

Cc: Sankofa African Cultural Centre



Jaramogi Khalfani Adofo Odhiambo
0775 683854, 0759 092658 ajaramogikhalfani@ieee.org
ajaramogikhalfani@outlook.com | ajaramogikhalfani@gmail.com
B.E Mechatronics and Biomedical Engineering, Kyambogo Univ, Ug

**Tribalism vis-a-vis the “Unnecessary” Need for Tolerance
(A Personal Perspective)**

Is there real tribalism amongst Afrakan communities? Owing to our history, must Afrakans be lectured on tolerance and co-existence? Why is tribalism prevalent amongst the “Educated?”

I pose the 3 fundamental questions as a guide to my argument; from my perception of things as a Ugandan toddler whose pattern of thought and action is driven by his accumulated consciousness. I tend to perceive tribalism as something personal to individuals that practice it, as some people’s belief (and way of life) that is often motivated by their knowledge-deficiencies! Such misguided beliefs are; as a matter of fact disastrous and hinder community development

Once brought into conversation about people's values and beliefs as related to our communities' development, I usually choose to take such development/transformation as a struggle, a liberation process; in which unity must not require uniformity. What's worth noting (what the perpetrators of tribalism fail to appreciate) is that we can still stand together while preserving our separate qualities, which could actually serve to enhance further the objective of transforming our respective societies

However, I think it's of urgency that we first examine the roots of such rotten and anti-Afrakan sectarian beliefs; which were unheard of amongst pre-colonial Afrakan society. This brings me to my 4th, 5th & 6th questions: Why were there no such kind of sectarian tendencies amongst the so-called "Primitive" Afrakan pre-colonial societies? How have all these terms (racism, tribalism, and sectarianism) now become part of our daily vocabulary? Could it be by design?

What did our alien invaders instill in us to make us hate each other and justifiably appreciate such nonsense? Is it the "civilization" we received from them that stripped us off our Afrakanness? Is it the religious beliefs or the education system? You could have a different opinion about that but I'll wholly attribute the mess to the education systems that we adopted from our invaders

In line with the Afrakan ancient philosophy of Nation Building; Ubuntu, Education merely meant (and ought to mean) the application of one's knowledge for the benefit of the collective which in turn would benefit the individuals within that collective. Prominent Black scholars have argued that what must constitute the basic part of one's education is the understanding of people rather than things. Positive about this approach is that when people understand themselves, their knowledge of things is automatically facilitated

This is quite different from the exclusive knowledge of things which does not necessarily guarantee knowledge of people; but has in fact contributed to the erosion, disintegration and absolute destruction of our people! While Dr. Carter G. Woodson talks about the Miseducated Negro, I personally choose to call them the rumpen elite

To overcome this imposed dilemma (tribalism) therefore, key concepts that determine our people's consciousness and beliefs must be redefined. Education (in Afrakan societies) must achieve what it had; for thousands of years before suppression. Our people ought to understand education for its rightful purpose;

- Teaching our people who they are
- Teaching our people what they are fighting for
- Teaching our people what should be done
- Teaching our people how to do it
- **Teaching our people that their destinies are inseparably linked!**

To draw a clear example: take a peasant (deemed illiterate) from the Baganda tribe in central Uganda. Such a person understands and appreciates the country's diversity and the beauty therein, and knows that he/she shares the same portion of the country just like his/her fellow from the Bakiga, Batooro or Bagisu tribes. Contrary, take a jobless university graduate or any amongst the employed community deemed dissatisfied with the status quo

Rather than taking responsibility of one's failures, one is quick to attribute one's misfortunes to whichever ethnic grouping owns the Head of State. This is insanity! This is what we continuously face and encounter. Whether in Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Nigeria, Tanzania, Burundi, Cameroon, etc. the story must be somewhat similar; it goes back to mindset, it goes back to the kind of training and it goes back to the worthless alien education systems which have totally eroded our motherland of her values, norms and traditions

“Education for Liberation”