

Chapter 23

The Third Largest Man Made Problem in the World

The man of Lawlessness The anti-Christ

The Man of Lawlessness

“Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God send them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Stand Firm

“But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.”(2 Thessalonians 2:1-15)



Tribes of Israel

The Tribes

- [Reuben](#)
- [Simeon](#)
- [Levi](#)
- [Judah](#)
- **Dan**
- [Naphtali](#)
- [Gad](#)
- [Asher](#)
- [Issachar](#)
- [Zebulun](#)
- [Joseph](#)
 - [Manasseh](#)
 - [Ephraim](#)
- [Benjamin](#)

Related topics

- [Israelites](#)
- [Tribal allotments](#)
- [Ten Lost Tribes](#)

“Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.”(Genesis 49:16)

“Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that his rider falls backward.” (Genesis 49:17)

“And of Dan he said, “Dan is a lion's cub that leaps from Bashan.”(Deuteronomy 33:22)

“and Dan, why did he stay with the ships?

Asher sat still at the coast of the sea,” (Judges 5:17)

Those who swear by the Guilt of Samaria, and say, ‘As your god lives, O Dan,’ and, ‘As the Way of Beersheba lives,’ they shall fall, and never rise again.” (Amos 8:14)

Beta Israel (Hebrew: בֵּית־אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל - Beta Israel, Ge'ez: ቤተ እስራኤል - Bēta 'Isrā'ēl, modern Bēte 'Isrā'ēl, IPA: "Betä ʾƏsra' el", "House of Israel") also known as Ethiopian Jews (Hebrew: יְהוּדֵי אֲתִיּוֹפְיָה, Yehudei Atiopia, Ge'ez: "የኢትዮጵያ አይሁድዊ", "ye-Ityoppya Ayhudi", "the Jews of Ethiopia"), are the name of Jewish communities which lived in the area of Aksumite and Ethiopian empires (Habesh or Abyssinia), nowadays divided between Amhara and Tigray Regions.

Beta Isreal lived in North and North-Wesrern Ethiopia, in more than 500 small villages spread over a wide territory, among Muslim and predominantly Christian ruling popultion. Most of them were concentrated in the area around Lake Tana and north of it, in the Tigre, Gonder and Wello regions, and among the Semien, Wolgait, Dembia, Segelt, Lasta, Quara, Belesa, and small number in the cities Gonder and Addis Ababa.

—Hagar Salamon


Beta Israel · Ethiopian Jews





Total population

125,000 - 130,000

Regions with significant populations

 Israel 120,000 ^[2] (2008)

1.75% of the Israeli population

 <u>Ethiopia</u>	3,188 - 8,700
 <u>United States</u>	1,000

Languages

Historical Jewish languages

<u>Kayla</u> · <u>Qwara</u>
<u>Liturgical languages</u>
<u>Ge'ez</u>
Predominant <u>spoken languages</u>
<u>Amharic</u> · <u>Tigrinya</u> · <u>Hebrew</u>
Religion
<u>Judaism</u>
Related ethnic groups
<u>African Jews</u> · other <u>Jewish groups</u>
<u>Amhara</u> · <u>Tigrinya</u> · <u>Agaw</u> · other <u>Habesha people</u>



The historical region of Beta Israel

Other terms by which the community have been known include Falasha (Ge'ez: "Exiles"), Buda (Ge'ez: "Evil eye"), Kayla (Agaw language spoken by them), Tebiban ("possessor of secret

knowledge"), Attenkun (Ge'ez: "Don't touch us") which is considered derogatory and the Hebrew Habashim, associated with the non-Jews Habesha people (Abyssinians).

Nearly all of the Ethiopian Beta Israel community, comprising more than 120,000 people, reside in Israel under its Law of Return, which gives Jews and those with Jewish parents or grandparents, and all of their spouses, the right to settle in Israel and obtain citizenship. The Israeli government has mounted rescue operations, most notably during Operation Moses (1984) and Operation Solomon (1991), for their migration when civil war and famine threatened populations within Ethiopia. Some immigration has continued up until the present day. Today 81,000 Ethiopian Israelis were born in Ethiopia, while 38,500 or 32% of the community are native born Israelis.

The related Falasha Mura are the descendants of Beta Israel who converted to Christianity. Some are returning to the practices of Judaism, living in Falash Mura communities and observing halakha. Beta Israel spiritual leaders, including Chief Kes Raphael Hadane have argued for the acceptance of the Falasha Mura as Jews. This claim has been a matter of controversy within Israeli society.

Origins

Kebra Nagast

Part of a series of articles on

Jews and Judaism



The Ethiopian history described in the Kebra Negast, or "Book of the Glory of Kings," relates that Ethiopians are descendants of Israelite tribes who came to Ethiopia with Menelik I, alleged

to be the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (or Makeda, in the legend) (see 1 Kings 10:1-13 and 2 Chronicles 9:1-12). The legend relates that Menelik, as an adult, returned to his father in Jerusalem, and then resettled in Ethiopia, and that he took with him the Ark of the Covenant.

In the Bible there is no mention that the Queen of Sheba either married or had any sexual relations with King Solomon; rather, the narrative records that she was impressed with his wealth and wisdom, and they exchanged royal gifts, and then she returned to rule her people in Kush. However, the "royal gifts" are interpreted by some as sexual contact. The loss of the Ark is also not mentioned in the Bible.

The *Kebra Negast* ascerts that the Beta Israel are descended from a battalion of men of Judah that fled southwards down the Arabian coastal lands from Judea after the breakup of the united Kingdom of Israel into two kingdoms in the 10th century BCE (while King Rehoboam reigned over Judah).

Although the *Kebra Nagast* and some traditional Ethiopian histories have stated that Yodit (or "Gudit"), a tenth century usurping queen, was Jewish, it's unlikely that this was the case. It is more likely that she was a pagan southerner or a usurping Christian Aksumite Queen.

Most of the Beta Israel consider the *Kebra Negast* legend to be a fabrication. Instead they believe, based on the ninth century stories of Eldad ha-Dani (the Danite), that the tribe of Dan attempted to avoid the civil war in the Kingdom of Israel between Solomon's son Rehoboam and Jeroboam the son of Nebat, by resettling in Egypt. From there they moved southwards up the Nile into Ethiopia, and the Beta Israel are descended from these Danites.

Other sources tell of many Jews who were brought as prisoners of war from ancient Israel by Ptolemy I and also settled on the border of his kingdom with Nubia (**Sudan**). Another tradition handed down in the community from father to son asserts that they arrived either via the old district of Qwara in northwestern Ethiopia, or via the Atbara River, where the Nile tributaries

flow into Sudan. Some accounts even specify the route taken by their forefathers on their way upstream from Egypt.

Rabbinical views



Public appeal of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel to save the Jews of Ethiopia, 1921, signed by Chief Rabbis Abraham Isaac Kook and Jacob Meir.

The ninth century Jewish traveler Eldad ha-Dani claimed the Beta Israel descended from the tribe of Dan, claiming Jewish kingdoms around or in East Africa existed during this time. His writings may represent the first mention of the Beta Israel, but his accuracy is uncertain; scholars point to Eldad's lack of firsthand knowledge of Ethiopia's geography and any Ethiopian language, although he claimed the area as his homeland.

Rabbi Ovadiah Yare of Bertinoro wrote in letter from Jerusalem in 1488:

I myself saw two of them in Egypt. They are dark-skinned... and one could not tell whether they keep the teaching of the Karaites, or of the Rabbis, for some of their practices resemble the Karaite teaching... but in other things they appear to follow the instruction of the Rabbis; and they say they are related to the tribe of Dan.

Some Jewish legal authorities have also asserted that the Beta Israel are the descendants of the tribe of Dan, one of the Ten Lost Tribes. In their view, these people established a Jewish kingdom that lasted for hundreds of years. With the rise of Christianity and later Islam, schisms arose and three kingdoms competed. Eventually, the Christian and Muslim Ethiopian kingdoms reduced the Jewish kingdom to a small impoverished section. The earliest authority to rule this way was the Radbaz (Rabbi David ben Zimra, 1479–1573). **Radbaz explains in a responsum concerning the status of a Beta Israel slave:**

But those Jews who come from the land of Cush are without doubt from the tribe of Dan, and since they did not have in their midst sages who were masters of the tradition, they clung to the simple meaning of the Scriptures. If they had been taught, however, they would not be irreverent towards the words of our sages, so their status is comparable to a Jewish infant taken captive by non-Jews ... And even if you say that the matter is in doubt, it is a commandment to redeem them.

In 1973 Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, then the Chief Sephardic Rabbi, based on the Radbaz and other accounts, ruled that the Beta Israel were Jews and should be brought to Israel. He was later joined by a number of other authorities who made similar rulings, including the **Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi Shlomo Goren**.

Other notable poskim, from non-Zionist Ashkenazi circles, placed a halakhic safek (doubt) over the Jewishness of the Beta Israel. Such dissenting voices include rabbis Elazar Shach, Yosef Shalom Eliashiv, Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, and Moshe Feinstein. Similar doubts were raised within the same circles towards Bene Israel Jews, and Russian immigrants to Israel in the 1990s.

In the 1970s and early 80s the Beta Israel were forced to undergo a modified conversion ceremony involving immersion in a ritual bath, a declaration accepting Rabbinic law, and, for men, a "symbolic recircumcision". **Chief Rabbi Avraham Shapira later waived the "symbolic recircumcision" demand, which is only required when the halakhic doubt is significant. More recently Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar has ruled that descendants of Ethiopian Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity are "unquestionably Jews in every respect".**

With the consent of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, Rabbi Amar ruled that it is forbidden to question the Jewishness of this community, pejoratively called Falashmura.

At present, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel requires ritual immersion prior to marriage, from Jews of Ethiopian or any other ancestry alike.

DNA evidence

A 1999 study by Lucotte and Smets studied the DNA of 38 unrelated Beta Israel males living in Israel and 104 Ethiopians living in regions located north of Addis Ababa and concluded that "the distinctiveness of the Y-chromosome haplotype distribution of the Beta-Israel from conventional Jewish populations and their relatively greater similarity in haplotype profile to non-Jewish Ethiopians are consistent with the view that the Beta Israel people descended from ancient inhabitants of Ethiopia and not the Levant." This study confirmed the findings of a 1991 study by Zoosmann-Dissen *et al.*. A 2000 study by Hammer *et al.* of Y-chromosome biallelic haplotypes of Jewish and non-Jewish groups suggested that "paternal gene pools of Jewish communities from Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East descended from a common Middle Eastern ancestral population," with the exception of the Beta Israel, who were "affiliated more closely with non-Beta Israel (non-Falasha) Ethiopians and other East Africans."

A 2001 study by the Department of Biological Sciences at Stanford University found a possible genetic similarity between 11 Ethiopian Falashas and 4 Yemenite Jews who took part in the testing. The differentiation statistic and genetic distances for the 11 Ethiopian Falashas and 4 Yemenite Jews tested were quite low, among the smallest of comparisons involving either of these populations. **The 4 Yemenite Jews from this study may be descendants of reverse migrants of African origin who crossed Ethiopia to Yemen.** The study result suggests gene flow between Ethiopia and Yemen as a possible explanation for the closeness. The study also suggests that the gene flow between Ethiopian and Yemenite Jewish populations may not have been direct, but instead could have been between Jewish and non-Jewish populations of both regions.

A 2002 study of Mitochondrial DNA (which is passed through only maternal lineage to both men and women) by Thomas *et al.* showed that the most common mtDNA type found among the Ethiopian Falasha sample was present only in **Somalia**. This further supported the view that all Ethiopian Beta-Israel(Falashas) were of local or Ethiopian origin.

Scholarly view

In the past, secular scholars were divided on the origins of the Beta Israel; whether they were the descendants of an Israelite tribe, or converted by **Jews living in Yemen**, or by the Jewish community in southern Egypt at Elephantine. In the 1930s Jones and Monro argues that the chief Semitic languages of Ethiopia may suggest an antiquity of Judaism in Ethiopia. "There still remains the curious circumstance that a number of Abyssinian words connected with religion, such as the words for Hell, idol, Easter, purification, and alms— are of Hebrew origin. These words must have been derived directly from a Jewish source, for the Abyssinian Church knows the scriptures only in a Ge'ez version made from the Septuagint." Richard Pankhurst summarized the various theories offered about their origins as of 1950 that the first members of this community were

(1) converted Agaws, (2) Jewish immigrants who intermarried with Agaws, (3) immigrant **Yemeni Arabs who had converted to Judaism**, (4) **immigrant Yemeni Jews**, (5) **Jews from Egypt**, and (6) **successive waves of Yemeni Jews**. Traditional Ethiopian savants, on the one hand, have declared that '**We were Jews before we were Christians**', while more recent, well-documented, Ethiopian hypotheses, notably by two Ethiopian scholars, Dr Tadesse Tamrat and Dr Getachew Haile... put much greater emphasis on the manner in which Christians over the years converted to the Falasha faith, thus showing that the Falashas were culturally an Ethiopian sect, made up of ethnic Ethiopians.

According to Menachem Waldman, a major wave of immigration from the **Kingdom of Judah** to present-day Ethiopia dates back to the **Assyrian Siege of Jerusalem**, in the beginning of the **7th century BC**. **Rabbinic** accounts of the siege assert that only about 110,000 Judeans remained in Jerusalem under King **Hezekiah**'s command, whereas about 130,000 Judeans led by **Shebna** had joined **Sennacherib**'s campaign against **Tirhakah**, king of **Kush**.

Sennacherib's campaign failed and Shebna's army was lost "at the mountains of darkness", suggestively identified with Semien Mountains. This account is supported by the letter of Aristeas (13), which also describes several later occasions in which Judean armies were sent against Ethiopian forces. According to Jacqueline Pirenne, numerous Sabaeans crossed over the Red Sea to Ethiopia to escape from the Assyrians, who had devastated the kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the eighth and seventh centuries BCE. She further states that a second major wave of **Sabaeans** crossed over to Ethiopia in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE to escape Nebuchadnezzar. This wave also included Jews fleeing from the Babylonian takeover of Judah.

In 1987 Steven Kaplan stated:

Although we don't have a single fine ethnographic research on Beta Israel, and the recent history of this tribe has received almost no attention by researchers, every one who writes about the Jews of Ethiopia feels obliged to contribute his share to the ongoing debate about their origin. Politicians and journalists, Rabbis and political activists, not a single one of them withstood the temptation to play the role of the historian and invent a solution for this riddle.

Richard Pankhurst stated in 1992 "The early origins of the Falashas are shrouded in mystery, and, for lack of documentation, will probably remain so for ever."

By 1994 modern scholars of Ethiopian history and Ethiopian Jews generally supported one of two conflicting hypotheses, as outlined by Kaplan:

- An ancient Jewish origin of the Beta Israel, as well as some ancient Jewish traditions later conserved by the Ethiopian Church. Kaplan lists Simon D. Messing, David Shlush, Michael Corinaldi, Menachem Waldman, Menachem Elon and David Kessler as supporters of this hypothesis.
- A late ethnogenesis of the Beta Israel between the 14th to 16th Centuries, from a sect of Ethiopian Christians who took on Biblical practices, and came to see themselves as Jews. Steven Kaplan lists himself along with G.J. Abbink, Kay K. Shelemay, Tadesse Tamrat and James A. Quirin as supporters of this hypothesis. Quirin differs from his fellow

researchers in the weight he assigns to an ancient Jewish element that the Beta Israel have conserved.

Paul B. Henze supported the latter view in his 2000 work *Layers of Time: A History of Ethiopia*:

These groups came into conflict with the military colonies and Christian missions which were the main instruments of the extension southward of the Ethiopian state. They may have been joined by dissidents or rebelling northern Christians who felt their interpretation of ritual, sacred texts and traditions of art represented a more ancient Israelite connection than Orthodox Monophysite Christianity itself. The Beta Israel can thus be understood as a manifestation of the kind of rebellious archaism that has often come to the surface in Christianity -- e.g. Russian Old Believers and German Old Lutherans. Assertion of Jewish derivation, they felt, provided them with a stronger claim to legitimacy than their Christian enemies.

Middle Ages



The Beta Israel village of Balankab.

In 1329, Emperor Amda Seyon campaigned in the northwest provinces of Semien, Wegera, Tselemt, and Tsegede, in which many had been converting to Judaism and where the Beta Israel had been gaining prominence. He sent troops there to fight people "like Jews" (Ge'ez ከሙሳይሁድ kama ayhūd).

For the next three centuries, these regions were frequently areas of Beta Israel rebellion against the Solomonic dynasty. Religion was less important to the Emperors than loyalty, however.

Rebellious Beta Israel leaders often formed alliances with other enemies of the Emperor despite their differing faiths. The late fourteenth century Christian monk Qozmos, for instance, copied the *Orit* (Old Testament) for the Beta Israel communities. He led them against local Christians before being defeated by Emperor Dawit I. Likewise, the fifteenth century governor of Tsellemt used both Jewish and Christian troops for his revolt. The first personal campaign against rebelling Beta Israel areas did not come until the reign of Emperor Yeshaq (r.1414-29). When Yeshaq I defeated the governors of Semien and Dembiya, he began to exert religious pressure. He reduced the Jews' social status below that of Christians. Yeshaq forced the Jews to convert or lose their land. It would be given away as *rist*, a type of land qualification that rendered it forever inheritable by the recipient and not transferrable by the Emperor. Yeshaq decreed, "He who is baptized in the Christian religion may inherit the land of his father, otherwise let him be a *Falāsī*." This may have been the origin for the term "Falasha" (*falāšā*, "wanderer," or "landless person"). In the 1400s, Emperor Zara Yaqob carried out some of the worst massacres, attacks and forced conversions of the Christian kingdom. Zara Yaqob added the title "Exterminator of the Jews" to his name.

Another convert was Abba Sabra (or Sabriqu) of Madra Kabd near Zeqwala in Shewa, who lived in the fifteenth century. According to Falasha tradition, in which he is a seminal figure, Abba Sabra turned to a life of penance after having committed a murder; one act of this penance was building a church in Dankaz near Gondar. Not long afterwards, he "embraced the faith of the Israelites", and converted one of Zara Yaqob's sons, Saga-Amlak, who according to some accounts also converted many other people. Abba Sabra is also remembered for his teaching of the *Orit*, as well as the laws of purity known in Amharic as *attenhugn*. He is also believed to have introduced to the Beta Israel monastic practices, which became one of its most distinctive practices as a Jewish sect. The influence of converts like Qozmos and Abba Sabra complicates the work of tracing this group's possible heritage from its earliest adherents.

Beta Israel autonomy in Ethiopia ended **in 1624**, when Emperor Susenyos confiscated their lands, **sold many people into slavery and forcibly baptized others. Jewish writings and religious books were burned.** The practice of any form of Jewish religion was forbidden in Ethiopia. As a result of this period of oppression, much traditional Jewish culture and practice was lost or changed.

Nonetheless, the Beta Israel community appears to have continued to flourish during this period. The capital of Ethiopia, Gondar, in Dembiya, was surrounded by Beta Israel lands. The Beta **Israel served as craftsmen, masons, and carpenters for the Emperors** from the sixteenth century onwards. Such roles had been shunned by Ethiopians as lowly and less honorable than farming. According to contemporary accounts by European visitors: Portuguese merchants and diplomats, French, British and other travellers, the Beta Israel numbered about one million persons in the seventeenth century. These accounts also recounted that some knowledge of Hebrew persisted among the people in the seventeenth century. For example, Manoel de Almeida, a Portuguese diplomat and traveller of the day, wrote that:

The Falashas or Jews are... of [Arabic] race [and speak] Hebrew, though it is very corrupt. They have their Hebrew Bibles and sing the psalms in their synagogues.

The extent of De Almeida's knowledge is not known. The Beta Israel were not predominantly of the Arabic race, for instance, but he may have meant the term loosely or meant that they also knew Arabic.

The Beta Israel lost their relative economic advantage in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, during the Zemene Mesafint, a period of recurring civil strife. Although the capital was nominally in Gondar during this time period, the decentralization of government and dominance by regional capitals resulted in a decline and exploitation of Beta Israel by local rulers. No longer was there a strong central government interested in and capable of protecting them. **During this period, the Jewish religion was effectively lost for some forty years, before being restored in the 1840s by Abba Widdaye, the preeminent monk of Qwara.**

The isolation of the Beta Israel was reported by explorer James Bruce, who published his Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile in Edinburgh in 1790.

Contacts with other Jews

The earliest surviving testimony to those hidden kingdoms comes from the ninth century. **In the last decades of that century, the Jews of Kairowan in Tunisia were visited by a man called Eldad son of Mahli, the Danite. Eldad the Danite, as he is referred to in Jewish histories,**

said he was the lone survivor of a shipwreck. He claimed to have escaped cannibals and had other fabulous adventures before arriving in Tunisia. He was described as having dark skin and speaking only a strange sort of Hebrew and no Arabic. Eldad the Danite claimed to be a Jew of a pastoralist tribe residing in the land of Havilah beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.

He claimed the tribe was descendants of the tribe of Dan, which had emigrated from Judaea at the time of Jeroboam's accession, after the death of Solomon. He said three other tribes, Naphtali, Gad and Asher, had joined them in the time of Sennacherib. He laid waste to the northern kingdom of Israel around 722 B.C. Opposite these tribes lived the Children of Moses, Bnai Mosheh, who came from those Levites who had mutilated the fingers of their right hands rather than sing the songs of Zion by the rivers of Babylon, and chose instead to flee to the south.



Dr. Jacques Faitlovich

Eldad the Danite said the Children of Moses lived beyond a river of grinding stones. They were impossible to visit, except on the sabbath day when the river ceased its grinding. This was a concept strikingly similar to, if not a direct borrowing from, Sambation. The tribes were pastoralists and mighty warriors. They were ruled together by a king assisted by a learned Torah judge-prophet. They did not know of the Talmud, but had their own traditions written down in Hebrew. Eldad the **Danite displayed these to the rabbis of Tunisia and Egypt.**

The **rabbis** corresponded with a Gaon of Sura (in Babylon) and concluded that Eldad the Danite was indeed a Jew. They determined that the differences of his practice from their own were legitimate forms of customary law for the Jews of Havilah. In the early modern period, the variations from Rabbinic law which he practiced and obeyed were still cited by Rabbinic authorities as precedents. The facts that he used only Hebrew in the Muslim world and carried a sacred text written in Hebrew which gave details of ritual and other practices suggested that ancient Ethiopian Jewry knew Hebrew.

In the sixteenth century, the Chief Rabbi of Egypt, Rabbi David ben Solomon ibn Abi Zimra (Radbaz) proclaimed that in terms of halakha (Jewish legal code), the Ethiopian community was certainly Jewish. During the nineteenth century, the majority of European Jewish authorities openly supported this assertion.

In 1908, the chief rabbis of 45 countries made a joint statement officially declaring that Ethiopian Jews were indeed Jewish. This proclamation was chiefly due to the work of Doctor (title). Jacques Faitlovitch, who studied Amharic and Tigrinya at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris under Professor Joseph Halévy. Halévy first visited the Ethiopian Jews in 1876. Upon his return to Europe, Halévy published a "Kol Korei," a cry to the world Jewish community to save the Ethiopian Jews. He formed the organization Kol Yisroel Chaverim ("All Israel are Friends"), to act as advocates for Ethiopian Jews for years to come.

Falash Mura



Falash Mura kid.

In 1860, Henry Stern, a Jewish convert to Christianity, traveled to Ethiopia to attempt to convert the Beta Israel to Christianity.

Many Ethiopian Jews whose ancestors converted to Christianity have been returning to the practice of Judaism. Such people are known as the Falash Mura. They have been admitted to Israel, although not as Jews. The Israeli government can thus set quotas on their immigration and make citizenship dependent on their conversion to Orthodox Judaism. Although no one knows precisely the population of the Falash Mura in Ethiopia, observers believe it is approximately 20,000-26,000 persons. Recently, some reporters and other travelers in remote regions of Ethiopia have noted finding entire villages where people claim they are Jewish or are Falash Mura, that is, Jews who have been practicing Christianity.

In the Achefer woreda of the Mirab Gojjam Zone, roughly 1,000-2,000 families of Beta Israel were found. They have not petitioned to immigrate to the Jewish state. There may be other such regions in Ethiopia with significant Jewish enclaves, which would raise the total Jewish population to more than 50,000 people. Israel has approved the immigration of the Falash Mura at 300 per month. The Ethiopian Jewish community and its supporters have petitioned to increase this number to 600 per month, citing the high mortality rate among Jews waiting to emigrate from Ethiopia. An economic analysis conducted for the JAI by David Brodet, former director general of the Ministry of Finance, concluded that an increased rate of immigration to Israel "is highly logical and has economical and social advantages" over the present immigration rate.

Culture

Religious traditions

The holiest work is the Torah — Orit. All the holy writings, including the Torah, are handwritten on parchment pages that are assembled into a codex. The rest of the Prophets and the Hagiographa are of secondary importance. The language of their holy writings is Ge'ez.

In addition to the Rabbinical Biblical canon, the Beta Israel hold sacred the books of Enoch, Jubilees, Baruch and the books of Ezra as well. The basic wording of Beta Israel Biblical writings was passed down through ancient translations like the Septuagint, which incorporates the Apocrypha (**as called by Protestant Christians**) including all the books noted by Catholics as Deuterocanon **as well as other Rabbinical Jewish Apocrypha**.

The Beta Israel possess, but do not consider canonical, several other books, including the Arde'et, Acts of Moses, Apocalypse of Gorgorios, Meddrash Abba Elija, and biographies of the nation's forebears: Gadla Adam, Gadla Avraham, Gadla Ishak, Gadla Ya'kov, Gadla Moshe, Gadla Aaron, Nagara Musye, Mota Musye.



Ethiopian women at the Kotel in Jerusalem during Hol HaMoed (the week of) Passover.

Leaders of the community consider especially important a book about the Shabbat and its precepts, *Te'ezaza Sanbat* (Precepts of the Sabbath). The leaders of the Beta Israel also read liturgical works, including weekday services, Shabbat and Festival prayers, and various blessings. *Sefer Cahen* deals with priestly functions, while *Sefer Sa'atat* (Book of the Hours) applies to weekdays and Shabbat. The Beta Israel religious calendar is set according to a treatise known as the *Abu Shaker*, which was written around 1257 CE. It covered the computation of Jewish holidays and chronological matters. The *Abu Shaker* lists civil and lunar dates for Jewish feasts, including Matqe' (New Year), Soma Ayhud or Badr (Yom Kippur), Masallat (Sucot), Fesh (Passover), and Soma Dehnat (Fast of Salvation) or Soma Aster (Fast of Esther).

The Beta Israel have a unique holiday, known as Sigd on the 29th of Cheshvan. Sigd or Seged is derived from the Semitic root, meaning "to bow or prostrate oneself." In the past the day was called Mehella. The acts of bowing and supplication are still known as mehella. Sigd celebrates the giving of the Torah and the return from exile in Babylonia to Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah. Beta Israel tradition holds that Sigd commemorates Ezra's proclamation against the Babylonian wives (Ezra 10:10-12). In Ethiopia, the Sigd was celebrated on hilltops outside villages. The location was called by several names, including Ya'arego Dabr (Mountain for making prayers) and in Amharic Yalamana Tarrara (Mountain of Supplication). The Kessim, or elders of the community, drew a parallel between the ritual mountain and Mount Sinai. Another source described Sigd (calling it Amata Saww) as a new-moon holiday, after which the Kessim withdrew for a period of isolation.

Social contact between the Beta Israel and other Ethiopians was limited. It was not because of the laws of Kashrut, since all Ethiopians share the same food taboos. Ethiopian Jews were forbidden to eat the food of non-Jews. The Kessim were more strict about the prohibition against eating food prepared by non-Kessim. Beta Israel who broke these taboos were ostracized and had to undergo a purification process. Purification included fasting for one or more days and ritual purification before entering the village. Unlike other Ethiopians, the Beta Israel do not eat raw meat dishes like kitfo or gored gored.

Languages

The Beta Israel once spoke Qwara and Kayla, closely related Cushitic languages. Now they speak Amharic and Tigrinya, both Semitic languages. Their liturgical language is Ge'ez, also Semitic. Since the 1950s, they have taught Hebrew in their schools; in addition, those Beta Israel currently residing in the State of Israel use Hebrew as a daily language.

Israeli intervention

Aliyah from Ethiopia compared to the total Aliyah to Israel

Years	Ethiopian-born	Total Immigration

Aliyah from Ethiopia

The Israeli government officially accepted the Beta Israel as Jews in 1975, for the purpose of the Law of Return. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin obtained clear rulings from Chief Sephardi Rabbi Ovadia Yosef that they were descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes. They were, however, required to undergo *pro forma* Jewish conversions, to remove any doubt as to their Jewish status.

Beginning in 1984, the Israeli-led Operation Moses began transporting Beta Israel to Israel. In 1985, it came to an abrupt halt, leaving many of

the Beta Israel still in Ethiopia. It was not until 1990 that the governments of Israel and Ethiopia came to an agreement to allow the remaining Beta Israel a chance to emigrate to Israel. In 1991, the political and economic stability of Ethiopia deteriorated, as rebels mounted attacks against and eventually controlled the capital city of Addis Ababa. Worried about the fate of the Beta Israel during the transition period, the Israeli government along with several private groups prepared to continue covertly with the migration. After El Al obtained a special provision to fly on Shabbat (because of the danger to life), on Friday, May 24, Operation Solomon began. Over the course of the next 36 hours, a total of 34 El Al passenger planes, with their seats removed to maximize passenger capacity, flew 14,325 Beta Israel non-stop to Israel.

Ethiopian Jews in Israel

	Immigrants	to Israel
1948–51	10	687,624
1952–60	59	297,138
1961–71	98	427,828
1972–79	306	267,580
1980–89	16,965	153,833
1990–99	39,651	956,319
2000–04	14,859	181,505
2005	3,573	21,180
2006	3,595	19,269



Ethiopian Israeli soldier in Nablus, in 2006



Kadima MK Shlomo Molla.



An Ethiopian Israeli member of the Israel Border Police

Ethiopian Jews are gradually becoming part of the mainstream Israeli society in religious life, military service (with nearly all males doing national service), education, and politics. Similarly to other groups of immigrant Jews who made aliyah to Israel, the Ethiopian Jews have faced obstacles in their integration to Israeli society. The Ethiopian Jewish community's internal challenges have been complicated by limited but real racist attitudes on the part of some elements of Israeli society and the official establishment.

One study found that some of the problems with the absorption of the Beta Israel was due to the model of absorption chosen.

Planning for the absorption of Jewish immigrants to Israel has been dominated by a procedural approach, which has generally been insensitive to the particular circumstances and needs of minority ethnic groups. This approach has emphasised the ‘national interest’ as defined by the dominant group, namely Ashkenazi Jews who originated in Central Europe. The social and cultural traditions of other groups have been treated as ‘problems’ that need to be overcome, and minimal attention has been given to the processes of adaptation such groups undergo.

Most of the 100,000 Ethiopian Jews living in Israel are immigrants and descendants of two main waves, the first in 1981-1984 and the second in 1991-1998. These airlifts were known as Operation Moses and Operation Solomon, respectively. Civil war and famine in Ethiopia prompted the Israeli government to mount these dramatic rescue operations. The rescues were within the context of Israel's national mission to gather Diaspora Jews and bring them to the Jewish homeland.

Individual Ethiopian Jews had lived in Eretz Yisrael prior to the establishment of the state. A youth group arrived in Israel in the 1950s to undergo training in Hebrew education and returned to Ethiopia to educate young Jews there. Also, Ethiopian Jews had been trickling into Israel prior to the 1970s. The numbers of such Ethiopian immigrants grew after the Israeli government officially recognized them in 1973 as Jews entitled to Israeli citizenship.

To prepare for the absorption of tens of thousands of Ethiopian Jews, the State of Israel prepared two 'Master Plans' (Ministry of Absorption, 1985, 1991). The first was prepared in 1985, a year after the arrival of the first wave of immigrants. The second updated the first in response to the second wave of immigration in 1991 from Ethiopia. The first Master Plan contained an elaborate and detailed program. It covered issues of housing, education, employment and practical organization, together with policy guidelines regarding specific groups, including women, youths, and single-parent families. Like earlier absorption policies, it adopted a procedural approach which assumed that the immigrants were broadly similar to the existing majority population of Israel. The Plans were, no doubt, created with good intentions and a firm belief in assimilation. As noted in this section, results have been disappointing and suggest that much greater attention needs to be paid to issues of ethnicity.

According to a November 17, 1999 BBC article, a report commissioned by Israel's Ministry of Immigrant Absorption stated that 75% of the 70,000 Ethiopian Jews living in Israel in 1999 could not read or write Hebrew. More than half the population could not hold a simple conversation in the Hebrew language. Unlike Russian immigrants, many of whom arrive with job skills, Ethiopians came from a subsistence economy and were ill-prepared to work in an industrialized society. Since then much progress has been made. Through military service most Ethiopian Jews have been able to increase their chances for better

opportunities. Today most Ethiopian Jews have been for the most part integrated into Israeli society, however a high drop out rate is a problem, although a higher number are now edging towards the higher areas of society.

In September, 2006, the Israeli government's proposed 2007 budget included reducing Ethiopian immigration from 600 persons per month to 150. On the eve of the **Knesset** vote, the Prime Minister's office announced that the plan had been dropped. Advocates for the Falash Mura noted that although the quota was set at 600 per month in March, 2005, actual immigration has remained at 300 per month.

On 9 November 2009, the Kiryat Ono Academy released a report that showed that 53% of Israeli employers would prefer to not employ Ethiopians.

Notable Ethiopian Jews olim

- **Qes Adana Takuyo** was born in Seqelt and studied with the Qessim as a child. During the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, he had moved to Ambober where he worked as a farmer. He studied Hebrew briefly in 1955 when an Israeli rabbi taught in Asmara. In 1985 Qes Adana immigrated to Israel along with his wife and eleven children. His oldest son Rabbi Josef Adana, who had immigrated earlier, had become the first Ethiopian Rabbi.
- In the 1920s, **Yona Bogale** was sponsored by **Jacques Faitlovitch** to study abroad. **He spent two years in British Mandate Palestine, four in Germany, one in Switzerland, and one in France.** After returning to Addis Ababa around 1930, he taught in the **Faitlovitch school** there. During the Italian occupation, he went into hiding and worked as a farmer in Wolleka. After the war Yona Bogale worked for the **Ethiopian Ministry of Education** for twelve years and then for the **Jewish Agency**. **Yona Bogale was fluent in Hebrew, English, and German, as well as Amharic.** He was author of an early Hebrew-Amharic dictionary. He left Ethiopia in late 1979 and immigrated to Israel. Yona was an early proponent of Ethiopian Jews' praying in Hebrew instead of Ge'ez. He believed the latter language was no longer appropriate for those seeking to be part of the modern Jewish world. He felt that Ethiopian Jews should set Hebrew prayers to the traditional Jewish melodies.

- Rabbi Sharon Shalom is a lecturer in Jewish ritual and tradition at Bar Ilan University in Israel. He is a counselor for the Ethiopian-Israeli community in the town of Kiryat Gat.^[60]
- Rabbi Yefet Alemu was born in 1961 in a small village in Ethiopia. In 1980, he left his village to go to Israel. He was arrested in Addis Ababa and escaped from prison. He arrived in the Gondar region and then set out walking to Sudan. There he met a Jewish Red Cross director who arranged for him to fly on one of the Israeli-organized secret flights to Israel. In Israel he studied and became a nurse. While continuing to be a believing Jew, Yefet became disillusioned with organized Judaism and the Israeli religious establishment's insistence on a conversion ceremony for all Ethiopian Jews. Yefet helped organize an Ethiopian protest vigil opposite the Chief Rabbinate building in Jerusalem. At the vigil, he met students from the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies who were studying to be Conservative rabbis. He was confused and surprised to see that they were without beards and without long black coats. The students replied that there was more than one type of rabbi, more than one way of being Jewish. Yefet excitedly embraced this pluralistic approach to Judaism. He was accepted by the Schechter Institute and after 6 years of hard work, he received a BA, MA, and his rabbinical ordination.^[61]
- Mazor Bahaina, rabbi of an Ethiopian community of 10,000 in Beersheba, studied at Yeshivat Porat Yosef, one of the most prestigious Sephardi yeshivot in Israel. Bayana, did not win a seat in the Knesset, yet entered when a colleague resigned.
- Adisu Massala, of Labour and later One Nation, is the first Ethiopian-Israeli to have served in the Knesset.
- Esti Mamo is an Ethiopian Jewish model. She is one of the first Ethiopian-Israelis to make it into the entertainment industry and is a budding actress. The first Ethiopian-Israeli model was Mazal Pikado in 1990.
- Avraham Negussie is one of Israel's most prominent Ethiopian Activists and a member of the South Wing to Zion. His struggle, with the support of many other Ethiopian-Israelis has resulted in the Israeli government continuing to bring the last 23,000 Ethiopian Jews from Ethiopia; though the Israeli government has set a quota of 300 Jews per month, half

of what they agreed to under pressure from Negussie, NACOEJ and the United Jewish Communities.

- Meskie Shibru-Sivan is a female Ethiopian-Israeli actress and vocalist, well known in Israel and beyond for acting on theater stages, in television programs, movies as well as being an accomplished singer.
- Moses Michael Levy (born Jamal Barrow), better known as Shyne, a multi-platinum Belizean born rapper, whose grandmother is an Ethiopian Jew, has long been a practicing Jew during his sentence from 1999 to 2009. "He attended a Jewish service by a rabbi employed by the New York [State] Department of Corrections who would not let him attend the service because he said he didn't know if he was a real Jew," Michelen said. "That offended him, and he made the decision to change his name so there won't be any misunderstanding about his religion."
- Baruch Tegegne, a prodigy of Bogale, was a leader in protests on behalf of Ethiopian Jewry in the 1980s and 1990s.
- In 2009, Tzion Shenkor, the highest ranking Ethiopian-Israeli officer in the Israel Defence Forces with a rank of Lieutenant Colonel, became the first battalion commander of Ethiopian descent.

Ethiopian-Israelis have been participating more in Israeli political life. The Atid Ekhad party sees itself as the political representative of the community, though other parties include Ethiopian members. In 2006, Shas, a party representing Haredi Jews of Sephardic and Middle Eastern background, included an **Ethiopian rabbi from Beersheba, in its list for the Knesset in a conscious attempt to represent diverse geographic and ethnic groups.**

Shas was not the only party attempting to appeal to the Ethiopian vote. Herut and Kadima both had Ethiopians on their lists. Shlomo Mula, head of the Jewish Agency's Ethiopian absorption department, was ranked 33 on Kadima's list and Avraham was number three on Herut's list.

Shas's spiritual mentor, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, enthusiastically embraced Ethiopians when they first began immigrating to Israel four decades ago. Despite Rabbi Ovadia's halachic ruling, some

refuse to marry Ethiopians without a conversion in accordance with official Chief Rabbinate policy. Only in cities and towns with rabbis that accept Ovadia's ruling or the ruling of Rabbi Shlomo Goren are Ethiopians married without immersion in a ritual bath (mikva) or, for men, *hatafat dam*, מִדַּת הַדָּם, see *brit milah*), the symbolic cut to produce a drop of blood instead of circumcision.

Ethiopian Heritage Museum

Ethiopian Heritage Museum

A museum highlighting the culture and heritage of the Ethiopian Jewish community is to be built in Rehovot. The museum, planned as a research, interpretive and spiritual center, is the brainchild of Tomer. This is an association of veteran Ethiopian immigrants and former Mossad agents who participated in the first operations to bring Ethiopian Jews to Israel.

The Jews of Ethiopia have a rich cultural heritage, and are the only Jews who strictly kept their Judaism although they were entirely cut off from the Jewish people," said Tomer chairman Moshe Bar-Yuda. "The museum will present Ethiopian Jewish culture to Israelis who are not familiar enough with it, and also to young Ethiopians who fall between the cracks — on one hand they are not connected to their parents' culture, and on the other, they sometimes find it hard to become part of the dynamic of life in Israel. When they see the ancient culture of their forbears, they will be filled with pride, and it will be easier for them to become part of veteran Israeli society."

Plans for the museum, expected to cost some \$4.5 million, include a model Ethiopian village, an herb garden, an artificial stream, an amphitheater, classrooms, and a memorial to both Ethiopian Jews who died in Sudan on their way to Israel, and Ethiopian Zionist activists. "We view the conservation of the past as very important and believe the museum will attract young people and adults alike," Rehovot Mayor Shuki Forer says.

Numerous Ethiopian Jews live in Rehovot and surrounding towns, which is why it was chosen as the site of the museum. The city has set aside 6 dunams (6,000 m²), of land for the museum complex.

All 21 members of the Rehovot City Council, both coalition and opposition, voted for the establishment of the center," says Abai Zaudah, a council member and a member of Tomer's board of directors. "It's the first time they all agree and leave politics behind to focus on the reality that the establishment of the **museum will assist the absorption of the Ethiopian community a great deal.**

One of the museum's founders was Baruch Tegegne, who pioneered escape routes from Ethiopia via Sudan and fought for the right of Jews to emigrate to Israel. Other founders include veteran Ethiopian rights activist Babu Yaakov, a former member of the Ramle City Council, and Shetu Barehon, who worked in the transit camps in **Sudan to bring Ethiopian Jews to Israel**. A number of Ethiopian Jewish spiritual leaders and rabbis are also working to increase support for the project in the community and the Diaspora.

Bar-Yuda's long association with the Ethiopian Jewish community began in 1958. The Jewish Agency asked him to go to Ethiopia to look for Jews and to reach remote villages. His report, together with a 16th Century ruling by Rabbi David B. Zimra, known as the Radbaz, was the basis for chief Sephardic rabbi Ovadia Yosef's determination in 1973 that the Jews of Ethiopia were to be considered Jews according to halakha (Jewish religious law).

Politics



Beta Israel protest in Israel

Some **non-Jewish Ethiopians expressed bitterness towards the Jewish emigration out of Ethiopia**. Others hope that the growing Ethiopian population in Israel will create stronger social and political connection between Ethiopia and Israel. Some Ethiopian Jews currently participate in Israeli politics.

The Ethiopian government is also an important ally of Israel in the international stage. Israel often sends **expertise assistance** for development projects in Ethiopia. Strategically, **Israel "has always aspired to protect itself by means of a non-Arab belt that has included at various times Iran, Turkey and Ethiopia."**

In fiction

Operation Moses was the subject of an Israeli-French film titled *Va, Vis et Deviens (Go, Live, and Become)*, directed by Romanian-born Radu Mihăileanu. The film tells the story of an Ethiopian Christian child whose mother has him pass as Jewish so he can emigrate to Israel and escape the famine looming in Ethiopia. The film was awarded the 2005 Best Film Award at the Copenhagen International Film

Barack Obama

Barack Obama



Barack Obama was born on August 4 1961 to Stanley Ann Dunham, an American of predominantly English descent from Wichita, Kansas and **Barack Obama, Sr., a Luo** from Nyang'oma Kogelo, Nyanza Province, Kenya Colony. Obama's parents met in 1960 in a **Russian language class** at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, where his father was a foreign student on scholarship. The couple married on February 2, 1961, but separated when Barack Sr. went to Kenya, visiting Barack in Hawaii only once, in 1971. He died in an automobile accident in 1982.

Quotes:

“We can rattle our sabers all we want but, realistically, we don't have troops for an invasion [Iran] and surgical strikes aren't going to work.”

“without enough troops to win the war, secure the peace and earn the respect of the world.”

“Instead of having a set of policies that are equipping people for the globalization of the economy, we have policies that are accelerating the most destructive trends of the global economy.”

"I didn't see the weapons of mass destruction at the time, I didn't think there was an imminent threat from Saddam Hussein."

"Money is not the only answer, but it makes a difference."

"In the speech, Obama suggested that it would be impractical to govern based solely on the word of the Bible, noting that some passages suggest slavery is permissible and eating shellfish is disgraceful."

"Which passages of scripture should guide our public policy?" Obama asked in the speech. "Should we go with Leviticus, which suggests slavery is OK and that eating shellfish is an abomination? Or we could go with Deuteronomy, which suggests stoning your child if he strays from the faith? Or should we just stick to the Sermon on the Mount?"

"So before we get carried away, let's read our Bible now," Obama said, to cheers. "Folks haven't been reading their Bible."

"He also called Jesus' Sermon on the Mount "a passage that is so radical that it's doubtful that our Defense Department would survive its application."

The Biblical name Korah is important because it became associated with Biblical villains and traitors for two reasons:

1. In the case of Korah son of Esau, both Esau and Korah waged war against Israel, and Esau was hated by God because of it according to Malachi 1:3. In these struggles Korah became renowned as a warrior and a fighter, and was legendary in Canaan because of abilities.
2. In the case of Korah son of Izhar, he is remembered for the rebellious action together with Dathan and Abiram against Moses according to Numbers 16:21. This story also appears in the Qur'an, where Korah is named Qarun (see Biblical narratives and the Qur'an). The story of this "fallen Levite" or "corrupted priest" is one of the many stories in the Scriptures that, in sharp contrast to most ancient literature, allows criticism of an honorable office, similarly to the criticism of King David's infidelity.

Korah said: "The presence of the whole Torah, which contains 175 chapters, does not make a house fit for habitation"

This is not a man who understands Christianity and claims to be a Christian

Fact: Barack Obama is the only world Leader or Chief official of any country that proclaims to be a Christian. All other leaders were of a specific denomination with a doctrine that became present after the empire split were we have religions that are endocrines of Great Britain.

His father was a Luo

Luo are an ethnic group in Kenya, eastern Uganda, and northern Tanzania. They are part of a larger group of ethnolinguistically related Luo peoples who inhabit an area including southern Sudan, northern and eastern Uganda, western Kenya, and northern Tanzania.

The Luo are the third largest ethnic group (13%) in Kenya, after the Kikuyu (22%) and the Luhya (14%). The Luo and the Kikuyu inherited the bulk of political power in the first years following Kenya's independence in 1963. The Luo population in Kenya was estimated to be 3,185,000 in 1994. The Tanzanian Luo population was estimated at 280,000 in 2001.

The main Luo livelihood is fishing. Outside Luoland, the Luo work in eastern Africa as tenant fishermen, small scale farmers, and urban workers. They speak the Dholuo language, which belongs to the Western Nilotic branch of the Nilo-Saharan language family spoken by other Luo-speaking peoples such as the Lango, Acholi, Padhola and Alur (all of Uganda).

History

Pre-colonial times

The Luo of Kenya descend from early agricultural and herding communities from western Kenya's early pre-colonial history. The Luo people and dialects of their language have historic roots across the Lake Victoria region. Chief among the powerful families to which the Luo trace

their ancestry were the Sahkarias of Kano, the Jaramogis of Ugenya, and the Owuors of Kisumu, whose clans married several wives and had multitudes of grandchildren and heirs to various chieftainships. **Leaders of these lineages typically had multiple wives and intermarried with their neighbours in Uganda and Sudan.** The Luo tribe, through intermarriages and wars, are part of the genetic admixture that includes all modern **East African ethnic groups as well as members of Buganda Kingdom, the Toro Kingdom, and the Nubians of modern day Sudan.**

The Luo had many ethnic enemies with whom they fought for access to water, cattle, and land including the Nandi, Luhya, Kipsigis and the Kisii. As a result of these wars peace treaties and intermarriages were accomplished resulting in a mixture of cultural ideals and practices. As with all so-called tribes of modern day East Africa, Luo history is intricately interwoven with the histories of their friends, enemies and neighbours and attest to the complexity of East African precolonial history.

The Luo probably originated at Wau in southern Sudan, near the confluence of the Meride and Sue Rivers. **The Kenya Luo migrated into western Kenya via today's eastern Uganda, the first wave arriving sometime around 1500 AD. Arrivals came in at least five waves arriving at different times:**

1. The Joka-Jok (who migrated from Acholiland the first and largest migration)
2. Those migrating from Alur
3. The Owiny (who migrated from Padhola)
4. The Jok'Omolo (perhaps from Pawir)
5. The Abasuba (an heterogeneous group in southern Nyanza, with Bantu elements).

The present day Kenya Luo traditionally consist of 25 sub-tribes, each in turn composed of various clans and sub-clans ("Jo-" indicates "people of".):

1. Jo-Gem
2. Jo-Yimbo
3. Jo-Ugenya
4. Jo-Seme

5. Jo-Kajulu
6. Jo-Karachuonyo
7. Jo-Nyakach
8. Jo-Kabondo
9. Jo-Kisumo (Jo-Kisumu)
10. Jo-Kano
11. Jo-Asembo
12. Jo-Alego
13. Jo-Uyoma
14. Jo-Sakwa
15. Jo-Kanyamkago
16. Jo-Kadem
17. Jo-Kwabwai
18. Jo-Karungu
19. Abasuba (Jo-Suna, Jo-Gwasssi, Kaksingri, etc)
20. Jo-Kasgunga
21. Jo-Kanyamwa
22. Jo-Kanyada
23. Jo-Kanyidoto
24. Jo-Kamgundho
25. Jo-Kamagambo

By the 1840s, the **Luo** had a tight-knit society with leadership from *Ruodhi* or regional chiefs.

Colonial times

Early British contact with the Luo was indirect and sporadic. Relations intensified only when the completion of the **Uganda Railway** had confirmed British intentions and largely removed the need for local tribal alliances. In 1896 a punitive expedition was mounted in support of the Wanga ruler Mumia in Ugenya against the Umira Kager clan led by Gero. Over 200 were quickly killed by a Maxim gun. In 1899, C. W. Hobley led an expedition against

Sakwa, Semeand Uyoma locations in which 2,500 cattle and about 10,000 sheep and goats were captured.

By 1900, the Luo chief Odera was providing 1,500 porters for a British expedition against the Nandi.

In 1915 the Colonial Government sent *Odera Akang'o*, the *ruoth* of Gem, to Kampala, Uganda. **He was impressed by the British settlement there and upon his return home he initiated a forced process of adopting western styles of "schooling, dress and hygiene". This resulted in the rapid education of the Luo in the English language and English ways.**

The Luo generally were not dispossessed of their land by the British, avoiding the fate that befell the pastoral tribes inhabiting the Kenyan "White Highlands". Many Luo played significant roles in the struggle for Kenyan independence, but the tribe was relatively uninvolved in the Mau Mau Uprising of the 1950s. Instead, some Luo used their education to advance the cause of independence peacefully. The lawyer C.M.G. Argwings-Kodhek, for example, used his expertise to defend Mau Mau suspects in court.

Independent Kenya

Kenya became independent on 12 December 1963. Oginga Odinga, a prominent Luo leader, declined the presidency of Kenya, preferring to assume the vice presidency with Jomo Kenyatta as the head of government. Their administration represented the Kenya African National Union (KANU) party. However, differences with Jomo Kenyatta caused Oginga to defect from the party and abandon the vice presidency in 1966. His departure caused the Luo to become politically marginalized under the Kenyatta, and subsequently the Moi, administrations.

In Tanzania Mwalimu J.K. Nyerere had personally sought to work with Hellon Ang'ielia Owino of Shirati, Tanzania, as a trusted and vibrant political aide who was never ashamed of eloquently speaking his mind whenever needed. Mr. Owino was well known among the front bench politicians who exchanged fists with the then Oscar Kambona and one Bhoke Munanka, who he said were betraying Nyerere behind his back. Owino (1930s-1988) was sent many times by Nyerere (through Oginga Odinga) to mend relations with Kenya and was the one who passed

information (through Okello, who was his friend) to Nyerere on Kenya's mission to take Zanzibar.

Many years of poor leadership and disastrous economic management in Kenya, particularly under the KANU party's administration of the nascent state, had tragic consequences for the people of Kenya. Ravaged by AIDS and with little or no infrastructure, the Luo-populated regions remained poor and undeveloped, despite the economic potential of nearby Lake Victoria. Kenya continues to struggle with poverty and AIDS today.

More than 1,000 people were killed in Kenya's election violence amongst the Kikuyu, Luo and several other ethnic groups following the controversial December 2007 presidential election.

The most prominent Luo politician today is Raila Odinga, the son of Oginga Odinga and former Minister of Roads and Public Works. He is widely credited with enabling Mwai Kibaki to win the 2002 presidential election through the support of his Liberal Democratic Party.

Another prominent member was Barack Obama Sr., whose son, Barack Obama II, is the 44th President of the United States.

Culture and customs

Religious customs

The **Luo traditionally believed in an afterlife and a supreme creator, whom they called Nyasaye, and had a strong ancestor cult**. Today the vast majority of Kenya Luo are **Christians**, while a few are **Muslim**.

The first major ritual in a Luo person's life is called *juogi*, the naming ceremony. Any time between birth and age two, an ancestor might appear in a dream to an adult member of the family. It is generally believed that only people who did good things when alive appear in this way and are thus "reincarnated". The child is supposed to assume some of the mannerisms of the ancestor he or she is named after. If the ancestor was quiet, the child becomes a quiet person; if talkative, the same. The so named ancestor becomes the individual's "guardian angel" throughout

life. Children are rarely named after bad people. It is believed that after death evil people are gone for good (sent to hell).

The Luo are in the minority of ethnic groups in east Africa in that they do not practice ritual circumcision of males as initiation. Instead, children formerly had their six lower front teeth removed at an initiation. This ritual has largely fallen out of use.

Marriage customs

Historically, couples were introduced to each other by matchmakers, but this is not common now. Like many other communities in Kenya, marriage among the Luo at the moment is fast becoming westernized and people are moving away from the traditional way of doing things. The Luo frequently marry outside the tribe, although it is not recommended by the council of elders. The traditional marriage ceremony takes place in two parts, both involving the payment of a bride price by the groom. The first ceremony, the Ayie, involves a payment of money to the mother of the bride; the second stage involves giving cattle to her father. Often these two steps are carried out at the same time, and as many modern Luos are Christians, a church ceremony often follows.

Music

Traditionally, music was the most widely practiced art in the Luo community. At any time of the day or night, some music was being made. Music was not made for its own sake. Music was functional. It was used for ceremonial, religious, political or incidental purposes. Music was performed during funerals (Tero buru) to praise the departed, to console the bereaved, to keep people awake at night, to express pain and agony and during cleansing and chasing away of spirits. Music was also played during ceremonies like beer parties (Dudu, ohangla dance), welcoming back the warriors from a war, during a wrestling match (Ramogi), during courtship, etc. Work songs also existed. These were performed both during communal work like building, weeding, etc. and individual work like pounding of cereals, winnowing. **Music was also used for ritual purposes like chasing away of evil spirits (nyawawa), who visit the village at night, in rain making and during divinations and healing.**

The Luo music was shaped by the total way of life, lifestyles, and life patterns of individuals of this community. Because of that, the music had characteristics which distinguished it from the music of other communities. This can be seen, heard and felt in their melodies, rhythms, mode of presentation and dancing styles, movements and formations.

The melodies in the Luo music were lyrical, with a lot of vocal ornamentations. These ornaments came out clearly especially when the music carried out an important message. Their rhythms were characterized by a lot of syncopation and acrusic beginning. These songs were usually presented in solo-response style although solo performances were there too. The most common forms of solo performances were chants. These chants were recitatives with irregular rhythms and phrases which carried serious messages in them. Most of the Luo dances were introduced by these chants. One example is the dudu dance.

Another unique characteristic in the Luo music is the introduction of yet another chant at the middle of a musical performance. The singing stops, the pitch of the musical instruments go down and the dance becomes less vigorous as an individual takes up the performance is self praise. This is referred to as ***Pakruok***. There was also a unique kind of ululation, ***Sigalagala***, that marked the climax of the musical performance. Sigalagala was mainly done by women.

The dance styles in the Luo folk music were elegant and graceful. It involved either the movement of one leg in the opposite direction with the waist in step with the syncopated beats of the music or the shaking of the shoulders vigorously, usually to the tune of the nyatiti, an eight stringed instrument.

Adamson (1967) commented that Luos clad in their traditional costumes and ornaments deserve their reputation as the most picturesque people in Kenya. During most of their performances the Luo wore costumes and decorated themselves not only to appear beautiful but also to enhance their movements. These costumes included sisal skirts (***owalo***), beads (***Ombulu*** / ***tigo***) worn around the neck and waist and red or white clay were used by the ladies. The men's costumes included ***kuodi*** or ***chieno*** a skin worn from the shoulders or from the waist respectively to cover their nakedness. ***Ligisa*** the headgear, shield and spear, reed hats, clubs among others. All these costumes and ornaments were made from locally available materials.

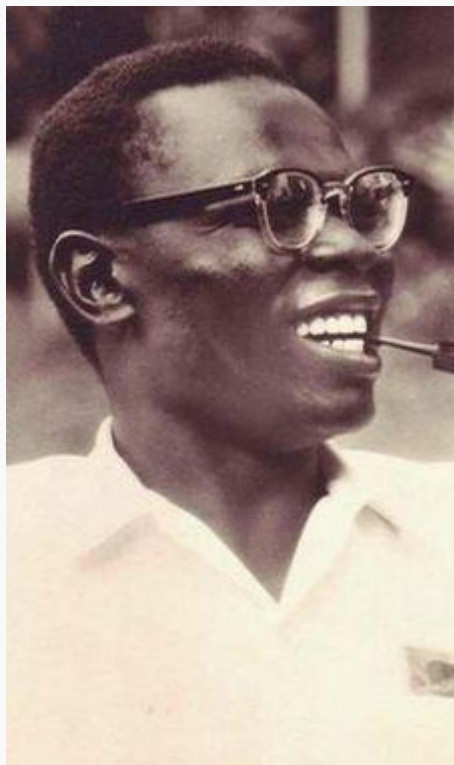
The Luo were also rich in musical instruments which ranged from percussion (drums, clappers, metal rings, ongeng'o or gara, shakers), strings (e.g., nyatiti, a type of lyre; orutu, a type of fiddle), wind (tung' a horn, Asili, a flute, Abu-!, to a specific type of trumpet).

Currently the Luo are associated with the benga style of music. It is a lively style in which songs in Dholuo, Swahili, or English are sung to a lively guitar riff. It originated in the 1950s with Luo musicians' trying to adapt their traditional tribal dance rhythms to western instruments. The guitar (acoustic, later electric) replaced the nyatiti as the string instrument. *Benga* has become so popular that it is played by musicians of all tribes and is no longer considered a purely Luo style. It has become Kenya's characteristic pop sound.

Luo singer and nyatiti player Ayub Ogada received widespread exposure in 2005 when two of his songs were featured in Alberto Iglesias' Academy Award-nominated score for Fernando Mereilles' film adaptation of *The Constant Gardener*.

Barack Obama, Sr.

Barack Obama, Sr.



Born	4 April 1936 Kanyadhiang village, <u>Rachuonyo District</u> , <u>Kenya Colony</u>
Died	24 November 1982 (aged 46) <u>Nairobi</u> , <u>Kenya</u>
Resting place	<u>Nyang'oma Kogelo</u> , Siaya, Kenya
Nationality	<u>British</u> <u>Kenyan</u>
<i>Alma mater</i>	<u>University of Hawaii</u> <u>Harvard University</u>

Occupation	<u>Economist</u>
Known for	Father of <u>US</u> President <u>Barack Obama</u>
Religion	<u>Islam</u> , later <u>Atheist</u>
Partner	<u>Kezia Aoko</u> <u>Ann Dunham</u> <u>Ruth Nidesand</u> <u>Jael Otieno</u>
Children	1. (with Kezia Aoko): <u>Abongo (Roy) Obama</u> , <u>Auma Obama</u> , <u>Abo Obama</u> , <u>Bernard Obama</u> 2. (with Ann Dunham): <u>Barack Obama II</u> 3. (with Ruth Nidesand): <u>Mark Ndesandjo</u> , ^[10] <u>David Ndesandjo</u> 4. (with Jael): <u>George Obama</u>
Parents	<u>Hussein Onyango Obama</u> and <u>Akumu Habiba</u>

Barack Hussein Obama, Sr. (4 April 1936 – 24 November 1982) was a **Kenyan senior governmental economist**, and the **father of the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama**. He is a central subject in his son's memoir, *Dreams from My Father*.

Early life



Photograph of Barack Obama, Sr. with his mother, Akumu

Barack Hussein Obama was born in Kanyadhiang village, Rachuonyo District on the shores of **Lake Victoria just outside Kendu Bay, Kenya Colony, at the time a colony of the British Empire.** He was raised in the village of Nyang'oma Kogelo, Siaya District, Nyanza Province. **His family is members of the Luo ethnic group.**

He was a son of Onyango Obama (c. 1895-1979), who had at least three wives. Barack Obama Sr. was the son of Habiba Akumu Nyanjango of Karabondi, Kenya, the second wife. However, he was raised by Onyango's third wife, Sarah Ogwel of Kogelo, after Akumu left her family and separated from her husband in 1945. Before working as a cook for missionaries in Nairobi, Onyango had travelled widely, **enlisting in the British colonial forces and visiting Europe,**

India, and Zanzibar, where he converted from Roman Catholicism to Islam and took the name Hussein Onyango Obama. Hussein Onyango was jailed by the British for two years in 1949 due to his involvement in the Kenyan independence movement. According to Sarah Onyango Obama, Onyango was subjected to brutal torture.

Although Obama Sr. was born into a Muslim and Christian family, he became an atheist as a young man.

Education and fatherhood

While still living near Kendu Bay, Obama Sr. attended Gendia Primary School and transferred to Ng'iya Intermediate School once his family moved to Siaya District. From 1950 to 1953, he studied at Maseno National School, an exclusive Christian boarding school in Maseno that is run by the Anglican Church of Kenya. (*Dreams from my Father*, 2004 edition, p. 418). The head teacher, B.L. Bowers, described Obama Sr. in his records as "very keen, steady, trustworthy and friendly. Concentrates, reliable and out-going." In 1954, after attending the Maseno National School, Obama Sr. was married for the first time. At the age of eighteen, he and Kezia Aoko were married in a tribal ceremony. They had Malik and Auma during their marriage and while Obama Sr. was married to his third wife, he and Kezia allegedly had Abo and Bernard.

Obama Sr. received a scholarship in economics through a program organized by nationalist leader Tom Mboya. The program offered Western educational opportunities to outstanding Kenyan students. President Obama said of his father's scholarship, "The Kennedys decided: 'We're going to do an airlift. We're going to go to Africa and start bringing young Africans over to this country and give them scholarships to study so they can learn what a wonderful country America is. This young man named Barack Obama [Sr.] got one of those tickets and came over to this country.'" An article by Michael Dobbs in *The Washington Post*, however, states that the Kennedy family did not become associated with the educational airlift until 1960, a year after Obama Sr. was studying in the United States. Initial financial supporters of the program included Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, Jackie Robinson, and Elizabeth Mooney Kirk, a literacy advocate who provided

most of the financial support for Obama Sr.'s early years in the United States, according to the Tom Mboya archives at Stanford University.

At the age of 23, Obama Sr. enrolled at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, **leaving behind a pregnant Kezia and their infant son. He had abandoned Islam; he was an atheist by the time he moved to the United States.** On 2 February 1961, Obama Sr. married fellow student Ann Dunham in Maui, Hawaii, though she would not find out that her new husband was already married until much later. Obama Sr.'s and Dunham's son, Barack Obama II, was born on August 4, 1961. Dunham quit her studies to care for the baby, while Obama Sr. completed his degree. He graduated from the University of Hawaii in June 1962 (and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa), he **leaving shortly thereafter to travel to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he would begin graduate study at Harvard University in the fall.** Later that summer, Dunham and year-old baby Barack stopped to visit her friends in Mercer Island, Washington, the Seattle suburb where she had grown up, before joining Obama Sr. in Cambridge. However, mother and son soon returned to Seattle, where she enrolled at the University of Washington. Dunham, missing her family, then moved back to Hawaii and filed for divorce in Honolulu in January 1964. **Obama Sr. did not contest, and the divorce was granted on March 20, 1964. He visited his son only once, in 1971, when Barack was 10 years old.**

While at Harvard, Obama Sr. met an American-born teacher named Ruth Nidesand. She followed him to Kenya when he returned there after he received a master's degree (AM) in economics from Harvard in 1965. Nidesand eventually became his third wife and had two sons with him, David and Mark. She divorced Obama Sr. amid allegations of domestic abuse. David died in a motorcycle accident. The second son, Mark Obama Ndesandjo, has written a semi-autobiographical novel.

Obama Sr. subsequently had a son, George Obama, with a woman named Jael. ^[*citation needed*]

Later years

On his return to his native Kenya in 1965, Obama Sr. was hired by an oil company and then served as an economist in the Kenyan Ministry of Transport and later became a senior economist in the Kenyan Ministry of Finance.

In 1959 a monograph written by him had been published by the Kenyan Department of Education, entitled *Otieno jarieko. Kitabu mar ariyo. 2: Yore mabeyo mag puro puothe*. (English: *Otieno, the wise man. Book 2: Wise ways of farming*.)

In 1965 Obama Sr. published a paper entitled **"Problems Facing Our Socialism"** in the *East Africa Journal*, harshly criticizing **the blueprint for national planning, "African Socialism and Its Applicability to Planning in Kenya"**, which had been produced by **Tom Mboya's** Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The article was signed **"Barak H. Obama."** As his son described it in his memoir, Obama Sr.'s conflict with **President Kenyatta** destroyed his career. (*Dreams from my Father*, pp. 214–216.) The decline began after Tom Mboya's assassination in 1969. Obama Sr. was fired from his job by Jomo Kenyatta, was blacklisted in Kenya, and began to drink. He had a serious car accident, spent almost a year in the hospital, and by the time he visited his son in Hawaii in late 1971, he already had a bad leg. (*Dreams from My Father*, pp. 64–71, 212–219). Obama Sr.'s life fell into drinking and poverty, from which he never recovered. His friend, Kenyan journalist Philip Ochieng, has described Obama Sr.'s difficult personality and drinking problems in the Kenya newspaper *The Daily Nation*. Obama Sr. later lost both legs in another automobile collision, and subsequently lost his job. He died in 1982, at the age of 46, in a third car crash in Nairobi.

Obama Sr. is buried in his native village of Nyang'oma Kogelo, Siaya District. His funeral was attended by ministers Robert Ouko, Oloo Aringo and other prominent political figures.

After her divorce, Dunham married Indonesian student Lolo Soetoro, who was attending college in Hawaii. When Suharto, a military leader in Soetoro's home country, came to power in 1967, all Indonesian students studying abroad were recalled, and the family moved to the island nation. They lived in the Menteng area of Jakarta. From ages six to ten, Obama attended local schools in Jakarta, including Besuki Public School and St. Francis of Assisi School.

In 1971, Obama returned to Honolulu to live with his maternal grandparents, Madelyn and Stanley Armour Dunham, and attended Punahou School, a private college preparatory school, from the fifth grade until his graduation from high school in 1979.

Obama's mother returned to Hawaii in 1972, remaining there until 1977 when she relocated to Indonesia to work as an anthropological field worker. She finally returned to Hawaii in 1994 and lived there for one year before dying of ovarian cancer.

Of his early childhood, Obama recalled, "That my father looked nothing like the people around me—that he was black as pitch, my mother white as milk—barely registered in my mind." He described his struggles as a young adult to reconcile social perceptions of his multiracial heritage. Reflecting later on his formative years in Honolulu, Obama wrote: "The opportunity that Hawaii offered—to experience a variety of cultures in a climate of mutual respect—became an integral part of my world view, and a basis for the values that I hold most dear." Obama has also written and talked about using alcohol, marijuana and cocaine during his teenage years to "push questions of who I was out of my mind". At the 2008 Civil Forum on the Presidency, Obama identified his high-school drug use as his "greatest moral failure."

Following high school, Obama moved to Los Angeles in 1979 to attend Occidental College. After two years he transferred in 1981 to Columbia University in New York City, where he majored in political science with a specialization in international relations and graduated with a B.A. in 1983. He worked for a year at the Business International Corporation, then at the New York Public Interest Research Group.

Obama is a Christian whose religious views developed in his adult life. In *The Audacity of Hope*, Obama writes that he "was not raised in a religious household". He describes his mother, raised by non-religious parents (whom Obama has specified elsewhere as "non-practicing Methodists and Baptists") to be detached from religion, yet "in many ways the most spiritually awakened person that I have ever known". He describes his father as "raised a Muslim", but a "confirmed atheist" by the time his parents met, and his stepfather as "a man who saw religion as not particularly useful". Obama explained how, through working with black churches as a community organizer while in his twenties, he came to understand "the power of the African-

American religious tradition to spur social change". He was baptized at the Trinity United Church of Christ in 1988 and was an active member there for two decades. Obama resigned from Trinity during the Presidential campaign after controversial statements made by Rev. Jeremiah Wright became public. After a prolonged effort to find a church to attend regularly in Washington, Obama announced in June 2009 that his primary place of worship would be the Evergreen Chapel at Camp David.

Luo sub-groups

This includes peoples who share Luo ancestry and/or speak a Luo language.

- Shilluk (Sudan)
- Pari (Sudan)
- Thur (Sudan)
- Alur (Uganda and DRC)
- Acholi (Sudan and Uganda)
- Lango (Uganda)
- Kumam (Uganda)
- Jopadhola (Uganda)
- JoLuo (Kenya and Tanzania)
- Jo-Luo or Jurchol (Sudan)
- Anuak (Ethiopia, Sudan)
- Maban (Suda)
- Funj (Sudan)
- Jumjum (Sudan)
- Blanda Boore (Sudan)
- Jonam (Uganda)
- (Shat) Sudan

Internationally notable Luo people

- Barack Obama, U.S. president (American)
- Barack Obama, Sr., father of U.S. President (Kenyan)
- Raila Amolo Odinga - Prime Minister of Kenya, Leader of the Orange Democratic Movement Party (Kenyan).
- Milton Obote, Former Ugandan Prime Minister and President of Uganda (Ugandan)
- Tito Okello, Former President of Uganda and Army Commander-Deceased (Ugandan)
- Bazilio Olara-Okello, Former president of Uganda-Deceased (Ugandan)
- Janani Luwum, Former Archbishop of the Church of Uganda (Ugandan)
- Tom Mboya - Politician, assassinated in 1969 (Kenyan)

- George Ramogi - Musician (Kenyan)
- Joseph Kony, Leader of the Lord's Resistance Army. Notorious rebel group in Uganda(Ugandan)
- Okello Oculi, Novelist, Poet, and Chronicler (Ugandan)
- Jaramogi Oginga Odinga - First Vice President of Independent Kenya (Kenyan)
- Ramogi Achieng' Oneko, Freedom fighter Veteran (Kenyan)
- Olara Otunnu, Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict (Ugandan)
- Robert Ouko - Kenyan Foreign Minister, murdered in 1990 (Kenyan)
- Okot p'Bitek, poet and author of the Song of Lawino (Ugandan)
- Ayub Ogada, Singer, Composer and Performer on the nyatiti, the Nilotic lyre of Kenya (Kenyan)
- Henry Luke Orombi, Archbishop of the church of Uganda (Uganda)
- Francis Omondi Okonya, Senior Deputy Commissioner of Police, Kenya, 2010 (Kenyan)

I have researched what is listed above. No one qualified to lead a world Government of freedom and peace. The more I researched the more corruption I discovered. Here are four people. Because of the enter winding of corruption that exists in this part of the world it is hard to believe that we have a president that is over the Christian population of the World leading the United States to peace in the World. The very location Obama comes from has never produced anyone person who is qualified to lead anything to do with peace. Obama is not even one generation away from freedom in his own country of ancestors. He cannot possibly understand the Free world. He is another pawn used by Japheth.

Thomas Joseph Odhiambo Mboya (August 15, 1930 - July 5, 1969) was a prominent Kenyan politician during Jomo Kenyatta's government. He was founder of the Nairobi People's Congress Party, a key figure in the formation of the Kenya African National Union (KANU), and the Minister of Economic Planning and Development at the time of his death. Mboya was assassinated on July 5, 1969 in Nairobi.

U.S. President Barack Obama has referred to Tom Mboya as his "godfather."

Mboya left a wife and five children. He is buried in a mausoleum located in Rusinga Island which was built in 1970.. A street in Nairobi is named after him.

Mboya's role in Kenya's politics and transformation is the subject of increasing interest, especially with the coming into scene of American politician Barack Obama, Jr. Obama's father, Barack Obama, Sr., was a US-educated Kenyan who benefited from Mboya's scholarship programme in the 60's, and married during his stay there, siring the Illinois Senator and President. Obama Sr. had seen Mboya shortly before the assassination, and testified at the ensuing trial. Obama Sr. believed he was later targeted in a hit-and-run incident as a result of this testimony.

Biography

Thomas Odhiambo Mboya was born on August 15, 1930 in Kilima Mbogo, near Thika town in what was called the White Highlands of Kenya.

Education

Mboya was educated at various Catholic mission schools. In 1942, he joined a Catholic Secondary School in Yala, in Nyanza province, St. Mary's School Yala. In 1946, he went to the Holy Ghost College (later Mang'u High School), where he passed well enough to proceed to do his Cambridge School Certificate. In 1948, Mboya joined the Royal Sanitary Institute's Medical Training School for Sanitary Inspectors at Nairobi, qualifying as an inspector in 1950. In 1955 he received a scholarship from Britain's Trades Union Congress to attend Ruskin College, Oxford, where he studied industrial management. Upon his graduation in 1956, he returned to Kenya and joined politics at a time when the British government was gaining control over the *Kenya Land Freedom Army* Mau Mau uprising.

Political life

Mboya's political life started immediately after he was employed at Nairobi City Council as a sanitary inspector in 1950. A year after joining African Staff Association, he was elected its president and immediately embarked at molding the association into a trade union named the Kenya Local Government Workers Union. This made his employer suspicious, but before they could sack him, he resigned. However, he was able to continue working for the Kenya Labour Workers Union as secretary-general before embarking on his studies in Britain. Upon returning from Britain, he contested and won a seat against incumbent C.M.G. Argwings-Kodhek. In 1957, he became dissatisfied with the low number of African leaders (only eight out of fifty at the time) in the Legislative council and decided to form his own party, the People's Congress Party.

- On the low number of African leaders, it is of interest to note that history has now indicated that his death earlier in the same year, attributed to a road accident, may not have been such. An exhumation of the body of C.M.G. Argwings-Kodhek, who was later to become a powerful minister in the Kenyatta cabinet and a close confidant of Kenyatta's, suggested that his death was actually the result of a gun shot fired from a

police-issued rifle. Many close to the family actually believe that this was President Kenyatta's first political assassination. Closely held family records indicate that former cabinet minister Paul Ngei actually identified the police vehicle that carried the assassins to the ambush point on Hurlingham Road (now Argwings-Kodhek Road). The vehicle in question was part of Vice-President Moi's Vice-Presidential Escort detail. The testimony of former cabinet minister Andrew Omanga, then C.M.G.'s Permanent Secretary indicate that when Omanga met him lying in the road shortly after the 'accident' C.M.G. stated that he had a 'shock' and that he heard a 'gun shot'. Formerly powerful Attorney-General Charles Njonjo confirmed as C.M.G. lay dying the next morning that the 'wounds are consistent with gun shot wounds'. It is commonly known that Kenyatta, frustrated with Oginga Odinga, had already notified Argwings-Kodhek that he was going to be appointed Vice-President—a position C.M.G. had turned down and suggested that it be given to Moi, instead of Mboya—to become the first African to join the colonial Legislative Council.

At that time, Mboya developed a close relationship with Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana who, like Mboya, was a Pan-Africanist. In 1958, during the All-African Peoples' Conference in Ghana, convened by Kwame Nkrumah, Mboya was elected as the Conference Chairman at the age of 28.

In 1959 Mboya organized the Airlift Africa project, together with the African-American Students Foundation in the United States, through which 81 Kenyan students were flown to the U.S. to study at U.S. universities. Barack Obama's father, Barack Obama, Sr., was a friend of Mboya's and a fellow Luo; although he was not on the first airlift plane in 1959, since he was headed for Hawaii, not the continental U.S., he received a scholarship through the AASF and occasional grants for books and expenses. In 1960 the Kennedy Foundation agreed to underwrite the airlift, after Mboya visited Senator Jack Kennedy to ask for assistance, and Airlift Africa was extended to Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar (now Tanzania), Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (now Malawi). Some 230 African students received scholarships to study at Class I accredited colleges in the United States in 1960, and hundreds more in 1961-63.

In 1960, Mboya's People's Congress Party joined with Kenya African Union and Kenya Independent Movement to form the Kenya African National Union (KANU) in an attempt to form a party that would both transcend tribal politics and prepare for participation in the Lancaster House Conference (held at Lancaster House in London) where Kenya's constitutional framework and independence were to be negotiated. As Secretary General of KANU, Mboya headed the Kenyan delegation.

After Kenya's independence in 1963, Mboya was elected as an MP for Nairobi Central Constituency (today: Kamukunji Constituency) and became Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and later Minister for Economic Planning and Development. In this role, he wrote the important "Sessional Paper 10" on Harambee and the Principles of African Socialism (adopted by Parliament in 1964), which provided a model of government based on African values.

Assassination

He retained the portfolio as Minister for Economic Planning and Development until his death at age 39 when he was gunned down on July 5, 1969 on Moi Avenue, Nairobi CBD after visiting a pharmacy. Nahashon Isaac Njenga Njoroge was convicted for the murder and later hanged. After his arrest, Njoroge asked: "Why don't you go after the big man?. Who he meant by "the big man" was never divulged, which has led to much speculation since Mboya was seen as a possible contender for the presidency. The mostly tribal elite around Kenyatta has been blamed for his death, which has never been subject of a judicial inquiry. During Mboya's burial, a mass demonstration against the attendance of President Jomo Kenyatta led to a big skirmish, with two people shot dead. The demonstrators believed that Kenyatta was involved in the death of Mboya, thus eliminating him as a threat to his political career although this is still a disputed matter.

Mboya left a wife and five children. He is buried in a mausoleum located in Rusinga Island which was built in 1970.. A street in Nairobi is named after him.

Mboya's role in Kenya's politics and transformation is the subject of increasing interest, especially with the coming into scene of American politician Barack Obama, Jr. Obama's father, Barack Obama, Sr., was a US-educated Kenyan who benefited from Mboya's scholarship programme in the 60's, and married during his stay there, siring the future Illinois Senator and President. Obama Sr. had seen Mboya shortly before the assassination, and testified at the ensuing trial. Obama Sr. believed he was later targeted in a hit-and-run incident as a result of this testimony.

Personal life

Mboya's father Leonard Ndiege was an overseer at a sisal plantation in Kilima Mbogo, Mboya married Pamela Mboya in 1962 (herself a daughter of the politician Walter Odede). They had five children, including daughters Maureen Odero, a high court judge in Mombasa, and Susan Mboya, a Coca-Cola executive who continues the education airlift program initiated by Tom Mboya. Their sons are Luke and twin brothers Peter (died in 2004 in a motorcycle accident) and Patrick (died aged four). After Tom's death, Pamela had one child, Tom Mboya Jr., with Alphonse Okuku, the brother of Tom Mboya. Pamela died of an illness in January 2009 while seeking treatment in South Africa.

Joseph Kony (born 1961) is the head of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a guerrilla group that is engaged in a violent campaign to establish theocratic government in Uganda, which claims to be based on the Christian Bible and the Ten Commandments. The LRA, which earned a reputation for its actions against the people of northern Uganda, has abducted an estimated 30,000 children and displaced 1.6 million people since its rebellion began in 1986.

On August 28, 2008, the United States Treasury Department placed Kony on its list of "Specially Designated Global Terrorists," a designation that carries financial and other penalties. It is unknown whether or not Kony has any assets that are affected by this designation.

Raila Amollo Odinga (born January 7, 1945) is a Kenyan politician, currently serving as the Prime Minister of Kenya in a coalition government. He has served as a Member of Parliament for Langata since 1992, was Minister of Energy from 2001 to 2002, and was Minister of Roads, Public Works and Housing from 2003 to 2005. He was the main opposition candidate in the disputed 2007 presidential election. Following a post-electoral crisis that resulted in the deaths of 1,500 people and the displacement of 600,000 more, Odinga took office as Prime Minister, at the head of a national unity government, in April 2008.

Odinga is the son of the first Vice President of Kenya, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga; Raila's brother, Oburu Odinga, is also currently a Member of Parliament (MP). Raila is commonly known by his first name due to coincidence: he was an MP at the same time as his father between 1992 and 1994, and is currently in the House with Oburu. Raila was a presidential contender in the 1997 elections, coming third after President Daniel arap Moi of KANU and Mwai Kibaki, the current president of Kenya and then a member of the Democratic Party. Odinga campaigned to run for president in the December 2007 elections on an Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) ticket.

On September 1, 2007, Raila Odinga was elected as the presidential candidate of the ODM. He garnered significant support in the 2007 General Election, with majority of the votes in his native Nyanza province and a considerable mileage in Rift Valley, Western, Coast, Nairobi (Capital) and North Eastern provinces. Kibaki led in his native Central province and beat Raila in Eastern province. Out of the 2007 elections, his party, ODM, got 99 out of 200 seats in the parliament which makes ODM the party with the majority seats in Parliament.

On December 30, 2007, the chairman of the Kenyan election commission declared Raila's opponent, incumbent president Kibaki, the winner of the presidential election by a margin of about 230,000 votes. Raila has disputed the results, alleging fraud by the election commission but has refused an election petition before the courts. Independent international observers have

since stated that the poll was marred by irregularities on both sides, especially at the final vote tallying stages. Many Kenyans across the country rioted against the announced election results.

Early life

Raila Odinga was born at Maseno Church Missionary Society Hospital, in Maseno, Kisumu District, Nyanza Province on January 7, 1945 to Oginga and Mary Juma Odinga. He went to Kisumu Union Primary School, Maranda Primary and High School where he stayed until 1962. He spent the next two years at the Herder Institute, a high school in East Germany. He received a scholarship that in 1965 sent him to the Technical University, Magdeburg (now a part of the University of Magdeburg) in East Germany. In 1970, he graduated with a Diplom degree in Mechanical Engineering. While studying in East Berlin, as a Kenyan he was able to visit West Berlin through the Checkpoint Charlie. When visiting West Berlin, he used to buy goods not available in East Berlin and bring them to his friends in East Berlin.

On returning to Kenya in 1970, he worked as a lecturer at the University of Nairobi. In 1971 he established the *Standard Processing Equipment Construction & Erection Ltd* (later renamed *East African Spectre*), a company manufacturing liquid petroleum gas cylinders. In 1974, he was appointed group standards manager of the Kenya Bureau of Standards, in 1978 he was promoted to its Deputy Director, a post he held until his 1982 detention.

Detention

Raila was placed under house arrest for seven months after being suspected of collaborating with the plotters of a failed coup attempt against President Daniel arap Moi in 1982. Raila was charged with treason and was detained without trial for six years.

A biography released in July 2006 suggested that Raila was more involved in the coup than previously thought. After its publication, some MPs called for Raila to be arrested and charged, but the statute of limitations had already passed and, since the information was contained in a biography, Raila could not be said to have openly confessed his involvement. His mother died in 1984, but the prison warders told him about it only two months later.

Released on February 6, 1988, he was rearrested in September, 1988 for his involvement with the Kenya Revolutionary Movement (KRM), an underground organisation pressing for multi-party democracy in Kenya, which was then a one-party state.

Raila was released on June 12, 1989, only to be incarcerated again on July 5, 1990, together with Kenneth Matiba, and former Nairobi Mayor Charles Rubia. Raila was released on June 21, 1991, and in October, he fled the country to Norway alleging government attempts to assassinate him.

Multi-party politics

At the time of Raila's departure to Norway, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD), a movement formed to agitate for the return of multi-party democracy to Kenya, was newly formed. In February 1992, Raila returned to join FORD, then led by his father Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. He was elected Vice Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of the party. In the months running up to the 1992 General Election, FORD split into Ford Kenya, led by Raila's father Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, and FORD-Asili led by Kenneth Matiba. Raila became Ford-Kenya's Deputy Director of Elections. Raila won the Langata Constituency parliamentary seat, previously held by Philip Leakey of KANU.

When Jaramogi Oginga Odinga died in January 1994, and Michael Wamalwa Kijana succeeded him as FORD-Kenya chairman, Raila challenged him for the party leadership. He lost, and left FORD-Kenya to join the National Development Party (NDP). In the 1997 General Election, Raila finished third after President Moi, the incumbent, and Democratic Party candidate Mwai Kibaki. He retained his position as the Langata MP.

After the election, Raila supported the Moi government, and led a merger between his party, NDP, and Moi's KANU party. He served in Moi's Cabinet as Energy Minister from June 2001 to 2002, during Moi's final term.

In the subsequent KANU elections held later that year, he was elected the party's secretary general. Since Moi, the president and KANU party chairman, was constitutionally barred from running for a third-term, Raila was thought to be maneuvering for the KANU presidential ticket. In 2002, however, Moi passed over Raila and openly supported Uhuru Kenyatta – a son of

Kenya's first president Jomo Kenyatta. Moi publicly asked Raila and others to support Uhuru as well.

Raila and other KANU members, including Kalonzo Musyoka, George Saitoti and Joseph Kamotho, opposed this step and formed the Rainbow Movement to protest Moi's decision. The Rainbow Movement went on to join the little known Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which later teamed up with the National Alliance Party of Kenya (NAK), a coalition of several other parties, to form the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC).

Dissent from within

President Kibaki did not appoint Raila Odinga Prime Minister on assuming office as perceived to have been agreed in the memorandum of understanding (Kenya's current constitution does not recognize a Prime minister); neither did he give LDP half the cabinet positions. He instead sought to shore up support for his NAK faction by appointing MPs from the opposition parties (KANU and FORD people) to the cabinet.

The perceived "betrayal" led to an open rebellion and a split within the cabinet, which culminated in disagreements over a proposed new constitution for the country. The government-backed constitutional committee submitted a draft constitution that was perceived to consolidate powers of the presidency and weaken regional governments as had been provided for under an earlier draft before the 2002 Elections. Raila opposed this, and when the document was put to a referendum on November 21, 2005, the government lost by a 57% to 43% margin. Following this, President Kibaki sacked the entire cabinet on November 23, 2005. When it was formed two weeks later, Raila and the entire LDP group were left out. This led to the formation of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) - an Orange was the symbol for the "no" vote in the constitutional referendum.

In January 2006, Raila Odinga was reported to have told police that he believed his life was in danger, having received assassination threats.

2007 presidential election

On July 12, 2007, Odinga alleged that the government was withholding identity cards from voters in places supportive of the opposition and that the intended creation of 30 new constituencies was a means by which the government sought to ensure victory in the December 2007 parliamentary election.

In August 2007, the Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya split in two, with Odinga becoming head of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) while the other faction, the ODM-K, was headed by Kalonzo Musyoka. On September 1, 2007, the ODM elected Odinga as its presidential candidate in a National Delegates Conference held at the Moi International Sports Centre in Nairobi. Odinga received 2,656 votes; the only other candidates receiving significant numbers of votes were Musalia Mudavadi with 391 and William Ruto with 368. Earlier, Najib Balala had withdrawn his candidature and endorsed Raila. The defeated candidates expressed their support for Odinga afterward, and Mudavadi was named as his running mate.

Odinga launched his presidential campaign in Uhuru Park in Nairobi on October 6, 2007, which saw a record attendance in this or any other venue in independent Kenya. The police estimated an attendance of close to 50,000.

Following the presidential election held on December 27, the Electoral Commission in controversial circumstances declared Kibaki the winner on December 30, 2007, placing him ahead of Odinga by about 232,000 votes. Other observers also viewed election process as having been manipulated in order to ensure victory for Kibaki. Further, Jeffrey Sachs (Professor of Economics and Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, and Special Advisor to former UN Secretary General) faulted the United States' approach to the post-election crisis and recommended an independent recount of the vote.

Odinga accused Kibaki of fraud, and widespread violence broke out in the country. Following two months of unrest, a deal between Odinga and Kibaki, which provided for power-sharing and the creation of the post of Prime Minister, was signed in February 2008; it was brokered by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Odinga was sworn in as Prime Minister, along with the power-sharing Cabinet, on April 17, 2008. Previously the post of Prime Minister had not

existed since 1964, when it was briefly held by Jomo Kenyatta following independence; Odinga is thus the second person in Kenya's history to hold the position.

Political role

According his website, Raila lists himself as a social democrat, thus distancing himself from his late father, who was openly socialist. His party, the LDP, is affiliated to the Liberal International.

Raila Odinga gets support especially among third largest ethnic base in Kenya, the Luo. A Gallup/USA poll taken in September 2008 found him to have an 85 percent approval rate.

Further to this, there have been recent calls from the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Martha Karua, for Raila to answer allegations regarding impropriety in the purchase and subsequent sale of land on the Kisumu Molasses Plant.

Personal life

Baptised as an Anglican in his youth Odinga became a Born-Again Christian after he had been baptised in Nairobi by David Owuor, a man known for being a self-proclaimed prophet known for his doomsday warnings particularly those were he foretold of half of Nairobi being destroyed in a massive earthquake, which never happened, of the National Repentance and Holiness Ministry on Sunday 3rd of May 2009, Odinga had previously announced that he had been born again on stage alongside David Owuor during a mass prayer meeting in the Rift Valley town of Nakuru in April 2009 and a handful of journalists and evangelical Christians were invited to attend Odinga's baptism ceremony at a private residence in Nairobi.

Odinga is married to Ida Odinga (born Ida Anyango Oyoo). They live in Nairobi (but have a second home at Opoda Farm, Bondo District). They have four children—two sons and two daughters: Fidel (born 1973), Rosemary (1977), Raila Jr (1979) and Winnie (1990). Fidel is named after Fidel Castro and Winnie after Winnie Mandela. Winnie is currently studying Political Science at Drexel University of Philadelphia, PA.

In a January 2008 BBC interview, Odinga asserted that he was the first cousin of U.S. president Barack Obama through Obama's father. However, Barack Obama's paternal uncle denied any

direct relation to Odinga, stating "Odinga's mother came from this area, so it is normal for us to talk about cousins. But he is not a blood relative." Obama's father came from the same Luo community as Odinga.

He briefly played soccer for Luo Union (later known as Re-Union) as a midfielder. Nowadays he owns several cars, including a Jaguar and a Hummer.

The Honorable Minister Dr. John Robert Ouko (31 March 1931–c. 13 February 1990), commonly known as Robert Ouko, was a Kenyan politician who served as Foreign Minister of Kenya. Robert Ouko served in the government of Kenya from the colonial period through the presidencies of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi. He was a member of the National Assembly for Kisumu and a cabinet minister, rising to the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation by 1990. He was murdered in Kenya on February 13, 1990. The murder case remains unsolved.

Early life and education

Ouko was born in Nyahera village, near Kisumu, Nyanza Province. He went to Ogada Primary School and Nyang'ori School. After schooling he studied at the Siriba Teachers Training College. He worked as a primary school teacher. In 1955 he landed a job as the revenue officer of Kisii District. In 1958 He joined the Haile Selassie University in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, graduating in 1962 with a degree in Public Administration, Economics and Political Science. He then went to Makerere University in Uganda for a diploma in International Relations and Diplomacy

At the time of his death, he had nearly finished his Doctoral Thesis, for which he was studying at the University of Nairobi. Despite being known as Dr. Ouko, he held only an honorary degree received in 1971 from the Pacific Lutheran University in Seattle.

Political life

Shortly before Kenyan independence in 1963 he worked as an Assistant Secretary in the office of the Governor. He was soon posted as the permanent secretary in the ministry of works. After the

East African Community collapsed in 1977, Ouko became a nominated member in the Kenyan parliament and appointed as the Minister for Economic Planning and Community Affairs.

He was elected to the parliament at the 1979 general elections from Kisumu Rural Constituency and retained his seat at the 1983 elections. For the 1988 elections he moved to Kisumu Town Constituency (later split to Kisumu Town West and Kisumu Town East constituencies), and was again elected to the parliament. Ouko represented KANU, the only legally operating party at the time.

Murder investigations

On 27 January 1990, Ouko, now Minister of Foreign Affairs, left Nairobi as part of a delegation of 83 ministers and officials, among them President Daniel arap Moi, to attend a 'Prayer Breakfast' meeting in Washington DC. The delegation arrived back in Nairobi on 4 February. On Monday 5 February Ouko met with President Moi, the Japanese Ambassador, the Canadian High Commissioner, Bethuel Kiplagat (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and Hezekiah Oyugi (Permanent Secretary, Internal Security). Later that day Ouko travelled to his country residence, a farm in Koru (some 300 km from Nairobi) near Kisumu, accompanied by his driver and a bodyguard.

On the night of February 12/13, 1990, Ouko disappeared from his Koru Farm complex near Muhoroni. His housemaid Selina Were Ndalo testified that she "was awakened at about 3am by a noise similar to a door being slammed shut but sufficiently loud enough to startle her awake" and that she saw a white car turning at the bottom of the minister's driveway before driving away.

Francis Cheruyot, a telephonist at Rongo Office, near to the Koru Farm, alleged to Detective Superintendent John Troon of Scotland Yard (see below) that on Tuesday 13 February, 1990, at about 6am, he was on duty on the post office telephone switchboard when he saw Hezekiah Oyugi "who was a passenger in a white car containing three other persons" drive past the post office on two occasions but Cheruyot would not make a written statement to this effect. Oyugi was subsequently unable to produce the daily log of his official car.

Ouko's body was found later that morning (February 13) at approximately 1pm by a local herdsboy Joseph Shikulu, at the foot of nearby Got Alila Hill, 2.8 km from Ouko's country home, but although he told local villagers of the find they did not report the fact to the police. Ouko's body was eventually officially discovered on the 16th February, following a police search.

Forensic evidence suggested Ouko had been murdered, near to where his body was found, killed by a single shot to the head, his right leg broken in two places and his body left partially burned. There was evidence that a gun had been discharged at the scene (although the bullet was never found). A "single caucasian hair" was also found "loosely associated with a partially burnt handkerchief found at the scene". Other items including a gun, a diesel can and matches were found nearby. All apart from the diesel can had belonged to Ouko. News of the murder set off riots in Nairobi.

Initial police reports suggested that Ouko had committed suicide but it soon became common knowledge that Ouko had been shot as well as burnt. Public pressure led President Daniel arap Moi to ask British detectives from New Scotland Yard to investigate Ouko's death.

The following investigation by the Kenyan police was supported by the arrival on 21 February of Detective Superintendent John Troon of Scotland Yard's International Organised Crime Branch, accompanied by two other detectives and a Home Office forensic pathologist.

Troon's theory

Troon's initial investigations uncovered allegations of a row in the Ouko family (mentioned in witness statements by Ouko's wife Christabel, his sister Dorothy Randiak, sister-in-law Esther Mbajah, and the family doctor Dr Joseph Olouch); a dispute with local politicians and allegations of fraud in Kisumu Town Council; and phone calls to Dr Ouko's mistress (Herine Violas Ogembo) saying that Mrs Ouko wanted to kill her and her daughter

However, during Troon's investigation a theory gained currency that there may have been an argument between Ouko and Nicholas Biwott, then Kenya's Minister of Energy, during the trip to Washington following a supposed meeting by Ouko with President George H.W. Bush; that Ouko had been involved in a dispute with Biwott over the cancellation of a project to build a

molasses plant at Kisumu (in Ouko's constituency); and that Ouko was preparing a report on high level political corruption in the Kenyan government in relation to the Kisumu Molasses Project (which by implication named Biwott).

The basis for Troon's theory were allegations by a Domenico Airaghi and a Marianne Briner-Mattern, directors of BAK International, a company based in Switzerland that had tendered to Ouko when he was Minister for Industry to re-start the Molasses Project in Kisumu. Troon did accept however that the "factual basis" for the alleged row on the Washington trip was "somewhat tenuous" and based on "hearsay"

Although Troon's final report to the Kenyan authorities, delivered in August 1990, was not conclusive it did recommend further investigation into Ouko's murder and in particular 'enquiries and further interviews' in respect of Hezekiah Oyugi, a Permanent Secretary in Kenya's Internal Security Department; James Omino, an MP for Kisumu Town and a political opponent of Ouko at the 1988 election; and Nicholas Biwott, the Minister for Energy.

However, Troon's investigation has since been criticised as being 'fatally flawed' and has been further undermined by subsequent investigations and disclosures, not least amongst these that Airaghi had been convicted of attempted fraud and deception in Italy in 1987. In particular, Troon has been criticised for his reliance on the testimony of Domenico Airaghi and Marianne Briner-Mattern, his failure to investigate their background, and his failure to read important evidence contained in the 'Molasses File', the Kenyan government's file recording all correspondence and minuted decisions relating to the project.

The 'Washington Trip'

In relation to the Washington trip there appears to be no evidence of a dispute, or for the supposed cause of a dispute - that Dr Ouko had met President Bush Snr. and not with President Moi and that this had caused a row between Ouko, Moi and Biwott. President Moi did meet with President Bush Snr. as photographic evidence attests.

No member of the Kenyan delegation at the time or since recalled any dispute. Nor was there was a meeting between Dr Ouko and President Bush Snr during the trip to

Washington, the reason cited for the alleged dispute. President Bush's official diary makes no mention of it; the US State Department have stated that it did not take place; no member of the delegation was aware of any such meeting, and 'further' investigation conducted into Dr Ouko's murder by the Kenyan police in 1991/92 found that, 'There is no evidence to confirm that Dr Ouko while in Washington met President Bush'.

The allegation made some 12 years later during a Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry established in March 2003 to again look into the murder of Dr Ouko, that Dr Ouko had been banished by President Moi whilst on the visit to Washington, stripped of his ministerial rank, sent home on a different flight, his bodyguards dismissed, his passport removed on arrival in Nairobi, would also seem to be without foundation. Passenger manifests and witness testimony prove that Dr Ouko travelled back from Washington with the rest of the Kenyan delegation to Nairobi. The delegation's return was a public event reported by the Kenyan media and newspaper reports, which are still available, carried photographs of President Moi and Dr Ouko coming out of the plane together and doing the welcoming rounds at Jomo Kenyatta airport.

After his return from Washington Dr Ouko was assigned an official trip to Gambia to deputise for Moi; he would have been unable to travel without a passport and Mrs Ouko's later gave evidence that she handed her husband's passport to Detective Superintendent Troon.

Official records and witness testimony also prove that Dr Ouko continued to discharge his official functions, meeting with President Moi, government officials and diplomats and to give instructions to his official staff and travelling to his country residence accompanied by his driver and a bodyguard.

To date, there is no credible evidence to support Troon's conclusion that the 'Washington Trip' was a motive for the murder of Dr. Robert Ouko.

The Kisumu 'Molasses Project'

Troon's second theory based on the allegations of Airaghi and Briner-Mattern, that intermediaries on behalf of Nicholas Biwott, Prof. George Saitoti and others had asked for bribes to facilitate the progress of the Molasses Project and that when these bribes were not paid

Nicholas Biwott stood in the way of the project, would also seem to lack any evidential basis. The process and timescale by and over which the decision was taken to bring the Kisumu Molasses project to a halt would also seem to remove it as a likely cause for a dispute in 1990.

Cabinet papers, official records and Dr Ouko's own correspondence prove that ultimately all decisions relating to the Molasses Project were taken by the Kenyan Cabinet, record that both he and Nicholas Biwott were agreed on the need for the rehabilitation of the 'Molasses Project', and attest to the assistance Nicholas Biwott gave him and the cooperation between the two men.

The allegation that Nicholas Biwott championed an alternative tender in order to receive a 'kickback' from the project is even more curious as the two companies concerned, the Italian firms ABB Tecnomassio SpA and Tecnomasio Italiano/Brown Boveri, were both introduced to minister Dalmas Otieno by Domenico Airgahi and both belonged to the same multinational group. Thus there was no rival tender and there could have been no bribe asked for or paid for a company to pitch for a tender against itself.

Nicholas Biwott's involvement with the Molasses Project ended on 3 November 1987 (when the Kenyan cabinet assigned specific duties to develop the project to the Ministries of Industry and Finance, not to Biwott's Ministry of Energy) over two years before Dr Ouko was murdered and the Molasses Project was effectively abandoned in 1988, the decision being taken by Dalmas Otieno who had replaced Dr Ouko as Minister for Industry following the election of that year, a decision taken nearly one-and-a-half years before Dr Ouko was murdered.

Critically, Troon rejected Dalmas Otieno's evidence and did not read, or ask for, the Kenyan Government's 'Molasses File' that would have substantiated Otieno's testimony.

Dalmas Otieno, in a witness statement made 21 May, 1990, stated, "I personally interviewed Mr Airaghi and I considered he was not competent to handle the project and knew nothing about Molasses. He initially asked for one million US dollars for the feasibility study, he then halved his sum, and eventually settled for 300,000 dollars."

Corruption Report

Marianne Briner-Mattern's allegation that Dr Ouko had been preparing a report at the time of his death into high level corruption in Kenya and that by implication the report would have accused Nicholas Biwott and which according to Troon could have provided a motive for murder, also can not be substantiated. No such report was discovered at the time and none has appeared since. If, just prior to his murder, Dr Ouko was preparing a report into corruption in respect of the 'Molasses Project', he was doing so some two years after the cancellation of the project.

Dominico Airaghi and Marianne Briner-Mattern

Troons reliance on the testimony of Domenico Airgahi and Marianne Briner-Mattern and his assessment that they were "truthful and honest" under "a reputable company" (Judicial Inquiry, 1990) has also been criticised in the light of subsequent revelations.

It was later to be revealed that for the entire period in which Dominic Airaghi was dealing with the Kenyan Government in respect of the Molasses Project he was on a bail, a convicted and sentenced criminal who had been found to have committed an offence of dishonesty. On the 14th March 1987, Dominico Airaghi and an accomplice were convicted (Civil and Criminal Court of Milan) on charges of alleged corruption, it also being found by the Court that Airaghi had presented false evidence and false documents in an attempt to establish his defence. The Justice described Airaghi as having displayed "the attributes of an International Fortune Hunter. He was sentenced to two years and six months in Prison and fined 2,000,000lire

Marianne Briner-Matter, or Marianne Briner as she termed herself at the time, who described herself as a "secretary" of "International Escort" an "employment agency", gave evidence in Airaghi's defence at his trial in Milan. The court found her evidence in support of Airaghi to be false. The judge said of Marianne Briner, "who lived with Airgahi", that it would better to draw a "compassionate veil" over her testimony and commented on her "unreliability" as a witness.

Airaghi appealed against his conviction, the final appeal ending in the conviction being upheld on the 4th April, 1991.

The use of four different names and two addresses in three years for the various entities of 'BAK', the company through which Airaghi and Briner-Mattern tendered for the Molasses

Project, was also unknown to Troon at the time of his investigation although Dalmas Otieno, Kenya's Minister of Industry, gave evidence to Troon that 'BAK' was ultimately excluded from the Molasses Project because it was incompetent and in breach of contract.

'BAK Group Marianne Briner + Partner' was registered as a joint partnership on 13 February, 1990, the day that Robert Ouko was murdered. Liquidation proceedings against this BAK entity were initiated in Switzerland on 25 February 1992 and in June of that year it was struck off the Register of Companies. At the same time as the insolvency proceedings in Switzerland, Airaghi and Briner-Mattern established PTA BAK Group International Consultants in Spain but it too was subsequently to be struck off the corporate register.

After Dr Ouko's murder, Domenico Airaghi and Marianne Briner-Mattern's claim for losses in relation to the 'Molasses Project' increased from \$150,000 to \$5.975 million.

Troon accepted that, in the absence of evidence from Airaghi and Briner-Mattern, there was no evidence against Nicholas Biwott

Public Inquiry

In October 1990, President Moi appointed a public inquiry into the case chaired by Justice Evans Gicheru. The inquiry was terminated by Moi in November 1991 at a point when Troon was being cross-examined on the grounds that he needed to return to the UK. He did not return to Kenya. The Gicheru Commission did not produce a final report.

Following the disbanding of the Gicheheru Commission and the onset of the Kenyan police investigation, ten government officials, including Energy Minister Nicholas Biwott and head of internal security Hezekiah Oyugi, were detained for questioning in relation to the murder. Nicholas Biwott was released after two weeks in the absence of "any evidence to support the allegations".

Jonah Anguka, a District Commissioner from Nakuru, was tried for Ouko's murder in 1992 and acquitted, with the crime remaining unsolved. Anguka later fled into exile in the United States,

saying he feared for his life. He has since published a book, "Absolute Power," denying his involvement in the Ouko Murder.

Parliamentary Select Committee

In March 2003 the newly elected government of Mwai Kibaki opened a new investigation into Ouko's death to be conducted by a parliamentary select committee. During the course of the Committee's deliberations several Members of Parliament publicly condemned the manner of its proceedings. Some left the committee and along with others who remained declared that they would not endorse its findings. Domenico Airaghi and Marianne Briner-Mattern agreed to testify on condition that they would not be cross-examined (something they had avoided during Troon's investigation, the Public Inquiry and the further investigation by the Kenyan police) and Nicholas Biwott was not allowed to call witnesses on his behalf or cross-examine or address other witnesses.

The Select Committee however, did not complete its work. It was disbanded in 2005 on the grounds of 'interference' in its deliberations just as Nicholas Biwott was beginning his testimony to it. The (incomplete) report of the 'Select Committee Investigating Circumstances Leading to the Death of the Late Dr. The Hon. Robert John Ouko, EGH, MP' was never debated in the Kenyan House of Assembly, or put to a vote.

Personal life

Robert Ouko was married to Christabel Ouko. His first-born son is named Ken Robert Ouko also had a daughter (born May 1983) by a Miss Herine Violas Ogembo, a relationship that lasted until his death.

In 2009 a fundraiser was held to build the Robert Ouko Memorial Community Library in Koru

Ann Dunham

Stanley Ann Dunham



Stanley Ann Dunham in 1960

Born	Stanley Ann Dunham
	November 29, 1942
	<u>Wichita, Kansas, USA</u>
Died	November 7, 1995 (aged 52)
	<u>Honolulu, Hawaii, USA</u>
Cause of death	<u>Uterine cancer</u>

Resting place	<u>Pacific Ocean</u> at <u>Koko Head</u> , <u>Oahu</u>
Nationality	American
Ethnicity	<u>White</u>
Education	<u>BA</u> , <u>MA</u> , <u>PhD</u>
<i>Alma mater</i>	<u>University of Hawaii</u>
Occupation	<u>Anthropologist</u>
Home town	<u>Wichita, Kansas</u>
Known for	Mother of US President <u>Barack Obama</u> Indonesian anthropology
Spouse(s)	<u>Barack Obama, Sr.</u> (1961–1964, divorced) <u>Lolo Soetoro</u> (1965–1980, divorced)
Children	<u>Barack Obama</u> (b.1961) <u>Maya Soetoro</u> (b.1970)
Parents	<u>Stanley Armour Dunham</u> <u>Madelyn Payne Dunham</u>

Stanley Ann Dunham (November 29, 1942 – November 7, 1995), the mother of Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States, was an American anthropologist who specialized in economic anthropology and rural development. Dunham was nicknamed Anna, later known as Dr. Stanley Ann Dunham Soetoro, and finally Ann Dunham Sutoro. Born in Kansas, Dunham spent her childhood in California, Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas and her teenage years in Mercer Island, Washington, and much of her adult life in Hawaii and Indonesia.

Dunham studied at the University of Hawaii and the East-West Center and attained a bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. in anthropology. Interested in craftsmanship, weaving and the role of women in cottage industries, Dunham's research focused on women's work on the island of Java and blacksmithing in Indonesia. To address the problem of poverty in rural villages, she created microcredit programs while working as a consultant for the United States Agency for International Development. **Dunham was also employed by the Ford Foundation in Jakarta and she consulted with the Asian Development Bank in Pakistan.** Towards the latter part of her life, she worked with Bank Rakyat Indonesia, where she helped apply her research to the largest microfinance program in the world.

After her son assumed the presidency, interest renewed in Dunham's work: The University of Hawaii held a symposium about her research; an exhibition of Dunham's Indonesian batik textile collection toured the United States; and in December 2009, Duke University Press published *Surviving against the Odds: Village Industry in Indonesia*, a book based on Dunham's 1992 dissertation.

In an interview, Barack Obama referred to his mother as "the dominant figure in my formative years... The values she taught me continue to be my touchstone when it comes to how I go about the world of politics."

Early life

Stanley Ann Dunham was born on November 29, 1942, at St. Francis Hospital in Wichita, Kansas as the only child of Madelyn Lee Payne and Stanley Armour Dunham. Her parents were

born in Kansas and met in Wichita where they married on May 5, 1940.^[9] After the attack on Pearl Harbor, her father joined the United States Army and her mother worked at a Boeing plant in Wichita. Named after her father because he wanted a son, as a child and teenager she was known as "Stanley." Other children teased her about her name but she used it through high school, "apologizing for it each time she introduced herself in a new town". By the time Dunham had begun attending college, she was known by her middle name "Ann" instead. After World War II, Dunham's father moved the family from Wichita to California while her father attended the University of California, Berkeley. In 1948, Dunham and her parents moved to Ponca City, Oklahoma, and from there to Vernon, Texas, and then to El Dorado, Kansas. In 1955, the family moved to Seattle, Washington where her father was employed as a furniture salesman and her mother worked as vice president of a bank. They lived in an apartment complex in the Wedgwood neighborhood where Ann attended Nathan Eckstein Junior High School.

In 1956, Dunham's family moved to Mercer Island, an Eastside suburb of Seattle. Dunham's parents wanted their 13-year-old daughter to attend the newly opened Mercer Island High School. At the school, teachers Val Foubert and Jim Wichterlan taught the importance of challenging social norms and questioning authority to the young Dunham, and she took the lessons to heart: "She felt she didn't need to date or marry or have children." One classmate remembered her as "intellectually way more mature than we were and a little bit ahead of her time, in an off-center way," and a high school friend described her as knowledgeable and progressive: "If you were concerned about something going wrong in the world, Stanley would know about it first. We were liberals before we knew what liberals were." Another called her "the original feminist."

Family life and marriages

For more details on this topic, see Family of Barack Obama.



Stanley Armour Dunham, Ann Dunham, Maya Soetoro and Barack Obama, mid 1970s (l to r)

On August 21, 1959, Hawaii became the 50th and last state to be admitted into the Union. Dunham's parents sought business opportunities in the new state, and after graduating from high school in 1960, Dunham and her family moved to Hawaii. Dunham soon enrolled at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. While attending a Russian language class, Dunham met Barack Obama, Sr., the school's first African student. At the age of 23, Obama had come to Hawaii to pursue his education, leaving behind a pregnant wife and infant son in his home town of Nyang'oma Kogelo in Kenya. Dunham and Obama were married on the Hawaiian island of Maui on February 2, 1961, despite parental opposition from both families. Dunham was three months pregnant at the time of her marriage. Obama Sr. eventually informed Dunham about his first marriage in Kenya but claimed he was divorced. Years later, she would discover this was false. Obama Sr.'s first wife, Kezia, later said she had granted her consent for him to marry a second wife, in keeping with Luo customs.

On August 4, 1961, at the age of 18, Dunham gave birth to her first child, Barack Obama II. Friends in Washington State recall her visiting with her new baby in 1961. By January 1962, she had enrolled at the University of Washington, and was living as a single mother in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle with her son while her husband continued his studies in Hawaii. When Obama Sr. graduated from the University of Hawaii in June 1962, he was offered a scholarship to study in New York City but he declined it, preferring to attend the more prestigious Harvard University. He left for Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he would begin graduate study at Harvard in the fall of 1962. Dunham filed for divorce in Honolulu in January 1964. Obama Sr. did not contest, and the divorce was granted.^[1] Dunham returned to the

university to study anthropology. During this time, her parents helped her raise the young Obama, and she also received food stamps. Dunham graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1967 with a bachelor's degree. Obama Sr. received a Masters degree (MA) in economics from Harvard in 1965 and in 1971, he came to Hawaii and visited his son Barack, then 10 years old; it was the last time he would see his son. In 1982, Obama Sr. was killed in a car accident.



Lolo Soetoro in 1971, with Ann, Maya and Barack.

It was at the East-West Center that Dunham met Lolo Soetoro, a student from Indonesia. They married in 1966 or 1967 and moved with six-year-old Barack to Jakarta, Indonesia, just after the unrest surrounding the ascent of Suharto. In Indonesia, Soetoro worked as a government relations consultant with the American petroleum company Mobil. On August 15, 1970, Soetoro and Dunham had a daughter, Maya Cassandra Soetoro. In Indonesia, Dunham enriched her son's education with correspondence courses in English, recordings of Mahalia Jackson, and speeches by Martin Luther King Jr. She sent the young Obama back to Hawaii to attend Punahou School rather than having him stay in Asia with her. Madelyn Dunham's job as a vice-president at the Bank of Hawaii helped pay the steep tuition, with some assistance from a scholarship. In the 1970s, Dunham wished to return to work, but Soetoro wanted more children. She once said that he became more American as she became more Javanese. Ann Dunham left Soetoro in 1972, returning to Hawaii and reuniting with her son Barack for several years. Soetoro and Dunham saw each other periodically in the 1970s when Dunham returned to Indonesia for her field work but did not live together again. They divorced in 1980 and she began using the name Ann Dunham Sutoro, with a modern spelling of her former husband's surname.

Dunham was not estranged from either ex-husband and encouraged her children to feel connected to their fathers.

Professional life

From January 1968 to December 1969, Dunham taught English and was an assistant director of the Lembaga Persahabatan Indonesia Amerika (LIA)—the Indonesia-America Friendship Institute at 9 Teuku Umar Street in the Gondangdia administrative village of the Menteng subdistrict in Central Jakarta—which was subsidized by U.S. government. From January 1970 to August 1972, Dunham taught English and was a department head and a director of the Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Manajemen (LPPM)—the Institute of Management Education and Development at 9 Menteng Raya Street in the Kebon Sirih administrative village of the Menteng subdistrict in Central Jakarta.

From 1968 to 1972, Dunham was a co-founder and active member of the Ganesha Volunteers (Indonesian Heritage Society) at the National Museum in Jakarta. From 1972 to 1975, Dunham was crafts instructor (in weaving, batik, and dye) at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu.

Dunham then had a career in rural development, championing women's work and microcredit for the world's poor and worked with leaders from organizations supporting Indonesian human rights, women's rights, and grass-roots development.

In March 1977, Dunham, under the supervision of agricultural economics professor Leon A. Mears, developed and taught a short lecture course at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Indonesia (FEUI) in Jakarta for staff members of BAPPENAS (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional)—the Indonesian National Development Planning Agency.

From June 1977 through September 1978, Dunham carried out research on village industries in the Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (DIY)—the Yogyakarta Special Region within Central Java in Indonesia under a student grant from the East-West Center. As a weaver herself, Dunham was interested in village industries, and moved to Yogyakarta City, the center of Javanese handicrafts.

In May and June 1978, Dunham was a short-term consultant in the office of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Jakarta, writing recommendations on village industries and other non-agricultural enterprises for the Indonesian government's third five-year development plan (REPELITA III).

From October 1978 to December 1980, Dunham was a rural industries consultant in Central Java on the Indonesian Ministry of Industry's Provincial Development Program (PDP I), funded by USAID in Jakarta and implemented through Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI).

From January 1981 to November 1984, Dunham was the program officer for women and employment in the Ford Foundation's Southeast Asia regional office in Jakarta. While at the Ford Foundation, she developed a model of microfinance which is now the standard in Indonesia, a

country that is a world leader in micro-credit systems. Peter Geithner, father of Tim Geithner (who later became U.S. Secretary of the Treasury in her son's administration), was head of the foundation's Asia grant-making at that time.

From May to November 1986 and from August to November 1987, Dunham was a cottage industries development consultant for the Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan (ADBP) under the Gujranwala Integrated Rural Development Project (GADP). The credit component of the project was implemented in the Gujranwala district of the Punjab province of Pakistan with funding from the Asian Development Bank and IFAD, with the credit component implemented through Louis Berger International, Inc. Dunham worked closely with the Lahore office of the Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC).

From January 1988 to 1995, Dunham was a consultant and research coordinator for Indonesia's oldest bank, Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI) in Jakarta, with her work funded by USAID and the World Bank. In March 1993, Dunham was a research and policy coordinator for Women's World Banking (WWB) in New York.^[38] She helped WWB manage the Expert Group Meeting on Women and Finance in New York in January 1994, and helped the WWB take prominent roles in the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women held September 4–15, 1995 in Beijing, and in the UN regional conferences and NGO forums that preceded it.

On August 9, 1992 she was awarded Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Hawaii, under the supervision of Prof. Alice Dewey, with a dissertation titled *Peasant blacksmithing in Indonesia: surviving and thriving against all odds*. Anthropologist Michael Dove described the dissertation as "a classic, in-depth, on-the-ground anthropological study of a 1,200-year-old industry". According to Dove, Dunham's dissertation challenged popular perceptions regarding economically and politically marginalized groups, and countered the notions that the roots of poverty lie with the poor themselves and that cultural differences are responsible for the gap between less-developed countries and the industrialized West. According to Dove, Dunham:

... found that the villagers she studied in Central Java had many of the same economic needs, beliefs and aspirations as the most capitalist of Westerners. Village craftsmen were "keenly interested in profits," she wrote, and entrepreneurship was "in plentiful supply in rural Indonesia," having been "part of the traditional culture" there for a millennium.

Based on these observations, Dr. Soetoro concluded that underdevelopment in these communities resulted from a scarcity of capital, the allocation of which was a matter of politics, not culture. Antipoverty programs that ignored this reality had the potential, perversely, of exacerbating inequality because they would only reinforce the power of elites. As she wrote in her dissertation, "many government programs inadvertently foster stratification by channeling resources through village officials," who then used the money to strengthen their own status further.^[49]

Dunham returned to graduate school in Honolulu in 1974, while raising Barack and Maya. When Dunham returned to Indonesia for field work in 1975 with Maya, after three years in Honolulu,

Barack chose not to go, preferring to finish high school in Hawaii while living with his grandparents.

Having been a weaver, Dunham was interested in village industries, and she therefore moved to Yogyakarta, the center of Javanese handicrafts. In 1992 she earned a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Hawaii, under the supervision of Prof. Alice Dewey, with a dissertation titled Peasant blacksmithing in Indonesia: surviving and thriving against all odds. Anthropologist Michael Dove described the dissertation as "a classic, in-depth, on-the-ground anthropological study of a 1,200-year-old industry". Dunham's paper challenged popular perceptions regarding economically and politically marginalized groups, and countered the notions that the roots of poverty lie with the poor themselves and that cultural differences are responsible for the gap between less-developed countries and the industrialized West. According to Dove, Dunham found that the villagers she studied in Central Java had many of the same economic needs, beliefs and aspirations as the most capitalist of Westerners. Village craftsmen were "keenly interested in profits," she wrote, and entrepreneurship was "in plentiful supply in rural Indonesia," having been "part of the traditional culture" there for a millennium...Based on these observations, Dr. Soetoro concluded that underdevelopment in these communities resulted from a scarcity of capital, the allocation of which was a matter of politics, not culture. Antipoverty programs that ignored this reality had the potential, perversely, of exacerbating inequality because they would only reinforce the power of elites. As she wrote in her dissertation, "many government programs inadvertently foster stratification by channeling resources through village officials," who then used the money to further strengthen their own status.

Dunham then pursued a career in rural development championing women's work and microcredit for the world's poor, with Indonesia's oldest bank, the United States Agency for International Development, the **Ford Foundation**, **Women's World Banking**, and as a consultant in **Lahore, Pakistan**. While at the **Ford Foundation** she developed a model of **microfinance** which is now the standard in Indonesia, a country that is a world leader in micro-credit systems. Peter Geithner, father of **Tim Geithner** (who later became **United States Secretary of the Treasury** in her son's administration), was head of the foundation's Asia grant-making at that time. Dunham also worked with leaders from organizations supporting Indonesian **human rights**, **women's rights**, and grass-roots **development**.

Illness and death

In late 1994, Dunham was living and working in Indonesia. One night, during dinner at a friend's house in Jakarta, she experienced stomach pain. A visit to a local physician led to an initial diagnosis of indigestion. Dunham returned to the United States in early 1995 and was examined at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City and diagnosed with uterine cancer. By this time, the cancer had spread to her ovaries. She moved back to Hawaii to live near her widowed mother and died on November 7, 1995, at the age of 52. Following a memorial service at the University of Hawaii, Obama and his sister spread their mother's ashes in the Pacific Ocean at Lanai Lookout on the south side of Oahu. Obama scattered the ashes of his grandmother (Madelyn Dunham) in the same spot on December 23, 2008, weeks after his election to the presidency.

Obama touched upon his mother's death in a 30-second campaign advertisement ("Mother") arguing for health care reform. The ad featured a photograph of Dunham holding a young Obama in her arms as Obama talks about Dunham's last days worrying about expensive medical bills. The topic also came up in a 2007 speech in Santa Barbara:

I remember my mother. She was 52 years old when she died of ovarian cancer, and you know what she was thinking about in the last months of her life? She wasn't thinking about getting well. She wasn't thinking about coming to terms with her own mortality. She had been diagnosed just as she was transitioning between jobs. And she wasn't sure whether insurance was going to cover the medical expenses because they might consider this a preexisting condition. I remember just being heartbroken, seeing her struggle through the paperwork and the medical bills and the insurance forms. So, I have seen what it's like when somebody you love is suffering because of a broken health care system. And it's wrong. It's not who we are as a people.

Posthumous interest

In September 2008, the University of Hawaii at Mānoa held a symposium about Dunham. In December 2009, Duke University Press published a version of Dunham's dissertation titled Surviving against the Odds: Village Industry in Indonesia. The book was revised and edited by Dunham's graduate advisor, Alice G. Dewey, and Nancy I. Cooper. Her daughter, Maya Soetoro-

Ng, wrote the foreword for the book. In his afterword, Boston University anthropologist Robert W. Hefner describes Dunham's research as "prescient" and her legacy as "relevant today for anthropology, Indonesian studies, and engaged scholarship." The book was launched at the 2009 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association with a special Presidential Panel on Dunham's work.

In 2009, an exhibition of Dunham's Javanese batik textile collection (*A Lady Found a Culture in its Cloth: Barack Obama's Mother and Indonesian Batiks*) toured six museums in the United States, finishing the tour at the Textile Museum of Washington, D.C. in August.^[45] Early in her life, Ann Dunham explored her interest in the textile arts as a weaver, creating wall hangings for her own enjoyment. After moving to Indonesia, she was attracted to the striking textile art of the batik and began to collect a variety of different fabrics.

Ann Dunham: A Most Generous Spirit, a feature documentary depicting Dunham's life, is scheduled to begin production in 2010. Charles Burnett, writer and director of Namibia: The Struggle for Liberation (2007) will direct the film. Shooting will take place on location in Indonesia, Hawaii and Washington. The production team is currently negotiating for the participation of President Barack Obama.

Personal beliefs

"She felt that somehow, wandering through uncharted territory, we might stumble upon something that will, in an instant, seem to represent who we are at the core. That was very much her philosophy of life — to not be limited by fear or narrow definitions, to not build walls around ourselves and to do our best to find kinship and beauty in unexpected places."

Maya Soetoro-Ng

In his 1995 memoir Dreams from My Father Barack Obama wrote, "My mother's confidence in needlepoint virtues depended on a faith I didn't possess... In a land [Indonesia] where fatalism remained a necessary tool for enduring hardship... she was a lonely witness for secular humanism, a soldier for New Deal, Peace Corps, position-paper liberalism." In his 2006 book The Audacity of Hope Obama wrote, "I was not raised in a religious household... My mother's

own experiences... only reinforced this inherited skepticism. Her memories of the Christians who populated her youth were not fond ones... And yet for all her professed secularism, my mother was in many ways the most spiritually awakened person that I've ever known." "Religion for her was "just one of the many ways — and not necessarily the best way — that man attempted to control the unknowable and understand the deeper truths about our lives," Obama wrote.

Maxine Box, Dunham's best friend in high school, said that Dunham "touted herself [then] as an atheist, and it was something she'd read about and could argue. She was always challenging and arguing and comparing. She was already thinking about things that the rest of us hadn't."

However, Dunham's daughter, Maya Soetoro-Ng, when asked later if her mother was an atheist, said, "I wouldn't have called her an atheist. She was an agnostic. She basically gave us all the good books — the Bible, the Hindu Upanishads and the Buddhist scripture, the Tao Te Ching, Sun Tzu — and wanted us to recognize that everyone has something beautiful to contribute." "Jesus, she felt, was a wonderful example. But she felt that a lot of Christians behaved in un-Christian ways."

In a 2007 speech, Obama contrasted the beliefs of his mother to those of her parents, and **commented on her spirituality and skepticism: "My mother, whose parents were nonpracticing Baptists and Methodists, was one of the most spiritual souls I ever knew. But she had a healthy skepticism of religion as an institution."**

Obama also described his own beliefs in relation to the religious upbringing of his mother and father:

My father was from Kenya and a lot of people in his village were Muslim. He didn't practice Islam. Truth is he wasn't very religious. He met my mother. My mother was a Christian from Kansas, and they married and then divorced. I was raised by my mother. So, I've always been a Christian. The only connection I've had to Islam is that my grandfather on my father's side came from that country. But I've never practiced Islam.

Stanley Armour Dunham (March 23, 1918 – February 8, 1992) was the American grandfather of U.S. President Barack Obama. He and his wife Madelyn Lee Payne Dunham raised Obama from the age of 10 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Ancestry

Dunham's heritage consists of English and other European ancestors who settled in the American colonies during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The most recent native European ancestor was Falmouth Kearney, a farmer who emigrated from Moneygall, County Offaly, Ireland during the Great Irish Famine and settled in Jefferson Township, Tipton County, Indiana, United States. Kearney's youngest daughter, Mary Ann (Kearney) Dunham, was Stanley Dunham's paternal grandmother.

Stanley Armour Dunham's distant cousins include six US presidents: James Madison, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush. Through a common ancestor, Mareen Duvall, a wealthy Huguenot merchant who emigrated to Maryland in the 1650s, Stanley Dunham is related to former Vice-President Dick Cheney (an eighth cousin once removed). Through another common ancestor, Hans Gutknecht, a Swiss German from Bischwiller, Alsace whose three sons resettled in Germantown, Pennsylvania as well as the Kentucky frontier in the mid-1700s, Stanley Dunham is President Harry S. Truman's fourth cousin, twice removed.

Madelyn Lee Payne Dunham (pronounced /'dʌnəm/ *DUN-əm*; October 26, 1922 – November 2, 2008) was the American maternal grandmother of Barack Obama, the President of the United States of America. She and her husband Stanley Armour Dunham raised Obama from age ten in their Honolulu, Hawaii apartment, where on November 2, 2008, she died two days before her grandson was elected the 44th President of the United States.

Early life

Madelyn Lee Payne was born in Peru, Kansas, the eldest of four children of Rolla Charles "R.C." Payne and Leona Belle (McCurry) Payne. In Barack Obama's memoir, *Dreams From My Father*,

he describes them as "stern Methodist parents who did not believe in drinking, playing cards or dancing." She moved with her parents to Augusta, Kansas at the age of three. Madelyn was an honor roll student and one of the best students at Augusta High School, where she graduated in 1940. Despite her strict upbringing, she liked to go to Wichita, Kansas to see big band concerts. While in Wichita, she met Stanley Dunham from El Dorado, Kansas, and the two married on May 5, 1940, the night of Madelyn's senior prom.

Adult life

World War II

During World War II, Stanley Dunham enlisted in the Army. Madelyn worked the night shift on a Boeing B-29 assembly line in Wichita. Her brother Charlie Payne was part of the 89th Infantry Division, which liberated the Nazi concentration camp at Ohrdruf, a subcamp of Buchenwald, a fact Barack Obama has referred to in speeches. Madelyn gave birth to a daughter they named Stanley Ann, who was later known as Ann, at St. Francis Hospital in Wichita on November 29, 1942.

Post-World War II

With Madelyn and Stanley both working full-time, the family moved to Berkeley, California, Ponca City, Oklahoma, Vernon, Texas, El Dorado, Kansas, Seattle, Washington and finally settled in Mercer Island, Washington, where Ann graduated from Mercer Island High School. In El Dorado, Kansas, Stanley had managed a furniture store while Madelyn worked in restaurants. In Seattle, Stanley worked in a bigger furniture store (Standard-Grunbaum Furniture) while Madelyn eventually became vice-president of a local bank. Mercer Island was then "a rural, idyllic place," quiet, politically conservative and all white. Madelyn and Stanley attended Sunday services at the East Shore Unitarian Church in nearby Bellevue. While in Washington Madelyn attended the University of Washington although she never completed a degree.

Hawaii

The Dunhams then moved to Honolulu, Hawaii, where Stanley found a better furniture store opportunity, and Madelyn started working at the Bank of Hawaii in 1960 and was promoted to be one of the first female bank vice presidents in 1970. In 1970s Honolulu, both women and the minority white population were routinely the target of discrimination. Ann attended the University of Hawaii and while attended a Russian language class, she met Barack Obama, Sr., a graduate student from Kenya. Stanley and Madelyn were upset when their daughter married Obama, Sr., particularly after receiving a long, angry letter from Obama, Sr. who "didn't want the Obama blood sullied by a white woman." The Dunhams adapted, however. Madelyn was quoted as saying, "I am a little dubious of the things that people from foreign countries tell me."

After the Obama marriage fell apart, the young Obama spent four years with his mother and stepfather in Jakarta, Indonesia. He returned to Honolulu at age ten to live with his maternal grandparents in the Makiki district of Honolulu and enrolled in the fifth grade at the Punahou School. The tuition fees for the prestigious preparatory school were paid with the aid of scholarships. Ann would later come back to Hawaii and pursue graduate studies; she eventually earned a PhD in anthropology and went on to be employed on development projects in Indonesia and around the world helping impoverished women obtain microfinance. When she returned to Indonesia in 1977 for her Masters' fieldwork, Obama stayed in the United States with his grandparents. Obama writes in his memoir, Dreams From My Father, stated: "I'd arrived at an unspoken pact with my grandparents: I could live with them and they'd leave me alone so long as I kept my trouble out of sight."

Obama and his half-sister Maya Soetoro referred to their maternal grandmother as "Toot" — short for "tutu," the Hawaiian word for grandmother. In his book, Obama described his grandmother as "quiet yet firm", in contrast to Obama's "boisterous" grandfather Stanley. Obama considered his grandmother "a trailblazer of sorts, the first woman vice-president of a local bank." Her colleagues recall her as a "tough boss" who would make you "sink or swim", but who had a "soft spot for those willing to work hard." She retired from the Bank of Hawaii in 1986.



Dunham in about 1950

During an interview for Vanity Fair, Obama said, “She was the opposite of a dreamer, at least by the time I knew her... Whether that was always the case or whether she scaled back her dreams as time went on and learned to deal with certain disappointments is not entirely clear. But she was just a very tough, sensible, no-nonsense person.” During his teenage years, it was his grandmother who “injected” into him “a lot of that very midwestern, sort of traditional sense of prudence and hard work,” even though “some of those values didn’t sort of manifest themselves until I got older.”

During an interview with Diane Sawyer, "She never got a college education, but is one of the smartest people I know... She's where I get my practical streak. That part of me that's hardheaded, I get from her. She's tough as nails." Obama said his iconic image of his grandmother was seeing her come home from work and trading her business outfit and girdle for a muumuu, some slippers and a drink and a cigarette.

Later years

Until her death, Dunham lived in the same small high-rise apartment where she raised her grandson Barack. She was an avid bridge player, but mostly stayed at home in her apartment "listening to books on tape and watching her grandson on CNN every day." Madelyn Dunham suffered from severe osteoporosis. In 2008, she underwent both corneal transplant and hip replacement surgeries.

2008 presidential campaign

Madelyn Dunham was generally not seen in the 2008 presidential campaign. In March 2008, the 85-year-old Dunham was quoted as saying, "I am not giving any interviews...I am in poor health."

On March 18, 2008, in a speech on race relations in Philadelphia in the wake of controversial videos of Obama's pastor Jeremiah Wright surfacing, Obama described his grandmother:

I can no more disown him than I can my white grandmother - a woman who helped raise me, a woman who sacrificed again and again for me, a woman who loves me as much as she loves anything in this world, but a woman who once confessed her fear of black men who passed by her on the street, and who on more than one occasion has uttered racial or ethnic stereotypes that made me cringe.

On March 20, 2008, in a radio interview on Philadelphia's WIP (AM), Obama explained this remark by saying:

The point I was making was not that my grandmother harbors any racial animosity - she doesn't. But she is a typical white person, who, if she sees somebody on the street that she doesn't know...there's a reaction that's been bred into our experiences that don't go away and that sometimes come out in the wrong way, and that's just the nature of race in our society.

Obama's use of the phrase "typical white person" was highlighted by a columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News and subsequently picked up by commentators on the Huffington Post blog, ABC News and other media outlets. In a CNN interview, when Larry King asked him to clarify the "typical white person" remark, Obama said:

Well, what I meant really was that some of the fears of street crime and some of the stereotypes that go along with that were responses that I think many people feel. She's not extraordinary in that regard. She is somebody that I love as much as anybody. I mean, she has literally helped to raise me. But those are fears that are

embedded in our culture, and embedded in our society, and even within our own families, even within a family like mine that is diverse.

Dennis Ching, who worked with her for more than 40 years, "never heard her say anything like that. I never heard her say anything negative about anything." Hawaiian State Senator Sam Slom, who worked with her at the Bank of Hawaii, said "I never heard Madelyn say anything disparaging about people of African ancestry or Asian ancestry or anybody's ancestry." Her brother, Charlie Payne, told the Associated Press that his sister's reaction to being made a campaign issue was "no more than just sort of raised eyebrows."

In April 2008, Madelyn Dunham appeared briefly in her first campaign ad for her grandson, saying that Obama had "a lot of depth, and a broadness of view."

In a September 10, 2008 interview with the Late Show with David Letterman, Obama described his grandmother as follows:

Eighty-seven years old. She can't travel. She has terrible osteoporosis so she can't fly, but, you know, she has been the rock of our family and she is sharp as a tack. I mean, she's just - she follows everything, but she has a very subdued, sort of Midwestern attitude about these things. So when I got nominated, she called and said, 'That's nice, Barry, that's nice.'"

On October 20, 2008, the Obama campaign announced that he would suspend campaign events on October 23 and 24 to spend some time with Dunham. His communications director told reporters that she had fallen ill in the preceding weeks, and that while she was released from the hospital the week before, her health had deteriorated "to the point where her situation is very serious." In an October 23, 2008 interview with CBS News, Obama described his grandmother as follows: "She has really been the rock of the family, the foundation of the family. **Whatever strength, discipline - that - that I have - it comes from her.**"

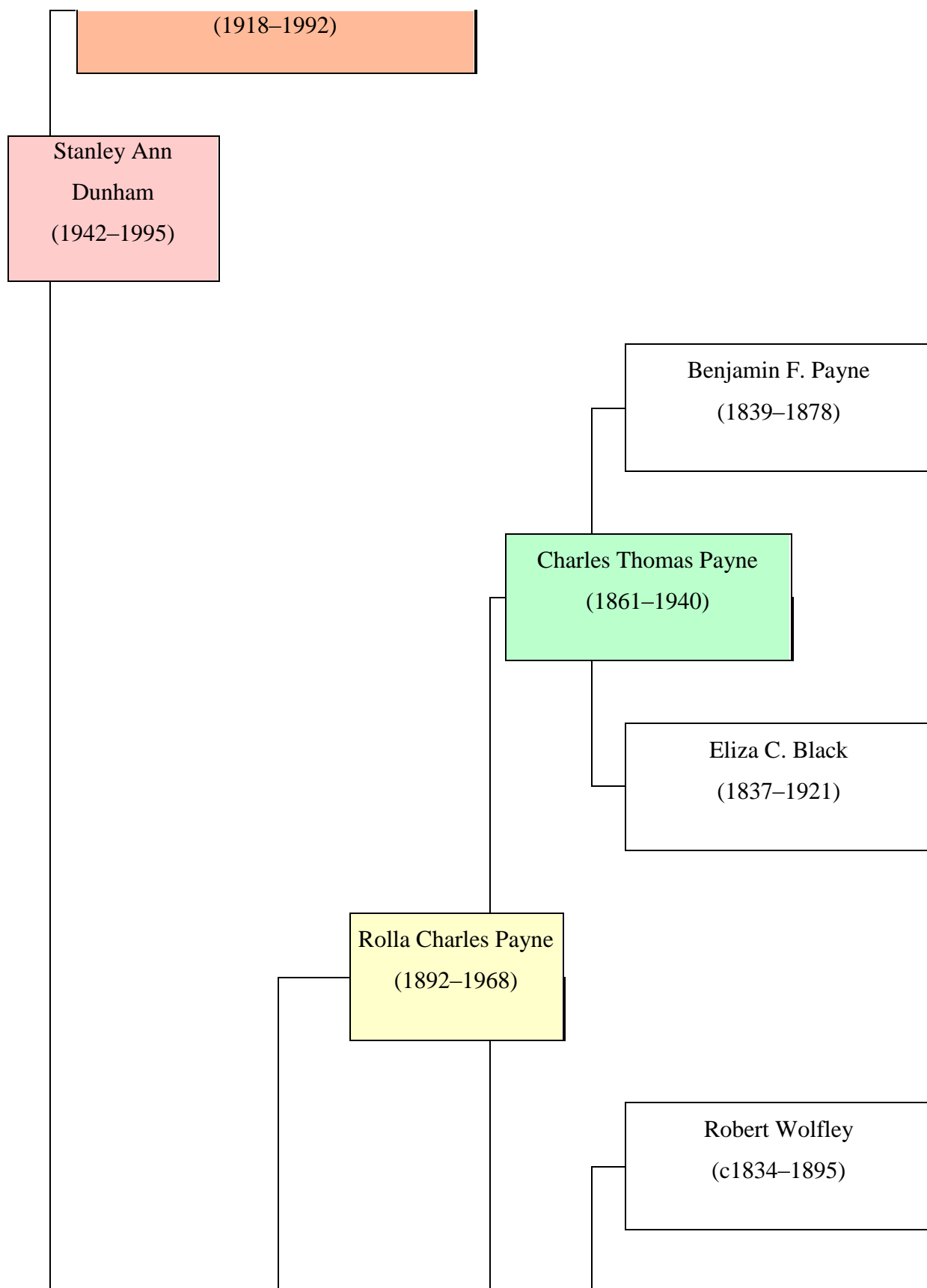
Death

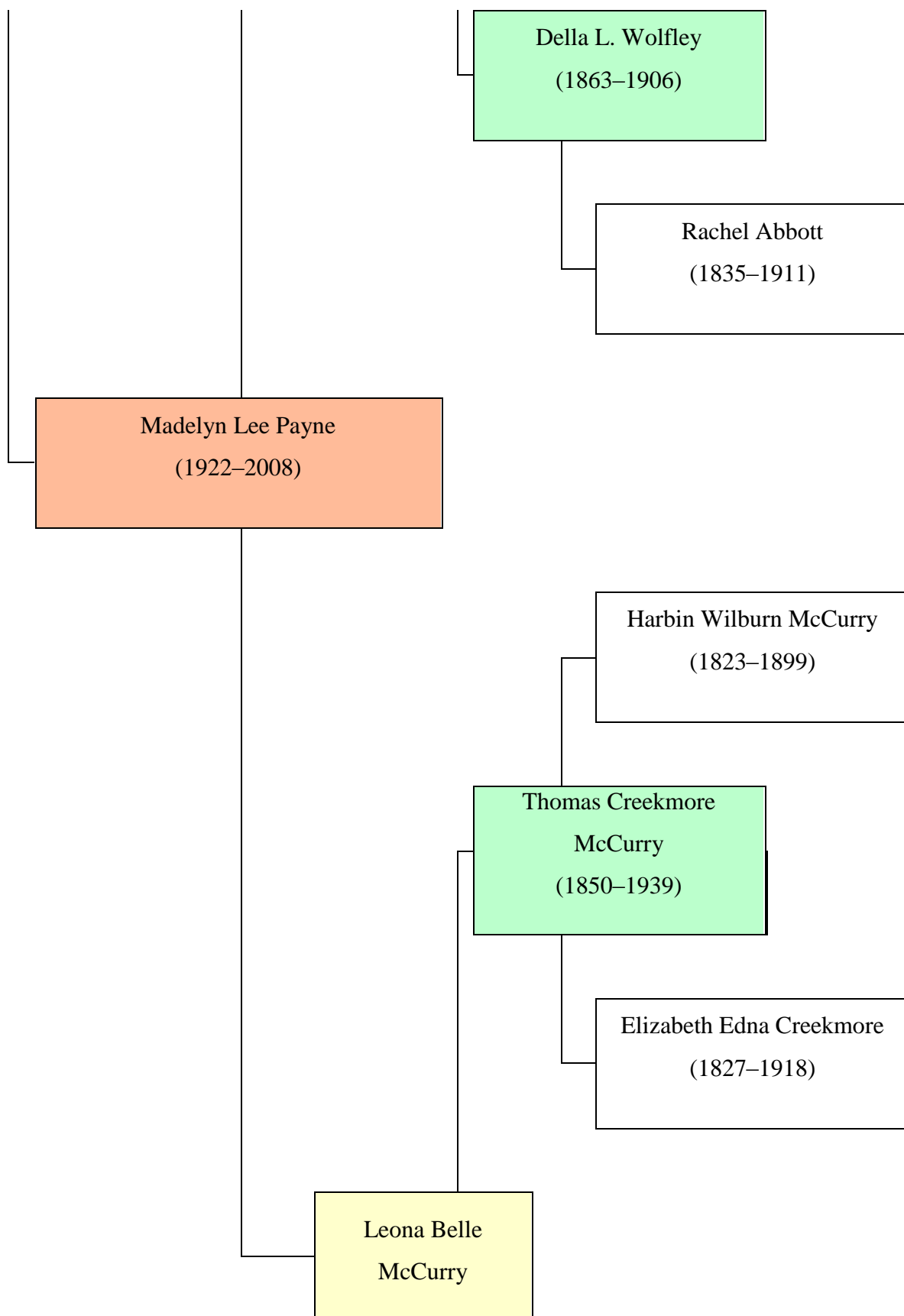
On November 2, 2008 (November 3, 2008 in the continental United States), the Obama campaign announced that Madelyn Dunham had "died peacefully after a battle with cancer" in Hawaii. Senator Obama and his sister Maya released a statement saying, "She was the cornerstone of our family, and a woman of extraordinary accomplishment, strength, and humility." At a rally in Charlotte, North Carolina on November 3, Obama said, "She was one of those quiet heroes that we have all across America. They're not famous. Their names are not in the newspapers, but each and every day they work hard. They aren't seeking the limelight. All they try to do is just do the right thing." Dunham's absentee ballot, received by the election office on October 27, was included in Hawaii's total. On December 23, 2008, after a private memorial service at the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu, Obama and his sister scattered their grandmother's ashes in the ocean at Lanai Lookout. It was the same spot where they had scattered their mother's ashes in 1995.

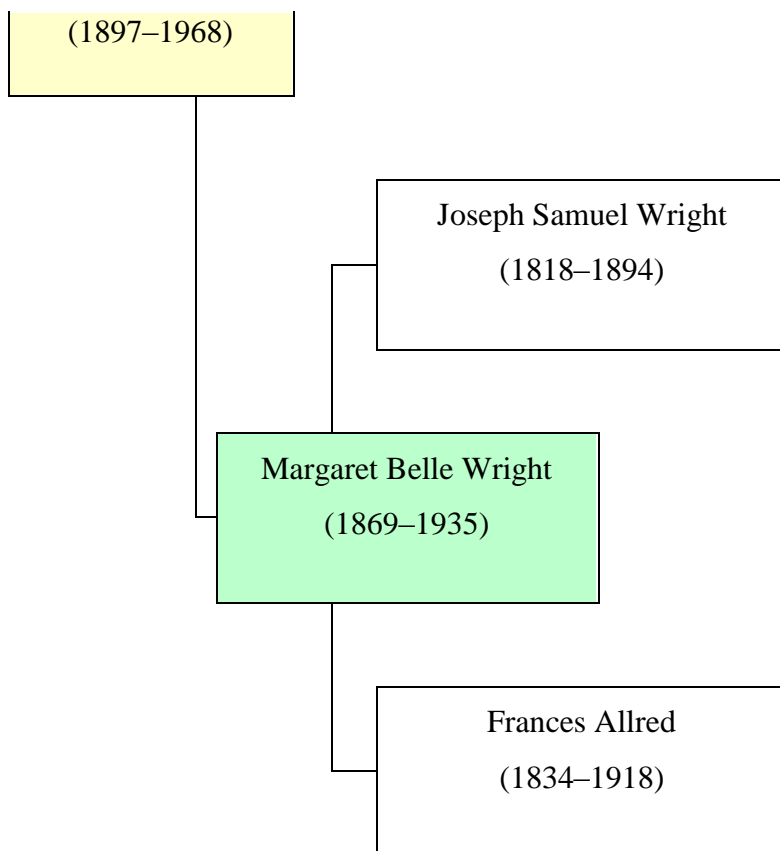
Ancestry

Madelyn Payne Dunham's heritage consists mostly of **English ancestors**, and smaller amounts of **Scottish**, **Welsh**, **Irish** and **German** ancestors, who settled in the **American colonies** during the 17th and 18th centuries. Her most recent native European ancestor was her great-great grandfather, Robert Perry, who was born in **Anglesey, Wales** in 1786 and whose father, Henry Perry, first settler of **Radnor, Ohio** in 1803. Robert Perry's wife, Sarah Hoskins, was also born in Wales and immigrated to **Delaware County, Ohio** as a young child. **Wild Bill Hickok** is Madelyn's sixth cousin, four times removed. According to **oral tradition**, her mother had some **Cherokee** ancestors, although researchers have found no concrete evidence of this to date.

ntanley Armour Dunham







His grandfather

Stanley Armour Dunham (March 23, 1918 – February 8, 1992) was the American grandfather of U.S. President Barack Obama. He and his wife Madelyn Lee Payne Dunham raised Obama from the age of 10 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Early life

Dunham was born in Wichita, Kansas, the second child of Ralph Waldo Emerson Dunham, Sr. and Ruth Lucille Armour. His father's ancestors settled in Kempton, Indiana in the 1840s, before relocating to Kansas. His parents were married in Wichita at a home on S. Saint Francis St. and

opened *The Travelers' Cafe* on William Street, sandwiched between the old firehouse and the old Wichita City Hall.

In 1926, at age 8, Stanley sadly discovered his mother's body after she had committed suicide at the age of 26. Following his mother's suicide he was, like most people, shocked, and his father abandoned the family, and Stanley and his older brother, Ralph Emerson Dunham, were sent to live with their maternal grandparents in El Dorado, Kansas. A rebellious teenager, he allegedly punched his high school principal and spent some time drifting, hopping rail cars to Chicago, then California, then back again. Stanley married Madelyn Payne on May 5, 1940, which was the night of Madelyn's senior prom.

Adult life

World War II

After the outbreak of World War II, Stanley Dunham enlisted as a private in the U.S. Army on January 18, 1942, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He served in Europe with the 1830th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, Aviation. During D-Day, this unit helped to support the 9th Air Force. They were deployed in France six weeks after D-Day. Stanley's older brother Ralph Emerson Dunham, great-uncle to Barack, landed at Normandy's Omaha Easy Red beach on D-Day plus four. Before the Invasion of Normandy, the brothers once met accidentally while Stanley went in search of rations at the Hotel Russell in London, where Ralph happened to be staying. Madelyn gave birth to a daughter they named Stanley Ann, who was later known as Ann, at St. Francis Hospital in Wichita on November 29, 1942. During the war, Madelyn Dunham worked on a Boeing B-29 assembly line in Wichita.

Post-World War II

After two years of military service in Europe (1943–1945), Stanley was discharged from the U.S. Army on August 30, 1945. After the war, the family moved to Berkeley, California and then eventually back to El Dorado, Kansas, where Stanley managed a furniture store. In 1955, Stanley and Madelyn moved to Seattle, Washington, where he worked as a salesman for the Standard-Grunbaum Furniture Company, and where their daughter Stanley Ann attended Eckstein Middle

School. They lived in an apartment in the Wedgewood Estates in the Wedgwood, Seattle neighborhood. In 1956 they moved to the Shorewood Apartments on Mercer Island, a Seattle suburb, where they lived until 1960 and where their daughter Ann attended Mercer Island High School. In 1957 Stanley began working for the Doces Majestic Furniture Company.

Hawaii

Madelyn and Stanley Dunham then moved to Honolulu, Hawaii, where he found a better furniture store opportunity. Madelyn started working at the Bank of Hawaii in 1960, and was promoted as one of the first female bank vice presidents in 1970. In 1970s Honolulu, both women and the minority white population were routinely the target of discrimination.

In Barack Obama's memoir, Dreams From My Father, he mentions, "One of my earliest memories is of sitting on my grandfather's shoulders as the astronauts from one of the Apollo missions arrived at Hickam Air Force Base after a successful splashdown." After the Obama marriage fell apart, the young Barack spent four years with his mother and her second husband in Jakarta, Indonesia. He returned to the United States at age ten to live with his maternal grandparents in the Makiki district of Honolulu and enrolled in the fifth grade at the Punahou School. The tuition fees for the prestigious preparatory school were paid with the aid of scholarships. Ann would later come back to Hawaii and pursue graduate studies; she eventually earned a PhD in anthropology and went on to be employed on development projects in Indonesia and around the world helping impoverished women obtain microfinance. When she returned to Indonesia in 1977 for her Masters' fieldwork, Obama stayed in the United States with his grandparents. Obama writes in his memoir, Dreams From My Father, "I'd arrived at an unspoken pact with my grandparents: I could live with them and they'd leave me alone so long as I kept my trouble out of sight."

Death

Dunham died in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1992 and is interred in the Punchbowl National Cemetery. His widow Madelyn took care of her daughter in Hawaii in the months before Ann died in 1995

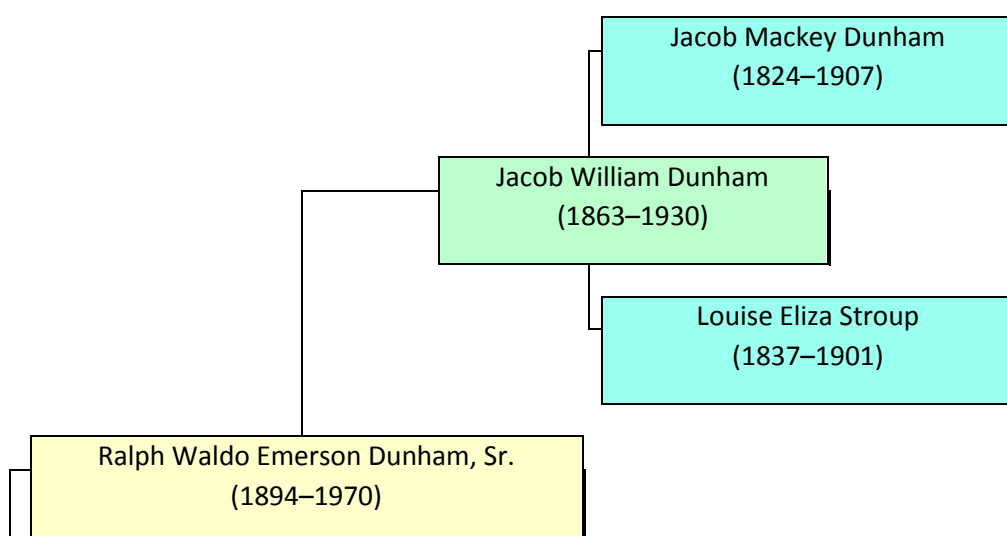
at age 52. Her last interview was in 2004, on the occasion of her grandson's keynote address to the 2004 Democratic National Convention.

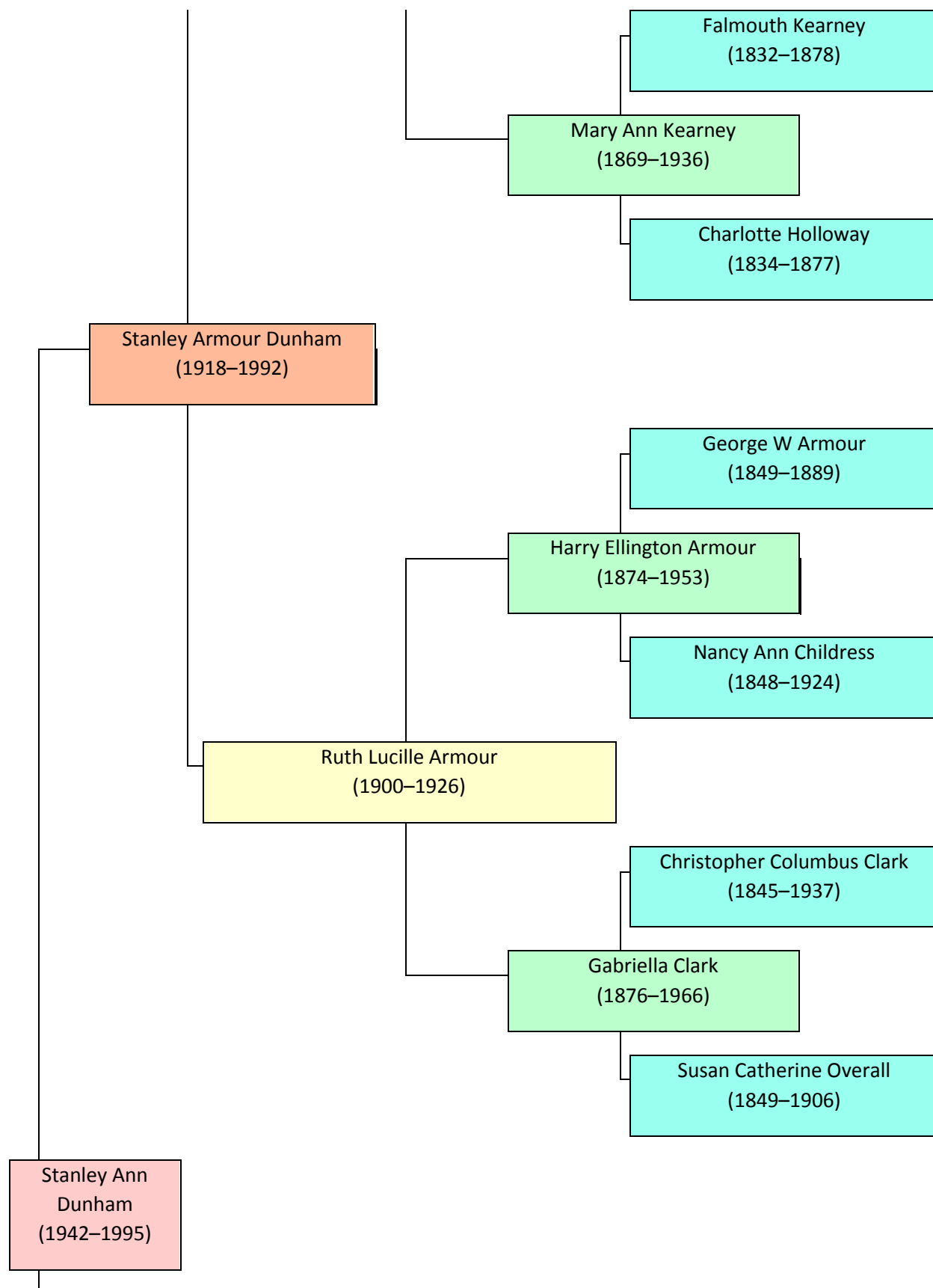
Ancestry

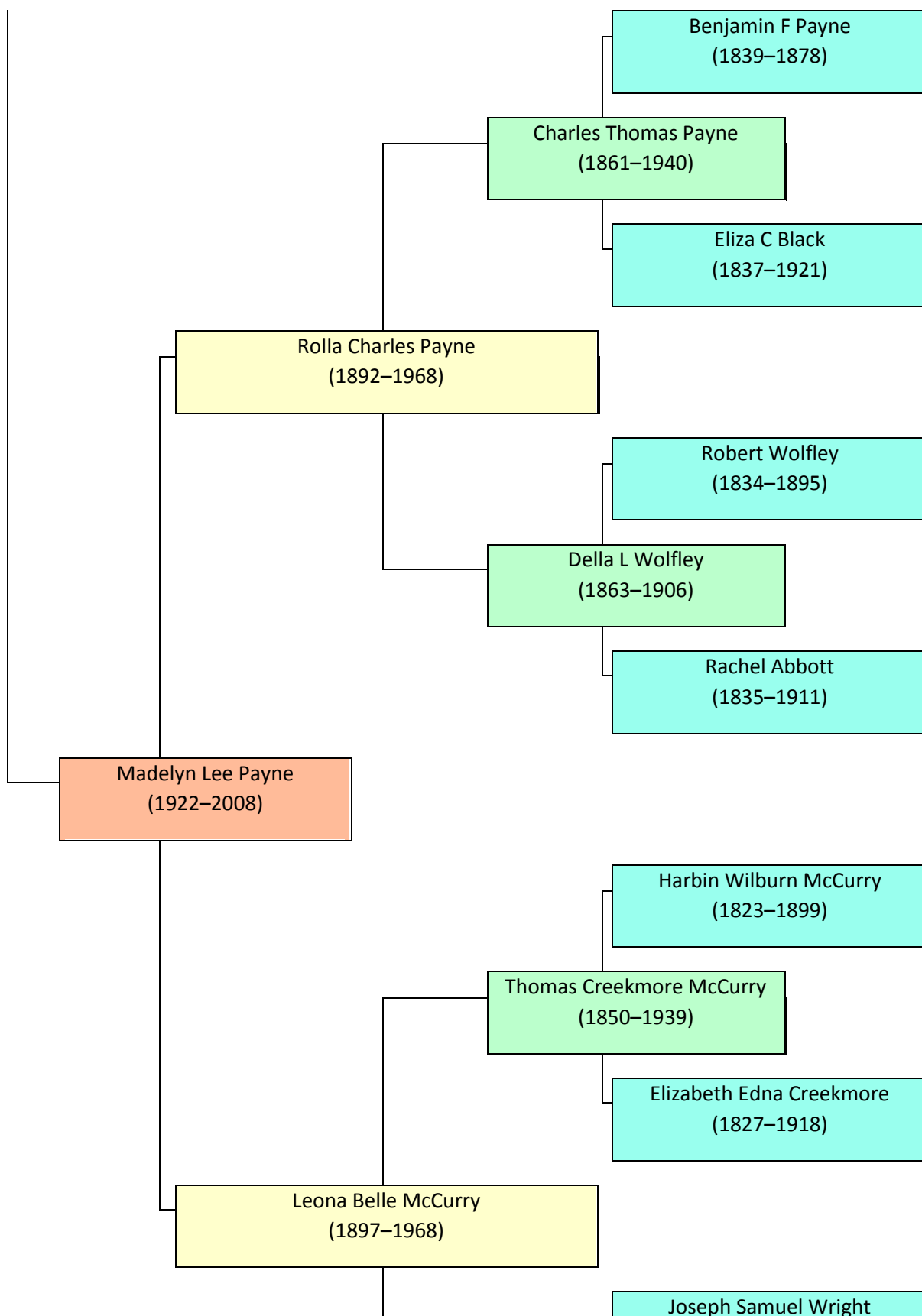
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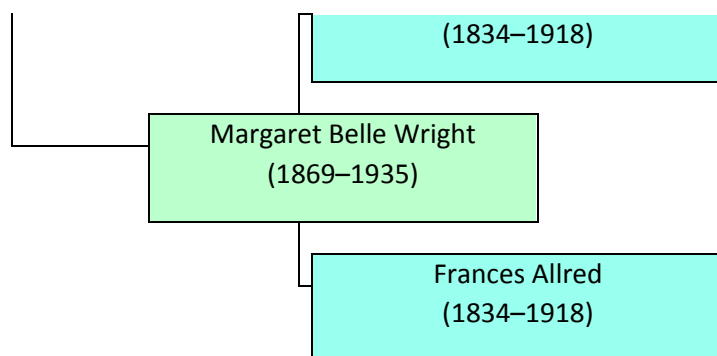
The most recent native European ancestor was Falmouth Kearney, a farmer who emigrated from Moneygall, County Offaly, Ireland during the Great Irish Famine and settled in Jefferson Township, Tipton County, Indiana, United States. Kearney's youngest daughter, Mary Ann (Kearney) Dunham, was Stanley Dunham's paternal grandmother.

Stanley Armour Dunham's distant cousins include six US presidents: James Madison, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush. Through a common ancestor, Mareen Duvall, a wealthy Huguenot merchant who emigrated to Maryland in the 1650s, Stanley Dunham is related to former Vice-President Dick Cheney (an eighth cousin once removed). Through another common ancestor, Hans Gutknecht, a Swiss German from Bischoffweiler, Alsace whose three sons resettled in Germantown, Pennsylvania as well as the Kentucky frontier in the mid-1700s, Stanley Dunham is President Harry S. Truman's fourth cousin, twice removed.









Ancestry chart source: [New England Historic Genealogical Society](#)

Barack Obama

Early life and career

Main article: [Early life and career of Barack Obama](#)

Obama was born on August 4, 1961, at Kapiʻolani Maternity & Gynecological Hospital (now called [Kapiʻolani Medical Center for Women and Children](#)) in Honolulu, Hawaii,^[4] the first President to have been born in Hawaii.^[5] His mother, **[Stanley Ann Dunham](#)**, was born in [Wichita, Kansas](#).^[6] Of **mostly English descent**, her family also traces to **[Germany](#)** and [Ireland](#).^[7] his great-great-great grandfather was born in [County Offaly](#).^[8] His father, **[Barack Obama, Sr.](#)**, was a [Luo](#) from [Nyang'oma Kogelo](#), [Nyanza Province](#), [Kenya](#). Obama's parents met in 1960 in a [Russian language](#) class at the [University of Hawaii at Mānoa](#), where his father was a foreign student on scholarship.^{[9][10]} The couple married on February 2, 1961,^[11] separated when Obama Sr. went to [Harvard University](#) on scholarship, and divorced in 1964.^[9] Obama Sr. remarried and returned to Kenya, visiting Barack in Hawaii only once, in 1971. He died in an automobile accident in 1982.^[12]

After her divorce, Dunham married **[Indonesian](#)** student **[Lolo Soetoro](#)**, who was attending college in Hawaii. When **[Suharto](#)**, a military leader in Soetoro's home country, **[came to power](#)** in 1967, all Indonesian students studying abroad were recalled, and the family moved to the **[Menteng](#)** neighborhood of **[Jakarta](#)**.^[13] From ages six to ten, Obama attended local schools in Jakarta, including **[Besuki Public School](#)** and [St. Francis of Assisi School](#).^[14]

In 1971, Obama returned to Honolulu to live with his maternal grandparents, [Madelyn](#) and [Stanley Armour Dunham](#), and attended [Punahou School](#), a private [college preparatory school](#),

from the fifth grade until his graduation from high school in 1979.^[15] Obama's mother returned to Hawaii in 1972, remaining there until 1977 when **she went back to Indonesia** to work as an anthropological field worker. She finally returned to Hawaii in 1994 and lived there for one year, before dying of ovarian cancer.^{[11][16]}



Barack Obama and half-sister Maya Soetoro-Ng, with their mother Ann Dunham and grandfather Stanley Dunham, in Hawaii (early 1970s)

Of his early childhood, Obama recalled, "That my father looked nothing like the people around me—that he was black as pitch, my mother white as milk—barely registered in my mind." He described his struggles as a young adult to reconcile social perceptions of his multiracial heritage.^[18] Reflecting later on his formative years in Honolulu, Obama wrote: "The opportunity that Hawaii offered—to experience a variety of cultures in a climate of mutual respect—became an integral part of my world view, and a basis for the values that I hold most dear."^[19] Obama has also written and talked about using alcohol, marijuana and cocaine during his teenage years to "push questions of who I was out of my mind." At the 2008 Civil Forum on the Presidency, Obama identified his high-school drug use as a great moral failure.

Following high school, Obama moved to Los Angeles in 1979 to attend Occidental College. In February 1981, he made his first public speech, calling for Occidental's divestment from South Africa. In mid-1981, **Obama traveled to Indonesia to visit his mother and sister Maya, and visited the families of college friends in India and Pakistan for three weeks.**

Later in 1981 he transferred to Columbia University in New York City, where he majored in political science with a specialty in international relations and graduated with a B.A. in 1983. He worked for a year at the Business International Corporation, then at the New York Public Interest Research Group.

Chicago community organizer and Harvard Law School

Two years after graduating, Obama was hired in Chicago as director of the Developing Communities Project (DCP), a church-based community organization originally comprising eight Catholic parishes in Greater Roseland (Roseland, West Pullman and Riverdale) on Chicago's far South Side. He worked there as a community organizer from June 1985 to May 1988.^{[26][27]} During his three years as the DCP's director, its staff grew from one to thirteen. He

helped set up a job training program, a college preparatory tutoring program, and a tenants' rights organization in Altgeld Gardens. Obama also worked as a consultant and instructor for the Gamaliel Foundation, a community organizing institute. In mid-1988, he traveled for the first time in Europe for three weeks and then for five weeks in Kenya, where he met many of his paternal relatives for the first time.^[30] He returned in August 2006 for a visit to his father's birthplace, a village near Kisumu in rural western Kenya.

In late 1988, Obama entered Harvard Law School. He was selected as an editor of the *Harvard Law Review* at the end of his first year, and president of the journal in his second year. During his summers, he returned to Chicago, where he worked as a summer associate at the law firms of Sidley Austin in 1989 and Hopkins & Sutter in 1990. After graduating with a Juris Doctor (J.D.) magna cum laude from Harvard in 1991, he returned to Chicago. Obama's election as the first black president of the *Harvard Law Review* gained national media attention and led to a publishing contract and advance for a book about race relations, which evolved into a personal memoir. The manuscript was published in mid-1995 as *Dreams from My Father*.

University of Chicago Law School and civil rights attorney

In 1991, Obama accepted a two-year position as Visiting Law and Government Fellow at the University of Chicago Law School to work on his first book. He then served as a professor at the University of Chicago Law School for twelve years—as a Lecturer from 1992 to 1996, and as a Senior Lecturer from 1996 to 2004—teaching constitutional law.

From April to October 1992, Obama directed Illinois's Project Vote, a voter registration drive with ten staffers and seven hundred volunteer registrars; it achieved its goal of registering 150,000 of 400,000 unregistered African Americans in the state, and led to *Crain's Chicago Business* naming Obama to its 1993 list of "40 under Forty" powers to be. In 1993 he joined Davis, Miner, Barnhill & Galland, a 13-attorney law firm specializing in civil rights litigation and neighborhood economic development, where he was an associate for three years from 1993 to 1996, then of counsel from 1996 to 2004, with his law license becoming inactive in 2002.

From 1994 to 2002, Obama served on the boards of directors of the Woods Fund of Chicago, which in 1985 had been the first foundation to fund the Developing Communities Project, and of the Joyce Foundation. He served on the board of directors of the Chicago Annenberg Challenge from 1995 to 2002, as founding president and chairman of the board of directors from 1995 to 1999.

Legislative career: 1997–2008

State Senator: 1997–2004

Main article: Illinois Senate career of Barack Obama

Obama was elected to the Illinois Senate in 1996, succeeding State Senator Alice Palmer as Senator from Illinois's 13th District, which at that time spanned Chicago South Side neighborhoods from Hyde Park – Kenwood south to South Shore and west to Chicago Lawn. Once elected, Obama gained bipartisan support for legislation reforming ethics and health care

laws. He sponsored a law increasing tax credits for low-income workers, negotiated welfare reform, and promoted increased subsidies for childcare. In 2001, as co-chairman of the bipartisan Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, Obama supported Republican Governor Ryan's payday loan regulations and predatory mortgage lending regulations aimed at averting home foreclosures.

Obama was reelected to the Illinois Senate in 1998, defeating Republican Yesse Yehudah in the general election, and was reelected again in 2002. In 2000, he lost a Democratic primary run for the U.S. House of Representatives to four-term incumbent Bobby Rush by a margin of two to one.

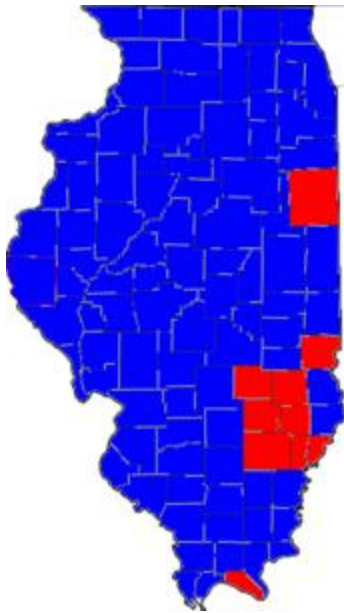
In January 2003, Obama became chairman of the Illinois Senate's Health and Human Services Committee when Democrats, after a decade in the minority, regained a majority. He sponsored and led unanimous, bipartisan passage of legislation to monitor racial profiling by requiring police to record the race of drivers they detained, and legislation making Illinois the first state to mandate videotaping of homicide interrogations.^{[43][48]} During his 2004 general election campaign for U.S. Senate, police representatives credited Obama for his active engagement with police organizations in enacting death penalty reforms.^[49] Obama resigned from the Illinois Senate in November 2004 following his election to the U.S. Senate.^[50]

U.S. Senate campaign

See also: United States Senate election in Illinois, 2004

In May 2002, Obama commissioned a poll to assess his prospects in a 2004 U.S. Senate race; he created a campaign committee, began raising funds and lined up political media consultant David Axelrod by August 2002, and formally announced his candidacy in January 2003.

Obama was an early opponent of the George W. Bush administration's 2003 invasion of Iraq. On October 2, 2002, the day President Bush and Congress agreed on the joint resolution authorizing the Iraq War, Obama addressed the first high-profile Chicago anti-Iraq War rally, and spoke out against the war. He addressed another anti-war rally in March 2003 and told the crowd that "it's not too late" to stop the war.



County results of the 2004 race

Decisions by Republican incumbent Peter Fitzgerald and his Democratic predecessor Carol Moseley Braun to not participate in the election resulted in wide-open Democratic and Republican primary contests involving fifteen candidates. In the March 2004 primary election, Obama won in an unexpected landslide—which overnight made him a rising star within the national Democratic Party, started speculation about a presidential future, and led to the reissue of his memoir, *Dreams from My Father*.

In July 2004, Obama delivered the keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts, and it was seen by 9.1 million viewers. His speech was well received and elevated his status within the Democratic Party.

Obama's expected opponent in the general election, Republican primary winner Jack Ryan, withdrew from the race in June 2004. Six weeks later, Alan Keyes accepted the Illinois Republican Party's nomination to replace Ryan. In the November 2004 general election, Obama won with 70% of the vote.

U.S. Senator: 2005–2008

Main article: United States Senate career of Barack Obama



Obama delivering a speech at the University of Southern California, on October 28, 2006.

Obama was sworn in as a senator on January 4, 2005, becoming the only Senate member of the Congressional Black Caucus. *CQ Weekly* characterized him as a "loyal Democrat" based on analysis of all Senate votes in 2005–2007. The *National Journal* ranked him among the "most liberal" senators during 2005 through 2007 (the ranking has been criticized by liberal groups such as Media Matters for America). He enjoyed high popularity as senator with a 72% approval in Illinois. Obama announced on November 13, 2008, that he would resign his Senate seat on November 16, 2008, before the start of the lame-duck session, to focus on his transition period for the presidency.

Legislation

See also: List of bills sponsored by Barack Obama in the United States Senate



Senate bill sponsors Tom Coburn (R-OK) and Obama discussing the Coburn–Obama Transparency Act^[71]

Obama cosponsored the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act. He introduced two initiatives bearing his name: Lugar–Obama, which expanded the Nunn–Lugar cooperative threat

reduction concept to conventional weapons, and the Coburn–Obama Transparency Act, which authorized the establishment of USAspending.gov, a web search engine on federal spending. On June 3, 2008, Senator Obama, along with Senators Tom Carper, Tom Coburn, and John McCain, introduced follow-up legislation: Strengthening Transparency and Accountability in Federal Spending Act of 2008.

Obama sponsored legislation that would have required nuclear plant owners to notify state and local authorities of radioactive leaks, but the bill failed to pass in the full Senate after being heavily modified in committee. Regarding tort reform, Obama voted for the Class Action Fairness Act of 2005 and the FISA Amendments Act of 2008, which grants immunity from civil liability to telecommunications companies complicit with NSA warrantless wiretapping operations.



Obama and U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN) visit a Russian mobile launch missile dismantling facility in August 2005.^[78]

In December 2006, President Bush signed into law the Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security, and Democracy Promotion Act, marking the first federal legislation to be enacted with Obama as its primary sponsor. In January 2007, Obama and Senator Feingold introduced a corporate jet provision to the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, which was signed into law in September 2007. Obama also introduced Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act, a bill to criminalize deceptive practices in federal elections, and the Iraq War De-Escalation Act of 2007, neither of which has been signed into law.

Later in 2007, Obama sponsored an amendment to the Defense Authorization Act adding safeguards for personality disorder military discharges. This amendment passed the full Senate in the spring of 2008. He sponsored the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act supporting divestment of state pension funds from Iran's oil and gas industry, which has not passed committee, and co-sponsored legislation to reduce risks of nuclear terrorism. Obama also sponsored a Senate amendment to the State Children's Health Insurance Program providing one year of job protection for family members caring for soldiers with combat-related injuries.

Committees

Obama held assignments on the Senate Committees for Foreign Relations, Environment and Public Works and Veterans' Affairs through December 2006. In January 2007, he left the Environment and Public Works committee and took additional assignments with Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. He also became Chairman of the Senate's subcommittee on European Affairs. As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Obama made official trips to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa. He met with Mahmoud Abbas before Abbas became President of the Palestinian Authority, and gave a speech at the University of Nairobi condemning corruption within the Kenyan government.

Presidential campaign: 2008

Main articles: United States presidential election, 2008, Barack Obama presidential primary campaign, 2008, and Barack Obama presidential campaign, 2008



Obama stands on stage with his wife and two daughters just before announcing his presidential candidacy in Springfield, Illinois, Feb. 10, 2007.

On February 10, 2007, Obama announced his candidacy for president of the United States in front of the Old State Capitol building in Springfield, Illinois. The choice of the announcement site was viewed as symbolic because it was also where Abraham Lincoln delivered his historic "House Divided" speech in 1858. Obama emphasized the issues of rapidly ending the Iraq War, increasing energy independence, and providing universal health care, in a campaign that projected themes of "hope" and "change".



Obama delivers his presidential election victory speech in Chicago's Grant Park.

A large number of candidates entered the Democratic Party presidential primaries. The field narrowed to a duel between Obama and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton after early contests, with the race remaining close throughout the primary process but with Obama gaining a steady lead in pledged delegates due to better long-range planning, superior fundraising, dominant organizing in caucus states, and better exploitation of delegate allocation rules. Clinton ended her campaign and endorsed him on June 7, 2008.

Obama announced on August 23 that he had selected Delaware Senator Joe Biden as his vice presidential running mate, from a field speculated to include Senator Evan Bayh and Virginia Governor Tim Kaine. At the Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado, Hillary Clinton called for her delegates and supporters to endorse Obama, and she and Bill Clinton gave convention speeches in support of Obama.^[101] Obama delivered his acceptance speech, not at the convention center where the Democratic National Convention was held, but at Invesco Field at Mile High to a crowd of over 75,000 and presented his policy goals; the speech was viewed by over 38 million people worldwide.



President George W. Bush meets with President-Elect Obama in the Oval Office on November 10, 2008.

During both the primary process and the general election, Obama's campaign set numerous fundraising records, particularly in the quantity of small donations. On June 19, 2008, Obama became the first major-party presidential candidate to turn down public financing in the general election since the system was created in 1976.

McCain was nominated as the Republican candidate and the two engaged in three presidential debates in September and October 2008. On November 4, Obama won the presidency with 365 electoral votes to 173 received by McCain. Obama won 52.9% of the popular vote to McCain's 45.7%. He became the first African American to be elected president. Obama delivered his victory speech before hundreds of thousands of supporters in Chicago's Grant Park.

Presidency

Main article: Presidency of Barack Obama

See also: Confirmations of Barack Obama's Cabinet and List of presidential trips made by Barack Obama

First days

The inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th President, and Joe Biden as Vice President, took place on January 20, 2009. In his first few days in office Obama issued executive orders and presidential memoranda directing the U.S. military to develop plans to withdraw troops from Iraq, and ordered the closing of the Guantanamo Bay detention camp "as soon as practicable and no later than" January 2010. Obama also reduced the secrecy given to presidential records and changed procedures to promote disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The president also reversed George W. Bush's ban on federal funding to foreign establishments that allow abortions.

Domestic policy



Barack Obama takes the oath of office as President of the United States.

The first bill signed into law by Obama was the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009, relaxing the statute of limitations for equal-pay lawsuits. Five days later, he signed the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to cover an additional 4 million children currently uninsured.

In March 2009, Obama reversed a Bush-era policy which had limited funding of embryonic stem cell research. Obama stated that he believed "sound science and moral values...are not inconsistent" and pledged to develop "strict guidelines" on the research.

Obama appointed two women to serve on the Supreme Court in the first two years of his Presidency. Sonia Sotomayor, nominated by Obama on May 26, 2009, to replace retiring Associate Justice David Souter, was confirmed on August 6, 2009, becoming the first Hispanic to be a Supreme Court Justice. Elena Kagan, nominated by Obama on May 10, 2010, to replace retiring Associate Justice John Paul Stevens, was confirmed on August 5, 2010, bringing the number of women sitting simultaneously on the Court to three, for the first time in American history.

On September 30, 2009, the Obama administration proposed new regulations on power plants, factories and oil refineries in an attempt to limit greenhouse gas emissions and to curb global warming.

On October 8, 2009, Obama signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, a measure that expands the 1969 United States federal hate-crime law to include crimes motivated by a victim's actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

On March 30, 2010, Obama signed the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act, a reconciliation bill which ends the process of the federal government giving subsidies to private banks to give out federally insured loans, increases the Pell Grant scholarship award, and makes changes to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

In a major space policy speech in April 2010, Obama announced a planned change in direction at NASA, the U.S. space agency. He ended plans for a return of manned spaceflight to the moon and ended development of the Ares I rocket, Ares V rocket and Constellation program. He is focusing funding (which is expected to rise modestly) on Earth science projects and a new rocket type, as well as research and development for an eventual manned mission to Mars. Missions to the International Space Station are expected to continue until 2020.

Economic policy

On February 17, 2009, Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, a \$787 billion economic stimulus package aimed at helping the economy recover from the deepening worldwide recession. The act includes increased federal spending for health care, infrastructure, education, various tax breaks and incentives, and direct assistance to individuals,^[134] which is being distributed over the course of several years.



President Barack Obama signs the ARRA into law on February 17, 2009 in Denver, Colorado. Vice President Joe Biden stands behind him.

In March, Obama's Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geithner, took further steps to manage the financial crisis, including introducing the Public-Private Investment Program for Legacy Assets, which contains provisions for buying up to \$2 trillion in depreciated real estate assets.

Obama intervened in the troubled automotive industry^[136] in March 2009, renewing loans for General Motors and Chrysler to continue operations while reorganizing. Over the following months the White House set terms for both firms' bankruptcies, including the sale of Chrysler to Italian automaker Fiat and a reorganization of GM giving the U.S. government a temporary 60% equity stake in the company, with the Canadian government shouldering a 12% stake. In June 2009, dissatisfied with the pace of economic stimulus, Obama called on his cabinet to accelerate the investment. He signed into law the Car Allowance Rebate System, known colloquially as "Cash for Clunkers", that had mixed results.

Although spending and loan guarantees from the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department authorized by the Bush and Obama administrations totaled about \$11.5 trillion, only \$3 trillion had actually been spent by the end of November 2009. However, Obama and the Congressional Budget Office predict that the 2010 budget deficit will be \$1.5 trillion or 10.6% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) compared to the 2009 deficit of \$1.4 trillion or 9.9% of GDP. For 2011, the administration predicted the deficit will slightly shrink to \$1.34, while the 10-year deficit will increase to \$8.53 trillion or 80% of GDP.

Unemployment numbers rose briefly to as high as 10.1% in October 2009 (the highest since 1983) before decreasing to 9.5% in June 2010. In the first quarter of 2010, the U.S. economy expanded at a 2.7% pace after growing at its fastest rate in six years in the fourth quarter, 5.7%. In July 2010, the Federal Reserve expressed that although economic activity continued to increase, its pace had slowed and its Chairman, Ben Bernanke, stated that the economic outlook was "unusually uncertain."^[151]

The Congressional Budget Office and a broad range of economists credit Obama's stimulus plan for economic growth. The CBO released a report stating that the stimulus bill increased employment by 1–2.1 million, while conceding that "It is impossible to determine how many of the reported jobs would have existed in the absence of the stimulus package." Although an April 2010 survey of members of the National Association for Business Economics showed an

increase in job creation (over a similar January survey) for the first time in two years, 73% of the 68 respondents believed that the stimulus bill has had no impact on employment.

Within a month of the 2010 midterm elections, Obama announced a compromise deal with the Congressional Republican leadership that included a temporary, two-year extension of the 2001 and 2003 income tax rates, a one-year payroll tax reduction, continuation of unemployment benefits, and a new rate and exemption amount for estate taxes. The compromise overcome opposition from some in both parties, and the resulting \$858 billion Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010 passed with bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress before Obama signed it on December 17, 2010.

Health care reform

Main article: Health care reform in the United States



Barack Obama signs the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act at the White House, March 23, 2010.

Obama called for Congress to pass legislation reforming health care in the United States, a key campaign promise and a top legislative goal. He proposed an expansion of health insurance coverage to cover the uninsured, to cap premium increases, and to allow people to retain their coverage when they leave or change jobs. His proposal was to spend \$900 billion over 10 years and include a government insurance plan, also known as the public option, to compete with the corporate insurance sector as a main component to lowering costs and improving quality of health care. It would also make it illegal for insurers to drop sick people or deny them coverage for pre-existing conditions, and require every American carry health coverage. The plan also includes medical spending cuts and taxes on insurance companies that offer expensive plans.

On July 14, 2009, House Democratic leaders introduced a 1,017-page plan for overhauling the U.S. health care system, which Obama wanted Congress to approve by the end of 2009. After much public debate during the Congressional summer recess of 2009, Obama delivered a speech to a joint session of Congress on September 9 where he addressed concerns over his administration's proposals.

On November 7, 2009, a health care bill featuring the public option was passed in the House.^{[165][166]} On December 24, 2009, the Senate passed its own bill—without a public option—on a party-line vote of 60–39. On March 21, 2010, the health care bill passed by the Senate in

December was passed in the House by a vote of 219 to 212. Obama signed the bill into law on March 23, 2010.

Gulf of Mexico oil spill

Main article: [Deepwater Horizon oil spill](#)

On April 20, 2010, an explosion destroyed an offshore [drilling rig](#) at the [Macondo Prospect](#) in the [Gulf of Mexico](#), causing a major sustained oil leak. The well's operator, [BP](#), initiated a containment and cleanup plan, and began drilling two [relief wells](#) intended to stop the flow. Obama visited the Gulf on May 2 among visits by members of his cabinet, and again on May 28 and June 4. He began a federal investigation and formed a bipartisan commission to recommend new safety standards, after a review by [Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar](#) and concurrent Congressional hearings. On May 27, he announced a 6-month moratorium on new deepwater drilling permits and leases, pending regulatory review. As multiple efforts by BP failed, some in the media and public expressed confusion and criticism over various aspects of the incident, and stated a desire for more involvement by Obama and the federal government.

Foreign and defense policy



President Obama in discussion with Chinese President [Hu Jintao](#) at the [2009 Pittsburgh G-20 Summit](#)

Main article: [Foreign policy of the Barack Obama administration](#)

In February and March, Vice President Joe Biden and [Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton](#) made separate overseas trips to announce a "new era" in U.S. foreign relations with Russia and Europe, using the terms "break" and "reset" to signal major changes from the policies of the preceding administration. Obama attempted to reach out to Arab leaders by granting his first interview to an Arab cable TV network, [Al Arabiya](#).

On March 19, Obama continued his outreach to the Muslim world, releasing a New Year's video message to the people and government of Iran. This attempt at outreach was rebuffed by the Iranian leadership. In April, Obama gave a speech in Ankara, Turkey, which was well received by many Arab governments. On June 4, 2009, Obama delivered a speech at [Cairo University](#) in Egypt calling for "[a new beginning](#)" in relations between the Islamic world and the United States and promoting Middle East peace.

On June 26, 2009, in response to the Iranian government's actions towards protesters following Iran's 2009 presidential election, Obama said: "The violence perpetrated against them is outrageous. We see it and we condemn it." On July 7, while in Moscow, he responded to a Vice President Biden comment on a possible Israeli military strike on Iran by saying: "We have said directly to the Israelis that it is important to try and resolve this in an international setting in a way that does not create major conflict in the Middle East."



British Prime Minister David Cameron and President Barack Obama, during the 2010 G-20 Toronto summit.

On September 24, 2009, Obama became the first sitting U.S. president to preside over a meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

In March 2010, Obama took a public stance **against plans** by the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to continue building Jewish housing projects in predominantly Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem. During the same month, an agreement was reached with the administration of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with a new pact reducing the number of long-range nuclear weapons in the arsenals of both countries by about one-third. The New START treaty was signed by Obama and Medvedev in April 2010, and was ratified by the U.S. Senate in December 2010.

On December 22, 2010, Obama signed the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010, a bill that provides for repeal of the Don't ask, don't tell policy of 1993 that has prevented gay and lesbian people from serving openly in the United States Armed Forces. Repealing "Don't ask, don't tell" had been a key campaign promise that Obama had made during the 2008 presidential campaign.

Iraq war

Main article: Iraq War

During his presidential transition, President-elect Obama announced that he would retain the incumbent Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, in his Cabinet.

On February 27, 2009, Obama declared that combat operations would end in Iraq within 18 months. His remarks were made to a group of Marines preparing for deployment to Afghanistan. Obama said, "Let me say this as plainly as I can: By August 31, 2010, our combat mission in

Iraq will end."^[193] The Obama administration scheduled the withdrawal of combat troops to be completed by August 2010, decreasing troops levels from 142,000 while leaving a transitional force of 35,000 to 50,000 in Iraq until the end of 2011. On August 19, 2010, the last United States combat brigade exited Iraq. The plan is to transition the mission of the remaining troops from combat operations to counter-terrorism and the training, equipping, and advising of Iraqi security forces. On August 31, 2010, Obama announced that the United States combat mission in Iraq was over.

War in Afghanistan

Main article: War in Afghanistan (2001–present)

Early in his presidency, Obama moved to bolster U.S. troop strength in Afghanistan. He announced an increase to U.S. troop levels of 17,000 in February 2009 to "stabilize a deteriorating situation in Afghanistan", an area he said had not received the "strategic attention, direction and resources it urgently requires". He replaced the military commander in Afghanistan, General David D. McKiernan, with former Special Forces commander Lt. Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal in May 2009, indicating that McChrystal's Special Forces experience would facilitate the use of counterinsurgency tactics in the war. On December 1, 2009, Obama announced the deployment of an additional 30,000 military personnel to Afghanistan. He also proposed to begin troop withdrawals 18 months from that date. McChrystal was replaced by David Petraeus in June 2010 after McChrystal's staff criticized White House personnel in a magazine article.

Israel

During the initial years of the Obama administration, the U.S. increased military cooperation with Israel, including a record number of U.S. troops participating in military exercises in the country, increased military aid, and the re-establishment of the U.S.-Israeli Joint Political Military Group and the Defense Policy Advisory Group. It was reported high-ranking defense officials from both countries had been making an unusual number of trips between the two countries, including Ehud Barak. Part of the military aid increase in 2010 was to fund Israel's missile defense shield. Before Adm. Mike Mullen, no Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had visited Israel for over a decade, but in 2010 he made two trips, bringing his total to four.

In 2011, Obama's Ambassador to the United Nations vetoed a resolution condemning Israeli settlements, with the U.S. the only nation on the Security Council doing so.

Libia

Main article: 2011 military intervention in Libya

In March 2011, Obama ordered the US military to take a lead role in air strikes against forces loyal to Muammar Gaddafi in Libya as part of enforcing **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973**. Obama ordered the use of Tomahawk missiles, B-2s, and fighter jets to destroy the Libyan government's air defense capabilities in order to protect civilians and enforce a no-

fly-zone. Some congressmen questioned whether Obama had the constitutional authority to order military action in addition to questions about its cost, structure and aftermath.

2010 midterm election

Obama called the November 2, 2010 election, where the Democratic Party lost many seats in, and control of, the House of Representatives, "humbling" and a "shellacking". He said that the results came because not enough Americans had felt the effects of the economic recovery.

Cultural and political image



President George W. Bush invited then-President-elect Barack Obama and former Presidents George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Jimmy Carter to a meeting in the Oval Office on January 7, 2009.

Main article: Public image of Barack Obama

See also: International media reaction to Barack Obama's 2008 election

Obama's family history, early life and upbringing, and Ivy League education differ markedly from those of African-American politicians who launched their careers in the 1960s through participation in the civil rights movement. Obama is also not a descendant of American slaves. Expressing puzzlement over questions about whether he is "black enough", Obama told an August 2007 meeting of the National Association of Black Journalists that "we're still locked in this notion that if you appeal to white folks then there must be something wrong." Obama acknowledged his youthful image in an October 2007 campaign speech, saying: "I wouldn't be here if, time and again, the torch had not been passed to a new generation."

Obama is frequently referred to as an exceptional orator. During his pre-inauguration transition period and continuing into his presidency, Obama has delivered a series of weekly Internet video addresses.



Obama presents his first weekly address as President of the United States on January 24, 2009, discussing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

According to the Pew Research Center, Obama's approval ratings dropped from 64% in February, 2009 to 49% in December, a trend similar to Ronald Reagan's and Bill Clinton's first years. Polls show strong support for Obama in other countries, and before being elected President he has met with prominent foreign figures including then-British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Italy's Democratic Party leader and then Mayor of Rome Walter Veltroni, and French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

According to a May 2009 poll conducted by Harris Interactive for France 24 and the International Herald Tribune, Obama was rated as the most popular world leader, as well as the one figure most people would pin their hopes on for pulling the world out of the economic downturn.

Obama won Best Spoken Word Album Grammy Awards for abridged audiobook versions of *Dreams from My Father* in February 2006 and for *The Audacity of Hope* in February 2008. His concession speech after the New Hampshire primary was set to music by independent artists as the music video "Yes We Can", which was viewed by 10 million people on YouTube in its first month and received a Daytime Emmy Award. In December 2008, *Time* magazine named Barack Obama as its Person of the Year for his historic candidacy and election, which it described as "the steady march of seemingly impossible accomplishments".

On October 9, 2009, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced that Obama had won the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize "for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples". Obama accepted this award in Oslo, Norway on December 10, 2009, with "deep gratitude and great humility." The award drew a mixture of praise and criticism from world leaders and media figures. Obama is the fourth U.S. president to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and the third to become a Nobel laureate while in office.

A 2010 Siena College poll of 238 Presidential scholars found that Obama was ranked 15th out of 43, with high ratings for imagination, communication ability and intelligence and a low rating for background (family, education and experience).

Family and personal life



Barack Obama together with his family and a costumed Easter Bunny, as they wave from the South Portico of the White House to guests attending the White House Easter Egg Roll.

Main articles: Early life and career of Barack Obama and Family of Barack Obama

In a 2006 interview, Obama highlighted the diversity of his extended family: "It's like a little mini-United Nations", he said. "I've got relatives who look like Bernie Mac, and **I've got relatives who look like Margaret Thatcher.**" Obama has seven half-siblings from his Kenyan father's family – six of them living – and a half-sister with whom he was raised, Maya Soetoro-Ng, the daughter of his mother and her Indonesian second husband. Obama's mother was survived by her Kansas-born mother, Madelyn Dunham, until her death on November 2, 2008, two days before his election to the Presidency. In *Dreams from My Father*, Obama ties his mother's family history to possible Native American ancestors and distant relatives of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War. **Obama's great-uncle served in the 89th Division that overran Ohrdruf, the first of the Nazi concentration camps to be liberated by U.S. troops during World War II.**

Obama was known as "Barry" in his youth, but asked to be addressed with his given name during his college years. Besides his native English, Obama speaks Indonesian at the conversational level, which he learned during his four childhood years in Jakarta. He plays basketball, a sport he participated in as a member of his high school's varsity team.



Obama playing basketball with U.S. military at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti in 2006



Obama receiving a Pittsburgh Steelers jersey from Steelers owner Dan Rooney, who campaigned for Obama in 2008

Obama is a well known supporter of the Chicago White Sox, and threw out the first pitch at the 2005 ALCS when he was still a senator. In 2009, he threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the all star game while wearing a White Sox jacket. He is also primarily a Chicago Bears fan in the NFL, but is known to also support the Pittsburgh Steelers, and openly rooted for them ahead of their victory in Super Bowl XLIII 12 days after Obama took office as President.

In June 1989, Obama met Michelle Robinson when he was employed as a summer associate at the Chicago law firm of Sidley Austin. Assigned for three months as Obama's adviser at the firm, Robinson joined him at group social functions, but declined his initial requests to date. They began dating later that summer, became engaged in 1991, and were married on October 3, 1992. The couple's first daughter, Malia Ann, was born on July 4, 1998, followed by a second daughter, Natasha ("Sasha"), on June 10, 2001. The Obama daughters attended the private University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. When they moved to Washington, D.C., in January 2009, the girls started at the private Sidwell Friends School. The Obamas have a Portuguese Water Dog named Bo, a gift from Senator Ted Kennedy.

Applying the proceeds of a book deal, the family moved in 2005 from a Hyde Park, Chicago condominium to a \$1.6 million house in neighboring Kenwood, Chicago. The purchase of an adjacent lot and sale of part of it to Obama by the wife of developer, campaign donor and friend Tony Rezko attracted media attention because of Rezko's subsequent indictment and conviction on political corruption charges that were unrelated to Obama.

In December 2007, *Money* magazine estimated the Obama family's net worth at \$1.3 million. Their 2009 tax return showed a household income of \$5.5 million—up from about \$4.2 million in 2007 and \$1.6 million in 2005—mostly from sales of his books.

Obama tried to quit smoking several times, sometimes using nicotine replacement therapy.^{[256][257][258]} Michelle Obama said that he successfully quit in early 2010.

Religious views

As he described in *The Audacity of Hope*, Obama is a Christian whose religious views developed in his adult life. He wrote that he "was not raised in a religious household". He described his mother, raised by non-religious parents (whom Obama has specified elsewhere as "non-practicing Methodists and Baptists"), to be detached from religion, yet "in many ways the most spiritually awakened person that I have ever known". He described his father as "raised a Muslim", but a "confirmed atheist" by the time his parents met, and his stepfather as "a man who saw religion as not particularly useful". Obama explained how, through working with black churches as a community organizer while in his twenties, he came to understand "the power of the African-American religious tradition to spur social change".

On September 27, 2010, Obama released a statement commenting on his religious views saying "I'm a Christian by choice. My family didn't—frankly, they weren't folks who went to church every week. And my mother was one of the most spiritual people I knew, but she didn't raise me in the church. So I came to my Christian faith later in life, and it was because the precepts of Jesus Christ spoke to me in terms of the kind of life that I would want to lead—being my brothers' and sisters' keeper, treating others as they would treat me."

Obama was baptized at the Trinity United Church of Christ in 1988 and was an active member there for two decades. Obama resigned from Trinity during the Presidential campaign after controversial statements made by Rev. Jeremiah Wright became public. After a prolonged effort to find a church to attend regularly in Washington, Obama announced in June 2009 that his primary place of worship would be the Evergreen Chapel at Camp David.