

CHAPTER 2

PAULO KIYINGI'S UPBRINGING

2.1 Samwiri Lwasi Buzaabo and Semyoni Kaddu leave Mpami

Samwiri Lwasi Buzaabo and his older brother Semyoni Kaddu were great mates and both full of adventure. Wherever one went, the other would follow. That is why when they came of age they both left their parents' home at Mpami, Mawokota and went trekking, together looking for adventure wherever they could find it. They travelled far and wide until they came to the compound or enclosure (*kisaakaate*) of the Prime Minister (*Katikkiro*) Apollo Kagwa Gulemye. They became employed as pages in the *Katikkiro's* compound. Because of their hard work and efficiency the *Katikkiro* liked them and eventually allocated them a huge piece of land and chiefly offices at Kawolo, Lugazi Kyaggwe.

Semyoni Kaddu became the area chief and at the same time inherited the headship of the lineage of Nansambu. He therefore came to be known as Semyoni Kaddu Nansambu and named his country "*Busambu*", after his clan lineage title. He established himself in the locality, got married and started a family while living in Busambu, Kawolo. Of his children: (1) Zevirio Lule Kateetemera got a job at a Catholic mission Nkokonjeru in Kyaggwe county. He was such a good worker that when the priest heading the mission was transferred to Kisubi in Busiro county, he invited Zevirio to move with him to Kisubi. It was while working at Kisubi that Zevirio got a piece of land at Nkumba. (2) Yowana Kiguli stayed put in Kyaggwe, got his own piece of land and started his family of six children. Unfortunately Kiguli died in active service during one of the wars and his body was never brought back for burial.

Samwiri Lwasi Buzaabo, after some adventure and getting himself a wife or two, it is said that he moved back to his birth place in Mawokota County, established himself there and propagated his family at Mpami.

2.2 Aloni Bapere Sekkadde

Of Buzaabo's children: the oldest, Aloni Bapere Sekkadde, led his younger brothers Fenekansi Nkonge and Paulo Kikwanguyira Kiyingi from Mpami to Kiryagonja in the county of Kyaddondo, where Bapere's maternal uncle Kisulebweru of the Monkey (*Nkima*) clan lived. Bapere became a man of great influence and acquired many friends. He and his two brothers briefly stayed at another place called Kiwenda, also in Kyaddondo, with one of his great childhood friends - Yokana Gasowole. From Kiwenda Bapere left for Ndejje in Bulemeezi County where he embarked on a training program to become a lay preacher and assistant priest in the church, with the support and encouragement from another of his friends named Kitaakule of the *Mpeewo* (Oribi antelope) clan. Kitaakule was himself already a lay preacher and assistant priest. Kitaakule was later ordained a full priest and came to be known as Reverend Kitaakule. He became the parish priest of Ndejje. Bapere was later joined at Ndejje by his younger brothers, Paulo Kiyingi and Fenekansi Nkonge. He subsequently got married to his lady in waiting, Yunia Tusubiromu Nakanwagi, being joined in holy matrimony by none other than Rev Kitaakule himself.

Aloni Bapere Sekkadde travelled far and wide preaching the word of God; going as far as Sukuma-land in Tanganyika (a country now renamed Tanzania). He therefore won great accolades from Rev

Kitaakule, who became his referee in later life. This is exemplified in the way Bapere bought a big piece of milo land at Mpigi at the recommendation and support of Rev Kitaakule. After the church at Mpigi was allocated its piece of land, Rev Kitaakule advised and recommended Aloni Bapere Sekkadde to buy the remainder of the land, which Bapere did.

Following the acquisition of that piece of land, Bapere invited his father Samwiri Lwasi Buzaabo and uncle, Semyoni Kaddu Nansambu, and allocated both some of that land at Mpigi. He also invited his two brothers Paulo Kiyingi and Fenekansi Nkonge and allocated them too some of that land. He invited his other brother Zevirio Kateetemera to relocate from Nkumba to Mpigi. He also invited Zakaliya Bbosa and his brothers, the children of his other brother Yowana Kiguli who died in battle, to move from Kyaggwe. He allocated them some piece of that land at a place called Busoke. Later on, after the death of his father Buzaabo and uncle Nansambu, Bapere invited his childhood friend Yokana Gasowole to move from Kiwenda to Mpigi, in the plot previously occupied by his father and uncle near the church at Mpigi. He also invited his maternal uncle Kisulebweru to move from Kiryagonja and gave him a plot of land. That is how Bapere gathered his entire close family members at Mpigi. He named his village “Nakaseeta”, to differentiate it from the adjacent one on which the Mpigi church is situated. He later relinquished his official services to the church, became a parish chief who then went on to motivate people to rebuild the Mpigi church at its present location on the hill crest. He grew in reputation and fame.

2.3 Paulo Kiyingi’s Early Childhood Days

As already mentioned, Paulo Kiyingi (PK) was born a Muganda in 1896. His father was Samwiri Lwasi Buzaabo, a Muganda, while his mother Banzigyamubangi Taliddawo was a Musoga. His father Samwiri Lwasi Buzaabo had two wives - namely Saalumanya and Banzigyamubangi Taliddawo. Both women were Basoga who were “looted” as war trophies by the victors following one of the battles between Busoga and Buganda during the reign of King Muteesa 1 (reigned 1856-1884). Buzaabo and his brother Nansambu were very adventurous characters who fought for their country Buganda, made it famous and enriched it with a lot of possessions including women, as was the practice in those days.

At the time of PK’s birth his parents lived at Mpami, Mbaale in Mawokota. He was given the name KIYINGI as his clan name. He was given another name KIKWANGUYIRA, from a Kiganda ancestral proverb, “*Ekikwanguyira naawe okyanguyira, ekikajjo olya kibisi*” (What you find easy should always be given priority; a sugar cane is always eaten raw). Perhaps his parents had quite early on seen signs in the young boy that he would grow up with ease to become efficient in whatever he set out to do. At his baptism he was christened the name PAULO, after the Christian Saint Paul. Later on in his adulthood he named himself BANADDA (which literary translates as “they shall return”), a name he cherished so much, as we will see in Chapter 9 dealing with his release from imprisonment and deportation. PK spent his early childhood years at Mpami, Mbaale Mawokota. Later his parents moved with him to another place called Kiryagonja, in Kyaddondo.

In his childhood PK was kind but reticent. Some people mistook his reticence for being unfriendly or antisocial. Others thought he was stern. He was clever and very calculative in speech, form and language. He was obedient and efficient in whatever tasks he was assigned to do. He executed them with the utmost care and speed, to the fulfilment of the meaning of his name “Kikwanguyira”. He would not rest until the task before him was accomplished. He was good at a variety of sports. He

participated in a number of sporting activities played by children of that generation in Buganda, like: rolling the wheel (*okukuba zzigga*), spinning the olive seed (*okubonga enje*) and athletics - especially the sprint track events. He played the *mwesoo*, *kassonko* and he would team up with other boys in the locality to play the famous mock-war game called, “*Olutalo lwe birumbirumbi*”. In this game the young pre-teenage boys would get together and divide themselves into two teams. They would collect young juicy reeds from the bush and shape them into kind of blunt spears. They then would attack each other in a mock fight like real enemies in battle and feign death or injury if they got speared. The victors would be very well rewarded. This game served to sharpen them and prepare them for battle in later life, in case their country got attacked by enemy forces. Unlike many boys of his generation though, PK never took to wrestling. In high school he also had the opportunity to participate in other types of sports like football (soccer) and cricket, which had become popular at Kings’ College Buddo and other British missionary schools around Buganda. But running in track events is what he excelled in most. In later adult life, instead of running he took to walking a fast pace. He had a long stride and walked so fast that anyone wishing to walk a distance with him would virtually have to run after him. Amos Kiguli Ssaalongo of Masooli, Yokana Kiguli of Mpigi and the late Anna Nabbose, all spoke highly of PK’s zeal and zest for walking to the total disdain for riding a bicycle. He despised bicycles to the point of even refusing to be carried on it as a pillion passenger. Wherever he would go, be it a short or long journey, if he did not travel by car, bus or truck/lorry he would walk. There were times he used to walk from his older brother Bapere’s home in Mpigi, back to his own home at Makeerere, quite a distance at that. It is said that he would leave in the afternoon or early evening hours when nobody would expect him to get home in time. But to their amazement he would be home in a tick.

He was very good and fluent at languages: Luganda and Swahili, as well as English, both written and spoken English, a language he excelled in at school and performed better than all his peers in class. Granted, he did not exhibit his talents in leadership to any remarkable extent, but he used to be an invaluable support to those with better leadership qualities than his. He was the invisible man who made the wheel turn and would do so with great efficiency.

2.4 Paulo Kiyingi’s Schooling

While PK and Fenekansi Nkongwe were staying with their elder brother Bapere at Ndejje, by that time a qualified assistant priest, they started off with catechism classes leading to their baptism and confirmation in the church. Following that, they started their formal schooling in what were known as Central Schools in the lower primary classes, working their way up to the upper primary classes. PK used to grow and sell cotton to top up on the school fees his brother Bapere used to pay for him through Primary and Junior school at Ndejje. On finishing out of Ndejje he sat for the King’s College Buddo entry exams, which he passed with flying colours and won a full scholarship to join senior secondary in 1916. At Buddo he excelled in a number of academic subjects like languages (English), mathematics, geography and history. But due to his seniority in age and stamina, PK was an easy pick to conscript into the army to fight in the First World War which was going on at that time.

2.5 Paulo Kiyingi’s Military Service during the First World War

Paulo Kiyingi fought in defence of the British Empire, which included Uganda at the time. Britain had joined hands with France and Russia to fight against Germany. PK and other pupils of his age were taken to war, leaving the other pupils who were much younger than them to continue with their education at school. But PK would have felt no bitterness; just determination with the proverbial

assurances of his ancestors. In one proverb the ancestors mused: “*Ekirya atabaala; kye kirya n’asigadde eka*” (What kills a fighter; could likewise kill anyone else including one who stays at home). In another proverb they mused: “*Omusajja gyagenda; gyasanga basajja banne*” (Where a man goes; he (surely) finds fellow men). PK served with “The Native Medical Corps of British East Africa”, against the German army in the then German East Africa, led by General Von Lettow Vorbeck.

The main thrust of the World War 1 was staged in Europe between Britain and its allies France and Russia on one side, and Germany with its allies Austria-Hungary and Italy on the other. It began against a background of a civil war in Europe, in which each of the European powers then was vying for supremacy. Germany, in particular, felt it had lost out during the Scramble for Africa of 1884. Germany saw little overseas outlets for its imperialism and became restless, feeling its greatness undermined. It therefore turned increasingly towards the European continent. Britain, France and Russia all became suspicious and felt threatened by these German expansionist ambitions. So it was all those military alliances, past conflicts and renewed suspicions, which dragged Europe into the war. The war later spilled over to involve the whole world, because the vast colonial empires of those major European powers collectively dominated the world trade.

In East Africa, the war was instigated by the Germans, as a diversionary tactic. They wanted Britain to relocate some of its troupes from Europe and commit them to East Africa in defence of its interests there. There was a German East Africa, which comprised Tanganyika or the present day mainland Tanzania and there was a British East Africa, which comprised Kenya and Uganda. In starting the war here the Germans hoped to weaken Britain’s position in its fight against Germany in Europe. Germany had already got wind of the fact that the British force in East Africa was smaller in size and perhaps weaker than the German force. So the Germans predicted that it would either be a walkover or that to match the German force Britain would have to strengthen its force by calling on its troops in Europe. The German plan was to attack the East African Railway service, which ran from the coastal town of Mombasa to Kisumu in the hinterland of East Africa. In that way they would paralyse the transport of goods from the port of Mombasa to the interior of Kenya, as well as goods destined for Uganda along the rail line all the way to Kisumu and there from along Lake Nalubaale/Victoria, by steamer, to Port Bell at Luzira near Kampala. The German commander Gen Lettow-Vorbek strategically stationed his forces on the slopes of Mt Kilimanjaro, ready to attack the railway. There was intense fighting along the section of railway line between Voi and Taveta on the south-eastern slopes of Mt Kilimanjaro on the Kenyan side. Those who heard Paulo Kiyingi’s tales about the war used to hear him cursing the Germans for the incessant and bloody attacks on their forces, especially around Voi. Many lives were lost in the battle around the town of Voi in the Taita hills. Up to this day there is a hill named “*Mlima Salaita*”, a Taita/Swahili translation for “slaughter hill”, which gives dimension to the amount of wanton killing that took place.

At that time Buganda was in the middle of celebrations marking the coming of age of the monarch. King Daudi Chwa turned eighteen years in 1914 at the start of World War 1. The war was lukewarm prior to February /March 1916 when it intensified. It was in that year that Paulo Kiyingi and his age-mates, who were conscripted into the war, were withdrawn from schools and sent out to the warfront.

By that time Britain had already sent for re-enforcement troops from South Africa to bolster the already ailing British force. They brought in an army from South Africa commanded by Lieutenant General Jan Christiaan Smuts, a reformed veteran of the Boer War of South Africa in which he had led a rebel

guerrilla group fighting against the British between 1899 and 1902. The British put Smuts in charge of the entire Imperial troops of the Kings African Rifles (K.A.R) to fight against the Germans in East Africa. Gen Smuts fought Gen Vorbeck until the latter moved his forces from the slopes of Mt Kilimanjaro, and headed southwards into Tanganyika, through Mwanza, Dar es Salaam, Tabora, down to the southern border of Tanganyika with Mozambique. It was a tactical attack in that Gen Smut's forces would strike and then recede, lest Vorbeck's forces make a tactical retreat. The ancestral Kiganda proverb says: "*Bwogoba musajja munno; embiro olekamu ezinadda*" (As you chase a fellow man; spare some strength for running back). Indeed at times Gen Vorbeck used to make tactical retreats to try and take Gen Smuts by surprise, only to find that his enemy was well versed in all those military strategies. By the time the last ceasefire was declared, marking the end of the first world war (*Armistice Day*, 11 November 1918), the German troops in East Africa headed by Gen Lettow Vorbeck were scattered all over southern Tanganyika near the borders of Mozambique and Rhodesia. The historians have it on record that in provoking war in East Africa, Gen von Lettow-Vorbek achieved his aim in that his forces managed to engage the Imperial forces in East Africa, in addition to those obtained from India and South Africa for the entire four years the war was going on in Europe. Gen Vorbeck was not aiming at victory or annexing British territories in East Africa, but only to divert the attention of the British from the more important European military campaigns (diversionary attack). You can imagine the people affected by such a senseless war!

The Kiganda saying goes: "*Zoolaga omulungi zidduka; ennaku embale tezeekunya*" (If you are planning to go to a favourite place, time flies). The war finally came to an end. Paulo Kiyingi survived it and returned home alive and with no physical injuries. He was proud that he had risked his life in defence of his motherland Uganda, although the big picture was that he fought for the survival of the British Empire. He was therefore also proud that he had come to the rescue of the Imperial forces in their fight and destruction of the German forces and influence in East Africa. He was decorated with a war medal and some other accolades for his bravery during the war. It will be remembered by those who saw him that every year at the war veterans' march (*okukumba kwa Bakawonawo*), PK used to don the medals on his veteran's uniform and march, showing off his valour. One unique gift or quality PK acquired from that war was a love for walking with speed and zeal like a marching soldier in military drill. He loved walking so much to the point of disliking and despising riding bicycles.

In early January 2002 when I visited Kenya, I met one gentleman Andrew Mwanyika Mwashigadi who resides in a village called Mgange in the Taita hills near Mt Kilimanjaro. His father too fought in World War 1. He related the following story to me about the First World War: "My father, Mzee Mwashigadi (1892-1976), also fought in World War 1 on the side of the British. He used to tell us what they told them. That Gen Smuts was a real son of King George of England, who fought very hard to remove the Germans from Mt Kilimanjaro. But when I grew up and read a story from a book called 'A short history of the East Coast' I saw that Gen Smuts was from South Africa, a Boer. He was a guerrilla. He was a rebel". That is how cunning some Britons can be.

2.6 Back to School After the War

Our spiritual ancestors philosophised in a proverb which says: "*Gyova toyombye, gyotera okudda*" (A place you depart in peace, without wronging or picking a quarrel, is one you are most likely to return to). So when Paulo Kiyingi finished his war service he went back to continue where he left off with his studies at King's College Buddo in 1918. By that time his former classmates, all those who did not go

to war for one reason or other, had advanced two classes ahead of him. He completed his studies in 1921. He was quite mature then, at 25 years of age.

It is said that Paulo Kiyingi's going to war frustrated his academic studies and emotionally undermined his will and determination to continue with them. So when he completed his senior studies at Buddo, instead of pursuing further academic studies at higher institutions he decided to look for a job and start working. He got a job in Kenya as a Telegraph Operator, stationed at Voi, in 1922. Voi was in familiar grounds as PK had been there during the war and hence had lots of enthusiasm in that job. Unfortunately this initial enthusiasm did not sustain. He therefore returned to motherland Buganda and secured himself a job in the Protectorate Government as a Native Clerk and Translator/Interpreter. Later on he did formal courses in typing, translation and interpretation methods and office management, at Makerere Technical College, near the University, in 1931.