Naming and Making of African Countries

Umar Kabanda*

Pan African University (African Union Commission) Thematic Area: Governance humanities and social science.

*Corresponding Author: Email: kabandaumar97@gmail.com

Abstract

State formation in Africa was following colonial interests and less of the traditional relations of the indigenous people in Africa. Today, we have come to realize that these demarcations and delimitations have continued to exist in Africa and an understanding of the boarder formation in Africa with a case study of Uganda is presented in this paper. Firstly as presented in the paper is the historical perspective of the early ethnic evolution and tribe construction in eastern Part of Africa around the Northern part of Lake Victoria dating from 400 BC, and lastly presented is the presentation of the Making of the nation Uganda.

Keywords: Delimitation and demarcation of Uganda, Colonisation of Uganda.

Introduction

Early ethnic evolution and tribe construction in eastern Part of Africa around the Northern part of Lake Victoria dating from 400 BC set the origin of Uganda and its people coming from Central African Rift Valley with its favorable climate at an altitude of 1,200 meters and reliable rainfall around the Lake Victoria Basin made it attractive to Bantu cultivators and herders as early as the fourth century BC to settle in this area. These people raised goats and chickens, and they probably kept some cattle by 400 BC.

Their knowledge of agriculture and use of iron-forging technology permitted them to clear the land and feed ever larger numbers of settlers. They displaced small bands of indigenous hunter-gatherers, who relocated to the less accessible mountains [1] As the Bantu-speaking agriculturists multiplied over the centuries in this area around Lake Victoria, they evolved a form of government by clan chiefs. This kinship-organized system was useful for coordinating work projects, settling internal disputes, and carrying out religious observances to clan deities, but it could effectively govern only a limited number of people.

Evolution of Politics and Realization in the Current Day Uganda

Larger polities began to form states by the end of the first millennium AD, some of which would ultimately govern over a million subjects each [1].

The earliest state in this whole region was assumed to have been established between the 13th and 15th centuries by a group of pastoral rulers called the Chwezi, depicted as supernatural beings, who are the ancestors of the modern Hima or Tutsi pastoralists of Rwanda and Burundi. During the 15th century, the Chwezi were displaced by a new Nilotic-speaking pastoral group called the Bito who formed Bunyoro Kingdom. The Chwezi appear to have moved south of present-day Uganda to establish kingdoms in northwest Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi. The third type of state to emerge was Buganda, on the northern shores of Lake Victoria.
This area of the swamp and hillside was not attractive to the rulers of pastoral states farther north and west. Buganda became a refuge area, however, for those who wished to escape rule by Bunyoro kingdom or for factions within Bunyoro who were defeated in contests for power. One such group from Bunyoro (Bito), headed by Prince Kimera, arrived in Buganda early in the 15th century. Assimilation of refugee elements had already strained the ruling abilities of Buganda's various clan chiefs and a supraclan political organization was already emerging. Kimera seized the initiative in this trend and became the first effective Kabaka (King) of the fledgling Buganda state. Bunyoro's power from which the Buganda state came from began to ebb in the 18th century, with the separation of the Toro kingdom and more importantly the rise of Buganda state.

Consolidating their efforts behind a centralized kingship, Unified in the fourteenth century under the first king Kato Kintu, the founder of Buganda's Kintu Dynasty, Buganda grew to become one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with some other four firmly established kingdom lying to the west, were Ankole, Toro and Bunyoro. The Baganda (people of Buganda) shifted away from defensive strategies and toward expansion. By the mid-19th century, Buganda had doubled and redoubled its territory, conquering much of Bunyoro kingdom and becoming the dominant state in the region; [2]. Newly conquered lands were placed under chiefs nominated by the king. Buganda's armies and the royal tax collectors traveled swiftly to all parts of the kingdom along specially constructed roads which crossed streams and swamps by bridges and viaducts. Buganda state in 1875 had 125,000 troops, 230 war canoes [2].

Scramble and Partition of Africa, Reality in Uganda and Dynamism of the Colonial Domination

During the Scramble for Africa, Karl Peters a German, visited the Kingdom in 1890 and tried to persuades the kabaka (the king of Buganda) to sign a treaty accepting a German protectorate over his kingdom which the Kabaka rejected. In 1894 the British government declared a protectorate over Buganda. Buganda was by far the most significant of the kingdoms with clear boundaries and clear boundaries of its neighbouring kingdoms as indicated in the Map of ethnic arrangement in Map B bellow. On his return to the Kingdom of Buganda, Johnston policy becomes effective with his proposal to the Queen by signing the Buganda Agreement of 1900 with the kingdom in 1900 [3]. The term "Uganda" was a Swahili word used in the Buganda agreement of 1900 meaning "Land of the Ganda". Originally, (and as used throughout the above agreement) this term applied only to the Buganda kingdom. As British colonial control expanded from this central territory, the term Uganda was retained for the whole Protectorate. The central territory was distinguished from the wider colony by using its indigenous name of Buganda, [4]. Johnston subsequently signed similar agreements with the rulers of Toro in 1900 and of Ankole in 1901 in the western part of Buganda Kingdom, with this much achieved, a clear pattern was set for the British to control these three kingdoms as its Protectorate.
Map A shows the demarcations of Buganda by the 1900 agreement and map B shows Ankole and Toro kingdom which entered into another agreement with the British in 1901 and 1900 respectively

Making of the Nation Uganda

Delimitation and Demarcation Process of Making Uganda’s Boundaries West, South, South West East and North

Uganda-Rwanda Boundary

The Anglo-German agreement of May 14, 1910 established the present Rwanda-Uganda boundary but allowed for a certain amount of interpretation of the final line by the boundary demarcation commission. The exact alignment of the boundary between the Congo tripoint of Volcan Sabinyo and the source of the south western branch (Lubirizi) of the Muvogero or Tshinzinga, marked by boundary pillar No. 38, is afforded by the Anglo-German protocol signed at Kamwezi on October 30 [5].

Uganda-Sudan Boundary

In 1913, a Sudanese-Ugandan commission attempted to delimit on the ground a common boundary between the Belgian Congo tripoint and Lake Rudolf. Because of the unfavourable season and lack of water supply, the line could not be completed in the field for the eastern sector from Jebel Harogo (Urungo, part of the Didinga Hills) to Lake Rudolf. On January 1, 1914, sizable transfers of territory were made south and north of the Sudanese-Ugandan commission line of 1913: (1) west of the Nile the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan transferred to Uganda the southern part of the former Lado Enclave which became the West Nile District, and (2) east of the Nile the protectorate of Uganda transferred to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan the territory from the parallel of five degrees eastward to the boundary with Ethiopia. Thus, the towns of Nimule and Gondokoro changed from Ugandan to Sudanese administration. By an Order of the Secretary of State under the Uganda Order in Council, 1902, the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan-Uganda boundary delimited by the commission in 1913 was promulgated officially on April 21, 1914 [6].

Uganda -Tanzania Boundary

Prior to the treaty of 1890, the United Kingdom had claimed an area south of Lake Victoria extending to Lake Tanganyika, and Germany had claimed a boundary that would have extended north westward from the eastern shore of Lake Victoria bisecting the Kingdom of Buganda, presently a part of Uganda. The latter claim placed western Buganda and an access route to the Nile valley within the German sphere. An Anglo-German Agreement signed at Brussels on May 14, 1910, modified part of the boundary between British and German territories initially established as the parallel of one degree south latitude by the treaty of 1890. Modified were the sectors between the Congo tripoint and the junction of the Kikutumba and Kagera, comprising the present Rwanda-Uganda boundary, and between the junction and the second crossing of the parallel of one degree south latitude by the Kagera, comprising the western segment of the present Tanzania-Uganda boundary.

Uganda-Kenya Boundary

The Kenya Uganda boundary was established initially as an inter-territorial line by a British Order in Council of 1926. Prior to the independence of the two states, administrative agreements amended the boundary in a number of places. In the Schedule annexed to "The Kenya Colony and Protectorate (Boundaries) Order in Council, 1926," the Kenya-Uganda boundary was delimited in three sectors from south to Page 4 north: (1) Boundary from 1° south latitude, through Lake Victoria to the Mouth of the Sio River, (2) Boundary from the Mouth of the Sio River to the summit of Mount Elgon, and (3) Boundary from the summit of Mount Elgon to Mount Zulia, on the boundary of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, [6].

Uganda-Democratic Republic of Congo Boundary

The British and Belgians had no agreement on the boundary between Uganda and Congo, although King Leopold II of Belgium had the intention of claiming the whole of the Congo basin up to the 308E meridian. In 1912-13 an Anglo-Belgian commission
delimited in detail the Belgian Congo-Uganda boundary between Lake Albert and the present tripoint with Sudan as shown in the maps below for demarcation of Ugandan-DRC water borders.

**Conclusion**

In addition to the demarcations above, in 1962 a federal independence was granted to Uganda with Buganda being the most dominant kingdom amidst a few other kingdoms which also were part of the independent Uganda at the time and these included the Kingdom of Ankole, the Kingdom of Bunyoro, the Kingdom of Toro and the territory of Busoga, in addition to them were Districts of Acholi, Bugisu, Bukedi, Karamoja, Kigezi, Lango, Madi, Sebei, Teso and West Nile and the territory of Mbale this was an internal demarcation of Uganda following its first Uganda constitution of 1962.

Due to the Nationalist movements in wider Africa, Uganda in specific by the end of 1962 the elected Prime minister, Dr Milton Obote aspired for a unified administration of these federal states. He staged a coup against the central federal strongest state of Buganda Kingdom, whose king was the president of the Independent Uganda dismissing its leadership; restructuring and unifying all respective territories and boundaries under a central Government of Uganda, [7-10] bordering Kenya in the East, Tanzania in the South, Rwanda in the South West Kenya in the East and Current South Sudan in the North.

**References**

4. Buganda Agreement (1900) the Kingdom of Uganda and Commissioner, Harry Johnston
7. Uganda Constitution (1963), Signed by Milton Obote
Appendix

Above map; shows Albert lake side Delimitation of the boundary between Uganda and DRC by an Anglo–Belgian commission in 1912–13
Above Map shows; The Kenya Uganda boundary demarcation in Lake Victoria