

CHAPTER 8

LIFE AT MAKEERERE DURING THE CAPTIVITY OF PAULO KIYINGI

8.1 Sserunkuuma Bwaddene heads the Makeerere home

Sserunkuuma Bwaddene, the son of Erenesti Sserunkuuma Diiro, was born at Kakute, Ndejje. He spent most of his early childhood days with his uncle Nasanayiri Mukasa Luggya of Kyabbumba. He attended Nakikungube Infant School and Kabale Sub-Grade. Then he went to Masulita Primary School where he completed the lower primary section in Primary 4. Because the village primary schools rarely went as far as upper primary in those days, Bwaddene left Kyabbumba and went to stay with his uncle Paulo Kiyingi at Makeerere in 1942. He did Primary 5 and 6 at Chwa II Memorial College, Namungoona and passed with flying colours. He then went on to Aggrey Memorial School, Bunnamwaya where he completed Junior Secondary 3 in 1947.

In 1945, when PK and ENK were taken into captivity, Bwaddene, the oldest boy in the home was left in charge of looking after his younger “brothers and sisters” (cousins) or “siblings” in the home at Makeerere. These were: Mary Namitala Bukayanirwa, Efulansi Nalugwa Lwalamukwano, Henry James Mpiima, David Kulumba Buzaabo, Edmund Kiwanuka Serwadda, Elizabeth Nakiyingi Banzigya, Esta Nabbose and Janet Nalunkuuma. Sserunkuuma did his level best to look after his siblings, grooming them into the observance and practice of the descent Kiganda culture.

8.2 The Dark Period at Makeerere During PK’s Captivity

Much as Sserunkuuma Bwaddene did his best to hold the fort, without their parents those children still faced immense difficulties. These were often related to the procurement of food to put on the table, other daily necessities and school fees. Unlike other times when the relatives and friends would have openly stepped in and helped, there was an intense fear in the general population to be seen identifying with or helping the detainees or their families. There were government informers ready to tell on anyone seen doing so. The fear was that fingers could be pointed at them as having been possible collaborators of the detainees; the consequences were grave. It is said that even PK’s elder brother and mentor Aloni Bapere Sekkadde, never dared go to Makeerere to see how those children were faring. It was Bapere’s son, Eryazali Lwasi, who used to check on them and help in whatever way he could. It is also said that even the members of “Bweyagalire”, an association of the Ndiga clans people who used to hold monthly meetings in PK’s home at Makeerere once every month, never called during those dark days. The children had become “lepers, destitute and beggars”. But, as the Kiganda proverb says: “*Obwa Wankoko teubula mwasirizi*” (the orphaned chicks never fail to have an usher), those children were variously helped by some few trusted and more daring relatives and friends of their parents. They took pity on those children and helped them with procurement of some vital supplies of commodities. Some of those people were:

- 1 Damasiko Erieza Kawesa - their maternal uncle. He supplied them with various commodities as well as paying school fees for some.
- 2 Nekemeya Semandwa - a family friend who used to supply them with sugar, among other things.

- 3 Rev Dunstan Nsubuga - who was the priest at the Makeerere parish church. He supplied them with food and other utilities in the home. He later became the Bishop of Namirembe diocese.
- 4 Nusula Matovu of Kanyanya - their elder sister from Semyano Kiyingi's maternal family who used to provide them with food and other domestic utilities.
- 5 Anna Nabposa - their other elder sister who used to help them in all sorts of ways, as much as she could.
- 6 Samwiri Kaggulire of Namasinda - their elder brother who helped them in several ways, including paying Semyano's school fees while he was still studying at Buddo.
- 7 Erifazi Kaggwa Kirimuttu - their elder brother who called on them often, helped them in several ways including paying school fees for David Kulumba.
- 8 Eriazali Lwasi Buzaabo - their elder brother who helped them in several ways including paying school fees for Efulansi Miriam Nalugwa.
- 9 Tezira Nakiyingi - their paternal auntie who used to get them some food and other domestic utilities. She also helped marry off Efulansi Nalugwa by getting her a man, Kerementi Kyambadde Musoke of Namirembe, who Efulansi got married to at Namirembe Cathedral on 16 June 1947.

Several other people, not remembered here, who may have also helped in one way or other, are hereby duly acknowledged.

All those people who exhibited courage and determination in those risky, gloomy days to extend love and pity to the children of the nationalist Paulo Kiyingi are sincerely thanked.

With the return from Moroto of their mother Ezeza Kiyingi who was then pregnant (expecting Samuel Lutalo), life for the children left at Makeerere started normalising. Sserunkuuma Bbwaddene, who had by then come of age and finished school, left home and moved into some rented accommodation, got a job and started working. Although life started normalising, it is said that the family's financial situation and standard of living never reverted to what it had been before PK's banishment into exile. Even after PK's release the situation remained the same, for he never got back into his job. It appears he and his colleagues were never properly compensated for by the government for the losses they incurred. It is said that had it been in these days of litigation in defence of people's rights and freedom, those aggrieved would have sued the government in the appropriate law courts and would have won. Unfortunately this has never been done.