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Contextualizing Privatization and Conservation in the History of Resource Management in Southwestern Uganda: Ethnicity, Political Privilege, and Resource Access over Time

By Amber L. Pearson[a] and Charles Muchunguzi[b]

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Introduction

Economic development pressure from multilateral lending agencies and donors[1] has led to increased privatization of land and other public resources[2] and the creation of national parks, especially in sub-Saharan African rangelands. Since the 1970s, vast public resources have undergone processes of privatization,[3] increasing dependence on private enterprises.[4] Privatization has been touted by neoclassical economic theory as more efficient and thus has been more attractive to foreign investors,[5] and has also been a requirement for World Bank and IMF loans.[6] However, evidence suggests that privatization has led to increased inequality in sub-Saharan Africa.[7] Similarly, the creation of national parks is intended to increase revenue from tourism. Tourism and national park entrance fees (and permits to see gorillas and chimpanzees in Uganda) indeed do contribute a large portion to GDP in many African countries.[8] In Uganda, travel and tourism accounted for 9.2 percent of the national GDP, with an annual growth forecast of 4.7 percent.[9] In South Africa, tourism increased by

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[1] D. Hall, *Nigeria Report* (cited 2006 October 30)., Available from: http://www.psiru.org/reports/2006-09-WE-Nigeria.doc; D. Hall, and R. de la Motte, "Dogmatic Development: Privatisation and Conditionalities in Six Countries," in PSIR Unit, Report for *War and Want* (London: University of Greenwich, 2004).

[2] Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

[3] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[4] L. Whiteford, and S. Whiteford, "Paradigm Change," in L. Whiteford and S. Whiteford, eds., *Globalization, Water and Health* (Oxford: James Currey, 2005); Farmer, *Pathologies*

[5] M. Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[6] Hall and de la Motte, "Dogmatic Development"; Friedman, *Capitalism.*

[7] James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

[8] M. Rugadya, E. Obaikol, and K. Herbert, *Critical Pastoral Issues and Policy Statements from the National Land Policy in Uganda: A Policy Brief, in Land Research Series* (Kampala: Associates for Development, 2005).

[9] WEF, *Uganda*, in *Country/Economy Profiles* (Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2006).

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6 percent from 2003 to 2005 at the Royal Natal National Park.[10] Conservation and privatization often occur in tandem, through funding sources and loan contingencies,[11] leading to further marginalization of those once living within the boundaries of the national park[12] by reducing access to environmental resources, economic activities[13] and community cohesion.[14] But, as national governments became saddled by massive debt and lenders encouraged the creation of protected areas and the increase in marketable resources, national parks and privatization of land have proliferated in the past twenty years. In addition to external pressures, there have even been internal political motivations behind national park designation and resource allocation, such as increasing state control, establishment of a taxable base, and de-stabilization of an opponent's voting population as is the case with Lake Mburo National Park (LMNP) in Uganda.[15] In this case, changes in land use policy can be tied to evolving external and internal political pressures and ultimately to the removal of decision-making power over resources and livelihoods from the communities and to the state. Specifically, LMNP was designated and the surrounding land was subsequently allocated as private parcels. Accounts of these land use policies often separate the effects of privatization from those of conservation. In actuality, the interactions between these two policies may be more informative of contemporary experiences in access to resources and consequences in the communities today. Many of these accounts are also devoid of the potentially differential lived experiences of the policies, which were implemented via existing systems of social stratification such as ethnicity, wealth, and political power. The purposes of this research are to: 1) contextualize the policies of land privatization and creation of LMNP in a broader history of resource management (pre-1900 to date), noting discrepancies and omissions in existing textual accounts; 2) cartographically represent the changes in land use over time; 3) understand the linked roles of ethnicity and political privilege as patronage systems for policy implementation; and 4) examine the lived experiences of the implementation of these policies and their contemporary consequences.

Study Site and Population

In southwestern Uganda, policies were implemented in the 1980s through the 1990s that created private ranches, allocated private parcels of land and ranches, and designated

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[10] J. Linde, and S. Grab, "Regional Contrasts in Mountain Tourism Development in the Drakensberg, South Africa," *Mountain Research and Development* 28, 1 (2008), 65–71.

[11] Rod Nuemann, *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[12] K.B. Ghimire, and M.P. Pimbert, *Social Change and Conservation: Environmental Politics and Impacts of National Parks and Protected Areas* (London: Earthscan, 1997).

[13] Mark Infield and A. Namara, "Community Attitudes and Behaviour towards Conservation: An Assessment of a Community Conservation Programme around Lake Muro National Park, Uganda," *Oryx* 35, 1 (2001), 48–60.

[14] C.C. Geisler, "Endangered Humans," *Foreign Policy* May (2002), 80–81.

[15] A. Mugisha, "A Case Study of Nshara Grazing Area, Mbarara, Uganda" (MSc thesis, Wye College, University of London, 1993).

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people's grazing and farming land and the permanent drinking water source, Lake Mburo, a national park. Lake Mburo served as the destination of annual migration for *Bahima* pastoralists during the extended dry season for centuries. External pressure mounted from donor agencies to generate income from tourism through national park user fees. External pressure also led to the promotion of commercialization of agriculture and ranching. This led to the privatization of land, in an effort to encourage settlement of pastoralists in and promote commercialization in the communities on the periphery of the park. Internal political pressures also mounted to promote the settlement of pastoralists and privatization of land to both increase the taxable population base and more formally secure state power.

One of the counties bordering the park, Nyabushozi County, is the study site for this research and is primarily inhabited by two ethnic groups: *Bahima* pastoralists and *Bairu* cultivators, which together form the *Banyankole* people. Stories told about the experiences of the implementation of these policies shed light on the impacts of land privatization and conservation and how these impacts vary greatly by ethnicity. Political motivations behind the policies and subsequent patronage systems of resource allocation intimately relate to ethnicity and wealth, where one group is politically favored while another group is in subordination. The implications of this preferential treatment have serious consequences for current access to resources and the current conditions of people's lives in southwestern Uganda.

Methods

In order to understand the context of land privatization and the creation of LMNP within a broader history of resource management in southwestern Uganda, historical texts (primarily written by colonialists or short-term visitors to Uganda) and policy documents were reviewed. These accounts were found often to be in contradiction, to only relay pastoralists' perspectives, or to completely omit the inclusion of cultivators as community members. Examination of these contradictions was aided through semi-structured interviews and oral histories. The oral histories and semi-structured interviews were conducted to derive information about: 1) the chronological order of political events that influence environmental resource use, access, and management since the time of the Ankole kingdom (pre-1900) to the present; and 2) the context and significance of privatization and conservation policies in the history of the area.

Three villages were randomly selected using a random number generator (Microsoft Excel Basic 2003, Redmond, WA) from three purposely selected village clusters, which: 1) border LMNP; and 2) have varying access to permanent water resources for human and livestock consumption. Selected villages were Nyanga, Rwozi, and Rwamuhuku (see Fig. 1).

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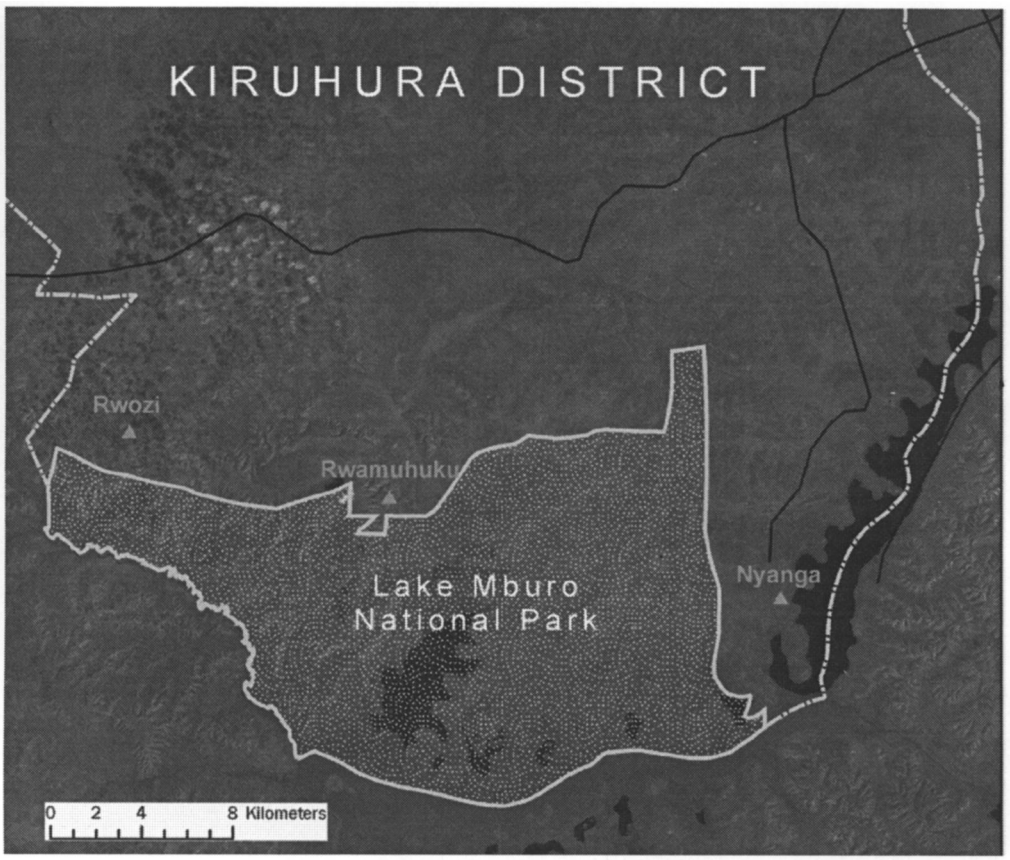


Figure 1. Map of Study Communities and Lake Mburo National Park (Source: Cartography by Amber Pearson).

Local Council (LC) chairman at the village level were selected as respondents in the oral histories. The chairmen were purposely selected to report on the history of environmental resource access, use and management, and political events in the communities due to their assumed knowledge of the experiences and their leadership role in the community. After the oral histories were conducted, chairmen were asked to complete community inventories, which were used to purposely select interview respondents. A goal of conducting twenty interviews across the three communities was set, given time and financial constraints. The number of interviews per community was established using proportional population sampling. The aim in using purposeful sampling was to increase the breadth of responses and to capture any potential variation including differences in people from different ethnic groups, economic status, and gender. The combined population of the three selected communities was stratified by community, and the number of respondents chosen from each stratum (community) depended on that stratum's contribution to the total sample population size.

Oral histories and semi-structured interviews were recorded using an Olympus WS-210S digital voice recorder (Olympus Imaging Corp, China) and were supplemented by written notes. Field assistants conducted the interviews in *Runyankole*. The primary

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interviewer translated interviews from *Runyankole* to English. Transcription of the English files was first entered in Microsoft Word 2003 software (Redmond, WA) then copied into EZ Text (CDC, Atlanta, GA) for analysis. Oral histories were compared with published texts, to highlight discrepancies. The histories were then combined to form a more cohesive account of the political events and the firsthand experiences of their implementation. Themes from interviews were coded. Analysis was conducted in two stages: 1) descriptive coding of themes such as physical and social conditions, and interactions among actors; and 2) analytic coding of themes such as strategies and tactics and consequences.[16] The results of the compiled historical accounts and experiences of resource management in southwestern Uganda are reported here.

Results

Oral histories were conducted with three LC1 chairmen and lasted 46.5 minutes on average, excluding rapport-building and closing comments by the interviewers. Twenty-six respondents were interviewed. The total population of Rwamuhuku village is much larger than the other two villages, so 62 percent of the respondents were from that village. Half of all respondents were male and half were female. Over 60 percent of the respondents own land in their community and 46 percent have lived in the community for over thirty years. Half of the respondents were *Bahima*, while 35 percent were *Bairu* and 15 percent were "other," including Rwandan, *Bakiga*, and *Buganda*. The length of the interviews ranged from 17.5 minutes to 42.3 minutes, with an average of thirty-six minutes, excluding rapport-building and closing comments by the interviewer. Two respondents were approached to participate but were considered ineligible because they were intoxicated. One person refused due to lack of trust, giving the interview portion a 4 percent refusal rate.

Precolonial Resource Management

For centuries prior to 1894, the area from Tanzania in the south to Katonga River in the north was called the Ankole kingdom and was ruled by the *omugabe*, the king of the *Banyankole* people. The king, always a member of the *Bahima* ethnic group, controlled access to numerous environmental resources in the area, such as lakes and pasture land, and designated the Nshara areas and swamp areas as communal pasture which was generally allocated for herders to use for grazing.[17] In times of drought, the king also more formally allocated grazing in areas outside of Nshara. The king generally allotted communal land, or "community property regimes," which were managed by kinship groups relying on lineage and inheritance.[18] In *community property* regimes, access is

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[16] A. Strauss, and J. Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990).

[17] James Mwami, "Rainwater Harvesting for Survival and Development, Uganda," (paper presented at the International Symposium on Water, Poverty and Productives Uses of Water at the Household Level, PanAmerican Health Organization, Muldersdrift, South Africa, 2003).

[18] J. Tukahirwa, "Policies, People and Land Use Change in Uganda: A Case Study in Ntungamo, Lake Mburo and Sango Bay Sites," in *Land Use Change Analysis as an Approach for Investigating Biodiversity*

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granted by membership in a unit that claims access to particular resources, by permission from that unit or through inheritance. The unit is a social one such as a clan or a community. A clan is a group of people who claim common descent and share a common vision of the purpose and appropriate use of its resources. Unlike *private property* regimes, access to resources is determined by membership in a social group, rather than by an individual's ability to purchase or control a resource. Private ownership of land, as found today, was unprecedented. Other areas in the kingdom were considered "open access" where the physical presence of someone indicates a right to use the resource.[19] Thus, some areas were allotted to pastoralists to manage via community property schemes, other areas were restricted and only allotted to groups or individuals by the Ankole king, and other areas were left unmanaged by the king and were considered open access. Many cultivators established farms on open access land. Migration was a strategy to cope with restrictions on access or during conflict.[20]

It was impossible to create an uncontestable map of the Ankole kingdom. Many kings and territory leaders were vague about the geographic boundaries of their domains, and the spaces were highly contested.[21] For this reason, a map of the kingdom is not provided. Through stories passed down in families, it became clear that the role of the Ankole king in managing resources was ethnically very divisive and created disparities, as it relied on patronage systems. The chairman of Rwamuhuku, an elderly *Mwiru* man who has lived in Rwamuhuku for sixty-two years, stated:

> You can see here in Ankole, the kingdom was divided on two lines. One for the *Bairu* and *Bahima* and yet, we are all *Banyankole*. But, you see the kingdoms here in Ankole were so much lying on this side of *Bahima*. So, the majority who were the *Bairu* could not agree with the kingdom's actions on resource access and allocation and even management. So, when the kingdoms were abolished, most people were very happy. So, even if the government decided to restore, as it did in 1986, here people in Ankole resisted getting back the king. So, people joined hands with the government to say "no" because they were servants on their own natural resources. So, those things did not appease the local people.[22]

While several *Bairu* felt that the king favored *Bahima*, *Bahima* respondents repeatedly mention that land allocation was more related to political favoritism than to ethnicity. The chairman of Rwozi, a *Muhima* stated:

Loss and Land Degradation Project, Working Paper 17 (Kampala: Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda, 2002).

[19] W. Kisamba-Mugerwa, "Rangeland Tenure and Resource Management: An Overview of Pastoralism in Uganda," Research Paper 1 (Kampala: Makerere Institute of Social Research and the Land Tenure Center, 1992).

[20] Yitzchak Elam, "Nomadism in Ankole as a Substitute for Rebellion," *Africa* 49, 2 (1979), 147–58.

[21] Sara Berry, "Hegemony on a Shoestring: Indirect Rule and Access to Agricultural Land," *Africa* 62, 3 (1992), 327–54.

[22] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #200, Rwamuhuku, 11 November 2008.

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> The kings would allocate land to someone. For example, they would say that these 5 miles belong to so and so. But, during that time, they would give to those people who were important figures in the government.... but during that time, land was allocated to hands of few people ... I think those people would get land according to their positions in society. For instance, you might find one was a county chief or maybe a prime minister in the kingdom, maybe you find someone is also a secretary of the king.[23]

While the king certainly allocated land to groups and individuals, other areas were designated as communal property schemes and as open access. Over time the significance of having land allocated by the king gave legitimized rights over that resource later, whereas people without land allocated by the king experienced more difficulty maintaining control over communal or open access land in the decades to follow.

The precolonial relationships between the *Bahima* and the *Bairu* have been fairly widely documented and much of this work involves the often-conflicting perceptions of the relations by Europeans. Most early accounts depict the relationship as simply hierarchical: the serfs (*Bairu*) and the rulers (*Bahima*).[24] However, some historians argue that precolonial relationships between the two groups coexisted and were somewhat dependent upon one another[25] or "co-operative"[26] despite apparent social inequality. Some claim that the two groups only engaged in economic activities and exchanges during times of surplus and the two groups lived more or less separately.[27] Still, it is unclear whether precolonial Ankole society was truly a two-caste system, a more open society with social mobility or whether it was more like having two separate societies. Doornbos insightfully states, "while it would be erroneous to conceive of their relationship as one that was rigidly patterned or as one that place every single *Mwiru* in a directly subordinate position to a *Muhima*, neither can be the proposition be upheld that member of the two groups had equal chances in an open and socially mobile society."[28] Most historians agree that before colonization, *Bahima* and *Bairu* were not socially equal. Routinely, *Bairu* were servants of wealthy *Bahima.* However, the extent to which this affected the whole of *Bairu* society is thought to be relatively small. *Bairu* were in the majority and likely large numbers of *Bairu* did not serve *Bahima.* Because the two groups held very different occupations and

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[23] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #269, Rwozi, 13 November 2008.

[24] J. Roscoe, "The Bahima: A Cow Tribe of Enkole in the Uganda Protectorate," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 37 (1907), 93–118; J. Roscoe, "The Northern Bantu: An Account of Some Central African Tribes of the Ugandan Protectorate," *The Geographical Journal* 47, 1 (1916), 56–57; J. Roscoe, *Twenty-Five Years in East Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921); K. Oberg, "Kinship Organization of the Banyankole," *Africa* 11, 2 (1938), 129–59; J.A. Meldon, "Notes on the Bahima of Ankole," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 6, 22 (1907), 136–53; H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* (London: Hutchinson, 1902).

[25] Michael A. Doornbos, "Images and Reality of Stratification in Pre-Colonial Nkore," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 7, 3 (1973), 477–95.

[26] Oberg, "Kinship Organization."

[27] Doornbos, "Images and Reality."

[28] Ibid., 485.

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engaged in separate economic activities, they were more or less coexistent subsistence systems. *Bairu* valued land for cultivation and *Bahima* valued cattle. Last, the pervasiveness of political inequality, whereby *Bahima* dominated *Bairu*, is consensual throughout all historical accounts.[29] The *omugabe*, or king, was always a *Muhima*[30] and almost all political positions were held by elite *Bahima*.[31]

Ankole Kingdom at the Dawn of Indirect Colonial Rule in Uganda

Uganda became a British Protectorate at the turn of the nineteenth century. The Ankole kingdom entered agreements with the protectorate government, which paved the way for land privatization.[32] Around the same time, the Ankole kingdom experienced outbreaks of rinderpest and small pox and large portions of human and livestock populations died.[33] The colonial administration began to recognize the kingdom's potential for commercial cattle production.[34] However, during this period, resource management continued more or less as it had previously.

Establishment of Nshara Controlled Hunting Area

In 1935, the British Protectorate government declared that there would be two neighboring controlled hunting areas, Nshara and Masha (see Fig. 2). Designation as a controlled hunting area permitted hunting activities as well as grazing, farming and fishing.[35] The area subsequently experienced a tsetse fly infestation, affecting both humans and cattle and causing many people to abandon the area. In 1939, the British governor of Uganda advocated for a Pure Ranching Scheme in the area, which led to efforts to eradicate tsetse flies and install permanent watering sites (valley tanks) to promote commercialized ranching.[36] The tsetse fly eradication program severely reduced game populations in the hunting area. But by the early 1960s, tsetse flies had been eradicated and the hunting area was opened to the public, to pastoralists[37] *and cultivators* (emphasis here because

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[29] Oberg, "Kinship Organization"; Meldon, "Notes on the Bahima"; Johnston, *The Ugandan Protectorate.*

[30] Michael Doornbos, and M.F. Lofchie, "Ranching and Scheming: A Case Study of the Ankole Ranching Scheme," in M.F. Lofchie, ed., *The State of Nations: Contrasts on Development in Independent Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

[31] Doornbos, "Images and Reality."

[32] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People."

[33] L. Emerton, "Case Study 7: Lake Mburo National Park, Uganda," in D. Roe and M. Jack, eds., *Stories from Eden: Case Studies of Community-Based Wildlife Management* (London: IIED, 2001).

[34] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People."

[35] C. Averbeck, "Population Ecology of Impala (Aepyceros melampus) and Community-Based Wildlife Conservation in Uganda" (Ph.D thesis, Techischen Universitat Munchen, 2001).

[36] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People."

[37] K. Zwick, and J. Lloyd, *Ankole Ranching Scheme 48a, Mbarara District: Biological Survey* in *Frontier-Uganda Baseline Surveys Programme* (London: The Society for Environmental Exploration, 1998) 1–31.

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cultivators were omitted in the published texts) once again. Economic inequality surfaced through colonization and subsequent commodification schemes that re-assigned value through monetization. Cattle ownership emerged as a more lucrative investment, with rights to cattle ownership almost exclusively claimed by *Bahima*.[38]

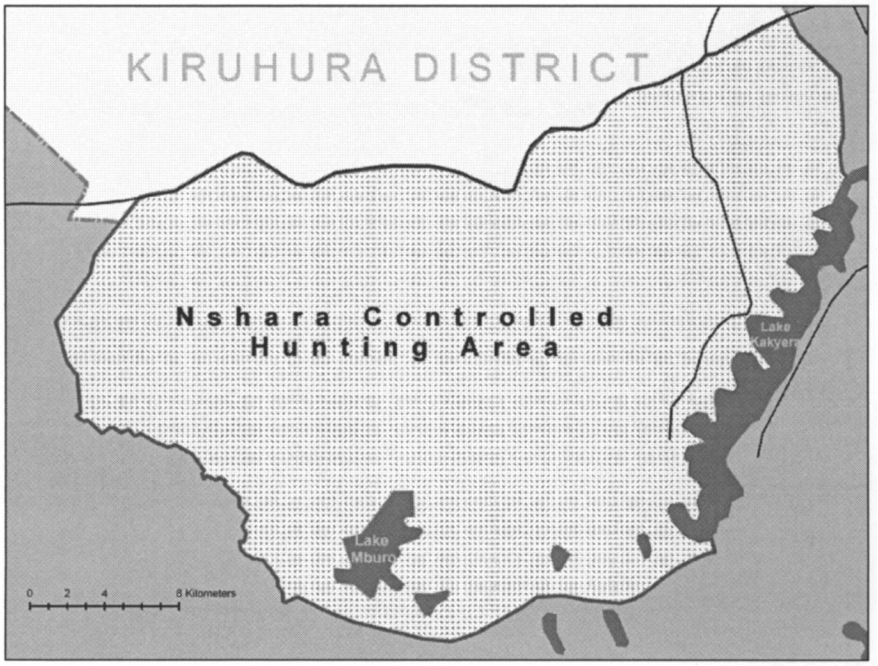


Figure 2. Nshara Controlled Hunting Area (later to become Game Reserve and then the first Lake Mburo National Park boundary). Source: Cartography by Amber Pearson, data to create map from Averbeck, 2001.

Commercial Ranching Scheme Policy

From 1963 to 1975, through funding from USAID and other international donors, the government created the Ankole Ranching Scheme (ARS) which designated previously communal land as private ranches covering over 77 sq. km.[39] Commercialization of cattle products, as an economic development strategy, was encouraged by lending agencies and taken up by many African governments at the time. Increasingly, pastoralists were encouraged to convert from subsistence livestock keeping to commercial ranching.[40] All over Africa, ranching schemes were administered by wealthy elites who were often non-pastoral people.[41]

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[38] Doornbos, "Images and Reality."

[39] Mwami, "Rainwater Harvesting."

[40] A. Cullis, "Taking the Bull by Its Horns," in *Pastoral Development Network* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 1992).

[41] O. Graham, "Enclosure of the East African Rangelands: Recent Trends and Their Impact," Paper 25a, *Pastoral Development Network* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 1998).

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The ARS was established by excising large blocks of land from the hunting area to form one government-owned and fifty private ranches with access to a permanent water source, Lake Kakyera (see Fig. 3). Ranches were allocated to successful applicants who met specific criteria and agreed to certain land management terms,[42] causing the displacement of most of the people, the majority of whom were pastoralists, who had been occupying that land.[43] Indeed, both pastoralists and cultivators who had previously occupied the ranches were forced to find resources elsewhere; all prior claims on access to and use of the land were ignored. In addition, Ranches 41 to 50 cut off access to most of Lake Kakyera, an important migratory destination for pastoralists during extended dry periods.

The criteria for allocation of ranches were based on: 1) Ugandan citizenship; 2) educational background (literacy and accounting); 3) experience with successful cattle rearing and business; and 4) financial capital (special consideration was given to applicants with >30,000 Ugandan shillings or about US$4200 in 1966). After applications were submitted, applicants were interviewed about personal achievements, maturity, integrity, and social standing in the community. Some applicants then went forward to a final selection board that decided which applicants had the most promise for successful commercial ranch operation. These candidates were then recommended for ranch allocation and conditional leases.[44] However, the selection criteria of the final review board were not documented.

Many pastoralists did not apply for ranches, as the idea of commercial ranching did not appeal to them. Most of the pastoralists who applied failed to meet the education requirement. A sentiment still exists that only outsiders with political influence received the ranches, again replicating patronage systems of resource allocation. In the words of the chairman in Nyanga, a wealthy *Muhima* man who had lived in the community for fifty years:

> People ... who had important names in the government, like important soldiers who were highly ranked, and even highly ranked policemen..., are the people who took control over the ranches and owned them.[45]

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[42] Zwick, *Ankole Ranching Scheme.*

[43] Doornbos and Lofchie, "Ranching and Scheming."

[44] D. Pulkol, "Resettlement and Integration of Pastoralists in the National Economy: The Case of Ranch Restructuring in South-Western Uganda," in C. Cook, ed., *The Africa Conference on Settlement and Environment* (Kampala: World Bank, 1991).

[45] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #11, Nyanga, 11 November 2008.

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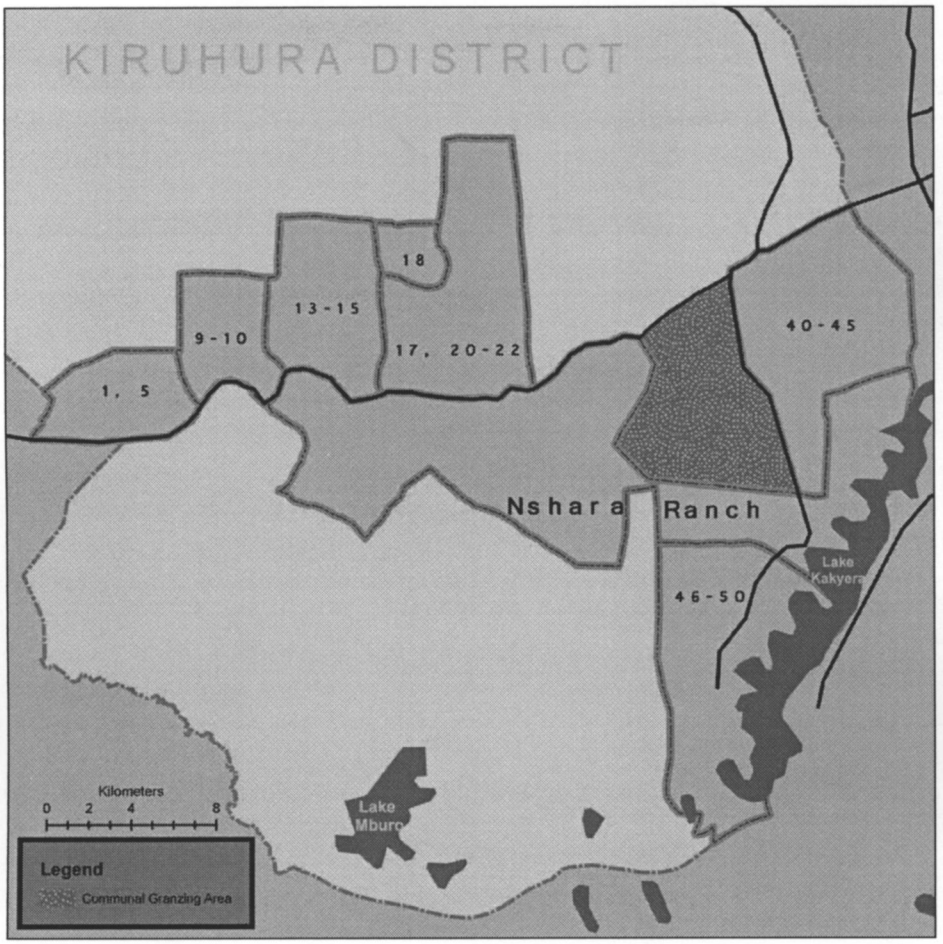


Figure 3. Ankole Ranching Scheme, circa 1964. (Source: Cartography by Amber Pearson, data to create map from GOU, 1988).

These criteria, in essence, forced pastoralists out of the ranching scheme area. Quite abruptly, they became squatters on the private ranches or migrated to other areas as landless citizens. Many of the wealthier families were able to purchase private land in the district and neighboring areas.[46] Some of the ranch owners did not stock their ranches to full capacity and became absentee landlords who sub-let portions of their ranches to the displaced and landless pastoralists. Thus, the creation of the private ranches left many pastoralists owning large numbers of cattle, yet with very restricted movements and drastically decreased access to land and water resources.

Transformation from Hunting Area to Game Reserve

In 1964, the postcolonial government transformed the Nshara Controlled Hunting Area into a Game Reserve. Some accounts report that human activities, such as hunting, grazing,

[46] E. Obaikol, "Common Property Resource Management in Uganda: The Legal and Institutional Framework," in *Joint Study Rural Common Property in a Perspective of Development and Modernization* (Kampala: Associates for Development, 2005).

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and fishing were banned within its boundaries.[47] Other reports claim that the government conducted homestead surveys to determine the number of people that would be impacted by this transformation; and households that were determined to be living within the Game Reserve boundaries were issued permits allowing them to remain and cultivate the areas around their homes. The 241 families judged to be resident within the Game Reserve were issued permits allowing them to remain in the area and to cultivate around their homesteads.[48] However, pastoralists were not recognized as inhabitants due to their migratory patterns, lack of permanent housing and lack of crop cultivation.[49] The creation of the Game Reserve rendered land and water resources inaccessible for pastoralists, while some cultivators were permitted to continue to access resources within the Game Reserve.

The era leading up to the 1960s, characterized by communal resource management, open access land use and limited involvement of the government is romanticized as being ideal by pastoralists. In the communal resource management scheme, land was not privately held, however, "rights to use" were recognized[50] and there seems to have been a great deal of harmony among the *Bahima* and *Bairu*, according to the chairman in Nyanga, himself a *Muhima*:

> The land that was good for grazing was so much liked by the *Bahima* they would not mix themselves with other people. Herdsmen would go to the place that has good pasture; that has no agricultural activities, like gardens. Even if there was a particular cultivator, you'd like find one person in ten. That's how people lived in the past. Or maybe where you find like four cultivators, so you'd like find that the pastoralists are surrounding that place with their herds. So, as a result, each group would leave the other in the area. For example, cultivators would leave the land in favor of the pastoralists. And the pastoralists would in this case also leave the land for the cultivators. That's how things were.[51]

Bairu also romanticized this era, noting the flexibility in accessing resources, movement and the smaller population size that allowed for ample resources. An elderly *Mwiru* stated:

> No person would stop us from reaching every land resource. Everything that we wanted, we would get it because by that time, we had a government and we would harmonize with it. Like, we would get ourselves into a group of ten people. Like, you see that hilly area there, we would go there. For example, every person would get like three fields and you find we are cultivating on a very large scale. Like from here to Kaburegyera. Would wait for our crops to grow then would harvest and

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[47] Zwick, *Ankole Ranching Scheme*; J. Ayorekire, "Conflicting Land-Use: Lake Mburo National Park," *Les cahiers de l'IFRA, Vol.* 22 (Nairobi: IFRA, 2002).

[48] D. Hulme, "Community Conservation in Practice: A Case Study of Lake Mburo National Park," in *Institute for Development Policy and Management* (Manchester: University of Manchester, 2000).

[49] Ayorekire, "Conflicting Land-Use."

[50] S.W. Lawry, J.C. Riddell, and J.W. Bennett, "Land Tenure Policy in African Livestock Development," in J. Simson and P. Evangelou, eds., *Livestock Development in SubSaharan Africa* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984).

[51] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #11, Nyanga, 11 November 2008.

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> come back.... We couldn't fail to get water. We would get ourselves into a group and go to the lake and fetch water and serve ourselves and then come back. There was no suffering. There was nothing like land scarcity. We had plenty of land.... No, we didn't have problems, as compared to today.[52]

Pressure on the reserve increased throughout the 1960s and 1970s, as large tracts of land were designated part of the ARS,[53] and with the two major permanent water sources, Lakes Mburo and Kakyera now within the boundaries of the Reserve or inaccessible due to the ranches. In 1967, the Ankole monarchy was abolished.[54] Then, in the 1970s, during the turbulent years of Idi Amin's reign, control over the Game Reserve loosened. As a consequence, human activities and homesteads increased within its boundaries.[55] Amin's rein resulted in internally displaced people who migrated to the remaining communal lands outside the Game Reserve.[56] Rwandan Tutsi refugees from the neighboring Nakivale Settlement also entered the Reserve.[57] These events placed land pressure on the large ranches, especially those with absentee ranchers, and weakened the law enforcement on the Game Reserve. With nowhere to go, large numbers of cattle, pastoralists, cultivators, internally displaced people, and refugees began to enter the ranches and the Game Reserve illegally.[58]

It is important to note that human populations have dramatically fluctuated in Nyabushozi County. From 1949 to 1959 there was an overall decrease in population. In 1959, Nyabushozi had the lowest population density of any county in Uganda, at nine people per square mile. However, from 1959 to 1969, the county had the highest population increase, at a rate of 310 percent. In 1969, the county had over 1,000 people per square mile.[59] In Nyabushozi County, populations in three sub-counties increased by over 40,000 people between 1969 and 1980. Populations then decreased from 77, 838 to 76,200 between 1980 and 1991.[60] However, these figures are in contradiction to figures published by the Ranch Restructuring Board, which reported that squatters households increased from 173 in 1989 to 746 in 1991.[61] In the last published census, in 2002, the population of

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[52] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #205, Rwamuhuku, 19 November 2008.

[53] Zwick, *Ankole Ranching Scheme.*

[54] R. Lemarchand, ed., *African Kingships in Perspective* (London: Frank Cass, 1977).

[55] Hulme, "Community Conservation."

[56] Zwick, *Ankole Ranching Scheme.*

[57] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People"; Kisamba-Mugerwa, "Rangeland Tenure."

[58] Mwami, "Rainwater Harvesting."

[59] B.W. Langlands, "Population Distribution in Uganda 1959–1969," *East African Geographical Review* 9 (1971), 59–68.

[60] GOU, *The 1991 Population and Housing Census: Mbarara District* (Kampala: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Statistics Department, 1992).

[61] Mark Infield, A. Namara, and M. Marquardt, "The Socioeconomy, Natural Resource Use, and Attitudes Towards the Park of Communitites Living in and around Lake Mburo National Park: Report of a Rapid Rural Appraisal," Research Paper 2, (Access to Land and Other Natural Resources in Uganda:

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Nyabushozi County was 100,630, which indicates an increase of over 24,000 people since 1991.[62] Averbeck reported that over 50 percent of the people living around LMNP immigrated since the early 1990s and 30 percent immigrated before that time.[63] Regardless of the figures used, immigration to the area swelled, often involving illegal land occupancy and tenuous access to resources and the figures in government policy documents drastically under-stated the issue.

Creation of Lake Mburo National Park and Eviction of All Inhabitants

The National Parks Act, Chapter 227, Laws of Uganda 1964, permits the designation of areas as national parks which includes protection of the resources and wildlife, and restricts human inhabitants inside its boundaries.[64] In 1983, the Obote government transformed the game reserve into a national park, giving the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) exclusive authority to control its use and access to resources within.[65] The motivation behind this designation was political. The Obote government believed that the *Bahima* pastoralists harbored antigovernment sentiments and did not support Obote's regime.[66] Although the eviction was a targeted revenge on the *Bahima*,[67] in 1983 an estimated 4, 500 families of *Bahima* and *Bairu* alike, as well as Rwandan refugees and internally displaced people who had entered and occupied the reserve during Amin's rein, were forcefully evicted[68] and several individuals were killed.[69] This eviction and the designation as a national park fuelled violent conflict.[70]

Most of the published historical accounts only mention the eviction of the pastoralists, yet, through the words of the chairman of Rwamuhuku, a *Mwiru* who owned cattle at the time of the eviction, it is clear that agriculturalists were equally affected by the eviction:

> When they sent us away from this place, in the 1980s, then I had to leave this place and most of my cows were destroyed. They were trying to conserve this place for wildlife, so we had to leave this place because it was an order. It should be noted that during that time, the regime of Uganda people's congress had lost elections in 1980. So, after losing elections, it was like a revenge [sic] because they thought we

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Research and Policy Development Project, Kampala: Makerere University, Institute of Social Research and Land Tenure Center, 1993).

[62] UBOS, *2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census* (Kampala: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2005).

[63] Averbeck, "Population Ecology of Impala."

[64] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People."

[65] Ayorekire, "Conflicting Land-Use."

[66] Infield and Namara, "Community Attitudes."

[67] Mushiga, "A Case Study of Nshara Grazing Area."

[68] Roe and Jack, eds., *Stories from Eden.*

[69] Ayorekire, "Conflicting Land-Use."

[70] Rugadya, *Critical Pastoral Issues.*

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> people here in Ankole had not voted them into power. So, they say now since you have not voted us into power, or office, then you need to vacate this land and we rather create it as a national park. That is actually the time when we suffered beyond human suffering. We had a lot of belongings from the activities we were carrying out on this land. For example, we had cows; we had banana plantations; we had houses. All those were destroyed because we had already taken root in development after utilizing resources very well. For us, we thought we had not voted this government into power. That's why they were revenging on us. They made a park, called Lake Mburo National Park in 1983. So, we heard an announcement over the radio that we should vacate this land and go to other areas, lands which we didn't know. So, we left this place on the 31st of March, 1983. But, before that in 1982, they had given us an order that we vacate all cows from this pasture land. Then, in 1983, we had to leave and make this place vacant. But, the unfortunate part is that those people who left after being chased in 1983, most of them, especially old people, died while away.[71]

The eviction caused the loss of property including homes, household items, livestock, crops, bicycles, and many other possessions. Most people left their homes on foot and were only able to take what they could carry. They walked as groups to find places to stay. Evictees relied on social networks in order to recover from the losses and to reside once evicted. A poor, landless *Mwiru* man described the hardship:

> They said that everyone should go and wherever he should get anywhere to go, he should go there. So, everyone went and whoever had a relative outside this place, would find him there. And whoever didn't, he would sell whatever you had and then go outside.[72]

Those without family or friendships elsewhere wandered for years. A poor *Mwiru* woman who moved to Nyabushozi County to marry her husband over thirty years ago described the situation:

> They sent us away and everyone who had his own property had to leave it behind, whether it was a goat, whether they were cows, whether they were homes. There is nothing that a person took. We skated ourselves all over the world. I first went to Buganda. Then, I came to Biharwe, then I went to Masha.... So, we all formed a group and by the way, we walked on foot. Oh, my daughter. It was terrible. I suffered. Can you image having pregnancy...?[73]

Since the national park contains one of the only permanent drinking water sources in the area and the ranches had depleted access to Lake Kakyera, and both had served as migratory destinations for centuries, the annual dry season would prove to be devastating to many of the evictees.

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[71] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #200, Rwamuhuku, 11 November 2008.

[72] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #162, Rwamuhuku, 25 November 2008.

[73] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #102, Rwamuhuku, 19 November 2008.

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Re-Occupation of the Park

The year 1985 marked the beginning of the Luwero War, which involved the take-over of Mbarara District (now three separate districts, including Kiruhura District) by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and the fall of the Obote government. In 1986, with Yoweri Museveni's new NRM government in power, officials allowed landless squatters to enter the park boundaries.[74] Pastoralists continued to return to the area throughout 1987, causing much intentional damage to park headquarters and killing wildlife in retaliation for the eviction.[75] Along with evictees, hundreds of other pastoralists displaced by the Luwero War entered the park,[76] with encouragement from Museveni, himself a *Muhima* pastoralist. Some claim that returning evictees invited others in order to make the park unmanageable.[77] Published accounts do not depict the hardships involved in returning to the area. When people returned, grasses and trees were overgrown, making it difficult to decipher land boundaries. In addition, some people attempted to grab others' land. For many, the return meant starting a new life from nothing. This caused food insecurity and much suffering. Again in the words of the *Mwiru* woman:

> Our land that was left behind, we came looking for it. So, you'd look closely to see what belonged to you. So, you'd take control over what you had before. We started cultivating. We started clearing the bush. We started planting crops. Even by that time, we had no crops to plant. By that time, we were even about to die, until we got food. During that time, when we had just come, we were living on the mercy of god. Sometimes would sleep with empty stomachs. So, whoever would come, would come back to his or her own land. Whoever would come would take control of his land. [78]

Ranch Restructuring Scheme

Although many evictees returned to land inside LMNP, many others remained landless.[79] Many of these people were squatting on the ARS land. The park management authorities, the Government of Uganda, and the Ranch Restructuring Board worked to settle families who were squatting on ranches or living on the periphery or illegally inside the park.[80] The ranchers often brutalized the squatters. In order to free land for allocation and due to the "failure" of the Ranching Scheme in reaching economic outputs, in 1987, the private ranches from the ARS were re-possessed and sub-divided into parcels, which caused much resistance from the ranch owners. The chairman of Nyanga, a community that benefited from the Ranch Restructuring Scheme, described the process:

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[74] Averbeck, "Population Ecology of Impala."

[75] Mwami, "Rainwater Harvesting."

[76] Ayorekire, "Conflicting Land-Use."

[77] Infield and Namara, "Community Attitudes."

[78] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #102, Rwamuhuku, 19 November 2008.

[79] Ayorekire, "Conflicting Land-Use."

[80] Doornbos and Lofchie, "Ranching and Scheming."

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> But because of the President, when Museveni came, he found people dying. During the other time, the leaders would kill their own people, like that of Obote I, like that of Amin. We were suffering when they were killing people and slaughtering them. So, after that time of anarchy and death of many people, in 1986, this government after coming ... it like brought or restored peace.... So, during the time of President Museveni, those people of the ranches became so small and very few. So, he started restricting the people who were migrating to remain in one place. So, they re-distributed the ranches. Whoever had five miles, they would cut two miles. So, you find that the two miles are being occupied by more than 200 people, like that ... like that. So, the owners of the ranches started hating Museveni because he put there people who had no land.[81]

New Park Boundaries

Also in 1987, the Lake Mburo Task Force (LMTF) was established to resolve the conflict between park officials, evictees, and those displaced by the Luwero War. The number of cattle in the park increased from about 15,000 in 1986 to 143,000 in 1992.[82] In tandem with the Ranch Restructuring Scheme, land was made available to the large numbers of landless people and their cattle in 1988/9 through the de-gazettement of 390 sq. km of the park (about 60 percent) to its current 260 sq. km.[83] This re-sizing allowed for the establishment of the Kanyaryeru Resettlement Scheme, to relocate pastoralist families displaced by the Luwero War and landless evictees onto private parcels throughout the early 1990s (see Fig. 4).

In the initial stages of resettlement, no new park boundary map was issued, paving the way for boundary disputes. This series of issues led to a sentiment among inhabitants that by increasing pressure on the authorities, they might de-gazette the entire park. This hope has continued to date.[84]

Allocation of Private Land Through the Ranch Restructuring and the New Park Boundaries

Allocation of land from the new park boundaries began in 1987. The land was allocated to evictees, as well as pastoralists displaced by the Luwero War. The Kanyaryeru Settlement area was designated specifically for those displaced by war. Full-blown allocation of land from the ranch restructuring began in 1990. This redistribution allotted a total of 647 sq. km in fifty ranches, or 29,976 hectares to ranchers. Seven hundred and seven former squatters were allotted 42,518 hectares of ranch land[85] on a no-cost basis. The chairman of Rwamuhuku described the process:

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[81] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #11, Nyanga, 11 November 2008.

[82] Ayorekire, "Conflicting Land-Use."

[83] Ibid.

[84] Infield and Namara, "Community Attitudes."

[85] J. Kamugisha, and M. Ståhl, eds., *Parks and People: Pastoralists and Wildlife* (Nairobi: Regional Soil Conservation Unit/SIDA, 1993).

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When the government came, it announced that whoever had land in this place should come back. It came with a very nice policy. So, all of us came back to our natural resources. They put 200 boreholes around this place. They cut the land that was belonging to the park and re-distributed it to people who had lost land. The ministers came around. The surveyors came. So, they made boundaries for the national park. From here to the tarmac road, it was given to the people.[86]

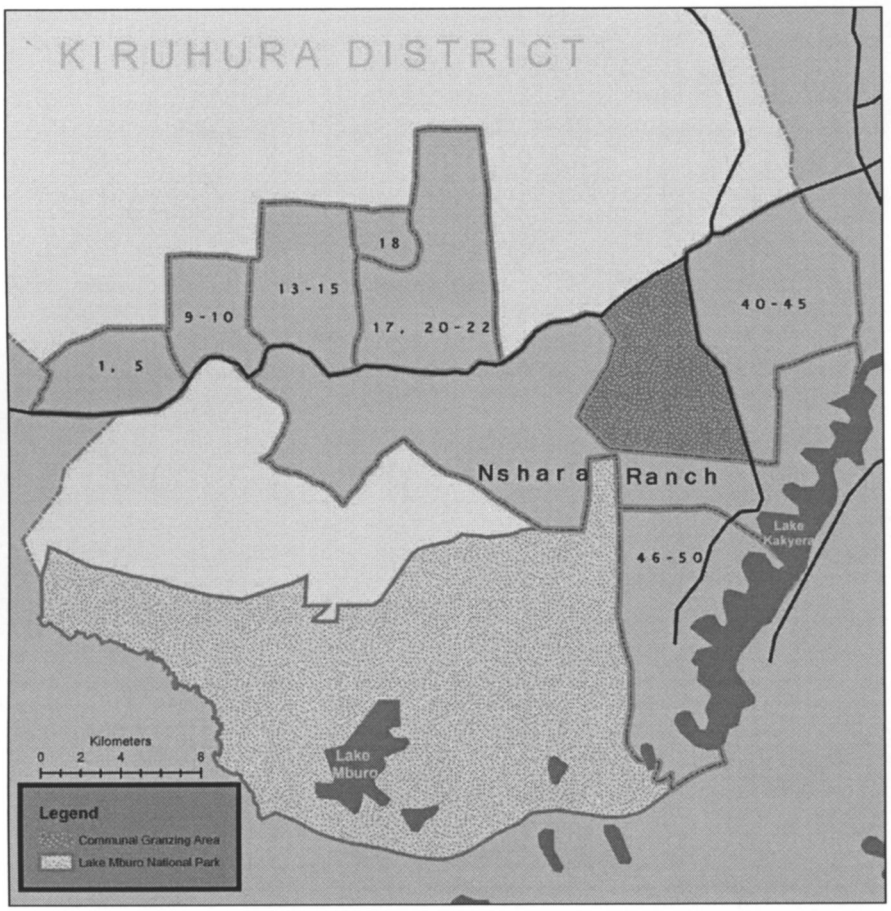


Figure 4. Restructured Ranches, New Park Boundaries and Kanyaryeru Settlement (Source: Cartography by Amber Pearson, data to create map from Muchunguzi, 2009).

Allocation of land from both the Ranch Restructuring Scheme and the reduction in park size was conducted based on the number of cattle owned (1 acre per cow). Therefore, pastoralists were allocated land, while many cultivators who did not own livestock remained landless.[87] In addition, many pastoralists and cultivators alike lost cattle during

[86] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #200, Rwamuhuku, 11 November 2008.

[87] Infield and Namara, "Community Attitudes."

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the eviction process itself. So, for those who received land, the resettlement scheme was a good policy. The chairman of Nyanga described the land allocation process:

> [The land allocation group] ... would consider the number of cattle that a person had. It would depend on the number of cows you had and every cow was allocated 1 acre of land. That's how they calculated it. So, if you had few numbers of cows, then you'd get limited acres of land and if you had large herds of animals, of cows then you'd get big acres of land. But, the maximum was 300 acres. There were some people who got large acres of land because they [land allocation group] would stop [allotting acres per cow] at 270 cows. On that land, they would allocate part for cultivation and those were 30 acres. Those were put aside for crop growing and also doing other activities. That was the limit.[88]

Under this scheme, several pastoralist families disproportionately benefited from land allocation, whereby wealthy pastoralists with large herds received huge plots and poor pastoralists and cultivators were given little or no land. This perpetuated the wealth of a few and further marginalized the poor and powerless in the communities and increased ethnic tension. The ranches certainly had far reaching impacts, as people who once used the ranch land were displaced. The chairman of Rwamuhuku, a respected elder who saw the troubling ethnic and wealth favoritism in the policy of allocation of resources and was in a position of leadership at the time of land allocation, stated:

> These ranching schemes were created in 1964. Those areas were initially public land.... So, when this government of NRM came, it found that these people who had earlier been allocated ranches had failed to take care of them. So, they had to create another strategy of re-distributing this land.... So, the NRM government, in 1986, re-distributed this land when it saw how people were suffering when actually this land was not being used well. So, they brought people, who were called squatters, so it was that time I was in charge of looking how the land was re-distributed. But, what made us angry was that the re-distribution of land was one-sided. This land, in the distribution process, did not consider both cultivators and pastoralists. But, the good thing with the first allocation of ranches in 1964 was that they couldn't consider the ethnic group, or maybe the tribe. They only considered whether you had cattle, regardless of whether you were a *Mwiru* or a *Muhima*.[89]

This allocation scheme was also problematic as it fixed wealth at one point in time, despite the ever-shifting nature of wealth in pastoralist, as well as agrarian, communities. The herd management and drought coping strategies in pastoral communities indicate that fluctuations in herd sizes are necessary. In *Bahima* communities, cattle are certainly a symbol of wealth and prestige. But, cattle are also given to friends during an extended dry season or during an epidemic to avert risk. Animals are lent and given as gifts to others

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[88] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #11, Nyanga, 11 November 2008.

[89] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #200, Rwamuhuku, 11 November 2008.

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who experienced losses, to help them rebuild their herd.[90] For these reasons, wealth in *Bahima* communities can be thought of as somewhat fluid. By allocating resources based on a snapshot of wealth, this fluidity is halted and wealth became fixed. In the words of a poor *Muhima* in Rwozi:

> So, it [land allocation] would regard if someone did not have enough property, or maybe wealth. So, they would just give that person where to cultivate from and where to build a house. And whoever had cows to graze, so those would receive relatively high number of acres to accommodate the things that they had. Mine is 30 hectares. I grow crops there. I have a plantation. I also have exotic cow breeds.[91]

In addition to the problems associated with the criteria for allocation, the Ranch Restructuring Scheme did not delineate easements on the new private parcels, cutting some people off from access to water sources.[92] The land allocation schemes left many cultivators who had lived in the area for centuries landless. In addition, the large numbers of displaced people and people who had migrated to the area after hearing about land allocation meant that there was not enough for all people to get a private plot. The chairman of Rwozi, a wealthy *Muhima* who experienced the resettlement in Kanyaryeru, explained:

> Here in our sub-county of Kanyaryeru, there are many people who don't have land. This is because we came from Luwero and we were forced out by war. So, those people who had land in Luwero were taken back after the war. But, some people who did not have land were given land in Kanyaryeru. They [the government] reduced the boundaries of the national park. So, this is where you find we have acres of private land. But, the population was too big and everyone did not get land. So, that's why you find that some people do not have land.[93]

The government's drive to settle families and promote agricultural activities was part of Uganda's policy of "agriculture modernization and commercialization."[94] In addition to ceasing migration, the government encouraged pastoralists to engage in agricultural activities. A wealthy *Muhima* man who owns thirty acres of land where he currently grazes cattle and cultivates a banana plantation claimed:

> we used to move from one place to another and the government told us to live a permanent life. They say that we settle down and even start cultivating. So, I listened to that. I settled down.[95]

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[90] H.N. Nakimbugwe, and Charles Muchunguzi, "Bahima: Keepers of the Long Horned Ankole Cow, Uganda," in *Conference of Indigenous Livestock Breeding Communities* (Karen, Kenya: UK Agricultural Biodiversity Coalition, 2003).

[91] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #287, Rwozi, 4 December 2008.

[92] Obaikol, "Common Property Resource Management."

[93] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #269, Rwozi, 13 November 2008.

[94] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People."

[95] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #61, Rwamuhuku, 27 November 2008.

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These efforts were supplemented by the German government's IPDP-GTZ Project. This economic development project aimed to facilitate the establishment of large surface water sources for livestock (valley tanks) and encourage communities to increase crop production. Communities were required to contribute 20 percent of the cost for water facilities.[96] However, communities were reluctant to contribute and the project is considered "largely a fiasco."[97] The aim of land allocation was to encourage pastoralists to settle and begin to cultivate. Many crops were introduced including maize, beans and cassava. Despite the fact that many *Bahima* now engage in agricultural activities and many *Bairu* own cattle, the pastoral identity remains fully connected to cattle ownership:

> It is natural because I was born in cows. So, you see it, that you as a *Muhima*, cow is very important than any other thing. Yes. This is because when I was still young, still it was the cow. Still, when I want to give school fees for the children, it is the cow. When I want to join a group, it is the cow. It is the cow that does all these things. The only benefit of the hoe is because I have the cows. So, I sometimes sell the cow when I am not able and then I use that money to put in some other people to grow crops. But, you can see still, it is the cow that does that.[98]

To promote sedentariness, the government of Uganda also established milk-trading centers and promised to improve roads (although the latter promise has rarely been met). At this point in time, communal grazing or common property systems were almost completely phased out in favor of complete privatization of land ownership.[99] In 1991–1992, the availability of farming land attracted many immigrants.[100] After most communal land was allocated to individuals, only land for sale remained around the park. In 1991, Nyabushozi County had only 3 percent of land designated as open access, 10 percent as communal grazing, and 83 percent in private ownership. With most of the land in private ownership, and with 226,678 cattle on these private parcels,[101] demand for resources like water and pasture within the park increased throughout the 1990s.[102] The open access land in the early 1990s was primarily on the periphery of the Nakivale Settlement, an area where this access was permitted not by policy, but by a breakdown in management.[103]

Also at this time, the government of Uganda began nation-wide decentralization of power and responsibilities to districts. As a result, each district formed a Land Board, to

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[96] Charles Musinguzi, "Self-Help Initiatives for Water Security: A Case Study of Settlers in Ankole Ranching Scheme" (postgraduate diploma, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, 2002).

[97] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People."

[98] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #81, Rwamuhuku, 1 December 2008.

[99] W. Kisamba-Mugerwa, "The impact of individualisation on common grazing land resources in Uganda" (Ph.D. diss., Makerere University, 1995).

[100] M. Marquardt, Mark Infield, and A. Namara, "Socio-Economic Survey of Communities in the Buffer Zone of Lake Mburo National Park," Research Paper 11, *Lake Mburo Conservation Project* (Kampala: Uganda National Parks, 1994).

[101] Kisamba-Mugerwa, "Rangeland Tenure."

[102] Infield and Namara, "Community Attitudes."

[103] Kisamba-Mugerwa, "Rangeland Tenure."

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settle land disputes, titling, and property surveying. These practices roused suspicion in terms of equitable access to and ownership of land. As a result, less affluent or less influential people have not benefited from decision-making being more locally centered. Instead, land decisions have become even more cloaked in patronage and clientelism.[104] Many people in Nyabushozi County continue to fear another government "land grab" and have decided to sell the land allocated to them. A poor *Mwiru* woman with a small plot of land stated:

> Whoever would become a fool would decide and sell it off and remain with a small piece of land. Even those who sold their land were fearing the [Obote land grabbing] incident. They were saying maybe he could come back and send them away. And others were fearing the park, saying the park would reclaim their land. So, they had to sell their land and remain with small pieces. So, they had to remain with a small piece of land for fear of being re-chased away.[105]

Current Status of Land and Water Resource Access and Consequences

Reports on the current status of environmental resources claim that commercialization of farming has continued to increase in the area through expansion of farmland and declines in pasture grasslands.[106] Increases in numbers of cattle and of people, paired with privatized land and an inaccessible national park, have led to severely diminished water and land resources necessary for the communities surrounding the park.

In the early 1990s, the negotiations between stakeholders and governmental agencies led to the establishment of the Parks Community Conservation Program, one of the first in Africa.[107] The intention of this new approach was to reduce conflict and to use park revenues to benefit the local people. The Lake Mburo Community Conservation Project (LMCCP) was established in 1991 (later renamed the Community Conservation for Uganda Wildlife Authority Project). The LMCCP was designated to contribute 20 percent of park entrance fees to community development projects. Projects funded include bee keeping, crafts, and agreements on access to resources within the Park such as fishing and water in times of drought. Increasingly, the project has become involved in resolving human-wildlife conflicts, namely from crop damage by wild animals.[108] In actuality, some respondents report that the financial benefits from the park are not actually serving those in need or those negatively affected by the park. The chairman of Nyanga discussed how funding agencies have become aware of poor relations between communities and the park due to wild animals and thus have implemented support mechanisms for those who have suffered crop damage. However, this has not been managed adequately, and as a result funds have not reached the appropriate recipients. He stated:

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[104] Tukahirwa, "Policies, People."

[105] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #102, Rwamuhuku, 19 November 2008.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Hulme, "Community Conservation."

[108] Roe and Jack, eds., *Stories from Eden.*

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> There are some funders that are interested in wildlife. There's a lot of funding there. There are different organizations that give out money. But the problem is that whoever comes to money, embezzles it instead of giving it to the rightful person who has been suffering.... You find that money is not going directly to someone who is facing the problems resulting from this national park, someone who lacks food, someone who doesn't have basic needs. So, if they could use that money that is generated there to help the people who are losing because of the national park ... so that he benefits from what he has lost, so that this money can take this person's child to school. Here, we don't have our children going to school because of low income. So, you find actually this money is not helping this person whom this money was intended to help. Even, in most cases, there is no accountability for the money that is got.[109]

Perceptions of the park today are varied. Many people complain that the park reduced access to resources needed to sustain livelihoods. Others see benefits from the park in terms of employment and cash-earning potential. Several participants see it as both. The following quotes depicted this conflicted relationship within the same respondent:

> At first, we thought the park was bad. But, today we have realized that it is good because they give us jobs. Like now, there are some people that are cutting firewood and collecting it and they get money. If I become stuck in life, I go to the park, I get a job and then I get money. Or maybe a child can get a job from the park. If the children also come for whole days, they also get some jobs in the park. That one also reduces your burden of maintaining their basic needs because he buys like shirt, he buys like books or maybe school uniforms and for you, you only buy school fees.
>
> What I see as the problem that might have interrupted with my life is this program where they came and they grabbed our land and they turned this land into a national park. If it were not that, here we would not be suffering. Because land is there and we would be cultivating to our satisfaction. Even the little part that they left to us, we are increasing in numbers and we are congested. Now, who ever has land decides to migrate away to other places. Even the children have to go to other places. But we, as old people, have to remain here because we do not have the capacity to care for our lives. Yes, that's how it is. Even those people who have children who have already got money have migrated to other places. If they had not taken this land, to turn it into a national park we wouldn't be having any problem.[110]

Currently, the consequences of these land use policies have affected residents in a variety of ways. Without a doubt, the most common complaint from respondents, regardless of ethnicity, occupation or gender, was the problems caused by wild animals. In Nyanga, the only community in the project where the majority of respondents did not engage in any agricultural activities, the chairman stated:

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[109] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #11, Nyanga, 11 November 2008.

[110] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #97, Rwamuhuku, 19 November 2008.

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> The wild animals always come and destroy our crops. That's why, you see, we don't have crops around. We have almost spent ten years and above having this land. But, we have failed to grow some crops because of these animals.[111]

The wild animal problem is echoed by the chairman of Rwamuhuku, where most respondents engage in agricultural activities. However, the chairman also mentioned some benefits of the park, such as income generation:

> Well, the creation of the park wouldn't have been a bad idea, only that it limited us to access particular places, especially those that we presumed to be fertile and having good pasture. But, the creation of the park has been very much important, because we get some money that comes from the park, from the tourists which helps to develop the community. Then, another thing on the negative part, this park has animals that sometimes and always come to destroy our gardens. And, of course, there are even wild animals that eat people. So, that is the bad side that can be of the park. But, to a greater extent, the money that comes from the park is so much useful for community development. But, in general the entire community was not happy about the creation of the park since it minimized people's access to good pasture and even restriction on water point, like Lake Mburo because Lake Mburo National Park has got a lake that used to be accessed at any time. [112]

The damage caused by wild animals has led to the reduction or abandonment of growing particular crops that are easily damaged by wildlife, such as millet, potatoes, cassava, and grains. Many of these foods were grown to be stored during the extended dry season. Without these crops, food insecurity has increased and reliance on cash to purchase posho, or cornmeal, from neighboring communities has increased during droughts:

> Our feeding habits have changed. For example, since I produced my first child, Nyangoma, she has never eaten on potatoes and now it is 10 years passed. This is because we are now near the park and the pigs and other wild animals sleep around our gardens destroying our crops. So, our feeding habits have changed. For example, we feed now on banana and in case of scarcity, we feed on posho. So, it has changed.[113]

In addition to crop damage, wild animals also carry diseases and consume pasture on private parcels that is intended for livestock. There are devastating consequences for the cattle, at times. For many respondents, the negative impacts of the wild animals are balanced by a perceived benefit from the government, which is conflated to be the park. In the words of a *Muhima* who is moderately wealthy, and has lived in the community for over fifty years:

> I think I should not lie about this on the government ... because this is the government that that made us feel comfortable in this place.... I cannot ill-talk about this government ... because this is the government that made us settle here,

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[111] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #11, Nyanga, 11 November 2008.

[112] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #200, Rwamuhuku, 11 November 2008.

[113] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #68, Rwamuhuku, 1 December 2008.

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> that made us get this land.... If the national park would stop the animals from coming this side to graze in my land, because in most cases the wild animals are coming and you find they are coming to feed on my pasture. You find they are finished the pasture and the cows are dying because of lack of food.[114]

A 1994 report estimated the costs of the LMNP to local communities and included the damage to crops and herds by wildlife, the opportunity cost of land devoted to wildlife, and restrictions on resource use.[115] The costs of wildlife damage are estimated at 375 million Ugandan shillings and the costs of resource use restrictions are calculated at over 225 million Ugandan shillings.[116] Although communities around the park at times benefit from revenue sharing, they face a net loss of over 500 million Ugandan shillings per year.[117] Given that the park restricts resource access and contains Lake Mburo, water remains the most discussed issue for both human and livestock needs.

The agreements set forth by the LMCCP now allow for controlled access to Lake Mburo for watering livestock only. In times that are deemed severe droughts, people can apply to enter the park to water animals. Water for human consumption and land for pasture cannot be ascertained from within the park, as reported by Rwozi's chairman:

> Even today, for us people who are neighboring the park, in case of a dry season where we don't have water, we write letters to a committee that is responsible for the national park. Every community has got a representative there. So, we write and tell them our problems and we ask them to help us to access the national park during the dry season. So, what they do, they give us a corridor where we pass and take our cows to the lake. But, we're not allowed to go there and graze.[118]

However, it is important to note that it is widely believed that many herders get access to water for livestock and even grazing within LMNP, despite an extreme drought not being declared by UWA.

Limitations

A few limitations of the study warrant mention. The method of employing research assistants to conduct the interviews could have jeopardized the quality of data collected. In spite of the rigorous training of the assistants, it is possible that the interviews would have been more exhaustive had they been conducted by the principal investigator. However, this weakness was mitigated by the investigator's daily review of the interview field notes and interview transcription throughout the data collection process. Weekly meetings with research assistants led to discussions about the data collection process, probing techniques, challenges encountered, and general willingness of respondents, and enabled timely discovery of any issues to improve interviewing skills. In addition, although training of

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[114] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #82, Rwamuhuku, 27 November 2008.

[115] Emerton, "Case Study 7."

[116] Marquardt, Infield, and Namara, "Socio-Economic Survey of Communities."

[117] Emerton, "Case Study 7."

[118] Interview by research assistant, Respondent #269, Rwozi, 13 November 2008.

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field assistants involved extensive translation practice, nuances in meaning, nonverbal communication and tone could be lost in the process of translation from *Runyankole* to English. Regardless of these measures, respondents may have been less open about sensitive topics, especially those related to criticism of the government.

Conclusions

The archival policy documents, published texts, interviews, and oral histories with leaders reveal a complex history of resource management and access reliant on ethnicity and political privilege that has swayed with changing internal and external political powers. During the era of the Ankole kingdom, *Bahima* pastoralists and political elites were privileged. During the colonial administration's designation of the area as a game reserve, cultivators were privileged as they were permitted to remain within its boundaries. Then, during Obote's regime, all people inhabiting the area were victims of political retaliation through forceful eviction. When Museveni took power in 1986, he favored pastoralists both *Bahima* and others from the Luwero area. Because this system of ethnicity and wealth favoritism (cattle ownership) was used for allocation of private parcels, unequal footing for accessing resources important in maintaining livelihoods persists.

By and large, opinions and accounts shared in the oral histories and interviews were congruent and there was consensus on the impacts of land use policies. Most participants felt that, in the past, the system of resource management was superior to the current private system allocated by the state. While many participants felt that the Ankole king did not equitably manage land and water resources and favored the *Bahima*, they still preferred that system. This may be due to the fact that enough open access land was available and therefore the consequences of a patronage allocation scheme were not as severe. This may also be related to the ability of both pastoralists and cultivators, in the past, to migrate elsewhere, if discrimination occurred, as proposed in other research in southwestern Uganda.[119] There was consensus that the private ranching scheme was unfair, underlining the fact that the ownership of these ranches almost exclusively involved outside elites with political influence.

While participants' accounts and opinions were similar in many respects, they often differed on: 1) current perspectives on the park; and 2) the land allocation scheme following eviction. Specifically, newer community members who did not experience the eviction process tend to favor the employment potential the park offers, while those who once accessed the resources in the park feel that overall the park does not offer advantages over the system of the past. Also, quite obviously, those who received large plots of land (i.e., wealthy pastoralists before the eviction process) feel that the land allocation scheme was fair while those who lost their cattle or did not own many or any cattle feel that the allocation scheme was unjust. One of the reasons this scheme, implemented via patronage by the state, is seen as distinct from the patronage system of the Ankole king is that it relied on a snapshot of wealth at one point in time, not allowing for the fluidity of prosperity in the rangeland ecosystem. The consequences are also seen as more severe, due to the lack of strategies now available to cope with land scarcity. Also, a few discrepancies

[119] Elam, "Nomadism in Ankole."

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and omissions in the historical texts should be highlighted. First, the number of squatters in the park and on the ranches found in the government policy documents grossly underestimated the squatter population. This is significant in that these figures were then used to re-allocate land resources through the shrinking of ranches and de-gazetting of LMNP, and this has contributed to a severe land shortage and landless population. Second, *Bairu* were often omitted in historical texts and policy documents. This is troubling as *Bairu* often constitute the majority in their communities, they have different livelihood needs from pastoralists, and they suffered alongside pastoralists during political retaliations in the war and eviction processes. Third, the lived experiences of the hardship of returning and re-establishing livelihoods after eviction is often omitted from historical accounts of these land use policies. These communities struggled to cope with losses from the eviction process, damage to fields and land, and lack of trust among community members due to unequal allocation of resources. All of these conditions have led to severe consequences, especially for those most marginalized through the land use policies. Consistently, participants from all backgrounds expressed two important consequences of these policies: 1) wildlife damage that results in fewer crops grown, only specific varieties which can be grown, reductions in pasture and increased disease transmission to livestock; and 2) lack of adequate water for household use and human and livestock consumption during the extended dry season.

Discussion

If resource access and use schemes are dislodged by the state (via the creation of a park or privatization), they must not perpetuate or exacerbate existing social and material inequalities. When land use policies are implemented via patronage systems where one group is politically favored while another group is in subordination, inequality deepens. The practice of favoring one group over another has serious consequences for access to resources and conditions of people's lives today.

It is likely that the area around LMNP now has too many inhabitants to revert to the previous system of community property or open access management, if the park were to stay intact. However, the contemporary consequences of years of swaying political favoritism in implementation of land use policy are tangible and unequal. While community property or open access land tenure schemes are unlikely to be re-implemented, community members need a voice in the equitable management of the resources they once accessed now inside the park, in nuisance wildlife management, and in maintaining coping strategies inherent in the rangeland ecosystem (such as migration) in order to maintain their livelihoods. The lack of access to a permanent water source for many residents typically means distant annual migrations in times of water scarcity. Water adequacy needs to be addressed, for human and livestock consumption in tandem.

Conservation and privatization practices yield similar stories from other parts of the globe, often involving eviction, limited resources, and internal marginalization of groups based on systems of ethnicity, wealth, or power stratification. In addition to these internal pressures, the impetus and prioritization of many of these land use changes is often determined externally by institutions with a particular ideological perspective. Under this

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paradigm, equality in resource distribution and access are secondary to economic development.

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