

# The kingdoms of Uganda



The time of kingdoms in Uganda was from the **13th to the end of the 19th Century**, as the dispersed kingdoms formed alliances to defend their territories and to open up new areas to explore. The largest and most famous kingdoms were **Bunyoro-Kitara** and **Buganda** in the southern and western parts of the country, the Anchoi-Reich in the north and the Busoga-Reich in the east. The Bunyoro-Kitara -Reich was not only the first, but also for a long time the largest kingdom in present day Uganda.

The tradition of kingdoms still has a high status in the history of Uganda, and the former rulers and Kings take a well-established place therein.

The isolated inland location of present day Uganda led to contacts with other peoples being tied relatively late. **Trade** was not operated not until towards the end of the 18th Century with peoples from northern Tanzania. In mid 19th Century also the **Arabs** established permanent trade routes. The first European researchers, adventurers and **missionaries** found their way into today's Uganda along these routes and heralded the colonial period.



Incidentally, Uganda would almost be part of present day **Egypt**. The then great Egyptian Empire wanted to merge the whole region around the source of the Nile. After John Speke had discovered Lake Victoria as the source of the Nile, Samuel Baker was sent as General Governor in 1871 to establish the State "Equatoria". However the ruling Ugandan kings resisted bravely, and the last Egyptian troops deserted the region in 1889.

During this time new religions were introduced in Uganda by **Catholic and Protestant missionaries** (mainly French and British). These religions competed with **Islam** from the outset. Today the breakdown of religious denominations is: 40% Catholics, 26% Protestants and approximately 5-10% Islam, while the rest of falls upon natural religions.

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