



**SOCIAL MOBILITY AMONG CHRISTIAN AFRICANS:  
EVIDENCE FROM ANGLICAN MARRIAGE REGISTERS IN UGANDA,  
1895-2011**

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# **Social Mobility among Christian Africans: Evidence from Anglican Marriage Registers in Uganda, 1895-2011\***

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**Abstract:** This article uses Anglican marriage registers from colonial and post-colonial Uganda to investigate long-term trends and determinants of intergenerational social mobility among Christian African men. We show that the colonial era opened up new labour opportunities for our African converts enabling them to take large steps up the social ladder regardless of their social origin. Contrary to the widespread belief that British indirect rule perpetuated the power of pre-colonial African elites, we show that a remarkably fluid colonial labour economy actually undermined their social advantages. Sons of traditional landed chiefs gradually lost their high social-status monopoly to a new commercially-orientated and well-educated class of Anglican Ugandans, who mostly came from non-elite and sometimes lower-class backgrounds. We also document that the colonial administration and the Anglican mission functioned as key steps on the ladder to upward mobility, and that mission education helped provide the skills and social reference needed to climb it. These social mobility patterns persisted throughout the post-colonial era despite rising informal labour during Idi Amin's dictatorship.

**Keywords:** Anglican Church, Chiefs, Christian Missionaries, Idi Amin, Indirect Colonial Rule, Social Mobility, Uganda

**JEL Classification:** J62, N27, O15

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## I. Introduction

Colonial influences on African development remain subject to intense debate.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, it is widely accepted that the arrival of Christian missionaries prompted a genuine schooling revolution in Africa. British Africa has been particularly praised for its benign policies towards missionary schooling (Cogneau and Moradi 2014; Dupraz 2015). Partly subsidised by the colonial state and a central aspect of their conversion efforts (Foster 1965; Berman 1974), Christian missionaries provided the bulk of education across British Africa during the colonial era (Frankema 2012). On the other hand, British colonial officials discouraged post-primary education of the general African population, a privilege mainly offered to sons of African chiefs in order to build African administrative capacities (Sutton 1965; Lloyd et al 1999). Africans from the non-ruling classes were typically debarred from higher education (Collins 1970), which therefore did not serve as a “ticket to upward mobility” among the average African (Bolt and Benzemer 2009, p. 31).

Still, it is well documented that Christian missionary activities left their marks on African religious beliefs (Nunn 2010); living standards (Wantchekon et al 2015); literacy development (Gallego and Woodberry 2010; Cogneau and Moradi 2014; Fourie and Swanepoel 2015); and gender unequal access to education (Meier zu Selhausen and Weisdorf 2016; Nunn 2014). But although mission schooling has continued to affect human capital and religious beliefs of Africans until the present, it remains an open question to what extent mission education translated into social mobility. In particular, did mission schooling expand the wider possibilities for social advancement in the colonial economy? Or did it merely strengthen the power of a pre-colonial minority elite?<sup>2</sup> To date, the absence of intergenerational micro-data prior to the 1980s, when census and survey statistics began to emerge, has confined empirical investigations of social mobility in sub-Saharan Africa to the post-colonial era (Louw et al 2007; Dumas and Lambert 2010; Bossuroy and Cogneau 2013; Lambert et al 2014).<sup>3</sup>

The existing, mainly qualitative, literature on African social mobility under colonial rule has conveyed two opposing views: one of optimism and one of pessimism. The optimistic view points out that new windows of opportunity opened up during the colonial era for those Africans who acquired the formal skills needed in order to obtain social

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<sup>1</sup> In this article we alternate the terms 'African' and 'sub-Saharan African'.

<sup>2</sup> Henceforth, the term 'pre-colonial' refers to nineteenth-century Uganda before its British annexation.

<sup>3</sup> One exception includes a study of social mobility among the 289 earliest students of mission schools in colonial Benin and that of their descendants (Wantchekon et al 2015).

advancement. These opportunities supposedly concerned white-collar work for the colonial administration, in railway and trading companies, and for the missionary societies (Iliffe 2007, p. 230; Frankema 2012). This view also holds that many Africans ‘welcomed’ mission schools as a means to adjust to the new colonial labour market conditions, finding that the ability to read and write in the metropolitan language facilitated upward mobility (Horton 1971; Porter 2004, p. 317; Iliffe 2007, pp. 219-229). It has been argued that mission schooling became a new source of social-class differentiation, which accelerated a new class differentiation among parts of Africa’s population (Kilson 1958, p. 371). According to Falola and Heaton (2008, p. 127), formal education was regarded as “the stepping stone to a middle-class career” in urban centres. Literacy helped built life-long proficiencies, which made children’s future social status less dependent on their father’s social position or wealth, such as land or livestock (Kelley and Perlman 1971). African parents thus sent their children to mission schools not just for their spiritual enlightenment, but also to promote their social advancement by way of acquiring formal skills (Foster 1965, p. 66; Berman 1975, p. xi), and in order to reap the large skill-premium that clerical and administrative work would pay (Isichei 1995, p. 240; Apter 1961, p. 74). For a new generation of young Africans, mission schools therefore opened up “worlds very different from those of their parents” (Reid 2012, p. 210) and became “colonial Africa’s chief generator of social mobility and stratification” (Iliffe 2007, p. 229).

The pessimistic view conversely questions the extent to which mission education and the colonial labour market actually benefitted African social mobility. A longstanding literature has argued that Africans were treated as secondary people in their own country (Rodney 1972; Amin 1972). Colonial reluctance towards building a well-educated African elite meant that mission schools rarely taught curricula beyond basic levels (Sutton 1965; Lloyd et al 1999). The benefits from receiving formal Western education also depended on the job opportunities available to Africans in the colonial economy. In Uganda, Europeans and Asian migrants dominated the colonial labour market for skilled work, while Africans themselves were often relegated to lower and unskilled work (Southall 1956, p. 561; Elkan 1960, pp. 48-50; Kabwegyere 1976). Evidence of racial labour discrimination (Jamal 1976) and wages of unskilled urban work near subsistence (Frankema and Van Waijenburg 2012) have testified to this. Profitable earning possibilities in cotton and coffee cultivation moreover discouraged urban migration (De Haas 2017) and thus offset the prospects for social mobility linked to secondary and tertiary sector work. A further issue concerns *indirect colonial rule*, a British system of governance used to maintain law and order at low costs,

organised through local tax-collecting administrative chiefs (Lugard 1965). Indirect rule in Uganda is said to have perpetuated pre-colonial power structures into the post-colonial era by placing local administrative authority in the hands of pre-colonial elites, described by Mamdani (1996, pp. 52-61) as ‘decentralised despotism’. This chimes with evidence that sons of chiefs were disproportionately favoured during the colonial era in terms of access to secondary education (Cartey and Kilson 1977), which consolidated pre-colonial power structures while leaving ordinary Africans with limited prospects for upward social mobility.

This article opens up a new avenue for the study of African social mobility using hitherto unexplored source material to shed light on the debate described above. Our data originate from some of the earliest Anglican parish registers in Uganda collected from Uganda’s capital city Kampala and from rural areas in Western Uganda. What makes these registers exceptional is that the Anglican Church Missionary Society was the only institution in Uganda to systematically record the occupations of both Ugandan grooms and their fathers during the colonial (1894-1962) and post-colonial (1962-present) eras. The sampled records include occupational statistics of 14,167 pairs of fathers and sons. We code the occupations using a standardised international occupational classification system (HISCO) and further organise them into social classes based on the skill-content of their work activity (using HISCLASS). We then perform an intergenerational social mobility analysis, while tracking the changing occupational trajectories of the sampled Anglican grooms across the long twentieth century.

The sampled grooms originate from all layers of Ugandan society. Their fathers’ social backgrounds range from low-status jobs, such as cowherds and shepherds, to high-status jobs including medical doctors and colonial officials. Although the social backgrounds of the sampled grooms represent the entire social ladder, we do not expect the grooms themselves to represent the broader Ugandan population or, in the case of our urban sample, the wider population of Kampala. The fact that the sampled grooms celebrated an Anglican Church marriage means they were born to parents who, by their choice of religion and compliance with the rules and regulations of the Anglican Church, had positioned their children in a social network that afforded them a wide range of educational and occupational opportunities. So if mission schooling led to social advancement among the general public in colonial Uganda, then we would expect to see it materialise amongst sampled grooms.

Our social mobility analysis shows that the occupational possibilities of the sampled grooms expanded dramatically across the colonial era, resulting in greater and considerably more equal opportunities for upward social mobility. That is, our Christian-educated grooms

were able to take large intergenerational jumps up the social ladder regardless of their social origin. The micro evidence presented also suggests that the colonial labour market was remarkably fluid, with pre-colonial power structures gradually eroding during the colonial era. At the doorstep into the colonial era, sons of chiefs were more likely than sons of lower-class fathers to reach the top of the social ladder. But towards the end of the colonial era, traditional claims to status no longer conferred automatic advantages to the sons of chiefs. We also do not observe a ‘buffer zone’ preventing sons of blue-collar fathers from entering into white-collar work. This indicates that meritocratic principles grew in importance as a determinant of social status, with mission education and the colonial economy providing new means to acquire social advancement among our sampled Anglicans.

## II. Historical Background

### *Pre-colonial Buganda*

By the time of the Scramble for Africa, in the 1880s, the kingdom of Buganda, situated along the northern shore of Lake Victoria, was the most advanced entity of the four co-existing central states (Ankole, Bunyoro, Busoga, and Toro) in today’s Uganda. Buganda owed its affluence to its well-drained and fertile lands allowing for intensive banana cultivation, which supported one of the greatest agglomerations of population in the interior of East Africa (Wrigley 1957). Buganda was ruled by a *kabaka* (king), who administered the kingdom through his *katikkiro* (prime minister) along with an administrative apparatus of appointed and hereditary chiefs at various regional levels that in turn commanded and taxed the local *bakopi*, i.e. farmers (Wrigley 1964, p. 19; Reid 2002, pp. 3-5). Though most engaged in farming, Buganda’s population also held a variety of craftsman skills, such as barkcloth, leather, pottery, canoe-making, and iron-working crafts (Roscoe 1911, p. 365; Reid 2002, p. 97).

Political office and territorial chieftainship in Buganda were neither based exclusively on inheritance, nor on kinship (Roberts 1962). Although sons of chiefs had an advantage over others, appointment as chief depended on winning the king’s favour. This system of ‘meritocracy’ created acquisitive and competitive social structures, where men competed for social positions at the royal court (Fallers 1959; Wrigley 1959, p. 73; Kiwanuka 1971; Twaddle 1974). Farmers and chiefs alike strived to send their sons to the royal palace in order to serve as *mugalagala* (pages) in the hope of establishing a path for their children’s social

advancement (Fallers 1964, p. 10). The result was that social upward mobility in Buganda was determined by “an extraordinary rat-race of rivalry” (Taylor 1958, p. 22) with “strongly marked differentiation of wealth and status, but at the same time something like equality of opportunity” (Wrigley 1957, p. 20).

### *Colonial change*

By the late 1870s, Anglican and Catholic missionaries had reached the kingdom of Buganda. The Baganda<sup>4</sup> embraced mission schools and literacy from the very beginning, and Christian converts quickly made up a considerable body of adherents at the Buganda court (Oliver 1952, p. 77). Religious confrontations and the *kabaka*’s fear of loss of his political power meant that war broke out in the late 1880s between different religious factions. In 1893, the ‘flag followed the cross’. Britain restored order and subsequently annexed Buganda as Protectorate in 1894, governing through *indirect rule* as constituted in the *Uganda Agreement* of 1900.

Under the Uganda Agreement, over half of Buganda’s land was allotted to Baganda chiefs and private landowners (Jorgensen 1981, p. 49). Anglican chiefs were overwhelmingly favoured,<sup>5</sup> and the land distribution reinforced Baganda chiefs’ class exclusiveness (Southall 1956, p. 575). Landed county- and sub-chiefs also became salaried colonial-state officials, who collected the colonial hut tax, enforced compulsory labour schemes, and administered local justice. This arrangement re-directed the authority of traditional Baganda chiefs away from royal ties and towards the colonial state with a close affiliation to the Christian mission (Hanson 2003, p. 153; Musisi 1999). It enabled chiefs to extract substantial rents from the peasantry, who became their tenants and cultivated increasing quantities of cash crops (mainly cotton and later coffee).

Close ties with Christianity became an avenue to social and economic status (Kasozi 2013, p. 13). The Anglican Church and the British colonial administration strengthened Baganda influence over the distribution of political and clerical posts in the Protectorate, at the expense of Catholics and Muslims as well as other ethnic groups (Roberts 1962; Hansen 1986, p. 325; De Haas and Frankema 2016). According to Low (1957, 1971) and Fallers (1964), the fluid nature of the pre-colonial class structure made the Baganda particularly receptive to Christianity and to mission schooling. More than anywhere else in British Africa,

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<sup>4</sup> The term ‘Baganda’ is an ethnonym that refers to the plural of African inhabitants of the kingdom of Buganda.

<sup>5</sup> By 1935, ten of eighteen county chiefs and 92 of 153 sub-county chiefs were Anglicans (Peterson 2016).

mass-conversion to Christianity soon occurred at all echelons of society in Buganda, triggered by a considerable demand for mission education, spread by Ugandan evangelists (Oliver 1952, p. 184; Berman 1975, p. 13, 26; Hastings 1994, pp. 464-78; Hanson 2010).

Kampala, the capital city of Buganda, formed the heart of missionary efforts. Mission schools became the driving force behind cultural change and social aspirations. According to Berman (1975), the fact that Christian missionaries “established schools based on achievement criteria” meant that “status achievement and social mobility quickly became associated with schools”, and that “schooling and mobility soon became synonymous” (*ibid.*, p. 26). This, according to Paige (2000, p. 32), facilitated “significant changes in Ugandan society and would enable successful students to enjoy a degree of social mobility unknown to their parents.”

### III. Data

#### *The parishes*

The Anglican marriage registers used for the social mobility analysis below come from four parishes, i.e. Namirembe Cathedral in Kampala, as well as three parishes from the Ruwenzori Diocese in Western Uganda: St. John’s Cathedral in Fort Portal, St. Barnabas’ Church in Bundibugyo, and St. Peter’s Church in Butiti (see Figure 1). These parishes are among the longest-running mission churches in Central and Western Uganda, allowing us to study the extent to which the colonial era represented a break with pre-colonial social mobility and socio-political power structures.

Namirembe Cathedral, adjacent to Buganda’s royal palace in Kampala, is Uganda’s oldest cathedral and Uganda’s most prestigious place of worship.<sup>6</sup> Kampala was the principal node of the British Protectorate’s administration. The population of ‘greater Kampala’ (Kyadondo County) grew from 37,000 people in 1900 over 105,116 in 1921 (Table 1) to reach 330,700 in 1969 and 774,241 in 1991 (MoFPED 1969; UBOS 1991). Kampala remained Uganda’s largest urban centre by far during the colonial and post-colonial eras. It offered the country’s best educational opportunities (De Haas and Frankema 2016) and the largest per-capita concentration of Anglican mission churches and schools (Table 1). This, along with Kampala’s transport infrastructure (roads and rails) and commercial enterprises, probably provided the greatest prospects of social mobility in colonial Uganda.

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<sup>6</sup> See Kodesh (2001) on its symbolical significance in Buganda politics and public forum of social change.

**Figure 1:** Map of Uganda with the geographical locations of sampled Anglican parishes



*Source:* Kingdom boundaries adapted from Steinhart (1977, p. 2).

Efforts to Christianize the traditional centre of African power were not only confined to Buganda. They also took place in Western Uganda's Toro Kingdom (see map), where the Anglican mission was promoted by the *omukama* (king) Kasagama. By 1921, 37 per cent of Toro's population were affiliated with Christian Churches (Table 1) of which one in three were Anglican. When British protection was extended to Toro, in 1896, Kasagama sought a strategic alliance with the Anglican mission in Buganda (Hansen 1986, pp. 126-133). Consequently, Christian conversion was "flourishing under his benign patronage" (Ingham 1975, p. 87).

The three parishes from Western Uganda are all located in Toro County, positioned in an agricultural zone stretching along the Rwenzori Mountains about 300 km west of Kampala. Here, commercial agriculture intensified when smallholders began to grow cotton

in the 1920s and coffee in the 1930s, but there were limited earning opportunities outside of farming. Fort Portal was the most populated place,<sup>7</sup> hosting the seat of the king of Toro and the British district headquarter. Home to the first Anglican Church in Toro, founded in 1896, Fort Portal's population grew from 1,824 in 1921 over 8,000 in 1969 to reach 33,000 people by 1991. Butiti emerged in 1900 as a mission station located east of Fort Portal (towards Kampala). It is not a town, but a disperse settlement, and no population estimates appear to exist. Bundibugyo, the main town of the Bundibugyo District, is remotely located west of Fort Portal near the Congo border (see Figure 1).<sup>8</sup> Bundibugyo grew from about 3,000 people in 1969 to some 7,000 in 1991.

**Table 1:** Population, Anglican followers, churches, primary schools in Kampala and Toro

		<i>Total population</i>	<i>Christian followers</i>	<i>Anglican churches</i>	<i>Anglican pr. schools</i>
1921	Kampala*	105,116	44,207	94	48
1921	Toro District	117,397	28,295	104	17
1945	Kampala*	133,000**	54,017	99	<i>n/a</i>
1945	Toro District	216,106	79,799	204	<i>n/a</i>

\* Kyadondo County consisted of Kampala, its peri-urban areas and some rural areas.

\*\* Denotes the population of Kyadondo in the year 1948.

Source: Uganda Protectorate, Blue Book 1921, 1945.

Some of the observed population growth in Kampala is explained by labour migration from Belgian-ruled Ruanda-Urundi, which grew in importance during the colonial era (Richards 1973). According to Uganda population censuses, three per cent of the adult male population in greater Kampala were migrants from Ruanda-Urundi in 1931, and 0.2 per cent in the Fort Portal area (Uganda Protectorate 1931, 1959). Those shares increased to 22 per cent of the Buganda inhabitants and 10 per cent of Western Uganda's total population by 1959.

<sup>7</sup> In comparison, in 1921 Fort Portal had 31 permanent brick houses (i.e. not huts) to 1,157 in Kampala (Uganda Protectorate 1921).

<sup>8</sup> A road from Bundibugyo to Fort Portal was built only in 1938 to replace porters with lorries (Jorgensen 1981, p. 94).

### *The registers*

Our marriage registers furnish the earliest individual-level data available for the study of intergenerational social mobility in Uganda. They inform about dates of marriage; names and ages of spouses; marital status before marriage (i.e. bachelor, spinster, widow, or widower); and places of residence of spouses at the time of marriage. Baganda names overwhelmingly dominate the register. The colonial migrants coming from Ruanda-Urundi, identified by Kinyarwanda or Kirundi names, only make up 0.8 per cent of our Kampala sample between 1930 and 1960 and hence do not represent an important share of our sampled grooms.<sup>9 10</sup>

The original forms used to record the marriages, filled out by Anglican ministers, were pre-printed in London. This ensures a systematic and time-consistent recording of ecclesiastical events, exactly as in Britain, the Protectorate's metropolis. The Church of England, in its *1836 Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages Act*, stipulated that the Church Missionary Society recorded the occupations of both groom and bride, as well as those of their fathers. While almost all occupations are recorded in English, the earliest of our Kampala registers (1895-1898) include occupations in *Luganda*, the language spoken in Buganda. We converted these into English in consultation with Ugandan labour historians<sup>11</sup> and translations found in Hanson (2003, pp. 243-246) and Taylor (1958, p. 282f). In order to concede their approval of the marriage, spouses left either their signature on the marriage certificate or an "x" mark or thumb imprint in case of illiteracy. This so-called *signature literacy* is widely used among historians to assess a person's ability to read and write (Schofield 1973; Rachal 1987). In our case, a signature provides a very strong signal of mission school attendance of a sampled groom.

Anglican missionaries were not the only Christian missionaries in Uganda. Protestant Mill Hill missionaries along with Catholic mission societies, including the White Fathers and the Verona Fathers, also competed for 'souls'. Conjugal statistics from the early colonial period report that one third of all Christian marriages were Protestant and two thirds Catholic (Meier zu Selhausen 2014). Other mission societies did not, however, follow the Anglican

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<sup>9</sup> This seriously questions the historical eligibility of migrants from Ruanda-Urundi to marry in Buganda's most prestigious place of Anglican worship and is consistent with the Baganda view of those migrants as low-status people (Southall 1956, p. 569).

<sup>10</sup> We thank Olive Nsababera for identifying our sample names of Kinyarwanda and Kirundi origin. Also, Doyle (2012, p. 290-1) only observed five per cent non-Ganda names in Catholic marriage registers of Kisubi in Buganda.

<sup>11</sup> We thank Edward Rugumayo, Chancellor of Mountains of the Moon University and former Minister of Education of Uganda, for fruitful discussion on this matter.

practice of recording spouses' occupations, preventing us from conducting comparative social mobility analyses between different religious groups.

### *The coding of occupations*

Social mobility analysis requires an occupational coding scheme. For this, we use the *Historical International Classification of Occupations*, known as HISCO (Van Leeuwen, Maas and Miles 2002). HISCO is the historical equivalent of ISCO, a contemporary coding scheme used by statistical agencies worldwide for the purpose of international work comparisons. ISCO was developed after World War II by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) after many rounds of consultations with occupational experts across the globe, including Uganda (ILO 1969). The latest ISCO version is from 2008. Similar to ISCO, HISCO contains more than 1,600 fine-mated descriptions of work-activities classifying virtually all forms of work existing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries worldwide. The use of HISCO therefore makes our Ugandan social mobility analysis directly comparable to other HISCO or ISCO studies done in other regions and nations across the globe, today and in the past.

Once our occupations were classified in HISCO (see below) we grouped them into a multiple social-class system based on skill-levels and known as HISCLASS. HISCLASS has been widely used in previous social mobility studies of historical Europe (e.g. Knigge et al 2014; De Pleijt, Nuvolari and Weisdorf 2016, Maas and Van Leeuwen 2016), but also in non-European contexts, including Uganda (Meier zu Selhausen and Weisdorf 2016); Egypt (Saleh 2015); South Africa (Cilliers and Fourie 2016); Latin America (Holt 2005; Botelho and Van Leeuwen 2009); and Asia (XingChen et al 2014).

HISCLASS was originally designed to map occupational titles into twelve social classes in order to distinguish work activities according to four dimensions: manual versus non-manual labour; supervisory versus non-supervisory labour; primary versus non-primary sector labour; and finally higher-, medium-, lower- or unskilled labour (Van Leeuwen and Maas 2011). Manual work is generally considered to be of lower status than non-manual work; supervisory jobs of higher status than subordinate ones; and labour involving a higher degree of human capital is generally of a higher status than labour needing less skills.

The original twelve HISCLASS groups are sometimes condensed into fewer groups, either for particular research questions or because the data are too thin for some classes. Here,

we have collapsed the twelve classes into six, as reported in Table 2.<sup>12</sup> This categorisation sets the social-class limits wide enough to allow certain occupational titles to change their social standing over time without breaking the social-class boundaries. Also, even if the social status of a barkcloth- or basket-maker increased or decreased relative to that of a doctor or a teacher, the latter occupations would still remain of higher status than the former.

It was occasionally necessary to contextualise certain Ugandan occupations. The title ‘Chief’, because of the nature of job functions in colonial Uganda, was coded as ‘legislative official’ (Richards 1960; Apter 1961; Gartrell 1983). ‘Sub-Chiefs’ received the auxiliary status code for being subordinate, since they earned a quarter of the annual salary of county chiefs (Jorgensen 1981, p. 88).<sup>13</sup> ‘Teachers’ have been coded into ‘Primary school teachers’, since most schools in colonial Uganda were primary schools (Ssekamwa 1997). This coding decision may underestimate the status of ‘Teachers’ in the late colonial and post-colonial eras, when secondary schooling and technical colleges grew in importance, but this has no implications for our overall conclusions.

**Table 2:** Occupational groups according to the original and our adapted HISCLASS scheme

<i>HISCLASS</i> 12	<i>HISCLASS</i> 6	<i>HISCLASS label</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Manual/ non-manual</i>
1	I	Higher managers	Chief, Interpreter, Landholder,	Non-manual
2		Higher professionals	Lawyer, Medical doctor	
3	II	Lower managers	Clerk, Medical assistant,	Non-manual
4		Lower professionals	Policeman, Shop owner, Sub-	
5		Lower clerical/sales	chief, Teacher, Trader	
6	III	Foremen	Carpenter, Cook, Mason,	Manual
7		Semi-skilled workers	Mechanic, Smith, Tailor	
8	IV	Farmers	Cultivator, Farmer	Manual
9	V	Lower skilled workers	Barkcloth maker, Builder, Domestic servant, Mat maker, Office messenger, Petty trader, Soldier	Manual
10	VI	Lower skilled farm workers	Farm worker, Cowherd,	Manual
11		Unskilled workers	Fisherman, Houseboy,	
12		Unskilled farm workers	Shepherd, Sugarcane worker	

The absence of information about acreage of land, types of crops grown, or number of farm-hands employed makes it somewhat difficult to classify the occupational title ‘Farmer’.

<sup>12</sup> A detailed breakdown by class of sampled occupations is provided in Online Appendix S1.

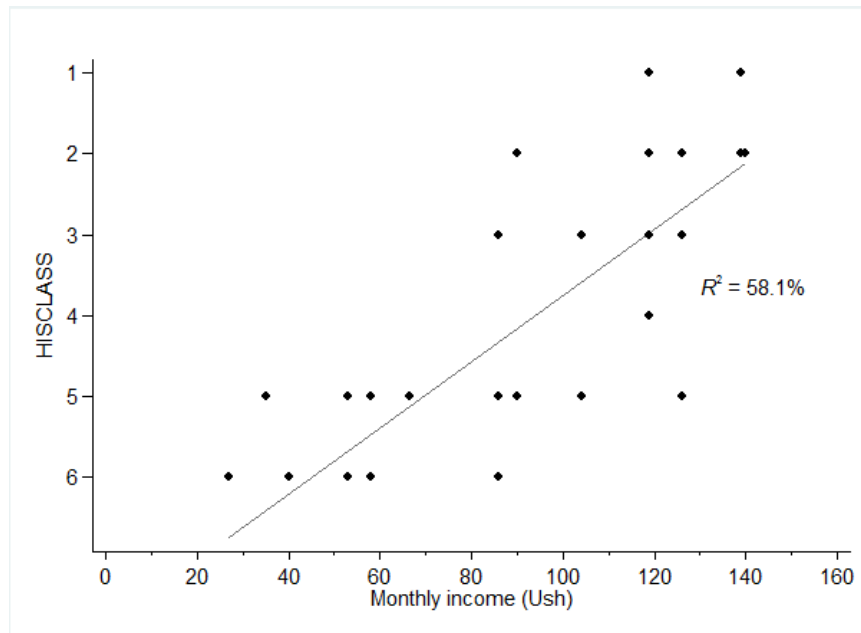
<sup>13</sup> Three hierarchical ranks of chiefs existed in Uganda (Apter 1961; Twaddle 1969): county chief (*saza*), sub-county chief (*gombolola*), and parish chief (*muluka*). The occupational titles of ‘chiefs’ in the marriage registers, however, do not always allow us to further disentangle the hierarchy of chiefs.

We believe that the majority of farmers found in our registers were tenants on chiefs' lands, at least until the mid-colonial era. No advanced agricultural technology (e.g. ox-plough) was used, and the average land size was below six acres (Mukwaya 1953, p. 37; De Haas 2017). Farming tools mainly included iron hoes, and fertilizers and pesticides were rare (Wrigley 1957). On the one hand, because agricultural technology was rather rudimentary, and since only a minority of the Baganda population commanded over large estates with dozens of tenant farmers (Richards 1973, p. 5), it may be tempting to categorise the many 'Farmers' that we observe as 'Subsistence Farmers'. On the other hand, owners of *mailo* (freehold) estates could earn substantial returns from cotton and coffee cultivation (De Haas 2017). Since the information available in the registers does not allow us to distinguish between freeholders and tenants, we have placed 'Farmers' in class IV of our condensed version of the HISCLASS scheme (see Table 2). This positions 'Farmers' higher in the social hierarchy than 'Subsistence Farmers' and 'Agricultural Workers', who both appear in class VI, but lower than 'Major Landowners', who appear in class I. A similar coding hierarchy was used in Kelley and Perlman (1977) in their social mobility analysis of Western Uganda. Moreover, farmers rank higher in HISCLASS than low-waged workers, such as office messengers and domestic servants, but are deemed to be of lower status than high-waged employees, such as clerks, lawyers, and medical doctors.

### *Income and social status*

If HISCLASS is supposed to be relevant in an African context, then we would expect to find that income and occupational status are somehow associated. To explore the case of colonial Uganda, we used monthly incomes of male workers reported in Jorgensen (1981, p. 115) and Southall and Gutkind (1957, pp. 115-17). Jorgensen lists only salaried workers, whereas Southall and Gutkind also include self-employment. In total, these studies contain 75 different occupations of more than 600 African workers in Kampala around 1952-53. All our six social classes in Table 2 are represented. Figure 2 plots the relationship between social class and monthly income. Though not perfectly correlated, there is a clear and positive association between income and social class as defined by HISCLASS. The distinction in Elkan (1960, p. 75) between skilled and unskilled earnings in Kampala in 1957, set to 80 *Ush*, is clearly visible in Figure 2: classes I to IV never earned less than 86 *Ush*. This exercise inspires confidence that social mobility, as measured by HISCLASS, proxies well for income mobility in colonial Uganda.

**Figure 2:** Monthly income and social class of male workers in Kampala, 1952-1953



*Notes:* County- and sub-county chiefs are not included, because they received free housing, government pensions, and moreover owned large estates that generated income not included in the reported earnings (Jorgensen 1981, p. 88).

### *Sample limitations*

We have digitized a total of 16,783 marriage certificates from the Kampala parish and another 3,069 certificates from the three rural parishes. The Kampala records concern the years 1895 to 2011, except for the registers covering 1899-1907, which were lost after lightning set fire to the cathedral in 1910. The records of Fort Portal cover the period 1911-2012; Butiti the years 1928-65; and Bundibugyo the years 1936-74.

Some of the certificates were unsuited for social mobility analysis. First, in order to avoid repeated entries of the same person, we included only bachelors (98.5 per cent in Kampala and 96.2 per cent in the rural parishes). Out of these, we were able to assign HISCO codes to 96.8 per cent (16,004) Kampala grooms and to 98.1 per cent (2,898) grooms from the three rural parishes. Moreover, HISCO codes were given to 74.1 per cent (11,852) Kampala fathers and to 91.6 per cent (2,898) rural fathers. The remaining fathers had either died or their occupation was unrecorded.<sup>14</sup> In combination, we were able to code the

<sup>14</sup> If fathers' death prior to the sons' marriage was correlated with low social status, then this may lead to a systematic exclusion of lower-class families (Delger and Kok 1998). However, we find no apparent differences in the social-class distribution among sons with a deceased father at the time of his marriage compared to those whose fathers were alive (see Online Appendix S2). This suggests that our restricted sample does not suffer from biases caused by the exclusion of records of missing occupation of the father.

occupations of both father and son in 11,554 cases for Kampala and in 2,613 cases for the three rural parishes.<sup>15</sup> Table 3 reports the summary statistics.

**Table 3:** Descriptive statistics

	<b>Kampala</b> (N=11,554)			<b>Toro parishes</b> (N=2,613)		
	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Year of marriage	1895	2011	1967	1911	2011	1952
Age at first marriage groom	16	78	29.33	15	98	29.43
Literacy groom	0	1	0.97	0	1	0.70
Father of groom deceased	0	1	0.07	0	1	0.05
<i>Parish of marriage</i>						
Kampala			0.81			.
Fort Portal			.			0.11
Butiti			.			0.05
Bundibugyo			.			0.03
<i>Social class groom (HISCLASS)</i>						
I: Higher managers/professionals			0.16			0.05
II: Lower managers/professionals			0.49			0.34
III: Semi-skilled			0.14			0.12
IV: Farmers			0.09			0.30
V: Lower skilled			0.10			0.13
VI: Unskilled			0.02			0.06

### *Representativeness*

Marriage registers are not without limitation when it comes to using them for social mobility analysis. First, the registers report fathers' and sons' occupations at the time of the son's marriage. Observed at different stages during their life-cycles, the father's career may thus be more advanced than when he was the same age of his son (Long 2013). Indeed, our estimates of social mobility across the life-cycle accordingly suggest that our fathers do better on average when we observe them at their son's wedding than when we supposedly detect them at the time of their own wedding.<sup>16</sup> This seems to indicate that our estimates of intergenerational social mobility tend, if anything, to underestimate upward mobility among the sampled grooms.

Second, the absence of Catholics, Muslims, and other non-Christian families raises questions about the sample's representation of the wider Ugandan population. Christianity in Uganda spread faster than anywhere else in colonial Africa (Oliver 1952; Hastings 1994). Colonial censuses suggest that about one in four Buganda were Christian followers in 1911;

<sup>15</sup> Frequencies of father-son pairs are displayed in Online Appendix S3.

<sup>16</sup> A detailed description of our investigation of life-cycle mobility is reported in Online Appendix S4.

58 per cent in 1931; and about three in four in 1959. In Toro, the Christian share gradually grew from 16 per cent in 1911 to 30 per cent in 1931 reaching 54 per cent in 1959.<sup>1</sup> In 2002, 85 per cent of all Ugandans were Christians, equally distributed between Protestants and Catholics (UBOS 2002).

There are good reasons to believe that our Anglican grooms performed better on average than their non-Anglican counterparts. Table 4 shows that Anglicans in the late colonial period had a clear advantage over Catholics and non-Christians in terms of primary and secondary schooling. Our church-marrying Anglican men were also more often literate, indicated by their signatures, than the average Anglican in Buganda. While 64.1 per cent of adult Protestants had received primary schooling in 1959, 99.8 and 87.9 per cent of our sampled Anglicans males in Kampala and Toro, respectively, were able to sign their marriage certificate. Recent efforts by De Haas and Frankema (2016) to trace literacy information on the basis Ugandan census data from 1991 and 2002 confirm this view.

**Table 4:** Schooling in Buganda by religion, 1959

	Anglican	Catholic	Non-Christian*
Total population (6-15 years)	72,800	158,100	51,100
Share primary schooling (6-15 years)	76.8%	56.9%	14.7%
Total population (16-45 years)	231,500	450,400	126,000
Share primary schooling (16-45 years)	64.1%	49.3%	3.4%
Share secondary schooling (16-45 years)**	47.9%	24.3	20.9%

*Notes:* \* non-Muslim, \*\* > 4 years of schooling.

Despite the fast process of Christianization, the majority of Ugandans who declared themselves Christians continued to marry according to traditional African custom. According to the 1931 Uganda census, 70 per cent of African males in ‘Greater Kampala’ identified themselves as Christian, but only 30 per cent had celebrated a church wedding. In Western Uganda, in the districts of Mwenge and Burahya, 19 per cent of males were married under Christian law. This pattern persisted over time: the Church Missionary Society reported in 1956 that only 25 per cent of all married Anglicans in Buganda had celebrated a Christian ‘ring marriage’ (Taylor 1958, p. 176). Similarly, Perlman (1969) has estimated that 80 per cent of all marital unions in 1950s in Western Uganda were informal.

Why did so many declared Christians continue to marry according to African custom? The answer is that Anglican ordinances and practices in Uganda were numerous and complex. First of all, a Christian wedding was by no means costless. In preparation for their marriage, non-Christian men had to undergo baptism and, for this, had to demonstrate reading ability in the vernacular (Peterson 2016). Financially, and in addition to the traditional bridewealth, a church-marriage fee, free-will donations, and other church-fund payments added to the liabilities (Taylor 1958, p. 177f). Christian husbands also lost their conventional right to reclaim their bridewealth if their wife deserted them (Taylor 1958, p. 178), and their marriage could only be dissolved in the colonial courts (Gutkind 1956, p. 43). This made church weddings unattractive for many Ugandans.

Far more important than this, and with later consequences for their offspring (as we discuss below), Christian husbands had to commit to monogamy. This way, African husbands and wives ideally “modelled their marriages – and their religious lives – after a British template” (Peterson 2012, p. 96), perceiving it as “an essential mark of civility” (Peterson 2016, p. 208). Ugandan men, who wished to baptise or marry according to Anglican bylaws, therefore had to divest themselves from all but one wife (Hansen 1986, p. 274).

Meanwhile, about half of all Anglican men, who married under the Christian Marriage Ordinance, subsequently took another wife under customary rites (Taylor 1958, p. 143, 181, 185). The Anglican Church penalised this behaviour by refusing infant baptism of the children of polygamous men. This meant their children did not enjoy unencumbered lineal inheritance of their father’s land through the colonial registry of freehold lands. Later in life, they would also be barred from marrying in an Anglican Church (Peterson 2016).<sup>17</sup> Not only can this explain why many declared Christians did not celebrate a Christian marriage.<sup>18</sup> The reprisal made by the Anglican Church against polygamous men also introduces a selection bias in our sample, since only sons of fathers entirely devoted to Anglican ordinances and practices were allowed an Anglican ring-marriage.

This way, the decision made by Ugandan males about whether or not to adhere to the rules of the Anglican Church thus had severe consequences for whether their offspring could enjoy the social advantages that came with participation in the life of the Anglican Church. These advantages included access to mission education and social networks that were

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<sup>17</sup> As a response to those prerequisites, many Baganda baptised into alternative Christian movements with less strict requirements, such as the Malakite Church (Peterson 2016).

<sup>18</sup> According to the 1931 Uganda census, 70 per cent of all males in ‘Greater Kampala’ identified themselves as Christians, but only 30 per cent had celebrated a Christian church wedding. In Western Uganda, in the districts of Mwenge and Burahya, 19 per cent of males married under Christian law.

beneficial for the sons' professional advancement. In other words, polygamous fathers supposedly constrained the social mobility prospects for their illegitimate children compared to children born to monogamous men within legitimate Anglican marriages. We therefore expect that our sampled grooms were in a more favourable position, in terms of access to education and social advancement, than those illegitimately born to Anglican polygamous fathers.<sup>19</sup> Importantly, the selection into this arguably more favourable position was not depending on the fathers' social status, but rather on the compliance with the canon law of the Anglican Church. We return to this central matter later on.

#### **IV. Social Mobility in Kampala**

In this section we first describe the occupational structure of the sampled grooms and how it evolved over time. Then we investigate intergenerational social mobility during Uganda's colonial and post-colonial periods. We first explore the patterns using standardised social mobility tables and then turn to a more detailed study of specific social groups. For analytical purposes we split our sample into urban Kampala and rural Western Uganda, the latter including Fort Portal, Butiti, and Bundibugyo.

##### *Occupational change in Kampala*

Figure 3 shows how our Kampala grooms' were distributed over time across our six social classes described in Table 2. Note first that, among the first generation of Baganda to marry in the Anglican Church, nearly one in five had close links to the Buganda royal court. This included clan leaders, chiefs, headmen, and royal guards (classes I and II). The fairly high representation of class I and II individuals in the data suggests that there was a strong liaison between the ruling classes of Buganda and the Anglican mission from the beginning (Hattersley 1908; Kodesh 2001).

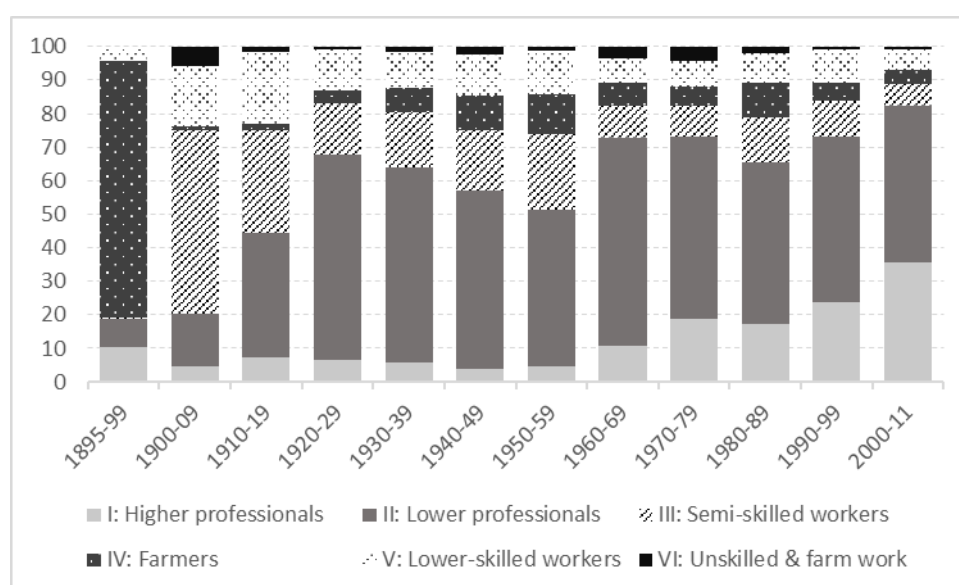
Figure 3 illustrates three main waves of occupational change across the long twentieth century. Around the turn of the nineteenth century, an initial and rather abrupt shift took place, from agriculture (class IV) towards craftsmanship and low-skilled formal work (classes

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<sup>19</sup> In practice, the baptism of infants of polygamous men was postponed until the child was old enough to enter a baptism class. Taylor (1958, p. 243) has noted, however, that these children rarely received adult baptism. Moreover, nearly half of all pupils (49 per cent) in Uganda's most prestigious Anglican boarding school (Budu) in the 1950s were born to polygamous fathers. This questions the effectiveness of the struggle of the Anglican Church against polygamy (Taylor 1958, p. 143).

III and V). Among those marrying before 1900, four in five worked in agriculture, as farmers and fishermen, or in traditional crafts such as barkcloth-making. But early into the colonial period, with the onset of the twentieth century, manual work had been replaced by more skill-demanding, non-manual jobs (class II).

**Figure 3:** Class structure of Kampala grooms (%), 1895-2011



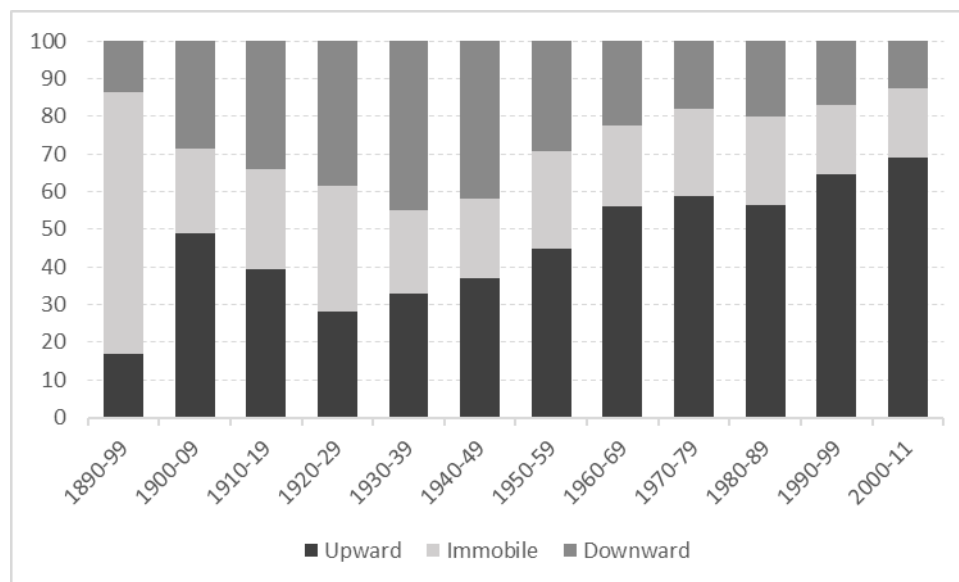
*Note:* The decade 1900-09 is limited to 1908-09.

A second wave of structural change emerged in Kampala between 1920 and 1960. This involved a gradual shift away from informal towards formal work. In this period, our Anglican grooms entered into newly-formed social strata of Ugandan society, working as salesmen for Asian businesses or self-employed commercial traders. Or they worked for the colonial government as clerks, interpreters, policemen, and chiefs. Also, one out of four non-manual occupational titles were linked to the mission society, including clergyman, teacher, dispenser, and medical assistant. This shows how the Anglican mission played a vital role in *Africanising* formal work.<sup>20</sup> The third and final wave of occupational change, which occurred in the post-colonial era, involved an even further formalisation of labour, with a staggering two out of three of our Kampala grooms working as lower or higher professionals.

<sup>20</sup> Even more so, the Church Missionary Society played an almost exclusive role for the access of Anglican brides to formal education and health-care work in the colonial labour market of Kampala (Meier zu Selhausen 2014). Still, the early twentieth-century Ugandan labour market for skilled, white-collar work was heavily influenced by foreigners. Among European male adults, 85.4 per cent worked in classes I and II in 1921, mainly as government servants and missionaries. Among Asian adult males, the number was 73.9 per cent, primarily as clerks, traders, and shop assistants (Uganda Protectorate 1921), which is consistent with the fact that Asians were not allowed to own land, which limited them to the administrative and business sector.

The new class formation taking place during the colonial era within Christian Buganda society is clearly documented in previous works. Hansen (1986, p. 259) has described how new windows of opportunity gradually created a new Christian middle and upper class during the colonial era. Christian mission schooling was an important vehicle in this, expediting not only reading and writing skills, but also technical training in medical care and vocational training in carpentry and sewing (Hattersley 1908, pp. 198-199; Mullins 1908, p. 18; Taylor 1958, p. 85). The training of African catechists, teachers, and medical workers was crucial for the spread of the gospel, which in turn depended on the recruitment of mission school and hospital staff (Kaplan 1995). Mission school training also catered to a growing demand for skilled African administrative workers, especially from the late 1920s on. The British authorities' had from the very beginning relied on hundreds of appointed Baganda clerks and administrators to oversee the Protectorate's provinces outside Buganda (Roberts 1962). This allowed competent Baganda to exercise what Roberts (1962) called 'sub-imperial authority' over Uganda's peripheries and coincides with the foundation of the British government's technical training college of Makerere and the Mulago Medical School (Iliffe 1998, pp. 60f).

**Figure 4:** Intergenerational social mobility in Kampala (% of total grooms), 1895-2011



#### *Intergenerational social mobility flows*

What did the shifts in the occupational structure look like in terms of social mobility? Figure 4 presents the shares of sons' subject to up- and downward mobility as opposed to those staying in their class of origin. Presenting the social mobility rates by grooms' year of

marriage, the graph suggests that Buganda society – as captured by our Kampala grooms – was comparatively immobile at the onset of British rule (1894-95), with three out of four sons remaining in their class of origin. This high degree of social ‘reproduction’ decreased dramatically over the course of the colonial era. By 1910, less than two decades after the British annexed Uganda, an astonishing three in four sons moved to a class different from that of their father. This portrays a colonial labour market that appears remarkably fluid, at least for the sampled grooms.

Up until the 1940s, and after an initial increase in upward mobility, downward mobility in Kampala was on the rise. This was linked to a growing number of Europeans and Asians found among Kampala’s higher professionals.<sup>21</sup> But downward mobility was also caused by the fact that many sons of chiefs (class I) dropped down the social ladder, as landed chieftainships gradually shrunk in numbers during this period (Southall 1956; Hanson 2003).

Meanwhile, in the late colonial and early post-colonial periods, after the Asian trading licence monopoly was broken and the colonial administration became increasingly *Africanised* (Elkan 1960), upward mobility became the leading mobility outcome. The considerable rates of social advancement shown in Figure 4, with close to 50 per cent of the sampled grooms moving up the social ladder, illustrate a surprising degree of social mobility among Ugandans situated in the right social and political environment. At Uganda’s independence in 1962, the formation of an Anglican-dominated political party strengthened the already strong relationship between the Anglican Church and the state apparatus (Ward 1991). So when European and Asian civil servants were replaced by Baganda, Anglicans were favoured over Catholics and other religious groups, causing the share of higher professionals (class I) among the sampled Anglicans to increase during the 1960s (Figure 3) and their rate of upward mobility to rise even further than during colonial times (Figure 4).

In the 1970s, an extended period of military conflict and economic decline emerged with the presidencies of Idi Amin (1971-79) and Milton Obote II (1980-85). Currency depreciations caused costs of living to increase between 200 and 500 per cent during this period. Plunging real wages in several sectors of the economy forced many Ugandans to leave their wage-earning jobs (Jorgensen 1981, pp. 298ff) and escape urban poverty by resorting to rural work (Kasfir 1984, p. 91). Amin’s expulsion of the Asian population in 1972, which was intended to transfer Asian shops and businesses to Ugandans (Jorgensen 1981, pp. 299), also led to a rise of the *magendo* (an informal, black-market economy).

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<sup>21</sup> Colonial census returns from 1911 and 1959 suggest that the Asian population grew steadily and dominated the skilled labour force in Kampala (Jamal 1976; De Haas and Frankema 2016).

Although this did not impact too much on our observed occupational structures (Figure 3) or rates of upward mobility (Figure 4), both of which remained largely stable during the Amin presidency, the shift towards more informal work is visible deeper down in our data. The share of informal or self-employed class II professions, including ‘Traders’, ‘Businessmen’, and ‘Shop owners’, doubled between 1962 and 1986, from 11 to 22 per cent, and was counterbalanced by declining shares of formal (i.e. waged) class II occupations, such as ‘Clerks’, ‘Policemen’, and ‘Teachers’.<sup>22</sup> The shift away from wage employment towards informal entrepreneurship illustrates the occupational change that resulted from the collapsing Ugandan economy and Amin’s efforts to disempower and replace the Anglican state apparatus (Pirouet 1980; Jorgensen 1981, p. 306-7; Rhodes 2000, p. 43). However, after 1985 upward mobility rates quickly began to grow again, with an overwhelming 60-70 per cent of our Anglican grooms moving up the social ladder.

Tables 5 and 6 take a closer at these developments using outflow mobility rates. These rates inform about the social-class destination of the sampled sons conditional on their social origin (their father’s class). We have divided the Kampala sample into colonial (Table 5) and post-colonial (Table 6) sub-samples. The percentages reported in the diagonals represent the shares of sons, who remained in their class of origin. Upward mobility appears to the left of the diagonals and downward mobility to the right.

**Table 5:** Outflow mobility rates in Kampala, 1895-1962

	<i>Groom's class</i>						<i>Total</i>	<i>N</i>
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI		
<i>Father's class</i>								
I: Higher professional	10.4	57.4	12.7	6.5	11.9	1.0	100	1,057
II: Lower professional	4.5	58.6	17.5	6.5	11.6	1.3	100	955
III: Semi-skilled	1.7	34.2	42.6	5.0	14.1	2.3	100	298
IV: Farmer	5.2	42.4	16.1	24.0	11.1	1.2	100	1,905
V: Lower-skilled	3.1	37.3	32.1	5.7	19.7	2.2	100	458
VI: Unskilled	2.8	29.2	37.5	8.3	15.3	6.9	100	72
Total (%)	5.8	47.8	19.2	13.4	12.5	1.4	100	
N	273	2,268	909	636	592	67		4,745

*Note:* Grooms’ class by fathers’ class in the colonial era is statistically different from the post-colonial era (Table 6) at the 1 per cent significance level.

<sup>22</sup> Online appendix S5.

Table 5 conveys several important messages about social mobility in colonial Kampala. It first of all confirms that social mobility was remarkably common among the Anglican grooms, and that the colonial labour market was surprisingly fluid. Among the more immobile groups, lower professions (class II) had three in five sons staying put, while two in five sons stayed immobile among craftsman fathers (class III). In the remaining groups, no more than one in four sons stayed in their class of origin. This illustrates a remarkable degree of social mobility among our sampled grooms regardless of their parental social background.

The movers also did not simply change to the neighbouring classes, but assumed positions across the entire social ladder. This resonates with Currie (1977) observing that the occupational status of Ugandan school graduates was highly independent of their fathers' educational and occupational backgrounds. Moreover, Table 5 portrays a society in which sons of blue-collar workers (classes III-VI) were clearly able to enter into white-collar work (classes I-II). A remarkable 45 per cent of sons coming from a farming background (class IV) moved into white-collar work. This also captures the ongoing structural change in colonial Kampala. Similarly, one in three sons of craftsmen (class III) moved into non-manual work. These findings contradict the 'buffer zone thesis', proposed by Goldthorpe (1987) and based on evidence that sons of blue-collar fathers in Victorian England struggled to enter into white-collar work.

Our findings from Anglican Kampala align with evidence from colonial Ghana (Foster 1963) and Senegal (Iliffe 2007, p. 231) showing that secondary education was very common among the sons of farmers, herders, and fishermen and used as a means to enter into white-collar work. Table 5 also demonstrates a notable degree of upward mobility among sons of lower-class (class V) fathers. Less than seven per cent of sons of fathers from the unskilled section of society (class VI) remained in their class of origin. A startling one in three of them made it all the way to the top of the social ladder (classes I and II). At the same time, sons coming from the social segments above the lowest social class very rarely dropped to the bottom of society (class VI).

How were those great leaps of social mobility achieved? What type of work were the grooms engaged in when they moved up the social ladder? Did they move into any sector of the colonial economy? Or was upward mobility restricted to particular sectors? Figure 5 presents six different occupational categories that upward-moving sons went into: *mission workers* (e.g. teachers, clergymen, medical assistants); *clerks and professionals* (e.g. interpreters, policemen); *traders* (e.g. shop owners, traders); *farming and low-skill work*,

*craftsmen* (e.g. carpenters, masons); and *chiefs* (and sub-chiefs). On the eve of Britain's annexation of Uganda, upward mobility was mainly linked to chieftaincy. But social advancement quickly became associated with moving into craftsmanship instead during the 1900s. In the 1920s, formal employment in the colonial economy, including mission work, overtook traditional craftsmanship as the most frequent category for upward mobility. This pattern stabilised after the 1940s, and formal employment continued to remain an important path to upward mobility until independence. The pre-colonial avenue to higher status - chieftaincy – concurrently lost its former importance.

**Figure 5:** Types of work of upward mobile sons in Kampala, 1895-1962

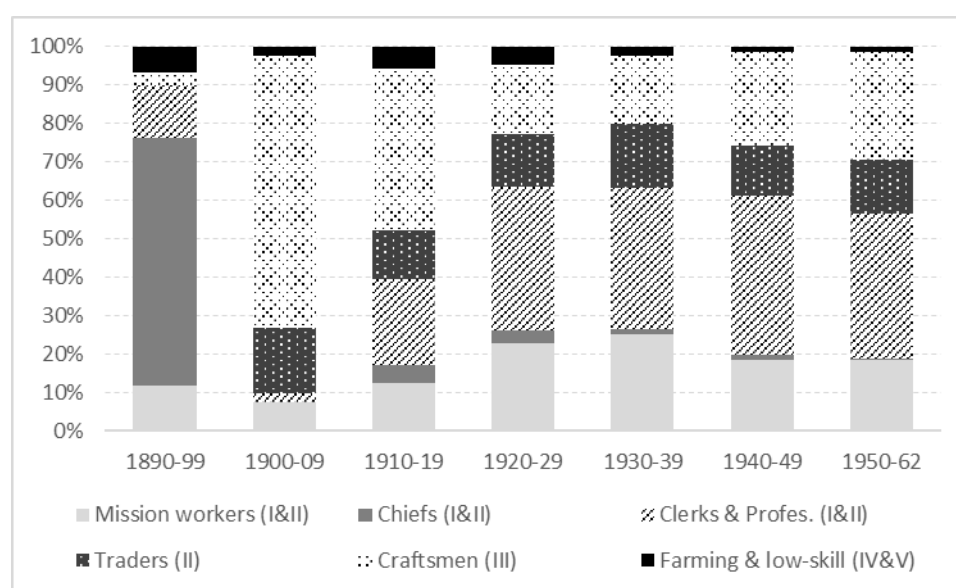


Table 6 illustrates that the social mobility trends of the late colonial period (Table 5) continued after independence. There was a significant degree of upward mobility among the sampled grooms born to the lowest social classes and a continual transfer of sons from blue-collar family backgrounds into white-collar work. Among grooms coming from farming backgrounds (classes IV, V and VI) nearly two in three made it into the upper layers of society (classes I and II). This remarkable transfer out of agriculture resonates with Bossuroy and Cogneau (2013) finding that intergenerational mobility between farm and non-farm work was more common in post-colonial Uganda than in other African countries. In fact, our Anglican sons from Kampala and the three rural parishes were twice as likely to move into non-farm work compared to the prospect faced by the general Ugandan male population

reported in Bossuroy and Cogneau (2013).<sup>23</sup> Key reasons for this difference are that our Anglican grooms were mainly drawn from Kampala and that Anglicans were more successful on average in attaining education (see Table 4).

**Table 6:** Outflow mobility rates (row percentages), Kampala, 1963-2011

	<i>Groom's class</i>						<i>Total</i>	<i>N</i>
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI		
<i>Father's class</i>								
I: Higher professional	33.1	48.1	6.1	3.8	6.7	2.2	100	640
II: Lower professional	25.2	54.8	7.5	4.2	6.0	2.3	100	1,419
III: Semi-skilled	15.6	41.1	26.4	6.1	8.7	2.2	100	231
IV: Farmer	21.9	50.6	9.6	7.7	8.4	1.7	100	4,095
V: Lower-skilled	24.8	37.2	16.8	4.9	14.2	2.2	100	226
VI: Unskilled	18.7	53.0	7.1	2.5	9.6	9.1	100	198
Total (%)	23.4	50.6	9.6	6.3	8.0	2.1	100	
N	1,593	3,443	654	430	545	144		6,809

## V. Persistence of pre-colonial power structures?

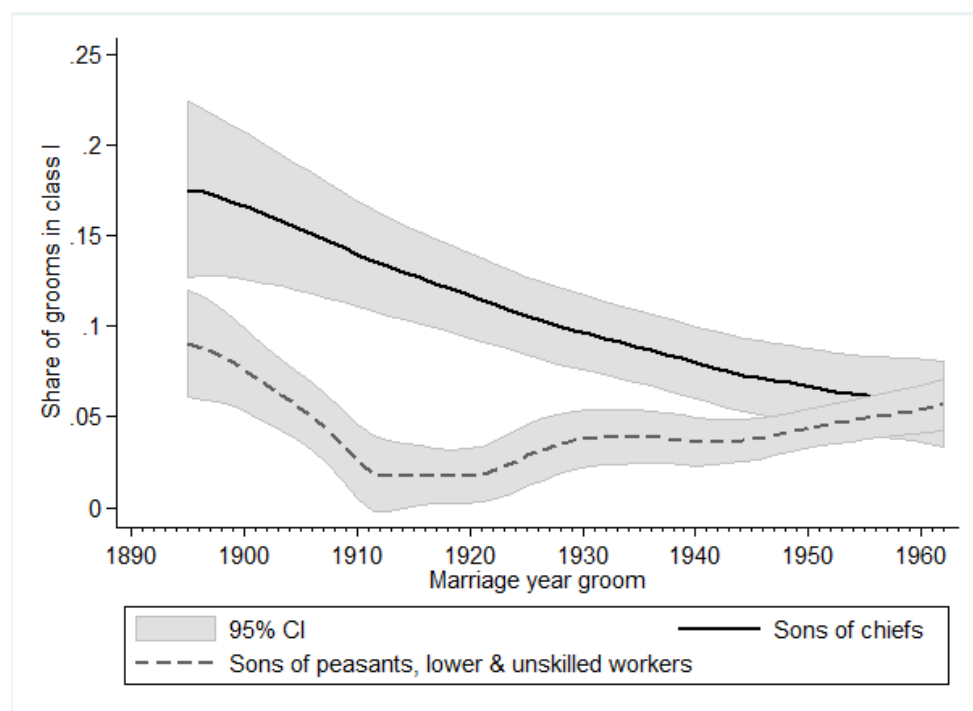
Pre-colonial political power in Buganda resided with the king and his landed chiefs who commanded over the peasantry. Under indirect British rule, many Baganda chiefs became colonial officials employed to extract profits from cash-cropping farmers (Wrigley 1959). This put them in a supreme position for consolidating their pre-colonial societal power. Evidence from colonial and post-colonial Nigeria and Uganda (Mamdani 1996) and from present-day Sierra Leone (Acemoglu et al 2014) have congruently suggested that British indirect rule continued and even perpetuated the power of pre-colonial chiefs. It is also held that British colonial officials discouraged post-primary education of the general population, except for the sons of chiefs whose training aimed at building local administrative capacities (Sutton 1965; Lloyd et al 2000).

The declining role of chieftaincy for upward mobility indicated in Figure 5 raises important questions about earlier conclusions. The nature of our data enables us to explore the persistence of pre-colonial power structures in some more detail. To this end, Figures 6 and 7 compare the conditional probability of sons of chiefs with that of sons from the three

<sup>23</sup> The share of farmers' sons working in non-farm sectors was even three times higher in our Anglican sample compared to Uganda's male population. Online appendix S6.

lowest social classes (classes IV, V, and VI) of entering into social class I (higher professionals) and class II (lower professionals) respectively. Even though the three lowest social classes included lower- and unskilled fathers (classes V and VI), 87 per cent of this group were farmers (class IV). Initially, sons of chiefs had significantly higher probabilities of reaching class I than lower-class sons (Figure 6). This resonates with earlier evidence that Ugandan chief descendants enjoyed privileged access to mission high-schools, such as King's College Budu, and that this placed them in an advantageous position for the future recruitment of chiefs and administrative clerks and interpreters (Fallers, 1959; Cartey and Kilson 1977, p. 77).

**Figure 6:** Conditional probability of entering class I, Kampala 1895-1962

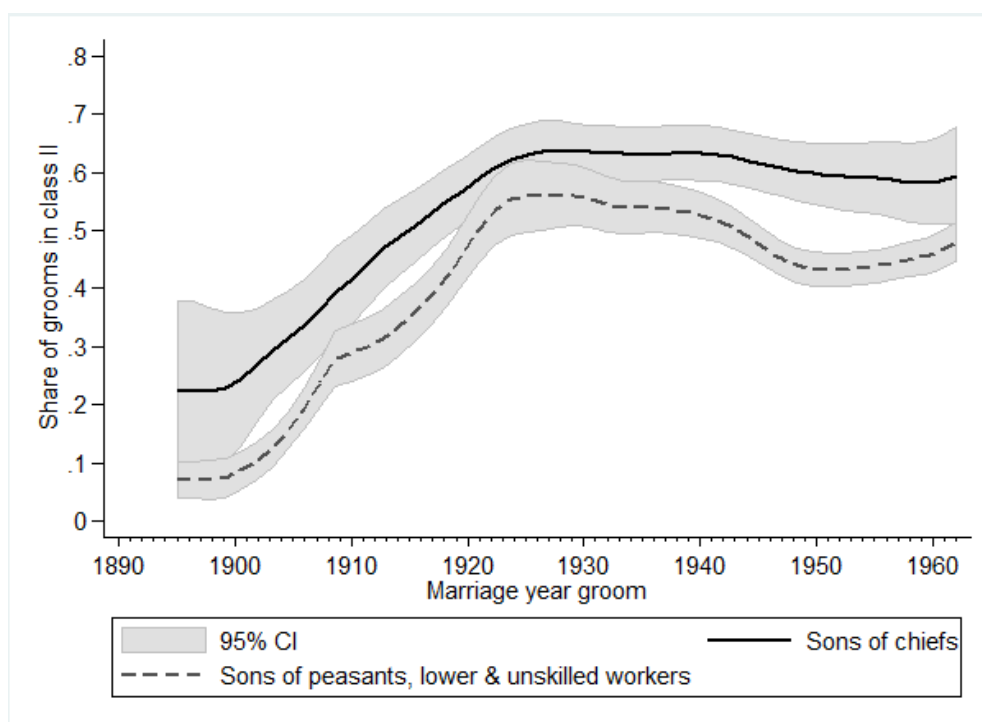


*Note:* Polynomial smoothed lines.

Towards the end of the colonial period, however, there was no statistical difference anymore. Around five per cent of the sub-sampled sons made it to the highest section of society, regardless of whether their father was a chief or belonged to the lowest social classes (Figure 6). This development implies that meritocratic criteria eventually matched status ascription for attaining the highest social status in Kampala. Although sons of chiefs faced mildly higher odds of becoming a lower professional (class II) than their low social-class counterparts during the entire colonial era (Figure 7), the probabilities increased markedly for

both groups, with more than half of all sons of lower-class fathers entering class II by the time of independence. These conclusions challenge the perception of ‘chiefs as despots’ (Mamdani 1996, pp. 52-61) in the sense that indirect colonial rule in Uganda did not perpetuate pre-colonial power structures, at least not among those with an Anglican pathway to social mobility.

**Figure 7:** Conditional probability of entering class II, Kampala 1895-1962



*Note:* Polynomial smoothed lines.

The weakening of pre-colonial power structures in colonial Buganda had many reasons. One is that chieftaincy was not exclusively obtained by lineal descent (Fallers 1964, p. 10). More importantly, colonial laws emerging in the late 1920s, which fixed rents and levies on cash crops, favoured smallholders and tenants and ensured them against oligarchy of landed chiefs (Powesland 1957; Richards 1973). Also, the elimination of hundreds of chieftainships and breakup of larger estates after 1930 arguably made it harder for chiefs to secure their offspring a high-status position. Colonial land reforms also helped thousands of non-elite Baganda to the purchase of land, which they paid for through their earnings from wage work or profits made in cotton cultivation (Hansen 1986; Hanson 2003, p. 194). The new landed class received substantial rents from cotton and coffee exports (Elkan 1960, p. 13-14; De Haas 2017) helping them finance the education and upward social mobility of their sons.

The colonial elevation of descendants from the lower classes to high-status positions also informs us that secondary education was not just a privilege of sons of chiefs. King's College Budo, the most prestigious high-school in Buganda, founded by the Anglican Church, testifies to how inclusive mission schooling was by the late colonial era: only eight per cent of the school's attendees came from a chiefly background, whereas 61 per cent were of farmer descent and 21 per cent had a father engaged in mission work or the colonial administration (Taylor 1958, p. 277). This helped create a new Christian-educated class, which "would increasingly challenge the old system, feeling itself excluded from social status and political authority" (Reid 2012, p. 185). Our findings also give numerical expression to earlier narratives about the rapid expansion and important role of mission education in Uganda, including John Iliffe's contention that "African education did more to foster social mobility than to entrench old privileged classes, largely because tropical Africa has no long-established literate elites" (Iliffe 2007, p. 230) and because "salaried administration, functionally divorced from landownership and from production" was a corridor to high-status attainment regardless of social background (Wrigley 1959, p. 50).<sup>24</sup>

The new income-earning opportunities and social mobility of the lower social classes deprived chiefs of their "monopoly of the labour market" (Hansen 1986, p. 87). "Cash wages, taxes in rupees, and labor demands slowly began to undermine the economic and social logic of chiefly authority" (Hanson 2003, p. 150ff). Table 7 highlights this, comparing the most frequent class I occupations held by sons of chiefs and sons of lower-class fathers, respectively. Although chieftaincy was relatively more common among the sons of chiefs, other higher professions, in mission schooling and medical care or other administrative work, presented descendants from the lower social classes with a new path to high social status. The occupational patterns of sons of chiefs and sons of lower-class fathers entering into class II were remarkably similar (Table 8). These illustrations show how Baganda chiefs lost their advantage in placing their offspring in high-status positions under indirect colonial rule.

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<sup>24</sup> Wantchekon et al (2015) has consistently shown that fathers' lack of education and social standing did not disadvantage their sons' educational attainments, social positions, or standards of living.

**Table 7:** Class I occupations of sons by fathers' social background, Kampala 1895-1962

<i>Father Chief (I)</i>			<i>Father Class IV-VI</i>		
<i>Grooms' occupation</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Grooms' occupation</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Chief	54	63.5	Chief	31	27.0
Medical doctor	9	10.6	Engineer	22	19.1
Engineer	8	9.4	Medical doctor	17	14.8
Interpreter	6	7.1	Accountant	16	13.9
Accountant	2	2.4	Interpreter	6	5.2
Clan leader	2	2.4	Clergy	5	4.3
Clergy	2	2.4	Journalist	4	3.5
Architect	1	1.2	Scientist	3	2.6
Pharmacist	1	1.2	Pharmacist	2	1.7
			Other Professionals	9	7.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>100.0</i>		<i>115</i>	<i>100.0</i>

**Table 8:** Class II occupations of sons by fathers' social background, Kampala 1895-1962

<i>Father Chief (I)</i>			<i>Father Class IV-VI</i>		
<i>Grooms' occupation</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Grooms' occupation</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Clerk	219	43.0	Clerk	349	34.9
Trader	86	16.9	Trader	201	20.1
Teacher	77	15.1	Teacher	197	19.7
Medical assistant	39	7.7	Medical assistant	44	4.4
Policeman	14	2.8	Policeman	39	3.9
Dispenser	10	2.0	Dispenser	23	2.3
Shop owner	9	1.8	Shop owner	23	2.3
Sub-chief	9	1.8	Sub-chief	17	1.7
Surveyor	7	1.4	Headman	15	1.5
Others	37	7.3	Others	92	9.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>509</i>	<i>100.0</i>		<i>999</i>	<i>100.0</i>

## VI. Social mobility in rural Western Uganda

The sample from Toro County was obtained by merging our three rural parishes in Western Uganda. It provides vital insights about social mobility trends among our sampled grooms living in less urbanised areas. Table 9 reports the occupational structures by social class in each of the three rural parishes. As in Kampala, we observe an initial shift towards non-agricultural activities in Toro's capital Fort Portal and in Butiti by the mid-colonial era, whereas the more remote parish of Bundibugyo remained predominantly agricultural throughout. The significantly lower shares of non-manual labour opportunities compared to

Kampala, however, clearly stand out. Rural occupational structures were also more sensitive to economic instability under Amin and Obote in the 1970s-80s, when Fort Portal and Bundibugyo saw rising shares of agricultural workers. This was accompanied by falling shares of formal professions and coincided with plunging real wages and evidence of de-urbanisation at the time (see the discussion above).

**Table 9:** Class distribution of grooms from Toro parishes, 1910-2011

<i>Fort Portal</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>VI</i>	<i>N</i>
1910-19	5.7	22.9	32.2	10.2	22.9	6.1	<b>245</b>
1920-29	3.3	47.0	20.8	8.7	15.3	4.9	<b>183</b>
1930-39	2.5	33.1	16.5	22.3	23.1	2.5	<b>121</b>
1940-49	3.5	30.4	8.7	18.3	25.2	13.9	<b>115</b>
1950-59	2.0	46.3	10.1	18.8	14.8	8.1	<b>149</b>
1960-69	9.0	50.6	10.1	15.7	9.0	5.6	<b>89</b>
1970-79	6.5	40.5	3.3	37.9	7.2	4.6	<b>153</b>
1980-89	9.3	28.4	2.1	46.2	3.4	10.6	<b>236</b>
1990-99	10.0	68.6	4.3	10.0	4.3	2.9	<b>70</b>
2000-11	34.2	42.1	6.6	6.6	10.5	0.0	<b>76</b>
<i>Butiti</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>VI</i>	<i>N</i>
1928-29	0.0	30.0	14.0	8.0	28.0	20.0	<b>50</b>
1930-39	1.1	24.9	13.9	30.4	16.5	13.2	<b>273</b>
1940-49	1.6	42.5	7.1	29.1	16.5	3.2	<b>127</b>
1950-59	1.1	39.8	17.1	15.9	23.3	2.8	<b>176</b>
1960-65	3.5	33.7	15.1	26.7	8.1	12.8	<b>86</b>
<i>Bundibugyo</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>VI</i>	<i>N</i>
1940-49	0.0	22.5	1.3	62.5	10.0	3.8	<b>80</b>
1950-59	1.6	26.1	3.2	67.0	1.6	0.5	<b>188</b>
1960-69	1.5	16.5	3.0	79.0	0.0	0.0	<b>133</b>
1970-74	0.0	9.5	0.0	85.7	4.8	0.0	<b>21</b>

#### *Intergenerational social mobility flows in the rural parishes*

Except for the 1970s-80s, when almost every second groom remained in his class of origin, usually no more than one in four stayed put (Table 10). In these relatively fluid rural societies, upward mobility generally outperformed downward mobility, with half of all grooms moving up the social ladder in Fort Portal as well as in Butiti. The trends (though not the magnitudes) of social mobility in Fort Portal largely followed those of Kampala during the post-colonial era. These patterns contrast with the socially-static parish of Bundibugyo,

remotely located along the Congo border, where about two in three grooms remained in their class of origin (meaning farmers) after independence. The virtual absence of non-agricultural market activities undoubtedly put a firm lid on the prospects for social mobility in this area. That said, our inability to track out-migrants may underrate the social mobility of rural-born workers, who left for urban areas or the nearby copper mine (Kilembe) in search of social advancement.

**Table 10:** Intergenerational mobility in rural Toro parishes (% of total grooms), 1911-2011

	<i>Fort Portal</i>				<i>Butiti</i>				<i>Bundibugyo</i>			
	<i>Up</i>	<i>Down</i>	<i>Imm</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Up</i>	<i>Down</i>	<i>Imm</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Up</i>	<i>Down</i>	<i>Imm</i>	<i>N</i>
1910-19	63.7	23.3	13.0	245								
1920-29	61.5	22.5	15.9	182	46.0	24.0	30.0	50				
1930-39	39.7	32.2	28.1	121	36.6	24.5	38.8	273				
1940-49	33.0	44.4	22.6	115	49.6	22.8	27.6	127	27.0	11.4	61.6	74
1950-59	39.2	36.9	23.9	148	45.5	33.0	21.6	176	27.1	7.0	65.9	188
1960-69	51.7	32.4	15.9	89	50.0	24.1	25.9	87	19.6	0.8	79.7	133
1970-79	36.6	17.0	46.4	153					9.5	4.8	85.7	21
1980-89	35.2	13.6	51.3	236								
1990-99	64.3	12.9	22.9	70								
2000-11	51.3	15.8	32.9	76								
Total	680	351	405	1,436	336	187	190	713	98	23	295	416

As in colonial Kampala, rural sons subject to social mobility literally moved into any social layer (Table 11). At one extreme, while half the sons of higher and lower professionals (classes I and II) stayed in their class of origin, the remaining half went into blue-collar work with almost one in five dropping to the bottom of society (classes V and VI). At the other extreme, sons of farmers (class IV) faced a 50 per cent chance of upward mobility, while one in three sons of unskilled workers (class VI) reached the two highest classes (classes I and II). Again, these large leaps in social status describe a society with only limited social barriers, at least among our sampled Anglicans. The post-colonial period displayed similar trends (Table 12), but with the important exception that the likelihood of sons of upper-class fathers of staying in white-collar work increased to 70 per cent, and that the sons of unskilled fathers remained at the bottom of society more often than during colonial times. The probabilities of sons of farmers and craftsmen (classes III and IV) of dropping down into the lower classes also became less likely after independence.

**Table 11:** Outflow mobility rates (row percentages) in the rural parishes, 1911-1962

	<i>Groom's class</i>						<i>Total</i>	<i>N</i>
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI		
<i>Father's class</i>								
I: Higher professional	12.2	37.4	15.7	14.8	13.9	6.1	100	115
II: Lower professional	1.1	46.6	12.9	16.3	17.4	5.6	100	178
III: Semi-skilled	1.3	16.0	29.3	32.0	17.3	4.0	100	75
IV: Farmer	2.0	32.1	13.1	33.2	15.1	4.5	100	1,092
V: Lower-skilled	2.1	25.3	21.1	11.6	34.7	5.3	100	95
VI: Unskilled	1.2	32.3	16.3	14.4	16.7	19.1	100	257
Total (%)	2.4	32.9	14.8	26.5	16.6	6.8	100	
N	44	596	268	480	301	123		1,812

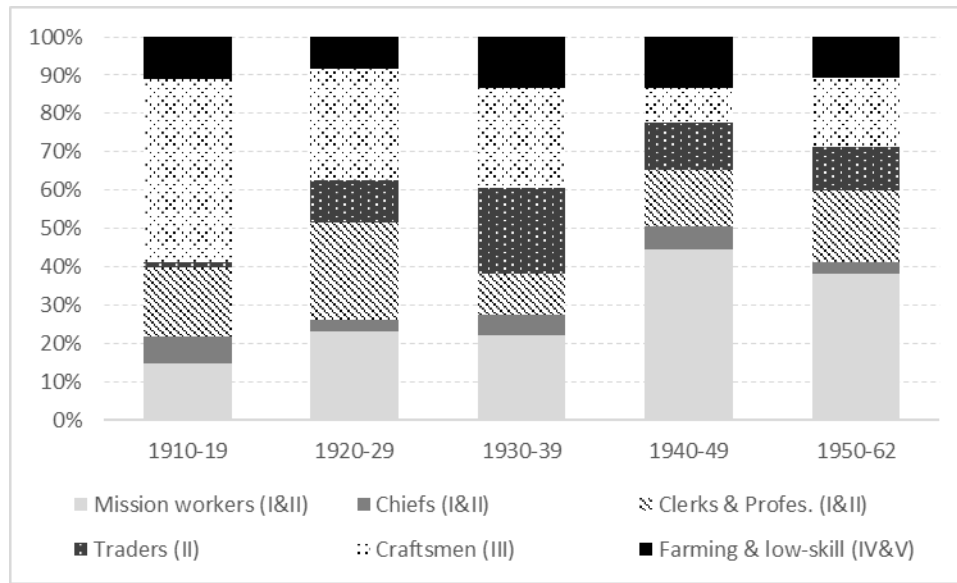
*Note:* Grooms' class by fathers' class in the colonial era is statistically different from the post-colonial era (Table 12) at the 1 per cent significance level.

**Table 12:** Outflow mobility rates (row percentages), rural parishes, 1963-2011

	<i>Groom's class</i>						<i>Total</i>	<i>N</i>
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI		
<i>Father's class</i>								
I: Higher professional	20.0	54.0	2.0	10.0	12.0	2.0	100	50
II: Lower professional	21.4	49.5	6.8	8.7	9.7	3.9	100	103
III: Semi-skilled	22.2	44.4	22.2	11.1	0.0	0.0	100	9
IV: Farmer	7.9	32.7	3.5	48.5	3.5	3.9	100	594
V: Lower-skilled	7.7	61.5	7.7	14.4	7.7	0.0	100	13
VI: Unskilled	6.3	21.9	3.1	12.5	6.3	50.0	100	32
Total (%)	10.5	36.3	4.1	38.6	5.0	5.5	100	
N	84	291	33	309	40	44		801

The lack of major structural changes in the rural parishes during the colonial era raises questions about the type of work that upward mobility involved. As in Kampala (Figure 5), rural social advancement was initially linked to craftsmanship (Figure 8). Formal-sector employment came to dominate from the 1920s onwards, but with the important difference that mission work, in the absence of a large colonial bureaucracy, was the main means to climb the social ladder. Again, this highlights the role of the Anglican mission in *Africanising* formal work and facilitating social mobility also among the rural parishioners.

**Figure 7:** Types of work of upward mobile sons in rural Toro parishes, 1911-1962



## VII. Conclusion

This article offers a first glance into intergenerational social mobility in colonial Africa. Our sampled grooms, even though they came from all layers of Ugandan society, represent in many ways a privileged group of Christian Africans. They were privileged in terms of mission-school education and labour market opportunities, which they could access through their parents' conversion and strict commitment to the rules and regulations of the Anglican Church. This created a pathway for the sampled grooms into a remarkably fluid colonial economy in which traditional claims to status did not confer automatic advantages to pre-colonial elites, and where the barrier between blue and white-collar work was surprisingly low. Even the most modest families could hope that their sons, helped by mission education and close ties between the Anglican Church and the colonial state, could climb the social ladder and reach the higher ends of Ugandan society.

Although many Ugandan chiefs were appointed as British officials and this way exercised both political and economic power over the local population, our micro-evidence portrays a society in which access to secondary education and a labour market seemingly based on meritocratic criteria caused traditional, pre-colonial power structures to gradually disappear. The shift, which was helped by colonial land reforms and Ugandan access into the colonial economy, challenges the perception of British indirect rule as 'decentralised despotism' (Mamdani 1996). It also illustrates how mission education did more to foster

social mobility among our sampled grooms than to entrench traditional privileged classes. Upward social mobility among our Kampala grooms grew persistently from the mid-colonial period up until the present, although with some reversal towards informal and agricultural work during the economically devastating precedencies of Amin and Obote. In rural areas, where the colonial economy was less developed than in Kampala, employment in mission churches, schools, and hospitals were important windows of opportunity for social advancement into formal work.

Going back to the debates outlined in the introduction, this demonstrates that the colonial economy in Uganda did issue ‘tickets to upward social mobility’, at least to a new generation of Christian Africans, whose parents self-selected into the religious and political networks surrounding the Anglican Church. This included not just the sons of traditional Ugandan elites, but from all social classes. However, although the occupational backgrounds of the sampled fathers did not appear to present any hindrance for social advancement among their sons, tickets to upward mobility arguably came with other strings attached. These involved a break with traditional customs of Ugandan religious and marital living in exchange for a way of life modelled after a Western template. Career-building in this context began with Anglican baptism and was followed by school and vocational training and later monogamous church marriage in compliance with the laws of the Anglican Church. The social mobility experienced by our Ugandan grooms demonstrates that new social-advancement possibilities in colonial Uganda opened up with adherence to Anglican Christianity. More liberal forms of Christianity, such as the Malakite Church<sup>25</sup>, which arose in protest against the rigidities of the Anglican Church and merged traditional Baganda culture and Christian theology by baptising children born to polygamous men (Peterson 2016), were suppressed by the Baganda establishment helped by the colonial government. In this light, it would appear that Anglican Ugandans made themselves legible in the eyes of the British colonial authorities through a careful career-building process. A possible interpretation of this, and a reason for the enhanced performance of Anglican Ugandans described in earlier studies (Roberts 1962; Low 2009; Hanson 2003; Peterson 2016), would be that Anglican Christianity essentially functioned as a screening device among the common

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<sup>25</sup> Malaki Musajjakawa, a Christian separatist leader, was a founder of the Malakite Church. He was educated by Anglican missionaries, but failed their baptismal test twice. In 1914 he founded a protest revival movement against the religious and social inequities as well as demographic exclusivity of Anglican Christianity in Buganda (Peterson 2016). By the early 1920s he claimed over 90,000 followers.

population used by the colonial government to fill pre-eminent positions within the colonial administration and possibly the broader formal labour market.

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## ONLINE SUPPLEMENTS

### Content:

Online Supplement S1: Top five occupations of grooms and their fathers by social class

Online Supplement S2: Class distribution of son, valid and non-valid samples

Online Supplement S3: Frequency of linkage between sons and fathers

Online Supplement S4: Life-cycle mobility estimates and method of investigation

Online Supplement S5: Share of formal and informal work in class I and II under post-colonial dictatorships in Uganda

Online Supplement S6: Mobility and structural change among sampled Anglican males vs. total Uganda from Bossuroy and Cogneau (2013)

## Online Supplement S1

### Top 5 occupations of grooms and their fathers in Kampala by class

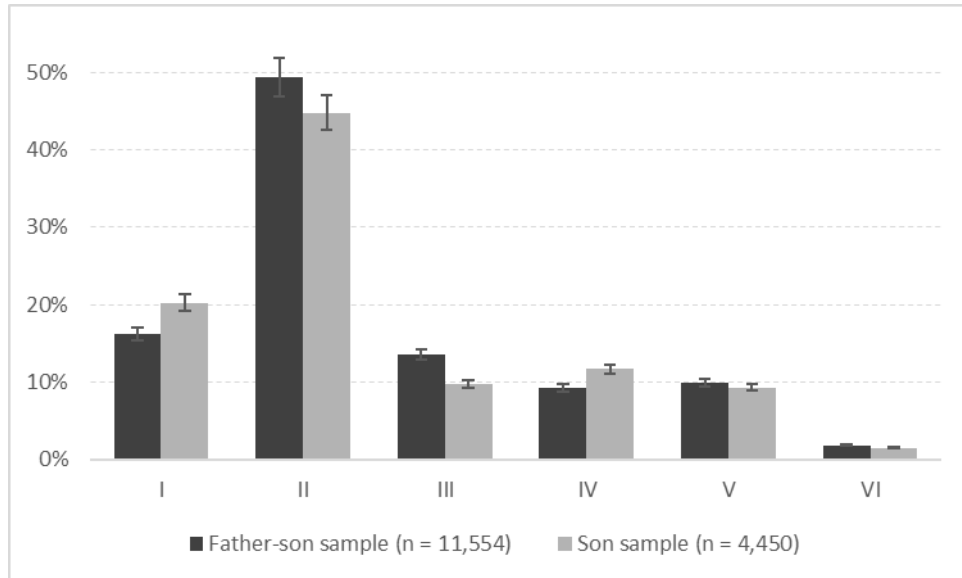
<i>Father</i>			<i>Groom</i>		
<i>I. Higher managers &amp; professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>I. Higher managers &amp; professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Chief	947	55.8	Accountant	467	24.6
Clergy	256	15.1	Engineer	297	15.9
Accountant	73	4.3	Medical doctor	169	9.1
Engineer	69	4.1	Chief	113	6.1
Medical doctor	59	3.5	Manager	65	3.5
Others	292	17.2	Others	754	40.4
Total	1,696	100	Total	1,865	100
<i>II. Lower managers, professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>II. Lower managers &amp; professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Teacher	498	21.0	Clerk	1,085	19.0
Businessman	478	20.1	Teacher	995	17.4
Trader	376	15.7	Businessman	891	15.6
Sub-chief	242	10.2	Trader	716	12.5
Clerk	147	6.2	Banker	170	3.0
Others	633	26.7	Others	1,854	32.5
Total	2,374	100	Total	5,711	100
<i>III. Skilled workers &amp; foremen</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>III. Skilled workers &amp; foremen</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Carpenter	191	36.1	Carpenter	342	21.9
Tailor	102	19.3	Tailor	275	17.8
Mechanic	50	9.5	Mechanic	259	16.6
Blacksmith	30	5.7	Technician	193	12.4
Mason	27	5.1	Electrician	94	6.0
Others	129	24.4	Others	400	25.6
Total	529	100	Total	1,563	100
<i>IV. Farmers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>IV. Farmers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Farmer	4,921	82.0	Farmer	742	69.6
Cultivator	755	12.6	Peasant	268	25.1
Peasant	322	5.4	Cultivator	53	5.0
Cotton grower	1	0.0	Game assistant	2	0.2
Poultry farmer	1	0.0	Poultry farmer	1	0.1
Total	6,000	100	Total	1,066	100
<i>V. Lower skilled workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>V. Lower skilled workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Barkcloth maker	319	46.6	Driver	400	35.2
Driver	107	15.6	Builder	225	19.8
Builder	96	14.0	Domestic servant	168	14.8
Domestic servant	66	9.7	Soldier	55	4.8
Potter	20	2.9	Watchman	27	2.4
Others	76	11.1	Others	262	23.0
Total	684	100	Total	1,137	100
<i>VI. Unskilled &amp; lower skilled farm workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>VI. Unskilled &amp; lower skilled farm workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gardener	164	60.7	Agricultural labourer	60	28.4
Hunter	21	7.8	Gardener	57	27.0
Fisherman	21	7.8	Fisherman	17	8.1
Agricultural labourer	19	7.0	Houseboy	14	6.6
Cowherd	14	5.2	Forest labourer	9	4.3
Others	31	11.5	Others	54	25.6
Total	270	100	Total	211	100

Top 5 occupations of grooms and their fathers in Toro parishes by class

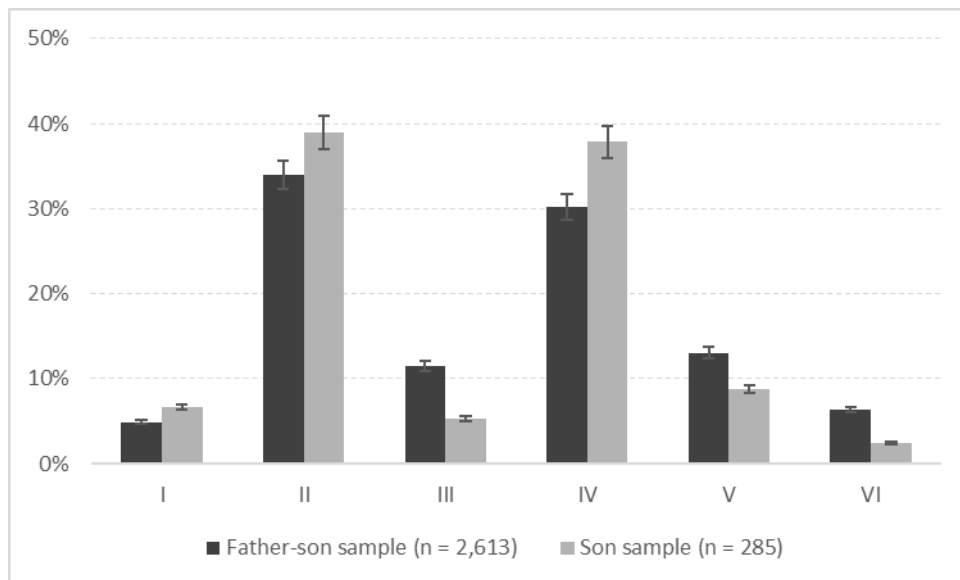
<i>Father</i>			<i>Groom</i>		
<i>I. Higher managers &amp; professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>I. Higher managers &amp; professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Chief	141	85.5	Chief	40	31.3
Bishop	3	1.8	Accountant	23	18.0
Accountant	3	1.8	Engineer	19	14.8
Engineer	3	1.8	Medical doctor	6	4.7
Priest	3	1.8	Manager	5	3.9
Others	12	7.3	Others	35	27.3
Total	165	100	Total	128	100
<i>II. Lower managers, professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>II. Lower managers &amp; professionals</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Sub-chief	85	30.2	Teacher	343	38.7
Trader	70	24.9	Clerk	155	17.5
Teacher	59	21.0	Trader	155	17.5
Clerk	15	5.3	Medical assistant	53	6.0
Businessman	10	3.6	Businessman	31	3.5
Others	42	14.9	Others	150	16.9
Total	281	100	Total	887	100
<i>III. Skilled workers &amp; foremen</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>III. Skilled workers &amp; foremen</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Blacksmith	27	32.1	Tailor	105	34.9
Carpenter	20	23.8	Cook	56	18.6
Tailor	12	14.3	Carpenter	53	17.6
Bricklayer	8	9.5	Bricklayer	32	10.6
Drum maker	8	9.5	Mechanic	8	2.7
Others	9	10.8	Others	47	15.6
Total	84	100	Total	301	100
<i>IV. Farmers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>IV. Farmers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Farmer	1,628	96.6	Farmer	781	99.0
Peasant	58	3.4	Game ranger	6	0.8
			Peasant	2	0.2
Total	1,686	100	Total	789	100
<i>V. Lower skilled workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>V. Lower skilled workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Domestic servant	29	26.9	Domestic servant	134	39.3
Mat maker	27	25.0	Mat maker	99	29.0
Barkcloth maker	21	19.4	Soldier	30	8.8
Basket maker	7	6.5	Driver	21	6.2
Builder	7	6.5	Builder	19	5.6
Others	17	15.7	Others	38	11.1
Total	108	100	Total	341	100
<i>VI. Unskilled &amp; lower skilled farm workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>VI. Unskilled &amp; lower skilled farm workers</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Cowherd	251	86.9	Cowherd	112	67.1
Shepherd	25	8.6	Houseboy	37	22.2
Hunter	6	2.1	Fisherman	6	3.6
Fisherman	2	0.7	Agricultural labourer	5	3.0
Agricultural labourer	2	0.7	Shoe shiner	2	1.2
Others	3	1.0	Others	5	3.0
Total	289	100	Total	167	100

## Online Supplement S2

Class distribution of son, valid and non-valid samples, Kampala, 1895-2011

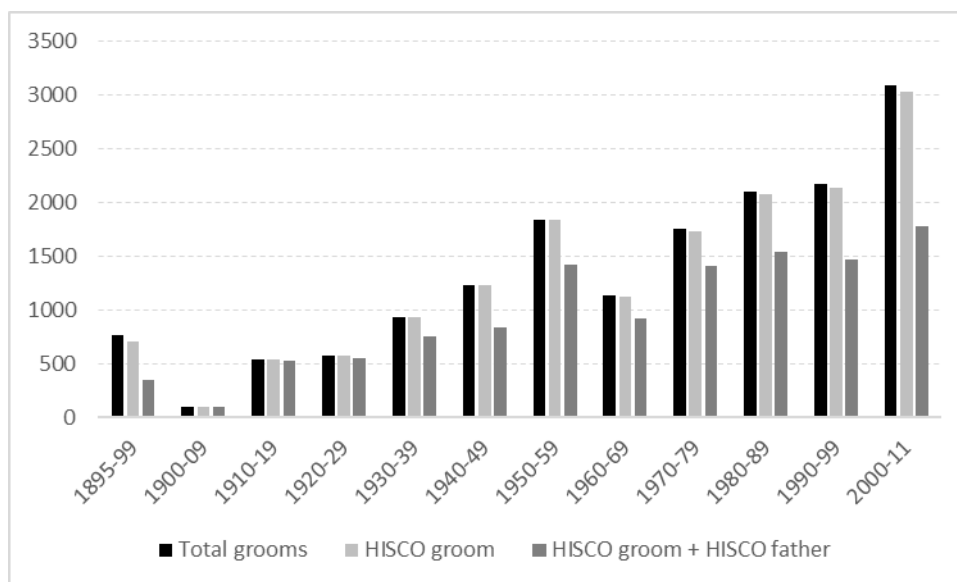


Class distribution of sons, valid and non-valid samples, rural parishes, 1911-2011

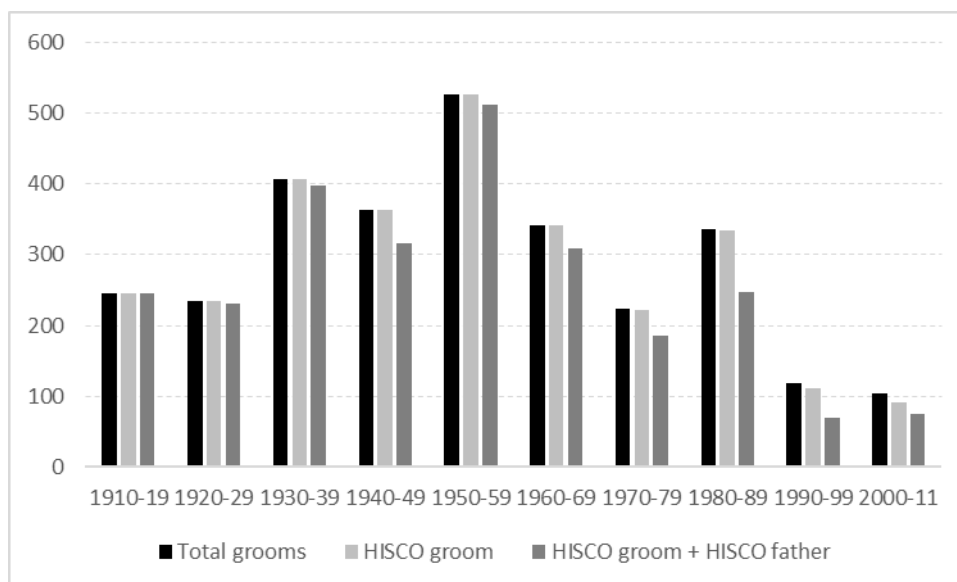


## Online Supplement S3

Frequency of linkage between sons and fathers in Kampala, 1895-2011



Frequency of linkage between sons and fathers in the rural parishes, 1910-2011



## Online Supplement S4

### Life-cycle mobility estimates and method of investigation

One issue concerns the fact that marriage registers typically report fathers' and sons' occupations simultaneously (i.e. at the time of the son's marriage) and therefore at different stages during their life-cycles. This implies that the father's career may be more advanced than when he was the same age as his son. This sort of life-cycle mobility may appear in the form of job promotion, for example if low- or unskilled workers advance to medium- or higher skilled ones (e.g. servants to butlers, cloth makers to tailors). Downward mobility may also appear due to a loss of physical strength, for example if skilled manual labourers, such as builders or brick makers, drop to unskilled workmen. As long as life-cycle mobility remains roughly constant, the study of social mobility *trends* is unaffected by this (Long 2013). One way to investigate the prevalence of upward or downward mobility over the life-cycle is to link the father's occupation listed in his son's marriage certificate with that at the time of his own church marriage when they were grooms themselves. Unfortunately, Ugandan males often carried identical names (and even sometimes changed names over the life-cycle), which makes it effectively impossible to undertake record linkage.

It is nevertheless possible to try to estimate life-cycle mobility in the current data by comparing the social structure among our sampled fathers with the social structure back when we expect that they were grooms themselves. While this is perhaps not ideal, it at least presents us with an approximation of the direction of the bias caused by life-cycle mobility. To this end, Table S4 below compares the distribution of fathers by social class to that of grooms 30 years prior to when we observe their fathers. The reasoning behind the 30-year back-cast is the following. We know the median age at marriage of the sampled men was 25 years, and we expect them to have their sons between the ages of 25 and 35. Therefore, on average we would observe the fathers at their sons' weddings roughly three decades after their own wedding. While we can of course not be certain that we capture the exact same individuals this way, we trust this provides a reasonable estimate of life-cycle mobility among the sampled population.<sup>26</sup> Since it is likely that fertility began with marriage, and that

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<sup>26</sup> The conclusions drawn below are robust to using different lengths of the back-cast period, including 25 and 35 years instead of 30 years.

the couple's births continued up to some ten years after the date of the wedding, we suspect this way to observe a son both five years into the marriage.

Estimates of social mobility across the life-cycle, Kampala

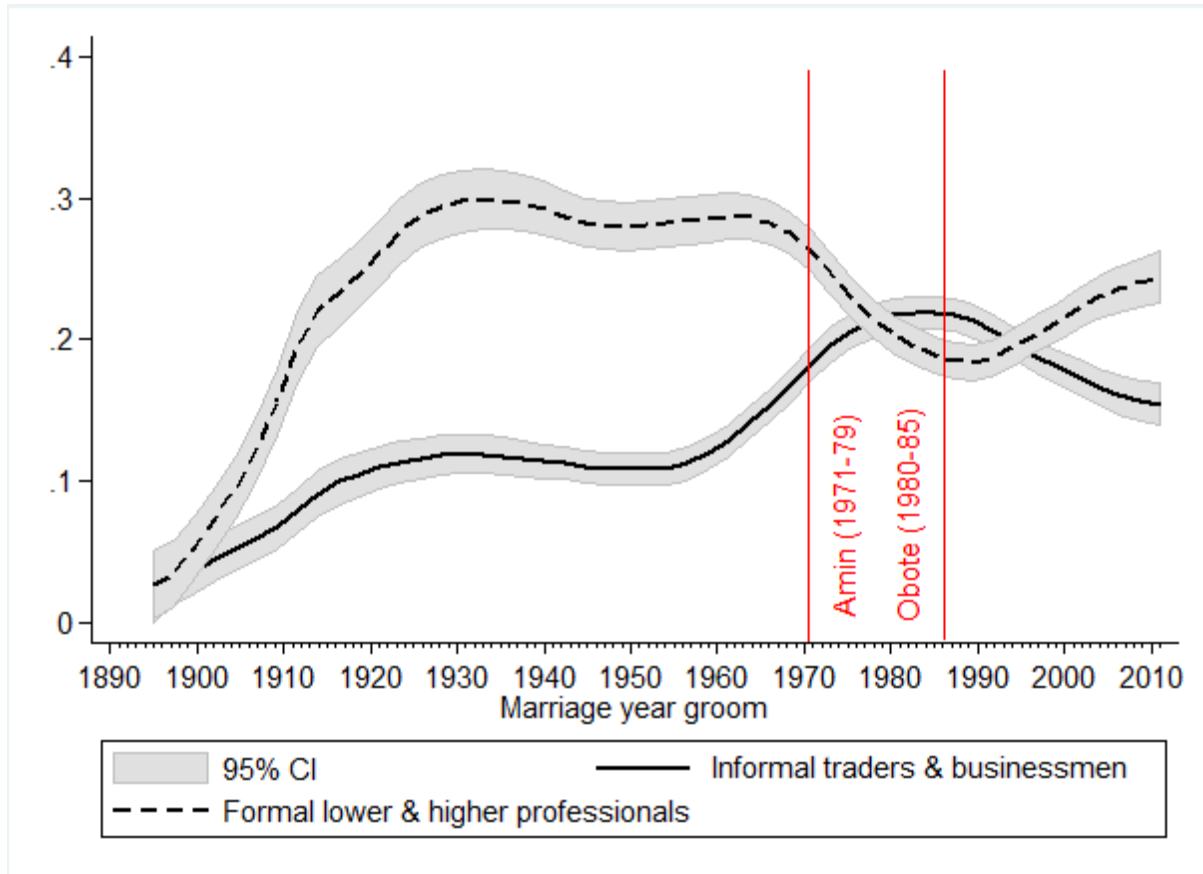
<i>Work</i>	<i>Class I</i>	<i>Skills</i>	<i>Grooms</i>	<i>Fathers</i>	<i>Grooms</i>	<i>Fathers</i>	<i>Grooms</i>	<i>Fathers</i>
			1910-29	1940-59	1930-49	1960-79	1950-69	1980-99
Non-manual	I	Higher skilled	4%	18%	6%	26%	17%	27%
	II	Lower skilled	96%	82%	94%	74%	83%	73%
Manual	III	Higher skilled	48%	9%	45%	5%	48%	6%
	IV	Lower skilled	9%	84%	15%	79%	11%	88%

*Notes:* "Grooms" include those aged 20-40 year at the time of their marriage and resident in Kampala. "Fathers" include fathers of those grooms aged 20-40 at the time of their marriage and resident in Kampala. "Chiefs" are not included due to their extraordinary societal position, but our conclusions are robust to their inclusion.

The first two rows of Table S4 illustrate the estimated life-cycle mobility of non-manual workers. Among grooms marrying in 1910-29 there were 4 per cent higher-skilled professionals and 96 per cent lower-skilled professionals. Thirty years later, in 1940-59, when we supposedly capture those grooms as fathers, we observe more high-skilled professionals (18 per cent) and fewer lower-skilled professionals (82 per cent). This pattern of upward mobility also features among later generations of non-manual workers, especially during the late colonial and early post-colonial periods. Turning to manual workers (last two rows of S4), there was a modest degree of downward mobility among those who married on the verge of independence. Apart from that, upward life-cycle mobility seemed to have been the norm, not least among manual workers and especially in the early colonial period. The predominance of upward mobility across the life-cycle means that our fathers do better, on average, when we observe them at their son's wedding than when we (supposedly) observe them at the time of their own wedding. In particular, this seems to indicate that our later estimates of intergenerational social mobility tend (if anything) to *underestimate* the degree of upward mobility of sampled grooms.

## Online Supplement S5

Share of formal and informal work in class I and II under dictatorship



## Online Supplement S6

### Mobility and structural change among sampled Anglican males vs. total male Uganda (Bossuroy and Cogneau, 2013), by birth cohort

<i>Birth year cohorts</i>	<i>Conditional Probability (%): Farmer sons become non-farmers</i>			<i>Conditional Probability (%): Non-farmer sons stay non-farmers</i>		
	<i>Total Uganda</i>	<i>Anglican</i>	<i>Anglican Toro</i>	<i>Total Uganda</i>	<i>Anglican</i>	<i>Anglican</i>
	<i>Bossuroy &amp; Cogneau</i>	<i>Kampala</i>	<i>parishes</i>	<i>Bossuroy &amp; Cogneau</i>	<i>Kampala</i>	<i>Toro parishes</i>
1930-39	16	90	66	33	95	87
1940-49	23	87	63	59	91	84
1950-59	26	89	72	60	92	90
1960-69	28	94	79	61	94	100

*Notes:* Men aged 25–69 born between 1930 and 1969. Total Uganda male data from Bossuroy, T. and D. Cogneau (2013). Social mobility in five African countries. *Review of Income and Wealth* 59: S84-110.

### Share of movers between farm and non-farm sectors among Anglican males vs. total male Uganda (Bossuroy and Cogneau, 2013), by birth cohort

<i>Birth year cohorts</i>	<i>Share of Movers (%)</i>		
	<i>Total Uganda</i>	<i>Anglican</i>	<i>Anglican Toro</i>
	<i>Bossuroy &amp; Cogneau</i>	<i>Kampala</i>	<i>parishes</i>
1930-39	23	59	49
1940-49	27	59	49
1950-59	29	60	53
1960-69	31	63	54

*Notes:* Men aged 25–69 born between 1930 and 1969. Total Uganda male data from Bossuroy, T. and D. Cogneau (2013). Social mobility in five African countries. *Review of Income and Wealth* 59: S84-110.