

Buganda agreement: affecting life of ugandans



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The aim of this study is to evaluate the political and social impact of the 1900 Buganda Agreement on the people of Uganda. This investigation will look at how the signing of the agreement affected the people of Uganda in the political and social aspects between 1900- 1960. In this investigation, I will also look at the delight that Ugandans enjoyed after the agreement was signed as well as the distress that accompanied the agreement.

I intend to carry out my investigation by visiting libraries and reading the available literature about Buganda and the Buganda agreement. For my investigation, I will use textbooks such as A Political History of Uganda, Roots of Instability in Uganda, both books written by S. R. Karugire and The Story of The Uganda Agreement by J. V. Wild. I will also go ahead and carry out interviews with highly distinguished Buganda, Bunyoro, as well as Ankole officials who have satisfactory knowledge on matters surrounding the Buganda agreement

Summary of evidence

The Buganda agreement was a bilateral accord signed by Sir Harry Johnston for the British government and three Buganda regents namely: Apollo Kaggwa, Stansilus Mugwanyiri and Zakariya Kisingiri on behalf of the Buganda king: Kabaka Daudi Chwa who was by then four years old and could not logically reason the terms of the agreement . The agreement was apolitical rather than a legal agreement which tried at one and at the same time to reconcile all imperial and local interests to the extents that these interests were identifiable and could be reconciled. The agreement can be summarized into four main sections.

The clauses 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, and 14 were administrative provisions that were aimed at defining Buganda's boundaries. Clauses 4, 7, 12, 15, 16 and 17 were aimed at the imposition of the infamous gun and hut tax while clauses 15, 18, 19, 21, and 22 were general clauses. The last group of clauses: 5, 6, 8, 13 and 20 tackled the issue of recognition of the Kabaka and his government which was dependent on their trustworthiness towards the British administration.

There are numerous effects that came about as a result of the signing of the agreement. One of the effects of the Buganda agreement was the taking away of the ultimate functions of the Kabakaship which was the Kabaka's power to make all laws for all Baganda thus making the Buganda kingdom independent from the Kabaka. Instead, the Kabaka and the Buganda kingdom were made subject to the colonial government. The act of doing away with the kabakaship also meant that the Kabaka would not appoint a chief unless he had received approval from Her Majesty's representative in Uganda. A new system of land ownership was introduced through the creation of an independent class of land owners whose rights over land were not subject to the Kabaka. Along with the new system of land ownership came the division of land between the colonial government and the Buganda government into two distinct parts namely: Mailo land (for the Buganda government) and Crown land (for the protectorate government).

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EVALUATION OF SOURCES

A Political History of Uganda

This is a didactic textbook that contains a very descriptive step by step history of Uganda's political arena from 1500-1971. The author's biography at the beginning of the textbook shows that he is a learned man with a first class historical background and therefore the book is a very reliable source of information. By setting a time limit for each chapter, the author made accessing topics easier. Through Karugire's prefatory proclamation, he openly states that his work has his own ideas and personalities and therefore it is not universally applicable. The textbook has a wide bibliography where its sources are stated. This textbook also provides unbiased views which are based on relevant research material and has a very detailed history of Uganda, Buganda and the Buganda agreement. There is primary evidence in the form of quotes of the people who were directly involved in the Buganda Agreement.

The story of the Uganda agreement

J. V. Wild's story about the Buganda Agreement is the most eloquent source of information I have used. J. V. Wild gives a step by step narration about the history of Buganda before as well as after the signing of the Buganda agreement, events that led to its signing and the impact it had on its signatories. However, the writer from my point of view is Eurocentric and some of his views clash with Karugire's. Unlike Karugire who says that the agreement was dictated and unfair, J. V. Wild says that the Buganda chiefs were given time to think out the terms of the agreement before putting pen to paper. The book has primary sources of information such as letters that

were written by Henry Johnston to Her Majesty the Queen, as well as Buganda officials, and quotes from the individuals that had a hand in the signing of the Buganda Agreement. The writer does not embroider any details and this rules out any feelings of bias.

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Analysis

There were many effects that emanated from the signing of the 1900 Buganda agreement. One of the noteworthy effects of the Buganda agreement was the doing away with the ultimate functions of the Kabakaship. The kabaka was deprived of his rights to make laws, as well as lost his authority and say over Buganda's land which brought about the individual land ownership system. Busoga, Ankole and Kigezi got to see the existing political organization get shuffled. The existing chiefs were placed under a colonial government representative known as the European District Officer who they were now subject to. The head chiefs, who were not used to being ordered around, were replaced with their minors, the traditional chiefs to who receiving orders were part and parcel of their day-to-day life. By doing so, it would be easy to manipulate the chiefs into British puppets who now had to receive orders from the British and not their fellow Africans. These chiefs were used in a type of leadership known as indirect rule which involved a higher power (in this case the British) instructing local natives (in this case the African chiefs) on how to govern the people.

Following the signing of the 1900 Buganda agreement was the reduction of Buganda's boundaries as well as the division of Buganda's land. Uganda's

land was divided into mailo land for the Buganda government, and crown land for the British government. The Buganda government land was further divided among individuals such as the royal family members, the lukiiko, the Muhammadan chief and some land was left for the private land owners

The signing of the Buganda agreement brought about the establishment of a taxation system based on possession of fire arms (gun tax) as well as areas of residence (hut tax). It is from this taxation system that money to run administrative activities was obtained. A hut tax of 4 rupees per annum was charged on any house, hut, or habitation used as an area of residence while a gun tax of 3 or 4 rupees was charged for any individual who was in possession of a gun, rifle or pistol. Limits were also placed on how many fire arms an individual could possess. For example, the locals were permitted only five guns, while the kabaka was given fifty guns license free. However, the possession of canons and machine guns was prohibited. This was very powerful artillery which would be of great use to the locals if there was an uprising against the British.

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Conclusion

The illustration of the area under discussion shows that the signing of the Buganda agreement brought about change in Uganda political and social way of life. The signing of the Buganda agreement undermined the powers of the kabaka as the kabakaship functions were swept away: he lost his say in Buganda's land matters. He could no longer appoint chiefs without the approval from the protectorate government and other concepts upon which

the governance of the territory was based were swept away. In areas such as Busoga, Kigezi and Ankole, the existing political structures were shuffled and the traditional chiefs were all placed under the European District Officer. These actions raised a question among today's writers, " did the flag follow the cross?"

However, by the time Uganda was finally granted her independence, most of the terms of the agreement had been swept away and Uganda was no longer subject to the British government.

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