

Getting Baganda Youth in Diaspora More Involved In The Future of Buganda

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Abstract:

This is a paper about the Baganda youth in the Diaspora. It discusses, their lack of enthusiasm about Buganda and what needs to be done to get them involved in pro-Buganda actions, so that the current movement to improve Buganda does not die after one generation.

Keywords:

Buganda, Baganda, culture, Diaspora, education, improvement, youth

2 pages

Motivating Baganda Youth in the Diaspora

People often tell me I have been lucky to have a unique experience during my formative years. I do not think that being born and raised in the United States for 15 years and then taken to a boarding school in Uganda without much warning or understanding was lucky. However, what it did was expose me to Buganda, Uganda, and the world at large. All the hardships I endured at least led to some perspective. This prevalent lack of global perspective among young Baganda born and/or raised in the Diaspora is one of the largest dangers facing the future of Buganda.

Today, there is a fire in the hearts of my parents' generation to restore Buganda to her former glory. This generation is the first of Baganda in the Diaspora to amass substantial education and success by Western standards, and they are the first generation of Baganda with the knowledge, wisdom, and resources to effectively make positive changes in Buganda. However, in forty or so years when this generation is gone or too tired to continue the struggle, who will carry this torch?

The immediate and assumed answer is: my generation. The 18 to 30 year olds, a majority of whom, are college educated, entering into successful careers, and have the potential to be difference makers globally. Sadly, that is a very dangerous assumption. There is an extreme lack of exposure among my peers to the history, current circumstances, and potential of Baganda and Buganda. This is a problem throughout the Diaspora and it must be understood and tackled for the prosperity of Baganda everywhere.

It is important to understand why there is a lack of exposure, so future generations can avoid it. Firstly, many of the people in my parent's generation came to the Diaspora from rough and dire economic, social and political conditions in Uganda. As they started to achieve their success they wanted to distance themselves from this history and shelter their children from it. It was also not obvious that their struggles and difference from other people in the Diaspora gave them the skills and characteristics for their success. Secondly, most cultures in the Diaspora pretend to their children from a young age that there is equality among all human beings. It is tantamount to

propaganda and the message is pushed hard. Without a counter message of cultural pride in the home, it becomes engrained in the children and youth that to be exclusive or unique is bad. This is very constricting because if being unique is interpreted as bad, then having a unique culture is inherently negative. Thirdly, information is not readily available and when it is available, it is not put into a context that the youth can understand. It is disseminated in Luganda and without enough background information for those who lack an already intimate understanding of Buganda's circumstances.

Now that some of the causes are clear, it is important to mention some of the things that the youth must understand to grasp the context of the current climate in Buganda. These important facts include but are not limited to an accurate history of Buganda from colonialism, Buganda's rise and glory in the 1960's, Buganda's suppression under successive leaders, Buganda's participation in removing those leaders, misconceptions about Kiganda culture in reference to the sexes, current attitudes of Baganda and non-Baganda in Uganda, and the culture of corruption imported into Buganda.

In conclusion, without a grasp of these concepts, the youth in the Diaspora cannot grasp the frustration and anger that consumes their peers in Buganda and the elder generations worldwide. If they do not come to grasp the frustration, then they will never feel compelled to participate and continue the struggle to preserve their heritage.