

REMARKS

BY

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AT

**A SYMPOSIUM ON THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN
SHAPING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**“Discussing the role of Universities in Responding
to Africa’s problems and development needs”**

AT

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

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- The First Lady & Minister of Education & Sports represented by the Minister of State for Higher Education Hon. J.C. Muyingo
- Chairperson of Council Makerere University
Mrs. Lorna Magara
- Chairpersons of Council from other universities
- Vice Chancellor of Makerere University Prof. Barnanas Nawangwe
- Visiting Vice Chancellors from sister universities
- Members of Council
- Members of Management
- Invited guests
- Ladies & Gentlemen

When I think about the problems of Uganda and Africa, I first of all, start with the pre-colonial times. How were our societies in the pre-colonial times organized? How were they organised politically and economically? It is good for the education system to discover how those societies were organised. Once you know how they were organised, then you assess how they behaved when they faced challenges of external actors. The Europeans' coming to Africa started with the fall of Constantinople to the Turks. Those of you who are Christians, you must have read the book of the Acts of the Apostles. You must have heard of a man called

St. Paul and that St. Paul was quite a traveller. He was travelling through a place called Asia Minor. However, if you go on the map now and you look for Asia Minor, it is not there. There is a new country, called Turkey and some of the areas which St. Paul was talking about like Ephesus, Galatia, are in what is now Turkey and other places are in Greece like Corinth, Thessalonica and so on.

When the Turks captured Constantinople in 1453, they blocked the land route of trade from Europe to China which had been established by a man called Marco Polo, if you remember that little history. That is when Europeans started looking for another way to China, looking for the sea route and by 1472, they were around Sierra Leone. In 1482, a Portuguese man called Diego Cams, was near Angola. By 1487, Bartholomew Diaz, saw the Cape of Good Hope and he said there is now hope. The African Continent was so big, going round it by water took long. In 1498, Vasco Da Gama goes around the cape and lands at Natal on Christmas Day; Natal in Latin means to be born. That is how Europeans came to Africa. When Vasco Da Gama goes around the cape, he comes and attacks Mombasa and he continues to India.

Now, this sleepy Africa, is now exposed to these new people and to cut a long story short, by 1900, the whole of Africa, had been conquered by these new people, except for Ethiopia.

Therefore, the educational system must find out whether this was good performance or bad performance by the

society – the Africans and the way they were managed. In the process, the Africans lost alot. You must have heard that, recently, an African was the President of America. How did he get there? How did the black people get to all those places? The rumour I heard, is that, they went there as slaves. Actually, when the Europeans got to Sierra Leone, in 1472, they started taking slaves and that slave trading went on for a long time. You must have heard of a man called William Wilberforce, who came in 1822 to decampaign slavery.

That means slavery had been going on for 350 years until this whiteman came and said: “*Ebisajja tubimazewo, tubikwata ngabaddu. Tukoye.*” He started that movement which ended up in the abolition of slavery, at least by those parliaments and then soon it was replaced by colonialism.

Therefore, the education system must bring this one out. You can talk about ancient history like Rome and so on. It is very important to know that history also but, specifically, find out how these societies were doing in that pre-colonial time up to 1900.

From 1900 to independence, we now become colonies. What was the system of management here, especially for the economy? There we go from producing slaves, who would go and produce cotton and sugarcane and many other things in America; now, we become producers of the same raw materials here residentially, producing raw

materials like cotton, coffee, cocoa and so on. How did that system support our prosperity?

The education system must be able to show this. Definitely, what you will find is that, the raw materials production introduced Africans, in a limited way, to the money economy. Remember that much of the pre-colonial economy of Africa, even when we were being attacked, being taken as slaves, was mainly a non-money economy. Money was not so much developed. There were some attempts; the use of cowrie shells and so on, but it was not a fully functioning money economy like the European one had become. It was a system based on mainly primitive homestead social self-sufficiency where you would find the home would grow its own food, build their own house like how I and Mzee Kaguta would do most of the things ourselves.

We would make our own fence (*okuzitira orugo*), bring the water from the well ourselves, get firewood from the bush etc.

There are people called Bagwere. I don't know whether you have heard of them. Do we have a Mugwere here? We don't have a Mugwere here. They are wonderful people. They call it *okukorera ekidda kyonka* – only working for the stomach. In English, they call it subsistence. Therefore, before colonialism, it was mainly subsistence. There was some exchange but limited.

With colonialism, you have some shallow penetration of the money economy. I challenge you to look at the census

of 1969, for instance or the one of 1958. I don't know if they have the records. You should find out the percentage of the homesteads which were in the money economy. Remember, what we are looking for is prosperity for our people. You cannot get prosperity, if you are working for the stomach only – *okukorera ekidda kyonka*.

The shallow penetration which came in by 1962, from the school system, our little economy here was being called an enclave economy (economy which is like an island); a small island of modernity, surrounded by a sea of backwardness of *okukorera ekidda kyonka*. I remember, in the school system, they were characterising it as the economy of the 3Cs and 3Ts. The 3Cs were Coffee, Copper and Cotton. The 3Ts were Tobacco, Tea and Tourism. The census of 1969 was showing that only 4% of the homesteads, were in the money economy. The 3Cs and the 3Ts were affecting only 4%. You can check.

By the sunset of colonialism, we had two problems. First of all, limited monetization of the economy, just a small portion of the people being in the money economy and the majority were outside the money economy.

Secondly, even within the little money economy, it was the production of raw materials. There was very little or no manufacturing.

Then Amin comes in and the small island economy now collapses. Of the 3Cs and the 3Ts, copper goes back to

zero, cotton disappears, but coffee kept limping on. Tourism disappears. Tea shrinks from 23,000,000 kg to 3,000,000 kgs per annum. By the time we came in, the tea plantations in Kyamuhunga, were trees. Tobacco and coffee were the only ones limping on.

Of course, with peace and private sector led growth, we have been able to restore the small island of modernity and to expand it. However, you find that when we are doing that, there is a tag of war because people don't know what is lacking. They talk vaguely about economic development.

In my view, the correct thing would have been to expand the monetization of the economy, so that the whole society goes to the money economy to produce for the stomach and also for the pocket. As I have been telling people, when you do that, you look for where you can participate in order to earn income to feed yourself; but also to deal with non-food needs: build a better house, have better clothes, have electricity in my house, have piped water in my house, have an easy system of transport rather than walking, health, education etc. In order to do that, where should I participate? You find that the sectors are four:

There is commercial agriculture, manufacturing (industry), services and ICT.

Therefore, at independence what was lacking were two things: first, the full monetization of the economy so that you don't have *abakorera ekidda kyonka*. In Luo, we say:

Tic meic keken. The whole society should join the money economy – move from the pre-capitalist society to the economy of money; but, secondly, go from producing raw materials to manufacturing so that you add value to all our products and also go to other products of knowledge. Go from raw material to manufacturing, also modernise the other services. I remember in 1963, one day Mzee Kaguta sent me with one other young man, to get his cow from Kanoni and take it to Katebe – to walk it (okufunya). You, town people you walk dogs. Me, I walk cows. We had money but there was nowhere to buy a cup of tea or even a soda. That time, there was nothing. The only way you would get support was okuraarira – to sleep at somebody’s house. Services were not there. When we walked up to Rubindi, I left my friend holding the bull. I went to a shop and said: “Can you sell us soda?” They asked me to first bring an empty bottle. But I was not walking with empties. I requested to pay more money for the soda; but the man refused. He said: “You sit here and drink the soda or bring an empty”. I said if I sit down to drink a soda, the bull will run away. Hence, we had to walk all the way to Rutooma. That is where we spent the night. We had money in our pockets, but you could not get a service.

There was a bit of tourism – hospitality - for the foreigners, but these services were underdeveloped. What the system should have emphasised was to, first of all, monetise the whole economy; the whole society to be under money economy; then introduce manufacturing to go away from raw materials because that is how countries don’t develop.

You can check on the internet, the example of coffee. The global value of coffee is now four hundred sixty billion dollars but all the coffee producing countries are getting US\$ 25 billion out of the US\$ 460 billion and Africa is only getting US\$ 2.5 billion; out of that, Uganda takes US\$ 800 million and it is one of the biggest producers of coffee in Africa. Therefore, you wonder: How can this happen and people are not talking about it? We have professors of neo colonialism. Do we have a professor of Economics here? Why are the professors not making enduuru on this issue? How can this be? When you sell a kilo of coffee, I hear they pay these people 1.4 dollars. But if that kilo is processed and sold as finished coffee, I hear it is 53 dollars. How can this be? And you have got the educational system and everyday people wake up and go to work and they come back and sleep, the following day they go to work. What are you working for? How can you produce coffee, like I am doing and I am paid my 1.4 dollars and someone else gets 53 dollars for the same product? How can this be? We have got professors, ministers, permanent secretaries. How can this happen?

I have been at war fighting your education system but I am also difficult to get rid of. I had a problem with the Bakiga. We have got very good iron ore there; in Butogota, Muko – Kabale. It is the best in the world. 70% pure. An Indian had come and got business and had been licensed to export unprocessed iron ore to India and have it processed in India. I said No! Kanungu District Council

had even been given some little money. I saved the iron ore (obutare). It will not go.

The Indian was going to give them 47 dollars per tonne and when you process it and make steel- at one time - it was going to 900 dollars- by that time, it was about 600 dollars and all the jobs would go to the Indians. I had to fight, even the Commissioners of Minerals in the Ministry here; forget about the Bakiga villagers. A Commissioner with a University degree! Even Masters! Masters in neo-colonialism! You can't believe it. How can this be? What sort of education system can produce anybody who can stand this even for one afternoon?

This education system! That is why these economies are always coming up and collapsing because sometimes when the raw materials prices are high, they do well. For example at one time, the Kwacha of Zambia, for one Kwacha, you would get three dollars. The Kwacha was stronger than the dollar because the price of copper was very high. But then, you see this is the danger of raw materials. At some stage, there were a lot of copper wires being used in aeronautical industry and many other places. Now at some stage, they developed new technology to use in these planes; instead of using the copper wires, they were using something like digital signals or electronic. The price of copper collapsed and Zambia

almost collapsed with it. You can check what happened to the copper of Zambia.

This is the problem when you depend on raw materials. When your raw material is in high demand, you are alright. When it collapses because science has found new methods and new materials, you collapse with it. Therefore, the education system, even today, must emphasise the issue of manufacturing and must bring it up. But, also to expand the services so that like today, if I was to walk from Rubindi. (First of all, I would not even walk, because walking cows is no longer there now; you put them on the Lorry and drive them) but, even if I was to walk, I would be getting services everywhere because the services have improved in many of these places- the hospitality. Therefore, the education system must expose how Africa and other parts of the world, which are like us, can go from raw materials to what the NRM was calling an integrated, independent and self-sustaining national economy when we came from the bush - Point Number Five of our Ten Point Program.

However, another problem and partly because of the reasons for what I have been talking to you about, is the neo-colonial social science. It is really mis-education of our people-the history. History is really taught in a wrong way. Misinformation, not even information. We call it history.

Therefore, this neo-colonial social science, has been a very big problem. The history, the political science; the way

they are taught. I don't know how they teach philosophy, but if you can learn from it because you can see the different thinking. You must have somebody to interpret it because some of it was progressive up to a point. When I say progressive, I mean rational. But, for instance, if you get someone like Adam Smith, he comes and points out to you the mistakes of the earlier philosophers of the bullionist group, those who believed that gold and silver were the wealth. You know that Adam Smith man wrote a book in 1776, entitled: The source of the wealth of nations. This was a big issue in Europe from the renaissance. People didn't know where wealth came from. Some were saying gold. If you have got gold, that is wealth and that is how Spain and Portugal went to Latin America and killed all the Red Indians and stole all the gold and silver. But they ended up being the most backward countries in Europe.

Therefore, that means that bullionism was not right. It is Adam Smith who came and changed things. He gave a very good example. He said: "Look at me, I have just had breakfast and at breakfast, I ate bread from the baker, I ate beef from the butcher, I drank beer (I didn't know that the British drink beer at breakfast), I drank beer from the brewer. Is it because these people loved me, for me to sit here and they arrange my breakfast without me being there?" And his answer was: "No. They didn't love me; but they loved themselves and by loving themselves, they worked and I had breakfast here." He was highlighting the importance of the private initiative, private sector-led

growth and division of labour and exchange. Therefore, it was a very useful contribution. But then, there is something else which he didn't see, which later on became a problem. That is how- if you have got efficient production, which Adam Smith helped- you produce and produce, but in the efficiency, you minimise costs. You try to minimise costs. Now, in the minimisation of costs, one of the costs is labour. If you keep under paying workers for a long time and your production is going up, then eventually, you may come in a crisis of the capitalist system of 1929 when there was a crash of the capitalist system. What caused the crash? High production; no consumption- the purchasing power. The purchasing power of the society was not there. If I produce and nobody buys, how will I continue producing? Hence, these philosophers, many of them made very useful contributions, if it is interpreted well in Political Science and Economics.

Now, in the economics, you don't hear emphasis, for instance, on regional integration. In Political Science, you don't hear it. They are talking about tribes: Baganda, Basoga, Banyankore, talking about culture. What is this called? Sociology. But now, how can we organise ourselves to be prosperous? You don't hear any talk on regional integration. I don't know whether it is emphasised anywhere in these teachings. Certainly, when we were studying, I don't remember it being talked about. But if you don't solve the issue of the market, you don't solve the issue of the one who buys what you produce, how will the

producers be encouraged? Economics without talking about integration, political science without talking about regional integration, are you an enemy? And you are producing young people with Phds! Phd in what? In no integration? You have got Phd in Economics. Did you learn about integration? “Ahaa, ekyo kilala...” But if you didn’t learn about integration, how will you support business? Because business means, I produce and sell as much as possible. The more I sell, the more profitable I become and expand and once I expand, I create more jobs. You are talking about jobs. “Emirimo tegiriiwo.”

Finally, the attack on the African identity. The educational system must put confidence back into the African people. You find our girls- with the Banyankore, the darker you were, the more beautiful you were. The Banyankore would say: “Nairaguza ebinyatsi” She is so black that when she sits on the grass, the grass itself becomes black. But, now, because of the colonial thinking, blackness is frowned on. You find someone going to get acids (It is terrible) to rub off the African color. You can’t believe it. Do you see how beautiful the Honourable Minister is? (Mama Janet). This is original Ntungamo-indigenous product. You find our children putting on dead people’s hair, wigs, because they want to be like the white women. That inferiority complex, which has been put in the Africans, is very dangerous.

Therefore, these are my five points which I think you could look at. The pre-capitalist, pre-colonial system, the way it was and its consequences that led to our colonisation and

the slave trade; the production of raw materials in the colonial times and the post-independence times and, therefore, the need for change which includes manufacturing, expanding of the money economy and expanding of the services sectors; then dealing with the neo-colonial social sciences. I tried to go to Makerere to engage Dr. Kirumira; Was he called Kirumira? I went there and tried to engage them; but we didn't go far. Then, finally, the attack on the African Identity. For me, I think these are the five big issues.

Of course, I must add a sixth one. Don't neglect global exposure. I heard some people saying: "What is the use of studying European History?" No! It is very important to study European History because when you know about the world, it is like a laboratory. You can trace how a society evolved. It is like the French Revolution, 1789-very, very important. Which were the forces there? Then what happened afterwards? What happened before? So, I should add that one; that what I am saying here, should not mean that we should neglect the global picture because it is very crucial. To somebody who is like me, I actually benefit from my big knowledge of European History. But, my quarrel with my people is: "Why don't you copy the good things that happened in Europe and bring them here? Why don't you?" Do you know that England, in 1400 was really a pre-capitalist society or France, but by the time you come to 1789, the society had metamorphosed. You remember that process in Biology? The one of metamorphosis of the butterfly: from the egg to

the caterpillar, to the pupa, to the mature butterfly. Society also metamorphoses. The problem here is that, ours is not metamorphosing. A peasant is producing another peasant. We are perpetuating underdevelopment. Omunakyalo okuzaala omunakyalo. But, if you study European society, you will see that in the last six hundred years, those European societies have metamorphosed while we, here, have in a way retrogressed because we had blacksmiths, they are no longer there. Now, until we came with the NRM and these people, the Musasis and the Kabaasas, now we are beginning to be able to make vehicles. But, otherwise, we had reached a stage where we could not even make a hoe. You can imagine people who were making hoes, had reached a stage where we were using Chillington hoes. N'enkumbi yali etulemye. We could no longer make hoes. We could no longer make ebikopo. Actually, in the colonial times, there was like a socio-economic regression.

Therefore, in my opinion, the Education system should know that the human story, spanning 4½ million years since the evolution of the homo- sapien sapien, is both connected and varied. The human being with his 3 unique characteristics of a superior brain, bipedalism and a hand that can hold tools, is the only animal that can adapt elements of nature to his needs in order to deal with hunger, disease, floods, drought etc., has been making progress, using the primer of science and technology, to improve his quality of life on Earth. The African, the original human being, has taken part in all these

inventions: the invention of fire 1.5 million years ago, the invention of agriculture, the domestication of livestock, the invention of iron etc. **It is only in the last 600 years, that the African has missed the bus of history to his disadvantage:** the invention of gun-powder, the printing press; the steam engine and stealing the anti-malaria quinine from the Indians in Latin America, that created a gap that resulted in the slave trade, colonialism, genocide etc., and the metamorphosis of Europe and the stagnation and retrogression of Africa. We ought, therefore, to study the history of the World, including Europe, to understand how social-economic metamorphosis took place, partly using the parasitism of slave trade and colonialism, although some European Countries metamorphosed without parasitism. These are: Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Russia etc.

Therefore, in my opinion, the new education system should have the 6 elements described above. These are:

- i. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-colonial African societies so as to understand why they were conquered by the rapacious foreigners;
- ii. Understand the colonial intrusion, after the mutation of the slave trade into colonialism, the creation of the enclave economies that confined themselves into the production of raw materials;
- iii. Understand the need for change, which includes manufacturing, expanding of the money economy and expanding of the services sectors;

- iv. Dealing with the neo-colonial social sciences;
- v. Using the education system to instil confidence in the African people;
- vi. Study the history of the World, including Europe, to understand how social-economic metamorphosis took place.

I thank you all.