for people to carry ancestral names originating from an ethnic group other than that of their current affiliation after the loss of a previous language.

The practices of intermarriage, migration, and direct assimilation through sub-clans are processes through which the Luo assimilate the non-Luo. Such dynamism is responsible for the expansion of the number of clans in Padhola from just a few to ever-increasing numbers. Despite these expansions, the cultural practices, the language, and the names of the people remain stubbornly Luo in Padhola, reinforced and solidified through religious ceremonies. For example, Ogot’s (1967) extensive research among the Jopadhola in the 1960s has listed original Luo clans first as 24 then 32. However, Oboth Ofumbi (1960, p. 14) noted that detailing clan practices and names, makes traditional Padhola clans even fewer to 22. Presently, there are even more clans, but a few of these clans are Omiia-Teso in origin. For example, Karwok or Kapukesi are now almost integrated or tolerated within Padhola, though they are non-Lwo. Moreover, all these non-Lwo clans currently in Padhola practice Lwo customs and have been giving their children Lwo ancestral names for generations, diminishing their non-Luoness.

In effect, many of the Omia within Padhola, who were noted previously as being from Kenya, have gradually assimilated and no longer speak their former language or give their children Omia names. These are the Omia who have vanished into Padhola because they now have Padhola names, save for the retention of their original non-Lwo clans. These clans’ loss of language suggests that their immersion into Padhola territory has profound effects on them, as not only do they practice Padhola culture, but they have also fully adopted their Lwo names. Moreover, Owor (2012) mentioned the presence of a clan of the Bagungu in Padhola. This is, however, a surprise, because there is a whole sub-ethnic group in Bunyoro in Western Uganda who are Bagungu.
The spread of the names of the minority Lwo can almost compare with the spread of the Kiswahili language of the coastal people. It is not a language of a dominant majority and it is not oppressive, but rather, a lingua franca or a medium through which different ethnic groups speak to one another throughout East and Central Africa (Kaligula & Lodhi, 1980). Similarly, in places where Lwo speaking people live, Luo becomes a lingua franca of some sort, and thereafter the adoption of Lwo ancestral and spiritual names makes many people become Lwo. Crazzolara (1950), Okello Ayot (1979), and p’Bitek (1966) all elaborated that the non-Luo gradually Luoize, when they give their children Luo names and become Luo.

2.2.9 Jopadhola and shrines

To function as a society, the Jopadhola maintain a belief system that guides their spirituality, with the maintenance of shrines as central to their survival and the means by which they resist assimilation by neighbouring communities. Ogot (1972) contends that the Jopadhola believe in one Spirit Being from above, together with other spirits that manifest along with the One above. Ocholla-Ayayo (1980) contended, “The Luo-speaking people in general believe in the existence of a Supreme Being and a supernatural force of power and Man as the centre of all creation, and that all things were given to him by the Creator” (p. 166). The customs and rituals of the Jopadhola are continual sacred beliefs. Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) noted that nothing is done in Padhola without invoking the Jopadhola beliefs that have guided the people throughout their existence.

According to Luo traditional legend narrated to Crazzolara (1950, p. 192) and Ogot (1967, p. 56), “the Padhola were among the Luo who struck the water on the River Nile dividing it for them to cross over on dry land as it happened during the time of Moses in Egypt.” Both Crazzolara (1950) and Ogot (1967) agreed that the tradition of parting the river and moving on
dry land is synonymous with Luo movements in crossing the Nile River. Ogot (1967) contended that when the Luo did not use boats, “they struck the Nile, parting it just as Moses did when crossing the Red Sea into Canaan. Hence the Jo-Pa-Lwoo passed over the River, inviting the rest to follow them” (p. 56). The Luo-Babito moved from the north into Bunyoro only after the Luo struck the river for dry land to appear (p. 56). Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) have further contended that the Lwo also assisted the Hima, or *Oma*, to cross the Nile with their cattle in this manner. The study of the minority Lwo Jopadhola counters the monopoly of the familiar epistemology through Luo narratives about parting waters for dry land.

In fact, Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) contended that Luo names include that of the *Iru*, or Banyankole who are Bairu, that the Luo named for smoking pipes all the time. *Iru* or *Iro* is smoke in Luo. Legend among the Luo also contends that the name *Cairo* or *Kairo* is also Lwo and refers to smoke in Lwo. The variation in the spellings is by people who currently live there or settled there later, but it makes sense as a Luo name in meaning. This, however, needs a deeper study of Lwo language since, according to Odonga (2007), *Kairo* means place of smoke.

Luo names cannot be hidden because they are interpretable in Luo. For example, when Beattie (1971, p. 25) contended that the Babito is a group of clans who are relatives of the present-day Acholi and Alur or the Shilluk of the Upper Nile who crossed the Nile to establish the Nyoro kingdom; it is the Luo names that can confirm such a claim. A more thorough account is with the Luo Bito kings of Bunyoro to interpret the meaning of *Bito* in Luo even though they no longer speak Luo. For example, Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) clarified that *Jo-Bito* is a curse or a threat in Luo issued to people who deserve to die because of rebellion or disobedience to stipulated rules in Luo culture. Kingship or pre-colonial governance in modern
Uganda must have come with Luo from the north because of the Luo titles and ancestral names that are currently still interpretable in Luo among most Ugandan royals, particularly in the *Empako* names of the Banyoro-Batooro, which are praise names from *pako*, which is Luo for praise.

Moreover, as Okello-Paito’s (2009) citing of the Luo tradition of crossing the Nile by striking the water or sea for dry land to appear is a spiritual knowledge of crossing the sea on dry ground that is very much present with the Luo. In the bible, the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea from Egypt to Canaan in a similar manner (Exodus 14: 22). Okello-Paito (2009) also identified some Luo names that the Hebrews returned with to Canaan from Egypt. Luo ancestral names are for neighbours too, and some Hebrews also have Luo names. Alenyo (2009) and Okello-Paito (2009) both pointed out some of the Luo names one can analyze with Luo meanings in Genesis 10: 25-29, such as Obal, Joktan, Ophir, and Japheth.

Furthermore, Alenyo (2009) pointed out the Luo name Achan in Joshua 7: 19-26. Both Achan and Ochan are current Luo ancestral names regularly given to children according to circumstances or events at the time of their birth. Okello-Paito (2009, p. 11) contended that the name Obal in the book of Genesis is a current surname among the Acholi, just as Ophir, which is Opiir in Acholi Luo. Opiir is known as one of the leaders who first led a Luo group into Uganda (see also Genesis 10: 26-29). Moreover, Okello-Paito contended that Jok-tan in Hebrew is Joktany in Luo. Similarly, both Odonga (2007) and Okello-Paito contended that Japheth is Lafet in Luo, which means wanderer. All the names above from the Hebrew Bible have similar meanings and circumstances as the Luo names that the Jopadhola give their children. The Luo do not baptize themselves with such names since they are Indigenous, spiritual, and ancestral names. The Hebrews and the Luo both lived in Egypt at one time. When writing about these
spiritual names and meanings, there are manifestations in the ear as if there is an instant communication of agreement. This is because according to Ogot (1972), since the Luo believe in a here-after-life, ancestral spirits regularly communicate and confirm names and other messages to Luo-speaking people.

Crazzolara (1950) has cited a Luo legend, where “Owiny, Labongo and Opiir were men who came from Misr, which is Egypt, who arrived in Uganda after traversing several river tributaries” (p. 256). Moreover, Okello-Paito (2009, p. 8) contended that in Pharaonic Egypt, dynastic kings had Luo names such as Tet, which is better pronounced Tetti in Luo and means design, or Ateti, or the name Ahmose, which means “I hail you” in Luo. All these names are also continual and current Luo names. For example, Ahmose among the southern Luo, still means “I greet you,” “honour you,” or “I hail you,” which is common among the Luo of Western Kenya and Tanzania. According to Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976, p. 248), in Bunyoro, the concept of Ahmose is reproduced in the Luo praise name “Amooti,” which also means “I greet you” (see also Ocholla-Ayayo, 1980). Okello-Paito contended that “Aha” is both a name and common expression among the Lwo speaking people, meaning “I have seen the light” or “I have risen” (p. 8). The “Aha” expression is also common among the Jopadhola, symbolizing an agreement in a conversation.

Indigenous Egyptian culture, especially among Egyptian rulers, is replete with Luoness, since many of the names are reproduced during children’s naming ceremonies that are continually celebrated (Okello-Paito, 2009; p’Bitek, 1971). The similarities between Luo names and names in Pharaonic Egypt should force a rethinking around the exoticization of Indigenous names of Egypt. More of the revelation of ancestral and spiritual names will be presented in the data chapter.
In another example, Okello-Paito (2009, p. 28) interpreted an 18th dynasty ruler of Egypt “Akhena-tuon” to mean “I am the only bull.” Ocholla-Ayayo (1976, 1980) also contended that *Tuon* is an honorific title or name among the Luo: for example, *Nyatuon* or *Nyathuon* is honorific for “daughter of the bull.” Contemporarily, Akena is now a Luo name in its shortened form. Although previously recorded as “Akhena-tuon,” the meaning remains the same in Luo now as it was during the Luo Pharaonic Egypt (Okello-Paito, 2009). Moreover, Cohen (1972), Okello Ayot (1979), and Okello-Paito (2009) have all noted that these Lwo cultural and ancestral names are ongoing and have not been lost.

Moreover, as reported in Jochannan (1972), Ogot (1967), Okello Ayot (1979), and Okello-Paito (2009), it is now a common practice for non-Luo neighbours to adopt Luo names as a norm. Luoness, then, is a phenomenon that reproduces and expands itself through ancestral naming practices. Because the Luo owe their ancestors names, the reproduction of these names ensures the protection of their identity as they come into contact with non-Luo neighbours. Furthermore, Ogot (1972) has contended that the “Padhola religion cannot be understood except in context of the Nilotic vision of Reality embraced in the concept of Jok” (p. 122). Additionally, the Creator is “regarded with reverence which appears almost Semitic in spirit. Although, He, the Creator, is recognised in his different manifestations—a development not unusual even in more highly intellectual religions—*this does not detract from his fundamental oneness*” (p. 124). Ogot’s comparison with “Semitic in spirit” only confirms that the Luo have always had their own concept of God and hence their resistance to *Christianization* and baptismal names, which would infringe on and conflict with Indigenous beliefs through which ancestral and spiritual names are given for identity.
Moreover, Ogot (1972) also contended that “in case of the Padhola and Kenya Luo, the use of the name ‘Jok’ or ‘Juok’ to mean God has to a large extent been superseded by ‘Were’ and ‘Nyasae’, respectively” (p. 124). Ocholla-Ayayo (1980, p. 167) has reaffirmed that “the Luo existence of a supreme being who created the whole universe” means that the Supreme Being worshipped among the Jopadhola Lwo is an ancient one that only compares to the God of the Bible, who cannot be introduced to the Jopadhola since they already know Him. According to Asante (2003), the Greek philosopher Homer came to Africa in 800 BCE to learn African religion and philosophy, which means that the people in Africa had a universally recognised ancient culture and religion. Therefore, even the Jopadhola were not going to adopt an alien religion when they already had one. Padhola is structured on an Indigenous belief system. Ogot said,

> When a man or woman dies, he or she discards the body, which is likened to a garment, but the spirit which is tipo goes to Were. But if a man or woman dies unmarried his spirit even demands his share of the dowry. If his death is due to foul play, the man is known to take revenge on his enemies. Moreover, people who die unjustly, it is believed, state their case before God and if the guilt of the murder is proved, avenging spirits together with the spirit of the deceased are dispatched back to the earth to punish the guilty. (p. 124)

According to Oboth Ofumbi (1960), the continuity of a kind of life after death is cieno or more broadly cien (see also Evans-Pritchard, 1965; Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976). Ocholla-Ayayo (1980) elaborated that “beliefs about a life after death appear to solve for the Luo the question of ‘What after death?’” (p. 147). Padhola, as a spiritual society, has the practice of relying on dead ancestors to communicate the names of children, which are then solemnized in naming ceremonies and feasts. The death of an ancestor is, therefore, just a phase for the continuation of the new life since, that ancestor’s name will be given with a ceremony.

Moreover, Ogot (1972) contended as follows:
Each of the nineteen Padhola clans of Luo origin had between three to four *kunnu* and *kuuni* in plural as guardian spirits guiding them in the hazardous journey to Padhola. Each *kunnu* had a sanctuary where a member of the clan went to ask succor from the ‘dumb’ spirit. The spirits could by themselves not speak as they had to speak to human beings through *Were* (God in Polo). As clans moved they designated different sites as holy and in Padhola the *kuuni* have taken up residence in stones, trees, hills near or within the primary area where different Jopadhola clans live. (p. 126)

The Jopadhola custom stipulates that children of clans are named in areas where their clan *kunni* resides, with their social organization foundationally and spiritually defined. This complex Jopadhola organization also impacts new immigrants in the area, together with other residents, through religion, customs, and the sheer presence of shrines in the vicinity. The preserved shrines make Padhola a spiritual stronghold, with Luo culture and language sealed through ancestral and spiritual names for the community. Moreover, even though Ogot (1972) referred to spirits in Padhola as *dumb*, the spirits actually speak through seers who are regularly consulted in this society. Sometimes, the spirits speak to people who hear them directing some of their functions. However, how spirits speak or make their demands to people today will be later discussed in Chapter 6.

There are also strict moral beliefs among the Luo, with slightly different levels of repercussions for breaking the moral code whereby the Jopadhola Lwo codes appear far stricter. For example, Oboth Ofumbi (1960, p. 36) enumerated some of the Jopadhola beliefs about sacredness of the child, whereby the mother of a newly born child, *minyur* (new mother), may not leave the house for several days or go out without a thanksgiving ceremony. The new mother also only eats certain kinds of food cooked using certain kinds of firewood. Certain kinds of fuel wood are avoided for their ritual harmfulness to both the *minyur* and the baby. There are practices forbidden as ritually unclean for the new mothers. For example, for the Koi clan, Oboth Ofumbi (1960, p. 36) said, *minyur chemo ikor pendi*, which is the inner part of the banana plant.
This is followed by a thanksgiving ceremony dedicated to Juok. Ocholla-Ayayo (1980, p. 149) contended that the Luo family institution is built on moral laws of “sinful consequences” of Ciira among the Kenyan Luo, and in Padhola, it is Luswa and also Kwer, or the forbidden acts, with cultural obligations and rules to prepare someone against any anti-social behaviours (see also Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). The practices are expected to continue because they are spiritual. Such knowledge is absent in colonially oriented education in Uganda and is practiced informally.

Moreover, Padhola moral codes also include reverence for the elderly as a spiritual duty for every Luo-speaking person. Even though, in Padhola, Ogot (1972) contended that:

The conception of God or Were is that of a merciful and good Being, this Supreme Being manifests in different ways, as God of the Courtyard (Were ma Diedipo) who looks after the family and the home, and there is also the God of the Wilderness (Were Othim) who watches over men while they are out hunting or fighting or on a journey. (p. 124)

Ogot also said that the Jopadhola “reverence for the name ‘Were’ is like that of the Jews for the name ‘Yahweh’” (p. 124). Similarly, Ocholla-Ayayo (1980, p. 167) has noted that the Jopadhola’s other name for Creator God is actually Jachwech (the Creator), whose name is not mentioned, but referred to in reverence as “Jamalo” or “The Man from above” (see also Ogot, 1972). In Ogot, Yahweh sounds very much like the original Jachwech of the Jopadhola, and Jachwech is typically a Lwo word and not a corruption of Yahweh. In Acholi Lwo, He is Lachwech. In Ogot, He is also called Jamalo the Creator of the universe. With such a well-established belief system, Indigenous people know their Creator and how to worship Him. The security of the Jopadhola depends on Jwok, and they believe that if ancestral names are not given to children with a ceremony, then hostile or foreign spirits will torment the children (Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). It is the orally transmitted knowledge among Indigenous people that sustains a parallel education to the colonial education linked to Christian religion. The resistance to the
establishment of the Christian church obligations to adopt baptismal names or foreign names will be discussed in the data chapter.

Furthermore, according to Oboth Ofumbi (1960, p. 64), the Jopadhola take their religious or cultural ceremonies seriously as an allegiance to ancestors with every event accompanied by a ritual ceremony. During their southward journey, the Jopadhola carried seeds for elusine, millet, or kal stored in granaries to continue with their Luo ceremonies. Both Crazzolara (1950) and Oboth Ofumbi (1960) have said that upon founding Padhola, the Jopadhola raided their neighbours for some other foodstuffs that they indigenized, such as the bananas. However, kal, or millet, remains a kind of staple food among the Lwo-speaking people, which they believe makes them physically stronger than their neighbours, whose staple food is the banana. Oboth Ofumbi has said that kal is also essential for brewing alcohol for feasts and ceremonies. It is also an item much used in the king’s courts for rituals. Both Crazzolara and Oboth Ofumbi reiterate that when King Ngor offered a feast at the end of a famine, he used kwon and kong’o made from kal to feast with his people, in full accord with his age group.

Crazzolara (1951, p. 318) cited local knowledge, in which the king of Padhola is known as Rwoth or Keere, kere. Hakeem (1990) also recorded the concepts of kwr, ker, kere, and qere as constituting titles by which kings in Egypt were also known. All of these are Luo concepts that are also Pharaonic titles: kwr, ker, qere, or kere. The Luo words have been sustained among the Lwo speaking people including the Jopadhola (Hakeem, 1990). Crazzolara (1951) noted,

At the end of the king’s feast after using kal, which is also a food item used during sacrifice to Were, Kere (king) Ngor in Padhola then assured his people of peace and comfort. After the feast offered by the king, there followed an era of peace, harmony and bumper harvests. (p. 323)

In Padhola, the king is also a kind of high priest with closer connections to the Creator in offering sacrifices. Even rulers are chosen by Juok, and the people only confirm them by
submitting to them. For example, Crazzolara (1951) noted the honours that follow the accepted king: “After the feast at the end of famine during the time of Kere Ngor, men of the same age with the king added the name Ngor to their own in his honour” (p. 323), where sacrifices were offered to the Ancient One regardless of their having come into contact with the Bantu. Namono (2008) suggested that the Jopadhola form of worship is of Bantu conception. Similarly, Southall (1956) contended that “the Lwo society can sometimes borrow some Bantu ideas considered useful though foreign but seldom in their belief systems” (p. 4).

However, with regard to *kal* or millet used in brewing alcohol for religious ceremonies, the Padhola form of worship may not have had any Bantu background, since the Bantu have no background of eating millet or using it for sacrifice to their deity (Ogot, 1967). The sacrifices that involve brewing alcohol from millet are usually Luo and not Bantu. Therefore, the deity in Padhola could not have been a Ntu concept as Namono has suggested. Millet is a Nilotic Lwo food used for offering sacrifices to the Luo deity, and if the Bantu use millet for sacrifice, it is more to a Lwo deity (Oboth Ofumbi, 1960; Ogot, 1967). A lot has been written since the colonial era that mutes Luoness and kingship. However, when it comes to kingship, though it is not a monopoly of the Luo, the Luo are known to be the originators of effective governance through kings of Uganda before the colonial era (Cohen, 1972; Ogot, 1966; p’Bitek, 1971). Crazzolara (1951), on the other hand, has contended that Ngor I was just one of the kings in Padhola because there were others such as Ngor II, Pyan, Risa, and Magoro. Such knowledge about the Jopadhola contends with the legacy that denies or mutes the significance of the Luo, especially through colonial attitudes that disparage the pre-colonial knowledge of Indigenous people.

Similarly, kingship in Padhola is for the unity, reclamation, and preservation of the Luo identity. The presence of knowledge about the concepts of kings among the Lwo also dispels the
notion of the Lwo as a stateless society. Moreover, when age sets add the king’s names to their own, it is a Lwo practice of naming children after their ancestors and Lwo heroes (Crazzolara, 1954). In Alenyo (2009), the Jopadhola Lwo community is currently organized around the idea of kingship within the Tieng Adhola Cultural Institution.

In Padhola (see the map in figure 2), customarily, foreigners are expected to gradually assimilate into the Lwo culture, through sub-clans affiliated with the original clans, and they are then given Padhola names, even ancestral names of the original clan to which people in the new sub-clan affiliate themselves. Initially, according to Crazzolara (1950), the non-Lwo clans joining other Lwo clans submitted to or paid tribute to the Keere. Now, if they properly remain within their own clans, they still Luoize, gradually immersing into their Luo neighbours guided by Luo spiritually.

2.3 Conclusion

The Jopadhola are Luo-speaking people of Eastern Uganda. They broke off from the main Luo mass, or lwak, that was moving southwards along the Nile River. Legend says that the Luo moved southwards from a north country because of famine and the pollution of the water that had turned into blood. They further dispersed at Tekidi/Napata after a quarrel between Lwo and Ocola (Onyango-ku-Odongo & Webster, 1976). Another dispersal was in Northern Bunyoro from where the Jopadhola and Kenyan Luo moved away as a non-Bantuized Luo group after crossing the Nile River, to Acholiland and then southwards. Upon arrival in current Padhola, they found the land uninhabited and indigenized themselves in forested areas in a “Lwo Island” to protect their culture and practice their customs (Oboth Ofumbi, 1960, Ogot, 1967). Hostile groups that included the Maasai and Banyole later attacked them, the Jopadhola defeated them and retained the land where their shrines are located. After founding Padhola, the people have
continued to give their children ancestral and spiritual names by according them ceremonies.

They maintain a monotheist religion, with their shrines dotting their areas of residence (Ogot, 1972). Like the Luo mass, the Jopadhola observe their customs and maintain food taboos (Ochola-Ayayo, 1976).

The Jopadhola have lived peacefully with their neighbours since the feast of Merekit, where all neighbours agreed to live as friends with the Bagisu, whom they call *Jo-Misoa*, the Bagwere, the Banyole, whom they called *Omwa*, and the Basamia towards the border with Kenya, all of which are Bantu-speaking groups. The Jopadhola also live peacefully with the Iteso or the Nilo Hamites, some of whom have adopted their Lwo language and names voluntarily, while some have assimilated into a few Padhola clans and sub-clans. The feast of Merekit was an important peace settlement after many wars between neighbours. After making peace with all the neighbours at Merekit, Dhopadhola Lwo language thrived so that at one point, it became attractive to newcomers, some of whom gradually and voluntarily started giving their children Jopadhola Lwo names. The Jopadhola maintain a clan-based system that regulates their cultural and social norms in observing their customs. The Jopadhola also hold a religious attitude towards their area of residence, which they refer to as the “Promised Land” and a place in which to preserve their Luoness. Padhola in Eastern Uganda is the place where Lwo ancestral names are salient and solemnized through ceremonies.

It is from this established Indigenous system since time immemorial that the next chapter draws from for the use of anti-colonial discourses to decolonize the current status quo of dominant knowledge which is colonizing. Indigenous knowledge systems have been retained despite the ravages of colonization.
Figure 2. Map of Padhola indicating locations of Kuunu Shrines

Culled from B. A. Ogot (1972), *On The Making of a Sanctuary* (p.134)
Chapter 3
The Anti-Colonial Discursive Framework:
Decolonizing Discourses and the Status Quo

3.1. Introduction
This chapter examines the anti-colonial discursive framework as an approach for theorizing colonialism and its relationship with the colonized people. This framework speaks to the retention ancestral and spiritual naming practice among the Jopadhola as a cultural anticolonial resistance. Key tenets of anti-colonialism are resistance, agency, and voice for decolonization all throughout the discourse. Anti-colonialism is the actual lens for reading and understanding Indigenous naming practices. It is also the lens through which colonialism is seen as ongoing. Through this lens, I see colonialism as maintaining a power relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in countries where colonialism purportedly relinquished its administration. Colonialism re-invents itself in the post-colonial states, especially through relations of domination, imposition, and continual oppression, using the same rules post-colonially to maintain a grip on the colonized people after nominal independence. This chapter will look at the advocacy for the reclamation of the values of Indigenous cultures for anti-colonialism. It identifies with my topic of ancestral and spiritual naming of children among the Jopadhola Lwo Indigenous people who have retained the customs and norms of their culture justifying resistance and defiance to colonialism. The Indigenous people’s culture practices of egalitarianism and the reclamation of the values of Indigenous cultures are devoid of oppression, and they must counter the oppressive colonial order. Wangoola (2000) spoke about a
millennia when communities were guided and driven by a worldview and value system at the centre of which was a closely intertwined trinity of forces, values, and consideration. In the African world, social life was dominated by spirituality, following which there was some development and a little politics. (p. 265)

Such a worldview is what is threatened with obliteration by the Western worldview, unless there is enough fervour to counter the dominant discourse.

My entry point in the anti-colonial framework as an Indigenous person is that I am able to use my anti-colonial Indigenous lens to question the existing social relations of domination. Experientially, since the beginning of my schooling, there has been a power relationship with the colonizer that remains salient. For Indigenous students in a colonial society, colonial European education contradicts our Indigenous identity through conflicts of interest and social relations, but the Indigenous identity is maintained culturally through informal education at home, which clashes with the colonial identity imposed by the dominant colonial system. An anti-colonial framework is, therefore, a colonized person’s structure for constructing a holistic space from where Indigenous voices can assert themselves in the struggle for decolonization. From an Indigenous and anti-colonial lens, an Indigenous person resists the colonizer and sees him as a daily cultural oppressor. Through an anti-colonial framework and anti-colonial discourse, the oppressed resist the institutionalized power.

32 Ancestral Naming as a Form of Anti-Colonial Resistance

Some of the anti-colonial theorists who have left a mark through the anti-colonial discourse are Cabral (1998), Dei, Mazrui (1986), Fanon (2008), Memmi (1967), Nkrumah (1998), Nyerere (1998), and Toure (1979). The anti-colonial thinkers share valuable modes of resistance to colonialism for current and future writers to sustain the decolonization agenda. In this context, the anti-colonial discursive framework is based on Indigenous people’s worldview
and discourse as a holistic platform for critical analysis to domination. It is my contention that a system that treats minorities or the colonized as devoid of institutions is an instrument of oppression that also traumatizes the Indigenous identity. On the other hand, an anti-colonial theory envisions a decolonized global society where educators must provide a culturally relevant and equitable education system in which Indigenous and minority learners have an equal stake.

In this bid for decolonization, Dei (2013) asked,

> How do we subvert colonial hierarchies embedded in conventional schooling? And how do we re-envision an education that espouses at its centre such values as social justice, equity, fairness, resistance and decolonial responsibility? (p. 1)

In this thesis, the significant question asked is: How is the study of ancestral and spiritual naming of children among Indigenous Jopadhola Lwo people in Eastern Uganda an agency for decolonizing current education? The other question asked is: What then is an anti-colonial discursive framework or its relevance in critically examining the ancestral and spiritual naming of children or why work with this framework?

These are questions arising from the social relations prevalent in the society reflected in the education system that take for granted fairness or equity from dominant perspectives, but leave out minority needs as nonexistent and, therefore, invisible. However, agitation for fairness and equity is every oppressed person’s responsibility.

An anti-colonialist individual resists colonialism as culturally oppressive to colonized subjects and sees it as a system of deculturation. To counter this oppression, Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001) contended that “the anti-colonial thought helps to revive and revitalize the revolutionary aspects of Indigenous knowledges by bringing into focus the emancipatory potential of Indigenousness vis-a-vis imposed norms and values” (p. 319). While advocating the
anti-colonial discursive framework for colonized people’s agency, Dei and Asgharzadeh (2006) contended:

All knowledge can be located in the particular social context from which it emerges. Such location shapes the ways of knowing and understanding of social and political relations at play in constructing social realities. The anti-colonial prism takes the position that all knowledges are socially situated and politically contested. The anti-colonial discourse works with the idea of the epistemological power of the colonized subjects. (p. 3).

This implies that in order to contest one knowledge or system, there must be in existence another one with fundamentally different values to the one that is being contested. Colonization is a system of oppression that fights competition from Indigenous knowledge and education by negating or ignoring it and operating as if the other is not in existence. Anti-colonialism sees colonialism as a violent system that Indigenous minorities or colonized people consistently contend with. It is fair to state defiantly that colonization cannot quench Indigenous knowledge. On the other hand, Indigenous ideologies bring together anti-colonialists in a movement that consistently nurtures revolutionary movements against foreign oppression. In fact, Indigenous anti-colonial resistance emerges from the colonial provocations resulting from the time the colonizer attempted to rearrange the Indigenous people’s social order. For example, an Indigenous society that cherishes its practices as spiritually relevant will resist as unacceptable the colonial order expecting them to abandon their ways for alien ones. For instance, the Jopadhola believe that a sudden high temperature in a newborn is because the child needs a name, or when a newborn cries at night, it is because an ancestor is trying to communicate something. In such matters, the Jopadhola will never listen to the colonizer, but will do what they believe is right in their culture.

Through an anti-colonial discourse, the power struggle that emanates from counter knowledge systems is what will tackle cultural oppression by the colonizer. It is worth noting
that colonialism brings with it some very tough conditions when imposing a new social order on the colonized, but this new social order must not be interpreted as submission of the colonized to the colonizer. An anti-colonial lens does not see the colonized people as following everything that the colonizer comes along with as good for them; rather, the Indigenous people see the colonizer as unwanted in their culture because his ways and rules are injurious to their dignity and therefore must be resisted.

With regard to the colonized and the violence of the colonizer, Cabral (1970) said of the colonizer:

In fact, to take up arms to dominate a people is, above all, to take up arms to destroy, or at least to neutralize, to paralyze, its cultural life. For, as long as there continues to exist a part of these people retaining their own cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation. The imperialist domination, by denying the historical development of the dominated people, necessarily also denies their cultural development. The imperialist domination, for its own security, requires cultural oppression and the attempt at direct or indirect liquidation of the essential elements of the culture of the dominated people. Whatever may be the conditions of a people’s subjection to foreign domination, and whatever may be the influence of the economic, political and social factors in practicing this domination, it is generally with the culture that we find the seed of opposition, which leads to the structuring and development of the liberation movement. (pp. 3–5)

Inferiorizing Indigenous cultures is an attempt to outlaw colonized people’s identity. However, for the colonizer to think that such a misdemeanor can go on un-resisted is a gross miscalculation. This is because the Indigenous cultures are anti-colonial and will resist any misrepresentation of re-colonization as a post-colonial era. The idea of a post-colonial era itself must be seen as a human face to re-structure colonialism. The study of the ancestral naming system of the Jopadhola Lwo demonstrates the people’s resilience through anti-colonialism to preserve the Indigenous identity and institutions.

Elsewhere, Cabral (1998) talked of the European incursion into the interior of colonized countries as that of subjugating their cultures. I re-examine and analyze these colonial processes
from a counter anti-colonial stand. Indeed post-colonialism is a colonial ideology, legacy and state of being that reigns in a colonized country soon after the colonizing administration has left, leaving behind the colonial structures in place for continued relationship with the colonizer (Cabral, 1998; Fanon, 1963/2004). Post-colonialism, indeed, is colonialism’s fashionable state of being that blurs the colonial legacy of oppression. It is also during such an era that the resistance by colonized people is muted through the colonial texts. However, younger generations of Indigenous people going through current formal education must now begin to question their fore parents’ alleged past submission to colonization, since Indigenous people have their own views, narratives, and perspectives, and as well, retain many aspects of their cultures. Indigenous people inwardly shun scenarios that are not synonymous with their cultures, thus symbolizing resistance to an alien curriculum. For example, Castellano (2000) contended:

Traditional (Aboriginal) knowledge has been handed down more or less intact from previous generation. With variations from nation to nation, it tells of the creation of the world and the origin of clans in encounters between ancestors and spirits in the form of animals; it records genealogies and ancestral rights to territory and it memorializes battles, boundaries and treaties and instills attitude of wariness of trust towards neighbouring nations. In most aboriginal societies the wisdom of elder generation is highly regarded and elders are assigned major responsibility for teaching the young. (p. 23)

Castellano’s (2000) essay brought an understanding that as the dominant education system offers a curriculum hostile to Indigenous knowledge systems, the Indigenous people have the option of equipping themselves with knowledge from their elders, which makes colonial education for them outmoded and irrelevant. Knowledge from Indigenous elders is broad and connects them to their ancestral rights to Aboriginal knowledge that is holistic and contends with the dominant epistemology and pedagogy.

An oppressive curriculum is not the base for reclaiming a previously excluded cultural epistemology. Indigenous students, therefore, resist cultural oppression in Western education
since they seldom believe it or practice what it teaches. Out of their marginalization, students from diverse geographical Indigenous backgrounds align themselves by adopting a counter epistemology different from the one propagated by the dominant education system.

Anti-colonialists must deal with the disjuncture of foreign intervention through the anti-colonial discourse and resistance for the reclamation of Indigenous values. The current education system alone is only relevant for Indigenous learners just to survive domination, but this survival is also a saboteur to the decolonization of their minds. For example, the Jopadhola Lwo of Eastern Uganda have access to the counter knowledge and educational materials necessary for an anti-colonial pedagogical transformation, though bogged down by a colonially instigated education system. On the other hand, the study of the resilience of ancestral and spiritual names challenges the validity of colonial knowledge Vis a Vis Indigenous institutions that are usually ignored.

Anti-colonialism sees the instructing of Indigenous learners in compulsory Western education as de-culturing and assimilationist by the dominant culture still attempting to abolish the Indigenous culture. Western education has currently pervaded all the Ugandan society, and yet, the country has majority Indigenous populations. Therefore, every Indigenous person stands to be implicated in his or her own colonization should they fail to actively retain their Indigenous identities and institutions necessary for decolonization. If every Indigenous person somehow received his/her Indigenous education or practiced his/her Indigenous cultures continually, there would be no room to entertain the colonial identity. Indigenous elders must educate the younger generations to let them know how a colonial identity is dehumanizing to an Indigenous person who must reject it.
Memmi (1967) contended:

Memory is not purely a mental phenomenon. Just as [the] memory of an individual is the fruit of his history and physiology, that of a people rests upon its institutions. Now the colonized’s institutions are dead or petrified. He scarcely believes in those which continue to show some signs of life and daily confirms their ineffectiveness. He often becomes ashamed of these institutions, as of ridiculous and overage monuments. All effectiveness and social dynamics, on the other hand, seem monopolized by the colonizer’s institutions. (p. 103)

Memmi’s reading brings an understanding to oppressed people as to how typical it is, in a colonized society, for colonialism to fight to erode the Indigenous institutions. The state of shame towards Indigenous institutions comes about when these Indigenous institutions are referred to by the colonial logic as something obsolete that must be discarded. Such a situation can come about when colonial education and what it teaches takes over the role of Indigenous institutions by imposing alien ideologies on the colonized people. Memmi (1967) further contended that the colonizer never even recognized that the colonized had a past to draw from, but that past is actually the identity and culture of Indigenous people. When colonized people stubbornly cling to their culture, that culture becomes a base for anti-colonial resistance; a people, however small in their numbers, perceive violence in the coercive process of assimilation by another culture that is fundamentally different from its own. Current education is what petrifies and kills indigenous institutions, as it is coercive and, as well, a form of forced assimilation.

Of the colonized subject and rebellion, Memmi (1967) contended: “He will choose institutional disorder in order to destroy the institutions built by the colonizer as soon as possible” (p. 138; see also Cabral, 1998). It is fair to state that both the Indigenous education institution and current formal educational have, on the one hand, similarities and, on the other hand, differences concerning values. The similarity is that they are both educational institutions,
but they come from different cultures. In fact, the current formal Eurocentric educational system functions as if Indigenous people are freer in a Western-centric education than in their own education system for the whole of Africa.

On the other hand, Cabral (1998) has rightly contended:

The value of culture as an element of resistance to foreign domination lies in the fact that culture is the vigorous manifestation on the ideological or idealist plane of the physical and historical reality of the society that is dominated or to be dominated. Culture is simultaneously the fruit of a people’s history and a determinant of history, by the positive or negative influence which it exerts on the evolution of relationships between man and his environment, among men and groups of men within a society, as well as among different societies. Ignorance of this fact may explain the failure of several attempts at foreign domination as well as the international liberation movements. (p. 261)

Here Cabral (1998) posited culture as a unifying reality from which people must draw their ideology for resistance within their environment. An anti-colonial resistance based on Indigenous people’s culture is not the same as that of international movements, since local people’s culture is the driving force in confronting colonization. What is usually international is also about globalization, but as Dei and Asgharzadeh (2006) contended, globalization is the new word for imperialism. Globalization is now the more advanced form of imperialism through a technologized world that is controlled more easily.

The colonizer’s ignoring of the Indigenous culture is sometimes a blessing in disguise. Cabral (1998) has said,

One of the most serious errors, if not the most serious error, committed by the colonial powers in Africa, may have been to ignore or under-estimate the cultural strength of African people, with the denying absolutely the existence of the cultural values of the African and his social position by denying him political activity. (p. 9)

Cabral brought an understanding that regardless of deculturation, many of the Indigenous structures have remained intact because of the people’s disdain for the imposed culture of the colonizer; otherwise, what explains the resurgence of Indigenous institutions after the nominal
independence? The survival and resilience of the Indigenous structures are the sum of Indigenous people’s determination to resist colonialism and preserve their culture. This means that the colonial agenda that denied the people political activity through occupation was resisted through African cultural values. The African values were usually not written about in the colonial discourse except in the Judeo-Christian perspective as pagan, or kaffir, as in this study of Indigenous naming system among the Jopadhola Lwo in the coming chapters. Indigenous people resist the use of European languages in learning institutions as a form of deculturation.

To the masses decultured through Western education, Cabral (1998) called for:

A reconversion of minds or mental set. . . . Such reversion—re-Africanization, in our case—may take place before the struggle, but it is completed only during the course of the struggle, through daily contact with the popular masses in the communion of sacrifice required by the struggle. (p. 262)

While not every Indigenous or colonized person is from Africa, re-Africanization is what Cabral has called a “Return to the Source” (p. 260), which suggests a reconnection with one’s pre-colonial identity in order to critically make sense of what colonialism does to the colonized through assimilation.

Western-centric education diminishes Indigeneity, whereas the anti-colonial framework is a transformational agenda. Cabral (1998) also encouraged a people who free themselves from domination to remain culturally free in order to “return to the upward paths of their own culture and negate both harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign culture” (p. 262). Cabral brought to us an understanding that those contestations around the dominant also happen when there is a failure to recognize or address, for example, the questions around colonial education’s negative effects or relevancy to people of non-Western cultures.

Right now, because the anti-colonial lens sees oppression as prevalent, it is fair to state that today there are masses of people who are only realizing their domination and oppression
through knowledge production. For anti-colonialists, decolonization is a struggle to regain freedom, and that calls for every writer’s participation in the discourse of resistance towards the establishment. For some students from a Euro-North-American background, it may, at first, be difficult. It is also possible for some students not to know that the system is oppressive until they hear from those who have been culturally oppressed through current education. This was demonstrated by Angod (2006), who enrolled in an OISE/UT graduate course titled “Anti-Colonial Thought and Pedagogical Implications” and was quite “unprepared for the stirrings of change” (p. 159) that led to an awakening. Angod wrote,

> Each week we discussed the readings, sometimes hotly, each time carefully testing and negotiating our own and each other’s subject positions under George’s guidance. This process pushed and pulled me in different directions so that I became dislodged from the post-colonial perspective with which I had entered, and assumed instead a position of intellectual straddling as I attempted to bridge the convergences and divergences between post-colonial and anti-colonial politics. As I moved squarely into an anti-colonial political stance, I continued to question and strove to avoid complacency within the framework, thus maintaining this sense of disequilibrium. (p. 159)

> In fact, intellectuals need a specific renaissance through anti-colonial writings and teaching about the colonized people’s experiences to justify their entry into struggles against colonialism in solidarity with people oppressed by colonization. It is now clear that the induction into the colonial process begins at the elementary level, where minorities are targeted for assimilation. By the time the mainstream students reach higher institutions, they are more or less post-colonialists, which only perpetuates the notion of colonialism as normal or legitimate. Angod (2006) only dislodged from post-colonialism after exposure to anti-colonialism.

> Moreover, the power relations that students from the majority have with minorities, for example in the Canadian context, are seldom criticized, whereby domination over the minority evolves into a kind of duty. Oppression can be reinforced through the curriculum and pedagogy, with teachers dutifully implementing a curriculum without a transformation agenda. Angod
(2006) later realized that the change agenda is a “risk to shift towards a new intellectual space” (p. 159). Such a move must be initiated by both students and teachers when they are made aware of their implication in oppression. The anti-colonial discourse must also target policy makers with these contestations to colonial education, especially from Indigenous cultures.

Resistance to colonialism is stronger when anti-colonialists network in solidarity with allies from groups disillusioned with the colonial order. In any anti-colonial movement, defections from the dominant to the oppressed side help to vanquish the power of the oppressor. Coalition building enhances voice by raising consciousness for action. From an anti-colonial lens, Nyerere (1998) had already said,

Thought without practice is empty, and philosophical conscientism constantly exhibits areas of practical significance. If philosophical conscientism initially affirms the absolute and independent existence of matter, and holds matter to be endowed with its pristine objective laws, then philosophical conscientism builds itself to the reflection of the objective unfolding of matter, it also establishes a direct connection between knowledge and action. (p. 87)

If people do not share their thoughts widely, there is inertia, and this leaves colonialism to proceed as though it is not resisted. The state of inertia is possible if anti-colonialists do not freely share their ideas, and that leaves the dominant ideology to continue colonizing Indigenous cultures. Nyerere (1998) brought an understanding for collective awareness and solidarity as the glue for collective resistance against colonialism. Colonial oppression takes another form, for example, when colonial knowledge is reproduced to undermine Indigenous people or to make them forget the violence that colonialism does to them.

Throughout East Africa, colonialism is remembered for its culture of brutality, especially when putting down rebellions by Indigenous people. Some of the examples are the Maji Maji rebellion of 1905-1907 in Tanganyika; or the Mau Mau rebellion of 1952-1954 in Kenya; or resistance that resulted in the colonial administration’s deportation to Seychelles Islands of
Ugandan Kings, Mwanga, and Kabalega in 1900. Colonial brutality, however, provokes rebellions as the colonizer infringes on Indigenous communities. For example, when a people’s culture customarily practices communal ownership of land and the colonialist comes to own that land, it is legitimate that Indigenous people must organize resistance. Similarly, when the colonizer tears down Indigenous shrines for worship, as they did to the Jopadhola, there is resistance (Ogot, 1972). Today, the curriculum is generally silent about the brutality of the colonizer, but awareness through anti-colonial discourses makes resistance even more relevant today.

The Jopadhola retention of their ancestral and spiritual naming system is an example of a sustained cultural resistance. Such resistance justifies the will of the Indigenous people’s freedom from domination by continuing with their own culture. In this regard, Cabral (1970) has said,

A people who free themselves from foreign domination will be free culturally only if, without complexes and without underestimating the importance of positive accretion from the oppressor and other cultures, they return to the upward paths of their own culture, which is nourished by the living reality of its environment, and which negates both harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign cultures. Thus, it may be seen that if the imperialist domination has the vital need to practice cultural oppression, national liberation is necessarily an act of culture. (p. 6)

What Cabral has said resonates with Indigenous people’s resistance to cultural oppression, in that the people are saying loudly and boldly:

We are a people, we have our own culture, languages, norms, manner of dress, food, among other practices. We are not going to agree to be forced into what we are not going to follow. We are not going to obey rules coming from another culture. (p. 6)

Cabral brought to us a reading that confirmed the hitherto silenced Indigenous institutions have Indigenous voices of resistance to counter colonial epistemology and pedagogy and must be heard.
Moreover, since the domination of the colonized is institutionalized, culturally oppressed people must articulate their counter cultural perspectives as an anti-colonial resistance. A blanket silence about oppression only relays a false sense of defeat, but a Ugandan proverb, *kirimutu*, that defined oppression said, “It is the wearer of the shoe that knows where it pinches most.” Therefore, colonialism, as the oppressed know it, is continual and painful. Serequeberhan (1998) has suggested that the colonizer wants to be in the *game* and wants to be the author of the rules as well. The colonizer makes all the rules, especially through pedagogy. The anti-colonial resistance in Africa is, therefore, a catalyst for substantive decolonization, transformation, and counter knowledge for changing status quo education. Current students must articulate anti-colonial discourse for the future of current and future generations to reject complicity in the cultural oppression of colonized peoples.

Chukwudi Eze (1998) contended,

“Colonialism” must be understood as the indescribable crisis disproportionately suffered and endured by the African people in their tragic encounter with the European world, from the beginning of the fifteenth century through the end of the nineteenth into the first half of the twentieth. This is a period marked by the horror and violence of the transatlantic slave trade, the imperial occupation of most parts of Africa and the forced administrations of its people and the resilient and enduring ideologies and practices of European cultural superiority (ethnocentrism) and “racial” supremacy (racism). In vain do we seek to limit the colonial period to the “brief” 70 years between the Berlin Conference that partitioned and legitimized European occupation of Africa and early 1960s when most African countries attained constitutional decolonization. (p. 213)

Chukwudi Eze helped readers understand colonialism as a crisis suffered and endured by African people in a continuing encounter of nearly 600 years. Such a prolonged encounter means that colonialism only changed its styles after an anti-colonial resistance against physical colonial occupation until the attaining of *constitutional decolonization*, but constitutional decolonization through a constitution in which the colonizer was heavily involved, using laws inherited from the
colonizer, is not genuine. During any oppression, intellectuals arise and try to organize resistance to stop colonialism from deepening in their society. However, Fanon (1963/2004) had this to say:

Within the political parties, or rather parallel to them, we find the cultured class of colonized intellectuals. The recognition of a national culture and its right to exist represent their favorite stamping ground. Whereas the politicians integrate their action in the present, the intellectuals place themselves in the context of history. Faced with the colonized intellectual’s debunking of the colonialist theory of a pre-colonial barbarism, colonialism’s response is mute. It is especially mute since the ideas put forward by the young colonized intelligentsia are widely accepted as specialists. (p. 147)

Fanon (1963/2004) brought an understanding of the unwillingness of the colonizer to leave the colonies. However, there is still a national culture, and the colonized intellectuals refute the colonizer’s notion of a barbaric pre-colonial era for Indigenous people as unsustainable, since it is this pre-colonial cultural base that must send the colonizer packing. When debunked by the colonized intellectual, the colonizer retreats into silence because the contradictions of colonialism have been exposed. However, the period of muteness of the colonizer, as noted in Fanon (p. 147), is soon followed by the attempt to legitimize neo-colonialism, especially when former colonial rulers extend economic and social control over the colonies they have purportedly vacated. When the colonizer is mute, it is only temporary, since it is expected that colonial values are entrenched and emerge even stronger through formal education. Moreover, the colonial education offered by the colonizer is not even free, and Indigenous elders have to pay for this colonial education that decultures their children.

What colonial texts posit as primitive must be seen as good for a people’s identity. Fanon (1963/2004) has also rightly pointed out:

We realize that nothing was left to chance and that the final aim of colonization was to convince the indigenous population it would save them from darkness. The result was to hammer into the heads of the indigenous population that if the colonist were to leave they would regress into barbarism, degradation and bestiality. The colonial mother is protecting the child from itself, from its ego, its physiology, its biology, and its ontological misfortune. (p. 149)
Fanon’s reading exposes the colonizer always trying to justify himself erroneously by claiming that the colonized need some form of protection as though they are infants who are yet to grow. This kind of attitude has been embedded in colonial ideology for a long time. This is where Machel and FRELIMO’s slogan of *aluta continua* becomes more useful in continuing the struggle against colonial oppression until victory is realized (Machel, 1986). FRELIMO, the acronym for Mozambique Liberation Front, symbolizes the justification for an armed struggle against Portuguese colonial rule. Machel often insisted that the struggle must continue, thus *aluta continua*. Machel also tirelessly insisted on the necessity of preserving the sovereignty of a country after independence. To many, Machel’s insistence was not usually understood as it was thought that the sovereignty of a state was so obvious a fact that it did not require such an insistence. Machel was however aware that the anti-colonial struggle must also battle against neocolonialism, hence *aluta continua* or the struggle continues.

Moreover, neocolonialism is a state usually arrived at after nominal independence, whereby the colonizer does not give up the *privileges* that come with *having* a colony. Because of the impact of colonialism, there are people today from African or other Indigenous backgrounds who might shun their own identities and histories as a *shameful* outlook, which is a betrayal to the cause of anti-colonial and cultural resistance to colonization. Since Black people’s history is typically not taught in lower institutions of learning, descendants of Indigenous people might internalize the rejection of their history, but there is also the option of Pan-Africanism as a movement that people from Africa affiliate with in resisting the continent’s cultural misrepresentations. Dei (2010) defined “Pan-Africanism as a social thought and practice linked to notions of culture, identity, freedom and liberation to ensure and sustain [the] sovereignty of African peoples and communities across diverse geographical spaces” (p. 49; see also Konadu,
Pan-Africanism, therefore, is a social and political, solidaristic uniting agency that the descendants of Indigenous Africans look to for self-empowerment and a sense of belonging. Pan-Africanism debunks the colonizing tendencies of the dominant culture as a legitimate resource for anti-colonial resistance.

Making Indigenousness more visible requires courage to openly identify with one’s previously marginalized culture. This must be implemented through reclamation, deliberately learning and practicing one’s culture openly, speaking and writing one’s languages, turning the obsolete into something that is valid, and discarding the colonial identity as contemptuous and injurious to our Indigeneity. This is because a collective action for a just cause is a holistic option for those traumatized by the reproduction of only one system of knowledge that does not have them in the picture. Of such a traumatized person, Memmi (1967) said,

As long as he tolerates colonization, the only possible alternatives for the colonized are assimilation or petrifaction. Assimilation being refused him, nothing is left for him but to live isolated from his age. He is driven back by colonization and to a certain extent, lives with that situation. (p. 102)

The understanding that Memmi (1967) brought suggests that the outcome of failed assimilation is racism, hence “assimilation being refused him, he lives with that situation” (p. 146). When colonized persons find themselves in such a situation, with their authentic identity denied, the scenario, though disastrous to a colonized people’s dignity, is an everyday experience. Hiding one’s identity or trying to live someone else’s is what colonialism expects of Indigenous people, but it is catastrophic. Liberation for such persons traumatized by cultural oppression comes from the holistic access to an anti-colonial discourse as an empowering means to decolonize one’s thinking and undo the mark of the colonial identity.

Colonialism also maintains the disastrous ideology of civilizing the natives, but what kind of an alien civilization, for example, does a community of the Jopadhola Lwo with an ancient
civilization need from the colonizer? The Indigenous community is better off without such an imposed civilization and will resist it. The colonizer, among other injustices, justifies occupation through an educational system emanating from Western democracies as something good for the colonized, but the reality is that the current system of education cannot be obligatory and relevant at the same time because it is colonial. Something that is obligatory to Indigenous people only traps them in a colonial structure or curriculum that also structures oppressive social relations for the colonized, which they would rather do without. By maintaining parallel informal education institutions, Indigenous people can undermine cultural domination and, thus, restore their Indigenous identity and continue with their values.

Apparently, a system of oppression when faced with resistance devises its own resistance towards any change-driven agenda. Of the strategies of the colonizer, Cabral (1970) has argued that in order

To escape this choice—which may be called the “dilemma of cultural resistance” the Imperialist colonial domination creates theories which, in fact, are only gross formulations of racism, and which, in practice are translated into a permanent state of siege of the Indigenous populations on the basis of racist dictatorship (or democracy). (p. 3)

Some of those theories around colonialism also justify a re-civilization for the natives, but even the very word native, when applied by the colonizer in a colonized society, is derogatorily twisted to insult the Indigenous people as uncivilized. Césaire (1998) has resisted the lie of parading or justifying Western civilization and contended,

The essential thing is to see clearly, to think clearly and ask, “What then is colonialism?” To agree on what is not: neither evangelization; nor a philanthropic enterprise; nor a desire to push back the frontiers of ignorance, disease and tyranny; nor a project undertaken for the greater glory of God, . . . but an adventurer and the pirate, the wholesale grocer and the ship owner, the gold digger. (p. 222)
Western civilization cannot be justified as anything good, since it is just another culture that does all the kinds of evil that Indigenous people do not have in their culture; the culture of the colonizer is that of violence. Elsewhere, Césaire retained his Igbo roots from modern Nigeria. Césaire’s retention of Aimé, his Igbo name, symbolizes his inalienable African identity, which is an act of defiance to the colonial identity (p. 222). Césaire also saw the colonizer as creating problems to justify occupation of such lands and then solve the problems they created, in the name of civilizing the colonized (p. 222). However, trying to re-civilize a people who already have their institutions from a long time ago is nothing but mockery.

Césaire (1998) contended that colonization actually decivilizes the colonizer, brutalizes him in the true sense of the word, degrades him, and awakens his buried instincts, which are covetousness, violence, race hatred, and moral relativism (see also Memmi, 1967). Today, colonized people see experiences of Césaire as their everyday experiences, where the colonial order perpetuates the colonial identity by traumatizing the colonized people into trying to accept the dissolution of their own identities. On the other hand, concerning cultural values, Toure (1979) said,

Moral values, intellectual capacities, cultural characteristics are not revealed by rhetoric. It is through actions that they reveal their nature. We should firmly reject all representations not founded on reason, and all speculations of the mind, of an exclusively aesthetic order, for, rather than forwarding the cause of the African peoples, they perpetuate under the same forms the crude distortions of the African personality known under the colonial regime. In fact, an Indigenous nature of a person remains with him or her wherever they reside. Even residence in the Western society should not deculture them or dispossess them of their sense of personhood. (p. 458)

Toure (1979) already saw that the colonial representations of Indigenous people were not founded on reason, but only on mere speculations of the mind and distortions. The colonizer uses misrepresentations of colonized people to justify their colonization by de-culturing them. These misrepresentations are in the current education system, since the absence of colonized people’s
identity in discourse is another form of presenting status quo education as pristine. It is, therefore, expedient for colonized peoples to resist misrepresentations and assert themselves, through the anti-colonial discourse openly, for them to reach other masses of culturally oppressed people.

Moreover, Césaire’s (1998) contended that the colonizer exercises brutality, murder, and rape everywhere, but this knowledge that exposes the brutality and barbarity of the colonizer has not yet found its way into the curriculum in a typical Ugandan context. However, the silence around such brutality in an Indigenous African society leaves the ravages of colonialism intact and operational. Unless such brutality is openly discussed, challenged, and resisted, the current formal education system remains complicit in promoting the violence of the dominant culture on colonized people. Odora-Hoppers and Richards (2012) said that educators are indicted through what they teach to racialized minorities, especially the Indigenous students.

Similarly, about Africa, Mazrui (1986) talked about its diversity, where there are three segments of African society—the traditional, the Western, and the Islamic—which co-exist uneasily; whereby principles emanating from them often conflict with one another. It is, however, fair to say that the latter two religions brought disequilibrium in the Indigenous cultures as they were confrontational towards one another. However, there is always that part of an African that is usually independent of the two religions that Mazrui referred to as “Abrahamic faiths” (p. 89).

On the other hand, for the Indigenous people, practicing an Indigenous ideology requires a well-thought-out strategy. Theorizing colonialism is the first step, but next is the anti-colonial and counter discourse. As said earlier in a Ugandan proverb, experiential knowledge is very important, thus kirimutu. After effecting a re-awakening, the next phase is upping the struggles
for change. Nkrumah’s (1998) and Toure’s (1979) assertions brought readings that have revolutionized oppressed people’s minds for anti-colonial political Indigenous African perspectives. For example, Toure (as cited in Fanon, 1963/2004) said to the masses in Guinea, Africa, and to all humanity:

> It is not enough to write a revolutionary hymn to be part of the African revolution; one has to join with the people to make this revolution. Make it with the people and the hymns will automatically follow. For an act to be authentic one has to be a vital part of Africa and its thinking, part of all that popular energy mobilized for the liberation, progress and happenings of Africa. Outside this single struggle there is no place for either the artists or the intellectual who is not committed and totally mobilized with the people in the great fight waged by Africa and suffering humanity. (p. 145)

From the Western perspectives, leaders of anti-colonial struggles, like Toure (1979), are usually branded as “those dictators of Africa” and, therefore, blacklisted as not worthy of positive influence. However, Toure's anti-colonial pronouncements and influence, especially in publications on mobilizations through Indigenous cultures, encourage the people’s voices for resistance against imperialism and colonialism that can no longer be ignored. Moreover, Toure’s call for a “return to Africa, to her values and riches, especially those whose culture has been deformed or who have been spiritually intoxicated” (p. 145) is not just for Africa, but is a catalyst for all oppressed people to question their current relations with colonialism as oppressive. Toure also provided an understanding of the treasures of culture and language as having a role to aid comprehension and communication of thoughts. The colonizer cannot, therefore, continually dismiss Indigenous cultures as a non-entity, with the revaluation of colonized people’s culture and the rising questions regarding the relevancy of a colonized identity constructed over time through colonial education. The fact that the colonized people’s languages have refused to go away is an act of anti-colonial resistance, with mobilization continually taking place as Indigenous languages are not understood by the colonizer. With
regard to my study area, the people maintain their Luo language in defiance to the British colonial power re-alignments and legacy.

Since Indigenous people’s first contact with the colonizer, anti-colonialists have been using Indigenous languages. For example, Miriam Makeba satirized colonialism in songs and openly mobilized against colonialism and apartheid, its offshoot (Makeba & Hall, 1989). For example, the song *Pata Pata* that was heard and sung all over Africa originally warned people to run and hide from police brutality whenever the apartheid police were sighted in an area. Traditional songs and dances in Africa that satirize oppressive situations are routinely used in Indigenous cultures to influence people to take action against colonialism. Some of these songs arise from the culture of orality; Fanon (1963/2004) talked about Indigenous culture as a resource for resisting a colonial situation.

An anti-colonial framework works with counter ideas from anti-colonial theorists and thinkers to undermine the colonial ideology of oppression. A thought is like a tool in the hands of a person with which the person can navigate a way out of oppression. When published, the agendas of anti-colonialists are not for personal fame, but are a means to whip up popular discontent against colonialism. Colonial fame can take shape: for example, if a minoritized scholar receives praise from the mainstream society for something that undermines the anti-colonial movement. Compromising statements from minority scholars are also betrayals. An anti-colonial theorist must break with status quo thinking, which requires sacrificing individual gain for a collective bargain. Indigenous people must re-assert their dignity through anti-colonial activism.

Writing in an Indigenous language, as Ngugi wa Thiongo has done in the Gikuyu language (as cited in “Stop promoting colonial languages,” 2013), is a protest to the colonial
identity imposed on Indigenous Africans. Urging current African governments to stop promoting colonial languages in their policies is an investment in developing African languages: “The development of the African language should not mean isolation from other languages of the earth,” according to wa Thiongo (para. 4). However, later, according to Taban lo Liyong (2006), spending too much time expounding socialism comes at the expense of diverting from Indigeneity. This brings the point home that Indigenous scholars must root their anti-colonialism in their Indigenous culture as resonating with their struggle against oppression. Anti-colonialism, therefore, calls for total dedication in every aspect of the struggle for the realization of a decolonized society.

Moreover, the politics that ignores Indigenous people’s philosophies is one that reinforces the inequity of ideologies. Toure (1979) contended:

> Information is the vehicle *par excellence* of intelligence. By its various media it conveys and spreads the fruit of human thought, makes known human activities and their results. In this respect it creates bonds of understanding among men, among groups of men, and societies, so that it facilitates an exchange of knowledge. Knowledge always precedes understanding and it is not unusual to observe that, if a fact, an action, or a thought is to be well understood, it must first be well known. (p. 203)

Here Toure stressed research for creating bonds of understandings, for the mobilization of knowledge, and sharing it across societies, for a collective strategy to reach the goal of turning everybody against colonialism. When Toure spoke about exchange of knowledge, he was advocating for recognition of different epistemologies in knowledge sharing. This also means that the lack of knowledge about the struggle going on against colonialism should not be an excuse to uphold the colonial discourse as legitimate. Anti-colonialism should then be a deliberate choice made early enough in the lives of the masses oppressed by colonization.

> Only stopping at the post-colonial erroneously entices people into believing that colonialism has died a natural death. Post-colonialism stifles the anti-colonial resistance by
tolerating and endorsing dominant perspectives as legitimate. For example, Kwame Appiah (1998, p. 276), at one point, critiqued the ‘antithesis’ of Du Bois’s argument in “The Conservation of Races” that ‘race’ is not a ‘scientific’—that is biological—but a socio-historical concept. Du Bois, however, is right to connect how race is theorized not as biological but a socio-historical concept because he speaks to the broader issues of how discrimination is embedded in the social construction of the dominant system of colonialism.

On the other hand, Appiah (1998) looked at another of Du Bois’s antitheses on the acceptance of difference along with a claim that each group has its part to play, that the white and Negro races are related, not as superior to inferior, but as complementaries, and that the Negro message is, along with the white one, part of the message of humankind. However, even if someone is from a mixed background, the responsibility to identify with Blackness as a form of politics rests with the person concerned. The mixed-race politics is a neutral ground that cannot advocate effectively for anti-colonialism since there is no mixed perspective. There is this thought that “if you are not white, then you are Black.” However, Blackness is better situated in the politics of anti-colonialism.

### 3.3 Conclusion

Anti-colonialism must continue through an anti-colonial discourse to articulate and maintain the struggle against colonialism as ongoing. The emergence of an anti-colonial framework means that anti-colonialists have a legitimate structure for anti-colonialist agency to voice their opposition to cultural oppression. An example is the Jopadhola ancestral and spiritual naming: a centuries-old structure for an Indigenous culture and identity. In fact, Fanon (1963/2004) has argued for continued vigilance among anti-colonialists:
Each generation must discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it, in relative opacity. In the underdeveloped countries preceding generations have simultaneously resisted the insidious agenda of colonialism and paved the way for the emergence of current struggles. Now that we are in the heat of combat, we must shed the habit of decrying the efforts of our forefathers or feigning incomprehension at their silence or passiveness. They fought as best as they could with the weapons they possessed at the time, and if their struggle did not reverberate throughout the international arena, the reason should be attributed not so much to lack of heroism but to a fundamentally different international situation. More than one colonized person had to say, “We’ve had enough.” (p. 145)

It is the duty of the colonized to continue with the decolonization agenda to inform the oppressed and to mobilize them by making their voice heard. This mobilization will take place through discourse—that is, providing access to transforming knowledge, drawing from the revolutionary theorists before them, and promoting anti-colonial knowledge through discourse. Only in this way will they shed off the colonial identity and refuse to internalize their own oppression as normal. The colonial identity substitutes the Indigenous identity through tacit assimilation, but the anti-colonial discursive framework resists colonialism as exploitative and coercive and furthers the resistance by the masses of colonized people in solidarity against cultural domination. The anti-colonial framework also lays the groundwork for understanding the study of the minority Indigenous Jopadhola Lwo people and their ancestral naming system as a way of articulating resistance in what Dei (2013) contended is an epistemology of the colonized. An anti-colonial discursive framework counters the dismissal of Indigenous knowledges as merely over-romanticization. Theorists and leaders of anti-colonial thought are pioneers of anti-colonial struggles and play significant roles in the mobilization of knowledge for current anti-colonialists (Cabral, 1998; Césaire, 1998; Fanon, 1963/2004; Machel, 1986, Memmi, 1967; Nkrumah, 1998; Nyerere, 1998; Toure, 1979). Their anti-colonial agency enables the debunking of ongoing colonialism, in what Dei (2013) has said, “Interrogation of the theoretical distinctions and connections between anti-colonial thought and ‘post-colonial’ theory” (p. 1), which
highlights the struggles against colonial oppression reinforced through formal education.

Thoughts from colonized Indigenous people have implications or lessons for critically educating the masses, who must eventually assert their role in genuine transformation. This chapter is critical of the impacts of colonization on the Indigenous people’s culture and recognizes that Indigenous people have steadfastly resisted and continue to resist cultural domination. Anti-colonialism engages Pan-Africanism as a solidarity movement with a legitimate role against colonial subjugation, and anti-colonialists can adopt its principles.

This chapter is also a precursor to understanding more deeply the naming ceremonies of the Jopadhola Lwo Indigenous people and their knowledge as self-empowering and as an opportunity for a counter worldview and a cultural base for an ongoing anti-colonial resistance. In fact, the ancestral and spiritual naming among the Jopadhola Lwo is a culture of resistance situated in anti-colonial discourse that will force a rethinking and promote a transformational agenda to the dominant education. Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001) contended that “an anti-colonial discursive framework builds upon insights from narratives of ‘Indigeneity,’ traditions of antiracism theory and praxis, with spaces created through discourse to reclaim the interconnected spaces for decolonization” (p. 297). From here, scholars can write resistance to oppression by bringing in counter knowledges as enriching for decolonizing status quo education. Through Indigenous voices, resistance to domination is highlighted, rather than muted, as is normally the case in the dominant discourse. The counter knowledge is what will decolonize current formal education with anti-colonialism as the colonized persons’ resolve for dismantling all forms of marginalization and oppression.
Chapter 4

Method and Methodology: Interviewing Elders of Padhola

4.1 Introduction

In conducting this study among the Jopadhola Lwo Indigenous people, I engaged elders in their mother tongue for oral interviews using an Indigenous methodology. I have interviewed a total of 13 elders, from the ages of 65 to 97, comprised of six males and seven females.

Through Indigenous methodology, I situated myself among the Indigenous people for agency. Indigenous elders situated in Padhola shared knowledge as educators in reaching out to their community’s younger and future generations. This chapter discusses the principles of Indigenous methodology, which uses oral interviews conducted and recorded in the Indigenous language. First, I discuss how the elders and I settled for the Indigenous methodology, where elders are identified and selected according to their age. However, to ensure the anonymity of participants, pseudonyms are used in referring to any research participants.

Participant Orio is in his 80s; he’s a retired clergyman with Indigenous views and interprets older Dhopathola language, which he says has been improved in certain aspects. Elder Orango was born in 1922 and, therefore, is 90. Orango is a former police officer and World War II veteran. His brother Askofu-Ripa’s year of birth was 1936, and he is 76 and believes that the traditional religion is the base for spirituality. He says God is better worshipped in Lul in Padhola. He considers foreign names for the Jopadhola dangerous parasites. He refers to foreign names as Njawala.
Wuod-Nyampala was born in 1917, is 95, and has interest in preserving the ancestral names, come what may. He says he would rather be shot than give up his ancestral name, and he sees the Jopadhola continuing with names ceremonies forever. He is a World War II veteran and served in Abyssinia. Jazak is 82 and believes that the European culture must respect the culture of the Black man. He says there is a campaign to replace the Lwo names of Padhola with foreign names. He says there is no reason for the Jopadhola to take foreign names as baptism names because they are meaningless and go against the ancestral and spiritual naming of the Jopadhola.

Walamo was born in 1919 and, therefore, is 93; he is a World War II veteran. Walamo reveals that in Padhola, people still offer sacrifices at the kuunu shrine after naming children. He also reveals the name of the ceremonial pot, Agulu Rut, used during the twin naming ceremony and says that the naming ceremonies must continue.

Udoyo was born in 1915 and is 97; he believes in the preservation of Padhola culture to the extent that he initiated a Tieng Adhola concept for a return to kingship. He participated in the locking up of the Christian church on Christmas day. He and his colleagues threw huge branches of thorns in front of the church symbolizing a closed path. The year was 2012 in Tororo in Eastern Uganda.

Orio is 83 years old, a retired clergyman. He interprets for us older Dhopadhola Lwo that younger Jopadhola may not understand. He says that when the contemporary Jopadhola fail to perform the ceremony of Apipili they rob the elders of their honour. He is against the trend of modifying the ceremony and advocates for the fulfilment of the Jopadhola customs at the right time.
From the female participant, Aluwo-Jaryo remembers her year of birth as 1934 and is 78. Aluwo-Jaryo advocates for Indigenous education to redeem the children from “getting lost.” She does not like the way the younger generation is disregarding Padhola customs.

Acoko was born in 1939, is 73, and says that Indigenous religion is the effective way of practicing Padhola culture. In fact, Acoko thinks that it was when the white people stepped into Padhola that the Jopadhola sinned and God started hiding from them, whereas before that, God of the Jopadhola spoke audibly to them. Acoko also discusses how the Nyasigweli sexual minority is part of the Jopadhola society. Acoko also reveals that Wangkach is a Lwo spirit that is worshipped and situated at the gate of any Luo homestead. Aguga is 87, is a sister-in-law of Aluwo-Jaryo, and her views are similar to Aluwo-Jaryo.

Ayuniya is 85, was born in 1927, and practiced Indigenous feminism at one time, by leading a female-headed household after physical violence. Ayuniya lives in a semi-urban area, where she has had a permanent house since the 1960s. She reveals that when roosters are thrown on the roof, the one which stays longest and crows on the roof determines the ancestral name of the boy child.

Akayo is 87 because she told us that she was born in 1925 as recorded by her parents. Akayo tells of the concept of kaffir that the British promoted as racist towards Indigenous names. Akayo is the elder sister of Acoko, and they are neighbours. Nyaburu is the youngest participant, who happened to travel together with me all the time. She joined in the conversations all the time, sometimes with statements that supported what the elders were saying. Participant Nyaburu is a female elder at 65.

All participants were in generally good health and active elders with sound memory concerning knowledge about Padhola community. With a frequently expressed sense of humour,
elders mocked the colonial system. The participants were interviewed in their homes, which were quite accessible using traditional hospitality.

4.2 Methods: Qualitative or Quantitative

I employed a qualitative method that enabled me to connect with the people by speaking to them directly. This is because there are multiple methodologies that are enticing for a field study among Indigenous people. However, the most prominent research method was the qualitative method rather than the quantitative one, as it allowed me to speak directly to the people. An Indigenous community would remain sceptical and not readily accept the written forms, as in the quantitative method. Due to expected challenges, Liamputtong (2010) has noted, “In certain circumstances and with some cultural and ethnic groups, obtaining a signed consent form can be a challenging task” (p. 44). Even though a signed consent form is ethical and protects researchers, what is more important is the success in registering trust with the subjects, which determines the interviewees’ willingness for interviews. An Indigenous community will, however, need some extra persuasion to accept the written forms.

On the other hand, as Wiersma and Jurs (2009) have said, “A qualitative research is more theory based from the onset with theoretical underpinnings existing in one form or another” (p. 14). It taps into a situation whereby both the researcher and researched share some common grounds for the study. For my study among Indigenous people, there was readiness to share their knowledge from the people’s existing systems. The process involved first networking to find out which elders were well known in the community and ready to present wisdom and knowledge about culture. An overview of the recruitment and interview process is presented in Appendix B). For the recruitment, my hosts, Elders I and II, identified those elders who were mostly older than them. We all spoke the local language after visiting the people in their homes. When a
visitor is expected, a small feast called *rwech* is offered. There was a mutual agreement that the researcher must go to the homes of the interviewees as a visitor. The elders gave their information willingly, face to face, and did not object to being recorded or to my taking notes. There was no mutual animosity because a visitor is supposed to be treated well in the community. The women usually referred to their places of origin as *thuwan*. Most of the men seemed to have been born in the same areas where they still lived in their homes.

On the other hand, Ogot (2005) in a review article critiqued the quantitative research method of collecting oral histories used by Elkins (2005) for using associations which had been formed for other purposes for interviews. According to Ogot, “accuracy is also crucial” (p. 493) Ogot also advised against the use of real names of people, as Elkins had done. Ogot has pointed out that the people whose real names have been used are known to come out to discredit such research. For example, one person whose name was mentioned as tortured later protested that he was never tortured or beaten (p. 494). Such inconsistencies must not arise during research among Indigenous people. The Indigenous methodology, therefore, stands out as one that is more reliable, as the elders are likely to trust the researcher and co-producers of their authentic knowledge. The people in the community are not likely to disown what the elders said, but value it as knowledge from their culture shared by elders. This is because it is face-to-face contact with the researcher, rather than the use of the traditional social science model of gathering data about Indigenous people, where the data recorded are not corroborated by the people or are inaccurate. It is not ethical to give interviewees’ real names because that makes them responsible for what the researcher wants to say or for the outcome of the research; therefore, pseudonyms are used when referring to participants in this report. On the other hand, an Indigenous methodology involves the Indigenous people directly, giving information or knowledge that they can relate
with what is ongoing. An Indigenous methodology is one mooted from the Indigenous people themselves as one resonating with their common norms as acceptable.

Abel and Richters (2009, p. 349), for example, in their development research misrepresented the Jopadhola society in their generalized statement of “women are seen not heard.” They further quoted or misquoted a participant named “Jennifer” as saying, “In our society women do not make decisions; it is the husband who makes the decisions.” During my study, however, women shared societal knowledge freely, and there were no restrictions. From my observation, women are also not banished from an extended family gathering. In fact, they seem to be the majority in the composition of a family gathering. Women are, in fact, the primary contacts in welcoming the researchers when using the Indigenous methodology.

Although Abel and Richters’ (2009) observation that “women are seen but not heard” (p. 349) probably has good intentions for the Jopadhola Indigenous society, it is not representative of them. It is, therefore, possible that methods of research that are not Indigenous people-centred may misrepresent what an Indigenous society is all about. There is a nuance in the statement of “Jennifer” that can be interpreted to mean the desire for the presence of a collective voice in an extended family not present during the interview. Research methods used among Indigenous people ought to go deeper to understand the structure of the Indigenous society as a communal one (Dei, 2010). It might be hard for researchers to observe a society over only a short period of time and know much about it (Oommen, 1969). Researchers may also encounter passive resistance through nuanced answers like that of Jennifer above. On the other hand, an Indigenous methodology is one through which Indigenous interviewees express themselves as authorities in Indigenous knowledge emanating from their culture.
As presented in the data chapter, interviewees occasionally evade a researcher’s questions when they do not want to answer. However, the Indigenous research method puts into practice the principles of the Indigenous culture, where the interviewees see themselves as serious educators representing the voice of the subject.

4.3 Indigenous Methodology and Research

An Indigenous research methodology must have an agenda for decolonization. Smith (1999) has given an example of the Indigenous “Maori people’s transition from the Maori as the researched to the Maori as the researcher” (p. 163). The Jopadhola community is one of the most frequently researched people in Eastern Uganda. However, I am critical of the methodologies and the validity or reasons advanced for researching the Jopadhola.

On the other hand, the Indigenous research methodology pursues Indigenous values as holistic and transformative as opposed to ethnocentric descriptions or distortions that objectify Indigenous people. For example, I am aware that Mogensen’s (2002) research in Padhola has been circulated among the Jopadhola, but the Jopadhola Lwo are already very critical of the research assertions as ethnocentric. Smith (1999) has already noted that “objectification is a process of dehumanization which is problematic” (p. 39). Smith also contended that “distortions of social reality by ethnocentric researchers overly given to generalizations were validated by ‘scientific method’ and ‘colonial affirmation’ and did little to extend the knowledge of the Maori people” (p. 39). Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) have also contended that “because of rules of evidence and dominant epistemologies of Western knowledge production, Indigenous understandings are deemed irrelevant by the academic gatekeepers” (p. 136). It is fair to state that the colonial methodologies that have been used to study the Indigenous Maori people are similar to the ones that have previously been used in studying the Jopadhola. Such research
methods have not been transformational, but are part and parcel of the normal science used for gate keeping or maintaining the dominant pedagogy devoid of the Indigenous worldview (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008).

Studying the Jopadhola Lwo for development purposes has often only distorted their knowledge and identity (Abel & Richters, 2009), but Oboth Ofumbi (1960) has written about the Jopadhola Lwo as a dynamic society with advanced social organizations that administer the community in every aspect of their culture. For example, every clan has an elder who oversees all that happens within that clan, but then, this clan leader does not rule over a household of another clan or rule over the whole ethnic group. Before the colonial intervention, the clan leaders were able to promptly assemble an army or inform their people if there was a looming danger to their community. What also is usually not written about is that the Jopadhola always chose a king to reign among them. However, both Crazzolara (1950) and Ogot (1967) mentioned that after the death of each ruler, the Jopadhola usually chose the next king by consensus. Moreover, since the death of King Majanga in 1905, recorded in Oboth Ofumbi (1960), the Jopadhola have again revived the institution of kingship for them to continue their culture collectively. In fact, a ruler in Padhola does not have to be an absolute monarch to be called a king; as long as an Indigenous people have a word in their knowledge calling him king, then he is a king. For example, the concept of Keere in Dhopadhola Lwo is about a king or kings, which means the institution of kingship has always been there. Similarly, there is also the concept of Rwoth, which is not exactly the same as Keere, although they are both about power, authority, and leadership at given levels. Legitimately, such knowledge can only come from the Jopadhola themselves, validated through what Dei and Kempf (2006) called the “resistance to amputation of knowledge” (p. 191). The Indigenous methodology will correct distortions and mutations for a
more *accurate* understanding of the Jopadhola as they disseminate their knowledge through the ancestral naming system that expresses a counter Indigenous worldview.

The Indigenous research methodology takes into account respect for elders as a value of the Jopadhola culture, their lived experiences, knowledge systems, and the community’s perspectives, voice, and agency, rather than merely subjecting the community to an *objective* study that devalues Indigenous narratives and oral culture. Distortions through mainstream research methodologies and current pedagogies tend to reinforce coloniality, rather than encourage counter learning from Indigenous living cultures and knowledge. This methodology, when accessed by all researchers, is a “decolonization project that challenges practices that perpetuate Western power by misrepresenting and essentializing Indigenous persons” (see Bishops, 2008, p. 450). For example, the methodology decolonizes popular perceptions that the Jopadhola probably did not resist the British rule, a view which reinforces the status quo of the European worldview. It gives the Jopadhola people their opportunity to narrate their encounters with and resistance to British intervention and rule from their own perspectives through teaching about the ancestral and spiritual naming of children and their ceremonies.

For my field study, the Indigenous methodology presented elders with an opportunity to disseminate their knowledge orally. While in the field, posing just one question to the Jopadhola elders elicited many answers concerning my topic of ancestral and spiritual naming of children among the Lwo. The use of Indigenous methodology must not restrict the elders to sticking to or giving only straight answers, as that is not their way of passing on knowledge to the younger generation. It was difficult to restrict the elders to giving only straight answers, as they sometimes spoke in parables. Thus, the researcher had to listen to them attentively, as many answers may require further explanations and elaboration.
The interviews necessitated going to the elders’ homes. My means of transport was a car that belonged to my extended family members, who also provided a female elder and male driver to go along with me. The participants were female and male elders. Of these were five females, aged between 73 and 87, and six male elders, aged between 76 and 97, whom I engaged in oral interviews, both audio and videotape, in the local language, which I later translated into English. The Jopadhola want their knowledge to be known by other people of goodwill and saw my study as their own agency.

The venue was Eastern Uganda, in a Lwo-speaking enclave or exclave, with family patriarchs and matriarchs interviewed as leaders, the year was 2012, and getting there was by car. There is also an airfield in Tororo as well as a big railway junction. I found the elders by going to their homes in their locations and villages that form Padhola. Before that, I inquired from my primary contacts, Elders I and II, who are members of a clan. The older people of Padhola are known by almost everybody. The participants are family patriarchs and matriarchs with leadership roles.

Elders were interviewed in the presence of other people, who usually interjected and added to the richness of collective Indigenous knowledge concerning the naming and general education of the Jopadhola. Although it is common knowledge that the life expectancy of Indigenous Africans from Western perspectives is tremendously reduced, the surprise was that the elders I interviewed and those I did not interview tended to live very long lives, well into their late nineties. There were some well-known centenarians, who were generally healthy physically and sound minded, which can be attributed to their unpolluted environment and organic food. The Jopadhola want their knowledge to be known by other people of goodwill and saw my study as their own agency.
4.4 Indigenous Methodology for Research Questions

4.4.1 Data collection

My study was an Indigenous agency; where the researcher was a learner and the elders of the Indigenous community were teachers and custodians of collective knowledge. Oboth Ofumbi (1960) already advised that it is better for younger generations of the Jopadhola to learn from elders than to abandon their culture. This implies that elders remain interested in equipping the younger generation, educating them in the norms and customs of their society. The methodology for the study enabled both the researcher and the Indigenous educator to collaborate for success. Smith (1999) has stressed that the researcher ought to remain respectful and observe elders’ ethics. The Jopadhola also stress respect for elders in their culture as a primary requirement to receive their blessing, which Oboth Ofumbi has also talked about.

A few days after ethics approval was received from the University of Toronto (see Appendix C), I confirmed to a contact in the research field that I was going over to interview the elders as we had planned two years earlier. However, my language had to change from “doing research” to “being educated by the elders” about Indigenous knowledge. Only then was the reaction of the contact more welcoming than the previous hostility, when I had bluntly talked about “doing research” on the people. My adherence to Indigenous methodology was a strategy that earned me an offer for help in identifying and recruiting the “knowers.” Indeed, I had previously been asked what I was going to do with the knowledge from Padhola, but now my topic on the ancestral and spiritual names was very much welcomed. The concept of recruiting people to ask those questions was also not welcome. To the elders, it is like recruiting people into an army, which draws a convulsion. It is better to respectfully “pay visits” or wendo to the elders, which resonates more with the norms of the people.
Moreover, with the value system of adoration of visitors in the culture of the Jopadhola, the hosts extravagantly lavish the visitors with food, especially those coming from far away. Ocholla-Ayayo (1976) contended that a Luo will never put vegetables before a visitor, but meat or chicken, in order to fulfil a traditional welcome. Additionally, Dei (2008) has called on researchers to “attend to the ontological and epistemological claims of Indigenous knowings” (p. 98). Dei also has said, “As Indigenous scholars, we cannot theorize ourselves out of our identities” (p. 98). I identify with these Indigenous people as my own, and therefore, it was an ethical requirement from the Jopadhola to submit to and re-learn from elders before embarking on interviews on my topic of the ancestral and spiritual naming of the children. Our driver knew the area well and worked late with us, sometimes leaving our hosts’ home at night without any worry for personal security. Padhola is a dynamic society; therefore, contact with elders was made through their mobile telephone numbers, sometimes through younger relatives.

4.4.2 Study area, a border community

Before embarking on the interviews, I needed an adequate supply of equipment, which included an audiotape recorder and battery. Although I had all these from Canada, at one time I had to go across the border into Kenya to get the right sizes for re-equipment just in case I exhausted the battery. Tororo is a border town where people crisscross the border for shopping all the time. Crossing the border for a foreign researcher requires a passport, but it is not required for the local people. Members of this border community do not need permission to cross to the other country, and this can be done without passports. My host elder’s locally and nationally identifiable name was an asset that reduced delay at the border, where the police search is mainly for foreigners.
During this course of trying to get all the necessary equipment in the neighbouring country, I had an intercultural experience of co-operation among the border communities. This is because members of one community are found in both countries. For example, the Samia people, who are neighbours of the Jopadhola, live on both sides of the border. The Jopadhola and the Samia share some names, like Opio, Apio, Anyango, and Akello, as will be presented in the data chapter. The Jopadhola community is, however, found only on the Uganda border, making them “fortunate” enough not to have been divided into separate countries by the colonial border. The idea of avoiding the border formalities also had a positive impact on my research budget.

According to my hosts, Okoth Ogola and his wife, Jennifer Okoth Ogola, there are foreign researchers who come and take pictures of people they have not really studied and then write imagined stories about Jopadhola culture.

The idea of using a video camera for recording came about because it could be stored safely in computer software, in case of a loss of baggage during flight from Uganda, through to Kenya, UK, and Canada. The video camera could have been a source of concern for interviewees, but given the assurance of confidentiality, my hosts informed me that the people usually do not mind being video-taped if assured of good intentions. I later used the video clips for a more detailed transcription to enable me to recall what the participants said. Watching the clips and hearing the elders’ voices vividly relayed the elders’ expressions. I could, for example, stop the video and repeat what the elders said, over and over, for their authentic knowledge. Together with community, this study was an avenue to share their knowledge, and there were high expectations for accountability. Smith (1999) argued that “local or Indigenous knowledges are even more at risk now than ever before” (p. 100), which could account for initial resistance towards the video camera. The Jopadhola Lwo elders remained very protective of the
authenticity of their knowledge because of concerns for distortions. The participants in the oral interviews did not want to be responsible for the corruption of the community’s knowledge. Knowledge from the ancestors has been preserved over the centuries, and everyone was obliged to protect this knowledge from distortions.

4.4.3 Ethics, courtesy, recruitment

An Indigenous research is synonymous with immersion into the Indigenous community itself, at least temporarily, for the study period. I recommend this Indigenous research methodology for all, the Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous people, as it was one step further from an ethnographic study and observed the dignity of the elders. Brunner (1989) has suggested that “care must be given to all phases of research design from hypothesis to analysis” (p. 68). Trust is a major component for the success of the Indigenous methodology.

As I was born in the community of the Jopadhola, I did not stay in any hotel, even though it is also a good idea for a hotel accommodation. As a member of a clan in Padhola, I was welcomed and looked after adoringly as is the custom (Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). Clan relatives have the same rights to me as my own immediate family. In fact, the family is usually an extended family, and not the nuclear one. As my research was going to be intensive, I lived with relatives near town and had access to the computer. Upon my return, I noticed higher living standards with rural electrification in many homes, including our own. Internet in Padhola was not a challenge because it was available.

It is also tempting to talk about the lush greenery of Uganda, where the Indigenous trees are mesmerizing. Someone said that a little romanticization of the Ugandan vegetation is something that an Indigenous person finds irresistible. Most of Padhola is lush with green vegetation throughout the year.
Recruitment of the elders required temporary immersion into the community, as mentioned earlier, for members of the community to help with identifying or even recommending the elders to be interviewed. A prominent member of his clan and extended family, Okoth Ogola was a source of guidance as to where to find the old men of the community. This elder entirely looked at the study as expounding the Jopadhola community’s agency. My hosts could not allow me to go anywhere alone, so Jennifer Okoth Ogola was tasked with showing me the directions and introducing me to all the female and male elders. We had to go deeper into the rural areas. We fueled our car and used the mobile telephone to contact elders. Most rural homes also have at least one mobile telephone, and we were able to make contacts before going there to ensure the elders were expecting us.

My hosts knew the cultural leaders of the Jopadhola community. It was important to them that I visit the Jopadhola King, who lives in a palace in a suburb of Tororo Municipality. Though my hosts knew his telephone number, we did not call the King, as culturally, we are always welcome to go to him, and the palace was not far from our residence. If I were a non-Jopadhola, I would definitely need an appointment with the king. The King of Padhola is a figure around whom the Jopadhola unite for cultural purposes and all other pressing needs of this society.

On arrival at the palace, we were ushered into the King’s throne room to see the coat of arms, which consists of a shield and two trademark spears, the emblem of the community. The Lwo culture has been described by Ocholla-Ayayo (1976) and Onyango-ku-Odongo and Webster (1976) as a “civilization of spears” in reference to the myth of the spear and beads. The Lwo culture, according to Ocholla-Ayayo, stipulates hospitality and feeding visitors. It has remained like that, and soon after our arrival, as is the custom, we were given refreshments in the living room. After meeting the King, the next visit was to the Prime Minister of Tieng Adhola,
who issued me a letter of permission to interview Jopadhola elders. Our request for a letter was in addition to the one issued by the Ministry of Education from the capital in Kampala.

The Prime Minister reiterated that the Jopadhola have hope in scholars from our community writing what is representative of our people and culture. He reminded me to remain accountable to the community. In the letter, the Prime Minister introduced me to our people as “Daughter of Padhola.” A few months prior to my visit, an African American professor, Dr. Shelby, visited Padhola and was accorded a Lwo naming ceremony as an honour for her outstanding work as a teacher at Tororo Girls’ School in the 1960s (Emojong, 2012, para. 2). After undergoing an induction into the Jopadhola society, Shelby was given the name Nyagwen, reflecting what the Jopadhola do during the season of birth. African-American researchers going back to an Indigenous African community are treated in a way that makes them re-connect more with their African culture.

Even for me, an Indigenous researcher, meeting the King of our people was a healing moment. It is a holistic moment for an Indigenous researcher to meet the King of one’s people, especially when addressed by the Prime Minister as “Daughter of Padhola” in writing. Any other person can also earn this status, since the Jopadhola like Lwoizing visitors who venture into their enclave. Respect is a virtue for a positive gain in learning from a culture of Indigenous people sharing knowledge in their own perspective.

Once equipped with the letter from the King as well as one from the ministry, going to the villages was an immersion into the community. Whereas, the social science method requires an orientation about their security, all that is needed when following Indigenous methodology is one’s ability to connect with Indigenous culture. It is unnecessary to perceive Indigenous people
as potentially dangerous. No extra protection was necessary because the people themselves are the community’s security.

4.4.4 Interview procedure and profiles of key participants

Some basic procedures that others have used before can be followed. For example, Liamputtong (2010) has quipped, “Researchers need to carefully consider the place where they will carry out their research so that the needs of their participants can be taken into account. Participants [are] more comfortable interviewed in their own homes” (p. 104). For my study, the venues to meet elders were deep in the rural areas. A researcher in Uganda requires a contact on the ground to help seek participants in their own homes. A researcher also has to inform the interviewees so that they are present. Humility is a value that is necessary in order to learn from elders. Though many of the interviewees initially wanted their names published for them to leave a mark as contributors, only pseudonyms are used. Not publishing the names of the participants is not an issue to them, as knowledge belongs to the collective Padhola community and not individuals. Pseudonyms also protect participants in case the community finds out that what was said is not representative of the community. If known to have said something that is not representative of the community, there are cultural ways of punishing the participant. No one wants to break basic spiritual rules, or kwer, that guide the Jopadhola.

Where both the researcher and the elders speak the local language, no consent forms are necessary, but rather only their verbal consent. Interviews are best through conversations. Consent forms are known to have been used and will still be used in the future in Padhola. In fact, a written permission must be obtained from the authorities in the Ministry of Education as well as from the King, as I have done, or from the office of the president.
Once permission is granted, Indigenous methodology requires going directly to the elders, and through conversations, sometimes over a cup of tea or just in the cool of the afternoon in a relaxed atmosphere, knowledge is shared. If employing the services of an interpreter, still the ethics of Indigenous elders, which are respect, humility, and honesty, must be followed. It is quite ethically acceptable to the Jopadhola elders to welcome visitors into their homes, to talk about what is happening in their society. In such an environment, consent forms might scare participants as too legalistic. Through Indigenous methodology, the interviewee has authority over the knowledge they are sharing.

Interviewing elders for a topic like that of the ancestral and spiritual naming practices was an opportunity for educating the world on the way ancestral names are given and the role of ceremonies for Indigenous identity. The conversations were informal, with a general willingness among the elders to share knowledge. Dishonesty was strongly discouraged, since the elders have their own ways of discerning attitudes of learners.

A basic principle for a traditional welcome is to offer food gifts as a norm. When offered a cup of tea, it is unthinkable to refuse. Similarly, one is likely of be offered a rooster during a send-off. Therefore, there should be a fresh awareness and recognition of the existence of other competing cultures (Dei et al., 2000; Wangoola, 2000).

During the course of the interviews, I noticed that there is a generation considered too young to hear what the elders were saying. Younger children were then told, “What we are discussing is for elders only,” and the children were expected to politely go out to play. Children considered too young to understand the themes that elders are discussing are free to linger around trying to pick up whatever the elders are saying and will not be turned away. I interviewed male elders in the presence of their spouses and female members of the extended
family or clan. There is usually no separation for a women-only interview or men-only interview. However, in case women happened to be alone during the time of the interview, they could be interviewed alone. However, they too could not utter certain words when young people were present. Female elders insisted on providing a meal, either before starting the interview, during the interview, or after the interview.

The Indigenous methodology, therefore, is one where men and women work together making it rather egalitarian. There are benefits from oral culture as an alternative to everything being literary. Participants were requested orally for their consent to audio or video taping.

**4.4.5 Applying Indigenous methodology**

All pseudonyms may have meanings for those who speak Luo; they are not real names, but only coined in order to record the interviewees. During my first visit to a female elder, we had to contact the son, Mariek. Though he was not able to inform his mother about our intended visit so that we actually arrived in the home before Mariek, his mother, Akayo, gave us a traditional warm welcome. The small hitch in communication was because we did not know Akayo’s mobile telephone number, which made us talk to the son. The son was attending a village local council meeting in the neighbourhood, and by the time he came home, he found us already in the mother’s home. Such scenarios are considered normal, and it did not spoil the visit. The only disadvantage was that we could have missed Akayo, not knowing her program for the day. Akayo, however, welcomed us into her home.

Akayo is an 87-year-old widow who is still very active and healthy and lives with her grandchildren. She explained that her late husband was one of the prominent clan leaders before he died. After her welcome, Akayo disappeared soon after to go and get food ready for us. Akayo’s short absence almost made me think that we might not get an interview, but such a
scenario of absence away from the visitor for a short time is also normal in the culture of the Jopadhola, and Akayo was in no way trying to avoid visitors. As long as the host has greeted you and given you a seat, you are a welcome visitor. What is important in the Jopadhola culture is that a person must prepare food for visitors, and this is what Akayo must do. We do not have to talk about time management skills here, but rather the expectations.

Akayo’s short absence, as we discovered, was to get a bunch of bananas and a live rooster to prepare for us a meal. Akayo’s concern is that visitors from far away have caught her unprepared, and yet, she must prepare some food for visitors, as it is the custom to make visitors feel welcome. In the culture of the Jopadhola, a visitor must not leave a home without having a meal; otherwise, it tells of not being welcome in the home. The Jopadhola fulfill their customs regarding visitors. Moreover, our request to interview Akayo straight away deprived her of time to prepare food first. Nevertheless, our common ground was that both sides are excited about my topic on the ancestral and spiritual naming of a child. Akayo is at first burdened by our sudden arrival and our prioritizing the interview over her cooking and even quips, “My friends, did you tell me you were coming?” Nende wi wacho ran ni wibino? Such a question is not from a negative attitude, but was clearly directed at our abrupt arrival that has left her no room for a traditional Padhola welcome. Both Oboth Ofumbi (1960) and Ocholla-Ayayo, (1976) have talked about the traditional Luo welcome, where visitors are feted. Our apology for not letting her know our coming in time, however, amused Akayo so much that she laughed heartily and agreed to sit down with us. We then moved outside with the portable seats to a shade in Akayo’s well-manicured compound.

The Jopadhola bury their dead, as ancestors, in the family compounds in the rural areas. For example, Akayo’s husband’s tomb, extravagantly decorated with marble, is right there in the
homestead. Akayo’s husband was named after one of the prominent pre-independence era chiefs in Padhola. Burial in the compounds is prevalent in the culture of the Jopadhola. In fact, the Jopadhola consider burial in the cemetery as that of a “person buried in the bush.” Tombs in the compound are customary in the culture of Lwo, which stipulates for the burial of the dead at home. The whole interview with Akayo on ancestral and spiritual names will be discussed in the data section. For a send-off, Akayo gave us a rooster and a bunch of bananas to go and cook for ourselves, with an invitation to return there on completion of the study to share the outcome with her.

Another interviewee was Jazak, an elder who is 82 years old. We telephone him, and a relative offered to drive us there. On our way, we asked villagers to show us where the elder lives. Older people seem to be quite well-known all over the Jopadhola community. Usually, at the mention of an elder’s two Indigenous names, someone within Padhola is likely to know their grandfather, father, or their locations—for example, Poyameri, Magola, Katerema, Bira, Pajwenda, Kisoko, Nagongera, Atiri, Petta, Chawolo, Liringi, Kirewa, Rubongi, or Paya, among many other places not mentioned here. For instance, after finding Jazak, who is a retired clergyman, I found that he knows my parents, at the mention of my grandfather and clan. Padhola, as a whole, seems a close-knit society, where people know each other’s identities by clans.

The Jopadhola love to be visited. They also seem to have extra language skills, in that they usually understand at least three languages that are not theirs. Tororo district has other diversities. The Jopadhola also usually learn the language of their neighbours, understand their cultures, and respect them.
Jazak’s home consisted of permanent concrete buildings with a manicured compound. Living in such a home does not deflate one’s Indigenousness because of Western-looking buildings. To perceive only thatched structures as really Indigenous is erroneous. In the homestead of Jazak stand several concrete houses. One house is his own, while the other is for a son and a chicken house as well. Jazak has also planted a tropical forest, consisting of very many species of Indigenous trees, adjacent to his compound. Jazak is an Indigenous environmentalist in his own right. This home also directly faces the 900 foot Tororo Rock adjacent to the town, making it rather cold in the evenings and mornings because of the heights. According to Jazak, the cool morning hours are good for going to the garden to tend crops in this farming community.

At Jazak’s home, as is the custom in most homes, except when it is raining, seats are brought from inside the house for visitors to sit outside under a shade. Upon our arrival, though, Elder Jazak is in the field; the family matriarch kept us company as she sent off the grandchildren to call him. In the morning hours, he is chasing away birds from his rice crop. He comes with a book of poems that he is reading. After welcoming us, Jazak sits on a traditional three-legged stool, which is common for men of Jazak’s age. Jazak speaks to his grandchildren in English, though such a practice may not be popular with other elders to whom it is unthinkable to speak English at home. A North American researcher will be more at ease with such an elder with English language skills.

What Jazak tells us in the oral interview is presented in the next data chapter and is full of nuances, regardless of his speaking in English to his grandchildren. Again, we had not talked to Jazak directly before reaching his home. Together with participant Nyaburu, we navigated our
way in the community. Nyaburu is a pseudonym here, but it is also a common name for many girls born during a funeral in their homes.

Upon our leaving, Jazak calls on the young boys around the homestead to chase a rooster for us—synonymous with Padhola hospitality. He gave us a rooster to take home to prepare our own meal, as we were not able to stay for a meal to be cooked for us. The scenario was similar to that of Akayo upon our send off. Visitors are usually accorded a small feast called rwech, but as we had to go to another elder, we did not wait for the meal. Rooster giving is a feature throughout our interview venues.

When the participants were not home on a first visit, we arranged a second time. For example, at the home of Orio, we let the wife know about our request to interview Mzee. Mzee in Swahili is a title of honour given to an elder because of his age. In Padhola, an elderly person’s title is generally Jadwong. Though Orio is usually expected home early, this time he was held up visiting parishioners. Though a retired clergyman, Orio is still very active. Their home is covered in Indigenous climbers, tropical fruit trees of oranges, guavas, or paw-paws. On our first visit to Mzee, his grandchildren dashed off to collect almost half a sack of fresh oranges for us to take home. It was harvest season, and many oranges were falling to the ground. Some of the oranges are sold at a nearby primary school to travellers to avoid them getting rotten, because the family cannot consume all of them.

It is fair to say that rural communities are food baskets. Learning about food and the culture of Indigenous people, especially among the Jopadhola, where every visitor must be feted with food, is something that revolutionizes current knowledge about Indigenous people. The richness of Indigenous culture as a method will decolonize research methodologies. Indigeneity advocates for changed attitudes towards this functioning society to debunk status quo knowledge
about Indigeneity. There is the possibility of acquiring counter knowledge from the virtues of generosity and sharing in Padhola Indigenous culture as fairer than the Western-centric competitive and rigid individualistic tendencies, which are often viewed as oppressive.

We finally met Orio, the third participant, the following day at five o’clock, and our interview took place over evening tea. The pseudonym beginning with “O” features frequently because almost 90% of the men’s names customarily begin with “O.” Women’s names in Padhola usually begin with “A” or “Ny.”

The interview with Orio was followed by more interviews with World War II veterans, considered authorities in knowledge and cultural practice of ancestral naming of children. Many of the elders are literate as well. Elders can be identified by their clans and locations to know their homesteads. The Jopadhola usually give a traditional welcome, where everybody in the homestead comes out to greet visitors.

Elder Walamo, the fourth participant, welcomed us to his home after we drove straight from the home of Acoko, the fifth participant. Walamo is a World War II veteran. Apart from telling us about the practice of ancestral and spiritual names, he was also happy to tell us that he was not forcefully recruited into the colonial army. Rather, he considered army service a means of visiting other countries. He served in Egypt, whereas his brother Uboth served in Libya fighting the fascists. Walamo is aged 93, and it is the year 2012. Evidently, the people of this area traditionally live longer lives.

The other participant in the adjacent location was another World War II veteran, who was our sixth participant. Wuod Nyampala carried out his service in Abyssinia. After an interview with him, he was happy to direct us to his other colleague, Udoyo, our seventh participant, who is 97. Both war veterans, after joining the army, went to Gilgil in Kenya for an intensive training
before leaving through Mombasa by ship. Elders have a love for story-telling. For example, stories are told about World War II and the fierce battles where many of the veterans and their friends died. However, both men were proud of their war achievements, and it gave them joy to share these stories with people in the community or those visiting them. Like another veteran, Wuod-Nyampala, the money that Walamo and Udoyo earned and saved enabled them to fulfill their bridewealth obligations to their parents-in-law in marrying their wives that each of them refers to as my “mother.” Walamo’s wife has died and is buried in the compound. He pointed to her grave saying, “There lies your Mama.”

On the other hand, participant Wuod Nyampala’s wife is alive and also active. Wuod Nyampala is still strong, although we agreed he needs more calcium intake to strengthen his bones. In our parting remarks, we also drew his attention to the need to drink more milk. There has to be a time of waiting for the elders to tell their own stories before specifically embarking on one’s own interest. Even then, the interview is better if it flows as a conversation. Again patience was important, and six hours in an elder’s home came as no surprise. Using Indigenous methodology, one has to be a good listener and also be “teachable.” The process may require a researcher to first “unlearn” what he or she already knows about Indigenous people. In fact, there are many surprises about epistemological approaches about my topic, which will be discussed in the data chapter.

Among the participants, Udoyo at 97 is the oldest person whom I interviewed. Though advanced in age, Udoyo reveals that he regularly meets researchers who come to him through Kenya. He is also mentally alert; again, the year of interview is 2012.

Two women, Aguga and Aluwo-Jaryo as the eighth and ninth participants, are interviewed together after an appointment. Again, prior networking was necessary for female
elders. In this case, we networked with the elders through their nephew Aripogine, who informed them to come together to one home for the interview. The women met us on time and also prepared us a meal, so that on arrival, we first ate. Though on the first day of the interview the battery for my recorder failed, the women offered to come with us to our residence for the interview.

There was ample time for the women to change into their best clothes, as we were going into town, but even then, we failed to find the right size of the battery for the audio. Electricity had been switched off by the South African company, Umeme, which is currently running power distribution in the country. The women were still patient and gave us another chance as we returned them to their home in a neighbourhood not far from ours. Aguga is 83 years old and Aluwo-Jaryo is 78, and it is December 2012. We agreed to meet another day once we had the battery. I had to have everything needed for the interview, especially an audio recorder. Pencils or notebooks alone might not be enough because the conversations covered broad issues that must be recorded. One cannot write and record everything said in the conversation, even as a fast writer or a writer of shorthand. An audio or video tape is important during the conversations.

With the consent of the female elders, we returned to them the third day with better equipment to actually videotape. The video cameras were available in town. Even these hitches were an opportunity to learn and understand the culture of the people, their patience, and zeal to share knowledge from the Jopadhola society. During the interview, I gave assurances to share the outcome of the study with the participants. The interview details that Aguga and Aluwo-Jaryo have shared with me on the ancestral and spiritual names are in the next chapter.

Another woman interviewee is Ayuniya, who is the tenth participant. It was the suggestion of my elders that I go to Ayuniya for an interview, as one of the female elders likely
to tell us about the ancestral naming. It was always a good idea to consult with people in the community to know the participants that will best represent the views of the elders. Ayuniya is an elder who lives quite independently in a semi-urban area. Before embarking on the interview, Ayuniya shared her own experiences with us. For example, Ayuniya told us how she once slept out in the open one night due to violence, reporting the matter to the police the following day to give her protection before making a life-changing decision. Ayuniya’s son has built her a permanent house, but before that, when the children were young, Ayuniya was responsible for everything, providing shelter, clothing them, and sending them to school. Everywhere, participants were story-telling, friendly people once introduced to us by someone they trust. A primary contact from within the community opened the way for someone to be received as a visitor or friend of a friend. We nurtured some kind of friendship during the conversation, and Ayuniya even offered to take a photograph with us. After processing the photographs in town, we gave some to Ayuniya, for which she was extremely grateful and proud. Ayuniya’s independence and the fact that she is not very far from the urban centre enabled us to have more time with her. Her near-urban residence does not mean that she has forgotten or does not espouse the Indigenous values and knowledge about my topic. In fact, her urban residence is the result of her acquisition of a plot in town, but she also has a village from where she originates, intact with a clan system.

Elders Orango is the eleventh and Askofu-Ripa the twelfth participants. Though some of the elders have religious titles, they hold Indigenous perspectives, as will be heard in the interviews. Most of the interviewees were at one time required to practice some Anglicanism. My host elders too are categorized as Anglicans. Since the colonial era, the Anglicans have had similar experiences and are, therefore, supposedly more accessible. Thus, I interview Askofu-
Ripa, a really controversial figure, who has decamped from the colonial church to lead an Indigenous one. Though situated in the church, Askofu-Ripa’s advocacy for Indigenous ways of worship makes him an ardent resistor to colonialism. The Jopadhola elders have a proverb that the elders taught me, which says, “gima la bedo asanda ineno gi wende;” translated into English, it means: “What will be a ‘good’ calabash is seen from the neck.” What is promising is noticed early, and Askofu seems to have volunteered to serve in the church to study its ways in order to oppose it. In fact, when introducing himself, he said that his presence in the church is kabwok koth or a “rain shelter.” In Uganda, when it is raining, one can take shelter in any house in sight, but that does not mean that the house in which you take shelter is your home.

Overall, the concept of respect for the participants underlines the elders’ roles as researchers and responsible teachers of knowledge, which Smith (1999) has also mentioned. The Indigenous research methodology is one where Indigenous people express themselves in their own worldview and may rattle the commonly established methods that measure the outcome of what is learned in a research field with the rigidity of a science laboratory. Going to the field with a set viewpoint can hinder a researcher’s learning, especially from Indigenous people. This is because Indigenous people can easily withhold knowledge to tactfully protect or shield their knowledge because of the danger of distortions. Such an incident was seen in what was told to Mogensen (2002), who believed that women in Padhola need the permission of a male family member before making a statement. Indigenous people, though generally welcoming, want their knowledge documented to genuinely reflect what the participants really have to say. Respect for the Indigenous ways of the elders does not mean that a researcher is unethical. Indigenous elders scrutinize researchers for transparency and mutual trust before any dialogue.
4.5 Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted in the local Dhopadhola Lwo language. It takes some years to learn this language for those who do not speak Lwo. This study was conducted using Lwo language skills translated into English. Although both female and male elders were interviewed, there still remained some divisions on religious grounds. Most of the participants are nominal Anglicans, but speak as Indigenous Jopadhola and not from their religious affiliation. Overall, elders are only nominal Anglicans. Although elders profess Anglicanism, they are, at the same time, thoroughly against its teaching in Luganda, which is not Dhopadhola Lwo. Interviewees only speak their minds after trust is established, which was not easy to earn. The religious divide in Padhola traditionally makes it a little difficult to access the Jopadhola who profess another faith to that of the researcher, since religion is fragmenting to this Indigenous community. The pattern in the field is such that the nominal Anglicans are the ones interviewed. However, in the future, this pattern could be balanced or avoided altogether since the people identify more with Padhola culture rather than Christianity. The World War II veterans were also predominant among the interviewees. Female interviewees also exhibited some skepticism at first towards the reasons for my interviewing them before establishing a level of trust. Overall, female elders were just as independent as their male counterparts and shared knowledge equally and freely with only minimal limitations among them. The study focused on all Jopadhola, Lwo people, and lovers of Indigenous knowledge for a transformative counter knowledge for decolonization and rethinking the re-production of knowledge, dominant pedagogies, inequities, inequality in the curriculum, and an Indigenous worldview for the global society.
Chapter 5
Part I
Data and Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents my findings after orally interviewing elders in the Dhophadho Lwo local language. It concentrates on the findings from interviews with the first group of elders. Women are always present wherever elders are speaking. Any interview without the presence of the other gender is mainly among widows who head their homes within a clan unit. The ancestral and spiritual names are ongoing, celebrated through ceremonies as the people’s identity. The preservation of the Jopadhola Lwo identity has seen them resist foreign names introduced through Christianity. The *apipili* naming ceremonies as well as the twin naming ceremonies are still carried out in Padhola. The Jopadhola maintain their monotheist religion, and sacrifices are still offered at the *kuunu* shrines that have been rebuilt after they had been burned down on the instigation of the colonial administration and their Baganda “catechist” agents. Through conversations with elders in their homes in selected rural locations in Tororo district in Eastern Uganda, we went to find out:

1. What are the processes and context of Indigenous naming and naming ceremonies?
2. What do these processes imply for Indigenous knowledge and possibilities of decolonization?
3. What does the notion of indigenousness mean for the interface of society, culture, and Nature and nexus of body, mind, soul, and spirit in coming to know and act within local Indigenous communities?
4. What are the lessons for transforming schooling and education in African and Euro-American context?

The findings are that the Jopadhola resisted the white man and colonial administration on contact. They resisted colonization and infringements into their culture and protected their Lwo identity. Elders also resisted the introduced colonial education simultaneously with Christianity at the expense of Indigenous religion and Indigenous education. The colonial administration introduced a new religion for the Jopadhola to try to force them to adopt Protestantism or Catholicism, which were to be formalized through baptisms into foreign and un-African names. The Jopadhola, however, resisted the erosion of their customs and continued with their ancestral and spiritual names. The colonial procedures tried to obligate the addition of foreign names to Padhola Lwo names. Despite these baptisms, the Christian doctrine is not believed, as people cling to their pre-colonial cultural belief system that has ensured the retention of their Indigenous names. The Jopadhola frown upon baptismal names as meaningless and parasitic to the ancestral names. The narratives of the elders are now presented, many of whom are World War II veterans.

5.2 Names and Variations in Padhola

In Padhola first names or baptismal names are largely dormant, considered only additions to the ancestral names and spiritual names that are widespread. The culture of referring to people with first Bible names is an exception rather than the rule. Whereas, the Christian centenary in Uganda was celebrated in 1977, the Jopadhola regard it as superficial. People mainly use their ancestral names, where no one is referred to by the baptismal names. When greeting someone, the Jopadhola introduce their Indigenous names as their first names, then father’s name, then the ancestral one if they trust you, and finally the grandfather’s name as well. An Indigenous name is
separate from the ancestral one because that can be given by either the father or mother. A woman gives you her Indigenous names and the name of the clan she comes from, regardless of whether she is married or single. There are also flexibilities that make it possible for some foreign names to be accepted and indigenized. For example, there are names given to honour someone. For example, the name Semei Nyanzi, though he was a Muganda, has been given to some children among Lwo-speaking people. The presence of the name Nyanzi among the Lwo explains how a non-Lwo name can sometimes be adopted. However, such a name is given to children only out of honour attached to the preacher, depending on the duration of time such a preacher spent among the Lwo or the good things he did while there. Such persons’ names are then indigenized. Nevertheless, giving a child a non-Lwo name, like that of Nyanzi, is based on the practice and customs of the Lwo. The name Nyanzi has now been Lwoized in the area of service among the Lwo.

Participant Orio gave an example and said,

Many children are given such a preacher’s surname. A preacher actually gives many children their surname for their surnames. For example, there was a preacher called Semei Nyanzi, who was a Muganda, but his area of service was in Acholi in northern Uganda. He had many children named after him in Acholiland whose custom of naming is similar to ours in Padhola because they are Lwo.

The custom follows naming patterns, whereby one long-dead ancestor reveals his or her name through dreams to a clan member, a few people in the extended family, or a homestead neighbour who lives in the same location. The Jopadhola rely heavily on dreams for the revelation of ancestral names. They call it kello lek, whereby ancestors are the usual revealers of ancestral names in their demand to be named. Another pattern is that preachers too are allowed to customarily give their names to children following Lwo tradition. Because people already know the character of the preacher, there will not be much scrutiny before he names a child after
himself. A visitor’s name can also be given to a child if ancestors and parents have no objection to the child growing up to become like that person. The non-objection of the ancestors is registered when the child does not fall sick or there are no dreams otherwise.

5.3 Naming Ceremonies and Initial Process

The naming ceremonies are usually initially organized by the women in the community. They are initiated and planned by women who are high-placed in status. Together with the clan, women organize and contribute most of what is required in the ceremony: for example, the foods and beverages for the ceremony, the singers, and the dancers. The men are usually involved when all the plans have been finalized. The men are also invited to the ceremony to eat and drink when the ancestral or spiritual names of the competing ancestors have been identified. The name of the child has to come from one of the ancestors of the father’s clan in a patrilineal arrangement. Attesting to this in the presence of women, Elder Orio says:

It is mostly women who give the children the ancestral names. But sometimes men also do give ancestral names. (Laughter from female participants.) Women are very important and powerful in this exercise. It is mainly women who manage this process because what happens like throwing the chicken on the roof and mentioning the name that comes first. It is women who do these things in the ceremony. Both men and women join together in the ceremony, but it is women who are the organizers of the ceremony. It is also women who initiate the ceremony.

My finding is that although women initiate and control the ceremony of naming the children, the men accept it as the norm, with the society defining the status of women. It is not just the ceremony that the women organize, but also the actual naming itself, although the father has to be present, since the name is from one of the ancestors of the clan in a patrilineal arrangement. In Padhola, it is customary that women own and provide food and chickens used in the ceremony. When a child cries endlessly throughout the night, it is most likely that such a child has been visited by the spirit of an ancestor. The child may refuse to breastfeed and have a
high temperature. The other way of knowing that an ancestor is contending for the child’s name is through convulsions, as if a spirit has possessed such a child. A woman who has trouble with such a newborn consults other women in the homestead of extended families, and then they plan to give that child a naming ceremony. It is the women who provide both male and female chickens to be thrown onto the roof to determine who the ancestor is. The ancestor is determined by which chicken remains longest on the roof. The chickens will each have been given one of the names of the competing ancestors.

Participants Nyaburu, Orio, and Orango agreed that it is mainly women who lead the ceremonies, since it is their work. On the other hand, the naming of children after parish priests does not stop or obliterate the ancestral naming practice. In addition to the name of the parish priest, where it is given, there is always an ancestral name. If it is only a parish preacher’s name, it does not require a ceremony. If a parish preacher names a child, but an ancestor also contends for a name, the naming process then requires a ceremony. On the possibility of foreign names infiltrating Jopadhola ancestral names, Orango, in a cool voice, answered:

The Jopadhola had to keep their names, because we already have our names and it was through our ethnic nono names or clan names that someone had to know us as the Jopadhola. It was not usual that foreign women gave children non-Jopadhola names. It is now that non-Jopadhola women married in Padhola do give children some foreign names. But it used not to be there. For example, a woman from Ramogi clan married in Nyapolo clan has named a child after her mother or from her clan because she has favour. Had she been a Jamwa or from among the Bantu speaking people, she would have brought such a foreign name here. But it is not common. Participant Nyaburu who is a woman says, earlier on a Japadhola was a Japadhola and a foreign woman even now is not allowed to bring foreign tricks into a Japadhola clan or home. A Japadhola man is a Japadhola man and is the head of the home and will not pretend to be what he is not by accepting a name from another ethnic group or by adopting their name. Participant O says that it is through someone’s name that he is known to be a Japadhola.

It is also customary that when a child is named after a preacher or a visitor, when he or she grows up, they may not marry into or from those people’s clans, since they become honorary
members of the clan and are considered relatives or *wat*. The children named by visitors or preachers, however, retain their own clans and are likely to have ancestral names in addition to the ones they were given by the preacher or visitor. Such a child’s sister or brother may also not marry into the clan of the visitor or preacher who named them. Clans with avoidance relationships are those where members of the two clans are considered too close to marry. Members of such clans, both men and women, have the obligation to always educate their children on the taboo of trying to marry into clans with whom they have an avoidance relationship. If they go against the norms and marry, such a marriage may be condemned to failure right from the attempt because nobody marries a clan relative; doing so is equivalent to the taboo of incest, which is forbidden with spiritual consequences, unless one undergoes a cleansing ritual.

Although it is predominantly led by women, the naming ceremony is a social function for all—women, men, children, extended family, clan members, as well as neighbours. Knowledge about naming is found among both men and women. Even though women marry into the patrilineal clans, the clans do not give names from the women’s clan backgrounds. Women become members of their marital clans, since this is where their own names are given to children of the clan as ancestral names. Baby girls are given the surnames of women ancestors in the father’s clan. Women, however, do not bear their fathers’ names, as they have their own women’s surnames. Girls are given women’s separate surnames for their ancestral names, and we can say that it is a matrilineal arrangement. When names are given as ancestral names to girl children, the women are considered members of their husband’s or marital clans. The clans from where the women come are always remembered, and no one from her marital clan may marry into her birth clan until after three generations, when it is no longer considered a taboo. Women’s
birth names from their own clans are ancestral names in their marital clans. From my findings, if a woman, after three generations, has an ancestral name from the clan into which she intends to marry, the marriage will be blocked by the clan. The supposed partner is considered a close relative if a woman’s ancestral name is derived from the man’s clan.

For example, Orio said,

When a woman has found a partner and they propose to marry, they must go to the parents to scrutinize the clan from where the man originates. The clan of the partner must be known and the ancestors of that clan must also be known. If a woman was named after a particular great ancestor from the clan of the partner, say she’s named after a woman or matriarch in her current clan but came from the partner’s clan, the marriage will be blocked by both clans, because she is considered an ancestor from such a clan and therefore related. She has to leave that partner but is allowed to marry from some other clan.

Regarding the day of naming, once the name of the ancestor is known, there follows a big party or ceremony to celebrate the naming of the child at a specific set date intended to ritually appease the ancestors. If the child is not accorded such a party, the ancestors remain grieved and may bring more sickness to the child. The Jopadhola believe that when the child stops crying or stops falling sick, it means that the ancestor has been named. Here is how Nyaburu elaborated:

A woman will get up early in the morning and complain that my child did not sleep at night, cried the whole night, refused breastfeeding, or is having some convulsions at night, or the child is rolling his or her eyes at me, or there is a spirit possessing this child. Then the women will suggest that perhaps the child wants a name. The women will gather together and come out and call the men of the clan or the homestead. If the child is a boy the men will bring male chickens for the ceremony. The next step is to throw a number of chickens up the roof with given names while the mother of the child sits with the child at the door of her house. The first chicken will roll and jump to the ground. But this one is not the one with the name to be given to the child. Rather, the chicken which remains on the roof with a given name will be the name given to the child. It will delay on the roof and come down much later than the other chickens. The women will then make a feast from those chickens for the clan. It was at first customary for women not to eat chicken.

In the former days, the Jopadhola women never ate chicken or eggs. So when chickens were eaten during the ceremony, only men and young boys ate the delicacy. Moreover, older
women reasoned that chicken did not have a good taste for women and that they were likely to “vomit” if they ate it. Only much younger girls ate chicken, but they were expected to stop upon reaching a mature age. Right now, this chicken-eating taboo has been abandoned, and women eat chicken and eggs during the naming ceremony or other festivals. Women no longer fear satirical songs by the musicians of the community about this food taboo, since it is now accepted that eating chicken is for both men and women. Satirical songs about many topics traditionally sung by men in Padhola still frighten women, but not as much as in the past generations. The Jopadhola women have realized that being told it was unwomanly to eat chicken was only a trick so that chicken was left for men. When the older women were saying that chicken could make them vomit, it was not true, since they were the ones who prepared the chicken and nothing happened during preparation. It is a dynamic culture, where women, while they are active custodians of the values of their culture, are also re-defining their status, by deciding to eat chicken, eggs, lung fish, or liver, which previously they did not.

5.4 First Born Naming Ceremony of Apipili

There is an important ceremony called apipili, which is for celebrating the birth of the first born child, or tedo minyur, where the child is also named. The Jopadhola strongly believe that if the ceremony for apipili is not performed to name the first born, there are both social and spiritual consequences. When such a child grows up, he or she will be reminded that his/her mother’s parents did hold a ceremony for him or her. Moreover, first born children who are not accorded the apipili ceremony are named according to what happens that stops the ceremony from taking place. The same name is given if the ceremony accorded is not a big one according to the expected standards of apipili. Orio also says,
It is the belief among the Jopadhola that if this ceremony *apipili* which is for welcoming the birth of the first child birth is not performed, the child might be sickly or even that home will not be given honour. To prepare for the *apipili* ceremony word is sent to the birth home of the mother of the new born child that your daughter has given birth in her marital home. There is then a very huge basket called *agono* where relatives from the new mother’s home collect food gifts in one form of flour for making the millet *kuon* or bread in preparation for a ceremony in their daughter’s marital home. If this is left unfulfilled then there is a belief that there will be trouble for the child.

The belief in the community is that such a child may even grow up sickly. Moreover, the home from where such a child comes will not be given honour if his/her mother’s parents or relatives did not meet the required standards for *apipili*. As usual, it is the duty of women from the child’s mother’s clan to provide food and beverages for the ceremony. The provision of the food is not solely for the child’s mother’s family alone, but the responsibility is theirs to contact other members of the community, clan-mates, and neighbours to help organize the ceremony for their nephew or niece, called *okewo*. As usual, millet or *kal* is very important for the ceremony for brewing alcohol and for food itself. Other food gifts to be collected in the big basket *agono* are sorghum flour, sesame, groundnuts, and cassava flour. When the *agono* is full, then it is taken to the child’s place of birth for the ceremony. If that basket is not full, it signals the failure to fulfil the requirements of the ceremony for the child. A child whose mother’s relatives fail him or her in this way is named Ocai or Ongoye for a boy and Nyang’anda or Olore for a girl. The names are reminders that the child’s maternal relatives never gave her or him a proper ceremony. Although people live well in the Jopadhola society with these names, it is a constant reminder and a social stigma for younger children. There is even a song in the Padhola community about a man and a woman called Owor and Nyang’anda respectively.

Regarding the children whose names reflect the inadequate food gifts during their ceremony, Nyaburu had this to say:
If the basket was not full and baby is a girl she will be called *Nyang ‘anda* in reference to the half size of the gifts. If the child is a boy, he will be called *Ocai* meaning “you were not honoured.” *Ocai* is a real name given to boys whose maternal relatives did not give enough for the ceremony or did not come at all to perform the naming ceremony. The relatives of the mothers of these children will not be given honour in the community and the names are testimonies of their failure to meet the expectations for the ceremony. These names are actually cultural names; they are acceptable and are not derogatory but the history behind them is usually well known.

Ocai and Ongoye or Nyang’anda and Olore, despite them reflecting the negative circumstance, are all acceptable names in Padhola. The negative circumstances are the failure by the mother’s relatives to provide abundant food to celebrate the births of their relatives’ firstborn children. The people who carry these names live with their names as constant reminders about the lack of ceremony or the size of their ceremony even though they are equally accepted. It is also accepted that the names are not meant to limit them, but are records of the circumstances around their naming ceremony. The advantage they have in the community is that they are first born and have a lot of respect. In fact, Ocai is the child’s lament against his maternal relatives, meaning “they have despised me.”

The relatives of these mothers will not be given honour in the community, since the names show their failure to fulfill the expectations of the child’s family for a rite that must be accorded such a child with a ceremony. The names are also a protest by the one named, so that in the future, he or she can still demand hefty fines from maternal relatives, in the forms of chickens, goats, or a cow for the unfulfilled ceremony. It is still customarily acceptable that when such a child is older, he/she will, on contact, constantly demand from his/her maternal relatives the foods and beverages for the *apipili* ceremony that they failed to accord him/her when he/she was young.

The *apipili* ceremony is also for cleansing the child so that the child has a successful life without being plagued by sickness or evil spirits. The Jopadhola elders maintain and believe that
it is better to have *apipili* as a big ceremony, where lots of chickens are slaughtered during the feast. Elders see *apipili* as an important ceremony that celebrates first-born children and brings people together for a feast. Once the feast is given, the people in that location as well as relatives and in-laws from far come together to share in the joyful event of celebrating a first born while observing their customs.

Apart from chickens, there are other delicacies such as *magira* as a favourite made from ground peas. Such feasts encourage harvests in the community. The prevalence of feasts encourages people to grow a lot of food crops that are harvested and shared during such ceremonies. When such a feast is not fulfilled, people may not be able to test the generosity of the new mother or determine if she will remain generous in the future. Again, most of the food is grown by women, where every woman is expected to store enough peas, groundnuts, or millet until the next harvest season. In the Jopadhola society, it is almost a taboo to refuse a child food when he or she visits or plays with other children in the homestead.

Nyaburu, a female participant who happens to be in the company of elders, describes the process and meaning of the *apipili* ceremony:

The revelers sing *wayi nyathi, wayi nyathi ocamo kwon apipili*. The song is sung as the mother of the child is ushered in and out of the house three times for a boy, and four times if it is a girl child. This is the norm for the ritual of naming of the child and it is called *chowo kwer*. It can also be called the ritual for the cleansing of the child.

The *apipili* ceremony brings together clan members and neighbours and commences with a ceremonial parade, whereby the mother and aunt must run fast and get in and out of the house several times as required for either a boy child or a girl child. When the mother and paternal aunt of the child finally return to the house, it is a fulfillment of *kwer*, which is three times going in and out of the house for a baby boy and four times for a baby girl. As the mother carries the child, the aunt carries *kwon kal* on the wooden spoon. Because the ceremony is for cleansing,
whatever happens during the ceremony is accepted as normative, so that whatever happened there will end there, especially if there was any ceremonial mock whipping of the new mother or the child’s aunt as a cleansing ritual. Mock whipping is loathed by the women concerned, but it is a reminder for the virtue of selflessness. Younger children are also important participants in this ceremony that honours ancestors. It is a customary occasion, and children seem to have some power to express themselves during the ceremony since their culture celebrates children. Children may not, however, drink alcohol because it is only for adults. The *apipili* ceremony is the time to cleanse the child and ensure continual good health.

Women are careful to uphold the culture of responsibility for feeding the society. Mothers also occupy a position in the community, whereby they too have the power to punish children by refusing them food, but not during the *apipili* ceremony. Mothers have important roles as primary educators of children in their community; hence, the Lwo proverb that says “a tree is shaped while still young, but it cannot be shaped when much older or already bent because it breaks.” The proverb stresses that the celebration of a child is good soon after birth. A child who is not celebrated soon after birth cannot be corrected as a grown-up person. For the Jopadhola, the greater part of disciplinary actions for children consists of praises of the children for everything good they have done and withholding such praise when they have made mistakes. Women use the giving of food to children in the community to earn a good name where generosity is valued.

Currently, there are concerns about the future neglect of the custom of *apipili*, even though the culture of the Jopadhola is thriving. The watering down of *apipili* is a grave concern in the Jopadhola society. In fact, the important ceremony is now being watered down by people with European education. Because Orio spent a long time working as a clergyman, his children
have not performed some of the ceremonies properly. Orio thinks that his children are a “lost
generation” for not fulfilling the Jopadhola customs. Orango thinks the same—that the children
are getting lost. The younger generations have distorted the way the ceremony must be
performed and are denying their parents and the community the opportunity to enjoy the naming
ceremonies. Some married sons only tell their in-laws to bring flour to their daughter’s home
upon the birth of a child, but this is not enough because they will have evaded the actual
ceremony of cooking at their daughter’s marital home for a large party of celebrants. When it
happens that way, the child will not have been accorded the proper rite for welcoming him or
her. Such a child may be given a name reflecting the nature of the unfulfilled ceremony that the
maternal relatives have not offered when the ritual of cleansing the child as a first born is not
performed. Children not accorded their ceremonies are usually plagued with sicknesses until
much later in their adult lives. Their age-mates may have the report of their not having been
welcomed in an apipili ceremony, which is ostracizing within their age-groups.

However, the customs of Padhola stipulate that children must not be discriminated
against, but be treated as ancestors. A generation of lost people is a trend that needs the
reinforcing of cultural norms. They are constantly reminded to live within their culture and not
 copy that which has nothing to do with their wellbeing. The customs of the Jopadhola, when
followed, protect even the unborn children and ensure a healthy birth that is followed soon after
by a naming ceremony. Even if a child is born before the marriage of his or her parents, the clan
of the unborn child must be known, as the father of the child is tracked down by asking the girl
who it is. The unborn child’s father’s clan is then informed in time about their unborn member.
Both clans then usually agree on a traditional marriage procedure, after which the ceremony of
apipili is accorded the child. This comes about if the girl gets pregnant before the traditional marriage. The child must be taken to his rightful clan to grow up there.

Moreover, elders in the woman’s birth home enjoy meeting with the other elders or mineniwa from the clan of the father of the child and play a big role on the continuation of apipili and all other ceremonies. The elders usually feel they are robbed of the big party if ceremonies are not performed. Apart from ritualizing the ceremonies in the parents-in-law’s homes for the children’s well-being, the Jopadhola value these ceremonies as communal events that bring people together to share the joy of their culture with the younger members of the community. The apipili ceremony is so important that it has to be performed only for mothers who have been properly married, making marriage most likely, even if a girl gets pregnant while still at her parents’ home. Cultural structures also protect a child conceived before the parents’ marriage. This is how Nyaburu explains it:

When a girl becomes pregnant before marriage the child still has protection in Padhola. But the gifts to her parents in fulfilling what a marriage is shall not be given until she gives birth. The belief system is such that it was feared that if the gifts to parents are given during the girl’s pregnancy, she might die at childbirth or even before that and bring a bad omen or a curse in the home. The girl’s clan has an obligation to respect the norms of Jopadhola and do things the right way to safeguard the unborn child.

Children are revered as ancestors, and there is no concept of an illegitimate child in Padhola’s Lwo society, since every child is a member of a clan. It is a preference that most ceremonies for children are done inside Padhola where their clan kuunu is situated. The Jopadhola who live in Busoga or Buganda also culturally continue with the ceremonies wherever they are. However, sometimes, these ceremonies require that the Jopadhola return to Padhola in order to perform the rituals, especially around kuunu, depending on the circumstance or certain unfulfilled rituals in the past, called chowirok or chowo Juok. Most Jopadhola end up returning
home for some ceremonies, but these can also be performed wherever they live. However, the ceremony to celebrate twin births is one that the elders are apparently very concerned about.

Twins’ ceremonies must be performed according to the norms of the Jopadhola. But because of lack of commitment by some families living away from Padhola, this is sometimes delayed. However, the twin ceremony is an urgent one that has serious consequences if not performed because the children might die. On whether twins were ever thrown away in Padhola, Orango has this to say:

No. Twins are not thrown away. There is a ceremony done to welcome them as people in the home, the two of them. Their mother is respectfully called the mother of the two, for example, Adongo, is the younger one and Apio, that is the time they perform Apipili, they rejoice and bring them out. They do a ritual of Padhola to make them people. They perform bayo athero. It is a letter brought to you to be responsible for the ceremony. If you do not accept this responsibility you will not have food but famine. Twins are people but they are spiritual beings until the ritual is done to make them people. When one twin dies they bury him or her but they do not mourn. The twin is buried in the veranda of the house.

Nowadays, because of European education and its influence, some people go to the extent of taking twins to church to be prayed over. Even if that happens, overall, twin ceremonies are very important for the lives of the twins and must be given the right attention. The birth of twins also gives their parents a status and a specific title among Jopadhola officially conferred during the proper cultural ceremony. The strategies for preparing for the twin ceremony are exciting to the Jopadhola. For example, it is still quite acceptable to convey the message about the twin birth and the impending ceremony to the chosen master of ceremonies or the ceremonial “father of the twins.” The process of conveying the message is done traditionally, and it is called bayo athero, which means people conform to the age-old method of celebrating the birth of twins. Although the Jopadhola are worried about younger adults in other aspects, the twin births must be followed by the ceremony in which twins are officially named. In fact, it is the parents
of the twins who approach members of the community to come together and perform the rite of cleansing twins by asking them to contribute to make the party a very big and memorable spiritual function.

Elders in the community see it as their duty to educate people on the need to continue with our customs. Moreover, among the Jopadhola, even clergymen or bishops are very active agents of the Indigenous society in reproducing culture, their customs, norms, spirituality, as well as the Indigenous religion. In fact, clergymen participate in all aspects of their culture and do not refrain from the traditional ceremonies. Some have volunteered to write the Jopadhola proverbs, or agecha. They also explain to the younger people the meanings of the older Lwo words and rituals, how they must be performed and for what purposes, or their consequences if the norms are not observed and lived.

It is the year 2012, and we are at the home of Elder Walamo, a World War II veteran. Walamo went to war at 23 years of age after the fourth grade. This is what Walamo says about himself:

I went to the World War II at the age of 23 after the fourth grade. In those colonial days if you did not have a fourth grade certificate you could not get a job. I was a village headman and later they made me a county guard. I have a picture and even my certificate. I made money, married, and built a home. But that was later. I did that after World War II after getting more money. Love is the most important.

In the colonial era in which the colonial administrators were physically present in Uganda it was the standard that no one be given a job without a fourth grade certificate. Walamo has his photos and a certificate on the wall of his brick house. Having already held the position of a village headman and a guard made it possible for him to be recruited easily as a soldier for World War II since he was literate. Walamo is one of the war veterans who speak of their experience with some pride. Most war veterans who returned made enough money to marry and
settle since the bridewealth was more affordable for them after securing some savings. Because Elder Walamo went to World War II in 1939 at 23, it means that he was born in 1916. The elder is active with a good memory. In fact, on entry to his home, Elder Walamo is at his mini grocery shop, at his gate, with a display of sweaters that he knits for a hobby and income as a small-scale businessman at 96. The year is 2012, and there are people who are over 90 years old in this village and who are active in one way or the other.

Moreover, elders are happy to educate anyone about Jopadhola and why they are who they are today. Recounting the origins of the Jopadhola excites the elders to such an extent that they want to spend the whole day retelling to the younger generation in the community what their own grandparents told them. The origins of the Jopadhola are dutifully retold to the younger generations. For example, Oboth Ofumbi (1960), writing in Lwo translated into English says, “Adhola and Owiny were one group that came through Sudan, passed through Lango and Teso districts, then Bugwere and came to a location called Katandi.” What Oboth Ofumbi actually cited is the legend that is already with the elders. The first migrants arrived in modern Padhola was between 500 to 600 years ago (Ogot, 1967, p. 66).

As the only more southerly Lwo-speaking people in Eastern Uganda, elders tell stories about the resilience of Lwo customs in relation to their Bantu speaking neighbours and the colonial administration. Before speaking to the interviewer about their names, a Japadhola will first tell you about the authenticity of their Lwo identity. The Bagwere that Oboth Ofumbi (1960) has mentioned above are one of their immediate neighbours, and though they co-exist with the Jopadhola peacefully, they are referred to as Omwa. Walamo also corroborates what Orio states: namely, that Jopadhola are Lwo who must retain their culture and identity in the midst of their
Bantu speaking neighbours. In fact, Elder Jazak explained that the Jopadhola’s reason for sole occupancy of their present cultural enclave is for unity to retain their Luo identity.

It is now time to talk about names in our culture. There are many clans in Padhola, but every clan has its own custom and names for its people. Walamo confirms what Orio also says, “There are ancestral names given to children of people still alive while others are given after death. There are also names given when planting seeds like Ochwo or Nyachwo.”

Respect for elders is determined when a younger person listens attentively to every elder, even if what one elder says may not be exactly the same as what another elder says. The elders’ expectation is that what they state is authentic for future generations. There are certain concepts that one elder might have forgotten, but another elder remembers, depending sometimes on the clan that an elder comes from. In Padhola, there are older clans and newer clans. The people from the older Lwo clans tend to use concepts that newer clans usually do not know, and younger people might not know altogether. Moreover, the clans from the outer parts of Padhola, Yowoko, may have consulted their clans from the inner parts of Padhola for meanings of certain words in their own language. I found out from our introduction that Elder Walamo and I belong to the same clan of Moriwa Sule. Walamo also confirms that kuunu shrines are still used for naming children and thus he elaborates:

Yes. They name children according to kwer of Jopadhola. They take food sacrifices there. Some do it at night. Laughter. They sometimes take the sacrifices at night. More laughter from those listening. They sacrifice and give food to the God of the area. You also take sacrifices to those of Majanga then name the children there. It is kwer of Jopadhola. The Moriwa Sule have their kunni there in Maundo or Nagongera. And when you sacrifice you believe that things happen. It is usually women who name children.

Although children are given ancestral names in the homestead, Walamo stressed that the ritual is only completed at the kuunu when women take their cooked food for sacrifices there.
Like Orio, Walamo says that it is women who name the children within a clan. Walamo also says that the clan sees to it that the name of a murderer is never given to a child.

### 5.5 Religion and Culture

Later on, foreign religion was introduced to Padhola in another language and, with it, some new names. In Padhola, it is the clan system that usually defines the marriage system, as Elder Udoyo, Walamo, and Orango have all said (see also Oboth Ofumbi, 1960). People continue to marry exogamously from other clans, but the arrival of Christianity divided the Jopadhola so that Protestants could not marry Catholics, even though the clan system was still in place. However, this is now changing again if one partner changes or converts to the other partner’s religion. Currently, the Jopadhola are reverting more and more to the clan system and are now stressing the teaching of culture to children so that clan relatives do not elope with one another. There is a separate ritual for cleansing eloping relatives. Everybody must know their ancestral names, particularly if perhaps they originate in one’s clan, so they can avoid marrying clan relatives. To avoid the danger of eloping, young people are brought together and are required to ask each other about their clans. This is because marriage to a clan relative is a taboo. The re-emergence of the pre-eminence of the clan system is to correct divisions that the two Christian denominations in Padhola, Catholicism, and Protestantism have brought into Padhola.

Regarding the extent to which the denominations divided the people, Elder Walamo says,

> In those days, Catholics only believed what the father or priest was saying because they were taught orally. But we have now brought elders together and have tried to unite so that Catholics and Protestants can now marry. But we have to guard the clans so that clan relatives avoid marriage to one another. We want our children to know each other. But the book says that you do not talk too much in front of your daughter-in-law. *Laughter.*

> In the audience was a clan daughter-in-law, thus the caution. On the other hand, there is much concern for the danger of a generation of “lost children” who are not taught their culture or
not taught early in their language. The Jopadhola society functions through clans, and each person is known by the clan he or she comes from. Teaching children in a foreign language, it is believed, has misled children so that they do not know one another by their clans. Elders generally refer to such a phenomenon as that of the “lost generation” for losing bonds with the culture that provide ancestral identity and security. It is common to find that one clan has its members living in different geographical locations within Padhola or elsewhere. In that way, marriage based on only Catholicism or Protestantism may mislead people into unknowingly or knowingly eloping with close clan relatives, which violates Padhola culture. Such a hazard can only happen if children are not given their ancestral names in a ceremony where they remain closely affiliated with their clan, which must also guide them at marriage. The infringing of the cultural norms came after foreigners came and started their own religion with foreign names and their foreign culture. Moreover, the colonial government attempted to divide the Jopadhola through Christianity, as Protestants had to read in Luganda, a foreign language, but left Catholics to read in Lwo. In dividing the Jopadhola, the colonial administration designed Protestants as rulers over Catholics in Padhola. The agenda was to encourage people to identify themselves either by Catholic names or Protestant names, but this cultural violation was resisted by steadfastly maintaining the system of ancestral names with ceremonies going unabated.

Mzee Udoyo is one of the oldest participants at 97 in 2012. With him, I have a conversation that corroborated the accounts of Orio and Orango that nowadays, there is a generation of lost children, or those who do not know elders, thus nyhindho jokuya wan. It is the foreign religion and Western education that interfere with the younger generation, swaying them from fully practicing their culture. Udoyo also advised that love is the most important thing in life, and people usually remember anyone because of love:
In Canada there where you have just come from was somebody who loves me very much called Okoth. He is someone who loves me very much. We heard that his wife died. Okoth used to send me clothing even for bedding. Oh I do not have a P.O. Box. But still Okoth sent me a lot of things, a kanzu gown and blankets. If I saw him, I would hug him and then shake his hand. I greatly honour and love him. In this world love is the most important thing. You cannot do anything and succeed without love in your heart for humanity. Our culture is that of love.

It is out of love that Udoyo even reveals the name Athago, which is not very common nowadays. Moreover, the circumstances around the name Athago mean that it needs cleansing in order to stop recurring deaths. He says, “You name Athago as if she is not yours,” meaning she can die any time. Both Udoyo and Wuod-Nyampala talk about the recurring deaths of children whose followers’ survival must be reflected in their names to capture the mood of their parents at the time of their birth. Such children must be cleansed with a ceremony and be given the right names to stop the recurring deaths. The account of Udoyo corroborated those of Elders Orio, Orango, and Aluwo-Jaryo that the naming ceremonies cleanse the children to ensure good health, while its continuation reinforces Jopadhola culture, as we will be presented in the next chapter. The revealing of ancestral names through dreams was corroborated by all participants as an ongoing phenomenon in the Jopadhola society. Such a cultural naming system cannot be altered through baptism by either Catholicism or Protestantism.

Moreover, though Catholicism and Protestantism attempted to divide and weaken the Jopadhola culture, this division was resisted both quietly and actively through the defiant continuation of the pre-colonial way of life. The participants insist that Christianity and colonialism did not enter the ancestral naming system, since people today continue giving these names in ceremonies. The Jopadhola did not really understand or accept foreign religion taught in foreign languages. Any admission that foreigners have had some influence in Padhola is regarded as a betrayal to Jopadhola ancestors, so that even during the colonial days, the
Jopadhola continued doing things their own way. The extent of resistance saw a group of Jopadhola throw a man out of a congregation. Mzee Udoyo speaks about a man being thrown out of a charged congregation:

When Odoi betrayed us by saying publicly that we knew Luganda but that we wanted to be taught in our language we had to disown him. We dealt with him. How could he do that? It was a betrayal to expect our ancestors be taught another religion in another language? We went to church only to have a look at the new ‘reverend’ they said was coming. We already knew that he did not speak our language and after all we have our religion. How could Odoi betray us like that? We never accepted foreign religion.

Mzee Udoyo also retells a specific function during a visit by the colonial administrators to Padhola, where the Jopadhola sounded traditional drums and made the Europeans drunk using traditional brew. Their full participation in the function was not to welcome the colonial administrators, but was meant to make them participate fully in the traditional worship of Lwo spirits in Padhola. Most ceremonies in Padhola are for appeasing Juok; thus, the local people wanted the colonial administrators to participate to symbolize their submission to Juok.

Moreover, the Baganda administrators, as colonial agents that the Europeans used in Padhola, were not tolerated. The generally hostile attitude towards the Baganda is mainly captured in the elders’ narratives. This is because the Jopadhola suspect that the Baganda, whom they demotively call Magere or Jong’aya, were aligning with the white administrators in order to take their land. The Baganda “teachers” are also blamed for burning the religious shrines, or kuumu, of Padhola. However, today, Padhola shrines have been fully rebuilt, while foreign religion and preachers are not held in high regard for their part in introducing meaningless foreign names to the people, unlike the ancestral names. Mzee Udoyo has this to say about the Jopadhola resistance to the colonial church:

One Sunday we had planned to lock the church during Christmas. We indeed brought a padlock and locked the church. We brought thorns and threw them in front of the church. Does this God speak Luganda? We decided to go to Nagongera church, which was
Catholic. But on reaching there we saw the father had a certain light, maybe it is called a candle. The preacher turned his back to us and talked to a lot of pictures of white people. They were greeting Maria only and did not mention God the way we know. So we left.

Interviews about the naming practices of children among the Jopadhola unmasked that external influences and attempts to disrupt the cultural practice and identity of Indigenous people through colonialism have been steadfastly resisted. In fact, the Jopadhola elders are not worth their salt if they do not retell the story of their people’s resistance to foreign influence that has seen them remain who they are today. Though the Baganda teachers went about razing the shrines of Padhola, what mattered more is that they have been rebuilt today. In 1944, there was so much resistance to the colonial church that Protestant churches throughout Padhola were closed on Christmas day. The rebuilding of the shrines and other Padhola houses of worship started almost immediately with the colonial agents still in the area. The ancestral names had to continue, and sacrifices of kwon kal millet bread continued being given to the ancestors. According to Walamo, some people built houses for sacrifices to ancestors within homesteads. In fact, Orango talks about how the colonial administrators were rejected, and he especially covers the rejection of foreign chiefs that the British appointed in Padhola. In Padhola, the names of chiefs can be given to children of an entire generation, but the names of foreign colonial chiefs were never given to children in Padhola. The Jopadhola also did not give foreign chiefs any gifts and refused to speak their foreign language, even if they had learned it from somewhere else. Female Elder Akayo also corroborates what Udoyo has said about the torture of being forced to learn a foreign language for conversion into a foreign religion and their resistance to the demeaning of Padhola names as kaffir. Elder Udoyo has this to say about resisting a sermon in Luganda:

They even called a bishop from Mbale. So we told the bishop that those people were saying that God should come down and kill the Jopadhola and finish us so that foreigners
remain here. People had come to see Musake whom they had brought. People had not seen a ‘full’ reverend and Musake was the first. But one man refused to be taught in Luganda and stood up and told the bishop that we hated the preachers, but that we understood Luganda very well. We got hold of this man Odoi and threw him out for betraying us. Was he the one who taught us Luganda and was that our language? They brought Masiga, another foreigner, to teach us religion but he had to flee. We drove him out. What were they teaching us in a foreign language?

The Jopadhola resisted the double insult during colonization, especially the use of Baganda imposed on them as administrators, and yet, the Jopadhola had fought wars in which they defeated the Baganda. The Baganda are Bantu speaking, just as some of the neighbours of the Jopadhola are. Moreover, the Baganda intrusion in the area held by the Jopadhola was an infringement on the culture of this Luo-speaking people. The Jopadhola also saw the closeness to Bantu-speaking people surrounding Padhola as a plot to Bantuize the Jopadhola, which they steadfastly resisted and rejected until today. Faced with the jeopardy of losing their Lwo identity if taught in Luganda that would make their children adopt beliefs taught in a foreign language, the Jopadhola rejected conversion and today continue with the beliefs of their ancestors. The Jopadhola allegiance to their ancestors means that they must still name their children after ancestors. In fact, it is the Jopadhola beliefs that define the institution of ancestral names fulfilled with ongoing ceremonies. Elder Udoyo’s statements speak of resistance to the attempted imposition of the colonial identity on the Jopadhola who are Lwo, but were being forced to speak a Bantu language, likely to Bantuize them.

Therefore, the Jopadhola resistance meant that baptisms were not desired exercises, but resisted. Moreover, the Jopadhola also simultaneously continued with initiations to assure themselves that they were still Jopadhola. Such initiations were through the taking out of some of their lower teeth for both men and women. Women also continued to tattoo their stomachs and defied conversion to Christianity. It is known that some Jopadhola women still continue tattooing
their stomachs and practice all aspects of their culture and other traditional practices unfazed by Christianity. In resistance to conversion to Christianity, female Elder Aluwo-Jaryo says, “God did not say that we stop practicing our culture.” Moreover, in Padhola what Udoyo says about the throwing of thorns in front of a building or church symbolizes a closed path. In Padhola, throwing thorns on a path symbolizes permanent closure, followed by bushes growing there. For anyone who attempts to go through such a path, thorns will prick their feet, followed by a curse from elders for defying the norms of the society.

The Jopadhola retain their cultural institutions, despite divisions created by the foreign religion. In fact, the Jopadhola are now more determined to unite around clans, with meetings regularly convened to solve problems culturally. Christian religion is secondary to clan institutions in Padhola society. When re-instituting kingship in Padhola, it is the clan from which a person comes that determines someone’s acceptance and eligibility to lead in Padhola not the religious denomination. Padhola elders have re-instituted *Tieng Adhola*. Elder Udoyo is the initiator of the concept of *Tieng Adhola*, and every Japadhola must learn how it started. *Tieng Adhola* is conceptualized from the fierce wild ants that move as an army called *mony*, which when stepped on while in their procession, make a great noise so that all of them come and sting the person who steps on one of them.

At the time of the inception of *Tieng Adhola*, Elder Udoyo’s concern was that the Jopadhola, who originally are brave people, were becoming like the hornless cow or bull called *dhiang gumo*, because most of the chiefs who knew the borders are dead. To initiate or reconstitute such an all-important cultural institution for the unity of Padhola, elders propose names from clans. Udoyo says that when he suggested one name, two people came from the same clan contending for the same position. The fact that two people came from the same clan
and contended for the same position left a loophole to religion as a factor in an unprecedented competition in Padhola culture. One person came from one of the clans in Padhola, separated from both his clan and religion. When there are contentions for such an institution, it is the clans that override the religion. Any person can get the post as long as he identifies himself as a Japadhola from a recognized clan.

In the past, the Jopadhola have given power to a few people who were not Jopadhola but lived in their midst, were Lwoized, and who cared about the interests of the Jopadhola. For example, Mbwekesi was adopted into Padhola, and his foreign origin was never a secret. Mbwekesi had fought and won military battles for the Jopadhola against their enemies, which made the Jopadhola install him as a ruler. Such rulers were transparent, and their backgrounds were not a secret since everybody knew them, but currently things are different. If a person were to admit or reveal that his background is not of Padhola, he would not be allowed to compete for kingship. The dilemma now is that some clans are known to have taken in many foreigners as their own members. One of the competitors, while he has a Japadhola name, also has a brother with a name from another tribe. The brother of that competitor is called Atauti.

This is what Mzee Udoyo had to say about the probability of a secret foreigner competing for kingship in Padhola in 2012:

So what happens when one of these competitors comes to a funeral and says that he is a Japadhola from such and such a clan and it is not refuted that he is one of us? But as for me I wanted to refuse because I know where he comes from. I know that one of his brothers has a name that is not of a Japadhola and he is called Atauti. The Jopadhola names can go as far as possible and they are Lwo names. But such a person with such a name is certainly not a Japadhola. Atauti is not a Japadhola but a Jamia. They eat rats. They can name children according to what is being done, like farming, and so on, Oboth or Abotha. But a person called Atauti or his brother can never be a Japadhola since they are Omia.
What Mzee Udoyo has said corroborates what Orango has said about the Jopadhola not giving their children ethnic neighbours’ names. Udoyo also speaks of the disappointment about the erosion of Padhola institutions, where a foreign religion might enable a secret foreigner to hide his background in a denomination to claim leadership of Padhola cultural institutions.

Moreover, there is anger around the differences that the Jopadhola have with the Omia over food taboos. The Jopadhola, as Lwo, have more food taboos that they observe than their neighbours all around them. Food taboos have restrictions as to kind of food that can be offered or not offered as a sacrifice to ancestors at the *kuunu* when giving children their ancestral names. For example, although Orango’s mother is from the *Omia*, he insists he is more related to his father than his mother. This must be linked to Padhola culture, which is patrilineal, as well as customs where food is offered to ancestors during ceremonies. Only Orango’s girl grandchildren or great grandchildren can be given his mother’s name as ancestral, regardless of her foreign ethnic origin. However, the names of a foreign female ancestor are usually silent, even though present. On the other hand, any male who retains a name that is not from Padhola is not a Jopadhola. Mzee Udoyo is 97, and his account about initiating and conceptualizing *Tieng Adhola* is corroborated by his brother-in-law Uboth. The knowledge is for the education of the whole Jopadhola community that the current younger generation must also give to the next generation.

Udoyo’s accounts also corroborate what Orio and Orango say about the danger of children forgetting Padhola ways due to Western education. Udoyo has a lot of Indigenous knowledge for the education of the younger generation within Padhola culture and deserves to be listened to. Udoyo addresses me and says, “Like my daughter here, do you study with only your home people? The Western-educated children have forgotten the land.” There is concern among the elders that strange ways that violate the culture of Padhola now influence children, who copy
foreign values at the expense of their own. Udoyo also blamed non-governmental organizations whose foreign ideologies disregard Indigenous values.

Warning is openly sounded in the local community that people should use their clans’ existing ways to solve disputes, rather than run to the foreign NGOs. Foreign-funded NGOs are now behaving like the colonial church. However, even during the establishment of the colonial church, one could only get baptized after fulfilling initial cultural norms for their own names. In fact, the churches baptized skeptics who never really ever converted to Christianity. Moreover, any picture of the Jopadhola as “predominantly Christians” is superficial because they firmly practice their traditional beliefs in marriage and everything else and that includes naming their children. The Jopadhola elders and the community are currently resistant to NGOs that are advocating for change of the traditional marriage system. NGOs operating in Padhola must listen to elders and not try to impose a foreign ideology to conflict with Indigenous people. If a family is advised by an NGO to disregard the clan’s ways of solving disputes, the children will be disconnected from their Indigenous values that they must uphold when older. About such an NGO, Udoyo sees them as merely stubborn, and he has something to say about it:

In the case of marriage, I spoke to some people from “Manumit” or something that marriage requires that a girl’s parents be given something. Laughter. But those from “Manumit” refused. So I asked them who the first person was to get married here in Padhola or those among them who have given their own cows to marry a girl from her father’s home. They had no answer. The bad thing is that there are those who have not been educated in our own cultural education and knowledge; they just copy whatever other cultures want them to do.

Elder Udoyo is telling the NGOs operating in Padhola that they must consult with elders in Padhola for authentic knowledge of the Jopadhola as cultural authority to solve the problems of the community. When not listened to, elders deliberately refer to such organizations with derogatory names. For example, even though Elder Udoyo knows the name of a certain NGO, he
calls it “Manumit” instead of perhaps the original name. The laughter in the audience, as usual, is in approval for what Mzee Udoyo is saying. Once there is an approval for what elders say it means that their influence over Padhola cannot be ignored by the NGOs who cannot change traditional marriage system ingrained in Padhola culture normatively followed by all clans.

5.6 *Kuunu* Shrine and Food Sacrifices

Moreover, clans are very influential in ceremonies in Padhola. Clan of Padhola do not all have to live in one common location to symbolize its unity. However, regardless of geographical locations, called *loka*, the people from a clan must always know each other and follow clan norms and meet regularly to iron out issues affecting them. Each clan member identifies the other by the ancestral name, since they have common ancestors after whom they are named within the clan. Younger people consult older members of the clan to resolve any disputes in the family—be it marital, property, or death in extended family—and come together for the last funeral rites to perform a ceremony for their dead. When any children are born during the last funeral rites of a clan member, they are named accordingly.

Clan members also usually come together, for example, if someone has problems with in-laws. Such a person consults the clan for support. Moreover, norms such as not coming close to an in-law or saying certain words in the presence of an in-law are reinforced as taboos. The culture of the Jopadhola clearly stipulates that an elder cannot utter certain words in the hearing of his daughter-in-law. This scenario plays out at Walamo’s home because Nyaburu, who is in my company, is his daughter-in-law within the clan. Certain words cannot be uttered in her presence because of the Jopadhola concept of *lworo or*. A man may not shake his father-in-law or mother-in-law’s hands or come very close to them physically. They also may not use the same bathroom or wash hands using the same utensils as the in-laws lest they violate the *luswa* taboo.
with grave consequences. Consequences for violating norms concerning in-laws are resolved through fines. For example, even though Walamo is careful enough and avoids saying taboo words in the presence of Nyaburu, Mzee Udoyo’s wife, Waya, is not very lucky because of her excitement in seeing Nyaburu after a long time, Waya calls out Nyaburu’s birth name. Waya is promptly fined and has to pay a goat. However, Nyaburu reduces the fine to a rooster. We return the next day to collect the fine. The culture of the Jopadhola is alive and is reinforced daily. In fact, the people enjoy it and feel whole by observing their norms.

Moreover, in Padhola the traditional religion is the backbone of the ceremonies with rituals performed for children. Walamo’s account corroborates with that of Elder Orio, who expresses dissatisfaction towards his children’s in-laws for watering down the *apipili* as they have performed the full ceremony that requires cooking at their homestead to honour ancestors. In fact, the *kuunu* shrine is the final place where the Jopadhola take food after giving children ancestral names. Ancestors have a stake in the children’s naming and must be given food. According to Elder Walamo, nowadays, some people take food to the *kuunu* shrine at night. A male ancestor’s food sacrifice is offered three times according to *kwer* and four times for a female *kwer*. Every Japadhola knows their number for *kwer*, thus three for a boy and four for a girl. The fulfilling of such a ritual requirement is probably the reason why most Jopadhola, when given a cup of water, pour some drops on the ground for a libation to ancestors, but act as if there is some dust on top of the water that must be poured away. Children grow up observing it as normal for elders to pour away dust off water. Eventually, as a norm, everyone grows up practicing the pouring of water to the ground before drinking it, but this is a drink libation to their ancestors that many people only find out when they are older, and as they find out, they only continue with it. This form of worship connects people with their ancestors whose names
children bear in every clan. The Jopadhola practice *kwer*, a kind of law also called *chik*, ingrained in Padhola, which is strictly followed. If this law is broken, there is a spiritual consequence, which requires another ceremony. To avoid these consequences, it is safer to continue with the norms of the society. The Jopadhola call it “doing what my ancestors did.” In the same way, children are named according to *kwer* of Padhola. All ceremonies are connected to *tyeko* or *chowo kwer*, which is solemnization for an ancestor with a sacrifice at *kuunu*. The parents and clan take food sacrifices to *kuunu*. Padhola being a dynamic society, some people are more comfortable taking their food sacrifices to *kuunu* at night rather than day time, thus keeping away from the gaze of others. This is how Elder Walamo talks to us listeners—who include young people—about how sacrifices are taken to *kuunu*:

We name children according to *kwer* of the Jopadhola. They take sacrifices there. Some do it at night. _Laughter._ They sometimes take the sacrifices at night. _More laughter._ And when you sacrifice and believe that things happen they actually happen. You have to take sacrifices to those of Majanga and then name children there. It is *kwer* of Jopadhola.

There is a *kuunu* shrine in Senda where people offer sacrifices and give food to the God of that area, and anybody can take his or her sacrifice and worship there. The Moriwa Sule clan to which Elder Walamo and I are affiliated has its *kuuni* in Maundo and Nagongera.

The Jopadhola generally laugh when someone says something that is not usually talked about openly. People with a Western education or those who go to church do not stop practicing their cultural beliefs. Although Western education makes people avoid openly discussing their cultural beliefs, they nevertheless practice them by routinely holding the required ceremonies for their children. It is, however, better to discuss than to remain silent and lead contradictory lives. This is because Padhola is a community that holds parties all year round, especially to celebrate the birth and naming of children and other celebrations. For example, the Jopadhola believe that
twins cannot grow up without a twin ceremony. In fact, it is believed that any omission of a twin ceremony, kills the children.

Moreover, the concept of God in Padhola is similar throughout the community, with traditional ways of worship maintained as probably more important until today. It becomes more powerful, especially as elders mainly agree on the continuation of ancestral naming practices as something they believe will never change. As an older person, Elder Walamo also reveals the name of the “pot with two mouths” as agulu rut used in the twin naming ceremony. As is the custom, the tomb of Walamo’s wife is in the compound, and a number of grandchildren bear her name as their ancestral name, with all the necessary ceremonies for them performed. Twin ceremonies are also ongoing whenever twins are born.

5.7 The Process of Bayo Athero and Twins Ceremony – Yao Rut

Let us now examine the procedures of celebrating the birth of twins with their own ceremony as distinct from apipili and the choosing of other names. Twin names are determined by the very nature of their birth, and the twins must always be celebrated. It is a custom that persists, as twins are considered sacred in Padhola. Parents of twins, even if living in urban cities, once they have twins must return to Padhola to perform their ceremony. Twin names have been retained since time immemorial, and this is true for all Lwo speaking communities in other countries. The Jopadhola share similar customs and celebrate twin births as do other Lwo groups in Tanzania, Kenya, DRC, Ethiopia, the South Sudan, Eritrea, or Chad.

All elders speak about twin births as very important events that are accorded especially lavish ceremonies to name and cleanse the children. The ceremony comes after the mother and the nurses have identified which twin came first. The nurses include traditional birth attendants.
Opio and Apio are the first twins, while Odongo or Adongo are the second twins. Arrangements for the celebration commence after a secret selection of a “ceremonial father of twins” who must provide all that is necessary for the ceremony. The “ceremonial father of the twins” called ba-rut, who is the “master of ceremonies,” is usually from the community. The father of the twins can be chosen from someone relatively wealthy or someone with a good harvest during the year. It is not usually considered a burden, but an honour, when selected as ba-rut.

Once athero is brought to someone’s home, he is expected to act fast so that the twins do not fall sick. The father of the twins also has to bring a pot with two mouths, called an agulu rut, and drink alcohol from it. The pot is called agulu rut because there are two children. Even if one of the twins dies at birth, it is also accepted that God has taken it away, but the ceremony must be done. God manifests as that of the savannah, Were Othim, and also as the God of the compound, or Were ma Diedipo. Though the process of bayo athero is now being corrupted, in that some people send a letter, the ceremony for the twins must still be done expeditiously. Moreover, the institution of “the father of twins” signifies some shared responsibility. Sometimes, the father of the twins comes from the twins’ father’s side or clan or even the twins’ mother’s clan. The father of the twins can also be anyone chosen within the community. Similarly, the messenger conveying the message can be anybody in the neighbourhood. The fact that when the messenger is caught he is beaten does not mean that he has no status in the community. The custom is that the messenger must get away as quickly as possible after delivering athero. As I understand, anyone can be sent with the “sacred knife,” and he might have been in the company that chose the ceremonial father. The ceremonial father must have the capacity to provide all the food and alcohol for the ceremony. What he provides for the twins is not only from one family. It is more like the ceremony of apipili, and he is free to solicit for food and grain donations from other
members of the community. However, the brewing of alcohol is done in his home, but he may bring more relatives to help in brewing enough alcohol for the huge company of revelers celebrating the birth of twins.

At the ceremony, the father of twins has to appear for the celebration in person and sit next to the mother of the twins together with the twins at the door of the mother of the twins’ house. Only then is the ceremony complete with song and dance. The biological father of the twins may not be present at the ceremony. If any chosen father of the twins were to fail to provide, which is not likely, he would face famine as his crops would all die. To avoid such calamities, the chosen *ba wengi* or *ba rut* usually complies. In any case, once the father of the twins is chosen, but delays to start the arrangements, he too falls sick. To avoid all that and to keep up the customs and rituals that keep the twins healthy, the father of the twins finds it a pleasure to fulfill his part. Moreover, if fathers of twins delay and something happens to the twins, they will be blamed; nobody wants to be responsible for the death of the twins, which also has consequences since this is part of the belief system in Padhola. Once the honorary father of the twins is known, he is not expected to “abscond,” since twins are considered spiritual beings that must be cleansed immediately by according them their ceremony. In fact, all newborn children are spiritual beings in the Jopadhola society, but the birth of twins brings a special status even to the parents, with mothers especially enjoying an elevated status because of their specific titles *Min Wengi* as an honour.

Although conveying messages to the father of the twins, especially in cities, is sometimes done through a letter, even that letter is left in the house secretly. Moreover, the conveyor of the message must take *athero* physically to his rural home and leave it there and have him informed through a written letter. Every Japadhola also has a rural home, regardless of whether or not they
work in the city. Participant Orio described the customary process of *bayo athero* in conveying a message to the father of the twins:

The bearer of *athero* may seem to be in a hurry with excuses that he has somewhere far to go or that he has some urgent work elsewhere. In the process, he secretly leaves *athero*, the “sacred knife” under a granary. The visitor then leaves without letting anyone know that he has left the message; it is usually a man conveying the message. Once out of reach of his hosts, then whoever he meets going towards the direction of that home, to him or her he reveals the message where to find *athero* under a particular granary. The messenger bringing *athero* hurries away because if at all caught nearby, he faces a thorough beating for the huge responsibility he has brought to the people of the home.

Whereas, in the process of *bayo athero* the honorary father of the twins receives his message, there is also a response method to inform the family when *ba wengi* is coming with his company. The people of the homestead or extended family where the twin ceremony is going to take place must go and meet the ceremonial father of the twins at a place with song and dance and then usher him and his company to the venue of the celebration. All the requirements for musicians and the beverages make it a big and memorable occasion where lasting relations with the twins and their parents are built. When *ba wengi* is coming, he informs the biological parents of the twins so that his company is welcomed by a large number of people who are going to perform the ritual of cleansing the twins. Again, as mentioned earlier, the biological father of the twins must strictly not attend the ceremony. The twins are then officially given their names and rituals are performed to cleanse them and the mother.

I think that the vulnerability of the twins makes the ceremonial father of the twins swing into action immediately. Twins are considered vulnerable until they are cleansed. One or both twins could die if not accorded their ceremony in time and cleansed. Sacrifices also have to be taken to their clan *kuunu*. If the ceremony is not done in time, the twins could become unhealthy, whereby the anointed honorary father of the twins would be to blame. Moreover, there is the danger of one twin dying because of delays in according the ceremony. Twins also have specific
requirements for the language and treatment they are accorded as they grow up. The consequences in the Jopadhola society are especially grave; for anyone responsible for an avoidable death in the community, his or her name will not be given as an ancestral name to any child. One member of the Jopadhola community even said that twins cannot be spanked when they are growing up. If they are spanked at all, the one who spans them will fall sick or experience a lot of body pains, particularly waist and back pains, from which he or she has to be cleansed also. The customs around the twin naming ceremony probably persist because of the consequences of not performing them that the people strongly believe in. Such beliefs defy Christianization or Western education and there is no likelihood that they will be abandoned but rather sustained.

As is the custom of the Jopadhola concerning visitors, we are given a rooster as visitors from far away. This is an age-old custom of the people. Because of the interview, the women join in the conversation, leaving them no time for cooking a full meal, hence the giving of a rooster for us to take home. Everywhere I go, the custom, rwech, of feting the visitor, is applied. A visitor not given meat or chicken or dek interprets it as not having been welcomed. The custom of naming, though a little affected through the society’s own dynamism, is a spiritual matter that outlives foreign influences, as the Jopadhola owe children and ancestors as a major practice for continuity.

5.8 Ancestral Names and Indigenous Education

Relatives join the conversations about ancestral naming during an interview with Elder Orango since they usually live near each other’s homesteads. Most of the neighbours are also relatives. The people are almost always around each other and check or confirm what the speaker is giving to a researcher. Knowledge about ancestral naming is shared collectively since people
tend to do things together rather than individually, especially sharing knowledge. During the interview, the women of the home are also present with grandchildren hiding in the background, listening quietly. We initiate a conversation and hear from the elders. An elder reminds me of a Padhola proverb, sos pa Toma kudhere jom’ongeyere, which translates to “the flute of Thomas is blown by those who know each other” and symbolizes shared knowledge among the Padhola. The Jopadhola are keen to protect their knowledge from distortion, with knowledge seen as belonging to the community. Moreover, to articulate this knowledge, a Japadhola elder knows that he or she is accountable to the community and ancestors and must speak responsibly.

In Padhola, when two elders are together, the younger one does not speak until after the older one has already spoken. Orango is 90, while Askofu-Ripa is 76 years old. Our appointment is through an emissary, Aripogine, a clan relative named after their prominent clan patriarch. On the first day of our coming, my instruments flounder, and we have to come back a second time. Aripogine, however, has something in his hand to give to his aunts, the wives to his uncles, but they visibly avoid him and do not directly touch the item he is trying to hand over to them. The avoidance is not because they are trying to be rude. Aripogine is actually an ancestor, named after the women’s father-in-law, and he is symbolically treated as a father-in-law. His aunts dare not touch him because he is considered Or and, therefore, avoidable.

The Jopadhola customs do not allow women or men to touch their parents-in-law or daughters or sons-in-law, as was also corroborated by Walamo and Udoyo. Any exchange of greetings is done from a good distance. I found out that as Aripogine is looked at as an incarnate of an ancestor, the revered father-in-law to the women. If Aripogine bears another name other than that of the women’s father-in-law, he treats them like his “mamas” or mothers. However, because Aripogine bears his grandfather’s names, the two women are his “daughters-in-law” and
avoid any close physical nearness, especially the touch of his hands or even his clothes. If they were to allow him to touch them, then it is the luswa taboo with consequences.

During our first time at Orango’s home, he is not comfortable revealing his ancestral name is considered sacred. Such a name is not to be told easily to strangers and non-members of one’s clan. He does not tell me this name, even after assurance that it will not be published. On our second visit, however, Orango is more comfortable and tells me his ancestral name boastfully, this time even before I ask for it. The Jopadhola are very sensitive concerning their ancestral names. They also do not trust non-clan members easily with these names because they are deeply sacred. They can, however, dialogue with someone who politely seeks knowledge about them, if they do not mean any harm. There are people, however, who do not hide their ancestral names, but use them as their official names. In respective clans, ancestral names are used most of the time as a form of adoration for ancestors. On my second visit to Orango and Askofu-Ripa, I, as the researcher, am no longer a stranger, but a friend where there is a level of trust with a free-flowing conversation. My grandfather was a Japadhola chief at the time Orango and Askofu-Ripa’s father was also ruling nearby. My great aunt who used to visit my grandfather a long time ago has children in Askofu-Ripa’s extended family bearing her name as their ancestral name.

We are ushered into a well-furnished and well-built house in the village and then offered the evening tea. It has been drizzling, and the tea is a welcome gesture. My companions in the car during our drive comment that people here are relatively wealthy. The wealth is attributed to the culture of maintaining a collective background since the pre-colonial days and also because they are descendants of a chief. By collective background, I mean a large extended family of people who share wealth collectively, whereby no one in the clan’s system is impoverished or
not looked after. When I pose a question to Elder Orango as to whether he is a Japadhola, this is his answer: *Kipenjan penji no meno iketa an*. Indeed, elders in Padhola are very sensitive if not handled according to their values of respect. His answer, in translation, is that I am trying to provoke him. To get an answer from an elder, particularly if you are from Padhola, requires showing a lot of respect. Once respect is established, there will be a free-flowing conversation signifying new friendship. Mzee Orango was born in 1922, but first looks at Askofu-Ripa for reassurance. In fact, in Padhola, an older person is expected to honour a younger person, and in return, the younger person will honour the older one. It is translated, *jadwong lwor nyath aka nyath bende ulworin*. Seeking reassurance from Askofu-Ripa for the exact year of an older person’s birth is a desired trait among the Jopadhola. Such respect for the younger people is directly connected to the ancestral names since almost everybody represents a revered ancestor. Orango, therefore, refers to his dead mother in the present tense since some of his grandchildren present in the room are named after his mother. Orango says:

> Yes. I am a son of Padhola and if you mention the Jopadhola you are in the right place. I was born in this same area and I am a son of a Japadhola chief. My mother is also here, but not the same ethnic group with me as I am more related to my father and not her: *To bende akiwat ra gine. Laughter from the people present.*

Although the women in the audience laugh, they challenge him on saying that he is actually related, or *wat*, to his father rather than his mother. Orango’s assertion portrays the Jopadhola as emphasizing a patrilineal society, especially if the mother is from another ethnic group. However, the matrilineal part of the society appears even stronger as the closeness of someone to a relative is determined through the mother, especially if the mother is a Japadhola like the father. The relationship to a mother also determines how property is shared among children of polygamous unions. Upon this aspect of the Jopadhola customs and Orango’s own assertion, the women easily challenge the elder. Orango’s joke that “if an ayah looks after a
child, that child is not related to her” represents the sentiments that the Jopadhola have towards their immediate neighbours and their culture. The women present insist that they are the “God” of children in their infancy, because they keep them alive. This is a common attitude in most Padhola clans, where a relative’s closeness is determined by whether or not they are from the same mother within a clan. The joke by Orango is then laughed off by the audience of both women and men. Typically from the interviews, men are not embarrassed by women’s challenge, but engage them in a friendly exchange concerning motherhood as to who is more important to an infant as well as the role of women in Padhola generally.

My finding is that women speak in public in Padhola. The Jopadhola culture is, therefore, such that if a clan meeting is called, women speak with ease in the company of men, and they are listened to. In any case, women and men tend to do things together concerning their knowledge and culture. If there is something a woman has more wisdom about, she shares it in a clan meeting chaired by a clan elder.

Justifying himself, Orango says, “If my mother had killed me she would have been answerable to my father. She would have sinned before the Creator God. And you women, I warn you not to think of killing your children.” The women do not answer after this, but compliment him after he emerges as the one fearing the Creator even more than the women, who talk about the possibility of mothers being able to “kill” the child at birth.

In Orango’s polygamous home, there is also intermarriage with one woman coming from a neighbouring ethnic group, the Banyole. Although the Jopadhola previously fought with the Banyole, such an inter-ethnic marriage signifies their current friendship. The Jopadhola are multilingual because they learn the languages of their neighbours through their wives or their sheer proximity to such a group. This is how Lunyole is spoken in Orango’s home by almost
everyone, including the senior matriarch even though she is a Japadhola, while the other mother is a Munyole. If a man’s children or grandchildren bear his mother’s name as an ancestral one, she is addressed as a living person, with such an ancestor’s presence acknowledged in the child. Thus Orango says, “My mother is also here” recognizing her spiritual presence in the children named after her.

5.9 *Poro and Births in Names*

The elders are very guarded about their ancestral names since they are spiritual and sacred. Again, there is nothing that signifies that the Jopadhola will change or abandon their naming system. Orango says, “We name ourselves after our ancestors until tomorrow or in the future,” signifying an unwillingness to depart from the naming system. The first names that the Jopadhola added to their names were a colonial requirement that was frowned upon. However, clan requirements for names override the borrowed names. Clan members always stick to the names found within their respective clans. If no clan can borrow any ancestral names from another clan, as they have different ancestors, even names purportedly adopted from the Bible do not have any significance since only names given with ceremonies are recognized in the clan. The Jopadhola remain opposed to any idea suggesting the abandonment of ancestral names. Whereas the Jopadhola *add* some Bible names to their names, they have no meaning in their lives, since they are colonial and foreign. Orango also talks about clans being similar to each other, but one clan, for example *Nyapolo*, can never include another clan’s ancestral names in their own. On *added names*, in this edited quote, Orango says,

> Look at this parable. Have you ever seen a vegetable source once cooked? Some salt is added into it. But that salt is only added. Some of the colonialists wanted to change us into ‘Absalom’ then we added ‘Absalom.’ But even so, we have our own names. A name like ‘Absalom’ has no value to me as a Japadhola. In the sight of God, a name like Absalom has a meaning. But it has no value in my clan and culture. For example, a name
like *Ranga* is just one of the *Nyapolo* spiritual names. I can tell you that because I trust you. Within the *Nyapolo* clan there are specific people with names similar to one another. But if one is from *Nyapolo*, and if another person is from *Ramogi*, the different clans do not include names from a clan that is not theirs. You can ask Askofu here. The *Ramogi* have their own names and so do the other clans.

The Jopadhola probably only added names like Absalom because of the power relationship with the colonial administration, but such a name is meaningless since it is not one of the Jopadhola ancestors. The added names deceive the colonizer, hence the parable of “adding salt to a vegetable.” Clans are units of administration whose powerful roles are kept out view, but clans continue reproducing ancestral names. The parable of the salt also portrays the resistance to the foreign names, whereby the possibility of the Jopadhola accepting foreign names is only an exaggeration.

Moreover, the perception that the colonizers could have succeeded in modifying the culture of the Jopadhola because of some existence of foreign names is a misrepresentation of areas that colonialism did not enter. Rather, Indigenous people protected their institutions and, through them, resisted foreign cultural impositions. The traditional method of making a vegetable salty is *kado athwona* rather than salt, which is only added afterwards. Without salt, *kado athwona* is still sufficient, which means that without the foreign names, there are enough Indigenous names for each person. Even Orango’s reference to the two clans of *Ramogi* and *Nyapolo* only refers to the clans’ relationship through marriage or friendship, but each clan is a self-governing unit with its *kuunu*, *kwer*, songs, and totems. Clans as social and administrative units respect each other as equal, but are independent of each other in their ancestral names. Since there is no clan that borrows ancestral names from another, they cannot borrow the names of strangers from outside the community as meaningful to them.
Participant Askofu-Ripa was born in 1936; at the time the exact birth dates are recordable. However, at this juncture without asking any specific question about the white man and colonialism, the topic of ancestral names is already a trigger for talking about resistance to colonialism. The talk about ancestral naming presents a provocative atmosphere for attacking colonial government’s structures that imposed the European education to infringe on Indigenous culture. In resisting the colonial rule and all agents of colonialism, some names of children are recorded to commemorate the events. When a child is born during a memorable event, this is recorded in his or her name. Some events recorded in children’s names are, for example, the period when Oguti’s cattle were being stolen. Such an event had to be recorded because Oguti collaborated with the colonialists and had to be punished for betraying Jopadhola. All people born at the time of Oguti also have ancestral names. Askofu-Ripa has this to say:

Ancestral names must have generations and genealogies. For example, Aripa pa Ranga, or Ayese or Keta p’Oloo, Oloo pa Mujasi, are all ancestral names that are given to children. For example, births can be recorded in children’s names. Some children’s names were named for the time when Oguti’s cattle were being stolen and other memorable events. But ancestral names are always given and celebrated.

Elders have a lot to say about resistance and the punishing of those who collaborated with enemies of Jopadhola culture. Oguti’s cattle had to be taken away as a punishment. Moreover, if a generation of parents named their children after an event or period that saw the punishing of Oguti when his cattle were being stolen, it is a permanent obliteration of any memory of anything good associated with him. Certainly Oguti’s collaboration with the colonizer signifies his disrespect for the Jopadhola culture. The destruction of Oguti’s wealth had to be total. Oguti does not have an ancestor in Padhola, and his name today is not found among the Jopadhola, as the Jopadhola disinherit him for going back on his oath to the Jopadhola. If a person retains his foreign ancestral name in Padhola, it means such a person’s allegiance is still with his ancestors
despite his assimilation into one of the Padhola clans. The names that are given after events eventually become ancestral names. For example, a person born during war is called Olweny for a boy and Alweny for girls, but within a generation, these also become ancestral names to be accorded with ceremonies.

5.10 The ‘Twigs’ or *Njawala* and Resistance

In Padhola, even persons serving as church leaders in the community value their ancestral names. Nothing bars church leaders from attending naming ceremonies or traditionally organized ceremonies in Padhola. When traditional music is sounded, a community church leader also dances in most ceremonies in Padhola. Every leader in his own field is also affiliated with a clan and is subject to clan rules concerning ancestral names. Lay church leaders are also immersed in their Padhola tradition and have ancestral names given with ceremonies. In fact, when in the community, no one calls them by the added names, but by the ancestral names. The men serving in the community churches do not consider it contradictory to be addressed by their ancestral names. The ancestral name is the authentic identity for anyone who is a Japadhola. Everybody identifies himself or herself by the ancestral name as sacred, as the love that the clan or family members have for ancestors is transferred to them. The giving of ancestral names is a form of worship to the ancestors and also God.

The Jopadhola conceptualization of the ancestors is that they are their closer links to God. Even among the lay Christian preachers, it is not considered a contradiction to stress the adoration of the ancestral names with baptismal names visualized as parasites. Christian leaders are first and foremost Jopadhola with ancestral names. A Japadhola proverb mentioned by one elder suggests that *Awendo ki ngoye gi achero*, which is translated to mean that a guinea fowl cannot fail to have spots. The Jopadhola are, therefore, usually identified by their ancestral
names, which are as natural as a guinea fowl that cannot fail to have spots. A typical Jopadhola cannot fail to have an ancestral name as an assurance for his identity. Moreover, the Jopadhola tend to consider going to church as only fashionable, without affecting their traditional beliefs or the way they worship their ancestors. The giving of ancestral and spiritual names is a form of worship to ancestors and God, but only as the Jopadhola conceptualize Him. Askofu-Ripa, despite being an active leader within the community’s churches, conceptualizes the baptismal names as “twigs” growing on the main tree; he is totally against the idea of non-Jopadhola names, even as baptismal names. The Jopadhola are for the continuation of their ancestral names for the younger generation and future generations to know their particular background and clans. The Jopadhola reject the Christian notion that their ancestral or spiritual name is a loophole for “demons” to come into their lives. When reminded that today’s European Christian values suggest that names of ancestors or spiritual names invite “demons” that come and enter children and bring misfortunes, and therefore, they ought to be discarded or changed. Askofu-Ripa responds,

They are not demons. No. Not demons. In fact, before the Europeans came, the Jopadhola already knew and still know the God they worship. The Jopadhola first worshipped their God in the forest or Lul. It is the God in Lul that makes us know God above. Lul is that thick Indigenous forest that no one in Padhola dares cut down. It has been there for centuries now because of its sacredness.

The Jopadhola consider the European’s missionary teaching to Africans about the concept of demons a deception. The Christian missionary evangelization during the colonial era is largely a failure since the Jopadhola still maintain sanctuaries for their deity in the thick Indigenous forest. There is a perception in Padhola culture that it is through the spirit in the forest that the God in heaven is known. Askofu-Ripa, for example, is not in any way apologetic about the way the Jopadhola believe in their God. Indeed, the thick Indigenous forest in Padhola
remains a spiritual symbol of defiance to the European missionaries or their Baganda “teachers” who tried to evangelize Padhola. All the contestations to foreign intervention defend the sacredness of ancestral names and what they stand for in the Jopadhola society.

In fact, what Askofu-Ripa, as a spiritual community leader says below in an edited quote, represents the Jopadhola general attitude towards foreign names Vis a Vis the ancestral names:

I prefer to be called by my name and the ancestral name. I compare those foreign or baptismal names to what we call njawala. Njawala is a twig growing on a tree. For example, when you plant a tree in your compound, a twig also might start growing on that tree. The better name for a twig is a parasite which comes to feed on the tree. When you plant an orange tree you may find that a parasitic twig that is njawala may come and start growing on it. This parasite comes to feed on the orange tree, but it is not part of that orange tree. The foreign name is as good as that foreign body that comes and pretends to be part of the tree when it has no roots on the ground. At this point there is laughter from the whole group. These foreign names are pretenders like an outsider who tries to be part of the equation unnecessarily. Njawala comes in the middle of the tree and then grows and goes upward. It does not come from the beginning or from the roots. Njawala, the twig, is also never used for fuel wood among the Jopadhola. Njawala is not something from home, but a total stranger. The foreign name, therefore, is like something that just came but is not part of the home.

The Jopadhola despise any attempts to alienate them from their identity by interfering with their culture. Moreover, likening the foreign or baptismal name to a parasite indicates that the ancestral naming system stands out as a symbol of life itself for the Indigenous people. Resistance to the colonial system then is organized around aspects of culture practiced since time immemorial, with structures for educating the next generation. The Jopadhola are a minority, but they will tell you how much they despise the dominant culture and prefer their own. Regardless of their minority status, which they do not even accept, the Jopadhola see themselves as part of the bigger Luo nation maintained through Luo culture and language. From such a position, elders in Padhola are ready to impart Indigenous education to the younger generations and readily welcome everyone to listen to them any time. For example, during one of the visits to elders in 2012, one of them Wuod-Nyampala tells us: “I have given you people my ears. Ask what you
want.” He then introduces himself by his clan as a Jaramogi, showing the continuity of the clan as an institution that governs someone’s life by reason of everyone being affiliated to a clan in Padhola. When I asked if the Jaramogi were warriors, as I had heard from one Acholi person from northern Uganda while still preparing for the interview, this is how Wuod-Nyampala answered:

Give me your ears properly. *Mia ithi maber.* Our coming here, it is the spear that gave us this land. Jaramogi or Ramogi came from Matindi with his brother and we chased away *Omia* who had encroached on this land as we expanded. When my grandfather was killed at P’Anya then Majanga came. Majanga our spiritual leader and king defeated and chased away *Omia* from here. But before that, this place was a savannah belonging to Padhola. In those days you could walk for miles before finding a single house. It was like Acholi area.

Wuod-Nyampala is saying that the Jopadhola do not approve of foreign cultural domination, but prefer doing things their own way since for them life rotates around protecting their sacred places where their *kuunu* is situated, even if it means war. The Jopadhola do not like foreign cultural practices near their *kuunu*, which might violate the shrine through disrespect. The Omia generally do not practice similar customs to the Jopadhola. Moreover, any *Jamia* that settles in Padhola is usually assimilated in many aspects. The Jopadhola maintain some food taboos that could be violated by the *Omia*. For example, certain animals that are edible to the *Omia* are not edible to the Jopadhola. Such foods cannot also be offered at the *kuunu*. Since a person offers what is considered a delicacy to the *kuunu*, which is a sacred place after naming a child, the Jopadhola cannot allow something they consider unclean to be offered at the *kuunu* or even allow people who do not have a similar food taboo to live in the proximity of the shrine. Differences in culture must have been the trigger for the Jopadhola chasing away the *Omia* from central places in Padhola to avoid the desecration of their sacred places. It is at these sacred
places that the ceremonies for ancestral names are initiated and finally solemnized with food sacrifices, even as they are held in homes.

In Padhola, it is the law, or what the Jopadhola call *chik or kwer*, that is followed as the norm for naming a child after a great ancestor or according to the circumstances under which a child is born, which is then followed by the right ceremony. The account of Wuod-Nyampala corroborates with those of Orango, Askofu-Ripa, and also Jazak, in that the Jopadhola will not hesitate to chase away a people from their midst whose culture violates their own.

Moreover, the naming practices go on as before. For example, a boy who follows the dead is named Ondhoro, or Olowo, and a girl is named Alowo. Such names do not only reflect the circumstances before their birth, they also have to be followed in order to safeguard the surviving children. The ancestral names focus on naming grandparents, great grandparents, great uncles or great aunts and great grandparents or uncles or aunts in the clan. A woman who marries, but does not have a child when she is married and returns home, when she dies or even before that and according to her influence, her name after a generation must be given to children of her clan. Above all, the originator of the clan or land must always be named. The Jopadhola naming system does adopt names from someone else’s culture, just as the Jopadhola dances cannot be substituted with those from another culture. The Jopadhola customs are stipulated by ancestors from a long time ago as set rules that are followed in regard to giving children names after the dead.

The giving of these ancestral names is what Wuod-Nyampala considers the “deep secret,” or *thene thene*, of the Jopadhola, which ensures the omnipresence of ancestors in every home. They are foundational secrets and principles relating to ancestors that sustain the Jopadhola society. It is the ancestors’ names that are given to children, and even if the Jopadhola are friends
or in-laws with people from other ethnic groups, they do not give friends’ names to their children, and as Wuod-Nyampala says, “It is because we are not related to them.” After their participation in the World War, the veterans are elders around whom people in Padhola gather for Indigenous education. Moreover, the Jopadhola maintain mutual respect for one another and for neighbours.

Although the Jopadhola elders like talking in parables, they do not see a change in the practice of ancestral naming as forthcoming. The parables are sometimes meant to test how much of their culture someone knows, if there is any assurance of mutual respect, before speaking their mind to someone. The elders who went to World War II in Abyssinia, Egypt, or Libya speak of the mutual respect that the Europeans had for them for saving a lot of lives with some of the bravest people in East Africa as the Kikuyu and Acholi. The Kikuyu are some of those who later resisted the colonial administration during the Mau Mau rebellion. The story about the defeat of the Maasai in Padhola is a popular legend retold by every elder to everyone. Elders Orio, Jazak, and Wuod Nyampala’s accounts corroborate and popularize this legend also retold through clans’ songs.

Moreover, the war with the Maasai took place at Matindi Fort, where there are still trenches and tunnels dug over 500 years ago. As a researcher, this knowledge is personally exciting to me, as it shows how the reproduction of knowledge can be retained and passed on. It is as well an opportunity to learn more about what we used to hear our grandparents talk about as some distant folk tales. Moreover, the better-known war cry in Padhola that even the neighbours of the Jopadhola know is usually widoma, but now, there is another war cry called Ngoyo. According to Wuod-Nyampala, when a Japadhola says, Ngoyo, it means “we shall die here.” Wars were often fought for land where each cultural group now stays and practices their culture.
The song *Sewe otyeko yach ma Matindi* is sung among the Ramogi clan, but also shared across clans of Padhola. The Joramogi seem to own the *Sewe* song, since it was their clans-people who were first attacked by the Maasai at Matindi. After the attack, all Padhola was mobilized for the war that saw the Maasai withdraw to modern Kenya for good. This is spiritual as well as historical knowledge that is constantly re-told to children as a legend. When writing about the deaths at Matindi, the spirits of those who died there manifest.

The Jopadhola’s belief in the omnipresence of the dead ancestors makes my writing about the dead a sacred duty to educate the younger and future generations about the ancestors for continuity of pre-colonial knowledge and culture. The heroes of Matindi are today still named as ancestors. Even those who had not yet married or had not yet had children have many children named after them in Ramogi and all the clans that fought in that encounter. In fact, the Jopadhola generally have feelings about their ancestral names, to the extent that when I ask about the possibility that they could have been compelled to drop their ancestral names, Wuod-Nyampala has this to say:

Nobody can stop me from using our ancestral names or giving them to our children. You would rather shoot me thus *Ga wi mundu, Laughter*. My names begin with O. Our names will remain our names. The Lwo names. We agreed to die with our names, but not change. You found me with “OO” names of my ancestors. You address me with those names. Not even in those days of Idi Amin did we change our names. I even slept on *Nyangonge* but that does not mean that a White man can make me change or drop the ancestral name that I carry in my clan.

Here Wuod-Nyampala is referring to the purge of people with names beginning with “O”, which is synonymous with Lwo ancestral names that took place during the reign of Idi Amin in the 1970s. Elder Jazak’s account corroborates the purge of people with Luo names that Wuod-Nyampala is talking about. In fact, Jazak says,

We resisted persecution. There was a time during Amin’s time that we were affected because of our Luo names. This period affected the Jopadhola as Lwo, but also those who
were not Muslims. Amin’s purge affected you and affected me. But we resisted. Even if they do what our names are what we remain with, our Jopadhola Lwo names.

The Luo-speaking people were the targets of Amin, first in the army and then in the general Ugandan society since most of the names usually begin with “O.” Wuod-Nyampala is also referring to the resilience of the Lwo names in Eastern Uganda, where the Lwo-speaking people are a minority, but resist any form of cultural domination. In fact, there are instances where the Jopadhola, despite being a minority in the region of their residence, have sometimes been accused of dominating their neighbours because they steadfastly resist any kind of Bantuization. Moreover, by referring to Nyangonge, Wuod-Nyampala is telling the youth to value their culture despite “improvements” in our dynamic society with regard to the education they are now receiving. The White man is associated with current education or what is usually referred to as gima Muzungu okello in Padhola, which translates as “that thing which the white people brought in Padhola.”

Moreover, the type of education that the Europeans brought is seen as bad for the Jopadhola children. This is because European education advocates for the abandoning of the pre-colonial ways of life of the Jopadhola. Elders contend that it is good for the advocates of European education to understand that Indigenous ways of teaching children are precious for our humanity. European education is impacting Indigenous children negatively. However, the Jopadhola elders insist that our pre-colonial life must consciously be taught in learning institutions. In my conversations conducted separately with Elders Orio, Orango, and female Elder Aluwo-Jaryo, accounts corroborate the general concern that the younger generation is becoming more disrespectful to elders, unlike the generation when the elders themselves were growing up. There is frustration that it is actually the European intervention that makes children rebellious. Impositions from another culture only confuse children so that they flounder between
two cultures—their own and the European culture. Because of the influence of an education offered from another culture, children have less interest in their own culture and start following what they do not exactly know. The general concern is that it is time to arrest the situation, as European education is causing the younger generation to drift away from taking Indigenous education about their culture more seriously. There is caution that if the Jopadhola do nothing about the situation or do not counter the influence of formal education, the younger generation might disregard elders’ authority and knowledge. Individualism must not be allowed to make neighbours into strangers in Padhola. It is not normative for the Jopadhola to treat one’s neighbours as strangers. It is time to return to Padhola cultural values, where a neighbour is able to send another neighbour’s child to fetch water for them. Clan relatives, however, still have authority over children born into the clan. According to Elder Orango:

If it were possible we want the Europeans to leave us alone and stop imposing their ways or standards on our children through their education. We want Europeans to leave our children to us to give them our own education to correct the wrongs. Europeans should leave us to practice our pre-colonial ways of life freely instead of infiltrating our system. We want to practice our own way of life and will not follow someone else’s everything. If it is Nyapolo clan’s way, or Biranga clan or all the other clans in Padhola, each should follow their own ways, and we will move on well.

Elder Orango is very critical of Uganda’s educational system, which reproduced European education after independence. However, a fundamental return to Indigenous education is needed for children to access their cultural practices and regain their Indigenous identity. Everything concerning instruction and pedagogy needs fundamental changes to correct the wrongs with the re-adoption of Indigenous principles as a foundation for decolonizing current formal education for the Indigenous majority. An education system that teaches foreign material to the children makes teachers also think that Indigenous education by elders is a waste of time. Moreover, Indigenous Ugandan children tend to lose their identity since Indigenous education is
not reflected in the post-colonial era curriculum. Despite the persistence of colonial education, there is now optimism that things are somehow beginning to change.

There is a general emphasis on Indigenous education, and elders stress the need to return to their clan roots to correct all the wrongs in a colonized society. Askofu-Ripa, for example, says,

Presently, the method of teaching is somehow changing. We are now leaving what Europeans had systematized as something to be taught here. Teaching now tries to teach our pre-colonial knowledge so that it does not get lost. And these teachings are at an advanced stage; they are happening. Now that we have our own rule, we tend to reinstate the pre-colonial methods of doing our thing. This reinstatement of our pre-colonial knowledge will make sure that our norms are not lost and so that our people are not lost due to the impacts of the colonial rule or the education system that the colonialists left behind.

There are now attempts at leaving what European education had systematically stressed with a general preference for the pre-colonial. The reinstatement of pre-colonial knowledge must emphasize that cultural norms be observed in order to resist the neo-colonialism perpetuated through education and other foreign cultural practices embedded in it. What is worth noting is that many of the expressions that are now emphasized in Dhopadhola Lwo words, like *thene thene mawan machango machon*, have no direct English translation, but stress particular aspects of the cultural norms through which children in Padhola must be brought up. Certain aspects of Indigenous cultures are now being taught, with some of the fundamental references currently being re-introduced in schools as a step in the right direction. According to Askofu-Ripa, some books in schools are now published in the local languages to make available to children their Indigenous education. Such a development brings with it much optimism. Elder Orango is, however, skeptical that concessions to Indigenous education do not go far enough, since pedagogical methods are colonial and opposed to the wishes of Indigenous elders. It is through the initiatives of the Indigenous leaders that even the church, which was part of the colonization
machinery, must itself be educated about the values of Indigenous cultural values as useful for children’s education. The community churches must not teach children to abandon their culture.

Askofu-Ripa says of his vocation:

As for me who am associated with the church, together with many of our people, and understand more about our cultures, we are the ones who now must educate Europeans on our values. We also tell our fellow Africans the best that we can do to correct what colonialism does to our people. Some of us have gone to the White man’s land and found that there are certain things or ways that are not acceptable to us Africans. We also educate our people who go to the White man’s country and tell them that the bad things of the White man should be left in their country, not to be brought here. And if there is anything useful or positive in the White man’s land you can try and come with it here.

What Askofu-Ripa is talking about is the copying of some aspects a foreign culture that is disrespectful to elders that often leads to a disconnection between young people and elders, which is injurious to the Indigenous identity. The culture of individualism is also hated by Indigenous elders because it is viewed as oppressive and exclusionary, unlike the culture of Indigenous people that is more communal and encourages sharing. What is most important is that Indigenous people must take a step to disseminate Indigenous education through positive technology or the fair publication of Indigenous knowledge as counter knowledge as holistic for Indigenous students currently undergoing dominant education. The Jopadhola have a lot of cross-cultural connection with their neighbours, but still practice their ancestral naming. There are, for example, many intermarriages, but that does not in any way change the way children are named in their respective clans or their identity, which is in their ancestral names.

Nyajaramogi then tells us more about ancestral names for children. Though almost mistaken for Munyole because she speaks the language fluently, because of the presence of another person from Bunyole in the homestead due to an inter-ethnic marriage in this home, Nyajaramogi is actually a Japadhola in her late 80s. Nyajaramogi therefore says,
When a child is born the child is given a name of one of the ancestors of long ago. Children are named after the dead to remember those who have died. We grew up and found it like that and we have continued. And we will continue.

Nyajaramogi’s answer agrees with that of Orango, Orio, and Wuod-Nyampala that the naming practice is ongoing and has always been there. There is probably no reason for the Jopadhola to change the names they grew up and found already in existence. Naming children after the ancestors is stressed as a link to ancestors who are immortalized as seen from the names of the grandchildren in this home, where both boys and girls have identifiable ancestral names that the grandparents use all the time. In fact, some children are referred to by their ancestral titles as “mother” or “grandmother” or “father” or “grandfather” with reverence and adoration for ancestors. From what is going on in this home, it is difficult to envision a sudden change from the relationship with ancestors who are addressed as omnipresent.

My finding is also that in Padhola, when a child is born and the child cries a lot, then he or she is given a name, but if he or she continues crying, then the elders discern that the ancestors are competing for the name of that child. In such a case, a chicken is symbolically given a suggested ancestor’s name, says Ochieng, and a simple exercise is done, whereby the women of the home stand in front of the house called rakichur and throw that chicken up on the roof. If that chicken returns quickly, then it is for ancestor Ochieng. If it lingers up there for some time or refuses to come down, but rests on the roof, then the child’s name is for an ancestor with some other name. The process goes on and is repeated until the child’s name is found.

A newborn baby will almost always be given a name according to the weather or time of the day or events taking place at the time of birth, but some children, even after receiving names, still cry unusually throughout the night so that the whole homestead comes to know about it. When the child continues crying, then the people suggest that maybe he or she has not yet been
given an ancestral name. They then begin mentioning the names of older ancestors, some of whom lived a long time ago. The names then are sorted out in an exercise of throwing two chickens on the roof to test which one comes down first, signifying the ancestor to be named. The concept of rakichur or nyakiteteyi is that of a thatched roof on which the chickens can stand for a long time as the clan observes the movements of the chickens. After the name is determined through this exercise, then the child is expected to stop crying. The exercise can also be done on any kind of roof, such as corrugated iron roofs or tiled roofs. Alternatively, ancestral names can be determined when the clan elders are asked who among the people of long ago have not been named in a home. If such a name is given and the child does not cry, then the exercise of throwing chickens on the roof is not done, since it is done only when ancestors compete.

The giving of ancestral names is similar in most cases, and this account of Nyajaramogi corroborates that of Orio and female Elders Aluwo-Jaryo and Aguga in the next section. The only variations are in whether it is a requirement for the roosters to crow or what they do while up on the roof. Some roosters are said to crow while up there and others are judged by the length of time they take on the roof. A rooster representing the ancestor is supposed to stay longest on the roof until it crows. The ancestral naming is so important that when newborn babies show symptoms of a fever, the Jopadhola do not rush them to the hospital without first fulfilling the ritual of giving them their ancestral names. The Jopadhola also consult fortune tellers to determine the right ancestral names to be given. The sickness of a child at this stage is thought of as being brought about by ancestors demanding to be named. Ancestors communicate freely with people at the time of welcoming a newborn child.

Moreover, the Jopadhola today blame the current existence of some sicknesses in their midst on strange or White man’s spirits that invade the area when the local people neglect
performing required rituals. According to elders, there are foreign spirits in their midst of Wazungu associated with names like *Rumpley*. Since colonial days, the Jopadhola have also named a cassava species *Rumpley*, thus *mwogo pa Rumpley* or the “cassava of Rumpley.” The Jopadhola remember White people’s presence when, for example, they named a height after a European engineer who led the construction of a tarmac highway. There is *Tendere pa Maningi*, which is “Manning Heights” on Tororo-Jinja Road. Manning was probably respected as an individual, but that respect stopped with Manning; it is not extended to the system he represented, which is known for building railways or roads in order to *effectively* administer the colony and to repatriate resources back to their country.

The Jopadhola elders get emotional when talking about the encounters with the White people, but may still name individuals according to what they did in the community. The gesture of giving the name of a place after a foreigner is still a process of Lwoization of people who come into Padhola. The Luo generally do not hesitate to name their children after people whose deeds are viewed as somehow heroic. Therefore, Manning Heights, or *Tendere pa Manning*, is for remembering the character of an individual whom the Jopadhola believe is worth naming.

On the other hand, elders in the Padhola community have reservations about the impacts of colonial and Christianizing policies. They see the white colonial rule as demeaning to their pre-colonial ways referred to as *kula machon*. In fact, the Jopadhola elders also believe that Europeans introduced current sicknesses into Padhola through their European names that compete with Indigenous names, hence elders’ views are that “European spirits behind their names are the ones today making the Jopadhola people sick.” Most of the new sicknesses have no background among the Indigenous people in the pre-colonial days. In fact, female Elder Acoko says about the presence of European spirits:
When Wazungu came they brought their names as baptism names. But we are not related to their ancestors and yet their spirits now contend for a presence with our ancestors. If you give your child a name of someone you do not know, the spirits of their ancestors come and contend with ours. When it is one of our own ancestors contending for a name, they also make a child sick, but we celebrate the name accordingly. The child does not remain sick as long as the ancestor is named. But these Wazungu ancestors, who are they to us? Sicknesses that plague our children were not here in Padhola before they came. Before Wazungu came with their spirits that sicken people through names they want the Jopadhola to adopt as baptismal names, the Jopadhola could pray to God and he would answer. But God stopped speaking to people the way he did before Wazungu. This is due to the introduction of foreign spirits brought here by Wazungu. *Me jwogi pa Wazungu, me jwogi pa Wazungu.*

European names are seen as having contrary spirits unfriendly to the Jopadhola ancestors. The lack of ancestral names detaches people from their Indigenous practices, thoughts, and behaviours. Strange behaviours among the Jopadhola are also attributed to spirits of foreign ancestors whose names should not be found in Padhola. Europeans also introduced the concept of pagan or *kaffir* names in their bid to have the Jopadhola agree to taking up foreign names. However, the perception of Jopadhola names as pagan names in order to impose a colonial identity on them was resisted, as corroborated by Elder Jazak as well as by female Elders Akayo and Acoko.

Moreover, apart from European colonial administrators breaching the culture of Jopadhola, they were also violent and killed people in Nagongera for resisting them, as Elder Askofu-Ripa says. Because of resistance, they shot Ngesi in Nagongera as a warning to people who refused to work with them. Askofu-Ripa narrates how there was much resistance at the time of Majanga the king. In fact, in a confrontation between the Jopadhola and the colonial administrators in Nagongera, several people were killed in this edited narrative:

As I said earlier, White people came suddenly through trickery. But there was a lot of resistance. For example, the European colonialists killed people in Nagongera. Ngesi was a leader shot by Europeans for resisting them. It was not because Ngesi was collaborating or working with them. He was a leader who refused to work with them. So they shot him as a warning to other Jopadhola to fear them. The colonialists did a lot of evil even here
in Padhola through use of brutal force. The Baganda brought White men here but the Jopadhola militarily fought them. The Baganda and the Whites were many. But we fought them militarily and they went away slowly. Many of them are no longer in our villages. The Baganda who collaborated with the White men could not change our identity.

What Askofu-Ripa has said corrects the notion that the Jopadhola could ever be \textit{Bantuized} because of the incursion of the Baganda as colonial agents. He is also educating the younger generation on how the Jopadhola fought battles in order to remain who they are today. The younger learners should go listen to elders to avoid being colonized, especially when their own history is absent from the national curriculum. This is because their ancestors’ roles in resisting colonialism has been excised from a curriculum, which also omits their identity.

On the other hand, the names of the Jopadhola today remain what they are because the Jopadhola resisted the introduction of foreign names. The elders talk about the anti-colonial resistance from the experience of their fathers as well as from they themselves having direct contact with foreigners from outside the continent for the first time in the colonial days. The cultural institutions in Padhola are always available for the protection of the Jopadhola culture. Ngesi, mentioned above, was one of the cultural leaders, while Majanga was the king. The Jopadhola never advocate \textit{purity}, and contacts with other Indigenous cultures are always there, with marriages across cultures seen as a means of building lasting relations and friendship, but among these neighbouring cultures, there is not one culture that instructs the other on what to do. The Jopadhola contacts with Baganda in Busoga and also in Budama were war encounters, but the Jopadhola remained protective of their culture. Kakungulu and his attempt to impose Kiganda culture into Padhola faced resistance since Ganda chiefs were ignored; their authority was rejected and never recognized. Though some Baganda penetrated deep into Padhola as chiefs, no one named their children after them. Even the loophole in Lwo culture of giving
children chiefs’ names as heroes never applied to the Ganda colonially appointed chiefs. About any possibility of giving children Ganda chiefs’ names, Orango says,

Some misguided people were thinking of giving children the names of Wagande who are not people of this area. *Laughter from audience.* There was a Ganda ‘chief’ Mukasa in this area. But Mukasa is a Ganda deity and we have nothing to do with him. I told my wife that cannot happen here. This was soon after we had our first born son.

The people are referred to as *misguided* because they were about to go against the values of the Jopadhola naming system. Moreover, no one in Padhola gives children the names of their perceived adversaries. Elders’ views are that the name of a Ganda deity, Mukasa, stands no chance of being named in Padhola, since he is a foreigner, and as an agent of the colonial administration, he is an enemy. Even the Lwo ancestors’ spirits cannot allow such a name and will contest it in dreams. A child cannot, therefore, be given a name of a deity from another ethnicity because he risks a tumultuous life or death. It is dangerous because a child represents an ancestor, and Padhola ancestors’ position in the clan cannot be taken over by foreigners, otherwise the clan ceases to exist.

Moreover, even the tenure of Mukasa becomes a very uncomfortable one because a chief whose name cannot customarily be given to children in the area of his chieftaincy usually symbolizes his rejection. On the other hand, anyone who gives his or her children names of foreigners in Padhola risks their children being mistaken for *Omwa*, which earns them ostracization from the clans they should be affiliated with. The Jopadhola, on the other hand, do not mind their non-Lwo neighbours adopting their names, as some Iteso in Tororo are known to do so voluntarily. The non-Lwo typically seek security by associating with a Jopadhola chief; however, this is also the process of their gradual assimilation while the Jopadhola expand. This process of assimilation is such that the non-Jopadhola adopt Padhola names voluntarily once
they begin speaking Lwo. Such a practice is for all the Lwo, especially when the non-Lwo adopt some of their names or their language as a lingua franca around their areas of residence.

The nuances in the Jopadhola society are such that even Askofu-Ripa, as a community church leader, has already decamped from the mainstream colonial church to join the pro-Indigenous reawakening from the 1960s, and especially during the Idi Amin persecution of the Luo in 1970s, as an ardent critic of colonialism and what colonial education has done to alienate the younger generations of Padhola. Moreover, he is himself a product of a polygamous family by birth, which means that he too adheres to the norms of Padhola as opposed to the restrictive principles of monogamy associated with the Christian church introduced during the colonial era. Askofu-Ripa practices his culture in a way that is synonymous with the kinship system of the Jopadhola. As a full-fledged member of his clan, Askofu-Ripa participates in all the Padhola cultural functions. As a strong advocate for the continuation of the Jopadhola ancestral naming, Askofu-Ripa has an ancestral name that he cherishes and is a strong critic of European education for Africans or its impacts on the Jopadhola children. The views of Askofu-Ripa are reflective of the elders generally in Padhola as a community.

Similarly, Elder Orio, as a retired clergyman, is a strong proponent for the continuation of the naming ceremonies in Padhola. In fact, Orio is compiling proverbs of Padhola through which he is advocating a total return to Indigenous education as one of the activities that he is giving back to the community. Moreover, even though Indigenous students continue to be instructed in the dominant education, elders whose views strongly represent those of the community resist formal education as not being representative of who the Jopadhola are.

Elders are suspicious of the intentions of formal education and maintain that continuing with European education is actually the culprit that overshadows Indigenous education in order
to replace it. For example, Orango went to World War II on the side of British because he was recruited into it and later joined the colonial police force, but he says that it was only to earn an income, not to adopt foreign ways. He, therefore, advocates strongly for a return to Indigenous pre-colonial education. Orango maintains that his ancestral and spiritual names are his identity, while the addition of a baptismal name is not important. Moreover, in Padhola, there is a general agreement that baptismal names are “twigs” or “parasites” or better still njawala in the local Dhopadhola Lwo language, as Askofu-Ripa and participant Nyaburu have expounded.

5.11 Indigenous Names and Resistance

There is a description in the methodology chapter of the beauty of Elder Jazak’s home, with a man-made forest consisting of mature Indigenous trees adjacent to the compound giving a cool breeze. Moreover, the 900 foot rock overlooks the area. When visitors arrive, home chairs and mats are brought outside to sit under the shade because the weather permits for a traditional Padhola welcome during the day. Grandchildren give visitors seats under the trees, after which one of them speeds off to the gardens to tell the elder about the visitors’ arrival. Upon learning of visitors at home, the elder comes home immediately, and we exchange greetings and introduce ourselves before embarking on conversations.

Elder Jazak is 82, and his account about the Jopadhola or who they are corroborates what Elders Orio and Wuod-Nyampala have said: namely, that the Lwo speaking Jopadhola came into their present area of residence 600 years ago with their system of naming that they have retained and will not change. When the Jopadhola first came, there was a way in which they named children, but some of that have changed because those were older Luo words. Jazak says,

At the time the Jopadhola came here there was a way they named the Lwo names, for example, Kitany, Sar, and many other such names. But our names progressed and we started naming according to the time one is born. It is not very ancient, but still it is.
Supposing as you came you found Nyadoi giving birth, the child would be named after you. The new names associated with the sun are not very old, but at the same time they are old. For example, my father who was born during planting season is Ochwo. My grandfather is Okoth, like all other people born during the rainy season. These are Adhola names according to seasons.

The Lwo names, such as Kitany and Sar, are today found in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya. In fact, legend in Padhola tells of Padhola territory that once stretched as far as Naivasha. The territorial claim is also always mentioned together with the story of Owiny and how he led his other Luo group to Western Kenya. In fact, Jazak also says that the Jopadhola had to fight for protection because “others could fight and kill all of you if you were not vigilant.” Thus, according to Jazak, “The Jopadhola fought to remain here to preserve who we are, even though Adhola also governed places from Busoga up to here and to the Naivasha in the Rift Valley.”

The fact that Kitany or Sar are today found among the Kalenjin who are residents of the Rift Valley Province of Kenya signifies the borrowing of Luo names, even though the Jopadhola currently do not have such names. Referring to the system of giving names according to the position of the sun as “not very old, but old” implies its continuity. There are currently names given to children around the position of the sun: for example, a girl born in the morning is Adikini. Those born at sunrise are Anyango or Onyango for a boy, but there are ancestral names of people who have died that must be given with the ceremony, in addition to the name that reflects the time she is born. In the Jopadhola society, the dead are referred to as living in the present because of the presence of children named after them. Jazak’s reference to his father and grandfather in the present corroborates the accounts of Orango and Orio that the ancestors’ spirits live among them. Similarly, female Elder Acoko also speaks about giving her children her parents-in-law’s names. Oboth Ofumbi (1960) also provided older names; for example, Kigondo
is an older name, which is now Aboth, or Okide is an older name, which has now evolved to Nyachwo.

Moreover, elders find it easier to address children directly by their ancestral names if they are great grandparents whose names are usually numerous in the extended family. They, however do not call their children’s names if they are those of their parents or grandparents, but refer to them by their titles. No one calls their parents’ or grandparents’ names since they are referred to by their titles of “Baba, Kwara, Mama, or Adhadha.” The risk is the spoiling of children who cannot be addressed directly by their names because parents revere them. A man may not address his father by his names. As a result, it is mainly mothers who deal with matters of disciplining the children as children and not ancestors in early stages. Sometimes, the children are also parents-in-law which presents another dilemma that plays out at Orango’s home, as Aripogine may not physically come very close to his aunts since he is an ancestor who is also their father-in-law.

On the other hand, clergymen such as Askofu-Ripa, Orio, or Jazak are normally expected to teach Christian values in place of ancestral and spiritual names. I found that just like Askofu-Ripa, who stresses the importance of Indigenous identity, or Orio, who is compiling Padhola proverbs into a book in the local language, Jazak is a strong advocate for the pre-colonial identity and ways as resonating with Indigenous people. Jazak also opposes and is very critical of Western education for its alienation of children from their Indigenous identity. In fact, the Jopadhola clergymen have their attitude rooted in the customs of the Jopadhola that they must fully practice. Participant Nyaburu says that “a Japadhola cannot pretend to be who he or she is not.” Apparently, Padhola clergymen craft their own canons, based on the culture of Padhola, for teaching in the community churches. Moreover, Indigenous traditions override Christian values
even among the retired clergymen. Jazak’s account corroborates that of Askofu-Ripa in the ways that the Jopadhola worship God:

But the Jopadhola are supposed to worship God in their own way. In fact, our God manifests in as many gods, but we also have one God. There is the God of heaven or God who is up Were ma Malo. To us God is someone who moves and comes and when he goes then you do not know where He has gone, just like our grandfather Adam. The Jopadhola have the God of the compound, or Were Osagala. Were Othim is the one who looks after the shepherds, Osiro is God of the door and God of the home is Were ma Diedipo. Ancestral names are given, for example, when a woman gives birth and many children keep on dying, then the one who survives has to be named Oyuki, Nyayuki or Olowo and Alowo so that they survive. We also name our ancestors who died. It is biblical that we name the children after people who died. In the land of the Bible they also name people the way we do. We don’t give people’s names if they were bad characters, for example, a thief or a wizard. But when you name an ancestor it is important because it is as if the person is hearing and will come and be with the one named, so we have to give the right ancestral names.

Jazak is speaking to those who try to contest their own Indigenousness by taking on the colonial identity or names. In fact, Western education, which is devoid of Indigenous values, has to contend with the Indigenous spirituality of the Jopadhola. The Jopadhola religion, which is practiced right from the compound, is the culture of the people.

Moreover, as the shrines have been rebuilt and sacrifices offered to existing deities, this is a step that energizes Indigenous institutions. When someone who has served in the church for a long time, such as Jazak, speaks about the God of the Jopadhola or how they worship their God, or Indigenous structures that govern the people through their traditions, it unmask the resistance to current education. It also calls for transformation in curriculum and brings into question the relevance of current Western education, as it is, for Indigenous children. There is also the question as to who ought to be in charge of education in a country such as Uganda with an Indigenous African majority. During this interview, there are strong views about the attempts to erase the Jopadhola culture, which was referred to as pagan, with colonizing attempts to introduce new ways of worship, but the resilience of the institution of ancestral naming suggests
that children are inducted into the culture of their ancestors soon after birth through ceremonies. Moreover, since Indigenous children’s metaphysics is based on traditional institutions structured from a long time ago, it makes education based on Western culture epistemologically difficult and irrelevant to them.

The Jopadhola, as the only Lwo-speaking people in the midst of Bantu-speaking groups, exhibit their stamina and resilience in retaining their Luoness, their distinct culture, language, and names in a Lwo-speaking enclave. In effect, they have resisted assimilation and maintained their identity. The story of Owiny and Adhola is being retold as part of Indigenous education within the Jopadhola community to let the children know about their ancestors’ background and help them cling to their Lwo identity. Each elder has only slight variations in details, which another elder might not have told. However, elders tend to reinforce each other’s accounts concerning the existence of the Jopadhola as Lwo in Eastern Uganda, and all agree that they were the first people in this area, with the desire to protect their Luo culture strongly emphasized. The Jopadhola remain as vigilant as their ancestors were in guarding their culture and have not allowed new immigrants to the area to dilute their culture, despite newer immigrants’ larger numbers. Although they are a minority, the legend is steadfastly retold by elders that the Jopadhola governed areas from Busoga up to the Rift Valley.

Sometime back in 1975, a leader of Uganda made certain statements deemed provocative, implying that parts of the Western axis of Kenya actually belonged to people who are now in modern Uganda. Though Idi Amin’s statements were dismissed as expansionist, the knowledge that the Jopadhola elders now share orally corroborates some of those statements. Moreover, when Elder Jazak mentions that Adhola governed places from Busoga to Padhola, his story agrees with Cohen’s account of 1972 that Busoga previously was a “Luo camping ground.”
which is not taught in Ugandan schools. This is because the curriculum teaches distortions rationalized as legitimate knowledge, while Indigenous education from elders is not an epistemological option. The protection from being killed by other tribes has now evolved to protection from being assimilated by other more numerous Bantu ethnic groups that surround the Jopadhola. The Jopadhola, however, remain ultimately impervious to other immigrant groups in their midst as a process of maintaining their identity as Lwo-speaking people. As a minority, observing customs, especially the names of their Lwo ancestors, is a priority for the Jopadhola.

5.12 Racism and Indigenous People’s Names

Racism is something that most Indigenous people experience when and where there is a foreign administration over them. The Jopadhola are people satisfied with their culture as something that defines who they are. The way the Jopadhola give their children ancestral names appears unchangeable. For example, Askofu-Ripa has said that “the Jopadhola cannot give names of people they despise to their children, joma wa cayo jo.” Despite serving in the church, he says that his ancestral name is the big name, hence nyinga ma ombo. Elder Wuod-Nyampala says, “I would rather be shot than abandon my ancestral name. You found me with my ‘OO’ names; you address me as such, hence ga wi mundu to aka wey nyinga ma jwok.” Elder Udoyo, on finding that during the colonial administration it was obligatory to be baptized and pick a foreign name, he insisted on his three Indigenous names. Elder Orio says that “as people will still die, their names too will still be given to children as ancestral names.” Elder Aluwo-Jaryo says that “our ancestral names and ways of naming are all that we have and cannot be taken away.”

As mentioned earlier, the people tend to have several surnames as “birth names” and ancestral names. The foreign baptismal names come without roots or better still, njawala, as Askofu-Ripa has already said. Where the Jopadhola looked at foreign names in their midst as
parasites, the colonialists tried to demean Indigenous names by calling them pagan. The dilemma that the Jopadhola face today with foreign names is because the schools introduced by the colonial administration were church founded. The colonialists then deemed Indigenous names as *kaffiri*—an Arabic word for anyone who did not believe in their foreign religion. The Jopadhola were not deterred in their resistance to colonialism and still insist on the so-called pagan names as the ones that they must stick with, since they are meaningful ancestral names and define their identity as Indigenous people. In fact, all the Jopadhola interviewed prefer their pagan names over foreign names, and this is reflected all over Padhola. The Jopadhola resist the distortion of their Indigenous identity and advocate for links with their ancestors by renaming their children after ancestors. In fact, elders have no problem being who they are as Jopadhola; they are, however, concerned about people with Western education losing their identity. For example, when asked how they resist the distortion of their identity, Elder Jazak has some words for me as a researcher:

> It is up to the understanding of the people. Even up to now some people, even educated people like you, still think that Wazungu should be cherished. There are those colonized and there are those who refused to be colonized. But I know that a Black person is a person, the difference of colour should not make a Black person a lesser human being. For example, this disease HIV catches both White and Black. There is nothing wrong with a Black person’s culture.

Jazak’s reference to me as “educated people like you cherishing Wazungu” is a warning to Western-educated Indigenous people not to compromise our identities as Indigenous people. Jazak talks of the possibility of colonized Indigenous people, but still it is a caution that “we Indigenous” can refuse to be colonized, even when we live in the diaspora. Elder Udoyo also speaks to me as a warning about the dangers of not learning from Indigenous education and says, “Educated children have forgotten the land. Like you and this lady here, you are children of the
world and not of the home. That is why teaching, or nursing, or working in the police force makes you to be taken to strangers.”

What Elder Udoyo expresses as “forgetting the land” is the impact of Western-centric education that is slowly eroding Indigenous learners’ culture from them, as instruction in schools is to create a colonial identity different from the Indigenous one. Similarly, when Jazak talks about “HIV catching both White and Black,” he is expressing his conviction that all human beings are equal, and no one culture should set itself as superior to another. A person based in rural Padhola is aware of and has experienced anti-Black racism right in his area of birth, as expressed in the statement of Jazak about a “Black person not being a lesser human being.” The Jopadhola elders detest racism and the unequal treatment of Black people.

Furthermore, according to Jazak, during the current regime in Uganda, children have been taught bad manners and have been taught to disrespect their culture. In this edited quote, Jazak has some strong words of advice for Indigenous people or their descendants receiving Western education and says,

A Black person already knows that there are good things and bad things; we did not need Wazungu to come and tell us. Through our culture we are capable of understanding. We have our culture which is enough, but the culture of Wazungu is being taught and imposed on us. Laughter. But the culture of the Muzungu should respect Black people’s culture. Even if White people try to erase the Black man’s culture they cannot. What is bad in a Black person’s culture? If there is anything bad we will leave it ourselves. That is how Africans who were taken to America were made to change their names to those of White people, like Davidson, and so on.

Elder Jazak is speaking to the colonial education system for colonized people. Such a response from an elder shows how much concern there is about the future of the Jopadhola children who are taught from a culture that is not theirs. The current education system eventually turns people against their own culture and turns them into people who think like Europeans. The making of colonial subjects starts through Western education. Currently, Indigenous children are
impacted by Western values from an early age, which outrages Indigenous elders. Elder Jazak also says,

After Wazungu came they taught that when a person ‘turns’ European, we had to be called Robertson and so on which is not right. The new colonial administrators initiated the despising of our names and called our names kaffir. And even today some people still cherish Wazungu names which are meaningless here. If you name a child Divine or Mercy do you expect that child to be divine? I want our people to be called by our own names. Moreover, the Wazungu brought denominations to divide the Jopadhola, whereby some had Catholic names and others Protestant names. Catholics were given Italian and Roman names like Bazilio, Donosio, or French names. Catholics also saw Protestants as rulers in this country. But since the restoration of kingdoms, Tieng Adhola is bringing unity.

Foreign religions on which the colonial education system is based divide the Jopadhola in order to weaken their Indigenous institutions. Moreover, a child with an Italian or Catholic baptismal name, for example, Donosio, is likely to find himself socially isolated as a “stranger” to the core in a Protestant school. Protestant schools are probably less tolerant than their Catholic counterparts because they are associated with the government as carry-overs from the British colonial establishment, which is traditionally Anglican. Families that are Catholic more or less do not trust their Protestant counterparts. Although all are Jopadhola, there is an unofficial adversarial relationship that foreign religions have imparted into them. Elders want to see such anti-Jopadhola unity colonial structures replaced by Indigenous ones that are more uniting. The adversarial trend continues to the extent that two people from different religious backgrounds cannot successfully consummate a marriage unless there is a “conversion” by one of the partners to the other’s religious denomination, but conversion alone is not a guarantee for unity unless both parties return to the traditional identity in Padhola. Female Elder Akayo gives an example of her mother having to drop one of her names as “too Catholic” in order to be married to a Protestant man. Without this religious divide where there are “Catholic names” or “Protestant names,” the Jopadhola are better organized in clans, where all clans practice their ancestral
naming system as a right. The cultural institution of Tieng Adhola is now reviving the traditional Jopadhola practices as legitimate by uniting the Jopadhola through their clans and encouraging people to revalue Padhola customs for their wholeness and identity.

The account of Jazak about the Jopadhola ways of worship also corroborates the accounts of Askofu-Ripa, Udoyo, Acoko, and Aluwo-Jaryo, whereby names synonymous with the creation of colonial identities are used to try to confuse people into believing that their names are pagan names or names of a people who do not worship God. Non-Indigenous religion supplants the Indigenous peoples’ names and replaces them with European names. Since the colonial era, the concept of *Kaffir*, which is Arabic for pagan, has been turned around and has been and is still widely used throughout Padhola to reinforce Indigenous names as the ones that people prefer to stay with, hence “*lwonga gi nyinga ma kaffiri*” or “call me by my *Kaffir* name.” Previously in the colonial era, a person referred to as *Kaffir* was expected to strive to become a Christian in order to get rid of the *Kaffir* tag. However, people do not see themselves as pagans, and even if they were, that is what they want to be for them to retain their Indigenous names handed down through their Indigenous belief system. The preference to remain a *Kaffir* continues, since the people have never really agreed with the foreign perception of God, and it has not crossed their minds that the colonialists are the ones who introduced the concept of God to them. Again, it is safe to say that the Jopadhola have never really converted to Christianity since they already have an ongoing monotheist religion in Padhola that people generally are affiliated with. Another irony is that men and women who profess some form of Christianity are in agreement that all forms of worship should follow the Jopadhola way, with Indigenous names remaining all spiritual, especially the worship of ancestors with accompanying ceremonies.
Moreover, God among the Jopadhola manifests in various ways. Examples are Were Osagala, Were Othim, Were ma Diedipo, Were Osiro, or even Were ma Wangkach. There is the God who looks after the shepherds in the wilderness, according to Jazak and female Elder Acoko as well as Askofu-Ripa. All the Jopadhola elders interviewed maintain that there is no justification for the European culture to force change in their names, and there is no justification for Indigenous people to adopt baptismal names, some of which are actually European surnames, which, if allowed, alienate the names of their ancestors. Though baptismal names are there, they are secondary, sometimes only slightly tolerated, and are seen only as fashionable. Even then, those foreign names cannot be compared to the all-important ancestral names for children that are solemnized spiritually with celebrations soon after birth.

The concept of Kaffir has been elevated and given a positive meaning by Indigenizing it to reflect defiance to colonization and is now salient everywhere among the Jopadhola, thus, nyinga ma kaffiri. The resilience of the ancestral names sees to it that the Jopadhola ignore religious baptismal names, which are looked at as njawala or twigs as a grand European scheme of trying to erase the Jopadhola names. All the Jopadhola elders interviewed now say openly that they prefer their Kaffir names. Such a stand is widely reflected throughout Padhola.

Foreign and colonial religions weaken Jopadhola institutions by hindering even inter-clan based cooperation. The Jopadhola are supposed to be one, but the establishment of the colonial state attempted to dilute Padhola institutions so that if one man wanted help from another Jopadhola, it was almost religion rather than the clan system that determined the level of help rather than helping someone as a fellow Jopadhola. Such a legacy exists to some extent so that before help is given, someone’s religion will be known, since among the foreign names, there are those which are Catholic while others are Protestant. An Italian name for a baptismal name
exposes someone’s Catholic identity. For example, it is quite possible for a Protestant Jopadhola to immediately identify the name Donosio as Catholic and then treat such a person with suspicion for his Catholicism. However, there is now an amalgamation that is rendering the religious divide irrelevant, since it is no longer necessary to know someone’s baptismal name, but rather their birth and ancestral names or simply someone’s clan for members of the same clan. The colonial legacy also divides the Jopadhola through religiously founded schools that separate Catholics and Protestants within Padhola. A Catholic family living near an Anglican-founded school does not, with ease, enrol its children in the nearby school, but sends them to a Catholic one regardless of the distance. This is how children end up walking seven to eight miles to a school of their parents’ religious affiliation.

Elders hardly talk about their Luoness as an identity without referring to their encounters with other groups or the saliency of their Lwo names, which also extend to names of places as recorded history for the future generations. As I now know from elders and current knowledge, there are contestations over names of areas that Jazak has mentioned, but the Jopadhola named the places as the first Indigenous people in the area, as well as their methods of living peacefully with neighbours after the first encounter. There is, for example, the “kind of friendship” solemnized at Merekit, a concept and name for co-existence as friends with other people in their areas, but now, there is a concern that the newer arrivals tend to change such names through mispronunciations due to language differences. The mispronunciations then boil over to actual claims over the names of places by neighbours of Jopadhola. However, such names are interpretable in the Dhopadhola Lwo language, with a cultural background descriptive of circumstances and times of these names that will not be lost or changed easily since Lwo
concepts are usually passed on to future generations. In this edited quote, Elder Jazak educates us on Lwo-named places, encounters, and boundaries:

“Colonization” brought interferences that weakened the Jopadhola who previously were united by the culture that was protected by everybody. The Jopadhola were originally few but commanded a big area because of unity. Through unity and bravery at the time of founding this place, the Jopadhola chased away the Maasai who had crossed into this place across the River Malawa into Kenya. Malawa River is Dhopadhola, but now is changed by the Baganda who do not know how to pronounce and call it Malaba, but it is originally Malawa. Merekit is now being called Mirikit, but this is where the Jopadhola and other neighbouring ethnic groups held the “feast of making friends.” “Mere” means friend or friendship and “kit” means type, hence Merekit. The Omia corrupted the name Asinge to “Asinget.” Sukuru is the last stronghold; the Jopadhola had an encounter with Maasai before driving them into modern Kenya. Sukuru has now been corrupted by the Baganda to “Sukulu.”

The Maasai are generally respected as tough warriors, and this is usually accepted, but again in Tororo, the Jopadhola encounter with the Maasai is told and retold to children from a very young age. The Maasai warriors are said to have had very big spears. The Jopadhola view the expulsion of the Josewe or the Maasai from Eastern Uganda as essential for their permanent and peaceful settlement in their Lwo enclave. Elder Jazak takes the knowledge of names a little further to names of places by revisiting Sukuru, towards Majanji, Kisumu, up to Eldoret in the Rift Valley, as originally belonging to the Jopadhola, whom he says commanded all those areas as their land. He is also telling us that current education is not really about the Indigenous people, since it is colonially structured to inhibit the knowledge of the Indigenous people who should otherwise be disseminating knowledge from an Indigenous worldview. In fact, I had to interrupt the elder from saying more about the colonial demarcations of land in the colonial East Africa because there are contentions about current boundaries, even though he represents knowledge that has been suppressed.

Although the Jopadhola are no longer near the Maasai, they have memories of their encounter and culture. There is a probability that the Maasai could not live close to the Jopadhola
because both groups maintain and observe different food taboos and customs in their cultures to the extent that the two groups’ co-existence seemed impossible as neighbours. Moreover, with constant attacks, the Josewe could have been a threat to Luoness, whose expansion is evident when neighbours gradually adopt Luo names. This does not mean that the Jopadhola do not co-exist with neighbouring Bantu cultural groups that the Lwo conceptualize as Omwa. Tales about the Maasai persist among the Jopadhola, even though they live hundreds of miles away in modern Kenya, and the confrontation with them in modern Padhola in Uganda is now at least five centuries old. Currently, a few Nandi people live near Tororo Rock. The extremely few Nandi in the outer part of Padhola are said to have been brought to Tororo by the British as a deportation for their rebellion in the early 1930s in the Nandi Hills area of the Rift Valley province of modern Kenya. The presence of the few Nandi families who remain in Tororo explains some of the stories told to children about initiation marks on their ears, which the Jopadhola do not have. Elders, however, keep tales about the Maasai alive as if the encounter they had with the Jopadhola is only 50 years old.

Moreover, there are names of places that the Jopadhola founded that are now corrupted through mispronunciations. For example, Malawa is now Malaba, and Sukuru should be called Sukuru, not Osukuru or Sukulu. Merekkit should remain Merekkit, not Mirikit. Merekkit signifies the well-organized boundary that the Jopadhola made with their neighbours. The concern is that names of places that are of Padhola are corrupted by people who do not know how to pronounce these names. Other ethnic groups, both Bantu and Nilo Hamitic Iteso living near Padhola, have corrupted these names, with the local administrations gazetting the corrupted spellings as official. For example, Sukuru is now officially Sukulu only because Bantu tongues cannot pronounce it, while the Omia call it Osukuru, which obliterates the meanings completely and is
irritating to the Jopadhola. It is also now common to find the place Merekit changed to Mirikit by the Iteso, who probably were not present during the “feast of friendship” between the Jopadhola and Bantu ethnic groups. Any mispronunciation of Lwo names shrouds the ceremony and memorable feast at Merekit, just as it does to other memorable functions recorded in names and reasons for celebrating names with feasts.

On the other hand, in the Jopadhola Lwo culture, people seal permanent friendship by eating a meal together in a feast. Once former foes agree and come together to feast, there is no more enmity, but friendship followed by visitations, where intermarriages are then common features. Since the feast at Merekit, children whose mothers are Jopadhola, but are married in Bugisu, practice the Imbalu rite of passage of male circumcision as part of a laid-down structure, whereby the Bagisu sons of Jopadhola mothers normatively go for chickens and goats from their maternal uncles during the dancing season for their coming of age.

Padhola boundaries are usually respected, as recognized by the Lwo names given. Sometimes, when the Omia neighbours dispute the boundaries, they are reminded of the Lwo names of such places. The Omia cannot turn Padhola land into theirs, since the Jopadhola know who they are through their names and clans. Many clans of Omia now speak Dhopadhola as their language. Learning Dhopadhola for Omia was, at first, having a lingua franca for communication, but their clans and culture might have now borrowed heavily from the Jopadhola people who were the first in the area. This is because, before colonization, the Jopadhola repulsed new immigrant ethnic groups coming near them in order to protect their culture and identity from the Jong’aya who consist of Basoga, Bagwe, or Basamia-Bagwe. The Banyole have a clear boundary with Padhola, and they remain in their area. They are also Jo-Ngaya. The Bagwere have some admiration and love for the Jopadhola, who have really never
fought the Bagwere, as they are fighting their own battles with the Omia from Teso who are trying to take their land.

The Jopadhola do not willfully discuss assimilating their Omia neighbours, even though this trend is found among all the Lwo-speaking people, but the Omia started giving their children Padhola Lwo names, and those with Lwo names now speak Dhopadhola rather than the language of their forefathers. Despite the Jopadhola not discussing the assimilation of other ethnic groups, they make their culture attractive and insist on speaking their language to newcomers. The Jopadhola also contend that it was the Omia who first sought friendship from the Padhola chiefs by giving their daughters to be married to some Jopadhola for security. Some Jopadhola also give a few of their daughters in marriage to some Omia, but the daughters of Padhola married to Omia usually teach their families Dhopadhola and give their children Lwo spiritual names. After a generation, some of the Omia begin to have Jopadhola Lwo ancestral names. So today, it is quite common to find generations of Omia with Padhola Lwo names.

Padhola women married in neighbouring ethnic groups take the ceremonies of apipili, Lwo twin names, and other ceremonies to their marital homes, infusing their own culture into the non-Lwo clans. Jazak also speaks of his Amor clan being in custody of a royal drum, sacred spear, and bushbuck totem. This clan is also found among the Alur of West Nile and parts of Congo, and members of this clan are considered blood relatives. With a probable common ancestor, the Amor may share some of the ancestral names of the clan, though they live in different geographical regions or countries.

The Jopadhola are keen on keeping their culture as a Lwo group and are unlikely to allow Bantu groups or any other people to corrupt their Lwo names through mispronunciation or misspellings, to the extent that they are constantly correcting them. The Jopadhola, however,
respect the Bantu names of their neighbours wherever they are. If they mispronounce them deliberately, the reason is usually a dispute over something, a pay back, or a reminder about their Luoness as opposed to Bantuization. For example, even though the Banyole neighbours to the Jopadhola first brought the Baganda to fight the Jopadhola, they remain good neighbours. The Jopadhola, however, refer to them as the “arch enemy” for their past alignment with the Baganda against the Lwo-speaking Padhola.

Moreover, the Banyole and Baganda are the two ethnic groups who named the Jopadhola “Badama” after overhearing the Jopadhola war cry Widoma, which was threatening them that “you are in trouble.” The Jopadhola, however, accept the name Badama from their Bantu neighbours since they struggle to pronounce Jopadhola. The contention, however, is for the Jopadhola to remind the Bantu-speaking people of their defeat during the past encounters. Administratively, the Padhola area is also West Budama, but the name Badama does not in any way Bantuize the Jopadhola, who are still solidly Lwo in culture and ancestral names.

The Jopadhola also quietly despise foreign customs that are not compatible with their own. Certain creatures considered edible for the Omia are not edible in Padhola, which is a cause for stereotypes and nicknames. There are also species of trees whose wood the Jopadhola may not use as fuel during the ceremony of naming children. The Jopadhola also have food taboos that forbid women to eat certain fish species. In addition, the Jopadhola may not eat a lot of creatures that live in water or land that they consider unclean. Moreover, the twigs or njawala that elders compare to foreign names may not be used as fuel wood in Padhola.
Chapter 5
Part II
Ancestral Naming Findings

5.1 Ceremonies and Names

This is the second part of interviews on ancestral naming as well as more ceremonies, some of which have not been mentioned by the male elders. So far, the interviews have yielded knowledge about the giving of ancestral names even during encounters with domination, the subsequent resistance that followed, and general advocacy for the retention of the pre-colonial way of life. Elders prefer taking a meal before sitting down to conversations. Throughout the interviews with elders, there is always some significant input from other family members who are usually present. Teenage children are told that the conversation is elders only, and young adults are politely advised to go out or are sent on some short errands. This is out of mutual respect for elders as is the norm for children of the clan. The age of the children allowed into adult conversations also matters. Some concepts are better discussed by elders only and then relayed to the younger people.

It is not common that the Jopadhola discuss their cultural matters in the presence of someone considered foreign, but our driver has a Japadhola mother and a Samia father from a neighbouring ethnic group. His mother tongue is, therefore, Dhopadhola, but he must follow the Samia patrilineal pattern of his father, and therefore, he is a Samia. Though welcomed for lunch, Opio sits some distance away and does not join much in the conversation. It is not considered discriminatory for a non-Jopadhola not to have a direct input in conversations concerning Jopadhola culture. In fact, at one of the venues of the interview, Opio is sent to the village
trading centre to buy some cooked food and eat there, which gives Jopadhola elders space to say what they want to say. This does not mean that he does not understand or practice Padhola culture. However, the sheer discovery that the driver speaking Dhopadhola is from a Bantu-speaking neighbouring ethnic group earns him some teasing from elders, who retort, “So he is a Jamwa.” His Samia identity is only known after participants inquire about his clan, which then forces him to acknowledge that he does not belong to any clan in Padhola since his father is a Samia. Despite being a Samia, his mother has given him a Padhola Lwo name, Opio, which, at first, confuses the participants into thinking that he is from Padhola.

From the setup of a marital clan, which apparently is for all Padhola, older people who are single live independently within a clan unit following clan norms. The norms ensure an atmosphere of peace, where clan land is available for all for their livelihood. Widows, in particular, normatively inherit their dead spouses’ land or property jointly with the children who bear well-known ancestral and clan names. Most widows in Padhola who have children prefer to live within the security of the clan. Older people who never had children are looked after in the clan, and their names are given to children of the clan as ancestral names. Once again, our emissary, Aripogine, is the one who guides us to Elder Aluwo-Jaryo’s home since he is a clan member there.

Aluwo-Jaryo and Aguga are in-laws and immediate neighbours. These women have their own compounds a walking distance from each other. Aguga returned to her birth place in her later years and has a plot of land where the clan has built her a house with enough acres for farming. Neighbours live in good relationships with one another, and where such a neighbour is a paternal aunt to children, her name is given to children after one generation. Aguga can also
name children after herself when she is the first visitor who arrives at a home where there is a newborn baby girl.

We are returning for the second time in Aluwo-Jaryo’s home, equipped with a video camera as well as an audio recorder. The first time our battery had gone cold, as it had rained heavily in this village. Even upon inviting the interviewees to our residence nearer town where there is electricity, there is power rationing in the afternoon, so we end up hearing and recording just a little bit until our second visit.

5.2 Naming and Village Seers

At the elders’ venue, we enquire about examples of how the Jopadhola name their children and also ask to be educated on the significance of ancestral names. My finding is that children are also given names according to seasons or the people’s activities during such a season. There are seasons for ploughing a garden or planting seasons. Others are seasons for sowing and seasons for harvest. Children are also named after events, whether happy or sad events. There are those named according to the time they are born, whether night or day. When a woman is walking by the side of the road and suddenly goes into labour and gives birth, such a child is called Oyo for a boy or Ayo for a girl. Children born when the mother is travelling or away from home are also named Oyo or Ayo. Those born away from home will be called Oloka. Such children will also have ancestral names, but their names given according to events will also evolve into ancestral names after a generation. A person who dies young in a clan will have a lot of children named after them during the time of mourning or even after.

For ancestral or Jwok names, Aluwo-Jaryo’s account corroborates with those of Elders Orango, Orio, and Askofu-Ripa, where children are named after ancestors of the clan. Aluwo-Jaryo also confirms what other participants have said about ancestors’ spirits and their demands
that cause a child to cry a lot or where an ancestor’s name is rejected if a child continues to cry. Here, elders also introduce the practice of consulting the village seer. Consulting a fortune-teller is a quicker way of finding a child’s name. It is the mothers of the clan who consult the fortune-teller, who is either a male or female.

An elder from the home where there is a newborn baby visits the seer before anybody else wakes up and returns to report what he or she has been told, then informs the women of the homestead which ancestor the seer has identified. Both men and women may visit the seer. Usually, one elder in the home visits the seer, even though seers are also known as “liars” or jotwodo. Though called liars in some aspects, the irony is that seers often accurately identify the ancestor causing the child to cry when demanding a name. After such a visit, the elder tells the women to get hold of a chicken and throw it up on the roof. When a seer is consulted, only one chicken is thrown on the roof for this occasion, as it is one child. When that chicken stays long on the roof, then it is the right name as suggested by the seer. For a male child, a rooster is thrown on the roof where it stays, looks down several times, and then wags its wings and crows. When the rooster later jumps down to the ground, the people confirm that the name from the seer is the right one for the male child. Everybody then calls that child by the ancestral name given on that day. The ceremony for celebrating the naming of that child then commences with feasting and dancing.

Seers, though relevant for their ability to speedily identify ancestral names, are also called liars or jotwodo because, sometimes, they actually lie and cause rifts between neighbours. This happens when the seer tells one neighbour that his other neighbour does not like him. The neighbour who has been deceived by the seer might stop greeting his other neighbour, whereas the seer has only deceived him. Seers can cause rifts in an otherwise harmonious community
because of their lying habits, as elder Aluwo-Jaryo has explained. However, on the occasion of naming children or identifying the correct ancestral and spiritual name, they are accurate. Seers also have herbs that they give to parents to calm and actually cure a child’s fever during the naming process. After the feast, the chicken and sesame stew is divided into small pieces and thrown to the ancestors while mentioning their names and telling the ancestor to eat with their colleagues. The ancestors, once appeased, are not expected to bring any illness or fever upon the children. The people offering the food call the ancestor by name and inform him or her that his or her name has been given. There is then a sumptuous feast, where neighbours are not left out but invited. Elders can spend three days sharing the local brew of mwenge together or send it in a calabash to the neighbours’ homes. Traditionally, they sit drinking in the banana garden away from the compound.

The naming ceremony is for both baby girls and boys, but the only difference is that a female chicken is thrown on the roof for the baby girl, and when it comes down and the girl stops crying then it is the right ancestral name. The female chicken thrown on the roof for the girl must be old enough to be eaten. If from the outset a name is given and the child does not cry, then they leave the girl with the name knowing that she has accepted the name and will not cry again or get any kind of fever associated with ancestors competing for a child’s name. It is unthinkable in Padhola to have a naming ceremony without the participation of neighbours in the feast. This is because an ancestor can even give a dream to a neighbour about the child’s name, which is accepted. Ancestors can bring the same dream simultaneously to a number of people as a confirmation for the name to be given to a child. Where such a confirmation is absent and the child continues to cry or has a fever in what is called nyath ywako nyinge, it is the village seer who solves the name puzzle. The belief system where seers are consulted continues parallel to
Christianity since every Japadhola must have an ancestral name. Moreover, the people who consult the seer also sometimes attend church with some born-again Christians as the stronger advocates for the maintenance of traditional religious practices in their culture.

Overall, the participants stress a return to practices of the pre-colonial era as resonating with the fullness of their cultural values and want to fully reclaim education that is based on their Indigenous culture for the younger generation. As elders advocate for a return to pre-colonial ways of life, students are encouraged to be who they are. Elders advise students instructed in formal education to reconnect with their Indigenous education and desist from adopting a colonial identity. The Jopadhola are not just nostalgic about the pre-colonial days when elders advocate those days’ re-adoption; apparently, the Jopadhola elders have never jettisoned their belief system, but see their practices as perpetual. It is the younger generation that the elders are more worried and concerned about. Elders, from Indigenous perspectives, reinforce gendered roles as normative in the naming ceremonies in the Jopadhola Lwo society. The concern about the influence of European education is reflected in what female elder Aluwo-Jaryo says:

The ancestral naming of our children will go on. But the education system brought by Europeans is good but bad. We have had this European education in our midst, but then it has confused our children and they are now spoilt. This is because children or young adults neither listen to parents nor do they respect us. Children going through European type of education have started looking at elders as “useless”. A child may even see a group of elders but act disrespectfully by shouting or talking loudly or by coming and rushing to or intruding where elders are seated, while speaking what is not acceptable in the hearing of the elders. Due to what they learn in schools which are European oriented they have no respect for parents or elders.

There are great the concerns that European education is eroding the identity of Indigenous learners by making them absorb colonial values. As a result, there is a strong advocacy for a return to pre-colonial ways of educating members of the community and for them to gain from Indigenous values and retain them for the good of the Jopadhola society.
5.3 Cleansing the Village: Escort of Yamo

Elder Aluwo-Jaryo educates us about the ceremony of cleansing the village to stop children from getting sick, which is a significant exercise:

This ritual of cleansing is done by escorting yamo. Yamo is a spirit. The necessity of escorting the spirit away from the village comes about when there is a lot of sickness among babies or young children in one village area. An epidemic does not just come from nowhere. There is a cause for it. When it comes all the children in the village may have measles or chicken pox. The people of the area then meet together and decide what to do. After discussions, they agree that the spirit yamo has been escorted to the area and left there from the neighbouring village and they too must escort it away.

The Jopadhola then ritually escort yamo away from the village because it is believed that sickness cannot be found in almost every home unless yamo has been escorted to them from another village; they must also escort it to the next village. Usually during a certain season, be it planting or harvest, the people from across the river escort yamo and deposit it into the next village. This “wind” koyo then fights people in next village. Yamo is like “wind” and cannot be expressed in English as there is no exact word for this word in English. When yamo has been escorted to one village, the villagers know that it is the cause of measles attacking their children. They in turn plot how or when to escort yamo to the next destination to save babies and young children. The escort of yamo must be done quickly to save the children of the village from measles.

The concept of yamo or its escort away from Padhola is shared inter-ethnically since the Jopadhola are neighbours to the Samia, Banyole, Bagisu, Bagwere, and Iteso. The Basamia are most likely to escort yamo into Padhola across River Malawa. But the Jopadhola are also most likely to escort yamo into Bugisu or Bunyole. The Jopadhola neighbouring the Bagwere will also escort yamo into Bugwere. When measles or chicken pox are becoming widespread in an area, it is blamed on the presence of yamo in a location, and people have to act fast to save their children.
from such a plague. The season when young children in many villages have measles is also the season for escorting yamo. From what the elders have mentioned, instead of only taking one child to the hospital individually, the cause of the measles epidemic must be uprooted by escorting yamo away from one village to another until it is out of Padhola. The Jopadhola do not feel guilty about escorting yamo to another location since it is also escorted and deposited into their area. This is how Aluwo-Jaryo justifies the escort of yamo away from a village.

After its entry into a location, yamo is then escorted to another village within Padhola until its final exit to the Bagwere, Banyole, Iteso, or Bagisu neighbouring ethnic groups. The escort of yamo away from Padhola is only complete when the spirit is safely away in the next neighbouring ethnic group, accomplished through performing the necessary rituals. In fact, measles and chicken pox are “diseases of the wind” or koyo for measles or koyo madongo or “big wind” for chicken pox. Babies who survive the epidemics blamed on yamo are named Nyayamo for the ceremony of escorting yamo and for yamo itself since he or she is a spirit.

From the elders’ accounts, it is fair to deduce that the majority of Jopadhola living within the Padhola Lwo enclave in some way or the other have not really abandoned and will continue their beliefs in solving their problems spiritually. Measles or chicken pox might be health problems but they are also spiritual as yamo is associated with measles. In the culture of the Jopadhola, the escort of yamo away from their locality is considered a bigger solution for the whole locality than individually or hurriedly taking a child to the hospital without doing things as a community. Moreover, dealing with the cause of this kind of sickness affecting all the children in the same area is a communal responsibility. Measles or chicken pox in one home will likely spread to another within the village. Elders know that from a long time ago an epidemic brought about by the presence of yamo is a spiritual problem that requires a spiritual solution first.
Medical solutions are also used but a problem must be addressed spiritually. There are children born during such a season and are named for Nyayamo to reflect the season. Children who had already been named may be renamed to reflect the epidemic. Other names for such epidemics are Owere for a boy or Nyawere or Awere for girls, meaning “it is because of God that they live.”

The Jopadhola also have their own way of mapping the village in the ritual escort of yamo. In this edited quote Aluwo-Jaryo elaborates how and where yamo is escorted to:

Usually, there is a stream, a bridge, or a river called ariwa. Ariwa is something like a bridge which separates one village from another. A very ancient and huge tree may also separate the villages, usually viewed as a mark for the boundary for names of the villages. From that river or ariwa is where the people of one village set off with ‘small things’ like food stuff for the ritual to be solemnized under a huge tree separating the villages. That huge tree is usually mahogany which is olwa but it is not the only huge tree that marks a boundary. It can be any other huge and ancient tree which is usually not cut down for centuries. People usually protect ancient trees and leave them alone without cutting them. Village boundaries can also be marked in phases. For example, if people are in a village called Atiri, its phases are Atiri mathin or small Atiri and big Atiri madwong to Pajara (translated home of owner of a hippopotamus) as neighbouring villages adjacent to each other. The name of a village Pajara has a historical meaning attached to it. The people of one phase escort yamo and leave him or her at Pajara from small Atiri whose residents will then escort yamo to big Atiri. But before such an exercise, a meeting is called in the village and women are informed about the day to remove the measles epidemic or spirit from their location by escorting kwango yamo to the next village. The women then cook food early since all the men will be escorting yamo. Once the escort of yamo commences, women extinguish all the fires after cooking. After the ritual of escorting yamo, the following day women go and get fire to light up from the village that had earlier on escorted the spirit to them and begin going about their daily chores of cooking food and making sure that the fire in the homestead is lit once again.

It is customary for women to go to the village that escorted yamo to them to get fire to light up, symbolizing an accepted norm since it is not just your enemy who escorts yamo to your area but friends with whom good neighbourliness must continue. The women also go to the next village as a means of communicating their fulfillment of the ritual of escorting yamo. For the Jopadhola neighbouring the Samia, going to them for fire indicates an inter-ethnic sharing of similar beliefs. When fires are extinguished usually the moonlight is bright enough for the men
to see where they are going at night. The men also use lamps, and if not, there is a local seed that
lights like paraffin used to light the grade roads in the village when escorting *yamo*.

As women extinguish the fire in their kitchens with water, they remain home but do not
tlock the doors. When the men come back from escorting the spirit they enter their houses and go
straight to their beds without speaking to the women or each other, as Aluwo-Jaryo elaborates.
Women do not go out to escort *yamo* in the night, but perform their roles at home, like
extinguishing the fire and making sure that they go to the village that had escorted *yamo* to them
to get fire for lighting up after the ritual.

Not locking doors during the exercise is a part of the ritual, but it also symbolizes a
society where there is no fear of an antisocial behaviour, since the Jopadhola practice a
communal culture that guides practices in the homestead. Everybody has a house to go to, and
teenage boys build houses for themselves within the homestead at only 15 years of age. The girls
either stay with their parents or sleep in their grandmother’s house.

When the people of the next village find the items of dry banana leaves and food items
heaped in one place, they know that *yamo* has entered their village with the consequences of
measles and chicken pox. Unless they too escort *yamo* quickly away from their village, they have
to contend with measles and chicken pox for newborn babies in that area. The ritual of escorting
*yamo* has equal functions to those of hospitals in treating measles and chicken pox, with the
wellbeing of children managed spiritually through ceremonies or rituals performed quickly. By
themselves, rituals performed in time avert the plague, and children’s lives are saved.

Moreover, when children are named during the ceremony of escorting *yamo*, the
ancestors cooperate and do not bring sickness, but their names must be given to the children. The
ancestors do not bring more sicknesses to children who are already contending with measles
brought about by the entry and presence of *yamo* in their village. The ancestors also do not immediately bring sicknesses after *yamo* has been escorted away. The visit of *yamo* and the sicknesses it brings cannot, however, be compared with the fever that newborn babies suffer when ancestors contend for names. Although the visit of *yamo* to the village is undesirable as indicated by Aguga, because it brings an epidemic of measles and chicken pox, children have to be named for *yamo* to ensure that they do not fall sick.

In fact, *yamo* is part of the Jopadhola spiritual society. For example when asked if *yamo* is perhaps only a story, Elder Aguga has this to say:

*Yamo* has been seen. Even me I saw one. They are like people, but in appearance, *yamo* looks like people who are ‘abnormal’ or persons with challenges. Female *yamo* even have children.

Participant Nyaburu suggests that the concept of *yamo* probably originated after “mad women” were escorted and left in the wilderness, and whenever they were cold, they started to cry. However, Elder Aguga, in this year 2012, confirms that people, including her, have heard the cry of *yamo*, especially during the dry season when the bush is burnt to clear the area for cultivation of new crops by subsistence farmers. The spirits cry and complain that their habitations have been destroyed and, therefore, go behind the houses of those who have burnt their bush habitations to lament from there during the night. *Yamo* sometimes laments the whole night and gives the occupants of the home responsible for burning their bush habitation sleepless nights until they are escorted away with a ritual.

In Padhola, people are warned not to pound groundnuts in mortar with pestles in the evening, as that disturbs the spirits in the forests. Some of the young adults have also heard *yamo* cry under trees near their homes. There is no doubt about the presence of *yamo* in the Jopadhola
society. In Padhola, it is believed that *yamo* is a spirit that impacts the society and if not handled well brings sickness on children during a season.

*Yamo* still has a place in the Jopadhola society; rituals for appeasing it are still common since food items are left for it at a place when it is escorted for it to stop making children sick. With some children still named for *yamo* its existence is firmly entrenched in the belief system. There is also a traditional way of healing “mad” people through another ceremony in which grieving spirits oppressing them are appeased. Mad people are also known to recover after spirits that oppress them are appeased through ceremonies for these spirits to leave them. Even people who “got lost” and died in unknown places are given a ceremonial burial, and their names are also given to children as ancestral names. The Jopadhola will not chase away any member of the clan with an ancestral name. Participant Walamo says that only murderers’ or wizards’ names are not given to children as ancestral names. When asked to educate us about *yamo*, this is what Aluwo-Jaryo says:

> I was born in 1934. I am not talking about what I did not see. When we were in primary school in my home area, Magoola, there was something we found and elders told us that it was the spirit *yamo*. We saw that it was a female figure wearing a skirt sitting down under a tree with her legs spread in front of her exactly the way women in Padhola do when they sit down. Wearing a very dirty skirt like that which had been buried and then brought up again, *yamo* did not let us see her eyes. She only looked down and did not allow anyone to have eye contact with her. Many people were called to see her. School children knelt down and tried to see her eyes but they did not manage. *Yamo* finally left this place after three days. She finally disappeared because on the fourth day she was no longer under that tree.

> The traditional ways of averting epidemics are not found in the modern education curriculum, but they are found with elders and the Jopadhola culture. Modern education sometimes makes people treat their own Indigenous knowledge as non-knowledge or something that is too shameful to be talked about in formal education. However, even the people who do not want to talk about certain aspects of their culture participate in the rituals meant to stop
crises. Every Japadhola will have been accorded at least a ceremony when being named, as evidenced by their ancestral names, as a continuation of the pre-colonial ways of life in Padhola society.

The pre-colonial ways practiced in Padhola mean that *yamo* has been and still is a useful contributor to the Jopadhola society. According to Aluwo-Jaryo, it is *yamo* who anoints someone as a traditional birth attendant. Moreover, traditional birth attendants are now becoming more visible in Padhola. For example, only recently there was a woman in one village in Padhola whom many people remember as a very successful traditional birth attendant. The wife of Kingilo initially had a child that the couple was worried about due to constant sickness. In Padhola, when a child is constantly sick, it is perfectly in order that a seer be consulted to find out the cause of the sickness and whether the child requires an ancestral name that has not been revealed through dreams or any other kind of sickness usually considered spiritual.

One morning, this woman and her husband Kingilo decided to go and consult a seer or a *jatwodo, jotwodo* in plural, as it is customary to go to a seer before dawn to find out what is happening to the child and also get herbs to cure the sick child. On passing by a swamp, the Kingilos found two figures, a man and a woman. The female figure was giving a child a bath in the swamp, or *saa* in Lwo, where water collects around some rocks that the Jopadhola call *dago*. The pair was shocked to have found a woman giving a child a bath at that time, but it was *yamo*. The female *yamo* told them not to be scared but to move closer to them. The male *yamo* also talked to them. The female *yamo* also inquired about the child’s health. The couple told the female *yamo* why they were going to a seer. *Yamo* bathed their child with a certain herb then showed the mother of the child a tree from which to get a medicinal herb. In that way, *yamo* anointed Ms. Kinglo as a traditional birth attendant like no other. This is how Aluwo-Jaryo
narrates, in this edited quote how Ms. Kinglo met yamo the spirit who “anointed” her an undisputed traditional birth attendant:

There was a woman in Poyemi called the wife of Kingilo and they had a child who worried them a lot because of constant sickness. Then this woman and her husband decided to go to the seer or “liars” as they were also called very early before dawn to find out what was happening and also to seek herbs to try to cure this sick child. Then this woman and her husband found two figures of a man and a woman. The female figure was giving a child a bath in the swamp, the waters that collect around rocks or what is called dago in Lwo. They were shocked and very scared to have found a woman giving a child a bath at that time. But yamo had seen them asked them why they were scared. Though they were terribly shaken with no more strength left in them they went to her together with the child. The female person asked them what was wrong with the child. They told her that they were going to the seer because the child is always sick. Then that spirit bathed that sick child with a certain herb then showed that woman the tree from which to get that medicinal herb. Yamo also assured the woman that the child will grow up and get married and will not fall sick again, except for a sickness probably much later when he is much older through which he would die. Yamo also showed that woman an herb for treating and managing troubled pregnancies. One other herb shown to the mother of the child is for correcting the child’s position in the womb when it is improper.

The practice of consulting seers is ongoing in Padhola society with the existence and presence of yamo in Padhola generally accepted. Traditional birth attendants are sometimes more trusted in Padhola and attend to women during the pre-natal process with herbs believed to avert complications. Ms. Kinglo is an example of a traditional birth attendant in Padhola whom women consult, and according to my findings, Ms. Kinglo had the authentic herbal knowledge for safe deliveries and treating children that is shared communally. Yamo the spirit is the source to Kingilo’s herbal medicine for treating and managing troubled pregnancies or correcting a child’s position in the womb. The idea of Kingilo receiving direct anointing from yamo has today led to a rise of traditional birth attendants in the Padhola community. All these practices are for the safety of the children in preparation for their ancestral naming ceremony after a safe birth.

Sicknesses that arise around ancestral and spiritual naming time are normally treated by the seers as something spiritual. As I found out, the Caesarean deliveries are exceptions and not
the rule in the Jopadhola society. Just as the ritual of escorting *yamo* is for averting the measles epidemic, so are the services of traditional birth attendants meant to avert childbirth complications. Even though some practices have been modified, for example, the lighting of fire with a big root *kasiki* or a stem of a tree, a big root fire continues to burn throughout funerals, and a child born at this time is automatically named Nyaburu or Oburu in reference to the ash. It is an ancient part of the Luo culture, where the ash is associated with mourning. Some later religions are known to observe an Ash Wednesday, but even then, it is associated with mourning and somehow connects directly to the ancient beliefs associated with the Nile Valley thriving among all Luo-speaking communities.

The beliefs, knowledge, and structure of ancestral naming continue as part of pre-colonial culture practiced today. Though the challenges of the impacts of formal education are glaring, it is quite possible that when the younger generation comes of age, they usually return to the basics of their culture with a preference for pre-colonial ways for their identity. That every generation eventually yearns for a return to the pre-colonial ways means the Jopadhola’s allegiance is to their ancestors’ statutes, rather than what foreign religion or current education teaches them. The Jopadhola’s pre-colonial beliefs guide the community in the spiritual matters of their culture and, fundamentally, the naming of their children. Aguga elaborates on the spiritual naming, which she believes will go on:

*Kwer apipili* is the ceremony of getting the child out of the house. But our world is becoming European oriented nowadays and most women give birth in the hospitals so that by the time a woman is coming back home she will have already taken her child outside the house. This trend of giving birth in the hospitals has seen the scaling down of the *apipili* ceremony with some people not doing it to their detriment. But there are those who still do it especially those who give birth at home using trained traditional birth attendants. This method of giving birth at home somehow ensures *apipili* ceremonies to continue. Even “educated” women have started resorting back to this method and engage the services of traditional birth attendants for a safe delivery which is a way of ensuring *apipili.*
The elders somehow blame the lack of ceremonies by some mothers for the children in the rise of caesarean births. As said earlier, births in hospitals have been the excuses for not performing *apipili* or other ceremonies for naming the children. Elders, therefore, blame the mothers for exposing the babies to the outside world before the 3- or 4-day mandatory for their naming ceremony. Overall, the practice remains a pillar in ensuring that children grow up healthy and not plagued by sickness, which is embedded in the Padhola belief system.

## 5.4 Naming Children around Harvest Ceremonies

Harvests are some of the memorable seasonal events that the Jopadhola, as a farming community, are attached to and, therefore, name children after. Any birth of a child around harvest time reflects the kind of crop harvested at that time in the name given. Children’s names record circumstances associated with the kinds of harvests at the time they are born. Children born at specific harvests have names such as Okecho, Nyakecho, Ofwono, or Nyafwono, with their births celebrated together with the harvest. The Jopadhola attach a lot of importance to seasons of harvesting millet, which is then dried and stored in granaries. Any child born around this time is named Okecho or Nyakecho. Elder Aluwo-Jaryo introduces another important season for harvesting peas, or *nyangor*, which has gendered roles for community. After the birth of a child during the harvest season, the mother stays in the house and observes *kwer*. According to Aluwo-Jaryo, this is how *apipili* is performed:

After a woman has given birth to a child, the child stays indoors in the house for four days for a girl and three days for a boy. The mother can get out and go to have a bath but the child is kept indoors. On the fourth day of bringing the child out the women of the home come and usher the woman out and make her sit in front of her house on the veranda where banana leaves of one kind called *nyarwanda* have been spread. The *nyarwanda* banana tree produces very slim and long bananas but it is only the leaves that are used for this particular ritual, even though the new mother may not eat of its banana at this time. So the women then grind the peas and from its flour make a stew called *magira*, which is a delicacy. The women then prepare or mingle the millet bread and take
a little bit together with the stew and put it up in a place on the front door from outside. Then the aunt of the child is fetched who must come with a whip and dances on one foot only while singing *ochamo kwon apipili*. Meanwhile the mother of the first born baby or *minyur* is eating.

The “whip” is only a ceremontial whip, not meant to hurt the mother. However, if the mother has not been generous in sharing food items, she might be exposed in the ceremony. Because she is now a mother, she must be ready to be a “communal mother” to all the children of the clan and share with them the produce of the bumper harvests, especially if her child is born during the harvest or even during a poor harvest. A new mother is, however, looked after well and not allowed to do any work, and the ceremony is for cleansing both the mother and child to ward off any bad omen and ensure good health and protection.

The concept of *kwer* that Elder Aluwo-Jaryo talks about is also corroborated by Elder Orio, where he too talks about the *apipili* ceremony. Elder Walamo talks about ancestral names in the context of *kwer*, which is a statute followed normatively by the Jopadhola:

They sacrifice and give food to the God of that area. Anybody can take his or her sacrifice and worship. The Morwa Sule have their *kuuni* in Maundo or Nagongera there. And when you sacrificed when you have believed things happened. You take sacrifices to those of Majanga and name the children there. It is *kwer* of Jopadhola.

Food sacrifice is another ongoing practice in rural Padhola, as the elder has said. Every Japadhola Lwo person has a rural home from where he or she originates. When there is a need for naming that requires a ceremony, most Jopadhola return to their area of birth to full-fill the ritual to ensure their children are not plagued by diseases by observing *kwer*.

Children born during the harvest are given names that reflect the harvest. Elder Aguga says that such names are for remembering that the children were born during the harvests. The names commemorating harvests are in addition to the ancestral names. However, names given for seasonal events are also associated with partying during harvest ceremonies. A child born at
harvest, if a first born, makes it easier to perform the *apipili* ceremony because there is plenty of food. The rituals for the new mother are still fulfilled, as she does not get out of the house for three days for a male and four for a female child. The Jopadhola do not allow the new mother to do any work at all for about a month, since she must have time to recover.

It is considered ritually and customarily unacceptable for a new mother to be seen doing any kind of work outside the home. At this time, the mother is considered delicate and must also observe the four days for the birth of a girl and three days for a boy that is called *kwer*, in addition to eating well. Not taking the child out until the stipulated days are observed is to protect the child from exposure to hostile spirits that might attack him or her.

For a new mother to make a quick recovery, *kwer minyur* forbids her from going near the cooking stove, and all the work is done by relatives in the home. At this time too, there are certain kinds of fuel wood that are ritually unclean in almost every clan that a new mother may not touch. Moreover, the harvest of millet coinciding with the birth of a newborn baby also enables clan members to brew plenty of alcohol to celebrate the child’s birth and prepare for a naming ceremony, especially *apipili* for the first born.

The symbolic ritual during the cultural festival is fulfilled so that the baby will not be plagued by serious sickness. If delayed, the mother will request for one to safeguard the baby; otherwise, should the child become sick, it will be attributed to failure to perform the cleansing ceremony. Such a cleansing ceremony for a newborn child is meant to prevent the sudden death of the child.

When asked to educate us on the possibility that the ceremonies are probably now not fulfilled as they should be, Elder Aluwo-Jaryo has a warning for all:

Our world is becoming European oriented nowadays and some women give birth in hospitals so that by the time a woman is coming back home the child will have been
taken outside without a ceremony. This trend of giving birth in the hospitals has denied many children the *apipili* ceremony, resulting in many children suffering a lot of sicknesses and not growing up properly. There are women, however, who prefer giving birth at home and employ the services of traditional birth attendants. These are the women who continue to perform *apipili*. The ancestral naming of the children is however always done, whether the child is born in the hospital or at home.

Participant Aluwo-Jaryo stresses that some sicknesses that plague children or inhibit their development are due to lack of ceremonies to celebrate children as spiritual beings. Ceremonies and rituals accorded children ensure their good health. Ceremonies are for cleansing children of all sicknesses as a kind of immunization. Moreover, the participation of clan members and neighbours stresses children’s special place in the Jopadhola society and gives them a sense of belonging. The blame on the lack of ceremonies for children’s sickness is a reminder that cleansing ceremonies must be performed during the naming period. Moreover, participants are unanimous that giving birth in hospitals has had impacts on the Jopadhola society, with some women not performing the required ceremonies, especially *apipili*, the lack of which alienates children and denies them holism from their Indigenous bases. There are spiritual implications for children not welcomed with ceremonies, which can result in poor health or disconnection from their cultural and spiritual base, which everybody needs.

The accounts of Aluwo-Jaryo and Orio agree that *apipili* must be strengthened for parents to take it more seriously for whole and healthier children. Hospital births expose children to the outside world before the *apipili* ceremony for the first born. Aluwo-Jaryo warns that the disruption and neglect of the required ceremonies have spiritual consequences. To avoid spiritual consequences, mothers must find a way of performing *apipili* and all other ceremonies: for example, the twins’ ceremony that requires a special cleansing for twin children.

There are, however, diverse ways of giving children ancestral and spiritual names. There are children named after or during the harvests, and their names reflect the harvest itself. To
maintain good health, children must be accorded their required ceremonies in welcoming them into the world. Moreover, the participants have not talked of any famine yet, but this is because food production is a priority, where ceremonies are performed after harvests and others before harvests to avert the spread of pests that cause famine.

5.5 **Ngor and Nyangoye: The Ceremony of Peas**

When asked if there are songs about the celebration of the harvest of peas and the significance of such a ceremony to naming children, elders introduce the ceremony of *ngor*, or peas, whose song is *nyangoe*. *Nyangoe* is sung when the peas have been planted, but are not doing well or when the shape of the pods is almost like the “tails of rats” or *yiw oyeyo*. By then, even though the plants are flowering, they are at the same time withering instead of growing straight.

Once the signs of a failing crop are identified, the people in the community must have a ceremony to correct the impending crop failure. The people of the community then register their need for the *nyangoe* song and ceremony and request that the girls responsible for the ceremony go to their gardens to rectify the crop failure. The girls gather together at an elderly woman’s house called *odi nyir*, which is loosely translated “girls’ house,” and then decide that everybody should come with a basket as they are going to sing *nyangoe*. The singing of *nyangoe* is the first step of the ceremony. As the girls sing while walking along a major road in the village, other villagers are alerted that the problem of the failing peas is being addressed. This is a totally girls’ led ceremony, but it is for the benefit of the whole society. Aluwo-Jaryo sings *nyangoe* that the girls sing when heading to their venue of the ceremony to avert famine. I have translated the song here:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Words</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyangoe, oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>The absence, oo the absence (or lack)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngor mit amyena oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>Peas are tasty when mashed oo the absence of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngor mit olerwa oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>Peas are tasty when roasted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magira gi kafuta oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>The stew and soup from it, oo the absence of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulukulu mere oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>The residual of it, oo the absence of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyangoe oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>The absence of it, oo the absence of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ojang’ de ojang, ojang de kir piny</td>
<td>Let them hang, let them hang to the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onur de onur, onur de kir piny</td>
<td>Let them ‘dose,’ let them hang to the ground</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second Verse

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<th>Translation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ngor mit olerwa oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>Peas are tasty when roasted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magira gi kafuta oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>The stew and soup from it, oo oo the absence of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulukulu mere oo oo nyangoe</td>
<td>The residual of it, oo oo the absence of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyangoe oo oo nyangoe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ojang’ de ojang, ojang de kir piny</td>
<td>Let them hang, let them hang to the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onur de onur, onur de kir piny</td>
<td>Let them ‘dose,’ let them ‘dose’ to the ground</td>
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Third Verse

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<tr>
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I have actually seen processions of girls singing *nyangoe* down the road. Moreover, the song is still widely sung and known to almost every one, which means that the practice is still valued in Padhola. As translated, the song is a lament that tells us about the consequences of lack, and particularly a crop failure, that result in a situation called *nyangoe*. When available, peas can be mashed together with another food like the sweet potato, which is very tasty, but this is only possible when there is a good pea harvest. *Olerwa* is roasted dried peas that can be chewed. *Magira and kafuta* are delicacies made from ground and pounded peas. *Mulukulu* are small pieces that remain after the ingredients from the peas from which *magira* has already been extracted. *Mulukulu* is gathered for preparing stew very much like that of groundnuts or *kifuligo*.
when there are no proper vegetables on a particular day and there is not enough time to get them ready.

In the first part of the song *nyango*, the girls lament to the spirit of the harvest that if there is a lack of the bumper pea harvest, the community will not be able to have the delicacies for their meals. The second part of the song is meant to reverse the withering of the plants by petitioning the spirit of harvest to make the peas plenteous by letting the pods grow. *Ojang de ojang* or *unur de unur* are Lwo phrases expressing the girls’ petition for the peas to ‘hang until the ground’ or become plenteous. After singing, the alarm that the girls raise is to expose the bad spirits that attack the crop. They continue with the exercise while running to the next garden to continue with the ceremony of *ngor* and *nyango*. The lament is a petition to the spirit of harvest for the peas to grow properly. During this ceremony, the girls cook food away from home in the gardens and perform the ritual *kwer* that will awaken the crops for a good harvest. The cooking is ceremonial to show that it is good to have food.

The girls continue singing *nyango* in all the gardens requested by the owners, while plucking vegetables for their cooking within those gardens for the *nyango* ceremony. The girls cook and make huge feasts in the garden where they sing. Lastly, they settle for a final meal under a huge tree that they climb, and they continue singing at the top of their voices, raising an alarm while running to the next garden. They climb the trees in order to communicate to everyone in the community as they raise their voices for this purpose. The girls then invite all the men and women to the feast of *nyango*. Towards the end of the *nyango* ceremony, the girls change the song for another one called *abudhi aluur*. *Abudhi aluur* is a song about removing the feathers from the bird *aluur*. *Aluur* is the flightless quail bird that nests in the millet or pea
gardens or in the bush usually trapped during harvests. During this ceremony, the girls also catch these birds and take them home for supper.

The function is similar to escorting the spirit yamo away from their area. Through this ceremony of the peas, or ngor, and singing of nyango, the girls chase away famine and hunger. The ceremony ensures a bumper harvest. This is a traditional ceremony, and from the elders’ accounts, it is more effective and more desirable than chemical pesticides that destroy crops and are also not accepted as capable of averting famine. The Jopadhola remain sceptical about the use of pesticides and contend that while the pesticides might kill the pests, they are not environmentally friendly; these methods tend to displace the traditional methods, which are more holistic in taking care of the land itself. Moreover, not many people can willingly eat vegetables sprayed with pesticides.

Elders believe that the girls are the spiritual leaders to chase away kayongo or famine, since they petition the spirit of harvest on behalf of the Jopadhola society. This is a gendered role that is done by women. The spraying of crops with chemicals or pesticides is believed to be harmful to people’s health, whereas the ceremony ensures a good crop. No one can name a child for the season of spraying crops, but the nyango festival leads to a harvest time where all children born around that time are named after the harvest. Pesticides are not the answer to famine, since the time when they are sprayed, the spirit of the harvest is ignored. However, when the ceremony of nyango is performed, there are bumper harvests of peas, which are traditionally collected in huge baskets called agon, whereby peas are taken directly to the granary for storage until the next season, as they are already dry and ready for consumption. Grains stored in homestead granaries do not have problems with pest attacks during storage.
The beliefs that the elders hold are what they depend on to run their Indigenous society.

Elder Aguga has something to say about children born and named during harvest time and also has a critique for any failure to perform nyangoe:

During harvest, Nyafwono and Ofwono are named, and those named just before the harvest are Abbo or Obbo, for a girl and boy respectively. There are also ancestors who have these same names, and they are given accordingly. If an ancestor was Nyafwono or Ofwono, it means they too were born around this time. And just as yamo is escorted away from the village and the children stop falling sick, even so when the famine is chased away from the village through the festival of ngor and nyangoe, the crops do not fail anymore and no pests attack crops. But when the nyangoe food festival is not performed is when pests invade the area and crops fail.

Elders are concerned and fear that if traditional methods of averting famine or kayongo are not used, famine cannot be chased away unless the nyangoe ceremony is performed. If the spirit of harvest is not consulted or appeased, then famine sets in. The nyangoe ceremony averts famine when performed in time. Pesticides are, therefore, the rivals to nyangoe, and without pesticides, natural or spiritual methods are said to work better, and knowledge on how to ensure healthy crops is always with the elders. The similarity of the nyangoe ceremony to escorting yamo shows that the traditional methods are interconnected in Padhola structures, where ceremonies are not just for purposeless merry-making, but are spiritual events that are continual in this Indigenous society.

Elders do not believe that pesticides can rid a village of famine; rather, it is the traditional methods that ensure bumper harvests. Nyangoe ceremonies will continue because, after girls in one village perform it, items from the ceremony are deposited in the next village. When villagers find utensils and pots used in another village deposited in their village, they too have to perform a ceremony in their village lest their crops are attacked by pests leading to famine. Moreover, elders strongly support the continuation of this traditional method of averting famine and warn
that famine only occurs if the ceremonies are ignored or when the society adopts alien methods not agreeable with the practices that ensure the fertility of land for healthy crops.

The beliefs and practices of solving problems advocated by elders thrive among the people and have not disappeared despite “the watering down.” In fact, the majority of names of people in Padhola are about particular harvests. Many of the names around harvests are also ancestral names of people born long ago around harvest time. Names connected to harvests are easier to interpret and connect with the seasons when the people named are born. If the ancestors named around harvest time were priests, their spirits are reproduced in children named after them. Other ancestors’ names display outright circumstances of their birth: for example, the twin births. The cultural practices are normatively spiritual, since the Jopadhola are very spiritual people who participate in ceremonies for spiritual purposes or what they call *kwer*. Ceremonies usually require a lot of food, and families see to it that planting seasons are well utilized. All around these ceremonies, children are named, making the practice of giving spiritual names a continual communal event that must be celebrated.

The Jopadhola elders still cherish the ceremony of *nyangoe* for peas to blossom to the ground. There is a strong advocacy for a return to pre-colonial ways of managing crop failure by both male and female elders. As the girls sing *ojang de ojang, ojang de kir piny*, they communicate with the spirit of harvest who grants their petition. When there is a good harvest, the children will be named after that good harvest. Even when there is a famine or hunger, the children will also be named accordingly: for example, Okech for a boy and Akech for a girl, reflecting hunger around the time of their birth. Elder Aguga’s account about names around famine corroborates what Askofu-Ripa says about the need for Indigenous people not to allow foreign influence to demean their culture. Bumper harvests seem to have more names than those
provided after a famine. However, names reflecting famine are positively named. Even if there is a very big famine, children are still named to remember the period.

The way of giving names will continue and the traditional system is not bowing to the impact of the European type of education on the Jopadhola children. Here, Elder Aluwo-Jaryo expresses anger at the formal education system for trying to dispossess Indigenous learners of their culture by targeting the younger generation in Padhola through foreign ideology:

Children going through European type of education have started looking at elders as “useless.” A child can see a group of elders but act disrespectfully by shouting or talking loudly or by coming and rushing towards elders or intruding where elders are seated, while speaking what is not acceptable in the hearing of elders. A child that has been influenced by European type of education can even come around and pull the ears of a visitor. *Laughter.* European educated ‘children’ now think that they are self-sufficient. They do not expect parents to have any say at all in what concerns their homes.

There is a perception that disrespect by the younger generation towards elders is caused by formal European-oriented education. What Aluwo-Jaryo is saying about the changing trends in the community corroborates what Elder Orio says about some of the married children neglecting to perform ceremonies to celebrate the naming of their children. This is considered a strange behaviour that is not compatible with ancestral norms that sustain the Jopadhola Lwo society. Aluwo-Jaryo, Aguga, and Nyaburu as well as Orio are all critical of the younger generation’s “watering down” of the pre-colonial ways on which the Jopadhola culture is based. What is alien and detrimental “dilutes” the preservation and continuation of Lwo identity and must not be allowed. The failure to perform naming ceremonies the right way has robbed many elders of the opportunity to exercise their cultural obligations that bring them joy. Elders are advocating, as their duty, for a return to the pre-colonial ways of doing things or educating their children. There is a consensus in frustration with the impacts of formal education, with a call for transformation for Indigenous knowledge to be the base for education for Indigenous learners.
Because of the impacts of foreign education, even marriage across cultures is now common among the younger generation of the Jopadhola. For example, Elder Orango says that these days, our children do not know us or nyithindho kuya wan. Orango also advises that it is better that “they leave our children to us to correct the wrongs.” Askofu-Ripa says, “The reinstatement of our pre-colonial knowledge will make sure that our norms are not lost so that our people are not lost due to impacts of colonial rule or education system that they left behind.”

On the other hand, marriage across cultures is not something new, as the proper ceremonies are performed for children from such marriages as well. When such a marriage takes place, certain Indigenous norms must usually be observed, shared, or exchanged with parents involved so that children are accorded their ceremonies to welcome them. It is not right for a daughter to begin to live with a man without permission from parents, since it is considered “getting lost” and it is against the Jopadhola ways that the elders want fully revived. It disappoints parents when a daughter is sent to school only to get pregnant and give birth without informing them. It means the ceremony of apipili cannot be performed because, as such, a daughter already has given birth without following the formalities of marriage where both families must meet to know each other. The child must also be given his or her proper welcoming ceremony and an ancestral name. European education is to blame for young people’s failure to respect parents, which results in poor quality of life. Such girls have to go back home to be rehabilitated, but then, European education tends to diminish the role of parents when children are influenced negatively to forget their Indigenous identity and copy an alien culture. Aluwo-Jaryo expresses her frustration on what can be done to include cultural education in the syllabus:

We do not know what to do. This European education has come and it is going ahead. Those with European education think that they know more than us. You see like this
child of mine, at least she now listens to my teaching. She went to high school and completed and went to stay at her sister’s place in town. She met a certain man who drives a trailer. We told her: “You are lost. Come back and stay home.” Her sister went to her and brought her back. Her sister’s husband is a Mugisu, but currently he is abroad. He comes from a place called “Bungokhoro” near the Kenya boarder. I do not know his name. She was brought back here with a very young baby but the baby is now walking.

From the conversation, Aluwo-Jaryo does not seem to know the name of the husband of her elder daughter and says, “I do not know his name.” This is a cross-cultural marriage, where the daughter stays very far away and has already violated the cultural norms. For a mother to recognize someone as a son-in-law, certain formalities are observed. The man must come home so that his clan is known and the bridewealth must be given to the parents of the girl. If Aluwo-Jaryo’s daughter has given birth, the ceremony of apipili for the first born may not have been performed, as it is required that the parents of the new mother must pay a visit to her parents for the ceremony of tedo minyur. Moreover, the younger daughter’s scenario is probably worse, to the extent that she is advised to return home. Normatively, the younger daughter must listen to her mother’s wisdom and return home and immerse herself in Indigenous values once more. Afterwards, she is expected to follow the norms for a successful marriage supported by her clan.

Although some of the elders interviewed also profess Christianity, this Christianity is on condition that Jopadhola practices are at the forefront. Aluwo-Jaryo says that she is a born-again Christian. However, during the conversation about ancestral names and the Jopadhola ways of living their lives, the conversation drifts to that of a Japadhola advocating for the retention of the Indigenous quality of life as truly fulfilling and one that defines her identity. Christianity in Padhola is secondary to the Jopadhola practices, as Askofu-Ripa also advocates. Moreover, Aluwo-Jaryo has this to say:

The birth name is the most important for me as to any Japadhola. We must never abandon our names but must continue to give the children their ancestral names. It is not possible to abandon these names, I can assure you. If these names are abandoned, it means we are
also wrong for following the laws of Europeans and not following our pre-colonial ways. God did not give me a child to give a baptismal name. Every Japadhola person or any African already has enough names by the time they are taken to church to be given foreign names. The name that I am born with is the big name. Take for example, my birth follows that of twins. I cannot abandon such a name. That is who I am. As I told you, should we not know the exact ancestral name to give a child we can consult a seer.

In fact, the suggestion of abandoning ancestral names is considered a provocation among the Jopadhola. Even those who profess some Christianity, as seen from Aluwo-Jaryo’s responses, are angered at the suggestion of being referred to by baptismal names. It is customary that most Jopadhola have at least three Indigenous names, while a baptismal name does not represent one’s personality. In fact, I often emerge from the interview not knowing people’s baptismal names because they are not used. Both female and male elders consider it shameful to refer to one another by baptismal names. For Aluwo-Jaryo and Aguga, baptism is an alien ritual that the people have little regard for. The general attitude in Padhola is that ancestral and spiritual names are the ones that reveal one’s personhood.

5.6 Charms and Wealth Protection

The village seer is called Mutusa by his title. There was one Mutusa, who is now dead. Mutusa is the well-known name by which he is remembered. Aluwo-Jaryo has an edited narrative about “Obo-Oniara,” pronounced “Oboniara,” who was not just a seer, but someone who possessed powerful charms. Oboniara is now a name that has been adopted as a trademark for any seer:

“Oboniara” administered herbs to cure someone. He was best known for charms for protecting his home and farm from thieves. He also gave people charms to secure their homes. His charms trapped thieves in his compound. As he was a rich man in the village, thieves could not rob his cows. A few decades ago, thieves did not steal the way they do nowadays violently or by killing people. Thieves could only come quietly during the night and untie the cows from their pen and vanish with them. Obo-Oniara charms were securing people’s homes to trap and expose thieves. Night dancers, wizards, or witches were trapped by his charms. The “night dancers” or “night runners” on their nightly
errands with their ashy bodies were trapped naked and exposed until Oboniara released them by speaking to them, then they would run away fast. As a rich man with big banana plantations where bananas often ripened and wasted, Oboniara employed a lot of people in his farm. He treated women with babies well and gave them free food because he did not expect them to work when nursing small babies. He knew they only wanted food, not work whenever they went to his farm.

This narrative of Oboniara portrays the presence of village seers who continue to administer various charms, some for protection, but others for treating sick children. Seers are still trusted, and although Oboniara was harsh towards the anti-social behaviours of wizards and thieves, he treated women of the society well. The nuance is that the art of “night-dancing” and that of a seer are both said to be hereditary and passed on to descendants. Moreover, as Obo-Oniara used paid labour, he also considered women’s double tasks, where their gendered roles consisted of looking after young children as well as being responsible for providing food. Most women, as I understand, also have their own gardens, but a wealthier man like Obo-Oniara has an advantage of a surplus for using village labour. Women, though, usually have their own gardens, where they grow their own crops, but if there is a famine and the harvest is poor, they may supplement the family food by working for someone else for a few days to be able to gather more food. On the other hand, Obo-Oniara’s kind of knowledge about powerful charms is a gift for every seer in Padhola. Seers, when consulted for their services, are paid. When parents inquire about the name of an ancestor after whom a child will be named, they pay seers’ fees.

When addressing the issue of whether it is possible for a seer with powerful charms to victimize someone, the elders respond that it is known that if a person is just walking and touches something without the intention to steal, nothing happens to such a person. Obo-Oniara, however, was rich with a lot more food than other people and needed to protect his wealth. He is said to have had many granaries of food. Since it was other people digging for him in his land, he would pay the people according to what they wanted, whether peas or millet.
Though my inquiry, initially, is about a seer’s role in identifying an ancestral name, the answer unravels an organized society, where a rich seer employs paid labour in his plantations in the rural area. Today, Obo-Oniara has become a concept for a seer or “swear word” in Padhola. It is also about anyone who uses charms to protect what he or she considers extremely valuable. The irony is that soon after the interview, I came face to face with a great-grandson of Obo-Oniara working somewhere I was visiting. I know he is the great-grandson of Obo-Oniara because he is preparing for his grandmother’s last funeral rites and refers to her as the “daughter of Obo-Oniara.” The last funeral rites, according to the elders, are celebrated about one year after someone’s death, with feasting, drinking alcohol, drumming, and dancing to put the dead person’s spirit to a final rest. If there are children born during the last funeral rites of someone like this one, their names reflect the event as well as their grandmother as an ancestor. It is probable that there are fewer named after Obo-Oniara due to his role in using powerful charms usually attributed to a wizard or an evil person. The Jopadhola clans do not name their descendants after wizards. If someone is a wizard in a clan, he will not be named.

A person like Obo-Oniara might not be a popular person for an ancestral name because tendencies of exploitation are also not encouraged. This is because Padhola is more of an egalitarian clan-based society that promotes sharing resources with the community rather than exploitation. I am told that upon the death of a person equated to a wizard, the people might not mourn, but will go about with their daily work. When an evil person in the Jopadhola community dies, people remain unperturbed and go openly to their gardens to farm and show that they are not mourning. The people going to the garden can be termed as a silent celebration of the death of someone who mistreats people, sometimes by contending for their ancestral land as though it is his own. A self-centred person, whose bananas rotted away instead of contributing to the
community festivals that require bananas for brewing beer, stands to go un-mourned in Padhola. This is a community that believes in communally sharing one’s wealth among clan members, relatives, and neighbours.

During the chasing away of an epidemic of measles by escorting yamo, children will be given names that reflect such a harvest ceremony of nyangoe. There is only a slightly different version of the ceremony of apipili from Aluwo-Jaryo, but just like Elder Orio and the two relatives, Elders Orango and Askofu-Ripa, Aluwo-Jaryo and her colleague Aguga are advocates for a return to the pre-colonial ways of life for all the Jopadhola on how they must relate with other cultures. Throughout the interviews, elders stress Indigenous education and remain very critical of European education for colonizing and alienating Jopadhola children from them, with the younger generation now seen as generally disrespectful to elders. In fact, this is the generation that is now referred to as the “lost generation.” The lost generation is, however, advised to seek wisdom from elders if they are to build healthy functioning families. Building healthy families also means observing and fulfilling the customs of traditional ceremonies for their children.

The voice of another participant, Ayuniya, though not included here, is similar to those of Aluwo-Jaryo and Aguga. Ayuniya is interviewed alone, but the only difference between her account and the accounts of Aluwo-Jaryo and Aguga is that when a male child is born and ancestors are competing for a name, roosters are given ancestors’ names and then thrown up on the roof. The rooster that remains on the roof longest and crows up there is the ancestor to be named. A profile of Ayuniya is in the methodology chapter. The next interview is at participant Akayo’s home.
5.7 Culture and Resistance

After our arrival, the Elder Akayo is in the neighbourhood, but finds us already comfortable, as people from her neighbour and brother-in-law’s house have already given us seats in the shade of a big Indigenous tree in their beautiful compound. Akayo gives us a traditional welcome into the family house as is the custom of welcoming visitors, but then Akayo soon disappears, in order to get some food from the garden as well as a chicken to fix us a meal. The full description of the scenario of Akayo’s welcome is in the methodology chapter. Our conversation with Akayo starts only after there is food for us. It is customary that visitors be given something to eat before sitting down for a conversation, and it is in such an atmosphere that we start our interview. Akayo’s birthday is January 18, 1925, as she tells us that her father recorded everything. Akayo is also the first born of her family from the Ramogi clan in Padhola. All the elders introduce themselves by their clans: for example, Orango is from the clan of Nyapolo like Askofu-Ripa, Aluwo-Jaryo is from Koi Katandi, Wud-Nyampala is from the Ramogi clan like Akayo, Walamo is from Moriwa-Sule, and Jazak is from Amor, among other clans of Padhola. It was enriching for me to see people identify themselves by their clans, as this portrayed a strong sense of belonging.

Like Akayo and Acoko, participant Wud-Nyampala is also a Jaramogi by clan. The Joramogi are remembered for their military prowess at Matindi Fort. Moreover, since the confrontation with the Maasai in their Matindi backyard, they are now found throughout Padhola practicing farming. The elders contend that all the Jopadhola are fighters who used to “capture” people, bring them home, give them names, and make them clan members, both Omia and Omwa, but children born in Padhola are given the names of the dead so that they do not disappear. For example, a man who dies must have names in the clan to return his name and that
means naming children after the dead. The Jopadhola name children after the dead to continue the ways of their ancestors. If the Jopadhola were to abandon their names and adopt the ways of their neighbours the Omwa, they would have been “slaves” of Omwa. The Jopadhola do not agree with the ways of Omwa, and that is how they retain their identity. The Jopadhola continue with their ancestral names to retain their Lwo identity, even if their neighbours are Omwa. The Jopadhola know that they are not Omwa, which refers to Bantu-speaking neighbouring groups; they are Lwo. On the advent of Christianity came additional names, but Padhola ancestral names still remain at the forefront of all names.

Most elders, when asked about the name that is important to them, all respond that it is the name from Padhola that is important. Just as Askofu-Ripa or Wuod-Nyampala’s responses show strong attachment to ancestral and Indigenous names for their identity, Akayo agrees that despite Christianity being introduced in Padhola, its impact does not change the naming system among the people:

They poured water on my face during that exercise. But this was a personal decision that came later and not from the beginning. I was not given a Jwok name perhaps because I am the first born. One of my sisters and I were not given Jwok names or ancestral names. I was not given my grandmother’s name but it was the decision of my parents since no ancestor claimed a name for me. They left me alone. But my own given name is already being given to my children’s children and nieces as an ancestral name, even though I am still alive.

Akayo is saying that despite the introduction of Christianity among Indigenous people, the names introduced along with it do not have prominence. The ancestors sometimes do not contend for names. Akayo, as a first born, has been left to start a generation of names after herself, since children are named after her even though she is still alive. Not all ancestral names are given only after someone dies. In fact, Elder Jazak also speaks about the evolution of ancestral names in Padhola, in that nowadays, children are given grandparents’ names when they
are still alive. Akayo’s account also corroborates what Elder Orio says about people giving names to children when they are the first visitors to arrive in the home where there is a newborn baby. All names given this way later become ancestral names to be given in other generations of children, even if the originators of the names are dead.

Moreover, a name given to Akayo only sticks as long as there are no ancestors competing or claiming a name for the child. It was around the time of Akayo’s birth in the 1920s that the colonial administration was setting a precedent that the Jopadhola names were “primitive” and their ancestral names “demonic.” The colonial system could have impacted on Akayo’s parents’ decision not to give her an ancestral name through propagation for the abandonment of Padhola ways as un-Christian and ungodly. Usually with christenings, there are some expectations for conversion, especially for children who miss the ancestral names. On the other hand, there is no evidence elsewhere in Padhola that the ancestral naming has ever been abandoned. Akayo’s lack of an ancestral name is an exception rather than the rule. Moreover, Akayo and all other elders have an urgent concern about the young and their not having proper education from elders on how to give meaningful names to children:

It is a source of concern. Nowadays, some people name their children anything like Akidevi which means ‘I do not care’ or Rembo which means ‘worry.’ They also name their children after quarrels and anger which is not good. They also do not give their children biblical names, but give them names like Sandra, which is not even in the Bible. Some Bible names are meaningful names like ours. We name according to the work they did. My own mother was a Catholic and had Catholic names like ‘Anna Theresa.’ My father forced her to drop ‘Theresa,’ which was purely Catholic. She also had a special name among the Jopadhola, Auma, a meaningful name in Padhola which a mother names [her child] reflecting the way she came from the womb.

In the Jopadhola society, the meanings of names define someone’s personality, and a child named after parents’ quarrels or anger can easily lead their lives in such a path. Unilaterally naming children also alienates other clan members or ancestors. Akayo is trying to say that it is
not advisable, since it is already a deviation from the institution of naming. Akayo also conceptualizes the Bible names in a similar manner as Elder Orio—that such names are only given on condition that they are scrutinized according to the Jopadhola way of naming children to reflect their character. The Christian religion divides the Jopadhola in such a way that a woman marrying a man from another denomination has to undergo a re-conversion, while her name must not reflect a different denomination from that of the husband. Akayo’s accounts also corroborate those of elder Walamo and Mzee Udoyo that Christianity is divisive, since marriage must be overseen by the marrying partners’ clans. To counter the impacts of Christianity, the rebuilding of their religious shrines that the Baganda “evangelists” burnt in Padhola are now complete, and the Jopadhola now see themselves as more united when organized within the cultural institution of Tieng Adhola. A clan to which someone is affiliated has far more influence than the church because partners in marriage are identified more by their respective clans that give them meaningful names. The denominations, the elders insist, divided the Jopadhola into two camps, with “Catholic” and “Protestant” names, but from a long time ago and even now, it is from their Indigenous culture that the people have meaningful names.

Akayo, for example, elaborates on the meaning of one of the names from Padhola, Auma, as a child who comes from the womb lying on the stomach. When asked, Akayo expressed this in an Dhopadhola expression as owok gi pal chunye or what makes her come like that:

*Laughter from everybody present*. These people are asking me funny questions. *Still laughing*. How do I know why God made her like that? Auma is born lying on her stomach. But now young people are losing Jopadhola names. As I told you, they are now naming their children *Akimar*, which means “I am not worried or I don’t care,” or *Angoyegirye*ko, which means “I have no wisdom,” instead of naming them after the harvest and other important events as is the custom of the Jopadhola. Young people are also not giving straightforward names but all sorts of names. If you ask them where they got such names, they have no answer. But Owino is a child born with the placenta stuck on him and it comes out with him. We cannot give such a person any other kind of name
but must give him his proper name because of the nature of his birth. A girl will be called Awino.

The humour is because of the surprise that at my age as the interviewer, I have no idea how and why Auma has such a name. What Akayo is also saying is that young people must consult elders when naming children. They are not supposed to name children by themselves as if children are their personal property, since children belong to a clan. There is much concern from elders about the younger Jopadhola losing focus on the naming practices by not valuing their Indigenous education. Giving a child a name Akipar or “I am not worried” unilaterally robs the clan of their input in the naming exercise. The lack of straightforward names is also a deviation from the norms of the Jopadhola. The births of persons called Owino or Awino must be accorded their own ceremony. Another name is Auma that only the mother of the child or midwife determines because they are present at birth. Auma is a name that is celebrated with its own kind of ceremony. Those called Auma or Ouma will, however, still be given ancestral names, and their own names will be given as ancestral names to children, even if their nature of birth is different. The next ceremony that follows is then not just for Auma or Ouma, but for the ancestor revealed in a dream or apipili if they are first-born children.

Moreover, it is possible that on commencing the interview, Akayo talks with caution because any question about ancestral naming is a sensitive area to venture into. Every Japadhola is a guardian of his or her own culture, and those who do not know the names they must give to the children must consult their clans. Foreign names must not just be added to children because they are meaningless. Giving meaningless names, like Sandra, is a deviation from the norms of the Jopadhola. Although Akayo admits that she does not have an ancestral name for herself, she has a birth name, which is now given to children as an ancestral name. Akayo’s late husband’s
name is already widely given in the clan as an ancestral name immortalizing him as an ancestor, which follows the norms of the Jopadhola.

5.8 The Concept of *Kaffir* and Indigenous Names

Professing Christianity does not take over someone’s identity; that is why the elders are very critical about the new religion Christianity and how it was introduced in 1877. The concept of *kaffir*, which Akayo and Elders Walamo, Aluwo-Jaryo, and Udoyo all talk about, was intended to demean Indigenous names as pagan, as though natives were expected to despise their own names. However, the concept of *kaffir* for Indigenous names has been positively elevated, in that the people themselves prefer their *kaffiri* names as the ones that make them who they are. Like Elder Aluwo-Jaryo, Akayo also strongly stresses that the birth name is the one that makes people who they are. At the time most elders were growing up, Wazungu, for that is how Europeans are officially called, had already come, but some Jopadhola do not follow Christianity. Some of them were and are still followers of Mutusa, and they worship spirits. The Jopadhola did not see Wazungu as capable of making them change their names, since most of them were not heard to say so directly. The Wazungu introduced foreign names through covert requirements for baptisms in church-founded schools. Even as the covert changing of names was there, the people also continued with and still use their *kaffiri* names.

The Jopadhola rejected the notion that they could really start practicing European culture and abandon their ways. As a society with its functional social structures, the people did not want the white people to rule over them, despite referring to Jopadhola’s names pagan or *kaffir*. According to Elder Akayo, the people resisted the colonizers because they lacked respect and were determined to remain ignorant of the Black people’s ways, in order to crudely impose their ways on them:
The White people despised the Blacks. When the White people were in Padhola, Blacks were forbidden and not allowed to eat the food that the White people ate. The toilet which the White man used, a Japadhola was not allowed to use. The area where the White people lived, a Japadhola was not even allowed to come there. The Wazungu took the Jopadhola or Blacks like “monkeys,” but as the book (Bible) says, “Can the Blacks or Kush change his skin or the leopard his spots?” The Whites were the ones giving rules which Black people must follow. But as soon as the Jopadhola woke up and opened their eyes jo yao wang gin they resisted the White rule. The Blacks also realized that we used to rule ourselves, but when the White man came the rules came from the White. But when the Jopadhola’s eyes opened they decided to wake up.

Although Akayo is just one of the people who says that she was not given an ancestral name, her criticism of the intervention into Padhola signifies the formidable cultural status of women in Padhola. The Jopadhola women are at the centre of preserving and reproducing the pre-colonial ways of life together with the male counterparts who traditionally respect their roles.

The foods that the white man forbade the Blacks are all Indigenous and locally grown. Food is usually locally grown by women who normally own it. That the colonizer began forbidding these foods to the very society in whose midst they came to live reflects greed from their own background.

### 5.9 Ancestral Names as Valued Possessions

Colonization, therefore, is the negative and unwanted occurrence that downgrades the Indigenous women’s status, but the ancestral naming system is a valued possession that women hold on to. The account of Akayo corroborates the resistance to the colonizing culture that Elder Jazak also discusses. In fact, when discussing the social differences between the white man as the colonizer and the Indigenous people in terms of their colour, Elder Jazak says that the white man must respect the Black man’s culture; thus, “Muzungu should respect Black people’s culture.”
Elder Akayo portrays an element of resistance against the coming of the colonial rule:

“We ruled ourselves, but when the white man came the rules started coming from the white man.” It is the effect of this rule that has impacted the younger generation to start naming their children “Sandra,” which has no meaning in Padhola, but signifies a “lost generation.” Akayo, just like Elders Udoyo and Jazak, advises the “lost generation” to return to their Indigenous basics. Elder Akayo corroborates all that Elders Udoyo and Jazak say about racism by the colonial administrators during their occupation of Padhola. For example, they started introducing Luganda as a language of instruction for the Lwo-speaking Jopadhola. Akayo says, “But the culture of the Muzungu should respect Black people’s culture.”

Akayo’s account concurs with that of Aluwo-Jaryo, in that the impacts of the colonial agenda disrupting the pre-colonial way of life is one of the reasons Indigenous education is the solution that formal education needs. The formal education in schools generates identities based on Euro-centred hegemonic tendencies that ignore the social differences that Indigenous people have with Western culture. Such a phenomenon occurs, despite the fact that the Jopadhola have their own ancestral and spiritual ways of naming their children with ongoing ceremonies. Some people, without any reasonable foundation, try to modify the way of naming their children. However, when facing any kind of trouble or when older, the Jopadhola usually return to elders in the village for solutions because they retain their affiliation in the clan system. The Jopadhola society remains a dynamic one that is equipped with structures for solutions for everybody’s well-being.

In inquiring from elders, the concept of kaffir is foreign and was expounded by both Arabs and the colonial administrators to disregard the Indigenous African religion and ways of worship, in order to justify their evangelization to erase Indigenous religion. Kaffir is probably
an Arab word, first used by Arabs to depict, as pagans or infidels, Indigenous Africans who do not follow the Arab religion. Though Arabs were early arrivals at the coasts of East Africa and Uganda for the purposes of trade, they introduced such a word when justifying the enslaving of Indigenous Africans who rejected their religion. With the arrival of Christianity for colonization in Padhola, the missionaries seized the word *kaffir* from the Arabs and began using it for Indigenous Africans. However, the Jopadhola, being aware of the negativity of the concept of *kaffir*, boldly turned it around and now call their own names *kaffiri* names that they must keep. However, as the elders have said, the Indigenous culture on the ground has structures that ensure continuity, and all the attempts to uproot this culture through colonization have failed. While formal education is a legacy of colonialism, the availability of Indigenous education is openly reviving all the Indigenous cultural institutions as functional.

Racism solidified itself in the concept of *kaffir* vis a vis Jopadhola names. Akayo’s scenario and the knowledge shared, therefore, challenges the depiction of an African woman as voiceless in her society. Akayo’s is the voice of a teacher of Indigenous anti-colonial and anti-racism knowledge.

**5.10 Social Differences**

Acoko is the immediate neighbour of Akayo, who welcomes us into the expansive compound as neighbours. Acoko is Akayo’s sister married to Akayo’s brother-in-law. In Padhola, when one woman gets married in a home, her younger sisters pay her some visits, which may eventually culminate in another marriage in the clan. The sisters then become neighbours married to brothers and remain close to each other. The compound is expansive and beautifully manicured. Two houses for two families are adjacent to one another, with mature trees. After saying good-bye to Akayo, who has given us food gifts to go and cook for ourselves
at home because we are unable to stay much longer, we move to Acoko’s home. We had already exchanged greetings earlier, and now we must visit Acoko as well.

In Padhola, it is not right to visit one sister’s home and not visit the other when they are near each other. Acoko was born in 1931 and introduces herself by her kaffiri name. Acoko’s husband died in 1970 when she was three months pregnant. In Padhola, remarriage is not prioritized for a widow unless she favours “inheritance” within the clan. Even if widow decides not to remarry, she is fully supported by the clan. The same scenario is true for all the widows when their husbands die when they are much younger or when they are older. Because she was still a young widow when the husband died, she officially uses his name as the head of the home responsible for children’s education. Because Acoko’s husband died when she was pregnant, the unborn child is named Ajwang. If it is a boy, then he is Ojwang. As a widow, Acoko admits that life is tough, but she manages because of her supportive environment:

It is hard, but I have to be strong. I made friends with the hoe, and the garden in order to take care of the children. He left me with seven children that he saw. Out of eight, two are gone. I buried one here, and the other one is buried at her husband’s home in Sukuru. I am a Japadhola of the Ramogi clan. When you give birth to a girl, you give her the grandmother’s name. I gave my first-born boy the name of my father-in-law. I have given the girl my mother-in-law’s name, Akotha. After that, you give the names of the father of their grandfather, and if a woman is still giving birth after giving the names of the dead, you also give the names of all those who are still living in the clan or family where you are married. I have a boy here who is the father of my father-in-law, a great ancestor.

The Jopadhola consider the “resurrection” cherino of dead people a necessity in the naming process to show that they have not disappeared, but are still present in the home and clan. The omnipresence of the dead among the living is prevalent everywhere in Padhola. Three elders, Acoko, Orango and Orio, have a similar account about the omnipresence of the dead and the sharing of a well-known chief’s names among all clans during his chieftaincy among a certain age group. The presence of a child named after a dead ancestor makes a child feel
important in their relationship to their parents and clan members. This is the main practice that ensures the continuity of Lwo-speaking people in the midst of the more numerous Bantu-speaking people.

Apparently, elders do not allow foreign names in the clan, even if some of them are settled deep into Padhola and speak Dhopadhola, like some of the Omia-Iteso people. Acoko’s account also corroborates that of Orio, whereby if a person from another Padhola clan, for example, Bendo or Guma clans, visits and finds that a baby has just been born, it is the norm that they can name the child after their own names. However, foreign names are not allowed because it makes the clan get lost. Clans that make up the Jopadhola ethnic group’s identity thrive. However, among a certain age group, a well-known chief’s name can be shared among all clans during his chieftaincy.

Where a chief’s name is given to a child, that child must still have a separate ancestral name. Each Japadhola has at least two or three names, including an ancestral name. The baptismal name does not feature as a child’s name in Padhola, but only at the schools they attend.

Foreigners come to Padhola as visitors or what Acoko says are “those who come to help us in certain trades” when needed like the Bakenye divers. The Jopadhola generally deny knowing any foreign person whose name has been given to children in their community. When asked if there are any foreign names given, Elder Acoko does not agree and portrays it in this brief statement:

But there are people who probably could have given their children such names ... I do not know what or who. . . . We do not give foreign names here.

Moreover, the Jopadhola usually do not understand how the colonial administration came about and find no reason for its coming to establish itself here. They usually believe that
originally there was a white king somewhere in a place called *Ulaya* who wanted to share some “advanced” knowledge that was “good” for the local people. However, according to Acoko, visitors’ ways are not preferable to their own pre-colonial ways, especially the existing ways of worshipping their God. In defiance to cultural intervention from outside, Acoko invokes the concept of God in Padhola:

The Jopadhola have their God. *Were ma Ogam, Othim*. We know that a typical Jopadhola must go to the anthill or under a big tree like the mahogany tree and talk to God. Earlier you could hear a Japadholo speak to God. And you could also hear God who created us talk to the Jopadhola audibly. For example, they would ask for a child. If we Jopadhola go in faith and ask in faith whatever we want but lack, God gives us. The Jopadhola already knew that God is in heaven and it is one God. It is the same God that we still worship. But after some time there were many people who started doing evil and God now hides from people. Earlier when a Japadholo spoke to God and presented their need, God answered. But the Jopadhola only sinned when the Wazungu came and that is how God started hiding from people.

What Acoko says about “sinning after the Wazungu came” is a warning that if the Jopadhola leave their own pre-colonial ways, it is considered a sin in their society, since they will be following something that their ancestors were not part of. Acoko’s account also agrees with those of Elders Aluwo-Jaryo and Orango, whereby even some sicknesses are blamed on the coming of colonialism that interfered with the disposition of spirituality in Padhola. The disruption of the pre-colonial cultural norms, whereby the colonial administration expected to fundamentally change the people’s belief systems, was resisted. For example, the concept of God *Were ma Ogam* is that of the deity as a giver, but the disconnection from *Were ma Ogam* can lead to someone not having a child to name after an ancestor. Acoko is saying that the entry of the white man into Padhola with another concept of God is to blame for causing the God who knows the Jopadhola to hide from them. Acoko is, therefore, telling the Jopadhola to practice their pre-colonial ways for God to stop hiding from them.
In Padhola society, even if a woman does not have a biological child, she is immortalized in the clan when her name is given to many children. In fact, such women’s names are sometimes more numerous than the names of women with biological children. No woman is considered barren in a clan.

According to Acoko, the Jopadhola have not left Were Othim or Wangkach, since Wangkach is still the God who looks after the home stationed at the gate. Acoko also reveals that the two huge trees in front of the gates of Jopadhola homes are shrines of bongi to this day. There might be a generation of Jopadhola who perhaps may not know it, but it is the norm that whoever is coming to a home passes between these two trees. Bongi is the tree from which bark cloth is made. When two trees of bongi are planted at the gate of a homestead, it is the shrine of the deity called Wangkach who looks after the home. Little known to the younger generations, the Jopadhola way of worship continues with a shrine and altar right at the home. It was also under the tree bongi or on top of the anthill that the Jopadhola talked to God, and the voice of God could be heard if a worshipper sought spiritual help.

The Jopadhola kind of worship persists, as there is a bigger majority (Ogot, 1972) of those who do not go to church, according to the elders. It is not strange to see some staunchly traditional people go to a church building, but still return and talk to God in the way of the Jopadhola. The Jopadhola worship an invisible God, and they have a specific time to hear him speak. Elder Acoko, however, laments that God only used to speak more to the Jopadhola before colonization.

Moreover, being taught in a language that one does not know elicits resistance. In order to acquire a foreign name, as I understand, young people worked for the minister by doing small tasks like fetching water, digging in his garden, or grinding millet in the home. Catechists usually
expect teenagers to labour to “buy” a foreign name. This notion has been thoroughly resisted in Padhola, where people prefer welcoming their children with a ceremony for ancestral names. Moreover, because of such ordeals in the hands of catechists, a lot opt for their cultural beliefs where they are celebrated. Moreover, regarding Christianity, the Jopadhola maintain that Jesus did not come to tell them to leave their ways. According to Acoko, “Jesus, only came to tell us not to do ‘certain’ things, but not to leave our ways. So that is why we are continuing with our ways.” The Jopadhola elders usually have strong views as to why they will stick to their pre-colonial ways and are adamant that whatever religion makes entry into Padhola must learn from the traditional beliefs of the people. Most Jopadhola steadfastly believe in upholding and continuing what their forefathers have always done as the way forward. The Jopadhola also ridicule Luganda religious teachings or evangelization to Christianity. For example, the Luganda phrase for “stop there” is “lekerwawo,” but Elder Acoko also tells how the Jopadhola routinely ridicule this phrase and translate it into something else in Lwo, hence “lek ran Awor.” The phrase means “shepherd for me Awor” and is meant to mock both the foreign language and religion. This is because Awor is a name of a girl born at night. Anglicanism in Padhola uses the bible written in Luganda. In Padhola, Catholics are not known to read bibles, but handouts or booklets, written from somewhere else, but translated into Dhopadhola.

On the other hand, right now in Padhola, there is a wave of Pentecostalism, but this Pentecostalism relates more to the culture of drumming and dancing, which the Jopadhola practice. The Pentecostal churches in the Padhola community are seen as Indigenous spiritual churches nurtured from local community initiatives and are different from the colonially founded mainstream churches. On the other hand, fortune tellers are continually consulted where ancestors are contending for a name of a new born child. This is corroborated by Elders Aluwo-
Jaryo and Acoko. This worship of ancestors is observable in how the Jopadhola adore and address children as though the dead ancestors are present. Moreover, the Jopadhola have their own conception of a Holy Trinity, hence *Were, Were Othim*, and *Were Madiedipo*. Another version comprises the Trinity of *Were Osagala, Were Ogam*, and *Were Wangkach*. The reproduction of ancestral and spiritually revealed names, therefore, compounds an ongoing interface with ancestors.

Together with Acoko, I delve into the theme of ancestral names for disabled children. Acoko actually situates disabled children as full members of the community. However, the very presence of disabled children unravels how disability is managed in the Jopadhola society. All children in Padhola are expected to receive equal treatment in their respective clans when given ancestral and spiritual names. Children with disabilities are given ancestral names, treated as members of the clan, and not stigmatized, Padhola being a dynamic society. Acoko says that the Jopadhola retain their culture in such a way that many aspects of the functioning structures were neither understood nor touched by the colonizer. The Jopadhola society is one with functioning structures to manage its own social and cultural complexes.

### 5.11 Sexuality

The Jopadhola society has a structure for diverse sexualities. The Jopadhola society is not complete unless everybody is included and given an ancestral name. Once again, Elder Acoko shares freely about the thriving sexual minority in Padhola who are entitled to ancestral names, just like everybody else at birth as seen in the interview:

*Nyasigweli* are men who do not marry or cannot physically consummate a marriage with a woman. People call them “the ones who have fallen down from the paw-paw or papaya trees.” They laugh like girls or women. In the community, they are sent on errands to fetch water from the village for their skills. Even if they are much older but do not have wives they are sent like younger people. They dig in the gardens like others. But they do
not marry. They are comfortable to sit with women and also together with other men. Those are children of the home. They build their own houses in the homestead and when they come to your house you give them food since they are not married. They are also very hard working and can bring fuel wood to the women and do other errands.

Like most societies, in Padhola, everybody is expected to marry and have children. Those who cannot consummate a marriage, like the sexual minorities, still have some kind of a convenient marriage arrangement for them to raise families. When Acoko says that the Nyasigweli are children of a home, it is the community’s recognition of their “queerness.” The queerness of Nyasigweli does not warrant ostracism or living apart by themselves. In fact, the “queer” only live their functional lives with the support of the community. They are comfortable in the company of both women and men, and there is no hostility towards them by the male members of the society. Acoko explains the typical life of the Nyasigweli in Padhola as normal and says in this quote, which is edited:

No one bothers the Nyasigweli since they also dig and make their own income. After making their money they bathe and go to the club and drink alcohol and enjoy like everybody else, using their own money. They are wise like everybody else. Even when they are drunk and fall somewhere on the way home in the village, nobody hurts them, but instead they are guided home. No one can harm a Nyasigweli; after all, it is their money they have earned and they are members of a homestead and a clan. For example, there is a queer person who even held a church wedding after performing a traditional marriage and paying the required bridewealth. He found it difficult to eat in people’s homes and decided to start a family. He told the wife, “I allow you to get your own friend whom you love and trust and give birth to children and those children will be ours. But do not show me the man.”

Elder Acoko portrays Padhola as a model self-governing society whose norms are followed with well making it almost utopian. In fact, deviation from the Padhola norms, if any, by its people is what brings them problems. The way the Jopadhola treat the Nyasigweli as cherished members of their society means there is no violence against sexual minorities in Padhola society. If the Jopadhola model were to be followed globally, there would be no violence against sexual minorities. Padhola is also a society where every person can be traced by
their clan. The Jopadhola even believe that all anti-social behaviours are alien oriented, hence the bid to continue with pre-colonial ways of life. For example, elders believe that a Jopadhola cannot steal from another Padhola home. The same belief is extended that if anyone were to harm a Nyasigweli, he would bring shame to his family and the clan as a whole. If anyone refuses Nyasigweli food in their homes, it is also very anti-social and very much un-Lwo, since generosity by sharing food is a virtue for everyone. A Nyasigweli who wants to stop living like a bachelor is entitled to his clan’s support and bridewealth to marry a wife and start a home. After that, his marital home is respected like any other. Any marriage arrangement between a Nyasigweli and his wife’s family that receives his bridewealth is equivalent to any other marriage in the society.

A woman married to a Nyasigweli has an easy life because when she goes out, it is the husband who cooks for her. There is no violence in their home, since it is a mutual agreement that the community supports a respected family. It is the norm in the Jopadhola society that the biological fathers of such children are usually kept secret, since revealing them will likely bring violence. What matters is that their children are named after the man’s parents, grandparents, and great grandparents, thus fulfilling the ancestral naming system. The home of such a Nyasigweli contributes to the expansion of a clan, where clan members are cousins or aunts or uncles to such children. There are homes like that where the children are usually well educated and build permanent houses.

Moreover, as Acoko reports, the people who befriend any Nyasigweli in their homesteads end up benefiting from such a friendship. As hardworking people, the Nyasigweli are also very fast in their errands. A Nyasigweli is usually known for his beautiful and neat house within the
compound, for which he is also well respected. Apart from his neatness, the Nyasigweli is also respected for his friendliness to everyone in the community.

The Jopadhola do not persecute the Nyasigweli, since they are trusted members of the society. For a Nyasigweli man to marry, an agreement must be reached between the man and his wife not to show him the lover that she takes for procreation in the night. The wife usually has a trusted lover with whom to conceive and bring children home. People born Nyasigweli are treated with the same regard as those with disability. Just as disability does not stop the giving of ancestral names, so being a Nyasigweli does not warrant any persecution, but support. There is an arrangement for every situation requiring a solution in Padhola. Even where there are disabled men, as long as they are supported, they marry and pay the bridewealth to their wife’s families. The girls who are disabled are also looked after. All these people marry, and their children are given ancestral names from their clans. When severely disabled girls remain at home, they too often have children who must be given ancestral names following patrilineal norms. There are even girls who move on their knees due to physical disability, but get children by “powerful men.” Powerful men are usually wealthy men who must take responsibility for the children they father, as they are tracked down. Their male children must eventually go home with them, bearing their clans’ ancestral and spiritual names. If the children of severely disabled women are girls, they can stay in their mothers’ homes and get married from there, but their clans must be known, so that there is no case of marrying a clan relative. The people who bring them up receive the bridewealth for their work, care, and love given to such a girl when she is growing up.

On the other hand, because the sexuality of Nyasigweli is not a problem in Padhola, many elders do not discuss it, as they have always been there in this society. The Nyasigweli men are
the equivalent of “barren” women, whose names are given to very many children as ancestral names. Once accepted as clan member, a child does not have to be someone’s biological child in order to be given an ancestral name.

It is also not common for a group of men to discuss the sexuality of the Nyasigweli in Padhola, and conversations that reveal the Nyasigweli man are more consistent among women, since he is more allied to women. There are structures for the Nyasigweli in the Jopadhola society, which handles everything to their satisfaction as members of a clan. Even though the Nyasigweli are valued as hard-working people, they do not belong to a class of their own, but have friends among women as well as men. As Acoko says, a Nyasigweli meets together with other men in the clubs, where each person uses his money to buy drinks, with social relations in Padhola stressing equity for all. The Nyasigweli’s friendship with women is through the assistance for women as allies in errands like fetching water, threshing millet, or digging in the gardens. Because such work is usually done by women, they find it beneficial befriending the Nyasigweli, making it positively normative for them to have meals together in the homesteads. Padhola is a complex society, where adhering to the pre-colonial culture ensures acceptance for everyone. The norms of Padhola make it possible for everyone to feel wanted as a son or daughter of the clan members; a sexual minority has a life that is celebrated by almost everybody as people value friendship with him. Moreover, the structures of the society are such that a sexual minority sometimes has more monetary wealth than other male members of the society. The fact that the Nyasigweli goes to the same club as other men, uses his money to buy alcohol, and is not persecuted is a symbol of a counter system that the colonial education system must learn from. In this way, the curriculum and what is being taught to children from Indigenous backgrounds that does not reflect their culture must transform. In fact, an inquiry for ancestral
names unravels a functioning social system that is totally different from what colonized people have been subjected to, with the colonial system acting as if there are no fundamental oppositions to its universality for education.
Chapter 6
Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has presented data from the participants indicating that the Jopadhola continue with their pre-colonial practices despite the colonial and post-colonial attempts to suppress this culture. The thesis has also sought to capture different ways in which the elders of Padhola have been able to keep their Indigenous knowledge alive and pass the desire for its continuation to the younger generation. Though the knowledge of the Jopadhola is rather hidden from the public view, it continues to attract some scholars who nevertheless have great interest in what is happening in Padhola. For example, Ogot (1967) has validated the history of clans of Padhola and the establishment of a Luo enclave in the midst of a hostile Bantu terrain. The resilience for continuity by such a distinct minority has something to tell us about the key roles Indigenous knowledge has for decolonization of the global society. In this chapter, I will now analyze some of the ways in which the Jopadhola sustain their Luo identity. Some of the responses of the participants have pedagogical implications for minority or Indigenous students in Western academies and present hope for the transformation of the globalized mainstream education system. Moreover, the processes and context of ancestral and spiritual naming ceremonies form the part of Indigenous knowledge relevant for equipping minority students with counter knowledge for their holistic growth.

The very notion of Indigenousness is not just for interweaving what is already there with something new; it is also about the autonomy of Indigenous knowledge. For example, the resilience and retention of the processes of ancestral and spiritual naming imply that the current
general education must reflect Indigenous people’s identity for it to be relevant. This also implies that learners who are not from European backgrounds must identify and see their culture in what they are being taught, to decolonize the imposing colonial identity in current education. As an Indigenous person, I see that the dominant education system is mainly Eurocentric; it contrasts with the elders’ perspectives because the elders want their own Indigenous education for their children to reflect their culture. Current education, which is mainly Eurocentric, alienates Indigenous learners from their culture, as it is assimilatory in its strategies, pedagogy, and curriculum. Let us look at themes from data findings where I used Indigenous methodology to learn from Indigenous education. Here, then, are elders as custodians and teachers of Indigenous knowledge, with lessons for transforming teaching and learning in current education, whether in Uganda, the area of my research, or Canada, where my academic institution of higher learning is based.

### 6.2 Revisiting Apipili Child Naming Ceremony

Among the Jopadhola Lwo, it is not just the first born child who is celebrated and given names of ancestors in a ceremony called *apipili*; everybody is, in fact, celebrated and accorded their own party for their own ancestral names. People of this culture know that they are loved and cherished. According to elders, all daughters and sons of a given clan are celebrated after the revelation of their ancestral and spiritual names. This is because elders believe that when a child is not welcomed with a ceremony, that person might be sickly. Any home that fails to honour their daughter’s child’s birth will also not receive honour, according to the account of Elder Orio. This implies that children are revered and honoured as ancestors, right from the beginning of their lives. On the other hand, in North America, a member of a minority group, who probably has an Indigenous background, is not revered in the racialized society. With their
background ignored, a descendant of Indigenous people expects to adopt the European culture, leaving almost no room to draw from the benefits of his or her Indigenous culture. Such a trend presents a crisis for learners in the racialized society that does not recognize them in the way they should have been recognized in their own culture. In the dominant culture, Indigenous African children in the diaspora may not have been celebrated because there is little opportunity to learn their culture when the European culture pervades the education system through the curriculum.

In fact, Dei (2010) wrote that relevant education must be anchored in local people’s aspirations, Indigenous cultures and values in order to meet their concerns and has a chance of promoting social and collective development. However, in a system that ignores minorities’ backgrounds when the minorities are treated as non-existent, the question is about the very relevance of such an education system. Experientially, I can connect more with what I am learning when I see myself reflected in the teaching material. When I do not, then I, like any Indigenous student, cannot see why I am taught from the dominant perspective. While among the Indigenous Jopadhola Lwo people, I found that younger people grow up as revered ancestors who are made aware of their responsibilities and expectations from an early age, with norms of the community followed at each stage to maturity. On the other hand, this may not be the same for minority students in the Ontario education system, where it is not uncommon to be treated as potential troublemakers. No doubt, as Dei (2008) has argued, “There are theories that blame racial minorities for their problems rather than critique the structure of schooling and delivery of education” (p. 94). In fact, transformation is a must, but can only come about when there is recognition that dominant education is not culturally relevant for Indigenous learners and, therefore, must be decolonized. Transformation can come when there is more learning from
Indigenous systems of education as valid and competing systems from Indigenous cultures. These cultures are more egalitarian than the Western society, which is more individualistic and oppressive to Indigenous and non-European learners.

On the other hand, pre-colonial knowledge within an Indigenous community actually encourages children to grow up knowing that regardless of their own weaknesses, they are valued when their elders can correct them where they have gone wrong. Indigenous elders want to see the younger generation mature as people who must not only benefit from the knowledge they are being given, but also carry it forward. If all children in the elementary level were exposed early to the existence of minoritized children’s cultural background and values, it could provide a counter strategy to unlearn the racist attitudes prevalent in the global society.

Moreover, the existing dominant systemic or general cultural attitudes towards women in the Ugandan society could be stemmed, if learning institutions gave room to unlearning certain colonial attitudes towards women or their status in the general society by taking lessons from more egalitarian minority communities. For example, the Jopadhola society is built around the Indigenousness of their culture and the customs they practice. It is through their culture—the centre for their mind, soul, and spirit—that they connect with the general Ugandan society.

### 6.3 Example of the Twin Ceremonies and Names

I have looked at the naming ceremony of the first born, *apipili*, and the celebration of the new mother, *tedo minyur*. At both of these ceremonies, children are given ancestral names.

The significance of the twin ceremony is an example of Indigenous functioning counter systems that the people practice. The Euro-North-American society can no longer ignore the roles of Indigenous education; rather, we can all learn lessons from an Indigenous culture—for example, that of the Jopadhola Lwo. Indigenous cultures are usually treated as “primitive” and
studied only to facilitate altruistic measures for them (Mogensen, 2002). However, such a dominant worldview has probably yet to accept the functions of the Indigenous culture in nurturing the people, though written about as “primitive.” Learning and accepting the functions and roles of Indigenous cultures has the answers for decolonization in the current globally organized society. Dei and Asgharzadeh (2006) have said, “Indigenous knowledges offer a discursive space to interrogate the process of decolonization and also how we speak about multiple knowing and resist academic and intellectual closure about our understandings” (p. 59). Coming from such cultures, Indigenous learners are bound to find themselves deep inside a strange cultural enclosure that denies them the Indigenous education, which is holistic for the mind, body, and soul (see Falola, 2003).

The lesson one can learn from the twin ceremony among the Jopadhola and other Lwo speaking people is that Indigenous Africans have cultural values that defy colonization, and the people still practice their customs and Indigenous religion. For example, though the Baganda Christian “teachers” acting as colonial agents helped the British burn the religious shrines of Padhola, later Ogot (1972) found that the shrines have been rebuilt, and Padhola regard Christianity as a “conquest religion” that they have steadfastly resisted (p. 133). The Jopadhola have consistently resisted colonial manoeuvres by maintaining a parallel education system that is in competition with the European system that they regard as ruthless (Ogot, 1972). The maintenance of a parallel religion and Indigenous education has lessons for the decolonization of current education because as Eurocentric education is hardly relevant to Indigenous learners.

Therefore, Indigenous cultures are not just about hunger, constant famine, laziness, or lack of technology warranting an intervention for correction. From the Jopadhola as a self-sufficient Indigenous society, one learns that cultural ceremonies require a lot of food and drink,
all catered for locally. In order to have food and drink, such an Indigenous society has all the cultural structures for food production and storage. Food sufficiency is demonstrated as every Padhola home plans for granaries to store different kinds of grain for their consumption. There is also a structure of preventing famine through the harvest ceremony of nyangoe led by girls as priests and leaders. In fact, Ocholla-Ayayo (1980) listed almost 14 categories of granaries, each built for the storage of different foods and grains. Among the Lwo, surplus food is for consumption and for ceremonies around the year, including ceremonies for twins and ancestral naming of children. The giving of gifts by the whole community where twins are born and celebrated signals a society organized on continuing Indigenous norms and values. The methods that members of the Jopadhola society use in food sufficiency for their ceremonies is a lesson all can learn from to decolonize the dominant education that conditions everyone’s minds to think in the same way.

Moreover, the generosity required from the ceremonial father of the twins signifies a society where, when one person is known to have a little more than others, the norm is that his wealth is shared with the whole community (Ochola-Ayayo, 1980; see also Dei, 2006). In the choosing of the ceremonial father of twins in kwer yao rut, is the recognition that the person has something that the community members can all share to rejoice in welcoming the birth of the twins, which Oboth Ofumbi (1960) has also written about in Lwo. Moreover, in the Jopadhola society, twins are considered vulnerable until they are cleansed, as mentioned by Elders Orio and Walamo, Aluwo-Jaryo, and Nyaburu, among others.

Some literature has been written about Africans generally murdering or throwing away their twins because of superstition as in instances during the late 20th century in Onitsha (Bastian, 2001). Similarly, pioneer female missionary Mary Slessor is reputed for the early 20th
century stopping of the murder of twins in Calabar in Nigeria. Buchan (1980) has contended that it was because of Slessor’s “anger at the way unwanted babies were thrown into the bush to die, and twins always killed and their mother driven out [of] the tribe that women would first live independent of men in Calabar” (p. 55). However, such instances reflect the nature of birth that required only a ceremony instead of throwing away twins as a ritual. The culture of a people or what the people do with it does not warrant colonization or the replacement of a whole people’s culture with another one. Elder Jazak has rightly said that if there is anything wrong in our culture, we will leave it ourselves, and it is not necessary that a person from another culture come and tell us what to do.

Moreover, if Africans were generally thought of as murderers of twins, the Jopadhola Lwo Indigenous society provides a counter view that twins are, in fact, accorded lavish ceremonies. The fact that twins are celebrated in Padhola can help many scholars to rethink Indigenous African societies and consider a worldview that is less prejudiced and begin learning about other civilizations. Learning about minority cultures should also help the global community not to dismiss the magnitude of the consequences of the dissemination of knowledge that has generally denied them “authentic” knowledge about Indigenous cultures (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008). Ocholla-Ayayo (1980) provided an example about visual learning and said of learning by observation:

A carpenter may mentally construct a stool with four semi-curved similar sized round legs, a symmetrical or circular seat, perhaps decorated in a specific way and recognized by all adults of the society. This is a chair we have never seen and cannot possibly see. An experienced child in his early stages of learning may be asked to draw the chair and will make futile attempts to represent it in this way, and recognized by all the adults of the society. This is a chair we have never seen and cannot possibly have seen. An experienced adult with a long training and practical skill and long observation may not make such a mistake. In his mind he has a full concept of the form of the Luo chair, and in reproducing it he thinks of his mental construction which controls his manipulating hands. (p. 7)
What Ocholla-Ayayo is saying is that everybody needs early access to training from their cultural education, obtained experientially, via observing, living, and learning their culture to conceptualize with their mind what they are going to do with their hands. However, if people are denied the opportunity to learn and observe from within their culture, the mental construction they form is from a cultural perspective other than their own.

Learning methods among the Indigenous people can include inherited knowledge, like pottery, or knowledge obtained through an extended family institution, social organization, overt techniques, and normative beliefs, all aimed at providing a practical education similar to that of the general Luo-speaking people (Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976). Indigenous education, therefore, can be said to be broad, but in the end, it covers all the basics and shapes the whole person through traditional institutions that Indigenous learners and others can relate to. Similarly, Toure (1979) has said, “Knowledge always precedes understanding and it is not unusual to observe that, if a fact, a phenomenon, an action or a thought is to be well understood, it must first be well known” (p. 203). Therefore, to decolonize current formal education, a counter knowledge from Indigenous systems of education or the thoughts of Indigenous people must be shared, as Toure has suggested above.

For too long, even the popular media has played a part in stifling the flow of Indigenous African knowledge where theorists, such as Toure (1979), despite their Indigeneity, are better off portrayed as “dictators,” perhaps bankrupt of any information worth learning from. Other anti-colonial Indigenous theorists who have put their knowledge about the African condition into practice, such as Nkrumah (1998) on “Consciencism,” have not been portrayed any better, but rather are ignored in the West. Despite all the challenges of mutation because of negative publicity, Toure emphasized that “the object of public information must be to convey to a given
society the facts of life of that society and of other societies, to popularize their intellectual
concepts, to reflect their activities” (p. 203). Making Indigeneity more salient and visible in
discourse is a strategy that targets dominant education for decolonization, since Indigenous
discourse is one that is accessible to all for expanding resistance to epistemological oppression.

6.4 *Njawala: Foreign Names as Twigs*

The way knowledge has been disseminated and availed to students in institutions of
learning has helped perpetuate colonialism and racism. The resistance that transpired during
encounters between Indigenous Africans and Europeans is conspicuously absent in the majority
of texts in most learning institutions. On the other hand, Cabral (1970) has contended that:

> The study of the history of national liberation struggles shows that generally these
struggles are preceded by an increase in expressions of culture, consolidated
progressively into a successful or unsuccessful attempt to affirm the cultural personality
of the dominated people, as a means of negating the oppressor culture. (p. 5)

When the study of liberation struggles or Black history is not regarded as a teaching material in
the curriculum, especially in a typical Western classroom, children or students from colonized
backgrounds are subjected to assimilation when learning what is not culturally relevant to them.

Dei (2010) has rightly noted that “certain forms of knowledge have traditionally been devalued
and denied access into the educational system even though such knowledge holds lessons for
change” (p. 34). Common experiences show that it is an uphill task to publish a journal that tries
to tackle the reproduction of Western-centred knowledge. Journals that are popularly published
mainly reproduce what Dei (2010) contends are “European values, ideas, norms and practices
that reign as valid and supreme” (p. 16). This is because what is published is still mainstream
material, usually more easily marketable to the general Euro-North American readers. Moreover,
the history of grievances or how colonized places were colonized has also not been popular
material for publication. If anything is published about colonialism, it is more about European triumphalism over or altruism to some tribal people, whereas the agency of Indigenous people is usually totally dismissed (Mogensen, 2002). Molefi Asante (1999) has provocatively pointed out that “in the West, almost all the knowledge about Africa is Eurocentric, that is, it has been mediated or delivered by white Westerners for the purpose of fitting Africa into the European world” (p. 26). While it is good to know that there is continual interest in knowledge about Africa as the “cradle of mankind,” it is also fair to note that what is written for general literature is actually Eurocentric, and this necessitates decolonization by rethinking Indigenous African knowledge.

Let me now bring a discussion on the impact of colonialism on Indigenous African names and Indigenous views on this theme. Let us revisit briefly the scenario whereby the British colonization policy used “Christianization” to try to displace the culture of Indigenous people and impose a new colonial identity on them.

In fact, even though baptismal names were supposed to be obligatory, the Jopadhola had distaste for them because they saw them as religiously trying to usurp the revered ancestral and spiritual names. Jopadhola elders were adamant that they would never let the foreign religion usurp their revered ancestral and spiritual names. In resistance to the British policy, participants Askofu-Ripa, his elder brother 90-year-old Mzee Orango, and participant Nyaburu talk about the concept of njawala, the twig, and compare baptismal and foreign names to twigs growing on a tree with no roots. The foreign names could not replace local names, as they are not considered names at all because they are not celebrated. The Jopadhola resisted the British policy by refusing to identify with the baptismal names and compared them with njawala, or a twig that is greatly despised. The Jopadhola also reverted to the concept of thene thene by not allowing the
colonial administrators to know their secrets, hence thene thene. From the interviews, it is observable that there are baptismal names out there, but the Jopadhola, when asked what their names are, they will give you their Indigenous birth and ancestral names as the first and last names for their identity. They maintain that a baptismal name is but “a twig or parasite which comes to feed on the tree.” Elders regard the current education system as conflicting with and contradictory to their Indigenous education. The elders want to see change in the current education system in Uganda and insist on having a say in what must be taught to children.

According to the elders, the schools that Indigenous children attend are mainly church founded, where teaching is structured on the foreign British system, which leaves almost no room for Indigenous education. The formal education system is, therefore, not relevant in the elders’ perspective and must be decolonized.

Askofu-Ripa laments that the type of education that the British introduced advocates for the abandonment of the Jopadhola’s pre-colonial ways of life and is, therefore, not good because it alienates children from their culture. The Jopadhola Indigenous people must be able to impart their knowledge to their children through Indigenous education. Elders want their knowledge documented and promoted and taught, now and in the future, instead of teaching what contradicts Indigenous education. The Indigenous people who travel overseas are advised not to accept everything foreign, but only certain values, if any, that are compatible with Indigenous ways of life. What the Indigenous Africans already detest in foreign culture is not worth importing to the local people. Indigenous people must not forsake the values of their culture, even if they are abroad, but instead must use Indigenous knowledge to build their lives, remain independent, and continue with their identity. Indigenous knowledge is, therefore, an equipper for learners for their legitimate transformation away from the British colonial identity.
perpetuated as a colonial legacy through formal education. Similarly, Indigenous people must take seriously narratives from their elders and not think that these narratives are not scientific.

When African Americans are influenced by what they have read about their ancestors “being sold into slavery” by their African kin in the dominant literature, the narratives of octogenarians, who themselves heard earlier narratives from their grandparents, are viable means to correct these distortions. In fact, in rethinking the value of Indigenous knowledge, most of our authentic history can be retold through narratives carried forward for the decolonization of current education. The resistance to racism that minoritized Black bodies, engaged in daily in North America (Dei, 2007), is synonymous with the resistance to colonial racism or the segregation that female Elder Akayo elaborately describes in her account. African Americans have this empowering counter narrative to learn from and not just the history of the conquest of an Africa without any pre-colonial knowledge, governance, culture, or identity. The dominant dissemination of knowledge degrades Indigenous knowledge and denies learners invaluable knowledge.

6.5 Holism and the Relevancy of Education

Indigenous knowledge cannot be limited to only a few practices, since it broadly emanates from ancient cultures. It is a holistic education with the potential to decolonize formal education. It has already been shown that when Indigenous people came into contact with the white colonialists, there was racism against them, straight away followed by resistance. Moreover, in the Western world, it is common to honour World War II veterans. However, to my surprise, many of the elders interviewed are also World War II veterans, who shared their Indigenous knowledge about warfare with European soldiers during campaigns that included diverse minority racial groups.
In Canada, there are functions where war veterans are honoured, and it is good that they are honoured. However, such functions are also sites of mutation of knowledge or history about Indigenous people, especially when they are not mentioned. It is, however, treated as normal not to mention any input of colonized people, regardless of the presence of the descendants of Indigenous Africans and other minorities at such functions. Without the mention of Blacks, Africans, or other Indigenous veterans and minorities, there is the potential for discrimination, especially if only the bravery of white veterans is emphasized at the expense of the minorities’ input. Whereas, the practice has been to honour brave men and women for having fought against fascism, Nazism, and other forces that brought insecurity to the whole world, when people of colour are not mentioned, whether they were victims of the war or combatants in defeating the negative forces, it leaves people of colour flabbergasted and broken in spirit.

A statement by World War II veteran Wuod-Nyampala—“Let them shoot me but I will not drop my ancestral name”—signifies Indigenous Africans’ will to retain their identity. Elder Wuod-Nyampala also narrates that during their time of service in World War II, their colleagues, the white soldiers, used to gather around them to learn from their Indigenous strategies for the frontline. During the war, the white soldiers also treated the Black soldiers as equal; they ate together and lived together in the same quarters without segregation, at least in Abyssinia, Egypt (Misr), and Libya during active combat in the military.

Another elder, participant Orango, himself a World War II veteran, has said that when the whites came to Padhola, “They saw us as we were.” Although his statement is short, it has a lot of other statements attached to it. In Orango’s own words, “Jo-makwar joneno wan paka wanitye,” which implies that the white people “found us practicing our culture.” It also means that the colonial interventionists found well established and functioning structures in this
Indigenous society. It was from such an encounter that the colonial administrators started bringing in their own ideas as “better” through schools to teach more about Europe as a place to be emulated. Not all of the white man’s education has been accepted on bended knees because of the presence of an Indigenous education system usually practiced as informal. For example, Askofu-Ripa says that some European administrators killed Ngesi and other people in Nagongera for refusing to work with them. The Europeans also brought the Baganda to try to kill the Lwo language of the Jopadhola, but the Jopadhola militarily fought them. According to Askofu-Ripa, “We fought them and they went away slowly. Many of them are no longer in our villages. They had some influence, yes, but they did not change our identity.” Indigenous people continue to criticize and resist current education and its relevancy for their children because violence is its foundation.

Elder Orango says,

If we could practice our own way of life instead of following someone else’s everything, all would be fine. If it is possible, we want Europeans to leave our children to us to give them our education to correct the wrongs.

By “Europeans,” Elder Orango means the current educational system in Uganda introduced by the British to replace the Indigenous education as the formal education. Indigenous education is practiced on a parallel pattern, but is now referred to as informal education. Though their education has been rendered informal, Indigenous Africans are the majority in Uganda. However, even though the Indigenous people are the majority in the country, the curriculum is “hooked” to British structures that offer mainly Eurocentric education as formal education. Education needs an overhaul to reflect the Indigenous identity for its relevancy.

The “wrongs” in the Indigenous society that Elder Orango is talking about is the Europeanizing of the minds of their children, to the extent that there is a conflict between what
elders want taught to the younger generations vis a vis the emphasis on foreign education at the expense of Indigenous education. Indigenous education has been preserved and is available, but the curriculum that is mainly alien is what pervades the learning institutions. We can draw similarities between the Ugandan education system and the Canadian curriculum that emphasizes the current Euro-centred education system that has yet to value the Indigenous knowledge of native Canadians or their perspectives as part of a positive strategy to bring about equity for minorities.

The statements of Indigenous elders draw attention to how dissemination and emphasis on knowledge from the dominant culture sustain an oppressive curriculum globally, especially in countries colonized by European powers. Fanon (1963/2004) argued for a new consciousness rekindled through oral storytellers and said,

At another level, oral literature, tales, epics and popular songs previously classified and frozen in time, begin to change. The storytellers who recited inert episodes revive them and introduce increasingly fundamental changes. . . . The storyteller once again gives free reign to his imagination, innovates, and turns creator. (p. 174)

In regard to what Fanon has said, connections can be made to the narratives and stories told by female participants Aluwo-Jaryo and Aguga about the successes of a traditional birth attendant Ms. Kingilo and how one can get anointed for such a profession. In post-colonial Uganda, typical students will have been taught many foreign ghost stories or fairy tales in schools, but little about what is happening in their Indigenous society; thus, they will have to learn mainly informally about their own society. For example, before completing high school, most Ugandan students will at least have read or heard about The Fall of House of Usher, a Euro-American ghost story by Edgar Allan Poe (1839). In Padhola, elders have already observed that apparently Eurocentric knowledge is supposed to be “the knowledge.” However, the knowledge of yamo or the escort of yamo away from a village to chase away an epidemic as knowledge that children in the village
ought to grow up knowing, or the functions that their parents participated in, is never taught in school or even considered relevant teaching material. With an emphasis placed on Western-centric curriculum as more scientific and the spiritual part of education emphasizing mainly Christianity over Indigenous beliefs that are deemed *kaflir* or pagan, Indigenous education is practiced out of the limelight or underground. In fact, that is how a participant tries to discredit a narrative about *yamo* but is overruled by the majority of the female participants. The scenario of African storytelling, however, connects with a phenomenon of the “frozen knowledge” that since the 1960s and 70s is now breaking out for a new consciousness (Fanon, 1963/2004).

During the interview, Elder Aluwo-Jaryo reveals that Indigenous people’s way of life that seeks spiritual solutions from fortune tellers, or *jotwodo*, has usually been regarded as “unscientific” or “sinful” and forbidden by the church since the British colonial era of oppression, but those rules have never really succeeded in stopping the people from consulting their area seers for solutions to spiritual problems as this practice defiantly continues. Dei (2008) has elaborately noted that “spirituality is a site of resistance in the pursuit of anti-racist teaching, political practice and transgression” (p. 68). The Jopadhola already have a laid-down foundation for the continuation of their pre-colonial practices in defiance of colonization. This defiance is, retrospectively, a holistic measure for healing traumas that minority students go through as the curriculum diminishes their own background by not teaching their history or acknowledging the presence of members of other cultures in learning institutions. However, the presence of minority students can only be recognized when their cultures are reflected in the curriculum. Something away from the familiar brainwashing offers not just equity, but also counter knowledge for solutions to racial oppression through the curriculum. For wholeness, an Indigenous or minority student needs less of the dominant and more of the minority. Even the very knowledge that the
escort of yamo goes on in the villages, for Indigenous students in the diaspora or Black students as descendants of Indigenous Africans, is refreshing and uplifting. As a researcher, I found the knowledge that our pre-colonial ways are going on uplifting. Such knowledge, for example, about yamo is usually so greatly fetishized to Indigenous students, to the extent that they would rather have nothing to do with it, even where African cultures have outlived European colonization.

6.6 Nyangoe Ceremony and the Status of Women

The women’s status, which is relatively higher within Jopadhola society, is determined by their culture. For example, at the child naming ceremony of apipili, participant Elder Orio agrees in the presence of women that it is mostly women who give the children ancestral names, with women leading in organizing the ceremonies or parties for celebrating children as ancestors. When Elder Orio admits that it is women who are the leaders of a ceremony where men are invited, the prolonged laughter from the women in the audience indicates that even the very clear-cut roles for women symbolize their high status as leaders in this area. The ceremony of ngor or nyangoe is led exclusively by young women as priests to chase away famine from the Jopadhola Indigenous society. The leading role of women as priests is something accepted and respected in this Indigenous society. If students were allowed access to such knowledge right from high school, the mutual respect exercised in the Indigenous society for one another could result in boys and girls gaining the counter knowledge to transform their thinking or how they look at other minorities in the society. Therefore, access to counter knowledge at a young age can help in fighting gender as well as racial prejudices right from the Indigenous learning institutions. Teachers, too, might want to use such counter knowledge to rethink their
epistemological approaches to transform how they teach their students in a typical classroom where minorities are present.

In the Jopadhola society, cooked food connects women to all children, and withholding food from children when they come to someone’s home is considered selfish and not tolerated. Children in any clan have a right to go for lunch to any family in the Jopadhola society, with mothers expected to give food to visiting children along with their own children. This does not require prior notice. Even if a woman has not yet had a child, she is still expected to feed children in the extended family, where individualism is selfishness and, therefore, discouraged. Food is considered an entitlement for children in any home during meal times in the Jopadhola Indigenous society.

On the other hand, the ceremonies that girls organize, for example nyangoe, tell us about the status of women as relatively high in the Jopadhola society. I find that in the structures of this Indigenous society, women exhibit more freedom and a higher status than what the traditional social science models or perspectives usually portray. These models, however, have not gone deep enough in recognizing pre-colonial practices maintained by Indigenous people. Indeed, this counter knowledge about Indigenous women or their status has something for feminists concerning the status of women, especially those from the Judeo-Christian background. The status of Indigenous African girls participating in the harvest ceremony of nyangoe is actually that of leadership. These girls organize nyangoe activities outdoors, where they are the society’s leaders in ensuring the desired bumper harvest, symbolizing their competencies as priests.

With the preservation of Indigenous values, there is also the saliency of the role of women working together with sexual minorities. Female participant Acoko, widowed at only 42, has not remarried and has not been traditionally “inherited” by her in-laws, but lives and works
within the community, drawing support from the extended family and clan. The relatively independent status of Indigenous women has seen Elder Acoko introduce the cooperation between male sexual minorities and the women in their daily chores. For example, the Nyasigweli works together with women in the threshing of millet, fetching water for women, and build beautiful houses for themselves in the homestead. Acoko also reveals how sexual minorities benefit from an arrangement of a “marriage” within the community, which enables them to parent children who are given ancestral and spiritual names as members of a clan without discrimination. Sexuality in Padhola or how they handle it is an education followed normatively. There is no persecution of Nyasigweli anywhere in Padhola, as they have total security as members of their respective clans.

Such counter knowledge about sexual minorities available in the Jopadhola society is quite gentle and humane and may extricate minorities sometimes implicated in homophobia in the North American society when they invoke this knowledge. In the culture of the Jopadhola, sexual minorities are independent and full members of the society. That sexual minorities socialize freely, as they go to the same clubs as other people and purchase their alcohol with their own money, speaks of a Japadhola society that sustains its complex social systems.

Focus on the Indigenous way of handling sexual minorities annuls the targeting of Black communities for their homophobia. Indigenous education can be realized when the interviewee is as well the researcher, which gives access to counter knowledge about the sexual minority (see Smith, 1999). Indigenous elders re-produce counter knowledge that defies colonial education, which in turn, exposit the discourse for anti-colonialism and anti-racism for an Indigenous worldview.
An Indigenous worldview, therefore, is the hope for every knower to regain their right to equity in the society. A society that emphasizes only the dominant perspectives for disseminating knowledge subjects the field of education to more than 500 years of the same colonizing system, which is monotonous and oppressive. However, as Dei (2010) has already said, “Critical education ought to rupture historical ‘master narratives’ as deposited through the colonial will” (p. xv). The authentic narratives of the elders, therefore, make the colonial will obsolete. The Indigenous methodology is the viable alternative to master narratives because the Indigenous people through their narratives see themselves as the masters of their own destiny. The Indigenous worldview is also not only for just analyzing the colonizing tendencies valorizing the dominant Euro-North-American society culture; it actually brings with it a workable counter knowledge through which to rethink our racialized world. The current dissemination of knowledge is traumatizing because the hidden force that reproduces the dominant ideologies systemically represses the knowledge of the minorities with emphasis on only one form of knowledge.
Chapter 7
Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I conclude the findings and the significance of the study and give recommendations for future directions for more comprehensive research among Indigenous people. I also summarize the origins of the Jopadhola and the study.

From the elders’ accounts, the Jopadhola have had tremendous anti-colonial and anti-racist struggles and encounters with the British colonial administration that first established the current formal education in the country. Despite the colonial administration, the Jopadhola managed to retain their identity. The experiences and oral narratives that the Jopadhola elders have shared are mainly for the younger generation to continue to preserve who they are and resist and question the relevancy of current education as colonially oriented and hostile to their Indigenous heritage.

Oboth Ofumbi (1960) has written about his heart’s desire that every Japadhola must know their heritage and who their people are. His concern, like that of many elders, is that because of foreign influence and travels, the Jopadhola might forget their culture or how they identify themselves, thus *kula gi tim mawan*. According to Oboth Ofumbi, “Younger generations are learning and are seemingly happy with foreign ways instead of our own” (p. iv), which is a great concern to Jopadhola elders.

Whereas elders are concerned about the younger people, the naming practices, especially the ancestral names, are going on, and the culture of the Jopadhola will go on. This is because the Jopadhola still give their children ancestral and spiritual names with ceremonies thriving,
Despite the concern that the younger generation is considerably watering down some of the ritual ceremonies, especially the *apipili* ceremony for the first-born children and other customs. The fact that mothers now decide to have their children in the hospitals, resulting in some frequent violations of the ceremony, must not mean that cultural requirements have been abandoned, as cultural institutions and practices are still zealously guarded. In fact *kwer* requirement for a child to spend four days indoors for a girl or three days for a boy before the *apipili* ceremony is still very much part of the Jopadhola community as a spiritual affair that has been preserved and must not be abandoned. Giving birth in the hospital should not be a reason for abandoning *apipili*. The community can work a way out whereby the children are given their due ceremonies so that the custom is not phased. It is the neglect of these spiritually and culturally important ceremonies that fosters colonial identities in the younger generation. Therefore, not even a child born in the hospital should be exposed to the outside world before the naming ceremony. Similarly, the ceremony celebrating the birth and naming of twins called *yao rut* must still be upheld to ensure that the cleansing of the twins goes on forever.

The lack of these ceremonies could be the reason Indigenous children have problems with their emotions because this was also usually healed through other ceremonies within the Jopadhola society. When people dance during these ceremonies, it is to make someone whole, and it works for both emotional and spiritual healing as well for one to be fully socially accepted in the Jopadhola society. Therefore, the lack of ceremony affects people emotionally in the same way the lack of ceremony for the twins will have health consequences, and that is why the people themselves still uphold the ceremonies.

The Jopadhola in the diaspora must also continue observing the ceremonies because welcoming children the Indigenous way is what keeps them whole with their Indigenous identity.
intact. The diaspora for the Jopadhola could even mean children born in other parts of the country and brought up there without being accorded their due ceremonies to welcome their birth, their ancestral names, and full knowledge to understand their culture. The Jopadhola elders have not denied that they reluctantly took baptismal names for themselves or that they do take their children for baptism in the Anglican or Catholic churches. However, despite all that, Christianization was originally resisted or is still resisted in the culture as alien by the majority of the Jopadhola who go to churches, but do not identify themselves as Christian. Ogot (1972, p. 133) noted that the Jopadhola go to church as a fashionable practice, but still firmly revert to the “old testament” of their ancestors. This old testament is what elders share out of love for the younger generation who must themselves give it to the next generation.

On interviewing the Jopadhola elders, I found that they believe it is not wrong to occasionally attend a church, as long as this spirituality is based on Padhola cultural norms that ensure their Indigenous identity. Researchers in Padhola and those who venture into Indigenous societies are, therefore, advised to engage the elders for their knowledge and consult them with sincerity on how their collective knowledge is to be disseminated for an Indigenous worldview that defines their very existence. Elders must be listened to.

However, contrary to the expectations of elders, education for Indigenous learners is now colonial. Fanon (1963/2004) argued that the establishment of colonialism was an attempt to rally African or other colonized people against each other by uncovering the existence of “spiritual” rivalries. Before that, these spiritual rivalries were usually minimal and could be handled by the Indigenous people through their own education and institutions. However, these minimal rivalries were usually exacerbated by the colonizer to justify the establishment of colonial education. For example, when the Jopadhola talk about how the establishment of Christianity by
missionaries supported by the colonial government went about burning Padhola shrines using Baganda teachers or catechists, they view such interventions with resentment as racist and insulting to their culture. Moreover, the burning of an Indigenous people’s shrines, an anchor within Indigenous culture from where elders drew moral power to educate generations of their children, angers them exceedingly. It is through the sharing of Indigenous knowledge that the violence of colonization is exposed. This is because, in all probability, the burning of a people’s holy place, which symbolizes their spiritual genesis, is an act of extreme provocation through violence that dehumanizes the colonizer himself (Memmi, 1967; Ogot, 1967, 1972). It is therefore not amusing for the Jopadhola to see researchers valorize Christianity over their Indigenous culture in their publications or forums that do not usually accept counter knowledge as scientific.

It is poor research for Western researchers to go to an Indigenous community like that of Padhola and study them from their own perspectives because they almost learn nothing from the culture of the people. They must first decolonize the traditional social science model if they are to learn from other cultures. Reading what researchers write, it is apparent that many hold pre-determined views. For example, when Abel and Richters (2009) overly focused on what they called the Jopadhola women’s “subordinate” position or the community’s “poverty” they missed out on the richness of the culture and Indigenous education, since the people will not have shared anything with them. On the other hand, it is the people’s Indigenous knowledge that problematizes formal European education for its lack of relevance to Indigenous children since it is colonial. Such a disconnection coupled with the oppression of formal education must not be overlooked by maintaining the status quo in the way research is conducted among Indigenous people.
Sometimes it is good to find out the mood or the attitude of the people towards researchers or how the Indigenous people regard them as those who reinforce colonial education and decolonize one’s own attitudes in the study field. Ogot (1967) has said that the attitude of Padhola is best reflected in their monotheist religion, which rejects colonization (see also Ogot, 1972). When Indigenous people rebuild their shrines that colonialism and Christianity attempted to destroy, it is definitely inaccurate to define them as “predominantly Christian” as Mogensen (2002) did. It is more of a misrepresentation because foreign names as symbols representing Christianization are not recognized as names among the Jopadhola Lwo people. Moreover, though baptismal names in Padhola are sometimes used, they are frowned upon as njawala. In their narratives, the Jopadhola elders talk about actual military battles that their people had to fight in order to preserve their identity and their “Luo Enclave” that Padhola is today.

Ogot (1967) also cited Jopadhola elders who talk about a major battle that the Jopadhola fought with the Maasai or Josewe at Matindi Fort. The other battles that the Jopadhola fought were with other neighbouring ethnic groups, such as the Jomisowa who are the Bagisu and the Omwa, the Banyole who aligned with Baganda or Jong’aya or Magere against them. The attacks on the Jopadhola went on until they ended at the feast of friendship almost 12 generations ago at Merekit, which brought about the current peaceful co-existence that the Jopadhola have with their neighbours. The Baganda were not at the feast of Merekit since they come from across Kiyira River (the Nile) and are not neighbours of the Jopadhola, but the Jopadhola had encounters with them more as adversaries than as friends. It is quite visible throughout Padhola that the Lwo, a minority that is eager to safeguard their identity in an enclave, make their culture attractive to the people who come to them, but are themselves extremely careful not to be assimilated by the Bantu-speaking neighbours.
Crazzolara (1950) has talked about the general Luo expansion through assimilation into clans of people from neighbouring ethnic groups or cultures. The assimilation of other people into Padhola is gradual and sometimes through inter-ethnic marriages, whereby the Lwo culture attracts neighbours who eventually start giving their children Jopadhola names. The spiritual element is evident through the Lwo shrines or *kuunu* that dot Padhola, and those who settle in Padhola also get revelations for their children’s names and start giving them Padhola names almost immediately. The neighbours eventually end up worshipping Lwo spirits, which compounds their assimilation. The Jopadhola will never easily copy another people’s culture, especially if such a culture has certain practices that violate their *kwer*, according to Elder Walamo, which Oboth Ofumbi (1960) has also talked about. *Kwer* is a concept that does not have a direct meaning in English, but is connected to a taboo or a strict rule that concerns a spiritually stipulated order that must not be broken. If broken, there are some serious lifelong spiritual consequences. *Kwer* is practiced in such a way that rules must strictly follow what Ogot (1972) referred to as the Jopadhola “Old Testament.” Therefore, any Jopadhola who breaks *kwer* may as well seek cleansing. The Jopadhola’s younger generation are better off knowing their *kwer* first and also unlearning alien values of Eurocentrism because they are of no benefit to them compared with the knowledge that is their privilege from their ancestors. Already the Jopadhola as Lwo have higher numbers of food taboos that they must observe compared with their neighbours. They are, therefore, better off if they know their *kwer* right from a young age to avoid consequences that could lead to their ostracization for violating the norms of the culture.

In the naming practice, the Jopadhola pay allegiance to their ancestors who elders insist must never be forgotten and will not be forgotten, because they still speak to the people through Juok. Ancestors do not really die, as they are immortalized continually by naming children after
them in respective Padhola clans. In fact, the Jopadhola refer to the ancestors in the present tense. Parents of children usually have the presence of ancestors in their midst among children named for parents, grand-parents, great-grandparents, great-uncles, great clan matriarchs, clan patriarchs, or other relatives, all maintaining their omnipresence. Ancestors choose and compete over newborn children’s names and communicate their wishes to the living through dreams and revelations, either directly or through seers of the community.

From the narratives, Jopadhola elders insist on the perpetual continuation of the ancestral and spiritual naming practice, and I also see that the ancestral names will not come to an end as long as children are revered as ancestors in Padhola. Elders are, however, resentful towards the impacts of formal education that is making the younger generation disrespectful to elders. They attribute this state of disrespect to the emphasis on Eurocentric education and foreign ways of life over Indigenous ways. The curriculum in schools of Uganda must undergo reforms, but this is slow, even though there is a realization that children are better off taught in their mother tongues at the foundational level.

It is clear that among the Jopadhola, Indigenous education has been discomfited and violently forced underground. The memories of colonial agents killing Indigenous people who did not want to work with them are still fresh in Padhola. The colonialists, for example, killed Ngesi, an elder and a leader in Nagongera, for refusing to work with them. That is enough indication that violence defines current formal education, right from the time of its inception from the colonial era up to this day. Jopadhola elders narrate instant white racism against Black people on contact with the colonial administration in their district, whereby Indigenous names were deemed *kaffir* or pagan. Both female and male elders have talked about colonial racism targeting their identity. It is, therefore, despicable to take on the colonial identity as one’s own,
because this erases the Indigenous person’s very existence. In countering racism against Indigenous people, World War II veteran Wuod-Nyampala shares counter knowledge that at the World War II campaign in Abyssinia, white soldiers respected Blacks and lived in the same quarters. But this friendship among soldiers from colonizing countries and the colonized also unmasks the fallacy of racism and the double standards of colonialism. It is now clear that the war that started in the European continent unequivocally depended on African input and African allies to fight the enemy.

On the other hand, the narratives of resistance to foreign religion also tell us how colonial agents taught the Jopadhola Christian religion, not only in a foreign language, but also in the language of their local adversaries in a cruel colonizing process. However, resistance to colonization saw the Jopadhola close churches on a Christmas day. They followed the Christmas day resistance with the rebuilding of Indigenous shrines previously burned down by colonial agents. By “teaching” a strange religion in a strange language, the colonialists handed the Jopadhola the opportunity to resist and reject Christian religion by refusing to convert and continue concentrating firmly on the religion of their forefathers. While Christianity in Uganda stipulated the giving of baptismal names, the Jopadhola ancestors continued revealing their own names through dreams and spirit possession, with local seers confirming suitable ancestral names for children undeterred. The naming ceremonies, including those for twins, also continue to this day.

The findings call for a return to pre-colonial structures of the community as redemptive for Jopadhola identity for the younger and future generations. Moreover, along with naming ceremonies, sacrifices are offered to the deity at shrines and altars within the homesteads for general protection. In that way, the Jopadhola go to great extents culturally to protect themselves
from foreign impositions. Lately, the Jopadhola have become a people very attractive to researchers. However, their mistrust of foreign education, and what foreign researchers end up writing about them only increases their resolve to remain protective of their Indigenous knowledge and education. More of this protection relates to when they speak, so that the younger generation hears and learns invaluable knowledge from the elders. The protection of Indigenous knowledge in the community does not mean that the Jopadhola do not share their knowledge with the world. For example, Udoyo tells me, “You are of the world,” but still shares knowledge with me for me to pass it on. It is the subjugation of their knowledge, especially through distortions, that they resist more. Abdi (2006) has correctly contended that:

Colonialism technically annulled African systems of learning by hastening systematic devaluation of African epistemes and epistemologies, complemented by the outright distortion of Indigenous and hitherto ongoing programs of mental and material development and set the stage for using education not as an instrument of human progress, but as a tool for establishing and sustaining the project of colonialism. (p. 15)

In as much as current colonial education is for the sustenance of the colonial project, throughout my experiences during the study, I have realized that the Jopadhola have the tendency and also the means to check the researcher for their attitudes linked to the distortion of their knowledge. Though not usually written about positively in dominant perspectives, especially by development researchers and certain mainstream gender activists, women in the Padhola community have invaluable, situated Indigenous knowledge to share. We hear from Elders Acoko about sexuality, or Akayo on racism against Indigenous people, or the consequences of colonial education for Indigenous children from Aluwo-Jaryo. It must be seen that Indigenous women’s roles as educators are actually revolutionary for decolonizing current formal education as one that mainly reflects patriarchy. To do away with any kind of domination in the education sector, Indigenous women’s roles and status as educators must be reclaimed as a
transforming paradigm for colonial education. In fact, Toure (1979) nostalgically remembered how:

Generally in African societies matriarchy conferred [to] women a paramount social and even political role whereby the participation of women in the economic, social, and cultural life used to be no less than [that] of men, while in family life she enjoyed full authority to care for the interests of the family and educate the children. (p. 263)

Among the Jopadhola, the role of family matriarchs has really never ceased. Although overshadowed in formal education, the Jopadhola usually take seriously the role of family matriarchs in educating the society and listen to them as much as they listen to male elders.

Female elders are also generally more open and are at the forefront in promoting equity in their society within the normative gender roles. For example, a female elder discusses the sexuality of Nyasigweli because women are allies with sexual minorities and in a position to share knowledge about how they live their lives. Therefore, while doing a study among the Jopadhola women, a new generation of scholars must leave behind the usual Eurocentric altruistic attitude. If not, researchers end up not learning from the Jopadhola women when they withhold knowledge since they can refuse to talk. Indigenous women prefer not to talk than to say something demeaning to their culture, which is treacherous to their identity. Vrasidas and McIsaac (1999, p. 97) gave an example whereby a Japadhola woman interviewee gives “a very short answer or simply a puzzled look.” However, this could have been because the interviewee did not want to give an answer concerning their relationship to land. On the other hand, Elder Acoko talks to me freely and even reveals the concept of Wangkac, who is the deity that watches over the Luo home at the gate. Wangkac is a Luo deity that is worshipped and entrusted with guarding any Luo homestead. Before my finding in 2012, many thought Wangkac was merely a word for the gate or entrance into a home.
Finally, at this point, I can say that the Jopadhola, like all “colonized” peoples, are claiming and reclaiming their identity rooted in their culture. The wish to retain their Luoness made them, right from the beginning, prefer to live in self-isolation in order to preserve their Indigenous Luo identity rather than lose it. Though not a very large ethnic group themselves, since splintering from the greater Luo nation, the Jopadhola have guarded their culture, norms, religion, customs, ceremonies, names, and identity. In fact, Ogot (1967) revealed how a small group of people numbering only in their hundreds five centuries ago founded and retained themselves in a Luo Island surrounded by hostile Bantu groups and Nilo Hamites.

From the example of the Jopadhola, other minorities who live where they are overwhelmed by the majority can learn strategies of resistance to colonization and assimilation and continue being who they are, yet remain a dynamic society. The elders express their stand and determination to remain who they are as an identity that must be retained by the future generations. The spiritual allegiance to the departed ancestors, constantly referred to as present, enables the continuity of Luoness among the Jopadhola.

Not even after their encounter with colonial administration and its profound effects of Europe-centred education in Uganda have the Jopadhola elders wavered in their resolve to keep their Luoness. The spiritual Indigenous knowledge about their history, or what the elders refer to loosely as “where we came from,” must be passed on to the younger and future generations through cultural norms that reproduce Luoness in the midst of the Bantu and Nilo-Hamitic people. The food taboos continually observed differentiate the Jopadhola as Luo from their neighbours, who likely have fewer food taboos. Elders advocate for a return to pre-colonial ways as being more representative of who the Jopadhola are for a harmonious but dynamic society.
In fact, the Jopadhola attribute the prevalence of certain new diseases afflicting children to not fully performing the required ceremonies. Some elders blame the spraying of insecticide on crops for reproducing famine. The nyango ceremony, through which girls chase away famine, must also be fully observed because elders say that it works. According to elders, the neglect of performing harvest ceremonies of nyango is the reason famine strikes in areas that occasionally opt for insecticides. The elders also believe that neglecting to perform the ceremonies due to children for welcoming them as ancestors is the major cause for children growing up sickly. Developmentally, children are expected to remain sickly and not grow up properly until the ceremonies welcoming or cleansing them are performed. Elders Orio, Orango, Aluwo-Jaryo, and Acoko advocate for a full return of all the pre-colonial practices in Padhola. All the ceremonies, apipili, yao rut, or tedo minyur for better health for their children, nyango for bumper harvests, working together in reverence to ancestors, and more of Indigenous education will get rid of the colonial identity.

In any case, most of these ceremonies thrive in Padhola, and I do not see them abandoned anytime soon or in the future. In fact, Acoko has said that it was when the white man came into Padhola that some Jopadhola “sinned” and that is when the God of Jopadhola started hiding from people and stopped talking to them audibly, unlike during the pre-colonial days. The Jopadhola have parables and riddles that they use to educate their people while reinforcing their culture, and I do not see them changing their ways and ancestral naming system or their names soon.

### 7.2 Recommendations

It is fair to state that most of the current formal education in Uganda and most of the countries of Africa is a carry-over from the educational policies of the former colonial powers, which have questions of relevancy to the Indigenous majorities. The injustices of the colonial
administrations whereby Indigenous education was discomfited and rendered non-existent are post-colonially legitimized in formal education based mainly on the colonizer’s culture. When Dei (2006), for example, contended that there has been an absolute glorification of Western knowledge in the international arena since the 1960s, this is visible in my study and is a reason why elders are demanding the transformation of formal education. From their experience, formal education is alienating children from their culture of Indigeneity and imposing on them the colonial identity.

Cabral (1970) has said that the experience of colonial domination shows that the colonizer perpetuates exploitation and represses the cultural life of the colonized people by provoking and developing cultural alienation, dividing the population, and attempting the assimilation of Indigenous people by creating and exploiting the social gap between the Indigenous elites and popular masses. This is what Jopadhola elders also realized early on, and thus, they resisted the colonizer by keeping their culture and Indigenous education out of the limelight. The current state of colonial education in Uganda is that of continual cultural alienation of Indigenous people, as Padhola elders have said. There is, then, an urgent need for the transformation of formal education so that Indigenous education that runs parallel to current education must have a role in re-defining policies for relevant education. To decolonize education in the learning institutions, we can consider adopting these recommendations:

- Formalize Indigenous education in schools through policy to reflect Indigenous cultures of Uganda by first popularizing Indigeneity, and then make education culturally relevant to the learners in learning institutions. Decolonize the education system that alienates children from their Indigenous community and identity, and make education culturally reflective of the learners’ Indigeneity.
• Popularize Indigenous cultures as legitimate in the community. In Padhola, children must be instructed on how their identity is established during the naming ceremonies. Children are celebrated as ancestors, and they must pass on the knowledge and practice to the next generation. Holistic education must be encouraged from community to national level.

• Integrate Indigenous knowledge and give elders a say in the national policy for children’s education. Reflect the Indigenousness of the Jopadhola for a worldview that incorporates the nature and nexus of body, mind, soul, and spirit for holistic education and for the retention of Indigenous identity.

• Teach about the naming ceremonies of the Jopadhola in schools of Padhola and nationally. Include the importance of African cultures to remove and heal the trauma of marginality and invisibility in the Eurocentric curriculum and pedagogy in learning institutions. Demystify Luoness in Uganda and foster respect for all Indigenous people’s names, their culture, customs, norms, music and Indigenous music instruments, song, and dances. Start a radio station of Padhola and promote the Lwo language and culture.

• Promote the Jopadhola naming ceremonies to rekindle African renaissance through reculturation as restorative, and transform current formal education.

• Build Indigenous institutions in Padhola rural areas for learners to access Indigenous knowledge from elders for an Indigenous African worldview. Equip and make visible this Indigenous institution by building a library, with resources to promote Indigeneity as a worldview to discard the colonial identity. The library should have
all the emblems of Padhola, the names of Padhola heroes and what they did, the

spirituality of Padhola and how it is practiced.


Titchkosky, T. (2011). The question of access: Disability, space, meaning. Toronto, ON, Canada: University of Toronto Press.


Wangoola, P. (2000). Mpambo, the African multiversity: A philosophy to rekindle the African spirit. In G. J. S. Dei, B. L. Hall, & D. G. Rosenberg (Eds.), Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: Multiple readings of our world (pp. 265-277). Toronto, ON, Canada: University of Toronto Press.


Appendix A
Glossary of Terms and Concepts

1. Indigenous knowledge: knowledge within an Indigenous society, culture, norms, values, wisdom, social organization, trade, marriage, food, storage, technology, agriculture, soils, boating, music, mining, farming, beliefs, identity, history, governance, kingship, warfare, worship, spirituality (Ochola-Ayayo-1976).

2. Indigenous education: education emanating from the culture of Indigenous people, values, custom, norms, language, and worldview.

3. Indigenous people: original people who have been living in a place in continuity over a long period of time (UN 2004).

4. Lwoo/Lwo, Luo: An ancient civilization, language and people, descendants of great Ancestor Lwo; concept of luuwo or to follow the Nile, a historical 'Nilotic' people who migrated along the Nile from the north southwards.

5. Padhola: A Lwo speaking enclave in Eastern Uganda, founded by the Jopadhola Lwo about 1490 as their “Promised Land” (Ogot, 1967).

6. Dhopadhola: A specific Lwo language spoken by the Jopadhola.

7. Jopadhola: Lwo speaking people of Adhola, residents of Padhola


9. Japadhola, singular, one person.


11. Yao rut: The ceremony that celebrates the birth and naming of twins.

12. Nyangoe: Ceremony of peas, a ritual to chase away famine.
13. **Apipili**: Ceremony for naming the firstborn.

14. Were: Padhola concept of God, the Creator.

15. **Bayo Athero**: process of conveying a message to the “ceremonial father” of twins to provide for foods and beverages for the twin ceremony.

16. **Kaffiri, Kaffir**: the so-called 'pagan' names among the Jopadhola.

17. **Nyinge ma Jwok**: Ancestral and Spiritual Name revealed by an Ancestor.

18. Mutusa: the Luo village seer for both the Luo of Kenya and Jopadhola (Ogot, 1967)

19. **Nono**: the concept of a clan. Also used to identify an ethnic group or their culture.

20. **Nythindho**: children. Singular is **Nyath(i)**.

21. **Kuunu**: shrine or **kuuni**, singular.

22. **Agulu rut**: ceremonial pot from which to drink alcohol during the twin ceremony.

23. **Or**: avoidance and taboo relationship forbidding touching parents-in-law.
Appendix B
Elder’s Interviews

I am a graduate student at University of Toronto. My name is Jennifer M. Jagire and I can be contacted at email: jenn.jagire@utoronto.ca

I am working on a PhD thesis research project on Indigenous African Knowledge with the topic of "Ancestral and Spiritual Naming of Children among the Jopadhola Lwo of Eastern Uganda”.

I will be interviewing elders orally.

This research will include interviewing people for my dissertation. I will be working with Indigenous Jopadhola Lwo people whose language I am able to speak fluently. My research will later be published.

There benefit of your participation in this study will be greater knowledge of your experiences as an agency for the community. It will also be an opportunity for intersubjectivity with dialogue and listening to one another.

We will respect your confidentiality and anything published will be used only for study purposes. Anything that will be published will be with your consent. Your name will not be published without your consent and will be kept confidential with the use of pseudonyms only.

In case of any wish to withdraw a participant is free to do so by verbally informing me.

The interviews will be conducted in an ethical manner of mutual respect and agreement. The process of the interviews may make you a little uneasy but together we will make it as comfortable as possible with your voluntary participation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact my supervisor Professor George Dei at george.dei@utoronto.ca

.................................   .........................
Participant Signature                  Date

.................................   .........................
Research Signature                  Date
Appendix C
Ethics Review Board

PROTOCOL REFERENCE # 28159

September 28, 2012

Dr. George JS Dei
DEPT OF SOCIOLOGY & EQUITY STUD. IN
EDUC.
OISE/UT

Ms. Jennifer Mary Jagire
DEPT OF SOCIOLOGY & EQUITY STUD. IN
EDUC.
OISE/UT

Dear Dr. Dei and Ms. Jennifer Mary Jagire,

Re: Your research protocol entitled, "Ancestral and spiritual naming of children among the Jopadhola Lwo in Eastern Uganda"

ETHICS APPROVAL

Original Approval Date: September 28, 2012
Expiry Date: September 27, 2013
Continuing Review Level: 1

We are writing to advise you that the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted approval to the above-named research protocol under the REB's delegated review process. Your protocol has been approved for a period of one year and ongoing research under this protocol must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Please ensure that you submit an Annual Renewal Form or a Study Completion Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your current ethics approval. Note that annual renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry.

If your research is funded by a third party, please contact the assigned Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Wakefield, Ph.D.
REB Chair

Dean Sharpe
REB Manager

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