

## THE TRUTH ABOUT BRITISH INDIRECT RULE IN UGANDA 1894-1962

**Dr. Hadjer Belmahdi**

University of Algiers 2

[hadjer.belmhadi@univ-alger2.dz](mailto:hadjer.belmhadi@univ-alger2.dz)

**Aicha Boutiche**

University of Algiers 2

[aicha.boutiche@univ-alger2.dz](mailto:aicha.boutiche@univ-alger2.dz)

Received: 14/01/2025

Accepted: 30/04/2025

Published: 11/06/2025

### **Abstract:**

This research paper attempts to dissect British colonial administrative policy in Uganda, explaining how Britain transformed from a protector of Ugandans to an occupier of the land and people. Britain operated according to a carefully considered colonial administrative policy, ostensibly humanitarian and advisory in nature, yet purely colonial and imperialist. This study refutes the thesis of the novel indirect rule, demonstrating how this system helped Britain consolidate its influence with minimal military and administrative costs. At the same time, however, it produced distorted institutions that served colonial interests more than the interests of the Ugandan people. While the claim that indirect rule granted relative independence to Africans is often misinterpreted, historical reality confirms that this system was a tool for consolidating colonialism not for transferring power or empowering Africans to self-manage, but rather for reproducing dependency in a more flexible and effective manner. Accordingly, the colonial administration controlled major decisions, particularly those related to taxes, resources, and foreign policy. Perhaps even more dangerous is that this system has given privileges to certain Ugandan kingdoms, most notably Buganda, at the expense of other groups, thus sowing the seeds of division and conflict in the region.

**Keywords:** Uganda, British policy, protectorate, Lugard, indirect rule, colonial rule.

### **Introduction:**

The kingdoms of Uganda, with their natural, human, and political characteristics, constituted a distinct civilization within East Africa. This preceded the British colonial establishment by many years. This was confirmed by a number of European explorers, who wrote fascinating accounts of their imperial rulers, discussing their organizational structures and economic potential. Upon his arrival in the region in 1875, traveler Henry Hamilton Stanley described it as the Pearl of Africa, and that what he saw in the Kingdom of Buganda in particular was like a fairy tale, as the region was unique and unlike any other in Africa. Richard Burton also noted the kingdom's sophistication and sophistication, comparing it to the British countryside. Add to this what historian Margery Perham wrote in her description of Lugard's first visit to Buganda, where he was also astounded by the primitiveness and emptiness he saw in his journey. The civilization he found in Buganda.

After the writings of European explorers, Uganda became the most targeted colonial outpost for major European powers to implement their colonial policies and meet their economic needs. This led the British government to take a special interest in the region, through its strong support for the campaigns of Richard Burton and John Speke, who worked alongside missionary workers.

In the same context, we note Britain's colonial superiority in East Africa at the expense of other European powers, concealed behind the fight against the slave trade in the name of humanitarianism. However, Germany's entry into the colonial race in 1884, coupled with France's strengthening of the role of Catholic missionaries in the region, led to Uganda experiencing a terrible imperialist conflict during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This conflict ended between Britain and Germany with the signing of the Helgoland Treaty in July 1890, in which Germany agreed to relinquish its territorial claims to Buganda. Thus, Britain achieved what it had sought.

British colonialists, such as Portal, continued to prepare reports on the region, encouraging the British government, explaining the appropriate method for tightening control over Uganda and the importance of the region to Britain. Uganda was declared a British protectorate in July 1894. From that declaration until independence in 1962, Britain pursued various policies to ensure Uganda remained a British protectorate. In the same context, we ask: What was the nature of the British presence in Uganda?

### **1. British colonial policy in the administrative aspect.**

When Uganda first joined Britain, it was subject to the British Foreign Office, on the basis that Uganda was a protectorate and not a colony. We refer here in particular to Sir Gerald Portal, who was able to establish the concepts of imperial colonial thought among the men of the British government, after he resolved the conflicting opinions about keeping or dispensing with Uganda, by strongly supporting the retention of the region. His reports also explained the importance of controlling Uganda and the danger of withdrawing from it. However, the reality of Britain's imperial intentions soon became clear. By the twentieth century, the British government assigned the Uganda Protectorate to the Colonial Office. The following are the stages that the British colonial administration went through in Uganda:

#### **1.1. Border Demarcation During Civil Administration :**

Britain extended its control over Uganda when it imposed a protectorate on the Kingdom of Buganda on June 18, 1894 (**Hertslet, 1894, p. 395**). This kingdom was the vibrant heart of the protectorate and the center of colonial interest and activity. Accordingly, Britain announced its annexation of the Kingdom of Buganda, with the recognition of the British Foreign Office, which was responsible at the time for managing and administering the areas of influence in East Africa (**Oliver, 1967, p. 571**).

Accordingly, the British Foreign Office commissioned the Consul-General of the East Africa Protectorate, A.H. Hardinge, to ask Colville to inform Mwanga Kabaka of Buganda that his agreement with Portal had been formally accepted by the British government (**Evans, 1929, p. 316**). A meeting was held in Kampala with Mwanga, which resulted in a treaty signed on August 27, 1894 (**Hertslet, 1894, p. 394**), confirming the terms of the treaty he had concluded with Portal on May 29, 1893 (**Eliot, Charles, 1905, p. 1**). Accordingly, the Kingdom of Buganda and its dependent territories became a British protectorate (**Hubert, 1956, p. 57**).

It should be noted here that the area placed under British protection under this proclamation included the Kingdom of Buganda and its dependent territories, the area bordered by the lands of Kuki, Ankole, Bunyoro, and Osaga. Britain then sought to expand the protectorate by gradually seizing the remaining kingdoms of Uganda, and by the late nineteenth century, it had acquired a vast area in the Great Lakes region.

Based on this, in mid-1895, the British government began to change its colonial policy and its approach to dealing with the region's inhabitants. It appointed Ernest Berkeley as Consul-General of the Uganda Protectorate from 1895 to 1899, thereby declaring its full and official responsibility for administering all areas of British influence in East Africa.

As soon as Ernest Berkeley arrived in Kampala in May 1895 as British Consul-General to the Uganda Protectorate, he began expanding at the expense of the Ugandan kingdoms. The following month, he announced the annexation of Bunyoro, Busoga, Kavirondo, and Nande to the British sphere of influence (**Cook, 1934, p. 84**).

However, official recognition of these areas was only achieved about a year later. On July 30, 1896, the British Foreign Office issued a proclamation regarding the Uganda Protectorate, stating that the lands of Bunyoro and the areas west of Buganda, as well as the Busoga Kingdom and the areas east of it, were now within the boundaries of the Uganda Protectorate, under the administration of the British Consul-General appointed for this protectorate. The following day, Britain first adopted the name "East Africa Protectorate" (**Evans, 1929, p. 316**).

The British protectorate was extended to include the Kingdom of Toro in 1900, and the following year to the Kingdom of Ankole (**Hertslet, 1894, pp. 395-403**). Thus, the British Uganda Protectorate was formed, comprising the kingdoms of Buganda and Bunyoro, and the lands to the east. In 1902, Uganda was incorporated into the British East Africa Protectorate with the aim of providing British settlers with additional land for their settlement. The new eastern border thus became the western shore of Lake Rudolph, the Turkwell River, and the eastern reaches of Mount Elgon and the Sio River (**Johnston, 1904, p. 382**).

Thus, the British Foreign Office, with its imperialist policy, was able to define and demarcate the borders of the Uganda Protectorate, with the region reaching its maximum extent under civil administration. However, the spread of strong local reactions to the exploitative British imperialist policy led the British government to change its administrative management of the region, by establishing a military occupation.

### **1.2. Border Demarcation During the Military Administration :**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Uganda was subject to the administration of the Colonial Office by order of the British government, after having been under the authority of the Foreign Office. This is explained by the resilience and strength of the local revolutions and uprisings, which drained the British government of enormous sums and led Britain to reveal its imperialist intentions by imposing a military occupation in 1905. Although the basis of the relationship between Britain and Uganda was, on the surface, one of protection, time would

reveal the true nature of the relationship, which was represented by the occupation and exploitation of the region.

This period witnessed the demarcation of the borders between Uganda and the areas of influence of the European colonial powers, particularly those that were the subject of conflict. In return, during this period, Uganda was subjected to the severance of several parts of its territory. After it was annexed in 1902 to the British East Africa Protectorate, and a portion of its eastern side, located between the Sio River and Lake Naivasha, was severed, in 1914 the centers of Nimule and Gondokoro, and part of Chua, were annexed to Sudan in exchange for the latter's ceding of the West Nile center to Uganda (**Haydon, 1960, p. 25**).

Here, we note Britain's focus on supporting European settlement policies in its areas of influence. The area between the Turkana Ridge and Lake Rudolph, known as the Rudolph District, was annexed to Kenya in 1826. Thus, the Uganda Protectorate comprised four provinces: Buganda, Eastern, Western, and Northern (**P.R.O, 1932, p. 5**).

It is noteworthy that during the military administration, Uganda's territory was subjected to significant reductions after having reached its maximum expansion under the civilian administration. This was due to British policy, which continued to pursue colonial methods to achieve its economic objectives without consulting the indigenous rights holders, and to act in a manner deemed to be in its own exploitative imperialist interests.

## **2. The Colonial System of Government**

The ingenuity of the British imperialists was evident in the systems of government they devised to subjugate the regions they sought to control. This was evident in the British government's establishment of a dual government in Uganda, consisting of a local government, overseen by a select class of local leaders who acted under the guidance and direction of British government representatives, and a central government under the direct supervision of the British government, headed by the British Governor-General, assisted by the Legislative and Executive Councils.

### **2.1. Local Government (Indirect Rule)**

Britain adopted the policy of local administration as a new philosophy adopted by the colonial government and as the cheapest and easiest means of extending control and governing vast territories. This avoided the burden of managing the region and saved the colonial government significant funds. This was achieved by employing local people who had influence among the region's population, while implementing an imperialist colonial policy that encompassed all aspects of life, including economic, social, and cultural exploitation, aimed at binding the local population to the colonial system. The following is the reality and nature of this system.

#### **2.1.1. The Reality of Indirect Rule**

Colonial historians believe that one of the characteristics of indirect rule was the gradual adaptation of local systems to modern conditions, by giving the local leader significant power to implement colonial policy. In addition, it ensured a good relationship between the British rulers and the population, thus reducing the costs of government administration.

Lord Lugard was the first to implement the system of indirect rule in Africa. Nigeria was the first country to be affected by this system in 1900, when he served as High Commissioner there from 1900 to 1906. He sought to maintain the rule of local leaders in order to place them

under his control (**Okoth, 2006, p. 322**). He and Lord Curzon claimed that divine providence had made the British Empire an unprecedented tool for spreading happiness and prosperity in the world (**John Sydenham, 1948, p. 288**).

It is clear that if we were to analyze the true underlying reasons that led Lugard to implement indirect rule, we would see the basic explanation in the strength of local resistance and the exhaustion of the British government treasury. Add to this the tropical diseases, especially sleeping sickness in Uganda, which nearly killed the Europeans, leaving the region devoid of European settlement, as well as Buganda's distance from seaports and its lack of modern means of transportation.

Therefore, Lugard was forced to act temporarily, in alliance with the ruling local elements, until the British were able to consolidate their control over the region. Lugard also realized that British colonial political interests and economic exploitation of the region during this period could not be served without relying on this strategy, and that this system did not favor local interests.

Lugard himself noted in one of his writings that the equatorial region specializes in the production of certain raw materials and foodstuffs not produced in other regions, which prompted European nations to compete to control these regions (**Lugard, 1922, p. 43**). Therefore, Lugard's sole goal in Africa was to develop British trade, secure raw materials, and guarantee markets for British products, not to spread Western civilization among the Black peoples.

Despite this, proponents of indirect rule attempt to defend this system, claiming that it is the ideal system for promoting local systems and empowering local populations for self-governance. In this regard, Sir Ronald Cameron points out that the goal of implementing the local administration system was to transform the tribal system adopted by Africans into a constitutionally democratic system, without abandoning the customs and traditions they inherited, refined with the advice and guidance of British officials (**Nelson, 1976, p. 96**).

However, how could this system serve Africans when local rulers were subject to the authority of the colonial government, not to the aspirations of their people. Rather, this system was created to make local chiefs tools and agents of the authorities they represented. The clearest evidence of this is that the decision to retain power rests with the colonial ruler. Whereas the ruler of the kingdom had previously wielded significant influence over all the people of his kingdom, his position became that of a supreme chief of a tribe, unable to issue any decision before submitting it to the British Governor-General for approval or rejection.

Indeed, the establishment of this system was intended to successfully implement British government policy. The local ruler, who was considered an employee of the government, had a good relationship with his people and was the most capable of convincing them of the colonial government's decisions without difficulty. This also facilitated the spread of British influence (**Mussazu, 2014, p. 151**). He explained that the foreign presence has one goal everywhere, to exploit natural and human resources as much as possible.

Based on the philosophy of British colonial plunder, which Lugard attempted to express in justifying British control over the resources of vast regions of the world, the issue is rooted in the history of the British commercial empire. This allows countries subject to British sovereignty to develop themselves in many fields. He boasts of the British ability to deal with local races and acknowledges that Britain has actually been able to develop new countries at a lower cost than other countries, and that this is nothing but an extension of Great Britain's noble mission, which he truly considers a source of pride and a responsibility that must be preserved to expand the industrial sphere.

Here we clearly see the extent of Lugard's imperialism and his pathetic attempt to defend British colonialism. What we understand from his argument is that the reality of British colonial plunder continues, although it has changed over time. However, the basic goals of promoting and protecting Britain's material and strategic interests remain the same.

### **2.1.2. The Local Government System**

The local government system does not mean the existence of a British system working for the colonial government and a local system representing the people and working to solve their problems, or two groups working in cooperation with each other. Rather, the local government system is a local government composed of a head of the executive body assisted by local councils composed of elected and appointed chiefs and members. One of these councils is located in each of the centers of the Ugandan kingdoms, or as the British colonial authorities called them, the protectorate provinces. In these councils, the local governors are an instrument of British authority, carrying out the colonial government's wishes. It can be classified into two categories:

#### **2.1.2.1. A system specific to Buganda**

The British found Buganda to be a traditional state, well-organized on a large scale (**Nelson, 1976, p. 97**), in addition to its great potential, from its central and commanding position, to its connections with Sudan, and its fertile lands adjacent to the Nile.

Hamilton Stanley considered it the key to Central Africa, controlling the Nile Basin. The British government appointed Sir Harry Johnston as its special commissioner to Uganda on July 1, 1899. Johnston drew on his previous experience in Africa, negotiating with local leaders during the first months of his arrival in the region. He sought to conclude a series of agreements with the most prominent equatorial kingdoms, the most important of which was the Mengo Agreement, concluded on March 10, 1900, in the Kingdom of Buganda, between Johnston, the representative of the British government, as the first party, and the three members of the Regency Council, representing the minor Kabaka of Buganda, Daudi Shoa, as the second party (**Cathcart, 1905, p. 13**). This agreement was considered the constitution according to which Uganda's affairs would be governed for nearly half a century.

This agreement comprised twenty-two articles, generally confirming the transformation of the ancient kingdom of Buganda into a province of the protectorate. According to Article 6, the agreement allocated the private property of the appointed officials of the royal regime, defining the new political hierarchy. The colonial administration officially recognized the Kabaka of Buganda as the head of the kingdom, alongside chiefs and leaders loyal to the British government, while recognizing the indigenous administrations (**P.R.O, 1939, p. 5**).

The Kabaka was assisted in administering government affairs by three ministers: the Prime Minister, called the Katikiro, the Minister of Justice, called Omulamuzi, and the Minister

of Finance, called Omuwanika. **(Ingham, 1958, p. 264)** In addition to the ministers, the Kabaka is assisted by a parliament or national council called the Lukiiko, which consists of the three ministers **(Scoot, 1901, p. 209)**, the twenty chiefs of the Basaza (districts), sixty notables (three from each district), and six dignitaries **(Haily, 1957, p. 479)**. This brings the total number of members to eighty-nine. The Kabaka appoints these members, subject to the approval of the British administration, in accordance with Article 9 of the agreement.

The Kabaka presides over the meetings of the National Council and discusses all matters relating to local administration and internal organization in Luganda. He then consults with the British Governor-General on these matters. Upon approval, these matters are published in the Official Gazette in both Luganda and English **(Buell, 1938, p. 581)**.

Regarding land ownership, the 1900 Agreement established previously nonexistent land rights and tenure. This created a bureaucratic class of local people subject to British influence, as required by the indirect rule system. The colonial authorities granted a special section to the royal family and their associated chiefs, while the remaining section was considered the private property of the central government and became "Crown Land," to be exploited for their imperialist projects **(P.R.O, 1956, pp. 38-39)**.

In the same context, we note the agreement's tax stipulations, under Article 12, which stipulated that all property owners in Buganda pay hut, head, and gun taxes **(P.R.O, 1954, p. 119)**. Accordingly, this agreement, signed in 1900, remained in effect until 1905, when oversight of the Uganda Protectorate was transferred from the British Foreign Office to the Colonial Office. Pursuant to Article 15 of the agreement, half of Buganda's territory came under the exclusive control of the British government, with the right to exploit the land's mineral and forest resources.

The 1900 Agreement reflected the interests of a select group of local leaders and British colonial interests. Perhaps the most important factor in the success of the negotiations that led to the agreement was that the Kabaka of Buganda, King Daudi Shoa, who succeeded Mwanga in July 1897, was only four or five years old and therefore unable to exercise absolute authority over his subjects, causing him to lose much of his powers as king.

Even though the Lukiko members believed the agreement granted them a degree of autonomy, the reality was that the British commissioners significantly outweighed their control over the affairs of the protectorate, and on occasion even exceeded what had been agreed upon. With this agreement, the Ugandan people lost their freedom and their most important asset, their land. The 1900 Agreement also contained the seeds of future problems for the country.

In general, the 1900 Agreement formed the legal basis upon which British colonialism flourished in Uganda for more than sixty years **(Herrick, 1969, p. 43)**. From 1894 to 1900, the British government concluded five treaties of "friendship" and "protection" with the Kingdom of Buganda. The number and sequence of treaties are important in illustrating the risks involved in the transfer of power from traditional to colonial rule. It also demonstrates that treaty-making was an important tool in consolidating and expanding British colonial rule. Thus,

in the cases of the Tooro and Ankole kingdoms, the British used treaties rather than outright invasion to consolidate their rule.

Perhaps what explains Britain's preference for treaties over invasion in establishing colonial rule in Uganda is that the Ugandan kingdoms were well-organized, providing a strategic foothold for colonizing the rest of the equatorial regions. In addition, the lack of resources and the scarcity of British administrators, led British imperial policy to favor treaties over outright military invasion. While the British government was aware that treaties were legally ineffective, the local population believed in them and did not question their legitimacy. Thus, British colonial rule relied on illegal treaties to govern vast areas of the African continent.

#### **2.1.2.2. A system specific to Toro, Ankole, and Bunyoro:**

After gaining control of the Kingdom of Buganda, the British administration sought to conclude additional treaties with the kingdoms of Bunyoro, Toro, and Ankole, renaming them "provinces" rather than "kingdoms." Each province was appointed a governor-general with a number of assistants, who were entrusted with managing the province's affairs. Local governments, varying in their level of development, were established to ensure effective control over the entire protectorate.

The British colonial authorities in Uganda concluded an agreement with the Kingdom of Ankole on August 7, 1910, appointing ten heads of administrative divisions for the province, headed by a local governor, the Mugabe (king). The same agreement was concluded with the Kingdom of Toro, appointing a local governor, known as the Mukama, at its head. This position was similar to the Kabaka of Buganda, but less influential (Nelson, 1976, p. 98).

On October 23, 1933, the British colonial authorities concluded an agreement with Bunyoro, stipulating the appointment of a native ruler, known as the Mukama, who would refer all matters relating to the administration of the region to the British authorities. A national council, known as the Rukurato, consisting of 74 members, had the right to appoint the prime minister, known as the Katikiro, and submit his candidacy to the British Governor-General for approval (Ingham, 1958, p. 274).

Generally speaking, the terms of these agreements were the same as those of the 1900 Buganda Agreement, with some exceptions, such as the division of land and the powers of the native ruler. The Kabaka of Buganda, as mentioned, had the right to issue laws, subject to the ratification of the British Governor-General. However, the native ruler in the other kingdoms did not have the right to appoint or dismiss the heads of the administrative divisions of the protectorate's districts. Everything pertaining to the region had to be submitted first to the British authorities. It is certain that, no matter how different the terms of these agreements were from one district to another, they were certainly not in the best interests of the local population.

In light of these considerations, we conclude that the colonial administration in Uganda utilized local chiefs and leaders to govern the region, with the goal of prolonging British rule and preventing any claims for independence. At the same time, the British government did not burden itself with establishing government centers supported by large numbers of soldiers, which would require spending enormous sums of money, contrary to Lugard's claim that he came to the region only to spread Western civilization and Christianity among the black people.

#### **2.2. The Central Government:**



The British government was keen to directly supervise Uganda by appointing a British Governor-General to represent it in the protectorate (**P.R.O, 1902, pp. 1157-1158**). It even adopted the indirect rule system, emphasizing its advantages and its suitability for African values and traditions. However, it undoubtedly served its imperial purposes. Furthermore, the local government was limited to managing simple internal affairs, while supreme authority and important matters were in the hands of the British Governor-General. To ensure its complete control over Uganda, it combined indirect rule with direct rule by establishing auxiliary bodies, namely the Executive Council and the Legislative Council.

### **2.2.1. The Governor-General:**

After suppressing the local rebellions, the British colonial system found itself needing to rely on a central administration to administer and manage the protectorate. The imperial government appointed Sir Harry Johnston as its Special Commissioner in Uganda on July 1, 1899-1901. Johnston was well-versed in African affairs, a distinguished administrator, and a skilled politician. He was subject to the orders of the British Foreign Office in administering the region (**March Zoë and Kingsnorth, 1961, p. 202**).

The Governor-General represented the highest executive and legislative authority in the protectorate. He derived his authority from the British government, which granted him broad powers. He was responsible for issuing decrees and laws pertaining to administrative, judicial, economic, and financial affairs, such as the appointment and dismissal of civil servants, and the oversight of taxes and customs. He was assisted by senior advisors charged with implementing the imperial policy of the British colonial government (**P.R.O, 1902, pp. 1157-1158**).

The title of the direct representative of British sovereignty in Uganda was changed from Commissioner to British Governor-General in 1907, when the British government decided to transfer control of the Uganda Protectorate from the Foreign Office to an independent Colonial Office. The next major step in political development was the establishment of a legislative and executive council (**Joseph, p. 659**).

It is worth noting here that the colonial administrative progress in Uganda was the result of the British imperial government's selection of a Governor-General, who possessed a high degree of administrative skill and extensive experience and skill in dealing with tribal systems. This was intended to weaken and diminish the functions of the kings of the Ugandan kingdoms, rendering them agents of the colonial administration. His efforts were not directed at serving the local population and improving their social and economic status, nor at focusing on the administrative and political development and advancement of the protectorate, as they claimed, but rather at serving British imperial interests.

### **2.2.2. The Legislative Council (Legco):**

The First Imperialist War in East Africa led the British government to make some changes to the colonial administrative system in East Africa in general and Uganda in particular. The 1920s saw Britain implement a system of direct rule, manifesting its features through the

establishment of the Legislative Council, or Legco, which was responsible for preparing draft laws and presenting them to the Governor-General for approval or rejection.

By the beginning of the 1930s, the Legco underwent significant changes in its composition. After comprising four government members and two unofficial European members, the number of unofficial members was increased in 1934 (**P.R.O, 1956, p. 706**) to nine members, consisting of three Europeans, one Asian, and one Ugandan. Furthermore, the Council stipulated that the Western Province should be represented by the Prime Minister, the Eastern Province, and the remaining regions by the Secretary of the Local Administration (**Lauterpacht, 1963, p. 263**).

In 1945, particularly after the Second Imperialist War, some changes were made to the structure of the Legislative Council. It now consists of seven government members and seven unofficial members (Europeans, Asians, and three Ugandans), in addition to the Governor-General, who granted the government a majority vote (**March Zoë and Kingsnorth, 1961, p. 206**). It is noteworthy that since this period, Ugandan representation in the Council has rapidly increased due to the growing awareness of liberation and the local population's demand for self-rule.

In the mid-1950s, the number of members was increased, and the Legislative Council now consists of 60 members, distributed as follows:

- The Governor-General as President.
- 29 members representing the government, including 12 Ugandans, 15 Europeans, and 3 Asians.
- 30 members representing the people's representatives, including 18 Ugandans, 6 Europeans, and 6 Asians (**Haily, 1957, p. 294**).

### **2.2.3. The Executive Council**

The colonial administration established, pursuant to the Uganda Council Act of 1920, an advisory body, the Executive Council, composed of senior British officials appointed to implement the policies of the British Governor-General (**P.R.O, 1946, pp. 216-217**). The British imperial administration attempted to present the Council as a consultative body established to serve the African population, but its goal was to manipulate royal regulations according to its own geostrategic and economic interests.

In the same context, it should be noted that until 1946, the Executive Council comprised only official members. In 1953, non-official membership was increased to six, including two Europeans, two Asians, and two Ugandans. In 1955, another amendment was made to the composition of the Council, bringing its total to fifteen members: eleven Europeans, two Ugandans, and two Asians.

It is worth noting here that the inclusion of Ugandans in the Executive Council since 1953 was due to the reforms undertaken by the British government, primarily to serve its imperial interests and ensure a longer period of time in the region, in addition to its sense of the liberation wave that had gripped the local population, and the beginning of their formation of some movements hostile to the British colonial presence (**David Ernest, 1961, p. 218**). These reforms, through which the Ugandans were included in the Executive Council, were nothing but an imperial will that sought to contain and include educated figures within the colonial

authority by granting them certain jobs and privileges, so that they would remain in the eyes of the colonial administration.

#### **2.2.4. The Supreme Council for the Administration of East African Affairs**

British imperial ambitions extended beyond attacking Ugandan kingdoms and disposing of their lands and people as if they were their own personal property. The British colonial authorities made numerous attempts to create a federal union between the parts of British East Africa, including Kenya, Tanganyika, and Uganda. Interest in this project began with the appointment of Harry Johnston as Commissioner to Uganda in 1899 (**Herrick, 1969, p. 43**). However, his attempt to integrate Uganda and the East African Protectorate into a political union (Closer Union) failed. Despite this, British colonialists continued to see this project as a dream that must be realized. In 1920, Mr. Amery, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, appointed Edward Gregg, Governor of Kenya, to carry out this project. However, the realization of this idea on the ground failed due to opposition from the Kabaka and the Lukiko (**Low, 1971, pp. 73-74**).

Given the failure of numerous attempts by British colonialists to realize their imperial dream, on January 1, 1948, they resorted to establishing an administrative union, the Supreme Council for the Administration of East African Affairs, consisting of representatives from Kenya, Tanganyika, and Uganda, assisted by a customs commissioner, an economic secretary, a legal secretary, and other experts specializing in financial affairs and the three countries' public facilities (P.R.O, 1950, p. 28).

In addition to submitting proposals for joint projects between Kenya, Tanganyika (**States, 1949, p. 3**), and Uganda, and working to implement them, the Supreme Council for the Administration of East African Affairs' achievements included the establishment of a railway network linking Mombasa in Kenya to Kampala in Uganda and Dar es Salaam in Tanganyika on Lake Victoria (**Steinberg, 1959, p. 314**). To help this council achieve control over the entire East African region and subject it to a unified administration, they established a central legislative council (**Union, 1948, pp. 98-99**) consisting of:

- Twenty-three official members, seven of whom serve on the Supreme Council, and three officials appointed by the Governor-General.

- Thirteen unofficial members, one elected by the unofficial members of the Legislative Council of each territory, one European member, one Indian member, one African member nominated by the Governor of each territory (except Kenya, where the European and Indian members are elected by the unofficial members of their communities in the Legislative Council) and one Arab member appointed by the Governor-General (**P.R.O, 1950, p. 28**).

It is clear that Britain's imperialist reality became apparent, especially after its attempt to unify the country's administration, or even its previous attempts to establish a federal union between the regions of East Africa. This was because, at least in the eyes of the British government, the political status of these countries differed. Kenya was a colony, Tanganyika was under UN trusteeship, and Uganda was a protectorate. However, with this move, it

demonstrated that its goal was one, to exploit the region to serve its imperial interests and to further control its colonies. This was especially true during this period, which witnessed the crystallization of liberationist thought and the attempts of the educated class to advance the country and move toward independence from British hegemony.

### **Conclusion:**

We conclude from the above that, after declaring the British protectorate over Uganda in 1894, the British government began implementing its colonial plans aimed at exploiting the region and its resources. Here, it resorted to manipulating political concepts by inventing administrative systems, promoting them as offering numerous advantages, including their compatibility with African values and traditions. At the same time, it focused on educating local leaders in the basics of administration and management. This might suggest that the relationship between the central government and local government was merely advisory. However, this is merely a remnant of colonial development literature, which vanished once the country was subjected to British colonial administration.

It appears that this system, while it has a connection to the British government, is only advisory. In reality, the essence of this system is to direct local government through the central government. This leads to the country's leaders and local leaders being devoted to serving British interests, making them loyal and competing to please the colonial administration. This necessitates neglecting the interests of the local population, resulting in a decline in the level of administrative organization, not an improvement in it.

The British protectorate was nothing more than the construction and consolidation of an exploitative and oppressive legal system, exploiting the local population's ignorance of the laws, which were tainted by dubious treaties. As a result, the Kingdom of Buganda and other parts of Uganda lost their sovereignty.

The British administration implemented a repressive colonial policy in Uganda, using force against indigenous rulers who posed a threat to British rule, as well as those who rejected and resisted it. It isolated and deported them. At the same time, it worked to win over other leaders to its side, ensuring their loyalty to British imperialism by incentivizing and using them as agents to cooperate with the colonial administrators. These leaders were an integral part of the policy of indirect rule, which fostered favoritism and inhibited the growth of awareness among the diverse peoples of the protectorate. In return, the colonial laws granted the British Commissioner in Uganda broad legislative and judicial powers.

### **Bibliographie**

Buell, R. (1938). *The Native Problem in Africa*, Vol. 1, London: Frank Cass & Co.

Cathcart, W. (1905). *East Africa and Uganda, or Our Last Land*, London: Griffiths.

Cook, A. (1934). *The Journey to Uganda in 1896 and Kampala during the Closing Years of Last Century*. *The Uganda Journal*, vol.1, April.

David Ernest, A. (1961). *The Political Kingdom in Uganda: A Study of Bureaucratic Nationalism*, Oxford: Princeton University Press.

*Eliot, Charles*. (1905). *The East Africa Protectorate*, London: Edward Arnold.

Evans, I. (1929). *The British in tropical Africa: An Historical outline*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Haily. (1957). *An African Survey Revised 1956: A Study of Problems arising in Africa South of the Sahara*, London: Cambridge University Press.
- Haydon, E. (1960). *Law and Justice in Buganda*. London: Butterworths.
- Herrick, A. B. (1969). *Area Handbook for Uganda*. Vol 550, Issue 74. Washington: Government Printing Office Washington.
- Hertslet, S. E. (1894). *The Map of Africa by Treaty*, Vol. 1, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Hubert, M. B. (1956). *The King's African Rifles: A Study in the Military History of East and Central Africa, 1890-1945* Gala & Polden.
- Ingham, K. . (1958). *The Making of Modern Uganda*, London: Allen & Unwin.
- Inter-Parliamentary Union. (1948). *Constitutional and Parliamentary Information*, Vol. 69-80, No. 75, July.
- John Sydenham, F. (1948). *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnston, H. (1904). *The Uganda Protectorate*, Vol.1, London: Hutchinson & CO.
- Joseph, W. (s.d.). *An Almanack for the year 1914*, London: Warwick Lane.
- Lauterpacht, E. (1963). *International Law Reports*. Vol. 27. London: Butterworths.
- Low, D. A. (1971). *The Mind of Buganda, documents of the Modern History of an African Kingdom*, California: University California press.
- Lugard, F. (1922). *The Dul Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, London: William Blackwood and Edinburgh.
- March Zoë and Kingsnorth, G. W. (1961). *An Introduction to the History of East Africa*, London: Cambridge University Press.
- Mussazu, J. (2014). *Planning and Development in Education, African Perspectives*. Vol.64. London: Routledge.
- Nelson, K. (1976). *The Shrinking Political Arena, Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics: with a Case Study of Uganda*. Brekely: University of California Press.
- Okoth, A. (2006). *A History of Africa, African societies and the establishment of colonial Rule 1880-1915*, Vol. 1, Kampala: East African Educational Publishers.
- Oliver, R. a. (1967). *Africa and The Victorians*, Canada: Macmillan Company LTD.
- P.R.O: C.O, (1956). *Uganda Report for the year 1955*, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- P.R.O: C.O, (1946). *The Colonial Office List 1946: comprising historical and statistical information respecting the colonial empire, List of officers serving in the colonies*. London: His Majesty's Stationery.

- P.R.O: C.O, (1950). The British Territories in East and Central Africa: 1945-1950, London: His Majesty's Stationery Office.
- P.R.O: C.O, (1902). British and Foreign State Papers, 1898-1899. Vol 91. London: His Majesty's Office.
- P.R.O: C.O, (1932). Colonial Reports-Annual, No. 1601- Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of the Uganda Protectorate, 1931, London: His Majesty's Stationery Office.
- P.R.O: C.O, (1939). Colonial Reports-Annual, No. 1903- Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of the Uganda Protectorate, 1938, London: His Majesty's Stationery Office.
- P.R.O: C.O, (1954). Uganda: Report for the year 1953, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- P.R.O: C.O, (1956). Statutory Instruments 1955, Vol. 1, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Scoot, K. (1901). The Statesman's Year-Book: Statistical and Historical Annual of the States of the World for the Year 1901 London: Macmillan, and CO.
- Steinberg, S. (1959). The Statesman's Year-book: Statistical and Historical Annual of the States of the World for the Year 1959. London: Macmillan and Co.
- United States. (1949). Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. Office of International Trade, Economic Review of British East Africa 1948, International Reference Service, Vol. 6, No. 77, August.