

Seeing and Living like a Cross-border Pastoralist: Local Struggles over State Resources and Services on the Uganda-DRC Border

by

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Declaration

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Abstract

The questions of access to state resources by cross-border people including mobile pastoralists remain difficult, especially when it comes to public goods and services like water, land, routes used for migration, grazing pasture for livestock, education for their children, livestock markets, and human and animal health services. This relates to the fact that East and Central African governments tend to focus on the welfare of communities that are settled in specific spaces. Yet lifestyles of some pastoralist groups are predicated on movements over large areas and across national borders. For them, state borders are often porous. At the same time, as Goodhead, (2008) argues, whenever there are violent conflicts borders are taken seriously; simultaneously acting as sources of security and antagonism, inclusion and exclusion. This means that border areas are not isolated peripheries, but places where populations travel, form networks and political alliances, exchange knowledge and conflict in respect to the historic trajectories and specificities of that borderland. This study draws on ethnographic and border theory epistemologies to show how the cross-border pastoralists (the Batuku) at the Uganda-DRC border have developed a “border cultural context” that is embedded in the networks, institutions, and practices that these cross-border pastoralists have developed over time through cattle-people relations and exchange systems. It is this “border cultural context” that the cross-border pastoralists have used to engage with spatial conditions including drought and other ecological uncertainties as well as their peripherality in terms of accessing state resources and services. Through this “border cultural context”, the cross-border pastoralists create migration routes that are not known to state border officials, and thus succeed in outwitting the state border surveillance systems. This “border cultural context” has been a form of resilience to extreme arid conditions of the region. The study observes that due to the changing dynamics caused by militia activities of abductions, strict border surveillance by the Ugandan state, and enforcement of the capitalistic private ownership of land, the Uganda-DRC porous border has changed to a “hard” one. This has brought about changes that threaten the Batuku’s livelihood as a cross-border pastoralist and exposed their cattle complex economy and social system to great stress than never before.

Key terms: Uganda-DRC border, Cross-border Pastoralist/pastoralism, border cultural context, Batuku people, Borderland dynamics, Cattle complex system, Border theory, Border profiteering, Peripherality

Opsomming

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List of Abbreviations

ADF: Allied Democratic Forces

BCMCU: Batuku Cattle Marketing Co-operative Union

CAO: Chief Administrative Officer

CDO: Community Development Officer

DESC: Departmental Ethics Screening Committee

DISO: District Internal Security Officer

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

DPC: District Police Commander

KRAs: Key Resource Areas

LC: Local Council

NALU: National Alliance for Liberation of Uganda

Pas: Protected Areas

PLE: Primary Leaving Examination

REC: Research Ethics Committee

SARS: Severe Respiratory Syndrome

UBOS: Uganda Bureau of Statistics

UNCST: Uganda National Council of Science and Technology

UPDF: Uganda People's Defense Forces

1.0 Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Growing Interest in Transhumant Cross-border Pastoralism

My personal family history profoundly influenced my academic interest in cross-border pastoralism. I was born and raised in a pastoralist family where, whenever drought came, part of the family would move away with cattle to areas that still had fresh resources especially water and pasture. My father and my three elder brothers and sister moved while my mother, grandmother, my paternal aunt, young brother and I remained at home because my young brother and I were too young to move with our father. My mother and her sister-in-law (my paternal aunt) would walk almost 25 kilometres daily to fetch water from the lake for home use, which they carried in big calabashes (gourds) on their heads. According to my mother this used to be an entire day's journey. They would leave early in the morning and return home in the evening. However, the container in which they fetched the water would reach home half full because they kept drinking it as they rested on the way. My father would, on the other hand, come home daily to bring to us milk to mix in the millet porridge, sometimes helped by his elder son (our elder brother).

Of greater concern in the story of these transhumance movements was that whenever droughts came and the decision to move was made, my three brothers and their sister would be withdrawn from school to assist with cattle in the new areas. Since cattle were the only source of family wellbeing, there could never be any objection on my siblings' part. When the rains came and water and pasture was no longer in short supply, family members returned home with the cattle, and it was then that my brothers and sister would resume their studies. These movements were a challenge, especially for my brothers and their sister because sometimes they would be made to repeat their school year because of their lengthy absence from classes. It was only good for them whenever drought came and schools in the area would close until rains came again. As a result of these disruptions, my three brothers and their sister dropped out of school before they could complete primary school Grade Seven and sit for their Primary Leaving Examinations [PLE]. As time went by, the areas where my father and other pastoralists migrated to in drought seasons became state-imposed "restricted areas" and pastoralists were denied access. These state actions forced my father and all other pastoralists in the area to diversify and become sedentary agro-pastoralists. This made them more legible to the state because they were now easy to count, and their agricultural production was predictable every fiscal year and taxes could be levied on them. This is in line with what James Scott calls an "imperial or hegemonic planning mentality of the state that never considers the role of local knowledge and know-how" (Scott, 1998:4). This childhood experience has shaped my thoughts about pastoralism in many ways. It alerted me to the reality that when drought came, pastoralists needed to move to their sanctuaries;

but the question of access to state resources by mobile pastoralists became difficult when it came to public goods and services like water, land, routes used, access to schools for their children, and human and animal health services.

From that personal life experience grew an academic interest in cross-border pastoralists' experiences, especially in 2014 when a group of pastoralists who had crossed the Uganda-Tanzania border to graze their cattle in north-western Tanzania were expelled back to Uganda. In the process, the Tanzanian government confiscated some of their livestock, which have yet to be returned (Musinguzi, 2014). In 2012, a group of pastoralists, the "Balalo", crossed into the Buliisa district in western Uganda, where government security agents killed their livestock following clashes with indigenous cultivators (Bagungu and Banyoro) over grazing rights (Azone, 2015). In 2006/2007 Congolese authorities drove some 800 Basongora pastoralists from the Virunga Mountain Range on the Uganda-DRC border (Mugaiha, 2007). These cases pointed to the borders of East and Central African nation states as contested spaces that shape aspects of social reality and the need for them to be understood from the perspective of those who occupy them (Galaty, 2016; Travis, 2014; Schindel, 2016). As Goodhead (2008:230) puts it, whenever there is "violent conflict, boundaries and borders are taken seriously, simultaneously acting as sources of security and antagonism, inclusion and exclusion". Borderlands are not just isolated peripheries, but places where populations travel, form networks and political alliances, and exchange knowledge and conflict. However, each borderland has its own "historic trajectory and specificities" (Goodhead, 2008:230).

Pastoralism is differentiated from "modern" livestock ranching by the fact that livestock are taken to pasture and water rather than having fodder bought to them, and consequently, pastoral populations are mobile (often following the availability of pastoral resources according to seasons), moving herds and themselves over wide areas (Elliot Fratkin, 2001; Galaty, 2016).

With this project, I carried out an ethnographic investigation into how pastoralists living astride an international border access national resources, security, and services on either side of this dividing line. Drawing on the case of Batuku pastoralists on the Uganda-Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) border, I have examined how cross-border pastoralists negotiate their livelihoods by documenting their struggles, conditions, and everyday life experiences. I also sought to identify the networks and institutions that these cross-border pastoralists have formed over time to facilitate their survival along, astride, and at times bounded by the lines that nation states have drawn. As shown by my own family story, most public services, including schools, hospitals, markets, and facilities for animal vaccination, are designed for citizens who are primarily sedentary. This study was prompted by the need to look at pastoralists' experiences in light of the fact that their mobile lifestyle requires negotiating access to government resources, support, and services on either side of the border. This

study contributes to pastoralists-border studies literature by investigating the experiences of the Batuku pastoralists and how they have framed their lives on the Uganda-DRC border. It focuses on their responses to state policies that promote sedentary livelihoods as well as their struggles to access state resources, protection, and services amidst political conflicts and ecological uncertainty. This is because borders, as Goodhead, (2008) points out, delineate different forms of sovereignty, citizenships and regulatory regimes, and these are always transient and fluid as they are continually negotiated and contested.

Earning a living on state borders can require many people to disregard state sanctioned lines and move as if there were no borders. This is heightened with mobile, nomadic communities with whom states often have ambivalent relationships (Galaty, 2016; Anderson & O'Dowd, 1999; Cooper & Rumford, 2013). Exemplifying this are pastoralists whose existence depends on movement unfettered by borders and boundaries within and outside of their territorial surroundings (Galaty, 2016). As Vinuesa, (2003) has observed, understanding borders requires understanding the people who move back and forth from one side to the other. This also requires understanding their efforts to make sense of a dual identity and their struggles to survive in unpredictable circumstances.

A considerable number of anthropological studies have looked at groups of people who live along nation-state borders. Examples include ethnographies of people living on the border between Venezuela and Colombia in Latin America, the US-Mexico border in North America (Alvarez, 1995; De Leon, 2013) and communities straddling the French and German border in Europe (Scott, 2012; Meehan & Plonski, 2017). In Africa, studies of borderland groups tend to emphasise cross-border conflicts (McCabe, 2002; Husken, 2010; Oba, 2012; and Galaty, 2016), and to highlight the fact that borders were drawn without due regard to the ethnic character and cultural areas of the people who live(d) on either side of the line (Wilson & Donnan, 2012; and Englebort, Tarango, & Carter, 2002). Other studies have detailed how nation-state borders become peripheral zones with few services to offer to their inhabitants (Nugent & Vincent, 2008; Vinuesa, 2003; Kolossov, 2005; Anderson & L. O'Dowd, 1999). These studies have also employed various perspectives, including human ecology, history, and political economy to understand the forms of engagement between pastoralists and their neighbours. Human ecology approaches have been used to explain the ways in which human populations exploit physical resources to survive and how they interact with other human groups through cooperation, trade, and intermarriages on the one hand, or competition, subjugation, and warfare on the other. These perspectives, however, tend to overlook pastoral mobility within and across borders as a way to exploit drylands optimally and sustainably for animal production. By contrast, sedentarisation is depicted by states and some development agencies as the first step towards "modernization" and "economic development" (Schlee, 2012).

These perspectives have formed the basis for predominately negative connotations of pastoralism within government and among policy-makers. Administrators often accuse pastoralists who cross territorial and state borders of spreading disease. Pastoralism has furthermore been blamed for harmful ecological effects and economic inefficiencies (Leder & Streck, 2005). Concepts associated with adverse consequences, such as “overgrazing”, “unsustainable carrying capacity”, and “the tragedy of the commons” continue to be advanced, even when research has shown these to be questionable in the African context (Turner, 2017; Anderson, Morton, and Toulmin, 2009). Nevertheless, based on these perceptions, and swayed by the potential for financial gain, governments of the regions in which pastoralists operate have made decisions that disadvantage pastoralists, such as allocating grazing lands to private companies for commercial agriculture. This research questions how this callousness affects pastoralists who straddle national borders, and how such groups gain access to the state facilities and services that do exist.

There are numerous studies of the movements of cross-border pastoralists, though not until now on the Batuku specifically. Previous work includes studies of Arab and Zaghawa pastoralists who move from eastern Chad into the contested land of Dar Fur (Mamdani, 2009); of the Anywaa and Nuer from South Sudan who relocate during drought to the Gambella region of Ethiopia (Hutchinson, 1996; Feyissa & Hoehne, 2008); of Somalis who routinely crisscross the borders of Somalia, Puntland, Somaliland, and Djibouti (Feyissa & Hoehne, 2008); of the Borana, Gabra, Dassanetch, and Garre who reconnoitre the Kenyan-Ethiopian border (Galaty, 2016); of the Pokot, Turkana, and Karimojong who move between Kenya and Uganda (Gray, 2009; Broch-Due, 2000); and the Maasai who straddle the Kenyan-Tanzanian border (Galaty, 1982; Hodgson, 2000). What tends to predominate in these studies of “borderland pastoralists” is discussion of conflicts that erupt as they seek to access pastoral resources. As Galaty (2016) has argued, borders create a system of political and economic differences that pull or push pastoralists back and forth on either side of the borders. On opposite sides of a border, land use and state policies invariably differ, creating abundant or limited space, verdant or arid pasture, stronger or weaker currencies, attractive or constrained market conditions, more or less security, and varying degrees of conflict and harmony. These differences create incentives for people to move back and forth over state borders in search of optimal conditions. In the same line of argument, Barth, (2000:17) refers to borders as rich “affordances” and as “fields of opportunities for mediators, traders, and middle persons of all kinds”. Nugent and Vincent (2008) have put forward an argument that suggests that links across state borders render trans-border communities and ethnic ties an asset rather than a source of loss.

This study thus draws on these studies, as well as border theory perspectives, to investigate the extent to which borders are contested spaces that shape aspects of social reality, surmising that the Batuku

pastoralists have constructed an identity that is embedded in and informed by their spatial context (the border cultural context). Grounded in the findings of my ethnographic fieldwork at the Uganda-DRC border, I argue that the Batuku pastoralists have constructed a “border cultural context” through maintaining ties with their kin groups across the border, creating routes that are not known to border officials, and developing networks and institutions based on cattle exchanges to facilitate their movements and access to resources and services as they secure their livelihood. It is this “border cultural context” that I find to have been both a source of their resilience to the spatial conditions of drought and other ecological uncertainties and vulnerabilities, as well as their peripherality in terms of accessing national resources and services, since they are sometimes viewed as “neither here nor there”. In other words, these cross-border pastoralists are not just passive spectators in relation to these border dynamics; they typically constitute their own “cross-border societies” that do not emphasise national citizenship (Truett, 2006). They produce their own context, rooted in their social practices that transcend nation-state boundaries. However, it is this spatially constructed “border cultural context” of the Batuku pastoralists that is being challenged by the capitalist commodification of land and cattle as well as the role of the state and militias, and the latter’s struggles for territorial control and political and military hegemony. This antagonism has threatened the cross-border pastoralists’ source of resilience so much that they risk losing their livelihoods. The case study of the Batuku pastoralists on the Uganda-DRC border examines these issues by explaining how people who have been making these journeys in this border region describe these processes, and documenting pastoralists’ stories of survival, struggles, and failures amidst drought, conflict and state policies at this border.

1.2 The “border cultural context” at the Uganda-DRC border

The “border cultural context” in this thesis is a conceptualisation of what border communities particularly the Batuku pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border engage in as ways of transforming borderland spaces on both sides of the border. As they graze their livestock, trade, work, and relate with one another at the border a cross-border cultural context develops that does not emphasise citizenship but people’s survival on the border. This is due to the fact that borders have what Truett, (2006:7) calls “the paradoxical character” of dividing and connecting at the same time. This conceptualisation is useful in explaining the activities in form of institutions, networks and relationships that are interwoven on cattle people relations that facilitate cross-border pastoralists’ movements to access state resources and services across the border. Although Truett (2006) argues that border people cannot forget their nations, surviving along borderlines makes nomadic pastoralists to forget their national borders and boundaries by emphasising on the ways of surviving the precarious situations of this border region of variable rainfall, disease, overgrazing, insecurity, and neoliberal

projects of the states. For the Batuku pastoralists, living on this borderline has given them a particular identity, which has made and re-made them; constantly redefining their past and present situations and giving them a more acceptable explanation of their prevailing state. The relationships between state and non-state actors and institutions are often antagonistic as they are reciprocal and complicitous (Timothy Raeymaekers, 2009). Instead of depicting them as separate entities – “namely separating the state from the non-state, the formal from the informal, or the political from the personal - there is a need for fluidity, porosity, and overlap” (Raeymaekers, 2009:56). The practices at the Uganda-DRC border show how political power is constantly “demonstrated, projected and contested” by ordinary citizens in the process of pursuing their livelihoods (Donnan & Wilson, 1999:155). Some border conditions do not merely influence political constellations, but essentially make the state to be what it is. As Raeymaekers (2009) argues, the reordering of space in the border areas is not a product of nation states but is instead the outcome of the everyday practices that create them. Pastoralism as a social practice (constructed on the border space itself) is becoming a mundane, daily economic activity due to the changing dynamics in this border region. The drifting nature of the Semliki border region, which is dominated by militia activities and displacement, has people living in this place even though they are aware of its precariousness and physical dangers. Pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border area have fended for themselves for many decades. This has resulted in the construction of a “border cultural context” that now is being challenged by militia activities, processes of violence, state securitisation and commodification which have contributed towards the transformation of a formerly porous border into a “hard” one. Before the border “hardened”, the disenfranchised herdsmen routinely moved across the border in times of drought and crisis, but these days they are facing new political and military threats to their livelihoods.

The closing of the border due to insecurity and commodification of land and cattle at the Uganda-DRC border has reduced the significance of the endless array of strategies and tactics used by the Batuku pastoralists to evade the dangerous conditions of the border. This situation has bred destitution, contradictory cultural contexts and new meanings of life in the Batukuland. It has disoriented people and introduced significant age, gender and generational changes to the area. It has also produced considerable creativity and innovation by women and youth in the region. This includes a growing number of male youths joining the *bodaboda* motorcycle operations, women increasingly opting to participate in trade, and young people who are seeking “*kyeeyo*” (unskilled jobs) abroad.

1.3 Why Batuku have become a cross-border pastoralist group

This research is motivated by the fact that pastoralism, as a mode of life in dryland areas of Africa, has long been termed “primitive”, “backward”, and untenable in the “modern” era. African

pastoralists are indeed some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world (Morton, 2010; Salih & Ahmed, 2001). In East Africa, pastoralist groups still depend on livestock and rudimentary forms of production for their livelihoods (Fratkin, 2001). An essential part of their survival strategy involves taking advantage of trading, exchanging goods, or forming alliances with neighbouring groups, including farmers, urban dwellers, and sometimes other pastoralists (Fratkin, 2001). Often such relations become competitive and lead to conflict over resources, particularly if the situation is worsened by population pressure, loss of land, civil strife, and border restrictions (Krätli & Schareika, 2010). In remote borderland areas, conflicts often escalate when resources are depleted on one side of the border. These areas are often too barren to support vegetation, and recurrent droughts force people to migrate in search of pasture and water, exposing their livestock to the risk of diseases (Fekadu, 2010). To overcome these challenges, pastoralists may choose to cross territorial and state borders. Doing so is one way to compensate for the hazardous environmental conditions that lead to recurrent shortages and loss of livestock (Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson, 1999; Hutchinson, 1996).

Boundaries between nation states are not the only lines that prove problematic for pastoralists. As elites continue to subdivide new and smaller, ethnic-based districts, even district boundaries have become obstacles to pastoralists' movements (Kratli & Schareika, 2010). Policy formulation and implementation frameworks remain a preserve of experts and rarely do they balance the various regional and sectoral interests with the needs of pastoralists (Gavanta, 2004). For instance, when it comes to benefitting from state assistance, public services like schools, hospitals, animal vaccination, and markets are generally oriented towards communities that remain in place. Pastoralist families with few resources can thus be faced with the choice of prioritising schooling for their children, health care to ailing family members, or moving their animals in times of drought (Krätli, 2000; Krätli & Dyer, 2009; Barton & Morton, 2001). Although there is an argument for integrating specific, pastoralist knowledge into policy-making, pastoralists' expertise and preferences are often ignored (Lister, 2004; Oba, 2012). Evidence from the pastoral areas of East Africa suggests that even appropriate policies are sometimes not implemented properly (Morton, 2010). For instance, in Uganda in 1998, \$34 million was allocated to address pastoralists' water needs, but this money disappeared in what came to be known as the "Valley Dam Scandal" (Livingston, 2005).

Scholars conceptualise the nexus of policy and governance around pastoralism through different approaches. Some highlight the marginalisation of pastoralists within African states, emphasising pastoralists' lack of political representation (Lister 2004; Brockley, Hobley, & Scott-Villiers, 2010). Other approaches have advanced what Ferguson, (1990) refers to as "the development discourse fantasy". In his work on Lesotho, Ferguson argues that the "development industry" tends to believe that Less Developed Countries (LDCs) and "traditional societies" need to be "plugged" into the

modern capitalist world through infrastructure development programmes. The situations of pastoralists, however, vary across Africa due to differences in ecology, historical context, and political economy. For instance, since the advent of colonialism in Central and East Africa, the trajectory of pastoralism took a different course, where cross-border pastoralists had to contend with the new boundaries and border regulations. This “witches brew” of actual processes and relations that Li (2007) writes about, deserve to be studied ethnographically.

The decision to focus on the Batuku pastoralists in this study is based on the consideration that they are one of several communities that live peripherally (economically marginal and insecure livelihood) on a borderland region in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the late 1990s, the Uganda-DRC border and the whole of Semliki region generally has been engulfed by political insecurity, conflict, and militia proliferation (Scorgie, 2011; Raeymaekers & Luca, 2009; Raeymaekers, 2009; Trapido, 2015). As Scorgie (2011) argues, borderlands are complex zones or entities, and studying them needs to move beyond the superficial paradigms of cross-border violence. Through examination of the socio-political and military-economic networks of the Uganda-DRC border region, Scorgie demonstrates that the war is “constitutive of the borderland” (ibid.:81). Having been shaped by processes that stretch back to the colonial era, and continue to the present, this border region, according to Scorgie, is characterised by two aspects: the unusual role of the state and the exceptional use of force by its occupants to survive. To use Andreas’s (2003) phrase, although geopolitics has transformed, it has not been transcended. States are retooling and reconfiguring their border regulatory apparatus to prioritise policing. This policing of borders has much to do with the US and European priorities of war on terror (Paasi, 2005; Newman, 2011). This situation of insecurity and militia activities has forced communities in the region to contend with new demands and innovate new strategies to survive. This has not only increased their peripherality but has also enhanced their dependence on pastoralism as the basis of their existence within a reduced space of operation. As Scoones & Devereux (2008) put it, the pastoralist lifestyle risks exposure to a Malthusian-style crisis. This refers to the possibility of “population checks” arising because too many people and cattle share too little land. The Batuku pastoralists, having constructed their livelihood based on a transhumance context, would now seem to fall into a “no man’s policy area” this means that the Batuku pastoral community fall off the Ugandan policy structures like traditional leadership ones of Rwenzururu, Tooro, and Obudingiya kingdoms to which these pastoralists have reservations to be part of, and this pushes them to higher levels of peripherality. Moreover, within the governance structures in Uganda, the Batuku pastoralists occupy an uncertain position, as they are neither part of the Toro kingdom nor the Rwenzururu kingdom. On the other hand, the Batuku are influenced by a love of cattle and the desire to acquire them, which catalyses the search for fresh pasture and water without regard to national

boundaries. It is this search for scarce necessities on behalf of their animals that in the past placed the Batuku in conflict with neighbouring communities on either side of the Ugandan-DRC border. Amidst this situation of border embeddedness and experiences, the Batuku pastoralists remain one of the groups in central-eastern Africa that are less known and minimally conceptually theorised.

Along with the national dividing line, the Batuku pastoralists are surrounded by three national parks: Semliki, Rwenzori, and Kibale. These parks have reduced the arable land available for pastoral activities and contributed to pushing the Batuku across borders in times of crisis. What this study sets to establish is how the Batuku pastoralists experience the dynamics of the Uganda-DRC border region in terms of struggles, challenges, failures, and opportunities as they pursue their livelihood amidst insecurity, violence, militia raids, and state vigilance and control in the border region. It documents how the Batuku themselves cope with precarious conditions brought about by the changing dynamics in this border region.

This study thus addresses the gaps in anthropological literature by articulating the experiences of the Batuku pastoralists and how they frame their existence in a region riven by insecurity, aggression, socio-economic struggles and power contestations. The study looks at what Migdal (2004:5) calls the “spatial logics”. This refers to the meanings border people enshrine in their social formations that relate to their contestations and experiences of state borders as they pursue their livelihoods. It focuses on the Batuku’s spatial responses to state policies from early colonial times to the present, indexing their navigations, engagements, and innovations in terms of networks and institutions that have been constructed based on cattle exchange systems in the process of earning a living in this border region. The study, conversely, examines the changes and continuities in the social relations of the Batuku pastoralists. The study examines the domestic and political relations of people in relation to cattle exchanges and management, and how these relations are perceived and experienced according to the distinctions of age, sex and generation.

1.4 Border theory

This study draws on “border theory perspectives”. This theoretical approach owes its origin to scholars of the American Southwest (Alvarez, 1995; Konrad, 2015; Konrad & Nicol, 2011, Anzaldua, 1987). In the 1990s, events taking place in the European Union compelled scholars to contribute significant theoretical insights and concepts to border studies (Newman, 2011; Sohn, 2014; Kolossov, 2005; Zimmerbauer, 2011). With a specific focus on Africa, Anthony Asiwaju, (2011, 1983, 1985, 1990), Paul Nugent, (1996), Coplan, (2010) and Donna Flynn, (1997) pioneered this theoretical orientation. These scholars dealt with the porousness and negotiability of African nation-state borders.

A great achievement of border theoretical studies has been to establish that borders are not made by geography. Borders in North America and Europe were established through war, domination, and resistance. During the 1885 Berlin Conference, territorial claims were made that resulted in the effective occupation of Africa by European nation-states (Katzenellenbogen, 1996). Contributors to the discussion, especially in the African context, have highlighted the reality that whether borders are arbitrary, intra-ethnic or politically divisive, they are often accepted and reproduced, thereby creating the conditions for the social and economic life of borderland communities (Flynn, 1997). Borders hold meanings for people who inhabit them, and such meanings are contested by other social formations (Migdal, 2004). It is in this sense that this thesis perceives the “border cultural context” of the Batuku cross-border pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border. This conceptualisation builds on what Migdal calls “mental maps” incorporate elements of the meanings people attach to special configurations, the loyalties they hold, the emotions, and passions that groups evoke, and their cognitive ideas about how the world they survive in is constructed. At the Uganda-DRC border these act together to establish and maintain a “cultural context” that connects people and their practices at the border and also marks the separation between them and other groupings. Through a special “border cultural repertoire”, the Batuku cross-border pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border have produced a cultural world that is composed of code words, secret names, signals, established routes of travel, values, and sanctions for divergent behaviour. Through this territorially based cultural repertoire, cross-border pastoralists are able to bypass, neutralize, and outwit the state border monitoring systems to access pastoral resources and services available at either side of the border.

The comparative and analytical foundations of border theory are informed by a focus on the characteristics of border management, border life, and borderland communities. Work on border theory is well placed to explain how African borders and borderland communities operate. This is because borders in Africa are contingent, porous, and in flux. They are impermanent features of social life, dependent on particular circumstances. As Truett (2006: 8) explains, “border people are not spectators in the border dynamics; they typically constitute their own cross-border society that does not emphasise citizenship”. Border subjects produce their own context, rooted in social practice that transcends nation-state boundaries (Truett, 2006; Donnan & Wilson, 1999). As Coplan, (2002) has argued, African borders have particular salience that need further study in order to contribute to the field more broadly, and to influence its theoretical foundations. In contrast to borders elsewhere in the world, African borders exhibit what Coplan (ibid.) has termed as “mixed inefficiency” and “inconsistent enforcement”. Therefore, as Truett (2006:9), puts it:

“By treating the borderlands as a shifting mosaic of human spaces - some interwoven, others less so; some transnational, others national; some colonial, and others modern..... we avoid simply replacing one historical container with another. A history bounded by cross-border

networks of corporate power would, just like national history, exclude much of the lived experiences of border people”.

So, using a border theory perspective, we must also track historic border crossers along local paths. Only then can we appreciate how ordinary people emerge on their own terms from the shadows of state and corporate control to reshape the borderlands (Truett, 2006).

Exemplifying this point is the Batuku pastoralists’ occupation of space that has been split by a national dividing line. In the context of these cross-border pastoralists who operate at a border where the authority and economy of the two adjacent states are equally weak, the emphasis is on performance rather than control; on gatekeeping and taxation rather than service. People living in this environment may find reason to identify with others locally, regardless of national identities, in order to create networks and institutions for mutual assistance, and to work together to outwit the practices of the state. Border theory perceives such communities as constituting a “border culture” that is defined by social interaction. It considers the borders to be formed by much more than the institutions and activities of the state. Instead, these spaces become meaning-making and meaning-carrying entities. For residents, the border is a facet of life and a form of meaning shared with people on the other side of the legal demarcation (Donnan & Wilson, 2012). Later I examine how this space is challenged and selectively “unmade” as militia violence and capitalistic struggles shake the foundations of Batuku pastoralists by destroying their drought sanctuaries and dreams of survival, creating a sense of misery.

1.5 Problem statement

East and Central African governments tend to focus on the welfare of communities that are settled in specific spaces. Yet lifestyles of some groups are predicated on movements over large areas and across national borders. For them, state borders are often porous. Communities that historically lived astride borders continue to do so, moving back and forth across these imaginary lines, pursuing their livelihoods. The Batuku pastoralists are one such group. Alongside other communities living on the Uganda-DRC border, they move back and forth seasonally. This study ethnographically investigated the relationship between the Batuku pastoralists and the state, and how they shaped their social world as a “cross-border” people. I also established how the Batuku pastoralists have constructed their livelihood in this borderland through a complex system of cattle-people relationships.

1.6 Research questions and objectives

This study set out the following questions and objectives:

How are Batuku pastoralists living on the Ugandan side of the border influenced by border dynamics? And what does the border mean for the Batuku’s access to state resources, protection, and services

originating from different nation states? Based on these questions the study set out to achieve these objectives with the main one being to investigate the influence of border dynamics on the people who live astride them. It focused on their conditions and practices ethnographically in relation to national resources and services. With this I intended to identify how Batuku pastoralists experience and frame a social world and how it has been defined by political borders. I intended to examine the networks and institutions that the Batuku have developed over time as survival mechanisms through which to navigate border conditions and dynamics; and then to ascertain the changes and continuities of the social and cultural complexities of Batuku pastoralists.

1.7 Research design and methods

This study draws on Clifford Geertz's notion of ethnographic "thick" description in order to describe and analyse the ways the Batuku pastoralists experience the dynamics of the Uganda-DRC border. Geertz suggests that ethnographers need to generate "thick" descriptions of social events and activities in order to explain people's ways of living from which a detailed analysis of concepts and meanings can be produced (Geertz, 1973). As Fife (2005:4) notes, "the goal of the ethnographic research is to formulate a pattern of analysis that makes reasonable sense out of human actions within the given context of a specific space and time". Fife (ibid.) also points out that "long-term observation is necessary to gain some understanding of the unwritten rules that govern human interactions among a specific group of people". In accordance with his suggestions, I "hung out" with Batuku pastoralists and followed their lives and examined their reasons for crossing the border as well as when and why they remained on one side. I observed their lives as pastoralists in the drought and rainy seasons, the networks and institutions they formed with other communities on both sides of the border, and how they have used those formations to access public resources and services. I engaged with a variety of people, both men and women of different ages with diverse levels of education. I ultimately ascertained how far pursuing a pastoralist lifestyle on nation-state lines limits or facilitates people's ability to access public goods and services astride the border and how the changing dynamics in the form of militia activities, state policing of the border and the commodification of land and cattle in this border region have undermined the Batuku's "cattle complex system", in some cases resulting in destitution.

This study was carried out on the Uganda-DRC border in Rwebisengo sub-county, Ntoroko district, which is the home of Batuku pastoralists. Ntoroko district is bordered by Kabarole district in the south, and Bundibugyo district in the southwest. It borders the DRC to the west and northern side. It is also bordered by Kibaale district to the east, and a significant part of the district is covered by Semliki Wildlife Reserve. The population of the study included all Batuku pastoralists.

According to the 2014 Uganda National Census Report, the Batuku number approximately 17,378 people. I, therefore, conducted this ethnography among a sample of Batuku pastoralists who cross the border on a seasonal basis, most of whom are in the Rwebisengo sub-county. I selected my interlocutors through snowball sampling, starting with those I already knew who then led me to other Batuku pastoralists living in scattered homesteads.

The study focused on individual Batuku households and, therefore, what is presented here includes individual voices, views, debates, and daily challenges of a livelihood at the border. I employed qualitative methods to facilitate the process of data collection. Through ethnographic interviews, informal discussions, participation in customary rituals and other occasional ceremonies, and life history analysis, I tried to understand Batuku people's perspective and lived experiences at the Uganda-DRC border.

1.8 Participant observation

Dewalt & Dewalt, (2002) consider participant observation to be a method in which the researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as a means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their routines and culture. This understanding motivated me to participate in the routines of the Batuku to observe as much as possible. This necessitated, as Hume & Mulcock (2004: Xii) emphasise, "both cultural immersion and separating oneself from the experience" in order to be able to comprehend it intellectually and write about it convincingly. As Fife (2005) says, I tried to understand the Batuku's point of view by both participating in their behaviour and life from within and observing from without. During my period of fieldwork, I participated in a range of activities that relate to cattle movements, ceremonies, rituals, social events, such as sub-county meetings, sensitisation assemblies, marriage and child naming ceremonies, burials, water well excavations, livestock herding and watering, markets, searches for missing animals, fencing, cleaning of cattle enclosures, and cattle lifting.

1.9 Ethnographic interviews and life history analyses

Ethnographic interviews are unstructured and sometimes thought of as fortuitous interviews. They are conversations that take advantage of the topics initiated by the subjects of our study (Fife, 2005). With this method I made use of the "lucky breaks" that occurred in my conversations with participants, turning them to my advantage as a researcher (Fife, 2005). This method was handy since it allowed me not only to discover most of the relevant themes, but it also served to confirm the assumptions that I brought into this study.

According to Fetterman, (2010), interviewing helps to explain and put into a larger context what the ethnographer sees and experiences. Being able to speak the same language as one of my informants is an important advantage. As my mother comes from the Batuku community, I was able to converse easily, and interpretation assistance was never required. Information generated through interviews included identification of historical events and how these events have influenced the cross-border pastoralism of the Batuku people, societal understanding of the border, perception of how pastoralism is viewed and perpetuated from generation to generation, and the methods of crossing the border in times of need in the form of code words, routes and means of avoiding border institutions. An open-ended approach to asking questions and conversation provided flexibility to cope with the particularities of the range of contexts encountered in the field. Such conversations brought to the fore individual people's knowledge of pastoralism, the changes experienced by the group in pursuing pastoralism at the border, and the continuities of the practice of pastoralism amidst border changing dynamics.

I employed life history analysis to collect and analysis intensive accounts of a whole life, or a portion of a life, through in-depth conversations (R L. Miller & Brewer, 2003). This is important since it places the individual within a nexus of social connections, historical events, and life experiences. In particular, I used life history analysis to situate participants in relation to the border, and pastoralism within a longer history of the Uganda-DRC border and its dynamics. People's perspectives on the borders and what they do to cross borders in times of crisis were explored. In this regard, permission was sought to speak with some individuals about their life experiences in particular. All interlocutors and informants were part of the Batuku pastoralist society.

1.10 Ethical clearance and consideration

As articulated by Miles & Huberman, (1994), ethical issues arise when conducting research through qualitative methods and when undertaking ethnographic research in particular. Anthropology Southern Africa's (2005) ethical guidelines and the ethical guidelines of Stellenbosch University have thus been taken into consideration when designing this study. Fundamentally, participants' privacy and welfare had to be respected and protected. Informed consent was obtained from all those involved both participants as well as institutions.

I asked for consent to participate from my informants and interlocutors, stating the nature, goals, and benefits of the research. Their voluntary participation was confirmed verbally since most were not able to read or write. Participants were assured of confidentiality through the protection of their identity and the use of pseudonyms. All the names of my informants used in this thesis are

pseudonyms. Their names were not disclosed, nor was any identifying data shared. I ensured the secure storage of data by translating and transcribing the conversations myself and storing all documents under password protection.

Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and the option to withdraw from the study for those who wished to do so. I also read the relevant notes to participants immediately after the conversation. The data obtained was analysed, not only in terms of what was said but also in terms of what was not said and of the wider context in which these conversations took place. I sought permission before presenting photographs taken as data. The formal procedures for undertaking work with human subjects were also observed. This entailed seeking approval from the Departmental Ethics Screening Committee (DESC) and the Research Ethics Committee (REC) at Stellenbosch University. Permission was sought as well from the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST) in Uganda.

1.11 Outline of thesis chapters

This thesis is divided into seven chapters which address various themes that elaborate on the ways the Batuku pastoralists have experienced the Uganda-DRC border and the ways they have responded to the changing dynamics of the region.

Chapter 2: Theoretical insights: Conceptualising borders in the context of cross-border pastoralism– This chapter contextualises the study theoretically by reviewing previous studies and arguments around the idea of borders, particularly as they relate to pastoralism. It highlights the gaps and the ways that this study contributes to the anthropology of borders and cross-border pastoralism.

Chapter 3: Doing Ethnography of Cross-border Pastoralism: Awkwardness, Failures, and Opportunities at the Uganda-DRC Border – This chapter focuses on the methodological processes within which this study was carried out and describes the challenges and opportunities in the process of carrying out an ethnography of cross-border pastoralism at the Uganda-DRC border. In this chapter I argue that the specificity of the socio-political conditions within which people (subjects) of the study operate determines the positionality of the researcher as self and other, and at the same time produces awkwardness, feelings of failure and opportunities that consequently lead to innovative designs and plans to effectively implement the study.

Chapter 4: The Ugandan-DRC border and the Batuku cross-border pastoral engagements - This chapter partly brings forward an historical ethnography which captures a “before and now” historical perspective and reveals possibilities for seeing the Uganda-DRC border processes along a mobility-

closure continuum in which these opening and closing processes are ongoing and defined by and within historical and political contexts. Highlighting the historical development of the Uganda-DRC borderline and its varying degrees of stability and intensity of border regimes, the chapter shows how people and goods involved in crossing and their reasons for crossing create tensions between everyday activities of Batuku pastoralists and the states' attempts to shape the local realities and citizen status of all dwellers and crossers of the border. The chapter captures the ways this border area takes on new meanings that become both obstacles and possibilities. It shows how the emergence of conflict in the region affects the nation-states' interface with border crossing and dwelling.

Chapter 5: *Pastoral Production Systems, Institutions, and Community Services in the Changing Border Dynamics* - This chapter brings forward Batuku pastoralists' operation of a system of networked institutions and practices as they produce their livelihood necessities. It captures how this system of institutional mechanisms of livelihood production practices continues to be a source of solidarity, social well-being, and social capital which benefits both the poor and the rich. The chapter shows that it is through these institutions and practices that the Batuku border cultural context was constructed and operated. The chapter shows that access to pastoral resources in the region derives from the operation of these institutions and practices, whether on the Ugandan side of the border or on DRC border side. The recent change of dynamics in the border region has adversely impacted on the operations of the Batuku pastoralists' institutions and practices. There has been a dramatic change in the character of the border, which can be characterised as a shift from a porous to a "hard" border. This process has been in response to the violent militia operations in the DRC, including militia abductions of pastoralists, and the raiding of their livestock. The chapter shows how change has also resulted from the Ugandan state's push for land reform, which has contributed to a shift from communal land to privately owned land use. These changes have greatly weakened the effectiveness of pastoralists' practices and institutions that have historically been sources of Batuku resilience. Such changes have thereby exposed Batuku people to a situation of extreme vulnerability.

Chapter 6: *Pastoralism: Unbroken practice in peripherality?* - This chapter shows how a society that constructed itself and its border livelihood through cross-border pastoralism is now faced with the interplay of capitalistic struggles in the Semliki region. The chapter captures how the Batuku pastoralists constructed the border cultural context through their cattle complex system with networks, institutions and knowledge. Always transmitted from generation to generation, it is now crumbling as drought, the hardening of the border, and privatisation and commodification of land decimate cattle. These factors are unsettling the once intact social system of the Batuku pastoralists which was managed through a system of labour allocation and status ascription that depended on

age, sex and generation. Consequently, the positionalities of social groups and generations, including women, men, children and youth, have now been disoriented, leading to competition and exclusion of some groups and making pastoralism a changing practice in peripherality.

Chapter 7: *Conclusion*: - This chapter sums up the arguments made on cross-border pastoralism and particularly the experiences of the Batuku pastoralists in the Uganda-DRC border region. It also includes reflections on what can be learned from those experiences as regards the anthropology of borders and pastoralism and opportunities for further research.

2.0 Chapter Two: Conceptualising Borders in the Context of Cross-border Pastoralism

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I provide the context of the study by outlining the key perspectives and debates about the idea of borders, borderland, and borderland communities, particularly as they relate to pastoralism. The chapter also gives an overview of key anthropological debates on the border and cross-border pastoralism and highlights the theoretical perspective and how it can best explain the practice of cross-border pastoralism. The gaps in the anthropology of borders and pastoralism and the ways that this study contributes are also brought forward in this chapter.

The many startling changes which the world has undergone since 1989 have been the focus of anthropology. These are radical changes in world politics, economics, and social relations. The most prominent anthropological concern has been the role of “culture” (this is used in Geertz’s context of shared patterns of learned behaviour) in the social construction and negotiation of these borders. Over twenty-five years or so, international and other geopolitical borders have continued to draw the attention and capture the imagination of scholars across the spectrum of social sciences and humanities. These scholars have kept pace with governmental and non-governmental leaders who daily deal with the problem of maintaining, securing, crossing, and opening up borders and frontiers, demarcations which separate peoples, countries, and ways of life (Donnan & Wilson, 2010). Borders are the physical manifestations of the sovereignty of the nation and the power of the nation-state to secure that nation from harm (Donnan & Wilson, 2010; Wilson & Donnan, 2012; Paasi, 1998). Anthropological attention to movement and mobility in local and global scenes owes something to the notion of time-space compression of Harvey, (1989) where he metaphorically refers to the changing conditions of movement and communication, wherein development in transport and communication technologies have effectively changed the qualities of space and time as people perceive and live them. As Castells (2004:12) points out, “the space of flows is increasingly replacing the traditional space of places and this may generate local and regional mobilisation among people who are trying to preserve their identities and livelihoods”.

Compression is uneven for different kinds of actors, objects, and ideas (Paasi, 2009). The changing global ecumene has also resulted in variations in borders, including the ways in which people and goods are slowed or quickened in their movements across the borderline (Newman, 2006). The world is punctuated by barriers, the most important of which are national borders. For some people and things, borders act as periods: full stops denying legal entry (Newman, 2006). For others, they are like semi-colons, requiring visas and work permits. For global elites, the ease with which they cross

borders depends on factors such as their citizenship status or their assets, particularly if they have access to VIP lanes or private jet facilities at ports of entry (Donnan, Hurd, & Leutloff-Grandits, 2017). Borders are made up of myriad points of immediate interaction, where some people easily manage to move forward without any encumbrances, but where others are made to delay or are stopped altogether. This variable experience of borders as structures of state power continues to be a focal point of anthropological research.

Anthropological analyses of borders are of heightened importance because of ethnographers' attention to ties that connect people to each other over long distances as much as over short ones, including distances that traverse borders. They almost always deal with people who desire to move themselves and their possessions across boundaries, even when government agents seek to limit or stop them (Donnan & Wilson, 2010). Consequently, anthropologists are immersed in the liminal spaces between the imperatives of politics and secure borders, and economics, and smart borders (Sparke, 2006). Their attempts to place both in context necessarily put them between national and local concerns, between state needs to manage time-space punctuation in borderlands, on one hand, and the expressed need on the part of borderland inhabitants to evade such management, on the other. Thus, anthropologists in all borderlands are aware of people who seek to contest the state's right and ability to enforce international borders (Donnan et al., 2017).

In analysing anthropological research on borders, one gets the sense that borderlands need to be viewed from the perspective of the borderland inhabitants who deal with the stress and tension of borders. All borders are experienced by anthropologists as zones of a wide variety of legal and illegal transborder economic and social activities. Whether it is through agricultural production and cooperation, labour migration, marriages, smuggling or just plain friendship, borders are punctured in many ways which often subvert the state's own design of its borders (Meehan, Plonski, & Walton, 2015). International borders are most often seen by those who do not live and work in borderlands to be lines where nation-states simultaneously meet and separate. But anthropologists approach these borderlines more as countless points of interaction, or myriad places of divergence and convergence, which may be there because of the borderline or in spite of it (Donnan & Wilson, 2012; Laine, 2016; Paasi, 2009).

This anthropological gaze shows us that in borderlands there are processes taking place because of the existence of borders themselves, processes that involve people and institutions that are in vital relationships with people and institutions of other ethnic groups and nations across the borderline. Thus the local people are not spectators or passive beneficiaries or victims of statecraft, and are instead often agents of change that involve processes of social, political, and economic significance to many people beyond their locality and beyond their states (Truett, 2006; Flynn, 1997; Donnan &

Wilson, 2010). This introduces what Donnan and Wilson, (2010) call the “borderland effect”, a factor of continuing interest for ethnographers in the borderland. To Donnan and Wilson, the anthropology of borders is distinctive because of its focus on those local people and communities who live and work in borderlands and who cross borders. Borderland inhabitants are citizens and residents who act, sometimes consciously and sometimes less so, as symbols, representatives and agents of nations and states, and as such may be forces of influence within national and international relations. One thing anthropologists of borderlands have in common is their fascination with frontiers as zones where the negotiations of international and transnational culture take place (Cohen, 2000). To anthropologists like Cohen, borders are those zones, which extend across borderlines. These transborder areas often delimit the sovereignty of the states. Alvarez’s (1995) study of the US-Mexico border has emphasised that border zones are the territorial and cultural spaces of negotiations, mixing and interaction that are within each state on either side of the borderline, but which also occur in varying ways across that borderline and are a reality to borders.

Frontiers are culturally constructed zones of meaning and interaction at the extremities of the state, spaces with sometimes very clear territorial connections (Feyissa & Hoehne, 2008). In these socially constructed, contested, and negotiated places and spaces, there are relations between people who live and work in frontier areas and people in other regions of the state. For anthropologists Feyissa and Hoehne (2008), drawing on their experience of the Horn of Africa, it is important to recognise the relationships borderland communities have with people across borders. They say that borderlands constitute within each nation-state a coherent transnational and cross-border zone recognised by borderland inhabitants as one that has particular social, political, economic, cultural and territorial meanings. In this sense, as Donnan & Wilson, (2012) put it, the border as approached by the borderland inhabitants in their everyday lives, comprises of various frontiers: those within each country and those that all but ignore the borderline itself. This view is shared by Fassin, (2011) when he asserts that borderland inhabitants must trade, work, socialise, and marry as if the lines between countries were not there. But this is not universally so, for many borderland people are there because of the border, striving to demarcate and defend that border against outsiders (Fassin, 2011).

Frontiers as analytical and societal constructions also depend on the mismatch between social groups within a state, and the impetus of states to homogenise the members as citizens. In other words, national boundaries are not the same thing as international borders. The former, according to Donnan & Wilson (2010; 2012) and Rudiatin (2016) separate nationals while the latter demarcate the states. To these anthropologists, national and ethnic groups often transcend the boundaries of the polity in which they reside, which can present problems for the state and its borderlands and borderland inhabitants, but groups who live in more than one state may also present opportunities for cooperation,

and transnational integration, or avenues of interaction in a globalising world. The “frontier effect” which Donnan & Wilson (2010) talk about is the result of political actions and identifications that are dependent on the nations and states who meet, greet, and contest their political futures at the limits of their sovereignty and territory, which by their own nature can only occur in borderlands. The “frontier effect” has many facets, but the chief among them is the clear delineation of nations and states, of nationalism and statism, at and across the border (Amare, 2017). This exemplifies the continuities and discontinuities between the local and wider levels of political and social integration, whether considered at national, regional or international levels. To Amare (2017:23), the “frontier effect sets borderlands apart from others, close and distant, and often does so within stark political and economic realities”.

To illustrate the point that “frontier effects” set borderlands apart, Donnan & Wilson, (2010) use the concept of “invisibility”, which to them has characterised anthropological research on borderlands. In borderlands, international borders are important matters of everyday concern that are both accepted and unproblematic. This is echoed by Rudiatin, (2016) when he says that borders are things and ideas that sometimes matter and sometimes do not, which suggests to outsiders that borders are “invisible” to borderland inhabitants, yet they continue to matter a great deal. In this sense, borders are there when one wants to see them, and they are not there when they are unnecessary. To some, borders are red, while for others the same borders are just green, and must be crossed as much as the conditions of living demand (Dias, 2012).

Scholarly interest has grown in recent years in the particular social, economic, and political circumstances of populations living around borders, including explorations of “border culture” and processes of identity formation in borderlands (Alvarez, 1995). This interest has been heightened partly by the growth of transnational processes, such as mass media communication and globalising economies, and partly by recent political developments in Europe and the US that undermined international boundaries (Flynn, 1997). This instability of borders that were once viewed as fixed and monolithic boundaries of disparate national and cultural entities increasingly reveals processes of cross-border cultural negotiations and raises new and provocative questions about the relationship between local and global, space and place, and nation and state (Flynn, 1997; Alvarez, 1995). The inquiry has been broadened to include the study of **multivocal borderlands (these are cultural and social spaces differentiation in different societies)** of that emerge at the intersections of less formalised cultural and social boundaries that exist between genders, ages, or classes (Cassarino, 2017; Anzaldua, 1987). Borderlands, both literal and figurative, are sites where political, cultural, and social identities converge, coexist, and sometimes conflict (Wilson & Donnan, 2012).

The other strand that scholars have pursued is that borders are evolutionary in nature, and serve different purposes for those who draw them and those who live along them at various times (Design & Olaleye, 2013). The evolutionary nature of borders means that they are borders in motion. The border is increasingly at the centre of security, yet it is not as fixed as it appears, either in practice or in meaning, and the making and unmaking of borders is just a matter of time (Donnan et al., 2017; Konrad, 2015). For instance, the Uganda-DRC border which has been porous has now been made hard, which shows that although border inhabitants may be part of the borderlands, they do not entirely control their dynamism. Borders are dynamic; their physical form changes both in space and time to define their geopolitical purpose and demonstrate the political control of state borders (Johnson et al., 2011). Borders evolve through three processes: the process of allocation which is the process of arbitrarily dividing up land for political reasons, delimitation, which involves selection of the border site using the information available, and the demarcation process which is the actual making of the border on the ground using beacons, pillars or fences (Haselsberger, 2014). What this study focuses on is how these processes of bordering or border making and unmaking affect the lives of the border inhabitants. Borders must be created before they can evolve; the bordering process constitutes the activities which have the effect of constituting, sustaining or modifying borders. The bordering process dialectically makes geography and history and forms a solid basis for explaining the present-day state of borders in Africa (Paasi, 1998). These explanations of the border processes should also capture the innovative strategies that border inhabitants employ as they pursue their livelihoods amidst changing dynamics of borderlands.

The continuous growing number of state borders, their alternating roles and functions in the globalising world and the tension existing in border areas are all factors that make a difference, and show the evolving nature of borders (Brunet-Jailly, 2011). Some existing boundaries are relatively strictly guarded, while others are very open. Still others may be managed selectively so that flows between states are strictly controlled in one direction. The meanings of borders are not consistent, as political transformations may cause some borders to become more porous or “softer”, while other borders become “harder” (Kolossof, 2005). The emphasis of this study is how the inconsistency of meanings and the situations of borders are experienced, perceived and responded to by the inhabitants of these regions, particularly by the cross-border pastoralists. The complexity of state borders as research objects is related to the meanings attributed to such borders: they are closely related to the ideological state apparatus, ideological practices such as nationalism, and the material basis of such practices, all of which manifest in territoriality. Brunet-Jailly (2011) asserts that everywhere legislation generated by the state and its instruments of socialisation aims at constructing the limits of nationality, citizenship, and identity by defining the borders of inclusion and exclusion (c.f Donnan

& Wilson, 1999). State borders in the world today not only mirror the changes that are affecting the institutions and policies of the states, but also point to transformations in the definitions of citizenship, sovereignty, and national identity, and, as Donnan and Wilson (*ibid.*) contend, borders are not just symbols and locations of these changes, but they are often their agents. Therefore, to understand how borders often become agents of those transformations in relation to citizenship, sovereignty, and national identity, it is imperative that a group of border inhabitants especially those who are viewed as neither here nor there by nation states should be studied ethnographically.

Another line in the ongoing anthropological debates on borders has been the suggestion that borders have perhaps not disappeared but have rather become so diffuse that they have transformed whole countries into borderlands. Their meanings are thus changing. This is what Paasi, (2009) has termed as “borders are everywhere” thesis. The “borders are everywhere” thesis exists in two forms, which are the historically and spatially contingent (Paasi, 2009; Paasi & Prokkola, 2008). Borders have become elements of control and surveillance infrastructures in the current dynamic world characterised by flows of people, ideas, ideologies and goods and by fluctuating fears of terrorism, even though they are often apparently invisible and diffuse, no longer existing as border landscapes. Borders are viewed as obstacles of social life and movement of citizens, goods, and ideas. They can at times have a very limited role in relation to nature, which, seems to imply a need to reject borders. The management of border areas in relation to the environment has also become an interesting theme among border scholars. Fall (2005) has studied border areas in many European contexts by bringing together questions of nature and politics. In other words, borders determine who should access, utilise, and exploit which public resources in the peripheral regions of the state. For instance, the Uganda-DRC borderland of Albertine region is experiencing immense pressures on how to manage the environmental and climatic change that might come with exploitation of oil and gas resources currently ongoing in the region. What is yet to be known is how the Batuku, a cross-border group, experiences and responds to these pressures.

Borders are always in motion, and theorising about borders needs to reflect this axiom. Beyond acknowledging borders as a process and changing quality, there is also a need to align the theories with the “motion turn” in the social sciences (Konrad, 2015). Building blocks of a theory of motion, concepts of border construction, reconstruction, the exercise of power, equilibrium-seeking, vacillating borders, spaces of flow, and uncertainty in transnational spaces among others need to be captured in one theoretical conception (Konrad & Nicol, 2011:5). Borders are increasingly found at the centre of politics of identity, security, environment, mobility, and economy, yet they are not as fixed as they appear either in practice or in meaning. Borders have always been in motion, and the making and unmaking of borders is just a matter of time (Davies, 2011). The border concept and

construct and the process of bordering have changed over time, evolving to reveal new dimensions as globalisation expands and becomes more complex (Appadurai, 1996). In Konrad's (2015) sense, constant motion of borders occurs above, below, through, and beyond the lines that separate polities, states, cultures, and societies, as these separated or divided entities converge in trade, vie for control of interstitial space, alter security parameters, and negotiate interaction and livelihood.

Borders are born in dichotomies and fashioned in dialectics (Konrad, 2015), and as constructs evolved from opposing forces, these border produce energy which is translated into motion between separate entities; more so states (in form of border policies and their enforcement) and border inhabitants (including their activities and values concerning their survival). Accordingly, borders, viewed either as objects or processes, are born in motion, conduct motion and create motion. Social science theories about borders, bordering, and borderlands do not express effectively the role of motion in generating, aligning, sustaining and altering these constructs (Konrad & Nicol, 2011). Therefore, social scientists need to venture into scientific theories that inform motion and offer useful analogues to conceptualise borders and border processes. Dichotomies are created by borders and they also create borders. Konrad emphasises difference, otherness, opposites, and intrinsicality between people, institutions, and places, and as analogues in interstitial space. Metaphorically, Konrad approaches borders as waves, currents, tides, and other motions. Konrad interprets the border effect in the form of the above metaphors. He argues that the plural nature of the "border effects" is consistent with the diachronic production of border motions and the dialectic space in which border motions are manifested, considered, and contested. He views borders as "liminal zones where water and land meet, and where waves strike rocks and lap on beaches, rip-currents recoil, channels cut through dunes, rivers enter seas and create deltas, and tides roll in and out to define the zone of interaction" (Konrad, 2015:6).

Konrad writes that substantive motion surrounding borders in the globalising world has drawn increased attention to boundaries, frontiers, and borderlands, and this attention has placed borders at the centre of social science discourses about borders in a "borderless" world. Yet social scientists need to focus on a new border paradigm which is developing through an expanded border transaction, negotiation, interaction, and discursive space. He concludes that "these conceptual links offer insights and approaches to research as well as challenges to heuristic traditions in border studies" (Konrad, 2015:8). The challenges need to be embraced and concepts and theories need to be explored and integrated to form a truly cross-disciplinary field of border studies aimed at evaluating one of the most elusive yet explanatory geographical constructs of the time.

The understanding of the evolutionary nature of a border calls for an appreciation of the bordering process. As Massey, (2005) puts it, space is differentiated and institutionalised through the generation of borders, and interrogation of the construction process and its production, is a recurrent feature of

borders, bordering, and borderlands research. There is a need for a focus on the way in which the very location of borders is constantly displaced, negotiated, and represented as well as the plurality of the process at different points within a society. According to Haselsberger, (2014), borders are human constructs that are put in place to serve the interest of those who establish them and hence the further study of this aspect of borders develops the notion that borders are not a perfect fit for all. The function of state borders can be perceived as positive or negative; positive when uncontested, providing “national and transnational economic and social life, and negative when they are partitioning people - even those who speak the same language and practice the same culture - into separate political units with different national orientations” (Okumu, 2009:5-6). Independent states choose how the boundaries are to function as an open or closed border. Brambilla, (2015:23) describes a “border as a geopolitical wound [that] cannot break cultural processes along and across it: identity, culture, and memory become more and more complex and multiple with reference to everyday lives spent at the border”.

Bohmer & Shuman, (2008) argue that the character of a border is not only determined by the existing activities at the borderlands but also by anticipated threats. The more a state expects conflict (insecurity) with its neighbour, the more closed its border will be. This significantly resonates well with the Uganda-DRC border. Though the two states are not in a direct confrontation, the proliferation of militia groups and their insurgent activities on one side of the border has forced the Ugandan state to order surveillance of its border region by the military to mitigate the spillover of militia activities across the border area. One of the indicators of whether borders are bridges or barriers is the type of infrastructure at the borderlands and settlement landscapes. Brambilla, (2015) looks at the borderlands as the place where people are involved in various webs of relations that affect a cross-border region where social and economic relations are carried out daily which is evidenced by the daily movements across the boundary to go to school, pasture livestock, attend church, and do business across and over the boundary. The hardening of borders enforces Okumu's (2009:7) argument that “the state border is a paradoxical phenomenon in the sense that it is a zone where not only is activity created but also restrained”. The state’s change of the border affects the population whose identity and sense of belonging is defined by the very border. “Social and family ties grow across the border and although”, as claimed by Okumu (ibid), the neighbours across the border could be culturally despised, they may also be relatives who are valued for their social capital in times of calamities or hardships like drought, floods, war and conflict.

Using the above perspectives in this study, I argue that the Batuku pastoralists have constructed a “borders cultural context” by maintaining ties with their kin groups across the border, creating routes that are not known to border officials, and developing networks and institutions based on cattle

exchanges to facilitate their movements and access to resources and services as they secure their livelihood. It is this “border cultural context” that I find to have been both a source of their resilience in the spatial conditions of drought and other ecological uncertainties and vulnerabilities, as well as their peripherality in terms of accessing national resources and services, since they are sometimes viewed as “neither here nor there”. In other words, as Truett, (2006) suggests, these cross-border pastoralists are not just passive spectators in relation to these border dynamics; they “typically constitute their own “cross-border societies” that do not emphasise national citizenship of either state” (Flynn, 1997:315). They produce their own context, rooted in social practices that transcend nation-state boundaries. However, it is this spatially constructed “border cultural context” of the Batuku pastoralists that is being challenged by the capitalist commodification of land and cattle as well as the role of the state and militias, and the latter’s struggles for territorial control and political and military hegemony. This antagonism has exposed the cross-border pastoralists’ source of resilience to the extent that they risk losing their livelihoods.

Despite restrictions on the border, it is almost impossible to stop the flow of human populations or goods across a boundary. The porosity of borders has been witnessed at highly guarded borders like US-Mexico border (Alvarez, 1995), the North Korea-South Korea border (Nianshen, 2017), and even the Berlin wall before its fall of 1989 (Anderson & O’Dowd, 1999; Geertz, 2000). The trend has not stopped new border barriers, and hence, as Paül & Trillo-Santamaría, (2015:15) argue, “the true purpose of borders is to maintain a sense of security and identity in which the image of a fortified border becomes more important than its actual effectiveness”.

Borders are crucial elements of biopolitical practices that are exploited to produce and reproduce state territoriality (Johnson et al., 2011; Fassin, 2011; Das & Poole, 2004; Donnan et al., 2017). Such practices are related to health and disease issues and these phenomena are crucially related to mobility which challenges the fixing of borders in many ways although states still try to maintain control over such unpleasant and potentially un-controllable flows. A modern or developed nation is seen to be able to protect its borders and its citizens against health risks. Diseases also motivate the creation of structures of political control, as in the recent cases of mad cow disease, severe respiratory syndrome (SARS), Ebola sickness, and bird flu (H5NI Virus). State authorities everywhere have been prepared to fight against these by imposing more effective mechanisms of control (Sparke, 2006). Health issues have become a theme in border studies, and it is certainly one factor responsible for making borders more closed in the increasingly mobile world. The Uganda-DRC border is known for its association with the Ebola sickness and from time to time border management structures have stringently controlled populations crossing back and forth. However, the questions of livelihoods and survival

transcend the biopolitical systems and structures and these cross-border societies continue to cross in spite of restrictions.

2.2 *Borderland interaction and borderland milieu*

Border regions as socio-cultural systems are a living reality (Martinez, 1994). They are characterised by inner coherence and unity which is essential to their nature (Donnan & Wilson, 1999). There cannot be classifications of borderlands despite their heterogeneous nature. According to (Martinez, 1994) it is possible to generate the features common to all borderlands based on their cross-border contacts. This is essential to assess cross-border movements and the forces that produce them. Martinez gives four paradigms of borderland interaction: Alienated borderlands, Co-existent borderlands, interdependent borderlands, and integrated borderlands. To him, alienated borderlands are those where day to day, the routine cross-border interchange is practically non-existent owing to extremely unfavourable conditions. He gives examples of borderlands where warfare, political disputes, intense nationalism, ideological animosity, religious enmity, cultural dissimilarity, and ethnic rivalry constitute causes of alienation. The question to contend with here is what happens to the people whose livelihood depends on this kind of borderland? On such borderlands, people's lives are at risk. They must cross the border in total disregard of the life-threatening conditions. This is characteristic of the Uganda-DRC border region. Though people in this border region have long depended on their cross-border interactions to survive the socio-economic and environmental hardships, they are currently faced with strict state surveillance amidst militia activities and violent conflict.

Martinez's model of co-existent borderlands explains that these are where international border-related conflicts are reduced to a manageable level or, in cases where unfavourable internal conditions in one or both countries preclude binational cooperation, when such problems are resolved to the degree that minimal border stability can prevail. Co-existent borderlands permit borderland communities to interact with their counterparts across the boundary with parameters established by the two nation-states. In time geographical sectionalism may be lessened through the spread of modern transportation, communication, and trade networks, diminishing the isolation of peripheries and enabling strong central control over independent-minded frontiersmen. This model suggests that nation-states must be in total control of all borderlines, which they do not in most cases, especially in Africa where most states are weak at their frontier points. Considering the Uganda-DRC border, the bigger section has always remained uncontrolled.

Martinez explains that interdependent paradigm is where a border region in one nation-state that is symbiotically linked with the border region of an adjoining country. The greater the flow of economic

and human resources across the border, the more the two economies will be structurally bonded to each other. He, however, says that the most common pattern in binational regions throughout the world has been one of symmetrical interdependence, where one nation is stronger than its neighbour and consequently plays the dominant role. Economic interdependence creates more opportunities for borderland communities to establish social relationships across the boundary as well as allowing for significant transculturation to take place. Thus, the binational economic system produced by symbiosis spawns a binational social and cultural system. This, however, as Martinez has alluded to above, suggests that the two nation-states must be at a balanced equilibrium of social, political, and economic power. If the borderland inhabitants remain unbalanced, suspicion, mistrust, and competition could develop and cause conflict.

On the integrated borderlands, Martinez says that at this stage the neighbouring countries eliminate all the major differences between them and reduce existing barriers to trade and human movement across their mutual boundary. In integrated borderlands stability is stronger and permanent. Economies of both countries are functionally merged and there is an unrestricted movement of people and goods across the boundary. Borderlands merge economically, with capital, products, and labour flowing from one side to the other without serious restrictions. Nationalism gives way to a new internationalist ideology that emphasises peaceful relations and improvements in the quality of life of people in both nations through trade and diffusion of technology. Integration between two closely allied nations is most conducive when both are politically stable, militarily secure, and economically strong. Ideally, the level of development is similar in both societies, and the resulting relationship is relatively an equal one. Population pressures must be non-existent in either nation, or the two sides would feel threatened by heavy immigration across their open border. Martinez diagrammatically illustrates these models in relation to different border regions all over the world. Martinez's paradigms could be applicable to some borderlands in the world like those borderlands between U.S.A and Canada, or those of some countries in the European Union, but they are not applicable to most nation-states, including those in the African continent. Whereas economies can merge and there can be an unrestricted movement of people and goods, it is still very hard for people to cross the border and easily access physical resources and public services, especially land, however integrated the border may seem. Moreover, considering the borderlands on which pastoralists operate, merging of boundaries can never be imagined. This is particularly because of the competition over land amongst pastoralist communities and sometimes competition with their farming counterparts.

Whether relatively closed or open, border zones are distinct within their respective nation-states because of their location, which in many cases is far from the core, and because of the international climate produced by adjacency to another country (Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Konrad & Nicol, 2011;

Vinuesa, 2003; Martinez, 1994; Green, 2009). The unique forces, processes, and characteristics that set apart borderlands from interior zones include transnationalism, international conflict and accommodation, ethnic conflict and accommodation, otherness, and separateness. In their totality, these elements constitute what the above scholars have called “borderland milieu”. A summary of the concepts used to describe a “borderland milieu” follows below.

Transnationalism:

This is a location at the edges of nation-states which places borderland communities in international environments that have wide-ranging implications for those who function in or are affected by the transborder interchange. Relatively unimpaired interaction makes it possible for residents in the transnational economic and social systems to foster trade, migration, information flow, cultural and educational exchanges and sundry personal relationships. An open international environment exposes borderlands to foreign values, ideas, customs, traditions, institutions, tastes, and behaviours. Borderland communities find it easy to see how members of other societies make their living, how they cope with daily life, how they acquire their education, and how they exercise their responsibilities as citizens. Fundamentally the level of transborder contact is dependent on the relationships between the adjoining nation-states, the concentration of population at the borders, and the condition of the binational economy. The descriptions of most of the above borderland scholars of the transnationality of borderland communities do not include those on most African borderlands since there is nothing international on either side of the border. The conditions are in most cases the same whether in education or business, and their ways of living are relatively so similar that they are intermingled and it is hard for one to pinpoint where a society starts and ends. It is also easy to say that most African borders are porous borderlands. International distinctiveness is not easily recognised. Normally only borderland communities who have a compelling need to carry on ties with their neighbours, many of whom are their kin keep crossing back and forth.

International conflict and accommodation:

Border-related strife is distinctive because it emanates from conditions peculiar to peripheries that are subject to international disputes and border instability. Borderland communities face special challenges innate to the boundary itself (Donnan & Wilson, 2010). Border people can be caught up in the territorial struggles between antagonistic nation-states and sometimes with non-state groups in the struggles and conflict for hegemony in border regions. Often fighting goes on for extended periods due to disagreement over the location of the border between rival countries, turning borderland areas into battlefields. Such dangerous situations force many borderland communities to choose between remaining in their war-torn homeland and abandoning it for safer grounds. Again, in a situation of

war on one side of the border, people on the other side must feel the effects of the war as refugees cross and may share the same public services with the citizens. In the case of pastoralists, they come with their animals, sickness, and urges of pastoralism to the area. Thus, accommodation comes in when people on one side of the border have to contend with the effects of conflict situations on the other side. This is exactly what Donnan & Wilson (2010) have referred to as “frontier effect”. Bitterness and distrust produced by tumultuous situations linger in the lives of borderland communities, making it difficult to achieve significant cross-border cooperation and interchange. The Uganda-DRC border is characterized by disputes and instability, and cross-border pastoralists find themselves entangled in this web of conflicts most of which they are not party to.

Ethnic conflict and accommodation:

People in border regions live in heterogeneous environments owing to ethnic mixture and immigration from contiguous countries. Cultural diversity inevitably produces inter-ethnic friction, especially if groups represented have a history of diversity. This exposes the border people to “cultural tugs-of-war” and perplexities that are equally pronounced (Newman, 2011; Hodgson, 2017; Faludi, 2012; Djeki, 2014). For pastoralists, discord with other ethnic groups may arise out of fear and resentment triggered by encroachment from the “outsider”. Pastoralists settle in the homelands of local groups as “unwelcome aliens” which unleashes passionate confrontation (Donnan et al., 2017).

Otherness:

Aware of the unique environments that shape their lives, borderland communities think of themselves as different from people of the interior zones and outsiders perceive them as different as well. One distinction entails relationships with citizens of other nations. Remoteness from the heartland and sustained interaction with foreigners tends to dilute nationalism among borderland communities, which makes them more tolerant of ethnic and cultural differences (Fassin, 2011; Newman, 2011; Wilson & Donnan, 2012). Another mode of behaviour observable among borderland communities that makes them different is their tendency to bend or ignore national laws deemed injurious to their regional interest. Statutes dictated by cross-border symbiotic pastoral relationships find no objection, but those that do are routinely circumvented and violated. For example, cross-border pastoralists find it morally and culturally acceptable to breach immigration regulations that interfere with the response to natural orders of crossing the border to graze their cattle during the drought seasons (Galaty, 2016a). A popular justification for this action is that regulations are unrealistic; that they fail to consider the unique conditions of pastoral binational settings, where interdependence is a way of life (De Weijer, 2007). Many borderland communities live and function in several different worlds: the world of their national culture, the world of the border environment, the world of their ethnic group,

and the world of the foreign culture on the other side of the boundary (Martinez, 1994). Considerable versatility is required to actively participate in each of these universes, including the ability to be multilingual and multicultural which, to some extent brings otherness (Rippa & Yang, 2017; Ghosh, 2017; Martinez, 1994).

Separateness:

Their distance and isolation from the cores of nation-states, coupled with unique local ethnic and economic characteristics, frequently leads borderland communities to develop interests that clash with central governments or mainstream cultures. The transnational nature of borderlands produces integrative and assimilative forces that blur differences between people on opposite sides of the boundary, spawning problems with parent populations (Adjepong, 2017; Flynn, 1997; Rudiatin, 2016). Many pastoralists at borderlands come to think of themselves as members of a self-contained and self-directed border economic community rather than as “pure” citizens of a nation-state whose behaviour must conform strictly to national norms. Borderland people function as a “joint community” and become a “we” group to whom others of their own nationality, especially authorities, are “they” (Adjepong, 2017; Martinez, (1994:21)). As peripheries of the nation-state, they are subjects of frontier forces and international influences (Mulugeta, 2017). Most borderland communities are exposed to processes that have the potential for generating conflict, including border-related disputes, oppressive tariffs, restrictive migration policies, constraints to free cross-border movements, ethnic frictions, and stereotyping by outsiders. As the world has evolved from isolationism toward integration, borderlands have become increasingly important for nation-states with significant cross-border interlinks. Borderland communities live in a binational milieu and are exposed to different ideas and cultures; they also have access to the foreign economy, which increases employment possibilities and consumer choices. This separateness is also shaped by living conditions, especially when such border regions are dominated by militia groups and conflicts.

2.3 *Understanding borders and cross-border interactions*

According to Paasi, (2011), the collapse of the cold war and the geographic divide between West and East at the turn of the 1990s and the accelerating globalisation, whether related to economics, culture, consciousness or all of these, provided a macro-level background that initiated new theorising about borderlands. The rise of the politically and economically important regions as part of re-shaping of new state spaces in association with the transformation of global capitalism has provided another, spatially more diverse background for the same scholarship (Brunet-Jailly, 2011). This re-shaping, as Paasi (2011) puts it, triggered a new vocabulary, with such keywords as cross-border regions, state regions, or city regions that needed a new theoretical focus. The rapid development of information

technology, partly generating globalisation and partly illustrating it, was also a significant context within which new theories could be generated. The politico-territorial and scalar consequence of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the USA in 2001 and the transforming hegemony of the USA on the global geopolitical and regional scene, were also upheavals that forced politicians and the prevailing statecraft to re-consider the meanings of lines dividing societies, nations, and even cultural realms (Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Brenner, 2013; Cassarino, 2017; Brambilla, 2015). In this situation, new fears, images of friends and enemies, dividing lines between us and them, and insides and outsides have emerged, perhaps mocking the optimism of early post-cold war period and challenging the seeds of cosmopolitanism that emerged after the collapse of the dividing lines which characterised that period (Brunet-Jailly, 2005).

The situation of the European Union and its internal and external borders serves to characterise more broadly the key issue related to borders and their selective openness. This also implies that some local borders were more meaningful than others in the construction of previous global dichotomies. Paasi's (2009) research based on this background to explain the complexity of political border research, how the events in the period shaped the interdisciplinary field of border studies, the formulation of border theory and how it informs border studies, and recent debates that challenge, re-interpret, and expand on the concept of border. To Paasi, (2009) there is a perpetually increasing number of states, sub-state, and supra-state borders. The bounded state in terms of territorial ideologies and methodological problems entailed in studying borders has made research on borders, especially the political ones, so complex. Much of this theorising has sought to liberate the notions of space, place, and time from assumptions about their connection to the supposedly natural units of nation, state, identity, and culture (Donnan & Wilson, 1999; 2010). Thus, attempts are made to create new vocabularies capable of articulating conceptual and analytical frameworks for studying people who are no longer as constrained by the boundaries of nations and state as they once were (Weber, 2012).

The development of a theory of borders has been a demanding undertaking which forces scholars to reflect on the meanings of the theory itself (Coplan, 2010; Brenner, 2013). Borders are a very complex set of social institutions that exist on and through various spatial scales and are related to several social practices and discourses in which they are produced and made meaningful (Coplan, 2010). Such institutions are linked to a variety of social realities that often go beyond the border. Instead of all-encompassing theory, it is perhaps the idea of theorising or conceptualising that could provide more tools to border scholars (Agnew, 1994). There is an obvious need to put both boundary producing and reproducing practices in context. Any valid contextual theorisation of boundaries should combine at least such processes, practices, and discourses as the production and reproduction

or institutionalisation of territoriality/territory, state power, human engagement and human experience. Considering this Paasi says:

“...But the context makes a difference, and it remains a challenge for the imagination of researchers to conceptualise and study empirically contextually manifested practices that may have their origins on diverging spatial scales and bring together events and processes from these” (Paasi, 2011:3).

Brunet-Jailly (2011) considers theorising borders to be based on four analytical frameworks: market forces and trade flows, policy activities of multiple levels of governments of adjacent borders, the political clout, and the specific culture of borderland communities. To Brunet-Jailly, (2011:30) “borderland communities also bridge these territories”. The nature of their local political organisation and culture influence the very nature of the border and the functioning of the border depends on their activism. He continues to say that political clout and local culture are important lenses through which policies that delineate a territory of belonging or a cultural territory can be viewed, including issues such as border security policies or those that work as filters to differentiate between desirables and undesirables such as immigration or trafficking policies. Political clout and local culture are also important lenses for understanding state boundaries and borders, but they do not address the role of market forces in the current era of globalisation.

Brunet-Jailly looks at the border theory perspective from both macro- and micro- levels. A macro-analysis, he argues is useful to document the multiple and complex social processes that establish borders and organise borderlands. A micro-analysis, he argues, would underline the multiple and complex activities of individuals across and around borders. He contends that individuals participate in the creation of social, political, cultural and economic institutions and cultures, but are contained by those creations. Brunet-Jailly gives three hypotheses of border theory perspective: the interplay of all four analytical lenses is useful both in time and space; assumption of agent and structural values; and empirical testing to demonstrate the strength of border theory.

2.4 Borders in perspective

This theoretical perspective owes its origin to scholars of the American Southwest (Alvarez, 1995; Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Konrad & Nicol, 2011, Anzaldua, 1987). In the 1990s, events taking place in the European Union prompted scholars to contribute significant theoretical insights and concepts to border studies (Newman, 2011; Sohn, 2014; Kolossov, 2005; Zimmerbauer, 2011). With a focus on Africa, Anthony Asiwaju (1983, 19885, 1990); Paul Nugent, (1996); Coplan, (2010); and Donna Flynn (1997) pioneered this theoretical orientation. These scholars dealt with the friability of African nation-states, their lack of popularly rooted social identity or morality, and the porousness and negotiability of their borders.

A major contribution of border studies has been to establish that borders are not the product of geography. Borders in North America and Europe were established through war, domination, and resistance. During the 1885 Berlin Conference, many processes, events, and territorial claims were not recognized, based on the effective occupation of Africa (Katzenellenbogen, 1996). Contributors to borderland studies, especially in the African context, have also highlighted the reality that whether borders are arbitrary or intra-ethnically or politically divisive, they are often an accepted and reproduced grounding of social and economic life of borderland communities (Flynn, 1997).

The comparative and analytical foundations of border theory are informed by a focus on the characteristics of border management, border life, and borderland communities. Work on border theory is well placed to explain how African borders and borderland communities operate. As Truett (2006: 8) explains “border people are not spectators in the border dynamics, they typically constitute their own cross-border society that does not emphasise citizenship”. Border subjects produce their own context, rooted in a social practice that transcends nation-state boundaries (Donnan & Wilson, 1999). However, as Coplan (2002) has argued, African borders have particular salience that needs further study in order to contribute to the field more broadly and to influence its theoretical foundations. In contrast to borders elsewhere in the world, African borders exhibit what Coplan (*ibid*: 5) has termed as “mixed inefficiency” and “inconsistent enforcement”.

Exemplifying this point are East African pastoralist groups occupying space that has become riven by not only a national dividing line, but also by militia groups and their violent activities. In the context of cross-border pastoralists who operate at a border where the authority and economy of the two adjacent states are equally weak, the emphasis is on performance rather than control; on gate-keeping and taxation rather than service. People living in this environment may find a reason to identify with others locally, regardless of national identities, in order to create networks and institutions for mutual assistance and to work together to outwit gatekeeping and taxation. Border theory perceives such communities as constituting a “border culture” that is defined by social interaction. It considers the borders to be constructed by much more than the institutions of the state, rather becoming meaning-making and meaning-carrying entities. For residents, the border is a facet of life and a form of meaning shared with people on the other side of the legal demarcation (Donnan & Wilson, *ibid.*).

“Border culture” is the least studied and understood aspect of the structures and institutions of international borders (Konrad & Nicol, 2011; Laine, 2016). Although scholars in a variety of fields have recognised the role of culture in the creation of and maintenance of borders and borderlands, few have tied culture directly to their analyses of statecraft at, across, and as a result of the border. Many other scholars have concentrated on the formal arrangements between states, which often do

not take into account the needs, experiences, desires, and other realities of the people who live at those borders, as well as the cultural significance of borders to people in and around borders.

As Das and Pole (2004) put it, the entrenched image of the state as a rationalised administrative form of political organisation becomes weakened or less fully articulated along its territorial or social margins. The practices and politics of life in these areas that shape the political, regulatory, and disciplinary practices that constitute, somehow, that thing called the state deserve to be approached from the border people's perspective. As Das & Poole (2004:18) argue, "there is a need for rethinking the boundaries between centre and periphery, public and private, legal and illegal, that also run through the heart of even the most successful liberal state". They continue to assert that "an anthropology of the margins offers a unique perspective to the understanding of the state, not because it captures exotic practices but because it suggests that such margins are a necessary entailment of the state, much as the exception is a necessary component of the rule" (Das & Poole, 2004:19). This changes the perspective of anthropology somewhat from the focus on primitive societies and non-state entities. The state must be an eligible subject for ethnographic inspection. The state has long remained distant from the ethnographic practices and methods that constituted the proper, disciplinary subjects of anthropology. "Anthropology has always, in many unacknowledged ways, studied the state. It is through the language of the state that anthropologists have traditionally constituted the tropes of social order, rationality, authority, and even externality for their subject" (Das & Poole, 2004:21).

As anthropologists map the effects and presence of the state in local life, they often look for signs of administrative and hierarchical rationalities that provide ordered links with the political and regulatory apparatus of the central bureaucratic state: the specific technologies of power. States attempt to manage or pacify the populations through both force and a pedagogy of conversion intended to transform unruly subjects into lawful subjects of the state (Das & Poole, 2004). Part of border creation is defining legibility and illegibility; citizenship determination and disqualification form part of the technology of rule used by states (Das & Poole, 2004). So, much of the modern state is constructed through its practices on the subjects. Practices like documenting and gathering of statistical information are all intended in some sense, to consolidate state control over subjects, populations, territories, and lives (Elden, 2007; Das & Poole, 2004; Johnson et al., 2011). Practices like displacement, falsification, and interpretation surrounding the circulation and use of personal identification papers constitute the rule technologies. Prominent here too is the tension-filled space of the checkpoint. However, subjects, especially those at the margins, are not just passive to these technologies of rule, they are active, manipulating technologies to their advantage in order to live, and they are outwitting the state machinery.

Anthropologists have reflected on how the contexts of civil war, political violence, authoritarian rule, and emergency power shape people's sense of community, self, and political future. Agamben, (2000) says that reconstitution is through special laws on populations whom the new form of regulation can be exercised. The two different modalities of the rule in Agamben's conception consider margins as sites that do not so much lie outside the state but run through its body. The securing and undoing of identities, and documentation through which the state claims to secure identities in practice often circulates in ways that undermine these same identities and assurances. Through documents, the state not only makes the population legible to itself but these documents become embodied in forms of life through which ideas of subjects and citizens come to circulate among those who use the documents (Fassin, 2011).

The combination of physical location and other aspects of the natural marginality of border people combines with maps of anticipation which are spaces where pedagogic claims and assurances of law and the nation become unsettled by state practices (Das & Poole, 2004). Through "maps of anticipation residents of a border or war zone come to anticipate and internalise the unpredictability of violence precisely through the predictability of physical sites where the state exerts its own seemingly arbitrary claims to sovereignty over territories that it cannot clearly control" (Das & Poole, 2004:24). Writing on checkpoints in the contested territories of the Horn of Africa, for example, Weber (2012), describes how different military forces compete for control of concrete territories. In these territories that have become in some ways truly "marginal" to the state, "uncertainties of one's own position with respect to the guarantees and protection of state law are further complicated by deliberately illegible identities and locations of the paramilitaries who are simultaneously of or not of the state" (Weber, 2012:3).

Anthropological focus on the processes of everyday life brings out how the state is reconfigured at the margins, including borders. Margins are not simply peripheral spaces, as Das & Pole (2004) put it. "Sometimes, as in the case of borders of nation-states, they determine what lies inside and what lies outside" (Weber, 2012:2). Borders and checkpoints are spaces in which sovereignty, as the right to life and death, is experienced. Paradoxically, these spaces of exception are also those in which the creation of the margins is visible as alternative forms of economic and political action are instituted (Agamben, 2005). It is a fact that though certain populations are pathologized through various kinds of power/knowledge practices, they do not submit to these conditions passively. When everyday life becomes the focus of analysis as in the work of James Scott, (1985) on everyday forms of peasants' resistance, it appears that agency is seen primarily in acts of resistance. The focus is on the ways in which conceptual boundaries of the state are extended and remade in securing survival or seeking justice in the everyday life of cross-border pastoralists. Activities that provide opportunities for

securing livelihoods in the regions devastated by ongoing wars, drought, and other economic disasters are ones that border theory sets out to capture.

The forms of sociality developed on the borders show that margins are also spaces on which the conceptualised boundaries of the economy are crafted and extended (Coates, 2017; Cohen, 2000; McGahern, 2017). The possibilities and limits of these new border bending practices provide an important vantage point for understanding trans-local processes through which the state is experienced. Lay justice and common good animate activities that take place at and across the borders. Geertz, 2000 and Das & Poole, 2004 agree that experiences of the local worlds do not stand in binary opposites with the state. Even if they are locked in unequal relations, they are enmeshed in one another. Borders are margins where the state gives legitimacy to an agreement that is coercive and, in many respects, paints a different picture of the common good, but for most African border spaces the state has yet to operate and sometimes they may be sites on which the state is continually formed in the recesses of everyday life.

It is the contention of this study that “culture” is important in the study of borders, borderlands, and borderland inhabitants. Local and regional cultures in borderlands are not just reactive agents; they affect policy formation, representation and reception at the border. As Donnan & Wilson (1999) put it, all border communities have cultural frontiers that they continue to negotiate. A focus on border culture through border theory is one way to identify and analyse the networks and institutions which tie individuals and groups in border regions to others, both inside and outside their own country. The lives of people who live and work at borders, some of whom do so because of the very existence of the border, are part of border cultures, ways of life and forms of meanings which they share with other borderlanders on the same or the other side of the borderline.

2.5 *Uganda-DRC border region*

The border between Uganda and DRC, like any other border, not only represents partition, but also an opportunity for different societal forces to come into contact and interact with each other. It is thus an area where socio-political identities converge, coexist, and sometimes conflict. This border is a world apart - very “unsovereign”: not wholly Ugandan, not Congolese, with its own customs, mores, values, and even its own language (Scorgie, 2011). Feeding into this is a remoteness from centralised control, not just in physical sense, but also in administrative and political domains as well, leading to a diluted sense of national identity on the part of the inhabitants (Raeymaekers, 2012). As Raeymaekers notes, a “sense of being different” from fellow citizens frequently leads into interests and visions fundamentally at odds with those of the capital. To understand this borderland, one has to go back to colonial times when ethnic groups of Bakonzo, Bamba, Batuku, and Banyabindi were

split when a border between the British Protectorate of Uganda and the Free State of Congo was imposed by the colonial powers (Vlassenroot & Bu, 2013). The most highlighted issues in scholarship on this border are the conflicts, the Ebola sickness and illegal business (Raeymaekers, 2012; Scorgie, 2011). However, the borderland community's complex networks and institutions have been built through family and ethnic nodes, something that is seldom emphasised by scholarships of this region. Trade networks include a variety of elements among buyers, sellers, investors and brokers, with ethnic and national diversity and a division of labour. Friendship, kinship and patron-client relationships form the basis for the interaction of people at the border and deserve to be analysed academically.

This border, as Vlassenroot & Buscher, (2009) assert, is a centre of community interaction with social, economic, ethnic and religious diversity, as well as instances in which groups at the border clash, collaborate, collude, compete and conflict. The close ethnic, kinship and family ties of people are the main reason for the intense social and economic interactions that take place across the border. The social structure and systems are complementary to each other in realising the livelihood demands prevailing at the border. Another social structure complementarity is reflected in the interactions between sellers and buyers, local political engagements and behaviour of local bureaucrats toward the market, and rural communities that are already bound in the border environment (Raeymaekers, 2012). This makes the border area a way of life, a common style of economic activity that covers many aspects. As a way of life, the border is a space to defend and protect from the dynamics of militia and state struggles. The border is the event of meeting distinct cultures, livelihoods, agriculture, trade, religion, and social systems deep within the unity of ideas, activities, and an artefact called the market (Atkinson, 2009; Donnan & Wilson, 2012). The border is a space that cuts across the country to create a fusion of culture and hybridisation through the process of social and cultural integration in a transnational order. The border between Uganda and DRC is highly porous. When the informal nature of many cross-border interactions is put into context, it then becomes appropriate to regard this border as an entity or group of entities, rather than to define areas as being associated with Uganda and/or the DRC. In this context, the complexity of cross-border pastoralism and the struggles and experiences of accessing state resources and service can be understood. Cross-border surveillance is ineffective and numerous border management agencies have limited patrolling capacity for screening the whole Uganda-DRC border. Observations at several border-crossing points showed the dominating presence of armed soldiers from Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF). There are many informal crossings, including routes that officials are not aware of, that enable people to cross undetected (often by foot or by canoes). Community surveillance using localised structures, social networks and institutions is more effective than top-down interventions. This has made the border area an arena of interaction which shows heterogeneity characteristics that bring transactions

among diverse groups of people with diverse cultural backgrounds. The border as a cultural meeting point brings border crossers into the world of trans-cultural and transnational. Ethnic similarities provide protection and advantages to facilitate matters ranging from basic needs to daily needs including getting a border crossing requirement like an identity card.

2.6 Cross-border pastoralism and borderlands in Africa

Cross-border livelihoods are transnational, in that they extend and operate across national boundaries, in order to be sustainable. Pastoralists frequently cross borders in order to access seasonal pastures and water, to move away from climatic and soil conditions or pests that are detrimental to their livestock. Alternatively, crossing borders enables access to trade routes, markets and opportunities for labour migration, seasonal labour and trading opportunities, as well as participation in key social and cultural events (Cormack & Young, 2012). African borders cut through multiple socially, economically and environmentally active regions. These borders pass through grazing lands containing important migration routes, especially for pastoralist groups, enabling them to access their favoured dry season pastures. There are two sets of issues of immediate concern for pastoralists that existing anthropological studies highlight; first the high profile and hugely important political and legal issues, including for example, border demarcation, citizenship and national agreements, and second, the implications of these issues for cross-border pastoralism (Mosebo, 2017; Djohy, 2017; Kratli & Schareika, 2010; Krätli, 2010). Whereas much has been written on the demarcation, citizenship, and international agreements, little is known on how pastoralists experience, approach, and survive along borderlines amidst insecurity and climatic variables.

In borderland areas, conflicts often escalate when resources are depleted on one side of the border. These areas are too barren to support vegetation, and recurrent droughts force people to migrate in search of pasture and water, exposing their livestock to the risk of diseases (Fekadu, 2010). To overcome these challenges, pastoralists may choose to cross territorial and state borders. Doing so provides one way to compensate for the hazardous environmental conditions that lead to recurrent shortages and loss of livestock (Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson, 1999; Hutchison, 1996). Boundaries between nation states are not the only lines that prove problematic for pastoralists. As elites continue to subdivide new and smaller, ethnic-based districts, even district boundaries have become obstacles to pastoralists' movements (Krätli & Schareika, 2010). Policy formulation and implementation frameworks remain a preserve of experts and rarely do they balance the various regional and sectoral interests with the needs of pastoralists (Gaventa, 2004). For instance, when it comes to benefitting from state assistance, public services like schools, hospitals, animal vaccination, and markets are generally oriented towards communities that remain in place. Pastoralist families

with few resources can thus be faced with the choice of prioritising schooling for their children, health care to ailing family members, or moving their animals in times of drought (Kratli, 2000; Kratli & Dyer, 2009; Barton & Morton, 2001).

The future of African pastoral societies is debated by a variety of actors, including development and policy planners, social scientists, and pastoralists themselves. One view is that pastoralists should abandon pastoralism altogether and start to plant forage crops, cereals, and fodder to raise livestock in private and sedentary settings to better integrate into an urbanising, market-based economy (Elliot Fratkin, 2001). The second view is that of anthropologists and pastoralist associations who emphasise the restoration and protection of traditional pastoral rights, including legal rights to water and pasture resources, guaranteed rights of way for herds to travel, rights to unhindered passages across international borders, recognition of pastoralists knowledge of water, pasture, and herd management, an end of propaganda to sedentary, and the right to run their own local affairs (Galvin, 2009; Tache, 2008).

According to Fratkin, (2001) pastoralist societies face more demands on their way of life than at any previous time. Population growth, loss of herding lands to farmers, ranches, game parks, and urban growth, increased commoditisation of livestock economy, out-migration by poor pastoralists, and dislocations brought about by drought, famine, floods, and civil war are increasing within pastoralist regions. These problems are intensified as international development programmes encourage privatisation, and individualisation of formerly communally owned resources. Despite these challenges, livestock pastoralism has been surprisingly resilient as pastoralists have shown a wide variety of adaptations to change including periodic oscillation between pastoralism and farming, as well as hunting and gathering, and more recently wage labour (Devereux & Scoones, 2008). Fratkin looks at problems faced by east African pastoralists societies including demographic growth, land degradation, privatisation of rangelands, urban migration, and political conflict. He focuses on the three cases of Maasai, Boran, and Rendille and demonstrates the variety of social and economic strategies pursued by pastoralist populations in the light of the increased pressures on their production systems. Fratkin (ibid) contends that pastoralists typically occupy large tracts of communally shared land and utilise kinship ties for mutual herding and defence. Their herds are often large and in poor condition, but hardy enough to survive periodic drought and sparse vegetation.

In east Africa, pastoralists occupy 70% of the land of Kenya, 50% of Tanzania and 40 % of Uganda, but their populations are numerically small (fewer than 1.5 million of Kenya's 45 million, 55 million of Tanzania and 38 million of Uganda's population), and they find themselves politically disempowered and economically marginalised in the national polities that are dominated by people from agricultural communities (Rugadya, 2007). Pastoralists rely on their herds for daily subsistence.

Their diet consists of milk, meat, and blood obtained from their animals, and cereals either grown or obtained from trading their animals' milk products. Milk products account for 60-65% of the dietary energy of Maasai, Turkana, and Rendille, consumed mainly in wet seasons, while meat, (usually from goats and sheep), blood (tapped from living animals), and cereals are consumed as the dry season sets in and milk diminishes (Fratkin, 1997).

The population growth rate in east Africa is among the world's highest. Particularly, Uganda has a 3.3% annual increase, attributed to a high total fertility rate of 7.3% coupled with declines in child mortality (UBOS, 2014). High population growth has affected both rural and urban areas. This has brought about increased competition with pastoral neighbours for pasture and water, leading to recent armed attacks and conflicts in the region (Filipová & Johannisova, 2017).

Faced with stress induced by drought and famine, pastoralists responded in the past with mobility or temporary shifts to hunting and gathering or farming societies. Today pastoralists have new options, including migration to towns for wage labour, migration to famine relief centres, and wholesale adoption of agriculture. These options, however, do not provide pastoralists with the same levels of food and well-being as pastoral life styles (Davies, 2006; Little, Tiki, & Debsu, 2015).

Loss of common property resources generates severe strain for pastoralists. Whereas livestock among most pastoralists in Africa constitutes individual or family property, access to land (for pasture, water, minerals, and security) is usually shared by territorial or kinship groups, that is, land is held in common as a communal resource or is considered a common property open to all.

Commoditisation, sedeterisation, and urban migration are current influences. Pastoralists are increasingly shifting their economy from subsistence production (producing mainly milk for household consumption) to commercial production (producing beef and dairy products for sale both to domestic and export markets). This has led to a growing polarisation of haves and have-nots (Boru, Schwartz, Kam, & Degen, 2014).

Whereas pastoralists politically dominated their agricultural neighbours in the 19th Century, this situation was reversed during the colonial and postcolonial times when governments were led by people from more populous agricultural communities that were often hostile to pastoralists' concerns. Traditional pastoral production demands mobility yet the actions of governments curtailed mobility through alienation of land, demarcation of grazing boundaries, and mechanisation of bore holes which encouraged pastoralists' sedentarisation. Moreover, governments displaced local authority over range and water use, decreased effectiveness of sanctions, and facilitated manipulation by the wealthy and influential (Tache, 2008).

According to Bascom, (1990) political turmoil and civil wars have created refugees, many of whom bring their livestock. Their arrival, coupled with the widespread expansion of mechanised agriculture in the same region, has intensified conflict over land resources, especially along the border. Bascom examines the factors that are bringing refugee cattle herders to the point of extinction and thereby are jeopardising pastoralism as a way of life for the Eritrean refugees. For more than four and a half centuries their cattle, ranging back and forth on well-established trek routes, moved as far as the Keren foothills in Subik, in the late dry season, and then westward into the lowlands in the rainy season. The Maria grazed their cattle closer to Keren foothills, and the Beni-Amar grazed their herds in the areas directly adjacent to, but west of the Maria. The western third of the Beni-Amar territory falls with Sudan. As it is common in pastoral societies, cattle served as the nucleus of their nomadic lifestyle. Milk and its products are central to their diet, and cattle confer political position, power, and prestige on their owners. Household heads make it their life objectives to develop a perfect-sized herd of at least one hundred head Bascom explains.

Cattle also serve as the principal commodity for intra-societal exchanges. For example, seven mature cows constitute a bride price, and a cow is bestowed on each son at his naming ceremony and marriage day. Nomadic lifestyles require minimal cash expenditures. The British gave only peripheral attention to the lowland areas as was evidenced by the minimal tax yearly of one shilling. This in turn, allowed the pastoralists to maintain a largely self-sufficient economy and a logic of accumulating cattle, not cash.

2.7 Cross-border pastoralism and livestock market location

According to Little, Tiki, & Debsu, (2015) what needs to be understood about pastoralism is that unregulated cross-border trade in livestock supports the exports and links traders and pastoralists to various actors including those at national, regional, and global levels. Indeed, most of the formal export trade is dependent on cross-border pastoralism and an informal, often in form of illegal, cross-border trade in livestock that challenges state sovereignty in weakly governed borderlands in the region. At times the agendas of different actors and institutions involved in the trans-border trade strongly conflict. Little, Tiki, & Debsu, (2015) attempt to show that interpretations of border policies and what is informal (illegal) versus formal (legal) trade vary depending on which actors and countries in the region are benefiting from cross-border trade, as well as political relationships among them. Looking at the Horn of Africa they suggest that the distinction is particularly problematic in border areas which are generally remote, administration is weak, and trade policies easily misunderstood, misinterpreted, and/or selectively implemented. For example, the livestock that is

unofficially trekked across the Somalia border to be sold in Kenya is eventually sold through formal market channels in urban centres such as Nairobi (Little, Tiki, & Debsu, 2015).

Depending on the destination of the animal, the rural trader or buyer also may pay a fee to a Kenyan veterinary department official to have the animal cleared for movement outside the border area. Like any other trade, cross-border animal trade involves a myriad of institutions, actors, and relationships and relies on a range of local institutions and practices to facilitate the activity (Little et al., 2015). There are brokers who have the role of matching buyers with the sellers. Brokers are used to ensure the legitimacy of the sale and that stolen or sick animals are not being transacted. Brokers often take on a special identity in border markets where they can maintain important social and economic networks across multiple international boundaries.

Nori et al., (2006) note that unlike other commodities, livestock has features that make it amenable to cross-border trade even in situations of insecurity. It is a mobile, high-value commodity that can be walked across the borders in rangelands that do not have monitor roads and are distant from official crossings. The geography of the trade and its informality is influenced by national policies and politics. Throughout the region, pastoralist areas are politically marginalised and despite the generation of considerable revenues from these areas, their citizens receive few government services and little infrastructure, often a fraction of what is allocated to more politically favoured locations. In relation to the above, Krätli (2010:2) talks about “setting of abstract, impossible policy goals which turn the means by which these goals are to be achieved into ends”. He says that “technical targets that are defined in the abstract with little connection to production systems and societies of producers on the ground”. Kratli (2010) examines the long-term effects of interventions showing how, once integrated into the actual context of production and social dynamics on the ground, the “solutions” in principle result in even bigger problems in practice.

Annual migration of cattle herds along the border has distinct periodicity and directionality. Bascom (1990:417) discussing the Ethiopia-Sudan border says, “that as the dry season begins to take hold in January and February, herds leave the Wade el Hileau area and move south ward along the Atbara River”. “During the month of February or early March they reach the wal kowi vicinity at the confluence of the Atbara and Bar el salaam rivers” (ibid.,). During the peak of the dry season, from April to July, herds move across the Ethiopian border and follow the Angereb and Bar el Salaam rivers deeper and deeper into Western Ethiopia. This annual trek of herds across the border to graze on better pastures and fresh water is part of the lifestyle that most group of cross-border pastoralists lead. Bascom, (1990:419) however, continues to say “that this annual trek has now attracted a group of bandits who attack pastoralists on their trek to look for pasture and water across the border”. This is comparable to the militia groups that have entered the Uganda-DRC border where pastoralists find

themselves at their mercy. Banditry has increased markedly with destabilisation of the area. Herders use several tactics to minimise on the risks of attack. Extra help is hired for the trek into Ethiopia and herders camp together in groups of six to eight. They slaughter male calves to minimise the difficulty of sending the herd back to the border if bandits are encountered. They also divide the herd into two parts; one, comprising older cows with calves, remains near the border, the other, with young, stronger cattle, advances to the dry season pastures. When bandits are seen, herders immediately break camp, drive the herd from the camp and move to the border as rapidly as possible.

The life of a herder is lonely and dangerous, especially in border regions where they have to cross spaces that belong to another authority or authorities and loyalties. A herder usually sleeps in the open during the day and tends the livestock during the nocturnal hours when beasts in search for forage are most apt to damage crops. For the Batuku pastoralists night time vigilance is important in the months of July, August, September, October, November, and December, when grass has weathered up in the area and water dried up. The head of the household is the owner of the herd even if the cows are for his wife, mother or sister. These hire herders while others do their own herding or use relatives. Kratli & Schareika, (2010) contends that livestock markets at the border in this region are dominated by Gedaref, because of the large concentration of purchasing power for beef. Its location is on the road that goes to the city centres where the demand for beef is six times higher than elsewhere.

A shift to a more sedentary lifestyle due to war has forced pastoralists to flee to an unfamiliar environment that, in turn, has a large disincentive for nomadism (Kratli & Schareika, 2010). Although cattle herds continue to migrate with changing seasons, households now remain at fixed locations, a pattern that is evident elsewhere in pastoral regions. Grazing rights have become firmly “commodified” or transformed into an expensive economic good. Intergenerational shifts from pastoralism are an important facet of the ongoing process of pastoral marginalisation and the fragmentation of household, which is the primary unit of production. Pastoral restructuring is also occurring everywhere in east Africa under similar conditions. Pastoralism is becoming the domain of absentee owners who are merchants in trading centres and wage labourers in main towns and cities (Gerald & Dorothy, 2013).

According to Moritz, (2017) pastoralists are fast becoming net losers in the politics of land use. The retreat of pastoralism can be attributed to the expansion of capitalism, which is undermining traditional pastoralism by expropriating rangelands and raising costs of production. Drought also magnifies an ongoing process of impoverishment linked to the appropriation of rangelands and the commodification of grazing rights in the border region. He says that the marks of social communalism continue to be seen in the pastoralists’ lifestyle, despite the depletion of their cattle herds. The exchange of cattle as bride price has served a vital reproductive function for the entire pastoral system

and an equally powerful symbolic function. Today young men must postpone marriage until they acquire traditional bride price of seven cows. Consequently, delays in the system at a biological level signifies the intense nature of the impending social crisis on another plane (Moritz, *ibid.*). The entrenched tradition has yet to buckle under pressures of a cash economy; the day it does so will mark the twilight of pastoralism as a distinct way of life.

According to Davies, (2006) pastoralists' households live with a high degree of uncertainty in food supply and frequently face food shortages. This creates a demand for insurance against hunger, which particularly in less developed areas where the cost of formal markets is high, is met by mechanisms for redistribution or social exchange. The good that such institutions of reciprocity provide is what he has termed social capital, and livestock plays a key role in the social capital procurement. According to Brown, & Tompkins, (2005) the systems of exchange are embodied within social and political institutions, yet they also fulfil important economic functions. Participation in these institutions can be viewed as a way of maximising utility. In his article *capitalisation, commodification, and obligation among Ethiopian Afar pastoralists*, Davies (2006) examines Afar livelihood goals to understand how they view the institutions that are central to their existence. He further assesses the choices made in allocating livestock resources to accumulate different forms of capital. Among pastoralists the term capital is used to describe the investments, stores, or claims which can be mobilised as a means of survival of the household or to increase well-being. These capitals are a core element of livelihood and represent the assets that are mobilised by a household to meet their livelihood goals (Davies, *ibid.*). However, the broad range of the roles that livestock plays in a pastoral livelihood renders it difficult to categorise because it represents forms of natural capital, financial capital, and social capital. For this reason, it may be useful to consider livestock as a medium of conversion from one type of capital to another or an enabling asset. Pastoralists can choose the type of capital their livestock represents according to their specific needs. The household's ability to cope with shocks or adapt to change depends on its *ex ante* asset portfolio and its ability to mobilise these different assets (Morton & Meadows, 2000). One way of mobilising livestock assets is to trade it in the marketplace, but marketing in pastoral areas is complicated by high transaction costs due to the long distance that pastoralists must travel and poor market infrastructure. Making and maintaining trade relationships, negotiations, contracts and markets fail when the cost of transaction creates a greater disutility than utility gain. Lack of information and absence of formal markets impose transaction costs. Livestock is also a means through which pastoralists can build up social capital. Social capital in the livelihood context describes reciprocity between individual and/or groups. It can also be defined as the social resources (networks, social claims, social relations, affiliations, and

associations) upon which people draw when pursuing different livelihood strategies requiring coordinated actions (Scoones, 1995).

2.8 Social Capital among Cross-border Pastoralists

In most pastoralists societies there are institutions that govern the transfer of livestock and labour. These are managed through practices of livestock exchange and networks of communal support systems. As a result, there are complex shared rights in livestock, which reinforce the community's control over an individual's decision making regarding disposing of animals (Tonah, 2002; Davies, 2006). Giving and loaning of animals between households is important in times of stress, and elders often forbid excessive sale of animals during drought to ensure that they are reserved for community members in greater need. Loaning livestock is an important mechanism for survival and redistribution of wealth within pastoralists. Although a rule may not be adhered to, a breach of the loan will lead to exclusion from such support system in the future (Turner, 2017; Mahmoud, 2008). Such loaning of stock ensures that poorer households have access to all resources in the community. Labour exchanges happen where individuals, usually young males, are effectively adopted by a wealthy household to herd their stock (Waller, 1985). Wealthier households also fulfil their obligations through the donation of livestock for slaughter at ceremonies, such as weddings and birth. In this study I look at loaning livestock as an institution that runs through the border culture context that keeps Batuku pastoralists together in the economy of cross border pastoralism.

According to Tonah (2000), there are also relationships created between pastoralists and sedentary farmers on one hand and national governments and nomadic pastoralists on the other, which can be characterised as a love-hate affair. In some countries, sedentary farmers appear to get along well with neighbouring pastoralist groups and the two groups cooperate for their mutual benefit. Studying the Ghana-Burkina Faso border, Tanah reveals that this cooperation usually takes the form of sedentary farmers entrusting their cattle herds, to nomadic pastoralists who have better knowledge of livestock herding and whose nomadic lifestyle facilitates the utilisation of pastures and waterholes in distant locations. In this way, nomadic pastoralists have access to the herds' milk, which often constitutes a substantial portion of their diet while farmers spend less energy and time searching for pasture and water. What draw I in Tonah's context is how nomadic pastoralists with relate in terms mutual benefits beyond their national borders and boundaries.

Patrilineal extended families of up to three generations is another form of social capital that Tonah (2000) records among the Fulbe, where each household constitutes a largely independent unit of residence, production, and reproduction. For the Batuku at the Uganda-DRC border these extended family networks are astride the border and help in the construction of the border culture context that

does not emphasise citizenship. This is through exchanges and sharing of available pastoral resources, like pasture, water, salty grounds, and food, milk, and other services important for their stay in the region. As Tonah contends, the Fulbe are nomadic cattle herders who subsist mainly on milk or milk products, consequently they must possess adequate herds with a high percentage of milk cows. They usually sell the surplus milk or exchange it for grain at the local market. Meat is eaten only on ceremonial and ritual occasions, and cattle are sold only to meet an overriding need for cash. Moritz (2017) reveals that a distinct feature of this group is the split household and the split headship where the household head remains in the home area where the farm lies, and his sons move with stock across the border during the height of dry season to the better endowed areas of northern Ghana in search of water and pasture. They later return to the locality in time to help with farm clearing or harvesting. Cultural differences and ethnic rivalry between the Fulbe and farmer groups (the Kassena), once insignificant, became stressed (Galvin, 2009; Tonah, 2002). According to Galvin, (2009) statements like pastoralists do not bury their dead, their cattle are not sweet, or the Fulani bring many foreign livestock diseases are common. We do not have the cure of these diseases and they do not want to show us how they treat their animals when they get these diseases. In fact, the Fulani are partly responsible for the rising cost of veterinary drugs and services in the area. The Fulbe accuse the Kassena landlords and stock owners of being unreliable and dishonest. They consider their herds to be bigger, better looking and thriving herds are surely a source of envy for the Kassena.

Many anthropologists like Fratkin, (1997); Morton, (2010) report that pastoral governance and institutions for range management are so fluid. Moritz, (2017); Chemed Edossa, Singh Babel, Das Gupta, & Bekele Awulachew, (2005) assert that rules of the game are continuously being negotiated as they respond to social, political, economic, and ecological criteria. AS Galvin (2015:191) argues, “horizontal linkages such as kin and close associates among local resource users allow them to interact and work cooperatively to achieve a common end”. These authors, however, highlight the level of fragmentation of grazing lands that has put pressure on the use of pastoral social networks and reciprocal rights and obligations mostly due to the neo-liberal programmes and activities of states. Galaty, (2016) reveals how the search for privately owned wealth has undermined social relationships among pastoralists. Socio-economic stratification is increasing among pastoralists with negative implications for the poor. Although wealth differentials are not new in pastoral societies, the gap between the rich and poor is widening especially now that land that was customary owned and accessed by all member through clan heads has been privatised (McPeak & Barrett, 2001; Little, Mcpeak, Barrett, & Kristjanson, 2008).

Pastoralists are increasingly linking to institutions and people at higher levels of society who can help them govern their lands; co-management is shared authority between local users and the regional or

national governments (Adger et al., 2005; Cassidy, 2012). These vertical links help increase a network's ability to access new power relationships. Because this type of capital can bring in new and potentially novel information, it can establish strong management institutions and thereby contribute to group resilience. Kratli & Schareika, (2010) and Butt, (2011) assert that in the face of growing uncertainty, the capacity of people both to innovate and to adapt to new technologies and practices to suit new conditions becomes vital. An important question is whether forms of social capital can be accumulated to enhance such innovations. As Schilling, Locham, Weinzierl, Vivekananda, & Scheffran, (2015) say, without the trust associated with social capital, herders tend to use individualistic strategies that help them in the short term to access resources, but which may increase their vulnerability in the long term. Pastoralists have adapted for centuries to climate, social, political, and ecological process. They have adapted to political, societal, or environmental changes by migration, cooperating with other ethnic groups, or taking up cultivation, among many other activities (Hall, 1986; Galvin, 2009). These authors contend that disturbances or crises are not always bad for a social system, but the capacity to adapt to the changes will determine whether the system can endure. A socio-ecological system with low levels of social memory and social capital is vulnerable to changes such as floods, shifts in property rights regimes, resource failures, new government legislations and may consequently deteriorate into an undesired state of being.

2.9 Pastoralism and Wildlife Conservation

According to Enghoff, (1990), wildlife conservation, as a form of land use organised by the state has had a long history in east and central Africa. Today it is considered one of the major forms of alternative use of semi-arid pastoral land. Huge tracts of land have been set aside as wildlife reserves or national parks, where only tourists come. The fact that wildlife moves, and that most pastoralist areas are just as suited to wildlife as to domestic herds, means that all pastoral lands of east and central Africa fall under the influence of wildlife. Butt (2011) says that pastoralists live in environmentally variable arid and semi-arid regions of the world where there is a high degree of risk and uncertainty. Pastoralists traditionally cope with environment variability by employing a variety of adaptive strategies that take many forms including migration and transhumance. Several political-economic structural policies have fragmented and reduced the spaces available for mobile pastoralism and threatened the ability of pastoralists to effectively cope with environmental variability (Galvin, 2009). West, Igoe, & Brockington, (2006) and Butt, (2011) note that despite restrictions on accessing Key Resource Areas (KRAs), which are located inside Protected Areas (PAs), these have become increasingly important to pastoralists because they contain dry and drought season grazing reserves. PAs are also thought to strongly influence the resource management strategies of pastoralists because

of the increased likelihood of livestock depredation by wildlife, epizootic disease transmissions, and harassment of herders by PA officials. PAs are contentious political and environmental spaces with violent histories, beginning with the expulsion of indigenous peoples from ancestral lands during the colonial era and continuing enforcement in a manner that puts pastoralists at conflict with their respective states. Galvin (2009) discovered that grazing land is too small, and children of pastoralists depend only on small pieces of land. Before subdivisions everybody could go everywhere. But now it is impossible with enclosure. Grass quality has greatly decreased; some grass species are really disappearing because the rain has decreased. Restrictions on the movement of people and livestock, privatisation of communal lands and group ranches, and long spells of drought with less predictable rainfall have caused a shorter interval between drought periods. Formal legislation and coercive resource management strategies that prohibit pastoralists access to traditional key resources areas are conditioning pastoralists to vulnerability (Schilling et al., 2015).

In addition to increased control and dwindling and deteriorating natural resources, organised cross-border cattle rustling is also evident at the core of the problems pastoralists are facing at the present. Only when local officials on both sides of the border cooperate effectively to resolve the problems associated with cross-border stock theft can pastoralists' lives be guaranteed. Pastoralists' management system of natural resources encompasses the core of pastoralist adaptive capacity, which includes formal and informal institutions (Turner, 2017). Pastoral management strategies may not be sufficient under fragmentation. Changes affecting grasslands and pastoralist societies include land tenure, land use, intensification, sedentarisation, institutional changes, and climate change. Most grasslands of the world have been community governed, by de jure or de facto control (Fratkin, 1997). Movement of livestock herds is a principal component of land management. Pastoralists access pasture and water across space and time through reciprocal agreements with other people. The right to use another group's property is the basis for the nonexclusive tenure and land use systems common to pastoralism. The move toward privatisation of grasslands (the change in land use tenure) is likely to cause vulnerability. Formal title to private land makes the system more rigid and constricts the normal "unboundedness, porosity, impermanence, and continual social/political renegotiation" that pastoralism embraces (Cohen, 2000; Galvin, 2009).

2.10 Conclusion

The focus of this chapter is to examine key anthropological debates on borders, borderlands, and cross-border pastoralism. In this chapter I draw on theoretical border perspective to understand cross-border pastoralism. The literature reviewed here is important to the study of borderland inhabitants and more importantly cross-border pastoralists. The chapter recognises the heterogeneous nature of

borders and border studies and the discussion in this chapter makes it apparent that a combination of factors, forces, and challenges face border inhabitants worldwide. The key area that is largely overlooked is the interplay of borderland dynamics as regards the life, experiences, institutions and networks that the cross-border pastoralists interface with as they pursue their livelihoods at and across the borderline. Border theory perspective is used as a lens through which the study explains the lives, experiences, and navigations of the cross-border pastoralists from a point of view of the cross-border pastoralists themselves.

3.0 Chapter Three: Doing Ethnography of Cross-border Pastoralism: Awkwardness, Failures, and Opportunities at the Uganda-DRC Border

3.1 Introduction

This chapter has two goals. One is to show the epistemological assumptions and dilemmas that shaped the study carried out at the border. The second, in some ways related to the first, is to describe the challenges and opportunities that I encountered in the process of carrying out this ethnography at the Uganda-DRC border. In this chapter, I argue that the specificity of the socio-political conditions within which subjects of the study operate determine the positionality of the researcher, at times producing awkwardness, feelings of failure and opportunities that assisted in doing this study. Considering the conceptual gap that I described in chapter two, this study uses border theory perspective to understand how the Batuku cross-border pastoralists have constructed a “border cultural context” through maintaining ties with their kin groups across the border, creating routes that are unknown to border officials and developing networks based on cattle exchanges to facilitate their movements and access to resources and services that secure their livelihoods. This “border cultural context” has been affected by changing border dynamics and socio-economic forces, and this chapter brings out how cross-border pastoralism in general and the Batuku pastoralists in particular can be examined effectively and systematically. This choice of an ethnographic study was motivated by the need to generate “thick descriptions” (Geertz, 1973) of the ways in which cross-border pastoralists construct their livelihoods on the border through networks that are built by the deployment of “the cattle cultural complex” that I discuss in Chapter five of this thesis.

3.2 The border area and people under study

The Batuku are a group of people who live in the valley of Semliki, which lies between Mt Rwenzori and the starting point of Ituri forest up to Lake Albert. In the middle of this valley there is River Semliki which forms boundary between Uganda and the DRC. The part of this valley that is in Uganda is called Butuku (Batukuland). The other part of the valley is in the DRC. The map below shows the border area and the ethnic groups that occupy it as it stretches from Uganda to DRC.

Location of the Study Villages in Rwebisengo Sub-County, Ntoroko District

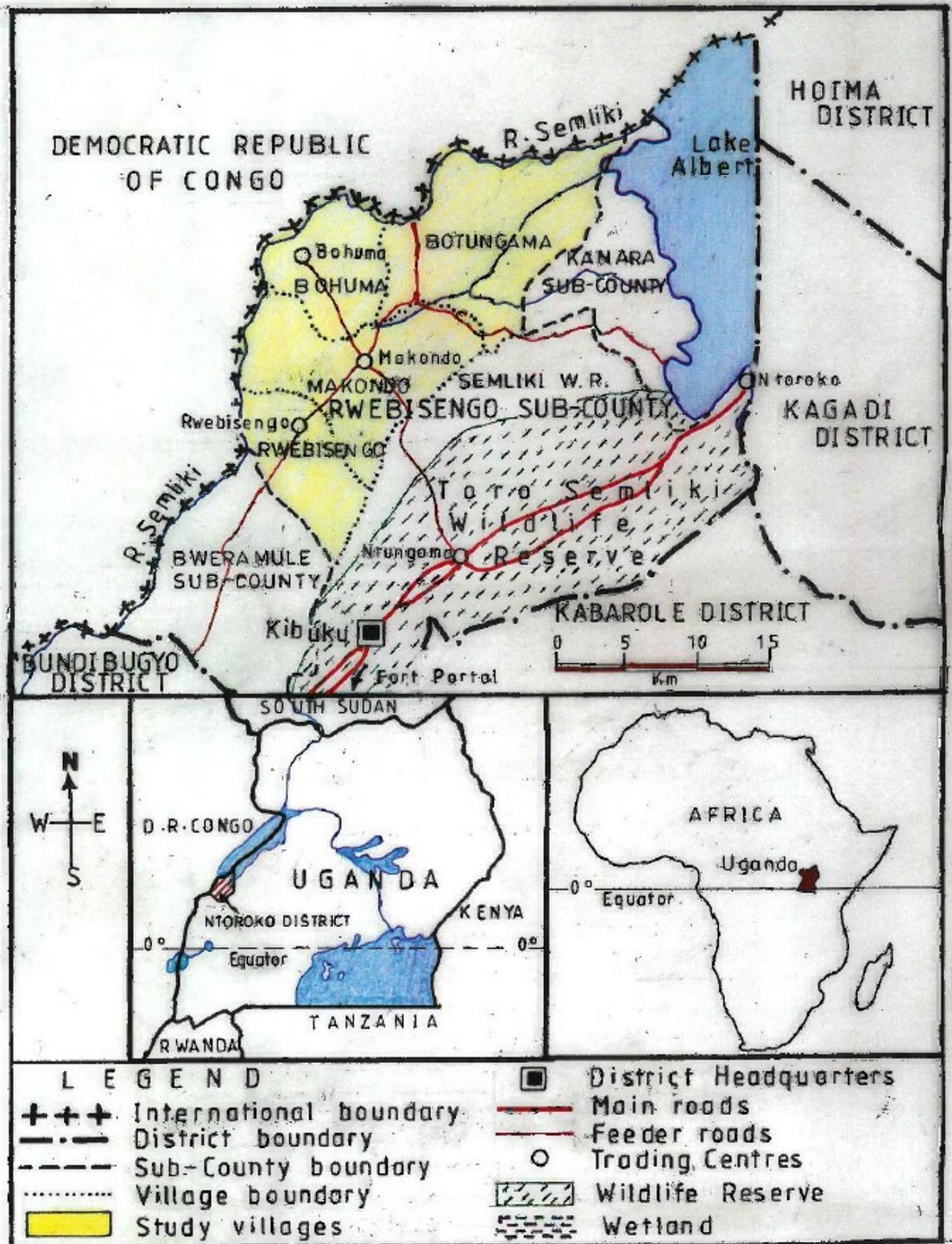


Figure 1: A map showing study villages in Rwebisengo Sub-county

This ethnography was carried out in Rwebisengo sub-county, one of the seven sub-counties that form Ntoroko district in the western part of Uganda. This district came into existence in 2010. But

Rwebisengo sub-county has been in existence as an administrative unit (sub-county) since colonial times. Rwebisengo sub-county is inhabited by people who are predominantly pastoralists and practice transhumance, moving to the DRC and back, depending on the season. The area is flat and dry most months of the year (normally from July to March). This area exhibits uniqueness in terms of its morphology, settlement patterns, and people's relationships. The area is 560 Metres above sea level and, due to the flatness of this region there is occasional flooding in the rainy seasons.

Batukuland has many entry points; one is through the Semliki Game Reserve where there are no human settlements, and another one is through the Rwenzori Mountains. Yet another entry point is through the northern direction by crossing Lake Albert. If coming from the DRC, one enters Batukuland by crossing the River Semliki. The area is bordered by the Semliki Game Reserve from the eastern part, Mt Rwenzori in the southern part, the River Semliki in the west, and Lake Albert in the northern part. As I moved from Fort Portal (this is the biggest town in the region where most services like buses to Kampala city; banks, hotels, and other services are situated) to Rwebisengo the hills in all directions gave me a sense that the area to which I was heading was flat. The Uganda-DRC border on which I carried out this ethnography is a natural one with River Semliki as the boundary marker. This river is 140 kilometres long on the DRC and Uganda border. It flows northwards from Lake Edward to Lake Albert in the Albertine Rift west of the Rwenzori Mountains. Drawing from Colin Turnbull's (1972) account of the "Mountain People", the Batuku can be referred to as the "Valley people".

The Batuku speak a language called Rutuku a dialect of Runyoro/Rutoro cluster of the Bantu language. The Batuku people are divided into two groups. These are the Batuku pastoralists and the Batuku fishing groups. The Batuku pastoralists who the focus of this thesis, are predominantly a transhumant group at the Uganda-DRC border according to the seasons. Their life and existence depend on their livestock. In this study I used snowball method of choosing my interlocutors whereby the households that I already knew to be practising transhumance who eventually led me to other pastoralists who were dependent on transhumance. All in all, I followed up fifteen households from six clans. From these households a total of twenty-five people both men and women became part of this study.

The most prominent feature differentiating Batuku pastoralists as a unified community from other groups in the Semliki valley are the "endearing names" (*engundu/empaako*) they give to each other. These are names given to each person both in Uganda and in the DRC and are used alongside their real names. They are referred to as endearing names and are used for greeting, appreciation, and recognition. These names are so important that everyone must have one. When I first reached Butukuland for fieldwork, my host immediately gave me an endearing name and advised me to get

accustomed to it so that whenever I greet, I could tell others my endearing name so that they as well tell me theirs. Since that time, I have been referred to by my endearing name. These names connect the Batuku on the Ugandan side of the border with those in the DRC and other ethnic groups in the Rwenzori region including the Batooro and Basongora.

The settlements are sparse, with homesteads spread far from each other by almost a one kilometre radius. In this area, people build homes on flat land. In other places people are fond of building on hilly areas, but in Rwebisengo there are no hills on which people could build their homes. This is another aspect that makes Batukuland distinct from other areas in Uganda.

People know their neighbours, and household heads are well known to each other. Even the children from different homesteads are known to people in the area. It is easier to ask for directions using the household head's name than the village name. These close relationships in Rwebisengo easily isolate people who are strangers to the area. When I had just reached this place, my stranger identity could be read on everyone's face and attitude. With time, I came to understand that though the settlement patterns were sparse, the social relations were intimate. This aspect of sparsely patterned settlements and closely-knit relationships sets Rwebisengo sub-county apart from other areas I was familiar with, especially in the city where people "mind their own business".

I reached this area for the first time in the latter part of the month of July, a month when drought intensifies, and people migrate to other areas for fresh pastoral resources. At the same time, it was in this month that the government of Uganda had responded to heightened insecurity in the DRC by deploying its military at the borders. At the border, pastoralists and their animals were searched. They would arrive at River Semliki in the early hours of the morning to water their animals, while others came with cars carrying tanks to fetch water for their cattle on their own farms. The state authorities on the other hand, were searching for clues that could lead them to information about the rebels and militia groups from the DRC. This made the situation not only precarious, but also challenging to me as a researcher. There was a lot of suspicion from both the police and the soldiers as well as other people who kept questioning my presence in this area. This was a time when conflict in the DRC had sent many people searching for refuge across the border to Uganda, and some Batuku pastoralists had lost their cattle to militias when they crossed to the DRC in search of water and pasture. Some Ugandans had been kidnapped by the militia groups in the DRC. In this kind of situation, the researcher needs to be sensitive to personal risks while collecting information as well as the risks to those one is studying.

3.3 *Ethnography and epistemological considerations*

The aim of this study was to produce the perspectives of the Batuku people who live, move and earn a living moving across the international border. The aim is to describe their lives and experiences as cross-border pastoralists. I draw on Clifford Geertz's (1973) notion of "thick description" to examine all possible meanings of events, and thereby provide a description that is layered, rich, and contextual. The ethnography aims to explore the experiences of cross-border pastoralists and listen to their explanations of activities and social practices within the multiple spaces of their daily lives. I visited the homes of some pastoralists and stayed with some of them for several days, where I had first-hand experience of their social realities with their relatives and other members of their families. During these visits, I paid close attention to how individual pastoralists understood their everyday realities as they grazed their livestock and lived in this region.

The rationale for ethnography in this study is that "by being there and actively taking part in the interactions at hand, I could come closer to experiencing and understanding the pastoralists' point of view" (Fife, 2005:7). At times I had to take a step back from the relationships I formed with the people in the field to reflect upon some of the taken-for-granted rules and expectations of the social world of the Batuku pastoralists. This enabled me to see with the eyes of an "outsider" as well as those of an "insider" (Fife, 2005; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

To understand people's ideas and practices, I used an approach that gave me access to the meanings that guided their behaviour.

According to Hammersley & Atkinson, (2007:3), "ethnography plays a complex and shifting role in the dynamic tapestry that social sciences have become in the 21st century". They continue to assert that

"...Ethnography usually involves the researcher participating overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, collecting documents and artefacts- in fact, gathering whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry..... ethnographers draw on a range of sources of data, though they may rely primarily on one" (ibid., 3).

Keeping with the above authors' view, I employed various methods to gather data from the pastoralists on their perspectives, struggles and experiences of crossing an international border in the process of earning a living. I used participant observation, ethnographic interviews, and life history analysis as my methods of accessing various kinds of data. With these methods I became familiar with the influence of border dynamics on the people who live astride this border as well as the conditions, practices, and experiences of Batuku pastoralists as they access public goods and services on either side of the border, depending on their seasonal movements. I learned how the changing

dynamics of the Uganda-DRC border influence a great deal of the Batuku's livelihood, how the current change of the border's nature from porousness to hardness undermined the Batuku's source of resilience, i.e., transhumance.

I carried out an ethnography of Batuku pastoralists from August 2017 to April 2018 and later from November to January 2019. The initial visits were done in all seven sub-counties of the Ntoroko district before settling in the Rwebisengo sub-county. As Fife (2005:4) notes, "the goal of the ethnographic research is to formulate a pattern of analysis that makes reasonable sense out of human actions within the given context of a specific space and time". Fife (ibid.) also points out that long-term observation is necessary to gain some understanding of the unwritten "rules" that govern human interactions among a specific group of people. In accordance with his suggestions, I "hung out" with Batuku pastoralists and followed their lives, and examined their explanations as to when, how and why they crossed the border, as well as when and why they remained on one side. I observed their lives as pastoralists and listened to their views about their networks and institutions that had been formed around the cattle exchanges amongst themselves, and with other communities on either side of the border. I also learnt how they accessed public goods and services from government institutions of either Uganda or the DRC. I engaged with a variety of people, both men and women, young and old, and with pastoralists of diverse levels of education. With these participants, I ultimately ascertained the difficulties pastoralists experienced in accessing resources and services as these borders shifted from being porous to hard.

3.4 Participant observation

Dewalt & Dewalt, (2002:12) consider "participant observation to be a method in which the researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as a means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their routines and culture". I participated in the routines of the Batuku pastoralists to observe how they experienced the border and its dynamics. This necessitated, as Hume & Mulcock (2004:xii) emphasise, both cultural immersion and separating oneself from the experience in order to be able to comprehend it intellectually and write about it convincingly (see also Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). As Fife, (2005) notes, ethnographers try to learn "the insiders' point of view by both participating in a behaviour from within and observing from without." According to Ingold (2013:1) "to know things one needs to grow into them, and let them grow in him/her, so that they become a part of who they are". It is, in short, by watching, listening, and feeling - by paying attention to what the world has to tell us - that we can learn "going along". Participating in the people's life activities helped me to learn and shake off the preconceptions I had held about the Batuku pastoralists, most of which turned out to be unfounded. As Ingold, (2013:3)

observes, “fieldwork is in truth, a protracted master class in which the novice gradually learns to see things, and to hear and feel them too, in the ways his/her mentors do”. Ethnography generally goes far beyond data collection to the extent of relationship formation. It is this relationship that can lead, according to Scheper-Hughes (1995) to responsibility, accountability, and answerability to those being studied, and this comes from both participant observation and the observant participation that Fassin, (2017) writes about.

In my fieldwork, I employed an open-ended critical inquiry into the conditions of Batuku pastoralist life. I joined with people as they grazed their cattle, as they watered them at River Semliki, and treated and sprayed them with medicines. I participated in milking, in lifting cows that could not stand on their own due to drought, and I observed people in cattle markets as they bought and sold cows and food, especially maize meal, and other necessities. I also observed the Batuku pastoralists on several occasions cross the River Semliki to take cattle to the Burasa livestock market across the border in the DRC. I observed them as they swam in the river with their oxen, an act that was illegal and risky, but about which the security personnel could do nothing. I attended village meetings, immigration department sensitisation sessions, and the sub-county administrative meetings. I also went to churches and observed how possession of cattle influenced people’s relationships at various levels. I observed pastoralists in bars as they drank alcohol after a long day in the market, and I examined their exchanges in these drinking places and how they positioned themselves according to the number of cattle they owned. This immersion gave me a profound grounding and understanding of what life is like in Rwebisengo sub-county and at the Uganda-DRC border in particular. The entire process of participating and observing people as they earned a living at this border could only be comprehended in the context of an ontological commitment that went beyond simply “collecting data” (see Ingold, 2013:4).

3.5 *Ethnographic Interviews and Life History Analysis*

Ethnographic interviews are unstructured and sometimes “thought of as fortuitous interviewing” (Fife, 2005:10). They are conversations that take advantage of the topics initiated by those with whom we are doing our study (Fife, 2005). This method makes use of the “lucky breaks that occur in conversations, turning them to our advantage as researchers” (Fife, 2005:11). This method allowed not only the discovery of relevant themes but also it tested my assumptions and preconceptions.

According to Fetterman, (1989), interviewing helps to explain and put into a larger context what the ethnographer sees and experiences. Being able to speak the same language as my participants was an important advantage. I was able to converse easily, and interpretation assistance was not required. Information generated through interviews included identification of historical events like the

demarcating of the Uganda-DRC border in the early stages of colonialism, and the later changes that were implemented by the colonial powers in 1926. Through ethnographic interviews I was also able to establish how these events have influenced cross-border pastoralism and examine the societal understanding of the border and its dynamics. I learned how pastoralism is viewed and perpetuated from generation to generation, and the methods of crossing the border in times of need, as well as the means of avoiding antagonism with the state authorities.

An open-ended approach to asking questions and conversations provided flexibility to cope with the particularities of the range of contexts that were encountered in the field, for instance, the youths who have moved away from pastoralism and are currently earning a living in other sectors and women who have broken through the popular perception of remaining as household wives and are now engaging in economic activities like food vending in livestock markets. Some pastoralists whose cattle have been depleted by drought are now earning a living through other economic activities such as working as security guards in towns, driving taxis, and buying weak and dying cattle, slaughtering them and selling meat to trading centers. Such conversations brought to the fore individual people's knowledge of pastoralism, the changes that are being experienced by the group in pursuing pastoralism, and the new opportunities being explored by youths at the border. They also drew attention to the continuities of the practice of pastoralism amidst border changing dynamics, particularly conflict in the DRC and ongoing struggles over land, oil resources exploration, and cattle in Uganda.

Life history analysis involves "the collection and analysis of an intensive account of a whole life, or a portion of a life, through in-depth conversation(s)" (Robert L. Miller & Brewer, 2003:28). This is important since it places the individual within a nexus of social connections, historical events, and life experiences. I used life history analysis to situate participants, the border, and pastoralism within a longer history. As Fetterman, (1989:50) notes "Life histories and other kinds of in-depth interviews are also part of fieldwork techniques ethnographers use to classify and organise an individual's perception of reality". The participants' perspectives on the border and what they had seen happen at the border in their lifetime was explored, and their experiences of crossing borders in times of crisis were examined. In this regard, the experiences of elders and middle-aged people were analysed. According to Marcus (1995:110) "describing a particular individual's life history reveals a juxtaposition of social contexts through a succession of narrated individual experiences that may be obscured in the structural study of processes as such". This means life history analysis reveals what the ethnographer cannot easily observe in the daily activities of the study subjects. Things that took place long ago can be discovered through digging

into individual life histories. Fetterman (1989:61) contends that “life histories bring out how a person weaves his/her story that tells much about the fabric of the social group. Personal descriptions provide an integrated picture of the target group”. Life history accounts guided me to spaces within the systems that are shaped by categorical distinctions in the Batuku society that could have otherwise been unnoticeable. In my fieldwork, the life history of participants revealed much about the experiences of Batuku pastoralists with the border and their relationships with other people in both Uganda and the DRC. The networks that they wove in their personal life story were revealing in terms of how pastoral systems in Uganda and DRC are interconnected to navigate the climatic conditions of the area and negotiate access to public goods and services in the two nation states.

3.6 Analysis of data and presentation

In the analysis of the data, I continuously oscillated between theory and empirical research. This move between inductive and deductive research acknowledges that being open-minded allows for the empirical data to inform theoretical engagement. This is similar to what scholars such as Comaroff & Comaroff (2003:164) have called “the dialectics of concrete and conceptual considerations”. My approach to data analysis was guided by the understanding that qualitative research should be flexible and consider the subjective perceptions and experiences of the research participants. In this regard, I analysed, reconstructed and interpreted the data in a reflexive, imaginative, and flexible manner (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2003).

The process of analysing the data involved formulating and reformulating research questions and interpreting the Batuku pastoralists’ experiences of the border and the meanings attached to them by members of different social groupings in Batuku society. In this process I had to code and categorise the field notes that I had gathered from interviews, life history narratives, and participant observations. From this process I created analytical categories and themes that aided the interpretation of the data. It is from these codes and themes that I emerged with an overview of the Batuku pastoralists’ experience, their perceptions and the meanings they attached to their everyday life amidst the changing dynamics of the Uganda-DRC border region.

The research examined points of intersection and local particularities among the social groupings of Batuku pastoralist society with regard to their experiences and the meanings they attached to daily life on the border and the processes involved in pursuing livelihoods. For instance, this included examining the historical development of the Uganda-DRC borderline and the historical role of the border security regime. It also involved engaging with how different categories of

people perceive and cross this border, and how this created tensions between their everyday activities and the Ugandan and the DRC states' attempts to shape the local realities and citizenship status of all dwellers and border-crossers in the Uganda-DRC borderland. At the same time, these different categories of people in Batukuland were attached to a system of networked institutions and practices as they pursued their livelihoods at the border. This system continues to be a source of solidarity, social well-being and social capital to people living in this region.

3.7 *On awkwardness, failures, and opportunities of ethnography at Uganda-DRC border*

In this section, as noted earlier, I describe how my positionality as researcher exposed me to awkwardness and feelings of failure, as well providing me with opportunities to pursue this study at the Uganda-DRC border.

When I began my ethnographic project, I was not a seasoned ethnographer. I was a student who had been living in the city for quite a long time and had to some extent lost touch with the realities of everyday life in rural Uganda. For instance, I had never realised that there are parts of Uganda where the mobile telephone network system is not accessible. I had done proficient reading and taken research methods lessons and learnt skills of how to ask questions, observe, listen, and document everyday life. My experience can be likened to what Fetterman, (1989:26) described when he wrote "ethnography is what ethnographers actually do in the field. Textbooks.... together with lectures- can initiate the newcomer to the field and refresh the experienced ethnographer, but the actual fieldwork experience has no substitute."

The "social positioning of an ethnographer simultaneously as an insider and outsider brings the feelings of personal inadequacy and social failure that are, perhaps, an inevitable part of successful participant observation" (Hume & Mulcock, 2004:12). However, this positionality comes with a socially anomalous identity that is dressed in ambiguity and inconsistency for the researcher and the research participants. By resisting total integration and commitment to the social domains an ethnographer is researching; by attempting to maintain his/her intellectual distance, while also indicating the desire to "belong", ethnographers choose a socially anomalous identity that creates suspicion in the minds of the people we are researching. It can also produce feelings of inadequacy regarding our abilities as researchers (Hume & Mulcock, 2004). My own fieldwork experience provides the impetus for this section. I describe the experience briefly to illustrate the anxieties and self-doubts that shaped this fieldwork encounter. These experiences, as Hume & Mulcock, (2004) observe, are predominantly marked with feelings of discomfort, uncertainty, awkwardness, disappointment.

I begin these reflections on the discomforts of fieldwork with the following conversation between *Jimo* (my guide) and *Patol* (a security officer): “That guy could be a spy”, said *Jimo*. “No, he is researching”, *Patol* replied. *Jimo* continued, “I have never seen him in this area, and he inquires on each and everything”. This conversation happened on my second day in Rwebisengo sub-county, after my host and I had approached the local area leaders and security agents to introduce myself. I had decided to go to the border point of Budiba, which is an informal border crossing point unlike Kasenyi, which is a formally manned border crossing point with a customs union in place and bridge to aid crossing. Budiba border point was important because of its porous character. I had noted that people always talked about how the River Semliki allowed people to cross the border without being exposed to official checks. It is at this River that pastoralists have created their informal routes to and from DRC through the water. It is also the route to Burasa livestock market. So, I contacted my guide *Jimo* to take me there. It is a journey of ten kilometres from Rwebisengo trading centre to the border point of Budiba and it took us thirty to forty minutes on a motorcycle.

On reaching the border point at River Semliki, we found many military personnel who had been deployed there days ago for the fear that rebels and militias could use the porous border point to cross to the Ugandan territory and destabilise the area. I decided to interact with the pastoralists who were watering their cattle at the river and later told *Jimo* that we return to the trading centre because I had realised time was running out since my appointment with another friend in Makondo village was fast approaching. However, this immediate return without talking to the military did rouse *Jimo*'s suspicion about my role in the area and he immediately went without my knowledge to the internal security office and reported. He told the area internal security officer that “there is a person he took to Budiba border point who he suspected to be a spy because he did not cross, nor did he interact with the military personnel at the border point”. So, on my way to Makondo village I saw a motorcycle carrying two people stopping in front of me. One of the people was the area internal security officer *Patol* to whom I was introduced a day before. *Patol* then narrated to me what had happened and told me to continue with my work as they returned to their office.

This scenario showed me that although I had explained to *Jimo* my purpose in the area he chose to position me as a spy. This kind of positionality related to the prevailing situation at the border that was characterised by the fear and feeling of insecurity and suspicion toward any stranger. For *Jimo* personal security had overridden my explanation and positionality as a researcher, which I championed to him. This situation was awkward to me and produced a feeling of failure in my explanations but also gave me an opportunity to be firm and move on as the internal security officer *Patol* encouraged me to do, and he continued to explain my role to whoever went to report to his office about me the stranger. This resonates well with Marcus (1995:99) when he says:

“Participant observation, the mainstay of ethnography offers an anthropologist an intimate knowledge of face-to-face with communities and groups. But such intimate knowledge can at times be confusing, marred by question of ethics and one’s own selfish interests, threatened by politics, and the unknowability of social facts, and compromised by efforts to remain both engaged and neutral. Fieldwork can be messy. It can be awkward, especially at the beginning. It requires some flexibility. Fieldwork is always productive, it can produce sensation, emotions, intimate knowledge of oneself and others”.

So, simultaneously positioning oneself and being positioned by others in the field according to Forsey (2004) is part of the taken for granted operational processes in the study of the institutions like borders, of which researchers should be aware. The ways in which ethnographers position themselves affect the stories they tell just as much as they affect the types of relationships formed in the field. Sympathetic downward gazes, punctuated by highly critical upward glances, may be emotional and ideologically satisfying, but they do not necessarily make for good research (Forsey, 2004). As the call for deeper, richer, “thicker” more nuanced understandings of power and its social effects is being issued, those anthropologists committed to a politically engaged and critical anthropology need to ensure that they position themselves in more productive ways and places (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2006; Hammersley, 2008).

I was eventually able to recognise, however, that my “failure” to develop ongoing friendships or collaboration with my research participants was symptomatic of the values and forms of interaction that characterised the field itself. For instance, I was first hosted by a relatively rich family that lives in the capital city (Kampala) and at the same time has a home in Rwebisengo sub-county. This family and particularly the head of the family was perceived with high esteem and people would come to register their financial challenges to him whenever he visited around his up-country home. I, therefore, suspected that it could have been the same kind of perception that my participants attached to my presence. This prompted my effort to look for another place to stay that was neutral. As Fadzillah (2004:62) observes, “using the social self as a research tool and participation is thus an intensely humanistic methodology based almost entirely on the messy, complicated, and often emotionally fraught interactions between two or more human beings, one of whom is the researcher”. Fadzillah continues to assert that awkward experiences of simultaneously belonging and not belonging, variable dichotomies between participants and observer, self and other, subjectivity and objectivity, are dichotomies that move in and out of focus, sometimes painfully sharp, that shape the direction of the study. According to Fadzillah, (2004:62-3), “messiness of fieldwork, the messiness of relationships, emphasis on the importance of vulnerability, and empathy, trust, dependency, emotional attachment, reciprocity, and responsibility account for the success of the research process”.

Before we begin our ethnographic fieldwork, ethics clearance procedures remind us that our endeavours may be intrusive and unpleasant to our subjects (Colic-Peisker, 2004). The final product

of an ethnographic research is most often determined by the nature of the discipline, political considerations, and the audiences we expect to have by the nature of the reality we claim to represent (Clifford, 1986). “We know that the social reality we attempt to unravel through our “graphics” and “ologies” is far more complex than our research, however sophisticated, can capture” (Colic-Peisker, 2004:85). Accessing the fieldwork area may need to be secured through gatekeepers but will also have to be negotiated and renegotiated with the people being studied, and this is true even where ethnographers are studying settings in which they are already participants. In other words, access cannot be assumed to be available automatically. Relations have to be established, and identities co-constructed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

It was not clear in the initial part of my ethnographic endeavour where, within a setting, my observation should begin, which actors needed to be shadowed and at which level was I to base myself. Here there were decisions that needed to be made that facilitated access to the field and actors therein. For instance, when I arrived in Uganda, I immediately followed up on my online application for ethics clearance to Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) which I had sent before I left Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Reaching their office in Ntinda Kampala, I was referred to Makerere University Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (MAKSS REC) because according to UNCST, a social sciences research proposal needed to be reviewed by an institutional review board that was specialised in such disciplines. At MAKSS REC I was asked to pay \$300 first as a review fee for my research protocols by the committee which I paid into the bank, and my research ethics application was reviewed. This amount had changed from \$50 that I had known in the same year and everyone whose proposals had been reviewed by this committee months before mine had paid. I was the first research student to pay that increased fee. This was another aspect to bring awkwardness that I never planned to meet. The MAKSS REC recommended some changes so that my application could then be forwarded to UNCST. This was another level of awkwardness that I never expected at the onset of the project. However, these movements of back and forth provided the opportunity to overcome most of the awkward situations and the feeling of failure and apathy by giving me more understanding of what I was studying.

In this process of going back and forth, I also kept interacting with people of diverse backgrounds and one of them was Oswald who is a professor in the Department of African Languages at Makerere University and has been doing research on cross-border languages of the Rwenzori border region. As we talked about what my research was about, he remembered that at one time he worked with a person from Batukuland and Rwebisengo in particular. He checked for his contacts and luckily, he had the contacts though he had not recently called him. He told this person, Constantine, about me and the research I was doing in his home area. This interaction with Oswald became one of the opportunities

that came to my rescue. As the research awkwardness and the feelings of failure were intensifying, I was grappling with how I could penetrate the area of my research. He was able to provide an opportunity by connecting me to a contact person who lives in Kampala and has another home and cattle in Rwebisengo sub-county. He has experience of border processes and he often opened my mental puzzles whenever we met. Interacting with Oswald was later to produce for me many opportunities including where to stay in Rwebisengo and importantly in a pastoralist's homestead where I started my participant observation immediately. He introduced me to this contact person and the person took me to Rwebisengo and gave me a house to stay in till I decided to leave and stay at Mustard seed church of Uganda where I later volunteered to work as a Sunday school teacher and later looked for another place as a way of getting closer to my other participants.

Positioned as one who is doing something that this group of people perceived as “no work” and perceived as one with higher education together with my relationship with Constantine who is a rich pastoralist and a retired civil servant distanced me from “insider” status. I later viewed it as a potential source of power imbalance, which I completely redressed by getting another place to stay at Mustard Seed church and later by renting my own place to stay in the trading centre. Also, my experience in cattle management and knowledge made participants notice that I had traits of pastoralism and therefore, I was accepted as one of them. Those I talked to seemed to share their stories and experiences and regularly invited me to their homes. As a way of reciprocity, I occasionally shared my story as a pastoralist and how our group pursued pastoralism, and this would “break the ice”. This information further defined my insider/outsider status. Being a “linguistic insider” who could effectively communicate with all the participants without an interpreter was important in my fieldwork. My data had to be translated from Rutuku into English language and into the academic idiom by myself. I have tried hard to preserve all the shades of meaning while doing the translation. I also have been faithful to my sources. I cannot think of better faithfulness than carefully “harmonising” the translation with the “intention” of the sources. The knowledge of the language of the people was an opportunity for effectively carrying out this ethnography because much information was gained through listening to conversations, taking part in their daily life, which to the observer who had no command of the language would remain entirely inaccessible. This also helped to eliminate the factors of secondary explanation through an interpreter.

Connected to the above are the researcher's values, which should be limited as far as possible, to producing findings that are truly independent of any particular value stance Scheper-Hugues, (1995) or research that is explicitly carried out from the standpoint of a particular group. The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them. How people

respond to the presence of the researcher may be as informative as how they react to other situations (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Hammersley, 2008; Fassin, 2017). “Reflexivity has been given increasing attention by ethnographers and others in recent years, notably in the production of natural histories of particular studies” Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007:6).

The anthropological tendency to favour the “subaltern” as advanced by Marcus, (1995:101), calls for ethnographers’ ability to suspend any disbelief they might feel when listening to informants’ narratives at least long enough to gain an empathic undertaking of their position. Being caught between field and home belonging to both and neither and the simultaneous participation in and observation of social action, to seek intimacy while maintaining distance is not only complicated but also challenging for ethnographers (Marcus, 1995). Expectations associated with the notion of “rapport” and its vital importance to ethnographic endeavours and the forms that it should take led to fundamental feelings of disappointment and failure that accompanied me throughout my research. The rapport that I developed between myself and my research participants was functional enough, but was intrinsically, perhaps unavoidably, limited for a combination of reasons including: age difference, personal agendas, the timing and internal structures of my “field-site”, and the challenging lifestyle of the people I was working with. An added stress was the conflicting demands of participant observation. I showed people another way of cow lifting, doing it using a rope instead of the long wood they used. I taught them how to use a rope which is easy to use and less harmful to the weak cow. This knowledge sharing made an easy way to connect and a source of rapport with people.

As Gewirtz and Crib (2006) observed, working with communities that are in vulnerable situations and highly critical of research practices that are not properly accountable to research participants brings fear, self-doubt, and feelings of failure that can haunt the anthropologists throughout the entire stay in the field. These feelings of self-doubt, confusion, anxiety and self-revelation become productive later in the process of research with persistence and patience (Colic-Peisker, 2004). Difficult fieldwork encounters, awkward spaces like the one in this border region as observed by Hume & Mulcock (2004), are best approached with a willingness to embrace a rigorous reflective process as a necessary component of the participant observation methodology. As Kelly (2004:3) puts it, “the process of fieldwork is as important as the final written product and that the “trials” of field research are as important as the “successes” (and sometimes even constitute the successes)”. In the struggle to write a cohesive and coherent account of fieldwork, the moments of illumination that emerge from the challenges and awkward moments in the field can easily, but should not, be lost as Hume & Mulcock (2004) observe.

3.8 *Learning the greeting and its mannerisms in Batukuland*

In the initial days of my stay with the people of Rwebisengo, I was bombarded with greeting manners that I was never prepared to deal with. This related to people asking for my endearing name (*empaako*)¹ whenever they wanted to greet me, or I greeted them. For the fear of being perceived as antithetical by the people I was living and working with, I chose to learn some of the mannerisms like greeting and acquiring an endearing name. Constantine had to make up one for me after refusing the one I had forged myself that he said did not have any association with the Butukuland endearing names. Constantine and his family called me *Abaala*, and there was no naming ceremony done (As most times getting an endearing name involves ceremonies and rituals). After obtaining an endearing name I now started to greet and respond to greetings with confidence. Everyone has an endearing name and they use them for greeting, calling, and any other reference made to a person. One must mention that name to greet another person and the reply must also refer to the endearing name as well. If it is not known to the one intending to greet, he/she must first, ask for the same. Whenever a stranger is to be greeted, he/she must first mention his/her own endearing name first to be greeted. I was initially surprised at the importance attached to this name and how people left other names to only use the endearing name in daily activities and communication.

As Hume and Mulcock (2004:4) put it, “unless we approach fieldwork with an open mind and heart, an ethnographic probe can result in an academic account that has little to do with reality”. The expectations of participants for my research were clearly subjective. They felt that my research could contribute in some way to solving their long-term problems and conflicts on the borderland especially in accessing their grazing zones in DRC. Representing any people through ethnography means constructing an artificial, partial account of individual lives. During this process one needs to keep in mind that there is a residue in every human social experience that academic language cannot penetrate, one that defies classification and scholarly analysis. Perhaps only nonverbal artforms can reach this level of experience, as words are always exclusive, limited and final.

On Sunday, I asked Constantine’s herdsman where I could find a nearby church and he led me to Rwebisengo Mustard Seed Church of Uganda about two kilometres from the Rwebisengo trading centre on the Fort portal road. The church service started at 10:30 in the morning and I was there much earlier than that. Not many people were in the church. They knew everyone who comes to that church and therefore, I was a stranger to everybody. Moreover, I did not have an endearing name

¹ This is a name that every person gets from the family that is different from other ordinary names. It is for being dear to other family and society members as in greeting, response to calls, and addresses in daily life conversations. They are an identity marker for the people that have a connection to the Bito dynasty of Bunyoro Kitara Empire.

(*empaako*). As they greeted me, they asked for my endearing name. So, as the service started, the church leader asked all people who were in that church for the first time to stand up and introduce themselves. I stood up and said my “nameless name” that is a name without *empaako* and told them where I am staying and why and what I was doing in Rwebisengo. Everyone welcomed me to the church, and people seemed to appreciate my presence. In the church the language of service was Rutuku but all the songs were in foreign languages, that is to say that languages are that not Rutuku; they were singing in Swahili, and Luganda languages and almost all the songs that they sang were contemporary songs and the ones that are commonly sung on radios and Televisions, not the ones in the prayer books.

I observed a lot of globalised contacts and influence, for instance the way the youth dressed was more of fashions that are found elsewhere in the world or at least in the cities and towns in Uganda. They put on trousers, short skirts and dresses. It was only relatively older women and men that dressed in the traditional Batuku attire (this is a traditional long woven fabric that is rapped from shoulders to the feet by married women) and their hair styles remain natural ones. The youth had straightened their hair, some wore braids and there were also many Congolese songs, dances, and all the processes of running the church. I also observed that the importance attached to cattle among the Batuku includes the church, with high respect given to those who donate bulls and cows to the church. The leader of the church service took time thanking those who always contribute to the financial running of the church and especially those who gave bulls and cows that were sold to raise seven million two hundred, nineteen thousand two hundred shillings (7,219,200 approximately 2000 U.S dollars) which he thought made the church out-compete older and bigger churches in the region. The leader then beseeched them to continue giving more bulls, cows and oxen in the Christmas season so that they could finish building the church and have more money to take to the diocese.

It was at this church that I later lived and volunteered to work as a Sunday school teacher. Working as a Sunday school teacher helped me to improve on my Rutuku language skills. As I talked to children, I learned new words and pronunciations, which later enabled me to communicate effectively in my fieldwork conversations. Volunteering as a Sunday school teacher was essential for me to create interdependent relationships with my participants in Rwebisengo. The church management decided to give me a one roomed house where I stayed for one month. I later rented another room in the trading centre of Rwebisengo which to some extent brought me closer to most of my research participants as we now interacted more often.

3.9 Moving to Rwebisengo and the experience of crossing the border

Constantine, his driver Regan and I set off at 6:00 am, and the journey of 360 kilometres took us 7 hours to reach in Rwebisengo. As we moved Constantine told me about his life history. He is one of the people whose life history I captured in this research project. We talked about the Batuku pastoralists, the area called Butuku, the border and its influence on the people's ways of living and the changes in the community, especially on land use and cultural aspects generally. I kept updating these conversations by going to his house every time I went back to Kampala. We started moving on a road that has turns and slopes, and for those moving to the area for the first time, it is a wonderful experience of how the car would tilt to one side and then again to the other side and how frightening it can be to look down the slopes. Travelling to Rwebisengo is all sloping and climbing hills and no wonder the place is 560 metres above sea level. A few miles after we left Fort Portal town, I saw my telephones changing to Vodacom and bringing messages that they are on roaming on DRC networks and this was to later cut off my communication with family in Kampala whom I only communicated with whenever I went to Fort Portal town. This journey remained awkward for months to come as I traversed the road doing rounds to Rwebisengo and back to Fort Portal looking for banks and a telephone network on a weekly basis for sustenance and communicating with my family that lives in Kampala.

Later I started using public transport. I would board buses and we would set off from Kampala at around 2:00 PM in the afternoon. As soon as we started moving on the jammed Kampala streets, I noticed how differently people on the bus behaved compared to the ones I was used to in Kampala city. The strange thing was greeting every one that entered the bus. I felt very shy to keep replying to everyone who was greeting me in the bus. I also immediately started growing goose pimples as the bus left the jam of the city because of over-speeding and the driver's complacency to passengers' calls on him to slow down. We arrived in Fort portal at night and at that time there was no vehicle going to Rwebisengo. I was extremely tired and in need of somewhere to sleep. The journey from Kampala to Rwebisengo was an awkward one. It takes 7 hours in a private car where stopping is regulated. The journey is approximately 360 kilometres and moving in a bus requires either starting the journey early enough, at least by 8 O'clock in the morning, or else the journey takes two days. This is because by five O'clock in the evening all traffic moving from Fort Portal to Rwebisengo would have stopped. For my case the journey always took two days because most of the time I started in the latter hours of the day particularly at two O'clock in the afternoon. This starting time would make us reach in Fort Portal town at night at around 9 O'clock and at that time no vehicle would be there to go to Rwebisengo.

The next morning, I would move to the Taxi park to proceed to Rwebisengo. At that stage everyone travelling to Rwebisengo would be known to the driver. The driver was known to everyone and strangers are easily identified. Someone travelling to Rwebisengo using this route is easily known to every passenger. Passengers have the drivers' telephone numbers and call them to let them know that they wait for them. The driver is friendly and converses with all passengers and most of the time he stops to talk to people standing by the roadside. This friendliness is very strategic because the driver uses it to request passengers to accommodate others as instead of the five people his car was intended to carry, he carries ten or eleven passengers. Passengers also request the driver to stop, even if it is at the wrong side of the road. I realised the car never gets full because people carry others in the car. The driver would request passengers to help him not to leave people on the way. These conditions in which we travelled needed a lot of patience and tolerance. In the city and other areas where I travelled traffic rules are observed by the drivers and there are traffic police officers on the roadsides to enforce the rules' observance. The conditions that I travelled in to Rwebisengo were also the most awkward I experienced at the onset. With time I became so accustomed to these conditions of travel that sometimes I would carry or be carried by other passengers in a taxi.

In my first week of stay in Rwebisengo, I could move with my host's herdsman to the grazing fields and watering points daily. It was on the fourth day of my stay at Rwebisengo that I decided to go to the livestock market of Burasa across the border in the DRC about three kilometres from the border point of Budiba. I had intended to observe pastoralists cross the River Semliki with their livestock (especially the oxen) taking them to the market. As I reached the border, I saw soldiers seated under a tree shed since it was blazingly hot. I went to them in their shed, greeted and showed them my identification documents like my national identity card, and they saw I was resident of Kampala city and wondered what the hell I was looking for at the Uganda-DRC border. They checked my bag as I explained what I was doing in Rwebisengo and that I had wanted to cross the border to go to the cattle market of Burasa in DRC. They warned me that there were militias who kidnap people in the DRC. They told me that it is risky to cross this border now though many people had crossed to go to the market where I wanted to go. "So, if you really want to go, register in our book and pay those people 2000 shillings for taking you in the canoe to cross the River" a military officer said to me. I registered in the book and paid the money to a guy who led me to a canoe, and as we moved on the water in the canoe, I could see people with cows swimming to cross the water. There were two people with four oxen swimming across to the market in the DRC. After reaching the other side of the border, I told the canoe man to take me back because I could not continue to the market after those soldiers had instilled fear in my mind. I decided to go and spend time with those who were watering their cattle at the River. I spent time with them and conversed with some of them. I could see how their cattle were

emaciated and thinning in size. It was at this River that I interacted with different herdsmen and women who later became my contacts and gave me a lot of information.

As I hung out at this River (Semliki) with people watering their cattle, I started a conversation with *Cole* who later looked for a house for me to stay in at Rwebisengo trading centre. Getting a house in the trading centre gave me an opportunity to move to many places and have more friends. These friends helped me access information and people especially those who were affected by militia activities and abductions in the DRC. *Cole* was useful because he was mobile. He went to most homesteads since he was trading in milk collected from various homes to sell at the Rwebisengo trading centre. He had knowledge about most people in the area and what they were experiencing due to drought and conflict in the region. He rode his bicycle every morning to pastoralists' homes. He carried his milk in jerrycans and measured his sales in a cup. In stable seasons he would cross to the DRC to also buy milk, but because of the insecurity there he had suspended his business in that area. As a milk vender, *Cole's* day would start very early and by mid-morning he would be free. This gave us more time together. He was able to introduce me to many other people, including pastoralists whose cattle were raided in the DRC by the militia groups.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown the processes and methods that I employed to study and collect data about cross-border pastoralism at the Uganda-DRC border. I have also argued that ethnography which seeks to produce "thick descriptions" of a social group requires an equal measure of thick immersion in the social realities of the social group under study. This thick immersion is very important if the nitty-gritties of the social group are to be deeply produced. However, I also argued that this process of deep immersion is not a rosy one, but it is characterised by awkwardness, feelings of social failure and personal inadequacies which are perhaps an inevitable part of a successful ethnography and such experiences should not be lost to the researcher to capture as part of the end product of the ethnographic research. These experiences remain as the unsubstituted part of the practice of ethnography in anthropological studies.

4.0 Chapter Four: The Ugandan-DRC Border and the Batuku Cross-border Pastoral Engagements

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the position of the Batuku, their territory, and their social organisation at the advent of the colonial rule in the region. It documents the progressive division and eventual erosion of the territory and imposition of new boundaries on the Batuku from the 1920s to the present. It uses the perspective of the Batuku pastoralists on the land use and protection systems in the region, together with their experiences in the DRC to show how these cross-border pastoralists have dealt with the border constraints. Using the empirical case of cross-border pastoralists through my interlocutors, Chale, Consta, Gela and Amos, I argue in this chapter that, historical and contemporary capitalist practices that stretch as far back as the early 20th Century continue to subjugate the lives of pastoralists in this region in a variety of contexts. For example, changing the boundary from River Duku to River Semliki during the colonial period when the Batuku territory was divided between two nation states with different political philosophies and agendas continues to marginalise and stigmatise the Batuku pastoralists' identity, leaving them as second-class citizens and exposing them to a life in many worlds of neither here nor there. This chapter engages with anthropological perspectives of scholars like Janat Roitman, Raeymaekers, Paul Nugent, Donnan & Wilson, Martinez, Comaroff & Comaroff, Uzoigwe, Mamdani, Karugire, Kabwegyere, Bayat, and Goodhand to show how both historical and contemporary state border activities have interacted to produce the current situation of cross-border pastoralists.

The Batuku have been vulnerable because of land lost to “capitalist schemers” such as elite land speculators, land traders and private investors, leaving behind insecurity in the process of navigating livelihoods. The current realities in the region reveal that the Batuku pastoralists' economic base and livelihood are at the verge of collapsing under the prevailing political and economic paradigms pursued by the DRC and Uganda respectively. Simply put, this chapter endeavours to highlight the linkages between government authorities and global capitalist interests, and their effects on the borderland populations. It focuses on the interaction of the Batuku pastoralists and the institutions of states at the border. The chapter views the Batuku pastoralists not as isolated peripheral and passive victims, but as active players in larger processes, most of which are not of their making, but in which some of them create alliances that help them to edge others out in the process, creating inequalities within the region. Recent studies of African borderlands point to the high-level of overlap and complicity that exists between different systems of survival and regulation. In his study on the Ghana-Togo border, Paul Nugent contends that “the practices of everyday life at the border may also serve

to constitute power through state institutions, community relations, and basic concepts of political space” (Nugent, 2002:232). The “practices at the border show how political power is constantly demonstrated, projected and contested” (Donnan & Wilson, 1999:155) by ordinary citizens trying to protect and organise their lives. In a similar perspective, Goodhand's (2008) study of Afghanistan borderlands illustrates how a set of important border conditions and exchange not only influence political constellations in the periphery, but also shape the nature of the state.

The discussion deals with the nature and extent of the response of Batuku pastoralists, whether in circumventing the imposed border or exploiting the weakness of border rules. This chapter also attempts to connect the region's situation with the dynamics of different types of capitalist relations, locally, nationally, and globally. This is useful in understanding borderland processes by focusing on transformations in the contemporary world in relation to the state, capital, livelihood, consumption and place. As Leif Ole Manger (2015:1) asserts, these transformations have changed the articulation of politics and economy, as capital is now influencing the nation state to operate on its behalf and protect its interests. In such a situation, military force is used to shore up financial hegemony and bring about a shift from a “hegemony of consent” to a “hegemony of force”. These transformations have turned some places into what Giorgio Agamben (2005) calls “zones of exceptions”. Such zones are places in which the conditions are such that normal limitations do not apply. Understanding Uganda-DRC border in the context of zones of exception is of key importance in the current neoliberal era. Within such a reality, the absence of consensus has allowed violence to be used to achieve certain goals and thereby take control where power is not defined (Manger, *ibid.*).

4.2 *The invention of the Uganda-DRC border*

From the beginning of the colonial era in East and Central Africa, the division between territories claimed by the Belgium Congo and those claimed by the British Uganda Protectorate split Batukuland into two. The bigger part fell in the territory of Belgian Congo, including the centres of the Batuku chiefdoms' administration. This warranted those Batuku pastoralists on the British Uganda's side to keep close contact with their counterparts in Congo. This is an international frontier that had far-reaching implications from the very start. The two colonial powers each in their own way influenced the course and the outcome of livelihoods among the Batuku pastoralists. The internally imposed political and economic boundaries have remained up to the present. According to Igor Kopytoff, the pre-colonial African frontier is a “political fact, a matter of a political definition of a geographical space” (Kopytoff, 1987:11). He continues to say that contrary to classic understanding, African history has been characterised by a ceaseless flux of populations which have constantly had to construct and reconstruct social order in the midst of uncertainty and crisis. From this perspective, I

intend to show how the Uganda-DRC border continues to take shape and expand because of institutional creativity and the processes which people consciously or unconsciously draw on, shifting from existing cultural and social arrangements to adapt to new situations. In other words, I aim at understanding the interaction between political power construction and pastoral economic opportunities and constraints posed by the ecology of the border, which simultaneously represents “a structural setting in which African polities are being perpetuated and transformed” (Raeymaekers, 2009:57). The practices (activities) at a particular border determine how it functions and relates to state structures, as well as the border’s relationships with people across the two adjacent state structures. This border of Uganda-DRC in its spatiality and temporality connects a people of the same occupation, language, and customary institutions, even though historical circumstances have worked against their connection by dividing their territory of operation in two and giving them different nomenclatures of Batuku (Uganda) and Hema (DRC).

Most pre-colonial borders were porous. European powers changed that, carving up territory by drawing maps. They allocated mountains, rivers and lakes to themselves (Alesina, Easterly, & Matuszeski, 2008). It took thirty years to settle the boundary between Belgian Congo and British Uganda protectorate. Colonial rule in Uganda began in 1894 in the kingdom of Buganda, expanded to other areas, and eventually lasted sixty-nine years (Karugire, 1980). The way colonial rule was introduced and exercised outside Buganda had a durable impact on the perceptions and relations within the protectorate and consequently on the nature of politics after the country became independent. Buganda served not only as the launching pad, but also as a source of manpower (foot soldiers and agent-chiefs) to help the British colonisers conquer and subdue other ethnic groups (Kasozi, 1999).

The British protectorate of Uganda was part of the British Empire from 1894 to 1962. Prior to this period, the territory was divided along closely related kingdoms (Uzoigwe, 1973). In 1964 independent African states, anxious to avoid conflict, agreed to stick with the colonial borders. But they made little effort to mark out frontiers on the ground. The nature of the borders and their colonial history remain of keen concern to the people in most of the borderlands in Africa today. As Nugent (2002:234) in his work on the Ghana-Togo frontier put it, “there is an inevitable tension between the sense of cultural and linguistic community across the border and the economic and political opportunities offered by its existence. The boundary may be both a negative imposition from powerful outsiders and at the same time a valuable resource to be exploited.” Cross-border connections can be harmful to local people or helpful, not only economically, but, for example, as somewhere to run to when times get politically difficult. For the Batuku pastoralists, the Uganda-DRC borderland has been somewhere to run to in the times of drought and other uncertainties. Beneath this ambiguity, tension,

and contradiction lies the essential liminality of such African border communities. In these areas, besides expressions of risk, urgency and survival, there are moments that give people a need to formulate answers against the radical transformations of the world they thought they were familiar with but which they now feel urged to reassess. In some contexts, such expressions can stimulate the making of new forms of political action that ultimately challenge conventional notions of “where politics is to be found and what it is” (Greenhouse, 2002:3-4).

When Uganda acquired her final geographical shape in the late 1920s, she embraced a people from three linguistic groups, namely: Sudanic, Nilotic and Bantu, from two major African language families - Nilo-Saharan and Congo- Kordofanian (Brower, 2005). There was very little or no linguistic and cultural affinity amongst these people, and it should have been obvious to the people who brought them together into one central protectorate administration that a lot of work needed to be done to mould them into nationals of one country. This work was not done because British administration thrived on division and it was never their intention to create nation-states out of her colonies. Therefore, the country called Uganda was forced on her citizens through forceful and fraudulent means. As Peterson (2012) argues, fraudulent agreements were concluded between the British and Buganda, Toro, and Nkore at the beginning of the 20th century providing for the acceptance of British protection and loyalty to the British crown and establishing a local constitution. Peterson vividly shows how the Anglo-Toro agreement fraudulently perceived the Toro kingdom to be inhabited by one ethnic group (the Batoro) leaving other ethnic groups as subordinated to the kingship of Toro against their will. It is domination of other ethnic groups that led to ethnic conflicts in the Rwenzori region in the form of what Peterson, (2012) calls “ethnic patriotism”. The use of agreements created a big divide between agreement and non-agreement areas - a divide which soured political development in Uganda. Having used force and fraud to establish the protectorate, the British proceeded to use the same means to maintain themselves in power. They established a force of internal coercion whose loyalty to them had to be above board. The Uganda Rifles Ordinance (1895) specifically included a clause (clause 58) empowering the Uganda Rifles to act against any local group(s) in the protectorate which engaged in active opposition to the administration.

From the triumph of conquest, the British moved to the next logical stage requisite to the consolidation of power. A dual system was devised, that of native administration and a central administration. In the domain of the native administrations the boundaries of native authorities were delineated, wherever possible, along ethnic lines (Karugire, 1980; see also Mamdani, 2012). The ethnic delineation of administrative boundaries has not changed to date. To accompany the delineation of ethnic boundaries was the indirect rule policy introduced by Lugard. The policy of indirect rule developed as a result of local initiative without clear policy guideline laid down

(Karugire, 1980; Kabwegyere, 2000). As Mamdani (2012) points out, colonial indirect rule did not only acknowledge difference but also shaped it. Mamdani's argument is that it is under colonial indirect rule that the definition and management of difference was developed as the essence of governance. This policy held centre stage in the field of administration and politics in Uganda until the late 1940s when, in a despatch to colonies, the colonial secretary Creech-Jones in 1947 enunciated a new policy on local government aimed at converting the system of indirect rule into a democratic, efficient and modern system of local government. It is this despatch which led to the enactment of the local Government Ordinance of 1949. This dual system of administration and its delineation of ethnic boundaries created a sense of ownership of places by ethnic groups. These policies did not have a clear focus on the spatial dimension of social practices which, in geographical terms shape processes of constructing identities, social relations, and economic practices in time and space. In relation to that perspective, Arturo Escobar notes that "people continue to construct some sort of boundaries around their lives, however permeable they may turn out to be. By constantly embedding their practices in time and space, these people (local communities, ethnic groups, social associations) show that far from being passive receivers of development, [they] also actually create their life worlds as places" (Escobar, 2001:15). The natives believed in the ways of self-administration and set out to guard their territories against intrusion especially from other ethnic groups. The central government remained a government of white colonialists and later it was handed over to colonial-trained elites (Kasozi, 1999). Kasozi continues to say that the central administration was seen to be alien to natives, and people trusted and believed in their native administrative systems rather than the colonial administration.

The border between the British Uganda protectorate and Belgian Congo was originally put at the river Duke where the boundary of the Bunyoro Kitara Empire was before the coming of colonial administration. The area occupied by the people who speak Runyoro-Rutoro, remained in the British Uganda protectorate territory. However, the region of West Nile in the north-western horn of Uganda was taken by the Belgian Congo, while the sub-region of Kigezi in the south-western part of Uganda was taken by Belgian Rwanda-Burundi Federation. Later in 1926, the boundaries of West Nile region and Kigezi sub-region were changed². The British Uganda Protectorate lost the part that lay between the rivers Duke and Semliki to gain the region of West Nile and Kigezi sub-region. The Semliki valley (which was an area where Batuku pastoralists lived) was divided into two between Belgian Congo and British Uganda Protectorate making River Semliki the new boundary. How that historical event structured the Batuku's sense of place, way of life, mobility, and identity and the lessons that can be drawn from that experience, may help us to understand both the predicament of those Batuku

² Kabarole District Archive, which is kept at the Mountain of the Moon University in Fort Portal, Uganda.

pastoralists who fell under British colonial rule, and that of the Semliki Valley people in general. How the colonial state structurally disrupted the mobility, memory, and local and regional identity of Batuku pastoralists in the region generally is what this section aims to explain. By memory, I mean collective memory, oral history, and local knowledge that became fractured and alienated. I explore how pastoralists became alienated from other pastoralists and pastoral society, from their land and region, and from the knowledge discourse about and associated with the region. The two parts of Batukuland have been both affected by border shifting, but the inputs on the two sides of the frontier have been very different.

The colonial policies in Uganda and Congo differed markedly. At independence, the boundary between the two countries inscribed very different national economies, infrastructures, and development status in terms of trade, transport and communication. The post-independence policies until recently emphasised that divergence with more attention given to developing range and livestock production through privatisation of, and investment in land in Ugandan Batukuland. De Certeau's (1984) term "tactical agency" of the poor against a dominant strategic power can best explain the situation of Batuku pastoralists in that period. They resorted to tactics that silently opposed the strategies of the state that tried to fix and delineate them. While such tactics are commonly perceived as irrational reactions without clear leadership, ideology or structured organisation, Bayat, (1997:58) insists that "they nonetheless represent a clear desire to get a respectful and dignified life against the dominance of groups that determine and mould their worlds". They show the capacity to bend the rules and foil the space instituted by powerful others, characterised by subtle but stubborn everyday actions that move against already established forces and representations (see also de Certeau, 1984). For instance, during this period of colonialism, Batuku pastoralists would frequently live on the Belgian Congo side of the border to avoid paying hut taxes to British Uganda Protectorate administration, while keeping their cattle on the Ugandan Protectorate side of the border to avoid paying tribute to the Congolese Belgian government. A popular justification for this action is that regulations are unrealistic; they fail to consider the unique conditions of pastoral binational settings where interdependence is a way of life (De Weijer, 2007).

Highlighting the implications of cross-border differences and contrasting processes that have shaped the Uganda-DRC border is very complex, but if understood from the perspective of the Batuku pastoralists, one can begin to realise that these processes have affected the Batuku pastoralists in terms of their relationships, land use, and accessibility to other state resources and services. In both Uganda and the DRC Batukuland, and for any comparison before and after the processes that led to boundary-shifting and territory swapping, state resources and service and how they were to be accessed by the cross-border pastoralists did not remain the same. In Uganda land demarcation and

privatisation was a fundamental engine to drive development of pastoralist production in Batukuland as early as the colonial period. Changes in settlement size tell us much about Batuku response to the pressures generated by boundary and land use changes. It also provides us with a critical reminder that this borderland is a contested space, where populations have been subjected to control and capture, and the mobility of people, goods and places is significantly restrained. Nonetheless, these populations continue to navigate and engage with these structures as they pursue their livelihoods. This agrees with Janet Roitman's terminology of "*la population flottante*" where she particularly talks about the "active policies behind fixing of national borders and populations, which are at the same time political technologies to circumscribe and govern the elements that have historically constituted a source of subversion with respect to tax, and transgression with respect to national identity" (Roitman, 2005:11).

Border making and unmaking in this area, as elsewhere in Africa, was between two great European powers, Belgium and Britain. The process was top-down and never involved people in the area. Their aspirations and needs were never a matter of concern to those who were negotiating the border-making dynamics. Only the interests of the great powers were important at that moment. The urgent British interest in the region of West Nile and the sub-region of Kigezi led to the inward shift of this particular borderline from the River Duke, deep in the Belgian Congo to the River Semliki in 1926, without due regard of the Batuku pastoralists and how they had lived and earned a livelihood in this area. The British colonial interests in the West Nile region ranked higher owing to the strategic security position it exhibited than the needs and lives of the Batuku pastoralists. This territorial swap between two imperial powers never considered the linguistic and cultural or economic engagements of the inhabitants. Given the fact that the convenient boundaries did not consider the interest of the affected communities prior to their creation, they have been reported by Flynn (1997) to have had an enormous potential for being contested and generating inter-ethnic conflicts. They are also treated by the dwelling and crossing communities as if they never existed. Although this borderline was not resisted by the affected people, it has been moulded and transformed in the process of generating local livelihoods. The Batuku pastoralists have created routes through which to migrate and maintained a network of relations based on cattle exchange that facilitates access to public goods and services astride and across this border.

Although the border as it exists today is an outcome of a top-down project of the two great colonial powers, the outcome has continued to be shaped by the history, economic activities, and the social-political relations of the people who live in the area. Pastoralists continued to access pasture and water resources in the area, and their relations with each other were not severed. Those on the Ugandan side of the border have continued to pay allegiance to their chiefdoms, whose palaces were now all in

Belgian Congo territory. One participant told me, that his father used to take him and his siblings to introduce and make them know their clan head and chiefs. The chiefdoms and a sizeable number of the Batuku pastoralists that remained in the Belgian Congo territory became Congolese, spoke French, and acted as the Belgian Congo administration directed them. This to a certain extent created differences within an originally homogenous people who shared history, ancestry, language, and institutions of worship and divinity. With the border porous, people could cross the River Semliki, the new boundary marker, to visit their chiefdoms and their clan heads. As one of my participants observed “the Batuku in Congo could also easily cross River Semliki to visit their relatives in the British Uganda”. The survival of contacts and cooperation facilitated the survival of practices such as cross-border marriages, kinship connections, livestock exchanges and loans, migration in the times of drought and floods, and to living as one people irrespective of the border. These interactions between people in different states and their exposure to different state policies and modalities of rule led the Batuku pastoralists dwelling in the situation of many worlds to develop versatility to fit into the diverse conditionalities of this region.

over by the Toro kingdom administration is still remembered by many. I think the reason for his unending existence in people's memory relates to the way he administered the sub-county and his successful endeavours to unite the people of Butuku with the Toro kingdom. He is said to have been a very tall man and the Batuku loved and respected him. He was later made the first sub-county chief of the newly created sub-county of Rwebisengo. The 1900 British-Toro agreement put the whole of the Rwenzori region under the governance of the Toro Kingdom which had collaborated with the British to extend their rule over the region. The agreement ignored the existing systems of governance, and leaders from different ethnic groups in the region were either killed or forced into submission. This created silent resistance among people against to Toro Kingdom. The Batuku whose territory was reduced by the inward shifts of the boundary and whose chiefdoms and leaders remained in the Belgian Congo had no choice other than to accept the Toro Kingdom administration (Uzoigwe, 2012).

At the apex of this kingdom's administration was the king (Omukama). The king appointed the Principal-minister (Muhikirwa) who was responsible for the administrative activities of the kingdom at all levels. All other administrative leaders were under the principal-minister. The principal-minister was responsible for the coordination of all the chiefs and sectors to develop the culture and reputation of the Toro kingdom for the king. At that time, the Toro kingdom was divided into eight counties of Burahya, Mwenge, Bwamba, Bunyangabu, Busongora, Kyaka, Kibale, and Katwe (what is today known as the Rwenzori region). Although, the Batuku pastoralists were put under Toro kingdom administration, they continued to relate and kept contacts with their chiefs and chiefdoms in the Belgian Congo. As Uzoigwe (2012) reports, this was because they were culturally connected and politically attached to those chiefdoms. In this situation the Batuku continued to pay allegiance to the two administrative authorities that of Toro kingdom and their chiefdoms in Belgian Congo.

Below I present information collected from the Kabalore archive that is kept at the Mountains of the moon University. These include information on the cattle inoculation's lists and letters exchanged by administrators at different administrative levels of the region including those exchanged between Belgian Congo and Ugandan states.

Cattle inoculations lists of 1930

Omubazi gw'ente Butuku

No. 110 Kapulisani Rwebisengo sh 20 ente eitano (5)

No 54 Komwaswa Kituku Rwebisengo sh 14 ente eisatu (3)

27/09/1933

Shillings z'omubazi Butuku

Yosia Taga Butungama 112 ente enkuru 28

8/01/1934

Shs z'Omubazi gw'ente Butuku

No.	Ibara (name)	Kyaro (village)	Amount (Shs)	Entenkuru (old cow)	Ento (young cow)
54	Komwiswa Kituku	Rwebisengo	14	1	5
73	Basaira	Butungama	6	-	3
98	Kasoro	Rwebisengo	20	5	-
85	Wamara	Rwebisengo	4	1	-
99	Bahemuka	Rwebisengo	12	3	-
112	Mahembe	Haibale	26	6	1
7	Wamara	Haibale	4	1	-
18	Byansi	Rwebisengo	22	-	11
21	Kiiza	Rwebisengo	4	1	-
78	Nyabwana	Haibale	26	6	1
36	Kwezi	Rwebisengo	2	-	1
43	Kaboyo	Rwebisengo	20	5	-
60	Tororyo	Rwebisengo	10	2	1
32	Churumbani	Rwebisengo	4	-	2
68	Muhito	Rwebisengo	42	10	1
13	Wembere	Haibale	4	-	2
52	Mugasa	Rwebisengo	2	-	1
Total			208	38	28

4/2/1943 Re: Cattle Movement Permits from Gombolola Chiefs

Waitu,

Ninsaba okuhebwa obutabu bwa permit okwokufura ente omu Isaza butuku, bunu obunkaba ntwekirwe buhoireho bwona buhabwe ogu ountumire.

A kuhurra

Sir,

I apply for books of permits to move cattle within the saza of Butuku, the books which were sent to me all are finished. These books should be given to the man who has brought this letter.

No. 32/EI/40

Office y'owisaza Kahuma

Butuku

16/02/1940

I have the honour to inform you that the people of Butuku (Rwebisengo) have difficulty of paying their taxes because they are unable to sell their cattle to the butchers. This was due to A.V.A who had did not allow them to get permits to remove many cattle as they to bring here in the market. I ask for your help to enable these people to pay taxes.

Reference your No.32/EI/40 of 16/02/1940

I have discussed the matter with Mr. Damba. He informs me that the water and grass up here not suitable for Butuku cattle, and that they die up here.

District Commissioner, Toro

Kahuma Butuku

I am in receipt of A.V. A's letter of 10/01/1940 a copy of which was sent to musale Butuku and the following are the contents:

1. There are some people issued with cattle removal permits and they change the permits instead of moving a calf he removes a bull or another.
2. If a cow is moved from the kraal and it becomes stubborn on the way, it is not good to return in the kraal because it might bring a disease. There he means the cattle in Butuku.
3. If a person sees he has bought a stubborn cow he must be intelligent to bring it using a rope and it may not run back.
4. They should give up buying cattle suffering mange and fly disease and health cattle bought should be kept properly.
5. You should, therefore, warn your people before hand and if they are found it is their fault.

Drawing on the administrative exchanges, it is proper to observe that the colonial state was very restrictive at the border. Crossing the border was closely monitored. Cross-border pastoralists found it hard to transact any activity without being cautioned as the above letters show. It should be observed that however restrictive the state has been on the border at different intervals, cross-border pastoralists have at point in time failed to cross to meet their social and economic demands and obligations.

02/08/1939

L'Administrateur Territorial

District Du Kivu

Territoire de Beni

Congo Belgium

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have been informed that two natives named Kadyadya and Kachongo came from your district and bought some cattle from here in Butuku removed them without a stock permit via the old Kasindi road thus breaking the sleeping sickness control rules and regulations.

I merely report to you for their punishment.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant

District Commission, Toro

The above is a letter exchanged between the District Commission of Toro and the territorial administrator of Kivu District of Belgian Congo. It was requesting for reprimanding of the two persons who crossed the border with animals without stock permits. This shows the border monitoring systems of the colonial states in both countries were equally vigilant in the 1930s and 40s. However, this vigilance did not stop cross-border pastoralists from crossing from time to time.

The understanding of the continuation of these relations can be vividly put into the context of cattle as aspects of both “material of economy of things and moral economy of persons” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991:38). That is to say that cattle not only remained as things that contained all value, but also as the threads on which the social fabric was woven. It is this salient feature of cattle that enabled the Batuku to find favour with Kings of Toro after the 1900 British-Toro agreement that put Batuku under political administration of Toro kingdom, as elaborated below.

The Batuku’s continuous contacts with their leaders across the border are said to have led the king of Toro Kingdom to create contacts with some of the chiefdoms in the Belgian Congo. For instance, King Rukidi II established a friendly relationship with Daudi Kituku Isansa I of Mitego chiefdom to whom most Batuku paid great allegiance, and both exchanged gifts of cows and the son of Kituku called Patrick Kaswara was staying in the palace of the king of Toro when he was studying for his primary and secondary school levels at Kabarole primary and Nyakasura schools respectively. It is also said that in the reign of king Patrick Matthew Olimi Kaboyo II he too loved the Batuku and would visit the sub-county of Rwebisengo three times a year before he was removed in 1967 when Uganda was made a republic by the then president Milton Obote (Uzoigwe, 2012). King Kaboyo II married a mutuku wife who is the current mother of the reigning king of Toro.

These relationships show how cattle enter the making of persons and things, relations and status; how cattle take the character of total social phenomenon; how their unique capacity to store and transform value enabled the Batuku to sustain viable social worlds. Concentrating on the overlapping

livelihoods in the economy of this border, it is possible to observe a series of institutions linked to sets of “beliefs, usages, and forms” which Leopold (2005) talks about. Such institutions contrast with the separate “moral” economies (Scott 1974) which presuppose a binary relationship between the peasant cattle herders and the ruling class appealing to the market. The cross-border pastoralists on the Uganda-DRC border straddle these different life worlds by balancing alternative resources and livelihoods. These are the worlds of land, the transborder economy, and the social assistance regimes. Constant straddling of different social settings and life worlds is currently facing fundamental change brought about by border insecurity that has come to threaten these worlds and associations, with some rather grave consequences for Batuku livelihoods.

The problem now facing Batuku pastoralists is the loss of land due to population growth and an increase in the number of cattle and other animals in the area. Whereas these problems are experienced in almost all pastoralist groups in Africa, the challenge that the Batuku are currently facing is the closing of the Uganda-DRC border due to insecurity in DRC. The Ugandan state has stationed its military at the border to guard against the spread of insecurity across the border. While the positioning of the military at the border by the Ugandan state does not deter pastoralists from crossing, the militias in the DRC do by raiding their cattle. Several pastoralists have lost their cattle to the militia and some have been killed and others abducted and only a few of them have been released after a ransom was paid. As Raeymaekers (2009:58) reports, “today, the Semliki Basin hosts three high risk zones that are more or less internally connected. These zones are respectively South Lubero (home to the Rwandan Hutu militias and some local Mayi Mayi forces), West Lubero (home to different rural militias), and Beni territory, which hosts the Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels and NALU militias”. These regionalised militias have had a detrimental effect on economic development in the region. This new scenario has cut the Batuku pastoralists off from their drought sanctuary where they herd their livestock in times of drought. In seasons of drought, the whole Batukuland dries up; pasture disappears, and water sources dry up and the result is loss of cattle to starvation. The closing of the Uganda-DRC border has stood between the mutual reciprocal relationships that have existed for generations among the inhabitants of the Semliki valley. It is said that the most important reason why the Batuku pastoralists help their DRC counterpart Hema pastoralist refugees is the reciprocal assistance they also receive when they cross with their animals to the DRC in the time of drought and floods and to go as far as Kyakabwohe, Burasi, Nyanfuka, Nyanzige, Kayera, Kikamba, Kikoga and Kalyabugongo areas in the DRC that have great pastoral resources when there is drought on the Ugandan side of the border.

The current security situation in the DRC has prompted people to restrict their crossings even when the situation demands crossing. Whenever they cross the border to the DRC, the militias attack them

and raid their animals. There are militia groups in the DRC who survive by stealing and raiding pastoralists' cattle and other property, especially those in the Semliki Valley. There is a feeling among the inhabitants of this borderland that the DRC government army does not protect pastoralists against those militia groups or prevent/deter them from raiding people's cattle. Some believe that there could be connivance between the DRC government soldiers and the militia groups to share the proceeds that come from raiding of pastoralists' cattle. The government soldiers find it economically beneficial to protect the cattle-raiding militias rather than protecting pastoralists. Sometimes the army uses the militia groups to extort money from the Batuku pastoralists who cross to graze their animals in the DRC in the seasons of drought. This implies that there is no state protection of the pastoralists in the DRC, and those who cross the border to find grazing for their cattle do that at their own risk; and some have lost their source of livelihood. Moving with what Kolossov & Scott (2013) say, this border situation is paradoxical in the sense that it exposes border management and border crossing as parallel and simultaneous processes. The crossing and controls of borders compete for hegemony. Whereas open and more flexible borders are vital for economic survival of the local communities, tighter and more closed borders are important for security measures.

4.4 Living in many worlds: the Batuku pastoralists' dwelling on and crossing of the Uganda-DRC border

My conversations with Consta confirm that since the division of the Semliki valley the Batuku pastoralists have lived and operated in several different worlds. In the world of their national culture, for instance, they must possess Ugandan national identity documents such as a national identity card and a passport. They speak Rutuku which is part of the Ugandan Bantu languages and the Runyoro-Rutoro dialect. On the other hand, they also live in the world of the border environment that is characterised by daily and occasional border crossings as they seek pasture and water for their livestock and sell their milk and milk products at and across the border. They access livestock markets within and across the border, for instance at Rwebisengo, Nyakasenyi, and Kyabikunguru livestock markets on the Ugandan side of the border, and Burasa livestock market on the DRC side of the border. These livelihood practices position them to learn and speak languages and behave in the ways that are part of this border environment. They are forced to learn the manners of negotiation, conflict avoidance, and resolution mechanisms to be able to access land on which to graze their livestock in times of crisis. They also live in the world of their ethnic group where they are Batuku with social institutions and the clan system that uniquely distinguishes them from other groups in the region. This clan system helps them manage their cattle economy based on gift and exchange values. This cattle economy is at the same time based on a system that enforces the material and moral values attached

to cattle by both the Batuku pastoralists and the rest of the borderland inhabitants. I elaborate on this cattle economy and its operating system more extensively in chapter five.

The Batuku pastoralists live with a “foreign culture” on the other side of the boundary. According to Gela who participated in the 2016 Ugandan Parliamentary Elections, living in this border region has made the Batuku different from other Ugandans and for that reason they are most times perceived as foreigners. The Uganda-DRC border has shaped the Batuku pastoralists differently based on the demands and needs they encounter in this region. They are one of the groups of people who speak Lingala and Kilendu languages which are commonly spoken in the DRC. Since their livelihood demands that they cross the border occasionally to territories occupied by groups of people who speak languages like Lingala and Kilendu, they learn these languages in order to operate in the DRC area with peace and harmony. Languages are crucial in relationship creation especially with groups that view them as “others”. They must live and work within this environment of otherness as they integrate and interact with those of other cultures, values, customs, and languages to which they must conform by acquiring some of the languages to dispel the state of otherness, although they rarely succeed in doing so. According to Gela it is this state of otherness that made his opponents petition courts to nullify his victory as a representative of his constituency. To him the state of otherness is not only experienced by the Batuku pastoralists while they are in the DRC, but they are also perceived as foreigners in Uganda. This has exposed the Batuku pastoralists to another a world of separateness. By their distance and isolation from the cores of nation-states, coupled with unique local ethnic and economic characteristics, these cross-border pastoralists frequently develop interests that clash with central governments or with national cultures. As some border studies scholars have reported, the transnational nature of borderlands produces integrative and assimilative forces that blur differences between people on opposite sides of the boundary, spawning problems with parent populations (Adjepong, 2017; Flynn, 1997; Rudiatin, 2016).

The Batuku pastoralists speak Kiswahili, Rutuku, Rukhonzo, Luganda, Lingala, French, Kilendu, Lunyabwisi, and some other languages including a few who speak English. This is what Rippa & Yang call a considerable part of versatility that is required to actively participate in each of these universes which includes their ability to be multilingual and multicultural (Rippa & Yang, 2017; Ghosh, 2017; Martinez, 1994). This is part of the many worlds that Batuku pastoralists experience as they cross the border for their livelihoods. It is what one can refer to as the “frontier effect” that Donnan & Wilson, (2010) write about. It is a coping mechanism (a form of versatility or a set of repertoires) to manage and bend the conditions of rule that they find themselves in. It is a tool for dwelling and crossing. This ability to interact with groups across the border has made them live not

as a unique, insular group, but one that lives with all the heterogeneities that the line offers them as they criss-cross it for their existence.

Batuku pastoralists use these languages to negotiate access to pasture and water, to bargain in the marketplaces as they buy salt and animal drugs, and to acquire other necessities of their lives. They use these languages to sell their milk and other milk products and to make statements at police stations whenever their animals are raided by the militia groups in the DRC and when their animals stray into cultivators' crops and gardens. They marry and give away their children in marriage to other language groups. Therefore, languages are currency for mobility and encounters (Donnan & Wilson, 2010).

Batuku pastoralists in this borderland come to think of themselves as members of a self-contained and self-directed border economic community rather than as "pure" citizens of a nation-state whose behaviour must conform strictly to national norms. Using Martinez (1994)'s term, the Batuku people function as a "joint community" and become a "we" group for whom others of their own nationality, especially authorities, find them hard to control and restrict. Adjepong (2017) argues that Batuku, like other populations on the peripheries of the nation-states, are subjects of frontier forces and international influences (see also Mulugeta, 2017). As many other borderland inhabitants, Batuku pastoralists are exposed to processes that have the potential for generating conflict, including border-related disputes, oppressive tariffs, restrictive migration policies, constraints to free cross-border movements, ethnic frictions, and stereotypes by outsiders and fellow citizens of the same nation. For instance, since 2015 the conflict in the eastern part of DRC has not only displaced people who have crossed to the Ugandan side as refugees but has also made the Ugandan state deploy strict border controls that have sabotaged the Batuku pastoralists' transhumance cycles. As most of their significant cross-border interlinks have now been disrupted, the Batuku pastoralists' drought sanctuaries have become inaccessible to them and their livestock.

The Batuku pastoralists avoid crossing the border at the border points that are well established, like that of Kasenyi which has a customs union and a bridge to cross to the DRC and back to Uganda. They instead use the crossing point of Budiba where there is no customs union, no bridge, and no check point, register books or revenue collection personnel. On the cattle market day of Burasa across the border in DRC, people come with their oxen and enter the waters of the Semliki River and swim across while chasing the oxen as the soldiers manning the border are watching. As I explained to the soldiers when I submitted my identification papers to them, pastoralists taking their oxen to the market could not bother and soldiers never minded them. As one of my participants said, "the government has done little for us pastoralists and we feel no reason to keep paying all that money they charge us at Kasenyi border point. Moreover, the president promised to draw water from the Muzizi River so that we could have water available all throughout the year, which we have not seen,

and we have no hope of it coming”. The Batuku pastoralists have on many occasions frustrated the establishment of a customs union on the Budiba border point. I attended sensitisation meetings organised by the immigration department, Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), and the Uganda Police where the Batuku held their ground and refused the calls to let these state institutions establish their offices at the border point of Budiba by promising never to cooperate with their staff or seek their services at all.

The Batuku pastoralists follow the movement of their animals on the routes that relate to diverse ecological zones that include linguistic diversities. This functioning of Batuku pastoralists in the social fields that traverse geographic, political, and cultural diversities, makes them multilingual, which is a “frontier effect” as Donnan & Wilson, (2010) have called it. This kind of “frontier effect” depicts the way local communities struggle to navigate difference as they function in multilingual conditions but also remain “islands” within their own community’s linguistic space. In the borderlands like that of Uganda-DRC, which appear as spaces where state governance is at its weakest, mutual influence of values, ideas, customs and shared economic relations on both sides of the border greatly contribute to both local communities’ and state survival and transnationalism. In her study on the Chad Basin frontier, Janet Roitman concludes that the existence of these activities at the border does not proclaim the demise of the nation state, because the state often stands in the heart of the proliferation of forms of wealth and power in its margins. In particular, in these border areas, where state power is theoretically at its weakest, “emergent” forms of regulatory authority can be observed that are both state and non-state, formal and informal in nature (Roitman, 2005). In such cases, state actors depend considerably on such non-official activities for rents and the other means of redistribution.

This departs from the perspective where borders are considered to represent marginal territories of the state, relatively fixed in space and continuous in time (Donnan & Wilson, 1999). The fixity and continuity produces a homogeneous notion of subjective experience of the border: people are expected to react in similar ways to the opportunities and restrictions enacted through the presence of the border. As Brunet-Jailly (2011) argues, marginality and the significant presence of the state create the impression that the border is acted from afar, by a different entity. Territoriality linked with the enforcement of sovereignty leaves us with the understanding of the border as both a barrier and a mechanism of separation but not a ground of survival and convergence of values. The appearance of the border as a territory constitutes a good reason for many to treat borders as mechanisms that separate cultures, societies, and sovereignties, thus reiterating the magicalities and fantasies of states in relation to their geographical margins (Das & Poole, 2004). Yet, there is more to borders than their capacity to separate and demarcate. This points to the fact that the border is more than a fixed

geographical, marginal location. It is also a concentration of state institutions and a site of culturally patterned negotiations. The border is both a conscious and unconscious domain that contains both visible and invisible attributes. As Kolossov (2005) says, there are interventions and transformations of territory and landscape. The effects of these interventions and transformations have not necessarily been restrictive to crossing and dwelling but to some extent they increase the possibilities to live with the border and (re)define it. For pastoralists like the Batuku, it is not just the engineering by the state that pressures borders to change and become different spaces, but also the daily activities and needs of both the borderlanders and hinterlanders, which are all related to crossing and dwelling on these borders.

4.5 *Creating national parks and pastoral grazing lands*

In the years that followed these colonial activities of territory delimitations and swaps, there came the creation of National parks and game reserves in different regions of the British Uganda Protectorate and the Belgian Congo. In 1932 part of the Semliki valley was turned into the Semliki game reserve thereby reducing the grazing territory of the Batuku pastoralists on the British Ugandan side of the border. In the following years, the Belgian Congo administration ordered all people who occupied its remaining part of Semliki valley to move up to the hilly areas. The reason, according to the Belgian government, was that due to the Second World War effort and Belgian involvement in the war, they could not allow the administration enough time and resources to fight tsetse flies which were causing nagana (trypanosomiasis) in the pastoralists' animals. My participant Conste observed that the truth was that the Belgian Congo administration wanted to turn that area into a national park. Some people refused the eviction and crossed the border to the British Uganda Protectorate thereby increasing on the number pastoralists and cattle on the British Uganda side of the border. Those who remained were forcefully evicted by government officials and soldiers and taken to the upland areas. The houses of those who hesitated were torched and they were forcefully removed from those areas. This act was termed by the Batuku "*okukongoora*" (to evacuate). This act of evacuating people from the valley of Semliki increasingly separated the Batuku of British Uganda protectorate and those in Belgian Congo due to the distance they had to cover to visit their relatives as well as to pay allegiance to their chiefs and clan heads. Importantly, as it was noted in my conversation with Conste, the areas where the Belgian Congo resettled the Congolese Batuku who were evacuated from Semliki valley had been inhabited by other groups including the Lendu, Babira, Balur, Banyali, and others. As Donnan & Wilson, (2010) note, mobility, whether legal, illegal, forced or voluntary, is a key conceptual category which defines borders as areas of tension and transformation. The experience of the border is also largely seen as an experience with state power. This is a relation fuelled by the fact that state

and economy often come into conflict at borders. It is the marginality of the border areas that pushes people into circumventing the state's rules and restrictions upon mobility.

The inhabitants of those places to which the evacuated Batuku pastoralists were settled considered themselves as the natives. Even though these people did not prevent the Belgian Congo government from resettling the pastoralists on their land, they refused to integrate with them and started clashes that have continued to the present day according to Conste. It was obvious that a new dimension was introduced in the pastoralists' relations with cultivators in the context of competition over state resources and services and this came to have an ethnic dimension. This ethnic dimension was to later become problematic in the state management of the affairs of those places. According to Trapido, (2015) the settlements instigated processes of economic rivalries and ethnogenesis that are still fresh in the popular memory of the Batuku and most other Congolese farmers. The social dynamics set in motion then were integrated into the 1990s and 2000s civil war that unfolded in the DRC border region with various rebel groups and foreign military forces.

As the Belgian Congo administration failed to implement its objective of turning this part of the Semliki Valley into a national park, the Batuku pastoralists kept on returning to their land clandestinely while those from Uganda could also use these places in times of drought and floods. The clashes have continued through the decades of Congo's independence, and they continued and intensified in the years 1998, 2003, 2005, 2009, and more recently 2017. Whenever clashes happen, refugees come to Batukuland in Uganda and are given a place to stay and some would even buy their own land and become permanent citizens of Uganda. Recently, the Ugandan state pronounced itself as a refugees-receiving and "caring state" in the region. This is premised not only on Uganda's humanitarian mandate, but also on the need to mend her deteriorating international relations and acquire funding from international organisations and states. This has made it easy for many refugees from the DRC to cross to Uganda and, as a result, many service delivery agencies are overwhelmed with the number of people to serve. For instance, health centres and schools are exceedingly overpopulated as the citizens and refugees compete to access these services.

The creation of the Semliki game reserve was received with resistance by the Batuku pastoralists. As it was for most of colonial Africa, the creation of the conservation and preservation institutions generally was based on what Rangarajan, (2003) calls the green agendas of colonisers that contrasted with more immediate day-to-day preoccupations of their subjects. The eviction of pastoralists, relocations and displacements became a major feature of the conservation policy in British Uganda. Even after independence, displacement of the local pastoralists from parks and game reserves remained a prerequisite for successful preservation. To grasp the magnitude of the resentment Batuku pastoralists have against Semliki game reserve officials, I draw on the scenarios that I witnessed

during my fieldwork in Rwebisengo. On one occasion while travelling to Fort Portal town in a taxi through the reserve, my fellow passengers urged the driver to knock one of the Deer that were crossing the road so that they could share it for meat. Being incensed by their attitude I asked why they wanted to do that to the national treasure because of Uganda's stands on tourism. The response was that "those animals are more treasured by the state than the people who live in the area and have nowhere to graze their cattle in times of drought". The second scenario was at Nyakasenyi livestock market where I witnessed a group of boda-boda youth who were slaughtering a Thomson's gazelle which they had killed in the park as some of them were returning from dropping a passenger. The sense I picked from their conversations while slaughtering it was that "if their cattle could die of drought and the state cares about the animals more than the needs of the people; let us also survive on the animals because they are the only surviving resource they can access". Citing Raymond Williams, Neumann (1998:97), argues that "preservation of wildlife as game was directly and repeatedly challenged by men living and finding their living in their own places, their own country, but now, by the arbitrariness of law, made over into criminals, into rogues, into marginal men". What this statement reveals, is that the colonial dispensation disrupted customary practices and rights, and local people continue to resist these changes in myriad ways. These resistances are what Scott (1985:28), calls "a characteristic of silent and anonymous forms of class struggle that typify the peasantry". These are peasant struggles for survival that show that the colonial state neglected the importance of free access to resources for rural livelihoods. This not only disrupted pastoralists' natural resource use but also diminished their control of traditional means of production.

On another note, the Batuku pastoralists keep creating bush fires in the Semliki game reserve during the drought season, something they explain as stopping their cattle from being tempted by fresh pasture in the reserve. This practice is considered by the state to be criminal but is part of the organised tactical manoeuvres to re-appropriate resources without the management being any the wiser, and their success shows a degree of community cooperation. The sense I draw from these struggles of the local Batuku pastoralists with the game reserve points to the fact that these conservation policies in Africa are a political ideology that aims to subject political, social and ecological affairs to capitalist market which according Büscher et al., (2012:11) is "made manifest through distinct governmentalities (techniques and technologies for managing people and nature) and embodied practices in social, material, and epistemological realms". These struggles are against what Harvey (2001) what calls accumulation by dispossession.

Looking at these conservation policies in the context of borders, it is possible to say that pastoralists' resistance expressed in the form of bush burning, killing of game animals, encroaching on the reserve pasture and water in the game reserve, are part of the silent encroachment on the capitalistic drive to

ring-fence everything into exchange value that cuts up the local connections and relationships with their surroundings in order to produce, sell, and consume their constituent elements (Büscher et al., 2012). **These pastoralists, like other local communities, have continuously resisted capitalism's intentions to separate, split, alienate, and estrange for the purposes of selling and buying that are dressed in the conservation rhetoric.** The creation of National parks and game reserves, Kolossov & Scot (2013) say, are ways of compartmentalising elite pleasures and profit from the local ways of living, which forms part of the formal making of borders by the state, most of which are Westphalian in nature. Powerful elites decide when, and in whose interest, it is to construct and constitute borders, and they also decide when and how to open and remove borders.

4.6 Batuku pastoral activities and their navigations of the Uganda-DRC border

Below, I begin with the Daily Monitor Newspaper article by Mike Ssegawa of Thursday January 31 2013. This article explains the precarious situation the Batuku live in both during drought and rainy seasons.

Ntoroko, where rain and sunshine are not welcome

To say life in Budiba village in Rwebisengo Sub county in the new district of Ntoroko is harsh, is an understatement. When you live there, you do not want to ask God for rain or sunshine because both can be a curse.

Budiba is one of the villages still battling the floods from the December rains. The rains make River Semliki explode now and then, flooding three sub counties of the district which was recently carved out of Bundibugyo, in western Uganda.

In the last one year, the river has burst twice; in August and December, taking two lives and displacing 17,000 people in Bweramure, Butungama and Rwebisengo sub counties. Their homes were swept downstream, and few others submerged in the floods that also destroyed gardens, and domestic equipment, and of course pasture for the animals.

This is not the first time it is happening. Floods happen every other year in the rainy season, but, the kind of floods that came in 2012, are only comparable to the ones of 1911, 1962, 1988, according to elders in the area.

World Vision assessment puts 895 households as severely affected. Mr Moses Muhigi of Budiba village, Rwebisengo Sub County, who we found sitting under a tree shade with his family, looking at their makeshift shelter, is not one of those assessed as severely affected.

The Butuku Cattle Marketing Co-operative Union (BCMCU) is an initiative the Batuku pastoralists have used to engage with the prevailing situation at the Uganda-DRC border region. This is an initiative for pastoralists to have a voice in the marketing and sale of their cattle in the Rwenzori region. It sets the prices of cattle and meat in the area and articulates the pastoralists' grievances to the local administrative structures. Chale is the co-operative's chairperson and experienced with cattle

keeping and border interactions, especially with market services. He has spent his entire life practicing pastoralism as a livelihood. I asked him whether I could consider him a pastoralist; he said that indeed he is “a pastoralist by birth” and that he had grown up herding livestock. Even when he was at school, he would return home during holidays to look after his father’s cattle. Even after his course at college he worked in Rwebisengo as a veterinary officer and has since acquired 150 head of cattle in Rwebisengo sub-county. He explained that pastoralism for the Batuku is a way of life. He said that “wherever a cow goes, a Mutuku (a singular person) follows it”. It is a belief among the Batuku that wherever pasture is their cattle must go there. As a way of life there is no barrier that can stop the pursuit of pasture, not even an international border. He said that one is born in a home where parents depend on cattle and one is raised looking after cattle. Even when Batuku acquire the highest levels of education, the first skills they exhibit are pastoral skills. There are social systems that enculturate the pastoral ways of living into the children, which I discuss in chapter five. These social systems stretch beyond the Uganda-DRC border. They have been in place for many generations. Fracturing them would negatively affect the livelihoods of the Batuku pastoralists in this border region.

In Chale’ view, the Uganda-DRC border has never been a matter of concern to the Batuku pastoralists. People migrated freely with their livestock in times of drought to DRC and back to the Rwebisengo in Uganda until the security situation in DRC started to deteriorate 2016/2017. Since that time, crossing to DRC became a risky undertaking to the pastoralists. Militias’ guns in DRC and the Ugandan security guns on the other side of the border have combined to make this border different from the one people (Batuku pastoralists) knew and experienced in the past. The survival movements of the Batuku pastoralists stretch far back to the time of the Bunyoro-Kitara empire to which these pastoralists belonged in the 13th Century (Uzoigwe, 1973). This means these periods of drought (*ekyanda*) stretch far back from to the early history of Batuku as cattle herders. Migrations have always provided an immediate solution to pastoralists during drought. Long spells of drought lead to the loss of herds in big numbers, causing famine and forcing people to migrate to save their lives and livelihoods. The Batuku pastoralists have used migrations as their solution; their movements go across and beyond borders and boundaries. This is well explained by a saying in the Batuku language that “*mainaro nsoni*” which literally means that “fear is the source of misery or poverty” or “Life is a struggle” and those who struggle live. This saying explains a worldview that the Batuku pastoralists have toward their movements with cattle (the greatest wealth in their possession) that extend from the south-west of Lake Albert and enter in the valleys of Lake Kivu in the DRC. Whereas it has been their habit to move far from the centres of power to avoid the effects of power struggles, the current insecurity in the DRC has extended into their places of operation in a manner that is unfamiliar to

them. The Batuku pastoralists have always crossed the Uganda-DRC border and entered Bulega, Mboga, Mitego, Beni, Butembo, Irumu, Bugoro, Butalinga, up to River Duke in DRC without encountering problems with the inhabitants of these places. **These chiefdoms are headed by a group known in DRC as the Hema (these are ethnic group with about 160,000 people located in the Eastern DRC, in particular Ituri Province).** These are part, according to my fieldwork interlocutors, of the Batuku who lived in this territory before the coming of colonial administration.

The River (Semliki) is the boundary marker between DRC and Uganda and there are three border crossing points of Budiba, Kasenyi, and Nyakasenyi on that River. Kasenyi is the official crossing point with a bridge and a good marram road. Here, there are also customs union and immigration offices. Budiba border crossing point is not recognised. On this border point people are criss-crossing all the time, however risky it is said to be. On Budiba border point life goes on; people come from the DRC and others who are involved in trade of cattle and milk cross to the DRC from Uganda. Some people come from the DRC and travel to Fort Portal to shop and cross again to using this border point. There are those who bring milk from the DRC and sell to people of Rwebisengo trading centre. At Kasenyi border point the border management is shared between the customs union and immigration departments (which are part of the central government), and the district local government. Military/soldiers are part of the officials who check those who cross to and from DRC at all border points on river Semliki. The military presence on these border points has been accelerated by the security situation in the eastern DRC. The whole region is militarised now, at least on the Ugandan side of the border. The military only checks for identification documents to prove the citizenship of those crossing. Crossing the border is very easy if a person can show all the necessary documents, especially the National Identity Card in Uganda's case. A military officer told me as he checked my documents at Budiba border point that accessing services on either side of the border is easy if the service is readily available. There are no mechanisms for instance, to deter those who cross at the Budiba border point and go to the Burasa livestock market in the DRC where they buy/sell whatever they want. On this Uganda-DRC border, restrictions are enforced in a relaxed and negotiable manner, and these can be viewed as various subject positions and practices that remake the border spaces and times in many ways. It is the life at the border with its peculiarities and always changing conditions of crossing and dwelling which disenchant the strict socialist bordering. It is crossing in pursuit of pastoral activity that has largely fallen beyond the state's control at the border, whereas deceptive dwelling is directly stimulated through the interaction between individuals and has subjected borderlanders to variabilities and precarity in various realms of their lives. Experiences of space and time at the border as people cross and dwell form a productive context materialised in activities that (re)create the border.

The intensification of insecurity on the border has threatened people's livelihoods because of killings, abductions, and the looting of people's property in the DRC. This has further led for the last two years to Batuku pastoralists losing their herds to droughts because they failed to access the dry season resources across the Uganda-DRC border. There is a feeling among the people of the area that the Governments of Uganda and DRC are not doing much to resolve the insecurity and cattle raiding in the region. One of my participants had this to say in relation to the government of Uganda: "the government has done little for us pastoralists in terms of services provision although we keep paying all that taxes that they charge us at Kasenyi border point. Moreover, the government has failed on its promise to provide water from river Muzizi so that we could have it available all time throughout the year". Relying on transhumance in order to take advantage of ecologically heterogeneous resources that are differentially distributed across the border landscape has now come to an unexpected stop for Batuku pastoralists.

To a pastoralist in Rwebisengo the Uganda/DRC border has been an advantage, a bridge to their sanctuary where they have always sought refuge in the times of crisis especially in the dry seasons when people used to move to Congo/DRC and secure their cattle from dying. The escalating levels of insecurity in the DRC have made pastoralists afraid to cross to the other side of the border where there are fresh grazing resources and so they are now experiencing great losses. Some of the pastoralists I interacted with predicted that the coming year (2018) was going to be the worst because insecurity has worsened in the DRC and the Ugandan government was beefing up security at the borders while drought was getting more serious in Rwebisengo. By the time I left this place at the beginning of the month of April 2018, rains had started and a significant change could be noticed in terms of green pastures and some dirty water in the wells. However, they lost many of their cattle to starvation in the previous months.

4.7 Receding solidarity and high-level vulnerability among the Batuku pastoralists

With insecurity in the region, the state of Uganda has been campaigning and sensitising people to resort to private land ownership and reduce the number of cattle. The government of Uganda has been doing this in pastoralists dominated areas. Pastoralism is the only source of livelihood in this area, and considering the levels of rain the area receives every year, reducing the number of their cattle means falling into a precarious situation. This is because they do not only depend on cattle for many of their life's necessities, but they also have a herdsman's outlook on the world. Cattle are their dearest possession and they gladly risk their lives to give them live a good life. As my participant Consta asserted "Ente eta ahabi n'aharungi; ente ehonderwa ahabi n'aharungi; Ruteerana enganda, amahanga

n'ebirwa" ("the cow puts its owner in a good and bad place; the cow is followed in good and awkward situations; it is the one that unites the clans, nations and territories"). E. E. Evans-Prichard, in his 1940's work among the Nuer of South Sudan, writes about their profound contempt for people who have few or no cattle (Evans-Prichard 2008). This same contempt is exhibited by the Batuku, and they will move to risky places to protect their cattle or to ensure that their cattle will prosper. This herdsman outlook is exhibited in their thinking and expressions that rarely go beyond the welfare of their cattle.

Poverty levels have increased because of the "hard" border, which has led to the death of many people's herds. Chale had this to say: "The land use is changing from communal/customary tenure to private/lease/or freehold land tenure systems. People are now seen fencing their land privately to restrict access from other pastoralists. The routes to access River Semliki the only source of water in the dry season are being blocked now". Private property is emerging with exclusionism and competition. Land has been a thread of unity and solidarity, and a source of community good will. Therefore, for it to become private property will only mean a widening gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots". Those who are rich in livestock need a lot of land and are willing to do anything to get access to more land. They can buy off land from the poor and bribe the land officials at the district land board and thus restrict the access of the poor to land.

This region is part of the Albertine area where the recent discoveries of oil are thought to cause land grabbing by the powerful and elite ruling class that connives with the local leaders and fraudulently grabs customary owned land. As the spirit of individualism is spreading roots, communalism is getting uprooted. There is receding solidarity and people no longer depend and rely on others. Households no longer live through help from other households in terms of food and water sharing. Cow lifting which is a common activity is despised and those who still seek such assistance are looked at as "backward". Vulnerability and individualism are increasingly witnessed in the community. Unlike other pastoralists in Uganda, the Batuku have little to sell daily as milk products. This is particularly the case in the dry seasons and therefore they desire large numbers of cattle to maximise their potential. People are seen with only five litres of milk on bicycles selling in cups of 500 milligrams in the trading centre.

This change of tenure from communal or customary land use to private ownership has made the lives of pastoralists worse because in the communal lands people competed for the number of cattle and could move as a group whenever it was necessary to cross the border and seek security from the community chiefs of their clans and chiefdoms in the DRC as a group. They could pasture their cattle in common and jointly defend them when they crossed the border. Their solidarity was most evident in the dry seasons when they lived in a group around a common kraal. The Congolese authorities

recognised grouped pastoralists and their voices could easily reach the high-level authorities in the land. Even the Ugandan state could lobby the DRC government to provide group security more easily than for individual pastoralists. The losses experienced by pastoralists when acting in a group would not be seriously felt and there could be guarantees of communal responsibility much more than for individuals. The sense of togetherness that stretched from communalism is on the verge of disappearing. There is individual competition over land and other resources. The competition ranges across access to land, water sources, livestock wellbeing, and other aspects of life such as housing. The bond of total interdependence of cattle pasturing that has long been inherent in Batuku society, and was the making of the self and others as expressed in the course of everyday life, is disappearing. Individual paddocks can now be seen with barbed wire delineating them.

“Cow lifting” is one of the activities that people in this area have on their daily to do list. It is an activity for which neighbours call each other on their mobile telephones asking for help in lifting a cow that is down and cannot stand on its own strength. Every household knows that it is their mandate and obligation to help a neighbouring household to lift their weak cow so that the next time it could be them calling for the same help when theirs cannot stand up. It is arduous work lifting a helpless cow. A lot of energy is required and most households do not have enough manpower, and so ask for help from neighbouring households. They use a big stick which is pushed under the cow and people on both sides lift the stick as others hold the horns of the cow. This activity too is beginning to be negatively perceived owing to the messages that people get from leaders describing households that still have cows that cannot stand on their own as being anti-development and exhibiting “backwardness”. People now feel ashamed to seek others for assistance in cow lifting. Some have tried to use fire to burn the cow so as to inflict pain on it and force it to stand when the help is only the owners.

The Butuku Cattle Marketing Co-operative Union (BCMCU) aims to secure stability of livestock prices in markets and protects those who cross the border to access the market in the DRC. In addition, cattle marketing cooperatives give a voice to pastoralists before governments and border management officials and guard against exploitation by cattle traders of pastoralists as they would do to individual sellers. These co-operatives also organise water tanks to take water to members at subsidised prices. With dying communalism, it was noted that in the period of drought pastoralists spend money to buy water for their cattle. This comes from the fact that communal routes to common water sources, including the River Semliki, are currently being blocked by those fencing private paddocks. Pastoralists have to sell cattle to buy water for other cattle and those who have made private paddocks find it hard to get out of them to access the common sources of water. In a certain way these cattle are eating themselves. If a pastoralist does not cross to the DRC in the dry season, cows will start to

eat themselves in terms of money the owners spend money buying water by selling other cattle. One of participants called them “cows that eat money”. To some degree cross-border pastoralists are at a crossroads now. I observed how pastoralists in Rwebisengo were in pain as they watched their cattle die due to lack of pasture while at the same time they could not cross the border to DRC due to insecurity caused by the militias who often take pastoralists’ cattle at gun point.

4.8 *Border insecurity, abductions and loss of power and status among Batuku pastoralists*

Amos is a resident of Nyakasenyi and has his home in the same sub-county of Rwebisengo where he left his family and every morning he takes them milk from where he works or sometimes his wife comes and picks up milk if Amos fails to take it to her. Amos narrated what befell him eleven months ago when he fell victim to cattle raiding by the militias in the DRC in early January of 2017. When the drought intensified in Butukuland, he could not afford to see his cows die and decided to take them to the DRC, as he had normally done and his father had also done long ago. Amos took his herd of 127 cattle across the border to the DRC but lost all of them and he was abducted by the militias and was later rescued by paying a ransom of seventy-two million Uganda shillings. This is a usual demand by the militias whenever they abduct a person. On top of the raided cattle they continue to demand more, or they kill the person. “They wanted to kill me if they had not been paid that ransom”. The money that saved his life was contributed by his relatives and especially his uncle, for whom he now works, friends, and the village community. In the view of the people life is more precious than cattle. They assert that cattle are owned by the living not the dead. He will get other cows with time. He spent many days in the militias’ custody as money was being gathered in the village. This continues to torment his wellbeing and remembering the situation they went through greatly depresses him.

Such abductions and the eventual loss of herds of cattle have led to a lot of fear among the Batuku pastoralists and they are now content to watch their cattle die from drought rather than seeing them raided by the armed militia in the DRC. “Yes, there are fresh pastures in DRC in this dry season but of what good are they if the person has to lose the cattle and their lives at once?” Amos asks in disappointment. His experience points to the bigger situation in the region now that the border that used to be porous has become so hard that crossing it is now a matter of risk. The border where they have dwelled for generations has changed its perspective in a short time. These are the effects of the change that people must adjust to in a very short time. It is greatly depressing as Amos described it. He kept on calling it “ekiina omu bwomezi bwangye” loosely translated as a depression in my life. It is hard for the Batuku pastoralists to restrain themselves and watch their cattle die in Rwebisengo.

But when such incidents happen fear develops among people and their lives change. Although people have contributed some cattle to Amos and now he has twelve cows, his life will take time to return to the state he was in before his cattle were raided and his abduction. He is now taking care of his uncle's cattle. The symbolic interpretation of a man who takes care of another man's cattle needs to be understood in the Batuku's context. Among the Batuku pastoralists power, influence, wisdom and knowledge, and "manhood" are all understood and attributed to the ownership of cattle. Because of this they have put in place institutional mechanisms that obligate them to contribute cattle when a person experiences a tragedy like the one that occurred to Amos. People give that person cows as loans to start with, and when those cows reproduce their calves will be returned to the giver. This exchange is called "*empaano*" a rotational exchange of cows among friends, relatives, and in laws.

Using my conversation with Amos where he repeatedly said "I have ever been a man"; which meant that before his cattle were raided, he was regarded by other Batuku as a man with power, influence, wisdom and knowledge in the context of him owning cattle. Now that he was taking care of another person's cattle people consider him as powerless, and therefore he had less influence on other members of his community. Indeed, to be a man means marrying, which requires paying a bride price in the form of cattle, called "*Omukaaga*", literally meaning six, the number of cows to be paid. Drawing from this practice of paying bride price, power, influence and manhood are proven to the community through ownership of cattle. There are no other practices that transit a person from childhood to adulthood among the Batuku. A boy's transition is through marriage. When a person marries, he/she is initiated from childhood to adulthood. Men must pay a bride price to marry and therefore those who have no cattle are not 'men' in the real sense of the word. A man who takes care of another man's herd cannot use them to pay bride price, and whatever effort he puts in to make them multiply and look well, the fact remains they are never his property. That kind of man never talks anywhere among people lest they remind him that he is someone's herdsman. So, most times people who earn their living by taking care other people's livestock must keep a low profile or in a way must know their position among the Batuku people.

The importance of cattle in Batuku life and thought is further exemplified in personal praise names that their peers give them in public spaces in relation to the number of cattle they own. I sat in the bar at Rwebisengo Trading centre in the evening with many pastoralists who had come from the Nyakasenyi livestock market. One of the men in the bar became emboldened and began to talk about the strength of his dominant bull. He said "Enumi yange n'entale", literally translated as my bull is a Lion. This compares the bull's strength to the strength of a Lion and its dominant position in the animal kingdom. What I understood from these words is that owner of the bull wanted to portray the dominant position of his bull to his bar colleagues. The strength of the bull in the kraal is related to

the position and strength of its owner in the area. When the bull beats all the bulls of other herdsmen in the common grazing areas, the owner is praised and respected as the bull is talked about among all herdsmen. Drawing from Evans-Prichard's phrase of "social idiom as a bovine idiom" the Batuku can be said to define their social relationships and processes in terms of cattle. Cattle share the clan and lineage of their owners. The bond of cattle between brothers continues long after each has a home and children of his own, for when a daughter of any one of them is married the others receive part of the bride wealth. To use Evans-Prichard's (2008) understanding, kinship is customarily defined by reference to those payments, which are the most pointed aspects of marriage. Cattle moved from kraal to kraal are equivalent to lines of a genealogical chart. A man establishes contact with the ghosts and spirits of his ancestor through his cattle. If one obtains the history of each cow in a kraal, one obtains at the same time not only an account of all the kinship links and affinities of the owners but also of all their mystical connexions.

The number of cattle a person owns determines the kind of position the person holds among the Batuku society. This is expressed in terms of the seat and place he/she occupies in a community meeting, wedding or burial ceremonies, in the church, markets, bars, and any other gatherings of people. People with many head of cattle are always given special seats in front rows, not behind. The person is given a priority to speak in such ceremonies. To the Batuku the number of cattle a person owns elevates him/her to public worth and social substance even when sometimes the individual does not merit the status. It is said that even a woman, and here the word "even" is the participants' emphasis, who owns many cattle either from her late father, husband, or self-generated, moves from the position of "womanhood" to a position of a "man" and she can speak among men in public places. She has the capacity to drink alcohol and speak with men in bars, in weddings, burial and church ceremonies. The number of cattle can elevate children to adulthood when they preside over an increasing number of cattle their parents left them with when they died. The reverse is also true for children whose fathers leave many cattle and the numbers dwindle in their hands. In such a situation people pour scorn on those children who "eat" the cattle as it is called in Rutuku language; "*okurya ente*" literally translated as "eating the cattle". That kind of "finishing" up the inheritance by the children is discouraged by the Batuku pastoralists through contempt and scorn for the children sell off their parents' property, especially cattle and land. This kind of criticism is directed at boys more than girls because girls are considered not able to manage their father's inheritance since they are supposed to get married and live among their husbands' kin groups.

There are rituals of initiating newly born babies. These rituals differentiate the social roles between girls and boys in their parents' homes as well as in the community in general. This ritual is part of a practice they call "*okugwetesa*" literally translated to "signify". In this practice it is said that the newly

born child of a week or two is taken out of the house and if the child is a boy; he is put on the back of a “sacred cow” “*ente enzizi*”. This is a cow that has never produced a male calf or lost one of its calves to death. The boy is then told to protect his inheritance with his blood if need be. It is also said that if the paternal grandfather of the baby boy is alive, he must give the child a cow there and then. In situations where the baby is a girl; she is lifted by the tallest man in the family on the shoulders and shown a hill far away and told that her inheritance belongs to that hill. This symbolically means that the girl is expected to marry into another family and another clan and inherit resources from her husband’s family. She does not have any claim over her parents’ property. Therefore, a boy who works hard and multiplies the number of cattle in his family is honoured and gets a special position and becomes a point of reference in the community.

The transformations at the Uganda-RDC border have created a situation that is understood to be depriving the Butuku pastoralists of their markers of personhood. If we understand pastoralism in the form of property and social identity, then cattle become the medium through which people shape their social biographies. For Batuku, cattle are the supreme form of property. In the words of Comaroff and Comaroff, (1991:45) “it is very widely the case that persons objectify themselves in things, goods either produced or circulated; that, by investing their identities in matter, they seek to project their being through space and time, enhancing their value as they are united with qualities outside themselves”. So, when the existence and well-being of such a property is threatened by insecurity and drought, as it is for Batuku, vulnerability and destitution set in.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter partly brings forward a historical ethnography which captures a “before and now” kind of historical perspective that opens possibilities for seeing the Uganda-DRC border processes along a mobility-closure continuum. These opening and closing processes are ongoing and defined by and within historical and political contexts. Highlighting the historical development of the Uganda-DRC borderline, its degrees of stability and intensity of border regimes, the categories of people and goods involved in crossing, and their reasons for crossing, brings out the tensions in local people’s everyday activities, especially their attempts to shape their realities as pastoralists within the Uganda and DRC nation-states. This border is taking on new meanings that involve both obstacles and possibilities for addressing livelihood challenges of the cross-border pastoralists. The biggest challenge currently is the emergence of conflict in this region that affects the nation-states’ interface with border crossing and residential communities.

The effects of the new dimension of this border area on local livelihoods must be understood in terms of access to livestock resources in both drought and rainy seasons, the land use perspective, access to

livestock markets within and across the border and how these new economic realities produce new forms of inequalities, challenges to old winners and creation of new privileged groups of actors. This helps to challenge the prevailing views that problems in this border region are understood according to a narrative of “incomplete transition” to a free market economy and private ownership of resources. What is going on is a battle of many social and political forces in the region, forces being local, regional, national, international and global. These are power games that take place in this small place but are concerned with big issues.

5.0 Chapter five: Pastoral Production Systems, Institutions, and Community Services in the Changing Border Dynamics

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the systems, practices and institutions that facilitate and maintain cross-border pastoralism in the region. These include the institutions of pastoralism at the border that give the cross-border pastoralists a context that not only facilitates the practices but also ties together the individuals, families, and the community at large in the process of pursuing their livelihoods. In this chapter I describe the ways in which these institutions facilitate grazing of livestock within and outside Batukuland as well as how they operate as a thread that ties together all the beads of the practice of pastoralism. What I have called the Batuku “border context” includes the way that these institutions and practices facilitate movement within Uganda and the DRC; the ways in which they are used to outwit the state institutions; and the way these practices connect the Batuku pastoralists with other groups to create alliances that help to access land and other resources essential for the well-being of their livestock. I also show in this chapter that these institutions and practices are not static by describing the changes that have taken place in the way they are applied and perceived. In this chapter, I argue that it is these institutions and practices that typically constitute the Batuku’s border context that goes beyond their citizenship. This spatially produced cultural context, I will argue, is undermined by a variety of processes that are taking place at the Uganda-DRC border. These changes have come in the form of state activities restricting pastoralism, enforcement of the border rules, and militia activities such as violent abductions of pastoralists and raids on their livestock when they move to the DRC in drought seasons. These developments have not only weakened the efficient operation of the institutions and practices as sources of resilience, they have also turned communally owned land into a commodity, thereby contributing to the transformation of a porous border into a “hard” one. These developments have exposed the Batuku’s life and existence on the border to so much risk that Batuku pastoralists now are becoming destitute as they lose their livelihood.

The Batuku pastoralists operate a systematic network of institutions and practices in the process of producing their livelihood necessities. These systems and practices have been a source of social well-being and social capital. These institutions and practices serve both the impecunious and the rich. They tie people together both in good and bad times. They are described as a source of people’s existence and livelihood. These institutions and practices relate to the cow and milk as important aspects of their lives and culture; their work, relationships, organisations, clans, marriages, practices of reciprocity and mutual assistance all hinge upon the cow and milk and products like meat, skins and ritual materials.

The drastic changes taking place in this region have changed the character of the border. It is imperative to note that processes of commodification of land and cattle have turned Batuku common resources into privately owned properties and forced pastoralists to compete for these resources, including land, cattle; and money. These new trends in the dynamics of this border region have pushed the Batuku pastoralists to destitution in the form of landlessness, loss of cattle, and consequently some are migrating to city centres and towns to look for simple menial labour jobs as a last resort.

5.2 The clan system and its enforcement of pastoral activity

There has been a way of thinking that most African societies lacked social institutions -bureaucratic governments, money-based economies, formal laws etc - that most observers were accustomed to (Kenny & Kirsten, 2015:70). It came to be perceived that where such institutions are lacking, kinship serves as an integrating force, an all-purpose social glue. “Blood kinship” provides the basis for the formation of cohesive groups, marriages, cross-generational connections, bonds of affection, and complex economic relationships that hold it all together. Family determines the social structure, inheritance, and group formation in society. Inheritance is a central factor among Batuku pastoral society. What happens when a family’s property is in danger of being lost to outsiders because there is no legitimate heir? This is a particularly serious concern for most pastoralist societies. Genealogical connections serve to validate claims to land, power, status, and anything else of social value.

Ties of kinship and marriage serve to form and bind together politically significant groups for the Batuku. Kinship, economies, and politics are entangled with one another, which makes it possible to think about these relationships in functional terms. Although there are many anthropological critiques of the functionality of these kinship institutions, I find them significantly dependable in a pastoralist economy like the Batuku cross-border pastoralists. Ties of kinship are also related to moral and economic obligations. There are many formal and informal ways of establishing such bonds as adoption, surrogacy, common-law relationships, and marriage. Marriage is a classic rite of passage, often involving complex ceremonies and intricate economic transactions (Kenny & Kirsten, 2015:74). Among the Batuku marriage remains a profound social act- an affair between groups, families and clans, not individuals. The ties established between groups by marriage are both political and economic and can span generations. Gift-giving is a common feature of these ties as well as giving bride wealth (*omukaaga*). Totemic clans going under names relating to ecology; wild animals; and cattle identify categories of people. To show how these practices take place in the context of Batuku, I draw on my conversation with Elama of Makondo village in Rwebisengo sub-county.

I visited Elama on five separate occasions because sometimes he would not be feeling well and could not talk. Elama is 82 years old. It is hard for him to remember when he was born and his daughter estimated his age. He still moves around his homestead and has a good memory. When I saw him for the first time he had returned from the hospital and was still very weak. I wondered whether he could still remember anything that happened long time ago, let alone understanding what is happening now. He lost his wife in 2015, and now his daughter and some of his sons take care of him. Some of his children live away from home. He started by saying that he never went to a formal school in his life, but all that he knows was and is acquired from cattle and pastoralism. These days, he said, when people go through school, they never ever return to help Butuku continue the work of rearing cattle with the knowledge they acquire from school. This is a pertinent observation that relates formal education acquisition and urban migration. When people acquire formal education, especially at higher levels, they tend to reside in urban centres and cities. This deprives the pastoralists of skills and advanced knowledge. The situation thereby weakens the pastoral production system and institutions.

Elama was born in the DRC in the chiefdom of Mitego, and his father was a member of the ruling lineage of the chiefdom. For him it is not just a chiefdom but a kingdom because it had a leader who could be considered a king. He is of the Babiito clan, which is the clan that still leads the Mitego chiefdom. His mother was from the Baihangu clan. He has many relatives who live permanently in the DRC and they cross to check on him occasionally. He is still connected with the current leadership of the Mitego chiefdom, since the current head of the chiefdom Kituku is his grandson. He left his birthplace in the DRC in 1963 during the **Mulele rebellion (This is was a rebellion between 1963 and 1968 led by pierre Mulele against the Congolese government during which people also crossed the border to other east and central African countries as refugees)** and, moving with his livestock, he crossed the Semliki River and entered Uganda where he has lived until today. He crossed to Uganda because the rebellion in DRC then threatened lives and livelihoods. He crossed with his family and their livestock and lived with his two uncles and his brothers. The land he settled on in Uganda was already under the custody of his clan, and his uncles and other clan relatives were living on it, though today people have divided the land and some have even sold the land to people of other clans. This narrative reveals the conditions within which the Batuku pastoralists have lived and pursued a livelihood. He lived through a systematic connection of institutions and practices that revolve around livestock that is facing pressure from the Uganda-DRC border regional dynamics. His ability to remember and list all the clans and their totems in the Semliki valley in Uganda and in the DRC reveals the importance that Batuku pastoralists still attach to their clans. The Batuku are organised in a very systematic clan structure. The clans have totems, they are patrilineal, exogamous, have

patrilocal residence patterns and heads, and various origins. The morals and beliefs of practising pastoralists in the Semliki valley revolve about the clans and their ability to organise their membership through inheritance of property and status, access to land and grazing grounds, marriage and blood brotherhood.

According to my conversation with Elama, the system of managing resources in Batukuland, whether on the Ugandan side of the border or in the DRC, was based on the clan system. Clan membership guaranteed access to pastoral resources. People could cross and find their clan members and places to graze their livestock depending on their ability to identify themselves by citing their clan ancestors. There are six major clans in Batukuland including Ababiito, Abahangu, Abandikasa, Ababysasi, Abagegere, and Abanywagi. These clans have different sub-clan. Both these clans and sub-clans have different functions to their members in their complexities of social and economic relations of the Batuku pastoralists. When one member of the clan lost his herd, either to disease or any other disaster, it was the responsibility of the clan members to give him cows to start with, called *okusumbusa* in Rutuku dialect. It was and is considered a problematic practice for one's clan member to sleep hungry when the other clan members are happy. "omuntu tarara njala abaako n'enganjane beine eby'okurya". This literally translates as "a person cannot sleep on empty stomach when his/her in laws and relatives have plenty of food". Clan leaders and heads of lineages used to enforce clan assistance. Enforcement could include denying the right to marry (*okwaaka*). If a clan member was unhelpful to other clan members in need, he could be denied the right to marry or to get a spouse for his son (s) or his daughter(s). It is, therefore, the clan leaders who make sure that the needy clan members are helped by their respective clan members.

Clans among the Batuku pastoralists also organise blood brotherhood rituals and ensure that rules are enforced and observed to the letter. Blood brotherhood is a practice where two people from different families, lineages, and clans are turned into brothers by symbolically "sharing" each other's blood. In this practice, people who want to be blood brothers are cut on their navels and the blood that flows from cuttings is put on coffee beans and the two persons swallow each other's blood-stained bead. This ritual symbolises a blood connection that exceeds friendship and binds persons together in kin-like ties. Individuals, families, and clans are supposed to observe the conditions of the practice very carefully lest they "kill" it. When it is "killed" one of the blood brothers or their relatives must literally die. To avoid such eventualities the Batuku pastoralists observe all the conditions more seriously than other connections. This is symbolically important in the field of pastoralism because it facilitates the grazing and access to resources. People who are blood-brothers in the context of this ritual, are supposed to help each other, their families and their clan members. It holds people together in addition to family, marriage, clan, and other social bonds of the Batuku society. These practices according to

Elama have been a source of solidarity for Batuku pastoralists, but the changing dynamics of the border, especially the commodification of land and cattle, have rendered them useless and such practices could disappear.

Elama lives with his daughter in the same house and one son who has his own house, wife, and children. This is a very common family setting among the Batuku pastoral community, where elders who can no longer live on their own labour are taken care of by their children and live with them in the same homestead. This kind of situation also reveals the importance of the institution of family as a source of social assurance and support to their members. In the case of the Batuku pastoralists, as is indeed in some other African societies, children are a source of insurance for the old age of parents. This is well captured in the Batuku saying that “Engiri ezaire teribwa ngo”. This is literally translated as “a Warthog that has grown up progenies can never be eaten by a Leopard”. This brings out the importance people attach to childbearing in relation to the vulnerability that comes with old age. Childbearing in this community is based on an anticipation of future eventualities. It is this social fabric of peoples’ lives that has held together the practice of cross-border pastoralism among the Batuku that is currently disappearing.

5.3 The cow as an institution of power, wealth, and social relations

“*Ekyitaita mutuku tikimumaraho nteze*” this is a saying among Batuku pastoralists which literally translates as “... what does not kill the mutuku (singular Person) pastoralist is that which does not deplete (finish off) his cattle.” Drawing from this saying, it is possible to understand these communities in the context of Evans-Prichard’s words that, “pastoralists not only depend on cattle for many of their life’s necessities but also they have a herdsman’s outlook on the world....the only labour in which they delight is care of cattle” (Evans-Prichard, 2008:119). Their life revolves about the cattle and as long as their cattle survive, they survive as well. Therefore, there is no life for them without cattle. In the same vein David Anderson, in his ethnographies among the Maasai of eastern Africa, reminds us of the importance of cattle in the re-telling of the cultural and symbolic significance attributed to livestock in relation to political authority. “History has made Maasai identity; but their identity has also made and remade history, as Maasai constantly redefine their understanding of the past in order to find a more appropriate or acceptable explanation for the present” (Anderson, 1993:125).

Talking to Elama revealed that when drought comes in Butukuland, they always move to wherever they can find water, pasture, and the general wellbeing of their cattle. This involves crossing the Uganda-DRC border and back, depending on grazing resources. A cow is an institution of togetherness/solidarity; a gift to appreciate others; a resource for inheritance; a commodity for selling,

buying, and exchanging to meet other needs; a mechanism for marriage; and a field on which division of labour and social engendering is based. This can be understood in Appadurai's context that things, like persons, have social lives. He explains that "the social life of things is engrossed in their forms, uses, and their trajectories" (Appadurai, 1986:3). To him commodities are things with a particular type of social potential, that they are distinguishable from "products", "objects", "artefacts" and other sorts of things (1986:6). Connecting with Appadurai's argument is James Ferguson's "prestige complex" which he explained as an ever-negotiated tradition tied to the wage earnings of young migrants of Lesotho working in the mines in South Africa (Ferguson, 1985:135-36). According to Ferguson's explanation, the wages that men earned were not stored monetarily in banks but were stored through purchases of livestock which were by tradition, men's property to be used in the socio-economic affairs of the community. For Batuku, wherever cattle can find satisfaction and peace the Batuku pastoralists would find peace and settlement. Cattle are the source of well-being in the Batuku culture. They enable marriage and childbirth as well as social and ritual roles as scholars like Comaroff & Comaroff, (1990) and Ferguson, (1990) have described among the Southern Africa pastoralists. They determine the position of an individual among his community, clan, family, and among peers.

The number of cattle a person owns determines his/her power and influence among the Batuku pastoralists. Being born in a household with a significant herd elevates the individual to a higher position in society irrespective of the person's gender. This position is definitive in that it can determine where to marry or to get married. Cattle not only enable individuals to pay bride wealth, but also determine the good will of the bride's family toward the family of the husband. This good will stems from the need for prestige, the feeling that comes with associating with a well to do family, especially one that can respond in the times of scarcity. This can be the motivation for wanting to marry into a family with a sizable number of cattle among the Batuku pastoralists. These days it determines the possibility of acquiring formal education up to higher levels of the individual's choice. Families with a sizable number of cattle can pay school fees for their children even to university levels. This positions such families and their members higher than other pastoralists, including those who cannot pay for their own children's' school fees because of the insufficient size of their herds. The number of cattle among the Batuku pastoralists is counted in accordance with the number of kraals one owns. A person with many kraals (*amasyo*) is held in high esteem among the Batuku pastoralist community. This is what Ferguson refers to when he says that livestock are perceived as a reserve asset or property of pride rather than as a commercial commodity. Traditional reasons for keeping cattle, for instance bride price, prestige, investment etc make farmers unwilling to sell their surplus, "unproductive" stock. Herdsmen value quantity rather than quality. Unproductive animals

are “retained merely as status symbols”. There is a traditional attitude against selling animals, particularly cattle (Ferguson, 1990:159). He attempts to demonstrate the fact that cattle as property is a special domain subject to cultural rules that structure the range of options for people. In Ferguson’s ethnography in Lesotho, he describes the Sotho the retention of livestock that reflects “a certain structuring of property which makes livestock a special domain not freely interconvertible with cash” (Ferguson, 1994:137).

Considering the above importance attached to cattle and the size of the herds, it is possible to deduce that cattle connect people through marriage in the form of bride wealth. They pay bride wealth, and goodwill that comes with payment is created between families, clans, and individuals involved in such transactions. Through these transactions, families can share in resources that are held in such high esteem. In addition, they help people to get married. Brothers use bride wealth paid for their sisters to pay their own bride wealth and marry and produce children of their own. Of course, there are some changes in the ways bridewealth is paid but most Batuku pastoralists still pay cattle. One of the practices associated with cattle paid for bride wealth is tagging them on their owner’s names (the cows are named according to the payee by the recipient). This keeps the information about the payee in so much circulation that even a visitor who never knew the payee gets to know him/her and understands the relations between the two families. Through these activities, a cow gives power and prestige to the owners and their associates. The power that comes when a parent receives bride wealth for his/her daughter and the prestige that is associated with that feeling is what needs to be understood from the pastoralist’s perspective. That reveals a social process, not just individual transaction. It is expressed at family, clan, and community levels. It is at this point that the cow becomes the vehicle for facilitating relationships in Batuku pastoralist society. Ferguson elaborates on this in his discussion of the “bovine mystique” when he asserts that livestock is never the concern of one household alone. It is embedded in the social relations of the community. Bride wealth payments are one form of this social embeddedness (Ferguson, 1985:657-58).

A cow is inheritable from father to son and sometimes from mother to son. It remains in the line when the father dies and his cattle are shared amongst his children, and especially amongst the sons; when they die, they leave their cattle with their sons as well. When the children are still young, the paternal male relatives or the deceased’s wife takes over the custody of the cattle on the behalf of the children, but the home is named after the eldest son of the deceased. They prohibit the mentioning of the dead persons’ names. They always refer to them in relation to their sons. Like the father of so and so. The cattle must increase in numbers. Children must preside over a growing number of their inheritance or else they dwindle and the children will be despised by relatives, friends and the community at large for “eating the cows” (as it is referred to among the Batuku pastoralists) that their father left for their

inheritance, leaving them unable to pass them on to their own children. This contempt is intended to protect and preserve the cow as a resource and valorise its importance in the social life of Batuku pastoralists. This community contempt and ridicule can well be compared with the one-way barrier that Ferguson describes among the Basotho community. Here livestock can only be bought but not sold for cash and household necessities (Ferguson, 1990:139). Cattle, in much the same way as capital, serve both as standards of value and as a means of accumulating and transforming it into other kinds of wealth in the political economy at large. Cattle as a focus of everyday activity are the epitome of social and symbolic capital, the capital that links material economy of things to a moral economy of persons and so constructs a total economy of signs and practices (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1990).

Children also share their father's cattle as a way of continuing his patriarchal line. Girl children are typically not given the opportunity to inherit their fathers' property since they get married to other clans and therefore, should not take the property to their husbands' clans. The essence here is keeping the resources within the family and the clan. While boys inherit their fathers' cows within their homes, girls are expected to get married and what they are supposed to inherit from their fathers is given to them on the day they are given to their husbands. The cow is one of the first gifts that reach the matrimonial home of a girl. That is called *ensagarrano* among the Batuku pastoralists. The cow that the father of the bride sends to the groom's home symbolises his contribution to the well-being of the couple. The exclusion of women from the world of cattle among the Batuku needs to be elaborated here. Women are forbidden from milking and all other physical activities that relate to cattle. Their relationship with cattle is limited to care of the milk and hygiene of milking utensils. It is because of this exclusion and patrilocal residence patterns that women are not allowed to inherit their fathers' cattle among the Batuku pastoralists. Ferguson writes about how Basotho women in Lesotho ideologically assault and denounce these ideas as expressions of old-fashioned notions of traditional male pride in livestock. According to Ferguson women challenge the "cattle prestige complex" and try to discourage their husbands from buying what they regard as useless animals with "household money" (Ferguson, 1990; 1985).

The capacity of the cattle to carry social identity, both individual and collective, is most vividly illustrated in two sets of conventional practices. The first involves the "cattle linkage" of siblings and bridewealth and the second concerns inheritance, which places males in the social field. The devolution of property is a gradual process, cattle being passed on to children, and distributed among houses, throughout the lifetime of their father.

The cattle are categorised according to the way they were acquired by their owners in the Batuku community. These categories include genealogical cattle; Bridewealth cattle; and market/cash cattle. This categorisation shows that cattle are an embodiment of cultural meaning and their capacity to

reproduce a total social system that links processes of production and exchange. They are the “prime media for the creation and representation of value in the material economy of persons and moral economy of things” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1990:204). Genealogical (heirloom) cattle include the cattle that have been in the home for many generations. They have been inherited from fathers to sons for a long period. They are perceived as the cattle that run within the family line. These cattle are more prestigious and are highly respected and referred to as “*ente enzumu*”, implying that they belong to the ancestral spirits which give them a higher value than other categories of cattle, especially higher than the market/cash cattle. With this category of cattle, the owner establishes contact with the ghosts and spirits of his ancestors. The implication for such cattle and naming them after ancestors is to keep the descendants connected to each other and socially supportive of one another. Evans-Prichard’s studies among the Nuer clearly reveal that “if one is able to obtain the history of each cow in a kraal, one obtains at the same time not only an account of all the kinship lines and affinities of the owners but also of all their mystical connexions” (Evans-Prichard, 2008: 120). They have ancestral blessings to multiply faster than other categories of cattle. On the other hand, market or cash cattle are those that the individuals did not inherit from their forefathers, but just bought from the market with cash. Or someone’s father bought them, and the son inherited them. These cattle are perceived to be less entrenched in the community’s ethos and can easily be depleted because they lack the ancestral connection and blessings. They are often believed to be dispensable. The way they were acquired, could be the way they could go. These “cows of the money” generally increase in numbers because of the increase in the numbers of people in salaried employment. Most absent cattle-owners own this category of cows. They use their salaries to buy land and later cattle and then hire people to take care of cows on their behalf.

The other category of cattle is the bridewealth cattle. These are cattle that have accrued to the family through bride wealth payments. They are a product of the daughters’ marriages and their well-being and usefulness depends on the stability and durability of the marriage. These kinds of cattle are highly regarded by the community in that if the marriages are, broken repayment (*okuzumurra*) is required. So, their sustainability depends on the sustainability of the daughters’ marriages and the good relationships they create with their in-laws. The who children are born in these marriages also strengthen the cattle of bridewealth more in the family ethos and in the long-run they become ancestral cattle. This means that in cases where the bride does not bear children and she is divorced her parents, then must return bridewealth cattle to their owners as well. But when children are born and cattle are used for their bridewealth, they are consequently entrenched into the family and lineage’s values, hence becoming ancestral cattle. The three categories of cattle offer distinct levels of prestige to their owner in the eyes of the community. However, these have associated reciprocal obligations; there are

benefits that accrue to the husbands' families that are associated with bridewealth cattle. Every first born in the marriage is entitled to cows from their maternal side of the parents and this is the bride wealth that was paid by their fathers. This makes the bridewealth cattle less esteemed among the Batuku than the genealogical cattle. Using the words of my male 53 years old participant:

Our cattle here are differentiated...the [type of cattle] a person owns grants him some level of prestige among his associates and community members.... For instance, inherited cattle are more esteemed than those that are bought with money. When an individual owns cattle that stretch as far back as the line of his great grandfather, it is something to be appreciated within the family, the lineage, the clan, and the community has to acknowledge it”.

This kind of categorisation is fundamental in the conservation of cattle in the lineage and family lines of the Batuku pastoralists. It is enculturated within the values and beliefs that are passed on to children by the parents. It is for this reason that children who deplete their fathers' inherited cattle are ridiculed by the community. These different categories of cattle, and the levels of prestige their owners receive from their community, reveal the position the cattle hold in the social life of the Batuku pastoralists. Cattle hold the same position in the cultural topography of wealth among the Batuku pastoralists. When cattle are compared with other types of animals such as goats and sheep, cattle are ranked higher, as I will explain in the following section. One of the reasons the cow is given this special position in terms of the Batuku cultural topography of wealth is the benefits that people get from it. The cow provides milk to the family all the time. It gives blood, which is a reliable food for the Batuku in drought periods. It should be noted that the Batuku pastoralists do not milk or draw blood for food from either goats or sheep, as they do to cattle. They eat goats' meat but not sheep. They sell these animals and use their skins for sitting on in their houses.

5.4 The Batuku cultural topography of wealth

In this section I analyse the domain of wealth among the Batuku pastoralists. As James Ferguson points out, this domain remains uncaptured in a linear-continuum model of wealth where a scale is used to measure the amount. He contends that “the cultural, legal, and moral paths governing economic exchanges should be as expressed as wealth that is different in kind, and not only in amount” (Ferguson, 1992:68). Ferguson advocates for an economic ranking by wealth that must go hand in hand with the analysis of commodity paths and the structure of property. Among the Batuku, cattle are on top of every other domain of wealth. They are the wealth of men, and they give prestige to those who own them. The rich among the Batuku pastoralists can only be those who have many head of cattle. *Omuguuda* (the well-off) is the man who owns big herds of cattle and has given most of his friends, relatives, neighbours, in-laws, and associates cattle loans (*empaano*). Living among the Batuku pastoralists I easily learned to identify the man owning many head of cattle. He moves with a special stick and wears a flat hat that is different to other kinds of hats and most of the time he

does not remove it, even when he is talking to other people. Those who own big herds of goats and sheep or chickens cannot even speak about it publicly. Table 1 below shows the hierarchy of the wealth domain; their roles in the community; and those entitled to them.

In the table below, I show how the Batuku pastoralists rank their wealth from the highest to the lowest.

Type of Wealth	Role to the people	Who owns it
Cattle	Gives milk, blood, bride wealth, can be lent to others, it can be given as a gift, sold, eaten as meat, hide and skin are used in houses	People with power, elders (both men and women), children who have inherited them from their fathers
Goats	Slaughtered for meat, sold for money, given as gifts to children and women as well as friends who are not occupationally pastoralists	Women own them as the source of income, children who get them as gifts, and any other person
Sheep	Sold for money and ritual purposes	Women, children and hired herds men who own them as a way of saving their money which they earn from their job
Chicken	Eggs, eaten as food by men most times and sold for money, they also tell the time	Children, women, and hired herds men
Land	Contains grazing and water resources	Community, clans, and the state

This table is drawn from the conversation I had with Elema and other participants. From those conversations and my own observations during fieldwork, it was revealed that the cattle are the greatest possession of the Batuku. It holds the highest position in the hierarchy of wealth. It is respected, protected, and preserved for posterity. Whereas other animals are reared, the positions they are given, as the table above shows, are not comparable to that of cattle. Notice that the value of land in this region has moved higher due to the state's policy of privatisation and liberalisation of the economy. Perhaps this is in the Albertine Graben where oil and petroleum resources are being exploited and land has increased greatly in value. As I shall show in the following sections, land is

now more valued than cattle. People apparently sell cattle to buy land, which had never been witnessed in Batukuland before.

Jean and John Comaroff (1990) write about cattle as a measure of value for all other commodities. “They are a currency and capital simultaneously; they have the unusual ability to make commensurable different forms of value and convert one form into another. It is this capacity to equate and transform, to give worth and meaning that quite literally animates cattle over other objects” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1990:195). They draw on Marx’s notion of commodity fetishism to understand the strange attributes of cattle as objects, which seem to have a logic all their own, an ability to do things, to forge relations and to increase on their own accord without ever disclosing the forces that fabricate them. Appadurai’s definition of the commodity as an “object in motion” seeks to capture the “social life of cattle” primarily in exchange with other objects (Appadurai, 1986:3). This clearly shows what James Ferguson means when he takes property not as a relation between people and things but a relation between people concerning things and, therefore, a social relation that is always structured (Ferguson, 1990). Among the Batuku pastoralists, the valorisation of livestock is differentiated, with cattle at the top of property domain, and the rules to valorise them continue to be maintained and recreated amidst contesting forces including urbanisation, land capitalisation, elitism, and the changing dynamics of the border area.

The Batuku pastoralists are said to be connected to each other by either “blood” or marriage. A person is related to other persons by blood ties from his father’s and mother’s sides. These connections are symbolised and articulated through cattle. Marriage connects people through payments of bride wealth called *Omukaaga*. It is the mandate of the family head (father) to find a wife for his son (s) by ensuring that there are cattle to pay for bride wealth. There are many other obligations that clans, lineages and families have over raising of children and organising the whole society. During the marriage ceremony, people give the boy many cattle; his uncles from both maternal and paternal sides give him cattle, as well as his friends, brothers, clan relatives, and in-laws. It is said that after marrying, the boy is expected to move with cattle to wherever there is fresh pasture and water, including crossing the border to Uganda or the DRC according to the changes in the seasons. The daily life and the setting of the Batuku pastoralists revolves about the cow and its milk, meat, blood and the prestige it gives to their owner. They take the cow and milk as important aspects of their lives and culture; their work, relationships, systems and structural organisation, clan, marriage, reciprocity and mutual assistance interactions hinge on cattle.

The cow is the dearest possession of the Batuku pastoralists, and they gladly move across borders and rivers for them to survive. Most of the men’s activities concern cattle. The organisation of the Batuku

homestead at times seems to be more focused on the welfare of their herds than the people themselves. They set up fences for kraals in such a way that their cattle must be protected first. The work and personal duties toward the community and within the household are well elaborated in accordance with the livestock and their production systems as well as their products. Men's everyday work is related to the looking after and taking care of the livestock while women's work concerns looking after and caring for the milk and its utensils; that is, women are concerned with preparing for milking sessions in terms of cleanliness and hygiene as well as the cleanliness of ghee. Ghee is a milk product that is obtained after churning milk in gourds and later well sieved. That sold substance is what is ghee or can be called butter. Peoples' names and conversational aspects relate to and are connected to cattle. Songs and singing instruments and the whole entertainment complex clearly articulate their love for cattle. Their dancing symbolises the shapes of their cattle's horns and how cattle move, live and all other aspects of their wellbeing.

The intra- and inter-household relations and conflicts and disputes in the region are caused and resolved by cattle. Household and community alliances are woven together by the cattle and the kinship system is built around cattle exchange and reciprocity. Both paternal and maternal uncles relate to their nieces and nephews by giving them cattle as soon as they are born. On marriage, a cow should be the first thing to reach the groom's home before the bride arrives. They use the cow for marriage, spiritual ceremonies, friendship creation (*omukago*), enthroning a chief, installing an heir (*okugweta*), and many other rituals. The milk is called *enjeru* (it is white) and it is believed to whiten everything in its way of cleansing. They use it to cleanse people in marriage ceremonies, giveaways (when girls are given away to their prospective husbands and their families), blood brotherhood, forgiveness and reconciliation processes, get-together ceremonies, hospitality, honour, and appreciation. Milk has its own utensils which are not to be used for any other purposes. *Emindi* (milk pots) are utensils for milking, drinking milk, and keeping milk for drinking during the day and for making yoghurt as well as for churning the next morning to make ghee. They clean the milk pots with clean water and dry and smoke them with spiced smoke to give them a good scent. This spicing is done every evening and morning before milking activity is started. As noted above, all this work is reserved for women and girls. Generally, cattle remain a shared property of pride, and livestock exchanges are managed by non-commercial, traditional means. "As social practices disperse from local contexts, they become malleable, flexible, and are liable to change and redefinition by those eager to engage in new or emerging behavioural options as well as by those invested in conserving ideals and behaviour they see as respectable or advantageous" (Turkon, 2003:148). That makes such institutional structures grounds for conflict over the nature of property and associated behaviours. This malleability of identity, social mobility and latitude for action have helped to transform social

capital of all forms into tactical assets that serve to separate and differentiate individuals rather than integrate them with a collectivity. This brings aspects of clientage and influences how people relate to material things and plays a vital role in forming their social identity. The status of bovines has been transforming from highly desirable social capital in a reciprocal economy to assets in a market economy in which grazing land is in short supply, social capital is diminishing in significance, and stock theft and raiding are rampant (Turkon, *ibid.*). The precarious nature of herding as a livelihood and changes brought to Batuku at the Uganda-DRC border can well be understood in Turkon's perspective. In this region, apparently, **people conduct** their affairs in more than one social sphere, which has made cattle take on the qualities of assets in a capitalistic sense, social goods, and fetish possessions among the Batuku cross-border pastoralists. But at the moment my participant Chale referred to them as "cattle that eat money" because the other spheres have been overshadowed by the economics of living at this changing border.

Drawing on John and Jean Comaroff (1992), it would seem that "cattle in this area continue to function as ritual symbols of status and prestige, but the ability to manipulate relationships through cattle is becoming an idealised feature of a bygone era" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1992:148). The ability to live in a world in which one's actions are judged in terms defined by a community of neighbours has been largely overtaken by an environment in which everything and every kind of person has the potential of transforming into, or being superseded by, something or someone deemed more relevant. Jimo, Pati, and Jessica's stories where boda-boda motorcycle transportation business, trading in carcasses of cattle, and selling foods and beverages in livestock markets respectively reveal that people have transformed their perceptions about cattle as assets. The Comaroffs suggest that because people bound to each other interact in institutionalised ways, capitalist modernisation does not simply sweep away and take over everything. Nor does capitalism necessarily add a distinct sphere to compete with indigenous ways of life. Rather, capitalist ideologies imbue indigenous institutions with new options, rules, and values which, while having the potential to liberate individuals from the structures of ascribed status and community responsibility, nonetheless restrict what they can meaningfully pursue, for instance, in relation to individual property rights vis-à-vis property as a shared resource. In these modernising settings, however, the ability to predicate status on reciprocal interaction and community support is diminished or lost to notions of status grounded in occupation, income, and individual material possessions. Such processes have been salient in transforming conceptions of property and the institutions associated with property distribution. Herd size has been found to be a useful surrogate of wealth. The advantages of wealth on herding strategies have been much debated by researchers. Wealth differentials among pastoral households are served and facilitated by both narrow self-interest and high interdependence between households that are not

necessarily equal in wealth. Wealth translates to power and, as a result, the wealthy may find it advantageous to coerce others into practices that suit the wealthy (such as joint herding practices). Wealthier households have more people living in their homesteads and are likely to benefit from the cheap labour provided by poorer households (Butt, 2011).

5.5 *The cow and community*

“Ente, n’abantu, n’obuntu” cow, people and personhood.

As James Ferguson writes in the context of Lesotho, “the cow is never the concern of one household alone” - so it is among the Batuku (Ferguson, 1990:152). Cattle are the most socially embedded property in the Batuku community. Cattle exchanges through bridewealth payments, loans, and lending are one form of this embeddedness, and nearly every household is in this way linked to other households through cattle exchanges.

Livestock loans (*empaano*) take place when herders give cattle to friends, relatives and in-laws and neighbours on a long-term basis. The recipient is expected to care for the cow and return one of its progeny in the near future to the giver either on demand (*okwenza*) or at his wish. These loans, since they do not include interest, are based on trust and intimate social relations. Strangers do not qualify to enter this exchange. They must first create relations with those that they would like to enter these exchanges with. The need to enter into such relations arises from desire, loss of cows due to drought, disease, or other calamities. The one in need always approaches the person he/she hope to loan him a cow who often is a relative, a friend, an in-law and “asks for a cow”. This is a very special moment and must be handled with utmost responsibility. Approaching someone for a cow starts with giving gifts to the prospective giver by the intending recipient. These gifts are in form of alcohol, sugar, soft drinks that are carried by the person “asking for a cow”. These gifts create obligations for each of the persons involved in the cow loaning activity. The obligation to receive comes with the obligation to give and repay. Cow loans come with relations that are built on other relationships that have been created for that purpose or were already in existence before the desire to ask for a cow loan. In this form of exchange the receiver is the client, and the giver is the patron. However, this patron-client relation is more of obligations and trust than of power and subordination. *Empaano* (cow loan), the relations generated by livestock lender/borrower, can also be described as patron/client, but it is something that goes beyond the two personalities and extends to families, clans and the whole community at large. Livestock is a social form of wealth, which participates in the economic life of the community in a way that more “personal forms” of wealth such as money do not.

There is also livestock “lending for custody” (*okuhereeka*): This is where herders give cows to friends, relatives, in laws, and neighbours for a specified period. This is mostly done due to lack of

enough pasture or water at their owner's place or lack of a good herder to care for the animals, or because the owner did not have the time to take care of them. This exchange is initiated by the owner of the cattle. The recipient is sought by the animal owner. When the recipient accepts, then he/she must take care of the stock and return them to their rightful owner on demand, or when the owner has put in place all that was lacking when he/she requested another person to take custody of his cattle. In this exchange the custody giver receives the use of the animals and all the proceeds and profits arising from them and usually some of the off springs of those animals. This is based on the good relations the owner created with the recipient. It is also a relationship that is built on earlier relations. This is a give and take kind of exchange and can be described as one that is characterised by a balanced reciprocity of all exchanges in the cattle economy of Batuku pastoralists. With *Okuhereeka* (livestock lending for custody) a man with a large herd may place some of his animals with friends, relatives, and neighbours on a temporary basis, and even smaller herders are usually enmeshed in networks of reciprocal favours, patronage, and dependence. Thus, although livestock is legally the property of single household, it is a kind of property to which many dependents, and in fact the entire community may be said to have some sort of claim.

Lending cows for milk (*okuha amata*) takes place where lactating cows are given to relatives, friends, in-laws and neighbours for the purpose of milking them to meet their own milk needs in their households. This is initiated by the household in need of milk that has enough grazing space but have insufficient cows to milk. The household head approaches one of their relatives, friends, in-laws, or neighbours and requests lactating cows to support his family with milk. If the request is granted cows are taken to the household of the person that requested them. The recipient looks after the animals and gets milk from them and returns them to the rightful owner on demand or after attaining milking cows. In this case, the recipient does not take any of the animals or their offspring. In this exchange situation, livestock owners can take advantage of distant pastures to relieve themselves of management responsibilities and establish relations of clientalism with the recipient of the loaned animals. In this exchange there is a power imbalance and patron-client relations are established whereby the owner of a large herd can become a "big man". This is achieved through "patron-client relationships established by the ostentatious display of animal wealth" (Ferguson, 1990:153). A man with cattle may also establish himself in the community by helping others with livestock for sacrifice in rituals and ceremonies and by providing access to milk. Livestock are always embedded in these relations of dependence, and whenever one finds an animal performing an economic task, one will usually find that it is performing a social task as well. In all these social tasks that involve livestock, the number of animals is of more importance than their "productivity" in the narrow economic sense.

A man who is wealthy in livestock, known as *omuguuda* (*abaguuda* plural) among the Batuku, regards his herd as a resource which contains both social and economic benefits. Livestock are nearly always involved in relations of patronage and a man with many animals is for this reason greatly respected; he is a man “who can help the people”. The respect does not merely come from wealth, but the sociality of the wealth which “belongs” in some sense to the whole community. So, cattle can also be seen as a form of social property or social wealth. They do not simply embody economic and commodity value. Most times neighbours, relatives, friends and in-laws with economic challenges visit the home of the cattle wealth man (*omuguuda*) and register their various challenges. He gives them money, bulls, oxen, cows or even herding jobs in one of his kraals to look after his cattle and get paid. This accords power and influence over other members of the community. This kind of power is more relevant in the current situation because such a person is called to buy land by the smallholders and can easily influence the land board official to process his land titles without verifying whether the land, they are processing belongs to him.

To summarise what the exchanges mean among the Batuku pastoralists I refer to the words of Best, my 44 years female participant: “Akuuha ente aba akuhaire obwomeezi; aba akuhaire amata; aba akuhaire omukazi; sente; n’omukaago”. This is to literally say that one who lends a cow to another person gives that person life in the form of milk, a wife, money, and relations. Therefore, the cow influences relations and builds power blocks and influence among the Batuku pastoralists. It is because livestock is a social and shared domain of wealth that borrowers and debtors may be expected to promote the “cattle prestige complex” that allows the “big man” to be respected (Ferguson, 1990). Likewise, these dependents appear to have no interest in valorising the accumulation of individualistic forms of wealth such as money and consumer goods. Tradition is never a residue of the past, but it is created, re-created and negotiated, fought for, and challenged. If cultural rules governing livestock keeping persist, it is because they are made to persist; continuity as much as change must be created and fought for. These rules may be “traditional”, and they may be resistant to change, but they are not inert, they are perpetually challenged and there is always something at stake.

“Ente eta ababi n’aharungi; ente ehonderwa ababi n’aharungi; Ruteerana enganda, amahanga n’ebirwa” (“the cow puts its owner in a good and bad place; the cow is followed in good and awkward situations; it is the one that unites the clans, nations and territories”). This summarises the relations people have with each other through cattle. The place of cattle in Africa is especially interesting in this respect. Livestock are first and foremost metaphors of social community, signifiers of the human condition. Evans-Pritchard (2008:120 [1940]) saw that cattle provide the meeting ground of ecology and symbolic value and that their prominence in indigenous consciousness and social life went well beyond the purely utilitarian. Not only were social identities and relationships represented by means

of beasts (1940: 18, 89), in the “bovine idiom” and “cattle clock” of the Nuer (1940: 19, 101) there is a bridge between material conditions and collective meaning, between practical activity and its cultural construction.

5.6 *The cow and the border*

The Uganda-DRC border is crossed by people, animals and commodities. However, cattle are special on this border. They cross as a commodity to be sold like other commodities; these are animals that are taken to the livestock markets along this borderline. But as the Batuku say, the cow knows no boundaries/borders because to cattle wherever they sniff fresh pasture and water they move to access them. The Batuku pastoralists along this borderline move with their cattle to the DRC in the seasons of drought, but other animals like goats and sheep are not given the same care in the drought seasons as that of cattle. Migrations across this border during the dry season are mostly about cattle movements. Cattle have the capacity to follow the fresh resources available in other territories for their own survival. This means livestock practices are inextricably bound up with border crossing systems and institutions. Livestock is a type of property that is movable even across borders and boundaries. Livestock sniff fresh pasture and water and even if these resources are across the border, they will never mind the crossing. Livestock is a type of property set apart from ordinary simple commodities by cultural rules which establish a “one-way barrier” between livestock and money as well as by a “cattle prestige complex” centring on the domain of property so defined. What social forces account for the maintaining of property and its associated prestige complex?

Conversing with Elama, it was revealed that there are changes in the way cattle are perceived these days in Batukuland; the need to educate children is to him draining the number of cattle in people’s households. He sees his sons selling most of their cattle to take children to school. He said that the need to acquire formal education has increased today as opposed to the past periods when there was no Mutuku (singular Person) with a university degree. These days many Batuku have graduated from different universities in Uganda. This has brought about a group of Batuku who have salaried employment in different companies and from different parts of Uganda; it is something new, making people leave their occupation of cattle keeping and causing the emergence of a group that one can call “absentee herders”. This group hires herders to take care of their livestock while they live far away in urban centres where they have salaried jobs and families. This new breed of herders has come with new kinds of houses that are different from the peculiar house to Batukuland. They now use cement, bricks, and iron sheets. The perception this group has of cattle is totally different from that of ordinary Batuku pastoralists. This group can easily sell their cattle without considering the opinion

of their families, neighbours, and the community at large. This is something that is not common to an ordinary pastoralist in Batukuland.

According to Elama, there used to be enough land for everyone, and they never fought over land whether in Uganda or in the DRC. He further claimed that the Semliki River is their provider and tormenter; it provides water in the drought seasons and floods the area when it rains. Sometimes Rwebisengo floods even when it has not received any rainfall. Rain can fall in other areas like Mt Rwenzori, in the hilly areas of the DRC, or in the area of Bwamba, and water collects in the Semliki and later floods the whole of the Semliki valley, including Rwebisengo. This river is also a boundary on which citizenship and difference are determined. It is by crossing this river that one ceases to a citizen of either Uganda or the DRC. Crossing this river also determines one's feeling of security or insecurity. These days, with the intensification of violence in the DRC, crossing Semliki has come to be perceived by Batuku Pastoralists as risking the loss of life and livelihood at the same time. It is this threat that has turned the once very porous border to hard one. This abrupt change has brought high levels of uncertainty regarding the pastoral activities of Batuku along this border region.

The change in technology, including mobile telephones, has, according to Elama, changed everyone's lifestyles; young people will even sell a cow to buy a telephone handset. Elama told me that there are many demands nowadays that "eat up" the number of animals compared to earlier times. He acknowledges the ways in which the technologies have revolutionised life by citing how easily he communicates with his sons who live in Fort Portal town, and his young brothers who live in Bunia in the DRC. He said that he used to go to Bunia to see his brothers and they would also come to see him at his home in Makondo village. However, these days they call him and talk through his daughter's telephone. But he insists that all these demands are contributing to "the eating of the cattle" (*okurya ente*). Whereas these changes would seem to imply progress, they also reveal the dramatic commodification of everyday life, cattle and land. This commodification of pastoral life demands that to access a service or goods, one must pay for it. It is this scenario that is driving the practice of pastoralism down the hard road of extinction along this border. As Stephen Gudeman notes, "the transformation of any society should be revealed by the changing relations of persons to objects within it" (Gudeman, 2001:11). The ownership of cattle as social possession is not simply collective; cattle are "total phenomena that contain all "the threads of which the social fabric is woven", as in the centrality of cattle in ritual and bridewealth, of their celebration in idiom and song, and of their salience as political currency" (Evans-Pritchard, 2008:120 [1940]).

Livestock are a man's possession and most of the cultural rules protect that status. Men are the structural head of the household. It may be stated that economic dependence of women on men is a sign not of a general and essential female passivity, but of structural constraints on the economic

freedom of women. Cattle are the essence of dependability and are largely self-reproducing and mobile in the face of drought and danger. They permit the stable storage, exchange, and seemingly spontaneous growth of wealth and dung, the substance used to make durable surfaces that set off domestic space from its surroundings. Their hides and bones furnish the material from which the most lasting personal possessions are made. With the changes of border dynamics, the Batuku pastoralists' ability to adapt without cattle and livestock movement is difficult, especially with the frequent occurrence of droughts and floods. The converse of adaptation is vulnerability, which can be defined as the degree to which a system, or some part of a social system, is likely to experience harm due to exposure to some perturbation. The hardening of the border is the perturbation that causes the loss of capacity of pastoralists to adapt to changing conditions.

5.7 Border, cattle marketing, and lords profiteering

There are four livestock markets at the Uganda-DRC border: these are Rwebisengo, Nyakasenyi, Kyabukunguru markets, which are on the Ugandan side of the border, and Burasa market on the DRC side. All of these markets sell livestock and other consumer commodities. In the period I stayed in Rwebisengo, all these markets were operating at least every two weeks on a rotational basis. I managed to be in all the three markets on the Ugandan side of the border. In all of these markets cattle buyers come from Bunia in the DRC, Bundibugyo, Kasese, Fort Portal, and from the whole of Ntoroko district. These markets are extremely competitive, and no livestock goes unsold. Buyers are always available and livestock sellers do not spend much time selling what they brought to the market. Ferguson views the market as the place where culture and power graft themselves as externalities; it is a social institution constituted by social forces (Ferguson, 1990:142). Considering livestock and cash, Ferguson looks at the social and cultural rules that restrict selling, thereby revealing the barrier between livestock and cash. Livestock are not freely convertible to cash (i.e., livestock and cash are not freely convertible). According to Ferguson (1990:142), "cash can always be converted into cattle through purchasing cattle, but cattle cannot be converted into cash through sales except under certain conditions, usually defined as a serious need for money which cannot be raised any other way". Livestock is not primarily used to generate income, but to store it. Once resources are "stored" in the form of livestock, they cannot be liberated at will, but only under circumstances at which relate to cultural rules. In this region the powers that are grafted in the cattle marketing dynamics go beyond the conception of the ordinary pastoralist to include political players, powerful business people, security apparatus, and warlords.

On market day pastoralists wake up early to take their animals to the market. They separate those to sell from other animals in the kraals and start driving them. This early rising is prompted by the

competition to sell since buyers arrive early and leave early, especially those from Bunia. On the morning of market day the roads leading to the market are full of people herding all sorts of animals but the most prominent are the cattle; other small stocks are transported on either motorcycles or in cars. I remember boarding a taxi that had goats at the back seat and people could not complain. The cattle's lowing is one of the sounds that would wake me up early in the morning of the market day as they moved through the trading centre of Rwebisengo. The areas for selling small stock like goats and sheep are separated from that where cattle are sold. The market area is well constructed with barbed wire and timber fencing so that an animal comes out only when the time comes to allow it to do so. There are two gates, the entrance and the exit and both are manned by police and other heavily built men holding receipt books and sticks in their hands so that as the cow enters, the owner (seller) must present a letter of the chairperson LCI (Local Council one) and pay market dues of ten thousand Shillings. At the exit gate the buyer must also present the security personnel with a receipt he/she acquired from the owner of the cow and pay ten thousand shillings and get a permit to transport or move the beast to wherever he/she wants. This strict observance of the rules is caused by the district administration as a way of collecting taxes to run its operations.

I was told that money that is collected is for the district local government administration, which gives out the tender to manage the markets to private individuals who pay to the district in advance through bidding to the district tender board. So, the highest bidder takes the management of the markets. The heavily built men and the security personnel are the employees of the individual who tendered for the market and in most cases the sellers and buyers do not know the person behind the fees collection. They never participate in the selection of the person during the bidding process. Thus, there is an invisible personality in the collection of the market dues, and in most cases the individual is not a buyer or seller. Sometimes the person could be a strong businessman from a bigger town or even from across the border in the DRC. They say that she/he could even be one who contributed much money to the district politicians during their canvassing of votes and the politicians rewarded them with the tenders of the cattle markets. This reveals a certain level of connivance between the politicians and the entrepreneurs that provides one level of profiteering from the local pastoralists. This is also one level of capitalistic interplay of interests and interested parties. When these interests and interested parties clash it is the ordinary pastoralist that is affected negatively.

The buyers come from various parts of the region. Some come from Bunia town in the DRC and it is said that they come with US Dollars since in the DRC it is quite possible to access those Dollars. They buy cattle at very exorbitant prices; most of them could be warlords in the region who have big businesses in Bunia town in the DRC or other towns, including Kasese, Bundibugyo, and Fort Portal in Uganda. Since the Dollar fetches a lot of Ugandan Shillings, they bring it from the DRC and

exchange it in Uganda and buy many cattle from sellers in the markets. One could be tempted to think that is good for the local pastoralist, but there are brokers who know and are connected to these businessmen who cut off the contact between those traders and ordinary pastoralists by communicating with traders early and hurrying to the market early to buy minimally from the sellers and later sell exorbitantly to the DRC businessmen. These are middlemen and women who create a racket to profit by informing each other on the availability of the Bunia buyers. This brokering group forms another level of profiteering from pastoralism at the border at the expense of pastoralists. Most of these businesspeople from the DRC come to buy mature cows, bulls, and oxen. They do not buy young ones.

There are also businessmen who buy relatively young bulls to slaughter in the towns that neighbour Rwebisengo like Fort Portal, Bundibugyo, Karurugutu, Kibuku, and other small towns in the region. There are also those who buy the youngest bulls in the market to keep and castrate to raise them into big oxen (which they term as “growing their money in the oxen”) or “moving savings banks” that will fetch them a lot of money later in the future. These people have large private lands and are very calculative. These are speculators who have private land in their possession and have fenced it off. They are most times unaffected by drought because they look ahead and sell off their oxen when they guess that there is going to be a scarcity of water and pasture in a certain period. They also have the capacity to buy water in big tanks to water their herds at home. I saw some pastoralists sell off their young bulls including female calves in the market to buy maize and maize meal for their families. My host has many oxen among his herds. Some are very old because he does not have as much expense as those of the ordinary pastoralists whose life rotates around cattle. He doesn't sell them until they have reached the required size and can fetch him more money. He told me that his former herdsman manager stole ten of his oxen and sold them to traders from Bunia and ran away with over fifteen million Uganda shillings. These oxen had grown, and he had “kept” his money in them so to speak. This is another level of exploitation of pastoralists. If ordinary pastoralists had other ways of survival, they could also allow their bulls to grow and become big oxen to fetch them much more money in future. It is a level where systems of oneness and dependence are weakened by capitalistic struggles and manoeuvres so that the urge for profit is a driving force in the community that once was dependent on one another.

There are also taxes levied at border points. This is more at Kasenyi border point where the immigration and customs union operate. People tend to avoid these taxes especially those levied on moving with livestock across this border point. They often use border crossing points where immigration and customs departments are absent. I attended a meeting that was held at Rwebisengo council hall and attended by district leaders, security agencies, immigration department, customs

department, and the community. In attendance were the Rwebisengo immigration office, chairperson Ntoroko district, district Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), District Police Commander (DPC), District Internal Security Officer (DISO), Military officers, the local council officials, sub-county chairperson, sub-county chief, and the Rwebisengo community members. I came to understand that people rejected the proposal to open immigration and customs union offices at Budiba border crossing point. It was a border point that was initially unknown to those officials, and people crossed and still cross to the DRC and back without any official checks. However, this border crossing point like many others is now manned by the military (Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF)) that has been deployed there due to the intensification of conflict in the DRC.

The meeting was intended to sensitise the community and the sub-county council leaders on the importance of opening customs and immigrations offices at Budiba border point, which people through their leaders had on many occasions protested and rejected outright. Even the district leaders did not want the customs office to be opened at that border point. The district chairperson said that “the immigration officers had no intentions to help people but just to collect money for their corrupt ends. He revealed that people had no problem with crossing that border point, but the immigration department wants to extend their greed to that border point as well”. These were the same actions of greed as at Kasenyi border point according to residents of Rwebisengo. People are yet to benefit from the customs union offices at Kasenyi border point. Community members accused these immigration and customs departments of having aimed at extorting money from them and most of the time they do not see any services. The people on the other hand rejected the customs officers’ opinion citing the need to harass them as they cross the border going to the market in the DRC and impose taxes on the goods that they take to the DRC or buy from the DRC, including crossing their livestock for grazing or for selling in the DRC market of Burasa. These opinions of the community prompted the immigration officers to explain that their intention was not for finance but to help people get documents to cross to the DRC and to Uganda. They further noted that they need to ensure that there is security by knowing who enters Uganda from the DRC and who leaves Uganda to the DRC. There is a need to check the rate of cattle raiding at this border point. To these officials the customs office would help to increase the vigilance together with the security agencies and protect the people whose cattle are stolen and crossed to the DRC through that unmanned border point. What I observed from these exchanges between government officials and border residents could be interpreted in the context of struggles against capitalistic profiteering that has dogged the region now.

The security agencies were forwarding the need for order to know who goes in and out of the border; when, to where, and why. They also cited the cattle raiding that takes place at that border point. They said that at this border point thieves cross with cattle any time and this has led to an increase in cattle

theft in the area. Budiba border point is on the Semliki River. It has no bridge and crossing is by use of canoes that are operated by the local people. Those who cross with animals like cattle swim and cross and I saw many of these people swim with their oxen as they took them to Burasa livestock market in the DRC. Canoes are operated by charging two thousand Ugandan shillings, but those who cross with animals by swimming do not pay anything and many cattle crossed at this border point on market day. If they were to be taxed, a lot of money would be collected. This is what the central government officials are looking forward to collecting if they were allowed to operate this border point. There are military officials at this border point and as the chairperson of the district was asking; how can thieves cross with animals when these security personnel are there at the border. They are supposed to ask for the permits that allow those people to cross with cattle.

5.8 Land accessibility in the changing regional dynamics

Until the advent of colonialism, access to land was determined by affiliation to a particular ethnic group. This access was governed by customary practices of the group, which varied from one ethnic group to the other. These practices depended on individual, family, and clan. The right to access and of land was not limited to arable land but also to forests, swamps, bushes, waterways, travel routes, and grazing lands. This system guaranteed access to land by everyone without necessarily allowing for individual ownership. As noted by Kisamba-Mugerwa (2001) the above arrangement worked very well in a situation of social hegemony and cultural consensus, which was common in most communities in pre-colonial Uganda. With colonialism and post-colonial states, land started to be put in the hands of individuals which had fundamental legal implications for people's access to land. This was most common in the pastoral areas of western Uganda. In the pre-colonial, land tenure systems ensured that everyone had access to land without necessarily owning particular portions. In these areas, the colonial and post-colonial state policies uprooted the foundations of customary land tenure; bringing about individual land tenure systems. As participant Chale noted below:

“Eitaaka rifunzire kandi hati abaana titurikumanya bararisiza nkaha? Tukaaba tugenda Congo obw’ekyanda kyeijaga baitu hati titumanyire nangwa okuturasoboola. Enjura kekabura obwomeezi obweitu tubukwasize mukama ow’ ahaiguru”. (“The land on which we graze has become smaller and our children have nowhere to graze. We have been helped by our movements to the DRC in the seasons of drought, but this seems to be no more. The rains have reduced significantly so now our existence and livelihood is in the hands of only God”).

These are the words of Chale, which explain the changes that were taking place in terms of land in Batukuland. He spoke while showing me the land and how dry it was at that time. He looked upwards with an expression that conveyed that their fate was in the hands of their creator God. Chale's words resonate with Lumumba-Kasongo's observation that the political economy of rural life in many parts of Africa is ultimately based on the question of land (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2016:2). Those who control

the land control the well-being of the whole of that particular society. When such a source of livelihood becomes competitive and a commodity for sale, the whole society becomes vulnerable. This vulnerability is part of a wider context that includes a growing population in this region, the intensification of commodity production, the reduction in formal sectors of the economy, and expropriation for conservation. Land issues include expropriation of land for donor-funded projects, the increased insecurity of tenure, the intensification of land subdivision, the operation of informal land markets, increased land alienation and concentration, increases in externally determined land use changes, the presence of undemocratic systems of local government to adjudicate and administer land disputes, and struggles over access to minerals by desperate populations and multinationals through concessionary actions. According to the Uganda Land Policy, (2013) “the recent discovery of oil and petroleum deposits in the Albertine Graben has generated excitement in Uganda regarding the wealth the resource may yield to the national economy, the energy sub-sector, and to the national social wellbeing” (Ministry of Lands, 2013). It has equally raised concerns with issues of tenure, compensation, displacement, and resettlement.

Increased cases of land wrangles and threats of evictions were reported in the oil-rich areas of Ntoroko district. A Chinese company for instance, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) is carrying out oil exploration activities in Kanywataba, Kanara Sub County in Ntoroko district. However with the expected benefits accruing from oil, several people are claiming ownership of chunks of land in the area. Statistics at the office of the Resident District Commissioner Ntoroko indicate that more than 70 incidents of land wrangles have been registered since the beginning of 2017. The most affected areas are in Rwebisengo and Bweramule Sub Counties which are near the exploration sites. People from the neighbouring districts of Bundibugyo, Kabarole and Kasese are claiming ownership of large chunks of land and are threatening to evict current occupants of the land, who are also claiming ownership. In Makondo village, Vincent says that his ten-acre piece of land was grabbed by unknown people from Bundibugyo district, who are now constructing a house and have turned the other part of his land into a farm. Vincent, who is a businessman in Karugutu town council, says he was shocked to find his land fenced off and yet he is in possession of a land title. He says that he has tried to seek assistance from police and courts of law, but in vain.

Article 244 of the Ugandan Constitution vests all minerals and petroleum in the Government on behalf of the Republic of Uganda (Uganda, 1995). The rush to secure land in oil-rich areas is threatening communal lands, which are not demarcated, surveyed or titled. Cases of grabbing of land from indigenous communities are common, as customary owners are insecure because they do not process formalised rights over land in order to benefit from royalties as provided for under the Constitution. In the same Constitution, the government of Uganda has a duty to attract private investment, both

domestic and foreign, into productive sectors of the economy. This duty includes creating an enabling investment environment and facilitating investors to access land. One of the major concerns in the land sector at present is allocation of government land, public land, and national resources held by the state in trust for the citizens for private investment. Such allocations have taken place amidst an environment of incoherent and/or non-transparent processes and procedures. This in effect, has weakened institutions governing the use and management of lands and natural resources. Some of the allocations have not considered ecological, environmental, economic and social impacts; and as such have displaced vulnerable communities dependent on land and natural resources whose rights to land access, food security and livelihoods are lost.

Galvin, (2009) discusses the major causes of transformation in pastoralism. She highlights the fragmentation of once contiguously intact grasslands as a result of the dissection of “natural systems” into spatially isolated parts, which is caused primarily by socio-economic change. Land tenure changes from communal (customary) to private ownership often fragment grasslands. Other sources of fragmentation include land use changes, which disconnect formerly intact grasslands, thereby compartmentalising important components of environment. The second source of change to grasslands is fragmentation caused by climate change. This has put pressure on pastoralists’ social networks and the use of reciprocal rights and obligations. According to Galvin “it is still common among pastoralists to distribute portions of their herds to friends and relatives who might have better access to grazing resources or to simply assist poor friends or families” (Galvin, 2009:191). But this is only possible where land is not fragmented or over-utilised.

Like most grasslands of the world, Batuku grazing lands have been communally governed, by de jure or de facto control. The movement of livestock herds is a central component of rangeland management. Batuku pastoralists’ access to forage and water across space and time is achieved through reciprocal rights to common resources which sometimes belong to other people. This right to use other groups’ property across the border is the basis for the non-exclusive tenure and land use systems common to pastoralism. But there has been a steady move toward privatisation of grasslands in this region. The area occupied by Batuku pastoralists as already mentioned is part of the Albertine region where the Ugandan state has discovered oil and its exploration has already commenced. This has turned the area into a hidden treasure for land speculators. The land in this area, especially in the Rwebisengo sub-county, has become a lucrative commodity. This has attracted political elites to buy land in the area, and the pastoralists are increasingly becoming landless. The practice is occurring in part because of the notion that individuals invest and steward the land better than a group. Thus governments, under the guise of economic development, mandate it. This revoked the Hardinian notion of the “tragedy of the commons” and its legitimation of privatisation of communal grazing

land (McCabe, 1990). Scholars of pastoralism suggest that exclusionary land title is counterproductive to sustainable land use in arid and semiarid areas. “Formal title to private land makes the system more rigid and constricts the “unboundedness, porosity, impermanence, and continual social/political renegotiation” that pastoralism embraces” (Galvin, 2009:193).

Much has been written on pastoral governance and institutions for range management, and the fact that they are so fluid. The rules are constantly being negotiated in response to social, political, economic, and ecological criteria. Horizontal linkages such as kin and close associates among local resources users allow them to interact and work cooperatively to achieve a common end (Lesorogol, 2003; Markakis, 2004). From the Batuku pastoralists’ perspective, crossing the Uganda-DRC border is one of their strategic management tactics to respond to the ecological changes that take place in the region. “The paradox of pastoralism is that it needs security to protect its flexibility. Pastoralists need secure rights to resources on the one hand, but they also need flexible patterns of resource use and flexible social relations on the other hand to be able to withstand uncertainty” Butt, 2011, 296). Vertical links help increase a network’s ability to access new power relationships. “This type of social capital can help establish strong resource management institutions, thereby contributing to group resilience” (Butt, 2011:302). It is this fluidity of the management systems that is facing rapid change because of insecurity, militia actions, and state activities at the border. The fluidity of the pastoralists’ institutions, especially those that relate to land management and accessibility, is crucial for resilience. When it is destroyed, pastoralists risk becoming vulnerable. Resilience becomes handicap when the Batuku clan that has been responsible for providing grazing to its members both in Uganda and the DRC is faced with border closure.

Most of the state activities toward pastoralists have been described by Saverio Kratli (2010) as “system-blind approaches” that result in the dramatic disappearance of perennial grasses, as well as social unrest as the stocking rates supported by the expansion of grazing to accessible dry-season rangelands at the periphery become unsustainable when applied to the central belt during the wet season. Kratli also notes that, “as the introduction of dysfunctional relationships in the production and livelihood systems at the regional level triggered abnormal outbursts of violence, system-blind law-enforcement measures were focusing on disarmament and punishment, exacerbating and expanding, rather than reducing, the causes that triggered the increase in violence in the first place” (Kratli, 2010:3). This is well captured in the words of Maryam Niamir, (1995) who writes that the development paradigm taken by state institutions toward pastoralists has “eroded their knowledge of the physical environment, for instance the names of plants and soil types; daily natural management techniques such as which type of tree or pasture to use, when and why; and the social control and organisation of daily management, including communal grazing control” (Niamir, 1995:5).

Traditional herd management aims to increase herd size, increase milk yield, maintain an appropriate herd structure for short- and long-term reproductive success, and ensuring disease resistance by selective breeding. Traditional management knowledge is gradually being lost as more of the younger generation of pastoralists are attracted to urban areas. Yet the traditional systems had developed an intimate knowledge of the environment and many successful techniques that could still be of use today (Niamir, 1995). Herd splitting, the practice of dividing the livestock into separate herds depending on their age, sex, type, and productivity is widely practised. This results in increasing niche specialisation, in reduced competition among livestock for the same vegetation and in a dispersion of grazing pressure as each type of livestock is taken to pasture which suits it best.

Mobility is one of the best adapted and effective means of obtaining what livestock need in an ever-variable environment. In the traditional African pastoralists' context, movement is not chaotic but is regulated by socio-political controls and technical know-how. It requires access to large areas of rangeland which most groups obtain by a combination of territorial rights and alliances with neighbours. Pastoralists from the same social unit are usually free to use any part of their territory, but in practice confine themselves to the range they know best, and they prefer to stay with the same group of people, especially relatives.

According to Bazaara Nyangabyaki, land tenure reform in Uganda has been based on the assumption that persistence of "customary" tenure was the major problem in Uganda (Bazaara, 1994:37). The solution proposed was the re-creation of freehold tenure that is perceived to be ideal for agricultural transformation. In south-western Uganda the trend of allocating individual private property rights in pastoral areas has fostered a new dynamic and the transformation of pastoral and nomadic systems into agro-pastoralism. The major effect of this privatisation process has been the increased number of households with smaller herd sizes and increased levels of destitution (Bazaara, 1994). Around Lake Albert in the lower Semliki valley people have tried to establish agriculture to supplement their livestock production, but changes in rainfall patterns have meant that crops have failed (McGrath 2009). Traditional risk-mitigating strategies of pastoralists have been challenged by reductions in mobility and an increasing emphasis on individual rather than communal property rights (Mwaura 2005 in Powell 2010). According to Kennedy Mkutu there has been a tendency to neglect the needs of pastoralists and even to envisage the gradual eradication of pastoralism. More attention has been paid to the interests of agriculture and urban dwellers (Mkutu, 2003:12). A major concern of policy and law since independence has been the regulation and "orderly" use of land. Ambitious and costly programmes of land titling and registration supported by the World Bank have continued to be pursued. The rate of land expropriation in pastoral areas is severe. The pressure on land and other

resources has been further increased since independence by the increased regularity and severity of drought.

The post-independence period has seen a further weakening of traditional governance institutions in pastoral areas. This is due to the failure of most governments to recognise the role of the traditional institutions in management at community level, and partly due to changing property rights regimes. Indigenous institutions are no longer significant mechanisms for resource management. The erosion of traditional governance institutions among pastoralist communities has weakened the ability of community elders to exercise control over young men. Indeed, “eldership” can now be attained by wealth, and youth are often well positioned to attain wealth if they can gain access to guns. Elders now have to “negotiate” with such youth in such a way that has not been witnessed before.

The problem of small arms has been made more complex by a new dimension: the commercialisation of cattle raiding, whereby wealthy businessmen, many of them based in towns, fund raids in pastoral communities. Accordingly, the economic benefits to be derived from obtaining a gun are significantly greater now than they have been in the past. Governments have often used force against pastoral communities, sometimes in the context of efforts aimed at disarmament. This has often led to violence and transformation of cattle raiding into a commercial and entrepreneurial activity, which increased the intensity of raiding and led to major changes in economic, social, and political structure in the border area.

Gender relations are under growing pressure. The conditions of this border area are experienced differently by men and women and have different consequences for them. In this context, gender roles are being reconfigured. Conflicts in borders have occurred in recent years at three distinct but interconnected levels: those within or those between pastoral communities at the local level; those between pastoral communities and non-pastoral communities at the local level; and those that have taken on wider regional dimensions.

The pastoralists’ region continues to face problems of growing population, increased competition for herding lands, loss of communal pastures to private ranches, farms and game parks, and increasing ethnic tensions and warfare. The most serious threat to their way of life according to Elliot Fratkin, “is the current commoditisation of the pastoral economy, as livestock are bought and sold on national and international markets and numbers of impoverished pastoralists settle in towns to seek jobs at the lowest end of the economic ladder” (Fratkin, 1998:4). Life among pastoral communities is very much determined by the seasonal rhythms of brief rains, bringing rich but temporary pasture, followed by long dry periods. The political ecology approach seeks to understand how communities utilise resources to support their members while simultaneously dealing with other social groups, who may be largely hostile and dominating. Although many pastoral communities may be physically isolated

from the rest of society, they have not escaped the rapidly expanding capitalist economies of their nation states, particularly in terms of providing livestock to larger national markets. However, their pastoral economies remain resilient and viable.

Pastoralists rely on domestic animals for much of their subsistence in the form of milk, meat, blood, and market sale of animals or their products like cheese, and leather to purchase other foods and necessary commodities. The east African herders raise more female than male animals to produce milk for both humans and nursing livestock, as well as to ensure against periodic loss through reproduction. Male animals are kept for meat and sale in the form of oxen (after castration and allowing them to fatten for an extended period), trade, and to satisfy social obligations such as payment of bride wealth and rituals.

Pastoralism is a family enterprise, where all members of the household, men and women, young and old, participate in production tasks such as milking, herding, and other activities that keep livestock as a basis for household subsistence. While livestock are almost always individually owned by pastoralist families, land is seldom privatised but is a shared communal resource, where rights to graze or water are held by local kin groups. Commoditisation of pastoralist economies and privatisation of the range leads to impoverishment as large numbers of former pastoralists no longer have any place to graze their animals. A key feature of pastoralist survival in arid lands is the ability to move in order to find pasture and water for their animals. Mobility is based in part on ecological factors including variation in terrain, rainfall, location of rivers, and variety of vegetation and salt resources. Successful pastoralists spread out over a broad geographical area and depend on the creation and maintenance of extensive social ties to people that are developed through marriage, descent, or personal friendships cemented by rituals and gifts of livestock.

As minorities on the fringes of national economic life, pastoralists are disempowered and neglected by governments made up of people from agricultural societies who have little understanding toward or sympathy for the needs and lives of their pastoral populations. Also, international donor countries, many of whom have had colonial relations with these countries in the past, share prejudices against pastoralists as primitive, uneducated, and wasteful, and who need to contribute more to the national economy by increased beef and dairy production for the commercial market. Policies for both local governments and international donor agencies in many African countries have largely encouraged pastoralists to settle. The Batuku represent a pastoral society that, at least for now, has been able to survive in arid lands through their pastoral livestock production systems. Theirs is a telling story because it demonstrates that humans are capable of surviving in a variety of physical environments, and within a complex social and political world. Their future is not secure, however, because of further encroachments on their herding environment, competition with growing and ritual pastoral

populations, and by an ever-expanding capitalist economy that seeks to privatise land, livestock, and labour, even in the margins of Africa's arid lands. "Drought is a part of Africa's climate and not apart from it". As Fratkin, (1998) points out pastoralists more than other populations have historically adapted to conditions of low and erratic rainfall, patchy resources, and recurrent drought.

Although African pastoralists' access to land is usually held in common as a communal resource, governments in east Africa have encouraged the privatisation of communal lands, following policies initiated by the governments and encouraged by international organisations, including the World Bank, and USAID. Commoditisation of livestock has led to large transformations of pastoral society, including increased polarisation of pastoralists into "haves" (owning private ranches) and "have-nots", with poor pastoralists working for wealthier kinsmen or migrating to town in search of low paying employment such as watchmen, or for women, maids or prostitutes. Political turmoil and civil war in the DRC have caught up pastoralists in situations of stock-raiding where access to violent automatic weapons and loss of lives has been the outcome.

Following independence, most governments in east Africa began to allocate individual sections of land, usually that with the best pasture and permanent water, to influential members of the community. It was believed that individual ranches would better contribute to the national livestock market than communal pastoralism and would set an example for other pastoralists in the region. This has resulted in a situation where land, not cattle has become the most important resource in Batukuland. The process of putting land in individual hands has led to permanent loss of common grazing lands through sales to rich individuals or non-Batuku and commercial ventures. The future of Batuku will very likely see large changes in both their economic system of land use and social relations of production. Many of these changes have already begun. The Batuku are increasingly integrated into the cash economy. This integration can be seen in the substantial number of items that are bought from markets with cash sales from cattle and small stock. Some pastoralists have sent their children to school and school leavers have entered wage employment. This increased commercial activity is leading to increased polarisation between rich and poor, with the wealthy few able to purchase land titles and cattle and many poor and landless end up as herding labourers or migrants to urban areas.

5.9 Conclusion

The Batuku pastoralists operate a system of networked institutions and practices as they produce their livelihood. This system of practices continues to be a source of their solidarity, social well-being, and social capital, and both the poor and the rich benefit from these institutional mechanisms of livelihood production. It is within the operation of these institutions and practices that the Batuku "border

cultural context” was constructed and operated. This border context does not emphasise national citizenship but rather the well-being of the people and cattle in the region through the practice of transhumance. Access to pastoral resources in the region is built into the operation of these institutions and practices, whether on the Ugandan side or the DRC side. The changing dynamics in the border region have adversely impacted on the operations of the Batuku pastoralists’ institutions and practices. There has been a dramatic change in the character of the border, which can be characterised as a shift from a porous to a “hard” border. This process has been in response to the violent militia operations in the DRC, including militia abductions of pastoralists, and raiding of their livestock. It has also been a result of the Ugandan state’s push for land reform, which has contributed towards a shift from communal to private ownership. These changes have greatly weakened the effectiveness of pastoralist practices and institutions that have historically been sources of Batuku resilience; it has thereby exposed Batuku people to a situation of extreme vulnerability.

6.0 Chapter Six: Pastoralism: Unbroken Practice in Peripherality?

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I attend to the everyday practices of Batuku pastoralists living with the crisis of a closed border, drought, and militia activities in the Semliki region, exploring what the crisis produces rather than strictly what it has taken away or what is lost. The chapter also aims to examine the ways in which, in the current crisis, “both privation and invention inform and feed off one another” (Piot, 2010: 5). I draw attention to peoples’ inventiveness in response to a crisis and the new ways of earning a living that come with it. Drawing on my conversations with women, youth and the elderly in the Batukuland, this chapter focuses on a shift away from agnatic politics and gerontocratic political tendencies. A new situation is emerging where young people and women are breaking into “independent” resource ownership. This is evidenced by the new ways women and young people perceive their roles in homesteads.

Women have moved out of their households in search of their own income sources. They are in trading centres trading in Chinese merchandise, they are in markets selling food and beverages of all kinds, they are in teaching jobs at pre- and primary school levels, while others have moved to towns to work in industries. Some women are finding themselves as the head of their families after their husbands have run away because their cattle became completely depleted because of drought. In Lesorogol, (2003:534)’s words “the fact that livestock die during drought and human populations survive means that there are many stockless pastoralists who are unable to recover their losses”. As Hodgson, (2000:97) asserts, “early anthropological studies which addressed gender relations applied a synchronic model, analysing them in terms of either the pastoral model of production or pastoralist ideology”. She writes that those anthropologists contended that, among East African pastoralists, men’s control of livestock gave them control of women. Her research amongst the Maasai demonstrates that the much-emphasised patriarchal perspective is not inherent to pastoralism, but a result of changing interactions and ideas and practices. Hodgson emphatically argues “that it was during the early period of British colonial state formation that the parameters of male Maasai power expanded to embrace new modes of control and authority, becoming something, she calls “patriarchal” (Hodgson, 2000:97). In this chapter, I stretch the argument further to say that the parameters of male Batuku power are mutating into new modes of control and authority that are driven by capital accumulation and property ownership irrespective of age, gender and position. This is further breaks the interdependence of the Batuku society. What is more evident is who owns what in terms of land, cattle, money, and shops, regardless of whether the owner is a man, woman, youth, or an elder, and irrespective of how the person acquired the resources.

This evidences a shift from a society whose relations were once anchored in complementarity and cooperation between agnatic patrimony, maternal support and their offspring. As Hodgson, (2000:100) puts it in reference to the complementary relations of women and men among the pastoralist Maasai: “a man gives his children the enduring characteristics of agnatic forbearers - flesh, bones, and breath. He plants the “seed” that a woman “stores”. “Storage”, however, does not imply passivity.... A woman gives the child she carries her food, blood, and after delivery, her milk”. In this chapter, I argue that the changes on the Uganda-DRC border from porous to “hard” not only affects the Batuku transhumance patterns and routines, but it also threatens to disrupt the most intimate domains of their social life. This is more so due to the reduction of the role played by cattle in the social relations of the Batuku pastoralists.

The commodification of the cattle economy of the Batuku is disrupting sexually allocated rights and responsibilities, leaving women and youth in search of new sources of existence. The breakdown of complementary and interconnected responsibilities of men and women is leading to the disintegration of the socioeconomic structures within which social relations, both in the domestic and in the public, have been constituted, maintained and transformed. Age and sex continue to be the key axes of social organisation that distinguish categories of persons in the Batukuland and structure their roles, rights, and responsibilities. Relations between men and women vary by age, kinship, and clan, but are generally based on mutual respect and relative autonomy. Although the Batuku depend on the milk and blood of their cattle and meat for subsistence, they supplement their diet with other foodstuffs bartered from neighbouring cultivators. Women always created and maintained links with neighbouring cultivating groups. They traded surplus milk, hides, small stock, and even ghee, for foodstuffs. This trade is either brought to their homes by the non-Batuku cultivators or they move to trading centres and markets to sell and buy the products and foodstuffs.

As Comaroff & Comaroff, (1991:41) put it, “agnatic politics, along with social bonds that are formed by marriage, make the world of pastoralists negotiable, a fluid, dynamic universe in which the practical efforts to construct identity, rank and relations are the stuff of social action”. Social and cultural arrangements of the Batuku pastoralists are based primarily on the differences between sex and generation. The meaning ascribed by the Batuku to human activity is particularly a conceptualisation of sex, age, and experience. Production is therefore a virtue of interdependence between man, woman, and child. Pastoral work is a creative process inherent in the Batuku existence and is expressed in the making of self and the others in the course of everyday life. Cattle have been the source of dependability among the Batuku as they are among other African pastoralists, and they represent a fluid and spontaneous growth of wealth. As Comaroff & Comaroff observe, “cattle supply dung, the substance used to make the durable surfaces that set off the domestic space from its

surroundings” (1991:42). It is on the cattle that the conception of time is articulated among the Batuku pastoralists. Time is counted in relation to cattle activities in this society (Evans-Prichard, 2008, [1940]). Time among Batuku pastoralists is based on daily activities such as when cattle are milked; when they are taken out to graze; when they are watered; and when they return home for milking in the evening. Therefore time in this community is not abstract, but an order of events and actions. As Comaroff and Comaroff observe, in the absence of such activity there literally is no time. “Time is the context of the entire social calendar, and with it the order which gives meaning and material form to the social world” (1991:44). It is based on this social calendar that complimentary social relations through rights, responsibilities, and expectations of men, women and children, have emerged among the Batuku pastoralists. It is from the “cattle clock” that a system of who should do what, when, and why is built and transformed from generation to generation in the Batukuland.

6.2 From cattle to carcass

Pati, a 51-year old man, has been a cross-border pastoralist since his youth. He reared his father’s cattle both in Uganda and the DRC, which he later inherited, and since that time he has lived with his cattle in the Semliki region. His cattle were depleted by the drought of 2016/2017. He chose to sell all that survived and ventured into a business of buying those cattle that could not move or stand on their own, including the dead ones. After buying the cattle he slaughters them and dries the meat which he sells to those in surrounding trading and urban centres. This is his new source of livelihood. He spoke to me of how this business had helped him and his family earn a living amidst drought challenges. He made a profit from the dying cattle of his fellow Batuku and filled the void of a market for the cattle that died in large numbers during the dry season. Even though he buys at low prices, it is better than situations when pastoralists had to bury the carcasses. This small amount of money can buy water for the family, or maize meal. His compound is full of drying hides, and flies attracted by fresh hides are a common visitor. Meat on the wooden trays being dried and salted is watched over to prevent flies from spoiling it. He pays a lot of attention to this meat and the dried product is packed in sacks waiting to be transported for sale to trading centres.

Pati is always called by the owners of dying cattle to come and buy them. He sometimes takes carcasses on credit and pays later after he has sold the meat. However, Pati is stigmatised by his activities as he says that pastoralists look at him as their last resort for their dying cattle. Since all his cattle were completely depleted and he turned to this business, people have accused him of being a “sadist” because they view him as someone who derives happiness and survival from other “people’s tears”. Indeed, Pati’s concerns are appropriate because being one who buys dying cattle can be perceived negatively by his community members who may look at him as “unempathetic” to his own

kin groups in Batukuland. The business he is engaged in has always been done by non-pastoralists who lacked access to meat sources and that would be their way of getting meat. These non-pastoralists were never expected to have an emotional feeling for the cattle and their owners. Now it is their own who is buying their cattle, not only cheaply, but also sometimes by the owners first pleading with him to purchase the animals. It is as if he is doing them a favour. The whole point in this scenario is a shift from a “herdsman outlook” which Evans-Prichard, writes about in his studies among the Nuer of South Sudan (Evans-Prichard, 2008). Cattle herders have a world view that does not go beyond the well-being of their herds in terms of reproduction, size, and relations with other herdsmen. So, when an individual who was once a herdsman finds himself in Pati’s position, he must face stigma, both by himself and others. Moreover, for a former herdsman to be the one slaughtering cattle that ought to be helped to live is not only an abomination but also unheard of in the pastoral context. It should be remembered that most pastoralists do not just slaughter their cattle. Cattle are slaughtered because they failed to live. This is well captured the Batuku saying that “*eyaremwa agayo ebaagwa*” (the cow that fails to live is ultimately slaughtered). Therefore, shifting from this complex thinking structure by both the individual and the pastoral society can be stigmatising.

The love for cattle by the Batuku pastoralists, as it is for other pastoralists, is so intense that shifting one’s attitude to cattle can be complicated. The Batuku pastoralists’ love for cattle drives them to areas that are sometimes risky. They cross rivers with their prized cattle to search for fresh resources for their survival. Given Pati’s age and elder status, he should be giving young people wisdom and knowledge on how to better take care of their herds. But here he is buying dying cattle after his cattle were completely depleted. As he revealed, this business positions him as a failure in the view of his fellow Batuku pastoralists. I observed the Batuku’s love for their cattle through the energy and time they put in caring for a cow that could not stand on its own. They lifted it every morning and collected fresh grass for it and carried water to it. Therefore, Pati’s stigma is not surprising. It is found in the values of all pastoralists whose herds get decimated. His stigma will be probably overcome as he succeeds in showing signs of capital accumulation from his business. This can be in the form of changing his living conditions in terms of the house, household appliances, and the conditions of his family members in terms of dress, food and their general well-being. The rate at which he is profiting from the sale of meat of those cattle will change his life, and it will possibly change the perceptions his fellow Batuku pastoralists have of him, and he may even attract others to join the business. This is in view of the trajectory of herding in the whole East African region, where states are intensifying their drive to discourage migration and enforce settled herding activities. With the diversification of pastoral economies and reduction of the number of livestock, pastoralists must look for new opportunities. East African regional governments are pushing pastoralists to adopt what they are

calling “modern”, commercial methods of agriculture and farming, by first acquiring private land and changing from their traditional types of cattle to exotic ones.

Pati’s story reveals a change from what Evans-Prichard, (2008) [1940]) termed “the herdsman outlook of the world”. According to Evans-Prichard, pastoralists view the world in relation to their perspective of their herds. They have contempt for those who have no cattle or have fewer than themselves. They struggle to protect their herds in good and bad times. They do not slaughter them for food unless they die of natural causes. They aim at multiplying them and, where necessary, raid their neighbours’ in order to restock and restore their herd size after disasters such as droughts. They move with their animal across and astride international borders and beat all the rules and regulations for the well-being of their cattle. Therefore, the situation Pati finds himself is one of a people whose source of livelihood is facing decimation amidst increasing demands. Like everyone in the region, Pati is faced with new and old demands of life, for instance, his children must be kept in school; they need food; they need health care and above that they need a roof on their heads. So, as a man faced with such demands, breaking the “herdsman outlook of the world” is what will keep him in a “manly” position in the Batukuland’s sense of the word. That is being a husband to his wife; a father to his children and a shareholder of the social relations and networks of his neighbourhood, clan, and extended family. It is a way of “socially navigating that can provide insights into the interplay between objective structures and subjective agency” (cf. (Vigh, 2006:24). As an analytical optic, social navigation (i.e. committing abominations to maintain social relations) enables one to make sense of the opportunistic, sometimes fatalistic, and tactical ways in which people in the periphery struggle to expand their horizons of possibility in situations of conflict, turmoil, and diminishing resources.

The move from cattle to a carcass that is experienced by Pati needs also to be understood in the wider context of the complexity of the duties and obligations that revolve about cattle. Cattle in the Batuku pastoral society, as elaborated extensively in the previous chapter (chapter five), are a thread that ties together the beads of social relations. Social relations are knitted in the connections that start from cattle and end with cattle exchanges. Consanguineal, affinal, person to person relations are built on cattle transfers from clans to clans, families to families and individuals to individuals. Children are connected to their matriclans as well as patriclans through cattle connections. Brother-sister and brother-brother relations are established and maintained through the inherited cattle of their fathers and bridewealth paid to them by their in-laws. Therefore, the demise of cattle, if understood in the context of these relations, would mean the demise of the sociality and belonging of the Batuku as a group. The question that is to be asked now is: how will these relations be understood and sustained among the Batuku pastoralists if there are no cattle? That question needs to be understood in the

context of the broader processes of economic commodification, kinship contractions, regional warfare, resource extraction and the encounter between the “global” and “local” forces of transformation (Hutchison, 1996). These processes, according to Hutchinson, are “changing the relations of autonomy and dependence rooted in fundamental social connections created by cattle in relation to age, gender, wealth, and descent” (ibid, 54). The role of cattle in creating and maintaining the socially augmented sense of self and other has subsequently weakened because of the emergent capitalistic and individualistic opportunities of cattle and other forms of wealth acquisition, which are prevalent at the Uganda-DRC border.

6.3 Counter culture practices

Jimo is 28 years old and rides a motorcycle (Bodaboda, a term in the local dialect for a motorcycle or bicycle that works around the border. It is a local corruption of the word “border border”). He transports people to and from trading centres. Bodaboda is the quickest means of transport available in this region where vehicles are rare, and roads are in poor condition. This helps many young people of his age earn a living. He earns a daily income and sustains his life and that of his mother whom he stays with, and siblings in Rwebisengo sub-county. Jimo started when he was hired as a rider by a businessperson at the Karugutu trading centre. He would report the amount of money he collected from riding passengers the whole day. He kept on saving and learning the dynamics of the business, and now he has acquired his own motorcycle which he has almost paid off in monthly instalments. Jimo’s normal day involves waking up early, preparing his motorcycle and himself, and riding to the stage in the trading centre of Rwebisengo. He describes his work as “earning as you move”. He starts earning money immediately when he steps out onto the road. This work gives him hope of one day building a house of his own, raising cattle, and increasing his ability to pay his bridewealth and marry a wife, and ultimately have a family.

To Jimo, the income he gets from his transport business is far beyond the earnings of many youths who are involved in cattle herding. He acknowledges that many people in Rwebisengo despise his job, but they always call him to take them wherever they want to go, and they pay. This ridicule comes from the fact that they expected him to be a prospective pastoralist by spending time looking after cattle and multiplying them. In his view, these days are different; he is looking at becoming a “modern” farmer. To him, farming now needs to change and a farmer needs to be settled in his own land, build a permanent house, install a permanent source of water, and grow grass for use in the times of drought. He proposes that the land that is owned communally by clans does not give youth an opportunity for development. The fact is that communally owned land cannot be sold or used as collateral in banks for loans. This kind of land use has been the source of “underdevelopment” in

Rwebisengo sub-county in Jimo's opinion. It is the old people and especially politicians who fail to do their job of encouraging people to plan and excavate wells for a permanent source of water. At his age, Jimo is culturally expected to be looking for avenues for accumulating cattle and creating networks that can help him become cattle-rich. But Jimo has defied all these socially prescribed expectations and responsibilities and acted contrary to the "Batuku culture". It is this defiance that I take to be a "counter-culture". This is a moment at which the whole cultural complex of the Batuku pastoralists and their herdsman outlook is being reviewed by young people through livelihood innovations. Many young people in this region are looking for ways of leaving to go abroad to look for work. Some have migrated to urban areas in search of new styles of living. The above story evidently shows what Comaroff & Comaroff, (1999) describe as the widespread anxiety about the production and reproduction of wealth, anxiety that frequently translates into bitter generational opposition. This anxiety is produced by the fact that the older generation controls all the production and reproduction of cattle and other forms of wealth, keeping the youth under their control through the promise and hope of providing them with bridewealth cattle. In Batukuland the young people must wait for their fathers, uncles, or sometimes paternal grandfathers to find wives for them by paying bridewealth and later to allocate cattle to them for their running and management of the homestead.

Scholars of African youth show how they have aspired to come of age in often volatile and precarious circumstances, and how they have had to shape their lives and strategies accordingly in their attempt to generate meaningful lives for themselves (Christiansen, Utas, & Vigh, 2006). They say that the conditions in most places shape the possibilities, experiences, and fantasies of the youth in Africa. These attempts by the youth can be viewed in Piot's sense of "passionate pleas to establish their rights to inclusion in the wider society" (Piot, 2010:166). Jimo's story attempts to show the way young people move and shape the environments in which their lives are set by the struggles of their societies. These are the ways in which the death of a tradition and the dissolution of the cattle complex system have disrupted the conditions by which life is lived (Piot, 2010). This is the way the young people in Africa reconfigure "geographies of exclusion and inclusion" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999). Jimmy's story shows how youths seek to escape confining structures and navigate economic, social and political turmoil. These ways reveal young people's desire to inhabit, escape or move within these difficult circumstances in meaningful ways. Understanding the move from pastoral society positions and how the youth seek to position themselves is crucial in illuminating how the herdsman outlook of Batuku pastoralists is being deconstructed and what counter-positions and new definitions are being constructed. As Christiansen et al. (2006:9) assert, "the generational categories, such as childhood, youth and adulthood, are not neutral or natural but rather part of the struggle for influence

and authority within almost every society”. The movement from childhood to adulthood is not just a moment between developmental positions but between positions of power, authority and social worth. Youth’s ease in adopting new techniques of learning, earning and communicating is what is at play in Jimo’s story. Technological innovations such as mobile phones are always in the hands of young people and are beyond the reach of gerontocratic custodians in this pastoral society. This ability of young people is what Christiansen et al. (2006) refer to as “youth (e)scapes”. These authors consider the youth to be social shifters that create new social configurations out of their efforts to redefine and change their living situations. For the Batuku youth like Jimo, since cattle are the most cherished possession as an essential food supplier and most important social asset, living without them can be a problem both at personal, household and public levels. As Evans-Prichard, (2008) puts it, recovering from herd losses can force pastoralists to adopt new ways of living, as the Nuer were forced to cultivate extensively when their herds were decimated by rinderpest. In agreement with Evans-Prichard’s view, Comaroff & Comaroff (1991), assert that the transformation of any society should be revealed by the changing relations of persons to objects within it. The changing salience of cattle among the Batuku youth is bringing in new sources of livelihood. Although these youth “escapes” may be viewed by the older members of society as containing countercultural connotations, they may save them from state of destitution. Youth have been perceived by Vigh (2006) as the primary source of social and cultural creativity and innovation and the locus of cultural production. Among the Batuku pastoralists, youth, especially males, must maintain good relations with their elders be it their fathers, uncles, grandfathers or any other male elder promising to meet their social, ritual, and economic obligations on their behalf. This is due to the fact that they need resources to marry and have their own homesteads. With the decline in cattle resources, the power of the gerontocratic elders controlling access to land, cattle, social worth and recognition, seems to be waning.

With the demise of the Batuku pastoralists’ means of livelihood, the young are becoming people who partake in what Janet Roitman (2005) describes as unregulated economic exchanges and financial activities. In her ethnographies of the Chad Basin, Roitman describes young people who become part of those groups that controlled and barricaded the roads as organised road bandits, and they have become a regional phenomenon linked to transnational flows. The failing of pastoralists’ activities at the Uganda-DRC border region may drive the young people to new forms of economic activities that are high-risk and lucrative, such as ventures in the trade in small arms flowing through the region, including transiting petrol, hardware, electronics, grain, stolen cars, ivory, drugs and large-scale organised high-way banditry. This border region has the potential to slide into a zone described by Roitman (2005:12) as a “military-commercial nexus” where the basis of livelihood for many people (i.e., state bureaucrats, the merchant elite, the military, civilians and non-state militias) might involve

in economic activities that are highly risky, criminal and unregulated in nature. With conflicts in the DRC and South Sudan, this border region is a fertile ground for banditry and criminality, especially if young people's situations remain hopeless.

Along similar lines, Comaroff & Comaroff, (2000) refer to the image of youth as "trouble", a label that has acquired an advanced capitalist twist as impatient adolescents go about "taking the waiting out of wanting" by developing remarkably diverse forms of illicit enterprise. They also talk of the startling effects of neoliberal capitalism and its changing planetary order, where youth situations have become similar the world over. These similarities, according to Comaroff and Comaroff (2000:307), "seem to be founded on a contradictory process of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion. This segment of the population has gained unprecedented autonomy as a social category because of its relative marginalisation from normative work and wage", but these youths are also at risk and living precarious lives.

6.4 Pastoral women in the marketplace

The story of youth can be compared to that of women in the same society; Jessica is 43 years old, married and a mother of five children. I met Jessica when I went to Nyakasenyi livestock market. I reached the market around midday and all the cattle had already been sold off. I then went to the food selling section of the market and sat in one of the houses of mud and wattle where Jessica and other women sell food and drinks. I asked for a cup of tea and sat down and slowly started conversing with Jessica. Jessica sells food and other beverages, including milk tea, in every livestock market. Jessica and other women travel to every livestock market where they cook food and sell beverages to those in the market. She rents a house from the market tender-holders and pays *empoza* (market dues) that is levied according to her sales. Jessica is a Mutuku woman who is expected to be taking care of her homestead; her children; her milk utensils; and the young calves that do not go for grazing. She is also meant to take care of all the milk requirement of her family members. These are the socially ascribed roles of all Batuku women. So, breaking away from these ascriptions can sometimes bring ridicule and disdain. She said that it has long been shameful for pastoralists' wives to cook food and sell drinks in the marketplaces where many people see them. If one's husband owns cattle and she is cooking food in the marketplace, it would be perceived as a bad omen for the cattle. Jessica views herself as one who has broken through the contempt and superstitions that surround cooking food in the marketplace and has shown that it is possible for a woman to engage in other work other than pastoralism.

Jessica started the business at a time when her husband's cattle were dying in the dry season and she needed to do something to keep their family safe. It was hard for the husband to meet all the needs of

the family (*ebyetaago by'omuka*), including her children's school fees. Fortunately, her husband is supportive of the business. Jessica said that many women still castigate her for undermining what are perceived to be traditional cultural values. She is seen by some to be one who has strayed from the norm. She is also referred to as a woman who turned herself into a market cook. She refers to herself as someone who has "left the house and the milk and its activities". To her it is a breakthrough. She believes that men have less contempt for her work than women. She said that men are the ones that consume the food and drink she sells after they have sold their livestock in the market. During the many times I sat in her room, I witnessed many more men come in to eat than women. Therefore, it would seem that most of them appreciate her work. But there are also many male traditionalists who regard women as being "flowers in the homestead" who are not meant to do any work other than handling milk. Jessica narrated how, if she had not broken the tradition, she would be witnessing some of her children dropping out of school and she would be helpless as her husband's cattle were dying. Jessica is one of the women working for money to supplement their husbands' incomes. She considered herself to be innovative in her capacity to develop alternative livelihood strategies. This kind of woman, who has transited beyond societal expectations, is contributing towards changing the social and cultural worlds they inhabit.

The Batuku pastoralists' division of labour is based on gender, age and, as indicated above, generation. Men take care of and milk cattle since it is considered an abomination for a woman to milk a cow in Batukuland. Boys tend to cattle in the grazing area, and some families hire cattle caretakers (*abapakasi*). Also, boys are responsible for smearing ash mixed with water on the udders of the cows after milking in the morning to stop them from being hurt by thorns and bitten by insects in the bush as they graze. The young children herd the calves and women care for those calves that are still too young to follow others into the grazing areas. The work of herding cattle, as well as watering them, is exclusively the domain of men and youthful boys. Treating the sick cattle is also work done by men among the Batuku pastoralists. This is done to cure, prevent and promote the health of the animals by controlling ticks, tsetse flies, and other insects that cause damage to animals. They spray their cattle with Acaricide on a weekly basis. The Batuku pastoralists also dose the animals to control worms (*enjoka*) and this is once again done by men. Vaccination against contagious diseases is typically done by the district veterinary department officials, who must make sure that all people have turned up for vaccinating their animals. Men also draw blood from the animals (*okurasa*) in order to treat the animal or to extract blood for food. Some animals could be sick and when blood is drawn from them, they are cured of their illness. Batuku also draw blood from their cattle to supplement other types of food. This activity is not everyone's work, and it is usually done by those with the know-how and experience, or the beast may die in the process.

On the other hand, women spend much of their time cleaning and maintaining milk and milking utensils such as milk pots and churning gourds. In Batukuland, milk is handled as a sacred aspect in people's lives, and therefore not everyone qualifies to touch milk and its utensils. Milk among the Batuku is used as food, for cleansing people and things, and it is used on ceremonies such as marriage, inheritance ceremonies, and rituals such as heir enthronement (*okugweeta*), blood brotherhood (*omukago*), and peace (*obusinge*) and reconciliation (*okugarukangamu*) ceremonies. They give milk to those they honour, including important visitors. Milk is also used for hospitality purposes. Milk has its special containers such as pots and gourds which are all handled by women in terms of observing and maintaining their cleanliness. Milk handling is a ring-fenced territory for women. It is where their power, authority, influence, and experiences are exhibited. Women's seniority and eldership are shaped and exercised in the processes of preparing and dispensing milk to the rest of the members of their homesteads. The area where milk is kept is a no-go area for men. Men are just given milk by women in the homestead (this can be the wife, mother, sister, or daughter). It is in this sphere of domestic life that men become "dependent" on women.

The running of this pastoralist society used to be the domain of gerontocracies, whereby male elders dominated the prestigious political sphere in which they made decisions and settled disputes. At the helm of this society were older men owning and controlling cattle, and playing the primary roles in livestock production. Like any other society, the Batuku pastoralists have experienced changes. However, in interaction with cattle, differentiation between female and male herders is still prominent, as for instance observation of the milk taboos. Pastoral women were relegated to the domestic sphere, as producers of the material culture of the pastoral complex. The Batuku pastoralists are patrilineal and patrilocal in their social relations. As the heads of the homesteads and clans, men serve as the key nodes of social interaction and influence (Hodgson, 2000). According to Hodgson, pastoralist men see themselves, and are seen by others, as "real pastoralists", denigrating not only women's roles and responsibilities, but also their identities as pastoralists. Considering these claimed features of African pastoral societies, it would appear that men dominate virtually every domain of life, for instance through their control of economic resources, of political decision-making, management of social networks, and cultural production and representation. It is also revealed in such accounts that pastoral women seem to be economically peripheral, politically subordinate, and socially and culturally marginal to other communities. This is in a way to say that pastoralist women have a completely inferior position. The variation in the distribution of duties between men and women is not indexed on the relative superiority or inferiority of either, as described in the previous paragraph, but rather it depends primarily on certain broad principles of complementarity in the

household and homestead of men and women enshrined in particular cultural traits that give different activities a special significance (Hodgson, 2000; Broch-Due, 1999).

For the Batuku pastoralists, as Hodgson (2000) suggests for the Maasai pastoralists, the difference in duties and responsibilities is based on the principle of sex differences rather than gender hierarchy through the understanding of their roles, rights and obligations. There are complex roles, rights, and relations among the Batuku pastoralists' production that vary according to differences of wealth, marital status, class, age, and degree of exposure to various experiences. Moreover, essentialising the male elder point of view as a timeless reality, rather than a traditionalist ideology, repeats and reinforces these androcentric and patriarchal ideologies (Hodgson, 2000). In Hodgson's sense, attention to actors and processes of continuity and change reveals the complexities and contradictions that organise social relations in any group, and the heterogeneity, fluidity and dynamism of the social relations. In this section, I draw from Jessica's situation and her participation in the market to make sense of the dynamism and complexity of the Batuku pastoral gender relations and ideologies, as well as the centrality of gender to the production of culture and history in these cross-border engagements. More attention needs to be given to the significance of gender not only in livestock production, but other domains of pastoral life at the border: the agency of women in mediating and manipulating descent, alliance and residence, historical changes in pastoral gender relations, and contemporary contestations of gender relations as men and women navigate livelihoods at a time when the most important resource (cattle) on which social relations have been built is getting decimated. Jessica's anecdote is an indication of the parallel struggles both men and women are currently facing as they seek to reproduce, remake and reinvent their livelihood strategies in these precarious times.

Jessica's story reveals that women often exercise power and authority in pastoral life, and therefore their role is about more than just livestock production. Understanding the domains, especially those neglected arenas such as ritual, and the production of material culture, where pastoralist women often exercise significant powers, conveys a more realistic sense of pastoralist lives and experiences than one structured by "the cattle complex". Evans-Prichard (2008) emphasises a range of female-dominated patterns and structures that reveal that women are not inferior to male pastoralists, but their roles are seen to be complementary to those of their partners. Broch-Due (1999) discusses the complementarity and interdependence of matrilineal ties of blood and patrilineal links that are socially constructed through cattle. This is evident among the Batuku pastoralists, especially in the expectations children and their parents have in the mothers' kin groups, as they keep choosing cattle whenever they visit them. Among the Batuku pastoralists parents send their children to their maternal relatives to be given cattle as gifts at end of their visits. In the same vein, there are senior women who not only actively involve themselves in their brothers' affairs, but also, as mothers, are recognised

and respected for their pivotal roles in perpetuating clan and lineage membership. Women, through story-telling, songs, prayers, and the socialisation of their children, celebrate and perpetuate their own pastoral traditions. As the bearers of cultural traditions, women direct everyday practices and the social relations of pastoralists (Anderson & Broch-Due, 1999). They exert substantial influence over and through their adult sons and daughters as well as sons-in-law and daughters-in-law. However, if cattle are decimated, as the conditions indicate at this border region, women's power; authority and roles as regard to cattle, and material cultural production and reproduction, hangs in balance. As Jessica's story reveals, their time with children, their daughters-in-law, and their role in the whole process of milk cultural production is reduced by their entry into the market.

Hudgson (2000)'s study of the Maasai describes how their codes (particular words for special purposes) structure the greetings, actions and interactions of both women and men, and therefore provide sites for the mediation and negotiation of their relative positions. In fact, women are often central to the teaching and enforcement of respect. This is because they spend more the time with children than men do. From my conversations with various participants, especially Elama, Jessica, and Conste, the role of women in child upbringing was emphasised because of how much time they spend in the homestead with children. Throughout my stay in Rwebisengo I observed women travelling with their children to markets, health centres or other places including shops. These mother-child relations develop into stronger bonds between mothers and their children than it is for fathers and their children. In terms of individual changes over the life cycle, women, like men, gain increased respect, authority and power with age. With marriage they become adults, acquiring increased responsibilities for household and livestock production, expanded rights over livestock and livestock products, and new modes of displaying and earning "respect". With motherhood, they create the matrilineal unit that is the centre of pastoralist production and reproduction (in both the physical and social senses of the word). Through their children, both sons and daughters, mothers eventually gain increased labour for their households, expand their networks of communication and political access, and ensure their security in old age. Women's role in giving endearing names (*empaako*) and their usage within a homestead also contributes to their enhanced status within the household and beyond. Women's status shifts as they age, and this involves changes in how sexuality and fertility are perceived and acted upon. As members of the household move through their life-cycles, it is inevitable that the gendered relations of power within the domestic unit shift accordingly. Males lose their power over cattle to their sons, and women get closer to their sons and become more powerful than their husbands.

To understand the sexual relations in livestock production, one must explore the questions of labour allocation, task responsibility, property rights, and the impact of socioeconomic change of all these

aspects among the Batuku pastoralists. Pastoralist production is almost always clearly structured by sex, age, and generation as mentioned above. However, there is flexibility in the assignment of duties to accommodate individuals within the household. Through the division of labour, each person generally understands the trajectory of obligations they will follow in their lifetime. As part of managing the milk supply, women must decide how to allocate milk between household members and visitors, and determine whether there is any surplus available for trade or sale. Usually, women take direct responsibility for bartering or selling milk and managing the food, as well as the goods or cash received in return. Since the economic reason for keeping herds is their milk rather than their meat, women's roles and responsibilities as "milk managers" are therefore crucial to the success of the entire production system. They always care for young animals or sick ones left in the homesteads. Some women possess substantial knowledge about livestock diseases and treatment and act as animal healers (Talle, 1999). In addition to milk and milk by-products, women also exercise diverse rights to and control over other livestock products such as hides and cattle dung. They dry and process hides for clothing, bedding, as carpets on the house floors, temporary shelters, and they barter or sell hides for foodstuffs and commodities. Fresh dung can be used as mortar in house-building, while dried dung is an important source of fuel in many of the Batuku households. With the monetisation and commodification of livestock economies, which has transformed cattle from a shared good in which men and women held overlapping rights and responsibilities into a commodity bought, sold and "owned" by men, women like Jessica look out for alternative sources of survival and power.

Because culture among pastoralists is determined by ecological and economic systems (Evans-Prichard, 2008), the gendered mechanisms of cultural production and transformation and the roles of women in these processes are often generalised, ignored or downplayed. Yet the practices of women are often central to the production and reproduction of pastoralist culture. As mothers, they not only socialise their children into the cultural meanings and practices of being pastoralists, but they also teach them appropriate roles based on their sex. These gender roles and relationships are usually structured for both men and women by ideals of respect that guide behaviour, terms of address, attire, posture and so forth. Women also play important ritual roles in the production of masculinity (Anderson, 1999). Women as mothers and wives contribute towards life stage transitions for men. Transformations in food taboos, clothing, appropriate sexual partners, hairstyle, and residence, which are central to age distinctions and promotions, are all signalled through ritual activities involving women (Bianco, 2000). Therefore, the positions of men in the cattle complex are contingent upon their rights in a female-headed unit within which their authority must be exercised. Without women, it is difficult to be a man, both from the standpoint of exercising one's proper social status and in

terms of material aspects of livelihoods - the care of one's property and the acquisition of daily sustenance.

Furthermore, for transhumant groups like the Batuku, women's homes are matrifocal nodes that underpin and enable mobility. The mobility of men and herds, which is central to successful pastoralist production in this area of extreme ecological and climatic variance and uncertainty, is premised on the capacity of women to stay in one place for long periods and fend for themselves. These matrifocal units are also the primary units for the allocation, management, and inheritance of livestock among the Batuku pastoralists. This relationship is termed the "house-property complex" (Broch-Due, 1999:55), in which livestock are allocated by a man to each of his wives for maintenance of her household, distribution in bridewealth payments for her sons' marriages, and the eventual inheritance by her sons. Broch-Due brings out the understanding of the shifting relationships of power between the female-dominated household (*enju*) and the male-dominated homestead (*eka*) throughout the developmental cycle of the family. The political significance of female-headed domestic units as anchors in the transhumant societies is reinforced symbolically in numerous ways. Often houses are named after their women-owners. Hodgson, (2000) discusses the seniority of Maasai women in the adjudication of disputes among women, including co-wives. Women are constantly relied upon to resolve disputes that arise among women in different spaces.

Pastoralist culture and gender relations are the historical products of the actions and ideas of men and women. Interacting with local and translocal structures and processes, pastoralist societies throughout Africa have long engaged with the ideas and practices of others, whether neighbouring cultivators, traders, missionaries, or administrators (Hodgson, 2000:106). Some of these encounters have had long-term consequences for gender relations among pastoralist groups. The multifaceted imposition of a capitalist economy on pastoralist lives and livelihoods, through monetisation and commodification of livestock and other components of pastoral production, has reworked not only the production and distribution of these objects but also the symbolic meanings attached to their social relations as well (Weiss, 2016:295). Concepts such as individual ownership, alienability, and portability have transformed how property is conceived and controlled by men and women, usually to women's detriment. The monetisation of trade marginalised, and eventually replaced, the female-dominated barter trade with male-dominated cash transactions (Hodgson, 2000:108). As a result, men can reinforce their claims to control and ownership with claims of livestock expertise. Similarly, the expansion of capitalist markets and the subsequent commodification of pastoralist resources have had ambivalent effects. Therefore, what women like Jessica are engaged with is a struggle to reposition themselves in a system now driven by individual interests and profit accumulation. It is very different from the one they were raised in.

6.5 *Shying away from responsibility*

Best is 44 years old and a mother of eight children. She brings her cattle for water at the Semliki River about five kilometres from her home. She moves about ten kilometres to and from her home to water her cattle every day. Best got married twenty-one years ago when she was twenty-three years old. She and her children are the sole caretakers of their cattle and move them to the river every day for water. Her children go to a nearby primary school and three are in a secondary school, but she is at the point of failing to raise the school fees for all the children, and some will be staying at home because of her failure to raise those fees. This is due to a lack of another source of money to supplement her cattle. She became a single mother when her husband moved away permanently two years ago. She said that he first went to Iraq and came back, and subsequently disappeared. Currently, she has no information about his whereabouts, and other relatives of her husband do not know where he is. They have been searching for him at police stations and in mortuaries, suspecting that he was either arrested or he died.

She is now the father and the mother of her children. She is the provider of food, health care, clothing, shelter, and school fees for them. This is traditionally men's work and responsibility. Women have their own work, but when men neglect their expected roles in the family, it is women who have to take on these roles. Best and her family's living conditions are in a bad state. Her house is falling apart, and she has no money to renovate it. She was worried about floods that occasionally come from the river which could disastrously damage their lives. Best is not alone; many women in Rwebisengo find themselves in similar situations where their husbands have run away during a crisis and left them with children in a dire situation. The Women's Parliamentary Representative of Ntoroko district revealed in conversation with me that the number of fathers running away from their homes is drastically increasing. She attributed the phenomenon to lack of income available to men to maintain their families. In addition, drought had decimated cattle in most of the households in the Rwebisengo area, and this had contributed to the scenario of men absconding from their responsibilities.

A woman at the Rwebisengo Community Development Office (CDO) reported that she receives at least 10-15 cases of men running away from their homes every year. She also said that girl children are sometimes married off by their parents as early as ten years of age in order to get cattle for restocking from the bridewealth. To her, the early marriage of girl children is not a new phenomenon. What is new, however, is the issue of men absconding from their responsibilities of taking care of their families. This has come about because of the growing levels of livelihood insecurity in the area due to the drought that had killed almost all the cattle in most households. In Best's case, it all started when her husband's cattle died during the drought of December 2015 to March 2016. As a result of

that drought her husband began to process documents to go Iraq to work. At that time, there had been an initiative for men who were unemployed in Uganda to go to the Middle East to look for menial labour jobs. Men without cattle in Batukuland had to look for alternative sources of income to take care of their families, and many of those ended up running away never to return. These scenarios reveal the rate at which the people in this region are sliding into destitution and social dissolution.

These life stories reveal the trajectory of pastoralism in the Batukuland and how the closed border, the changing dynamics of land use enforced by the state, and the recurrence of drought are shaping the perspectives and livelihood strategies of the Batuku, especially the women and the youth. These accounts show that people are not passive but are involved in innovating new ways of survival that may contribute towards long-term changes to pastoralism in the region. The structure of Batuku social relations that shaped and maintained the practice of pastoralism may “decompose” Ferguson, (2010) in terms of how herds of cattle that once were the thread that tied together the structure of social relations are increasingly becoming depleted by drought, the “hard” border and increasing privatisation of land. Due to heightened competition and exclusion, people are in turn seeking alternative livelihoods to avoid destitution.

Furthermore, this region is a peripheral space because state authority and legitimacy on one side of the border intersect with a profound crisis of authority and rule on the other side. This produces what (Watts, 2017:1) calls “the political economy of radical precarity”. He describes this in the context of Nigeria asserting that crises of authority are instrumental in the creation of rural and urban underclass groups alienated and excluded from the circles of legitimate authority and socio-economic production. In Watts’ sense, these groups become “lumpenproletariat”, land poor, and unemployed, all detached from the old gerontocratic order. They, therefore, fail to fulfil the norms of personal advancement through marriage, reproduction, and adulthood. Hence, occupying what Vigh (2006), terms a social moratorium. Without cattle, the socio-economic order of gerontocratic customary dominance is crumbling in Batukuland. This is resulting in a crisis of identity: of rights, of social exclusion, and of masculinity. Men who cannot take care of their families are running away, those who have young daughters are giving them away to marriage at a young age, and young boys and girls are processing papers to go abroad for *kyeeyo* (overseas employment) in the Middle East and other distant places. While the elders are nostalgic, fantasising about the days when they crossed the Uganda-DRC border to secure their cattle from drought and reminiscing about the time when their youthful children were a promise of their society’s future development and secure livelihoods. These precarious groups are experiencing massive ruptures between the realities of their lives and those expectations. They are deprived of any connection to their past, a present, or an imagined meaningful future.

The Batuku pastoralists like many other groups in Uganda are changing rapidly. As Conste my respondents said, “what is remaining is the name Batuku, but they are not, actually, in the real sense of their values, practices and organisation”. The changes in the Batuku cultural values and practices have come about due to a range of changes that impact on the everyday lives of people living in the Batuku region of Uganda. Conste my respondents attributed this situation to the fact that parents no longer transmit to their children, through folktales, riddles, proverbs, and songs, the underlying ideas about “Batuku culture”. The children are seen to be exposed to new values and practices that are transmitted through the media and through schools’ cosmopolitan environments. Accordingly, formal education is contributing to the changes that elders find contradictory to their own “Batuku cattle culture”. There are other people who argue that although education is good, it should help people become self-aware in terms of traditional Batuku values and ways of living. Labour, which remains the preeminent factor in cattle production, as it is in other agrarian societies, is being diverted by formal education and thereby consistently disrupting networks and institutions of pastoral management, which are themselves being violently stressed by the dynamics in the region.

The Uganda-DRC border’s earlier porous character added to the expanse of land that Batuku pastoralists could use to earn a living. The hardening of the border has caused land fragmentation and made it difficult for pastoralists to find sufficient grazing for their herds. With the border closing, people cannot expand their herds, and their sons who would have been the managers of the expanded herds, are looking elsewhere for new ventures. My participant Chale lamented that “rain has decreased, grass quantity has decreased, if it does not rain like now, it seems as there has never been any grass and some grass species are really disappearing because of the little rain”. So, grass types that used to be very good for livestock are disappearing. The grasslands are changing, pastoral social systems are changing, and this is affecting the Batuku way of life. Land tenure change from communal to private ownership has disrupted formerly intact grasslands, thereby compartmentalising important components of the environment. The result is a reduction in the grazing land available. As Joe Trapido, (2015:31) argues, one of the fundamental outcomes of these changes in the region is the huge class of “masterless men” - excluded youth in an economically stagnant region who might become the foot soldiers of violence in the times to come. This group of persons are “masterless” because they have no pastoralist skills and they also do not have access to the skills necessary for any other economic activity. This is a precarious situation for them, and this makes them potential recruits of militias in the region.

Considering the insecurity in the DRC, and the anxiety the Ugandan administration is faced with, it may not be an overstatement to say that the region may soon become a war zone. Meanwhile, the Ugandan government is worried about uncontrollable infiltration of the DRC militias and Allied

Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels, and it has kept soldiers on the border. Neglected youth groups in dire crises of survival could become a gift for rebel groups. As Raeymaekers & Luca, (2009) put it, in a region where wealth and power are contested using ethnic strategies, violence can easily erupt, and the relationship between a collapsing DRC state and a re-established Ugandan military state has already led to the emergence of armed groups in this borderland, and this has in turn forced Uganda to intervene in the Eastern DRC in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This has contributed to ongoing militia violence in the Great Lake region of Eastern Africa. Scorgie, (2011) has written about these forms of cross-border violence that make borderlands complex zones or entities in their own right that require an urgent shift in the policymakers' frames of reference and institutional action from the national to regional, and from simplistic oppositions of "centre" versus "periphery" to more subtle notions of a "central periphery" (Scorgie, 2011:81).

On all border points of Bidiba, Kasenyi, and Nyakasenyi that I visited, the military manned entry and exit. Even in the bushy areas of the border, there were military personnel. When I lost my way going to Budiba border point and reached the bushy areas of the border, where no one can cross, I was shocked to find soldiers in grass thatched huts there who gracefully showed me the way to the border point. This shows how intensively the Uganda-DRC border is militarised. As insecurity intensifies across the border, the visibility of the state at the border intensifies, and livelihoods that depend on border crossing such as pastoralism are restricted as people are checked, turned back, and sometimes imprisoned. The state becomes suspicious of anyone crossing into or out of the border.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how a society that constructed itself and its livelihood through cross-border pastoralism is now faced with the complex developments that are playing out in the Semliki region. The Batuku pastoralists in this borderland developed a "cattle complex system" by means of cross-border networks, institutions and local knowledge that was transmitted from generation to generation. It would seem that this is now crumbling as a result of drought, the hardening of the border, and the privatisation and commodification of land along with the decimation of cattle. These developments have profoundly unsettled the once relatively stable social system of the Batuku pastoralists, a system that was reproduced through forms of labour allocation and status ascription that depended on age and sex. Consequently, women, men, children and youth have to participate in livelihood strategies that are increasingly squeezed by modes of competition and exclusion that are profoundly changing pastoralism and turning it into a highly precarious livelihood practice.

7.0 Chapter Seven: Conclusions

7.1 *Introduction*

This thesis established how cross-border pastoralists negotiate a livelihood by detailing their struggles, conditions, and everyday life experiences. In this thesis, I have also identified the networks and institutions that the cross-border pastoralists formed over time to facilitate their survival along, astride, and at times bounded by the lines that demarcate nation states.

The thesis emphasises the fact that most public services including schools, hospitals, markets and facilities for animal vaccination are designed for citizens who are mostly sedentary. Therefore, it engages with what cross-border pastoralists experience in light of the fact that their mobile lifestyle requires negotiating access to government resources, support, security, and services on either side of the border. The experiences of the Batuku pastoralists and how they have framed their lives on the Uganda-DRC border amidst political conflicts and ecological uncertainty highlight the reality that borders are always transient and fluid and are often negotiated and contested.

Earning a living on international borders prompts people to disregard them and move as if borders never existed. Therefore, understanding borders can effectively be done through understanding people who move back and forth from one side of the border to the other. As Galaty, (2016) argues, borders create a system of political and economic differences that pull and push people, especially pastoralists, back and forth. On opposite sides of a border, land use and state policies invariably differ, creating abundant or limited space, verdant or arid pasture, stronger or weaker currencies, attractive or constrained conditions, more or less security, and different degrees of conflict and harmony. In the same vein Barth (2000) considers borders to be rich affordances and fields of opportunities for mediation, trading, and inter-connection of all kinds. Nugent & Vincent (2008) regard cross-border linkages and ethnic ties as being assets for trans-border communities.

This thesis draws on these arguments, as well as border theory perspectives, to engage with the extent to which borders are contested spaces that shape aspects of social reality, inferring that the Batuku pastoralists have constructed an identity that is embedded in and informed by their spatial context. Grounded in the findings of my ethnographic fieldwork at the Uganda-DRC border, I argue that the Batuku pastoralists have constructed a “border cultural context” through maintaining ties with their kin groups across the border, creating routes that are hidden to border officials, and developing networks and institutions based on cattle exchanges and practices that facilitate their movements and access to resources and services as they secure their livelihood. It is this “border cultural context” that I find to have been both a source of their resilience to the spatial conditions of drought and other ecological vulnerabilities, as well as their peripherality in terms of accessing national resources and

services, since they are sometimes viewed as “neither here nor there”. These cross-border pastoralists are not passive spectators of the border dynamics. As Truett (2006) argues, they typically constitute their own “cross-border societies” that do not emphasise national citizenship. They produce their own context, rooted in their own social practices that transcend national state borders. However, it is this spatially constructed “border cultural context” of these cross-border pastoralists that is being challenged by the capitalist state’s push for commodification of land and cattle, as well as the role of the state and militias and their struggles for territorial control and political and military hegemony. This antagonism in the region has threatened the Batuku’s “border cultural context” so much so that it no longer holds in times of crises.

As Raeymaekers (2009) argues, the reordering of space in border areas is not a product of nation state but is instead the outcome of everyday practices. This calls for room to understand the border areas in Nugent & Asiwaju’s (1996) sense of fluidity, porosity, and overlap. These everyday practices at the border essentially make the state what it is. Pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border area have fended for themselves for many decades. Their survival in this region has been based on this “border cultural context” that is now being challenged by militia activities and processes of violence, state securitisation, and commodification of resources and services which contribute to the transformation of the formerly porous border into a hard one. This hardening of the Uganda-DRC border has introduced new political and military threats and disrupted the routine transhumance movements of the disenfranchised herdsmen across the border in times of drought and crisis.

Insecurity and commodification of land and cattle at the Uganda-DRC border region have reduced the significance of the endless array of strategies and tactics that the Batuku pastoralists used to evade the dangerous conditions of the area. This situation has bred destitution, contradictory cultural contexts, and new meanings of life among the Batuku pastoralists. It has disoriented and introduced significant age, gender, and generational changes among the Batuku pastoralists. These changes are in the form of a great deal of creativity and innovations by women and youth in the area. This includes a growing number of male youths joining the *bodaboda* motorcycle operations, women participating in trade while other young people are seeking “*kyeeyo*” (unskilled menial jobs) abroad.

7.2 Revisiting the arguments

I have shown in this thesis the ways in which borders are made up of myriad points of immediate interaction, where some people easily manage to move forward without any encumbrances, but where others are made to delay or are stopped altogether. This variable experience of borders as structures of state power continues to be a focal point of anthropological research. In analysing anthropological research on borders, one gets the sense that borderlands need to be viewed from the perspective of

the borderland inhabitants who deal with the stress and tension of borders. As Donnan & Wilson (2012), Laine (2016), and Paasi (2009) put it, borders are seen more as countless points of interaction, or myriad places of divergence and convergence, which may be there because of the borderline or in spite of it. So the local people are not spectators or passive beneficiaries or victims of statecraft, and are instead often agents of change that involve processes of social, political, and economic significance to many people beyond their locality and beyond their states (Truett, 2006).

Inspired by Brambilla's, (2015) view of borderlands as the place where people are involved in various webs of relations that affect a cross-border region, I have argued in this thesis that the social and economic relations are carried out daily at the Uganda-DRC border which are evidenced by the daily movements across the boundary to go to school, pasture livestock, sell livestock in markets, attend the church, and do business across and over the boundary. The hardening of the Uganda-DRC border enforces Okumu's (2009:7) argument "that the state border is a paradoxical phenomenon in the sense that it is a zone where not only is activity created but also restrained". The state's change of the border affects the population whose identity and sense of belonging is defined by the border. "Social and family ties grow across the border and although", as claimed by Okumu (ibid), the neighbours across the border could be culturally despised, they may also be relatives who are valued for their social capital in times of calamities or hardships like drought, floods, war and conflict.

War (insecurity) and health issues certainly have become factors responsible for making borders more closed to an increasingly mobile world. The Uganda-DRC border is an exemplar of two catastrophes, insecurity and disease, which make state structures employ stringent measures to control the populations crossing back and forth. However, the questions of livelihood and survival transcend the biopolitical systems and structures; hence cross-border pastoralists often disregard them. This particular salience is in Coplan's (2002) sense coupled with the "mixed inefficiency" and "inconsistent enforcement" where states emphasise gatekeeping and taxation rather than service provision. It is for that reason that cross-border pastoralists actively manipulate the border structures to their advantage by outwitting the state machinery.

In chapter four I have identified the progressive territorial border-making and remaking in Batukuland from the 1920s to the present. I also detailed the Batuku pastoralists' experiences and their responses to these bordering processes either by circumventing or exploiting the weak end of the border rules. In the chapter I connect the region's situation with the capitalist dynamics taking place locally, nationally and globally. This reveals that the transformations taking place in the contemporary world, as Manger (2015) asserts, have changed the articulation of politics and economy, as capital now is influencing the nation state to operate on its behalf and protect its interests. I argue in the chapter that it is these contemporary capitalist practices stretching back to the early 20th Century that continue to

subjugate the lives of pastoralists in a variety of contexts. These include the division of the Batukuland between two different states with different political agendas and philosophies which has affected the Batuku pastoralists' identity, exposing them to a life in "many worlds" that requires an extra versatility for them to live. It has also exposed the Batuku's land to "capitalist schemers" such as mineral, oil and gas excavators and speculators, hence the Batuku's loss of land on which to graze their livestock amidst insecurity and drought.

In this chapter, I view the Batuku pastoralists not as isolated peripheral and passive victims, but as active players in the larger processes most of which are not of their making, but in which some of them create alliances that help them to edge others out in the process creating inequalities among themselves. Recent studies of African borderlands point to the high-level of overlap and complicity that exists between different systems of survival and regulation. In his study on the Ghana-Togo border, Paul Nugent contends that "the practices of everyday life at the border may also serve to constitute power through state institutions, community relations, and basic concepts of political space" (Nugent, 2002: 232). The practices at the border show how political power is constantly "demonstrated, projected and contested" (Donnan & Wilson, (1999: 155)) by ordinary citizens trying to protect and organise their lives. In a similar perspective, Goodhand's (2008) study of Afghanistan borderlands illustrates how a set of important border conditions and exchange not only influence political constellations in the periphery, but also shape the nature of the state.

In chapter five I analyse the systems, practices and institutions that facilitate and maintain cross-border pastoralism in the region. These include the institutions that tie the practice of pastoralism together at the border and give the cross-border pastoralists a context that not only facilitates their practices but also ties together the individuals, families, and the community at large in the process of pursuing their livelihood. In this chapter I describe the ways in which these institutions facilitate grazing of livestock within and outside the Batukuland as well as how they operate as a thread that ties together all the beads of the practice of pastoralism. The chapter emphasises the ways that these institutions and practices facilitate movements within Uganda and the DRC; the ways in which they are used to evade state structures; and how these practices connect the Batuku pastoralists with other groups and create alliances that help them to access land and other resources essential for the well-being of their livestock. These practices and institutions are what constitute what I have called as Batuku's "border cultural context".

I argue in this chapter that it is these institutions and practices that typically constitute the Batuku's border context that goes beyond their citizenship. This spatially produced cultural context, I argue, is being undermined by a variety of processes that are taking place at the Uganda-DRC border region. These changes have come in the form of state activities against pastoralism, the enforcement of the

border rules, and the militias' activities with their violent abductions of pastoralists and raiding of their livestock as they routinely cross the Uganda-DRC border in the drought seasons. These developments have not only weakened the efficient operations of the institutions and practices as sources of resilience, they have also turned communally owned land into a private commodity and transformed the usually porous border into a hard one. These have exposed the Batuku's life and existence on the border to so much risk that the Batuku pastoralists now are becoming destitute as they lose their livelihood.

These systems and practices, as the chapter details, have been a source of social well-being and social capital for the cross-border pastoralists. The institutions and practices serve both the impecunious and the rich. They tie people together both in good and bad times. They are described as a source of people's existence and livelihood. These institutions and practices relate to the cow and its products as the important aspect of the Batuku lives and culture; their work, relationships, organisations, clans, marriages, practices of reciprocity and mutual assistance interactions all hinge upon cattle and their products of milk, meat, skins and ritual material. Therefore, drastic changes taking place at this border region have changed the character of border life. It is imperative to note that processes of commodification of land and cattle have turned Batuku common resources into private property and made pastoralists compete for these resources, including land, cattle, and money. These news trends in the dynamics of this border region have pushed Batuku pastoralists to destitution with landlessness, loss of cattle and migration to city centres and towns to look for simple menial labour jobs as a last resort.

In chapter six, I attend to the everyday practices of Batuku pastoralists under the crisis that comes with a closed border, drought, and militia activities in the Semliki region, exploring what the crisis is producing rather than strictly what it has taken away or what is lost. The chapter also examines the ways in which, as Piot (2010:5) puts it, "in the current crisis, both privation and invention inform and feed off one another". I draw attention to peoples' inventiveness in response to a crisis and the new ways of earning a living that come with it. Drawing on my conversations with women, youth and the elderly in the Batukuland, in this chapter I focus on a shift away from agnatic politics and gerontocratic economic tendencies. I argue that a new situation is emerging where young people and women are breaking into "independent" resource ownership. This is evidenced by the new ways women and young people perceive their roles in homesteads.

Women have moved out of their households in search of their own income sources. They are in trading centres; trading in Chinese merchandise; they are in markets selling food and beverages of all kinds; they are in teaching jobs at pre- and primary school levels; others have moved to towns to work in industry. Some women are finding themselves as the head of their families after their husbands

have run away because their cattle became completely depleted in the drought season. In Lesorogol's, (2003:534) words “the fact that livestock die during drought and human populations survive means that there are many stockless pastoralists who are unable to recover their losses”. As Hodgson, (2000:97) asserts, “early anthropological studies which addressed gender relations applied a synchronic model, analysing them in terms of either the pastoral model of production or pastoralist ideology”. She writes that those anthropologists contended that, among East African pastoralists, men’s control of livestock gave them control of women. Her research among the Maasai demonstrates that the much-emphasised patriarchal perspective is not inherent to pastoralism, but change as a result of interactions and ideas and practices. Hodgson emphatically argues that “it was during the early period of British colonial state formation that the parameters of male Maasai power expanded to embrace new modes of control and authority, becoming something, she calls patriarchal” (Hodgson,2000:97). In this chapter, I stretch the argument further to say that the parameters of male Batuku power are mutating into new modes of control and authority that are driven by capital accumulation and property ownership irrespective of age, gender and position. This is further breaking the interdependence of the Batuku society. What is cogent is who owns what in terms of land, cattle, money, and shops, regardless of whether the owner is a man, woman, young, or an elder, and irrespective of how the person acquired the resources.

This translates into a shift from a society whose relations were once anchored in complementarity and co-operation between agnatic patrimony, maternal support and their offspring. In this chapter, I continue to argue that the change of the Uganda-DRC border from porous to hard is not only affecting the Batuku transhumance patterns and routines, but it also threatens to disrupt the most intimate domains of their social life. This is more so due to the reduction on the role played by cattle in the social relations of the Batuku pastoralists. The commodification of the cattle economy of the Batuku is disrupting the sexually allocated rights and responsibilities and, therefore, leaving women and the youth in search of new sources of existence. The breakdown of complementary and interconnected responsibilities of men and women is leading to the disintegration of the socioeconomic structures within which social relations, both in the domestic and in the public, have been constituted, maintained and transformed. Age and sex continue to be the key axes of social organisation, which distinguish categories of persons in Batukuland and structure their roles, rights, and responsibilities.

7.3 Challenges, contribution to anthropology of borders and pastoralism, and prospects for further research

Writing a thesis on cross-border pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border from South Africa can be a challenging task. There was not always enough documentation, especially about the Batuku

pastoralists whose absence in scholarly literature is very prominent. Despite this lack of literature on Batuku pastoralists, it is my humble belief that this thesis has made a significant scholarly contribution toward filling that gap.

In this thesis, I have used ethnography to study border conditions in the cross-border pastoralists' perspective and experiences. I articulate the experiences of the Batuku pastoralists and how they have framed their life in a border region riven by conflict, aggression, socio-economic struggles and hegemonic power contestations. This study brings out the meanings border people enshrine in their social formations that relate to their contestations and experiences of the state borders as they pursue their livelihood. I detail the Batuku pastoralists' responses to border policies and conditions from as far back as the colonial time to the present. The thesis indexes the cross-border pastoralists' navigations, engagements, and innovations of the border conditions in terms of networks and institutions that have been constructed based on cattle exchange system and relations with other people across the border. In relation to the changing dynamics of the Uganda-DRC border, I examine the changes and continuities in the social relations and operations of the Batuku pastoralists. What this thesis highlights is that what these cross-border pastoralists are confronted with is not different from what other pastoralists elsewhere in the Central-Eastern African region have been engaged with. But what is new to the Batuku pastoralists is that the border crossing routines with which they outwitted the states' policies on land, taxation, and sedentarism have been stopped with the transformation of the border in a hard one.

Drawing on the border theoretical perspectives, I contribute to the debates on how border people act to establish and maintain a "cultural context" that connects them to other people and their practices at and across the border. This is particularly shown by how the Batuku pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border through a special "border cultural repertoire" have produced a cultural world that is composed of code words, secret names, signals, established routes of travel and sanctions for divergent behaviour among their members. The concept of "border cultural context" has been expanded and articulated in the Batuku pastoralists' context and everyday experiences. This thesis shows how the Batuku pastoralists have constructed, maintained, and used the "border cultural context" to live and work in uncertain conditions of the Uganda-DRC border region. Through concept of "*cattle, people and personhood*" I show that the Batuku have engaged resiliently with the vulnerabilities of region such as drought, conflict and insecurity, specifically on how to access state resources and services across the border. In making these concepts understandable this thesis employs the perspectives of scholars like James Ferguson, (1990); Comaroff & Comaroff, (1990); and Evans-Prichard, (2008; [1940]).

The thesis contributes to understanding the transformations that come with the dynamism of the border regions. In the thesis I have shown how the parameters of power of male Batuku pastoralists is mutating into new modes of control and authority that are driven by capital accumulation and property ownership irrespective of age, gender, and position. This is further dismantling the solidarity and interdependence of the Batuku pastoralists. This translates into a shift from a society whose relations evolved through cattle control and exchanges that linked individuals, families and clans and led to complementarity and co-operation. The current transformation threatens to disrupt the domains of social life of the Batuku pastoralists. This transformation relates to a shift away from what Evans-Prichard's (1940) study of Nuer of South Sudan termed a "herdsman outlook". This is where relationships and interactions among pastoralists both with the private and the public domains would be understood in terms of cattle ownership, control, and well-being. This shift is evidenced among women, youth, and the general Batuku pastoralists' perception of cattle. Death of livestock associated with drought and the hardening of the border has deprived some families of a resource base and forced them to look for alternative sources of livelihood. As chapter six articulates, women, youth, and men are moving on to look for other ways of living than pastoralism. As Comaroff & Comaroff (1990) say, the transformation of any society should be revealed by the changing relations of persons to objects within it. This brings in the concept of "*social navigation*" (i.e. committing abominations to maintain social relations) that Vigh, (2006) uses to make sense of the opportunistic, sometimes fatalistic, and tactical ways in which people in the periphery struggle to expand their horizons of possibility in situations of conflict, turmoil, and diminishing resources. These manoeuvres are contextualised in the "move from cattle to carcass" and the "counter cultural issues" also elaborated in chapter six. In expounding on the changes that have come with a hardening border, the thesis brings out the dynamics of land use and ownership in this region and how they have influenced the cross-border pastoralists, making their cattle into "the cattle that eat money" instead of pasture. This captures how the state policies render local people vulnerable.

On the prospects for future research, there are many angles from which further research on similar issues can be conducted. Prominent among these is the methodological angle. I employed ethnography as a methodological approach to collect information about cross-border pastoralists at the Uganda-DRC border. Another study could deploy other methodological approaches to study the same cross-border pastoralists at the same border area. These approaches could include phenomenological, archival, or "time-series" analysis and many other methods.

Another angle can come from the subjects of study. My study was focused on one group of people: the Batuku pastoralists as a cross-border people. A future study could look at other cross-border people in comparison to pastoralists and learn their daily experiences at, across and sometime

bounded by the border. There are many other cross-border economic activities which could be compared with cross-border pastoralism in terms of how they engage with the border as they access public resources and services. This could be for example, the fishing communities along Lake Albert and how they are engaging with border dynamics as they fish in a Lake that cuts across nation states.

Another dimension that further research could advance is the symbolic borders that exist among the cross-border pastoralists and how these borders are generated, maintained, and passed on from generation to generation. This kind of paradigm could be stretched to include such issues as ethnic differences and the people's perceptions about people belonging to other ethnic groups. In taking the research into this direction one could also bring out how these symbolic borders facilitate people accessing public resources and services in this region.

This study was carried out in the perspectives of border theory, but another study could take on another perspective. This could focus for instance on the state activities in the control of the Uganda-DRC border. How does the state view the various activities at this border? What future plans does the state have to help people whose lives are dependent on crossing the border like informal traders, herders, market vending women, and many other people? This would be research focused on the state and its functionality at a porous border fraught with insecurity, violence and scarcity.

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