

**2nd MEMORIAL JOSHUA BAITWA MUGYENYI MEMORIAL LECTURE
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY MAIN HALL**

**DR. JOSHUA BAITWA MUGYENYI:
A LIVING MONUMENT OF A PATRIOTIC
INTELLECTUAL MIND**

BY

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15TH MARCH 2013

INTRODUCTION

It was always wonderful and memorable to arrive at Ntare School at the beginning of one's schooling at the school. I am sure all Ntare School Old Boys will remember their own arrival at the school; and the thrill of being at Ntare School for the first time. Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi and I met for the first time on the Notice Board of Ntare School in 1962 as each of us was trying to find out where everything was; dormitory where to sleep, classroom where to go for classes, dinning-hall where to eat etc. We became friends and remained friends for the six years (1962-1967) of our stay in the school.

NTARE SCHOOL AND ITS INFLUENCE

Ntare School, founded in 1956, was one of the few schools at the time set up by Governor Andrew Cohen as a non-denominational School. At the time most schools, both Primary and Secondary, were missionary schools.

Ntare School emphasized the following core values:

1. Meritocracy and individual merit as a basis for recognition
2. Academic freedom and tolerance to listen to ideas of others
3. Non-sectarianism
4. Student participation in the administration and management of the school.
5. Haven for vulnerable groups (Refugees and expellees from seminaries)

The founding Headmaster, Mr. William Chtricton laid a firm foundation of educating students in a holistic manner to prepare them to make a better society. Ntare School was not just another secondary school; it was different

and distinctive: with no boundary walls, no gate doors, and no written rules. The School imparted skills as well as critical intellectual thinking. To this day, Ntare School remains one of the prestigious schools ranking among the top in the country.

The School inculcated these core values, and promoted a mind-set and positive attitude towards life that shaped Joshua Mugenyi with the capacity to understand big issues of the day. At Ntare School, Joshua Mugenyi was a brilliant student and his peer-group at the school can testify to this fact. His peers included Richard Nturu, the late Saul Mboijana, the late Frank Kamurari, Zake Bibangabah, Abedneg Bazibumba, Rev. Sam Kakiiza, Edward Kiiza and others who became prominent personalities in the country. He was a year behind H.E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Late Eriya Kategaya and others of that caliber.

MAJOR EVENTS THAT GENERATED A SENSE OF PATRIOTISM

The period 1962-1967 when Joshua and I were in Ntare School was an exciting period in Uganda's history. This impacted our minds in intellectual growth. Permit me to mention a few highlights:-

- Uganda became internally self-governing on 1st March, 1962 with Ben Kiwanuka, the President of Democratic Party (DP) being the Chief Minister. This followed a general election in 1961 where there had been a complete boycott in the whole of Buganda Kingdom.
- The centrality of Buganda, the position of the Kabaka of Buganda in a future self-governing Uganda; and the prospects of Buganda seceding

from the rest of the country: were the issues that pre-occupied the domain of public debate in those days.

- The internal self-government period experienced intensive preparations for full fledged political independence that included the following:-
 - Drawing up of a constitution for an independent Uganda.
 - Buganda Kingdom being given the option to nominate its representatives in the National Assembly of Independent Uganda using the Lukiko acting as an electoral college. The rest of the country used a common roll as a basis for electing Members of Parliament of Uganda.
 - On 25th April, 1962, Uganda held general elections and Uganda People's Congress won the elections. Buganda representatives, all of whom belonged to Kabaka Yekka (KY), agreed to join Uganda Peoples' Congress (UPC) to form a coalition Government resulting in a change of government with Apolo Milton Obote becoming Uganda's Prime Minister.
- Uganda achieved independence on 9th October, 1962 after a period of nearly 70 years of British Colonial occupation.

These were huge milestones that engaged the minds of many students at Ntare School; and Joshua Mugenyi was one of the most active and eloquent students in debating these issues. Other events that occurred in the region that influenced Joshua Mugenyi's early intellectual development included:

- The political instability in Rwanda towards the end of 1963 when a lot of refugees crossed into Uganda.
- Besides refugees from Rwanda, there were also refugees from Sudan.
- Many of the refugee children from Rwanda were admitted to Ntare School and Joshua had a compassionate attitude towards them. What impacted him most was seeing the struggles these young refugee students were going through. They were uprooted from their homeland; from their education system in French; from their family and social relationships; and they were forced into a foreign, albeit neighboring, country with a different education system and in English. They were forced to cope and to integrate. We could clearly see how they struggled.

Meanwhile Uganda experienced a period of high hopes and stability shortly after independence. Our economy was buoyant; more schools were being built, roads and hospitals were being constructed; Co-operative societies were being promoted to take over more ginneries and coffee processing factories—and the Cooperative Movement was at the centre of our agricultural development agenda. The Uganda Development Corporation (UDC) was forming subsidiary companies – steel rolling mill, textile mill, wheat mill, paper factory, match factory, manufacture of agricultural tools, meat-canning, fish-net-factory; and many others to accelerate industrialization of the country.

There was a burst of enthusiasm and public debate on all these developments and Joshua Mugenyi was always at the centre of them.

The country still struggled with teething troubles in form of tribalism, regionalism, party politics based on religion and individual ambitions. As a result, the short period of stability was short-lived and was soon replaced by a long period of despair.

The abrogation of the constitution in 1966 became a water-shed in the political instability of the country. From then on, civil strife, emergency laws and economic stagnation defined the character of the State. These impacted the country's political and social fabric in a negative way from then on. And Joshua Mugenyi always offered an eloquent critique of these developments; as his patriotic ideals took shape: and he began to develop a deep resolve to resist these negative political and social developments.

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY AND ITS TIMES: 1968-1971

Joshua Mugenyi and I were admitted to Makerere University as “freshers” in 1968 in the Faculty of Social Sciences. We were roommates in the “Great Hall”: Northcote, now known as Nsibirwa. We had our young men's experiences in the Great Hall: when your roommate “imported”—you were “exported”—otherwise known as “dust-binned”. I don't know what the “dust-binning” term is for you--Makerere students today—of “dot.com” generation and *The Hostel!* But for us the **BBC generation--“Born Before Computers”**; that was our “import & export” business.

In his first year, Joshua Mugenyi took Economics, History and Political Science. He graduated in 1971 with an Honours degree Upper Second Division. This was a high scholarly achievement as it was hard at the time to obtain such high score.

There were only two other students who obtained the same degree classification in the Faculty of Social Sciences: the late **Daudi Taliwako** and **Ephraim Kamuntu**. Peter Anyang Nyongo, who got a First Class degree, on top of having been a Guild President; was the rare breed among us all!

Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi left a mark of monumental achievement at Makerere University. He was an excellent student. He actively participated and shaped to large extent Makerere's programmes. He was the Vice-President of the Students' Guild, as I said, with Peter Anyang Nyongo as President. Daudi Taliwako was the Minister of External Relations. I was a member of the Students' Guild Council by virtue of being Chairman of the Great Hall—Northcote!

Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi, Peter Anyang Nyongo and Daudi Taliwako and their Students Guild Government left a monumental mark on Makerere University. This translated to a monumental impact on University students' government leadership in Africa. Many of you who attended last year's Inaugural Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi Memorial Lecture presented by Hon Professor Peter Anyang Nyongo will recall that: Joshua, Anyang Nyongo and Daudi Taliwako were the trio of the Students Guild Executive of 1969/70 who conceived the *Makerere Africa Lecture Series*, according to Professor Okello Oculi, then a tutorial assistant:

...the culture of public lectures that Mazrui took to a higher gear at Makerere, led to a novel project created by the Makerere Students Guild (or executive). Growing dissatisfaction with what was increasingly regarded as Mazrui's hostility to radical African nationalism, the Guild under the troika of Peter Anyang Nyongo, Joshua Mugenyi and Daudi Mulabya Taliwako convinced Y.K. Lule, Makerere's Principal, to fund 'The Makerere Africa Lecture Series'.

*Distinguished scholars would be nominated to deliver an annual lecture. Makerere would publish and market the lectures to libraries worldwide. Professor Ade Ajayi was nominated to launch the series. He arrived in Kampala the morning after Idi Amin's coup. He was met at the Apolo Hotel and urged to return to Nigeria immediately.*¹

Unfortunately, the inaugural *Makerere Africa Lecture Series* was stillborn because of Idi Amin's coup of 25th January 1971. But thanks to Makerere University's innovation, the *Rebirth of the Makerere Africa Lecture Series* took place 40 years later on 2nd December 2011. And Hon Professor Peter Anyang Nyong'o, the only one of the trio still living; was the Lecture Presenter for the *Inaugural Re-birth of the Makerere Africa Lecture Series*. This "rebirth" was possible courtesy of Makerere's Gender Mainstreaming Directorate, GMD. Congratulations, GMD!

Because of the *Rebirth of the Makerere Africa Lecture Series* on the 2nd December 2011; we were blessed to have Peter Anyang Nyong'o again as the Lecture Presenter for the **Inaugural Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi Memorial Lecture**, a year ago today, 15th March 2012.

That was the 10th Anniversary of Joshua passing on. And today, I am honored thanks to the Department of Political Science & Public Administration & the College of Humanities and Social Sciences; to be the 2nd Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi Memorial Lecture Presenter on the 11th Anniversary of his passing on. I am truly honored!

¹ Okello Oculi, "Makerere, Mazrui and Tajudeen" in *10Years:Pambazuka News—Pan African Voices for Freedom and Justice*, 2009-10-01, Issue 450: <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/59151>

At this point, I would like us to congratulate the Hon Professor Peter Anyang Nyong'o for winning the recent elections in Kenya as Senator for Kisumu County! That is the least our mutual friend Joshua would love us do today.

Permit me also to take this opportunity to congratulate “Her Excellency” **Ms Anna Adeke Ebaju, the Guild President-elect**, for winning the recent Elections with a landslide! Congratulations! I have heard she wants to emulate Peter Anyang Nyong'o: go for it, “Your Excellency”!

After Joshua and I graduated in 1971: we both started our teaching careers at the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) now Uganda Management Institute, UMI. Then Joshua got a Masters scholarship and went to Manchester University, UK. I too got a Masters scholarship and went to the University of Rochester, New York, USA.

We returned from exile after the fall of Idi Amin. Joshua, I and others became founder members of Uganda Patriotic Movement, UPM, in 1980. It was I who coined the UPM name for the “Third Force” in Uganda’s politics at the time. However, I left UPM for practical political reasons, namely: (1) it became clear to me that the “Third Force” had very little chance of winning elections. And in politics you have to win elections to be relevant.

(2) It was also apparent to me even then that UPM was ultimately destined for a military solution to Uganda’s political problem. Yet some of us had resolved during the Moshi Conference that the fight to overthrow Idi Amin would be the last military solution to Uganda’s political problems. But it was apparent to me then that the principals of UPM were en-route to a military solution, as

President Museveni recently confirmed during his eulogy of the late Rt Hon Eriya Kategaya.

THE ENDURING QUESTIONS

Uganda has just marked 50 years since our political independence in 1962. If Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi were alive today: what would he have liked to see? I know he had a clear vision of the future Uganda; and those of us who knew him know that he would be raising critical questions about the future of Uganda today. So I know there are enduring questions Joshua would have posed, and is till posing, to us today: questions about the **politics and future of Uganda**; about **education, especially higher education in Uganda** with his special focus on Makerere University, his beloved *alma mater*; and about the **youth and patriotism in Uganda** today.

Here are some of my thoughts about what Joshua would have us think critically about.

On the National Resistance Movement:

Since 1986, when MRM came to power there has been significant progress that has been hailed across the country and the world. Peace and security has been established across the whole country. The principles of human rights and civil liberties have been established. *This would be pleasing to Joshua.*

The fragile state of the earlier years has been reconstituted, and the economy rejuvenated. Uganda has discovered commercial viable deposits of oil and gas;

Despite these monumental achievements, however, I believe Joshua would still be asking about the degree of institutionalization and consolidation of these achievements.

NRM has made progress in winning elections across all regions of the country for the first time in the history of Uganda.

Joshua would be asking: how can the NRM sustain this achievement and prevent the reversal process that polarized the country along ethnic rifts and regionalism?

NRM and the movement political and inclusive system of governance has succeeded, under Yoweri Museveni, in managing diversity within the country and laid the foundation for democratic governance in Uganda.

Joshua would be asking: Can NRM continue and survive its founders as the main political mainstream in a multi-party frame-work in Uganda?

Corruption and fraudulent practices are still prevalent in a wide range of sectors.

This would be a cause for serious concern for Joshua and he would ask: What can be done to create a professional and efficient public service that would fight corruption?

By these enduring political questions, I believe Joshua would be reminding us today, of the challenges the country still faces in transforming from poverty and instability to prosperity.

On relevance of Higher Education for Uganda today

Joshua loved education, especially higher education. According to Dr Pamela Mbabazi, Deputy Vice Chancellor of Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Mugenyi was:

“a tireless and innovative student of Development Studies, having helped to inaugurate International Development Studies at Dalhousie in the early 1990s where he completed his PhD. His vision led to a report on the establishment of the Faculty of Development Studies at MUST at the end of the last century, and until recently, the largest faculty at MUST, now being re-organized as a post graduate research think-tank”²

Dr Mbabazi continues:

“Dr Mugenyi identified distinguished Professors Tim Shaw and Martin Doornbos to come to Mbarara and give the much needed input of starting the thinking process to establish a Faculty of Development Studies at MUST. Under his continued support, Mbarara University was awarded a Bank of Uganda Chair in Development Studies in 1996 which was jointly held by Prof Tim Shaw and Prof Martin Doornbos”³.

Although Joshua was instrumental in starting the Bank of Uganda supported Chair in Mbarara University of Science and Technology; he loved Makerere, his beloved *alma mater*. While he was Secretary and later Executive Director of Administration in the Bank of Uganda; Joshua was active in providing leadership at his *alma mater*. He was a Member of the University Council; and Chairperson of Convocation where he spearheaded a number of innovations.

² Pamela K. Mbabazi, *Concept Note for establishment of a Dr Joshua Mugenyi Annual Memorial Lecture & Scholarship Fund for Needy Students at Mbarara University of Science and Technology*, MUST 2012.

³ Pamela K. Mbabazi, *ibid*.

So were he alive today, I believe, Joshua would have still wanted the best for Makerere.

Professor Mahmood Mamdani, Distinguished Makerere Professor and Director of the Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR) was a close friend and colleague of Joshua. It was therefore appropriate that he was the Discussant of Peter Anyang Nyongo's Inaugural Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi Memorial Lecture last year.

As many of you all know, Professor Mamdani has critiqued the World Bank/IM structural adjustment ideology that affected higher education in Makerere University as follows:

In the period that followed the signing of the first Structural Adjustment Programme between the IMF and the Uganda Government in 1989, the single most important actor defining the parameters of policy making in the field of education was the World Bank....The intellectual muscle of the World Bank was powered by the fact that it was in a position to translate recommendations into 'conditionalities'...Some of the Bank's concerns were shared by other critics of the colonial experience. This was particularly so when it came to the critique that many of the colonial universities, like Makerere, were reproducing an expensive British colonial model for training a narrow elite⁴.

Furthermore, Professor Mamdani claimed the World Bank/IMF of the 1990s was impelled by an *economistic* concept of education for development biased against higher education in favour of primary education:

⁴ Mahmood Mamdani, *Scholars in the Market Place: The Dilemmas of Neo-Liberal Reform at Makerere University, 1989-2005* (Dakar: CODESRIA 2007) p.13

In a series of policy papers that it wrote starting in 1986, the Bank put forth more concrete ideas for radically altering the governance and structure of universities. Two of these came to be central in shaping the future of Makerere University. The first idea was based on the argument that the rate of return on investment in higher education was much lower than that in primary and secondary education respectively.....In the new policy framework, the World Bank appealed in the language of both market and democracy....it cleverly played primary against higher education in the name of equity⁵.

What might Joshua have said to Professor Mamdani's critique of the World Bank/IMP structural adjustment policies, especially on higher education in Uganda, and particularly in regard to Makerere University, Joshua's beloved *alma mater*?

First, let's look at Joshua's arguments about the World Bank/IMF adjustment policies as a whole. Joshua argued against World Bank/IMF's liberalization as panacea for Africa's socio-economic transformation because he was motivated by his cognizance of Africa's fundamental needs:

The intention of liberalization is to free markets from restrictions and distortions, restore competition and efficiency, and thereby clear the economy for rapid economic growth. But liberalization quite often leads to reckless use of scarce foreign exchange and helps strangle local industries. Besides, liberalization is not necessarily the most viable route towards transformation: the newly industrializing countries (NICs), particularly the Asian Gang of Four—Honk Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan—were highly interventionist, protectionist, dirigiste states that protected their local industries with subsidies. And they developed much faster than many economies during the last 25 years. In any case,

⁵ Mahmood Mamdani, *Ibid*, p. 13

it can be argued that the crucial question in Africa is not the freeing of markets but their creation.⁶

Second, what then would Joshua say about the outcomes of the World Bank/IMF policies that affected higher education in Uganda--Makerere University in particular, as Professor Mamdani has critiqued?

I believe today's view of the Government of Uganda concerning Higher Education in Uganda, in general, and Makerere University in particular would be an appropriate response to Professor Mamdani's critique.

Today, Government of Uganda recognizes the critical importance of higher education in national development. This is clear in the spirit and the letter of the National Development Plan (NDP), which describes higher education as

The heart of education as well as the core of national innovation and development systems. It is also the place where teachers are trained and curricula developed. Without research in higher education to develop curricula for the entire education system, all curricula will be of little relevance to national development. Universities are the core of any national development system because they produce not only the knowledge needed to drive economies but also the skilled human resources required to do the job.⁷

Today, I believe Joshua would be satisfied with the Government's view of Higher Education as reflected in the National Development Plan.

⁶Joshua B. Mugenyi, "IMF conditionality and structural adjustment under the National Resistance Movement" in *Changing Uganda*, Holger Bernt Hansen & Michael Twaddle, eds, James Curry, London, and Fountain Publishers, Kampala, 1991, p.65

⁷National Development Plan (NDP) (2010/11-2014/15) Government of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, April 2010, p. 214

On youth and patriotism:

What would Joshua have asked us about youth and patriotism? I believe, first, he would have do a sober analysis of the conditions affecting a majority of Uganda's youth today, 50 years after our political Independence. And I truly believe Joshua would have compared the youth today with our youthful times 50 years ago at Independence.

Notwithstanding today's Government view of higher education as I have said above; I believe Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi would have us do something urgent about Uganda's fast growing population where 50% are youth of 15 years and younger; and consequently--the fast growing youth unemployment.

But Joshua was also a realist. I believe if he was alive today he would point out to Government and Makerere University the urgent need to address the youth unemployment beginning with the need to transform our education and training system. He would point out to the need for Uganda to start producing the skills needed for expanding our economy and create more jobs. And while he would underscore the onus on Government and our education system; I believe Joshua would also do something about it in his own capacity.

I believe he would have been motivated to action on the basis of evidence from such a recent World Bank synthesis report on Uganda as follows:

Education and skills provision cannot be static in a transforming economy. Uganda's growing problem of unemployment among the more

educated youth while the country imports high skilled labor highlights the existing mismatch between the education system and the skills needed by the economy. As seen with the Asian economies, re-adjusting the education system to meet the demanded skills is crucial but cannot be the work of the Ministry of Education and Sports alone⁸.

I believe Joshua would have agreed with the World Bank report that restructuring our education system to produce the necessary skilled labor force for Uganda's transforming economy cannot be left to the Ministry of Education and Sports, MoES, alone. He would counsel that "All hands are needed on the deck".

On our part as Government, however, I am happy to applaud the **Skilling Uganda Strategy launched by Government as part of the** Golden Jubilee celebrations last year. Its mission is to re-orient our educational and training system towards development and multiplication of skills.

Above all, I am especially happy to say that the Joshua Mugenyi Education Foundation launched last year will continue propagating Joshua's ideals and commitment in both word and deed.

In that regard, I am happy today that the Joshua Mugenyi Education Foundation is handing over its first check, since it was formed, of **10,000,000 (Ten Million) Uganda shillings** to Makerere University. This is a contribution

⁸*Uganda promoting Inclusive Growth: Transforming Farms, Human Capital and Economic Geography*, Synthesis Report, The World Bank, February 2012, p.53

to scholarship for bright but disadvantaged Ugandan girls through the Female Scholarship Foundation (FSF).

While this may not be a lot of money; it is a great demonstration for a young Ugandan national foundation which is barely one year old. The Joshua Mugenyi Education Foundation has started on such a positive note! This can best be understood in terms of the life and spirit of Dr. Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi who animates the foundation named in his honor. Congratulations, the Board and Management of Joshua Mugenyi Education Foundation!

I believe Joshua would have come up with a contribution to the problem of youth unemployment in Uganda, as his foundation has demonstrated today.

In this regard, let us recall his critique of the World Bank/IMF above, where he said:

Besides, liberalization is not necessarily the most viable route towards transformation: the newly industrializing countries (NICs), particularly the Asian Gang of Four—Honk Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan—were highly interventionist, protectionist, dirigiste states that protected their local industries with subsidies. And they developed much faster than many economies during the last 25 years

The same World Bank Synthesis Report I have quoted above vindicates Joshua's critique of 22 years ago. How so?

It gives a sobering comparison of Uganda's education system and its production of skilled labor force compared with that of Ghana--here in Africa—with Malaysia, one of the Asian Gangs—according to Joshua—as follows:

The current intervention of universal education programs (UPE and USE) are expected to dramatically reduce the population without education, but given the low completion rates and the low post primary transition rates, only 50% of the labor force will have attained primary education by 2030. The majority of the labor force will therefore remain in the low productivity sectors, with adverse implications to the transformation of the economy. At the current pace, Uganda's labor force in 2030 will be worse off in terms of education attainment than that of Ghana today, and lower than what Korea and Malaysia were in the 1970s. Over a 10 year period, Malaysia had transformed its labor force such that more than 60% had secondary education by 1980. Yet Uganda expects its labor force to only evolve to 48% with secondary education by 2030. Within the continent, the Uganda labor force is likely to be much worse off than Ghana's was in 2010—60% of the labor force in Ghana had post primary education in 2010, a share that is expected to rise to 80% by 2030⁹.

Having appreciated the difficult times the youth of Uganda are in today, and having tried to do something about it; I believe Joshua would still challenge the youth not to expect “hand-outs” from Government, Donors or from any other people.

I believe he would have asked the youth to ask for “hands-up” so as to pull themselves up; instead of “hands-out” as if they are helplessly stuck.

This would have been the essence of youth patriotism for Joshua in both good times and bad times.

⁹ The World Bank, Ibid, p.49-50

He would not want Uganda's youth to expect their country, or any body, to do everything for them; but to meet their country half-way.

CONCLUSION

I believe that Joshua would say to the youth of Uganda, today, 50 years of Independence; what President J.F Kennedy said to the youth of America of his time: **“Ask not what your country can do for you; but ask what you can do for your country”!**

Finally, I want to thank you, Mary Mugenyi, the Mugenyi Family and Friends: for making 15th March every year an Anniversary to pay tribute to the late Dr Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi.

I want to especially thank you, again, Mary Mugenyi, the Mugenyi Family and Friends: for making it possible for me, this year, the 11th Anniversary since Joshua passed on; to pay tribute to **Dr Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi: my friend; my roommate; and my intellectual soul brother.**

I thank you for making it possible for me to pay tribute to **Joshua, my friend, for his contribution in transforming society.**

Dr Joshua Baitwa Mugenyi **is** truly a **living monument of a patriotic intellectual mind!**

His life-time achievements and ideas will never die!