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Cultural manifestation of the Ugandan diaspora living in South Africa

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Title: Cultural Manifestation of the Ugandan Diaspora Living in South Africa

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Synopsis:

In this research paper I look at who and what the Ugandan Diaspora is, with a focus on the diaspora living in South Africa. I assess the scale of the cultural and economic legacy of the inaugural generation that moved to South Africa when through personal narratives of Ugandans, I begin to understand and describe reasons for migration and the current dynamics of cultural manifestation. By means of the pageant trope, I investigated the importance of cultural manifestation and national pride to Ugandans now living in South Africa, some of whom have lived here for their entire lives. In this instance the case study I use is the Miss Uganda SA pageant. This brings me to discussions of the pseudo-pageant and how it applies to and affects Miss Uganda SA, as well as the effects of a hyphenated identity.

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Introduction

The Ugandan Diaspora to South Africa is still quite young; arriving as early as the 1980s, by 1990 there were 2,582 Ugandan citizens reported to be living in South Africa[1]. By 2013 this number had only risen to 5,972[2]. It is a mixture of first to third generations, some of whom now have dual citizenship. The later generations typically do not frequent Uganda[3], and in my research I attempt to gauge why this is as well as whether it makes them more or less integrated into South Africa. I do this by speaking to and interacting with Ugandans of different ages and circumstances. I am most interested in how this community has changed and how they see themselves progressing as a group and individually.

The move to South Africa became a trend at the height of Apartheid and is largely tied in with the development of homelands[4], specifically the Transkei, the homeland to which the largest groups of Ugandans moved during Apartheid. Today Ugandans spread across South Africa. I look at the lives of Ugandans moving to South Africa more recently, and the choices they have made for themselves and their families. I compare this to the decisions made by Ugandans who moved decades ago, specifically looking at what motivated their move, and how their lives have changed since the move.

As Part of the second generation of the Ugandan diaspora to South Africa, the research I have completed is from an insider perspective. Referrals for interviews with Ugandans have begun through family and friends of family. Interviews outside of that immediate circle have been possible because of the currency I have as part of the Ugandan diaspora community. This has not only been

1 IOM Mission to Uganda, 2013. *Migration in Uganda, A Rapid Country Profile 2013*. Bukoto Cresent: IOM Mission to Uganda, p. 37.
2 *Ibid*.
3 Kaganda, J., 2012. *South African – Ugandan.* [discussion](Personal communication, 12 March 2012).
4 Independent states created by the South African government, specifically for black residents of South Africa. See: Stone, J., 2007. *When She Was White.* New York: Miramax, p. 167-177.

productive, but also describes the network and connection points of the Ugandan community across South Africa. My father was a medical doctor who moved to the Transkei in 1991 and took up a contract as an expatriate along with many other Ugandan and east African nationals. Today the Ugandan doctors, teachers and nurses that worked in what were then referred to as homelands, live and work across South Africa. In her biography of the life of Sandra Laing, a young woman who lived in a homeland during apartheid, Judith Stone described the desperate situation: "The homelands were crowded desolate places, with barren farmland, rudimentary housing, no industry, no jobs and little infrastructure..."[5]. After being relocated to homelands, black people lost their citizenship to South Africa[6]. By the 1980s the National Party had created four separate republics: The Republic of Transkei; The Republic of Bophuthatswana; The Republic of Venda; and The Republic of Ciskei[7]. Black South Africans were involuntarily displaced to these republics created on the outskirts of the old Cape and Transvaal provinces[8]. This involuntary displacement was a stark contrast to the voluntary displacement of their east African neighbours in the homelands. The Transkei, a Xhosa speaking homeland, was the first choice and first point of entry for most Ugandans. The major influence of this was word of mouth. Ugandans who went ahead sent back word, suggesting the Transkei as a viable prospect[9]. In KwaNgwane, the homeland Laing and her family were relocated to, fifteen doctors served 200,000 people[1011]. With one university serving the Transkei, skills were spread just as thin[12]. The exception for the Transkei was that soon after the forced removals begun, Ugandans quickly moved in to establish much needed infrastructure. For many years in Uganda, to be a doctor had been a desired profession with a high income and quality

5 Stone, J., 2007. *When She Was White*. New York: Miramax, p. 169.
6 *Ibid*.
7 Bunting, I., 2001. *The Higher Education Landscape under Apartheid*. [pdf] Available at: www.chet.org.za/download/file/fid/90 [Accessed 3 September 2014], p. 35.
8 *Ibid*.
9 Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203).
10 Stone, J., 2007. *When She Was White*. New York: Miramax, p. 172.
11 Interestingly by 1980 in Uganda there was a ratio of 26,810 patients to every one doctor. See: Pirouet, L., 1988. Refugees in and from Uganda in the post-colonial period. In: H. B. Hansen & M. Twaddle, eds. 1988. *Uganda Now.* London: James Currey Ltd, p. 253.
12 In 1990 the University of Transkei enrolled 14,000 students. See: Bunting, I., 2001. *The Higher Education Landscape under Apartheid*. [pdf] Available at: www.chet.org.za/download/file/fid/90 [Accessed 3 September 2014], p. 46.

of life attached to it[13]. Around the 1970s this started to change as the economic climate of Uganda shifted, affecting the pay package of doctors and other trained professionals and causing a mass exodus to Europe and Southern Africa[14].

While a significant number of this Ugandan community included trained doctors and nurses, there also came with them teachers and businessmen. My father told me a story of Ugandans who, also wanting their bite of the pie, took up jobs as teachers with fraudulent paperwork. They were later found out and deported. When the South African community saw how they had quickly returned to the situation of under-staffed schools and low grade education, they called for those teachers to be brought back to Transkei and reinstated. Whether this story is factual was never the point in all the many times my father told it, nor is it the point now. What my father meant to illustrate to my siblings and I was the level of integration and support the Ugandan community brought to the homelands, especially from a Ugandan perspective, as this spoke to the role of the Ugandan community in its adopted country.

Prior to migrating, South Africans and Ugandans formed relationships as a result of the large number of South African political exiles in east African countries (including Uganda), and later the *Umkhonto We Sizwe* camp that was set up in the Ugandan region of Mbarara[15]. Ugandans soon started seeking out opportunities to migrate to South Africa, but of course being black people, they were only allowed entrance to the homelands[16]. The lack of skilled South African blacks gave opportunity for the trained doctors, nurses, teachers and those with other skills. With their income, husbands supported their wives with capital to start businesses such as hair salons, clothing alteration services and tuck-shops, and these also created informal jobs for South Africans. Later in

13 Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 29.
14 *Ibid*, p. 30.
15 Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 2013).
16 *Ibid.*

my research I go further into how the presence of *Umkhonto We Sizwe*, known as MK, fostered a trust and interest from Ugandans coming to South Africa.

Second and third generations of Ugandans living in South Africa are faced with a hyphenated nationality. In addition to many of them holding dual citizenship, they also have to relate to parents who grew up differently to them. While first generation migrants have made major lifestyle changes, they still have a first hand, and experiential, recollection of their culture back home[17]. Young Ugandan-South Africans/South African-Ugandans are responding to and contending with different cultural and national experiences. In my research I will look at whether these two nationalities can ever be balanced, and if not, which one is privileged, how and why. The Miss Uganda SA pageant is an important vessel for understanding this. Miss Uganda SA is a pageant aimed at promoting national pride and beauty in the Ugandan community in South Africa. Unlike the pageants of the respective countries, this pageant is about more than one national ideal. In my research I look at the way this pageant is used to manifest Ugandan culture.

Miss Uganda SA also has an online life. In the months between pageants, their Facebook page is used to promote concerts and several other events that cater to a Ugandan community. The page is a pale comparison to the much more varied online life of the Miss Uganda UK pageant. The UK counterpart has a Facebook page and a You Tube account, both of which are far more active and provide increased access to the lives of the beauty queens as well as what they promote; representing Ugandans in the diaspora. This is potentially due to a significantly greater number of Ugandans living in the UK. In my research I look at how the Miss Uganda SA pageant is presented online. I also look at other online access points to Ugandan culture available to Ugandans in South Africa.

17 *Ibid*.

I then extend this discussion to a more particular consideration of the phenomenon of 'home'. It is a common practice for Ugandans to refer to Uganda as 'home'[18]. This is no surprise amongst older generations for whom Uganda is the place where they grew up, however even second and third generations refer to Uganda as 'home'[19]. This may be a result of so often hearing our parents call Uganda home in conversation that home becomes a sort of pet-name for the country[20]. What I am interested in is how this referral influences the relationship to the country. I am also interested in the effect of this referral on the hyphenated identity and whether it inhibits integration into South Africa. Does living in a country while calling another country home affect how settled, or in place, we feel? Young South African-Ugandans often speak one or more of the eleven official South African languages; are involved in mostly South African social groups; and refer to themselves as South African while calling Uganda 'home'[21]. Is this then (or does it become) a fraudulent expression? And just as important: Is referring to Uganda as 'home' instead of simply 'Uganda' a way of hallowing the place? To support this discussion I ask a number of Ugandans in South Africa how they refer to their country of origin and why.

18 *Ibid*.
19 Kaganda, J., 2012. *South African – Ugandan.* [discussion](Personal communication, 12 March 2012).
20 Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).
21 Kaganda, J., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 12 March 2012) and Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).

Part one: A brief history.

The military wing of the African National Congress (ANC) was founded by – along with other members of the ANC – renowned freedom leader, Nelson Mandela[22]. More often referred to as MK, *Umkhonto We Sizwe* had training camps set up in several countries across Africa[23]. One of these camps was in the neighbouring country of Angola, but in 1989 MK troops were forced to shut down due to what is referred to as the UN resolution 435 which lead to the independence of Namibia in 1990[24]. In his defence statement at the Rivonia Trial of 1964, Mandela said the following:

> "The time has come in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices – submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means in our power in defense of our people, our future and our freedom."[25]

This statement was taken from the manifesto of *Umkhonto We Sizwe,* as published on 16 December 1961[26]. MK presence in Uganda was a quiet one. In fact, in 1991, it was reported by residents that members of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)[27] had been seen near the northern border[28]. The Ugandan government responded immediately, and with force, injuring several MK members before realising that these were not the men they were after[29]. MK was still quite new to Uganda, only arriving in 1989 due to the closure of the Angola camp[30].

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22 Venter, I., 2013. On both sides of the law. *Drum the beat goes on, special issue*. 10 Dec, p. 58.
23 *Ibid*.
24 Mtshali, T., 2011. Umkhonto We Sizwe marks its 50th anniversary. *The New Age*. [online] Available at: www.thenewage.co.za [Accessed 20 December 2013].
25 Venter, I., 2013. "I am prepared to die." *Drum the beat goes on, special issue*. 10 Dec, p. 69.
26 *Ibid*.
27 The Lord's Resistance Army is a political opposition group lead by Joseph Kony for the past 25 years with strongholds in the northern parts of Uganda. See: Kulish, N., 2013. African Rebel Leader Said to be Considering Surrender. *The New York Times.* [online] Available at: www.nytimes.com/2013/11/22/world/africa/african-rebel-leader-said-to-be-considering-surrender.html?_r=0 [Accessed 3 September 2014].
28 Mtshali, T., 2011. Umkhonto We Sizwe marks its 50th anniversary. *The New Age*. [online] Available at: www.thenewage.co.za [Accessed 20 December 2013].
29 *Ibid*.
30 *Ibid*.

Ibrahim Kabogoza, a Ugandan businessman living and working in South Africa recalls his encounter with MK: “I was unlucky. I only saw a few of them near the training camps... I thought I could finally meet one of them.”[31] Kabogoza has never met a member of the famous military wing, and seems regretful of this missed opportunity. As many other countries, especially in Africa, Uganda is in awe of the history of determination and dedication to freedom that the ANC and the rest of South Africa fought for. And, again like many countries, Uganda has shown this by memorialising one of the most historic leaders of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, by naming a sports stadium in his honour. The Nelson Mandela Stadium[32] was inaugurated in 1997 with a performance by South African reggae star, Lucy Dube, and an official visit from Mandela who was formally granted patronage[33]. Before 1997 Lugogo Indoor Stadium, also in Kampala, was the countries largest stadium, now Nelson Mandela Stadium dwarfs Lugogo[34]. Journalist, James Bakama, writes with pride how he believes Uganda to have been on of the African countries that played an important role in the eventual freedom of South Africa[35].

In fact many Ugandans are not only proud of their countries small role in the struggle, but also envious of the freedom South Africans won for themselves. Ester Kabogoza, makes it abundantly clear that she is not only envious of South Africa's historical feat, but prefers South Africa and will never return to Uganda. I asked Ester how she came to be in South Africa, along with her husband and two young children:

> “I was just tired of Uganda, so when I got a chance to visit South Africa, I came and I liked the place so I stayed... South Africa is my home. Except if they say now go back to your

31 Kabogoza, I., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).
32 Nelson Mandela Stadium is also referred to as Namboole, after the hill on which the stadium was built. See: www.ebubeleni.com/content/119.
33 Bakama, J., 2013. Ugandan Sports will miss Mandela. *NewVision*. [online] Available at: www.newvision.co.ug/news/650264-ugandan-sports-will-miss-mandela.html. [Accessed 11 January 2014].
34 Arac de Nyeko, M., 2012. Pastor Love. In: T. Goniwe, ed. *Space Currencies in Contemporary Africa Art*, p. 52. Johannesburg: Cassava Republic Press.
35 Bakama, J., 2013. Ugandan Sports will miss Mandela. *NewVision*. [online] Available at: www.newvision.co.ug/news/650264-ugandan-sports-will-miss-mandela.html. [Accessed 11 January 2014].

country, *eish* [own emphasis added], then I don't know, but South Africa is my home now."[36] When asked about the possibility of returning to her country of origin Ester vehemently denies that there could ever be such a chance[37]. In some cases of Ugandans migrating to Europe and North America immigrants have cut all ties to Uganda[38], but to move to South Africa and do the same is surprising to me (based on proximity alone) even though I made my first trip to Uganda in 2011, since leaving in 1991. As far as she is concerned, South Africa is the land of milk and honey for her and her family[39]. Being in South Africa is so important to her that she has never visited extended family in Uganda, speaking to them only on the phone[40]. In her words: "Here I can live free."[41]

36 Kabogoza, E., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014). While talking, Ester often uses the casual South African colloquialism: *eish*. An expression of mild wonder or frustration.
37 Kabogoza, E., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).
38 Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 43.
39 Kabogoza, E., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).
40 *Ibid*.
41 *Ibid*.

Part two: Otherness in language.

Ester speaks of the freedom she enjoys, living in South Africa. She says: "I was never happy in Uganda like I am now in South Africa."[42] Ester paints a South Africa I wish I lived in, better laws, faster police response, virtually no discrimination and the freedom to work anywhere you would like[43]. This is partially true, but I am doubtful when it comes to the matter of discrimination. In the time when Ugandans began moving to South Africa, laws such as the Urban Areas Act of 1923 and the Group Areas Act of 1950 governed South Africans and Ugandans alike[44]. Under apartheid government black South Africans were denied citizenship to their country and rendered temporary visitors to all areas outside of the homelands[45]. Essentially, we were all foreigners in the Transkei, whether we had chosen to be or it had been forced on us. I came home from school once, complaining that the other children had been making fun of me, calling me *makwerekwere*[46]. At that my mother laughed, she told me that they had called them the same while living in the Transkei and that despite blacks welcoming their skills, they were often called derogatory names like *makwerekwere*, and myths about east Africans were plentiful and believed. While there was a massive financial gain for Ugandan expatriates, they more likely became a community as a result of their shared otherness.

Julia Kristeva defines a foreigner as one who does not belong to the state; a foreigner is someone who does not have the same nationality[47]. By this definition I am not a foreigner, despite having been called one for most of my childhood. Even though in theory, most Ugandans who migrated in the 80s and 90s are not foreigners after having taken up South African citizenship, Ugandans are

42 Kabogoza, E., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).
43 *Ibid*.
44 Kreutzfeldt, D. & Malcomess, B., 2013. *Not No Place*. Auckland Park: Fanele, p. 151.
45 *Ibid*, p. 153.
46 Makwerekwere is a South African colloquial (and derogatory) term that refers to the way foreign African languages sound.
47 Kristeva, J., 1997. By what means are you a foreigner? In: M. DeBord, ed. 1997. Trade Routes History + Geography. Johannesburg: Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, p. 39.

still considered to be outsiders. It is possible that this is partly due to the fact that Ugandans have clung to their original nationality, even after taking up South African citizenship. This clinging is done through more than choosing to have a dual nationality. In her book, *Belonging: A Culture of Place* (2009), bell hooks writes about her desire to return to her home of Kentucky, and her longing for a homecoming[48]. In interacting with other Ugandans, specifically those from the first generation, living in South Africa only makes them grow fonder of Uganda. Language is undoubtedly a major adjustment when changing place. While exiled to Tanzania, Janet and Yoweri Museveni (years before he ruled Uganda) underwent the difficulty of speaking and hearing Swahili spoken everywhere around them[49]. I clearly remember as a child how my mother would talk excitedly as she loaded airtime to call Uganda and speak to relatives in her mother tongue. She would gather my siblings and I and would sometimes switch the phone to speaker mode, but the conversation would inevitably leave English, cutting us out. Despite Kristeva's definition of a foreigner, a change in nationality could not change how foreign my mother felt speaking English, nor how foreign the Museveni's felt speaking Swahili.

Many children of Ugandan migrant parents either speak their mother tongue poorly or not at all[50], but their parents speak their language amongst their friends, and in front of their children, at numerous Ugandan gathering and events[51]. Despite not having language, children are taught the importance of home, tradition and community. I grew up, like many second and third generation Ugandan-South Africans, calling any adult that walked into our home aunt or uncle, and believing that they had some kind of real relation to my family. To this day, I struggle to visit Ugandan doctors as disclosing personal information about my body to someone I regard as a close relative, especially a male, makes me uncomfortable. This over-relation to people is a cultural thing, it

48 Hooks, b., 2009. *Belonging: A Culture of Place*. New York: Routledge, p. 2.
49 Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey.* Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 84.
50 Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).
51 Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203).

manifests as social support networks that run deeper than we acknowledge[52]. Removed from their Ugandan community during exile, the Museveni's struggled to come to grips with raising a young family[53]. In South Africa, while still living in the Transkei during apartheid, Ugandans formed a kind of an alliance with each other[54]. When a Ugandan passed on[55] they would rally together, usually lead by a chief mourner and/or chief fundraiser, to raise the money needed to send the body of the late[56] back to Uganda[57]. I do not know of any Ugandans who were buried in South Africa. The volatile history of land ownership[58] in South Africa was not replicated in Uganda. Uganda was colonised by the British in 1894[59], but referred to as a protectorate, meaning non-Ugandans were not permitted to own land[60]. As a result the majority of Ugandans have family owned land that is passed from generation to generation[61]. This land is used for comercial and subsistance farms, and it is also used for clan burial sites. While ancestral belief is not practiced in Uganda, strong importance is placed on being buried amongst one's clan.

There has been a huge surge in migration to South Africa since the fall of apartheid, and especially as economic and political strife increases across the African continent. Ugandan culture can easily be lost in this bolstering hub of diasporic diversity. West African countries, such as Nigeria, may have more cultural notoriety due to larger groups present in South Africa[62], but is cultural manifestation of the Ugandan diaspora completely invisible in South Africa? In 1980, after the fall

52 Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey.* Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 15.
53 Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey.* Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 84-96.
54 Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203).
55 Terms such as “passed on” and “the late” seem to be second nature to Ugandans when talking about death. Bluntly naming death is almost taboo, or uncivilised.
56 *Ibid*.
57 Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203).
58 Rugege, S., 2004. *Land Reform in South Africa: An Overview.* [pdf] Available at: ccs.ukzn.ac.za. [Accessed 16 June 2015].
59 History World, 2015. *History of Uganda.* [online] Available at: http://historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistoriesResponsive.asp?historyid=ad22. [Accessed 20 June 2015].
60 Richardson, M. L., 1980. *After Amin, the bloody pearl.* Atlantic: Majestic Books, p. 14.
61 Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development, 2010. Statistical Abstract volume 1. Kampala: Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.
62 Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).

of Idi Amin's ruthless reign, there was a significant increase in Ugandans leaving their country[63]. The history of Ugandan politics shows the exodus happening, not as a single event, but instead in shift-like patterns defined by tribal groups and/or religious affiliation[64]. In Uganda the tribe can often come before the nation[65]. Not to say that west African countries do not have similar tribal divisions, but specifically in the Ugandan context this can interrupt a single avenue for cultural manifestation. In my own home, myself and my siblings learnt English only, as my parents came from different tribes, speaking different languages. When people ask me what language is spoken in Uganda, I like to mislead them and say: "We speak Ugandan in Uganda." It is amusing how many people take this as a given, and perhaps that is why I keep doing it. It could also be because my tongue was never trained to pronounce all the words correctly and saying Ugandan is just so easy. In Uganda we do not have the rare privilege of eleven official languages. The official language of Uganda is English. There are 56 languages spoken in Uganda[66], but the unofficial language of Uganda is Luganda, spoken by the Baganda tribe, due to a legacy of privilege gained through allegiance with the British during colonialism[67]. While the *gomesi* (Ugandan national dress for women) is accepted nationally, it is not particularly popular at the western and northern borders of the country[68]. These unacknowledged fractions within the nation affect joint cultural manifestation in the context of the diaspora.

A complicated legacy of benefiting from apartheid law and the xenophobic profile that existed in

63 Pirouet, L., 1988. Refugees in and from Uganda in the post-colonial period. In: H. B. Hansen & M. Twaddle, eds. 1988. *Uganda Now.* London: James Currey Ltd, p. 239.
64 *Ibid,* p. 244-246.
65 Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey.* Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 15.
66 My Uganda, 2015. Uganda Tribes and Languages. [online] Available at: http://www.myuganda.co.ug/uganda-tribes-and-languages/. [Accessed 20 June 2015].
67 The Buganda kingdom was established as early as 1200 and continued a history of privileged rule through the arrival of first the missionaries in 1877, and the start of colonial rule in 1894. In 1962 Uganda received their independence and in 1963 *Kabaka* (king) Mutesa II was named the president of Uganda as a whole. Three years later the national constitution was changed, revoking all special privileges available to the Baganda and *Kabaka* Mutesa II was exiled to Brittain. In 1967 Uganda abolished kingdoms. There is still a legacy of Buganda privilege. See: Gikandi, S., 1998. *Uganda's Katikiro in England.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.
68 Mwesigye, S., 2012. Uganda: Fashion – You would never escape the Gomesi. *Allafrica*. [online] Available at: allafrica.com/stories/201201060112.html. [Accessed 10 April 2013].

the homelands where Ugandans first arrived has created a close knit community despite previous divisions. This is a community with an immense tribal diversity[69]. While support is strong across tribal lines, language remains a significant division. Competition to have the most success has been high, and Baganda were often openly praised for having the most lavish lifestyles; sending their children to the best schools; and providing the strongest support to those in need in the community. Similarly, and in the context of the country of origin, Baganda are also said to have the most lavish traditional ceremonies[70]. In this research, I interacted with Ugandans from seven of 56 tribal groups: Acholi, Baganda, Bagisu, Banyankole, Banyole, Iteso, and Lugbara. These tribes differ in language, marriage customs and staple foods, among other things. Differences in tribes are not unique to Uganda, and exist amongst South Africans as well. However, South Africa's declaration of eleven official languages effectively validates eleven different cultures, allowing for (especially in the context of diasporas) trusted cross-pollination and coherent cultural manifestation. In Uganda there is one official language and what is still viewed as the unofficial language was premised on divisions provoked during colonialism, making cohesive community challenging which ultimately manifests in competition.

Janet Museveni said the following of language: “I am thankful for having been exposed to speaking Swahili and believe that having one language in our region of east Africa can be a great unifying factor for us as Africans.”[71] In Uganda, and in Africa, language often means class. When exiled to Tanzania, the Museveni's relationship to Swahili had to change. In Uganda Swahili is a language used by the police and army (as these are considered professions of the uneducated) in training only and is not taught in schools or used in business or government (it is not an official language)[72]. In a Ugandan context Swahili is disregarded and perceived as inferior to any other languages spoken in

69 Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203).
70 Wauyo, J., 2014. *Ugandan culture.* [discussion](Personal communication, 10 September 2014).
71 Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey.* Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 85.
72 *Ibid*, p. 84.

the country. In a conversation with a Ugandan, Joy Wauyo, she expressed how language alienates her from South African culture in the following words: “People come up to you and just begin to speak Zulu as if you should understand.”[73] Another contributing factor to the togetherness of Ugandans in South Africa is this way in which their language is immediately disregarded (by South Africans who cannot understand it, and Ugandans who often set it aside to relate to other Ugandans as I discuss later) despite its place in Ugandan class hierarchies. Once removed from the country of origin, any value one's language had, may not apply in the adopted country, equalising Ugandans in terms of their experience as other, but not in terms of their inter-cultural engagement within the diaspora. This separation from language limits the possibilities of cultural manifestation within the diaspora.

73 Wauyo, J., 2014. *Ugandan culture.* [discussion](Personal communication, 10 September 2014).

Part three: Gender in the context of Ugandan culture.

While Uganda cannot compare with the history of racial inequality in South Africa, there is still much to be desired when it comes to equality. Aside from the hotly contested issue of gay rights[74], Uganda is still plagued with gross gender inequalities that exist in practice more than anything else. Kalundi Serumaga illustrates this well in his criticism of a seemingly innocent encounter involving media professional and Ugandan feminism icon, Miria Matembe, and Uganda's first lady, Janet Museveni. A former member of cabinet herself, Matembe recently said that women, and women's rights in Uganda, could only be seen progressing if they steel themselves with a "spirit of determination and impeachable character" in every aspect of their everyday being[75]. Serumaga is not convinced of Matembe's ideals. According to him a woman who aims to live the ideals of a feminist icon should not be calling on the wife of a notorious and long standing dictator[76]. What irritates Serumaga the most is the use of this phrase: "I want to talk to mummy." Matembe says this in referral to the first lady of Uganda[77]. This is a common manner of speaking in Ugandan culture.

Growing up, I heard my fathers friends use it all the time, not just when speaking to my siblings and I, but also when speaking to my father about his wife, and when speaking to my mother. It seemed to be a sign of respect, even though when they came over, often unannounced, my mother was expected to drop everything she was doing and wait on them hand and foot[78]. Serumaga asks his reader, and perhaps himself, whether Matembe's choice of referral is an attempt to feminise patriarchal power and celebrate positive matriarchal power[79]. He quickly dismisses this and renders

74 The Anti Homosexuality bill was published in 2009, as introduced by David Bahati.
75 Gwambe, T., 2012. Uganda needs redemption Miria Matembe tells women. Allafrica. [online] Available at: allafrica.com/stories/201203091257.html. [Accessed 12 January 2014].
76 Serumaga, K., 2013. Calling Mrs Museveni – A letter from Kampala. Chronic Books supplement to the Chimurenga Chronic, 1 Mar. p. 4.
77 *Ibid*.
78 Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203). During the discussion my mother mentions the common practice of spontaneous social gathering and how much of an interruption they were, one culture kept her from speaking against.
79 Serumaga, K., 2013. Calling Mrs Museveni – A letter from Kampala. Chronic Books supplement to the Chimurenga Chronic, 1 Mar. p. 4.

the question rhetorical by accusing African dictators of intellectual excuse-making[80]. He seems comfortable believing that by using the referral "mummy", Matembe has abandoned, even if for a moment, her feminist ideals. I think it is important to note that Serumaga, in his description of Museveni's role in the country, refers to the first lady as a dutiful wife[81].

I experienced first hand how far female emancipation has to go in Uganda. I was told by my female relatives not to wear shorts while walking in the capital city. I was staying at my aunt's house in Nsambya, a suburb just outside of Kampala. On one occasion my uncle took me to Owino Market[82]. Like all the other days that I was in Uganda, it was an extremely hot and humid day. I wore a pair of very short, tan shorts despite the the warnings I received. Once I got out of the car to make the short walk to the marketplace, the attention was obvious. Although no one made any attempt to touch me or approach me, and it was nothing like the assaults that have happened at the Noord taxi rank in Johannesburg[83], it was still an unexpected experience. My uncle told me later that if I had been alone someone would have tried to grab me. I was surprised at how unprepared a city was to see a woman wearing shorts. I was surprised, even though I never wear shorts to the Noord taxi rank in order to avoid unwanted attention. However in the South African situation, the attention I am most aiming to avoid is one motivated by xenophobia.

I spoke to my grandmother about the traditional dress for Ugandan women. The *gomesi* is a full length dress with puffy sleeves, a broad strip of material laid flat across the breasts, secured with two buttons, and an incredible expanse of cloth from the waist down that wraps around the body in

80 *Ibid*.
81 *Ibid*: "Janet Museveni is the patron leader of The Ugandan Women's Effort to Save the Orphans, a pillar of her church, a dutiful wife. A graduate in education from the national university, a government minister, an elected member of parliament, and, seemingly, a model of African womanhood and of gender representation in politics."
82 Owino Market is one of the busiest marketplaces in Uganda. See: www.lonleyplanet.com/uganda/kampala/shopping/markets-streets-arcades/owino-market.
83 Mhlana, Z., 2012. Miniskirt marchers say 'we wear what we want'. *The New Age.* [online] Available at: www.thenewage.co.za/derail.aspx?NewsID=43839&CatID=1009. [Accessed 12 January 2014].

several layers. The origin of the dress is uncertain but seems to date back to the 1940s[84]. Some say that the dress was designed by the Baganda chieftaincy in collaboration with missionaries, others say that the missionaries working at the school in Gayazi were uncomfortable with the girls attire and had a new dress design commissioned[85]. The girls attending the school came from royal and high ranking families, and when they returned home their new dresses were so admired that the chief declared them the new formal dress[86]. Both versions have the royal family endorsing the garment. It also shows the importance of social capital (in terms of leadership and trend setting) and how this can set the tone for the entire group, which I will discuss further later on. One *gomesi* uses at least seven meters of cloth, and despite how bothersome it is, my grandmother says to me that she has worn them almost all her life, she says, as a show of respect to her in-laws and her husband[87]. My grandmother said her husband, my grandfather, would ask her to wear a *gomesi* from at least five in the evening because it kept her body warm until bedtime[88]. This dress hides the body in all its layers and takes time and strategy to put on correctly. However, despite its physically oppressive attributes, the dress remains popular. I recall seeing many women wearing it that hot day while at Owino Market. Shifa Mwesigye writes in an article: “The gomesi embodies the decency in us and the men say that



figure a: Gomesi

84 Mwesigye, S., 2012. Uganda: Fashion – You would never escape the Gomesi. *Allafrica*. [online] Available at: allafrica.com/stories/201201060112.html. [Accessed 10 April 2013].
85 Kemigisha, M., 2013. The Gomesi. *The Ugandan.* [online] Available at: www.theugandan.info/index.php/cultures/item/157-the-gomesi. [Accessed 10 April 2013].
86 *Ibid*.
87 Muhofa, S., 2013. *Wearing the Gomesi.* [discussion](Personal communication, 29 May 2013).
88 *Ibid*.

the sight of a woman wrapped in a gomesi creates visions of unwrapping her to see what lies beneath."[89] I suppose then that all the gawking at the market was the result of me not giving men the chance to unwrap me.

The image of a woman wearing a *gomesi* becomes, through its over-consumption, a gender aesthetic. I would like to further discuss this in relation to the artwork of Lilian Nabulime. Nabulime is a female Ugandan artist living and working in Uganda. She is a masters graduate from the Makerere School of Fine Art and has exhibited in Uganda and internationally[90]. Nabulime works sculpturally, and mostly with the subject of the female head or body[91]. Nabulime is counted as one of the few successful female visual artists in Uganda[92]. Female graduates of fine art generally leave professional art practice after their studies to pursue more stable careers at non-profit organisations or in banking[93]. According to Nabulime, the scarcity of female artists in Uganda is a missed opportunity to convey important messages to uneducated women in Uganda[94]. Although this may be the case, there is also an important discussion to be had about the impact the national perception of female roles is having on the visual art industry. According to Sarah Nakisanze, a prominent fashion designer in Uganda, women are still expected to stay at home and raise children[95]. This makes it difficult to keep up with the commitment and time a successful art career demands. This perception supports an expectation that female artists will not be able to commit and follow through on a body of work for a successful exhibition. In 2011 a gallery official of the Nommo Art Gallery in Nakasero admitted that these very perceptions influenced the number of solo

89 Mwesigye, S., 2012. Uganda: Fashion – You would never escape the Gomesi. *Allafrica*. [online] Available at: allafrica.com/stories/201201060112.html. [Accessed 10 April 2013].
90 Birungi, R. & Garberg, A. K., 2011. Where are the Ugandan female artists? *START Journal of Arts and Culture.* [e-journal] Available at: startjournal.org/2011/03/female-artists/. [Accessed 9September 2014].
91 *Ibid*.
92 *Ibid*.
93 *Ibid*.
94 The Ugandan Masters. [online] Available at: www.theugandanmasters.com/lillian_nabulime.html. [Accessed 9 September 2014].
95 Birungi, R. & Garberg, A. K., 2011. Where are the Ugandan female artists? *START Journal of Arts and Culture.* [e-journal] Available at: startjournal.org/2011/03/female-artists/. [Accessed 9September 2014].

exhibitions of female artists work that they can put on annually[96]. According to Jane Twinomugisha of Nommo Art Gallery: “Women have multiple responsibilities. They raise children; they do household chores and don't have the time to devote the necessary attention to complete an art piece. That is why you do not see many of them.”[97]

Nabulime has undoubtedly surpassed this perception as an obstacle in her career. In a 2012 article in the *Saturday Monitor*[98] she said the following: “Art is also a very powerful tool that can change people's attitudes regarding issues that affect them, thus empowering them, leading to change among themselves, socially or politically.”[99] Looking at *Namu*, a sculpture Nabulime completed in 2011, her focus on femininity is clear, but not overly descriptive. The sculpture is worked out of a log[100]. The elongated figure of a woman is two meters long and has a thirty centimeter diameter. While the neck and head are clearly distinguished, the rest of the body is less defined. Instead Nabulime carved occasional and mildly suggestive curves along the wood that illustrate the body. What the artist does pay detailed attention to is the patina and texture of the figures 'dress'. Sheet metal in varied shades of blue wrap around what would be the thighs and legs of the figure, and fibres are used to create a pattern of rings at what would be the breasts of the figure and again at the ankles.



figure b: Namu, 2011, Lillian Nabulime

Nabulime vehemently puts the sculpture forward as a figure of a women, holding in it the perceptions and attributes of women[101]. *Namu* perpetuates a sleek and elegant figure, perhaps a

96 *Ibid*.
97 *Ibid*.
98 The *Saturday Monitor* is a Ugandan based online news forum. See: www.monitor.co.ug.
99 Musinguzi, B., 2012. Using Art to Tal k about HIV/AIDS. *Saturday Monitor.* [online] Available at: www.monitor.co.ug/artsandclture/Reviews/Using-art-to-talk-about-HIV-AIDS/-/691232/1465994/-/hce5e7z/-/index.html. [Accessed 13 September 2014].
100 Kakanda, A., 2011. Sculptural figures reflected on daily experiences? Nabulime confronts the canon of visual representation. *START Journal of Arts and Culture.* [e-journal] Available at: startjournal.org/2011/10/sculptural-figures-reflected-on-daily-experiences-nabulime-confronts-the-canon-of-visual-representation/. [Accessed 13 September 2014].
101 *Ibid.*

woman of class and virtue. At the same time, the ring like patterns at the breasts and ankles can be read as shackles. More decisively, the top of the 'dress' is reminiscent of the top of the *gomesi*, in that it pushes the breasts back in an effort to subdue them. The metal sheets wrap around the figure, not as a single sheet, but is several pieces. It mimics the tight layering of the *gomesi* which also wraps around the body of its wearer. The *gomesi* conceals the woman, allowing only a suggestion of her frame, as is seen in the subtle curves in Nabulime's *Namu*.

In the essay *Sculptural figures reflected on daily experiences? Nabulime confronts the canon of visual representation*, Angelo Kakanda responds to the work[102]. While he acknowledges the artists intention to challenge gender perceptions, he argues that Nabulime only reinforces the visual regime in which these perceptions are implicit[103]. In his conclusion, Kakanda says the following of Nabulime's work: "...her works are gendered portraits in which the artist inquires into the dynamics of hierarchy in which ...feminine is female, weak and marginal."[104] I am most interested in the way Nabulime's interpretation of the female figure relates to the *gomesi's* control of the female figure. The artist has expressed an intention (and perhaps desire) to challenge a specific trope, but inevitable ends up repeating it.

The renown and awe of the *gomesi* is unrivaled in Uganda, and any amendments to its design are considered an insult to the original[105]. It seems to have the power to instantly transform any woman into an honourable pillar of her community: desirable, respectable and trustworthy. Amongst Ugandans in South Africa, the *gomesi* is not at all popular. While some women may own them (probably stashed away in the back of a closet waiting for a village wedding or funeral to maybe see the light of day) they are never worn in everyday life. Arguably, Ugandan women experience a

102*Ibid.*
103*Ibid.*
104*Ibid.*
105Mwesigye, S., 2012. Uganda: Fashion – You would never escape the Gomesi. *Allafrica*. [online] Available at: allafrica.com/stories/201201060112.html. [Accessed 10 April 2013].

shedding or emancipation of the *gomesi* once they leave the country of origin. This poses a significant drawback on cultural manifestation of the Ugandan diaspora. I have mentioned the prominence of other, specifically west African, diasporas in South Africa, and how this is attributed to the size of their groups in comparison to Ugandans. The representation of traditional dress contributes to their prominence as well. West African head cloths, called *gele*, can be seen daily in the Johannesburg CBD and surrounding areas whereas the *gomesi* is not.

Gender perspectives leave much to be desired in both Uganda and South Africa, however less so in South Africa due to a comparatively greater record of gender equality movements, organisations and laws. Uganda has a strong affirmative action approach with regard to gender equality in education. Up to half of the students enrolled at Makerere School of Art are female, but less than ten percent end up having a successful career in the arts[106]. This is not too far removed from the statistic on South African arts, with the majority of artists being black males and white females[107]. Although black female artists do not reach much success in both countries, when compared to their black male counterparts, the few black females achieving success in South Africa are working harder against the grain (and achieving much more prominence) of the gender perspectives in their respective contexts. As seen in the example of Nabulime's work and the circumstances at Nommo Art Gallery, social perceptions and gender stereotyping simply draw the industry backwards.

106Birungi, R. & Garberg, A. K., 2011. Where are the Ugandan female artists? *START Journal of Arts and Culture.* [e-journal] Available at: startjournal.org/2011/03/female-artists/. [Accessed 9September 2014].

107The Human Sciences Research Council, African Micro-Economic Research Umbrella (AMERU); University of the Witwatersrand; Thompson Research Services, 2010. *An Assessment of the Visual Arts in South Africa.* Commissioned by the Department of Arts and Culture, p. 116.

Part four: Cultural association.

Emmanuel Lulua is a 25 year old Ugandan living in South Africa. He has lived in South Africa his entire life. He was born here, and has visited Uganda twice in his lifetime[108]. Despite being removed from his so-called country of origin, Emmanuel has lived a life surrounded by Ugandan people, language and a perceived sense of culture[109]. Lulua said: "It seemed like Uganda has, metaphorically speaking, moved here."[110] To my memory the only non-Ugandan childhood friends I had before going to school were the children living next door to my childhood home. Despite visiting their homes, I was seven when I realised that I was part of a minority group. There were always so many Ugandans around me, it seemed like my entire world was filled only with them. Lulua's temporary reality of this unending familiarity is shattered by South Africans, much like mine was. It was the children in school refusing to play with me because I was different to them that made me realise for the first time that there was nobody else like me at my school. They brought sandwiches to school for lunch, and I brought *chapati*[111]. In conversation Lulua laments his lack of familiarity with South Africans, and describes it as a barrier he can never cross[112].

Joachim Buwembo describes the kind of Ugandan culture that feels familiar to me in his book *How to be a Ugandan* (2002)[113]. A stripped down to the bare necessities culture that has thrived in the Ugandan diaspora, this culture is more akin to a cultural personality, than a cultural tradition. I did not grow up watching my mother wrap herself in a *gomesi* every evening (or even some evenings) at five[114]. I have no appreciation for *border border*[115]; and my mother's tongue is not my tongue.

108Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).
109*Ibid*.
110*Ibid*.
111*Chapati* is a fried flat bread commonly eaten in Ugandan homes.
112Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).
113Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers. Buwembo is a Ugandan born and based journalist.
114Muhofa, S., 2013. *Wearing the Gomesi.* [discussion](Personal communication, 29 May 2013).
115*Border Border* is the colloquial name given to the motorcycle transportation system. Passengers or luggage are loaded onto the back of a motorcycle and driven recklessly and as quickly as possible to their destination.

This is an experience shared by most second generation diaspora youth I spoke to during my research. Our perception of Ugandan culture has always been the way people are. For lack of a better term, the stereotypes Buwembo sets out in his book. They have a determination to succeed in business and education, sweet talking their way if they have to[116]. In fact, the strong belief in the power of education is a trope identified by Naluwembe Binaisa in her research on the Ugandan diaspora living in the UK[117]. Binaisa is an academic focused on migration studies while based in the UK[118] and has worked specifically with the Ugandan diaspora[119]. Binaisa said the following:

> "In the home, adults repeatedly recount their life trajectory through the lens of education – as either a tale of potential unfulfilled through a lack of education, or as a success because of the opportunity of and the hard work they put into their education."[120]

Different avenues in education are perceived in different ways, each receiving a different status in a set hierarchy. Revered paths include medicine, law and engineering. Ugandan culture is about more than having success, it is about showing success. We are determined to be educated and to encourage our children to pursue education, all in an effort to be leaders of the pack; the point in the network that everyone first turns to for support. Buwembo paints the scenario more accurately. He writes about a young businessman who pumps his profit into appearance[121]. He works on impressing girlfriends, family and his community with gifts, as well as undoubtedly necessary support, before considering the growth of his own business[122]. This is not dissimilar to the strategies of the so-called endangered civil servant; or the desperate dreamer, often referred to as *kyeko*[123],

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116 Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 3-7.

117 Binaisa, N., 2011. *African migrants negotiate 'home' and 'belonging'*. Oxford: International Migration Institute, p. 19.

118 Oxford Martin School, 2014. *Naluwembe Binaisa*. [online] Available at: www.imi.ox.ac.uk/people/naluwembe-binaisa. [Accessed 25 January 2014].

119 *Ibid*.

120 Binaisa, N., 2013. Ugandans in Brittain Making 'New' Homes: Transnationalism, Place and Identity within Narratives of Integration. *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies*. [e-journal] Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X_2013_765649. [Accessed 29 November 2013].

121 Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 4-5.

122 *Ibid*, p. 5.

123 *"Kyeko* is a term used within Uganda and the wider Ugandan 'community' to denote those migrants who do low-status jobs to earn valuable foreign exchange as their primary motive for migration." See: Binaisa, N., 2011. *African migrants negotiate 'home' and 'belonging'*. Oxford: International Migration Institute, p. 5.

with the single goal of getting a visa to a country in the West; and the opportunistic exodus of doctors[124], a path my own family followed in the early nineties.

Benon Lutaaya is a South African based, Ugandan born, artist[125]. Having completed his studies in Uganda, Lutaaya felt larger than his circumstances and identified as a full time artist while still an undergraduate[126]. Starting out as a collage artist, Lutaaya built up a portfolio of works in order to gain acceptance to the Bag Factory's visiting artist program[127]. Navigating the Johannesburg art network, and gaining as much exposure to the industry as possible, Lutaaya decided early on that he would not return home[128]. He believed his career would not enjoy the same trajectory as it could in a South African context[129]. The artist made it his objective to adapt to the Johannesburg art network, through reading books and acquainting himself with individuals he believed could most benefit his growth as an artist[130]. 2015 marks Lutaaya's fourth year living in South Africa[131]. His work is now widely recognisable and collectable. Seeing himself as a philanthropist, Lutaaya uses his success to support children's organisations in Uganda, as well as arts organisations in South Africa. Lutaaya has also returned to Uganda to give lectures and participate in the Ugandan art network[132]. Lutaaya criticises the making-focused approach to art education in Uganda, he says: “I believe you should make a way for yourself.”[133] In his opinion the making approach, which is focused on developing technical art skills, stunts growth in skills needed for professional practice, including marketing and critical thinking[134].

124Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 24-25.
125Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Being a Ugandan Artist in South Africa.* [discussion](Personal communication, 13 January 2014).
126*Ibid*.
127Bag Factory, 2014. [online] Available at: www.bagfactoryart.org.za/residency-alumni/. [Accessed 25 September 2014].
128Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Being a Ugandan Artist in South Africa.* [discussion](Personal communication, 13 January 2014).
129*Ibid*.
130*Ibid*.
131*Ibid*.
132Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Biography.* [online] Available at: www.benonlutaaya.com/biography/. [Accessed 5 August 2014].
133Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Being a Ugandan Artist in South Africa.* [discussion](Personal communication, 13 January 2014).
134*Ibid*.

As much as it is a contest to exceed each others success, the determination runs deeper than appearances. I would like to argue that it is a part of our culture to to be the leader and caretaker of the social group. Ronelle Carolissen, Pamela Naidoo and Loraine Townsend define culture as a set of guidelines, both implicit and explicit, that influence a way of life and an outlook on the world[135]. Carolissen *et al* state: "Culture involves rules shared by members of a group. It is an abstract concept but is enacted and made practical through behaviours that can change over time."[136] Early Ugandan life has been described by several writers as idyllic. Winston Churchill famously said after his tour of Africa: "Concentrate on Uganda."[137] In the frequently described green land, for early Uganda success meant owning land, having a large family and being respected as a source of wisdom and authority amongst community members. The center of this success was often with the *Kabaka*[138]. During the colonial period, the British worked hand in hand with the Baganda kingdom[139]. Under British rule, non-Africans were not allowed to own land which meant that despite the British monopoly on trade, Ugandans were able to maintain a level of life as before[140]. Relations seemed so harmonious, 1958 even saw an increase in African members of the Legislative Council[141]. It is unsurprising that Buwembo comments on Ugandan politics not having much to agitate them from the beginning, especially in comparison to Kenya amidst the Mau Mau war[142], or (more relevantly) the apartheid regime in South Africa. According to Buwembo, Ugandans took up a supposed struggle for independence as it became a trend across Sub-Saharan Africa[143]. Even though the handover of power was quite amicable, eight years later the country was already dissolving in political turmoil[144]. A survival of the fittest mentality festered amongst politics and

135Carolissen, R., Naidoo, P. & Townsend, L., 2008. Mainstream theories and non-mainstream approaches to personality. In: L. Swartz, C. de la Rey *et al.* Eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction.* Cape Town: Oxford Univerity Press, p. 133.
136*Ibid*.
137Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 9.
138Gikandi, S., 1998. *Uganda's Katikiro in England*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
139Richardson, M. L., 1980. *After Amin, The Bloody Pearl.* Atlanta: Majestic Books, p. 14.
140*Ibid*.
141*Ibid*, p. 15.
142Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 9.
143*Ibid*, p. 10.
144*Ibid*, p. 10-11.

today national leaders and members of parliament who were active in 1962, the year of independence, are still active in government today[145].

Ugandan culture seems to be bent on coming out as the lead caretaker and most self-sufficient, not in an effort to help community, although that is the means to the end, but to show status. To surround themselves with people who are reliant on, an loyal to them. When this falls apart, it can be devastating, so far as to cause the link to community to break, often irreparably[146]. After moving to South Africa, Lutaaya was able to make a few acquaintances with informal traders and asylum seekers from Uganda[147]. He names only one individual as a genuine friend from Uganda, and not only has no links to any kind of Ugandan community, he admits that he would not know how to join such a community[148]. It is worth noting that while all other conversations with Ugandans were initiated on the premise of them first knowing me to be Ugandan, Lutaaya knew me only as an artist and agreed to meet with me on that basis instead. It was his prominence and success that drew me to him. On the Saatchi Gallery[149] website, Lutaaya's profile appears alongside a South African flag and makes no mention of his Ugandan heritage[150], nor the fact that the portraits that have made him so popular echo his childhood in Uganda and the lives of the many Ugandan children he works with today[151]. Lutaaya says he has no problem with being referred to as a South African and he has never made any corrections in this regard[152]. The artists perspective of what a successful career in his field entails, combined with his culturally inherent appetite for achievement, has contributed to Lutaaya's disconnection from any kind of Ugandan community while living in South Africa. Since, according

145*Ibid*, p. 11.
146*Ibid*, p. 43.
147Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Being a Ugandan Artist in South Africa.* [discussion](Personal communication, 13 January 2014).
148*Ibid*.
149Saatchi Gallery is a London based, international gallery and arts agency founded and headed by Charles Saatchi. See: www.saatchigallery.com.
150Saatchi Gallery, 2014. Benon Lutaaya. [online] Available at: www.saatchigallery.com/benon. [Accessed 25 September 2014].
151Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Being a Ugandan Artist in South Africa.* [discussion](Personal communication, 13 January 2014).
152*Ibid*.

to Carolissen *et al*, the validity of a culture includes the shared consensus of a group[153], and Lutaaya does not belong to a Ugandan group, his cultural manifestation becomes diluted and removed from being that of a Ugandan cultural group.

I would like to illustrate how Lutaaya has already begun, in his four years working and living in South Africa, to lose the distinctly traditional, and often unnervingly bright-coloured aesthetic that is commonly seen amongst Ugandan artists by looking at two examples of his work. *Pillars of the Family* is an early example of Lutaaya's work, dating 2010. In it the use of bright colour is self-evident and the artist chooses a typical African scene of women balancing baskets of goods on their heads. The artist uses collage to create the stylised figures and arbitrary background. While none of the women are dressed in traditional attire, there is nothing overtly contemporary about their clothes as the women conduct themselves in a moment typical to a woman in Uganda, carrying food either to sell at the market or to feed to her family. In a later work *Broken Dreams* (2013), Lutaaya's growth as an artist is evident in his distance from a typical Ugandan style of painting. The colour pallette is comparatively dulled. While the face is clear, unlike the generic and unidentifiable faces in *Pillars of the Family*, the work seems to depict less while evoking more. Abstraction is used far better in *Broken Dreams*, than it is in *Pillars of the Family*, and the subject is not placed in a conventional or expected moment. A comparison between these two works shows Lutaaya reaching a level of contemporary art making, which in itself means moving away from the Ugandan mode of art making, which is distinctly traditional. This traditional approach is not only in Lutaaya's earlier work but also in the work of Nabulime which I discussed earlier. Nabulime's use of basic lines and shapes, and vibrant clear palettes of colour fall within the trope of traditional African art making[154], and more specifically traditional Ugandan art making[155]. In *Pillars of the Family* Lutaaya has

153Carolissen, R., Naidoo, P. & Townsend, L., 2008. Mainstream theories and non-mainstream approaches to personality. In: L. Swartz, C. de la Rey *et al.* Eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction.* Cape Town: Oxford Univerity Press, p. 134.

154Martin, J. H., 2007. The Reception of African Art. In: S. Njami, ed. 2007. *Africa Remix*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media, p. 38.

155Cecil, D., 2014. Beyond Tradition & Modernity: Contemporary Art in Uganda. START Journal of Arts and Culture.

collected strips from magazines and newspapers with colours that he has closely grouped. The line of each form is distinct, and even when depicting the skin of his figures, there is a vibrancy in the browns he selects. The most obvious mark in moving away from traditional African art in *Broken Dreams* is the identifiable subject. The unknown, or unidentifiable, subject is a common trope in traditional African art[156]. We see this from African mask making to Jackson Hlungwane (the renowned South African sculptor). The subject in *Broken Dreams* is not only defined, but it has a clear expression and personality.



figure c: Pillars of the Family, 2010, Benon Lutaaya



figure d: Broken Dreams, 2013, Benon Lutaaya

[e-journal] Available at: http://startjournal.org/2014/01/beyond-tradition-modernity-contemporary-art-in-uganda/. [Accessed 1 October 2014].

156Enwezor, O., 1999. Between Worlds: Postmodernism and African Artists in the Western Metropolis. In: O. Enwezor & O. Oguibe, eds. 1999. *Reading the Contemporary African Art from Theory to the Marketplace*. London: Institute of International Visual Arts, p. 248-332.

Part five: Group mentality and cultural manifestation.

Uganda's comparatively uneventful transition into independence for a while looked as though it may become a model for its neighbouring African countries[157]. Based on the same principles of a core leader or source, Ugandans were partially governed by a chief or *kabaka*, who acted as the main liaison between Uganda and the British Government[158]. Education also took leaps under British governance. Makerere University was referred to as the Oxford of Africa[159]. For a time in history Uganda was clearly fulfilling Churchill's proclamation, but at the start of the seventies it all fell apart[160]. Uganda now finds itself at the bottom of the pile economically and regarding infrastructure[161], and must start from scratch to become a leader on the African continent. How does this predicament affect an ambitious culture? Through several personal accounts, including one of my own, I explore this question further and its effect on the manifestation of Ugandan culture.

In primary school one of the boys asked me if Uganda was one of the war torn countries in Africa. I was terribly offended and proceded, even at my young age, to proclaim how great and peaceful my country of origin was. Outside of Idi Amin, Obote and the tales of my grandfather's days as a high ranking police official, I had no idea whether Uganda had ever been war torn. I learnt years later that there was a history of child soldiers and a tumultuous relationship with the Democratic Republic of Congo while it was still Zaire. This without mentioning continued rebel activity on the northern border. According to Carolissen *et al*, collective cultures are supportive and promote empathy and a sense of belonging[162].

157Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 10.
158Richardson, M. L., 1980. *After Amin, The Bloody Pearl.* Atlanta: Majestic Books, p. 13-15.
159Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 10.
160Doornbos, M., 1988. The Ugandan crisis and the national question. In: H. B. Hansen & M. Twaddle, eds. 1988. *Uganda Now Between Decay and Development.* London: James Currey, p. 257.
161Oling, V., Rwabizambuga, A. & Warren-Rodriguez, A., 2014. *African Economic Outlook.* AfDB, OECD, UNDP.
162Carolissen, R., Naidoo, P. & Townsend, L., 2008. Mainstream theories and non-mainstream approaches to personality. In: L. Swartz, C. de la Rey *et al.* Eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction.* Cape Town: Oxford Univerity Press, p. 134.

I recognise a similar cultural impulse in a conversation with Joy Wauyo. Joy is a young student of the University of the Western Cape[163]. She keeps mostly to herself as she has not come across a large group of Ugandans living in Cape Town[164]. For the two years that she has lived in South Africa, her social group has consisted of four other Ugandans, one of which is her brother[165]. According to Joy, most South Africans she meets ask her if she is from Nigeria, Congo or Zimbabwe[166]. She finds this surprising as it necessitates and explanation of there being other countries in Africa, and enjoys telling people about Ugandan culture, particularly dress and food[167]. In the 2011 South African census Western Cape was found to have 3.2% of its residents non-citizens of South Africa[168]. The nationality break down of this figure is not available in the same report, however, in 2013 an estimated 700 Zimbabweans entered South Africa daily[169], making up the majority of the foreign population[170]. In my conversation with Joy, I did not ascertain her knowledge or experience with the population of Zimbabweans in South Africa, but we did discuss her cultural isolation and how she finds herself longing for certain aspects of culture[171]. Joy is also habitually boastful of her Ugandan culture, to me in our phone conversation and while detailing her encounters with South Africans who have questioned her cultural heritage.

In collective cultures individuals are inter-dependent, but in an individual cultures independence is encouraged[172]. It is said that Western cultures are typically individual and African cultures are

163Wauyo, J., 2014. *The Ugandan Diaspora.* [discussion](Personal communication, 9 September 2014).
164*Ibid*.
165*Ibid*.
166*Ibid*.
167*Ibid*.
168Statistics South Africa. *Census, report. 2011.*
169Chiumia, S., 2013. How many Zimbabweans live in South Africa? The numbers are unreliable. *Africa Check.* [online] Available at: africacheck.org/reports/how-many-zimbabweans-live-in-south-africa-the-numbers-are-unreliable/. [Accessed 7 October 2014].
170Molatlhwa, O., 2012. Nationals from 53 African nations stay in SA. *Sowetan Live.* [online] Available at: www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2012/11/02/nationals-from-53-african-nations-stay-in-sa. [Accessed 7 October 2014].
171Wauyo, J., 2014. *The Ugandan Diaspora.* [discussion](Personal communication, 9 September 2014).
172Carolissen, R., Naidoo, P. & Townsend, L., 2008. Mainstream theories and non-mainstream approaches to personality. In: L. Swartz, C. de la Rey *et al.* Eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction.* Cape Town: Oxford Univerity Press, p. 133.

collective[173]. Janet Museveni described Ugandan society as being organised first around their family, then clans (extended family), then tribes and finally nationality[174]. Each of these entities would have a head, of the family or clan. Buwembo's young businessman who gives everything to building his reputation is an example of how an ambition to lead the clan can be at the expense of the self. He buys expensive medicines for his ailing aunt and spends money on an extravagant last funeral rites dinner for his father[175]. This earns him the respect of his clan and a prominent position in its leadership[176]. In this case it is then necessary, in a Ugandan context at least, to have an element of an individual culture with regard to being a leader amongst the group, even though secondary to the collective one as the role of a leader is dependent on there being a group to lead, and the devotion of the group promotes the individual as leader.

Ibrahim Kabogoza seems to live in this culture of ambition and working to achieve first for his family, then clan, then tribe and nation. Kabogoza is a businessman who works in South Africa and frequently visits Uganda[177]. He has married a South African woman with whom he has two children[178]. Kabogoza struggles to foster a love for Uganda in his children, the kind of love that would inspire a culture of ambition for country. Kabogoza laments the following: “They think my country is poor.”[179] He then proceeds to question me on my perception of the country and its culture. He is interested in what I know about the place; what I think of the food and the landscape; and how I find the environment in comparison to my life here. I think he may be trying to gauge whether it is possible for a young second generation Ugandan in South Africa to be inspired to speak well of, and excel for, their country of origin. Perhaps I disappoint him when I confess that I could never return to live in Uganda as the visual art industry, in my opinion, is not developed

173*Ibid*.
174Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 15.
175Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 5.
176*Ibid*.
177Kabogoza, I., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).
178*Ibid*.
179*Ibid*.

enough at this time[180]. Later I meet Benon Lutaaya, who confirms my opinion of art in Uganda. Kabogoza works hard in business and supports extended family back home. He is trying to raise the profile of his home to make Uganda more attractive to his children.

Tanya writes:

> "Humans are social beings and one of the ways in which this social nature is expressed, demonstrated and influenced is through groups. Our participation in and interaction with various groups is a fundamental part of our lives."[181]

For Janet Museveni, being exiled to Tanzania during her first pregnancy put tremendous strain on her, and a considerable difference is clear between her first pregnancy and later pregnancies during which her family, and other Ugandans, were able to visit her[182]. Museveni frequently uses the phrase "Us Ugandans" when referring to other Ugandans exiled to Tanzania, and muses at Amin's threats towards them, writing assuredly that Amin's forces had no chances against their combined Ugandan forces[183]. Amin was a member of the Kakwa tribe of the northern part of Uganda[184]. Growing up I often listened in on discussions the adults would have contesting whether Amin was in fact a Ugandan, or really a Sudanese who had crossed the border undetected. This possibility is alluded to in Museveni despising Amin's capabilities and excluding him from "Us Ugandans", and it is clear that she believed the Ugandan army would triumph.

Conversing with Pross Nenghwage ahead of this research she said: "...Ugandans cared for each other, if you had a problem and you were a Ugandan, people visited you, people comforted you,

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180Also see: Tumushabe, A., 2013. Arts courses to blame for joblessness – Museveni. *Sunday Monitor.* [online] Available at: www.saturdaymonitor.co.ug/art-courses-to-blame-for-joblessness-museveni/1958856/-/kn5f0gz/-/index.html. [Accessed 13 September 2014].

181Swart, T., 2008. Group Concepts. In: L. Swartz *et al,* eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, p. 300.

182Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 81-98.

183*Ibid*, p. 97.

184Richardson, M. L., 1980. *After Amin, The Bloody Pearl.* Atlanta: Majestic Books, p. 17.

people gave you money. They just never looked away. We became family."[185] In this statement the tertiary group (nation) is promoted to the primary group (family/clan) and the secondary group becomes inconsequential. In Gestalt psychology the whole is more than the sum of its parts[186], a principle that seems to have been adopted after a diaspora of Ugandans started to grow in South Africa. While it is part of Ugandan culture to be ambitious, at the same time this desire is more present when there is another group that fosters a competitive drive towards betterment and achievement. The displacement from secondary (tribe) and tertiary (nation) groups means a new group must be formed to advance the primary group, giving it a more holistic and complete impression and enabling this holistic group to function in a way that the culture is accustomed to functioning. Later I discuss hyphen-nationality. Group functioning and social networks are integral to the performance of culture within the context of hyphen-nationality[187]. Social networks provide the security that Nenghwage refers to and the false sense of country belonging Lulua alludes to, while also fostering the collective cycles that Buwembo's businessman revolves in.

Ester says she has not returned to visit her extended family in Uganda since she moved to South Africa with her immediate family[188]. When I was referred to her it was because at the time she was visiting another Ugandan who had agreed to speak with me. The phone was passed to her. While conversing with Ester, I asked about what she knew of the Miss Uganda SA pageant and she went on to tell me how she knew participants and past winners of the pageant[189]. Ester vehemently rejects Uganda as her home and declares her allegiance to a free South Africa, but like the rest of us, she has built a new Uganda. She socialises with other Ugandans and engages with events and gatherings of the Ugandan diaspora. The metaphorical move that Lulua speaks about is as true for Ester as any

185Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203).
186Swart, T., 2008. Group Concepts. In: L. Swartz *et al,* eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, p. 300.
187Binaisa, N., 2011. *African migrants negotiate 'home' and 'belonging'.* Oxford: International Migration Institute, p. 10.
188Kabogoza, E., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).
189*Ibid*.

other Ugandan living in South Africa. The 2012 winner of the Miss Uganda SA pageant has reached a similar resolve.

Busisiwe Juuko was named the winner of the inaugural edition of Miss Uganda SA in 2012[190]. She was encouraged to enter the contest by her family and now hopes to have a career in modelling after completing high school (in 2014)[191]. Busisiwe spoke eloquently and with pride concerning her participation in the pageant, and specifically in a pageant of this nature. She believes Miss Uganda SA has an opportunity and responsibility to represent Ugandans living in all parts of South Africa, and to bring this community together[192]. Through winning the pageant she had hoped to contribute to distinguishing Ugandan culture from other African cultures present in South Africa[193]. According to Busisiwe, "South Africa has more opportunities", but she prefers to call herself a Ugandan. Since participating in the pageant she claims to have learnt a substantial amount about Ugandan culture[194]. When I introduced the Anti-Pornography Act of Uganda[195] into the conversation, Busisiwe supported the controversial law[196]. In her opinion, the Anti-Pornography Act celebrates and protects traditional Ugandan women[197]; an idealistic perspective on the effect this law has on gender equality in Uganda[198]. Returning to Swartz' statement on humans being social by nature[199], and dependent on the group, Juuko has aligned herself to all things theoretically Ugandan. This does not decide their practicality for her as a young woman, but she declares her allegiance in order to participate in the group. This asymmetry is quite typical of Ugandans in the diaspora[200].

190See: https://facebook.com/missugandasouthafrica. [Accessed 20 September 2014].
191Juuko, B., 2014. Winning Miss Uganda SA 2012. [discussion](Personal communication, 15 June 2014).
192*Ibid*.
193*Ibid*.
194*Ibid*.
195See: www.parliament.go.ug/new/index.php/about-parliament/parliamentary~news/325-parliament-passes-anti-pornography-law. [Accessed 7 October 2014].
196Juuko, B., 2014. Winning Miss Uganda SA 2012. [discussion](Personal communication, 15 June 2014).
197*Ibid*.
198Fallon, A., 2014. Confusion over Uganda's 'miniskirt ban' leads to public attacks on women. *The Guardian.* [online] Available at: www.theguardian.comfashion/fashion-blog/2014/feb/28/uganda-miniskirt-ban-attacks-women. [Accessed 7 October 2014].
199Swart, T., 2008. Group Concepts. In: L. Swartz *et al,* eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, p. 300.
200Binaisa, N., 2011. *African migrants negotiate 'home' and 'belonging'.* Oxford: International Migration Institute, p. 9.

Ugandans living in the diaspora, especially those of subsequent generations, lose social capital in their country of origin[201]. They are increasingly disconnected from the practices of the country of origin (traditional and contemporary), which causes tension between generations and with the adopted country[202]. This makes it difficult for them to feel, and be seen as, a part of the group. One of the most significant contributors to this loss is the lack of language. While language is not the largest part of culture, it is a major avenue for the passing on of culture, without it we are left with modeling behaviour in order to pass on aspects of culture[203]. The familiarity of Lulua's predicament is distinct:

> "People, they don't connect with me when I don't speak their language. It's like a bridge or a boundary that you cross when you speak their language. They feel more comfortable, they can relate to you. ...I'm usually on the [other side], after the joke has been said, everyone is laughing and I'm pulling people aside asking what happened, what did they say, and I kind of lose out a bit."[204]

Here Lulua is referring to his lack of South African vernacular. Lulua goes on to say: "Once you learn a language...they teach you about the culture because it aids you in learning the language."[205] With language one is half way to full absorption[206]. A lack of Ugandan language, or so-called mother tongue, poses a cultural limitation and damages social capital, but being a part of a close knit community of Ugandans makes it possible to absorb culture through other means. By seeing our parents conduct themselves amongst each other, we understand the hierarchies in the cultural group and how these are navigated and bypassed[207]. Kaganda considers himself well versed in

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201 Binaisa, N., 2013. Ugandans in Brittain Making 'New' Homes: Transnationalism, Place and Identity within Narratives of Integration. *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies.* [e-journal] Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X_2013_765649. [Accessed 29 November 2013].

202 Binaisa, N., 2011. *African migrants negotiate 'home' and 'belonging'.* Oxford: International Migration Institute, p. 9.

203 Carolissen, R., Naidoo, P. & Townsend, L., 2008. Mainstream theories and non-mainstream approaches to personality. In: L. Swartz, C. de la Rey *et al.* Eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction.* Cape Town: Oxford Univerity Press, p. 133.

204 Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).

205 *Ibid*.

206 Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 11.

207 Kaganda, J., 2012. *South African – Ugandan.* [discussion](Personal communication, 12 March 2012).

Ugandan cultural customs because of how he has observed his parents and their friends[208]. Kaganda's father was a well-respected teacher in the Ugandan community who has often appointed the master of ceremonies at important events[209]. Kaganda is fluent in Zulu and admits to using it to his advantage frequently[210]. This gives him the cultural integration into South African society that Lulua can only wish for[211]. For others, how does a lack of language, an important ingredient of culture, inhibit the integration of Ugandans into South African culture? I have mentioned the torment I was subjected to in school, and how my mother thought it minor in comparison to the name-calling and back-biting east Africans went through in the Transkei.

208*Ibid*.
209*Ibid*.
210*Ibid*.
211Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).

Part six: Ugandan popular culture in South Africa.

I would like to look at highly consumed popular culture in South Africa, particularly to discuss contemporary practice that would be relevant and accessible to Ugandan South Africans that are disconnected from their country of origin. David Kibuuka is a popular comedian of Ugandan origin, now living and working in South Africa. His family left Uganda during the regime of Amin and settled in Krugersdorp, South Africa[212]. Kibuuka, who holds an honours degree in finance, uses his outsider status in his comedy and, in spite of this status, is still regarded as one of South Africa's leading comedic writers[213]. Kibuuka cannot take advantage of the comedic elasticity often available in African vernacular of any kind, particularly South African vernacular. The comedian still manages to fit into mainstream popular culture, not alienating a South African audience despite his unique content. Kibuuka's impression of an advert for an arbitrary chicken shop in Kampala that claims to have recorded the voice of Nelson Mandela, albeit a very Ugandan sounding version of the world leader, amuses everyone. Jokes like this also take advantage of Kibuuka's pronounced ties to both countries, and has him simultaneously participating in both groups.

The comedian's first big break was as the winner of 5fm's[214] freshest five nationwide comedy talent search[215]. Kibuuka has a steady gig, appearing on the current affairs satirical show: *Late Night News*[216]. On the show he performs the role of an international correspondence reporter. He often pokes fun at countries in their time of crisis, including public unrest and natural disaster. Kibuuka's accent is void of any distinct African affect. He tends to over enunciate, and his scripts fit the stereotypical over-animated, loud, agitated, intense and abrupt descriptions of the situation he is

212Podium Comedy, 2013. *David Kibuuka*. [online] Available at: www.podiumcomedy.com/view-artist.php?pid=82. [Accessed 26 January 2014].
213*Ibid.*
2145fm is a popular national radio station in South Africa.
215Podium Comedy, 2013. *David Kibuuka*. [online] Available at: www.podiumcomedy.com/view-artist.php?pid=82. [Accessed 26 January 2014].
216*Late Night News* is headed by South African comedian, Loyiso Gola, and airs weekly on eTV.

reporting. He does not have a musical and homely sound to his voice, typical to Ugandans, and it does not feel like he is dragging any of his sentences out. He avoids using euphemisms or softening his voice to lessen the blow of a disaster, another trait of Ugandans as well as other African nationals. The comedy in his performance is how blunt he is. This is perhaps also how his popularity in a South African audience works. As Kaganda uses his command of Zulu to his advantage, Kibuuka has found a way to use his audible difference and lack of language to his advantage and has found a place in South African popular culture.

Popular culture is an interesting area to see traditional forms of culture being applied and adapted, as I will discuss later while examining Miss Uganda SA. Popular culture today, individually and collectively speaking, has largely become about an open and visually apparent experience. Relationships and lifestyles are conducted via a thread of electronically shared imagery and/or text, whether this is via Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or any of the myriad of online networks[217]. These social media platforms embody not only the self but who and what the self would like to embody. They also become a catalogue of life as we know it; a catalogue of culture. On Facebook Kibuuka's profile image is professionally shot. Throughout his page there are several postings of the comedian at media events as well as posing with fans[218]. Kibuuka also posts news articles, including a web link that leads to an article with the headline: “No 'taboos' for Ugandan making South Africans laugh”[219]. The article begins by mentioning Kibuuka's brazen jest of Nelson Mandela dying[220] and goes on to describe the general bravado of the comedian who tells the journalist that he is the only foreign African comedian in South Africa[221]. This speaks to the Ugandan culture of achievement and need to be successful. Kibuuka puts himself forward as a successful creative individual who, while

217Davies, G., 2013. 'How did I know I was dumped? I was blocked on Facebook.' *Grazia*, 2 Oct, p. 46-47.
218Facebook. David Kibuuka. [online] Available at: www.facebook.com/davidkibuuka. [Accessed 5 April 2014].
219*Ibid*.
220The article was published on 24 July, eighteen months before the apartheid struggle hero passed away, and during a time when his health condition was shrouded in mystery.
221Harding, A., 2012. 'No taboos' for Ugandan making South Africans laugh. [online] Available at: bbc.com/news/world-africa-18973355. [Accessed 5 April 2014].

funny, is composed and respectable. He does this by posting posed and professional shots and images of himself and the cast of *Late Night News* attending the Emmy Awards[222], an honour for which he has been nominated. His sense of humour comes across in his Facebook statuses and the web links he chooses to share. Kibuuka lists Johannesburg as the place where he is from. In his about section he has not named Uganda as his place of birth.

With my major case study being the Miss Uganda SA pageant, I would also like to look at an example of a female Ugandan celebrity living in South Africa. In particular Zarinah Tlale Hussein, also know as Zari or Boss Lady, a socialite, businesswoman and singer[223], she is a Ugandan born woman living and working in South Africa. I will look at her career through a different, and less focused on, form of social media; the use of the online tabloid. I establish how tabloids begin to shape self-image, and subsequently collective image. Zari features in several blogs, has over thirteen thousand twitter followers, and after she launched Uganda's first reality TV show based on her own life, she has been branded a role model for young Ugandan girls living in Uganda and the diaspora.

On 25 June 2013, *Uganda News*, an online tabloid, reported that Zari had attacked her ex-husband's brother, who goes by the name of King Lawrence, shortly after being arrested for an altercation with her ex-husband's lover[224]. This is one of many such public displays that Zari has reportedly been involved in. Tabloids such as *Red Pepper*[225] write about her constantly, however she still seems to remain popular especially amongst a younger audience. Zari herself attributes this to her success and good looks[226]. The merits of her music and the importance of her looks are subjective; I would

222The Emmy Awards are an American awards ceremony for television shows and their professionals.
223See: www.zarionline.co.za
224Uganda News, 2013. *Zari Arrested, Attacks Ivan's Bro on being Released.* [online] Available at: www.ugandaonline.net/news/view/14075/zari_arrested__attacks_ivan_s_bro_on_being_released. [Accessed 25 April 2014].
225Red Pepper is Uganda's first online tabloid and has earned notoriety for releasing a list of the 200 most famous homosexual Ugandans after the Anti-Homosexuality act was passed into law in Uganda. See: www.redpepper.co.ug.
226Uganda News, 2010. *Is Zari Sulking?* [online] Available at: www.ugandaonline.net/red_pepper/?y=2010&m=10.

like to argue that this ongoing popularity goes beyond the global culture of reality television and voyeurism, but is largely to do with what I argue is at the core of Ugandan culture, namely the need to be a prominent leader and/or provider. Zari has three sons fathered by Ivan Ssemwanga, also a Ugandan, who she met in South Africa where he has become an impressively successful[227] *sangoma*[228]. She herself owns a private tertiary college with multiple campuses across South Africa, a cosmetics store in Uganda and multiple properties in both Uganda and South Africa[229]; she has become more than just another Kim Kardashian[230] or to bring it closer to this research, Nonhle Thema[231]. Zari has acquired wealth and security to raise her family and provide for her extended family. She has become, as a woman, the cultural ideal of a strong clan leader.

I have looked at how a move from the country of origin can affect and distort culture and its value. I have also looked at Ugandan culture in the context of contemporary popular culture by using examples of celebrities living in the diaspora. I have argued that one of the primary traits of Ugandan culture that remains undiluted despite location is aspiring to lead and stand out in the clan. These include not only wealth and success but an ability to extend provisions and favours to one's extended family and subsequently being applauded as generous and valued, as is the case with the businessman we encounter in Buwembo's *How to be a Ugandan*[232], and also the case with Zari. None of the individuals I have looked at have denied their Ugandan identity, and in Kabogoza's case, he longs to show his immediate family what it means to aspire to lead the clan[233]. When conversing with Nenghwage she explains how the family to clan structure changes when displaced

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[Accessed 25 April 2014].

227 Kwesiga, B., 2014. Farouk: What crime did I commit to love Zari. *Red Pepper.* [online] Available at: www.redpepper.co.ug/farouk-what-crime-did-i-commit-to-love-zari/. [Accessed 25 April 2014].

228 *Sangoma* is the South African name given to a traditional ritualist or witch doctor.

229 Uganda News, 2010. *Is Zari Sulking?* [online] Available at: www.ugandaonline.net/red_pepper/?y=2010&m=10. [Accessed 25 April 2014].

230 Kim Kardashian is an American based international celebrity. See: Raath, S., 2014. Kim Hit by another Sex Tape Scandal. *Grazia SA,* 121(8) October 2014.

231 Nonhle Thema is a South African based international celebrity. See: Raath, S., 2014. Nonhle's Big Come Back. *Grazia SA,* 117(10) September 2014.

232 Buwembo, J., 2002. *How to be a Ugandan*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 5.

233 Kabogoza, I., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).

in the diaspora[234]. This has the potential to heighten national pride; however this can also bring with it the dynamics of the hyphenated nationality. According to Binaisa, "Networks are increasingly mediated through new technologies revealing the disruption as well as pluralisation of the public sphere."[235] In the examples above I have looked at online social sites and tabloids. Both of these can easily be accessed by members of the diaspora and give them the opportunity to collectively share and comment on the activities of these figures of Ugandan popular culture. Ugandans like Joy, who is relatively isolated, can participate in this public sphere and potentially gain a sense of belonging and an opportunity to cultivate social capital.

234Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 203).

235Binaisa, N., 2011. *African migrants negotiate 'home' and 'belonging'.* Oxford: International Migration Institute, p. 10.

Part seven: Miss Uganda SA

The Miss Uganda SA pageant was initiated by StarQt.com[236]. An online fashion and lifestyle business, founded and run by Stella Nankya[237]. StarQt also organises Miss StarQt Africa and Miss East Africa South Africa[238]. The inaugural Miss Uganda SA pageant was in 2012, which named Busisiwe Juuko as the winner[239]. I have already discussed how the young, but ambitious, Juuko exhibits signs of being unable to marry her theoretical and practical expressions of Ugandan culture. Juuko understands and applauds aspects of Ugandan culture, including gender roles and structures, but leads her own life as a contemporary South African young woman[240]. Miss Uganda SA has been associated with the Kabaka Organisation; an organisation that creates awareness and support for the Baganda chieftaincy, specifically amongst Baganda and generally amongst Ugandans, and part of the pageant has been focused on exposing the participants to Ugandan culture[241]. The 2014 edition of Miss Uganda SA was grouped into a single event, StarQt Uganda Awards, which was held at the Wits Theatre in Johannesburg[242]. Award categories included: Best Patriotic Person, Richest Person and Best Mobiliser[243].

The online presence of this pageant not only allows those who were unable to attend the event an opportunity see it in review, but it is also an overview of what Ugandan culture looks like at a glance. The publishing of imagery develops a visual language for interested outsiders, and members of the diaspora looking to become further engaged with the manifestation of Ugandan culture in a South African context. The images published for the inaugural edition of this pageant built a rich

236Miss Uganda SA, about. [online] Available at: www.facebook.com/missugandasa. [Accessed 3 November 2014].
237StarQt Africa, Miss Uganda SA 2012. [online] Available at: www.starqt.com/pageants/miss-uganda-south-africa/. [Accessed 3 November 2014].
238StarQt Africa, Pageants. [online] Available at: www.starqt.com/pageants. [Accessed 4 November 2014].
239StarQt Africa, Miss Uganda SA 2012. [online] Available at: www.starqt.com/pageants/miss-uganda-south-africa/. [Accessed 3 November 2014].
240Juuko, B., 2014. Winning Miss Uganda SA 2012. [discussion](Personal communication, 15 June 2014).
241*Ibid*.
242Miss Uganda SA, about. [online] Available at: www.facebook.com/missugandasa. [Accessed 3 November 2014].
243*Ibid*.

vocabulary, which has formed a foundation for future editions. In 2012 we see the winner, Juuko, and her contemporaries, participating in a variety of sub-contests, with categories such as traditional dress and evening wear. While there is no video available on the Facebook page, there are action shots of traditional dance exhibitions. The pageant appears to be a diverse event with the intent to select a winner who represents a balanced modern and traditional young Ugandan woman. The 2013 edition shows fewer traditional cultural aspects, and is more inclined to the conventions of a traditional pageant (swimwear/lingerie section, evening wear and casual wear). In 2013 Miss Uganda SA depicted pan-Africanism and the blurring of group cultural hierarchies (clan, tribe, nation) by including in it documentation of the 2013 winner going on to participate in Miss East Africa South Africa. Other countries participating in this pageant include; Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sudan. By including images of this consequent pageant, Miss Uganda SA unites itself with a broader east African diaspora in South Africa. This also contributes to the one people perspective that Joy experiences in an earlier discussion; the failure of South Africans to comprehend Ugandans as a cultural group different to other African groups living in South Africa[244]. While developing an image of pan-Africanism, Miss Uganda SA has lost focus on specifically Ugandan culture. Simon Njami declared pan-Africanism dead in his 2004 text, *Chaos and Metamorphosis*[245]. According to Njami the diversity of the different countries on the continent can never be over-looked for a true realisation of pan-Africanism, an idealistic effort to understand Africa as a whole particularly post-colonial[246]. He does go on to describe the more successful expressions of pan-Africanism as being when Africans drew together, transcending their borders, towards a common objective (such as the FIFA World Cup, which highlighted the common adversary of the West particularly in matches like the Senegal/France match, symbolic because of the historical colonial relationship of the two countries) and without this common objective Africans continue to struggle to remain united

244Wauyo, J., 2014. *The Ugandan Diaspora.* [discussion](Personal communication, 9 September 2014).
245Njami, S., 2004. Chaos and Metamorphosis. In: S. Njami, ed. 2007. *Africa Remix Contemporary Art of a Continent.* Johannesburg: Jacana Media, p. 13.
246*Ibid.*

beyond their geographical divisions[247].

In Miss East Africa SA, much like in Miss Uganda SA, a representative of a single group is sought out. By publishing images of its 2013 winner participating in Miss East Africa SA, Miss Uganda SA declares that its values are shared with a larger east African group, and that in addition to loyalty to nation, the pageant and the community it represents has a loyalty to the broader geographical region. As already discussed, while living in the diaspora, the social group hierarchy can become fluid and see the tertiary group (nation) taking the place of the primary and secondary groups (family/clans and tribe), benefiting loyalty to the broader group. The negative aspect of this pageant is that the Ugandan diaspora can be seen as synonymous with any east African diaspora. As Joy expresses, this is not necessarily the case[248]. However, through pageants like this we begin to see the potential for an expression of pan-Africanism that can work. While living in the diaspora African nationals become united as a symptom of being collectively other in the adopted country. In the same way that this blurs tribal lines, it can blur national lines, particularly when the nationalities also come from the same region of Africa. Museveni found Swahili unifying for east Africans[249]. It was an element of the same that could apply to them while othered, as the Miss East Africa SA pageant can apply to the diaspora in South Africa.

Participation in pageants is not just an aspiration to be crowned, but a desire to be affirmed as a part of, and worthy to, that group. Former Miss South Africa, Bokang Montjane, wrote:

> "Entering beauty pageants boosted my confidence in all areas, especially having gone from competing in a village to a small town to a city, and then to the whole country and internationally."[250]

247*Ibid*, p. 14.
248Wauyo, J., 2014. *The Ugandan Diaspora.* [discussion](Personal communication, 9 September 2014).
249Museveni, J. K., 2011. *My Life's Journey*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, p. 81-98.
250Montjane, B., 2013. In Defence of the Tiara. *Grazia SA*, 2 Oct. p. 44.

In naming an individual the 'most beautiful', all other participants are inadvertently declared 'less beautiful'[251]. Pageants that, like Miss Uganda SA, claim to be about more than just the physical beauty, begin to champion the winner as more than just a beauty queen, but an individual in whom the specific ideals of that pageant are invested in. For this reason, the criteria of such a pageant must be broadened beyond the physical appearance of the participant. In my conversation with the former Miss Uganda SA, she reflected on her surprise at winning: “I didn't expect them to choose a light skinned girl...”[252] Juuko clearly has an ideal of what a typical Ugandan woman should look like, and how beauty functions in that community, thus her surprise at the selection of a winner who, by her perception, was not typical or expected. While Miss Uganda SA imitates many conventions of a pageant; the set up of evening wear and swimwear categories, it replaces other conventional categories such as talent or 'beauty with a purpose' with a compulsory focus on culture. Miss Uganda SA can thus be referred to as a pseudo pageant, having the initial appearance of a conventional pageant, but in actuality being an imitation. Instead of a 'most beautiful' the pageant crowns a 'most culturally representative'. However the counterfeit quality of a pseudo pageant erodes this title, and also the winners of the title. In 2009 former Miss Uganda UK winner, Maria Namiiro, entered and won the Miss Uganda title. General public reaction towards the beauty queen was negative with many claiming that she did not deserve to win because she was not a real Ugandan[253]. In order to enter Miss Uganda from outside the country all you need is a valid Ugandan passport[254]. The position taken was that having grown up in the UK, Namiiro should not be allowed to represent a country that she had little relevance to. Being a former Miss Uganda UK further pronounced her as someone not completely Ugandan, whose representation was only relevant in the diaspora in which she won. Binaisa would blame Namiiro's predicament on transnationalism. She

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251Hartford, A., 2013. Miss Cosmetic Surgery. *Marie Claire,* Dec. p. 85.

252Juuko, B., 2014. *Winning Miss Uganda SA 2012*. [discussion](Personal communication, 15 June 2014).

253Nakajubi, G., 2014. Miss Uganda Namiiro: No more controversies, just helping children. *New Vision.* [online] Available at: www.newvision.co.ug/news/658787-miss-uganda-namiiro-no-more-controversies-just-helping-children.html. [Accessed 21 June 2015].

254Muzira, J., 2014. *Miss Uganda 2014*. [email](Personal communication, 1 March 2014).

defines transnationalism as ties, networks and social spaces in more than one nation[255]. She goes on to say that transnationalism promotes hybridity and hinders integration into the adopted country[256]. Likewise, transnationalism affects how individuals can re-integrate into the country of origin, nationalism is not a solid experience. It is disrupted by displacement and any allegiance to a homeland becomes obsolete once the ability to conclusively belong comes into question.

255Binaisa, N., 2013. Ugandans in Brittain Making 'New' Homes: Transnationalism, Place and Identity within Narratives of Integration. *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies*. [e-journal] Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X_2013_765649. [Accessed 29 November 2013].

256*Ibid*.

Part eight: Hyphenated

Binaisa highlights the concept of 'home' as an important factor in ascertaining the level of integration to the host or adopted country[257]. Living as a part of the diaspora can promote cultural essentialism, expressed in a number of ways, including physically and symbolically[258]. Throughout my research, I focus on ambition as a specific characteristic of Ugandan culture. In his text, *Imagined Communities* (1991), Benedict Anderson says the following: "...nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love."[259] In her essay, *Hyphen-Nations* (1995), Jennifer DeVere Brody poses nationalism as both powerful and dangerous[260]. Putting nation first tampers with traditional social hierarchy implicit in traditional Ugandan culture, and develops a larger, and harder to navigate, group to aspire to lead. Regarding the country of origin, there is a depreciation of social capital that is often not anticipated and cannot be reversed after the fact[261]. While this should give opportunity for a more focused fostering of integration in the adopted country, because a level of allegiance to the homeland is still an important factor for the diaspora it is difficult to conclusively belong. The concept of a nation is a Western one[262]. In the context of Africa, nationalism becomes a symptom of displacement as displaced groups are smaller and easier to navigate. Thus, while tribal ties would be prioritised in the country of origin, in the diaspora the group experiences a kind of long distance nationalism[263].

In conversation with my grandmother, she mentions certain expectations of her as the wife of a

257 *Ibid*.
258 *Ibid*.
259 Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 82.
260 Brody, J. D., 1995. Hyphen-Nations. In: S. Case, P. Brett & S. L. Foster, eds. 1995. *Cruising the Performative.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 149-164.
261 Binaisa, N., 2013. Ugandans in Brittain Making 'New' Homes: Transnationalism, Place and Identity within Narratives of Integration. *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies.* [e-journal] Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X_2013_765649. [Accessed 29 November 2013].
262 Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 10.
263 Binaisa, N., 2013. Ugandans in Brittain Making 'New' Homes: Transnationalism, Place and Identity within Narratives of Integration. *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies.* [e-journal] Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X_2013_765649. [Accessed 29 November 2013].

wealthy community leader[264]. When asked to elaborate on these expectations, she refers to dress and conduct, as well as participation in the community[265]. She also makes it clear that these expectations were mostly unspoken, and if ignored would result in a wordless and steady exclusion from community[266]. While ambition is a cultural trait of Ugandans, the binary relation to this is a commitment of the community to support, celebrate, and look to those whose ambition has brought them success. Not only is it important to be a leader and provider in the community, but also to have with you the kind of family that is perceived to be to a person of such standing. The consequences of slipping away from this ideal can mean losing one's place as a community leader, or being excluded from the community altogether.

Cultural manifestation of a diasporic group can vary over time, and as influence of the adopted country grows[267]. The Ugandan diaspora is a significantly less prominent group, amongst African diasporas around the world[268]. When compared to west African diasporas, Caroline Lulua, a middle aged teacher living and working in South Africa, declares the Ugandan diaspora in South Africa to have failed in manifesting more distinct aspects of their culture[269]. One quite absent aspect of Ugandan culture, that would undoubtedly distinguish the group from other African groups (both diaspora and native) in South Africa is the *gomesi*. Anderson marks the shift in preference for imperial uniform to national costume for imperial powers (circa 1922) as a major indication that the nation-state had become the norm[270]. By choosing to wear a national costume you at least accept being identified as a member of that group, and being visual, this identification is immediate in placing you as the representative and the represented. By not wearing the *gomesi*, this visibility is

264Muhofa, S., 2013. *Wearing the Gomesi.* [discussion](Personal communication, 29 May 2013).
265*Ibid*.
266*Ibid*.
267Binaisa, N., 2013. Ugandans in Brittain Making 'New' Homes: Transnationalism, Place and Identity within Narratives of Integration. *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies.* [e-journal] Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X_2013_765649. [Accessed 29 November 2013].
268*Ibid*.
269Lulua, C., 2013. *The Ugandan Diaspora.* [email](Personal communication, 20 October 2013).
270Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 66.

lost. Although Anderson, throughout his text, parallels the development of language (spoken and printed) with the development of nations[271], in this statement national costume is made an implicit and significant aspect of cultural manifestation, a symptom of nationhood. Anderson uses the term "costume"[272], which suggests the masking of one's personality to portray another. Through conversations with several Ugandans, the desire for a better life was common. For different people this meant different things: Ester Kabogoza sought freedom[273]; Emmanuel Lulua's family moved to South Africa to give their children international opportunities[274]; Joy Wauyo sought education[275]; and a large group of Ugandans (including the Kaganda family and my own family) moved to South Africa during apartheid in the hope of better earning potential[276]. This is a common tale for any diaspora. Writers such as Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie (*Americanah*, 2013)[277], and NoViolet Bulawayo (*We Need New Names*, 2014)[278] have told the story over again. However in the disruption of displacement (which I have already identified as a cause for nation in the context of Africa), the diaspora sheds national costume and instead takes on international costume, allowing them to blend into, and perhaps as a strategy to succeed in, any scenario. The nation is a strategic structure supported by collective understanding and fed by signifiers in dress which are communicated by a common language[279]. Anderson poses it as a natural progression of civilisation[280], but Brody argues that hyphen-nationality can never be natural[281]. Brody goes on to say: "...the hyphen as the marker of emergent entities that should evolve by dissolving into a dominant, unified 'whole'."[282] In other words to progress the status of a hyphen-national there should become a time where there is no

271*Ibid*, p. 53.
272*Ibid*, p. 66.
273Kabogoza, E., 2014. *Reasons for Leaving*. [discussion](Personal Communication, 5 January 2014).
274Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).
275Wauyo, J., 2014. *The Ugandan Diaspora.* [discussion](Personal communication, 9 September 2014).
276Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 2013).
277Adichie, C. N., 2013. *Americanah*. London: Fourth Estate. The story of two young Nigerians who travel to America and England, respectively, in hopes of a better life.
278Bulawayo, N., 2014. *We Need New Names*. London: Vintage. The story of a Zimbabwean child growing up in America.
279Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 66.
280*Ibid*.
281Brody, J. D., 1995. Hyphen-Nations. In: S. Case, P. Brett & S. L. Foster, eds. 1995. *Cruising the Performative.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 149.
282*Ibid*, p. 151.

hyphen at all, but instead a single word that is less vulnerable, more widely accepted and natural. I agree that this status would hold significant power in that it would belong to both places equally and not interchangeably. This status would be superior to former hyphen and the independent solids prior to their coming together[283]. Perhaps with the progression of globalisation, and more such hyphen-nationalities being absorbed into it, this dissolve can begin to happen.

Okwui Enwezor's 1997 discussion on globalisation sets up "The hunger for home..." and the "...lure of international fraternity." against each other[284]. To argue Lulua's point, and in support of "...the lure of international fraternity."[285] as being the winning end of Enwezor's binary in the context of the Ugandan diaspora, I refer back to the cultural characteristic: ambition. I have discussed at length, earlier in my research, the primary reasons for Ugandans migrating in the 80s and 90s. I have also pointed out the circumstances to which they moved in the homelands, and how they benefited and excelled. I also look at the artist Lutaaya's ambition to not only join the South African art community, but to also lead in it, and provide for it. Joy Wauyo's decision to study in South Africa becomes another mark in a pattern of Ugandans who are not only ambitious, but have also ended up in the diaspora as a result of their ambition. While there may be other cultural aspects that an individual or family may choose to preserve, ambition becomes a commonality amongst Ugandans living in the diaspora. In order to express this characteristic, Ugandans need other Ugandans to provide for, compete against, and to stand out against. This community, or, as Anderson phrases it: "...remarkable confidence of community in anonymity..." is tantamount to nation[286]. Other factors that contributed to the Ugandan diasporas ability to experience nation despite displacement and cultural erosion is the abandonment of the 56[287] languages spoken in the

283*Ibid*, p. 150.
284Enwezor, O., 1997. Trade Notes. In: O. Enwezor, ed. 1997. *Trade Routes History + Geography.* 1997. Johannesburg: Municipality of Johannesburg, p. 11.
285*Ibid*.
286Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 20.
287Www.brittanica.com/uganda. [Accessed 30 December 2014].

country[288]. While Anderson marks language as a significant development of nation, in an African context (where country borders have been drawn by outsiders who trivially included and excluded tribal groups[289]), it is language that nullifies nation. This patched together, with pieces missing, experience of the national is as a result not only of hyphenation, but also the application of a Western concept in an African context. Perhaps as well "...the lure of international fraternity." and how Ugandans are responding to it, particularly as a young diaspora, contributes to this experience as Uganda-South Africans awkwardly move faster than what may be comfortable for a move to dissolving their hyphen.

"Hyphens may link or divide, move away from things or towards them; but they always act."[290] The hyphen, as a punctuation mark, is neither natural, nor is it neutra[291]. According to Brody, in the context of nation, hyphenated nations are not only unnatural but also regressive[292]. While placing a hyphen between two different terms (despite their distance from each other) may join them, it also creates a power relationship between the two terms. There needs to be a decision on which term will lead, and which will follow. In the case of hyphen-nations, one nation will always be on the following, or back end of the hyphen. How does one choose, and once the choice is made is it unchangeable. National pride can be a great measure of the power relationship in the hyphen-nations of an individual or group. Looking at the individual; Kaganda said he had never felt more South African, and more proud to be a South African than during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The four week tournament was held in South Africa and attracted tourists, media attention, as well as the development of substantial national infrastructure[293]. The South African national team, Bafana

288Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 27.
289Njami, S., 2004. Chaos and Metamorphosis. In: S. Njami, ed. 2007. *Africa Remix Contemporary Art of a Continent.* Johannesburg: Jacana Media, p. 14.
290Brody, J. D., 1995. Hyphen-Nations. In: S. Case, P. Brett & S. L. Foster, eds. 1995. *Cruising the Performative.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 149.
291*Ibid*.
292*Ibid*, p. 151.
293See: www.sa2010.gov.za. [Accessed 1 January 2015].

Bafana, played in the opening match against Mexico[294]. Simphiwe Tshabalala scored the first goal of the tournament, and the country erupted with pride[295]. The streets were littered with flags and other national paraphernalia, and supporters rushed through the streets blowing *vuvuzelas*[296] and shouting praise for their team and country. Any community will thrive on the perception that there are others, known and unknown to each other, sharing in their pride and confidence in nation[297]. Pageants play a similar role to sports, especially at a national level[298]. You watch for your country, to see where they might be placed. Participants of the Miss World and Miss Universe pageants are referred to by their countries name only. The 2014 Miss World pageant saw Rolene Strauss, Miss South Africa 2014, crowned[299]. Leah Kalanguka, Miss Uganda 2014, gained incredible popularity and support at the same pageant, and was named in several online articles as a possible candidate to win (a first for the Miss Uganda organisation)[300]. This was a moment I took great interest and pride in. Anderson uses the example of language in literature in his illustration of the allegiance (national pride) that comes with nation[301]. The familiarity in language or, in the instances I have indicated, group identification, aids a shared right to celebrate and claim the excellence of others based on the shared nationality. At the 2014 edition of Miss World the winner was not announced as "Rolene Strauss" but as "South Africa". By this explanation, the group with which you are more familiar will become the group named on the leading end of the hyphen.

In the context of visual art, Raimi Gbadamosi said the following of hyphen-nationality (or, as he refers to it: hybridity, which is arguably a step beyond hyphen-nationality, suggesting that the two ends have merged and can no longer be separated.):

294*Ibid*.
295*Ibid*.
296The *vuvuzela* is a horn shaped instrument, unique to South Africa, that makes a blaring deep hoot when blown.
297Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 16.
298Montjane, B., 2013. In Defence of the Tiara. *Grazia SA*, 2 Oct. p. 44.
299See: Www.missworld.com/southafrica. [Accessed 1 January 2014].
300See: www.chimpreports.com/leah-kalanguka-edges-closer-to-miss-world-crown/. [Accessed 1 January 2014].
301Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities.* London: New Left Books, p. 28.

> "While arguments about hybridity in relation to post-colonialism often start as attempts to stake claims for peripheral practices, these practices are quickly reduced and directed to an uncomfortable ghetto."[302]

In other words the relevance is rejected by non-hyphenated groups, which we see in the case of Namiiro. Miss Uganda UK, or Miss Uganda SA for that matter, is only acceptable when it remains Miss Uganda SA and can never become equal to Miss Uganda or Miss South Africa. Adhering to a hyphen can, however, be a strategy to avoid marginalisation[303]. This kind of strategy can be understood by looking at the definition of Informational Social Influence, which occurs in communities. "Informational Social Influence refers to the type of social influence that results from a persons response to information proveded by others..."[304] Benon Lutaaya was affected by Informational Social Influence regarding the arts in Uganda, causing him to move to South Africa and attempt to fit into a new community where he believed he could achieve[305]. Gbadamosi argues that cultural purity, in other words single nationality, is less likely the case and also not a viable option to avoid being marginalised to the periphery of art practice[306]. The centre (West) may assume that it both cultivates and controls cultural production and the commodification thereof[307], and this centre has maintained this perspective for centuries to date. At this point the centre could likely be experiencing a cultural drain, thus moving towards a desire for a new cultural hub[308]. Creatives such as Kibuuka and Lutaaya have not only carried with them their Ugandan-ness, but have also had it set them apart, even when trying to fit in. The success of diaspora artists such as Yinka Shonibare[309]

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302 Gbadamosi, R., 2012. For those Interested in My Admixture. In: B. Law-Viljoen, ed. *Art South Africa.* Vol. 11. Issue 02. Summer 2012, p. 104.

303 Brody, J. D., 1995. Hyphen-Nations. In: S. Case, P. Brett & S. L. Foster, eds. 1995. *Cruising the Performative.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 159.

304 Swart, T., 2008. Group Concepts. In: L. Swartz *et al,* eds. 2008. *Psychology an Introduction*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, p. 304.

305 Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Being a Ugandan Artist in South Africa.* [discussion](Personal communication, 13 January 2014).

306 Gbadamosi, R., 2012. For those Interested in My Admixture. In: B. Law-Viljoen, ed. *Art South Africa.* Vol. 11. Issue 02. Summer 2012, p. 104.

307 *Ibid*, p. 104-105.

308 Mbembe, A., 2012. *The Politics of Imagination in Contemporary South Africa.* [lecture](Personal communication 12 April 2012).

309 Yinka Shonibare is a successful British-Nigerian artist. See: www.yinkashonibarembe.com.

and Godfried Donkor[310] prove that the West is willing to accept previously marginalised cultural production provided they remain what they are. The primary issue is instead the requirement for one to carry an identity/nationality (particularly of origin)[311], as this grants not only access, but also affiliation. Carrying an identity is much like carrying a passport. In the case of many Ugandans living in South Africa, dual citizenship means a person may carry passports issued by both countries at one time. How one chooses to travel can speak to how one chooses to identify. The South African based pan-African organisation, *Chimurenga*[312], posted the following quote by Paula Akugizibwe[313]: "Visa red tape is an inescapable part of life with an African passport"[314]. In the following figures you can see how the conversation carried out.



figure e: All instances mentioning @basterrd refer to me under my previous Twitter handle at the time of interaction.



figure f: All instances mentioning @basterrd refer to me under my previous Twitter handle at the time of interaction.

310Godfried Donkor is a successful British-Ghanaian artist. See: www.donkor.net.
311Brody, J. D., 1995. Hyphen-Nations. In: S. Case, P. Brett & S. L. Foster, eds. 1995. *Cruising the Performative.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 154.
312*Chimurenga* runs a quarterly print journal, an online platform as well as a South African based cultural hub. See: www.chimurenga.co.za.
313Akugizibwe is a Rwandese-Ugandan writer. See: www.thisisafrica.me/author/paulaakugizibwe/.
314See: www.twitter.com/chimurenga.

Holding dual citizenship for me becomes an issue of convenience. I am offered ease in travel in being a citizen of a country that the world can imagine me wanting to return to, as opposed to being a citizen of a country which many aspire to leave. Emmanuel Lulua affirms this when he laments on his parents sacrificing his right to belong[315] in answer to "...the lure of international fraternity."[316], and while South Africa is considered a developing country, as is Uganda, it is undoubtedly given a higher regard internationally. Kaganda agrees that his parents raised him with this same perspective and that this has benefited his own access[317]. The posted quote comes from an article Akugizibwe wrote for *Chimurenga's* website. The article was titled *Beasts of No Nation*[318]. Akugizibwe says:

> "Many people I know who have applied for European or north American passports were driven not by desire for a different identity, but for a different degree of convenience, for freedom from the tediousness of ticking one's way through a relentless list of visa requirements..."[319]

In this she admits to the "...lure of international fraternity."[320] Akugizibwe is, however, more concerned with the international fraternity specific to the African continent, and the gate keeping that is affecting this[321]. Akugizibwe cites border control as a tool of exclusion and oppression founded in colonialism and exercised by Africans to further political agendas against Africans[322].

When I visited Uganda, I applied for a visa. It cost R 500.00. The application was incredibly simple, and when the visa had been issued I gave my mother a note and asked her to collect it for me[323].

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315 Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).
316 Enwezor, O., 1997. Trade Notes. In: O. Enwezor, ed. 1997. *Trade Routes History + Geography.* 1997. Johannesburg: Municipality of Johannesburg, p. 11.
317 Kaganda, J., 2012. *South African – Ugandan.* [discussion](Personal communication, 12 March 2012).
318 Akugizibwe, P., 2014. Beasts of No Nation. *Chimurenga Chronic,* 5 August 2014. [online] Available at: chimurengachronic.co.za/beasts-of-no-nation/. [Accessed 18 August 2014].
319 *Ibid*.
320 Enwezor, O., 1997. Trade Notes. In: O. Enwezor, ed. 1997. *Trade Routes History + Geography.* 1997. Johannesburg: Municipality of Johannesburg, p. 11.
321 Akugizibwe, P., 2014. Beasts of No Nation. *Chimurenga Chronic,* 5 August 2014. [online] Available at: chimurengachronic.co.za/beasts-of-no-nation/. [Accessed 18 August 2014].
322 *Ibid*.
323 Since the terrorist attack on the Kenya mall, Westgate, third party collections have been stopped. See: www.aljareera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/09/mysteries-linger-over-westgate-201492171737803205.html.

While Uganda does issue passports, there is no conventional identification book or card available to citizens without passports[324]. For identification purposes a citizen may have a work access card; a drivers permit; or a birth certificate (primarily used for school applications)[325]. This makes the tracking of illegal immigrants in Uganda difficult[326]. It also means that the most secure document confirming a person's identity is the exit document (passport). A decision not to carry a Ugandan passport further disassociates oneself from the country of origin, and this is where border control manifests as a tool of exclusion. When a Ugandan of origin travels amongst countrymen and kin, but is later separated during border control queues and procedures, the separated person is either seen as a deserter of country, or as one who has risen above "...the tediousness of ticking one's way through a relentless list of visa requirements..."[327] and achieved the right to be set apart. In the context of Ugandans, it would be the latter.

In my artwork I am more aware of my hyphen-nationality than I am in everyday life. While a hyphen-nation creates its own power relationship, connected and communicated by the hyphen, there is also a power relationship between the national and the hyphen-national. While contending in creative and cultural contexts, the hyphen-national is a diminutive, or by-product of the national, eventually obscured after integration with the national[328]. As Henri Lefebvre stated:

> "...production has a cardinal role: first, the (absolute) Idea produces the world; next, nature produces the human being; the human being in turn, by dint of struggle and labour, produces at once history, knowledge and self-consciousness – and hence that Mind which reproduces the initial and ultimate idea."[329]

324Nenghwage, P. H., 2013. *Life After Migration*. [discussion](Personal communication, 9 July 2013).
325See: www.refworld.org/docid/469cd6b417.
326International Organisation for Migration Uganda. [online] Available at: uganda.iom.int/iom-uganda-supports-the-organisation-of-the-interpol-smuggling-training-and-operation-program-stop/. [Accessed 5 January 2015].
327Akugizibwe, P., 2014. Beasts of No Nation. *Chimurenga Chronic,* 5 August 2014. [online] Available at: chimurengachronic.co.za/beasts-of-no-nation/. [Accessed 18 August 2014].
328Gbadamosi, R., 2012. For those Interested in My Admixture. In: B. Law-Viljoen, ed. *Art South Africa.* Vol. 11. Issue 02. Summer 2012, p. 104.
329Lefebvre, H., 1991. *The Production of Space*. Translated from French by D. Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p. 68.

If the moment in which nature produces the human being is interrupted, hyphenated, what is the effect on the struggle and labour, and the results of that struggle and labour? A peer once declared in class that an African artist cannot take photos of a landscape unless their ancestors had died there. The fact that they were an African human being affected their labour toward producing their own history, knowledge and self-consciousness. Their labour as an African artist was not valid unless it detailed their particularly African history. Earlier I mentioned how the situation of women artists in Uganda affects the kind of work they make (or can make), and I referred to the work of Lilian Nabulime, and how in her effort to work against gender stereotypes, she ends up falling back into them[330]. A change in Lutaaya's environment had an effect on his struggle[331], and subsequently saw the subject matter of his work affected.

The very fact that I am second generation Ugandan diaspora, making work that considers the culture of that diaspora, speaks for itself. While Gbadamosi and Brody point out that hyphenation distinctly marginalises the self and the group, I find something unique concerning the Ugandan diaspora to South Africa. The context of this particular group is still an African one. Earlier I highlighted Binaisa's European context (going 'home' being a greater challenge). Lutaaya shows how one is lent comfort when working on the same continent as your country of origin. His way of working does change in technique, but remains consistent in terms of subject matter. Kibuuka comfortably straddles the two cultures in his performance, and Zari has spread her wealth and influence across the two countries. When speaking of my own work, I bluntly expose my failure in language, I develop from my inadequacies in adapting the *gomesi*.

330Birungi, R. & Garberg, A. K., 2011. Where are the Ugandan female artists? *START Journal of Arts and Culture.* [e-journal] Available at: startjournal.org/2011/03/female-artists/. [Accessed 9September 2014].

331Lutaaya, B., 2014. *Being a Ugandan Artist in South Africa.* [discussion](Personal communication, 13 January 2014).

Part nine: F(l)ight

In my own work I explore other visual readings of the design of the *gomesi*. What you are initially confronted with is its volume. An average sized woman requires seven meters of material to make a single *gomesi*. The dress is proposed as a modest garment, and even a moral one. The number seven is significant in Christianity as a number of perfection; the Lord is believed to have rested on the seventh day[332]. The implicit purity in this was quite significant to me, especially in contrast to Mwesigye's article regarding the general perception of the dress[333]. When given as a gift to someone, a *gomesi* is usually packaged as an un-sewn sheet, and this further reinforces the value of the full seven meters. As a start I worked with two such gifts: the first a gift from my youngest uncle, given on my first visit to Uganda during Easter; the second a Christmas gift from my grandmother. Both of these materials were patterned wax cloth, popular across Africa, and I intentionally wanted to blur this particular cultural reference to make the specific reference to the *gomesi* more prominent. To this end I begun manually unravelling the material. This became a lengthy and taxing process, as I removed individual strands from the seven meter length, but it also sanctifies the material through labour alone; it took eighteen months to unravel both lengths of material.

As the *gomesi* is seldom worn (I can call to mind two occasions where I have worn it) I found it most poignant that these particular garments had never been worn or made into a *gomesi*, although I still considered them *gomesi.* Preserved food items are often deconstructed, reconstituted and sealed. Once unravelled the threads tend to cleave to one another in bundles reconstituting themselves, and I packaged these reconstituted items in 2 liter glass jars, almost as a preserved

332The Bible Study Site, 2015. Meaning of Numbers in the Bible, The Number 7. [online] Available at: www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-the-bible/7.html. [Accessed 21 June 2015].

333Mwesigye, S., 2012. Uganda: Fashion – You would never escape the Gomesi. *Allafrica*. [online] Available at: allafrica.com/stories/201201060112.html. [Accessed 10 April 2013].



figure g: unravelled wax cloth. (From Uncle – Unwrapped for Easter)

cultural dress, therefore preserving culture. The jars of dress were incredibly descriptive in referring to culture preservation, and specifically preservation of cultural dress. In response to the abrupt, and never solid, expression of Ugandan culture in South Africa I separated the bundles of threaded dress into stand-alone objects. The objects were formed organically as I added threads to each bundle over specific periods that spread over severals days at a time. More often than not such a period would come after a conversation had been had with a Ugandan; I had engaged with a specific event: Uganda's participation in the African Cup of Nations, the 2014 Uganda Awards, a social gathering of Ugandans; or the completion of a specific area of research relative to this paper. These periods came as a punctuation to these investigations, and usually represented my response to the results. It became more important to present them as such, and for the final exhibition of this work they are intentionally set out as a series of points (and perhaps parentheses).



figure h: reconstituted wax cloth in 2 litre jars.

In conversations with younger Ugandans, who have grown up in, and are citizens of South Africa, they referred to 2010, when South Africa hosted the FIFA World Cup, as their most memorable moment of national pride. Personally I did not find the same inspiration, but instead took national pride in 2014 during Miss Uganda's participation in the Miss World pageant. The positioning of the title is structured in such a way that the winner draws awe. There is a throne, a crown, a sash, and once announced a climatic and celebratory eruption: confetti, swelling music, a dramatic announcer. To further pronounce the fact that by naming her most beautiful, all other participants are named less beautiful, the previous years winner ceremoniously removes the crown from her own head and places it on the head of the new winner. The event is watched by citizens who are looking up to / wanting to be / believing for their country/region's representative to name the ideal that will show who they as individuals are, but that they will also likely never live up to. I can liken this phenomenon to that of the superhero. A superhero goes beyond the hero, possessing skills an ordinary hero would not have, and in their realm of impossibility: an ability to fly, an ability to act as saviour, and an impression of being an ideal hero/person. Both superheros and beauty pageants are Western concepts which makes them tricky to negotiate (comfortably) within a

non-Western context, and yet they are widely known and applied (an application that requires assimilation for it to work) concepts. Milumbe Haimbe addresses this awkwardness in *Ananiya the Revolutionist* (2014), a graphic novel the artist has centered around a black female. This work not only addresses the oddity of Western assimilation, but also the importance of self-identification within the existing contexts created by the West in which we end up participating in[334], such as the pageant.

Miss Uganda SA exists around a precariously balanced hyphen, Ugandan and South African ideals rocking on either end. This liminal state arguably provides a more comfortable expression of the pageant; when what the pageant represents is already so odd that the pageant itself, with all its Western conventions, appears almost normal. Miss Uganda SA 2012 (Juuko) has an ideal of what her title should represent. She wanted to spread awareness of Ugandan culture, and had a campaign planned to see this through, but failed to achieve this due to lack of support from the organisation[335]. She expresses her ideal Ugandan woman, and seems to believe she is this ideal: traditional, modest while also proud. Throughout our conversation she was sure of her standing as someone young Ugandan women in South Africa can look up to. Similarly, Miss Uganda UK 2008, while at the time taken a back by the animosity towards her, has since recovered and still considers herself a role model, example of Ugandan femininity, and a strong contributor, and even leader, in her community[336]. While this could be attributed to individual personality, and certainly cultural personality, the pageant also plays a role in giving the winner the impression that they are this superhero character, possessing qualities that describe an ideal. I spent a day wearing the *gomesi*. I wore it to places of work, art practice and social interaction, and found the public reaction was either lukewarm or oblivious. In a South African context the *gomesi* does not connote anything

334Libesekal, M., 2014. Are there Superheros that Look Like You? *Another Africa.* [online] Available at: www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture. [Accessed 17 September 2014].

335Juuko, B., 2014. *Winning Miss Uganda SA 2012*. [discussion](Personal communication, 15 June 2014).

336Nakajubi, G., 2014. Miss Uganda Namiiro: No more controversies, just helping children. *New Vision.* [online] Available at: www.newvision.co.ug/news/658787-miss-uganda-namiiro-no-more-controversies-just-helping-children.html. [Accessed 21 June 2015].



figure j: Miss Uganda 2013 does her winning strut as superhero, pen and ink on ashrad, 2014



figure k: Ohusoola in Flight, polyester and chiffon mix, lace, wool, and wind, 2015.

significant. Unlike most African countries its value is not necessarily written into the pattern or type of material, but instead in the design and function. The *gomesi* is not visible enough in South Africa to create the same kind of resonance it has in Uganda. This said, there is an awareness of that resonance in you the wearer of the dress. What stood out the most in my experiment was the act of dressing, and re-dressing. Re-dressing because the garment often became loose or uncomfortably bunched in places; and because much of the dress needed to be undone with each visit to the toilet. The *gomesi* is fastened above the breast, and then wrapped over the rest of the body. To wrap the dress around your body you need to extend your left arm out, while holding the left end of the material in your hand; in your right hand you hold the right side of the material close and secure to your body. The action of swinging the material around yourself is quite sweeping and can cause the dress to billow out around you. I found this reminiscent of a cape, particularly that of a superhero. The two sides of the *gomesi* are unequal in length, but if equalled (like I have done in my adaptation), the image of a billowing cape is more pronounced. Again regarding Mwesigye, and the effect of the unwrapped *gomesi*: What might this image of the *gomesi*

being unwrapped look like? In addition to the billowing cape, the sleeves pointed upwards evoke authority and (self) importance; in removing the length of the dress from the front, the broad strip of material over the breasts protects them (as a breastplate or article of armour), instead of flattening or suppressing them.

There is still a sexualisation placed on Mwesigye's image. The last part of Mwesigye's comment indicates this in saying: "...what lies beneath."[337] It appears that the contemporary perception of the *gomesi* has become a developing sexual connotation, a direct contrast with the original perception during and after the design of the dress[338]. Although, the time frame in which this perception remained relevant is debatable, as my sixty-five year old grandmother found herself sexualised (being asked to wear the dress after five to keep her body warm) by means of the *gomesi*. I wanted to adapt the dress to further question the idea that this dress in itself can create a version of superwoman, according to the Ugandan ideal. I investigated, through collaborative photography and video performance and drawing, the stance of this superhero. I compared the stance of the pageant entrant to that of a superhero, as seen in figure j. The pageant entrant rolls her shoulders back to show confidence and to push her chest forward, asserting power. Her hands on her hips and jutted out elbows create a winged silhouette. While her hips and legs are kept close together, she pushes them forward in intended determination. I perform this stance as directed by a photographer, whom I ask to compose a superhero stance – without much context provided by myself – (figure l). The similarities are stark, confirming my understanding of the pose.

337*Ibid.*
338Kemigisha, M., 2013. The Gomesi. *The Ugandan.* [online] Available at: www.theugandan.info/index.php/cultures/item/157-the-gomesi. [Accessed 10 April 2013].



figure l: Positions in Flight I – Untitled I, 2015

In my adaptation of the design I challenge the concept of the *gomesi* as a modest and demure outfit, considering the possibility of its flight and the connotation thereof, I regard my re-configuration as a drawback to reinforcing my position as a Ugandan-South African artist, in that the very thing I identify as the most visually distinctive aspect of Ugandan culture is changed and subsequently diluted. I counter this by using language as a tool complicit to the work. In giving the work a Lunyole[339] title, I hope to locate it in the cultural context. *Ohusoola* (the title of the work in figure m, and the partial title given to several of the works representing the dress and/or wearer) translates as 'fight' in English. This title came about through misunderstanding in language. I asked my mother to give me the Lunyole word for 'fight'. Months later she asked me why I had chosen such an aggressive word to describe my work. I had intended to use 'fight' in the context of perseverance,

339Lunyole is my mother's mother tongue.

but as such a word is not distinguished in Lunyole, my mother had given me the word that describes 'fight' in the context of physical infliction. In deciding to use this word I expose my inability to harness meaning in a vernacular of my country of origin, placing me on the periphery of its culture, but I also uncover the oddity of Lunyole not being able to express perseverance, given the Ugandan cultural characteristic of ambition. *Ohusoola* is a character that intends to represent all the qualities of a Ugandan woman that I have discussed thus far. She is however an elusive character, changing avenues of expression from drawing to performance, and especially in terms of the real life personalities that I have referred to in this paper, who have aspired to the specific qualities but do not always harness all of them at all times. Ohusoola is also presented in perpetual flight, a constant change of transition which not only influences audience perspective and experience but also speaks to the liminal and dream-like quality of the concept of the superhero. It also becomes a standing (for floating) metaphor for my own hyphen-nationality as it consumes a considerable amount of space but occupies little.

I also have a series of drawings of the crowned crane (Uganda's national bird) in flight. The cranes are represented through traditional fine art drawing. I coloured the gland underneath the neck of the crane red to visually relate it to *Ohusoola in Flight* (the gland is also red on live cranes). Red also acts as a visually apparent signifier of Ugandan nationality, being one three colours featured in the country's flag (red is also featured in the South African flag, and is the more prominent of the two colours, the other being black, that the two countries flags share). When presented the cranes are place in such a way that face the opposite direction of *Ohusoola in Flight*, in a manner taking flight away from the installation of *Ohusoola in Flight* (figure k). The installation of the



figure m: Ohusoola, watercolour pencil and permanent mark of paper, 2014

dress is activated by wind, which I created with industrial fans, and the dress billows vigorously and facing upwards as though it were the cape of a superhero it static flight. The cranes almost take flight with *Ohusoola*, but it is more accurate to say they are aroused into flight by the disturbance of *Ohusoola's* flight. While the word flight has connotations appropriate to superheros and birds, I am more interested in how it connotes escape. This is relative because the work concerns a diaspora, but more than that, one that has systematically eroded their own culture over years in pursuing success. I call the creative component of this research *F(l)ight* to refer to this escape, and to the manner in which the residues of culture we try to maintain ultimately escapes us, as seen in Juuko's theoretical allegiance; Lulua's – and my – lack of language; and the way in which Lutaaya's practice looks less like the work of a typical Ugandan artist over time. My title is also punctuated with parentheses, which alludes again to the hyphen and interrupted identity, but also highlights the word

fight and my significant inability to find and negotiate language, which Lulua calls a carrier of culture[340].

I collaborated with a South African curator, Michael Cheesman for the presentation of the body of work exhibited at Workhorse Bronze Foundry. This was his statement on the body of work:

> "The exhibition consisted of two bodies of work, the first, charcoal drawings of crowned cranes and a *gomesi*, which was installed with a fan blowing against the piece, similar to heavy wind attacking laundry. The second is a body of work consisting of deconstructed material bundles, where each bundle represents the artist's processing of a seven meter piece of material in a single session of work. The material bundles played an important part in relation to the first body of work, depicting the unravelling that takes place when not belonging completely to a single particular cultural space. The piece is particularly effective in capturing a diasporic space that is built on the same aesthetics but experiences a degree of severance from the completed whole. The *Crowned Crane in Flight* drawings have a great sense of movement in their moment of taking flight. It is also important to point out that the two very different sets of work exhibited speak to each other very strongly, allowing for insight into the artist's process and her approach to her research from different perspectives."



figure n: full length material for From Uncle - Unwrapped for Easter

340Lulua, E., 2012. *South African – Ugandan*. [discussion](Personal communication, 29 March 2012).

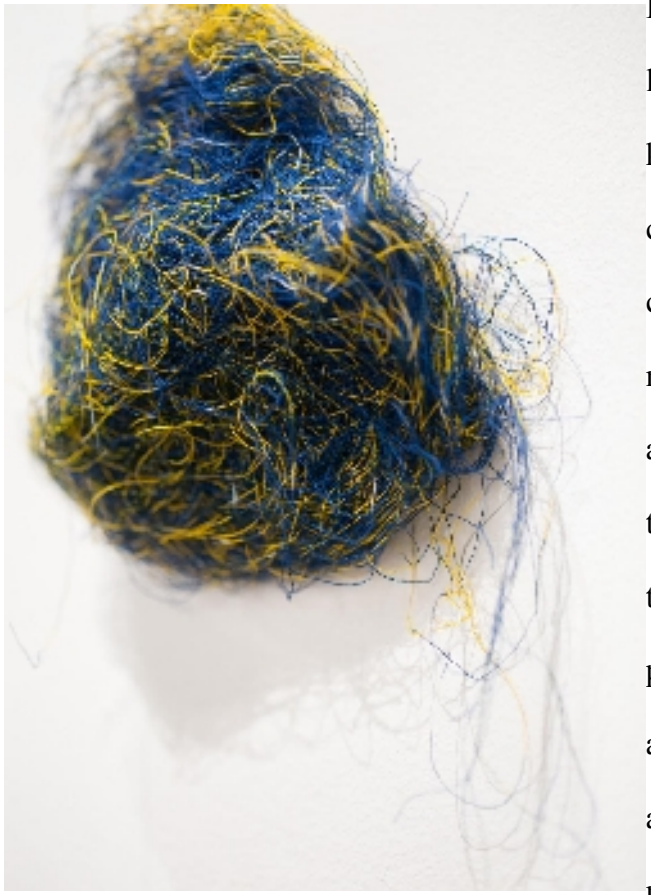


figure o: From Uncle - Unwrapped for Easter (detail), 2013-14

I knew the title of my masters research project long before I even enrolled as a student and I knew I wanted to know for myself what Ugandan culture should (or could) look like in my context, compared to the reality of what it did look like in my context. The *gomesi* is one of the most apparent signifiers of Ugandan culture. It is a traditional dress – designed for women – unique to Uganda and it became an important and central part of the body of work produced. This not only as an exploration of something forgotten, but also an expression of this blatant forgetting. During my research I did not encounter a single individual who claimed not to know much about the *gomesi*, or who had anything negative to say about the dress. Most women admitted to owning the dress themselves and appreciated it for many of the reasons that Mwesigye puts forward. When hyphenated one side of the hyphen will always be more dominant, but what happens to the weaker end? Will it remain as a watermark in the life of someone hyphenated, referred to only when convenient or necessary, or will it be an ignored but shouting aspect of the individuals identity. Through my practical component (which was attended by several Ugandans and has since been circulated amongst the full group via social media) I tested whether the Ugandan end of the hyphen was indeed the weaker end, and indeed what did happen to this end given the active forgetting of this cultural group. Two of the thirteen Ugandans who were fully exposed to my research expressed to me how obvious the theme of the *gomesi* was to them. One other Ugandan who was not exposed to my research but had become aware of it through another Ugandan approached me

with the same expression. This thin feedback decidedly positions Ugandan on the hyphen as precariously placed and easy to ignore.

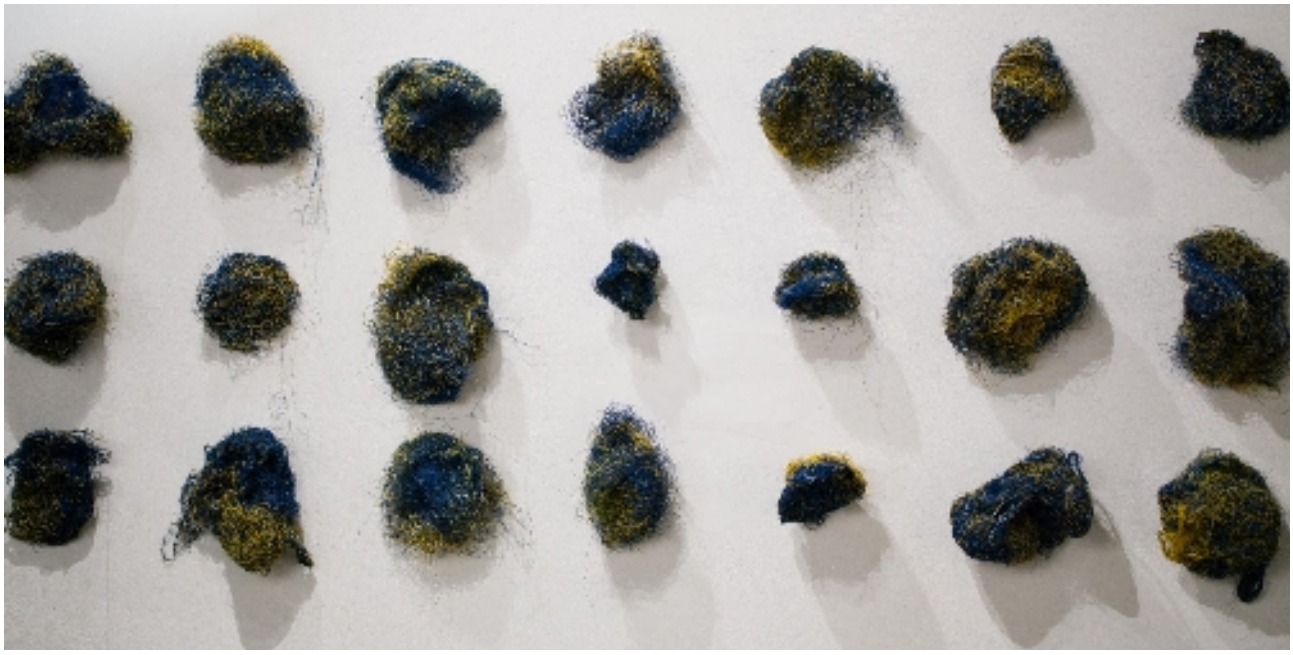


figure p: From Uncle - Unwrapped for Easter (detail), 2013-14

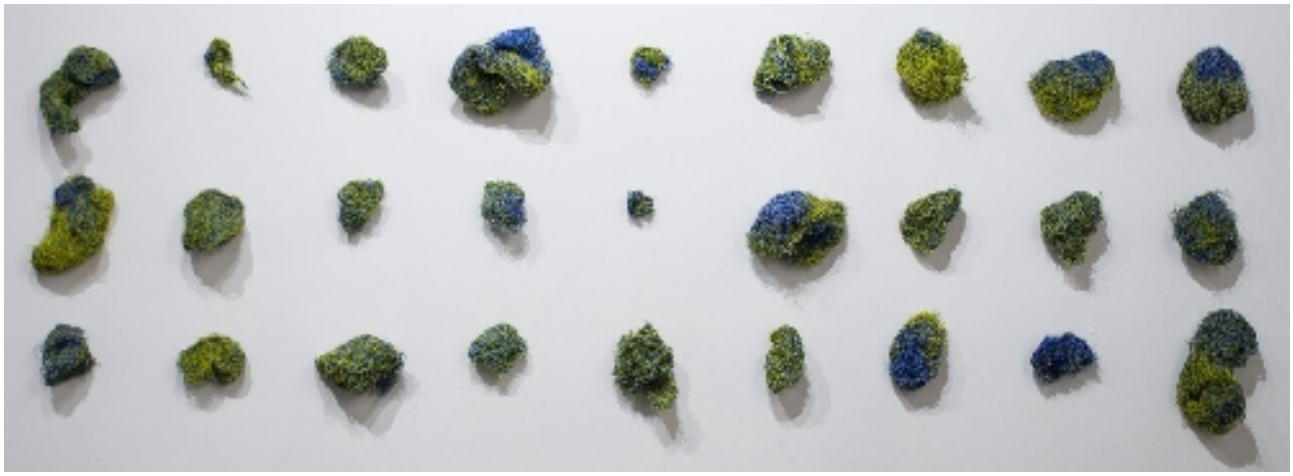


figure q: From Grandmother - Unwrapped for Christmas (detail), 2014-15



figure r: From Grandmother - Unwrapped for Christmas (detail), 2014-15



figure s: Crowned Crane in Flight drawing series (installation view), 2014



figure t: Crowned Crane in Flight I (detail), charcoal and poster paint on fabriano, 2014



figure u: Positions in Flight I - Untitled III, 2015 (in collaboration with Marissa Venter

Conclusion

Ugandans have left (and continue to leave) their country of origin under a variety of circumstances, mostly motivated by perceived better prospects. These include career, trade and education. Despite their motivation, Ugandans living in South Africa struggle to maintain a geographical link with their country of origin. In our conversation, Ibrahim Kabogoza lamented his children's lack of interest in visiting Uganda. Kabogoza felt that this lack of interest kept them from being inspired to national pride for his country of origin. Before I spoke with Kabogoza, I met Emmanuel Lulua, who blamed language for his exclusion. While this exclusion regarded him not being able to belong to either a Ugandan or a South African community, it specifically causes Lulua difficulty in adapting. Benon Lutaaya preferences his place in an industry over his place in his country of origin, seldom correcting instances where he is referred to as a South African. Kabogoza's business requires him to frequent Uganda, but his own children have never travelled with him. It appears that without his children having national pride, he is discouraged to foster one for them, and abandons the idea altogether. While Lulua longs to belong, lack of language bars him. Lutaaya has language and national pride, but in prioritising his career, he virtually lets all this aside, and when visiting Uganda, he does so as an artist practising in South Africa.

The Ugandan diaspora in South Africa is a comparatively small one. This can make it difficult for community to thrive, as we see with Joy Wauyo who knows only four other Ugandans in Cape Town. The size of the diaspora can also contribute to how close those in it become, and how that affects social hierarchies. We see this in the descriptions of funeral practices, and in the referrals to countrymen made by Lulua (who calls the community a Uganda in South Africa), and Nenghwage (who refers to her countrymen as family). The size of the group makes a visual representation of their country a very important thing. Throughout my discussion of cultural manifestation of

Ugandans, I focus on national (cultural) personality of the group. This becomes the most logical avenue with there being little visual representation (such as cultural dress) to draw from. However, the Facebook page of the Miss Uganda SA pageant sheds light on what Ugandan culture could look like. By visiting this online catalogue one can learn what societal aspects are celebrated (the categories in the 2014 Uganda awards, of which Miss Uganda SA was a part); the extent to which traditional dress is prioritised; and the cultural affiliation with other African cultural groups. Miss Uganda SA (2012), Busisiwe Juuko, credits the pageant for teaching her a great deal about her Ugandan culture. However, pageants like this celebrate a distorted idea of nationality in an African context, and directly affect social hierarchies. As mentioned, Nenghwage refers to the Ugandan community as family, taking the tertiary social group (nation) and awarding it the benefits of the primary social group (family/clan). I demonstrate, using Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991) and Simon Njami's *Chaos and Metamorphosis* (2004), that 'nation' is a European concept and that the idea of pan-Africanism is no longer applicable, and potentially damaging to traditional social hierarchies. The distortion in social hierarchies causes the Ugandan diaspora to think more favourably of nation, and popular personalities like David Kibuuka and Zarinah Tlale Hussein foster pride in this nation.

I took a person centered approach to completing my research. While I had not aimed to arrive at a statistical conclusion, it is interesting to note that of the thirteen Ugandans I spoke with, ten consistently referred to Uganda as home. In some instances, this referral was logical, being that the individual had grown up in Uganda. The reasoning for younger generations was more linked to Lulua's ideation of a metaphorical Uganda, or Juuko's desire for association with Uganda. This reference is symptomatic of a hyphen-nationality. I have looked at the different symptoms of hyphen-nationality, including how one nationality is inevitably preferred. I also name marginalisation as a symptom. I acknowledge how hyphen-nationality can cause disjunction in how

one relates to each nationality (specifically seen in how Juuko praises cultural practices from Uganda, but does not demonstrate them in her own life; and also how Lulua calls Uganda home, but laments how he does not belong to the country at all), but in my own work I regard my hyphen-nationality as an opportunity to express the disjunction caused.

Focussing on the aspects of Ugandan culture that can be visually identified I marginalise my own work as not being a part of the South African norm. having an identity balanced on the power relationship, and simultaneously liminal experience, of the hyphen I explore how outside parties may respond to and express the theme of my work by collaborating with a curator and photographer who are both South African.

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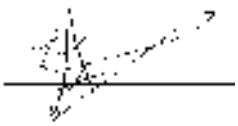
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