

# **Bunyoro-Kitara/ Buganda relations in 19th and 20th Centuries.**

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## **The source of sour relations.**

In order to understand the relations between Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda kingdoms in the 19th and 20th centuries, one must first know the origins of the sour relations. The birth of Buganda, after seceding from Bunyoro-Kitara was the source of hostile relations. This article will show how this sad situation was arrived at.

Up to about 1500 Kitara kingdom (today's Bunyoro-Kitara) under Abatembuzi and Abacwezi dynasties was peaceful, intact, with no rebellious princes. When the Abacwezi kings disappeared they left a three-year vacuum on the throne which was filled when four Ababiito princes were traced, and collected from their Luo mother in northern Uganda. They ascended the Kitara throne with their elder, twin brother, Isingoma Mpuuga Rukidi becoming the first Mubiito king.

The Babiito dynasty continues today (January 2005) to reign in Bunyoro-Kitara, Buganda, Busoga, Tooro, Kooki, and Ankole. The Abacwezi kings left behind a structure of local administration based on counties. Muhwahwa (lightweight) county, today's Buganda, was just one of Kitara's counties. In the pages ahead we are going to see that the counties administrative structure is also the cause of bad relations between Bunyoro and Buganda.

Muhwahwa's small size, hence the need to expand it, as we are about to see in the pages ahead, had a lasting bearing on the relations not only between Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda, but also between Buganda and the rest of today's Uganda. During Abacwezi reign Muhwahwa county under chief Sebwana, was very obedient, and extremely loyal to Bunyoro-Kitara kingdom. The county chief of Muhwahwa had no treacherous aspirations.

Because of the large size of Kitara empire Omukama Isingoma Mpuuga Rukidi decentralised power for effective administration. He appointed his brothers to chieftainships of various counties. This was the beginning of bad relations between Buganda and Bunyoro.

His twin, younger brother, Kato, was appointed chief of Muhwahwa county, Kiiza was appointed chief of Busoga, while Nyarwa was sent to govern Kaarokarungi (Ankole).

## **Kato-Kimera rebels to found Buganda kingdom.**

What Omukama Rukidi feared most was exactly what took place. Prince Kato rebelled when he reached Muhwahwa. He sent a message to his twin brother,

Omukama Rukidi, saying, "I have germinated like a sap tree does (Mezire nk'omutoma), and my name will henceforth be Kimera,".

His name became Kato-Kimera. This worsened the already bad relations between Banyoro and Baganda. Many prominent Baganda up to today (January 2005), refuse to accept that Kato-Kimera was a twin brother of Isingoma Mpuuga Rukidi.

They refuse to call him by the compound name. They prefer to call him just Kimera in order to avoid the Kato which ties him to Isingoma Mpuuga Rukidi, his twin brother. They refuse to accept this reality, because, according to their distorted history, Muhwahwa has never been part of Bunyoro-Kitara. This is referred to in some circles as distorted patriotic pride.

### **Baganda embark on culture of ridiculing Banyoro.**

Baganda purposely embarked on a culture of ridiculing Banyoro. They began by claiming that Kato-Kimera was a child sired by a Muganda prince, Kalemeera whom, they allege, mysteriously landed at the Omukama of Bunyoro-Kitara's palace, tiptoed into the palace compound and made love to Omukama's Omugo(Queen) thereby impregnating her to produce Kato-Kimera. Banyoro consider this allegation an insult to them. It annoys them greatly, aggravating the already sour relations.

Baganda history writers are confused telling an untrue story of Kato-Kimera's birth. They find it difficult and embarrassing to piece together an unbelievable, incoherent story on how Kato-Kimera was borne of the Omugo of Bunyoro-Kitara, brought up in the palace and how he was smuggled out to land in Muhwahwa.

However, the accurate story, as told by elders whom imminent Muniyoro historian, John Nyakatuura quotes, say that prince Kato was a true twin brother of Isingoma Mpuuga Rukidi, borne of the same Luo mother, Nyatworo. The twins were collected together, four brothers, and their elder brother, Isingoma Mpuuga Rukidi, crowned the first Mubiito king of Bunyoro-Kitara.

On being assigned the chieftainship of Muhwahwa Kato went with the intention to rebel. He carried with him the kingdom's regalia, a drum called Mujaguzo, which is today still present at Mengo. He took with him many Banyoro citizens who founded the Engabi clan.

Distorting Kato-Kimera's Bunyoro origins, indeed using it to ridicule Bunyoro royalty, is one of the symptoms of continued bad relations between Banyoro and Baganda. As the 19th century closed and the new one started, Baganda embarked on a culture of downplaying Banyoro. They ridiculed them by referring to them as backward, uncivilized, uneducated, social misfits etc, In Buganda society a Muniyoro was held next to a sub-human being. A Muniyoro could never perform anything good. If he did anything good it was always said he had imitated a Muganda. Baganda children were groomed to humiliate and always downplay Banyoro. Hence 10-year Baganda children openly referred to Banyoro as, "Banamawanga" (strangers).

This culture of Baganda holding every Muniyoro in disrepute and considering them as backward lot, persists in some circles. Agreed it has subsided, but down deep in

purely Kiganda circles, the culture of holding Banyoro as barbaric people still continues. Isingoma and Kato remained friendly.

When prince Kato rebelled and declared himself king, and assuming the compound name Kato-Kimera, thereby founding the Ababiito dynasty, to replace county chief Sebwana, and subsequently founding the kingdom of Buganda, there were initially no antagonisms between Muhwahwa and Bunyoro-Kitara kingdoms. The relationship between the kingdoms of twin brothers was that of friendly brother to brother co-existence.

Indeed, custom had it that it was taboo for twin brothers to fight each other. So, the relations between infant Muhwahwa kingdom and mother kingdom Kitara, were peaceful, although the king of Bunyoro-Kitara kept hoping that the rebellious prince would recover his senses and return to Bunyoro-Kitara.

Having successfully rebelled and having founded a kingdom with its attendant honours of wealth and dignity, it was not long before relations between the two kingdoms would be strained. While Kato-Kimera lived there was peace, although an uneasy one. Kato-Kimera's sons initiate military attacks on Bunyoro-Kitara.

But Kato-Kimera's children having lived outside Bunyoro-Kitara, indeed not having any influence of their uncle, and being tempted by the wealth and honours that go with royalty and a large kingdom, felt their Muhwahwa kingdom was very small. It had to expand in order to become wealthy. Expansion of Muhwahwa kingdom could only be at the expense of Bunyoro-Kitara. This policy sowed seeds of incalculable hostility between Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda which has lived up to today.

Hence sour relations between Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda started with, Kato-Kimera's son, Nakibinge the third kabaka of Buganda who started an expansionist programme. He was killed in that first war between Banyoro and Baganda. Nakibinge's successor, his brother, Kayima, also died in battle while continuing with his late brother's expansionist programme.

### **Expansion of Buganda at the expense of Bunyoro become a policy.**

But Buganda kings could not rest until they expanded their kingdom. Apart from a desire for wealthy originating from a large kingdom, geography also favoured and tempted Buganda kings to aspire to expand Muhwahwa at the expense of Bunyoro-Kitara.

Bunyoro-Kitara kingdom which included today's counties of Busujju, Gomba, Kyagwe. etc, was geographically too extensive to be governed effectively. The kingdom was too far flung from the centre of Bunyoro-Kitara to be governed, and to be militarily defended effectively. Hence the temptation to Buganda kings to invade them and annex them to their kingdom. And that's exactly what happened. As Buganda kings became stronger and stronger every day, with ambitious kings, the temptation to invade Bunyoro-Kitara was always great.

### **Weak Banyoro kings tempt Buganda.**

On the side of Bunyoro-Kitara, by the beginning of the 19th century she got a succession of weak kings who could not militarily defend her borders. This weakened position of Kitara was not lost to Buganda leaders. They embarked on an expansionist programme fully knowing that they could easily defeat Banyoro at war. Baganda kings then periodically invaded Bunyoro-Kitara grabbing one county after another until they acquired the counties of Buddu, Gomba, Busujju, Kyagwe, and Kooki. Hence the relations could not be friendly.

However, in spite of the poor relations the royal families knew and recognized their common lineage. They knew they originated from a Luo woman by the name of Nyatworwo and they were of Ababiito dynasty. Hence at individual level members of the royal family were at times friendly. This is exhibited by the then prince Kabaleega enlisting the support of Baganda princes who supplied him with soldiers during the succession war with his brother prince Kaabigumiire. Eventually Kabaleega defeated Kabaigumiire partly because he had Baganda soldiers on his side.

### **Kabaleega assists prince Kalema in the war of succession.**

Later on during the trouble years of 1880's when Baganda princes fought for the throne, Kabaleega sent Banyoro troops to fight on the side of prince Kalema. He assisted him to win the throne, but Kalema unwisely sent back Banyoro soldiers instead of keeping them to guarantee his continued stay in power. His fears were prompted by the Banyoro military commander-in-chiefs playing the role of Prime Minister of the Kabaka. His continued stay did not please Baganda nobles who suspected the Banyoro of coming to rule them. So the Kabaka asked Banyoro troops to return to Bunyoro. It was a bad mistake on the part of Kabaka Kalema because, without Banyoro troops, he was toppled almost as soon as the troops left. He went into exile in Bugangaizi county where he later died.

### **European colonialists side with Buganda.**

That the 19th century was the time of slave trade and the scramble for colonies in Africa were at their highest. Indeed, the two crimes against humanity were at that time an honour. The two crimes were happening in Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda. In addition to wanting colonies, European powers wanted to find the source of the River Nile. That question had baffled European thinkers for a long time. The Nile was the cradle of Egypt, but they did not know where it originated. So they wanted to find out where that great river began its journey to Egypt.

Hence European travellers who wanted to reach the source of the river Nile had of necessity travel within Bunyoro-Kitara kingdom. At that time Lake Victoria, Lake Kyoga and the surrounding areas were all part of Bunyoro-Kitara kingdom. So European travellers had of necessity deal with the king of Bunyoro-Kitara.

In 1862 the first European traveler, Speke, to reach Bunyoro-Kitara found Omukama Kamurasi on the throne. The others were Samuel Baker and his wife who had a bad experience when they found the Banyoro throne now in the hands of Omukama

Kabaleega. Since they passed via Buganda on their way from Mombasa, they were given advance biased information about the king of Bunyoro-Kitara.

### **Bunyoro kings on collision course with Europeans.**

Both kings Kamurasi and Kabaleega would not accept the arrogance the British travelers exhibited. They stood off in an attack on Samuel Baker's fort by Kabaleega's army. The battle ended with Samuel Baker abandoning the plans of the ruler of Egypt who had dispatched him to establish Egyptian authority over Bunyoro-Kitara.

So while European travelers were getting open-handed welcome in Buganda, the kings of Bunyoro-Kitara were insisting on respect of their authority. Which the British did not accept. This resulted in the travelers sending negative reports about the kings of Bunyoro and good reports about the kings of Buganda.

Thus, while the search for the source of the River Nile went on and the colonisation of the inter-lacustrine region went on, European travellers and colonialists, who had planned to reach this region via the northern route, re-routed and used the eastern route which went through friendly Buganda. Buganda made matters worse for Bunyoro by exaggerating Banyoro kings' dislike of European colonisers.

### **Buganda poison European attitude on Banyoro.**

King Kabaleega always insisted that any European traveller going through his kingdom had to first get permission, like it is all over the world. But the colonizers refused to obey this rule arguing that the kings of the region were barbarics who should not be obeyed. Hence, from the very beginning of European arrival in the region Banyoro under their kings wanted respect of their borders and of their dignity. But Buganda poisoned the minds of the travellers to the extent that every European who came to this part of the world was poisoned against Banyoro.

### **Kabaleega embarks on restoration of Bunyoro's glory.**

When Omukama Kabaleega ascended the Bunyoro-Kitara throne, his major foreign policy was to restore the lost glory of his kingdom. This meant invading and defeating the rebellious princes in today's Congo which was at that time an integral part of Bunyoro Kitara, all of today's west and south western Uganda, Toro kingdom, and Buganda.

To achieve this he had to have an efficient army supported by a vibrant economy. He made every able-bodied Muryoro become economically productive so that the kingdom is wealthy enough to afford to support a large army. At the same time he mobilized every able-bodied Muryoro to play a role in the maintenance of the national army, THE ABARUSUURA.

With a large, well-equipped army, a vibrant supportive economy, Kabaleega embarked on what he called disciplinary exercises of bringing back to the fold all the

rebellious princes. Kabaleega's army was so successful that rebellious princes began panicking on just learning that the Abarusuura were advancing towards them. He defeated all the rebellious princes including the ones in Toro thereby re-uniting the kingdom which had rebelled in 1830 thus living an independent life for more than fifty years. But how does defeating the rebellious princes and re-uniting the kingdom affect relations with Buganda?

### **Kabaleega's army pose a threat to Buganda.**

Having re-united the kingdom in the process acquiring wealth and further means to launch an attack on Buganda, Kabaleega greatly enhanced his ability to defeat Buganda which had rebelled since the days of Kato-Kimera.

According to British field commanders reports now available in the British archives in London, by 1890 Kabaleega's abarusuura army was the most formidable in the lucustrine region. They estimated it to have more than 10,000 men under arms.

The 19th century was the time European powers were priding themselves in possession of colonies. Indeed, to emphasise that the world was under their feet., the met in 1885 in Berlin and carved out Africa amongst themselves. Uganda, although non-existent at threat time, but the collection of kingdoms in this region, were allocated to Britain.

### **Kabaleega resists British colonialism.**

But Omukama Kabaleega would not accept this. He refused to be treated like somebody who had no power from God to lead his subjects. All of king Kabaleega's dealings with colonizers Charles Gordon, Emin Pasha, Gerlad Portal, Fredrick Lugard, Henry Collville, etc. were aimed at reaching a peaceful friendly agreement to allow European penetration to introduce religion and civilisation on an equal footing. But the British would not accept this. The Baganda on the other hand, welcomed British penetration. King Kabaleega warned Buganda kings, Kabaka Mwanga in particular, against welcoming British penetration. But, unwisely, Mwanga signed an agreement in 1894 accepting British colonisation of Buganda.

### **Baganda welcome British colonialism.**

Baganda took this position aiming to ally with a stronger nation, Britain, in order to get military assistance from it to fight their traditional enemies, Banyoro. Military victory against Bunyoro would come with benefits in the form of expansion and attendant wealth. Hence, in 1890 Cpt Fredrick Lugard invaded Bunyoro-Kitara with the help of Baganda, Nubian and Indian troops.

Kabaleega was aware of the changed balance of military power due to the introduction of the precision guns in the form of Maxim Guns. His army was equipped with only the muzzle-loading, single shot guns. These could not match the precision guns.

On several occasions he offered to talk peace with the invaders, but Baganda always intervened to harden British resolve not to negotiate with Kabaleega. The

result was that the British, with superior precision weapons fought an eight-year war with Kabaleega who was eventually joined by Kabaka Mwanga.

The nine-year war was a total disaster to the population of Bunyoro-Kitara as the invaders employed scorched-earth tactics to weaken the resolve of the population. This approach meant establishing garrisons virtually on every village in the whole kingdom. The ordinary, civilian persons were punished to the extent that the suffering made them turn against their ordinary persons who were supporting the war effort. Using financial attractions every Muryoro was attracted to become a spy against fellow Banyoro.

The final years of the war were fought in today's Luweero Triangle that is the districts of Nakasongola, Kayunga, that is Buruli and Bugerere counties inhabited by Baruli and Banyala.

### **Semei Kakungulu leads British troops to colonise the rest of Uganda.**

Baganda armies commanded by Semei Kakungulu did havoc in the countryside pillaging, raping and taking women and children to be retained as slaves.

When the two kings were captured April 9, 1899 they were exiled in the Seychelles where Mwanga died returning the body to be buried at Kasubi. Kabaleega lived in exile for 23 years only to be returned as an old man of over 70. He died without reaching his kingdom at Mpumwire, in Busoga.

The foregoing shows that the relations between Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda have never been friendly from the time Kato-Kimera's children embarked on a policy of expanding Muhwaahwa County. Indeed, the two kingdoms have been in a virtual state of war as long as Buganda treated as conquered territory the many counties today comprising Buganda kingdom.

### **Bunyoro-Kitara/Buganda Relations in the 20th century.**

The foregoing shows that the relations between these two kingdoms were shaped by events that took place to establish the kingdom of Buganda. Briefly, Buganda kingdom of today was a mere county of Bunyoro-Kitara.

Muhwahwa county inhabitants. Baganda, spread out and captured neighbouring Bunyoro-Kitara counties in an expansion programme which has doomed relations between the two kingdoms to eternal hostility.

### **1900 Buganda Agreement annexes Bunyoro-Kitara's seven lost counties.**

The relations between Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda in the 20th century were founded on the terms of the shapers of the Buganda Agreement of 1900. It was an agreement which was made partly to punish Banyoro for their resistance of British colonialism. This is the agreement which annexed the most central and most fertile part of Bunyoro-Kitara. Indeed, looking at Buganda map the seven lost counties

which Britain donated to Buganda to thank them for assisting British colonialism, it is obvious that they were given a huge chunk of land which was too large to be ignored by Banyoro. It is geographically larger than the original size of Buganda. Hence the source of sour relations between Banyoro and Baganda in the 20th century.

### **Banyoro/Baganda bad relations spread to other parts.**

The relations between Banyoro and Baganda in the 20th century are directly the relations between Baganda and the rest of Ugandans. This is because whatever the Baganda did to Banyoro was reciprocated in other parts of Uganda. For example the British colonizers of Uganda had a policy of giving preferential treatment to Baganda. This annoyed not only Banyoro, but also other tribes in Uganda.

The British introduced Baganda administrators to other parts of Uganda. While this might have been good administrative move, it was politically wrong because it caused bad relations. The other tribes saw it as an insult and a humiliation. Indeed, in Bunyoro-Kitara it caused a riot which very nearly degenerated into a mini-war in what is historically known as the Nyangire Revolt.

To quell this revolt the Protectorate Gov't had to call in the equivalent of riot Police which rounded up many Banyoro leaders who were charged in courts of law. Some deaths were recorded and the courts handed down stiff custodial sentences including exile for ring leaders. Painful as it was, the message was delivered that Baganda are not welcome to rule other parts of Uganda. Any attempt to force it only resulted in solidarity of other tribes.

### **Semei Kakungulu subdues Ugandans on behalf of Britain.**

In the early 20's, after subduing Bunyoro-Kitara, and having secured Buganda's loyalty. the British employed Baganda armies led by Semei Kakungulu to assist them to colonise the remaining parts of Uganda. Kakungulu led Baganda armies equipped with the deadly Maximu gun went on a rampage to subdue the Langis, the Banyole, the Bagisu, the Bavuma and Basese, and other tribes around Lake Kyoga.

Kakungulu was the equivalent of today's mercenaries. He was handsomely paid by the British masters. He employed the most brutal means when subduing resistance. And after securing an area he employed the most oppressive methods to secure the loyalty of the vanquished.

In his book, "Kakungulu" Michael Twaddle, a professor of History in London University describes Kakungulu's brutality when he says, Kakungulu expressed astonishment when he saw, from a distant, the decapitated heads of Bavuma floating in Lake Victoria. He wrote that the heads were so many they presented a scene of black cooking pots floating in the lake waters.

Twaddle says the Maximum gun killed so many Bavuma who had put up stubborn resistance based on their traditional courage whereby they do not run away from the enemy. By confronting the Maximum Gun the Bavuma made themselves easy prey to the Kakungulu's guns.



Conquest of the rest of Uganda by the British employing Baganda was not the only cause of hostility between non-Baganda and Baganda. The economic, political and social development of Uganda was based on Buganda. This was expected because the Baganda had to be rewarded for their treachery in welcoming British colonialists while the rest of Uganda defied British penetration.

Hence, as Uganda was shaping up into modern state, modern developments like education, hospitals, infrastructure, etc, were all started in Buganda. The British were using tax-payers money collected in all parts of the country. Therefore, since they were building a united Uganda, taxes collected from all over the country, and on merchandise entering Uganda, were all used to establish the country's capital at Kampala.

### **Britain embarks on policy keeping Bunyoro-Kitara backward.**

The capital city, and other central government institutions were built not only in Kampala, but also in surrounding Buganda areas. This was to further British policy of keeping Bunyoro-Kitara backwards in order to stop her re-arming and then begin a war. Thus, there was a purposeful policy of keeping Bunyoro-Kitara backwards, to stop her becoming militarily strong and then start another war.

Bunyoro-Kitara was aware of this policy. This is best illustrated by the government's policy of never to introduce valuable cash crops in Bunyoro-Kitara. In Bunyoro-Kitara the Government introduced only tobacco growing, which was a crop associated with disease and backwardness. The Omukama's Gov't constantly voiced concern at being left out on development projects. Indeed, up to day, the education system in Bunyoro-Kitara is still the backward type. This is reflected in the fact that Primary Schools in BunyoroKitara do not perform well.

While the Uganda Gov't constructed good infrastructure in Buganda, the rest of Uganda got only the equivalent of remainders. Bunyoro-Kitara and the rest of the nation are given minimal attention. All these happenings annoy the rest of Ugandans who accuse even the subsequent governments after independence of giving Buganda preferential treatment.

### **Bunyoro-Kitara's seven lost counties: a recurrent source of sour relations.**

There is nothing which has puzzled the relations between Banyoro and Baganda in the 20th century like the seven lost counties issue. In the foregoing pages I have shown that the relations between Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda have been, since the birth of Buganda before the 19th century, rotating on Buganda's expansionist programme, which on the other side, Bunyoro-Kitara has been trying to stop.

Later in the 20th century it made an about turn in that Buganda was to hold on to the seven lost counties donated to her by the conquering British forces, that is keeping them for eternity.

On the other hand; Banyoro did not accept the loss of those most prized counties. Hence a source of serious friction.

Banyoro's determination is evidenced in their refusal to sign any agreement with the British until 1933. And even then they did not accept the loss of those counties. The Omukama Sir Tito Winyi documented his claim to the seven lost counties.

To further show that Banyoro never accepted defeat, Omukama Kitahimbwa, the immediate 1899 British chosen successor to king Kabaleega, abdicated the throne in 1903 as a protest to Britain for failure to restore the seven lost counties.

### **Mubende Banyoro Committee is born in 1918 to restore lost counties.**

The Banyoro in the lost counties in 1918 formed the first political party in Uganda aimed at recovering the seven lost counties. Started at the foot of Mubende Hill it

was spearheaded by five prominent Banyoro, Benwa Rubuto, Yowana Nyakatuura and Zaakaliya Rugangwa.

It began humbly demanding permission to allow Banyoro in those counties to speak their mother tongue, Runyoro and for Banyoro to be appointed to post of chieftainship. The Baganda refused to heed and instead said that was a mere subject of conversation. When simple civilized request was rejected the Banyoro felt they had reached a deadlock.

### **Omukama petitions British monarchy to restore the seven lost counties.**

The Omukama, Sir Tito Winyi dispatched scores of memoranda to the king of England requesting a restoration of his seven lost counties. But they were rejected. The subject of the lost counties formed a nucleus of debates in the fledging Uganda Parliament, in the 50's known as the Legislative Council (Legco). The Bunyoro Member, George Magezi introduced the motion in the Legico, but although the house was sympathetic to Bunyoro's cause, the House, controlled by the British officials rejected the motion.

### **Banyoro patriots elected to Buganda Lukiiko.**

In 1953 the Buganda Lukiiko held democratic elections whereby the people of the lost counties, more particularly those of Buyaga, and Bugangaizi elected hardcore Banyoro patriots. On joining Buganda Lukiiko these representatives led by Joseph Kazairwe, James Mukasa, Andrey Kaliibeera Lubega and Gabriel Kasumbi, introduced Runyoro language in the mainly Luganda speaking house.

They were thrown out and accused of disrespect to the Kabaka. The three representatives sued the Lukiiko for violating their rights as representatives of the people of Buyaga and Bugangaizi counties. The Banyoro won the case whereby they were re-instated in the Buganda Lukiiko.

### **Relations further strained as Mubende Banyoro Committee became militant.**

The relations between Banyoro, not only of the lost counties, but of all of Bunyoro-Kitara, and Baganda were extremely strained. The Banyoro wanted the seven lost counties to be restored to which the Baganda said no.

In 1951 Mubende Banyoro Committee elected as Secretary General, Joseph Mujoobe Kazairwe, a returned military officer at the rank of Sergeant. Kazairwe prevailed upon the group that they would never achieve anything unless they resorted to military tactics. So it was.

Baganda responded by becoming harsher. Whereupon Kazairwe incited Banyoro to boycott anything Kiganda. He even told them from henceforth to stop recognizing the authority of Buganda by refusing to pay taxes to Buganda kingdom. The people obeyed. Whereupon he was arrested and jailed five years. He served the sentence but came out more determined to secure the rights of Banyoro, come what may.

The situation in the seven lost counties was that of, "master vs slave". See the book written by Isaabaruuli Mwogezi detailing how Baganda chief turned Baruuli and Banyala their slaves.

### **Banyoro hunt Baganda and vice versa.**

Now the situation in the lost counties, more particularly Buyaga, Bugangaizi and Buheekura became rowdy with Banyoro hunting Baganda and vice versa. At least 100 people, on both sides, were killed in this war. The correct figure will never be known because at that time there were no press men covering it.

At independence time. 1960-62 the issue of Bunyoro-Kitar's lost counties became the only national subject to debate. Indeed, it became so hot that it threatened to delay the date for Uganda's independence. However, the British, being cunning as they are, referred it to the plenary session of the debate. Even when it was in London it threatened to torpedo the constitutional conference. But the chairman of the conference, Lord Macleod shifted it to the closing subjects. That effectively saved the conference from collapsing.

It was agreed at the conference that the issue of the lost counties be referred back to Uganda. It was agreed that there would a referendum two years after Uganda attained independence. In the meantime it became a controversial topic of discussion. It was the topic in all newspapers.

However, it is significant that non-Baganda delegates grouped together with Banyoro. While Banyoro campaigned looking for Banyoro votes, the Baganda too were trying to hoodwinck Banyoro like they did in the other counties, Buheekura, Bulemeezi, Bunyala, Rugonjo (Singo). Indeed, because of hoodwincking the indigenous population to declaring themselves Baganda, the referendum was not held there. But events in 2004 showed that had the referendum been held in those counties as well, they would all of them have voted to return to Bunyoro-Kitara.

The bloodshed culminated into the 1964 Buyaga/Bugangaizi Referendum. The voters were asked where to belong, Bunyoro-Kitara, Buganda or to become an independent district. They overwhelmingly chose to return to Bunyoro-Kitara.

After restoring Buyaga and Bugangaizi counties one would have thought the Banyoro of those counties would be happy. But no. It did not happen that way. While the two counties were returned to Bunyoro administratively and politically, they remained in Buganda as far as land is concerned.

### **Land Fund in 199 Uganda Constitution to compensate Baganda.**

Uganda seemed to have been be-witched to always move with what seems to be a perennial problem: Bunyoro-Kitara's lost counties. This issue was created in 1900 when making the Buganda Agreement. The country has lived with it since that time. And until all of these counties are restored to their original owner, Bunyoro-Kitara, it will continue to give the country sleepless nights.

When in 1995 debating the lost counties issue in the Constituent Assembly, Baganda Mps demanded compensation if they were to give up the land they were donated by the British in the 1900 Buganda Agreement. President Museveni's gov't accepted this demand as a short cut to ended the touchy issue.

However, when it came to actually hand over the land titles most Baganda wanted to be given huge amounts of money. But the government insisted that they be given the current value of land in Kibaale District. This has continued to cause disagreement resulting in failure on the part of Baganda to hand back the land titles. Hence; Banvoro in Buyaga and Bugangaizi counties continue to live on the land as squatters. It has made relations between Banyoro and Baganda remain very hostile.

### **Banyoro of Kibaale District in court demanding the land.**

As land titles issue continued to bog down the gov't and beginning to appear as if the Gov't has no political will to implement the Buyaga Bugangaizi Referendum Act, a legal measure which would automatically make Baganda surrender the land titles, the Banyoro in the district of Kibaale sought legal decision. They opened us a multi-billion UK pound suit against six defendants:

1. The Uganda Gov't as represented by the Attorney General.
2. The Kabaka of Buganda, also represented by the kingdom Attorney General.
3. The Her Majesty's Gov't of Great Britain.
4. The Uganda Electoral Commission
5. The Uganda Land Commission
6. The 3636 absentee landlords.

In this suit the Banyoro are praying for the cancellation of the 1900 Buganda Agreement which gave a legal touch to the annexation of the seven lost counties.

They want a cancellation of the system of mailo land which condemned them to squatter status on their own land.

They want a cancellation of the re-settlement schemes in Kibaale which created preferential treatment to migrant communities by giving them land and financial benefits while Banyoro have never been given land, let alone financial benefits.

They want re-location of illegal migrants who have inflated the voter register rendering indigenous people unable to possess political power in their own land.

Finally they want payment of reparations to the tune of five hundred billion British pounds for the damage their troops did to Banyoro-Kitara, more particularly the violation of human rights when they killed over two million Banyoro in the course of the nine-year war.

The suit is in the Uganda High Court and has already generated a lot of heat between Banyoro and Baganda. The Banyoro are quoting the Uganda Constitution Article 32 which says the Uganda Gov't has a Constitutional obligation to redress historic wrongs committed against minorities. The Banyoro are a minority which was wronged by the wrongful annexation of their land.

The case promises to drag on for a long time therefore making the bad situation worse. The Baganda are viewing themselves as being targeted by the various forces. They are blind to the fact that theirs is a situation which was caused in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when they welcomed British colonialism when they should have joined forces with fellow Africans, more particularly Banyoro, to repulse the invaders.

This is when they committed what is today referred to as the original sin. They have to apologise to the rest of Ugandans in order to be forgiven this sin.

It is this special position given to them by the British who needed Baganda support at that time in order to have an ally to ease their penetration of this part of Africa. Their condition was not helped by developments in Buganda's conquered territories, the lost counties. Until the NRM brought decentralization policy which gave power to the peasants, Buganda chiefs had effectively muzzled them. But now everybody has got a voice. Hence peasants who were quiet are now talking. So the indigenous people in the lost counties are demanding to be given their freedom after living under the yoke of Buganda colonialists for all these years.

### **Baruuli/Banyala demand secession from Buganda.**

When the oppression Baruuli/Banyala underwent while under Buganda rule from 1900 was removed through the introduction of decentralization, the peasants in those areas began talking. They exposed the harsh rule Baganda imposed on the indigenous population in the lost counties. In particular they showed how they held under the harshest slavery in modern world. A book written by Isaabaruuli Isaabarongo Mwogezi gives details of the harsh treatment. The harsh reality is that the Baganda chiefs treats all the people in the seven lost counties as slaves.

The Baruuli could not stand this treatment any more. Thus, when Baganda demanded federo which would restore their area to colonial rule where slavery was the order of the day, the Baruuli/Banyala came out and boldly said they would not be part of a kingdom which treats it's people as slaves.

Earlier in 1994 the two ethnic groups had elected their Cultural leader, the Isaabaruuli in the name of Isaabarongo Mwogezi Butamanya. On installation day, December 10, 2004 the Isaabaruuli Mwogezi minced no words when he declared that:

1. From now on Baruuli/Banyala are free to speak their language, Ruruuli/Runyala without fear.
2. The schools with effect from January 2005 will begin teaching in Ruruuli/Runyala instead of Luganda.
3. There will be no more singing of Buganda national anthem in Baruuli. Instead they will sing Baruuli/Banyala national anthem.(This was implemented there and then).

Hence it will be seen that the issue of the lost counties has affected the relations in Uganda not only between Banyoro and Baganda, but also between the rests of Uganda. Indeed. since the Baganda are adamant in persisting to believe in their

colonial role and clinging on what they call conquered territory, that is the lost counties, the relations will continue to be sour between Banyoro/Baganda and the rest of Uganda. The solution seems to be to remove the element of belonging to one kingdom or the other. But this may not be removed without grave repercussions. Having restored kingdoms in 1993 as a measure of enhancing peace it will be moving in reverse gear to abolish them again.

The other solution is to educate Baganda to the realities of life and show them that empires are born and also that empires collapse. They should learn the examples of the British Empire which at one time controlled almost a quarter of the world. Today it is confined to their tiny islands off the coast of Europe.

France, Germany, Japan, Soviet Union, were once great powers, today they are no more. Indeed, the era of colonialism ended after world War Two. Colonialism and slave trade were declared sins against humanity. So, Baganda must begin to live with the idea of Buganda going back to her original Muhwahwa size. After all Buganda has already benefited by getting a lion's share of development facilities provided by tax-payers of other districts.

It should be realized that until Buganda clamoured for a federated status which, according to their demand:

1. No district will be allowed to secede from Buganda.
2. The 9000 square miles must be restored to Buganda.
3. Kampala must be governed by Buganda kingdom, nobody was re-awakening the seven lost counties issue.

Had Buganda not made the above demands nobody was asking them to hand over the lost counties. It means that by that time it was not making any difference where districts belonged to. But Baganda added value to the size of territory deemed to belong to them. There was prestige to get if one's kingdom is large.

The Baganda made the situation bad by evicting indigenous people in Buruli and Bunyala. The way they are doing it causes suspicion that they want to punish the indigenous people, the Baruli/Banyala/Banyoro.

President Museveni reacted by coming to the side of the oppressed. He declared that the indigenous people should not be evicted. He said if the Baganda landlords want money he was prepared to pay them so that Baruli/Banyala/Banyoro may remain on the land of their forefathers.

This humanitarian gesture by President Museveni was interpreted by Baganda as witch-hinting them.

The solution is to let the indigenous people live a peaceful life on their ancestors land which was forcefully annexed to Buganda in 1900.

Signed;  
Henry Ford Mwirima

