



# **A Dualism of Narratives: Feminine nostalgic perspective account of a KY (Kabaka Yekka) activist Nabisere of Buddu and Masculine (DP) Democratic party; rhetorical outlook of rivalry within multi-party politics in Buganda in the 1960s.**

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## **Abstract**

A dualism of narratives attempts to highlight two counter-narratives on the one hand of a woman activist who condemns the Democratic Party's disregard for her political party, Kabaka Yekka, and on the other the Democratic Party's counter-accusations regarding what can be termed as political atrocities committed by Kabaka Yekka against the Democratic Party. The woman activist provides insight into her experiences and frustrations as a member of Kabaka Yekka, highlighting the dismissive attitude and neglect she perceives from the Democratic Party. She criticizes the Democratic Party for failing to acknowledge the contributions and aspirations of her party, which represents the interests of a marginalized group. In response, the Democratic Party accuses Kabaka Yekka of committing atrocities against their members, emphasizing the need to confront and address historical grievances. Therefore, this paper sheds light on the complex dynamics and differing perspectives between these two political entities, emphasizing the importance of understanding multiple narratives in this political discourse.

**Key Words: Democratic Party, Kabaka Yekka narratives, dualism.**

## Introduction

This is a comparative analysis of two accounts decrying political improprieties committed by two camps Democratic Party (DP) and Kabaka Yekka (KY) on political activists in these two political camps in basically the 1960s in Buganda. First, from time immemorial women in the political space have not been a common spectacle in most African societies; Politics was a man's thing. In this particular paper, the concern was the role played by Nabisere in asserting her opinion and political stance as regards the state of Buganda affairs in the late 1960s. In her view, she believed that the Buganda Kingdom nation had been powerful, and was that which was handed over at independence by the British. At the helm was the King /Kabaka who had then become a head of state in the new dispensation. Initially, it had been the work of British officials in creating political institutions that suited their purposes. In Apter's<sup>1</sup> view, the political system in Buganda represented a well-functioning contemporary Phenomenon rigid, highly, conservative, yet relatively open as a system. That is to say, there was a modification of the traditional system, in a way that these changes did not actually touch, the values inherent in the system or the principal of Kingship, particularly after Mwangwa was deposed and the infant, Daudi Chwa, put in his place. The principle of autocratic Kingship then did not interfere with the practical affairs of Buganda, but there was only a transition emanating from the transfer of political authority and influence from the clans to chiefs a creation of a centre of power chieftaincy. Therefore, the colonial authority succeeded in the creation of a hierarchical monarchical despotism which was carried over to the independence era in Uganda. In this respect, the monarchy also wanted to impact its influence in the post-independent era. This was by the forming of a royalist political party to carry on its mission in the name of laying the foundation for the building blocks of a post-independent government. This was seen in the unprecedented marriage of convince between the Uganda People's Congress and the Kabaka Yekka /King Alone royalist party to be able to exert influence in the country. This is where Nabisere's account begins on the other hand there is a counter-narrative accusing the KY a royalistic political party of mishandling political affairs then. The purpose of this paper is to historicize these narratives and accounts based on the participation of a woman activist in the political affairs of a kingdom state that was transiting to being incorporated into an independent Uganda nation state literally the fight of the Democratic in order to survive the political storm that had arisen then due the struggle for political space than in the 1960s.

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<sup>1</sup>Apter, D. E. *The political kingdom in Uganda: A study in bureaucratic nationalism*. Routledge. (2013).

Nevertheless, this paper also focuses on the unique role played by activists of her time in the political affairs of her kingdom and her country, and a cross-comparison of the faction of the mainly DP party in its bid to establish a democratic state based on the principals of equity and human rights of all people of particularly Buganda and Uganda at large. This paper attempts to use a comparative narrative approach and qualitative historical methodology to conceptualise the role of a woman activist and a patriot to her King: as a political leader who expressed her opinion of the political status quo in her country in contrast to the victimisation stance given by the DP party. Apart from the narrative approach used in this piece of work; the sources of this piece of work are basically based on analysis or conceptualization and contextualization of secondary literature sources. To give substance to what one could call a historical career of the little-known Nabisere as a woman leader and Kiwanuka's career all political activists of that time.

### **The articulation of the process of evolution of women's power and participation in state politics: the case of pre-colonial Buganda State.**

The status of women in political affairs in pre-colonial Buganda state was that which had uplifted the status of royal women even well above that of non-royal men; who had to address such women with the title 'Sir'. Compared to other African social formations Buganda at least initially had uplifted the role and status of women mainly of the royal household. However, it should be noted that never at any one time did the pre-colonial Baganda state ever have a Queen sit on its throne, especially in the post-Kimera era.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the status of royal women was far above those of the ordinary women folk and the commoners. The king's mother (Namasole) had superior authority over all that of the other chiefs; Namasole is believed to have had powers similar to those of the Kabaka and the Prime Minister.<sup>3</sup> She had access to taxes, and ownership of estates and also had membership in the court in which she was King; she could also condemn her subjects to death<sup>4</sup>. The other line of argument was that the powers of state Namasole had were constructed by society in a bid for her to legitimize, empower, enhance and protect her son's dominance over the King. In fact, Namasole's power derived from the role she had to play as the protector and defender of her son; the King. On the other hand, Namasole was also protecting the little power she could acquire from the male-dominated society, while her son was still king.

In pre-colonial Buganda state, the ideology of the state was that power and privilege were distributed in favour of women royalty in this case princesses. For example, the commoner women never held land in their

<sup>2</sup>Roscoe, J. (1911). *The Buganda: An Account of their Native Customs and Beliefs*.

<sup>3</sup>Nannyonga-Tamusuza, S. (2009). *Female-men, male-women, and others: Constructing and negotiating gender among the Baganda of Uganda*. and Musisi, N. B. (1991). *Women, "elite polygyny," and Buganda state formation*.

<sup>4</sup>Nannyonga-Tamusuza, S. (2009). *Female-men, male-women, and others: Constructing and negotiating gender among the Baganda of Uganda*.

own right, while Princesses administered small-scale governments in their designated areas. Secondly, all Baganda, including chiefs, had to show great respect towards the princesses<sup>5</sup>. According to Roscoe, even chiefs bowed low when addressing Princesses on the road and often knelt when they visited their homes. Princesses were addressed by the male title (Ssebo) sir rather than (Nyabo) Madam.<sup>6</sup> Were also exempt from general rules of behaviour and speech that governed the common flock of Baganda women. The Princesses were free to move about at will and to use obscene language (Okuwemula). This set them apart from ordinary women and men. Whose use of language was meant to be Cautious.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, this group of royal women were also permitted to engage in what came to be called 'sexual conspicuous' consumption for it was socially legitimate for them to initiate sexual liaisons with any man they fancied at any time they wished. And yet the princesses were not allowed to marry.

Among the commoners; women's rights were protected in terms of the societal roles traditionally required/entitled of them by society, with no mention of the political roles played by common flock women in the traditional records. Buganda society traditionally was Polygamous. All the relatives of the wife in the marriage relationship were either fathers or mothers to her children. It was compulsory for a man to take a second wife, whom he called Nasaza, from his paternal grandmother's clan. It is this second wife who performed special duties, such as shaving him, cutting his nails and so disposing of their hair and nail chips lest they should not fall into the enemies' hands. While the first wife a man took was always his Kadulubare; she was in charge of all his fetiches, and it was with her that a man was bound to fulfil the taboos of journeying or of going to war<sup>8</sup>.

However, women's authority declined in Buganda in the 1700s and 1800s with the rise of the hereditary chiefs (Batongole) and the demise of the influence of the clans. The coming of the British further undermined their roles. While on the one hand, British colonial engagement with local authorities privileged men, colonial education gave rise to Ugandan women's leadership in local and national organisations, which provided women with a venue for political mobilization. The first women were appointed to the legislature at the end of British rule in 1954. The general view however is that the colonial era led to the deterioration of women's socio-economic position in sub-Saharan Africa. Moreso in the colonial period women were excluded from the cultivation of cash crops and agricultural farming<sup>9</sup>. Women's discrimination was also

<sup>5</sup> Musisi, N. B. (1991). Women, " elite polygyny," and Buganda state formation.

<sup>6</sup> Roscoe, J. (1911). The Buganda: An Account of their Native Customs and Beliefs.

<sup>7</sup> Musisi, N. B. (1991). Women, " elite polygyny," and Buganda state formation.

<sup>8</sup> Roscoe, J. (1911). The Buganda: An Account of their Native Customs and Beliefs (London).

<sup>9</sup> Powesland, P. G. (1952). Economic policy and labor: A study into Uganda's economic history. East African Studies, 10.



seen in the colonial markets and cash-based economy and in the urban areas. The number of women in political office remained low until the takeover of President Yoweri Museveni in 1986,

### **The contextualization of Dominata Nabisere's narrative as a Kabaka Yekka (KY) party activist.**

This is the reengineering of Nabisere's conservation to try to understand her position as a Muganda women activist of her time. She tried to defend her King/Kabaka and her party in an increasingly competitive party space where might be the order of the day. Her conservation is to highlight her position as a party activist against the changing circumstances of the time. It should also be pointed out that there were also other known women activists like the women delegate to the legislature the Asian adopted Muganda Sugra Visram (15/July 1923-29th October) pictorial archival evidence; she adopted Kiganda name was Sugra Namubiru an activist and business Woman. In the new dispensation in the era of restoration of Kings in Uganda in the era of President Museveni, she had been appointed as a Mukungu of the Kabaka an official of the Mengo Government authority. She was a strong supporter of Kingship and the protection of the person of the Kabaka. She was of strong opinion that in the 1960s the Democratic party had betrayed the Baganda by not supporting the Kabaka and interests of the KY) Kabaka Yekka/ King Alone Party.

In Nabisere's opinion the political woes of Uganda; She believed began when her Kabaka and her party had been misled in making a political alliance with a rival political party Uganda People's Congress (UPC) in the name of laying the foundation of the modern Uganda state. Initially, the Uganda People's Congress offered to work with the Kabaka Yekka party to be able to do away with the dominance or even curtail the influence of the catholic dominated Democratic party. Mr Obote was willing to cooperate with the Kabaka, he had shown respect to the person of the Kabaka/ King as a traditional leader of the Baganda people and promised to maintain cooperation and peaceful co-existence in the political space of Uganda. A quality which the Democratic party leader did not possess according to Nabisere, who added that Kiwanuka disrespected her king despite being a Maganda himself. Nabisere put it that this was a marriage of convince: this was a camouflage that was used by the UPC party to destroy her party and her King. This was envisaged in the state of affairs in the aftermath of the period after the acquisition of independence when the UPC party used her position in government to bulldoze the KY party her ally and pushed it out of government.

In this discourse Nabisere Dominata does not give her date of birth but only her name and that she was a Muganda by tribe and resident of what today would be described as Buddu, Masaka district in Uganda.

Buddu is remembered for its catholic solid domination and the background of its residents, and a centre of conflict between the Catholic-dominated party then the D.P. Democratic Party and the Royalist party the KY Kabaka Yekka (king alone). By the time of this interview, Nabisere was a grand old lady and her career as an activist had come to an end. Her account is dismay; how things went wrong for her beloved country Buganda. Her country Buganda had to fall into confusion coupled with witch-hunting of individuals due to their political party affiliation or religious inclinations. She recounts from colonial times her state Buganda under the Kabaka had been a powerful state. And towards independence all social services were available and the people were healthy and did not lack anything: For example, she recounts the provision of health services for those who needed them. According to her narration, she was an activist of the Kabaka Yekka party then. She even recounts the day of Uganda's independence; she was already an adult then. Nabisere purportedly witnessed the raising of the Uganda flag by the British authorities to acclaim the newly independent state of Uganda at Kololo airstrip in Kampala.

#### **(a) Kabaka Yaka (KY) Activists in a war of Antagonistic Rhetoric**

Generally, at this time in point, Buganda society was divided amongst itself on the basis of religion Catholic/Roman Catholic church, Protestant Anglican Church and political parties; mainly and namely the democratic party (DP) and Kabaka Yekka (KY). These two prognostics went far enough even to begin bitter exchanges of words; for example, people who were village mates co-existing became archenemies.

The founding of the Kabaka Yekka (King Alone) let alone the party's evolution into a major force in the political arena deserved attention by this paper; There are numerous accounts as to how the Kabaka Yekka party was founded. According to A.B Kasozi<sup>10</sup>, this party was founded on 24th May 1961 with the Slogan "Obuganda bufugibwa Kabaka Yekka" which literally translated that 'Buganda should be ruled by only a Kabaka (King) alone' This party was basically founded to curb the dominance of Democratic Party then that is to say founded to defeat the Democratic Party. This stemmed out of the fallout between the Baganda elite across religious divides and political affiliations. A B Kasozi<sup>11</sup> believed that this was an initiative from the school days at the King's College of his close friends who had served at the court. These allegedly formed a club known as the Kakamega to provide the young Kabaka / King with entertainment and motivation to study. These fellows were Sepiriya Kisawuzi and Masembe Kabali; these who led to the formation of the KY) Kabaka Yekka Movement. Masembe Kabali was born in 1912 his father had once been Omuwanika/Treasurer in the Kabaka's Government; four generations of his family had already served at the Court. From these core Mengo Establishment in a meeting of 24th May 1961 under the Chairmanship of

<sup>10</sup>Kasozi, A. B. K. The Bitter Bread of Exile. The Financial Problems of Sir Edward Mutesa II during his final exile, 1966-1969. (2013)

<sup>11</sup> Kasozi, A. B. K. The Bitter Bread of Exile. The Financial Problems of Sir Edward Mutesa II during his final exile, 1966-1969.(2013)

Latimer Mpagi,<sup>37</sup> Leaders met and drew up six resolutions on which was that Baganda should never be ruled by a commoner (non-royal person). The point to make here is that this party was founded under controversial circumstances no doubt there was bound to be conflict. The creation of KY divided Baganda, on the other hand as DP (democratic party) which was headed by Benedicto Kiwanuka; whose base relied on largely catholic petty peasants in Buganda, who disliked the chiefly classes the main land owners. While the KY's support hinged on the Baganda's loyalty to the Kabaka. G.B.Asiimwe<sup>12</sup>and Mutibwa<sup>13</sup> .

Basically, the Democratic Party (DP) was formed in 1956 after Mugwanya had been humiliated by the Mengo establishment (Buganda Government Authority) when he had won a by-election for Mawokota County. According to Mutibwa<sup>14</sup>; Karugire put it Mugwanya formed the Democratic Party as a protest against the treatment he and his coreligionists (Catholics) had been subjected to by the protestant Oligarchy of Mengo; which treated the Catholics as second-rate citizens in Buganda since the religious wars of the 1890s. Therefore, Democratic Party (DP) was formed as a reaction to the discrimination the Catholics felt in the allocation of political and economic in both Buganda and the Uganda Protectorate, which became the central government. And also, in order to redress those imbalances, they formed their party to fight for Truth and justice which is the DP motto. This is to prelude to Nabisere narrative of rivalry between two Buganda-based political parties in the 1960s. and they were believed to be the cause of intense rivalry between the two political parties.

According to Nabisere's narrative the antagonistic stance between DP and KY also stemmed from the fact that what she called the young man Benedicto Kiwanuka's disrespect of her King Muteesa II whereby it is alleged, he utterly said if Muteesa the King' had any challenge, he should go to his office (Prime-Minister) to see him; Yet she believed that Kiwanuka had got to study abroad on the influence and favour of the Buganda government which meant the support and sponsorship. He ought to have accorded the Kabaka (King) the respect he deserved. It should be noted that the above information on Kiwanuka is not verified. This was believed to be the time when Benedicto Kiwanuka had become Prime minister of the pre-independent government in Uganda. It was this kind of affair that forced the royalists to create a pure royalist party to accord self-respect to the Kabaka and to maintain the status quo.

<sup>12</sup> Godfrey, Asiiimwe B. The impact of post-colonial policy shifts in coffee marketing at the local level in Uganda: a case study of Mukono district, 1962-1998.and

<sup>13</sup>Mutibwa, Phares Mukasa. A History of Uganda: The First 100 Years, 1894-1995. Fountain Publishers, 2016.148

<sup>14</sup> Mutibwa, Phares Mukasa. A History of Uganda: The First 100 Years, 1894-1995. Fountain Publishers, 2016

The other reason for this controversy was the catholic supremacy and influence in Buganda especially her village in Masaka (Buddu) which was the centre of the catholic faith in the country. The Catholics were fighting back to regain their ground that had been lost in the political arena, during the colonial era. It should be noted that Masaka Buddu was allocated to the Catholics in the territory divided into counties by the 1900 Uganda agreement. The Catholics had opened up a war of words putting it that whoever was not a catholic was not a true Muganda.

“She Nabisere, frantically inquired *as if the Catholics were present on the day of Baptism or as if their Baptism card read DP (Democratic Party)*”.

Those around her at the time insinuated that only the DP members were the smart ones and all the others from the other parties like the KY were no bodies useless according to her.

In one incident where she attended mass, (catholic prayers) she was outraged when a priest known as *Father Nagoya the holy one*; during the sermon, the character of her King/Kabaka abused.

*‘Father Nagoya; in his sermon put it that; I wonder why people should still associate with such a pagan king who still goes on hunting expeditions in the village and consults traditional diviners in this modern era.’*

She wondered what kind of priest who did not accord respect, speaks ill of her Kabaka (King). Nabisere wondered how many people had been misled by this priest. This to her was a war of words against her King. She believed that only members of the Kabaka Yekka (KY) were the ones who protected the King. She believed that the stability that the Buganda state had enjoyed in the past was destroyed by the (DP)Party. In general, DP had spoiled the politics in the country in her view.

She also testified that the members of the KY party were even barred from sharing local brew (Mwenge) around the village they were segregated. They were branded as communists and cursed people (*bakolomerwa*) by members of other parties. Communism in the 1960s was wrongly portrayed by people during that period. Propaganda put it that any communist party assuming office would take away people’s property most importantly including their wives. This arose from the capitalist colonial ideology propaganda that the then imparted by colonial masters. These ideas were taken by the members of the Uganda People’s Congress and the Democratic Party.



In ensuing political rivalry; in Kiwanuka's home village of Kisabwe it was alleged but also proven that DP supporters purportedly killed a man and threatened to wipe out KY supporters from the region.<sup>15</sup>

### **Vindication of the catholic politicians' war rhetoric; What Nabisere's narrative did not say; The Masculine narrative of the democratic party.**

In this second counter-narrative basically, a secondary source is the alternative source and answer to the war of words accusation/condemnation by a KY activist woman, to the wrongs of the democratic party against her king and the KY. It is the presentation of the DP party's defence against the atrocities committed against them by KY activists; in the rivalry battle of basically the capture of state power between two political parties in the Buganda region in the 1960s. Generally, the life story of Benedicto Kiwanuka is the line of account; a monologue of the Democratic party. There was a thin line of separation between Kiwanuka's account and the outcry of the political party DP against the physical and rhetorical attacks by the KY.

It is a challenging task to give a fair analysis of the political impasse that had hit mainly the central region of Buganda resulting from political competition between basically the two political parties DP and KY the political parties then, all of which had political bases in Buganda. It is argued that these differences resulted from initially the religious wars during the establishment of colonial rule. What Nabisere's account did not say; was that it was the Catholics who were the victims of the royalist and powerful Kabaka Yekka party which terrorized anybody who did not subscribe to the Kabaka (King) aspirations. It was believed this was illustrated by the founding slogan of the Kabaka Yekka party that Buganda cannot be ruled by a person who is not a Kabaka. Probably she shared conflicting loyalties she was both a catholic and a Muganda too.

According to the narratives reconstructed by Jonathan Earle and Carney<sup>16</sup> in *Contesting Catholics*; we can have the other side of the story of competing political parties. This account puts it that Kiwanuka's Uganda was not a place of manners and hidden aspirations; it was a fierce field of immense contestation and public duress. (Jonathan Earle and Carney<sup>17</sup> Benedicto Kiwanuka spent pretty much his political career crying foul of the atrocities committed by either KY or the UPC government against his DP supporters. Between 1 January and 20 December 1962, there were no fewer than 639 offences committed against DP supporters,

<sup>15</sup>Minister in Trouble Area; Uganda Argus,6 December 1962.

<sup>16</sup>Earle, Jonathon L., and Jay J. Carney. *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda*. Vol. 4. Boydell & Brewer, 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Earle, Jonathon L., and Jay J. Carney. *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda*, 2021.9

498 of which were prosecuted and 306 convicted. One DP report noted that in Katera, like other areas throughout Buganda, chiefs used to pass through the lines of voters and threatened the would-be voters that; if they voted they would be removing their Kabaka from the throne and that if they dared vote they would be killed along with those DP members.<sup>18</sup> To Kiwanuka, it was the Kingdom royalists who terrorised Buganda fulfilling strategies to kill Democratic party supporters and raped Democratic women supporters. According to S.B.K Musoke the editor of the catholic press, Munno argued that the rise of Benedict Kiwanuka caused distress and fury among the leadership of the Buganda government for the first in history a *Muganda Mukopi* had assumed a high office greater than that of the *Kabaka* (King of Buganda).

## **A house divided amongst itself; the rivalry between Baganda royalists and Buganda Catholics.**

### **(i) The evolution of catholic Buddu politician Kiwanuka**

This narrative begins with how Kiwanuka becomes a politician. Benedicto Kagimu Mugumba Kiwanuka was born on 8th May 1922 in Kisabwa village of Masaka District in Buddu province today known as greater Masaka the heartland of Catholicism in south-western Buganda Uganda. He basically attended catholic schools; he was shaped by white fathers right from primary school and then his association with father Benedicto Nsubuga his mentor then this is the Kiwanuka who later becomes the African catholic Bishop. He also went to St Peter's Nsambya a prominent junior school in Kampala then which was run by the British Mill Hill Missionaries. Kiwanuka was basically shaped by three key catholic currents in colonial Uganda. The white fathers' missionaries, the Mill Hill missionaries and African priests from Buddu/Masaka region, the first catholic territory in sub-Saharan Africa to be turned over completely to indigenous clergy<sup>19</sup>; not to mention the influence of Buddu Catholicism, a rigorous and disciplined tradition shaped equally by white Fathers and a cohort of Uganda's first indigenous clergy.

Kiwanuka then marries Maxencia Zalwango a devout Catholic and a Munyoro in 1947. Kiwanuka the man the politician is seen after the completion of his law degree at the University of London. On the other hand, back home, the Catholics were mobilizing. The founding of the Democratic party as mentioned earlier in 1954 was to serve as a vehicle for representing the interests of Buganda's politically marginalized Catholics. The Catholics had gotten a raw deal in terms of the political space in Buganda: this was shown in the contest for Katikiro in the 1955 (prime Minister) election. The Mengo establishment despoiled the election a catholic prime minister Matayo Mugwanya former Mulamuzi (chief justice) was left in the cold in favour of the

<sup>18</sup> Earle, Jonathon L., and Jay J. Carney. *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda*. Vol. 4. Boydell & Brewer, 2021.10  
<sup>19</sup> Earle, Jonathon L., and Jay J. Carney. *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda*. Vol. 4. Boydell & Brewer, 2021.26.

Anglican one Mikaeri Kintu who was chosen instead. For the Democratic party activists, this reminded them of a similar incident the sidelining of Mugwanya's grandfather Stanislaus Mugwanya in 1920. Elected to represent Mawokota county in the Lukiiko in July 1956 Matayo Mugwanya's election was not confirmed by the Kabaka Edward Muteesa II or the Mengo government. Shortly thereafter, Mugwanya was banned from serving in the Lukiiko on imprecise grounds that he had accepted a position with the Transport Advisory Council of the East African high commission.<sup>20</sup> The argument, in this case, is that this move prompted the catholic elites to look to form their own movement to represent their own political interests in Buganda and across the Uganda Protectorate as it were. It is believed that's when the thought of creating a Democratic party came to them. Even though Mugwanya's speech on his election spoke the contrary in August 1956 that DP was framed as a national, non-sectarian party, denying it was a catholic party he argued that; DP stood for equal human and political rights for all people. Nevertheless, the Democratic Party was beginning to make inroads in Buganda, securing the largest number of delegates in the Lukiiko elections after refusing Kabaka Mutesa's call for a boycott. DP also saw a change in leadership when at the D P annual conference in August 1958 saw Kiwanuka elected secretary-general or President of the DP party. Kiwanuka on his part still called for broader empowerment of the common people according to DP principles of truth, justice, democratisation, and human rights<sup>21</sup>.

Kiwanuka confessed that even though he was "ardent" Catholic, "am not a bigot. I cherish Christian principles. DP's primary policy goals focused on universal aspirations, especially for rural Bakopi<sup>22</sup>. The background to Kiwanuka's life speaks volumes of what kind of person he was and would be or what he stood for. which probably was incompatible with the ideals of Baganda royalists. This was the very reason why the Democratic party was possibly on a collision course with the KY Kabaka Yekka party.

## (ii) Kiwanuka Entangled Between Populist Republicanism and Royalists' Safeties

Kiwanuka's political stance and choices played a big role in positioning the Democratic party in terms of finding a favourable political space amidst the confrontation that ensued in the then political landscape of Uganda and Buganda in particular. First in Bunyoro Benedicto Kiwanuka found himself in the middle of a

<sup>20</sup>Sathyamurthy, Tennalur Vengara. *The Political Development of Uganda, 1900-1985*, 1986.374 and Welbourn, F. B. *Religion and politics in Uganda: 1952-1962*. (1965 18).

<sup>21</sup> Sathyamurthy, Tennalur Vengara. *The Political Development of Uganda, 1900-1985*, 1986.374

<sup>22</sup> Earle, Jonathon L., and Jay J. Carney. *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda*, 2021.53.

fierce struggle over competing Catholic allegiances. When he attempted to align with Nyoro patriots to stabilize national politics he further ostracized DP in Buganda.

It is challenging as to why Kiwanuka's approach to public politics was actually referred to as Masculine, contributing to DP's failure to empower women's political movements<sup>23</sup>. It is believed that, unlike other political movements, DP did not endeavour to use women's resources as a tool of political mobilisation. The other parties were believed to have had women's leagues. A weapon that was used by Mulumba to attack the character of Kiwanuka, it even so, happened that it was Mulumba to whom Kiwanuka had entrusted his sick wife while on a trip. to Mulumba DP remained an overwhelmingly masculine project. Although the party had run female candidates in the 1962 elections, and in addition, Kiwanuka had supported the enshrinement of women's right to vote in the 1962 Constitution; DP still struggled to recruit and include female activists.<sup>24</sup>

Kiwanuka's personality was yet again destroyed and betrayed by a fellow catholic and tribemate Semakula Mulumba. Semakula Mulumba argued that Catholic infighting was the result of coordinated efforts to centralise Catholic authority in the state on the eve of independence by Kiwanuka and the priests. Mulumba also went on to question the moral legitimacy of Benedicto Kiwanuka's leadership and the significance of the Catholic priesthood. Mulumba called on all Catholic priests to question Kiwanuka's ill motives. Mulumba claimed that the priests were obliged to understand Benedicto beyond the surface, to know him as he Mulumba did; for him, Kiwanuka was a man of uncontrollable rage, jealousy and envy, treachery and hypocrisy and one who uses others to achieve his selfish ends<sup>25</sup> Kiwanuka on the other did not remain salient he used the catholic press Munno to delegitimize Mulumba, he castigated that even though Mulumba was in the United Kingdom he had failed to visit Muteesa for two months while in exile and yet he had spent most of his time in the United Kingdom; engaged in criticising the Catholic church and catholic priests. Kiwanuka also reminded Mulumba, that he was in charge of the Bataka clan leaders and that he had the responsibility of sending musical instruments to the Kabaka in exile, which Mulumba was instructed to arrange for them to be played, a task that Mulumba failed to do. That he was a great liar who could even make one believe a very obvious lie.<sup>26</sup> These were rhetorical battles intended not only to discredit Kiwanuka as a person but the democratic party and the Catholics as well.

<sup>23</sup> Earle, Jonathon L., and Jay J. Carney. *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda.*, 2021.140

<sup>24</sup> Aili Tripp, *Women and politics in Uganda* (madison: University of Wisconsin Press,2000)p.40,p46.

<sup>25</sup> Earle, Jonathon L., and Jay J. Carney. *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda.*, 2021.145-6

<sup>26</sup> B. Kiwanuka Munno 22 March 1960



**(iii) Kiwanuka war of words with catholic royalism**

This time around DP's war is seen in the war of words between Kiwanuka and a fellow Muganda catholic royalist and activist. Aloysius Darlington Lubowa was Buganda's most influential Catholic royalistic. His work was purportedly to mobilise Catholics for the royalistic party Kabaka Yekka. Lubowa was a co-founder of the popular Luganda newspaper Uganda Eyogera. 'Uganda Speaks' which was used to campaign for the return of the Kabaka from exile. Lubowa's perspective was that Baganda subjects should be protected under the authority of the kingship and that Buganda did not want to do anything to compromise the authority of the Lukiiko which had secured Buganda's privileged status in Uganda for over fifty years. Lubowa used his newspaper to publicly shame Catholic chiefs for failing to support the exiled kabaka. In one article, the catholic chief of Buddu, the Pokino, was ridiculed for obstructing fundraisers to support Muteesa:

The Pokino has declared at Bukoto, Masaka, that he will deal seriously with people found collecting for the subsistence of the Kabaka in exile.

*'Does the pokino wish the people to forget the Kakaba'*<sup>27</sup>

Lubowa maintained that Catholics had a responsibility to uphold the integrity of Buganda and the Kabaka; Only kings and their parliaments were equipped to govern the affairs of the state.

*What kind of Muganda are you to allow Benedicto Kiwanuka or any other person to sit over the Lion'. His Highness, the Kabaka of Buganda, as the DP is proposing*<sup>28</sup>

Lubowa perceived the Democratic party as the one which would erode the royalist political authority in Buganda. It was for this purpose, that Mengo had ordered all Baganda to avoid any national election like the one which had occurred in 1961. To make matters worse in the ensuing confrontation then between the Democratic party and the Buganda government Mengo, Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Democratic rejected the government of Buganda's boycott of the national election. In this respect Kiwanuka became, Uganda's first prime minister this was by disregarding the Mengo; some Baganda even joked that Benedicto had committed an abomination. Lubowa attacked the Democratic party and Kiwanuka in the words of Earle for

<sup>27</sup>Uganda Eyogera, 26th February 1954.

<sup>28</sup>Karugire, Samwiri Rubaraza. "A political history of Uganda." 2010:187

attempting to replace one regime of hierarchical authority with another. To Lubowa Kiwanuka and the Democratic party were misguided prophets therefore it was imperative to silence them as quickly as possible.

According to Lubowa for the Catholics in Buganda, it would be in their interest to serve and champion the cause of the kingdom of Buganda and not of national political parties. It is believed that Lubowa represented the views of the Kabaka Yekka party in the respect the KY was viewed to be the anti-Catholic party<sup>29</sup>. Lubowa believed that it was his role to advocate for the kingdom's special status in national politics. In the same breath, he commanded county (Ssaza) chiefs in the catholic counties of *Buddu*, *Busujju*, *Buvuma*, *Mawogola* and *Mawokota* to resist DP and back KY. These in turn were supposed to command the lower chiefs (sub-county) chiefs (Ggombola) and Parish (Muluka) chiefs to do likewise.<sup>30</sup>

The results of Lubowa's work were seen in the election results especially those of 1962 in which Buganda did not boycott the low percentages in Buddu 22%; Busujju, 10%, Buvuma, 45%; Mawogola, 14% Mawakota 22% were indicative of that Democratic party had failed to secure majority catholic regions of Buganda<sup>31</sup>.

### **Explosion and Proliferation of political violence in Buganda region.**

In the subsequent period for the following 1962 Benedicto Kiwanuka called upon his DP supporters and his fellow Ugandans to embrace a politics of resistance a statement that could have been wrongly interpreted by his rival political opponents at the time to draw down a line of confrontation. On the part of the KY, this had far-reaching episodes of political violence against members of DP, especially after when DP decided to its own path first by not joining Baganda royalists in boycotting national elections beginning as early as 1961. Its members were expelled from the Lukiiko while hundreds of protestors denounced Kiwanuka as a traitor to the Kabaka; even one DP member was physically ejected and manhandled by the crowd. The Baganda who had registered to vote faced death threats, there were even incidences of slashing of coffee trees and the burning homes of the DP supporters. In fact, there were over 100 police reports on political intimidation filed between September and November back in 1960<sup>32</sup>. Matters went out of hand in March 1961 legislative council (Legco) elections period; When 75 per cent majority of the Lukiiko members passed a resolution condemning registrant as 'traitors' to Buganda, who rebelled against the Kabaka and the Lukiiko. This

<sup>29</sup> Welbourn, F. B. Religion and politics in Uganda: 1952-1962. *EAPH historical studies*, (1965:62 and Low, Donald Anthony. Buganda in modern history. Univ of California Press, 1971:54

<sup>30</sup> Earle, J. L., & Carney, J. J. . *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda*. (2021:160

<sup>31</sup> Welbourn, F. B. Religion and politics in Uganda: 1952-1962. *EAPH historical studies*, (1965) and Uganda Argus, 24 February 1962.

<sup>32</sup> (Uganda Argus 1960)

resolution went very in promising that those who disregarded the above directives of the Lukiiko would never be able to build a home in Buganda; in other words, such fellows were promised excommunication from their homeland Buganda.<sup>33</sup> As already noted, violence grew worse also after Kiwanuka's ultimately futile stand against indirect elections in Buganda at the Lancaster House conference in London in September-October 1961. In mid-October, a mob of KY supporters marched on DP homes, and in November thousands of coffee and banana trees belonging to DP sympathizers; were slashed with crowds chanting 'We shall kill you because you are traitors of this country. Acts of violence included the burning of catholic schools that were affiliated with the party. There was also the theft of animals and threatening party members with decapitation. The aim of these acts was to intimidate or intimidation which in its basic form meant to instil fear among the DP party members.<sup>34</sup>

As the February 1962 Lukiiko elections approached, anti-DP intimidation increased. Highlights included KY's burning of DP's flag in effigy; the beating arrest, and imprisonment of five DP members, allegedly on Kabaka's orders; and the burning of two catholic schools with threats of worse actions if Benedicto Kiwanuka was elected<sup>35</sup>. In total forty incidents of anti-DP, KY violence were reported to police headquarters in Kampala in early 1962, including arson, death threats, assault, theft, and the slashing of trees

One line of reasoning would put that DP (Democratic Party) played the Victim card just as the KY (Kabaka Yekka) had done in her narrative. This would illustrate itself Gilbert Mulindwa's violence narrative. That his home was in the village of *Nantabuliriwa* in the Protestant County of *Kyaggwe*. He was allegedly accused of participating in laying down the electoral strategies of the DP party. In his account, Mulindwa told a harrowing ordeal during which the local parish chief marshalled 750 KY patriots who surrounded Mulindwa's home. The crowd, according to Mulindwa's account was even accompanied by a Buganda Government police officer who donned a hat that had on it the party image of KY (Kabaka Yekka) and had big Knives with him<sup>36</sup>.; Purportedly the chief and police officer announced that it was now time for the Kabaka, the of Buganda, to 'kill the red ant' *Kabaka atte nabbe*' One group entered into the home and apprehended all of the men, who were accused of being DP sympathizers who were then escorted to a local jail and incarcerated on charges of treason. The women and children ran into a nearby forest. A group of KY supporters then used iron bars to demolish the home, after which the doors and windows were set on fire.

<sup>33</sup> (Uganda Argus 1961).

<sup>34</sup> (Chief threatened to 'chop off' DP men's heads 'Uganda Argus 2 February 1962).

<sup>35</sup> (Public Hanging Uganda Argus, 10 January 1962:172; DP men' beaten up and arrested'' Uganda Argus 7 February 1962'school burnt down)

<sup>36</sup> BNA CO 882 2425/6 Gilbert Mulindwa to Colonial Secretary,6 April 1962 in (Jonathan Earle and Carney 2021.173)

Mulindwa himself was severely beaten. Mulindwa described in detail ‘the blood that streamed all over me’ and that’s why Mulindwa requested for the colonial government to evacuate him to some other place<sup>37</sup>. Mulindwa was but one of the 2000 DP activists systemically targeted in February during local elections to the Lukiiko. It is also argued that clearly, the Buganda Government Mengo was in support of these acts against DP party supporters. The DP party activities believed that these acts were intended to wipe out DP from Buganda completely.

No wonder DP was defeated heavily in the subsequent elections; for the whole of the year 1962 DP decried colossal losses Kiwanuka highlighted how the chiefs’ control of the electoral process enabled them to threaten voters; there even incidents where electoral officials sealed and resealed ballot boxes and vowed to burn or behead those who ‘voted for the hoe’ (a prominent DP symbol). Yakka sweep into power: influence by chiefs alleged by DP, Uganda Argus 24 February 1962. Furthermore, in the days following the National Assembly elections, anti-DP violence continued unabated. A KY mob chased a DP supporter into the bush and killed him, later raping his wife.<sup>38</sup>

### **Bishop Kiwanuka the arbitrator: As Buganda State crushes DP and catholic influence in the Buganda political landscape.**

This was the exhibition of Bishop Kiwanuka’s dissatisfaction with the way things were going; and this was through writing a pastoral letter titled: *The Church and State; Guiding Principal November 1961*<sup>39</sup>

The bishop as a religious leader in the nation of Uganda felt it was his duty to arbitrate in the impasse that was caused by the enmity between traditionalism /Royalty and Catholicism and untold violence in Buganda. For quite some time even though the catholic church had helped in the upbringing of most catholic Politicians. The church tended to stay aloof from politics. This was the first time a powerful church leader of the catholic church directly comment and advise on political matters. It is thought because of his catholic DP, the flock to which he was politically inclined were been oppressed by the Mengo government then. As for the Anglican or protestant side for them it is believed enjoyed the favour of the state, they were even the advisers of the rulers of Buganda. It is alleged that; it is the colonial state that had constructed this framework of operation in favour of its own protestant church officials and in turn empowered protestant statesmen or

<sup>37</sup> (Jonathan Earle and Carney 2021.173).

<sup>38</sup>DP man killed by the crowd; Uganda Argus, 2 May 1962.

<sup>39</sup> PASTORAL LETTER OF THE MOST REV. ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH KIWANUKA, D.D., ARCHBISHOP OF LUBAGA (UGANDA) CHURCH AND STATE Guiding Principles November 1961



politicians. In this case, the protestants just as they had in the period of religious wars in Buganda, had allied themselves with the royalists to compete for state power, therefore the bishop's letter was seen as an attempt to create some semblance of order in the political space in Buganda region.

So, the bishop put that in his view the monarchy of Buganda should be just like the one of Britain; should not directly be involved in partisan politics; in his view Buganda's monarchy should have been a constitutional monarchy. In his view the King was not King enough to support just a faction of his people; he was supposed to be King of all the people. To him, he did not like the slogan 'Kabaka Yekka' King Alone this was divisive of the people of Buganda. By involving himself in politics the King was digging his own grave and putting an end to Kingship in Buganda. By supporting only, a section of his people; what he was doing was not right. According to the Bishop's letter, those who were supporting Kabaka's initiative to join party politics were traitors to the Kabaka and their own country. He noted not all Catholics were targeted for violence but those who supported (DP). He urged Catholic voters should be open and choose selfless, Godfearing leaders of high moral character who fought for religion's role in government and the nation. Leaders who struggle for truth and justice in this people will everywhere help Buganda and Uganda unite and stand together as brothers. To some, in this way, he was indirectly endorsing the DP party as the party for Catholics. On the other hand, he put it that those of KY and others who flatter themselves that they are the defenders of the throne and the King are the one who will spoil our royalty by dragging the King in the backwash of politics in his words.

### **Conclusion**

As regards Nabisere's career is that remorse about how her own people failed to understand the importance of nationhood under the leadership of the kabaka ship which eventually degenerated into political violence. Religious leaders of her own professed faith catholic rejected her king's party. Nabisere as a woman activist from the Kabaka Yekka party, as representative of her party's perspective, voiced her concerns about the violence allegedly perpetrated by the Democratic Party. This concern highlighted the importance of non-violent means of political expression and emphasized the need for peaceful dialogue to address the issues of the time. This counter-narrative sought to expose the Democratic Party's alleged role in fomenting violence and urged for a more inclusive and democratic political environment.

On the other hand, the Democratic Party's accusations of atrocities committed by the Kabaka Yekka party in the 1960s painted a different picture. They alleged that the Kabaka Yekka party, with its close association with traditional institutions and ethnic identities, and its use of state power and resources at hand then, had engaged in acts of violence and suppression against dissenting voices. The Democratic Party's counter-

narrative aimed to expose the alleged human rights abuses committed by the Kabaka Yekka party and highlight the need for justice and accountability.

It is important to note that historical narratives are often shaped by political interests and perspectives. The events and actions of the 1960s were undoubtedly complex and influenced by multiple factors, including ethnic tensions, political rivalries, and socioeconomic challenges religious rivalries and colonial legacies. The differing accounts presented by the Kabaka Yekka party and the Democratic Party reflect the deep-seated divisions and power struggles that characterized Ugandan politics during that period.

Finally, the counter-narratives presented by women activists from the Kabaka Yekka party and the counter-accusations made by the Democratic Party shed light on the complexities and challenges of Ugandan politics in the 1960s. They remind us of the importance of addressing historical injustices, promoting dialogue, and striving for a society built on the principles of democracy, human rights, and social justice. Only by understanding and reconciling these narratives can we pave the way for a better future for all Ugandans.

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