



CONCEPT NOTE

THE NSIBIRWA ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE

Yusuf Lule Central Teaching Facility Auditorium
09th November 2023 | 14:00—17:00 PM

TOPIC: “Situating the Role and Relevance of Cultural Institutions in Modern Uganda.”

0.01 INTRODUCTION:

Martin Luther Nsibirwa is a celebrated patron and forefather of Makerere University. In 1945, Martin Luther Nsibirwa defied the odds and public protests from the Baganda and aided the colonial administrative agenda to expand Makerere College. At the cost of his life, Martin Luther Nsibirwa passed a decree that gave Makerere the land on which it stands today.

By virtue of this great and noble act, Makerere College was able to expand and gain University Status in 1970 becoming the premier University of East Africa. Owek. Nsibirwa’s selfless gestures didn’t stop at giving Makerere College land for expansion, he also gave part of his own land in Mulago to the University for the construction of a dormitory for the School of Nursing. His gestures portrayed his belief in education.

It is upon this noble background that we honour and celebrate the life and contribution of the late Katikkiro of Buganda, Martin Luther Nsibirwa through an annual public lecture dubbed, The Annual Nsibirwa Public Lecture.

The Inaugural Annual Nsibirwa Public lecture was held on 6th May 2022, in commemoration of 100 years of excellent service to humanity. The lecture, held under the theme, “Revisiting the life of the Late Katikkiro Nsibirwa in the lenses of Makerere at 100 years: The contributions of cultural institutions in engendering public goods,” was delivered by Owekitibwa Charles Peter Mayiga, the Katikkiro of Buganda.

In his address, he noted, “Nsibirwa, an accomplished and foresighted administrator, who as you shall recall, had no formal missionary education himself, saw it fit to compulsorily acquire the land. He did this because it was the right and wise thing to do. He did it even though it was unpopular at the time. That was the result of his training and his vast experience as an administrator. He paid for this decision with his life.”

He further noted that Nsibirwa’s name, has therefore always been closely associated with the history of the establishment of the modern Makerere University. Indeed, in 1996, a Hall of Residence was renamed after him, an action which resonates with the decolonization movement of the 21st Century.

0.02 ABOUT THE NSIBIRWA ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE:

The Annual Nsibirwa Public Lecture was established as part of the Makerere @100 celebrations, to celebrate the life and martyrdom of the Late Katikkiro of Buganda Kingdom, Martine Luther Nsibirwa. As Makerere strives to become a research-led university, we continue to host the Nsibirwa Public lecture annually not only to celebrate a life that stands tall in the history of Makerere but also to spark debate and intellectual discourse.

This year, the Nsibirwa Annual Public Lecture will be held under the theme, “**Situating the Role and Relevance of Cultural Institutions in Modern Uganda.**” The Public Lecture will be delivered by **Owekitibwa Apollo Nelson Makubuya.**

Owek. Apollo Makubuya, in this year’s public lecture, seeks to delve into a critical and timely exploration of the significance of cultural institutions in the rapidly evolving socio-cultural landscape of Uganda. Uganda, often referred to as the “Pearl of Africa,” is renowned for its rich and diverse cultural heritage, comprising over 56 distinct ethnic groups, each with its unique traditions, languages, art forms, and historical narratives. This cultural mosaic has played a pivotal role in shaping the identity and character of the nation.

The cultural fabric of Uganda has undergone a transformation spanning pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras. Each of these distinct phases has introduced profound alterations and dynamic shifts that have reshaped cultural institutions from their traditional forms, as understood by previous generations.

The re-instatement of cultural institutions in Uganda in 1993, particularly the revival of traditional kingdoms, has brought about a multitude of crucial facets of relevance in the post-colonial era. These institutions serve as stewards of Uganda's cultural heritage, preserving and transmitting traditional knowledge, languages, customs, and art. They foster a sense of national identity, unity, and cultural diplomacy, playing key roles in economic development through cultural tourism and the creative industry. Additionally,

they have historical significance in governance and conflict resolution, contribute to community development, promote native languages, offer educational and research opportunities, adapt traditional practices to contemporary challenges, and empower local communities, making them dynamic and influential forces in shaping modern Ugandan society.

Over the years, with the ever-changing global dynamics, Uganda has undergone significant transformations, both in its urban and rural settings. The forces of globalization, technological advancements, migration, and changing demographics have presented new challenges and opportunities to not only the preservation, promotion, and adaptation of traditional cultural institutions but also to the relevance of cultural institutions in today's modern society. While globalization has brought about access to new ideas, technologies, and ways of life, it has also posed threats to indigenous cultures, languages, and customs.

0.03 OBJECTIVES OF THE ANNUAL NSIBIRWA PUBLIC LECTURE:

The following will be the objectives of the lecture;

- 1) To commemorate and celebrate the selfless life and contribution of the Late Martin Luther Nsibirwa, whose contribution provided a home to Makerere University.
- 2) To promote a deeper understanding and appreciation among attendees regarding the historical significance, evolution, and diverse functions of cultural institutions in Uganda, emphasizing their role in shaping the nation's identity and cultural diversity.
- 3) To critically examine the contemporary challenges and opportunities faced by cultural institutions in the context of modern Uganda, including the impact of globalization, urbanization, and technology, as well as the potential economic, social, and diplomatic contributions of these institutions.
- 4) To generate insights and recommendations for policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders on how to better support and engage with cultural institutions to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness in preserving Uganda's cultural heritage, fostering unity, and contributing to national development in the 21st century.
- 5) To facilitate Makerere University's unique agenda to be a research-led University in the next 100 years as we effectively contribute to the production of knowledge.

0.04 EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1. **Heightened Awareness and Appreciation:** Attendees will develop a deeper appreciation of Uganda's cultural heritage and a better understanding of the importance of cultural institutions in a modern Ugandan society.
2. **Informed Decision-Making:** Policymakers and cultural leaders will gain valuable insights to inform decision-making and advocacy for policies supporting cultural institutions, which will strengthen their impact on national identity, unity, and development.
3. **Community Engagement:** The lecture is expected to inspire increased community engagement with cultural institutions, fostering a sense of empowerment and motivation for active participation in cultural preservation, thereby strengthening community bonds and enriching Ugandan culture.

0.05 THE STRUCTURE/METHODOLOGY:

The lecture hosted by the Advancement Office under the Office of the Vice Chancellor will be a 4-hour event, aimed at honoring the wonderful life journey of the Late Nsibirwa and his contribution to Makerere University as we investigate the theme of the day, "Situating the Role and Relevance of Cultural Institutions in Modern Uganda" The keynote speaker, Owek. Apollo Nelson Makubuya will have a 45 minutes' moment to unpack the theme.

After the delivery of the keynote address, a **moderated session** with the keynote speaker will continue to assist shade more light to the audience, on the key outcomes of the address. The public/audience will then be accorded a 30-minute question and answer session to make contributions, observations, and any other matters arising.

The audience consisting of 300 participants will be composed of Makerere University's members of the Council, Senate, Management, staff, students, and other guests.

Lastly, the lecture will also include **an online engagement** on all University social media platforms which will provide an opportunity for the wider Makerere University's stakeholders to follow the lecture proceedings.

END.