The Question of Ethnicity in Uganda's Politics: Exploring the Period 1970s to 1980s and Implications for Ugandan Development

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Abstract

The ethnicity debate, often known as ethnic identity politics debate, has in some manner affected the majority of third- and first-world nations. Understanding this requires a time frame of about 10 years to be able to see the trends in politics and how identities like ethnicity affect politics and hence forth development. Having analysed the period 1960 to 1970, this new period provides a further elaboration of ethnicity in politics in relation to development. This is related to the fact that voters have promised to support candidates of their own ethnicity, which has impacted politicians' effectiveness. In these situations, development has traditionally been prioritized in the regions where the ethnicity in question originates, leading to social, political, and economic inequalities between regions. It has caused the nation to fall behind in terms of inclusive growth on a larger scale. Opportunities, resources, and other elements that may propel the nation toward progress have not produced anything for the nation. . Language, song, drama, and dance are all components of ethnicity; it is also more than skin color or physical traits. It is a composite whole that represents a people's historical experience, goals, and world-view. It is the embodiment of values, institutions, and behavioural patterns. Take away a people's culture and ethnicity, and you take away their sense of direction or purpose. This has characterized the majority of African societies, if not all of them, and caused a social gap.

Key words: Ethnicity, Uganda, politics,Development

Introduction:

On the 9th of October 1962 Uganda gained independence from Britain, ending sixty eight years of rule by the Protectorate Government. The independent Ugandan nation inherited many problems, giving Prime Minister Milton Obote 'the formidable and unenviable task of welding the various communities of the country into a modern nation-state.' Indeed, in 1962 Uganda was still a rather fractured and disparate entity, divided by a multitude of ethnic, linguistic and regional cleavages. During the early 1960s there remained a persistent and 'almost unbridgeable gap between the various communities in Uganda.' Moreover, in 1957 Sir Andrew Cohen, Governor of Uganda from 1952-57, noted that 'nationalism is still a less powerful force in Uganda than tribal loyalties.' In the run up to independence Uganda's politicians failed to form a united nationalist front, and 'managed to arrive at the threshold of independence with very little to show in the way of political struggle.' This contributed to the lack of unity within Uganda's political system, and meant that broadly speaking, political parties were split along ethnic lines.

In 1959 Sir Frederick Crawford, then Governor of Uganda, established a Constitutional Committee to discuss political representation across Uganda, and what form 1961 elections to the Legislative Council would take. The Constitutional Committee also noted in their report that 'Uganda is an artificial unit containing within its borders a very wide range…of different tribes with different languages and customs.' Furthermore, Jan Jelmert Jorgensen notes that 'the ideology of tribalism was more than a threat to the unity of Uganda.' The primary focus of this essay will be the divisive nature of ethnicity in Ugandan politics, and it is important to first establish what the term ethnicity specifically refers to in a Ugandan, but also broader African context. It is of paramount importance not to confuse ethnicity with the term 'tribe' which can 'promote a racist conception of African ethnicities as primitive and savage.' Bruce Berman claims that 'African ethnicity is a construction of the colonial period through the reactions of pre-colonial societies to the social, economic, cultural and political forces of colonialism.' The term ethnicity however has no concrete definition, and among other things can refer to nationality, provincial identity, community, village, chiefdom or kin-group. Nelson Kasfir notes that 'ethnicity is a fluid, not a fixed, condition of African politics. Within this essay the term ethnicity will be used to describe the different communities of Uganda, mostly separated by region and culture, that are defined in almost all secondary literature as separate ethnic entities or groupings. In 1962, on the verge of independence, there were vast discrepancies between Uganda's different ethnic groups, which contributed towards the lack of unification within the country.

In Uganda there was 'a long-standing tradition of local nationalism before independence', which was manifested through the presence of different kingdoms, territories and districts. In 1962, Uganda consisted of the kingdoms of Buganda, Ankole, Bunyoro and Toro; the territory of Busoga; and the districts of Acholi, Bugisu, Bukedi, Karamoja, Kigezi, Lango, Madi, Sebei, Teso and West Nile. Loyalty to such local institutions and identities meant that political behaviour was largely based upon 'linguistic, socio-cultural and economic identities of interests.' The Independence Constitution, negotiated in London a few months prior to independence, granted full federal status to Buganda and a semi-federal relationship to the other kingdoms. Such devolution of power undermined the authority of the state, and left Uganda in a 'quasi-federal milieu.' The kingdom of Buganda had for a long time

generated resentment throughout Uganda, because it had enjoyed a position of unrivalled superiority throughout the colonial period. Many Baganda in fact 'developed an attitude of complacent arrogance towards the other people of Uganda.' Almost all other ethnic groups in Uganda were concerned by Bagandan attempts to dominate the post-colonial state, and the 'suspicion and hostility engendered by this sort of attitude was hardly a sound basis for national unity.'

The 1962 Independence Constitution, the 'compromise document', was intended to deal with the political problems that had beset Uganda during the 1950s. It attempted to appease the separatist tendencies of the kingdoms, particularly Buganda, in an attempt to forge a unified state. As a result of this, the Constitution has been described as 'a parcel of contradictions', as it was neither fully federal nor fully unitary. The attempt to forge such a state was a rather formidable task, as ethnic divisions within Uganda were deep-set, and had been engrained over a long period of time. Ethnicity was a divisive political issue long before Uganda gained independence, particularly the elevated position of Buganda, which came about largely as a result of the preferential treatment shown towards the kingdom by the Protectorate Government.

In order to evaluate the role that ethnicity played in Ugandan politics after independence, it is important to understand the course of events leading to 1962, and whether said issues were relevant under British rule. As previously noted, Uganda was a rather disparate entity during the 1950s, and as James Mittelman aptly notes, Uganda's history was 'marked more by internal heterogeneity and conflict than by shared tradition or co-operation.' Compared to other British colonies in Africa, discontent with the colonial authorities was not channelled into a strong nationalist movement, and 'neither the leaders nor the sentiments…essential to internal stability' were present in Uganda. The nationalist cause was rather weak during the 1950s, and there were in fact a number of competing nationalisms in Uganda. Firstly, there was 'Uganda-wide nationalism' which aimed to serve the country as a whole. Second, there was 'Kiganda nationalism', which aimed to serve the interests of Buganda, and finally 'anti-Kiganda' nationalism, which primarily aimed to serve the interests of all other ethnic groups in Uganda. In light of such differing priorities, it is hardly a surprise that the nationalist cause was fractured. As noted by M.S.M Kiwanuka, 'Kiganda nationalism' was intrinsic to the success or failure of national unification, as

was Buganda's position of preponderance, which stemmed largely from the overt favouritism shown to the Buganda by the British.

During the colonial period, the British authorities adopted a policy of indirect rule, and made a series of agreements with the different kingdoms of Uganda. These included treaties with Buganda (1900, 1955), Ankole (1901), Toro (1900) and Bunyoro (1933). The Protectorate government made little investment outside of Buganda, both economically and politically. The British held the view that 'tribal governments were the proper arena for African politics', and therefore made little effort to provide representative political institutions. In addition, whilst recognising some broad ethnic affinities, in the majority of cases the British attempted to segregate Uganda's different ethnic communities. The Protectorate Government attempted to keep the peace 'through a policy of separating peoples rather than bringing them together.' Ali Mazrui stresses the fact that British rule sharpened ethnic loyalties, and that 'colonial policy made the task of national integration more difficult.' This viewpoint proves to be particularly pertinent when the role of Buganda is considered, and the preferential treatment it was shown by the Protectorate Government.

Throughout the colonial period, the Protectorate Government bestowed special treatment upon Buganda, and it was 'through which, and by whose people the British had developed the country.' Buganda had existed as an independent country for nearly five hundred years before the arrival of the British, and was 'the largest, but also the wealthiest, the most advanced and most strategically placed of the African tribes in Uganda.' In 1900 the Uganda Agreement helped to enshrine Buganda's privileged identity, which was then revised and replaced by the Buganda Agreement of 1955. The Agreement 'satisfied Buganda's separatist loyalties', which made the task of national integration decidedly more difficult. In addition, it also enhanced Buganda's position at independence conferences in 1961, and 'was a major factor leading to federal status for Buganda.' The colonial authority's preferential treatment of Buganda was largely responsible for regional inequality within Uganda and a major cause of resentment towards Buganda by other ethnic groups. Members of other ethnic units 'tended to resent Buganda's special position', which in time manifested itself in the form of political opposition. The appointment of Sir Andrew Cohen as Governor of Uganda in 1952 did bring reform to the policies and attitude of the

Protectorate Government, and started the process of rebalancing the uneven distribution of power between Uganda's different ethnic groups.

During the 1950s Uganda was transformed 'by the political and constitutional policies introduced by Sir Andrew Cohen.' It was Cohen's arrival as Governor in 1952 that 'coincided with the development of nationalism and political parties' in Uganda. Tribal governments were democratized and given local government functions, and the Protectorate began to push for the formation of a unitary state. In 1953, shortly after Cohen's arrival, it was announced that African representation was to be increased on the Legislative Council, which 'was intended to provide an institutional means of achieving national unity.' However, these reforms were only applied in Buganda, and when direct elections to the Legislative Council were proposed in 1956 they were initially only held in Buganda, which 'would provide an example to other parts of Uganda'. It seems that despite reform the Baganda were still subject to preferential treatment from the British. Despite some criticism, reform of the Legislative Council was largely welcomed, and came to epitomise 'tolerance and combined effort.'

In a speech given at a joint meeting of the Royal African Society and Royal Commonwealth Society in 1962, Dr Kenneth Ingham lavished praise upon the Legislative Council, claiming that Cohen's reforms were integral to Uganda gaining independence, and that the Legislative Council became Uganda's 'first truly national institution.' Furthermore, Ingham also noted that the emergence of political parties in Uganda was assisted by the Legislative Council, because it was an institution 'which had already established itself as the apex of the political pyramid.' Although the merits of the Council were disputed by some, it seems beyond question that Sir Andrew Cohen's actions heralded a general change in attitude of the Protectorate Government. In his last major act as Governor, in a speech on April 24th 1956, Cohen delivered a message about the importance of direct elections, which became 'a major step toward the building of an independent, primarily Ugandan nation.'

After his tenure as Governor had ended, in a speech given to a joint meeting of the Royal African Society and Royal Empire Society in February 1957, Cohen detailed how his principle goal had been 'to help the people and the country to move steadily and in an orderly fashion towards self-government.' This Cohen claimed was Britain's only justification for being in Uganda, and that ultimately a successful transition towards independence was in the hands of Ugandans and the emerging

political parties. Before his departure, Cohen 'served notice that it was incumbent upon Africans to make their own pace' towards independence, and it was indeed the emerging political parties of the late 1950s that determined this pace.

During the 1950s, as a result of the changing attitude of the Protectorate Government and the growth of political parties, 'the tempo of political life in Uganda changed.'Calls for independence were certainly a part of political rhetoric, though superseding this were regional concerns and the fear of political domination by the Baganda. Politicians from outside of Buganda 'began to unite and to advocate outright challenge to so-called Kiganda domination and leadership.' Understandably, non-Bugandan citizens desired representation, and 'political co-operation between disparate groups outside Buganda was itself a kind of protest against Buganda's position of aloofness.' There was one party that managed to gain electoral success both inside and outside of Buganda, namely the Democratic Party. Founded in 1956 as a Catholic party, the Democratic Party (DP) were led from 1958 onwards by Benedicto Kiwanuka, an outspoken critic of the Baganda Government and Lukiiko. Able to appeal to Catholics in Buganda, the DP were 'also very important outside Buganda', forming a strong minority in many regions as well gaining electoral victories in West Nile in 1958, and Lango and Acholi in 1959. In addition to the DP, the Uganda People's Congress (hereafter UPC) quickly became a powerful political force, and offered itself to the Ugandan public as 'the party of compromise.

The formation of the UPC began in 1958, when seven unaffiliated members of the Legislative Council came together to from the Uganda People's Union. In March 1960 the Union joined with the Uganda National Congress, and under the leadership of Milton Obote, the UPC was born. The UPC was formed as a non-Ganda party, and became increasingly hostile towards 'the feudal tribalism of Buganda.' In addition, in Buganda Obote was deemed to be an unacceptable leader of the UPC as he was from the Lango District. As noted, the UPC was staunchly anti-Baganda, but there were also ethnic divisions within the ranks of the UPC itself. Bantu and Nilotic blocs within the party competed for power, with the Nilotic group pursuing more radical social policies, with the Bantu taking a more conservative stance. Despite some conflict within the party, the UPC were an integral part of Uganda's political progression. Both the UPC and the DP were 'in policy and intention, trans-tribal parties' and without these two parties it seems doubtful whether Uganda would have

gained independence in 1962. In the run-up to independence in 1962 the UPC failed to work successfully with the DP, and despite huge conflict in ideology, the UPC instead formed a coalition with Kabaka Yekka (hereafter KY), a pro-monarchist Bugandan party.

Despite having 'divergent views on almost every conceivable subject' the KY and UPC were able to form a majority government that took Uganda to independence in October 1962. Launched on 10th June 1961, the Kabaka Yekka movement quickly spread throughout Buganda, and by the end of 1961 had become a rallying point for all opposition against the DP in Buganda. The KY epitomised the isolationist tendencies of the Baganda and immortalised the role and status of the Kabaka (King), Edward Mutesa II. The KY 'acquired mass support drawn from all levels of Gandan society' and were presented as the party that 'was for Buganda and the throne.' The formation of KY was preceded by two major events, namely Buganda's declaration of independence in 1960 and boycott of national elections in 1961.

On 4th October 1960 the Bugandan Lukiiko adopted a resolution stating that Buganda would become an independent state on 31st December 1960, justified by the failure of the Protectorate Government to acknowledge the role of existing institutions in Buganda in the move towards parliamentary democracy. In the memorandum, members of the *Lukiiko* documented that 'Buganda is determined to be a separate autonomous State' and that 'the Baganda believe that they can safeguard their prestige only through the survival in a living and functioning form of the Kabakaship and the Lukiiko. Though highly symbolic, the declaration of independence 'turned out to be an idle threat' and Buganda did not secede. The Kabaka's government did however call for a boycott of national elections in 1961 which was over 97% effective in Buganda, highlighting the level of authority that Mutesa possessed. Of those that voted, 67% voted for the DP, which gained the party twenty out of twenty one seats in Buganda. For Bugandan leaders this defeat 'was the worst possible result, but they alone were responsible for the outcome.' The embarrassment of the 1961 elections fuelled the formation of the KY, which 'aimed to unite all Baganda in the common cause' of defending their own identity and interests. Despite such conflicting ideologies, the UPC and KY managed to form a working coalition and gain a strong majority, with 21 KY seats in Buganda and 37 UPC seats in the rest of Uganda. However, after independence the marriage of convenience between the UPC and KY

soon failed, with Prime Minister Obote turning his efforts to the subjugation of Mutesa and the KY during the early 1960s.

Ethnic differences were clearly divisive in Uganda before 1962, especially the discrepancy between Buganda and the rest of the country. The British Protectorate Government played a major role in establishing Buganda's position of prevalence, which considerably heightened the level of resentment felt towards the Baganda by other ethnic groups in Uganda. The policies of Sir Andrew Cohen as Governor brought change to the emerging political landscape, but were unable to reverse the discrepancies between different ethnic groups that British policy had for so long extenuated. Broadly speaking, Buganda managed to sustain its position of prevalence within an independent Uganda, manifested through the adoption of a federal constitution in 1962. As Hugh Dinwiddy accurately observes 'the previous history of the country made the formation of a federal constitution an inevitability.' Uganda was carried to independence by the most unlikely of coalitions, as the KY and the UPC had divergent political goals and 'contradictory ethnic bases'. However, neither the KY or the UPC had 'had any illusions about the permanency of the alliance', which rapidly disintegrated after independence.

Independence: The Formative Years

The marriage of convenience between the UPC and the KY that brought Uganda to independence resulted in Milton Obote assuming the position of Prime Minister, and Edward Mutesa II the position of President. Mutesa's position gave him a largely ceremonial function, whereas Obote's appointment as Prime Minister forced him to deal with the 'highly politicized cleavages' that beset the country. As previously noted, a federal constitution was adopted in 1962 in an attempt to appease the desires of different kingdoms and regions across the country. T.V. Sathyamurthy claims that much greater attention should have been given to the relationship between the kingdoms/districts and the federal government in the Constitution of Uganda, than the powers of the central federal government itself. The 1962 Constitution of Uganda failed to successfully redistribute power among the smaller ethnic groups of Uganda, and failed to successfully curb the overwhelming power of the Baganda. After 1962 however, Obote did his utmost to ensure the balance of power was reversed.

Despite the devolution of power throughout Uganda, Obote still 'saw his role as one of uniting Uganda into a single nation.' This view was expressed by Obote in London

in 1960, where a commitment was made to 'a free, untied Uganda in which the dignity of every inhabitant was recognised.' Unlike the Kabaka, Obote had an 'unalterably strong conviction' that Uganda should 'become one nation in which tribal differences would ultimately disappear.' After independence, it was in fact Obote's primary concern 'to weaken the organisational manifestations of ethnicity.' This conviction proved to be a salient issue for Obote, who continued to stress his desire for unity as the 1960s progressed. On 9th July 1965, on the radio station BBC Home Service, Obote stated that Uganda's 'greatest achievement since independence…is national consciousness.' Furthermore, in response to a question from host Roy Lewis about the importance of tribal affiliation, Obote remarked that 'tribal consciousness is now quietened down, what is now taking its place is a clear cut national consciousness.' These statements indicate that Obote was committed to national unification, but fail to indicate what measures were taken to achieve such a goal. Between 1962 and 1966 Obote attempted to stimulate the process of ethnic integration by engaging in 'a struggle against feudalism.' This largely manifested itself in the appropriation of Bugandan privilege.

The Military, Ethnicity And The 'Move To The Left':

The struggle that Obote waged against Buganda during the early 1960s was largely political in nature, but in order to deliver the decisive blow in 1966 it was necessary to resort to military force. The combination of political stratagem and military force has been described as a 'fatal error', because it meant that the army 'assumed a pivotal role in the political process in Uganda'. The army in fact became the power-base of the Obote regime because it possessed 'the means of physical coercion.' This significantly reduced the legitimacy of the UPC, as it could only effectively sustain authority through the use of force. Despite the omnipresence of the military in Uganda after 1966, Obote also introduced a number of positive political reforms that were intended to stimulate national unification and reduce the influence of ethnic affiliation.

After the events of 1966, Obote realised that he had placed himself in somewhat of a quandary. Obote's problem centred around the desire to reduce the importance of ethnicity, whilst simultaneously showing favour to those from northern Uganda. The reliance upon an ethnic foundation reduced Obote's freedom of action, and between 1966 and 1971 Obote made a number of attempts to manoeuvre himself out of this position. He no longer wanted to be a victim of 'the ethnic sickness' that 'still

afflicted the system despite constitutional and organisational changes.' In September 1967 a new constitution was enacted, which strongly enhanced the power of the central government. The constitution also abolished the kingdoms of Buganda, Ankole, Bunyoro and Toro, turning Uganda into a republic. The disappearance of the kingdoms was 'an indication that the different regions of Uganda had now achieved equality', and that the 'symbols of inequality' were no more. In addition, a programme of nationwide reforms were introduced, that were intended to reduce discrepancies between the different ethnic groups of Uganda. In order to address the economic and educational imbalance in the country, there was heavy investment in areas deemed to exhibit backward tendencies. In 1968 reforms were made within the UPC itself, firstly the party organisation was centralised, and secondly the ethnically orientated districts that were used as organisational units were abolished. Finally, there was reform of the parliamentary voting system which meant that every candidate had to stand for election in three constituencies other than their own, reducing the importance of ethnic and regional identity in electoral campaigns.These policies demonstrate a partial political reversal by Obote, especially when compared to his behaviour in government before 1966. The northern domination of government was somewhat relinquished, and a new ideological approach was adopted. This shift was largely realised in Obote's 'Move to the Left' strategy, that was further enshrined by the Common Man's Charter in 1969.

In November 1968 Obote adopted the 'Move to the Left' strategy, and announced that the country would be adopting a socialist ideology. Through the implementation of the 'Move to the Left' Obote was 'attempting to establish a power base among the masses', and also work towards 'an alternative pattern of politics.' This was realised during the early part of 1968 when Obote and his ministers went on country-wide tours to 'meet the people' and generate a mass following for the UPC. The 'Move to the Left' came to be epitomised by the Common Man's Charter, which was signed into law on 24th October 1969, and envisaged 'the creation of a new political culture and a new way of life.' It was 'an effort to break out of the ethnic dimension' and also a promise for 'justice, equality, liberty and welfare for all sons and daughters of the Republic of Uganda'. It flatly rejected 'isolationism in regard to one part of Uganda towards another.' In theory the Charter was meant to reduce inequality throughout the country and generate national loyalty, which caused a considerable stir. The

introduction of radical new policies such as the plan to spread wealth more equitably, reform the electoral system, state acquisition of many multinational companies and the eradication of regional mentality created shockwaves throughout Uganda. The proposition of such radical reform meant the Charter was greeted with widespread scepticism, especially as the document itself appears to have been 'riddled with ambiguities.'

A large section of the population treated the 'Move to the Left' with considerable cynicism because it was vague, and could be interpreted in a variety of ways. The Charter was 'received with alarm by the commercial circles in the country' because the government wanted to adopt a much greater profile in the Uganda's economy. John Saul claims 'it is perfectly clear that Obote was no socialist' and that 'it is all too easy to overstate the significance' of the Common Man's Charter and the 'Move to Left'. Indeed, it appears that the shift to the left had limited long term significance, and that part of Obote's strategy was to isolate his political opponents within the UPC. It would appear that 'Obote's real purpose was not so much a new system as the elimination of those he could no longer trust', and also the development of a new generation of leaders that were loyal to him personally. The presence of an ulterior motive in the formulation of the 'Move to the Left' illuminates a much greater theme in the policies of Obote. It highlights an undercurrent of superficiality in the post-1966 political reforms, and suggests that the President was not overly committed to reducing the potency of ethnic affiliation in Uganda. One example of this, among many others, is Obote's treatment of the Baganda after the crisis of 1966.

The treatment Buganda received after 1966 lends little credibility to Obote's declared intention 'of reducing the significance of the ethnic factor.' Despite the destruction of the Bugandan monarchy in 1966, the region was kept in a state of emergency until Obote was overthrown in 1971, and its citizens were regularly mistreated by the army and security services. In 1968 a number of 'quite unnecessary' steps were taken, including the establishment of the Uganda Armed Forces Headquarters on the premises of the Lukiiko, and the Kabaka's palace being turned into army barracks. These actions exacerbated the resentment felt by the Baganda and symbolised 'the final desecration of the kingdom.' Furthermore, after Obote had forced the Kabaka to flee Uganda in 1966, Mutesa II later died in exile during 1969 in a state of poverty. The government refused to allow him to be buried in a traditional ceremony on

Bugandan soil, which 'further humiliated the Baganda and welded them together in enmity towards Obote.' Such treatment of the Baganda highlights the lack of effort Obote made to integrate an important and populous region within the national framework, and that his public declarations about a new era of politics, free from ethnic division were both erroneous and hypocritical. This argument proves to be particularly pertinent when the ethnic composition of the army is considered, given that Obote was preaching about the death of ethno-politics whilst also ensuring that recruitment for the army was 'being conducted on an ethnic basis.'

As has been previously discussed, the political landscape after independence was for the most part dominated by politicians from the north of the country. This was also the case in the army, which Obote manipulated along ethnic lines by recruiting heavily from the north of the country. In the military Obote had created 'a reliable constituency based on ethnicity' that was used as a base of political support.Throughout the 1960s Obote manipulated 'the tribal composition of the armed forces in order to retain support for the regime' and excluded ethnic factions that he deemed unreliable. The army was stuffed with recruits almost exclusively from the north, who were 'united in a common cause for survival against the rest.' Like the political environment, ethnicity was also extremely divisive within the armed forces, and throughout the 1960s the divide between these two different bodies became increasingly blurred. The first major event that saw the military become involved in the political arena took place not long after independence, and was fuelled by events elsewhere in East Africa.

The first intrusion into politics by the armed forces took place in 1964, part of a chain reaction of army mutinies across East Africa that were sparked by revolution in Zanzibar. On the 23rd January 1964 disturbances broke out on the Jinja barracks, during which time expatriate officers were specifically targeted. The rebellion 'was effectively the only form of expression' for the mutineers, who wanted an increase in pay and the removal of British officers from key positions in the army. The government capitulated to virtually every demand, implementing better pay for private soldiers and non-commissioned officers, which accelerated the speed of Africanisation within the army. The lack of resistance the government displayed had far-reaching consequences, and also highlighted Obote's intention to 'buy time and the loyalty of the military.' It has been claimed that 'changes in the attitudes and

behaviour of the Ugandan armed forces can be dated from the reaction of this mutiny', as soldiers realised they had influence over the political leadership in Uganda. The lack of any real punishment for the mutineers also helped to engender a sense of impunity within the armed forces, which only increased as the decade progressed. The mutiny also had an ethnic dimension, expressed through the resentment of northern soldiers towards the officer corps, who were largely from the southern Bantu group. This conflict 'exercised a high degree of influence on the Africanisation programme' and meant that 'ethnic divisions became an internal fact of life within the army.' As a result of the rebellion in 1964 'personal, factional and tribal considerations became much more important in maintaining military chains of command', and were exacerbated even further as a result of the events of 1966.

As previously mentioned, the army adopted an increasingly important role in Ugandan politics after the events of 1966. After the Buganda crisis, the UPC was reduced 'to the position of a phantom party', because once the armed forces had been used to achieve political goals 'it was impossible to return to a practice of reconciliation politics.' As time progressed the UPC became far too divided and heterogeneous to provide effective leadership, and therefore the army became the only organisation 'which had the immediate political potential for imposing, if not creating…an integrated political order.' The army emerged from the 1966 crisis 'with flying colours' and Obote distributed rewards accordingly. The size, quality and equipment of the army were all improved, and various military personnel were afforded training opportunities outside of Uganda. Despite the ascendency of the Ugandan military between 1966 and 1971, internal conflict soon arose. In the late 1960s a fractious split emerged between Obote and then Major General Idi Amin, which resulted in the formulation of ethnic powerbases and ultimately the overthrow of Obote in 1971.

During the latter half of the 1960s a divergence of opinion emerged between Obote and Amin that 'rendered the vital premise of the post-1966 power-system no longer valid.' The conflict that emerged between the civil and military authorities proved once again to be ethnically divisive. The conflict that emerged can be highlighted by the different approaches Obote and Amin took towards the civil war in neighbouring Sudan. Obote gave orders that Sudanese guerrilla activities could not take place on Ugandan soil, and that the national border must be respected. Amin however

authorised support for Southern Sudanese rebels, and even directly involved some Ugandan army units in the conflict. Obote and Amin both resorted to the 'manipulation of ethnic, language and geographical variables to shore up their support in the armed forces', and in an attempt to exert control over the whole country. Obote created a number of armed organisations in an attempt to rival the regular army, namely the Special Force and the General Service Unit (GSU), which was controlled by his cousin Akena Adoko. The Special Force and the GSU were filled with individuals from Obote's own district of Lango, and were favoured in terms of arms, equipment and budgetary allowance, which greatly angered the regular army. Furthermore, the secretive nature of the GSU 'greatly magnified the danger it seemed to represent to the army. As well as the creation of these paramilitary organisations, Obote also ensured that Langi and Acholi officers were given strategically important positions within the army, pinning his hopes of an alliance between the Langi and Acholi, thus 'clearly exploiting the army's ethnic composition.' Obote's behaviour caused an equal reaction from Amin, who mobilised his own ethnic affiliates from West Nile to counter balance the inflated numbers of Langi and Acholi in the army.

On 12th April 1968, Obote "promoted" Amin to the position of Major General, a position that was of greater honour but of much less influence. This represented an attempt by Obote to weaken the West Nile group within the army, of which Amin was sole representative. In response, Amin began recruiting heavily from his own language cluster, which saw a sudden rise of Sudanic-speakers in the army and a corresponding decrease of Nilo-Hamatic-speakers. Between 1968 and 1969 the number of Sudanic-speakers in the army in fact rose by 74 per cent. On January 25th 1970 Brigadier Peirno Okoya, a leading Acholi officer, was murdered in cold blood alongside his wife only eight days after accusing Amin of cowardice. It was widely believed that Okoya's position as a high ranking Acholi in the army was behind his murder, and 'despite the unequivocal clearance which Amin received from an investigating committee, his unseen hand was still believed in some quarters to have been behind the assassination.' Finally, Amin also managed to generate popularity in Buganda, whose citizens were still resolute in their hatred of Obote. In a television interview in August 1970 Amin drew a distinction between his support for the office of the President and his support for Obote, which was well received in

Buganda. Amin came to represent Buganda's opposition to the regime, and thereby brought about a coalition 'between his group in the army and the civilian groups, especially in Buganda, opposed to Obote.'

Thus came about the coup of 1971, with Amin seizing power on the 25th January whilst Obote was attending a Commonwealth Summit Conference in Singapore. The coup took place at the end of a period 'fraught with tension', that came about as a result of both Obote and Amin establishing conflicting, ethnically orientated blocks of support within the armed forces Michael Lofchie argues that the primary reason the coup took place was in fact the formation of class consciousness among the military, and the desire to sustain the position of economic preponderance that the military had recently achieved. Lofchie states that because the army 'had come to constitute a more and more economically privileged stratum', Obote was overthrown because the 'Move to the Left' threatened the economic prosperity of the armed forces. This however is vehemently disputed by Holger Bernt Hansen, who claims it is 'meaningless to treat the army as a uniform entity…as it was only a single ethnically-defined group that took power', and therefore 'it is difficult to interpret the coup in elite or class terms.'

During the late 1960s and early 1970s a destructive show down occurred between Obote and Amin for the ethnic control of the army, and in effect control of the entire state. The political reforms brought about by the 'Move to the Left' were extremely hypocritical and essentially meaningless, given that Obote was simultaneously organising the military along ethnic lines. The claims made by Obote in the Common Man's Charter that the days of regional and ethnic identity in fact seem rather laughable. When the decisive hour came in 1971 Obote was abandoned by his Acholi allies in the army, who were disgruntled about the government response to the murder of Brigadier Pierino Okaya. Obote had dug his political grave 'by using ethnicity to contain ethnicity.' After Amin overthrew Obote the centre of power remained in the north of the country, but 'moved to a new and more narrowly-defined group'. Unsurprisingly, this did not herald an end to ethnic division within the army or the country as a whole, in actual fact perhaps the polar opposite.

The Amin Regime And The Asian Expulsion

After the overthrow of Obote, Amin publicly stated that there would be a significant overhaul of the Ugandan political system. This was highlighted by the list of eighteen grievances, which were used as a justification the January coup. The list included the breakdown of law and order, neglect of the armed forces in favour of the GSU and ethnic manipulation of the army and country as a whole. The list of grievances seems somewhat ironic given that Amin was heavily involved in the ethnic manipulation of the armed forces before 1971, and also suggest continuity in the policies of Obote and Amin. After the coup Amin had to largely work within the system he had inherited, and perpetuated 'the importance of the ethnic factor over the whole spectrum of development.' Writing in 1973 Garth Glentworth and Ian Hancock noted that 'Amin represents not an aberration within Uganda's recent history but an extension of existing tendencies of Uganda politics.' There was an evident perpetuation between Obote and Amin, but there were also a number of changes implemented by Amin that warrant mention.

Announced an initiated in 1972, local political organisations were reorganised, meaning election to local positions had to be sought through the ballot box instead of being inherited. Furthermore, ten new regions were established that cut across Uganda's main ethnic groups, in order to 'break with the inherited ethnic-group structure.' In August 1973 Amin attempted to address a long-standing problem by declaring that Swahili would become the official language in Uganda. This provided opportunities for people who were previously unable to exert themselves on the political level because of linguistic barriers, and because no group had a monopoly of the language, it 'represented an attempt at ethnic equalisation.' The adoption of Swahili as the national language however proved to be 'one of the very few cultural gains brought about by Amin's rule.' Before the coup in 1971 Amin had developed an amiable relationship with Buganda, which he attempted to sustain during the early 1970s. In February 1971, the State of Emergency that had been in place since 1966 was lifted, followed by the announcement that the body of Edward Mutesa II would be returned to Uganda for a state funeral, which Amin was keen to stress that the ceremony was 'a gesture of national reconciliation.' Furthermore, although publicly opposing the return of the kingdoms, Amin allowed the Baganda to openly campaign for the restoration of the Kabakaship. It has however been observed that Amin's

stance was ‘a reflection of the regime’s political, military and economic weakness in its first year’, as opposed to Amin being overtly conciliatory.These examples indicate that Amin did instigate a variety of changes upon his assumption of power, but as noted there was also distinct continuity with the Obote regime. Shortly after the coup Amin announced that an airport, giant hotel and university were to be built in his home district West Nile, which confirmed the ‘continuation of the already familiar pattern of ethnic favouritism.

Ethnic manipulation of the military transcended the change of President in 1971, and was realised in a more drastic and brutal fashion under Amin. During the Amin regime ‘life was at its cheapest’, and ‘the whole ethos of Amin’s army threatened the unarmed people of Uganda.’ Military force became ‘the medium and very foundation of Uganda politics’, which was consummated with a rapid growth in military expenditure. In the fiscal year 1971/72 military spending accounted for 25 per cent of the total state budget, contributing in part to a sense of growing impunity within the army. The military had command of significant assets, and were able ‘to commandeer whatever took their fancy.’ Amin brought the army ‘under his personal control by changing its ethnic composition and increasing its responsibilities’ on a nationwide scale. After the coup 22 army officers were promoted, of which 13 were from northwest Uganda, and the Special Force and GSU, filled will pro-Obote Langi were liquidated.

Many Langi and Acholi officers were also specifically targeted, creating a ‘holocaust within the armed forces.’ On June 24th 1971 150 officers and men, most of whom were Acholi were killed in ‘a violent tribal clash.’ After Amin’s coup, a significant portion of the Langi and Acholi in the army fled to Tanzania with Obote, where they established training camps and engaged in various cross-border guerrilla attacks. The threat that this produced resulted in a variety of ‘strongly ethnic repercussions inside Uganda’, and the targeting of Langi and Acholi citizens. Langi and Acholi girls were targeted and raped by soldiers, and from the early 1970s onwards ‘periodic terror’ became ‘an aspect of the life of every Langi and every Acholi.’ Ethnicity was evidently still incredibly divisive during the Amin regime, with the ethnic affiliates of Obote from Langi and Acholi being specifically targeted. There was also another ethnic group that were targeted by Amin that have thus far gone unmentioned in this

essay. This group were consistently discriminated against during the colonial period, then under Obote and finally under Amin, before being expelled from Uganda in 1972.

On August 4th 1972, Idi Amin announced the mass expulsion of Asians from Uganda, which was to be completed within three months. It was the beginning of 'the final chapter in the story of the Indian presence in Uganda', and represents perhaps the most extreme example of ethnic conflict and division within the time period that has been examined. The announcement of the expulsion was preceded by the "cattle count" in October 1971 whereby Indians were forced visit special camps to be counted, followed by Amin's famous Indian conference, held on 7th-8th of December 1971. During the conference Amin 'detailed numerous charges against the Indian community, without distinguishing between citizen and non- citizen Indians of Uganda.' Amin claimed he had been told by God in a dream to expel the Asian population from Uganda, which resulted in the expulsion of around 80,000 Ugandan Asians that held British passports.

Amin's expulsion of Ugandan Asians was part of his plan for 'an all-black Uganda', which gained considerable support throughout Uganda and in other African nations. Amin publicly declared that the expulsion of Uganda's Asian community would benefit the African population economically, and that the supposed exploitation of Asian businessmen would come to an end. The promise that the economic balance of power would swing decisively in the favour of the African community resulted in considerable support for the expulsion, that would rid the country of a largely resented ethnic minority.

Mahmood Mamdani observes that the supposed 'moment of glory of the Amin regime turned into a tragedy', that went on to haunt Uganda for a considerable period of time. The expulsion has been described as 'economically unjust, sociologically illiterate and historically unsound', and also fundamentally racist in conception. The British Government publicly documented the racial orientation of the expulsion, highlighted by a telegram sent from R. W. Whitney of the British East African Department to the headquarters of the Organisation of African Unity in Addis Ababa. The telegram states that 'the President's decision to expel non-citizen Asians was a blatant act of racial discrimination' and that 'these people had nothing in common except the fact that they were of Asian ethnic origin.' This view is supported by Vishnu Sharma and F. Woolridge who also proclaim that 'the expulsion of the Uganda Asians was an act

of racial discrimination.' Although it was Amin who expelled the Asian population from Uganda, anti-Asian prejudice was already well established in Uganda, and had its origins in the colonial policies of the British.

In order to explain why resentment developed towards the Asian community in Uganda, 'one must look at the structure and nature of the colonial system for an explanation.' Once Uganda had become a British protectorate, the country and its neighbours became the 'America of the Hindu', resulting in considerable levels of immigration from Asia. Under British rule a 'three tier society was created along racial lines', with Europeans at the top, Asians in the middle and Africans at the bottom. Such institutionalized separation 'fed the fire of misunderstanding between the races' and also reinforced the 'insular attitude and behaviour' of the Asian community. Black African views of the Asians 'arose largely out of the social, political and economic dynamics' that were generated within the stated societal structure. Substantial incomes were largely concentrated in the hands of non-Africans, resulting in a wide imbalance of wealth and power within Uganda, and resentment towards the Asian community from the lower echelons of society. Furthermore, African hostility towards Asians 'had a sharper edge' than it did towards Europeans, because Europeans were mainly technical experts, whereas Asians competed within the commercial sector. Despite relative economic success in Uganda, it still appears that 'the Asians were the victims of the colonial hierarchical situation, and not its perpetrators.' Just like the elevated position of the Baganda, racial friction between the Asian and black African population was largely generated by the societal structure imposed by the British before Uganda gained independence, which made 'the expulsion of Asians from Uganda…inevitable.'

Before the expulsion occurred, anti-Asian prejudice was well established in Uganda. Bahadur Tejani, who was expelled in 1972, observes that 'long before Idi Amin Dada boxed his way through the command post we brown Ugandans had been used to being ordered around' and 'treated as outcasts.' One of the first major examples of anti-Asian prejudice came in the form of the Bugandan boycott of non-African shops, that took place from 1959-60. The boycott was pro-Buganda and pro-Kabaka, but was also inspired by 'the widespread dislike of Asian traders throughout Uganda.' D.A Low claims 'there can be no doubt of the deep animosity of Africans towards the Asian minority in Uganda because of their alleged exploitations of Africans', manifested in

part by Asian commercial practice. The boycott ‘gave an outlet for accumulated political and social frustrations’, which were realised through the prominence of ‘xenophobic, violent and criminal’ actions taken against Asian traders. The boycott is a clear example of deep-seated anti-Asian prejudice in Uganda, as Asian traders ‘were from the outset the primary target’ of the boycott. As a result of the boycott, many Asian traders were expelled from the Bugandan countryside, which ‘stood as a reminder of what a determined campaign against them could effect.’

There is also evidence of anti-Asian prejudice during the Obote regime, which came to the fore towards the end of the 1960s. During a conference of commonwealth leaders in London on 5th January 1969, Obote stated that ‘it was ultimately wrong that a vital aspect of the economy should be controlled by foreigners’, and that around 40,000 Asians who held British passports would have to leave Uganda. The situation became far more pressing in 1970 with the adoption of a new Immigration Act, which meant that all non-Ugandan Asians were required to possess an entry permit if they wished to remain in the country. In addition, following on from his declarations in London in 1969, in early 1970 Obote ‘resolved that all Asians holding British passports should leave Uganda’. Given the steps that Obote took it is somewhat unsurprising that Amin decided to expel Uganda’s Asian population in 1972. The expulsion took place after the progressive escalation of anti-Asian legislation, and was supported by largely anti-Asian black majority. All that remained was for Amin to justify the expulsion personally.

By the summer of 1972, there ‘can be no doubt about the dire straits to which the country had been reduced.’ The economic and budgetary position was serious, there were food shortages and the banking sector was in trouble. In the face of such severe problems, Amin realised that ‘draconian measures taken…against the Asians would win him popularity.’ Indeed, ‘Amin’s attack on the Asian community seems to have been designed, as much as anything, for populist purposes.’ Amin’s announcement also coincided with ‘the most extensive re- organisation of local government Uganda had ever seen.’ The establishment of new provinces and the carving up of ethnic groups was potentially inflammatory, and therefore the expulsion of the Asian community acted as a counterbalance as it was a cause most black Ugandans supported. Amin did not publicly justify the expulsion in populist terms, but instead advanced the idea that the expulsion would benefit Uganda economically.

In December 1971, during a declaration at the Indian conference, Amin listed various examples of 'commercial malpractice' committed by the Asian community in Uganda. The list included the undervaluing of exports and overvaluing of imports, the smuggling of commodities, the subjection of Africans to inflated rents and the lack of African employees in Asian owned businesses. The whole Asian community 'were accused of economic crimes, of the exploitation of Africans, and of occupying too prominent a position in the Ugandan economy.' Amin was 'quite eloquent in defending the expulsion and economic war in terms of economic nationalism' and pledged to transfer economic control into the hands of Ugandans. This economic angle proved rather popular, because the Asian position in the economy was a particular source of animosity. Economic factors were not the only justification for expulsion, and the argument was put forward that the secular nature and exclusivity of the Asian community also justified expulsion.

The sexual exclusivity and 'the barrier which the Asians of Uganda had erected against intermarriage with Africans was an important aspect of their tragic fate under General Idi Amin.' The issue of non-integration was viewed as the 'most painful question' for the Asian community, especially given that only six known marriages had taken place between Asian woman and African men. Amin castigated the Asian community for their unwillingness to integrate, and before the expulsion was announced, declared that the Asian community had to make a greater effort to assimilate themselves into Ugandan society. This however proved fruitless, because the economic role of the Asians within Ugandan society 'predicated on their political and social isolation.' Historically speaking, Ugandan Asians were 'a transplanted, immigrant community which differed physically from the black population', creating a barrier that proved to be insurmountable. It has been observed that many Ugandan Asians 'kept their *man* (heart) in India and *dhan* (wealth) in Britain, whilst still managing to retain their *tan* (body) in East Africa.' For many Ugandans Amin provided sufficient evidence to warrant expulsion, playing on widespread grievances about the economic practices and social exclusivity of the Asian community. Writing in 1975 Dent Ocaya-Lakidi observed that 'if only the Asians were more open, more integrated with the rest, if only they intermarried more, all might have been well.'

The economic turnaround that had been promised by Amin failed to materialise after the expulsion in 1972. Amin failed to live up to the guarantees he given the public,

and instead of the country benefiting economically, the assets left by the fleeing Asian population were squandered and distributed amongst high ranking individuals in the Amin regime. Furthermore, the Africans that filled the positions left vacant by the Asian exodus 'were inexperienced and the economy declined still further under their management.' All property owned by the expelled Asians was nationalised by the state and managed by the Properties Custodian Board. This however did not result in a fair distribution of the seized assets, with the army adopting a larger role in 'distributing the spoils of the economic war'. In a telegram from the British High Commission in Kampala to the Foreign Commonwealth Office, sent on 22nd January 1973, it is noted that 'no real attempt has been made by the Ugandan authorities to put official valuation on the enterprises owned by former Asian residents…transferred to Ugandan Africans.' It is apparent that the expulsion of Uganda's Asian community was not economically beneficial like Amin promised, and that after 1972 the reckless greed of the government meant that the economic assets that been left behind were squandered.

After Amin's seizure of power in 1971 a series of 'atrocious and bizarre events…occurred in Uganda', which culminated in the expulsion of around 80,000 non-citizen Asians in 1972. The expulsion received widespread international coverage, and generated a variety of both positive and negative reactions. It also created a significant refugee crisis, and resulted in the resettlement of 80,000 Ugandan Asians in various locations across the world. The presence of the Asian community in Uganda was clearly divisive, and for a long had generated resentment from black Ugandans. Such resentment had its roots in the societal structure imposed by the British, which placed black citizens at the bottom of the social ladder. The expulsion had economic and social dimensions, but was primarily a 'rejection of alien elements, such as Asians.' In the quest for an all black Uganda, Amin believed he 'had won 'a famous victory over the Asians', but instead the results of the expulsion were almost universally negative.

Conclusion

It is abundantly clear that during the time period studied, ethnicity was an incredibly divisive force in Ugandan politics. Although the ethnic conflicts that took place between the 1950s and 1970s took a variety of forms, there is a clear continuity of theme. Although the scope of this essay does not extend far beyond the expulsion of

Ugandan Asians in 1972, it is clear that the ethnic divisions in Uganda would have continued long after this date. Ethnic divisions do not simply disappear overnight, which would warrant further exploration of ethnic divisions in Uganda after 1972 at a later date. During the time period that has been examined over the course of this work itself, ethnicity manifested itself in overtly negative terms, and was usually a source of contention instead of unification. Both before and after independence friction between different ethnic groups in Uganda was detrimental to the process of national unification, and on a number of occasions ethnic identity became 'a weapon in the political struggle', which was used to mobilise the members of one ethnic group against another.

When Uganda gained independence in 1962, it is unsurprising that the country was divided along ethnic lines, as the Protectorate Government had pursued the policy of ethnic separation for a considerable period of time. The country was essentially an amalgamation of different ethnic entities, which created a much stronger sense of local identity, rather than national consciousness. During the 1950s, the omnipresence of the Baganda was a key issue, as politicians from outside the kingdom were adamant that the post-colonial state would not be dominated by Buganda.

During the tenure of the Protectorate Government, Buganda was treated much more favourably than other parts of Uganda. This resulted in the accelerated development of Buganda, which generated considerable hostility across Uganda. The policies of the British were largely responsible for the ethnic division of the country before independence, and even though Sir Andrew Cohen attempted to reform of this situation during the 1950s, only so much could be done. The formation of political parties in Uganda during the late 1950s reflected the split between Buganda and the rest of the country, namely through the formation of the UPC and the KY. The UPC was formed as a 'non-Ganda' party and sought to combat the power and hegemony of Buganda. For the Baganda 'tribal institutions were the most viable from of political organization', which was realised through the pro-monarchy, isolationist platform of the KY. There was a clear ethnic division in the support base of the KY and UPC, yet it was a coalition between these two parties that brought Uganda to independence. This seemingly unthinkable partnership was short lived however, as after 1962 Milton Obote vehemently sought the marginalisation and eventual destruction of Buganda.

Uganda attained independence with an 'absence of any genuine feeling of nationhood among the people.' Milton Obote publicly stated that he sought to stimulate the process national unification, but this was at the expense of the Baganda, who Obote saw as an obstacle to a united Uganda. It seems that Obote had considerable support for the subjugation of Buganda, which began in earnest in 1964 with the loss of 'lost counties' referendum. This episode was extremely embarrassing for Buganda, and struck directly at the power of the Kabaka. The destruction of Buganda was realised in 1966, after Buganda tried to secede from the rest of the country. In response Obote attacked the Kabaka's palace at Mengo, which decimated the Bugandan kingdom once and for all. Obote consistently espoused the need for unification and synergy within Uganda after 1962, whilst simultaneously seeking the destruction of Bugandan power and authority. This process appears to have been counterproductive, as the war Obote waged in the name of unification did not include the Baganda, and therefore national unity could not be achieved without the Uganda's most populous group.

Obote's calls for national unification and departure from ethnic politics seem particularly shallow when the northern bias of the post-1962 state is considered. Obote merely replaced the Baganda as the dominant force in Uganda by placing power in the hands of those from the north of the country. Obote did not only show bias towards northern politicians, but also manipulated the military along ethnic lines. After the 'battle of Mengo' in 1966 the armed forces assumed an increasingly pivotal role in Ugandan politics, which Obote ensured were dominated by those from northern Uganda, particularly Lango and Acholi. If this was not divisive enough, another split emerged during the late 1960s between Obote and Idi Amin, who both galvanised ethic support bases within the military and security services. Obote established the Special Force and GSU, whilst Amin increased the representation of the West Nile group within the army and recruited a large number of Sudanic-speakers. This ethnic polarisation within the army ultimately lead to the Amin's seizure of power in 1971, highlighting how divisive a force ethnicity was within Ugandan politics.

The pervasive force of ethnicity did not dissipate with a change of President, and under Amin there are numerous examples of how ethnicity factors were manipulated. Upon Amin's assumption of power a wave of violence swept through the military, with Langi and Acholi officers being specifically targeted for their loyalty to Obote

before 1971. Under Amin Langi and Acholi citizens were also targeted, as they were thought to pose a threat to the authority of the state. Amin's defining ethnic battle came in August 1972, when it was announced that all non-citizen Asians would have to leave Uganda within three months. The expulsion was primarily the rejection of an ethnic minority, and was considered by many outside of Uganda to be an act of flagrant racial discrimination. Inside Uganda the expulsion was justified with a variety of economic and social reasoning, and was met with very little resistance from the black population. Resentment of the Asian community was long standing, and the view of Asians as exploiters widespread. The expulsion of 1972 is seemingly the most extreme example of ethnic division that took place before or after independence, as it resulted in the forced migration of around 80,000 people and the reckless plunder of the economic assets of an entire community.

In a nutshell, although ethnic divisions were substantiated in a number of different forms during the time period examined in this paper, ethnicity was a persistent and divisive force in Ugandan politics, both before and after independence. There appears to have been a consistent dissatisfaction with the balance of power between ethnic groups, which usually resulted in conflict or confrontation. Before independence the UPC acted as a vehicle to rally opposition to Bugandan hegemony, and after 1962 Obote continued to attack the power of the Baganda in order to try and stimulate the process of national unification. During the late 1960s contention for control of the state resulted in acute ethnic conflict within the armed forces, and under Amin the idea was put forward that the expulsion of Asian community would redress the balance of power in favour of the African majority. During the period investigated ethnic conflict within Uganda was pervasive and unrelenting, and was detrimental to the nation as a whole because one ethnic group always lost out. Ethnicity was unquestionably divisive both before and after independence, and undermined the very stability of the Uganda itself. This has continued to affect politics in third world countries as they try to grapple with development related challenges. Uganda as for many other African countries is no exception.

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