

Asians and Africans in Ugandan Urban Life, 1959-1972

by

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Dedication

For Harold and Addie

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Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Figures	xii
List of Abbreviations	xiii
Abstract	xiv
Introduction: Race, Space, and Rupture in Histories of Urban Uganda	1
<i>A. Ugandan Asian history</i>	6
<i>B. Ugandan Asians and urban competition</i>	22
<i>C. Methods and sources</i>	29
<i>D. Organization of the dissertation</i>	35
Chapter One: Defending Asian Politics in Uganda, c. 1911-1959	41
<i>A. Elite Asian politics</i>	45
<i>B. Non-racialism and Ugandan nationalism</i>	58
<i>C. The organizational defense of Asian rights</i>	64
<i>D. “A new Asian”</i>	74
<i>E. Conclusion</i>	86
Chapter Two: Surveillance, Disciplinary Violence, and the Anti-Asian Boycott of 1959/1960	88
<i>A. The invisibility of disciplinary violence</i>	92
<i>B. A political history of the boycott</i>	97
<i>C. The boycott and the vernacular press</i>	110
<i>D. Subaltern surveillance and anonymous violence</i>	120
<i>E. Anonymous letters and alternative registers of authority</i>	138
<i>F. Conclusion</i>	150
Chapter Three: The Spatial Dynamics of Racial Exclusion in Small Town Uganda	152
<i>A. Spatial histories</i>	155
<i>B. Africanizing commercial space</i>	178

C. <i>Counter culture and public space</i>	185
D. <i>Trust, empathy, and microtensions</i>	206
E. <i>Small town politics</i>	215
Chapter Four: Legal Claims, Spatial Histories, and the “Sprit of Africanization”	224
A. <i>Administrative challenges</i>	227
B. <i>Africanization under Obote I</i>	236
C. <i>Race, space, and citizenship under the Trade Licensing Act</i>	245
D. <i>Silencing claims</i>	256
E. <i>Conclusion</i>	262
Chapter Five: The Asian Expulsion and Infrastructures of Exclusion	263
A. <i>Geopolitics, Africanization, and citizenship</i>	266
B. <i>Asians in print culture under military rule</i>	281
C. <i>Expulsion as event</i>	305
D. <i>Commemoration and historical intimacy</i>	313
F. <i>Conclusion</i>	324
Conclusion	325
Sources	331

List of Figures

Figure 2.1	Coca-Cola Advertisement in <i>Uganda Empya</i> , April 6, 1969	117
Figure 3.1	Areas of Kabale town	163
Figure 3.2	Street map of central Kabale town	173
Figure 3.3	Illustrations from <i>Keeping Shop: A Handbook to assist Africans in Trade</i> , 1955	184
Figure 3.4	Kabale Main Street in the 1960s	200
Figure 3.5	Drivers permit photographs, Kabale. 1951-1958	208
Figure 4.1	Plan of Kabale Town, 1950	246
Figure 5.1	Cover of <i>The People</i> , December 9, 1971	303

List of Abbreviations

CCIA	Central Council of Indian Associations
CCMA	Central Council of Muslim Associations
DAPCB	Deported Asians Property Custodian Board
DP	Democratic Party
FUAF	Federation of Partnerships of Uganda African Farmers
KDA	Kabale District Archive
KAR	Kings African Rifles
KY	<i>Kabaka Yekka</i>
LegCo	Legislative Council
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NTC	National Trading Corporation
PAFMECA	Pan-African Freedom of East and Central Africa
TOL	Temporary Occupation License
UAG	Uganda Action Group
UCP	United Congress Party
UCW	Uganda Council of Women
UNA	Uganda National Archives
UNC	Uganda National Congress
UNM	Uganda National Movement
UPC	Uganda Peoples Congress
UPD	Uganda Power & Development Ltd.

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between racial thought, urban infrastructure, and urban sociality during a period of rapid change in Uganda's political order and public spheres. It shifts focus away from a teleological narrative of racialization, in which the 1972 Asian expulsion constitutes a totalizing legacy of Ugandan Asian history, to arenas of contestation over the production of racial categories, urban space, and history. Each chapter considers Ugandans' efforts to reshape ideas about racial difference and to control the spaces in which such ideas took shape in daily practice. Analyzing the multiple registers in which Ugandans produced, used, and elided racial categories reveals tensions that are too often hidden in expulsion narratives.

Introduction

Race, Space, and Rupture in Histories of Urban Uganda

In August 1972, Uganda's President General Idi Amin announced the expulsion of "any person who is of Asian origin, extraction or descent" from the country as part of an "economic war" against foreign exploitation. Amin's speeches drew on language inherited from urban populist politicians and the elite and vernacular press that by the late 1950s cast Ugandan Asians as homogenous and socially insular, embodied in the figure of rude, exploitative male shopkeepers. Subsequent scholarship and popular articulations of Ugandan Asian identity have portrayed the Asian expulsion as a moment of rupture. In that role, it casts a shadow over earlier struggles for the control of political constituencies, urban space, legal recognition, and discursive constructions of racial difference. This dissertation examines the registers in which Ugandans pursued these struggles from the late 1950s until the 1972 expulsion. It argues that manifestations of racial distinction in thought and action depended on particular infrastructures of built space, print culture, and government bureaucracy, which all Ugandans did not inhabit equally. Attention to relationships between infrastructure and forms of racial tension complicates a dominant narrative of rupture culminating in the expulsion and allows us to revisit unsettled dimensions of Uganda's racial politics and urban life.

The story of Taj Kassam provides a useful point of departure. In 1954 at sixteen years old, he moved from his parents' home in western Kenya to join his sister in the small town of Gomba in central Uganda. "I liked the culture of Ugandans, [especially] their extended family concept," he recalled sixty years later. "So within no time, I become part of it." Using connections with other Asian-owned firms, Taj developed a successful business selling sugar, soft drinks, and other commodities on credit to local coffee farmers while setting up several dozen shops managed by Africans from surrounding villages. He spoke Luganda, he taught literature voluntarily at a nearby school, and he used his car to transport people to hospital twenty miles away free of charge. He earned the nickname "Gandhi," a moniker that suggested his compassion as well as a commitment to justice. Five years after Taj's move to Gomba, a man from a nearby town organized a rally on behalf of a nationalist political movement at which he declared, "We should control our economy," and urged his African audience, as Taj remembered, "Don't deal with Asians. Period." Taj's customers, his business colleagues, his students, and his neighbors stopped visiting his shop or even interacting with him. Unable to make a living and fearful for his safety, he moved to Kampala, where he developed a flourishing wholesale business and became involved in Ismaili community politics, though he often returned to Gomba to supply other shopkeepers. After Uganda's independence in 1962, he applied for citizenship. However, with memories of his experience in Gomba and suspicions about government campaigns to "Africanize commerce," he decided to retain his British passport. When a government official, whom he knew through his business and political circles, warned him of harsh

times to come in Uganda, he decided to move to Canada, where he continued his success in business before returning to Kampala in 1995.¹

Taj Kassam's story is an instructive opening into the history of Asians in Ugandan urban life since the 1950s, both for its illustrative qualities and its divergence from narratives that characterize Ugandan Asian history as a unitary experience of segregation and expulsion. Taj's account vividly illustrates different registers in which racial hierarchies were reproduced and elided as well as the production of home and belonging amidst physical mobility. He proudly describes his efforts to build what he believed were ethical relationships through credit, business partnerships, and charity. Meanwhile, he used his investments, political connections, and the navigation of government bureaucracy to maintain his security and forge a sense of belonging in Gomba and in Uganda. However, the social, economic, political, and legal relationships that wove Taj into the fabric of Ugandan urban life were also sources of tension that animated the performance of racial difference and desires for racial justice. According to his own telling, the relationships that he cultivated in Gomba, whether at his shop or through his charity or political work, were mutually warm and sincere, but they also sustained racial and class hierarchies that could provoke resentment. When the boycott of Asian shops began in 1959, some of his closest colleagues and beneficiaries of his charitable work were among its harshest enforcers. From the other side of the counter, the attributes of thrift and aid could be seen as upholding an unethical hierarchy and the abuses that it enabled, particularly when mediated through credit and unequal access to capital. Political entrepreneurs readily

¹ Interview with Taj Kassam, Kampala, July 15, 2013; Vali Jamal, *Uganda Asians: Then and Now, Here and There, We Contributed, We Contribute*, April 2015 Edition (Kampala: Viva Publications, 2015), 1194–6.

reduced this hierarchy to fixed racial categories and urged African publics to identify racial exploitation in the mundane interactions that characterized daily life in segregated urban environments. Such uses of racial thought shaped not only the orientation of Ugandan Asian community politics but also gendered dynamics of urban protest, social norms of commercial transactions, and discursive constraints over claims to belonging in a variety of imagined communities.

The aspects of Taj Kassam's story that elucidate tensions of late colonial and postcolonial urban life also reveal experiences of disruption and continuity that do not easily conform to narratives of segregation and rupture that characterize many popular and scholarly accounts of Ugandan Asian history. Because his personal trajectory bypasses the expulsion altogether, Taj's story draws attention to other experiences of dislocation and arenas of urban sociality that many Ugandan Asians shared. Narratives culminating in the expulsion often dismiss or consider these only as antecedents.² However, tensions among Africans and Asians and contestations over the place of Asians in Uganda took shape long before the expulsion. In reference to the boycott that forced him to move from Gomba to Kampala in 1959, Taj remembered, "That was the time I became very bitter." His resentment grew not in response to the actions of a lone dictator but from myriad ways that friends, colleagues, and neighbors, as well as the economic and political networks in which he had invested, participated in rejecting his claims to belonging and residence in his hometown. Understanding Taj's bitterness and the dynamics that produced his multiple

² On the perils of "doing history backward" through constructivist or genealogical approaches, see Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 18–9; Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), chap. 1.

dislocations requires analyzing how horizontal relationships and exclusions were built, reproduced, experienced, and understood. They are equally important for understanding why and how he moved back to Uganda a quarter century after he left. Until recently, scholars of Ugandan Asian history have tended to write a narrative of unitary rupture precipitated by state action, subsuming the everyday production of racial difference and hierarchy within diverse registers of urban life. Such an analytic strategy has made it difficult to address the multiple registers in which racial ideas and structures continuously shape ways of self-identifying and belonging.

This study examines the infrastructure of racial thought in late colonial and post-colonial urban Uganda. By the late 1950s, diverse Ugandan publics shared a common assumption that individuals and communities were divided in a tripartite hierarchy among the categories European, Asian, and African. However, even where there existed common beliefs about Uganda as a plural society, the political, social, economic, and administrative implications of such ideas varied depending on the connections that people drew between racial categories and the spaces and institutions through which they moved. Likewise, racial ideas spread through, and adapted to, particular infrastructure and media, including the elite and vernacular presses, anonymous letters distributed among the density of urban trading centers, interactions over shop counters, and correspondence across different levels of government bureaucracy. If constructivist accounts often portray “racialization” as a coherent process that produced ideas about mutually exclusive racial groups across social and political contexts, it was a far more contingent experience for those who participated in it. As Ugandans adapted changing technologies to address new publics, summon racialized constituencies, and challenge the normative interactions that

characterized daily urban life, they found novel ways of claiming urban citizenship and imagining belonging in urban economic, political, and social life. While Idi Amin drew on the tensions that these histories produced, the expulsion also required denying the claims and mutual entanglements that they entailed.

Ugandan Asian history

Ugandan Asian history is inextricably connected with British Protectorate rule, but popular and scholarly accounts of that connection often hinge on alternative origin stories that account for Asian presence in East Africa. Historians of the Indian Ocean world have challenged the hegemony of territorial imaginations in regional histories by pointing to the circulation of people, ideas, and commodities in ways that bypass European-dominated world systems.³ Taking a Braudelian approach to the emergence of the Indian Ocean over the *longue durée* through trade among coastal peoples, Michael Pearson, Kenneth McPherson, and Kirti Chaudhuri emphasize the environmental agency of monsoon winds that enabled seasonal travel patterns between the western Indian and eastern African coast.⁴ If scholars have built a consensus around the idea of the Indian Ocean as a sphere of exchange, the periodization of its relationship with European capitalism remains deeply contested. Immanuel Wallerstein proposed that there was an alternative “South Asian

³ See also Martin Lewis and Kären Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

⁴ Michael Pearson, *The Indian Ocean* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Kenneth McPherson, *The Indian Ocean: A History of People and the Sea* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993); Kirti Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). See also Abdul Sheriff, *Dhow Culture of the Indian Ocean: Cosmopolitanism, Commerce and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

world economy” that was destroyed and reconstituted as a semi-periphery of the European world system in the nineteenth century.⁵ However, historians of South Asia have long argued that such a view ignores “how British capitalism rode on the back of South Asian dynamics,”⁶ showing how shifts in scale (from histories *of* the Indian Ocean to histories *in* the Indian Ocean) need not imply the dissolution of non-European history.⁷ Sugata Bose follows Ranajit Guha’s assertion that the British established dominance without hegemony, as peoples of the Indian Ocean pursued “alternative universalisms” and ideoscapes beyond the hegemony of colonial discourse and institutions.⁸

Indian Ocean scholarship soundly rejects the notion, which informs so much racial thinking, that the geographical distance between continents kept Africans and Asians economically and culturally separate outside of European colonialism. However, until recently, Indian Ocean Studies produced its own gaps and silences. Chaudhuri and McPherson downplayed East Africa’s connection to the Indian Ocean economy, and even many of those who follow networks into the East African interior tend to claim India as the

⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, “Incorporation of Indian Subcontinent into Capitalist World-Economy,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 21, no. 4 (January 25, 1986): PE28–39.

⁶ David Washbrook, “South Asia, the World System and World Capitalism,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 49, no. 3 (August 1990): 490; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “‘World-Economies’ and South Asia, 1600-1750: A Skeptical Note,” *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 12, no. 1 (1989): 141–48.

⁷ On histories in and of the Indian Ocean, see Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, 190 & chap. 7. For a critique of the incorporation of the Other into the Western Self, Fernando Coronil, “Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories,” *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no. 1 (February 1996): 61–8.

⁸ Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Ranajit Guha, *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 36.

spatial and/or imaginative center of Indian Ocean history.⁹ By privileging the mobility of maritime peoples “on the sea,” Pearson, for example, renders the vast majority of people who did not participate in transoceanic travel peripheral to Indian Ocean history.¹⁰

Meanwhile, the very focus on the ocean as a unique space of interconnectivity may obscure social networks, intellectual trajectories, and political horizons that were not strictly part of a diasporic public sphere.¹¹

Extraction and exploitation in histories of extraversion, as well as the refusal to acknowledge African contributions to universal history, renders histories of non-Africans charged with moral and political implication. “‘The Outsider’ in African history ... tends to belittle and dilute the African contribution to human civilization,” wrote the historian Bethwell Ogot.¹² Thus, a critical project of cultural retrieval among African nationalists in the 1960s was to demonstrate that African linguistic and cultural work was responsible for the Swahili culture of the East African coast.¹³ However, the coast was also a zone of extreme inequality whose relationship with the East African interior was characterized by

⁹ Hatim Amiji, “The Asiatic Bias in the Historiography of the East African Coast,” *Journal of African Studies* 10, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 66–72; Bose, *A Hundred Horizons*, 11–2; McPherson, *The Indian Ocean*, 6.

¹⁰ Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, 31, 77, 92.

¹¹ The phrase comes from Bose, *A Hundred Horizons*, 149. For a critique, see Claire Anderson, “Process Geographies of Mobility and Movement in the Indian Ocean: A Review Essay,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 8, no. 3 (Winter 2007).

¹² Ogot was addressing an audience at FESTAC in Lagos in 1977. Bethwell Ogot, “The Concept of the Outsider in African History,” in *The Challenges of History and Leadership in Africa: The Essays of Bethwell Allan Ogot*, ed. Toyin Falola and E.S. Atieno Odhiambo (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2002), 461.

¹³ Tanzania’s ruling TANU party attempted to use Swahili language and culture in a united national cultural project. On tensions that TANU’s cultural nationalism produced, see Kelly Askew, *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

intensified slave trading in the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Historians of the western Indian Ocean have attempted to correct the imbalances of Indian Ocean historiography through studies of the slave trade, from the involvement of Indian financiers to the contested histories of African presence in India through enslavement and voluntary migration.¹⁵ The intensification of the slave trade in the nineteenth century and of the subsequent exploitative labor demands of “legitimate commerce” did not preclude Africans from shaping global trade networks and cosmopolitan consumer culture through consumer demand and practices of what Jeremy Prestholdt refers to as “similitude” and “domestication.”¹⁶ Nevertheless, the celebration of Indian Ocean cosmopolitanism as an arena of religious, cultural, and political circulation in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries tends to silence “embarrassingly articulate” racists who worked in these arenas and often commented explicitly on histories of exploitation that pitted Black Africans against Asians, Arabs, and other perceived “foreigners.”¹⁷ Indian Ocean studies helps move away from area studies’ fixation on “the interaction between Africa and the rest of the

¹⁴ Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry and Rebellion on the Swahili Coast, 1856-88* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995); Steve Feierman, “A Century of Ironies in East Africa (c. 1780-1890),” in *African History: From Earliest Times to Independence*, ed. Philip Curtin et al. (London: Longman, 1995), 391–418.

¹⁵ Edward Alpers, *East Africa and the Indian Ocean* (Markus Wiener Publishers, 2009). For debates over the origins of “Sidis” in India, see essays by Gwyn Campbell and Robert Collins in Shihan de Silva Hayasuriya and Jean-Pierre Angenot, eds., *Uncovering the History of Africans in Asia* (Leiden: BRILL, 2008), 37–80; Kiran Kamal Prasad and Jean-Pierre Angenot, eds., *TADIA, The African Diaspora in Asia: Explorations on a Less Known Fact* (Bangalore: Jana Jagrati Prakashana, 2008), 43–82. For an overview, see Edward Alpers’ chapter in Amy Catlin-Jairazbhoy and Edward Alpers, *Sidis and Scholars: Essays on African Indians* (Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press, 2004), 27–41.

¹⁶ Jeremy Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World: African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

¹⁷ The phrase is taken from Michael Twaddle, “Z.K. Sentongo and the Indian Question in East Africa,” *History in Africa* 24 (1997): 312–3. Embarrassing only for those invested in narratives of non-racial anti-colonialism.

world ... since Africa is in no sense extraneous to the world,” even as it grows to include studies of political and intellectual projects that attempt to ossify geographic racial boundaries.¹⁸

Narratives of Asian commercial pioneers usually begin in the nineteenth century with the gradual movement of traders beyond Zanzibar and the Swahili coast into the East African interior, independent both of slave caravans and of British or German colonial conquest.¹⁹ The dhow trade had long connected merchants from the Indian subcontinent with the Swahili coast, but it was in the early 1800s that a small community permanently settled in Zanzibar began to expand and assume a prominent position in the island’s commerce with the encouragement of Sultan Seyyid Said. Trade in cloth from Kutch and Surat in exchange for ivory formed the initial economic basis of the Indian community in Zanzibar, though some also attempted to gain a foothold in plantation agriculture. As British subjects, most Indians were not allowed to own slaves, a prohibition that was ultimately enforced in 1860, leading to the emancipation of 2,544 enslaved persons from fifty-nine owners.²⁰ Thereafter, the economic base of Zanzibar’s Asians was neither in land nor in forced labor but in trade and credit. This was the economic basis upon which Indian

¹⁸ Jean-François Bayart, “Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion,” trans. Stephen Ellis, *African Affairs* 99, no. 395 (April 2000): 234. For reflections on bringing Africa and India into the same frame within and outside of Indian Ocean studies, Isabel Hofmeyr and Devrakshanam Betty Govinden, “Africa/India: Culture and Circulation in the Indian Ocean,” *scrutiny2* 13, no. 2 (2008): 5–15; Isabel Hofmeyr, “The Black Atlantic Meets the Indian Ocean: Forging New Paradigms of Transnationalism for the Global South - Literary and Cultural Perspectives,” *Social Dynamics* 33, no. 2 (2007): 3–32.

¹⁹ For example, Cynthia Salvadori and Shaila Mauladad Fisher, *Settling in a Strange Land: Stories of Punjabi Muslim Pioneers in Kenya* (Nairobi: Park Road Mosque Trust, 2010); Jamal, *Uganda Asians*; Moyez G. Vassanji, *The Gunny Sack* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1989).

²⁰ Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices, & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire Into the World Economy, 1770-1873* (London: James Currey, 1987), 170.

traders moved inland into East Africa from Zanzibar and directly from western India, including to what would become the British Uganda Protectorate.²¹

Scholars have noted three myths that characterize heroic narratives of the expansion of Asian trading networks in East Africa: men came to create new trading opportunities, they prospered economically through hard work, and they remained in East Africa. There is a kernel of truth in each assertion. “Pioneers” such as Allidina Visram established vast trading networks that often spread more rapidly than British administration. The men involved in this trade invited relatives to help them expand their businesses. While they remained connected with family, spiritual, and economic networks in India, most of those who found commercial success remained in East Africa. However, as Gijsbert Oonk has argued, prospective traders were aware of the risk involved in their endeavors and attempted to protect themselves in case of failure. Migration was a process, which never involved the immediate and complete severance of ties with western India. Single men proceeded first and gradually summoned relatives to join them as their businesses grew. Those who went bankrupt usually returned to India and have since been written out of East African Asian history.²² The vast majority who emigrated to serve as cheap and trusted labor for their relatives, as Mahmood Mamdani put it, did not go “in search of, but [rather] in response to, opportunities.”²³ Trade was a male-dominated sphere, but a man trading in East Africa worked to build social and economic capital in

²¹ Robert Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa: An Economic and Social History, 1890-1980* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).

²² Gijsbert Oonk, *Settled Strangers: Asian Business Elites in East Africa (1800-2000)* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2013), chap. 2; Gijsbert Oonk, “South Asians in East Africa (1880-1920) with a Particular Focus on Zanzibar: Toward a Historical Explanation of Economic Success of a Middlemen Minority” 5, no. 1 (2006): 57–89.

²³ Mahmood Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), 81.

order to request that his family in India find him a wife from a respectable family and send her to join him.²⁴ The myth of the self-made male pioneer thus obscures the more variegated experiences of Asian migration to and through East Africa in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

When Idi Amin described the context that he believed justified his decision to expel Ugandan Asians in 1972, he made no reference to the long history of Asian-African exchange or to the work of independent Asian traders. “The British ... removed those British Asians in their hundreds of thousands from their homes in the Indian sub-continent and brought them to the East Africa [*sic*] to assist in the colonial administration and exploitation of the region,” he informed a radio audience.²⁵ For Amin, the Asian presence in Uganda belonged to a legacy of British exploitation of African resources and of both African and Asian labor rather than to longer histories of coastal exchange. Many Ugandan Asians’ autobiographical accounts emphasize the figure of the pioneering trader and Indian Ocean connections.²⁶ However, historians have focused primarily on Asians’ relationship with colonial institutions in order to explain the origins of structural racial divisions that led to Amin’s expulsion decrees.²⁷ If the former stories tend to eschew analysis of how the category ‘Asian’ was entangled in the inequalities of colonial society and institutions, the latter approach insists too strongly on a unitary origin of Asian presence and racialization.

²⁴ Richa Nagar, “Communal Discourses, Marriage, and the Politics of Gendered Social Boundaries among South Asian Immigrants in Tanzania,” *Gender, Place and Culture* 5, no. 2 (1998): 117–39; Gijbert Oonk, “The Changing Structure of the Hindu Lohana Community in East Africa,” *Contemporary South Asia* 13, no. 1 (March 2004): 7–23.

²⁵ Government of Uganda, *Uganda’s Economic War* (Kampala: Publications Section of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1975), 24.

²⁶ For example, see Nanji Kalidas Mehta, *Dream Half-Expressed* (Bombay: Vakils, Feffer and Simons Private Ltd., 1966); Manubhai Madhvani and Giles Foden, *Tide of Fortune: A Family Tale* (London: Manubhai Madhvani Bermuda Trusts, 2008), chap. 4–5.

²⁷ See Chapter 5.

As Jonathon Glassman and Ann Stoler have argued, the power of racial thought lies in its malleability, its multiple influences, and its diffuse resonance rather than its linear evolution from a single point of origin.²⁸ Foucault reminds us, “What is found at the historical beginning of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin; it is the dissension of other things.”²⁹ As African politicians questioned the possibility of incorporating the category “Asian” into articulations of Ugandan national belonging, Asians could draw on a variety of historical entanglements to justify their inclusion, even if they only did so cautiously given the inequalities that characterized their shared history.

The people whom Idi Amin expelled in 1972 could trace their presence in Uganda to three primary streams of immigration: indentured labor, individuals following family and community networks in trade, and individuals recruited in the Protectorate civil service.³⁰ The first was part of a larger system of indentured labor, in which millions of people, involuntarily or in efforts to escape famine or other forms of bondage, were shipped across the British and French empires in the 1800s and early 1900s, mostly to work on sugar plantations in Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, Fiji, and Natal in South Africa.³¹ Others were conscripted to work on infrastructure projects, such as the railway line that linked the port of Mombasa with Kampala. The figure of the indentured laborer, as a barrier to African

²⁸ Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, chap. 1; Ann Laura Stoler, “Racial Histories and Their Regimes of Truth,” *Political Power and Social Theory* 11 (1997): 183–206.

²⁹ Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. D.F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 142.

³⁰ There were other forms of migration, including the movement of religious figures to serve East African Asian communities or the recruitment of professional staff in private businesses. Smaller numbers of people also moved from areas of South Asia other than Gujarat, the Punjab, and Goa. However, the majority of migration across the Indian Ocean to Uganda came from these regions and fell within the three streams described here.

³¹ Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920* (London: Hansib, 1993).

apprenticeship, figured prominently in Amin's rhetoric immediately following his expulsion announcement. "And that is now the lesson I am teaching the British," he told a group of British and Ugandan journalists a few days after his announcement. "If they had [thought] earlier that there are Africans here who can even work building the railway with instruction given to them by the British, this problem would not happen."³² However, former indentured laborers and their descendants constituted a small proportion of the total population of Ugandan Asians. Of the 39,771 who worked on the railway, approximately 32,493 died or returned to India at the end of their contracts, and few of those who remained settled in Uganda.³³

The largest stream of immigration from western India consisted of individuals joining family commercial networks. Few had worked in commerce before reaching East Africa, but as stories of others' fortunes circulated in Gujarat and the Punjab, many took advantage of open immigration between the two world wars to move to East Africa in order to work for other commercial enterprises before acquiring the capital and credit to start their own shops. As a trader S.S. Keshavji recalled in an interview with the historian Robert Gregory, "Each family in my village tried to send one son. When I did well, my

³² AP Archive, "Uganda Amin Luncheon," AP Archive video, 3:09, August 9, 1972, <http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/youtube/abb889f8839208bd918bbf206140c9e6>. Amin's appeal to the paternalism of British tutelage differs in emphasis from the formulation recalled in Amin's speech by Mahmood Mamdani: "Asians came to Uganda to build the railway. The railway is finished. They must leave now." Whereas the latter implies the purging of the jetsam of colonial development, the former suggests a legacy of competition for colonial apprenticeship. Mahmood Mamdani, *From Citizen to Refugee: Uganda Asians Come To Britain* (London: Frances Pinter, 1973), 13.

³³ Robert Gregory, *India and East Africa: A History of Race Relations within the British Empire 1890-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 61. Dharam Ghai puts the figure of those who stayed at 6,724 out of 32,000. Dharam Ghai and Yash Ghai, eds., *Portrait of a Minority: Asians in East Africa*, Revised Edition (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1970), 3.

brothers followed.”³⁴ Once in East Africa, it was a common practice for young men, such as Taj Kassam, to branch off from the family business to open their own shops. If many individuals who were subsequently lionized as “pioneers” often opened trade independently or in advance of British conquest, colonial administration was still deeply entwined in the relationship between commerce, racial hierarchy, and the development of urban spaces. Commerce followed the railway, according to one oft-repeated phrase, which reflects the dependence of trade on transportation infrastructure. As British authorities imposed taxes and encouraged the large-scale cultivation of cash crops such as cotton and coffee, African farmers became dependent on a cash economy shaped by credit. Licensing laws, based on quality controls and preference for established firms, privileged Asian businesses in the lucrative produce marketing and processing industries.³⁵

The third stream of immigration from India to Uganda consisted of individuals recruited into the service of the Protectorate government. Indian soldiers formed a significant part of the Imperial British East Africa Company’s military police force and continued in the King’s African Rifles (KAR), as one British Inspector General put it, “in order that we might have a body of troops with no religious or local sympathies.”³⁶ However, British officials withdrew Indian troops from the KAR in 1912 over concerns about the extra cost of catering to Indians’ dietary demands and their higher salary scale than African recruits. Similar logic informed the recruitment of Indians to the civil service.

³⁴ Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa*, 15.

³⁵ The Uganda Cotton Ordinance, 1908 Ordinance No. 5 or 1908; The Uganda Cotton Ordinance Rules, 1909 (No.1 and 2), (18 January 1909 and 30 December 1909); The Uganda Cotton Rules, 1918, (27 November 1918), page 124; Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 72–79.

³⁶ Quoted in Timothy Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File: Social Implications of Colonial Military Service in the King’s African Rifles, 1902-1964* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999), 15.

Lord Lugard advocated importing West Africans and Indians as clerical staff in order to provide a skilled cadre of clerks who owed their loyalty to the Protectorate government rather than to local political allegiances.³⁷ Goans, whose Roman Catholic faith and Western dress often distinguished them from Indian traders, became the preferred recruits for mid-level clerical positions.³⁸ However, from the outset, this arrangement conflicted with officials' efforts to cut costs and with the paternalist project of colonial uplift characterized by African apprenticeship under European command. As early as 1912, officials advocated "the formulation of some scheme for the training of native clerks with the ultimate object of the Civil Service of Uganda being composed only of Europeans and Natives."³⁹ However, the racial hierarchy of the civil service did not reflect individual applicants' educational qualifications, but rather the institutional structure of Protectorate rule. As "overseas civil servants," Asian clerks were paid higher wages, provided with accommodation, and had their passage to and from India provided. Meanwhile, their African "home civil service" counterparts often expressed resentment over their Asian colleagues' efforts to prevent their career advancement and to block their access to European officials, despite the latter's repeated assurances that Asian civil servants would be phased out.⁴⁰ Racial pay scales remained in place until independence.

³⁷ Nizar Motani, "The Growth of an African Civil Service in Uganda, 1912-1940" (Ph.D. thesis, SOAS, University of London, 1972), 19-21.

³⁸ Health was not a factor. Motani notes, "It was a recurring complaint in government departments that their Asian staff was often on the sick-list." *Ibid.*, 182.

³⁹ Second Assistant Secretary G. Lyall, quoted in Nizar Motani, *On His Majesty's Service in Uganda: The Origins of Uganda's African Civil Service, 1912-1940* (Syracuse: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, 1977), 6.

⁴⁰ Motani, "The Growth of an African Civil Service," 310; Nizar Motani, "The Ugandan Civil Service and the Asian Problem, 1894-1972," in *Expulsion of a Minority: Essays on Ugandan Asians*, ed. Michael Twaddle (London: The Athlone Press, 1975), 102-3; Motani, *On His Majesty's Service in Uganda*, 49, 64-5.

Professional divisions among immigrants to East Africa overlapped with religious and family ties. The majority of “Asiatics” counted in Uganda’s 1921 census were Ismailis, though by 1931, Hindus constituted the majority of the 13,026 “Indians” enumerated in Uganda.⁴¹ Unlike indentured laborers sent to other plantation colonies, who primarily came from Calcutta and Madras, most indentured laborers sent to East Africa came from the Punjab, while most traders came from Gujarat.⁴² Professional networks often spread through religious and family connections, which helped to reinforce and harden ideas of caste hierarchy even as they were modified in East Africa. For example, the anthropologist Agehananda Bharati described how Patels were landowners in India who became synonymous with wealthy merchants in East Africa. Stereotypical images of prosperous “Patels” thus occasionally came to fill in for a stereotype of all Asians among some Africans and Europeans.⁴³ Bharati also noted that Lohanas, among whom were Uganda’s wealthiest families the Mehtas and the Madhavanis, went from being rural peasants in India to a prosperous trading class in East Africa. However, collective social mobility became more constrained in East Africa. “Upcasting,” whereby communities attempted to improve perceptions of their collective status in an imagined caste hierarchy by altering their dietary and spiritual practices as well as their professional aspirations, was more difficult

⁴¹ “Goans” numbered 1,124 in 1931 and were counted separately, as were “Arabs,” “Europeans,” and “Others” among “Non-Natives.” Uganda Protectorate, *Census Returns, 1931*, (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1931), 39.

⁴² Paul Younger, *New Homelands: Hindu Communities in Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, South Africa, Fiji and East Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 201.

⁴³ Agehananda Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa: Jayhind and Uhuru* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Co., 1972), 45. Glassman describes similar processes whereby a racial stereotype of a larger group is formed by stereotypes of a single sub-group seen to be particularly morally suspect. Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, chap. 6.

among small numbers in East Africa. Anthropologists such as Bharati and Richa Nagar agree that overlapping class and caste hierarchies tended to remain fixed in East Africa.⁴⁴

“Asian” was a shifting category. The Protectorate Government and Indian nationalist leaders demanded that East African Asian leaders speak for a single community, even as “the Asian community” served primarily to unite elite business interests rather than to facilitate everyday social functions, which remained in religious and caste communities.⁴⁵ Before the partition of India and Pakistan, Ugandan government officials tended to refer to categories of people as “Indians” based on their perceived geographic origins and as “Asiatics” based on a crude racial typology. Although officials replaced the term “Asiatic” with “Indian” in census reports beginning in 1931, many government departments continued to use the former term well into the 1940s. Asian members of the Kenyan and Ugandan Legislative Councils denounced the “contemptuous” connotations of “Asiatic” and proposed “Asian” in its stead.⁴⁶ The term “Asian” could include a wider population than “Indian,” which became a contested political identity after the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

The terms “Asiatic” and “Asian” circulated among shifting popular ideas of race and official legal identities. Government documents frequently required clerks to identify an individual’s religion, nationality, and race, though interpretations of these categories shifted over time. For example, in the 1920s, clerks filling out death certificates routinely

⁴⁴ Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa*, 29–36; Nagar, “Communal Discourses, Marriage, and the Politics of Gendered Social Boundaries,” 126.

⁴⁵ Harold Stephen Morris, *The Indians in Uganda* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), chap. 3.

⁴⁶ UNA Secretariat Topical box B 5 file 6 “Substitution of the term ‘Asian’ for ‘Asiatic’ in official communication and publications,” Secretariat Nairobi to Secretariat Entebbe, February 22, 1944: 13.

referred to the deceased's "nationality or race" with designations such as "Lohana" or "Patel," which would later be identified as "caste" or "family" affiliations.⁴⁷ Officials never codified these categories in law. Even the classifications that ostensibly provided a legal architecture for pinning down Asians in Protectorate administration were neither internally coherent nor uniformly adopted. Constructivist accounts of racialization suggest that legal categories developed by colonial administrators and reinforced by colonial institutions distorted indigeneity as a basis for violent political identities.⁴⁸ However, as James Brennan counters, "The path between colonial policy and internalized colonial identity was mediated by several factors, in particular the constant improvisation of colonial officials and the selective political appropriation of their colonial subjects."⁴⁹ As Christopher Lee argues, even as "native" and "non-native" became vital terms in the British colonial lexicon, there was little coherence or consensus regarding these terms.⁵⁰ "Native" connoted rural and traditional while "non-native" suggested urban and modern, which translated into the protection of customary law for "natives" and civic law for "non-natives." Officials thus relied on case-by-case assessments of individuals' legal statuses often based on assumptions about their descent, class position, and their cultural orientation.⁵¹

⁴⁷ JDA file 27/30 "Deaths – Non-Native: Nanji Hansraj" Report of Death, n.d. [1930].

⁴⁸ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2001).

⁴⁹ James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2012), 22.

⁵⁰ Christopher J. Lee, "The 'Native' Undefined: Colonial Categories, Anglo-African Status and the Politics of Kinship in British Central Africa, 1929-38," *Journal of African History* 46 (2005): 455–78.

⁵¹ Brennan, *Taifa*, 26. Mahmood Mamdani's formulation suggests an intellectual and juridical consistency to these categories, which historians have argued was never the case.

Asians occupied a doubly negative discursive space as “non-native” and “non-European,” which simultaneously blocked claims to a “privileged autochthony” and to the civilizing project offered by European colonizers or evangelists.⁵² Asian community leaders frequently demanded equality with Europeans in political representation and government employment, but they found little traction in official thinking that took an ambivalent view of their participation in European paternalism toward Africans. As Lee has shown, the efforts of “Anglo-Africans” of mixed European, African, and/or Indian parentage to carve out Anglophile social and political subjectivities found little recognition among colonial and post-colonial governments or publics.⁵³ For example, a petition from a self-described “Anglo-Indian” police clerk John Thomas Farrell to the Secretary of State for the Colonies suggests how the double negative designation non-native and non-European produced a double exclusion from the ideals of colonial paternalism. As the son of a British father and an Indian mother, he requested the increased pay, better accommodation, opportunities for advancement, and social prestige that came with being on a European civil service pay scale. Invoking his “Britisher’s sense of Racial Pride,” he observed, “In the eyes of the Natives of Uganda the ‘MUHINDI’⁵⁴ and ‘GOA’ stand reproached for some unknown cause and are considered as people of very inferior social grade, an opinion which is shared by

Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1996).

⁵² Achille Mbembe, “African Modes of Self-Writing,” *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002): 256.

⁵³ Christopher J. Lee, *Unreasonable Histories: Nativism, Multiracial Lives, and the Genealogical Imagination in British Africa* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

⁵⁴ *Muhindi* is the Luganda term for Indian.

the majority of [British] Officials.”⁵⁵ As a “Muhindi,” or Indian, and as an “Asiatic staff” member, Farrell felt excluded from the civilizing project of colonialism.⁵⁶

Andrew Arsan recently criticized historians of non-African minorities in Africa who “treat historiography as moral reckoning.”⁵⁷ Through the tallying of colonial legal privileges, structural constraints, or charitable initiatives, historical narrative can become a means of implicating middle groups in, or exonerating them from, the structures and sins of colonial exploitation.⁵⁸ Efforts to situate Asians on either side of a colonizer/colonized or non-native/native binary, as Arsan points out, miss the texture of everyday life for people named by these categories, even as they point to the politics of racial bifurcation in which such people were entangled. Unlike middle figures who translated colonial civilizing projects between European authorities and African subjects, Asians occupied a middle

⁵⁵ UNA C Series box 7 file 111 1912 “Eurasians: Petition by Mr. Farrell re status of” John Thomas Farrell to Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 18, 1912: 1a.

⁵⁶ The Secretary of State for the Colonies rejected his petition. On Asian efforts to form partnerships with Europeans in the colonization and civilization of East Africa, and the conflict that such efforts provoked with ideals of racial equality, see Sana Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya: The Politics of Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), chap. 1 & 2.

⁵⁷ Andrew Arsan, *Interlopers of Empire: The Lebanese Diaspora in Colonial French West Africa* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 123.

⁵⁸ Political economy provided a method for analyzing Asians’ position in an exploitative class hierarchy defined by colonial underdevelopment, but it usually avoided an explicitly moralizing language. Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*; Issa Shivji, *Class Struggles in Tanzania* (New York: New York University Press, 1976). Sympathetic accounts include Robert Gregory, *Quest for Equality: Asian Politics in East Africa, 1900-1967* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993); Dana April Seidenberg, *Uhuru and the Kenya Indians: The Role of a Minority Community in Kenya Politics, 1939-1963* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1983); R.R. Ramchandani, *Uganda Asians: The End of an Enterprise* (Bombay: United Asia Publications, 1976); J.S. Mangat, *A History of the Asians in East Africa C. 1886-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969). Such binary interpretations also informed Western press coverage of the 1972 expulsion. Yumiko Hamai, “‘Imperial Burden’ or ‘Jews of Africa’?: An Analysis of Political and Media Discourse in the Ugandan Asian Crisis (1972),” *Twentieth Century British History* 22, no. 3 (2011): 415–36; Deogratius Nzarwa Katono, “Western Newspapers’ Coverage of Idi Amin, 1971-1979” (M.A. thesis, Wake Forest University, 1990).

ground that largely cut them off from those projects.⁵⁹ Lloyd Fallers referred to “the lack of cultural *rapprochement*” between Asians and Africans as Hindus, Sikhs, and Asian Muslims rarely proselytized or offered an alternative model of moral uplift through spiritual or cultural conversion.⁶⁰ Instead, Asians and Africans interacted in sites of intense social and economic competition in urban centers. In such contexts, moral reckoning appears less analytically useful as a means of understanding Ugandan Asian history than as a political response to urban competition.

Ugandan Asians and urban competition

Patterns of immigration from India, reinforced by state policies, connected Asians with male domains of urban commerce and administration. After abandoning an idea of promoting Asian agricultural settlement, British officials attempted to regulate Asian claims to land and to balance the economic benefits of Asian commerce with the ideals of paternalist protection of African interests. Thus, by 1923, the colonial government had barred the alienation of land to non-natives, who could lease plots in towns and trading

⁵⁹ On “middle figures,” see Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon: Of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Gaurav Desai, *Subject to Colonialism: African Self-Fashioning and the Colonial Library* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001). Valentin Mudimbe’s fictional writing vividly captures feelings of double alienation. V.Y. Mudimbe, *Between Tides*, trans. Stephen Becker (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991). By contrast, Ugandan Asian fiction often focuses on the relationship between experiences of exclusion and the desire of knowing Africans in a manner inaccessible to Europeans. Peter Nazareth, *In a Brown Mantle* (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1972); Dan Odhiambo Ojwang, “The Pleasures of Knowing: Images of ‘Africans’ in East African Asian Literature,” *English Studies in Africa* 43, no. 1 (2000): 43–64.

⁶⁰ Lloyd A. Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy: A Study of Integration and Conflict in the Political Institutions of an East African People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 44.

centers, usually on 49 or 99-year leases.⁶¹ Likewise, the Trading Ordinance of 1938 attempted to protect rural African traders by preventing non-natives from operating shops outside of designated trading centers.⁶² As a result, Africans regularly encountered Asians, unlike distant European administrators, in spaces of urban commerce and administration. The anthropologist Lloyd Fallers observed in 1956, “The *duka* [shop] town ... brings the peasant into economic relations with Indian traders. ... Although relations may be hostile and lacking in mutual trust, they are intimate.”⁶³

Social scientists who conducted fieldwork in the 1950s frequently emphasized the challenges of reconciling the emergence of a new political order with tense social relations among Africans and middle groups such as Ugandan Asians. Georges Balandier’s influential account of the colonial situation emphasized the convergence of horizontal social relations and vertical hierarchies. Scholars have revisited his observation of the “ambivalent reactions towards [foreigners] on the part of the indigenous population (a certain intimacy tinged with scorn).”⁶⁴ Since the 1980s, cultural historians have used the study of affect and social intimacy to expose “tensions of empire” that united metropole and colony, colonizer and colonized in the same analytic field.⁶⁵ However, Balandier’s discussion of sometimes hostile intimacy referred specifically to “the Lebanese-Syrians, the Greeks, and the

⁶¹ Henry West, *Land Policy in Buganda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 135–8.

⁶² *Trading Ordinance, 1938*, Ordinance No. 19 of 1938, (20 October 1938), section 5.

⁶³ Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, 60.

⁶⁴ Georges Balandier, “The Colonial Situation: A Theoretical Approach (1951),” in *Social Change: The Colonial Situation*, ed. Immanuel Wallerstein (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966), 48; Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, chap. 2.

⁶⁵ Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Nancy Rose Hunt, “The Affective, the Intellectual, and Gender History,” *Journal of African History* 55, no. 3 (2014): 331–45.

Portuguese in West Africa.” Though he regarded “colored foreigners,” including Indians, as isolated in an overlapping racial and economic middle position, they remained subject to the same critical question: how would such tense horizontal relations endure or shift with changes to the colonial social structure?⁶⁶ “The Indian community[’s] future is perhaps Uganda’s foremost long-term problem,” Fallers predicted.⁶⁷ Social scientists who studied East African Asian communities, such as Harold Stephen Morris and Agehananda Bharati,⁶⁸ focused on social structures that provided community security within a plural society of separate social orders in the same political unit.⁶⁹ Urban commercial and administrative spaces provided the setting for tensions between Asians and Africans as well as the context where racial hierarchies were challenged and reproduced.

Scholars have long been concerned with the wish for discipline in African urban life.

Frederick Cooper identified African cities as sites of struggle over the structure of time,

⁶⁶ Balandier, “The Colonial Situation,” 49.

⁶⁷ Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy*, 44. Fallers’ assertion in 1956 was remarkable given how fixated scholars of Uganda were on the relationship between the “modernizing autocracies” of traditional kingdoms and the central Ugandan state. Lloyd A. Fallers, ed., *The King’s Men: Leadership and Status in Buganda on the Eve of Independence* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964). Modernization theorists assumed that people could claim the protections of civic belonging by participating in modern state bureaucracy. The entrenchment of ethnic and racial nationalisms troubled scholars working in this framework.

⁶⁸ Bharati, born Leopold Fischer in Vienna, was ordained in the Hindu monastic Order of Sanyasis and subsequently taught anthropology at Syracuse University as well as institutions in India, Thailand, and Japan. Morris was raised in Rhodesia and subsequently became a student of Raymond Firth at the London School of Economics. Syracuse University, “Bharati Memorial Award,” accessed August 15, 2015, http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/sac/Bharati_Memorial_Grant/; Victor King, “Obituary: Stephen Morris,” *Anthropology Today* 10, no. 1 (February 1994): 17–18.

⁶⁹ Harold Stephen Morris, “Immigrant Indian Communities in Uganda” (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1963); Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa*. The classic statement on plural societies comes from J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), xv. For a research program outlined by Morris’s advisor, see Raymond Firth, “Factions in Indian and Overseas Indian Societies, Part 1: Introduction,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 8, no. 4 (December 1957): 291–95.

space, and class relations.⁷⁰ Cities were built on cheap migrant labor, but because of their inability to reproduce a labor force with adequate wages or services, government and capital relied on an informal sector beyond their surveillance or regulation, which appeared to spread “values antithetical to a work culture.”⁷¹ Mobility between urban and rural centers of production complicated workers’ aspirations of urban modernity but provided security against the fragility of urban wage employment.⁷² Beer brewing, prostitution, and urban farming sustained the labor power of urban workers within a zone of illegality.⁷³ Cities, it was argued, produced indiscipline that threatened the ideal work-time of industrial capitalism, even as this indiscipline sustained the labor necessary for capital’s expansion.

African urban life was worrisome to administrators and industrialists, but also to African men seeking social capital amidst diverse, competitive, seemingly undisciplined masses. In recent years, historians have recognized the urban as both a site and object of racial thought and ethnic patriotism in late colonial and postcolonial Africa. Amidst the cacophony of African cities, men created ethnic associations that not only directed members to employment but also attempted to instill social discipline and to defend the

⁷⁰ Frederick Cooper, “Introduction: Urban Space, Industrial Time, and Wage Labor in Africa,” in *Struggle for the City*, ed. Frederick Cooper (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983), 7–50; Frederick Cooper, *On the African Waterfront: Urban Disorder and the Transformation of Work in Colonial Mombasa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁷¹ Cooper, “Introduction: Urban Space, Industrial Time, and Wage Labor in Africa,” 32; Luise White, *The Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

⁷² James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (University of California Press, 1999).

⁷³ White, *The Comforts of Home*. See Chapter 3 for examples of local authorities’ ambivalence toward such activities.

honorable reputation of their members.⁷⁴ Many men in East Africa's bustling towns, fearful of losing control over the reproduction of their households, sought to identify a common heritage that bound women to the command of their husbands and youth to the authority of their elders. Associations of ethnic compatriots organized campaigns to police the behavior and movement of their potentially wayward countrymen and women, forming patrols to round up prostitutes, to restrict access to towns, and to place women and young men under the surveillance of elder men's authority.

Wage labor and the consumption of manufactured commodities also put Africans at the mercy of foreign employers and merchants, potentially threatening their respectability. If urban commerce was an enticing means of building wealth for many Africans, Asians often appeared as exploitative barriers to African advancement, even as they cultivated social, political, and economic relationships with African consumers and politicians. As African politicians and ethnic patriots condemned the allegedly corrupting influence of foreigners and urban decadence, they encouraged their imagined compatriots to view their daily commercial and social interactions through a lens of racial hierarchy. The blunt condescension of shopkeepers or the spatial segregation of Asian domestic life became evidence of racial hierarchy and proof that Asians did not deserve Ugandan citizenship, which many believed should be predicated on claims to indigeneity.

If competitive urban centers provided the context in which ideas about Asians were refined and circulated, such ideas depended on particular infrastructures and media that shaped African-Asian interaction as well as the production of urban publics. Elite

⁷⁴ John Iliffe, *Honour in African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), chap. 16; Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, C.1935-1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

newspapers allowed certain Asian men in the 1950s to claim to represent a unitary Asian community, which was appealing to a public that felt threatened by African racial nationalism. Meanwhile, the vernacular Luganda language press, as well as sound systems at public rallies, facilitated political populism that appealed to urban consumers' experiences of the inequalities of urban commerce. The population density of urban centers also allowed for forms of surveillance and violence that enforced social and commercial distance between Asians and Africans. Alongside this material infrastructure was a legal and administrative architecture that shaped how Asians made claims to property and citizenship.

Historians' interest in the urban as a site and object of contestation in colonial and postcolonial Africa has largely remained focused on large cities. Dar es Salaam, Mombasa, and Nairobi have been the settings for the most innovative urban histories of East Africa.⁷⁵ While Uganda's urban history remains comparatively understudied, Kampala and Jinja have been the primary sites for scholars of urban dynamics.⁷⁶ The concentration of East African Asians in large cities has been the focus of scholars of racial thought. However,

⁷⁵ Brennan, *Taifa*; Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar Es Salaam* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Andrew Burton, James R. Brennan, and Yusuf Lawi, eds., *Dar Es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging African Metropolis* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, 2007); Cooper, *On the African Waterfront*; White, *The Comforts of Home*.

⁷⁶ Among early studies, see Aidan Southall and Peter Gutkind, *Townsmen in the Making: Kampala and Its Suburbs* (Kampala: East African Institute of Social Research, 1957); Peter Gutkind, *The Royal Capital of Buganda: A Study of Internal Conflict and External Ambiguity* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1963); Ann Evans Larimore, *The Alien Town: Patterns of Settlement in Busoga, Uganda: An Essay in Cultural Geography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); Cyril Sofer and Rhona Sofer, *Jinja Transformed: A Social Survey of a Multi-Racial Township* (Kampala: East African Institute of Social Research, 1955). See also Bernard Calas, *Kampala: La Ville et La Violence* (Paris: Karthala, 1998); Andrew Byerley, "Ambivalent Inheritance: Jinja Town in Search of a Postcolonial Refrain," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no. 3 (2011): 482–504.

provincial towns, trading centers, and suburbs remained key spaces for the practice of everyday racial politics. This study takes an expansive view of urban history by including the administrative and commercial hub of Kampala as well as peripheral trading centers and provincial towns. In part, this strategy fits with the geographic dispersal of Asians in Uganda compared with neighboring countries. On the eve of independence, census reports indicated that ninety percent of Asians in Kenya lived in sixteen towns and seventy percent of Asians in Tanganyika resided in twelve centers, while only sixty-two percent of Ugandan Asians lived across sixteen towns in the smaller, less populated Protectorate.⁷⁷ Impersonal relations, such as those among African workers or consumers and distant Asian industrialists or landlords, also existed in Uganda. Yet the wider approach to what counts as urban deployed in this study allows for greater historical intimacy, that is, for a close analysis of tactics of provocation and accommodation within towns and commercial spaces, where it is possible to see how racial ideas grew out of close everyday social and mercantile interactions. Cities, towns, and trading centers were not only objects of political struggles or sites of administration. They were made up of places constituted through everyday sociality and memory.⁷⁸ Racial tension was embedded in the intimacy of urban life as well as the ways that people attempted to make condensed urban spaces livable and meaningful.

⁷⁷ Uganda Protectorate, *Uganda Census 1959: Non-African Population*, (East African Statistical Department, 1960), 10; Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa*, 11.

⁷⁸ Edward Casey, *Getting Back Into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

Methods and sources

This is a study of relationships between place, infrastructure, and ideas of difference over time. Four decades after the expulsion, efforts to describe places of Asian life and the struggles over them are methodologically difficult and often contentious. Idi Amin's expulsion decrees precipitated one of many displacements that have long characterized Uganda's urban landscape. Since their founding, East Africa's towns have been objects of anxiety over the stability of African urban life and the validity of Asians' long-term presence in Uganda. Colonial officials could not control unregulated urban settlement, but they did periodically and arbitrarily evict people from neighborhoods on the peripheries of many towns. Economic calamity and political violence also displaced Africans and Asians well before 1972. In each case, people have kept alive the places where they once lived in memory, in conversation, and occasionally in commemorative events, even as others have moved into and remade them. These layers of claims and attachments to urban spaces compel scholars to pursue a multiplicity of sources and methods.

This study was possible to write at a specific moment between the perseverance and frailty of paper and human memory. Until recently, many historians assumed that the paper trail of Uganda's public institutions and other historical records had been destroyed in the violence and institutional collapse of the 1970s and 1980s. However, the broad brush with which those decades are often painted obscures a more complicated documentary legacy that has been far less destructive to Uganda's archives. Government records were a source of careful management among British officials beginning in the 1950s, as African activists, particularly in Buganda, along with their allies in the British Parliament used legal and moral arguments to question British protectorate rule and to safeguard the position of

Buganda's monarchy.⁷⁹ Patrick English and J.P.M. Fowle served as records officers between 1950 and 1956 and carefully regulated access to files requested by a growing number of scholars, many of whom were indirectly employed by the Government through the East African Institute of Social Research. Despite increasingly stringent rules on archival access, some scholars received preferential treatment. *The Making of Modern Uganda* by Kenneth Ingham, the founder of Makerere University's History Department, seemed to his student Bethwell Ogot to "read like an official history of Uganda" in part because Ingham was granted access to recent files in exchange for subjecting his writing to the approval of Governor Andrew Cohen and Administrative Secretary John Vernon Wild.⁸⁰ Wild instructed Ingham to remove references to government files because, "I do not want to encourage a whole lot of public delving into the official archives."⁸¹ Under instructions from London, officials across Britain's fading empire attempted to edit what records their African successors as well as British and African publics would know existed. Some were burned, some were dropped in the ocean, and still others were flown to the United Kingdom, where they sat hidden until historians and lawyers brought them to light during a lawsuit brought by Kenyan ex-detainees in 2011.⁸²

⁷⁹ Derek R. Peterson, "Archive Work in Uganda" (African Studies in the Digital Age, Ann Arbor, MI, November 13, 2014).

⁸⁰ Kenneth Ingham, *The Making of Modern Uganda* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1958); Bethwell Ogot, "Historians and East Africa," in *Africa Discovers Her Past*, ed. J.D. Fage (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 70.

⁸¹ UNA Confidential box 23 file C. 7902 "The Making of Modern Uganda," JV Wild to Ingham, August 7, 1956: 1. Ingham was also a backbencher in the Legislative Council.

⁸² David Anderson, "Guilty Secrets: Deceit, Denial, and the Discovery of Kenya's 'Migrated Archive,'" *History Workshop Journal* 80, no. 1 (Autumn 2015): 142–60; Michael Tuck and John Rowe, "Phoenix from the Ashes: Rediscovery of the Lost Lukiiko Archives," *History in Africa* 32 (2005): 404.

Would-be arsonists of Uganda's colonial archives were limited by time, the logistics of secrecy amidst a sizeable African staff, and the material qualities of paper that made it difficult to eliminate without leaving telltale traces. Thus, all but the most sensitive files remained, as they were legally supposed to, after independence. However, Uganda's first independent government was also suspicious of inquisitive scholars' requests for government records. In the tense political climate following President Obote's disbandment of Uganda's kingdoms in 1966, officials outlined procedures to thoroughly vet anyone requesting government records, while often refusing requests for files.⁸³ Following the 1971 coup, Idi Amin's government adopted a hostile stance toward intellectuals, and deteriorating security coincided with a near halt in academic research in the country. However, Amin also invested in the maintenance of government archives, hiring the long-serving archivist Eugene Wani and sponsoring the training of several students in archival studies.⁸⁴ While no extensive architecture of archival management emerged during the Amin or second Obote administrations, neither did these years see the mass destruction of Uganda's archives. When the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government took power in 1986, its leaders professed a distinct lack of interest in the past, except as a burdensome legacy of sectarianism and moral decay. In the National Archives in Entebbe and in District Archives across the country, records sat in the attics or storerooms of dilapidated government buildings, rarely consulted by officials busy with the work of building an inclusive future rather than delving into a contentious past. This legacy of

⁸³ UNA Confidential box 40 file C. 7724 "Archives Access of to Research Workers," Mubanda to Secretary to the Cabinet, October 26, 1966: 67.

⁸⁴ UNA Confidential box 96 file UNA/2/3 "Regional Training Centre for Archivists (RTCA) Accra Ghana"; J.M. Akita, *Development of the National Archives and the National Documentation Centre* (Paris: UNESCO, 1979).

archival management and subsequent neglect has left many of Uganda's government archives remarkably well preserved and underused.

I was fortunate enough to begin my research in 2011 as the Uganda National Archives (UNA) Director Okello Ajum invited a group of American and Ugandan students to catalogue the UNA's collections. Although the Ugandan government appears to show little interest in the records of past governments, they have recently begun to approach archives management as an aspect of public service modernization deserving of support. I was among those who participated in the cataloging project, sorting through hundreds of dusty boxes, typing catalogue entries, and composing introductory notes for each collection.⁸⁵ Among these files were correspondence over the handling of the 1959 boycott, cabinet minutes from Obote's and Amin's governments, and a range of other files covering late colonial and early postcolonial governance. Correspondence between British officials in Uganda and the Colonial Office have long been available at the British National Archives. While I have made extensive use of those files, records at the UNA also contain correspondence that never made its way to London, thus providing an important addition to understandings of colonial and postcolonial governance. Materials from Obote's administration also reveal how he and his cabinet managed negotiations with the British government over Ugandan Asians' legal status and how they responded to setbacks in implementing Immigration and Trade Licensing Acts.

⁸⁵ For more on the context of this archival work, see Edgar C. Taylor, Ashley Rockenbach, and Natalie Bond, "Archives and the Past: Cataloguing and Digitisation in Uganda's Archives," in *African Studies in the Digital Age*, ed. Terry Barringer and Marion Wallace (Leiden: BRILL, 2014), 163–78; Frank Emmanuel Muhereza and Susan Mbatudde, "A Report of a Workshop on Archiving in Uganda Held on 18 July, 2011" (Makerere Institute of Social Research, 2011).

This study has also relied on government district archives, particularly that of Kabale District (KDA). Despite severe underfunding, district archives have avoided destruction in the basements and attics of government buildings, often under layers of discarded office equipment and the habitats of bats and vermin. These conditions ironically helped to protect records from destruction even as they rendered them, with a few exceptions, physically inaccessible. Though not catalogued at the time of my research, Kabale District's collection was easily accessible thanks to the work of Records Officer Martin Tushabe. The geographer Grace Carswell had also used agricultural files from the KDA for her 2007 book, *Cultivating Success*.⁸⁶ Beginning in 2010, Derek Peterson's work in collaboration with the Mountains of the Moon University in Fort Portal led to the digitization of the Kabarole District Archive, which has sparked renewed scholarly interest in similar collections across the country. As I concluded my research in 2013, a team of volunteers arrived in Kabale to catalogue the material that I had already systematically read through in unorganized and uncatalogued form. Thanks to the District Council, there is now a comfortable reading room in which visitors may peruse files. The district's court archives remain disorganized amid discarded office equipment in a leaky shed behind the court building. By contrast, town officials have meticulously preserved Kabale Town Council property files, which are regularly needed to manage disputes and licenses. Each of these collections offers a view of local governance strategies and petitions from residents

⁸⁶ Grace Carswell, *Cultivating Success in Uganda: Kigezi Farmers & Colonial Policies* (Oxford: James Currey, 2007); Kathryn Barrett-Gaines and Lynn Khadiagala, "Finding What You Need in Uganda's Archives," *History in Africa* 27 (2000): 455–70. While other district archives drew in the curiosity of scholars from the 1990s to the mid-2000s, Carswell's is the only book from that period based primarily on such a collection in Uganda. Stuart McConnell, "Historical Research in Eastern Uganda: Local Archives," *History in Africa* 32 (2005): 467–78.

that are not visible from the capital. Even when administrators composed documents in efforts to conceal local conditions from officials in Kampala or Entebbe, their records and correspondence reveal strategies of negotiation and accommodation shaped by local histories and social dynamics.⁸⁷

Just as this study has depended on the tenuous survival of Ugandan paper archives, it was also made possible by layers of human memory and engagements with built infrastructure in Uganda's towns. Community leaders and racial populists often attempted to channel common experiences of exclusion and commercial tension into ideologies of racial justice. However, the formulations that politicians and administrators left in archival records and newspaper accounts often differ from the ways that urban residents frame their memories of life before the 1972 expulsion. Interviews with dozens of African and Asian Ugandans express how individuals structure their recollections of places and social relationships in Ugandan towns and trading centers. We have already noted that Taj Kassam pointed to alternative moments of dislocation and feelings of bitterness to those that characterize most studies of Ugandan Asians focused exclusively on the events of 1972. Chapter 3 examines how Kabale's former residents, decades after the upheaval of the expulsion, recall forms of sociality and tension that shaped life in this small town. Such recollections do not offer an unfiltered lens on life in Kabale. Rather, they point to a range of discursive influences, institutions, and built infrastructure that shape how Asians and Africans remember Ugandan urban life from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

⁸⁷ On the tenuous connection between district records and lived reality in upcountry 1970s Uganda, see Derek R. Peterson and Edgar C. Taylor, "Rethinking the State in Idi Amin's Uganda: The Politics of Exhortation," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7, no. 1 (February 2013): 58–82.

In a study of place, infrastructure, and difference, built infrastructure itself is a silent source. During my work in Kabale, I often concluded my days in the district archive by winding my way down Makanga Hill, overlooking the neighborhoods about which I had just finished reading. Once in town, I spent many evenings talking with older residents and shopkeepers who now inhabit what was once Kabale's Asian commercial district. Many of the people whom I cite in Chapter 3 took the occasion of our conversations to point out particular buildings or lead me along certain streets to emphasize both change and continuity in their experiences of specific spaces. Likewise, Asian expellees now living in the United Kingdom shared memories and pictures of their former homes and businesses while offering mental maps of Kabale's social, commercial, and political networks. Those interactions led me to questions about shop counters, verandahs, and bars that I took back to archives in Kabale, Entebbe, and London. In each case, historical, ethnographic, and oral history research proved mutually enriching.

Organization of the dissertation

This study covers a period of time and arenas of political and social life that have received little attention in the historiographies of Uganda, of East Africa, and of racial thought in Africa. It proceeds along three intertwined trajectories: temporal, geographic, and thematic. It covers the years immediately preceding independence until the 1972 expulsion. As analyzed more fully at the end of Chapter 5, Uganda's leaders have found little use for celebrating narratives of the political struggles that led to independence. Scholars have also paid less attention to forms of urban sociality, political organization, and

violence in late colonial and early post-colonial Uganda than they have to domains of ethnic patriotism and class formation. Scholars of neighboring Tanzania's cultural politics have worked to unravel how such histories became subsumed within TANU's efforts to unite Tanzanians through forms of juridical and cultural citizenship rooted in officially sanctioned syncretic models of the "traditional" and the "authentic."⁸⁸ By contrast, Uganda's historians work with a postcolonial legacy of historical devaluation, as the Buganda Kingdom's political strength has inhibited state projects of cultural retrieval.⁸⁹ As a result, Uganda's post-colonial history is comparatively understudied.⁹⁰

The chapters that follow move chronologically across late colonial and postcolonial history as well as geographically from Uganda's administrative and economic capital Kampala to the provincial outpost of Kabale and finally to national and transnational debates and politics. As the study moves through time and space, from colonial center to postcolonial periphery to the transnational, it also moves across different registers of racial thought and urban experience. If ideas of race may, in some contexts, cohere in a social structure that sustains and normalizes inequality, ideas of immutable difference rooted in

⁸⁸ Askew, *Performing the Nation*; Ivaska, *Cultured States*; Brennan, *Taifa*; Emma Hunter, *Political Thought and the Public Sphere in Tanzania* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

⁸⁹ On the contemporary politics of heritage in Uganda, see Derek R. Peterson, "Heritage Management in Colonial and Contemporary Africa," in *The Politics of Heritage in Africa: Economies, Histories, and Infrastructures*, ed. Derek R. Peterson, Kodzo Gavua, and Ciraj Rassool (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 18–29; Mikael Karlström, "Modernity and Its Aspirants: Moral Community and Developmental Eutopianism in Buganda," *Current Anthropology* 45, no. 5 (December 2004): 595–619.

⁹⁰ Peterson and Taylor, "Rethinking the State in Idi Amin's Uganda". One important exception is in gender history. Aili Mari Tripp, *Women & Politics in Uganda* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000); Christine Obbo, *African Women: Their Struggle for Economic Independence* (London: Zed Press, 1980); Alicia C. Decker, *In Idi Amin's Shadow: Women, Gender, and Militarism in Uganda* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2014).

blood and descent are shaped by the infrastructures in which they are embedded.⁹¹ This study analyzes the production, use, and elision of racial categories in elite politics, street protest, daily commercial transactions, legal negotiation, and press debates.

Chapter 1 examines how elite Asian men attempted to summon a unitary Asian public in response to African racial nationalism. The failure of multi-racial politics in the 1950s precipitated a crisis amongst elite Asian leaders as their efforts to secure their followers' interests were exposed to a widening political field. Elder elite men faced opposition from a group of young foreign-educated men who aspired to leadership in a non-racial democracy. However, these young men lacked organic connections with African political aspirations, which were often framed in racial terms. They were also unable to link their non-racial ideas with burgeoning urban class politics, as lower class Asians championed racial unity in order to combat high rents demanded from Asian landlords. By the time of independence in 1962, African/Asian alliances found little traction in Uganda's popular politics and were subject to intense public scrutiny.

Chapter 2 turns to forms of street politics, surveillance, and violence intended to produce social and economic distance between Asians and Africans. Members of Buganda Kingdom's peri-urban underclass used a trade and social boycott against Asians in 1959 to carve out positions of authority and to stake claims to economic accumulation in anticipation of a new political order. The boycott opened political space for women and allowed individuals to carve out positions of authority outside of established ethnic and class hierarchies. Public rallies and the vernacular press allowed activists to mobilize

⁹¹ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1994); Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, 8–12.

support, but the boycott soon became decentralized and divorced from any particular constituency. Young people on the periphery of Uganda's urban economy used surveillance and threats against their African neighbors to enforce disciplined social and commercial interactions that excluded Asians.

Chapter 3 shifts focus to material infrastructure in which everyday urban interactions took place. Using a case study from Kabale, a provincial town in southwestern Uganda, the chapter analyzes histories of urban segregation and the architecture of commercial, residential, and leisure premises. Ugandans shaped relations of authority and trust by bargaining for goods over shop counters, entering semi-public house verandahs, or socializing over bar tables. Such spatial arrangements sustained relationships that normalized inequality, such as when African customers entered the Asian commercial district of Kabale to negotiate lines of credit with Asian shopkeepers. However, places of leisure and commerce also occasioned micro-tensions that provoked unease in and with hierarchy in everyday life. Certain African traders and politicians sought popular support by encouraging Africans to see daily commercial interactions as evidence of an exploitative racial hierarchy.

Chapter 4 examines another consequence of urban material infrastructure on racial politics. When officials in Milton Obote's government attempted to redress Asians' disproportionate control of urban commerce in the late 1960s, their legal interventions failed to override the relationships between commercial and residential space inscribed in the architecture of Uganda's urban spaces. Officials designed the 1969 Trade Licensing Act in an effort to transfer wealth from Asian traders to African allies of the ruling bureaucracy through the reallocation of commercial space. However, colonial authorities and Asian

building contractors had combined residential amenities and commercial premises in a manner that made them difficult to sever. Built into urban architecture were assumptions about racial and class segregation that complicated state efforts to reshape the racial makeup of urban commerce through the legal reallocation of space.

Chapter 5 analyzes how Ugandan and British officials, as well as Ugandan African publics, denied Asians' claims to citizenship, property, and belonging in debates abstracted from the complexities of urban experience and history. In negotiations over the Ugandan and British governments' responsibilities for Ugandan Asians in the late 1960s and early 1970s, officials from both sides attempted to limit their obligations. They each did so by requiring Ugandan Asians to prove their loyalty through a labyrinth of bureaucratic requirements. Meanwhile, the elite English language Ugandan press was no longer united in promoting an ideal of a harmonious multi-racial reading public that aspired toward a shared – though not equally obtainable – vision of urban modernity. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, papers such as the *Uganda Argus* and *The People* had become platforms for attacks on Asians' alleged incapacity for national loyalty, even as some writers continued to defend non-racial ideals. Severed from discussion of local experience or historical complexity, press debates reinforced government officials' speeches that emphasized a discursive barrier between the categories "Asian" and "Ugandan." This abstracted language in the public sphere and in private government negotiation enabled the conflation of racial and legal categories, which was made explicit in Idi Amin's 1972 expulsion decrees that denied Asians' legal claims to belonging and attempted to undo their social entanglements in Ugandan urban life. As Ugandans reflect on the expulsion's legacies while contesting the

terms of belonging in contemporary political debates, it is important to revisit the tensions and struggles hidden in its wake.

Chapter One

Defending Asian Politics in Uganda, c. 1911-1959

In August 1959, the *Uganda Argus* printed a reader's letter imploring African and Asian leaders to negotiate mutually acceptable means of securing Asian rights in Uganda.¹ "We, the Indians, have come forward and given chances to Africans to absorb us in a way agreeable to both of us," wrote Ravi Joshi in this elite English-language newspaper. "We

¹ The terms "Indian" and "Asian" were (and still are) often interchangeable in Ugandan popular usage. In 1943, Asian Legislative Council (LegCo) members formally objected to the term "Asiatic" in Protectorate administrative documents, and proposed "Asian" in its place. After the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, some organizations adopted "Asian" as a neutral term that did not differentiate between people whose ancestry could be traced to India or to Pakistan. Older groups such as the Central Council of Indian Associations (CCIA) and the Indian Associations of Kampala and Jinja did not change their names, though Asian Muslims, particularly Ismailis, formed separate Muslim Associations. These categories were produced and used in administrative practice, political organization, and popular usage. As this chapter explains, the reification of a unitary "Asian" or "Indian" community by Asian leaders, British officials, and African politicians was a fraught endeavor. Where necessary, I have tried to use the terms that best approximate the categories that were used in the context I am describing. I have avoided using cumbersome square quotes on the assumption that references such as "Asian leaders" will be understood to refer to people who presented themselves, or were interpreted by different publics, as leaders of a constituency they considered to be an "Asian community." Adopting seemingly more neutral phrases such as "South Asian" or "people of Indian descent" would substitute one set of socially constructed labels of racial identification with others whose terms were not used in the contexts I describe. I do not aim to describe a trans-historical category of people who simply require a more refined vocabulary to pin them down. Rather, this work shows how identity categories were used and changed over time and in different contexts. For a more detailed discussion of naming, see Introduction. For debates on naming, see UNA Secretariat Topical B box 5 file 6 "Substitution of the term 'Asian' for 'Asiatic' in official communication and publications."

denounced our demand for safeguards for the minority and the reserved seats [in the Legislative Council] to show oneness. But the politicians and leaders of Africans supposed it to be weakness on the part of the Asian community. The race relations are now made worse by Africans and not Asians.”² Joshi’s minor contribution in an increasingly racialized political field suggested dramatic shifts in the role of Asian leaders in political debate and in the aspirations of those who increasingly saw themselves as members of a unitary Ugandan Asian public, albeit embattled by their “internal” divisions.

The letter, like many by Ugandan Asians in the English-language press in 1959, expressed frustration that African political protest had broken down elite multi-racial political negotiations. Wealthy Asian men used patronage networks within business and *jati* (“caste”³) communities, as well as relationships with European and African elites, to secure leadership positions in Asian organizations. However, as African politicians demanded greater electoral representation and drew support from a wider public sphere (rather than private elite negotiations), Asian leaders repositioned themselves as representatives of a unitary community with political aspirations. Asian leaders worked to protect a sphere of elite interests by seeking incorporation into a self-governing state through representational safeguards for Asians. This strategy subsumed competing categories of identification and patronage under the racial category “Asian.” For Joshi and other members of an Asian public, safeguards were desirable because they would protect Asian commercial investments responsible for the country’s development. “The 90 per cent

² Ravi Joshi, “Letters to the Editor – Asian Traders,” *Uganda Argus* August 24, 1959: 2.

³ On the fraught production of caste in colonial thought, see Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); On the history and sociology of *jati* communities in East Africa, see Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa*.

of commerce is shared by Asians,” he noted. “They have it in their industriousness and pioneering [*sic*]. Asians have assisted Uganda in many ways but the regret is only that no figures are kept.” Asians, he asserted, were pioneers working toward “a common interest – to develop Uganda.”⁴ For Joshi and others who saw themselves as members of such an Asian collectivity, a political elite’s protection of Asians’ commercial interests reflected a collective investment in Uganda’s political and economic progress. This investment, many believed, should warrant the rights and protections of citizenship as well as protection against discrimination or populist racial victimization.

Thrown open to popular scrutiny, wealth was seen as a barrier to Asians’ protection. Joshi’s letter was a response to a speech by the businessman and Buganda Kingdom’s Minister of Natural Resources Leonard Basudde, who had decried Asians for being “intoxicated by their wealth” and “fail[ing] to identify themselves with the land and people where they lived.”⁵ At the time of Basudde’s and Joshi’s statements, a boycott of Asian-owned shops was in its fifth month and growing increasingly violent as men and women enmeshed in the competitive arena of urban commerce worked to redefine moral commercial and social behavior in anticipation of a new political order. Supporters of the boycott, which is the subject of Chapter 2, attempted to sever the commercial and affective ties that bound Asians and Africans together in socially and economically competitive segregated urban centers, which are described in greater detail in Chapter 3. These ties were often characterized, quoting Georges Balandier, by “a certain intimacy tinged with

⁴ Ravi Joshi, “Letters to the Editor – Asian Traders,” *Uganda Argus* August 24, 1959: 2; Ravi Joshi, “Letters to the Editor – Asian View,” *Uganda Argus* February 25, 1960: 4.

⁵ Our correspondent in India, “Attitude of Indians must alter -- Mr. Basudde,” *Uganda Argus* August 4, 1959: 5.

scorn.”⁶ In another letter, Joshi complained that the boycott had undermined the premise of elite negotiation and give-and-take that he argued had previously governed Asians’ political relations with Africans and Europeans without the influence of popular street politics. “If every race has to reside with peace and harmony in this country then both must give sacrifices,” he conceded, “but we do not mean Africans to understand us [as] a piece of wood and a tool for them to mould us as they like and prefer it.”⁷

As elite Asian leaders adapted to a widening political field, they sought security by defending an ideal of multi-racialism requiring the safeguarding of an undivided “Asian community” under their leadership. Asian elites regarded multi-racialism as a form of political pluralism, “in which distinct social orders live side by side, but separately, within the same political unit,” with each group working toward a common goal of economic progress, which would require the special protection of Asians’ economic and political interests.⁸ Meanwhile, African politicians and activists denounced multi-racialism as the entrenchment of Asians’ economic and political power through an immoral arena of elite collusion. This chapter tracks shifts in Asian political organization and the abortive non-racial origins of Uganda’s first political party, which lacked the infrastructure or social base with which to summon a constituency that was not regarded as exclusively African. It concludes by analyzing how a group of young Asian men attempted to combat their double exclusion from the generational hierarchy of Asian leadership and from the racial nationalism of African political parties by espousing non-racial civic nationalism. Without organic connections to African popular political thought or to class grievances among

⁶ Balandier, “The Colonial Situation,” 48.

⁷ Ravi Joshi, “Letters to the Editor – Asian View,” *Uganda Argus* February 25, 1960: 4.

⁸ Furnivall, *Netherlands India*, xv.

Ugandan Asians, these young men struggled to gain influence in a political landscape anchored by the normative call for African self-government in which Asian identity could neither be erased nor denied. With the rise of mass electoral politics in 1961 and 1962, some Asians from either side of the political and generational split gained positions in African political parties by summoning urban Asian voting publics. However, multi-racialism, backed by constitutional safeguards and elite claims to represent Asian interests, suffered a stillbirth, exposing diverging political aspirations among Asian and African leaders.

Elite Asian politics

In the midst of the anti-Asian boycott of 1959, a heated correspondence emerged in the *Uganda Argus* over the legitimacy of organizations purporting to speak for the Asian community. The young political activist Shafiq Arain asserted, “In the very near future the Asians, those who intend to make this country their permanent home, will be called upon to form and nurture the sense of nationhood and integrate into the society at large.” He asked rhetorically, “Is it not high time that the Asians shed their communalism? Consequently is it not logical that these communal bodies [the Indian Association and Muslim Association] – relics of a gone past – which symbolize, bind and perpetuate communal thinking should be no more?”⁹ One of Arain’s supporters argued that these organizations not only lacked a political purpose, which was fulfilled by national political parties, but they also have no “useful part to play even in other fields,” since bodies such as

⁹ Shafiq Arain, “Letters to the Editor – That Election Victory Statement,” *Uganda Argus* October 31, 1959: 5.

the Asian Parents' Association, the Youth League, Kala Kendra, Parimal Art Circle and the Indian Women's Association addressed social and religious community needs.¹⁰ For these activists, the racial exclusivity of African political parties was merely a response to Asian communalism that, like tribalism, would fall away with the advance of civic nationalism and modern politics.

Despite Arain's and other activists' fervent appeals, the Indian Association and the Muslim Association, alongside elder Asian politicians in the Protectorate Legislative Council (LegCo) and Executive Council, occupied an increasingly influential position in negotiating the political rights of Asians as a single category in Uganda's transition to self-government. If the organizational split between predominantly Hindu and Muslim organizations remained, together their leaders claimed to speak for unanimously held political aspirations of all Ugandan Asians. The president of the Central Council of Muslim Associations (CCMA) B.K.S. Verjee asserted that his organization "represented 100 per cent of [Asian] Muslims in Uganda" while the president of the Central Council of Indian Associations (CCIA) R.J. Mehta "claimed 95 per cent representation for his organisation."¹¹ The outward presentation of a united front concealed what was privately acknowledged as deep "internal dissension" as these organizations struggled to adapt to a widening political field.¹²

Since their founding, Asian political groups attempted to maintain Asians' prestige in a tripartite colonial racial hierarchy. Organizations such as the CCIA were composed of

¹⁰ The Ninety Five Percent, "Letters to the Editor – Racial Organisations," *Uganda Argus* October 31, 1959: 5.

¹¹ "Action Group not 'voice' of Asians," *Uganda Argus* October 14, 1959: 3.

¹² CO 822/1358 "The United Congress Party of Uganda" Bleackley to Rednall, March 10, 1958: 3.

elite men who advocated for legal protections from the Protectorate Government. The Indian Association of Kampala, founded in 1911, attempted to influence land and immigration policies through meetings with Protectorate officials and petitions to the Governor.¹³ When the umbrella organization, the CCIA, was formed in 1921, among its primary objectives was to negotiate for Asian representation in the Protectorate's Legislative Council, an effort that it framed as a struggle for representational equality with Europeans.¹⁴ Asian organizations also worked to secure the social prestige of Asians in relation to Africans. Among the Kampala Indian Association's first actions was to forward a resolution to the Governor concerning the murder of a Punjabi man by an African.¹⁵ A different group purporting to represent the Indian Community of Jinja wrote the Governor in 1918 to condemn the whipping of Indian prisoners, which they thought was "calculated to lower Indian prestige in [the] eyes of natives of Africa."¹⁶

Leaders of Asian organizations directed their advocacy at Protectorate officials and, occasionally, elite African circles. So important was linguistic and cultural fluency in the norms of British colonial society that even Allidina Visram, the most prominent pioneer of Asian commerce, was not on the Indian Association's first executive committee because of his limited knowledge of English.¹⁷ However, Asian economic, social, and political interests were not entirely determined by the tripartite divisions of colonial governance. As the Asian population grew, Asian Associations and the CCIA mediated between, on one hand,

¹³ UNA C 9 1920 509 "Policy to be adopted with regards to Indians in Uganda" General Secretary CCIA to CS, February 21, 1923: 15.

¹⁴ Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, 107–8; UNA C 9 1920 509 "Policy to be adopted with regards to Indians in Uganda" Governor to CS, August 5, 1920: 4a.

¹⁵ Hasu H. Patel, "Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda: Power, Politics, and the Indian Minority, C. 1900-1972" (Ph.D. thesis, UCLA, 1977), 95–96.

¹⁶ UNA A46 1812: 2, "Indian Community" Jinja to CS, 4 July 1918.

¹⁷ Patel, "Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda," 96–97.

patronage networks anchored in religious and *jati* communities that were spread across East Africa and the Indian Ocean world and, on the other, a narrow elite political field in which Europeans and Africans regarded Asians as a single political community. The representation of all Asians under a single political body was also congruous with the ideals of Indian nationalism, as community leaders instructed audiences at mass meetings, “they must not even think of class or caste distinction.”¹⁸ In the 1920s and 1930s, Asian community leaders simultaneously defended Asians’ interests in cotton ginning and in the LegCo, from which Africans were excluded, even as some promoted nationalist politics that linked critiques of British rule in India and Uganda.¹⁹ The Young Baganda Association, which included the sons of Baganda chiefs who used the ideals of pan-Africanism in efforts to wrest control of land and political authority from their elders, received support and inspiration from Indian nationalists as well as Asians in Kampala.²⁰ In 1929, a predominantly Asian crowd that was assembled with the help of Asian leaders in Kampala applauded a visiting speaker when he prophesied “one day Africa will be for Africans only, and India for Indians alone.”²¹ Such expressions of support for racial nationalism without insistence on protections for minority populations contrasted sharply with the position

¹⁸ UNA C 15 1929 1719/1 “Communist Propaganda: Indian Nationalist Movement” CID Report, September 29, 1932: 22(1).

¹⁹ Sana Aiyar, “Nation, Race and Politics Amongst the South Asian Diaspora: From Colonial Kenya to Multicultural Britain” (Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 2009), chap. 1; Bose, *A Hundred Horizons*, chap. 5.

²⁰ UNA C 1919 9 569 “Young Baganda Association” Young Buganda and the Indians from GA Chronicle, February 5, 1921: 9; Kenneth King, “The Young Baganda Association: A Study of East African Protest after the Great War,” *Journal of African and Asian Studies* 3, no. 1 (Autumn 1969): 12–17.

²¹ UNA C 15 1929 1719/1 “Communist Propaganda: Indian Nationalist Movement” RS Samson CID Report, December 7, 1929: 1.

that Asian groups would take in the 1940s and 1950s in support of pluralist political arrangements.

A unified Asian political voice, whether propelled by the demands of British officialdom or by the ideals of Indian nationalism, was difficult to sustain given the rapid increase in the Protectorate's Asian population and the spread of communal politics in India. The 1921 census recorded over 5,000 "Asians" in Uganda, a majority of whom were "Mohammedans," but by 1931 the total number was 13,026, over half of whom were "Hindus."²² Despite war-time immigration controls, the 1948 census recorded an increase to 33,767, roughly two-thirds of whom were "Hindu," while the 1959 census enumerated 69,103 "Indians" and "Pakistanis," over two-thirds of whom were "Hindu."²³ As the population grew, leaders anchored in particular religious and *jati* communities worked to ensure that the interests of their communities and patronage networks were represented among the Asian leadership that negotiated with the Protectorate Government for educational and infrastructural grants. As Mahmood Mamdani remarked, "The politics of the Indian petty bourgeoisie was the politics of caste associations personalized as the politics of individual leaders."²⁴ Other scholars have observed, "East Africa ... completely preserved the [caste] system" as immigrants secured employment, housing, and spiritual community in a "class-based and caste-based occupational hierarchy" that developed with

²² Uganda Protectorate, *Census Returns 1921*. (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1921), 11; Uganda Protectorate, *Census Returns, 1931*, (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1931), 39.

²³ Uganda Protectorate, *Report on the Census of the Non-Native Population of Uganda Protectorate Taken on the Night of the 25th February, 1948*, (Printed by Authority, 1951), 58, 60-61; Uganda Protectorate, *Uganda Census 1959: Non-African Population*, (East African Statistical Department, 1960), 47. The designations "Indian" and "Pakistani" did not correspond with citizenship.

²⁴ Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 83.

increased immigration.²⁵ Elite men used their status within community networks to struggle for leadership positions in Asian organizations, while others relied on their rapport with British officials to secure recognition as “Asian leaders.”²⁶

Sustaining unity was difficult even as the Indian National Congress demanded political uniformity and Protectorate officials attempted to force competing groups into a single organization with which to negotiate regarding Asians in the Protectorate.²⁷ Splinter groups appeared even during the early years. In 1921, a confused British Land Officer complained, there were “three Indian Societies in Kampala, two of which purport to speak for the whole of the Indian Community.”²⁸ By 1940 the CCIA had become unable to bring competing organizations together and ceased meeting.²⁹ Moreover, as in Tanganyika and Kenya, the increasing salience of communal politics in India, culminating in the partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947, drove divisions in Uganda as well.³⁰ During the 1940s, Muslims gradually left Asian groups dominated by Hindus and formed their own organizations, including the Muslim Association. Tensions between Hindus and Muslims were especially tense in larger East African cities.³¹ In smaller Ugandan towns where leaders presented a united front in order to attract grants needed for schools and other infrastructure, organizations adopted the generic name “Asian” over “Indian” and tried to

²⁵ Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa*, 16; Nagar, “Communal Discourses, Marriage, and the Politics of Gendered Social Boundaries,” 126.

²⁶ Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, chap. 8.

²⁷ UNA A 46 1811 “Indian Association Jinja” Perryman to CCIA, July 19, 1928: 4; CO 822/125/8 “Indians in East Africa: Moslem League” Osborne to Governor, September 27, 1949; Gregory, *India and East Africa*, 396.

²⁸ UNA C 10 1921 627B, “Indian Questions: Official Information regarding” Land Officer to CS August 15, 1921: 3.

²⁹ Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, 108.

³⁰ Brennan, *Taifa*, 54–56.

³¹ Robert Gregory, “Co-Operation and Collaboration in Colonial East Africa: The Asians’ Political Role 1890-1964,” *African Affairs* 80, no. 319 (April 1981): 262–263.

conceal struggles over the representation of religious and family groups on their boards.³² Hindu and Muslim leaders often struggled over the representation that their communities should receive within local Asian associations or in other local political affairs, such as town boards or school committees.³³

A growing population and the decline of the anti-communal politics that animated Indian nationalism in the interwar years challenged East African Asians' unity even as the political status of Asians became increasingly important in African political thought and post-war colonial developmentalism.³⁴ British officials' efforts to manage urban consumption helped to racialize market relationships. James Brennan argues that as the state acknowledged and attempted to manage African urban workers in colonial East Africa, African claims to urban entitlements often took on a racial logic. African consumers often contrasted British officials' efforts to avoid urban unrest among urban Africans by fixing prices for food and consumer goods with the strategies of small Asian traders to widen narrow profit margins at the expense of their African customers.³⁵ As price controls and the rationing of food encouraged the growth of a black market, Asian traders were subjected to greater scrutiny from British Protectorate police and from African shoppers, which provoked a feeling among some Asian leaders that they were being unfairly persecuted. One Dr. Patel, an Asian LegCo member, "was obviously extremely moved" when he protested to the Chief Secretary in 1943 about surprise searches for rationed foodstuffs

³² UNA Confidential Box 92 File 360 "Indian Education Board – Acholi & Lango" Minutes of Indian Board of Education Northern Province meeting, September 23, 1949: 15.

³³ R.H. Desai, "Leadership in an Asian Community," in *Proceedings of the East African Institute of Social Research Conference* (Kampala, 1963), 6–8.

³⁴ On immigration, see Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa*, 13; Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, 17–18.

³⁵ Brennan, *Taifa*, chap. 3.

at Asian homes and shops while Europeans appeared to evade scrutiny.³⁶ Meanwhile, as ex-servicemen swelled the ranks of small African traders competing with and dependent on Asian suppliers, urban Africans consolidated a stereotype of Asians as immoral profiteers who threatened the alleged civilizing influence of Europeans by producing urban moral decay.³⁷ “An Indian,” wrote GR Kizza to the Luganda daily *Gambuze* in 1946, “cannot respect the people working under him,” leading their employees into “dirty” habits such as pick-pocketing and prostitution. Just as “the Jews were driven away” from Europe for causing “wars and poverty,” he concluded, so too should Indians be removed from Uganda.³⁸

The Kabaka crisis of 1953-1955 strained Asians’ elite political alliances. When Governor Andrew Cohen dethroned and deported Buganda’s king Kabaka Mutesa II in 1953, the Uganda National Congress leader Yosia Sekabanja attempted to channel popular discontent with the Governor’s action into a boycott of Asian businesses whose goods were antithetical to the kingdom’s state of mourning and whose wealth undermined the bonds of love and mutual obligation that cemented Buganda’s royal authority.³⁹ In 1953, Governor Cohen, believing the Kabaka’s support to be at a low ebb in the wake of personal scandals and a new popularly elected Buganda Parliament (Lukiiko), withdrew recognition and

³⁶ UNA C 24 1943 2730 “Complaints of Racial Discrimination in Food Searches” CS, March 31, 1943.

³⁷ Gardner Thompson, *Governing Uganda: British Colonial Rule and Its Legacy* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2003), 204–218.

³⁸ G.R. Kizza, “Antipathy to Asians, 1946,” in *The Mind of Buganda*, ed. D.A. Low (London: Heinemann, 1971), 131–33.

³⁹ Interview with Christine Nkata, August 2013, London; UNA Secretariat Papers 26 17 “Police: 1954 Buganda Boycott”; Patel, “Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda,” 283–289; Sir Amar Maini, “Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda: Some Personal Recollections,” in *Expulsion of a Minority: Essays on Ugandan Asians*, ed. Michael Twaddle (London: The Athlone Press, 1975), 116–117, 123–124. On the emotional response to the Kabaka Crisis, see Carol Summers, forthcoming, chaps. 7-8.

deported him to England for insisting on a timeline for Buganda's independence. Popular reaction surprised Cohen and decisively shifted Buganda's political climate. In the 1940s, protestors had used public meetings and the circulation of pamphlets to summon a horizontal citizenry bound by the ideal of clanship to challenge the collusion they saw amongst a multi-racial elite, including the Kabaka and his ministers, to deny them political power and the ability to market their crops.⁴⁰ Protests in 1949 included attacks on Asians as well as chiefs and Buganda Kingdom ministers.⁴¹ The Kabaka's deportation, however, sparked a widespread deep emotional response across Buganda's social, economic, and political spectrum, as it disrupted the links of patronage, loyalty and love that bound grandparents and grandchildren in a network directed around the Kabaka.⁴² The anthropologist Audrey Richards observed at the time of the deportation, "Feudal ties [that had] seemed to be slackening ... have been jerked tight."⁴³

Buganda's traditionalist politics posed unique challenges for Asian politicians. As the crisis deepened, Kampala's mayor Sir Amar Maini believed that the political and economic pressure on Asians increased as power shifted "from cotton and trade agitators like Ignatius Musazi to cultural traditionalists like Mikaeri Kintu."⁴⁴ The Lukiko declared a state of mourning, during which many Baganda comported themselves in a manner

⁴⁰ Carol Summers, "Grandfathers, Grandsons, Morality, and Radical Politics in Late Colonial Buganda," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 38, no. 3 (2005): 427–47; Carol Summers, "Radical Rudeness: Ugandan Social Critiques in the 1940s," *Journal of Social History* 39, no. 3 (Spring 2006): 741–70; Gardner Thompson, "Colonialism in Crisis: The Uganda Disturbances of 1945," *African Affairs* 91, no. 365 (October 1992): 605–24.

⁴¹ Summers, "Radical Rudeness"; D.A. Low, *Buganda in Modern History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 148–151.

⁴² See Summers, forthcoming, ch 7; Jonathon Earle, "Political Theologies in Late Colonial Buganda" (Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 2012), 110–115.

⁴³ LSE Richards/6/21 "U: Kabaka Crisis" Richards to EM Chilver, 1953.

⁴⁴ Maini, "Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda," 117.

demonstrating their grief for the deposed king. Baganda women seized these exceptional circumstances to enter what had previously been male-dominated political space, disrupting elite negotiations with loud expressions of anguish.⁴⁵ However, if Asians could express solidarity with the Kabaka's fate, they and other non-Baganda could not share in the same emotional distress caused by the disruption of familial bonds seen to result from the Kabaka's removal. The Uganda National Congress, despite its own multi-racial origins, tapped into Buganda's state of mourning by organizing a brief boycott of Asian-owned shops. Its tactics, as a Protectorate spokesman described, closely resembled those that were to be mobilized on a grander scale in 1959:

There has been forcible prevention of selling and buying; cases have been reported in which people have been compelled to return goods bought; purchases have been seized and broken or thrown away; coffee trees belonging to people who have ignored the boycott have been cut down; threats have been made against persons and property. There have been whispering campaigns against those who have ignored the boycott. People have sat or stood outside shops taking the names of those who go in. Prominent Africans have had anonymous threats made against their lives and property and have even been followed round Kampala when making purchases. Some shopkeepers in country districts have felt obliged to close their premises and move into the towns. General alarm has been caused to law-abiding citizens, Baganda and others.⁴⁶

Trade fell precipitously in Kampala, with some Asian merchants reporting that during the height of the boycott in May their sales were a quarter of their normal volume.⁴⁷ Attacks were reported against Asians living in isolated trading centers.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Interview with Christine Nkata, August 2013, London; Summers, forthcoming, ch 8; Kabaka of Buganda, *The Desecration of My Kingdom* (London: Constable and Co., 1967), 131.

⁴⁶ UNA Secretariat Papers 26 17 "Police: 1954 Buganda Boycott" Emergency Reimposed, June 1, 1954: 4.

⁴⁷ UNA Secretariat Papers 26 17 "Police: 1954 Buganda Boycott" Uganda Buying Boycott Cuts Trade, June 5, 1954: 7.

The 1954 boycott petered away after two months. It constrained the capacity of Baganda and Asians to imagine themselves sharing aspirations in a shared public sphere.⁴⁹ Judges handed down harsh prison sentences – for example, twelve months for taking a saucepan from someone who purchased it in violation of the boycott and fourteen months for telling a man to quit his job at an Asian-owned shop.⁵⁰ More importantly, as Christine Nkata, an activist in the 1954 and 1959 movements, remembered, the 1954 campaign revolved around a feeling of “sadness” and collective mourning that could only be resolved with the Kabaka’s return.⁵¹ The 1954 boycott faded rapidly in June with the beginning of the Namirembe Conference, which was charged with recommending constitutional recommendations to pave the way for Kabaka Mutesa’s return.⁵² By contrast, as discussed in detail in Chapter 2, the 1959 movement aimed at disciplining the king’s subjects in preparation for a new political order rather than achieving a particular goal, as many of its elite supporters hoped it to be. Both boycott campaigns exposed the limits of political and affective solidarity that non-Africans could draw with Africans as activists used intimidation and violence to enforce an interpretation of Asians as immoral profiteers who were disruptive of Buganda’s social and political order under the Kabaka.⁵³

As Governor Cohen negotiated an end to the crisis, he reaffirmed his intention to see Uganda’s transition to self-governing, “primarily African” state. In this direction, he

⁴⁸ UNA Secretariat Papers 26 17 “Police: 1954 Buganda Boycott” Intimidation Up-Country, May 25, 1954: 1; “Another Raid on Asian Shop,” *Uganda Argus* July 10, 1954: 5.

⁴⁹ “Failure of the Buying Boycott,” *Uganda Argus* July 15, 1954: 1.

⁵⁰ UNA Secretariat Papers 26 17 “Police: 1954 Buganda Boycott” More Intimidators Sentenced, June 12, 1954.

⁵¹ Interview with Christine Nkata, August 2013.

⁵² Neal Ascherson, “The Uganda National Congress” (EASIR, 1957); UNA Secretariat Papers 26 17 “Police: 1954 Buganda Boycott.”

⁵³ Similar dynamics between Baganda and other Ugandan Africans are discussed in Chapter 2.

fostered a less racially exclusive atmosphere at official functions and directed limited resources, including loans and restricted African trading areas, at developing African trade.⁵⁴ Both efforts produced mixed reactions. The increased presence of Africans at official functions at Government House is said to have provoked racial friction, as the wives of European civil servants raised objections.⁵⁵ In trade, the Protectorate established an African Loans Fund in 1954 alongside a Uganda Credit and Savings Bank that provided small loans beginning mostly with rural African traders. However, the loans were small, on average £10 to each trader, and African traders continued to handle less than a third of commerce in the Protectorate despite outnumbering their non-African counterparts two-to-one.⁵⁶ A multi-racial committee charged by Governor Cohen with proposing strategies to increase African trade emphasized educational facilities over capital and licensing needs, and it proposed the gradual emergence of African traders as apprentices in a commercial field that would continue to be dominated by non-Africans.⁵⁷ Despite the shortcomings of Government Africanization initiatives, they contributed to the consolidation of political mobilization and advocacy by and on behalf of “African traders.” Among the committee’s recommendations endorsed by the Protectorate was the promotion of traders’ associations through which Africans could share knowledge and receive Government sponsored

⁵⁴ Colonial Office, *Uganda: Report for the year 1956*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1957), 46.

⁵⁵ David E. Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda: A Study in Bureaucratic Nationalism* (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 399.

⁵⁶ Jan Jelmert Jørgensen, “Structural Dependence and Economic Nationalism in Uganda, 1888-1974” (Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 1977), 309. For more on the politics of Traders’ Associations, see Chapter 3.

⁵⁷ The report concluded: “Although African traders may lack capital, the more serious drawback is their lack of knowledge and experience in the use of such capital as they do possess.” Uganda Protectorate, *The Advancement of Africans in Trade*, (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1955), 5.

instruction about commerce. By the end of 1958, there were 115 such officially recognized associations and many other unofficial ones, which often served as pressure groups through which their leaders summoned and spoke for constituencies of African traders.⁵⁸

Asians occupied an ambiguous status in post-War British administrative thought, constituting a category of a double negative: “non-native” and “non-European.” The contradictions between an extractive political economy and paternalistic protection of the category “native” heightened official equivocation over the Protectorate government’s moral and legal obligations to Asians. Since abandoning the idea of Asian agricultural settlement in East Africa in the 1920s, officials had acknowledged “many Asiatics [as] permanently settled in the country” but considered that “natives are still more permanent.”⁵⁹ After World War II, Protectorate officials placed rhetorical emphasis on the interests “not of imported Europeans or Asians, but of its African population.”⁶⁰ Moreover, the independent Indian government refused to take responsibility for East African Asians, very few of whom had taken Indian citizenship. “The Indians were in Africa as guests,” Prime Minister Nehru told a press conference. “If they were not prepared to serve Africans they must pack up and go. India was not prepared to take up their case.”⁶¹

Politicians who invoked a single Asian constituency initially did so in order to defend Asians’ position within a tripartite racial hierarchy. While this situation sustained a wide range of popular politics and political aspirations, individuals who positioned

⁵⁸ Uganda Protectorate, *A Guide to Traders’ Associations and Buying Groups in Uganda, Third Edition*, (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1959).

⁵⁹ Acting Chief Secretary of the Legislative Council P.W. Perryman in “Legislative Council - Minutes of Meeting,” *The Official Gazette of the Uganda Protectorate*, (15 November 1929): 546; Motani, “The Ugandan Civil Service and the Asian Problem,” 103.

⁶⁰ J. Hathorn Hall, “Foreword: Some Notes on the Economic Development of Uganda,” in Worthington, *A Development Plan for Uganda*, iii-iv.

⁶¹ “Indian Imperialism ‘Nonsense,’” *Uganda Argus* August 1, 1953.

themselves as Asian leaders in interactions with British Protectorate officials worked to maintain prestige in a racial hierarchy that privileged Europeans. With intense commercial competition and struggles for urban entitlement during and following World War II, African traders portrayed Asians as an inferior foreign group devoid of the civilizing influence of Europeans. As traditionalist politics came to dominate Buganda's public sphere in the 1950s, Asians were unable to demonstrate their loyalty, belonging, and political solidarity with the Kabaka's subjects through emotional displays of grief. Moreover, they were also subjected to attacks on their perceived wealth and position in immoral commercial relationships that undermined the affective links embedded in reciprocal obligation, which were being co-opted into royalist hierarchies. While British officials attempted to manage difference in a manner that gradually included Africans but maintained European superiority, Asian leaders were stuck in the middle attempting to defend an increasingly politicized racial category.

Non-racialism and Ugandan nationalism

By the late 1950s, Asians in the Legislative Council and leaders of Asian organizations grew increasingly concerned with the position of Asians position in a future self-governing state. During World War II, wealthy educated men such as Sir Amar Maini had revived the CCIA because they feared that Asians' internal divisions and insistence on separate representation for different communities impeded their ability to lobby the Protectorate Government for services needed by all Asians, such as education, social welfare, and

relaxed immigration regulations.⁶² The efforts of particular community leaders proved largely ineffective in advocating for legal and political protections for their followers. The Aga Khan had long tried to persuade British authorities to grant Ismailis a form of East African nationality as recognition of their unique commitment to East Africa and to British rule.⁶³ However, despite the efficient corporate organization of Ismaili political institutions that promoted expressions of Ismaili belonging in East Africa, Ismailis remained subject to the same legal status and African political rhetoric as other Asians.⁶⁴ When the Ismailia Supreme Council instructed their followers to identify themselves as “Africans of Asian origin” during the 1959 census, census officials “arranged that their schedules should be amended to read ‘Indian’ in Nairobi when being analysed.”⁶⁵ Likewise, during the Kabaka crisis of 1953-1955 and the boycott of 1959-1960, Ismaili businessmen, with the exception of several wealthy individuals with personal ties to Baganda politicians, were subject to the same boycott as other Asian traders.⁶⁶ Communal political organizations proved ineffective at shifting the legal and political boundaries that produced Asians as a unitary category in British administration and African political thought.

Racial categories distinguishing Africans from Asians and Europeans dominated the language of administration and nationalist politics. Political parties saw them as organizing principles through which Africans could achieve freedom from foreign political and

⁶² Maini, “Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda,” 113.

⁶³ UNA C 21 1937 2324, “East African Nationality,” Note of Governor’s interview with H.H. the Aga Khan, March 17, 1937: 1.

⁶⁴ Harold Stephen Morris, “Communal Rivalry among Indians in Uganda,” *British Journal of Sociology* 8, no. 4 (December 1957): 311–313; Harold Stephen Morris, “The Divine Kingship of the Aga Khan: A Study of Theocracy in East Africa,” *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 14, no. 4 (Winter 1958): 468–470.

⁶⁵ Uganda Protectorate, *Uganda Census 1959*, 5.

⁶⁶ On exemptions from the boycott, see CO 822/1846 “Trade Boycott in Buganda,” Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies October 2, 1959: 177.

economic domination by Europeans and Asians. Although most parties aspired to civic nationalism, which would unite all Ugandan Africans beyond the dictates of traditional authorities, they rejected de-politicized visions of racial harmony that they feared would surreptitiously re-entrench the power of wealthy Asians. Uganda's first party, the Uganda National Congress (UNC), owed its formation and its name to exchanges between Ignatius Musazi and a group that included British Labour Members of Parliament Fenner Brockway and John Stonehouse, the Trinidadian pan-African intellectual George Padmore, and the South African doctor and anti-colonial activist Leon Szur. British progressives such as Brockway and Stonehouse hoped that the advancement of parliamentary politics would eventually drive racial language from public debate, even as they remained ambivalent about Asian political participation. Stonehouse, for example, praised the "loyal, honest, hardworking" Goan community, particularly the proprietor of the Norman Cinema for providing a leisure space "with no colour bar," but regarded "the network of Asian enterprise [as] a virtual conspiracy against the African consumer."⁶⁷ Brockway praised "liberal Indians" and reported feeling "disturbed by the anti-Indian feeling" among Musazi's supporters, but he remained sympathetic in light of the "exploitation [African farmers] suffered at the hands of Indian" commercial monopolies.⁶⁸ At the time of the UNC's founding in 1952, Musazi's political career had been dedicated to establishing egalitarian economic and political relationships within Buganda Kingdom, in part by attacking collusion between chiefs and Asian cotton buyers.⁶⁹ Many of the UNC's core members came from Musazi's Federation of Partnerships of Uganda African Farmers (FUAF), which framed

⁶⁷ John Stonehouse, *Prohibited Immigrant* (London: The Bodley Head, 1960), 93–94.

⁶⁸ Fenner Brockway, *Towards Tomorrow: The Autobiography of Fenner Brockway* (London: Hart-David MacGibbon, 1977), 179–180.

⁶⁹ Earle, "Political Theologies in Late Colonial Buganda," chap. 1.

itself as an organization of African farmers oppressed by the dual yoke of oligarchic chiefs and Asian commercial monopolies. Ascherson reported that in the same year as the UNC's founding, FUAF circulated a draft prospectus that restricted its shareholders to individuals of "pure African descent."⁷⁰

The UNC initially aspired to build an inclusive party, united by a commitment to political representation and economic justice divorced from FUAF's racial language. The party's first policy declaration stated its goal "to remove the economic, political, and educational stains in the Protectorate so that Uganda can become a peaceful, self governing nation." It proceeded to identify four goals, which included the "unification of all tribes in Uganda", self-government, universal education, and "placing the control of Uganda's economy in the hands of the people of Uganda."⁷¹ Although its platform attacked the concentration of wealth and political power among non-Africans, the UNC also strove to present itself as an open party. Brockway wrote that Musazi had preferred the name Uganda African Congress but agreed to Dr. Szur's suggestion that it present itself as a national, non-racial movement in order to attract Asian and European sympathizers.⁷² Another founding member of the UNC, Abu Mayanja, told a press conference in March 1952 that the party was "open to people of all races" and to "citizens of Uganda whatever their colour."⁷³ For its inaugural meeting, the party extended invitations to several senior European and Asian leaders, including members of the press, the business community, and the Legislative Council.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Ascherson, "The Uganda National Congress," 10.

⁷¹ Quoted in Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda*, 313 fn 18.

⁷² Brockway quoted in Ascherson, "The Uganda National Congress," 8.

⁷³ *Uganda Herald* March 22, 1952: 1.

⁷⁴ Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda*, 313-314.

Despite Musazi's efforts to draw a multi-racial elite into a more representative and egalitarian society, opposition from his core supporters and dissension among Asian leaders undermined this objective from its inception. Not only did Musazi's political rivals, such as Eridadi Mulira, object to the UNC's multi-racial policy, but the party's own supporters questioned whether non-Africans should be allowed to participate in their struggle. Neal Ascherson, a Scottish journalist who later described himself as the UNC's "propaganda secretary" in the mid-1950s, noted that the party's members accepted its open policy only as a "propaganda tool" for foreign donors. By the time Ascherson arrived in Uganda in 1956, he noted, Musazi was "quite frank with me about the preference he has for an all-African party."⁷⁵ When several Asians applied for membership in 1956, Musazi declined to admit them on the grounds that the question of non-Africans' citizenship in a self-governing Uganda was not settled.⁷⁶ For Musazi and other UNC nationalists, the ideal of civic nationalism promoted by their British allies simultaneously promised to break down tribalism and royalist loyalties while threatening to expand an arena of elite collusion and Asian privilege by granting political rights to non-Africans. Economic justice required the exclusion of non-Africans until a new political and social order was established.

The party's rapid disavowal of its inclusive origins became entrenched as its leadership and social base shifted with the Kabaka crisis of 1953-55. The King's deportation united popular sentiment around the Kingdom, and the UNC's fractured leadership attempted to capitalize on general hostility to British authority. The day the

⁷⁵ "SRB Interview: Neal Ascherson" *Scottish Review of Books* 10: 2 (2014); Ascherson, "The Uganda National Congress," 10.

⁷⁶ Patel, "Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda," 362.

Kabaka was sent into exile, Musazi began a dramatic clandestine journey through northern Uganda and Sudan to London in order to campaign for his return. Out of the power vacuum that he left behind in the UNC emerged Yosia Sekabanja, a strong supporter of the deposed Kabaka whose political activities were restricted primarily to Kampala.⁷⁷ While Musazi's base was among rural cotton farmers, Sekabanja appealed to the frustrations of urban consumers and aspiring traders, which he linked with expressions of loyalty to Buganda's monarchy. He organized the boycott of Asian-owned businesses in 1954 and wrote the UNC's first formal constitution, which codified membership procedures that excluded non-Africans.⁷⁸ Although Sekabanja's tenure in UNC leadership was brief, his approach to urban activism endured. Many of the UNC's leaders, including Musazi and Sekabanja himself, would become prominent supporters of the 1959 anti-Asian boycott.⁷⁹

The brief opening that the UNC ostensibly created for Asian participation in the national political project in the early 1950s appealed not to the Asian community's elder leaders but to a younger generation of educated men seeking to forge a place for themselves as citizens outside of the racial exclusiveness of Asian community politics. Of the prominent non-African invitees to the UNC's inaugural meeting, only one European LegCo member appears to have attended, but Ascherson reports that a press photo from the event showed the presence of several "junior-looking Asians."⁸⁰ Among the first Asians to formally request membership in an African political party were young men such as Rajat

⁷⁷ UNA Confidential 41 S. 6280/7 "Emergency 1953: Mourning of the Deposed Kabaka" Commissioner of Police January 19, 1954: 1A.

⁷⁸ Ascherson, "The Uganda National Congress," 17.

⁷⁹ A prominent opponent of the UNM boycott, however, was Abu Mayanja, a founding member of the UNC. The UNC's British allies remained neutral or tacitly supportive of the party's anti-Asian turn. Stonehouse, *Prohibited Immigrant*, 109–10.

⁸⁰ Ascherson, "The Uganda National Congress," 8; Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda*, 313–314.

Neogy, who would grow disillusioned by his double exclusion from Asian and African political leadership.⁸¹ It was only on the eve of elections in 1961 that political parties accepted Asian members. As Hasu Patel has shown, this policy did not reflect the triumph of a non-racial public sphere but rather the electoral necessity of recruiting Asian candidates for urban constituencies, many of which were majority Asian, a legacy of urban segregation.⁸²

During the height of the 1950s political protests that realigned authority within Buganda Kingdom and challenged British rule in Uganda, elite politicians failed to identify an arena of non-racial civic activism or multi-racial political organization linking self-consciously Asian and African constituencies. The infrastructure of urban protest enabled the production of social distance between Asians and Africans through threats and violence, leaving little space for solidarity among African and Asian politicians or publics. As British authorities equivocated over paternalistic obligations to Asians and Africans, Asian leaders worked to defend their rights while moving toward an uncertain future.

The organizational defense of Asian rights

In the wake of the Kabaka crisis of 1953-1955, Protectorate officials and African politicians engaged in public debates over the position of non-Africans in a future self-governing state. In 1954, in response to Buganda's concern that Uganda would be incorporated into a union with the rest of East Africa and under direct Indian influence, Secretary of State for the Colonies Oliver Lyttelton told the British House of Commons that Uganda would gradually

⁸¹ Patel, "Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda," 362.

⁸² Ibid., 408-434.

move towards self-government with “the rights of minority communities resident in Uganda ... properly safeguarded” in a manner “that will not detract from the primarily African character of the country.”⁸³ As the proposal for a “primarily African state” with “minority safeguards” became the basis for late colonial British policy in Uganda, a broad range of African politicians questioned whether such safeguards were an undemocratic ploy to entrench foreign commercial interests after independence. Ignatius Musazi and other Uganda National Congress leaders thought such measures were designed to “perpetuat[e] racial distinction and racial discrimination.”⁸⁴ Such objections fuelled support for the 1959 anti-Asian boycott among many African politicians as well as Buganda Kingdom loyalists who saw safeguards as a dilution of Mengo’s rightful powers.⁸⁵

As British officials replaced the paternalistic language for protecting native interests with one of managing African political aspirations, they increasingly emphasized a special obligation to the security of East African Asians under an African-led government yet to come. As Uganda’s new Governor Frederick Crawford lectured Uganda National Congress politicians in 1957 to “demonstrate themselves to be responsible and adult people,”⁸⁶ he urged the Secretary of State to exercise British economic influence to deter “discrimination against minorities” when self-government came in “about 15 years’ time.”⁸⁷ When contemplating a transition to self-government, officials in London presented a more

⁸³ Quoted in S.A. de Smith, “Constitutional Monarchy in Buganda,” *The Political Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (January 1955): 8.

⁸⁴ CO 922/1352 “The Uganda National Congress” Notes on a Meeting at Government House, April 23, 1957: 1.

⁸⁵ For example, Our correspondent in India, “Attitude of Indians must alter -- Mr. Basudde,” *Uganda Argus* August 4, 1959: 5.

⁸⁶ CO 822/1352 “The Uganda National Congress” Notes on a Meeting at Government House, April 23, 1957: 1.

⁸⁷ CO 822/1436 “Development of Constitution of Uganda” Record of Conference of East African Governors, October 18, 1957: 18.

impassioned case for British responsibility toward the future protection of East African Asians. The Colonial Office noted Britain's "moral obligation to the 55,000 [*sic*] Asians in Uganda who have given their industry and ingenuity to develop the country under the protective mantle of British power. Under this assurance they have been committed; if it fails they are betrayed."⁸⁸ Secretary of State for the Colonies Lennox-Boyd expressed particular concern for non-Africans' future legal status to the Governor: "I feel a particular responsibility towards the Asians on this account."⁸⁹ British officials' expressions of obligation to secure Asians' protection in an independent Ugandan state grew in part from a cynical fear that if Asians retained British citizenship in the absence of Ugandan or Indian recognition, they would remain Britain's legal responsibility in perpetuity.⁹⁰ "The Europeans have somewhere else to go if they fail," concluded the Colonial Office, but "the same is not true of the Asians," already implying tension over Britain's racialized assumptions about desirable immigration, the postcolonial consequences of which are discussed in Chapter 5.⁹¹ However, such feelings were also nourished by the personal connections that elite Asian politicians cultivated with British officials and the repeated expressions of loyalty delivered by leaders in the CCIA and other organizations.

British officials and Asian leaders reached consensus on "minority safeguards," an ambiguous phrase that referred to political protections, elite multiracial social interactions,

⁸⁸ CO 822/1808 "East African Governor's Conference, Paper EAC (S7) 1 – General Problem, Political and Constitutional" Final Report The General Problem, n.d.: 5.

⁸⁹ CO 822/1592 "Governor's Reports, Uganda" Lennox-Boyd to Crawford, May 16, 1957: 4.

⁹⁰ This fear, driven largely by the Home Office and Commonwealth Relations Office, would determine their stance in constitutional negotiations in 1962. HO 344/49 "Citizen and Passport Matters in relation to the Commonwealth Immigration Bill"; CO 822/2803 "Citizenship, Uganda" Bailly to Stacpole, May 24, 1962: L/3.

⁹¹ CO 822/1808 "East African Governor's Conference, Paper EAC (S7) 1 – General Problem, Political and Constitutional" Final Report The General Problem, n.d.: 5.

and racial quotas among LegCo and Executive Council members. The Colonial Office initially described “‘safeguards’ [as] practices or induced habits designed to prevent the worst effects of uninhibited African racial democracy.”⁹² At the end of his Governorship, Sir Andrew Cohen asserted, “just as important as having the right policy is the making of real contact, ... real friendship and understanding [through] inter-racial activities of all kinds.”⁹³ Elite Africans, Asians, and Europeans saw social clubs as important sites for improving “interracial relations,” and forging alliances among educated “leaders of opinion.”⁹⁴ This strategy, though couched in a new language of social intimacy, was a familiar practice among elite Asian men, who developed friendships, credit relations, and business ventures with a diverse range of Uganda’s African elite. At the time of the 1959 boycott, the Kabaka was heavily indebted to several prominent Asian businessmen, while other Asians provided donations and favorable loans to the heads of the main political parties.⁹⁵ Such collusion among wealthy Asians and Buganda Kingdom officials had angered activists in the 1949 riots.⁹⁶ While some Asian leaders instrumentally referred to maintaining cordial relations with African political figures as “fire insurance,” many wealthy Asian

⁹² CO 822/1812 “East African Governor’s Conference, Paper EAC (S7) 5 – Political Development” Final Report Political Development, n.d.: 5.

⁹³ Andrew Cohen, “Uganda’s Progress and Problems,” *African Affairs* 56, no. 223 (April 1957): 120.

⁹⁴ UNA Confidential box 72 file SD 433 “Inter-Racial Social Club at Kyambogo” Judson to CS, June 11, 1956: 1; UNA Confidential box 39 file C 4678 “Kampala Institute” Notes on Proposed Kampala Institute, March 11, 1952: 1A; CO 822/1815 “East African Governor’s Conference, Paper EAC (S7) 8 – Social Problems” Final Report Social Problems, n.d.: 1.

⁹⁵ CO 822/1437 “Development of Constitution of Uganda” Crawford to Gorell Barnes, February 18, 1959: 112.

⁹⁶ Summers, “Radical Rudeness,” 743; Thompson, *Governing Uganda*, chap. 14.

industrialists such as Jayant Madhavani cultivated close ties with politicians such as Milton Obote, which allowed them to influence Obote's policies during the 1960s.⁹⁷

Social alliances offered protection for elite Asians in a sphere shared with a multi-racial elite but closed off to wider African publics. As British politicians promised to develop Uganda as a democratic "primarily African state," their fear of "uninhibited African racial democracy" threatened these arrangements. During the Bataka protests of the 1940s, activists such as Semakula Mulumba had shown deliberate disrespect for the social rituals that supported elite collusion as he summoned wider African publics into debates over Uganda's political and economic development.⁹⁸ Even with a new order of apparent royal hegemony in Buganda after 1955, the threat of African populism posed a quandary for Asian leaders as well as for the Protectorate Government. British officials pondered how to install democratic parliamentary institutions without having the system of elite patronage fall apart. At a meeting of East African governors in 1957, Secretary of State for the Colonies Alan Lennox-Boyd "enquired whether democracy was worth pursuing in Africa." When Governor Crawford noted that "Africans had shown a liking for the system," which had gone too far to be reversed, Lennox-Boyd proposed, "it was possible to vary the conception of what democracy meant," which might include continued British control over defense and "responsibility in some way for minorities," including Europeans and Asians.⁹⁹ Officials

⁹⁷ For example, Jayant Madhvani chaired the influential Export and Import Corporation in 1970, which helped protect large Asian capital from the Africanization campaigns that targeted Asian traders. Jayant Madhvani, "Export and Import Corporation First Annual Report and Accounts Year ended 31st December 1970," April 1971; Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 271. See also Chapter 4.

⁹⁸ Carol Summers, "Radical Rudeness: Ugandan Social Critiques in the 1940s" *Journal of Social History* 39: 3 (Spring 2006): 741-770.

⁹⁹ CO 822/1436 "Development of Constitution of Uganda" Record of Conference of East African Governors, October 8, 1957: 18. Lennox-Boyd was primarily concerned with

hoped to shape the obligations that would continue to bind Britain and colonial foreigners after British rule.¹⁰⁰

The primary institution through which officials and Asian politicians hoped to retain elite negotiations against popular democracy was the Legislative Council. Since its inception, the LegCo served as a forum for European and Asian elites to offer advice on Protectorate policy. Established in 1921 in response to lobbying from the European Chamber of Commerce, the LegCo initially consisted of four European officials and three unofficial members, including two Europeans and one Asian, though Asian leaders protested their numerical inferiority on the Council by refusing to nominate anyone until 1926.¹⁰¹ While an additional Asian member was added in 1933, Asian and African leaders ignored the Governor's feeble insistence that members were nominated in their personal capacities rather than as representatives of a community. Kabaka Daudi Cwa protested that the body would undermine Buganda's interests and undercut his influence in negotiations with the Governor.¹⁰² When the first three African unofficial members were admitted in 1945, the number of their European and Asian counterparts was also increased to three each, making it harder to maintain that the Council was not representative of racial

Kenya's white settlers, but he and other officials regularly considered Europeans and Asians in similar terms during this period, even if they tacitly suggested that Europeans – but no Asians – could potentially find a place in Britain.

¹⁰⁰ "Colonial foreigners" is derived from Balandier, "The Colonial Situation," 47–52.; On the ambiguities of decolonization, see Pamila Gupta, "Mapping Portuguese Decolonisation in the Indian Ocean: A Research Agenda," *South African Historical Journal* 57, no. 1 (2007): 94–96; Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Luise White, *Unpopular Sovereignty: Rhodesian Independence and African Decolonization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

¹⁰¹ Patel, "Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda," chap. 3.

¹⁰² Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda*, 165–166.

communities.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, secluded in Entebbe, the LegCo maintained what David Apter referred to as a European “club-like atmosphere” and “air of unreality” that reinforced European privilege. Apter remarked that even “the Asian minister, Sir Amar Maini, ... was made to feel an Asian among Europeans, regardless of his urbanity, poise, and University of London background.”¹⁰⁴ By 1955, the Governor had conceded to the Council’s reorganization in a manner that acknowledged unofficial members as “representative members,” including six Europeans, six Asians, five from Buganda, and one or two Africans from each district. An Executive Council of ministers appointed by the Governor enabled him to maintain a majority in alliance with European and Asian members, but the contradiction between the principle of representation and the disproportionate number of Europeans and Asians on the Council turned the chamber of “club-like” elite negotiation into an object of popular political protest.¹⁰⁵

The leaders of the CCIA and CCMA were LegCo members, and they struggled to maintain a balance competing interests between their communities and the demands of African politicians who garnered African support through the vernacular press. For politicians such as Godfrey Binaisa, a lawyer and Uganda National Congress official, these men’s refusal to intervene in support of self-government was grounds for their removal. For example, in 1957, B.K.S. Verjee of the CCMA had voted against a motion demanding complete independence by 1961, despite speaking in support of the principle of self-

¹⁰³ The first African members consisted of one nominated by the Kabaka of Buganda; one rotated among nominees of the Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole kingdoms, and one rotated among nominees of the District Councils of Busoga, Bugisu, Bukedi and Teso. For a summary, see Uganda Protectorate, *Report of the Constitutional Committee 1959*, (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1959), 18-19.

¹⁰⁴ Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda*, 399.

¹⁰⁵ Uganda Protectorate, *Report of the Constitutional Committee 1959*.

government.¹⁰⁶ Binaisa wrote directly to “all the Hindu and Moslem Associations” demanding that they urge all Asian members of the LegCo to resign to pave the way for more African participation.¹⁰⁷

Petitions such as Binaisa’s culminated around Sir Amar Maini’s appointment as Minister of Commerce and Industry, which included African Trade Development, a move that a broad range of African politicians saw as an effort to foreclose the development of African trade and entrench Asians’ political position. Maini did little to allay these fears when he reallocated shop premises intended for African traders to non-Africans on the pretext that there was not enough African demand.¹⁰⁸ A.D. Lubowa, a member of the Buganda Parliament (Lukiiko) and editor of the Luganda newspaper *Uganda Eyogera*, addressed a crowd at the start of the 1959 anti-Asian boycott, “If the Indians are on our side, let them tell their colleague Sir Amar Maini to resign as minister, and also the other 4 to resign from the committee that was appointed by the governor.”¹⁰⁹ A *Uganda Eyogera* editorial demanded

The Indians themselves should first do something to ask their own Minister Sir Amar Main [sic] to resign from government. ... That would help us to know that they have wholeheartedly left politics. From there we will start to talk to them about trade. But if they keep keeping quiet to the nationalism that is taking place, they will be the ones to lose because victory is in the hands of the black people only and not any other. They must understand that.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Patel, “Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda,” 334–335.

¹⁰⁷ CO 822/1358 “The United Congress Party of Uganda” Bleackley to Rednall, March 10, 1958: 3. For Binaisa’s low opinion of Asian LegCo members, see also CO 822/1352 “Uganda National Congress” Notes of Meeting between Governor and UNC, June 18, 1957: 14.

¹⁰⁸ “House Asked to Allow Transfer of African Shops,” *Uganda Argus* March 11, 1960: 6; “Approval Given to Dispose of African Shops,” *Uganda Argus* April 27, 1960: 6.

¹⁰⁹ Nicodeme Salis, “Democratic Party Kanyenyenkule: Omugwira Bisaniiko” [“Democratic Party are like small crickets: A Foreigner is Garbage”], *Uganda Empya* March 31, 1959: 4.

¹¹⁰ “Abayindi Mubeeko Kya Mugamba,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 2, 1959: 4.

The *Uganda Argus* reported similar warnings from Democratic Party president Benedicto Kiwanuka, an opponent of the UNM boycott. “On the subject of Asians participating in the Government Mr. Kiwanuka said that if Sir Amar Maini, the Minister of Commerce and Industry, wanted peace with Africans the best thing he could do would be to resign.”¹¹¹

Opposition to Asian political participation had by 1955 coalesced around the denunciation of multi-racialism, an arrangement that African politicians interpreted not as the depoliticized management of different racial communities but the codified entrenchment of Asian economic and political power. In the 1955 Agreement that saw the return of Kabaka Mutesa, Governor Cohen had insisted on a six-year waiting period before pursuing any major constitutional changes. Unsure of whether to wait until 1961 or to grant piecemeal concessions in response to African demands for increased participation in government, Cohen’s successor Frederick Crawford appointed a Constitutional Committee in November 1958 to chart a way forward. The Committee’s work provided a focal point for elite Asian and African politicians’ debates over non-Africans’ rights and obligations in the transition to self-government. The Governor asked for recommendations concerning “the form of direct elections on a common roll for representative members of the Legislative Council to be introduced in 1961,” including their number, their geographical distribution, and “the method of ensuring that there will be adequate representation on the Legislative Council for non-Africans.”¹¹² Among the LegCo members who accepted appointment to the commission was Uganda National Congress chairman Apolo Milton Obote, who successfully lobbied for far broader African representation in the final report than the Governor had imagined. The two Asian members of the committee were the 63-

¹¹¹ “Barrister to help Uganda to self-rule,” *Uganda Argus* August 11, 1959: 1, 3.

¹¹² Uganda Protectorate, *Report of the Constitutional Committee 1959*, 1.

year old nominated LegCo member Habib Kassumali Jaffer and the 55-year old Jinja mayor Chandulal Kalidas Patel.¹¹³ The committee members, as well as the 279 individuals and organizations that testified or submitted written memoranda, pushed the scope of the committee's mandate to cover the transfer of greater powers to popularly elected representatives and to offer suggestions of how non-Africans might be incorporated or excluded from a future voting public.¹¹⁴

The Constitutional Committee offered a forum in which the Uganda National Congress, the Democratic Party, the CCIA, and the CCMA worked to shape the rights of their constituencies to participate in an emerging electoral democracy. Others objected to the committee's demand for formal submissions subject to the approval of members who were chosen by the Governor and compelled to operate under limited terms of reference. The Buganda Lukiko rejected the omission of a mandate to settle Buganda's relationship to Uganda as a whole. In mid-February 1959, Augustine Kanya, a man whom Protectorate spies thought to be "one of the Kabaka's strong arm squad," organized a rally of over 3,000 people in Kampala to launch a "new political war" against the commission, "to unite the people of Uganda and to liberate the country from foreign rule."¹¹⁵ At his side were the anti-traditionalist Protestant intellectual politician Eridadi Mulira, former UAFU leader and UNC chairman Ignatius Musazi, and United Congress Party secretary-general Godfrey Binaisa alongside a diverse range of political figures, from the former journalist and trade

¹¹³ See profiles in E.G. Wilson, ed., *Who's Who in East Africa 1965-66*, Second Edition (Nairobi: Marco Publishers (Africa) Limited, 1966). For a more detailed collection of family biographies of Ugandan Asians, see Jamal, *Uganda Asians*.

¹¹⁴ Uganda Protectorate, *Report of the Constitutional Committee 1959*.

¹¹⁵ "New war' against Constitutional Committee urged," *Uganda Argus* February 16, 1959: 3; "Party leaders speak on single platform: Vast Crowd Urged to Join National Movement," *Uganda Argus* February 16, 1959: 5.

unionist Feenekansi Musoke to self-styled chairman of the Katwe People's Council, Musa Bulwada. Two weeks later, at what was the largest political meeting in Uganda's history, Kamyá's "Uganda National Movement" announced a boycott of non-African shops, which many of its leaders described as a tactic to stop the constitutional commission, even as others described a more far-reaching goal to expel Asians from rural Buganda.¹¹⁶ By June, the UNM's liberal and traditionalist leaders had lost control of the boycott and found themselves marginalized both from the Constitutional Commission's proceedings and from the direction of popular protest. However, as UNM politicians tried to channel popular discontent against the Commission in early 1959, a group of young Asian men attempted to use the Commission's prompt as a means of undermining the authority of senior Asian leaders. As Sir Amar Maini would later observe, their idealism for a shared non-racial public political sphere would soon be "tempered by realism."¹¹⁷

"A new Asian"

By the eve of the 1959 UNM boycott, Asian politicians in the LegCo and in Asian and Muslim associations had been compelled to position themselves as the voices of Asian political aspirations. In 1956, the CCIA had issued a policy statement in which it declared that it was the sole representative of Asian opinion. The statement expressed support for eventual self-government as long as Asians could automatically acquire Ugandan citizenship and maintain "minority safeguards" to ensure their representation after a common roll

¹¹⁶ "Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans," *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 1, 3.

¹¹⁷ Maini, "Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda," 118.

election.¹¹⁸ Asian LegCo members helped their government-appointed colleagues to pass a resolution that combined the promise of direct elections in 1961 with special representation for minorities. Most of the African members objected that the motion would maintain the disproportionate influence of Asians and Europeans.¹¹⁹ Asian leaders' entry into public debates over African nationalism in the late 1950s marked a decisive shift away from the role envisioned by Maini and others when they revived the CCIA during World War II in order to negotiate for government concessions to elite Asian interests. While the political system shifted around them, Asian leaders tried to maintain their position in it by adapting their roles.

As leaders like Sir Amar Maini, B.K.S. Verjee, and R.J. Mehta attempted to weather debates over Asians' political status in a future self-governing state, a group of young foreign-educated men attacked the basis of their elders' authority. At its founding, the Uganda Action Group (UAG) consisted primarily of British-educated young Asian men, including Hindus, Ismailis, and Sikhs, whose average age, one senior politician estimated, was around nineteen years.¹²⁰ Recently returned from overseas and driven by such diverse influences as Fabian socialism and avant-garde literature, the UAG's young nucleus wanted to subject Asian elite politics to the scrutiny of a combined Asian and African public through the press.¹²¹ They hoped that this would dissolve the pretense of a common Asian political voice and force individuals to participate in political debate dominated by

¹¹⁸ Patel, "Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda," 125–129, 319.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 341–351.

¹²⁰ CO 822/1360 "Young Asian Association in Uganda" Hartwell to Webber, January 24, 1959: 1.

¹²¹ On Shafiq Arain and Fabianism, see Patel, "Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda," 363.; On Neogy's literary influences, see Peter Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pt. II.

nationalist political parties, which would eventually welcome Asians as fellow citizens. They believed that their future lay in political participation rather than the protection of community sovereignty. The Group focused its attacks on electoral “minority safeguards,” which it argued was the old guard’s effort to protect their insular elite political club and prevent all Asians’ eventual participation in national political life as individual citizens.

The UAG’s commitment to a non-racial public sphere, mediated through the English language press, grew from its members’ experience of double exclusion from two familiar arenas of formal politics, African political parties and the higher ranks of Asian elite politics. Among the group’s founding members were Shafiq Arain, Gurdial Singh, and Rajat Neogy, each of whom had recently returned from England, where they had obtained degrees at different universities, and forged connections with anti-colonial activists including future African political leaders.¹²² In London, Arain met Julius Nyerere and Tom Mboya and was injured in a protest against British action in the Suez crisis.¹²³ After returning from London a self-described “well-established atheist,” the twenty year-old Neogy befriended UNC president Ignatius Musazi.¹²⁴ In an interview with Hasu Patel, Neogy recalled “the first thing I did for example when I came [back to Uganda] was to apply for membership ... of the Uganda National Congress [only] to be told I couldn’t as a non-African join it.” He felt that this exclusion was “short-sighted,” but he was even more dismayed by Asian community leaders, whose “absolute refusal to see beyond ... the next constitutional meeting where they would again press for what was then called minority

¹²² See profiles in Jamal, *Uganda Asians*; and Wilson, *Who’s Who in East Africa*.

¹²³ “Shafiq Arain (Obituary)” *The Times* June 6, 2005: 49.

¹²⁴ Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening*, 105.

rights,” was also “short sighted ... [for] a people who had obviously a huge stake in the country if [only] financially.”¹²⁵

The UAG’s origins lay in debate over Asians’ participation in elite politics and in generational conflicts between the old guard of Asian leadership and young men who wanted to create new axes of political mobilization. In the months leading up to its founding, one of the UAG’s founding members, B.A. Misri, had unsuccessfully sought the support of CCMA chairman B.K.S. Verjee to replace Verjee’s rival in the Ismaili community, the senior LegCo representative Major A.S. Din.¹²⁶ Protectorate officials expected the UAG to fragment along religious lines determined by political networks within the CCIA and CCMA.¹²⁷ Indeed, the UAG initially tried to enlist influential senior Asian leaders. M.M. Patel, the former CCIA president who had presided over the 1956 policy statement endorsing safeguards, accepted an appointment as the UAG’s first chairman in an effort to regain his political influence.¹²⁸ Sir Amar Maini, whose appointment as Minister of Commerce inflamed African politicians’ concern with Asian political ambitions, held discussions with the group in its early days.¹²⁹ However, the UAG’s first meeting exposed deep rifts over Asians’ political activity that coincided with divisions in generation and education rather than religious community. At their first meeting, some of the UAG members “were rude to Major Din” and became disenchanted by the paternalism of the elder leaders. Maini “tried

¹²⁵ Patel, “Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda,” 362.

¹²⁶ On differences between Major Din and B.K.S. Verjee, see CO 822/1592 “Governor’s Reports, Uganda” Crawford to Mathieson, January 6, 1958: 10.

¹²⁷ CO 822/1360 “Young Asian Association in Uganda” October 1958 Special Branch report, n.d.

¹²⁸ Yash Tandon, “A Political Survey,” in *Portrait of a Minority: Asians in East Africa*, ed. Dharam Ghai and Yash Ghai (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1970), 87–88.

¹²⁹ CO 822/1360 “Young Asian Association in Uganda” December 1958 Special Branch report, n.d.

to influence the young Asians generally to begin at the bottom and seek office on the lower level public bodies and municipal councils,” but when he became alarmed by their “leftish or even Communist” sympathies, he reported their activities to the Governor, suggesting that while they “need [not] be taken too seriously, ... they certainly need watching.”¹³⁰

Through the UAG, Arain, Neogy, Singh, and Misri attacked networks of patronage and community prestige through which elder Asian leaders cemented their authority. The group’s initial policy statement called on its members “wholeheartedly and unreservedly to enter into the national political struggle” and to “educate and prepare” themselves for self-government. While the CCIA and CCMA called for a unified Asian political voice, the UAG supported “co-operation and unity” among all “residents of the Protectorate.”¹³¹ At the meeting, Major Din condemned the Group’s formation because, he believed, “Africans were not prepared to accept Asians into the political life of the country.”¹³² For Major Din and other senior Asian leaders, the UAG’s effort to encourage Asians to shed their racially exclusive patronage-based politics challenged their strategy, as Maini put it, to “lie low so far as politics is concerned, and do what they can to patch up a modus vivendi with the Africans” out of the public eye.¹³³ Until the upheavals of 1959, the older generation believed that their intervention in support of self-government and minority safeguards would allow them to continue elite political advocacy under an African government.

¹³⁰ CO 822/1360 “Young Asian Association in Uganda” Hartwell to Webber, January 24, 1959: 1.

¹³¹ CO 822/1360 “Young Asian Association in Uganda” December 1958 Special Branch report, n.d.

¹³² CO 822/1360 “Young Asian Association in Uganda” January 4, 1959.

¹³³ CO 822/2262 “Constitutional Development in Uganda” Hartwell to Webber, January 29, 1960: 21.

The UAG's capacity to mobilize support among Asians suggests a sharp demographic shift since World War II. At one meeting, Neogy remarked, "there was in Uganda now a 'new Asian', who was born in Uganda, but educated in the West," and was "responsible for an intellectual breakaway from the feudalism of Asian thinking in Uganda in the past."¹³⁴ The politics of elite Asian negotiation in the 1930s and 1940s had allowed community leaders to raise funds from the Protectorate Government and from community members toward improving primary and secondary education for Asian children. By the mid-1950s, that success had allowed a growing number of families to send their children to prestigious English and Indian universities.¹³⁵ Meanwhile, in Uganda, government pressure to foster multi-racial social attitudes had led to the admission of a handful of African children to Asian primary and secondary schools, while Makerere University admitted its first Ugandan Asian students in 1952.¹³⁶ By 1959, Neogy could claim that "sociological changes" had produced a constituency of young people whose political horizons were not bound by connections internal to the networks that Asian leaders, British officials, and African politicians reified as the "Asian community."¹³⁷

Throughout 1959, UAG leaders attempted to create an elite multi-racial print culture by issuing statements, hosting press conferences, and submitting letters to the editor of the *Uganda Argus*. Misri used the *Argus* to "appeal to the Asian intelligentsia to

¹³⁴ "Party seeks those who 'believe in Uganda'," *Uganda Argus* February 13, 1959: 2.

¹³⁵ On Asian education in East Africa, see Robert Gregory, *The Rise and Fall of Philanthropy in East Africa: The Asian Contribution* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1992), chap. 5.

¹³⁶ CO 822/1751 "Inter-Racial Education in Uganda" Crawford to Lyttleton, August 12, 1957: 3.

¹³⁷ "New Political Group Elects Officers to Form Policy," *Uganda Argus* February 9, 1959: 1.

even now try to appreciate the reason in the present African attitude.”¹³⁸ Arain imagined the UAG as “an intellectual version [of a political organization], ... something like the Fabian Society or if you like the Bow Group; be a very powerful concentration of planners.”¹³⁹ In April, they demonstrated their influence by mobilizing their supporters to control debate at a meeting of the Indian Association of Jinja, which ended in a vote to reject minority safeguards.¹⁴⁰ Two weeks later, they organized a meeting “of over 1,000 Asians” who applauded their critiques of the CCIA and CCMA’s indecision on this issue. When the CCIA secretary Dahyabhai Patel suggested that they first seek feedback from elite African politicians to be sure that “Asians’ ... attitude was not taken for weakness,” Arain denounced “bargaining,” while Gurdial Singh claimed Patel was trying to stifle youth expression. “If the Indian and Muslim Associations had considered the views of the young Asians, this meeting would have been called under their auspices.” Although Singh appealed to attendees’ frustration with senior Asian leaders, he provoked their anxiety when he requested a mandate for the UAG to circumvent the CCIA and open direct negotiations with “African leaders,” a motion that passed despite many declining to vote.¹⁴¹

The UAG’s alliances with African political parties, especially Obote’s Uganda People’s Congress (UPC), grew out of the shared political and social arenas of young elite men. The Group’s greatest success at forging such alliances came at the 1959 Pan-African Freedom of East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) meeting in Moshi, Tanzania. Arain, who would go on to become an MP and confidant of President Obote in the 1960s, received Obote’s support for

¹³⁸ B.A. Misri, “Letter to the Editor – Asians and the Boycott,” *Uganda Argus* April 10, 1959.

¹³⁹ Shafiq Arain quoted in Patel, “Race, Class, and Citizenship in Uganda,” 363.

¹⁴⁰ “Asians Confer on Common Roll,” *Uganda Argus* April 14, 1959: 1.

¹⁴¹ “Decision To Drop Demand For Safeguard Supported,” *Uganda Argus* April 27, 1959: 1, 3.

the UAG's recognition as a "fraternal member" (though not a full member) of PAFMECA, the only group with non-African membership to receive such acceptance.¹⁴² However, there were spheres of social experience and political solidarity that Arain and his colleagues did not share with their African allies. On Arain and Misri's drive to the Moshi conference, the manager of a hotel in Nakuru, Kenya refused to admit their traveling companion, the Muganda politician Abu Mayanja.¹⁴³ While such forms of urban racial segregation remained sharpest among Kenya's white settlers,¹⁴⁴ many young Asians with progressive political ideas lacked organic personal connections with Africans outside of elite politics. Rajat Neogy later reported that before going to England, the only Africans with whom he had interacted were his family's servants and members of the Buganda royal family.¹⁴⁵ He and his colleagues hoped that the rejection of racial safeguards and participation in a multi-racial public sphere through the elite press would overcome the social and spatial segregation that separated Asians and Africans.

UAG members carved out a political niche whose focus on discursive race relations largely excluded engagement with burgeoning urban class politics. During the height of the UAG's activities, another locus of discontent with the CCIA and CCMA leadership arose from middle income Asians in Kampala worried by the expiration of government rent controls in July 1959. As the boycott forced many rural traders to relocate to Kampala, demand for residential and commercial space increased, especially in Asian neighborhoods such as Old

¹⁴² "Uganda Asians at Pafmeca talks," *Uganda Argus* September 7, 1959: 3; "U.A.G. can attend Pafmeca talks," *Uganda Argus* September 10, 1959: 1, 3.

¹⁴³ CO 822/1419 "Activities of A.M.K. Mayanja in Uganda" Special Branch report, October 15, 1959: 15.

¹⁴⁴ On Kenya's white settlers, see John Lonsdale, "Kenya: Home Country and African Frontier," in *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas*, ed. Robert Bickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 74–111.

¹⁴⁵ Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening*, 104–6.

Kampala.¹⁴⁶ Baganda retail traders in the *kibuga*, the part of the city under the Buganda Government's authority, attempted to eliminate commercial competition by putting pressure on African landlords to evict the poorer Asians living in their areas.¹⁴⁷ However, the hardest hit by the rent crisis were middle-income Asian traders. They found their commercial and residential security threatened not only by the boycott but also by wealthy Asian landlords, whose interests appeared to be protected by elite politicians such as Sir Amar Maini and R.J. Mehta. The Tenants Association that represented the interests of such tenants was not founded and led by the "young Turks" of the UAG, but by Jal Dastur, a former CCIA secretary and member of Uganda's small Parsee community.¹⁴⁸ At an explosive meeting of the Association in December, Dastur compared "our landlords ... [to] Hitler who once said that he will have breakfast in Paris and lunch in London, but before he could make this dream come true, he had to commit suicide in the face of a strong British Army."¹⁴⁹ Through this imperfect analogy, Dastur hoped to frighten landlords into uniting with their fellow Asians in the face of an existential threat from Baganda anti-Asian boycott activists.

Tenants defended Asian racial solidarity in an effort to convince Asian landlords to protect the less privileged against economic hardship; if left unchecked, they argued, it would embolden African anti-Asian activists. The Association's president Siraj Din told the 115 assembled people, "We should not now live as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others, but as one nation – Asians." This racialized defense of class interests challenged the UAG's non-

¹⁴⁶ "Tenants Appeal Against Rent Increases," *Uganda Argus* June 10, 1959: 5; "Tenants Reaffirm Rents Plea," *Uganda Argus* June 29, 1959.

¹⁴⁷ Gutkind, *The Royal Capital of Buganda*, chap. 5.

¹⁴⁸ See profile in Jamal, *Uganda Asians*, 477–9.

¹⁴⁹ UNA Confidential Box 5 File C9843 "Tenant's Association: Decontrol of Rents" Tenant's Association – Kampala, December 29, 1959: 1A.

racial platform. At the meeting, Shafiq Arain cautiously opposed Din's and Dastur's appeals to Asian unity and departed early alongside the CCIA president R.J. Mehta and a prominent landlord, Mr. V.V. Radia.¹⁵⁰ As tenants turned to the *Uganda Argus* to express their dissatisfaction with the CCIA leaders' apparent indifference to the plight of Asians squeezed between the UNM anti-Asian boycott and Asian landlords, the UAG remained silent. One Ramanbhai Patel pondered, "[A] question which baffles the minds of the public are to whom they may take approach for their grievances? ... It is like the Derby sweep for the investors, and open slaughter for the tenants."¹⁵¹

The UAG failed to allay the concerns of African supporters of the anti-Asian trade boycott. The latter feared that any political movement dominated by Asians would undermine their efforts to enforce moral economic relationships. Kissimwa-Muyise of Masaka wrote to the *Uganda Argus* to condemn the "so-called Asian political party" and to "remind the Asians that we, the Africans, are not going to allow them to rule in Uganda. ... We will not give them a single vote."¹⁵² At the first UNM rally, the journalist and Lukiko member A.D. Lubowa warned, the "Asian political party was an aspiration for power in an African country."¹⁵³ Worried by these reactions, elders such as Maini felt that the UAG's criticism of other Asian leaders provided ammunition for African anti-Asian politicians.¹⁵⁴ Even as he advocated on behalf of tenants, Jal Dastur wrote to the *Uganda Argus* to

¹⁵⁰ UNA Confidential Box 5 File C9843 "Tenant's Association: Decontrol of Rents" Tenant's Association – Kampala, December 29, 1959: 1A.

¹⁵¹ Ramanbhai G. Patel, "The problem set by rent de-restriction," *Uganda Argus* December 12, 1959: 10.

¹⁵² Kissimwa-Muyise, "Letter to the Editor – Asian Party," *Uganda Argus* February 26, 1959: 4.

¹⁵³ "Party leaders speak on single platform: Vast Crowd Urged to Join National Movement," *Uganda Argus* February 16, 1959: 5.

¹⁵⁴ Maini, "Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda," 118.

denounce the UAG's irresponsible efforts to "humiliate" Asian leadership as they dealt with threats to the very fabric of Asian life in Uganda. "The organisers of the U.A.G. must know how immorality is increasing and how the immigrant community is harassed and looted." He concluded that their criticism of the CCIA and CCMA was "doing harm rather than good to the people of the country."¹⁵⁵ Threatened by African racial nationalism, many Asians sought protection by appealing to the ideals of racial solidarity in elder Asian leaders' defense of "safeguards" rather than the non-racial ideals of the UAG.

Others used the *Argus* to attack the principle at the core of UAG activity, that forging goodwill in a non-racial public sphere would protect the long-term interests of everyone who regarded Uganda as home. "Will the action [to renounce minority safeguards] ... not be construed as a step dictated more by the high-handed 'movement' [UNM] than as a sincere desire to co-operate in the achievement of freedom for the country?" asked Nagjibhai Patel.¹⁵⁶ UAG supporters argued that "the liberal humanitarian view must be sold to the masses."¹⁵⁷ However, Kishore Gadhia echoed a common lament when he wrote, "Asians are out to reach Eldorado in the matter of securing the sympathies of the African."¹⁵⁸ Someone using the pseudonym "Fair Play" wrote to denounce any attempt at pandering to "Africans' ... irresponsible attitude" and expressed hope that Asians' political status would be settled by established leaders beyond the pressures of public opinion.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Jal F. Dastur, "Letter to the editor – Asian representation in Uganda," *Uganda Argus* October 28, 1959: 4.

¹⁵⁶ Nagjibhai L. Patel, "Letter to the editor – The Asian future," *Uganda Argus* May 12, 1959.

¹⁵⁷ Mathias Jan Kironde, "Need for a liberal point of view," *Uganda Argus* May 21, 1959.

¹⁵⁸ Kishore Kumar, "Letter to the editor – The future of Asians," *Uganda Argus* June 10, 1959: 4.

¹⁵⁹ Fair Play, "Letter to the editor – Negotiation At Highest Level on Asian Future is the Answer," *Uganda Argus* May 16, 1959.

The UAG's success in shaking up elite Asian politics came at the cost of insulating itself in the racial categories it had initially proposed to transcend. Neogy brought I.K. Musazi to the UAG's inaugural meeting, and several Africans critical of the UNM became members. However, Neogy soon became disillusioned with the Group's work in a political sphere that reproduced Asian political distinctness. In the wake of the Jinja meeting that denounced safeguards, he wrote in the *Argus*, "I cannot get away without the impression that this [is] solely an Asian movement." He recalled "an old Indian fable" where a man "mistook the bark for the tree" and failed in his promise to protect his village and ended up only defending his own home. "Reduced to criticising a non-existent and defunct Asian leadership, [and] apologising ... to Africans," the Group, he suggested sarcastically, should change its name to the "*Asian Action Group*."¹⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Musazi, whom Neogy had confidently endorsed as an ally in promoting non-racial nationalism, had helped organize the UNM boycott that Misri and Arain condemned.¹⁶¹ By October, Arain and his colleagues were writing to the *Argus* to proclaim positions on behalf of "Asian opinion." Their letters led to an extended exchange between UAG and CCIA supporters defending their respective organizations' representation of a unitary Asian opinion on everything from minority safeguards to the Conservative election victory in the United Kingdom.¹⁶² For Neogy, the UAG's initial promise had resided in its ability to "use a new language" that was not

¹⁶⁰ Rajat Neogy, "Letter to the Editor – Action Group Decisions," *Uganda Argus* May 14, 1959.

¹⁶¹ CO 822/1360 "Young Asian Association in Uganda" January 4, 1959; B.A. Misri, "Letter to the Editor – Asians and the Boycott," *Uganda Argus* April 10, 1959; "Decision to Drop Demand For Safeguard Supported," *Uganda Argus* April 27, 1959: 1, 3.

¹⁶² E.g. "Election result 'not welcomed'," *Uganda Argus* October 12, 1959: 3; "Action Group not 'voice' of Asians," *Uganda Argus* October 14, 1959: 3.

“restricted ... on racial lines.”¹⁶³ Unable to actualize this language in Uganda’s politics, he returned to the UK that same year determined not to come back. When he did return to Kampala the following year, he forged a lively arena of intellectual and artistic creativity in *Transition* magazine that engaged and defied racial politics.¹⁶⁴

Conclusion

The alliances that Rajat Neogy forged in a shared elite print culture were less easily maintained when they intersected with unshared political spheres. Although Uganda’s urban politics in the 1950s gave rise to spheres of public debate, they sustained arenas where debate and mobilization foreclosed the sort of inclusive politics to which the UAG had aspired.

This chapter has charted Asian leaders’ efforts to defend Asian interests in the face of an expanding public sphere. It has argued urban publics already associated their security with racial categories, which made the incorporation of Asians into a shared political arena increasingly difficult as Uganda prepared for self-government in the late 1950s. Over the preceding decades, the idea of an undifferentiated Asian community was primarily an elite response to the political demands of Indian nationalism and the administrative infrastructure of the Protectorate state. As more Africans gained admittance to the LegCo and mobilized African urban constituencies against the Kabaka’s deportation in the mid-1950s, they demanded that Asian leaders speak for the political aspirations of all Asians. African activists attacked elite multi-racial collusion for maintaining immoral racial

¹⁶³ “Party seeks those who ‘believe in Uganda’,” *Uganda Argus* February 13, 1959: 2.

¹⁶⁴ Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening*, pt. II.

hierarchies. In response, Asian leaders defended racial pluralism, proposing electoral “minority safeguards” in a future majority-rule political system. Young Asian men, doubly excluded from Asian community leadership and from African political parties, attempted to cultivate a non-racial political arena in the English-language press. However, their inability to forge alliances with African politicians or with non-elite Asians ultimately led them to reinforce racial political categories, seeking to speak for “the Asian community” in place of elder leaders.

As Asian leaders attempted to protect their security during a period of political transition in the late 1950s, African activists used violence and surveillance to enforce social distance between Asians and Africans in urban daily life. With the entrenchment of racial categories in the political arena, activists attempted to enforce these distinctions in commercial and social life. We now turn to one such campaign of violence in late colonial Buganda.

Chapter Two

Surveillance, Disciplinary Violence, and the Anti-Asian Boycott of 1959/1960

In October 1959, a mechanic in Kibuye, on the outskirts of Kampala, arrived at his garage one morning to find an anonymous letter threatening him with death if he did not cease trading with Asians and Europeans. In a similar incident reported by the *Uganda Argus*, a schoolmaster at Vumba village in south-western Buganda¹ “has been told in a letter signed ‘Muzinge, leader of the Underground Movement’ that he would be killed and his school and home burned down if he did not stop teaching.” The letter specified, “The threats were made because he deals with Asians.” Uganda’s Protectorate police reported hundreds of such threats in 1959 and 1960, many of which were followed by acts of violence under cover of night. In Bulemezi, a man awoke to find his coffee plants destroyed; he suspected that it was retribution for having entered an Asian-owned shop. After a tailor in Kayunga

¹ Buganda is a kingdom within the country of Uganda. Buganda refers to the place, Baganda to the people, Muganda to a single person, and Luganda to the language. In the late 1950s, debates raged in the press and in the Legislative Council over whether to change the name of Uganda given that it derives from a corruption of Buganda. John Kamarumba of Kabale told the Constitutional Commission, “The name ‘Uganda’ [is] a source of continuous annoyance to the non-Baganda people.” UNA Confidential box 95 file CONST 7/5 “Western Province – Kigezi” John Wycliffe Kamarumba, Kabale n.d. [1959]; UNA Confidential Box 46 File C. 8388 “Proposed Change of Title of Country – New Name for Uganda” 1957.

bazaar, seventy kilometers from Kampala, received a threat for serving Asian customers, an unknown assailant shot and injured his wife.²

Accounts of hundreds of such incidents filled the files of Uganda's Protectorate Police and the pages of Uganda's newspapers from March 1959 into the second half of 1960. The timing coincided with a trade and social boycott of Asian traders and of the foreign consumer goods they sold. Boycott supporters used anonymous threats and anonymously inflicted violence to discipline people in Buganda's small towns and trading centers into limiting their relationships with Asian traders. The boycott encouraged urban residents to regard their business and social interactions as ethical and political acts. Threats and violence reminded them that their actions were under constant surveillance not only from Protectorate or Kingdom authorities, but also from neighbors and untraceable strangers. These men and women on the margins of Uganda's urban economy used intimidation, violence, and the ideals of a moral community that excluded non-Africans. Many Asians found it difficult to maintain their connections with small town life at this moment when their legal and political status in East Africa was under increasing scrutiny (see Chapter 1). Thousands of Asian traders lived and worked in Buganda's small trading centers and suburbs, where they survived on slim profit margins and long lines of credit. The boycott compelled them to move to larger towns or areas outside of Buganda as they lost customers, sensed intimidation, and became economically and socially ostracized.

² "Boycotters set fire to woman's house in holiday incidents," *Uganda Argus* October 14, 1959: 5; "Threat to African teacher," *Uganda Argus* October 10, 1959: 7; "Slashed Crops at Mpigi," *Uganda Argus* August 27, 1959: 3; "New spate of crop slashings and threats," *Uganda Argus* September 22, 1959: 1; "Bugerere gombolola places under curfew after two shootings," *Uganda Argus* September 12, 1959: 1.

Racial violence may take a myriad of forms. Michel Foucault reminds us that discourses on race often proceed from discourses on war, in which right and truth reside in the articulation of a perspective perceived to be in existential battle with another. However, such oppositional logic rarely finds expression before being subsumed by “the internal racism of permanent purification [that] will become one of the basic dimensions of social normalization.”³ The normalization of racial discourse requires disciplinary techniques that produce groups and subjects who articulate rights and define moral norms particular to themselves and in conflict with imagined others. As historians of ethnic and racial politics in colonial Africa have demonstrated, disciplining the behavior of potential insiders is often a more pervasive manifestation of racial thinking than violence directed at a racial other.⁴ While racial discourse may be a product of dispersed forms of power, violent subjectivities are far from universal. They require the work of instigators or riot specialists aiming to produce conditions of collective violence.⁵

This chapter examines a form of violence in late colonial Uganda that perpetuated racial categories but was not taken as a prompt for oppositional racial violence on a large

³ Michel Foucault, *“Society Must Be Defended”: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 62.

⁴ John Lonsdale’s analysis of the relationship between moral ethnicity and political tribalism has been particularly influential among historians of East Africa. John Lonsdale, “The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: Wealth, Poverty & Civic Virtue in Kikuyu Political Thought,” in *Unhappy Valley, Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, ed. John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman (Oxford: James Currey, 1992), 315–504; John Lonsdale, “Moral Ethnicity, Ethnic Nationalism and Political Tribalism: The Case of the Kikuyu,” in *Staat Und Gesellschaft in Africa: Erosions- Und Reformprozesse*, Schriften Der Vereinigung von Afrikanisten in Deutschland 16 (Hamburg: LIT, 1996), 93–106.

⁵ On “riot specialists,” see the works of Paul Brass: “Introduction: Discourses of Ethnicity, Communalism, and Violence,” in *Riots and Pogroms*, ed. Paul R. Brass (London: Macmillan, 1996), 1–55; *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).

scale. A coalition of politicians and royalist activists launched a trade and social boycott against Ugandan Asians in 1959. The boycott triggered a campaign of surveillance and violence against individuals who continued to consume foreign products or consort with Asians. This form of disciplinary violence included the circulation of threatening anonymous and pseudonymous letters. As a result, its force has remained invisible in accounts focusing exclusively on mob oratory and print culture. It remained concealed in part because it did not involve the activist politics of a particular community or political constituency, as did ethnic associations and trade unions. Violence could be inflicted anonymously under cover of night, and threatening letters were modalities of concealment. Letters were either anonymous or signed with the name of the mythical figure, *Muzinge*, who issued commands like an omniscient messenger. The amorphous quality of the boycott enabled small openings of political space for men and women on the margins of Uganda's urban economy, while profoundly straining social and commercial relationships among Asians and Africans in these rapidly expanding small towns and trading centers.

As with many situations in which tensions over economic accumulation and social mobility animate ideas of immutable difference based on blood and descent, these frictions did not erupt in violent conflict that could subsequently be rendered intelligible as a race riot. Only when the trade boycott's supporters had lost the ability to enforce new social and commercial practices upon urban consumers did some resort to a terror campaign, using homemade guns and bombs against Asians. The boycott led to economic hardships for Asian traders and their African consumers, since the African traders who attempted to replace their Asian counterparts were unable to secure or extend lines of credit. As Buganda resisted incorporation into a unitary Ugandan state, conservative royalism led by

the Kingdom's Protestant elite grew in popularity. Disenfranchised urbanites steadily drifted away from the promises of small traders and the draconian demands of the boycott.⁶ Gradually abandoned in the run-up to the 1961 elections and Uganda's independence in 1962, the boycott proved unassimilable within a fledgling nationalist discourse and has remained invisible to subsequent scholars.

The invisibility of disciplinary violence

The sort of subaltern surveillance that flourished in Buganda's small towns and peri-urban trading centers in 1959 was strongly influenced by royal elites who hoped to consolidate a popular hegemonic loyalty to Buganda kingdom's institutions. However, many ordinary people who sought economic advancement in competitive urban centers without the support of chiefly patronage networks carved out alternative means of commanding authority. In so doing, they exposed rifts among Buganda's young urban underclass and compelled both Protectorate and Kingdom authorities to change their strategies of urban governance. For British Protectorate officials, as for most historians since, acts of violence and intimidation were part of a singular campaign known as "the Buganda Crisis" or "the boycott." Launched by a coalition of Baganda politicians and royalist pressure groups, this boycott quickly escaped the control of its organizers. After Protectorate officials had ordered the arrest or deportations of its leaders and compelled Buganda's Katikkiro (prime minister) to condemn it, the boycott continued to be enforced through mysterious

⁶ The point is made in Nelson Kasfir, *The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics, with a Case Study of Uganda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 144.

anonymous threatening letters and violence. Although loudspeakers and printing presses were an infrastructure for politicians and journalists appealing for support, subaltern activists used writing, road networks, and urban congestion to circulate anonymous threats that bypassed existing centers of power.

As an episode of political activism, the boycott deeply shaped Uganda's decolonization. The violence and intimidation rendered Buganda difficult to govern for British authorities at a moment when the kingdom's incorporation into a future self-governing polity was hotly contested. As early as September 1959, the Protectorate had already lost a stunning £600,000 from anticipated taxes and import duties without figuring in increased expenditure for courts and police.⁷ Baganda politicians refused to join a multi-racial constitutional committee appointed by the Governor to suggest ways to increase African representation on the Legislative Council; its other African members used the uncertainty spread by the boycott to push for a swift transition to self-government. Uganda's future elected leaders, Benedicto Kiwanuka⁸ and Milton Obote, privately urged the Protectorate Government to crush the boycott for threatening to derail a swift political transition to a unitary independent state. At the same time, they publicly condemned the Governor's handling of the crisis and argued for a swifter transition of power to elected African officials. Boycotts of Asian-owned shops and attendant violence recurred at other moments of political transition in Uganda, including when Milton Obote abolished Uganda's kingdoms in 1966 and again when his Africanization campaigns failed to placate urban traders in the late 1960s.⁹

⁷ FCO 141/6640 "Uganda National Movement" Cartland October 24, 1959: 7.

⁸ Kiwanuka was briefly Chief Minister before independence.

⁹ "Trade Boycott 'Nonsense'" *National Trading Corporation Bulletin* March 1968: 29.

However, historians have almost entirely neglected this moment in Ugandan history and the forms of protest that drove political, economic, and social change in late colonial urban Uganda. Contemporary academic observers worried about the boycott's effect on the political position of the Kabaka, or Buganda's king. Cranford Pratt perceptively noted the "insecure alliance between cautious masters [Buganda's political elite, on one hand] and greedy clients" and "local malcontents," on the other. Anthony Low suggested a "Bataka-type pattern" to the boycott's organization, one that relied on diffuse clan networks rather than office-holders appointed by the King and his ministers.¹⁰ During the Africanization campaigns of the late 1960s and in the wake of Idi Amin's economic war against Asians and commercial minorities, several prominent Makerere University scholars turned to the boycott as a moment of failed nationalist aspiration. Dharam Ghai, a Ugandan Asian political scientist, regarded it as a misguided "expression of Gandan economic nationalism" that sought ethnic solidarity and racial division at the expense of national unity.¹¹ By contrast, historian of Buganda Semakula Kiwanuka and future Prime Minister Apolo Nsibambi each presented the boycott as a nationalist movement driven by grassroots populism that was ultimately defeated by the colonial government's manipulation of elite politicians.¹²

¹⁰ R.C. Pratt, "Nationalism in Uganda," *Political Studies* 9, no. 2 (June 1961): 167–169; D.A. Low, "The Advent of Populism in Buganda," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 6, no. 4 (July 1964): 442.

¹¹ "Gandan" refers to Buganda. Dharam Ghai, "The Bugandan Trade Boycott: A Study in Tribal, Political, and Economic Nationalism," in *Power and Politics in Black Africa*, ed. R.I. Rotberg and Ali Mazrui (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 755–70.

¹² Semakula Kiwanuka, "The Uganda National Movement and the Trade Boycott of 1959/60: A Study of Politics and Economics in Uganda on the Eve of Independence," *Makerere Historical Journal* 2, no. 1 (1976): 1–26; Apolo Robin Nsibambi, "Populism in Uganda, 1959–1961," *The Indian Journal of Political Studies* 2 (1978): 19–37.

If these early writings placed the boycott within narratives of royalist or nationalist political projects, subsequent scholars have regarded it as peripheral to more recent unrealized aspirations for national rebirth, whether through class struggle or moral reckoning. For neo-Marxists, the boycott became briefly intelligible as an episode in the development of African petty-bourgeoisie class-consciousness. However, because it was not designed to seize state power and did not appear to consolidate African traders' class position through revolutionary violence, it was quickly dismissed as a blip along the trajectory of Uganda's underdeveloped class politics.¹³ As scholars and public figures began to produce book-length surveys of Uganda's colonial and postcolonial history in the 1980s and 1990s, they consolidated an image of the past as a burden filled with degradation and humiliation.¹⁴ These accounts had no space for the story of a popular trade boycott animated by small traders and other commoners, except as a portent of the economic disaster that accompanied Idi Amin's 1972 Asian expulsion. None of these books contained more than a few sentences on the boycott, and like their predecessors, they subsumed it under a story of political parties' efforts to seize control of the state. As a result, there has been a tendency to ignore the work of activists who kept the boycott going long after its political leaders were removed from the scene or had renounced it. This gap has led to a consensus that it was orchestrated and controlled by political elites and "did not last long enough to make any impact."¹⁵

¹³ Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 215–216. See also Jørgensen, "Structural Dependence and Economic Nationalism," 311.

¹⁴ See Chapter 5. See also Peterson, "Heritage Management in Colonial and Contemporary Africa," 19–21; Peterson and Taylor, "Rethinking the State in Idi Amin's Uganda," 62–63.

¹⁵ Samwiri Rubaraza Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda* (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1980), 167. Even historians who claimed that it was a "success" focus

The boycott's conspicuous absence from scholarly attention reflects not only historians' preoccupation with elite politics, but also an approach to social activism and racial ideas that privileges print debate and moments of violent rupture. In an effort to make the boycott legible, historians have concentrated on its political leaders, most of whom had little or no influence after the first four months. More recently, scholars of Buganda have yet to consider the boycott except as part of the victory of Buganda royalism over a previously more egalitarian populist politics.¹⁶ Historians of the 1940s and early 1950s have noted the use of loudspeakers and newsprint to address large numbers of people who could be reached or summoned together simultaneously thanks to the wider availability of bicycles and expanded road networks.¹⁷ However, unlike the predominantly rural UAFU and Bataka Union movements,¹⁸ the boycott relied on the concentration of people in urban centers, where public rallies and newspapers were supplemented with networks of surveillance over the social and consumption habits of ordinary people. Surveillance and disciplinary violence did not reflect coherent activist politics but rather enabled people to insert themselves into positions of authority without representing a unitary subject position. Bereft of a rallying cry around an imagined collectivity, such as "the Bataka" or "workers," the boycott has fallen through the cracks of historical analysis.

The boycott's supporters pursued a form of activism that left neither a written archive for scholars of Buganda's intellectual history to read nor accounts of explosive

on its influence on elite politics T.V. Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda: 1900-1986* (Hants, UK: Gower, 1986), 382.

¹⁶ Carol Summers, forthcoming; Earle, "Political Theologies in Late Colonial Buganda," 143–145.

¹⁷ On bicycles in the semiotics of colonial life, see Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon*, 15–17 & chap. 4. On bicycles and the expansion of African public spheres in East Africa, see Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival*, chap. 2.

¹⁸ Summers, "Radical Rudeness."

racial violence. They aimed to discipline participants in urban commercial and social life by putting people under surveillance, circulating threats, and inflicting violence anonymously. There was not an appeal to fellow citizens in an open public sphere, but a campaign of disciplinary violence meant to change commercial and social habits in anticipation of a new political order.

A political history of the boycott

In February and March 1959 near Kampala's taxi park, a series of rallies held at the "Tree of Freedom," included one reportedly attended by 15,000 people.¹⁹ The speakers consisted of men, women, Anglicans, Catholics, Muslims, traditionalists, progressives, journalists, members of Buganda's parliament (the Lukiiko), and members of several competing political parties. Their presence together on the same stage was remarkable. On February 7th, the president of one faction of the Uganda National Congress (UNC) Ignatius Musazi and Paulo Muwanga of the United Congress Party (UCP) had held competing rallies 50 yards apart; they heckled one another through loudspeakers and dodged stones and eggs thrown at them by their opponent's supporters.²⁰ A week later, they joined some of their fiercest opponents at the same location to champion unity among all political factions. Musazi heralded the meeting as a "revival of nationalism," while his erstwhile opponent and Progressive Party president Eridadi Mulira revealed that "leaders of political parties

¹⁹ "Ebibuga 9 temukyali bayindi," *Uganda Empya* March 31, 1959: 1.

²⁰ "Mr Musazi's meeting swamped by rival U.N.C. hecklers," *Uganda Argus* February 9, 1959: 1; CO 822/1353 "The Uganda National Congress" Intelligence Report, February 1959: 64.

had resolved to set their parties aside” and form the Uganda National Movement (UNM).²¹ At this and subsequent public rallies, Musazi, Muwanga, and Mulira joined the lawyer and UCP secretary-general Godfrey Binaisa, its president Dr. Eria Muwazi, and other party leaders to champion the UNM as an anti-colonial movement.

Political party elites regarded the UNM as a political coalition that would challenge government policies and struggle to take state power from the Protectorate administration. They also hoped to increase their fledgling popular support in Buganda by extracting concessions from Protectorate officials on a range of government social and political programs. Binaisa condemned a proposed Education Bill, which he decried as an effort “to curtail the development of education in the country and to retard the granting of self-government.”²² He declared that the UNM would peacefully take power and provide free education after independence. Binaisa and Mulira also announced that the UNM’s aim was to disband the Constitutional Committee, which they warned was Government’s effort to entrench the political rights of non-Africans. Multi-racialism, they argued, was an immoral affront to democratic ideals; it signaled the “death warrant” for Ugandans seeking self-rule.²³ Others, such as the journalist and prominent member of Buganda’s Lukiiko A.D. Lubowa, joined the condemnation of Sir Amar Maini’s tenure as Minister of Commerce and Industry described in Chapter 1. Lubowa claimed that Maini’s and Governor Crawford’s

²¹ “Party leaders speak on a single platform,” *Uganda Argus* February 16, 1959: 5.

²² “UCP to Fight Schools Bill,” *Uganda Argus* February 4, 1959: 5. Minister of Education and Labour Mr G.B. Cartland confirmed this paternalist policy by stating the government’s position that “the expansion of primary education should be slowed down” so that government could “protect parents and their children from educational exploitation.” “New Education Policy Announced,” *Uganda Argus* February 6, 1959: 1, 5; W.L. Bell, “Ministry Replies to Criticism of Education Bill,” *Uganda Argus* February 14, 1959: 2.

²³ “Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans,” *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 3.

refusal to cede control of trade policy to an African was a sign of bad will by Asians and Government toward African political aspirations.²⁴

The UNM's elite politicians combined the promise of concessions on Protectorate policies with an appeal against the insidious influence of foreigners in Ugandan politics. As discussed in Chapter 1, leaders of Uganda's early political parties occasionally imagined the possibility of multi-racial liberal democracy, but they also remained suspicious of Asian political representation and economic influence. Mulira and Binaisa each portrayed multi-racialism as a morally repugnant continuation of colonial exploitation.²⁵ Ignatius Musazi had exacerbated divisions between different factions of the UNC when he invited European and Asian members of the Legislative Council and the President of the Indian Association of Kampala to a public meeting.²⁶ Upon joining the UNM, he publicly "repented" for having invited non-Africans to a political rally, though each of the non-Africans he had invited denied having any affiliation with African party politics.²⁷

In the new movement, however, political elites played a secondary role to a larger group of less educated leaders of pro-royalist pressure groups from Kampala's suburbs. The UNM's primary organizer and leader was a 29-year-old building contractor named Augustine Kamyā.²⁸ Kamyā had been director of the Mugogo Farmers' Association and was

²⁴ Nicodeme Salis, "Democratic Party Kanyenyenkule: Omugwira Bisaniiko," ["Democratic Party are like small crickets: A Foreigner is Garbage"] *Uganda Empya* March 31, 1959: 4.

²⁵ CB EMKM/Gen/1/1 "Autobiography."

²⁶ CO 822/1353 "The Uganda National Congress" Intelligence Report February 1959: 64.

²⁷ "Party leaders speak on single platform," *Uganda Argus* February 16, 1959: 5; Barbara Saben, "Mr. Musazi's meeting," *Uganda Argus* February 10, 1959: 2; R.J. Mehta "Musazi Meeting," *Uganda Argus* February 11, 1959: 3.

²⁸ Other accounts have referred to Kamyā as a cobbler, a house painter, and a taxi driver. Samwiri Rubaraza Karugire, *Roots of Instability in Uganda*, 3rd ed. (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2003), 43; CO 822/1846 "Trade Boycott in Buganda" Uganda National Movement and Trade Boycott in Buganda, n.d. [June 1959].

president of the “Third Party to the Agreement,” which was active among people in Kampala’s suburban trading centers who were cut off from chiefly patronage and from economic advancement in peri-urban economies dominated by Asian traders. Others such as Musa Bulwadda of the Katwe Village Council, Alamanzani Kizito of the Kyabando Saza Council, Fenekansi Musoke of the Landlords’ Council, Yosia Sekabanja of the Uganda Nationalist Party, the populist Lukiiko member Hajji Busungu, and Christine Nkata, a veteran of the 1953-1955 campaign for the Kabaka’s return, formed the core of the UNM’s leadership.

The UNM’s core leadership had connections with Kabaka Mutesa that circumvented the influence of Ministers and Chiefs, but they did not claim to speak directly on the King’s behalf. Prince Badru Kakungulu, for example, was dismayed that the Kabaka surrounded himself with “people with simple minds like ... Haji Busungu.”²⁹ Kamyā’s pressure group, “Third Party to the Agreement,” made explicit its role as an autonomous defender of royal interests rather than a direct extension of the Kabaka’s will. It took its name from the Buganda Agreement between the Kabaka and the British Governor. Pamphlets circulated by the group spoke of a third party, “we, the people of the Buganda Agreement,” who would protect the Kingdom’s sovereignty and the Kabaka’s “peace and happiness.”³⁰

²⁹ Quoted in Abdu Basajjabaka Kawalya Kasozi, *The Life of Prince Badru Kakungulu Wasajja: And The Development of a Forward Looking Muslim Community in Uganda, 1907-1991* (Kampala: Progressive Publishing House, 1996), 130.

³⁰ UNA Confidential Box 15 File S9436.5 “Buganda Crisis 1959_ Boycott Propaganda Against_ White Paper” n.d. [October 1959?] “A Brief Doctrine to Enlighten All People”: 54/1A. In 1961, Kamyā would inaugurate another group with a similar mission known as “Amabega gwa Namulondo” or “People Behind the Throne.” See Ian Hancock, “Patriotism and Neo-Traditionalism in Buganda: The Kabaka Yekka (‘The King Alone’) Movement, 1961-1962,” *Journal of African History* 11, no. 3 (1970): 427 fn 27.

The UNM, like the “Third Party,” did not follow direct orders from the King, but they worked to sustain moral order in the kingdom by demanding loyalty to him. When in 2012 I asked former UNM member James Sekagya about the boycott’s origins, he prepared a document that described how, after their first meeting, the King summoned ten of the UNM’s leaders to his palace. In Sekagya’s narrative, the UNM’s formation and the policy to boycott non-African shops were proposed without the king’s involvement, and the Kabaka only subsequently “said that he supported the war that was declared” because it would help advance Buganda’s autonomy from British rule.³¹ Protectorate spies reported that UNM leaders deferred to the Kabaka’s wishes that the trade boycott not begin until after the British Queen Mother’s visit in February.³² Kamyia, Bulwadda, and others were political entrepreneurs who were eager to please the King at a moment when Buganda appeared to be on the cusp of a new political order. Kamyia believed that “Buganda was going forward daily [toward] self-government” and that the Kabaka’s position should be protected regardless of what sort of polity emerged, because Mutesa “was fitted to be the Kabaka of East Africa.”³³

Unlike political elites such as Mulira and Binaisa who promised legislative concessions from a distant Protectorate administration, the UNM’s populist leaders used public rallies to appeal directly to men and women in Uganda’s competitive urban centers. The Kabaka remarked that the boycott was “ably led by a demagogue” Augustine Kamyia,

³¹ Ashe James Sekagya, “History of the Uganda National Movement [U.N.M.] That Led Uganda to Independence on 9th October 1962,” manuscript, n.d. [2012].

³² CO 822/1437 “Development of Constitution of Uganda” Special Branch report February 18, 1959: 112/2.

³³ UNA Confidential Box 44 File C 8886 “Meetings of People at Bwayise” Special Branch Report May 10, 1958: 1A.

whom British intelligence officers considered “a master of mob oratory.”³⁴ Kamyā was a powerful speaker, he dressed stylishly, and he was often seen in the company of beautiful women or cruising through Katwe in a new car.³⁵ Elite politicians such as Mulira and Musazi were no match for powerful orators and charismatic personalities such as Kamyā, Musa Bulwadda, Hajji Busungu, and Christine Nkata. The latter group believed that they had greater liberty to speak as they pleased, while educated political party leaders felt vulnerable to arrest under draconian sedition laws.³⁶ Indeed, as Godfrey Bināisa later remembered, Kamyā was a “very articulate” orator in Luganda, “and could convince thousands of people,” while “the educated ones [had to] play it cool, until we convince the masses.”³⁷ As Nkata recalled, an effective speaker had to “get to people’s hearts [and] remind them of their losses and what they had to gain.”³⁸

The UNM’s leaders used increasingly powerful loudspeakers at political rallies to provide an emotional appeal to royalism and promises of economic advancement for men and women lacking access to chiefly patronage or to stable employment. Two features dominated each rally. First, each was concluded with the singing of Buganda’s anthem *Ekitibwa kya Buganda*³⁹ as everyone faced in the direction of Mengo, the site of the

³⁴ Kabaka of Buganda, *The Desecration of My Kingdom*, 154; CO 822/2064 “Monthly Intelligence Reports” Intelligence Report August 1960: E10.

³⁵ For a brief description of Kamyā’s political career based in part on interviews with Ignatius Musazi, see Horace Campbell, “The Political Struggles of Africans to Enter the Market Place in Uganda 1900-1970” (M.A. thesis, Makerere University, 1975), 243.

³⁶ Interview with Christine Nkata, London, August 5, 2013.

³⁷ Interview by Daniel Sills with Godfrey Bināisa, September 6, 2001.

³⁸ Interview with Christine Nkata, London, August 5, 2013.

³⁹ Ekitibwa translates literally as “that which is feared.” Murphy translates it as “honor, glory; prestige, dignity; respect; reverence; pomp” with the note, “None of the preceding equivalents expresses the full meaning of kitiibwa which is perhaps the greatest ideal and the most sought after attribute of the Baganda.” John D. Murphy, *Luganda-English Dictionary* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1972), 210. Iliffe

Kabaka's palace. However, unlike at smaller meetings of pressure groups such as "The Third Party to the Agreement," persons from other regions like Teso and Bugisu were invited to speak. Kamyia also promised that "tribal anthems throughout the protectorate will be sung facing the tribal centre of administration."⁴⁰ This rhetorical strategy enabled speakers to appeal to a generic authority without precluding participation of non-Baganda who still expressed allegiance to the royal authority ruling their area. Thus, non-Baganda living in Buganda were included as long as they submitted to the Kabaka.

The second ubiquitous characteristic of UNM rallies was working up of the crowd up with shouts of "Freedom!" or "Eddembe!" which became the movement's slogan, along with a "V" finger sign.⁴¹ *Eddembe* in Luganda connotes "freedom" as well as "opportunity," "lack of worry," and "peace." It suggested the absence of an obligation to perform coerced labor.⁴² As Mikael Karlström describes, the term suggests "liberty to carry out some particular activity without constraints imposed from above" and is used interchangeably with "*emirembe*, meaning 'peace' and also 'royal reign'" or 'epoch'.⁴³ With forced labor and the commercialization of land in early twentieth century Buganda, people rendered landless were also cut off from patronage relationships and burials that bound them to ancestors, descendants, and kingdom authorities; they often complained of enslavement by

describes the ostensibly egalitarian connotations of the concept, which would have appealed to commoners supporting the UNM boycott: "Buganda's politics centred on competition for office and its associated *ekitiibwa*, a competition open in principle to any man of talent and courage." Iliffe, *Honour in African History*, 168.

⁴⁰ "U.N.M. Leaders Declare Non-African Shops Boycott," *Uganda Argus* March 9, 1959: 1; "Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans," *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 3.

⁴¹ Interview with Hajji Mohammed Kasirye, Kawempe, April 3, 2013.

⁴² Murphy, *Luganda-English Dictionary*, 65.

⁴³ Mikael Karlström, "Imagining Democracy: Political Culture and Democratisation in Buganda," *Africa* 66, no. 4 (1996): 486.

land owners. Freedom implied the ability to show love for patrons and dependents through reciprocal obligation without coercion.⁴⁴

Boycotts leaders drew inspiration not only from Buganda royalism but also from the Bataka movement of the 1940s and early 1950s, which had promoted ideas of social membership and political authority based on ideals of horizontal clanship. The collusion of royal elites, Asian industrialists, and European rulers angered a large demographic of Baganda who felt shut out of royal patronage networks and advancement in colonial commerce or administration. The 1900 Agreement between British and Buganda Kingdom authorities established the framework of British “protection” in Buganda as a pact between royal institutions that excluded other forms of authority based in healing and clan membership, which had coexisted in mutual dependence with royal power.⁴⁵ Holly Hanson has described how Baganda who were disenfranchised by the 1900 Agreement rallied around or created new clan identities in the 1920s, not only seeking the return of the return of land, but also arguing that “unobligated, bureaucratic power undermined good government and that commodified social relations enslaved people.”⁴⁶ By the 1940s, the pressures of the wartime economy and conflicts within the kingdom’s ruling elite exacerbated tensions further, leading some activists to claim the mantle of “Bataka” in arguing for an egalitarian basis of Buganda citizenship based in common membership in Buganda’s clans. Central to Bataka activism of this period were professed claims to

⁴⁴ Holly Elisabeth Hanson, *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003), chap. 7.

⁴⁵ On pre-colonial authority anchored in clanship and healing practices in Buganda, see Neil Kodesh, *Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Public Healing in Buganda* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

⁴⁶ Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 204.

ancestral burial grounds, which signaled claims to indigeneity.⁴⁷ The Bataka Movement's ideals of class solidarity among an imagined community of indigenes influenced UNM activists as they denounced the control of urban commerce by immoral foreigners. However, following the Kabaka's deportation in 1953, expressions of royal devotion increasingly cemented Buganda identity. As a result, activists in 1959 such as Christine Nkata claimed to be working in the spirit of the Bataka Movement even as they jettisoned its earlier hostility to royal authority.⁴⁸ The aspirations implied in UNM supporters' rallying cry linked economic opportunity, prosperity, and an ordered and peaceful kingdom under the Kabaka with political self-determination.

Kamya anchored his appeal to *eddembe* by dramatically declaring a boycott of Asian-owned shops and the foreign items they sold. "From now, ten minutes to six," he declared in March 1959, "all trade is put into the hands of Africans. From this hour no African should enter a non-African shop."⁴⁹ The goal was to "remove Asians from the villages and to bring trade into the hands of Africans."⁵⁰ In addition to boycotting foreign shops, he called on his audience to avoid other imported leisure goods, such as cigarettes. A reporter for the *Uganda Argus* noted that Muslims in the crowd interrupted him and successfully lobbied for the boycott of bottled beer, a prohibition that Protectorate officials, in an effort to turn elite Christians against the boycott, were eager to point out was ruthlessly enforced.⁵¹ The

⁴⁷ On Bataka activism, see Summers, "Grandfathers, Grandsons, Morality, and Radical Politics in Late Colonial Buganda"; Summers, "Radical Rudeness"; Carol Summers, "Local Critiques of Global Development: Patriotism in Late Colonial Buganda," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 47, no. 1 (2014): 21–35.

⁴⁸ Interview with Christine Nkata, London, August 5, 2013.

⁴⁹ "U.N.M. Leaders Declare Non-African Shops Boycott," *Uganda Argus* March 5, 1959: 1, 3.

⁵⁰ "Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans," *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 1, 3.

⁵¹ "U.N.M. Leaders Declare Non-African Shops Boycott," *Uganda Argus* March 5, 1959: 1, 3; "Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans," *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 1, 3.

UNM also banned the use of public transportation regulated by the Protectorate Government.

Despite these bans, the UNM's leaders attempted to establish a list of authorized retailers and goods. These exceptions enabled individual leaders to seek payment from businessmen in exchange for exempting their shops and goods. African and Asian businessmen bitterly complained that some prominent Asian wholesalers offered payments to Kamyā and others in the UNM in exchange for being allowed to continue operating during the boycott. These exemptions, some argued, only exacerbated racial tension. "The rich [Asian] wholesalers have thought little of their society, the country and its rulers," wrote one Asian trader from Mpigi, Ratilal Jeram, to the Colonial Secretary. As a result, "The Asian community has been blamed due to the evil deeds of a few of them."⁵² Asian politicians regarded Kamyā as a "corrupt" extortionist, whose greed ultimately blunted the boycott's effect on some Asian businesses.⁵³ Kamyā's efforts to lift a ban on Coca-Cola may have played a part in his later appointment as a distributor for the company.⁵⁴ Accusations against Kamyā, Bulwadda, and other UNM leaders of accepting bribes and stealing funds provoked tension within the movement and opened these individuals to accusations of immoral self-aggrandizement.⁵⁵

In Buganda's competitive towns and trading centers, Kamyā's boycott was well received by many. Still, it provoked heated responses from groups that articulated activist

⁵² CO 822/1846 "Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda" Ratilal Jeram to Colonial Secretary, August 18, 1959: E177.

⁵³ Interview with Manzoor Moghul, Leicester, June 11, 2012.

⁵⁴ "Kamyā Aganzizza Coca-cola," Uganda Eyogera September 5, 1960: 3; Campbell, "The Political Struggles of Africans to Enter the Market Place in Uganda 1900-1970," 243.

⁵⁵ CO 822/1846 "Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda" The Uganda National Movement, May 15, 1959: 165.

politics on behalf of workers and established traders. A British confidant of the Kabaka noted that the boycott took root primarily among “the newly educated and the town dwelling idlers.”⁵⁶ By contrast, many African traders who lacked connections with exempted wholesalers and lost revenue from the prohibition of consumer goods reacted angrily. When the UNM’s Alamanzani Kizito presented a list of 30 authorized African wholesalers to a meeting of 200 African traders in Kampala, the traders requested that a committee first be formed to liaise with importers, who dealt primarily with large Asian-owned firms.⁵⁷ Likewise, workers dependent on wage labor actively opposed the boycott as businesses with declining revenue began to lay off employees. By May, around 2,000 people had lost jobs leading some to join the anti-boycott UNC and form an association of jobless youth, who clashed with boycott supporters in Kampala.⁵⁸

Faced with a public with divided loyalties and interests, UNM leaders used public meetings to rally support and encourage supporters to meet one another, assess others’ commitment, and organize networks of enforcers. The boycott’s spread within Buganda closely followed the concentration of political rallies in March and April of 1959. For example, it was slow to take hold in Masaka district until Eridadi Mulira and Elizaphan Mawagi held a large meeting there on April 3rd.⁵⁹ Rallies were lively affairs, with speakers

⁵⁶ CO 822/1846 “Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda” Sir Ronald Bennett, July 7, 1959: 164A.

⁵⁷ “Traders Clash With U.N.M. Delegate,” *Uganda Argus* March 16, 1959: 3; “Police Called to Katwe,” *Uganda Argus* May 20, 1959: 1.

⁵⁸ CO 822/1845 “Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda” Governor to Secretary of State, May 19, 1959: 33; “Crowds Urged to Beat the Boycott: Unemployed hold meeting at Naguru,” *Uganda Argus* May 18, 1959: 1; “Ignore boycott say unemployed workers – ‘not for our good’,” *Uganda Argus* May 8, 1959; Unemployed, “Boycott Has Gone Awry Somewhere,” *Uganda Argus* April 28, 1959.

⁵⁹ Rallies outside of Buganda failed to ignite support, and it found little support in the disputed Lost Counties with a majority population of Banyoro. FCO 141/6640 “Uganda

and attendees from diverse social backgrounds. At an early meeting, the *Uganda Argus* reported, “There were over 13 speakers including leading politicians, school mistresses, farmers and traders.”⁶⁰ Speakers worked cultivated charismatic styles that attracted large crowds with rhetorical flourishes, dramatic hand gestures, and props.⁶¹ Audience members were active participants. We have seen that speakers urged supporters to face Mengo and sing Buganda’s anthem. At other moments, audience members formulated UNM policy, such as when Muslim attendees interrupted Kamyá’s speech to demand the banning of bottled alcohol.

The Protectorate Government responded by closely monitoring public rallies and eventually forbidding the UNM to summon large crowds. At first, police conducted surveillance and collected evidence using sound recording equipment. At the UNM’s largest meeting in late February, “Police erected a microphone near the platform to relay the speeches to a tape recorder in a car nearby” while “other police were seen on roof tops nearby.”⁶² The journalist and politician A.D. Lubowa objected that such recordings interfered with freedom of speech by inhibiting politicians from speaking as they pleased. British officials secretly shared this view, while hoping that recordings would “cause the speakers to moderate their language” lest they be prosecuted for sedition.⁶³ Secretariat and intelligence officials in Entebbe felt that political party leaders had free reign to make inflammatory speeches because they could always challenge the accuracy of notes taken by

National Movement” Cartland, October 28, 1959: 7; UNA Confidential box 15 file S 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc – Main File” Provincial Commissioner’s Conference October 1959: 109.

⁶⁰ “Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans,” *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 1, 3.

⁶¹ Interview with Christine Nkata, London, August 5, 2013.

⁶² “Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans,” *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 1.

⁶³ CO 922/1357 “A Proposal to Use Tape Recorders at Meetings of the Uganda National Congress” Hartwell to Mathieson July 8, 1957: 1.

policemen who were notoriously inefficient in shorthand. R.E. Stone believed that recordings would “deter people from making seditious speeches” and also could be used to manipulate court proceedings: “it requires little imagination to visualise the effect on a court were the magistrate to know that a tape recording of a meeting was available, but that he was not allowed to hear it.”⁶⁴ Politicians attempted to adapt to the Protectorate’s surveillance techniques. UNM leaders attempted to identify and remove police informers from meetings. Even populists like Kamyia were careful to publically repudiate violence, even as they pushed for the boycott’s expansion.⁶⁵

As the boycott continued in spite of police surveillance, Governor Crawford attempted to proscribe public rallies altogether. In April, he signed an ordinance requiring written approval for meetings of over 250 people. He also banned the UNM and a series of successor organizations. When a large crowd assembled in Kampala in violation of this ban, police responded with batons and live ammunition, killing several people.⁶⁶ Despite their efforts to avoid overtly seditious language, nearly all of the movement’s leaders found themselves in prison or in court by the end of May. Augustine Kamyia served a year in prison for threatening a bar owner who continued to serve bottled beer. Hundreds of others faced orders restricting them to their homes, where any visitors could be closely monitored. After Christine Nkata appeared in court many times for breaking the conditions

⁶⁴ CO 922/1357 “A Proposal to Use Tape Recorders at Meetings of the Uganda National Congress” Stone to Webber December 19, 1958: 12. Recordings of political rallies had already stirred controversy in Kenya.

⁶⁵ CO 822/1847 “Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)” trial transcript June 24, 1959.

⁶⁶ For police accounts of the incident, see CO 822/1845 “Trade Boycott in Buganda” Governor to Secretary of State, June 5, 1959: 70; CO 822/1845 “Trade Boycott in Buganda” Governor’s Deputy to Secretary of State Langley to PS for Security, June 6, 1959: 76.

of her house arrest, a judge remarked, “she is like a ghost to keep reappearing.” He sent her to prison.⁶⁷

Government crackdowns exposed rifts in the UNM’s leadership. At Eridadi Mulira’s trial, prosecutors allegedly found a document in which he wrote, “The traditionalists will have to be put to sleep [with concessions. ...] But as soon as their guard is down we shall smash them with clenched fists.”⁶⁸ Deported to the north of the country, neither UNM’s elite politicians like Mulira, Musazi, Muwanga, and Mawagi, nor its traditionalist leaders, such as Sekabanja, Kitayimbwa, and Hajji Busungu, could exert further influence on events in Buganda.⁶⁹

The boycott and the vernacular press

The UNM’s message was appealing to many Africans in Uganda’s towns and trading centers, and its rallies were effective at rallying support. However, by June of 1959, most of its leaders were cut off from their followers. Government crackdowns made it impossible to use loudspeakers to summon large publics through open gatherings. Governor Frederick Crawford believed the boycott’s fate was driven by public proclamations by public figures, who could command their followers to behave as they directed. At its outset, he suspected the King’s involvement and felt “the Kabaka’s Government could end [present disturbed

⁶⁷ Interview with Christine Nkata, London, August 5, 2013.

⁶⁸ CO 822/1846 “Trade Boycott in Buganda” Judge LEG Lewis High Court Miscellaneous Cause [sic] No. 67: 138E; FCO 141/6640 “Uganda National Movement” Governor to Sec of State, May 30, 1959: 1.

⁶⁹ Personal conflicts also developed among deportees. In one of the more salacious scandals, Yosia Sekabanja, the architect of the 1954 boycott (see Chapter 1), took his colleague ERKS Mawagi to court for seducing his wife while they were exiled together in Arua. “Detainee brings action against another detainee,” *Uganda Argus* May 13, 1960: 7.

conditions] in a week if they wished.”⁷⁰ He mused to an unreceptive Secretary of State, “we will never get Uganda right until the present Kabaka has been removed from the scene.”⁷¹ Unable to eliminate him, Crawford tried to coerce the King into publicly condemning the boycott by threatening in effect to bankrupt the kingdom by withholding Protectorate grants. “If the present loss of revenue, and the economic disaster caused by the boycott did not end,” he told Mutesa, “we should have to try to turn public opinion against it” before it becomes “a habit.”⁷² In other words, Crawford regarded the boycott as a product of leaders’ manipulation of public sentiments through speeches and public declarations. Mutesa, by contrast, responded “that the boycott had become a political issue and for that reason was all the more difficult to terminate,” regardless of his own disposition toward it.⁷³ Only after Crawford coerced the Kabaka’s Katikkiro (Prime Minister) Mikaeri Kintu to publicly condemn violence and disorder for a second time, was there a noticeable change in commercial activity, though intimidation and violence escalated. Crawford, in a letter to his counterpart in Tanganyika, bemoaned how the boycott undermined the formal channels of polite negotiation through which his predecessors had ruled. “What problem children are these bumptious, beer-swilling, bible-punching, bullying, braggart Baganda,” he concluded.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ CO 822/1845 “Trade Boycott in Buganda” Governor to Secretary of State May 19, 1959: 33.

⁷¹ CO 822/1437 “Development of Constitution of Uganda” Governor to Gorell-Barnes February 18, 1959: 112.

⁷² UNA Confidential box 15 file S 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc – Main File” Governor to Resident, August, 11, 1959: 9A.

⁷³ UNA Confidential box 15 file S 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc – Main File” Governor to Resident, August, 11, 1959: 9A.

⁷⁴ CO 822/1437 “Development of Constitution of Uganda” Crawford to Turnbull July 25, 1959: 122. The beer that Crawford accused Baganda of swilling was locally produced brew

The boycott continued for another year after its leaders were exiled and the Katikkiro had issued his condemnations. One way that its supporters reached large numbers of people despite these constraints was through the Luganda language press. By the late 1950s, more efficient printing presses and the construction of roads allowed editors to distribute their papers to larger and more geographically dispersed audiences than ever before. In 1956, the twice-weekly Luganda paper *Uganda Empya*, owned by Eridadi Mulira, claimed a circulation of 11,000 copies, while the daily *Uganda Eyogera*, edited by A.D. Lubowa, claimed to distribute 15,000 copies in 1958. This compared with the elite English language *Uganda Argus's* circulation of 9,400.⁷⁵ Illegal "pirate taxis" ferried newspapers to small trading centers upcountry.

Newspapers enabled writers to do a number of things. First, they could attempt to explain and control boycott policy. Like speakers at a rally, newspaper writers provided arguments in favor of the boycott and instructions on UNM directives. For example, *Uganda Empya* reported on May 6th: "A group is threatening to disturb the peace and stone shops in Kampala after the trial of [Augustine] Kamyia in order to cause trouble for the UNM. So UNM followers should not go to all roads near the court."⁷⁶ Articles explained the rationale

that came to symbolize the rejection of European-style beer that was prohibited during the boycott.

⁷⁵ Uganda Protectorate, *Uganda: Report of the year 1956*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1957), 126; Uganda Protectorate, *Uganda: Report of the year 1958*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1959), 118-119.

⁷⁶ "Mwekuume Abatabuzi," *Uganda Empya* May 6, 1959: 1. *Uganda Empya* owner Eridadi Mulira was already on trial for publishing a previous article that instructed supporters to guard against police efforts to cause a disturbance at a UNM meeting. CO 822/1845 "Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda" Month Intelligence Appreciation April 14, 1959: 21.

behind the boycott of particular goods, “because they did not help Africans,”⁷⁷ while attempting to tell readers how to be a responsible supporter. The paper *Obuggaga* (“Wealth”) printed a statement on its title page: “Always drink local beer that grew your grandparents,” which discouraged drinking of bottled beer, which was banned under the boycott.⁷⁸ At other times, writers struggled against the spread of boycott practices that did not originate from UNM announcements. One *Eyogera* editorial noted that the “Movement only declared three issues. ... But it has come to our notice that when some women go to the markets with their hair plaited, traders do not sell matooke [green bananas, Buganda’s staple food] to them. There is no reason why a woman with her hair done should be denied merchandise. It is a violation of one’s rights.”⁷⁹ Another article warned, “any person who refuses to sell to Batooro or Banyankole but only Baganda does not know what UNM’s aims are. UNM’s goal is to bring together all people to make one country.”⁸⁰

Newspapers also provided a space for individuals and businesses to attempt to demonstrate their moral behavior or to clear their names against accusations of breaking the boycott. “We the management of Akutwala Ekiro Bar have gotten rid of all foreign beer from our bar,” stated one advertisement. I.W. Mukasa wrote to *Uganda Eyogera* in order to apologize to individuals whom he had invited to a wedding tea party at the foreign-owned Metropole Hotel. “It was so because by the time the UNM announced [the boycott], I had

⁷⁷ “Ani Aliko Obuvu nanyizibwa wa Boycott Kati? Okuddamu: Gavana,” *Uganda Empya* May 5, 1959: 1.

⁷⁸ The notice appeared regularly in issues of the weekly paper, which was published by Sapoba Press in Katwe.

⁷⁹ “Movement yalangirira bisatu byokka,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 7, 1959: 4. Prohibitions against plaited hair were enforced during the Kabaka Crisis of 1953 to 1955, as it was considered to be against the spirit of mourning for the exiled Kabaka. The alleged use of this practice in 1959 suggests that ordinary people appropriated boycott policies in ways that reworked the symbolism that leaders intended for them.

⁸⁰ “Obutaguza batali Baganda,” *Uganda Empya* April 4, 1959: 1.

already paid for the venue. I therefore apologize to the nation to please forgive me.”⁸¹ In another letter to *Uganda Empya*, W.D. Willy denied accusations that he continued to purchase bottled beer and explained that the empty bottles around his shop were being returned by customers who had purchased beer before the boycott started.⁸²

Newspapers could also rally weary boycott followers. For example, A.D. Lubowa used his position as editor of *Uganda Eyogera* to appeal directly to his readers. He wrote, “Even though the protectorate Government has become so foolish to ban meetings that exceed 250 people, thinking that it will force people to get money out of their pockets to buy from foreigners, all that is meaningless. The Africans will not stop but only to tighten more because they now know that what they are doing is hurting.”⁸³ Letters to the editor provided another format conducive to the spread of justifications for the boycott. E.K. Katuma wrote to *Uganda Eyogera*, “Foreigners never appreciated our things, yet when we have ignored their things, they cry.”⁸⁴ Reports of the boycott’s progress could be equally galvanizing. Common stories in the early months of the boycott included accounts of how Asians had begun to perform activities that were ordinarily only done by Africans. *Uganda Empya* reported “an Indian man who has lived [in Nakisunga Kyaggwe] for more than 30 years is fetching water for other Indians for money. The male black servants who have been working for Indians have quit.”⁸⁵ Likewise, in Mityana town, “Indian women fetch water from wells which are a quarter of a mile distance, something they had never done

⁸¹ “Okwetonda,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 7, 1959: 3.

⁸² “Okwetonda,” *Uganda Empya* April 28, 1959: 6.

⁸³ Editor, “Gavumenti kyesazeewo tekijja kugaana bantu butagula,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 11, 1959: 3.

⁸⁴ EK Katma, “National Movement Ngisiimye,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 3, 1959: 4.

⁸⁵ “Omuyindi yasiibye asomba mazzi: UNM yebizade.” *Uganda Empya* April 9, 1959: 1.

before.”⁸⁶ Another article reported, “now Indians go to those Africans who have lost relatives and share with them moments of grief [which] was never seen before.”⁸⁷ Meanwhile, articles celebrated the boycott for “teaching Africans trade,” which made the UNM boycott like a “university of commerce for Africans.”⁸⁸

Newspaper editors also appealed to audience sentiments through images. In 1958, African editors continued to rely on the Protectorate’s Department of Information for stock photos, but in 1959, they began to incorporate their own news photos into their issues.⁸⁹ Just two days after a demonstration in Kampala, where police dispersed an assembled crowd with batons and live ammunition, the newspaper *Munnansi*, which was owned by two Buganda Kingdom ministers, published a photograph of a woman at the protest, head in her hands, with blood flowing across the frame under a front page headline “Blood Blood Blood” and the question “Do you see how the blood runs?” The venerable editor Joseph Nambale later admitted that he had enhanced the image by smearing ink on the negative in order to create the impression of copious amounts of blood.⁹⁰ Attorney General Dreschfield stated, “The picture is a fake. Where it says: ‘See how the blood flows’ it is in fact ‘see how the ink flows’.” Although the manager of the elite *Uganda Argus* admitted that press photographs were often “touched up,” *Munnansi*’s picture was a novel innovation in the Luganda language press: a news photograph manipulated to be printed alongside a news

⁸⁶ “E Mityana Abayindi besombera amazzi: Bagenyi Okubaguza Amata,” *Uganda Empya* April 6, 1959: 1.

⁸⁷ “Abayindi batandise n’okuwa amabugo,” *Uganda Empya* April 7, 1959: 1.

⁸⁸ “UNM Yatandike University,” *Uganda Empya* May 8, 1959: 2.

⁸⁹ Uganda Protectorate, *Uganda: Report of the year 1958*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1959), 124.

⁹⁰ UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/5 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Propaganda Against: White Paper” Governor to Secretary of State, October 10, 1959: 43; FCO 141/6640 Cartland, May 23, 1959, “Uganda National Movement,” 7; CO 822/1845 “Trade Boycott in Buganda” Governor to Secretary of State May 5, 1959: 27.

story reporting about the same events that had occurred less than two days earlier. Dreschfield found the picture more dangerous than the accompanying article, an “exaggerated report by Nikodem Sali [*sic*]” that despite being “largely untrue” was less provocative, and hence less seditious, than the manipulated image.⁹¹ Indeed, Godfrey Binaisa used the image to lobby British Labour MP John Stonehouse to press for an inquiry into Government oppression in Uganda.⁹²

Despite the political commitments of many editors and writers, the vernacular press appealed to diverse aspirations and participated in the cultivation of consumer desires, often not confined by the dictates of the boycott. As editors sought readers among aspirants to an urban middle class and their bosses depended in part on advertising revenue, the vernacular press sometimes provided seemingly contradictory images. *Uganda Empya* and *Uganda Eyogera* each ran advertisements for bottled beer and other luxury items up until the first weeks of the boycott. *Uganda Empya*'s edition of April 9th reported approvingly of Augustine Kamyá's announcement that “no black Ugandan” should consume Coca-Cola on its front page, but carried a prominent advertisement for the beverage on page three, and continued to run it in several subsequent editions.⁹³ The juxtaposition of advertisements for leisure consumer goods and articles heralding the boycott's success may have reflected tensions within particular papers as well as the commercial desires that readers cultivated over long engagements with colonial commerce.

⁹¹ “Sedition Case Opens Against Minister and Ex-Editor,” *Uganda Argus* June 4, 1959: 1, 3; CO 822/1845 “Trade Boycott in Buganda” Governor to Secretary of State June 17, 1959: 103.

⁹² CO 822/1845 “Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda” Binaisa to Stonehouse May 2, 1959: 28A.

⁹³ “UNM Asibyeyo Ebirala: Fanta, Coca-Cola Ne Serengeti Teinywebwe,” *Uganda Empya* April 9, 1959: 1.

Uganda Eyogera's editor A.D. Lubowa participated in the public burning of copies of his own paper at a UNM rally because some felt that the paper's proprietor, the prominent bar owner Lwanga Miti, exerted too much influence on its content.⁹⁴ Regardless of personal conflicts over editorial policy, boycott supporters who bought, read, and circulated *Empya*, *Eyogera*, and other papers did not reject consumer goods, though they objected to the relationships through which they could acquire them. The necessity of organized surveillance and disciplinary violence in order to enforce the boycott suggests how enmeshed consumer goods were with social lives.

Figure 2.1 *Coca-Cola* advertisement in *Uganda Empya*, April 6, 1959. It appeared opposite an article about the trade boycott. *Uganda Empya* was owned by Eridadi Mulira, a UNM leader.

⁹⁴ "Uganda Eyogera Baamwokezza," *Uganda Eyogera* April 2, 1959: 1. As *Uganda Eyogera* became less supportive of the boycott, it received threats or arson and violence against its reporters. "Arson Threats to Newspaper Alleged," *Uganda Argus* June 2, 1959; "2 Men Threatened With Death," *Uganda Argus* June 20, 1959.

As Stephanie Newell has shown, newspapers allow writers to manipulate and play with self-naming practices that render unstable the links between their work as writers and their social lives.⁹⁵ One reporter used the pseudonym Nicodeme Salis in place of his given name Nick Ssali. In this way, he attempted to convince readers that the author was a foreigner difficult to prosecute or censure. Thus, Ssali recalls, when an article by “Salis” appeared detailing Kabaka Mutesa’s marital troubles, the furious Kabaka wondered how a foreigner could have acquired such insider information, even though Ssali was a regular presence at the Kabaka’s palace.⁹⁶ He also believed that Protectorate authorities would be less likely to charge a foreigner with sedition out of fear that it would provoke international outcry. In the wake of *Munnansi’s* publication of the doctored photograph in May 1959, prosecutors declined to prosecute the author of the accompanying article, whom they knew as “Nikodem Salis.”⁹⁷

The economy of boycott journalism required a careful balancing act for many young reporters. Reporters worked across social and political arenas. The prolific reporter John Jones Salongo recalled, “I used to go to the Kabaka as chief reporter [of *Sekanyolya*]. I was then [also] his escort by motorcycle ... while reporting and escorting him. And he loved me very, very much.”⁹⁸ However, when not at the Kabaka’s palace, Salongo met with young people on the outskirts of Masaka, who provided him with information on violators of the boycott and their efforts to intimidate them into reforming their ways. Proximity to the police could also yield important information. In another case, Ssali remembered working

⁹⁵ Stephanie Newell, *The Power to Name: A History of Anonymity in Colonial West Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2013).

⁹⁶ Interview with Nick Ssali, Kampala, July 20, 2013.

⁹⁷ “Sedition Case Opens Against Minister and Ex-Editor,” *Uganda Argus* June 4, 1959: 1, 3.

⁹⁸ Interview with John Jones Salongo, Masaka, April 26, 2013.

on a story about conditions in police jails. When an officer refused to allow him to enter the cells, he went outside and threw a stone through the window, which led to his brief detention and the ability to conduct his research. Fearful of receiving further bad press, the commanding officer quickly released him without charge. However, on another occasion, he recalled being “kidnapped” by a group in Masaka whom he knew to be boycott enforcers who demanded that in order to confuse the police he write a story suggesting that they had moved to Kampala.⁹⁹

Journalists’ social mobility could open them to social censure and vulnerability from police and activists. Although press ordinances placed legal responsibility for seditious articles with a newspaper’s editor rather than with individual writers, participation in illegal meetings or in acts of intimidation was illegal. Journalists not only sought out boycott enforcers as informants for stories, but they also often saw themselves as participants in a common struggle. “We reporters were not political but were protesters,” recalled Ssali.¹⁰⁰ This approach, especially among journalists who worked for papers that were associated with political organizations, required journalists to carefully navigate between protest writing and other forms of political action. Bylines were coveted prizes of particularly well-researched and well-written articles, but, as Ssali’s story suggests, they could expose writers to harassment from police and activists. As a result, just as the press enabled some forms of social mobility and protest, it could prove less conducive to others.

⁹⁹ Interview with Nick Ssali, Kampala, April 10, 2013.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Nick Ssali, Kampala, May 2013.

Subaltern surveillance and anonymous violence

There were things that newspapers could not do. By late 1959, public rallies were banned, the Kabaka had issued statements through the Katikkiro condemning the boycott, and several newspaper editors and journalists had been prosecuted for libel and sedition. Some newspapers, especially *Uganda Eyogera*, turned against the boycott. In public addresses, in elite politics, and in print, the boycott was all but over by November 1959.¹⁰¹ However, economic data, police files, and newspaper accounts show that the boycott, and an increasing level of intimidation and violence to enforce it, continued long after public expressions of UNM activism had disappeared from the public sphere. Even as former UNM leaders and the Buganda Government turned attention to mobilizing against Legislative Council elections scheduled for March 1961, the trade boycott continued into late 1960. A Government report from October 1960 concluded that the boycott “has become a habit” as sales of beer and soft drinks remained low and use of foreign-owned buses were at half of pre-boycott levels.¹⁰²

Anonymous letters, threats, and disciplinary violence provided a different register for boycott supporters to work in. This register sustained a politics with an amorphous constituency, opened political space for women, and challenged the authority of Kingdom elites even as it promoted conservative ethnic patriotism. The following pages trace how boycott enforcement escaped from the control of UNM leaders through the use of anonymous threatening letters and eventually a strategy of violent insurgency against Asian shop-owners, particularly in isolated trading centers. Tactics of boycott enforcement,

¹⁰¹ UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc.”

¹⁰² CO 822/2925 “Trade Boycott in Uganda” Trade Boycott Report October 25, 1960: 18E.

including intimidation, social boycott, and violence, momentarily transformed the gendered and ethnic dynamics of urban protest in Buganda as women and non-Buganda carved out spaces of authority in political activism.

The UNM, in rhetoric and in organization, sought to establish parallel structures of governance through surveillance. In towns and trading centers across Buganda, its leaders appointed “mayors” who monitored the boycott’s enforcement. At a rally in Mityana town, A.D. Lubowa presented the UNM as a conquering army establishing a new administration. “Those who have abandoned UNM should know that Mityana is now taken by Black people,” he stated before declaring Mr. Mugwisa “the new mayor of Mityana.”¹⁰³ Those appointed to such positions were often traders who acted on the promise that they would receive assistance in importing goods from UNM leaders.¹⁰⁴ By July, the Resident of Buganda estimated that the UNM had appointed around 200 mayors. “These men were taking over the functions and duties of the African chiefs,” he observed, in a manner “unpleasantly reminiscent of Mau Mau organisation in Kenya.”¹⁰⁵ Unlike during the boycott of 1954, lamented intelligence officials, chiefs refused to strongly intervene against UNM activities in their areas out of fear or complicity.¹⁰⁶

The organization of such wide networks of enforcers without the interference of chiefs required economic support and political protection. UNM leaders formed a mutually

¹⁰³ “Ekibuga Mityana kiwambiddwa abaddugavu: Kati Mugiswa Ye Meya Wakyo,” *Uganda Empya* April 3, 1959: 4.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with George William Luboyera, Kalisiizo, April 25, 2013.

¹⁰⁵ Governor Crawford had been Deputy Governor of Kenya during the Mau Mau emergency. CO 822/1845 “Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda” Governor to Secretary of State, May 19, 1959: 33; FCO 141/6640 “Uganda National Movement” Cartland, May 30, 1959: 7; CO 822/1846 “Trade Boycott Against Non African Goods in Buganda” Lewis Report to the Governor July 2, 1959: 138/E.

¹⁰⁶ CO 822/1845 “Trade Boycott Against Non African Goods in Buganda” Intelligence Committee Report on UNC April 11, 1959: 15 E1.

beneficial relationship with several Buganda Government ministers, particularly Minister of Finance Amos Sempa and Minister of Natural Resources Leonard Basudde, who provided a car that UNM leaders used to travel to rallies outside of Kampala.¹⁰⁷ Basudde and Sempa were rumored to finance the UNM in exchange for boycott regulations that would enrich their businesses. They not only owned *Munnansi*, the paper whose doctored image of a battered protester sparked a sedition trial, but they also owned Uganda Power & Development Ltd. (UPD). UPD distributed Shell petrol, which Kamyia refused to include among boycotted goods, and they subsequently worked with a Scandinavian brewer to sell homemade beer during the boycott.¹⁰⁸ Fearful of the sort of retaliation that was meted out to disloyal chiefs following the Kabaka's return from exile a few years earlier, chiefs were careful not to interfere with activities that appeared to be supported by the Kabaka and his ministers.

With the support of members of the Buganda Government establishment, the UNM promoted networks of surveillance and punitive enforcement. In its early months, individuals who broke the boycott were often warned that they were under surveillance and subject to disciplinary violence through face to face encounters. For example, in Bakuli in Kampala, a police report indicated, "Four men entered a bar and swept several bottles of beer off a table because it was European manufactured" only to be arrested by an off duty police officer who happened to be inside.¹⁰⁹ In another incident, Augustine Kamyia and three other UNM members, including an alleged member of the Kabaka's secret police John

¹⁰⁷ CO 822/1845 "Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda" Intelligence Committee April 11, 1959: 15 E1.

¹⁰⁸ CO 822/1846 "Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda" The Uganda National Movement, May 15, 1959: 165.

¹⁰⁹ CO 822/1847 "Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)" list June 17, 1959: pp 1.

Kintu,¹¹⁰ were charged with entering the bar of Paulo Lugaisi and threatening to burn it down if he did not stop selling bottled beer.¹¹¹ Others approached people in public places and interrogated them about the goods they had purchased. In Masaka, Eriyabu Katongole approached an elderly woman, Salima Namatovu, as she exited an Asian shop with her purchase and “ordered her to pour the paraffin away as she had broken the boycott.” When she refused, he seized the paraffin and threatened to burn her house.¹¹²

In other instances, crowds formed to intimidate and sometimes beat boycott breakers. For example, the *Uganda Argus* reported on August 14th, “Two Baganda women who had bought clothes from an Asian shop on Wednesday were surrounded by a crowd shouting ‘freedom’.”¹¹³ As analyzed below, boycott enforcement could sometimes enable the consolidation of dehumanizing ethnic stereotypes that associated non-Baganda with disloyalty. Reports of crowd intimidation in the press and Protectorate intelligence files indicate that people directed their anger (or were encouraged by provocateurs to direct their anger) at boycott breakers or people whose perceived ethnic affiliation could mark them as a disloyal. Asians were the victims of insurgent attacks and crime, but they were rarely subjected to the type of mob violence experienced by non-Baganda Africans who were collectively accused of breaking the boycott.

Supporters of the trade boycott further targeted undisciplined individuals through social boycott. As Ranajit Guha writes, social boycotts seek to sever relationships that entwine people together in a community by depriving them of the material and social basis

¹¹⁰ CO 822/1845 “Trade boycott against non African goods in Buganda” Intelligence Committee April 11, 1959: 15 E1.

¹¹¹ The case ended in Kamyā’s imprisonment. “Kamyā Jailed for 18 Months,” *Uganda Argus* May 7, 1959: 1.

¹¹² “Jailed for boycott threat to woman,” *Uganda Argus* August 17, 1959: 3.

¹¹³ “Crowd shouts at women in Katwe,” *Uganda Argus* August 14, 1959: 7.

of survival.¹¹⁴ The most insidious aspect of this action was the refusal to sell milk to Asians and efforts to disrupt the sale of imported Kenyan milk.¹¹⁵ In response to intimidation or in solidarity with the boycott, business partners and employees limited or severed their associations with Asian traders. As one UNM chairman recalled, “The milk was all poured down and people left their sewing machines.”¹¹⁶ When a British intelligence official J.D. Gotch secretly conducted a survey of boycott activity in Makwota and Gomba counties in August 1959, he reported from Kabulasoke trading center, “The Asians here ... are finding it impossible to employ any African staff, even house-boys and night-watchmen.”¹¹⁷ Meanwhile, in Kituntu and Kammengo, he observed, “the Asian residents are quite unable to buy any local produce.” While vernacular newspapers dramatized the travails of Asians who were allegedly unaccustomed to fetching water without servants, such forms of social boycott were not ubiquitous. Gotch reported that in predominantly Catholic centers such as Mitala Maria, with strong support for the anti-boycott Democratic Party, the boycott was “practically non-existent.” Meanwhile in Mpigi, Asians reported no difficulty in buying food.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Ranajit Guha, “Discipline and Mobilize: Hegemony and Elite Control in Nationalist Campaigns,” in *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*, by Ranajit Guha (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 100–151.

¹¹⁵ “Kenya milk boycott announced at Katwe,” *Uganda Argus* March 25, 1959: 5. Some Asians would later cite lack of access to milk as a primary reason why they began to leave trading centers and small towns in Buganda. CO 822/1846 “Trade boycott against non-African goods in Buganda” Ratilal Jeram to Colonial Secretary August 18, 1959: E177.

¹¹⁶ Interview with George William Luboyera, Kalisiizo, April 25, 2013. Shopkeepers often employed tailors to work on their shop verandahs sewing materials for customers who had bought cloth inside.

¹¹⁷ Gotch pretended to be a census officer. UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incident of Intimidation etc – Main File” J.D. Gotch Tour of Gomba County September 4, 1959: 68.

¹¹⁸ UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incident of Intimidation etc – Main File” J.D. Gotch Tour of Makwota County August 19, 1959: 46A;

The harshest forms of social boycott were directed at Africans who continued to patronize Asian shops. Such people were labeled *babaliga* (singular *abaliga*), literally those who walk with splayed or crooked feet. The label implied being unfaithful and lacking discipline. Kabaka Mutesa later recalled, "If a man bought some foreign product in one part of Kampala and then went on his way to buy the bananas on which we live [*matooke*] at an African market, he would find himself preceded by a stranger walking with a slightly peculiar gait, with the toes turned out, and goods would become unobtainable or prices soar as he arrived."¹¹⁹ As Mr. S.K. Mukasa of Kyadondo warned in an article for *Uganda Empya*, "*Babaliga* are like bats," which only wake up at night and fail to find anything to eat.¹²⁰ In late March, Augustine Kamyia made social boycott an official UNM policy when he instructed a mass rally, "Regarding beer drinkers he said that should one have a bicycle and get a puncture he should not be lent a pump ... He told sellers of [*matooke*] they should not sell [*matooke*] to anyone rebelling against the order of the nation."¹²¹ A pro-boycott writer for *Uganda Eyogera* reported that a group of nurses from Mukono were unable to buy meat for Easter after they were seen leaving an Asian shop.¹²² In Bombo, Kinisito Mutibwa reported to police that two men "told him that he must not come again to the market

UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/2 "Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incident of Intimidation etc – Main File" J.D. Gotch Tour of Gomba County September 4, 1959: 68. I return to the effects of the trade and social boycott on Asians at the end of this chapter.

¹¹⁹ Kabaka of Buganda, *The Desecration of My Kingdom*, 154.

¹²⁰ S.K. Mukasa, "Abababaliga balifaanana nga akawundo," *Uganda Empya* April 3, 1959: 2.

¹²¹ CO 822/1847 "Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)" trial transcript June 24, 1959: reel 9 p 8.

¹²² E. Banazizza, "Mu Bukoba Abayindi Batunula," *Uganda Eyogera* April 2, 1959: 3.

because he had bought goods from Asian shops, and they threatened to destroy his coffee trees.”¹²³

Accusations of indiscipline could also render an individual vulnerable to violence. One former trader who was active in enforcing the boycott recalled, “There was a saying in those times, ‘Never get off track [*tobaligabaliga*] or Kamyā will beat us, never get off track or Busungu will kill us.’” When asked how enforcers dealt with *babaliga*, he responded, “They were whipped with canes; there weren’t any games.”¹²⁴ Such violence was intended to punish errant individuals either to change their behavior or to serve as a warning to others. Many victims reported that they had received prior warnings that they would be targeted if they did not quit working for an Asian employer or cease business transactions with Asians. In one case from Bulemezi, for example, two men were convicted of burning down the home of another man four days after he was confronted outside of an Asian shop.¹²⁵ In Buddu, a man was shot and wounded two months after being threatened for working with Asians.¹²⁶

Enforcing a social boycott and directing violence or threatening violence in order to discipline consumer behavior required surveillance of social and commercial interactions. While editors and journalists innovated new writing and photographic styles to promote the boycott, boycott enforcers used writing and photography as tools of surveillance in order to discipline urban consumers. In towns and trading centers across Buganda, young

¹²³ CO 822/1847 “Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)” list June 17, 1959: pp 15. Protectorate policemen were also subject to social boycott. “Policeman Called Blackleg,” *Uganda Argus* August 7, 1959: 5.

¹²⁴ Interview with Hajji N, Masaka, April 25, 2013.

¹²⁵ “4 Jailed, Order to Pay 1,000/-,” *Uganda Argus* August 15, 1959: 1.

¹²⁶ “Gunshot Wound Man,” *Uganda Argus* August 19, 1959: 1. The men who allegedly threatened him were already in prison at the time of the shooting.

people sat outside Asian-owned shops with notepads and pencils, threatening to record the name of anyone who entered for future punishment. The Chief Secretary noted, “A favourite trick of those supporting the movement was to wait outside a boycotted shop with a camera, to create in the minds of those who used the shop the fear that they had been photographed and recorded and would be dealt with later.”¹²⁷ Barnado Kabogoza was jailed for “carrying a camera and photographing – or pretending to – people who defied the boycott.”¹²⁸ A barman reported to the police that a man approached him, took his photograph, and told him that his house would be burned if he did not leave his Asian employer.¹²⁹ Passengers reported that as they alighted from boycotted buses, people waiting outside wrote notes and took pictures of them.¹³⁰ In Kammengo, the *Uganda Argus* reported, “two Baganda were seen writing down the names of other Africans who work for Asians.”¹³¹

Boycott supporters’ recourse to threats, violence, and social boycott reflected three challenges of their campaign: reconfiguring consumption was not easily imposed, aspirations were heterogeneous, and the boycott reinforced an amorphous quality with no unitary politics. First, the renunciation of leisure goods and Asian owned shops disrupted forms of sociality and consumer desire that enmeshed urban Africans in colonial commerce. Elites often conducted business and politics in leisure settings where alcohol,

¹²⁷ BNA, FCO 141/6640, Cartland, 28 October 1959, “Uganda National Movement,” 7.

¹²⁸ “Boycott ‘camera man’ jailed,” *Uganda Argus* August 7, 1959: 7; CO 822/1847 “Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)” list June 17, 1959: pp 15.

¹²⁹ CO 822/1847 “Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)” list June 17, 1959: pp 4.

¹³⁰ CO 822/1847 “Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)” list June 17, 1959: pp 11.

¹³¹ “Boycotters stone two students,” *Uganda Argus* December 17, 1959: 7.

cigarettes, and other boycotted products helped to lubricate deals and debate.¹³² The prominent Lukiiko member and UNM leader A.D. Lubowa visited a Kampala club with a European, and was recognized by “UNM chaps [who] flashed the news across Kampala,” despite his best efforts to conceal himself. The next day, market vendors refused to sell him food.¹³³ Godfrey Binaisa recalled, “There were a few of the educated among us who were already drinking beer ... mainly government civil servants, the elite at Makerere [University] and elsewhere” who did not follow the boycott.¹³⁴ However, non-elites’ consumer habits were also difficult to reshape. An unusually ambivalent article by a *Uganda Eyogera* writer reported, “The boycott brought back the *tadooba* [small paraffin lamp] to my home ... because I did not want to disobey the boycott rules” by buying parts for his old lamp.¹³⁵ Enforcers issued threats and inflicted violence precisely because people found it necessary or desirable to shop for proscribed goods or from proscribed shops, which were often the cheapest or the only source of items like candles and soap in small trading centers.

UNM leaders attempted to control the boycott’s enforcement to claim moral authority. When residents in Bwaise, a Kampala suburb, refused to sell food to Madalena Nanteza after it was rumored that she had bought clothes from an Asian owned shop, she

¹³² Such elite arenas were the target of protest in 1949 by Bataka Union supporters. Summers, “Radical Rudeness.”

¹³³ Kabaka of Buganda, *The Desecration of My Kingdom*, 154; Interview by Sills with Lubowa, September 3, 2001.

¹³⁴ Interview by Sills with Binaisa, September 6, 2001. Makerere University students publically condemned the boycott. “Policy of UNM Under Attack,” *Uganda Argus* April 9, 1959: 3.

¹³⁵ “Ebigambo By’Obutagula Byakomyawo Tadooba Mu Maka Gange,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 3, 1959: 2.

arranged for a “respectable man” to take her to a UNM “chairman, Hajji Busungulu.”¹³⁶ The Chairman announced that if guilty, “let UNM take her clothes worth 5 shillings.” However, according to *Uganda Eyogera*, after no one responded when Bunsungulu “asked for evidence” of Nanteza’s alleged purchase, he declared her innocent and people began to sell her food again.¹³⁷ In another case, the chairman of the UNM’s traders’ association Lemeka Ntambi fined a man 50 shillings for “buying foods from a wholesaler not on the approved list.”¹³⁸ UNM leaders also worked against the appropriation of their claims to moral authority. We have already seen how UNM leaders used the vernacular press in efforts to instruct readers against unauthorized boycott practices, such as refusing to sell food to women with braided hair or to non-Baganda.¹³⁹ Such actions, they claimed, worked against their effort “to bring together all people to make one country.” Surveillance and violent threats were means of regulating and contesting ideas about proper behavior in this highly competitive urban moral economy. Uganda Nationalist Party president and UNM leader Yosia Sekabanja hailed the boycott for combatting drunkenness, while Eridadi Mulira’s *Uganda Empya* celebrated popular obedience to the UNM for eliminating robberies and preventing drunk driving.¹⁴⁰ Sekabanja, Mulira, and their colleagues worked to promote their image as exclusive guardians of moral behavior.

¹³⁶ Most likely the boycott leader Hajji Busungu.

¹³⁷ “Nanteza Ogw’okugula Mu Bagwiira Yagmezze,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 1, 1959: 2.

¹³⁸ UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc – Main File” Pullicino to Senior Assistant Resident Masaka September 29, 1959: 88.

¹³⁹ “Movement yalangirira bisatu byokka,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 7, 1959: 4; “Obutaguza batali Baganda,” *Uganda Empya* April 4, 1959: 1.

¹⁴⁰ “Omulumu gwa UNM ku Ggwanga,” *Uganda Empya* April 3, 1959: 1; “U.N.M. Meeting Approves List of African Wholesalers,” *Uganda Argus* March 23, 1959: 1.

The UNM's declaration of a new moral order opened political space for people whose voices had often been dismissed as part of conservative ethnic patriotism, particularly women and African non-Baganda. Scholars have pointed to two situations in the 1950s in which women worked to expand their participation in political affairs: the movement to bring back the exiled Kabaka in 1953-55 and elite multi-racial women's organizations that achieved legislative victories in the years preceding independence. While there was significant overlap among these campaigns, the boycott movement saw a qualitative shift in the manner of women's political participation.¹⁴¹ During the Kabaka's exile, women intervened as mourners, using dramatic expressions of grief to disrupt the calm negotiations through which British officials sought to placate male political elites.¹⁴² Unlike the Bataka Union campaign of 1949, some women also addressed rallies demanding the King's return. However, as activist Christine Nkata remembered, those who did were often subjected to verbal abuse and to false rumors that they were like prostitutes seeking to be close to men. She recalled, "At that time women were not included in many things [but] my country is what was aching at my heart."¹⁴³ In 1959, there were increasingly vocal calls for women to take a prominent role in organizing the boycott. In addition to Nkata, Augustine Kanya invited two women "school mistresses" to address one of the UNM's first

¹⁴¹ Nakanyike Musisi has demonstrated that the construction of Buganda identity in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries involved the silencing of contestations over gender relations. However, struggles over women's political voice and position in royal hierarchies were never fully suppressed. Nakanyike B. Musisi, "Morality as Identity: The Missionary Moral Agenda in Buganda, 1877-1945," *Journal of Religious History* 23, no. 1 (February 1999): 51-74; Nakanyike B. Musisi, "A Personal Journey into Custom, Identity, Power, and Politics: Researching and Writing the Life and Times of Buganda's Queen Mother Irene Drusilla Namaganda (1896-1957)," *History in Africa* 23 (1996): 369-85.

¹⁴² Summers, "All the Kabaka's Wives," forthcoming.

¹⁴³ Interview with Christine Nkata, London, August 5, 2013.

and largest rallies, which they used to “appeal to women to attend such meetings.”¹⁴⁴

Eridadi Mulira, whose wife Rebecca was politically active in both 1954 and 1959, argued “the English fear women” because they appear peaceful but are “hard like stone.”¹⁴⁵ His emphasis was not on women’s status as wives or their embodiment of grief, as the 1954 campaign demanded, but on the forcefulness of their actions. A writer to *Uganda Eyogera* echoed this view,

Sir, I thank women who are moving together with UNM and who are not caring about what some people are accusing them that they are violating Ganda culture when they stand on podiums to speak about whatever is not going well. Those accusing women also say that women should stay and attend to the affairs of the homes. I call those accusers the successors of the foreigners.¹⁴⁶

The new emphasis placed on women’s power as speakers and organizers, rather than embodying of loyalty and grief, grew in response to the organizational work that trade boycotts and social boycotts required. During the Kabaka’s exile, Christine Nkata had recruited women from markets across Buganda to join mourning processions. In 1959, women from those markets were responsible for commercial and social transactions – selling food and alcohol and buying household goods such as cloth – on which the boycott hinged. By the mid-1950s, women took increasingly prominent roles in the selling of food in markets, assisting men in shop-keeping, and selling homemade beer.¹⁴⁷ This placed women in important positions in the UNM’s campaign against *babaliga*. As a UNM chairman from Masaka remembered, it was a political and practical necessity for the movement to

¹⁴⁴ “Inter-Party Group Announces Boycott Plans,” *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 1, 3.

¹⁴⁵ “Omungereza Atya Bakyala,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 1, 1959: 3.

¹⁴⁶ A.S. Katugga, “UNM erangirire olwekwefuga,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 4, 1959: 4.

¹⁴⁷ Peter Gutkind, “Town Life in Uganda,” *Uganda Journal* 20, no. 1 (March 1956): 44; Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo and Marjorie Keniston McIntosh, *Women, Work & Domestic Virtue in Uganda, 1900-2003* (Oxford: James Currey, 2006), 99–101.

include women. “She [Nkata] was so powerful. ... [T]hat was the beginning of involving women in politics. We had to include at least a woman on committees.”¹⁴⁸ Although some participants remember UNM enforcement as a male-dominated exercise, contemporary accounts suggest otherwise.¹⁴⁹ In one case, a woman selling home-brewed beer noticed a bottled beer in a customer’s pocket and reportedly “told him it was boycotted, and attacked him.”¹⁵⁰ In another example out of dozens of similar reports in the *Uganda Argus*, “Two Baganda women shouted ‘Freedom’ and pointed at a Mukiga who bought cloth from an Asian shop in ... Kampala.”¹⁵¹ Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo and Marjorie Keniston McIntosh have argued that the history of women’s status in Uganda has been dominated by hegemonic “Domestic Virtue thinking” that has limited ideas of women’s political agency to the home even as women seek access to, or are forced into, the market economy.¹⁵² However, accounts of boycott enforcement suggest that women’s position in the market economy took on a central role during the boycott in a manner that encouraged wider acceptance of women’s participation in the arena of political and social activism in Buganda.

Unlike members of elite women’s political organizations, those women who sustained the boycott did not seek to carve out an autonomous institutional base for women’s politics. Aili Mari Tripp has complicated the naturalization of a colonizer/colonized dichotomy in elite politics by focusing on women’s organizations such as the Uganda Council of Women (UCW), which pushed for women’s legal rights using a

¹⁴⁸ Interview with George William Luboyera, Kalisiizo, April 25, 2013.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Hajji N, Masaka, April 25, 2013.

¹⁵⁰ “Boycotters rob man with beer,” *Uganda Argus* November 26, 1959: 5.

¹⁵¹ “Bus park fight over purchase from Asian,” *Uganda Argus* October 24, 1959: 7.

¹⁵² Kyomuhendo and McIntosh, *Women, Work & Domestic Virtue*.

non-racial ideology at a time when male-dominated political parties failed to create alliances across racial lines.¹⁵³ The UCW worked to unite elite African, Asian, and European women behind campaigns for women's legal rights by writing to the English language press, hosting public lectures, and providing social occasions for debate and interaction among elite women.¹⁵⁴ While women's organizations expanded dramatically in the late 1950s and early 1960s, their political voice was largely addressed to elite circles rather than mass populist politics.¹⁵⁵ As Tripp demonstrates, women looked for a variety of ways to expand their political strength, such as entering the Legislative Assembly and electoral politics, as did Pumla Kisosonkole and Sarah Ntiro. Nonracialism, however, was not the only register in which women worked to command a political following. Rebecca Mulira participated in the UCW, advocated on behalf of women candidates to the Legislative Council, and was an active member of the UNM with her husband Eridadi Mulira. At a UNM rally, she reportedly requested "to be 'baptised' with a U.N.M. name," prompting Augustine Kanya to give the name "Uganda Independence Mulira" to her and her 4-month old baby.¹⁵⁶ However, Mulira did not participate in the grassroots mobilization that Nkata pursued, and, like other political elites in the UNM, she condemned the increasingly violent

¹⁵³ Aili Mari Tripp, "Women's Mobilization in Uganda: Nonracial Ideologies in European-African-Asian Encounters, 1945-1962," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34, no. 3 (2001): 543-64; Tripp, *Women & Politics in Uganda*, chap. 2.

¹⁵⁴ "Move to improve the status of Asian women," *Uganda Argus* June 8, 1960: 3.

¹⁵⁵ The number of women's organizations in Uganda doubled in 1959 to over 1,000 with approximately 20,000 members. However, the UCW was not an organization for the masses, and some members complained of low participation, especially by African women. "Clubs for Women Increase by Half," *Uganda Argus* March 23, 1960: 2; Housewife, "Too few at UCW meetings," *Uganda Argus* May 17, 1960: 3; Housewife, "The bitter truth about clubs," *Uganda Argus* June 22, 1960: 2.

¹⁵⁶ "U.N.M. Meeting Approves List of African Wholesalers," *Uganda Argus* March 23, 1959: 1.

turn that it took after her husband's deportation.¹⁵⁷ For Nkata, elite women's organizations were foreign institutions made up of individuals who were too "proud of their status" to seize the opportunity to speak forcefully on the same stage as men in a manner that resonated with ordinary people.¹⁵⁸

While boycott enforcement required women's participation, it had an ambivalent effect for non-Baganda in Buganda. Before their deportations, UNM leaders consistently warned against violence or social boycotts motivated by ethnicity and invited non-Baganda speakers to public rallies even as they celebrated Buganda royalism. Semakula Kiwanuka has argued that the UNM was "the last of the populist Movements [with] trully national" aspirations, so long as it was understood that Buganda would firmly lead the nation.¹⁵⁹ However, as many non-Baganda rejected the UNM as a Buganda royalist movement and the boycott as a campaign to enrich Baganda businessmen, intimidation and social boycotts sometimes took on an ethnic character. The individual targets of boycott enforcers included Baganda and non-Baganda, though accusations of disloyalty implied in the label "*okubaliga*" were, in some cases, projected onto all non-Baganda Africans or people from a particular region outside of Buganda. Non-Baganda were already more dependent on wage labor than Baganda, especially in newly urban settings where they could not rely on the support of relatives in the nearby countryside.¹⁶⁰ People without a safety net were more

¹⁵⁷ CoU I box 204 file 1146 "Political Affairs 1960" Rebecca Mulira to Governor April 4, 1960. Eridadi Mulira was deported, while Rebecca Mulira was placed under a restriction order.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Christine Nkata, London, August 5, 2013.

¹⁵⁹ Kiwanuka, "The Uganda National Movement and the Trade Boycott of 1959/60," 16. As noted above, Kanya had earlier argued that Buganda's king "was fitted to be the Kabaka of East Africa." UNA Confidential Box 44 File C 8886 "Meetings of People at Bwayise" Special Branch Report May 10, 1958: 1A.

¹⁶⁰ Southall and Gutkind, *Townsmen in the Making*, 135.

likely to continue working for non-African employers during the boycott and become subject to social boycott, intimidation, and violence.

Jonathon Glassman has described how perceptions of criminality may be used to consolidate the discursive construction of racial groups associated with immoral or criminal behavior and thus justifiable targets of dehumanization.¹⁶¹ Prosecutors alleged that after the murder of a Muganda man in Kasawo, a vigilante group of “100 Baganda volunteers” burned down three Lugbara homes and tied and beat a Madi who worked for a non-African, before taking people “into custody because they were Lugbara or because they worked for Indians,” under the guise of being a “tax patrol.”¹⁶² One Madi witness “heard somebody in the crowd giving instructions to arrest all Lugbara who were working for Indians, and saying they should be killed.”¹⁶³ Although “a non-official court [also] sentenced several Baganda employees of Asian shopkeepers to three months imprisonment,” the Baganda vigilantes regarded an incident of criminality (a murder) as a prompt to attack Lugbara as disloyal *babaliga*.¹⁶⁴ In other cases, all non-Baganda came to be regarded as automatically *babaliga* and thus justifiable targets of social boycott. In April 1959, *Uganda Eyogera* reported, “non-Baganda people but who are black around Kamwokya, Wandegeya and Kawempe are not sold food” and are discussing plans to boycott Baganda shops and beer in retaliation.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, chap. 6.

¹⁶² CO 822/1794 “Disturbance at Kasawo Buganda” Crawford to Secretary of State August 21, 1959: 1; “Kasawo Tax Patrol,” *Uganda Argus* September 14, 1959: 3.

¹⁶³ “Crowd of 100 Set on Me, Servant Says,” *Uganda Argus* September 10, 1959: 3.

¹⁶⁴ In total, the crowd placed 63 people, “mostly of Northern Province tribes,” in the Chief’s lockup.

¹⁶⁵ “Mbu Abatali Baganda Tebakyaguzibwa,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 2, 1959: 1.

In other cases, the boycott tested tense relationships between Baganda and non-Baganda and animated and justified collective violence once it was already in progress. In Nakezi Market in Luweero, ten Alur men attacked a Muganda woman after she roughly dragged onto the main road an Alur man whom she accused of stealing a sash from her. After a passing motorist rescued the woman, the Alur men proceeded to the market where they were allegedly provoked “by a drunken Muganda man who abused them for beating the woman [and] started to throw sticks and stones at the Alur, who attacked him and beat him.” In the brawl that ensued, “a large crowd of Baganda gathered and ... were heard to be shouting ‘Okubaliga’.”¹⁶⁶ According to reports of the incident, the Alur men, six of whom were killed by Panga blows to the back of the head, had not conducted any transaction at the market and were not in possession of boycotted goods. However, Baganda observers, most of whom had not seen the entire exchange, apparently assumed that Alur would be *babaliga* because, as seasonal laborers for cotton cultivation, Alur men often sold cotton to Asians.¹⁶⁷ In Nakasekke, a muluka chief warned Alurs “that their crops will be burned and they will be killed as the Alurs were at Luwero.”¹⁶⁸ For many around Luweero, it was too much to endure. In February 1960, a chief reported, “the numbers [of Alur] leaving far exceed the normal end-of-cotton-season migration” and the manager of a nearby cotton

¹⁶⁶ CO 822/ 1793 “Disturbance at Luweero Bazaar, Uganda,” Governor to Secretary of State August 1, 1959: 3.

¹⁶⁷ Several years earlier, a cotton gin manager in Lukoma remarked that Alur were “hard workers ... but ... won’t work for other people.” LSE Richards 7/16 “P: Attitudes and Values” Survey Busiro, Attitude to immigrants, February 6, 1951: 19. On Alur in Buganda, see Aidan Southall, “Alur Migrants,” in *Economic Development and Tribal Change: A Study of Migrant Labour in Buganda*, ed. Audrey I. Richards (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1954), 141–60.

¹⁶⁸ CO 822/1846 “Trade Boycott Against Non African Goods in Buganda” RD Hook July 27, 1959: 165. Two months earlier, when two men who had threatened a crowd of Alur for selling cotton to Asians “were taken to the muluka chief,” the chief released them. CO 822/1847 “Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)” list June 17, 1959: pp 8.

ginners were “rather pessimistic about his next year’s cotton since there will be no one to grow any.”¹⁶⁹

Confounding the situation in Luweero, according to the Governor, was “the fact that at these markets there is much drunkenness.”¹⁷⁰ As the consumption of home-brewed beer came to signify solidarity with the boycott, it could embolden enforcers and become a means of expressing solidarity with the boycott. When a *Uganda Eyogera* correspondent asked a Toro newspaper editor S.K. Baguma if he followed the boycott, he did not answer directly but stated, “He drinks Buganda beer and he even uses a straw, but what he does not like is not being sold food.”¹⁷¹ Just as “bottled beer offered itself as a useful icon for those who sought to stress the moral dangers posed by ... the ways in which colonialism offered wealth, and new sources of power, to others,” home-brewed beer could simultaneously lubricate and become a sign in contestations over belonging.¹⁷² Beer consumption could facilitate a collective intoxication with boycott enforcement even as it offered a feeble means for individuals perceived as foreign *babaliga* to perform loyalty to the boycott.

The boycott, however, was not organized and implemented by a coherent constituency that advocated on behalf of a particular ethnic, class, or gender group. Protectorate police and the elite *Uganda Argus* each worked to portray the boycott as an expression of exclusive Buganda chauvinism, and thus had no incentive to emphasize the

¹⁶⁹ UNA Confidential box 26 file 8348/1 “Law and Order in Buganda Vol 1” Assistant Resident Mengo to Resident Buganda March 8, 1960: 114A.

¹⁷⁰ CO 822/ 1793 “Disturbance at Luweero Bazaar, Uganda” Governor to Secretary of State August 1, 1959: 3.

¹⁷¹ “Mbu Abatali Baganda Tebakyaguzibwa,” *Uganda Eyogera* April 2, 1959: 1.

¹⁷² Justin Willis, *Potent Brews: A Social History of Alcohol in East Africa, 1850-1999* (Nairobi: British Institute in Eastern Africa, 2002), 183.

participation of non-Baganda. However, their reports reveal that people whom police did not identify as Baganda worked to enforce the boycott throughout 1959 and 1960. “Yohasi Kantoli, a Mutoro,” reported the *Uganda Argus*, “told a crowd that [Mr. John H.S. Kekinyumu] a 73-year-old market stall holder who had refused to close” on the anniversary of Augustine Kamyá’s imprisonment “should be beaten and have his house burned.”¹⁷³ “Yekosafati Ochwo, a Mudama, and John Nyawadde, a Jaluo” were convicted of assaulting a Muganda who was drinking a bottled beer.¹⁷⁴ Some traders, like their Baganda counterparts, may have acted in order to drive business away from non-African competitors, while others may have attempted to police the behavior of non-Baganda in the hope of undermining views of all non-Baganda as automatically *babaliga*. Surveillance and violence offered Baganda and non-Baganda ways of shaping and contesting belonging and authority in Buganda’s towns and trading centers.

Anonymous letters and alternative registers of authority

Arrest records and newspaper accounts of face-to-face provocations ascribed coherent identity categories to attackers and victims. However, one of the most ubiquitous forms of enforcing boycott prevented such categorizations of its social base. Anonymous threatening letters circulated throughout Buganda in 1959 and 1960. Some were handwritten, others typed. Some were posted outside the homes or residences of the individuals to whom they were addressed, while others were found in the street addressed to a general public. Some appeared mysteriously in the night. Others flew out from the windows of speeding vehicles.

¹⁷³ “4 jailed for hindering police in pirate taxi check,” *Uganda Argus* August 10, 1959: 3.

¹⁷⁴ “Three years jail for threats,” *Uganda Argus* September 2, 1959: 5.

These letters not only concealed the identities of their authors, but they also enabled the boycott to develop amorphous politics without a singularly identifiable constituency. At rallies and in newspapers, politicians and journalists encouraged audiences to consider themselves part of a group with shared desires and aspirations. Letters instead commanded from a position that was not readily identifiable with a central authority or single activist project.

Threatening letters were part of a wider campaign of intimidation and violence that sustained the boycott. In addition to appointing mayors to enforce the boycott in particular areas, the UNM also cultivated an ethic of collective surveillance. In April, a leaflet circulating in Kampala warned, "Anyone who behaves as a traitor to the Uganda National Movement will be put before the public eye and it is the public that will deal with him accordingly."¹⁷⁵ Supporters celebrated the UNM's seeming omniscience. *Uganda Empya* gloated, "policemen went to one radio repairer in Katwe and grilled him about where he put the meter that taps voices from their [police] radios. It is said that whatever they communicate within themselves, UNM publishes it fast."¹⁷⁶ Over time, however, the surveillance that supported the boycott became separated from the central authority of the UNM. In the wake of leaders' deportations and the Katikkiro's condemnation of boycott related violence, a leaflet found in Kampala instructed, "Every person should act as a detective on his friend."¹⁷⁷ Enforcers who engaged in performative acts of surveillance, by holding a camera or notepad outside of Asian-owned shops, presented a threatening

¹⁷⁵ FCO 141/6640 "Uganda National Movement" Cartland, April 15, 1959: 7.

¹⁷⁶ "Ebyama bya Gavuymenti UNM ebiggya wa?" *Uganda Empya* April 14, 1959: 1.

¹⁷⁷ PC 78 S. 9436/12 "Buganda Crisis: Declaration of Disturbed Areas" Inf Dept, September 16 1959: 85.

spectacle, but, for this reason, they could be vulnerable to arrest or to accusations of self-interest depending on their reputation in the community.¹⁷⁸

Anonymous threats in epistolary form reminded Africans that their commercial and social behavior was under surveillance from an authority that they could not see and to which they could not respond. Some letters informed individuals of their transgressions and the punishment that would be inflicted on them. "At Kibuli, near Kampala, a Muganda found a letter this week threatening nine named people with death by shooting with a double barrelled shotgun unless they stopped buying from Asian shops within seven days," police told the *Uganda Argus*.¹⁷⁹ An anonymous letter to a chief threatened him with death if he did not stop buying from Asians and print a notice of his reformed behavior in the press.¹⁸⁰ Other letters urged a larger public to engage in a social boycott of a particular *babaliga*. "Late on Saturday night," reported the *Argus*, "copies of a cyclostyled letter were thrown out of a motor vehicle in Katwe, Kampala, urging people not to buy from shops belonging to an African on the grounds that he had been buying goods from Asians."¹⁸¹

These menacing letters created a sense of fear and uncertainty in recipients who could not attribute them to an individual author. "The anonymous threatening letter," remarked E.P. Thompson on eighteenth century England, "can be frightening and disturbing to [its recipients]; it can induce extreme anxiety, night-watchers, suspicion of

¹⁷⁸ For example, see arrest records in CO 822/1847 "Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)" list June 17, 1959; CO 822/1846 "Trade Boycott Against Non African Goods in Buganda" RD Hook July 27, 1959: 165.

¹⁷⁹ "Letter threatened death by shooting," *Uganda Argus* December 12, 1959: 1.

¹⁸⁰ "Threat to murder chief," *Uganda Argus* June 27, 1959.

¹⁸¹ Eleven Cattle Slashed," *Uganda Argus* September 15, 1959: 1.

friends and neighbours, and justified forms of paranoia.”¹⁸² In some cases, the receiver tried to help police identify individuals whom they suspected of writing the letter. After a tailor found a note posted to a window of his house warning that his children would be killed and coffee trees destroyed, he reported that he suspected someone who had previously threatened him for buying goats from an Asian.¹⁸³ In most cases, however, recipients of anonymous threats were either unable to identify a specific culprit or were too frightened to report their suspicions to chiefs or to the police. With rare exceptions, letters were delivered under cover of darkness or from the safety and anonymity of speeding vehicles. Although some chiefs opposed the boycott, they often lacked the power or information to prevent the spread of such anonymous threats, which they also received.

Writers of threatening letters adopted identities that positioned them outside of normative relations of authority. In July 1959, letters began to appear signed by “Muzinge” or “Son of Muzinge” that claimed an authority to direct boycott activity and dispense punishment independently of the UNM or Kingdom officials. Some letters claimed that Muzinge was the leader of a “Uganda Underground Movement” that issued orders from a remote cave.¹⁸⁴ This mysterious figure could appear anywhere and at any time to issue new instructions and to threaten wayward consumers. One Muzinge letter read, “Traders are hereby warned for the last time that I forbid the sale of Brook Bond Tea by all shopkeepers, without exception. I warn the people of Katwe and Wandegeya and other trading centres

¹⁸² E.P. Thompson, “The Crime of Anonymity,” in *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth Century England*, by Douglas Hay et al. (New York: Allen Lane, 1975), 255.

¹⁸³ CO 822/1847 “Trade Boycott in Uganda (Annex)” list June 17, 1959: pp 6.

¹⁸⁴ “Governor bans three Uganda societies,” *Uganda Argus* October 9, 1959: 1.

that I will not give another warning. If I inspect the shops again and find Brook Bond Tea, I will sentence the offender to death as I did to the 'beer drinker'."¹⁸⁵

Muzinge was a messenger and a commander, rather than a reporter. In Luganda, the name refers to a peacock.¹⁸⁶ As "king of the birds,"¹⁸⁷ a peacock does not connote the benevolent distribution of privileged knowledge associated with a heron (*sekanyolya*) as in the saying, "Grey heron, you are tall: tell us the news of the city."¹⁸⁸ Rather, *muzinge* implies the power of a messenger issuing draconian instructions to impertinent children. A popular folktale tells the story of a young girl who released a peacock from its cage against her parents' instructions, which caused her family to die of hunger without its eggs. The story tells how the girl's doomed parents drove her from home to be haunted in an endless search for the missing bird.¹⁸⁹ The folktale, like Muzinge letters, warns of social boycott against those who neglect Muzinge's importance and whose disobedience causes collective disaster.

¹⁸⁵ PC 78 S. 9436/12 "Buganda Crisis: Declaration of Disturbed Areas" LegCo Proceedings, February 26, 1960: 77/2.

¹⁸⁶ In other contexts, the word *muzinge* may derive from the verb *okuzinga*, meaning to wrap or fold. Murphy, *Luganda-English Dictionary*, 396, 647.

¹⁸⁷ Christine Obbo, "Healing Cultural Fundamentalism and Syncretism in Buganda," *Africa* 66, no. 2 (1996): 195; Pastor Stephen Kyeyune, *Shaping the Society Christianity and Culture: Special Reference to the African Culture of Baganda, Volume II* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2012), 143.

¹⁸⁸ Quoted in Twaddle, "Z.K. Sentongo and the Indian Question in East Africa," 313. *Sekanyolya* and *Muzinge* were also the names of defunct newspapers, the latter of which was edited by Kakembo Walusimbi, who was in England studying law by the time that the boycott began and *Muzinge* letters appeared. "Obutagula Kasita Bunakalambira: Gavumenti Eyinza Okugambukukuka," *Uganda Eyogera* April 1, 1959: 1; Uganda Protectorate, "Report of the year 1956," 126.

¹⁸⁹ Helen Nabasuta Mugambi, "From Radio to Video: Migratory Texts in Contemporary Luganda Song Narratives and Performances," *Passages* 8 (1994); Bertha Mubiru, *Muzinge the Bird* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2004).

Muzinge letters commanded people using a language of authority detached from any particular position in social relations and not answerable to its audience. Letters often referred to directives issued by the “Office of Muzinge.”¹⁹⁰ Some designated the mysterious author to be “commander-in-chief” or “chairman” of the equally shadowy Uganda Underground Movement.¹⁹¹ Other letters usurped formal positions of authority by providing a return address at the Kabaka’s palace, while others indicated Entebbe, the capital of the Protectorate.¹⁹² However, unlike the Kabaka or other official institutions, Muzinge did not occupy a singular position in Uganda’s political and social landscape. Its return address – whether the Kabaka’s palace or an isolated cave – was remote and inaccessible to return mail. Because Muzinge did not occupy an identifiable social position, there was no outlet for the individuals and publics that it addressed to seek social protection or to appeal against its decisions. Muzinge’s danger and its position outside of institutionalized hierarchies were emphasized in one letter that indicated “Son of Muzinge” had recently returned from obtaining a B.Sc. from “Killer University, Russia.”¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ “Farmers Deny Starting Ban on Kampala Matoke Sales,” *Uganda Argus* September 21, 1959: 1, 3; “Muzinge and son’ send threat,” *Uganda Argus* January 7, 1960: 3; “Arson bid foiled in Masaka,” *Uganda Argus* February 22, 1960: 4; “More threats and damage by boycotters,” *Uganda Argus* March 2, 1959: 5.

¹⁹¹ “Underground Movement Formed,” *Uganda Argus* July 25, 1959: 5; UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc – Main File” Muzinge n.d. (early September): 85.

¹⁹² “Boycott troubles eases in Maskaka,” *Uganda Argus* November 3, 1959: 1; “Driver Jailed for Sedition,” *Uganda Argus* December 10, 1959: 5.

¹⁹³ “B.Sc. (Namuzisa University, Rusia) (Mutabani wa Muzinge)” CoU box 204 file 1145 “Political Affairs, 1959” Plan No. 10 Muzinge n.d. [November or December 1959]; “Driver Jailed for Sedition,” *Uganda Argus* December 10, 1959: 5. While Protectorate Officials worried about politicians obtaining education and funding from the Soviet bloc, they did not fear communist influence behind the boycott or Muzinge. The royalist and Christian nationalist leaders of the UNM occasionally denounced their opponents as communists. From exile in northern Uganda, Busungu, Musazi, and Mulira wrote to the British Prime Minister to condemn “the Government use of men who are known to be in the Communist

The mystery of Muzinge's identity enhanced its power while confounding the efforts of other authorities to bring it under control. A letter to the editor of the *Uganda Argus* noted, "We are sure, for example, that nobody, apart from Muzinge's company, can show us Muzinge's home though even he himself is not hidden!"¹⁹⁴ A leaflet warned, "The Government is of opinion that it can arrest me; this is completely wrong and a waste of their time. They cannot see me whereas I am often among them."¹⁹⁵ Protectorate police reported having "done a great deal of work in trying to detect the identity of Muzinge letter writers" with little success. They suspected that "Salis, Taifa's No. 1 reporter, was probably inventing Muzinge letters as a press stunt."¹⁹⁶ While detectives apparently failed to connect the alias "Salis" with the journalist "Ssali," their suspicion that he composed Muzinge letters suggests that such letters occupied a register that journalistic prose, even under a pseudonym, could not enter. Newspapers allowed writers to play with self-naming practices, but they were more difficult to wield as instruments of surveillance over others. Muzinge letters, by contrast, were pinned to shop doors, placed in home windows, attached to trees, or scattered in public streets, with threats against everyone from ordinary shop employees to Protectorate officials. Muzinge's omnipresent aura was reinforced by one letter that referred to the "Office of Muzinge and his Son in the Air."¹⁹⁷ Even UNM chairmen did not know what it did: "It was a secret organization but no one knew what it consisted

pay [*sic*] to fight against us, a Nationalist Movement." CO 822/1846 "Trade Boycott in Buganda" Busungu, Musazi and Mulira to Prime Minister Macmillan, August 1, 1959: 27A. See also CoU box 204 file 1145 "Political Affairs, 1959" Rebecca Mulira to Bishop of Uganda June 15, 1959.

¹⁹⁴ ZMB Bisaya and FR Cokeson, "Letter to the editor," *Uganda Argus* May 14, 1960: 2.

¹⁹⁵ COU I box 204 file 1146 "Political Affairs 1960" Muzinge's Song to Governor, April 15, 1960.

¹⁹⁶ UNA Confidential box 26 file S 8348 I "Law and Order in Buganda" Security Meeting, March 4, 1960: 112.

¹⁹⁷ "Muzinge and son' send threat," *Uganda Argus* January 7, 1960: 3.

of. It did some secret work.”¹⁹⁸ An Asian member of the Legislative Council expressed concern over Muzinge’s amorphous identity: “I would like to ask the honourable the Chief Secretary as to who this gentleman Muzinge is? Is he a man, is he a woman, is he just a mythological figure or is he a ghost of a long vanished disgruntled Civil Servant? ... this mythological figure is causing a very great deal of concern to many people in the country. ... I think it is the primary duty of the Chief Secretary to dispel the aura of superman which surrounds this gentleman, Muziinge.”¹⁹⁹

The nebulous form of Muzinge shielded boycott enforcement from Government crackdowns while facilitating the entrepreneurial politics of non-elites. Members of labor unions and political parties exerted authority by seeking recognition as office-bearers in institutions that shaped public political life. By contrast, the boycott not only rendered veteran politicians and elite figures dependent on the initiative of non-elites, but it thrived through the mystery and anonymity of the forces behind it. Some individuals attempted to secure political credibility by claiming a prominent place among these unseen forces. Intelligence officials reported skeptically about individuals who had claimed to be behind Muzinge, and over fifty year later, former UNM supporters suggested the names of a half dozen additional people whom they heard were behind it.²⁰⁰

The case of James Sekagya suggests how individuals used writing and pseudonymity, outside of petitions and the vernacular press, to place themselves at the center of late colonial politics. A corporal in the Buganda police force Kulanima Mukasa

¹⁹⁸ Interview with George William Luboyera, Kalisiizo, April 25, 2013.

¹⁹⁹ PC 78 S. 9436/12 “Buganda Crisis: Declaration of Disturbed Areas” LegCo Proceedings, February 26, 1960: 77/2.

²⁰⁰ UNA Confidential box 26 file S 8348 I “Law and Order in Buganda” Security Meeting, March 4, 1960: 112.

reported that while he was on patrol in Katwe on September 24, 1959, a young man introduced himself as Awusi Sekatawa and presented him with a document he claimed to have written that described a plot to assassinate several Buganda Government ministers and the Muluka Chief of Katwe. The document alleged that a certain James Sekagya had organized a secret meeting with the prominent UNM activists Eriabu Lwebuga and Godfrey Binaisa to plan the assassinations. Sekatawa reportedly prodded Corporal Mukasa to arrest the men named in the document. Suspicious of how he could have obtained such information, the corporal arrested Sekatawa and soon found that he was actually 18-year old James Sekagya, the alleged mastermind named in the document. On a search of his home, police found documents in Sekagya's handwriting signed "Muzinge." Binaisa and Lwebuga acknowledged that Sekagya was active in the UNM but denied hatching an assassination plot with him.²⁰¹ Judge Inyansio Lule concluded that the alleged plan was a fabrication, though he did not see enough evidence for a defamation conviction.²⁰² When I met Sekagya fifty-three years later, he also presented me with a document he had recently written that placed himself in the center of the UNM's leadership and the Kabaka's good graces.²⁰³

At stake here is less assigning authorship or evaluating the accuracy of documents than understanding how texts that circulate in particular registers reframe relations of authority. Muzinge letters enabled experimentation with command and surveillance outside the direct control of the Protectorate Government, elite politicians, Kingdom

²⁰¹ "Plot to kill Ministers alleged," *Uganda Argus* November 10, 1959; "Court Hears More Evidence of 'Plot'," *Uganda Argus* November 11, 1959.

²⁰² "Youth freed on 'plot' charges," *Uganda Argus* November 17, 1959.

²⁰³ Ashe James Sekagya, "History of the Uganda National Movement [U.N.M.] That Led Uganda to Independence on 9th October 1962," manuscript, n.d. [2012].

officials, and UNM leaders. Just prior to the Katikkiro's July speech that mildly criticized disorder associated with the boycott, leaflets appeared outside of the Top Life Club in Kampala, urging people to continue the boycott.²⁰⁴ The timing suggested that the leaflets could have been prepared by someone close to the Kabaka's inner circle who wanted Buganda's publics to disregard the king's remarks, which were made under coercion from the Governor. However, Muzinge's letters quickly pushed the boycott in a direction that the Kabaka and his ministers found threatening to their authority. In September, letters signed by Muzinge instructed farmers and produce buyers to refuse to sell matooke for shipment to Kampala as punishment for Kampalans' continued consumption of bottled beer. "Leave us to die of starvation; we do not want bananas, beer is enough for us," mocked one handwritten letter found on a Kampala street. "Anybody found selling or bringing bananas to Kampala ... will be heavily punished as one who has no respect for one's country."²⁰⁵ Though Buganda Government ministers had rejected Protectorate officials' pleas to intervene against the boycott since March, some worried that matooke shortages could turn public opinion against them for failing to control food security.²⁰⁶ As Muzinge leaflets continued to appear condemning its intervention,²⁰⁷ the Buganda Government sent lorries,

²⁰⁴ "Underground Movement Formed," *Uganda Argus* July 25, 1959: 5.

²⁰⁵ UNA Confidential box 15 file S 9436/2 "Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc - Main File" Anonymous Notice, Muzinge n.d. [before September 14, 1959]: 85.

²⁰⁶ UNA Confidential box 15 file S 9436/2 "Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc - Main File" Deputy Resident meeting with Ag Katikkiro Musoke September 16, 1959: 84A.

²⁰⁷ "Farmers Deny Starting Ban on Kampala Matoke Sales," *Uganda Argus* September 21, 1959: 1, 3.

under armed escort, to transport matooke to Kampala and briefly took over its distribution in the city.²⁰⁸

Faced with the unregulated circulation of documents claiming the authority to command and direct the boycott, UNM leaders and Protectorate officials attempted to make Ugandan publics distinguish between authorized and unauthorized texts. As early as May, Hajji Busungu warned that boycott instructions could only come from the UNM's executive committee. "The only valid notices and instructions were those from the movement's head office at Katwe, and signed by the acting chairman," he said in a press statement.²⁰⁹ After the deportation of Busungu and his colleagues, Protectorate officials struggled to contain the increasingly violent tactics of boycott enforcers. As insurgent violence against *babaliga* and against Asians escalated in April 1960, officials arranged for 15,000 "anti-crime" pamphlets to be dropped by aircraft across the worst affected regions of Buganda "as far afield as southern Masaka District, Masaka township, East and West Mengo and parts of Kampala municipality area."²¹⁰ In so doing, they intervened in a struggle over the authority of prescriptive texts in which boycott supporters were deeply engaged.

The modes through which the boycott spread – anonymous letters, mutual surveillance, and disciplinary violence – fostered a politics that was not easily reducible to a single cause, constituency, or central authority. Buganda's political discourse, anchored

²⁰⁸ "Saza Chiefs Summoned to Mengo: Bid to halt food supplies denounced," *Uganda Argus* September 19, 1959: 1; "Buganda sends two lorries of matoke," *Uganda Argus* September 23, 1959: 1; "Rush for matoke as government lorry arrives," *Uganda Argus* September 25, 1959: 1; "More lorries sent for matoke," *Uganda Argus* September 26, 1959: 5.

²⁰⁹ "Follow official instructions only – U.N.M.," *Uganda Argus* May 8, 1959: 1.

²¹⁰ "Leaflets dropped over Buganda," *Uganda Argus* April 29, 1960: 1; "Police plane drops more leaflets," *Uganda Argus* May 7, 1960: 1.

around support for royal institutions and the Kabaka, accommodated diverse ideas about how legitimate authority should be exercised. During the boycott, ministers such as Basudde and Sempa supported the UNM, and the Kabaka maintained a tactical silence that led British intelligence officers, and many Baganda, to believe that he privately approved of it.²¹¹ After the banning of the UNM in May 1959, however, the boycott lacked public leadership that could direct its enforcement, promote a political agenda, and police boundaries between leaders and followers. Anonymous and pseudonymous documents offered one means of filling that vacuum. The letter that James Sekagya presented to a police officer not only put Sekagya in the center of Uganda's political action; it also implicated two prominent boycott leaders, Godfrey Binaisa and Eriabu Lwebuga, in an assassination plot against Buganda Kingdom ministers and a prominent chief. Kingdom ministers, chiefs, and wealthy African businessmen courted contempt for colluding with a multi-racial elite, in spite of funding the UNM and other boycott activity.

Even the Kabaka became alarmed by the general hostility to central authority that the boycott provoked. After he relented to the Governor's pressure and issued a mild public condemnation of violence associated with the boycott, the authority of his instructions came into question by boycott supporters. In October, when a matooke dealer tried to make a purchase at Katwe market, a crowd assembled and prevented the transaction. When someone interjected that the Kabaka had said people were free to shop where they pleased, "some of the crowd ... inquired the bystander's name and address and threatened

²¹¹ This was British officials' primary concern in attempting to get the Kabaka and Katikiiro to publicly condemn the boycott. See UNA Confidential box 15 file S. 9436/2 "Buganda Crisis: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc – Main File."

him.”²¹² The Kabaka noted that the African areas of Kampala-Kibuga were becoming increasingly threatening to authority in general – both from the Protectorate and the Buganda Kingdom. Governor Crawford met the Kabaka, who “said that he himself had ‘freedom’ shouted at him, but often with a laugh. He did agree, however, that there was a hostile feeling towards Government and authority in Kampala, and that something should be done to ‘clear up’ the Kibuga.”²¹³ As violence spread in early 1960, his Government cooperated with Protectorate police to tackle crime in Kampala.²¹⁴ The use of surveillance and anonymous letters to enforce moral behavior and consumer habits had opened means of establishing authority and asserting belonging that were not controlled by Protectorate or Kingdom officials, even as followers continued to invoke loyalty to the King.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how anonymous letters and relentless surveillance operated alongside newspapers and public rallies, facilitating social mobilization and reshaping authority relations in late colonial Uganda. The boycott worked to consolidate racial thinking in a context of highly competitive urban commerce. It compelled Africans to regulate behavior that connected them in exploitative ways with global capitalist networks namely through Asian traders, Government officials, and Kingdom elites. Such activism has

²¹² “Two years’ jail for threatening violence,” *Uganda Argus* October 6, 1959: 3.

²¹³ PC 15 S. 9436/2 “Buganda Crisis 1959: Boycott Incidents of Intimidation etc – Main File” Governor to Resident, August 11, 1959: 9A.

²¹⁴ UNA Confidential box 26 file S 8348 vol. 1 “Law and Order in Buganda” Meeting Regarding Law and Order, n.d. [March 1960]: 123A; UNA Confidential box 26 file S 8348 vol. 1 “Law and Order in Buganda” What I said at a meeting... March 23, 1960: 127; UNA Confidential box 26 file S 8348 vol. 1 “Law and Order in Buganda” Resident Buganda, April 11, 1960: 137.

remained largely invisible in a scholarship that operates through the categories of nationalist historiography or through subsequent iterations of ethnic patriotism. The boycott focused attention on Africans' moral discipline in their relationships with Asians. Racial hierarchies continued to be forged and challenged within the micro-tensions of daily life after the boycott had faded and in regions where it never took hold. If the scholarly lens is turned solely toward violent rupture, toward moments like the 1972 expulsion, ordinary everyday forms of aggression and disciplining used by Ugandans to reshape hierarchies would be overlooked.

The next chapter turns to everyday interactions and provocations through which Africans and Asians experienced and understood racial segregation and justice in small town life.

Chapter Three

The Spatial Dynamics of Racial Exclusion in Small Town Uganda

When Alan Mulenga¹ criticizes the immoral character of Asians before 1972 in the small town of Kabale, he recounts his daily walks to school through the center of the Asian commercial district. As he and other African schoolchildren made their way through town, he recalled in one of our many conversations, Asian male shopkeepers “could yell at you for no reason. ... The Asians ... were very bad. They could hit you if they could reach you.” This memory repeated a genre of anti-Asian speech that cast Asians as a homogenous group, embodied by an immoral male adult shopkeeper.² However, when I pressed him to continue describing his walks to school, Mr. Mulenga sketched a less uniform picture of interactions with and memories of Asians. Passing through the 500-meter stretch of road that made up the Asian commercial district, he would continue through the African trading area opposite the market where, he reported, a handful of less wealthy Asians, with stalls resembling those of African counterparts, did not engage in abusive behavior. When he arrived at Rusharoza Primary School, several Goan children – “friends” – joined him: “The

¹ The names of all interviewees are pseudonyms except for those of public figures.

² Such stereotypes were often used in order to appeal to the moral obligations of Europeans. For example, see: Kizza, “Antipathy to Asians,”; Paul Theroux, “Hating the Asians,” *Transition*, no. 33 (November 1967): 46–51.

young ones were ok.” After leaving school in 1969, this Mukiga man began to operate a food stand outside of a bar where Asian and African men often mixed openly, listened to music, and sometimes searched for sexual liaisons with African women. “We used to be friends in bars, not in shops,” recalled Mulenga. At the bar, “there was no racism.” It was possible to greet one another as “friends. But in his shop? Hapana!”³

Mulenga’s story suggests that racial exclusion and class hierarchies were deeply spatialized experiences. The physical infrastructure of small towns enabled racial exclusivity and class difference to be openly performed and contested in some spaces while rendering them less visible in others. Traders, shop customers, and bar patrons were among those urban residents who strategically navigated spaces entangled with histories of racial and class inequalities. Some of their strategies took the form of what psychologists refer to as “micro-aggressions,” or unconscious actions that sustain oppressive hierarchies.⁴ In this chapter, I use the term “microtensions” to connote all behaviors and experiences that provoke unease in relation to hierarchy in everyday life. Bargaining for goods over a shop counter, entering semi-public house verandahs, or socializing over a bar table were acts through which relationships of authority and trust were negotiated. Small town spatial arrangements could sustain relationships that normalized inequality, but they could also become the sites of provocation as well as the objects of political rhetoric.

Government efforts to exert control over urban space after independence competed with residents’ strategies for navigating the spatial dynamics of economic inequality and

³ Interview with Alan Mulenga, Kabale, December 7, 2012. He used the Kiswahili word for “no” to emphasize that there was no possibility to express friendship in an Asian shop.

⁴ Chester Pierce, “Offensive Mechanisms,” in *The Black Seventies*, ed. Floyd Barbour (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1970), 265–82; Derald Wing Sue, *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2010).

racial segregation. Officials used licensing laws and building ordinances to lessen racial segregation and realign class distinctions, bringing Africans allied with state bureaucracy into central commercial districts. Anticipation of Africanization as a political program and social project often exacerbated tensions over liminal spaces, such as shop counters and verandahs that linked public male space with the domestic domains of Asian women, while excluding Africans from the latter. Deliberate acts of abuse – a shopkeeper’s mockery of a poor African or an African goat herder’s threat to usurp an Asian’s domestic space – were often read as provocations by their targets. However, racial and class exclusion were also woven into the habitual socialities through which people grounded divergent expectations of legitimate hierarchy and reciprocity. Thus, racial boundaries were entwined with the gendered division of space and the sexual economies of urban life.⁵

Racial provocateurs encouraged urban publics to interpret their daily interactions through a lens of racial hierarchy. Such efforts contributed to escalating tensions in daily life, but the cycle of racialization and provocation was not inexorable. Agitators had to work with the material infrastructure at hand. They appealed to the hatreds and wounds of racial injustice, feelings often contingent on the spaces in and through which individuals moved as well as the forms of inequality, authority, and contestation found there. Jonathan Glassman has shown how everyday affairs in colonial Zanzibar, such as weddings and traffic accidents, could become objects of resentment and political discourse that could provoke violence.⁶ This case study of Kabale examines how struggles over mobility and accumulation shaped how Asians and Africans understood and contested economic, political, and social opportunities in the 1950s and 1960s. Anti-Asian African politicians

⁵ White, *The Comforts of Home*.

⁶ Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, 160–176.

traversed the interconnected world of commerce and social intimacy in ways that, despite aversion and denigration, bound them to Kabale's Asian community. Provocateurs were often economically dependent on Asian colleagues and deeply familiar with Asian social circles. Their political work was contingent on the details of urban political and economic competition, embedded in material infrastructure. African anti-Asian politics was not the denunciation of a distant Other; rather, it often reflected intimate familiarity with Asian social and commercial life.

Spatial histories

Kabale's spaces of interaction evolved from relationships between geography and economic and administrative history. Since its founding in 1914, Kabale had been the primary hub of colonial administration and commerce in a southwestern region, Kigezi, long characterized by mobility, exchange of goods and labor, and retreat from territorial authority.⁷ Located nearly 2,000 meters above sea level amidst mountainous, fertile terrain, Kabale is still a provincial capital and a gateway to nearby Rwanda and Congo; their borders are 25 and 80 kilometers away respectively. At such an elevation, the temperature may dip to 10 degrees Celsius at night, though many residents say that the clearing of trees

⁷ In 1974, Kigezi District was divided in two, with Kabale town remaining the capital of South Kigezi District. In 1980, it was renamed Kabale District. Kabale was subsequently split into Kabale and Kisoro districts, and in August 2015 the government approved the creation of three separate districts out of present-day Kabale District, which will be phased in by 2017. During the period covered in this chapter in the 1960s and early 1970s, all of Kigezi was a single administrative unit. "Cabinet approves creation of 22 new districts" *New Vision* August 18, 2015.

has made the town progressively hotter since the 1970s.⁸ At the census of 1969, the town had 8,234 people, making it the eleventh most populated urban center in the country.⁹

Kigezi's hilly terrain has facilitated local units of political authority and required entrepreneurship in trade. These dynamics have earned Bakiga people of the region a reputation as industrious, tough, and irreverent toward social hierarchy.¹⁰ When British officials attempted to exert control over Kigezi and demarcate it from neighboring Rwanda, they encountered people who had long fought against the institutionalization of state authority, particularly from Rwanda. Finding no chiefly class with control over large territory, the British enlisted Baganda to act as chiefs in order to collect poll taxes, organize agricultural activity, and to gather intelligence about violent resistance.¹¹ One

manifestation of hostility toward territorial authority was the spirit Nyabingi, who frequently reappeared in the body of individuals leading insurrections against state

⁸ Scientists have found a steady increase in temperature since the 1950s has driven up cases of malaria in Kabale. M. Pascual et al., "Malaria Resurgence in the East African Highlands: Temperature Trends Revisited," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 103, no. 15 (April 11, 2006): 5829–34.

⁹ *Report on the 1969 Population Census, Volume 1: The Population of Administrative Areas* (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1971).

¹⁰ Bakiga refers to multiple people, Mukiga to a single person, and Rukiga to the language. Banyakigezi (plural) or Munyakigezi (singular) refers to a person of Kigezi without a specific ethnic connotation. Stereotypes about Bakiga and Banyakigezi have become especially common in Kampala in recent years given the percentage of government jobs occupied by people from western Uganda. The stand-up comedy of Alex Muhangi provides a useful introduction. Kings of Comedy, "Ugandan Stand-Up Comedy; Alex Muhangi," *Youtube* video, 11:55, October 18, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU5hMB0hNqk&t=1m43s>; Alex Muhangi, "New Bakiga Artistes Joke Alex Muhangi New Ugandan Comedy 2014 Ugmovies44," *Youtube* video, 5:22, May 9, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6eWewxDsRIk>. On the distribution of government jobs, see Yasiin Mugerwa, "Western Uganda takes lion's share of government jobs" *Daily Monitor*, May 19, 2015, <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Western-Uganda--takes-lions--share--/688334/2721670/-/595kc2z/-/index.html>.

¹¹ Benoni Turyahikayo-Rugemya, "The History of the Bakiga in Southwestern Uganda and Northern Rwanda Ca. 1500-1930" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan, 1974), 514–534.

authorities into the 1920s.¹² Baganda agents collected taxes only with considerable difficulty and earned a reputation as draconian rulers.¹³ As a result, Kabale, the seat of colonial power and commerce, had a particularly fraught connection to the political and economic life of the surrounding district. For followers of Nyabingi, it embodied the seat of foreign rule. During the Nyakishenyi Rebellion of 1917, a mob attacked a Muganda chief while shouting, “Kabale is burnt!” The following year, disloyal chiefs were publicly hanged in the town.¹⁴

The environmental features that sustained local political allegiances beyond the control of Kabale authorities also shaped the productive and commercial activities of Bakiga and other Banyakigezi. Farmers created narrow terraced plots along hillsides, where they planted millet, potatoes, peas, and other food crops, which grew in such abundance that they traded surpluses in regional networks that stretched across the Lake Kivu rift.¹⁵ Regional trade in salt and livestock also passed through the region long before the arrival of non-African traders.¹⁶ Respected iron workers (*abaheesi*) produced hoes,

¹² Steven Feierman, “African Histories and the Dissolution of World History,” in *African and the Disciplines*, ed. Robert H Bates, V.Y. Mudimbe, and Jean F O’Barr (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 167–212; Holger Bernt Hansen, “The Colonial Control of Spirit Cults in Uganda,” in *Revealing Prophets: Prophecy in East African History*, ed. David Anderson and Douglas Johnson (London: James Currey, 1995), 143–63; Murindwa Rutanga, *Politics, Religion, and Power in the Great Lakes Region* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2011), 99–163.

¹³ After Bakiga chiefs were introduced in the late 1920s, the District Commissioner remarked, “Indigenous chiefs ... are, on the whole, both more capable and more honest than the class of non-indigenous Sub-Agent.” KDA [loose paper, no file] DC to Permanent Secretary, November 26, 1929: 62.

¹⁴ Turyahikayo-Rugemya, “The History of the Bakiga,” 546–550.

¹⁵ Carswell, *Cultivating Success in Uganda*, 50–55, 25–28; David S. Newbury, “Lake Kivu Regional Trade in the Nineteenth Century,” *Journal Des Africanistes* 50, no. 2 (1980): 7–30.

¹⁶ Turyahikayo-Rugemya, “The History of the Bakiga,” 235–268; Kathryn Barrett-Gaines, “Katwe Salt in the African Great Lakes Regional Economy, 1750s-1950s” (Ph.D. thesis,

axes, and ornaments that were exchanged for food and livestock.¹⁷ As Grace Carswell argues, Bakiga farmers' cultivation techniques, which mitigated against erosion and preserved soil nutrients for food crops, enabled a flourishing field of commercial activity that predated the arrival of Europeans and Asians.¹⁸ Though British authorities did not recognize trade in food crops as commerce, the District Commissioner noted in 1929, "The principal commerce of this District is the exchange of salt against live stock. This trade was created and is maintained by native initiative ... [with] little or no material encouragement from the Government."¹⁹

These histories of exchange meant that colonial commerce in Kabale town was hardly established on a blank slate. The town did not immediately dissolve older relations of production in the countryside as occurred with cash crops elsewhere, though it did alter relations of exchange as Asian traders used the mobility enabled by vehicles and government construction of roads to take control of the marketing of salt and fish.²⁰ British efforts to introduce cash crops such as tobacco, coffee, and flax met mixed responses from farmers.²¹ Initial spikes in the production of these crops soon fell as they sapped soil nutrients, diseases such as antestia spread, and farmers rejected the unfavorable terms of cash crop marketing controlled by non-African traders.²² Even in cases where cash crops

Stanford University, 2001); Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History* (New York: Zone Books, 2006), 191–194.

¹⁷ KDA, "Kigezi District Annual Report for 1921," January 18, 1922; Rutanga, *Politics, Religion, and Power*, 54–55.

¹⁸ Carswell, *Cultivating Success in Uganda*, chap. 2–3.

¹⁹ KDA box TI 5 file C. 29 "Native Traders' Association Shirika ya byashara ya wenyeji wa inchi" Office of DC Kigezi to PC Western, April 16, 1929: 42.

²⁰ This was slower and a less direct process than that outlined in Bill Freund, *The African City: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 68. See Introduction.

²¹ Paul Ngologoza, *Kigezi and Its People* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1998), 114.

²² Carswell, *Cultivating Success in Uganda*, 30–39.

did take hold, such as tobacco in the 1940s, British officials and Asian traders failed to control their marketing to factories, as farmers sold them in local markets. Most importantly, officials lamented, “people could make good money by selling peas, beans and English potatoes, ... so on the whole they did not see the need ... for another economic crop.”²³

Given the tenuous tentacles of colonial commerce, Kabale’s Indian traders remained largely impoverished through the 1940s. By the end of the nineteenth century, Asian merchants were trading in present-day eastern Congo, and Greek, Arab, and Asian traders set up business around administrative towns and missions throughout Rwanda and Kigezi in the early twentieth century.²⁴ Asian self-narratives and anti-Asian discourse tend to emphasize the commercial success of mobile pioneer traders and consequently obscure the frequency with which bankruptcy and business failures have long characterized the history of Asians in East Africa.²⁵ According to officials’ accounts, the Kabale bazaar was less the site of a dominant commercial class than a fledgling outpost of unsophisticated traders perpetually on the brink of destitution. In the early 1920s, the District Commissioner remarked, “the Indians seem to be constantly in difficulties” as “trade in the [Kabale] bazaar is at a standstill and most of the traders seem to be insolvent.”²⁶ Without cash crops or reliable transportation networks across Kigezi’s imposing hills, traders struggled to stay afloat. Transporting goods over four hundred kilometers from Kampala was costly and

²³ De Courcy Ireland, in December 1942, quoted in *ibid.*, 37.

²⁴ Rutanga, *Politics, Religion, and Power*, 57.

²⁵ Oonk, “South Asians in East Africa (1880-1920) with a Particular Focus on Zanzibar.”

²⁶ KDA, “Kigezi District Annual Report for 1923,” 27 January 1924; KDA, Quarterly report of DC Kigezi, 4 April 1923, File: “Kigezi District Report for 1921-3,” 18.

time-consuming, and the 1921 census recorded only 23 Asians permanently resident in all of Kigezi.²⁷

Asian traders gained their first commercial successes by redirecting existing trade networks. British officials worried that unregulated African trade facilitated the spread of disease and undermined efforts to collect taxes.²⁸ Resulting improvements to transportation routes that linked Katwe salt mines in neighboring Ankole with the rest of the region enabled Indian traders to transport salt and fish from the nearby lake by vehicle. As a result, these goods increasingly passed through the cash economy of Kabale, which resulted in a decline in the connected livestock trade and a shift of profits from Africans to Asian merchants.²⁹ By the end of 1931, reported the Governor, "The [Native] salt-trade with Katwe is moribund, as it has largely passed into the hand of Indians, through the medium of their lorries."³⁰ Soon, salt and fish were being redirected for export to Rwanda and Kampala by vehicle.

Under difficult conditions for trade in cash crops and manufactured commodities, many of Kabale's Asian traders turned to the region's significant mineral deposits, which could be obtained through legal mining or illicit smuggling. In the 1950s, Kigezi was among the largest producers of wolfram, an essential mineral in the production of steel. In 1956, 164 tons were exported largely due to a mechanized plant at Nyamulilo mine.³¹ However, most mines in the district, marginally profitable, became sites of tension with African

²⁷ KDA "Annual Report. Kigezi District. 1948" February 18, 1949.

²⁸ KDA box TI 5 file C. 29 "Native Traders' Association Shirika ya byashara ya wenyeji wa inchi" Office of DC Kigezi to PC Western, April 16, 1929: 42.

²⁹ KDA "Kigezi District Annual Report 1930," Trade, January 8, 1931: 28.

³⁰ KDA, "Annual Reports By District Commissioner of Kigezi District for the Year 1931," January 20, 1932: 72.

³¹ Uganda Protectorate, "Uganda Report of the year 1956" (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1957), 72-73. Nyamulilo was to stop production within a few years.

workers and politicians. Wages were reportedly the lowest and worker absenteeism the highest in the country outside of Karamoja.³² Strikes periodically broke out at mines across the district,³³ and the number of Africans employed in the industry rapidly decreased from a peak of 2,380 to under 800 in 1958, after which it continued to fall.³⁴ When the Protectorate tried to provide incentives for wolfram mining in Kigezi in the early 1950s, the District Commissioner warned, “The activities of miners are causing widespread popular anxiety in this District at present.”³⁵

Gold deposits were also abundant across the region, especially in Congo, but were tightly regulated by both British and Belgian authorities. In 1939, the Land Officer and District Commissioner noted that Kigezi “has been suspect as a clearing house for gold illicitly obtained from the Belgian Congo.” As a result, they concluded, “we owe it to the Belgians to restrict the Indian settlement [in Kisoro near the border] to reasonable limits.”³⁶ In addition to aggravating Belgian authorities, gold miners antagonized local populations and administrators. In 1945, the District Commissioner reported, “The inconsiderate methods of various Indian gold miners, who worked their river locations to the ruin of the adjoining agricultural land, has resulted in the closing of most of Rukiga and Ndorwa Counties to further gold prospecting.”³⁷ In a region with high population density

³² KDA “Annual Report Kigezi District 1949” n.d.

³³ CO 822/2064 “Monthly intelligence reports, Uganda” Intelligence Report June 1961, July 10, 1961: E27.

³⁴ KDA “Annual Report Kigezi District 1958” n.d.; A.L. Job, “Mining in Uganda,” *Uganda Journal* 31, no. 1 (1967): 48–49, 55.

³⁵ UNA Confidential box 57 file C. 4902 “Wolfram Mining Policy” DC to CS, November 5, 1952: 26A.

³⁶ UNA Secretariat Topical box L2 file L. 87 “Land: Township Plots: Kigezi” “Land Officer to CS Entebbe, November 20, 1939: 1.

³⁷ KDA “Annual Report Kigezi District 1945” n.d.

that required cultivation techniques that sustained soil nutrients, mining malpractices could be particularly dangerous.

Such negative responses to mining were partly a result of the rough characters Kigezi's frontier economy attracted. Some of Kabale's first Indian traders delighted in telling more recent arrivals of the wild, frontier-like atmosphere of the early days when wild animals roamed to the edge of town, before an influx of manufactured clothes displaced animal skins among Bakiga.³⁸ The single men who attempted to build up businesses in Kabale often lacked the material and social capital to arrange marriages in India. Some took up sexual and or even domestic relationships with African women.³⁹ Prior to the 1950s, most lacked the education necessary to form the sort of personal connections with British administrators that Indian leaders in Kampala did [see Chapter 1]. When in 1937 the District Commissioner asked the local Indian Association of Kabale to nominate a member to a King George Memorial committee, he was informed that no one in the association was proficient in English.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the Provincial Commissioner noted that potential donors from Western Uganda might lack bank accounts.⁴¹

Despite the economic limitations of Kabale's residents, officials worked to regulate the town's growth and the construction of commercial and residential units. The division of the town was shaped as much by its physical geography as by government regulation and the initiative of its residents. The center of Kabale lies at the base of Makanga Hill, atop of

³⁸ Interview with Lakshan and Riju Kyada, Kampala, November 26, 2012.

³⁹ These partnerships rarely appear in archival sources except in cases where a woman sought compensation after her partner absconded. For example, KDA box RC 514 file con JUD 1 "British Courts" Mr C Carvalho to DC, February 17, 1953: 62.

⁴⁰ KDA 191 "Death of His Majesty the King George V" President Indian Association Nazarali to DC, February 10, 1937: 24.

⁴¹ KDA 191 "Death of His Majesty the King George V" PC to DCs Toro, Ankole, and Kigezi, February 3, 1937: 32.

which Protectorate government headquarters were first built in 1913 to be followed by elite residences, a golf course, and a post office. Two areas at the bottom of the hill became the initial hubs of the town's commercial activity. The first market was located at the western edge of town, while the Asian trading area expanded at the base of Makanga Hill along the main road that connected eastward to Mbarara and westward to Kisoro [see Figure 3.1]. Moving away from the hill, the first road parallel to Main Street would eventually become a center for buses and mechanics' shops. Further away, there developed an Asian residential area, Kargote [see Figure 3.1 and 3.2].



Figure 3.1 *Areas of Kabale town.*

Working with the natural barrier of Makanga Hill that separated the largely European administrative area from the centers of Asian and African life, officials attempted to enforce building standards and regulate commercial activity. However, their efforts were impeded by economic limitations of traders and of their own administration. Officials worried that the “bazaar-rabble” of African boys who loitered around the market and commercial district seeking casual employment. Local authorities believed that they spread unsanitary conditions and constituted a security risk. These concerns reflected official anxiety over African-Asian sociality.⁴² Officials were also concerned that the expansion of the Indian population could lead to slum conditions in Asian residences.⁴³ Town land was considered Crown Land, which could be leased (usually for 49 or 99 years) if the tenant constructed a permanent building within eighteen months. However, the majority, who could not afford such buildings, either lived in unregulated areas on the edge of town or applied for Temporary Occupation Licenses (TOLs), which allowed for the construction of basic commercial buildings and residences. Until 1948, the most substantial structures in the commercial district were made entirely of iron sheets. In the residential neighborhood behind Garage St., Asian residents applied directly to the District Commissioner for TOLs to construct houses made of mud and wattle with thatched roofs.⁴⁴ The area came to be known as “Kargote” after the bamboo reeds that were used in the construction of these buildings.⁴⁵

⁴² KDA “Annual Reports by District Commissioner on Kigezi District for the Year 1931” January 20, 1932: 72.

⁴³ KDA LAN 2/6, 1427 “Temporary Occupation Plots in Townships,” DC to District Medical Officer, November 20, 1951: 203.

⁴⁴ KDA box LND6 file 207B “Housing in Township Asian & Africans.”

⁴⁵ It is also a similar nickname of a prominent building contractor who built many of the permanent houses that replaced these structures in the 1950s and 1960s.

The 1950s marked a major shift in the town's demographics, physical infrastructure, and economic fortunes. The brief relaxation of immigration controls after World War II and unrest over the partition of India and Pakistan saw a marked increase in immigration from India, primarily Gujarat, to East Africa. Many traders took the opportunity to send for their families to join them or invite younger relatives to assist with their businesses. Richa Nagar and Gijsbert Oonk have shown how as the population of Hindu communities grew, it became increasingly respectable and even desirable for men to marry women who had already lived in East Africa, rather than seeking a bride in India.⁴⁶ With the entrenchment of larger networks of religious communities and trading interests, many families moved to small provincial towns to launch or expand family businesses. For example, after Ghalib Chokshi 's father arrived from India in the 1940s, he worked in Kampala for a few years until his elder brother suggested that he move to Kabale to set up a general merchandise shop. As Ghalib recalled, "Uganda was not a very big country; everybody knew everybody within three hours," so people could easily make connections to move somewhere else.⁴⁷ Haider Somani explained why his parents moved to Kabale similarly. "In these days people could move anywhere. It was all East Africa" with the "same currency [and] no customs."⁴⁸ In 1937 when his parents arrived from Bukoba in Tanganyika, Somani believed there were only six Indian families settled in Kabale, but by 1962 the Kabale Indian Association reported 124 in the township.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Nagar, "Communal Discourses, Marriage, and the Politics of Gendered Social Boundaries"; Oonk, "The Changing Structure of the Hindu Lohana Community in East Africa."

⁴⁷ Interview with Ghalib Chokshi, Leicester, February 24, 2013.

⁴⁸ Interview with Hamil Pirani, Kampala, November 13, 2012.

⁴⁹ Jamal, *Uganda Asians*, 606 These were the categories (along with European, Arab, Somali, Mixed, or Other) that census takers recognized during the Non-African census. They did not

The expansion of Kigezi's economy from the late 1940s was facilitated in large part by the expansion of traders' and consumers' mobility due to government expansion of the district's road network. By 1951, Kigezi Local Government maintained 357 miles of roads and was preparing to construct three additional major routes.⁵⁰ These roads allowed traders to move minerals and primary commodities more easily and to take advantage of the district's position as a gateway to neighboring Rwanda and Congo. Several local industries, including wolfram mining, experienced momentary growth in the 1950s with Protectorate government encouragement. Likewise, in the mid-1950s, there was a surge in demand for wattle bark, which is used for tannin, due to a decline in Kenyan production and increased demand in India.⁵¹ Kigezi farmers had previously rejected wattle trees despite draconian government efforts to introduce them as a cash crop.⁵² However, when firms from Kampala and Kenya began demanding it, one trader remembered, "It was just a lottery for peasants" and for Kabale's Asian traders who "would send trucks" to purchase the bark and act as middlemen with outside buyers.⁵³ The expansion of road networks in Kigezi not only helped traders to market primary commodities but also enabled them to take advantage of their position in the heart of interlacustrine trade and migration routes.

reflect official nationality or citizenship status. Uganda Protectorate, Non-African Population Census, 1959 (Nairobi: East African Statistical Department, 1959).

⁵⁰ KDA "Kigezi District Western Province Uganda: District Plan" Revised and Amended to December, 1952.

⁵¹ Robert M. Maxon, "Where Did the Trees Go? The Wattle Bark Industry in Western Kenya, 1932-1950," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34, no. 3 (2001): 565-84; *The Way to the West: Being an Economic and Railway Traffic Survey of Certain Areas of Western Uganda, Together with Recommendations Based Thereon* (Entebbe: Government of Uganda Protectorate, 1951), 27.

⁵² Ngologozo, *Kigezi and Its People*, 109; Wattle trees could not be planted close together without causing severe erosion. F. Scherer, *The Development of Smallholder Vegetable Production in Kigezi, Uganda: Data, Observations and Experiences* (Munich: IFO-Institut Für Wirtschaftsforschung, 1969), 22.

⁵³ Interview with Hamil Pirani, Kampala, November 13, 2012.

Many of Kabale's Asian and African former traders assert that business with Rwanda and Congo insulated them from fluctuations that accompanied economic and political upheavals in Kampala. Throughout the 1950s, currency traders, petrol stations, and general merchandise shops expanded to service this trade. Moreover, a number of goldsmiths operated in town,⁵⁴ and some traders were believed to have made large profits throughout the 1950s and 1960s smuggling gold from Congo. "It was like a drug," remembered one trader. "Everybody used to do *magendo* [smuggling]." Competition among Kigezi's commercial community had long been fierce due to scarce markets,⁵⁵ but many believed that gold exacerbated tensions below the surface. The sudden wealth or unexpected disappearance of individuals seemed to be the results of deals gone awry in Congo.⁵⁶

As commerce among Kabale's Asians expanded, more money flowed through the district, and more Africans became enmeshed in Kabale's commercial life as consumers and traders. The brief influx of money to miners and wattle tree farmers supplemented an expanding cash economy in food crops in Kigezi. African ex-servicemen were also returning to the district supported by government programs designed to encourage small-scale African commerce.⁵⁷ As James Brennan has argued, shortages accompanying World War II introduced an economy of urban entitlement across East Africa, in which administrators sought "to manage critical variables of food, housing, consumer goods, and human

⁵⁴ UNA Confidential box 16 file C. 904 "Press Censorship Ordinance (Policy)" Burgess to DC Kigezi, March 18, 1954: 30.

⁵⁵ KDA "Kigezi District. Report for the quarter ending 30th September, 1931" October 8, 1931: 63.

⁵⁶ Multiple interviews.

⁵⁷ For example, in the years immediately following World War II, ex-soldier traders were not required to pay for piece-goods in advance. KDA old box 147 file EO VII 353 "Control Price & Distribution" Controller of Price & Distribution, April 23, 1946: 304.

mobility” and, one might add, commercial licenses in a way that invited increasingly bifurcated racial claim-making [see Chapter 1].⁵⁸ Demands of ex-servicemen, disgruntled African consumers, and aspiring African traders pushed British officials to create programs for the promotion of African trade under the banner of protecting natives against alien, primarily Asian, commercial interests. The African Loans Fund and Uganda Credit and Savings Bank provided modest support to African traders while government-sponsored programs offered commercial education for African traders. Encouraged to form self-help groups, African traders created associations that often acted as pressure groups or political organizations for the promotion of African trade.⁵⁹ In Kabale, leaders of such groups were the most vocal anti-Asian provocateurs, who worked to channel popular feelings of racial exclusion and injustice into political capital.⁶⁰

Licensing regulations, construction codes, and sanitary department inspections were the primary means through which local administrators attempted to manage Kabale’s expansion and the class aspirations of its residents. The Town and Country Planning Ordinance of 1951 enhanced the existing Public Health (Building) Rules to enable the Governor to create town Planning Areas in which local authorities were empowered to “control the development of land [and] to secure proper conditions of health and sanitation, communication, amenity and convenience.” The Kabale Planning Area accompanied expansion of road construction, the distribution of public services such as

⁵⁸ Brennan, *Taiifa*, 88; See also Cooper, *On the African Waterfront*.

⁵⁹ Jørgensen, “Structural Dependence and Economic Nationalism,” 309; Uganda Protectorate, *A Guide to Traders’ Associations and Buying Groups in Uganda, Third Edition* (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1959).

⁶⁰ The key figure in Kigezi was Semu Lugarama Itazya, a trader and UPC politician whose career is discussed later in this chapter.

water and telephone lines, and the stricter regulation of building standards in Kabale.⁶¹ Even without a significant working class demanding urban amenities, small towns such as Kabale received substantial government infrastructural support in the 1950s as officials hoped to manage the desires of aspiring traders. Kabale's main roads were paved, sidewalks installed, phone lines connected, and electricity and piped water introduced.

With these services came growing regulations of the buildings that they connected. In 1947, the District Commissioner bemoaned the "considerable dilapidation [of] most of the dukas in the Kabale Bazaar"⁶² and his successor warned in 1951, "We are in some danger of countenancing the presence of an 'asian [*sic*] slum'" in Kargote. In the same year, he attempted to force the redevelopment of the Asian residential area of Kargote (Blocks H and J), arguing "the excuse that licence-holders are too poor to undertake the expense involved cannot now be pleaded," as several plots were held by wealthy absentee landlords.⁶³ The District Medical Officer was encouraged to strictly enforce code violations in order to revoke TOLs, and in 1954, no TOLs were renewed in that neighborhood, forcing

⁶¹ *The Kabale Outline Scheme, 1959* (Entebbe: 1959).

⁶² KDA old box 216 file 56A pt III "Kabale – Bazaar Leasehold Plots" Provincial Engineer Western to Supervisor Mbarara, July 2, 1947: 42.

⁶³ KDA LAN 2/6, 1427 "Temporary Occupation Plots in Townships," DC to Land Officer Entebbe November 20, 1951: 206.

the eviction of 35 families.⁶⁴ One man who claimed to have resided in Kabale since 1922 complained that this was the fourth time he had been removed.⁶⁵

Individuals who agreed to leases faced stringent rules over the buildings they were required to construct. Contractors exchanged dozens, often hundreds, of pages of correspondence with the town council, medical officer, land officer, and registrar of titles throughout a construction project. The Executive Office of the Kabale Township Authority warned one contractor that his plans, already eight months under review, would not be approved and their client's costly lease forfeited unless "the ventilators at the front of the shop are placed well above the plate glass window and are not unsightly."⁶⁶ An earlier proposal for the same plot was rejected by the health inspector for six violations, including the improper siting of soak pits too close to the building and the lack of "latrine accommodation for Africans employed in or about the premises."⁶⁷ Even after construction was approved, if it was not completed within the eighteen months allocated by the township authority, the land automatically reverted back to the town council, which could advertise a new lease.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ KDA LAN 2/6, 1427 "Temporary Occupation Plots in Townships," DC to District Medical Officer, November 20, 1951: 203; KDA old box 15 file LAN 2/5 2084 "Temporary Occupation Plots in Township (other than Block H)" Land Officer to DC, September 21, 1953: 3; KDA old box 15 file LAN 2/5 2084 "Temporary Occupation Plots in Township (other than Block H)" Executive Officer Township Authority Kabale to Land Officer Entebbe, November 27, 1953: 4.

⁶⁵ KDA old box 15 file LAN 2/5 2084 "Temporary Occupation Plots in Township (other than Block H)" Kushi Mohamed to Executive Officer Township Authority Kabale, September 6, 1954: 32.

⁶⁶ KMCR "Plot No. 120 Kabale Rd" MG Johnson to HS Rajput, January 16, 1954: 47.

⁶⁷ KMCR "Plot No. 120 Kabale Rd" Comments on Plans for Plot No. 23 Block A, n.d. [April 1950]: 3.

⁶⁸ KDA file LAN 1 I 1421 "Leases in Township" List of Kabale & Kisoro Townships Leased Plots on Which No Buildings Have Been Erected, n.d.: 28A; KDA "Annual Report, Kigezi District 1956" Municipal, n.d.: XXVI; KMCR "Plot No. 101 Kabale Rd." Town Clerk to

Urban racial and class segregation was encoded in building regulations, which also shaped the built environment in which domestic and commercial relationships took place. The contractor mentioned above who proposed a building in the heart of Kabale's Asian commercial district was informed of strict regulations that limited the type of people who could ultimately use specific areas of the building:

The Township Authority has decided that the following shall be the minimum requirements for building under S. 10 (i) of the Building Rules:-

- (a) Not less than 3 bedrooms per residence.
- (b) Not more than 1 shop per residence.
- (c) Not less than 1 boy's room with separate latrine per residence.
- (d) Shops to be lighted by glass panes or display windows and not double wooden doors.
- (e) Latrine to be built subject to special specifications available at the Health Office, Kabale and which includes self-closing rear traps of 1/8 gauge steel with a catch in wall to hold the door open.⁶⁹

These regulations burdened Asian building contractors with high standards while requiring building layouts that marginalized the Africans who worked for Asian tenants. The resulting relationship between domestic and public commercial space on Kabale's main business thoroughfare was to be an enduring site of racial tension, as Africans struggled to open shops in this area in the 1960s without access to amenities located in rear residential quarters. Shop doors opened onto verandahs facing the main street. Shopkeepers usually lived in one of the residences in the back of these buildings, which were accessible through a side alley and an interior door in the shop. While shopkeepers could use indoor toilets in their residences, building regulations called for the construction of outdoor latrines for the use of servants and employees. The cost of renting these shops

Harbans Singh Rajput, July 26, 1962: 40; KDA old box 521 file C MUN 4 "Townships" S Carvalho, HS Rajput and Nazaralli Virji to Land Officer and DC, April 25, 1957: 33A. Extensions were occasionally granted. KDA old box 521 file C MUN 4 "Townships" Director Lands & Surveys to Executive Officer Township Authority Kabale, June 4, 1957.

⁶⁹ KMCR "Plot No. 120 Kabale Rd" PH Gayward to AS Gondhalekar, April 22, 1953: 27.

and residences was high due to their central location, the required quality of the construction, and high demand for limited commercial and residential plots in gazetted areas.⁷⁰ Administrators thus intended that building codes and construction plans would produce barriers that would separate well-off Asian residents and shopkeepers from their servants and customers, most of whom were Africans.

In addition to the careful separation of domestic and commercial spaces, building regulations informed the spatial separation of neighborhoods according to racial categories and economic means. In 1947, “the Township Authority considered that the time had come to improve the quality of the buildings [in Kargote] by offering the security of a lease.”⁷¹ The Governor dispatched the District Medical Officer to find violations through which TOL holders could be evicted so that wealthier individuals could construct permanent residences that were required for a lease. Poorer Asians who could not afford rents in these buildings moved further away from the center of town west or north of Kargote, while still separated from African residential neighborhoods, such as Bugongi and council estates behind the market. As Asian-owned shops proliferated from the early 1950s into the early 1960s, township officials were careful to prevent the Asian commercial district from expanding into African commercial areas. They licensed plots to Asian traders in an area beside the police station separated from the rest of the commercial district by an open

⁷⁰ On housing markets and shortages in Dar es Salaam, see Brennan, *Taifa*, 187–189. With the conversion to leasehold in the mid-1950s, there were periodic shortages of Asian housing in Kabale. KDA old box 15 file LAN 2/5 2084 “Temporary Occupation Plots in Township (other than Block H)” Kushi Mohamed to Executive Officer Township Authority Kabale, September 6, 1954: 32; KDA “Kigezi District Annual Report 1954” n.d.

⁷¹ KDA LAN 2/6, 1427 “Temporary Occupation Plots in Townships,” DC to Land Officer Entebbe, November 20, 1951: 206.

sports ground. However, these plots still remained several hundred yards away from the area allocated to African traders [see Figure 3.2].

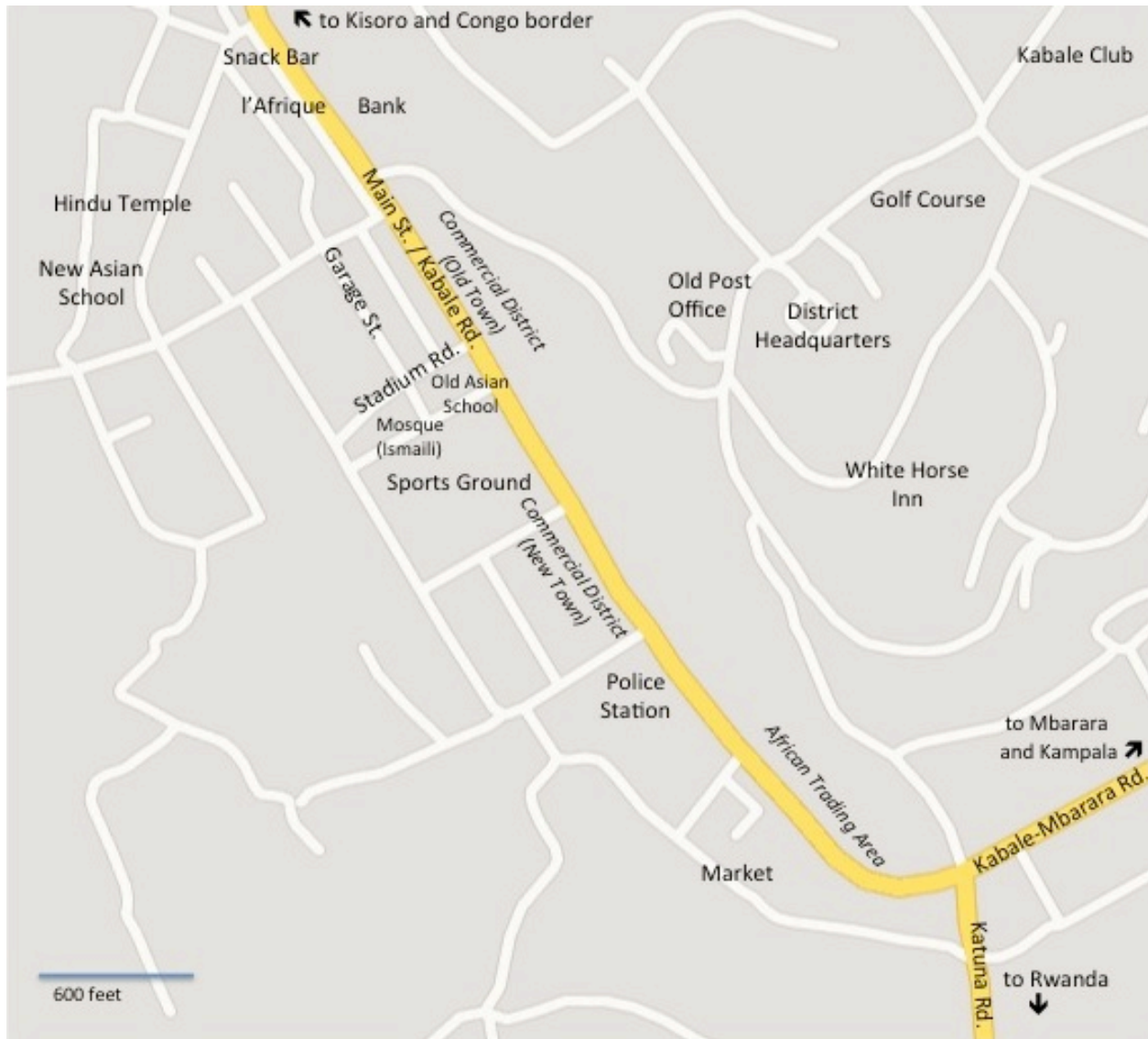


Figure 3.2 *Street map of central Kabale town.*

As local officials attempted to control Asians' domestic and commercial spaces in the center of town, they also followed post-War policy that increasingly recognized Africans as permanent urban residents who should be incorporated into officially regulated commercial and residential life. This effort to stabilize urban populations was significantly pushed forward by the effort of some Africans to claim urban entitlements that would

protect their material and social investments in urban life. In Kabale, this process was prompted somewhat late, in 1951, when a Mukiga man applied to lease and build a permanent structure on land that he claimed his family had occupied for generations and for which he held a TOL. Authorities worried that attempting to survey and plan unregulated settlements within the township was unfeasible, and as a result they conceded they were unable to “meet the aspirations of persons such as the present applicant who wish to build a solid house on a land for which, by reason of long residence, they have an overwhelming preference for sentimental but cogent reasons.” Their solution was “to survey and demarcate an area of the Township wherein Africans might build the better class of houses on leasehold plots sufficiently large to accommodate a small garden for growing food as well as a residence.”⁷²

Township authorities’ desire to plan African settlement faced a reality that Africans were already settled within Kabale’s borders without official control or regulation. Officials lamented, “Kabale Township covered a very extensive area, much of which was given over to African houses built in the traditional manner,” which, like farming practices within the township’s borders, were “technically unacceptable.”⁷³ In order to avoid “inflicting very considerable hardship” on residents of those areas by evicting those who could not build permanent structures, the township authority searched for land that was not already occupied within the township boundaries. They found it in Bugongi, an area north of the town center with “only a few foot tracks and scattered houses and cultivation,” which was

⁷² KDA file LAN 1 I 1421 “Leases in Township” DC Kigezi to Land Officer Entebbe, November 29, 1951: 77. Farming and animal grazing in town were key points of tension among township officials, Asian shopkeepers, and African residents, which is discussed below.

⁷³ KDA file LAN 1 I 1421 “Leases in Township” Kabale Township Authority Meeting December 4, 1951: 85.

named after the large swamp that engulfed most of it [see Figure 3.1].⁷⁴ Development of the area finally began in 1958 and was to include a paved main road, an accessible standpipe water supply, and a large Social Centre serving 95 plots with very low rents and service charges. Despite officials' confidence that "this scheme is very popular locally," Bugongi's development was beset with difficulties. The area's first leaseholders could not dig pit latrines through the swampy ground as the "pits get filled up with water as they dig them."⁷⁵ In 1965, Councilors noted disapprovingly, the "Social Centre at Bugongi [was] not serving the purpose of bringing people together."⁷⁶ In Bugongi, as in other areas of town where authorities sought to control the arrangement and construction of African residences, they were often compelled to leave regulations unenforced.

Kabale's African trading district also emerged out of African efforts to claim urban entitlements, administrators' attempts to manage their aspirations, and the geographic features of the town. Bakiga had long been enmeshed in regional trade networks, but in the 1940s, some (particularly ex-servicemen) positioned themselves as traders in a common commercial field with Asians in order to demand financial and educational assistance from the Protectorate Government. A group formed the Kigezi African Traders Association. This organization lobbied for the allocation of rationed commodities to its members. Lacking connections with wholesalers and distributors in Kampala, they also enlisted local officials in helping them to secure equipment such as scales and sewing machines.⁷⁷ Protectorate

⁷⁴ KDA old box RC521 file C8 "Briefs" Brief for Governor, n.d. [1959].

⁷⁵ KDA old box 138 file MUN 2 III 1645 "Kabale Town Council – Minutes of Meetings" Kabale Town Council Minutes for 31st December 1962.

⁷⁶ KDA "District Team Minutes 1962-1965" Kabale District Team Minutes, March 8, 1965.

⁷⁷ KDA old box 104 file EO Pt IV 351 "Emergency Orders Re: The Indian Association" DC Kigezi to The Drapers Kampala, November 26, 1946: 8; KDA old box 104 file EO Pt IV 351

officials took a paternalistic view of African trade, professing their intent “to enable African traders to play their part in common with other traders in stimulating the purchase of goods by African consumers,” which would “create an urge to greater productivity” of cash crops.⁷⁸ However, administrators were concerned that organizations such as the Kigezi African Traders Association were “too inclined to dissipate its energies in unproductive projects covering a wide range of activities” rather than focus narrowly on officially sanctioned trade networks.⁷⁹ The District Commissioner echoed a common complaint in 1953, “So far little apparent progress has been made against the stubborn self-sufficiency of the Bakiga,” who seemed reluctant to adopt trading practices promoted by the Protectorate, such as group buying and aggressive marketing of manufactured goods.⁸⁰

Frustrated by the failure of cash crops to catch on in Kigezi and eager to enmesh Bakiga in the cash economy, officials embarked on a major reorganization of African commercial space in late 1940s Kabale. In 1946, the Kabale Township Authority identified an area along the road leading into town to set aside “for a distinctive Trading Area from which non Africans would be excluded.”⁸¹ As in the Asian commercial area, plots would measure 100’ by 100’ but would be subdivided in three instead of two, building standards would be less onerous, and rents would be much lower.⁸² Some buildings would also

“Emergency Orders Re: The Indian Association” Military Affairs Officer to The Kettles Ray & Tysons Kampala, March 20, 1947: 30.

⁷⁸ KDA old box 101 file TRD 1/5 3005 “Department of Commerce – Circulars” Survey of Internal Trade 1952-1953, August 10, 1953: 4a.

⁷⁹ KDA “Annual Report, Kigezi District, 1948” February 18, 1949.

⁸⁰ KDA file CS TRD 1 “Trading Ordinance – Policy” DC to Commissioner of Commerce, March 4, 1953: 3.

⁸¹ KDA file 56(a) pt II 1406 “Land – Bazaar” Kabale Township Authority Meeting Minutes, September 28, 1946: 204A.

⁸² KDA file LAN 1 I 1421 “Leases in Townships” DC to Land Officer Entebbe, November 21, 1949: 20.

contain residential space behind the shop, but others would not, and many also lacked verandahs. In an effort to concentrate African trade in a single area of Kabale, officials also relocated the dilapidated market from the opposite end of town to directly across the road from the new African trading area. This location not only concentrated African commercial activity in a single area away from the Asian commercial district, but it was also intended “to greatly reduce the present stream of pedestrians across the Station Hill [Makanga]” from Butobere to the old market.⁸³ The management of European administrative space, bridged by elite multi-racial social spaces, thus continues to be a central feature of post-War urban development policy in Kabale as in other British colonies.⁸⁴ Meanwhile, when it opened in 1950, the new market included a mix of open vending areas and 32 stalls, the latter of which were open to any person without a shop in the main commercial district or a hawking license.⁸⁵ This regulation allowed a small number of poorer Asians to operate in the market, which would provoke anxiety among officials and African traders that wealthier Asians were using their relatives to unfairly compete with Africans in the market.⁸⁶ This was the architecture of Kabale town that endured until the mid-1970s, when the smuggling economy enabled unregulated construction.

⁸³ KDA file 56(a) pt II 1406 “Land – Bazaar” Kabale Township Authority Meeting Minutes, September 28, 1946: 204A.

⁸⁴ Ann Laura Stoler, “Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 1 (January 1989): 134–61.

⁸⁵ KDA file TRD 2/2 2442 “Application for Stores etc in the New Market” DC Kabale New Market, December 11, 1950: 29.

⁸⁶ KDA old box 589 file ADM 20 j “Trade Development District Council” DC to Office-in-Charge Police, October 15, 1959: 34.

Africanizing commercial space

Between independence in 1962 and the publication of the Kabale Development Plan in 1972, town officials' primary concern shifted from controlling the construction of new buildings to regulating how existing ones were used and maintained, and by whom. These efforts were shaped both by the legal interventions of Milton Obote's Uganda Peoples Congress government and the circulation of popular rhetoric about Africanization among civil servants, politicians, and Kabale's residents.

It is important to situate shifts in the regulation and use of commercial space in Kabale within politics of postcolonial governance. Traders constituted a key base of political parties and also represented an aspirational position in political life. Colonial and postcolonial governments encouraged this aspirational position by summoning traders as a constituency in state programs. The Kigezi African Traders Association functioned as a pressure group from the late 1940s into the 1960s, expending considerable energy lobbying for the interests of its members in the district's political circles, often to the consternation of administrators who hoped they would accept roles as apolitical apprentices.⁸⁷ In 1953, the association was re-inaugurated under the leadership of Semu Lugarama Itazya, whom officials referred to as "a politically agitated gentleman," who demanded "universal suffrage for African traders in Kigezi District" and became the head of the district branch of the Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC).⁸⁸ Itazya and his fellow traders linked the realignment of territorial sovereignty with political self-determination and

⁸⁷ On Protectorate officials' paternalism and low expectations of African trade, see Chapter 1. Uganda Protectorate, *The Advancement of Africans in Trade*, (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1955)

⁸⁸ KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" Maltby Report on Tour of Kigezi District, March 26, 1954: 12.

economic opportunity. “The African must be brought into industry both large and small,” asserted Itazya to a National Economic Advisory Council in 1966, as he demanded, “it was about time Government thought positively about African traders.”⁸⁹

Itazya’s political advocacy on behalf of African traders, which will be examined more closely below, gained increasing national traction after 1966 as the ruling UPC party contained the political and economic power of the Buganda Kingdom. Among the most bitter critics of Augustine Kamyá’s campaign of economic empowerment in Buganda was UPC president Milton Obote. His political base was in northern Uganda. The Chief Secretary reported that Obote “indicated in pretty extreme terms that the action which we have taken in Buganda to deal with the boycott and the violence resulting from it, is not nearly strong enough, and added that if it had occurred in [Obote’s home region] Lango we should have dismissed all the chiefs there.”⁹⁰ However, Obote’s UPC was not strong enough to win national elections without the support of the Buganda royalist party Kabaka Yekka, with which he formed an alliance in 1961. The deal led to his election as independent Uganda’s first Prime Minister with Kabaka Mutesa as President. In 1966, Obote acted against Buganda’s ruling structure, deploying the military under General Idi Amin to force the Kabaka into exile and to dismantle Uganda’s kingdoms. This action allowed him to pursue a more aggressive campaign to Africanize trade and industries without fear that Buganda’s merchant class with connections to the Kingdom’s ruling authorities would use new economic opportunities to consolidate power.⁹¹

⁸⁹ UNA OP box 1 file 21 “National Economic and Social Advisory Council (Cabinet Meetings)” Minutes of 1st Meeting, June 1966.

⁹⁰ CO 822/1353 “The Uganda Peoples Congress” Hartwell to Webber, July 23, 1959: 72.

⁹¹ Abdu Basajjabaka Kawalya Kasozi, *The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda: 1964-1985* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1994), 95; Jan Jelmert Jørgensen, *Uganda A Modern History*

After 1966, Obote introduced legislation designed to introduce commercial opportunities to Africans, often at the expense of petty Asian traders and through institutions controlled by members of the UPC's ruling bureaucracy. For example, in 1966, he established the National Trading Corporation (NTC), which issued loans and granted monopolies in specified commodities to particular African firms, often with connections to regional UPC political elites.⁹² Kigezi's former Secretary General, Sepi Mukombe Mpambara was named NTC director in 1968, while his in-law, the respected director of Kigezi African Wholesale Company John Batuma, was appointed sole distributor of salt, sugar, onions, rice and other food items in Kigezi. There was frequent correspondence among Batuma, Mpambara, district officials, and Asian traders over allegations that the latter were continuing to illegally distribute restricted goods, while Mpambara allegedly diverted surpluses to another business in which he owned shares, Kigezi Twimuke.⁹³ In 1969, a Trade Licensing Act forbade non-citizens from operating businesses in central commercial districts, including Kabale's Main Street. Its fraught implementation is discussed at length in Chapter 4. Both initiatives made control of urban space into a central component of the UPC's efforts to enrich members of the ruling bureaucracy. NTC depots were often located within or directly adjacent to Asian trading areas, such as Garage Street in Kabale, rather

(New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 227–241; Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 246.

⁹² Jørgensen, "Structural Dependence and Economic Nationalism," 405; Horace Campbell, "The Commandist State in Uganda" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Sussex, 1979), 347–361; FCO 31/471 "Uganda: Political + Administrative Affairs: Ministerial Changes" RG Tallboys to Lr Toq, December 3, 1968: 3.

⁹³ KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" Batuma to DC, December 11, 1967: 66; KDA file S. INT. 1 (B) "Kigezi District Intelligence Committee" Activities of NTC, July 16, 1969: 12.

than areas previously allocated to Africans.⁹⁴ The Trade Licensing Act followed an inverse logic to that of colonial-era Africanization schemes, which had attempted to isolate areas for embryonic African trade to develop. Instead, the Act attempted to replace Asian traders with Africans allied with ruling party officials within a spatial arrangement of urban neighborhoods that was expected to remain unchanged.⁹⁵

Town administrators in early post-colonial Uganda operated in a political environment that demanded the visible Africanization of urban space; they wanted it to happen without sacrificing the regulation of health and licensing codes historically used to exclude Africans from predominantly Asian and European areas. Two issues, animal grazing and the arrangement of commercial premises, challenged officials' priorities in the regulation of urban space in the years immediately following independence. Residents had long used empty plots to dump garbage,⁹⁶ graze animals,⁹⁷ and grow vegetables, occasionally taking out TOLs to prevent others from taking their spots.⁹⁸ Although township codes forbade unregulated cultivation of crops and the grazing of livestock in urban areas, Kabale authorities did not generally attempt to enforce these restrictions until the 1950s, when contractors requested protection of their building sites.⁹⁹ With the expansion of public infrastructure and the increasing regulation of plot leases, township

⁹⁴ Interview with Festo Karwemera, Kabale, April 2012. Karwemera was the NTC depot manager until 1971.

⁹⁵ On the UPC's "commanding heights" strategy to consolidate wealth among political elites, see Jørgensen, *Uganda A Modern History*, chap. 5; Selwyn Ryan, "Economic Nationalism and Socialism in Uganda," *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* 11, no. 2 (July 1973): 140–58.

⁹⁶ KDA old box 196 file 18 72 "Indian Public School" District Medical Officer to Township Authority, March 3, 1934: 61.

⁹⁷ KDA "District Team Minutes" Grazing in the Town, March 8, 1965: 16/65 (4).

⁹⁸ KDA old box 208 "Markets Protectorate" DC to Rating Officer Kampala, July 19, 1950: 233.

⁹⁹ KMCR "Plot No. 120 Kabale Rd" H Singh Rajput to Township Authority, July 6, 1953: 32.

officials were empowered by the 1959 Urban Authorities Rules to regulate animal grazing more strictly. In 1963, the Town Council mapped a large area around the perimeter of Kabale, particularly around African residential areas such as Bugongi, where livestock grazing was to be permitted with a valid license, renewable each year for each animal for a small fee.¹⁰⁰ In spite of efforts to arrest and prosecute violators,¹⁰¹ officials conceded that although “many cattle owners have been convicted for [grazing,] this had proved no solution,” and it remains “one of the biggest problems in the town.”¹⁰²

Enforcement of regulations against animal grazing were hindered by the demands of powerful cattle owners who expected that an independent government run by their political allies would support their claims to use vacant land in town. In 1965, civil servants on the town council observed, “most of the cattle [that infringed the byelaw against grazing] belong to chiefs and senior officials in the Kigezi District Administration.”¹⁰³ Some cattle owners politicized the issue, claiming that civil servants, some of whom were non-Africans, were insulting Uganda’s self-determination by attacking indigenous livestock grazers. Semu Itazya, the president of the Kigezi African Traders Association and a prominent figure in the Kigezi branch of the UPC, wrote to the District Commissioner, “I see no reason a man owning 10 heads of cattle and 40 goats and sheep should pay extra Shs. 50/= on his Graduated tax for the simple reason that these animals are living in the area which you call Kabale Township,” especially since “it is the intention of the present

¹⁰⁰ KDA old box 138 file MUN 2 III 1645 “Kabale Town Council – Minutes of Meetings” Agenda and Committee Reports, Grazing in the Town (31/63), April 1963: 26.

¹⁰¹ KDA file MUN 2 III 1645 “Town Council Minutes of Meetings” December 31, 1962.

¹⁰² KDA old box RC 537 file INF 7 “Kabale Town Council” Kabale Town Council Annual Report for the Year 1966, May 5, 1967: 20.

¹⁰³ KDA “District Team Minutes” Grazing in the Town, March 8, 1965: 16/65 (4).

Government to attract more Africans to live peacefully in Townships.”¹⁰⁴ The incredulous commissioner responded, “It is true that the intention of the Government is to urbanise the Africans. This means urbanising the African people and does not repeat not mean ruralisation of a town.”¹⁰⁵

Even as new laws encouraged African control of urban space, local administrators were often caught between African expectations of Africanization and the maintenance of codes previously used to segregate African and Asian commercial spaces. Both the Protectorate and UPC governments invested in programs to professionalize African trade. In addition to sponsoring training courses in Kampala and facilitating scholarships for aspiring traders to attend business courses abroad, the Protectorate Department of Commerce had issued a series of booklets after 1955 with titles such as “Using Accounts” and “Keeping Shop” with the subtitle “A Handbook to assist Africans in Trade” [see Figure 3.3]. These booklets were distributed across Uganda through Trade Development Officers, whose numbers were greatly expanded after independence.¹⁰⁶ These booklets offered lessons about the display of goods that Trade Development Officers would continue to teach after independence, two of which in particular were especially unpopular among African traders. First, they instructed that the prices of items should be fixed and labeled, a

¹⁰⁴ KDA old box 506, file C MUN 4 “Township & Urban Development” Itazya to DC, 21 May 1963: 40.

¹⁰⁵ KDA old box 506, file C MUN 4 “Township & Urban Development” DC notes, n.d. [May 1963]: 41.

¹⁰⁶ Trade Development Officers, Assistant Trade Development Officers, and Trade Supervisors all worked under the Ministry of Commerce. An Assistant Trade Development Officer was posted permanently to Kabale in 1965. KDA “Annual Report, Kigezi District 1965” Trade & Industry, n.d.: 22. Interview with EW Bairubabi Merete, Kabale, June 26, 2010.

practice that was required by law beginning in 1968.¹⁰⁷ However, in a context where black market prices often overtook those fixed by the NTC, traders reported that their customers were suspicious of posted prices and preferred to build trust through bargaining. Authorities periodically cracked down on this practice from the late 1960s into the 1980s.¹⁰⁸

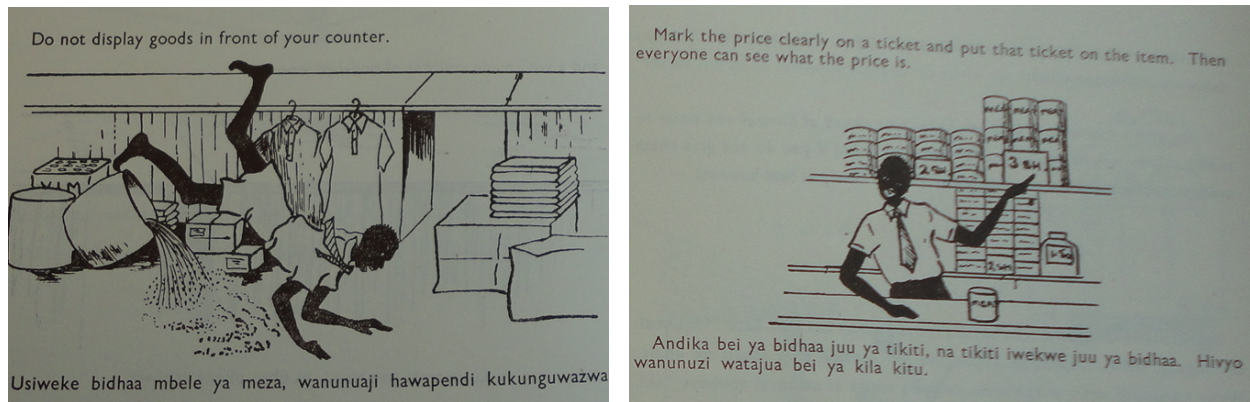


Figure 3.3 Illustrations from *Keeping Shop: A Handbook to assist Africans in Trade (1955)*, which the Protectorate Government distributed to African traders.

Second, both Department of Commerce and Department of Health officials attempted to regulate how items were displayed in shops, by encouraging their placement on shelves behind a counter. Such an arrangement allowed traders to control access to their shops and merchandise, reproducing a hierarchy that some African traders rejected by displaying goods in front of their buildings or on the floor. Some customers recalled that shopkeepers in Kabale’s African trading district organized their shops “in an African way.” This phrase connoted that shops were more “open” but also reflected the perceived “low quality” and quantity of goods that African traders could afford to stock.¹⁰⁹ Town officials felt compelled to call on the Health Inspector “to try and control the display of goods on

¹⁰⁷ KDA “District Team Minutes” Control of Commodity Prices in Kabale, October 16, 1968: 38/68 7.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with EW Bairubabi Merete, Kabale, December 3, 2012.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Moses Balaba, Kabale, April 2012.

shop verandahs,” which they considered unsanitary and unsightly.¹¹⁰ As officials worked to balance the regulation of commercial space with politicians’ and traders’ expectations of Africanization, individuals using shops and other public places adopted strategies to navigate the spatial infrastructure of racial and class hierarchies.

Counter culture and public space

Anti-Asian discourse, whether among African racial populists or anxious European and African administrators, conjured mobile and illusory figures: the absentee landlord, the unscrupulous roving cotton buyer, and the desirable though hidden Asian woman. A dominant recurrent figure in this field of thought was the exploitative male dukawallah, who depended on dispersed supply networks and occupied a stationary shop inviting non-Asians as customers. Politicians and government officials thus devoted considerable energy seeking to control the spaces in which Asians lived, worked, and moved. We saw that administrators worried that unregulated urban space begot chaotic movements of people and goods, spreading disease and undermining official paternalism toward “Native interests.” Likewise, African ethnic patriots especially decried Asians’ corrupting influence on Africans in crowded urban centers lacking the protective discipline of elderly male authority. In narrating their own community and life histories, many Asians longed for their previous mobility; they contrasted a period of unrestricted movement and prosperity with the creeping restrictions and suspicions of post-independence governance and

¹¹⁰ KDA old box 138 file MUN 2 III 1645 “Kabale Town Council – Minutes of Meetings” November 20, 1962: 11.

politics.¹¹¹ This section provides an outline of the material and social institutions that shaped Kabale's Asian community.

The contrast between the figures of the mobile Asian and the stationary African is striking in racialized stereotypes. Yet these figurations erase more complex histories of movement and exchange and obscure the actual spaces of interaction that shaped the presence of Asians in small town Ugandan life. We have seen that Asians' mobility and their ability to profit from the flow of goods and people contributed to their increasing number and prosperity in Kigezi. The district's frontier economy also required traders to maintain connections across vast distances and political boundaries, from wholesalers in Kampala to gold smugglers in Congo to consumers in Rwanda. However, Asians were not uniquely mobile. Bakiga farmers had long participated in long distance trade networks. Moreover, Asian traders had difficulty controlling the marketing of the few cash crops grown in the region because farmers often sold them into regional markets. Others worked as migrant laborers on plantations in Ankole and Buganda, either moving by foot or relying on vehicle transport from Asian contractors.¹¹²

Despite the mobility that characterized many lives in Kigezi, the most routine relations through which hierarchies were enacted occurred repeatedly in these relatively fixed spaces. Even as there was considerable turnover among Kabale's Asian population,

¹¹¹ As Gaurav Desai points out, not all Asian capitalists were hostile to state regulation as they "negotiat[ed] between the ideologies of managed economies and the demands of capital accumulation and growth." *Commerce with the Universe: Africa, India, and the Afrasian Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 15 and chap. 4.; However, while elite industrialists may have benefited from the partial nationalizations of Milton Obote's Move to the Left campaign, such policies were often much more severe for small traders. See Chapter 4. Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 267.

¹¹² Carswell, *Cultivating Success in Uganda*; Murindwa Rutanga, "A Historical Analysis of the Labour Question in Kabale District," in *Uganda: Studies in Labour*, ed. Mahmood Mamdani (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1996), 53–135.

the spaces where their social lives and increasingly politicized interactions with Africans took place were well defined by the 1960s. While some of Kabale's Asian traders traveled frequently to buy goods, most rarely ventured far from the buildings where they lived and worked except to attend social gatherings. As scholars have long noted, anti-Asian sentiment often emerged out of everyday experiences of exchange and credit at the *duka* or shop. Moreover, as more Africans aspired to compete in trade and to secure the rights of urban citizenship, the target of anti-Asian political grievances shifted in the 1950s from the monopolies of mobile cotton buyers to the control of trade by Asian shops.¹¹³

Kabale's geographic, economic, and administrative histories produced distinct spatial boundaries for Asian community life. One edge began with the commercial and residential buildings to the southeast of the sports ground. These five plots were developed in the 1950s with the rise in the town's Asian population and were sometimes referred to as "New Town." Separating New Town from the rest of the central Asian commercial district was an open field, which was officially inaugurated as Kabale Sports Stadium in 1958, where sporting events, film shows, and traveling carnivals frequently attracted diverse African, Asian, wealthy, and poor audiences.¹¹⁴ The remainder of Main Street constituted the heart of the Asian commercial district, with shops lining either side of the street up to the junction with the road leading up Makanga Hill. However, these shop fronts concealed residential units behind, making the designation of this area as a "commercial district," which took on particular significance with the implementation of the 1969 Trade

¹¹³ This shift is reflected most directly in the career of Ignatius Musazi, whose base among cotton farmers in the Federation of Partnerships of Uganda African Farmers gave way to a base of urban traders under the Uganda National Movement. See Chapter 1.

¹¹⁴ Interview with James Zatwoshaho, Kabale, July 2010; KDA "Annual Report Kigezi District 1958" n.d. Mr. Zatwoshaho succeeded Kigezi's first District Sports Officer, Matthew Ndyanabangi, in 1967.

Licensing Act, somewhat misleading [see Chapter 4]. Until the mid-1950s, a school for Asian children supported by the Kabale Indian Association stood in this area directly adjacent the sports ground.¹¹⁵ By 1957, however, the Association had raised enough money to construct an impressive new school building on the northern edge of Kargote, and the old school site was developed into Kabale's largest two-story building, with shops and flats.¹¹⁶ At the same time, the temporary structures after which Kargote took its name were rapidly replaced with permanent residences for some of Kabale's wealthier Asian families, while poorer residents either moved further north and west or were compelled to leave Kabale altogether. Hindus used one of these houses for religious and social gatherings until 1968, when construction of a new temple began adjacent to the new school building.¹¹⁷ Ismaili services were conducted in an inconspicuous building back on the opposite end of town behind the old Indian School site. While some of Kabale's richest Asian families lived in large residences on Makanga Hill, the center of Asian life in Kabale lay within these areas below, and some Makanga residents moved down to Kargote in order to be closer to community social life.

Social life among Asian residents was dispersed across this area, from organized school events to bars to the semi-public spaces of shop verandahs. Many former residents fondly recall events at the Indian School where singing and other cultural competitions brought together Hindus, Ismailis, Sikhs, and Goans. Events such as Diwali and Khushiali were also occasions for celebration and socializing across religious communities at the

¹¹⁵ The school was funded largely from proceeds from the salt trade, but its supporters solicited donations from Kampala and Masaka as well. KDA 18 72 "Indian Public School" DC to Director of Education, June 28, 1934: 34.

¹¹⁶ KDA "Annual Report Kigezi District 1957" n.d.

¹¹⁷ KDA old box RC 519 file MSN 5/A "Hindu Religious Bodies" Ag DC Hindu Mandal Building, September 20, 1968: 13.

Hindu Temple and Ismaili Jama'at Khana. Groups of elder men often gathered after closing their shops to stroll through town and across Makanga Hill. Each month, hundreds of Kabale's Asian residents walked ten kilometers for picnics on the shores of Lake Bunyonyi, an experience that many, over four decades later, emphasized as the epitome of the uniquely close-knit Asian community of Kabale. Those who consumed alcohol gathered in the evenings at one of the few bars on the northern edge of town to drink and listen to music on the jukebox, from Jim Reeves and Cliff Richard to Congolese and Kenyan artists. A Mr. Zala operated a small theater behind the Jama'at Khana building where American and Indian films attracted a small but diverse audience of Africans and Asians. The music of Lata Mangeshkar and Kishore Kumar was popular among those families with gramophone players in their homes. Women cooked supper on their verandahs facing the street and chatted with passers-by. Others spoke to their neighbors from inside their residences through windows that faced adjacent buildings across side alleys.

Forty years after their expulsion from Uganda, many former residents eagerly emphasized, to one another and to me, that Kabale's Asian community "was like a family."¹¹⁸ When I asked about community life, Prakash Mulani corrected, "It was not a community; it was like a big family."¹¹⁹ Many contrasted life in Kabale with the impersonal competition of larger towns such as Mbarara and Kampala or with the cold anonymity and communal divisions seen to characterize life in England.¹²⁰ Many emphasized that there

¹¹⁸ Interview with Nandlal Lakhani, Leicester, February 24, 2013; Interview with Lona Sutaria, London, March 3, 2013.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Prakash Mulani, London, March 2, 2013.

¹²⁰ Joanna Herbert has written extensively on nostalgia and belonging among Ugandan Asians in the United Kingdom. Joanna Herbert, "The British Ugandan Asian Diaspora: Multiple and Contested Belongings," *Global Networks* 12, no. 3 (2012): 296–313; Joanna Herbert, "Migration, Memory and Metaphor: Life Stories of South Asians in Leicester," in

was a careful separation of business and social life. “There was no competition in the evening,” remembered Baldev Valia.¹²¹ For some, the familial metaphor combined both the positive qualities of mutual support and co-operation across religious and caste lines with the less welcome features of constant surveillance and policing according to male elders’ moral standards. “Everyone knew everyone,” recalled one woman. “If you looked at a boy the wrong way, your father would know before you got home.” Of particular concern for some were the rebukes of some older men against individuals whom they felt consorted too freely with Africans, an issue examined more closely below.

These memories of Kabale’s Asian district, as home to a harmonious extended family that kept intense business competition separate from social life, were a middle class Asian vision. As Richa Nagar has demonstrated regarding Asian communal spaces in Dar es Salaam, spaces of social and religious life may inscribe hierarchies and exclusions even as they provide a normative sense of common belonging.¹²² Exclusions operated along religious, racial, and class lines, which were often filtered through the identity politics of Africanization under Milton Obote and Idi Amin. Several Hindu residents remembered that Ismailis, many of whom were wealthy businessmen or professionals, “changed” in the years preceding the expulsion, by avoiding Asian social events and excluding non-Ismailis from functions that had previously been open to all. The Aga Khan had directed his followers to identify with Africans in a manner that would distinguish them from other Asian

Histories and Memories: Migrants and Their History in Britain, ed. Kathy Burrell and Panikos Panayi (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006), 133–48.

¹²¹ Interview with Baldev Valia, London, February 2013.

¹²² Richa Nagar, “Making and Breaking Boundaries: Identity Politics Among South Asians in Postcolonial Dar Es Salaam” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1995), chap. 6–7.

communities,¹²³ which appeared to provide political protection, such as in February 1972 when Idi Amin contrasted patriotic Ugandan Ismailis with “disloyal Asians.”¹²⁴ Others noted subtle and overt discrimination against lower caste individuals. One man recalled being given a piece of candy by “an untouchable” and walking around the corner in order to avoid being seen throwing it away. Some residents recalled that many Asians kept social distance from several Sikh and Goan men who had married African women. Children of these marriages recall, and in some cases continue to maintain, close friendships with their Hindu and Ismaili peers, even as they remember being called the derogatory term *jotawa* in Gujarati or *chotara* in Kiswahili, which connotes “mongrel” or contamination by slave ancestry.¹²⁵ They maintain complex practices of identification. These are contextual and have preserved personal and family security in Uganda after the Asian expulsion.¹²⁶ Some identify as Asians. They explain that they inherit their identity through paternal lines, even as they often refer to both Africans and Asians as groups distinct from themselves. In 1971, a group identifying itself as “the half-caste women in Kabale” used a public meeting to identify themselves as a distinct constituency supportive of Idi Amin’s coup.¹²⁷ However, forty years later, many with whom I spoke rejected the notion of such a community, as they expressed their feeling of home and community before 1972 in terms of the degree of their

¹²³ Morris, “The Divine Kingship of the Aga Khan”; Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, chap. 6.

¹²⁴ However, Ismailis were not exempted from Amin’s expulsion decrees six months later. “Ismaili Leader Arrives in Uganda,” *Uganda Argus*, February 21, 1972: 1; “President Amin tells Aga Khan: Govt Only Against the Few Disloyal Asians,” *The People*, February 21, 1972: 1.

¹²⁵ Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa*, 161; Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, *No Place Like Home: An Autobiography* (London: Virago, 1997), 57; Brennan, *Taifa*, 240.

¹²⁶ Anneeth Kaur Hundle, “Exceptions to the Expulsion: Violence, Security and Community among Ugandan Asians, 1972–79,” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7, no. 1 (February 2013): 164–82.

¹²⁷ KDA old box RC 542 file INF 59 c “News – General” JWN, April 8, 1971: 167.

inclusion in or exclusion from centers of Asian community life. For many poorer Asian families, their business, domestic, and social life was centered around the edges of the central Asian district. Some operated stalls in the market alongside Africans and across from the African trading district, and some lived on the outskirts of Kargote or north of town in areas that were geographically closer to African residential areas.

Despite inequalities and exclusions that characterized Asian neighborhoods, they sustained feelings of social intimacy among Asians. These spaces also constituted an object of desire for African traders and politicians.¹²⁸ Africans had diverse encounters with Asians, from Ismailis establishing social protection through elite sociality to “half-caste” individuals to poorer Asians in the market. However, despite the diverse arenas of social and commercial life that such divisions produced, the spaces of middle class Asian commercial and social life in central Kabale dominated contemporary African political rhetoric about Asians and the subsequent memories of African-Asian interaction. President Milton Obote’s efforts to turn the ruling UPC bureaucracy into a commercial bourgeoisie and Idi Amin’s subsequent efforts to enrich members of the military hinged on the control of Asian neighborhoods. The primary target of Africanization programs, such as the 1969 Trade Licensing Act or the Departed Asians Property Custodial Board that allocated Asians’ properties after the expulsion, was the Asian commercial district on Main Street. For most Asian residents, establishing an anchor of social life beyond the spaces of Asian religious, social, and commercial institutions was neither desirable nor feasible. While categories such as “half-caste women” could prove useful in addressing government officials, they did

¹²⁸ For similar dynamics in Durban, South Africa dominated by the end of apartheid, see Thomas Blom Hansen, *Melancholia of Freedom: Social Life in an Indian Township in South Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

not displace efforts to seek acceptance in centers of middle class Asian life that were riven with commercial competition and fears of contamination.

The negotiation of close, intimate social relations alongside deeply competitive business practices shaped Asian lives. The most intense competitions were sometimes within families. The brothers Harri and Harbans Singh Rajput were two of the most prominent building contractors and transport operators in Kabale. Their competition was allegedly so intense that they refused to speak with one another, and their employees feared being sacked if they were seen near the other's businesses. With limited plots available for development, contractors were eager to convince officials to reject their competitors' applications, either by appealing to ideals of equal distribution or by forging libelous letters in another's name.¹²⁹ Public social occasions that crossed communal boundaries also masked tensions between Hindu and Ismaili community leaders over political representation in local government.¹³⁰ Business alliances also often fell within family and religious communities, which provoked undertones of communal tension between Hindus and Ismailis during some business negotiations.¹³¹ After a visit to Kabale in 1960, Minister of Commerce Sir Amar Maini, whose appointment had provoked opposition among African politicians and traders, concluded, "The Asian traders [in Kabale]

¹²⁹ KMCR TC/006/CP2/16 "PL No 4 Bwankosya Rd Plot No. 2 Block H" Harbans Singh Rajput to Executive Officer Township Authority, January 2, 1953: 29; KMCR "Plot No. 120 Kabale Rd" Juma Walji [*sic*] to Land Officer, June 27, 1954: 69a; KMCR "Plot No. 120 Kabale Rd" Juma Walji Somani to Land Officer, August 28, 1954: 72.

¹³⁰ KDA old box 521 file C MUN 4 "Townships" HS Rajput Secretary Kabale Indian Association to DC, June 21, 1962: 121.

¹³¹ KDA old box 521 file C MUN 4 "Townships" District Supervisor to DC, June 30, 1962: 146.

evoke my pity because they seem to live in constant bickering and remote from the tide of events. If this persists, they are going to be left behind.”¹³²

Sir Amar Maini’s comments repeated concerns among East African Asian leaders that the failure of Asians to act as a united constituency played into the hands of African racial nationalists and threatened their future in an independent Uganda [see Chapter 1]. Among members of a small business community, however, safeguarding security while navigating social and business competition was achieved through everyday strategies of social and commercial exchange in the particular spaces and contexts where they lived, worked, and interacted with African consumers, traders, and politicians. For some local elites, this included District and Township Authority meetings with fellow civil servants and politicians. However, for most, it was confined to the spaces that linked the central main street with the shops and residences behind. The shop counter and the verandah thus became the key thresholds across which racial and class hierarchies were negotiated in the years from Kabale’s expansion in the 1950s through the Africanization campaigns of the 1960s to the Asian expulsion of 1972. Bars and social clubs, from Snack Bar in town to the elite White Horse Inn in Makanga, constituted other spaces where African-Asian sociality was performed in ways that differed from shops. Both Kabale’s commercial district and bars were primarily male domains of trade and leisure. Desire for access to private domains controlled by women animated tensions over the relationship between racial and national identity as well as the spatial dynamics of racial hierarchy.

The businesses that lined Kabale’s Main Street catered both for local consumption and the demands of commercial networks linking Rwanda and Congo with Kampala. In her

¹³² KDA old box RC 589 file ADM 20 J I 121 “Economic Advisory Committee” Amar Maini to DC Purcell, January 18, 1960: 4.

pioneering 1958 study from the large industrial town of Jinja in eastern Uganda, Ann Evans Larimore placed shops into six categories: general merchandise, specialized goods or crafts, “hotelis” selling food, merchant wholesale *dukas*, “African sellers and craftsmen,” and service establishments.¹³³ Kabale sustained all six types of businesses, but the overwhelming majority of Main Street shopkeepers catering to diverse needs in Kabale’s economy fell into first group. “General merchandise” was a ubiquitous description of East African commerce that reflected the nature of wholesale supply from the port of Mombasa and in Kampala as well as African demand. Traders who defined their business as “general merchandise” described combinations of stocks ranging from cutlery and kerosene, to textiles and biscuits, to bicycle parts and construction materials. For example, Nathwani and Sons’ letterhead advertised that they were “Dealers in cutlery, hosiery, enamelware, g.c.i. sheets, nails, cement, Vono & Banco beds & springs & every type of mattresses etc. etc.”¹³⁴ Many emphasized that their stock of goods depended on their knowledge, built up over time, of local consumer desires and supply gaps as well as their ability to develop credit relationships with wholesalers in Kampala.

The commercial relationships that Asian traders sustained within Kabale and across East Africa depended on relations of trust (the extension of credit) and feelings of empathy (with languages of marketing and authority). Even in the commodity economy of late colonial and post-colonial urban Uganda, exchange was a social process that required both traders and customers to engage in social rituals that established trust. Unlike

¹³³ Larimore, *The Alien Town*, 107–114.

¹³⁴ KMCR “Plot No. 120 Kabale Rd.”

supermarkets, which did not open in Kabale until the 1990s,¹³⁵ shops were not places where customers could freely enter, browse, and make purchases without future obligations or debts. Few African consumers could afford to buy commodities regularly without credit, and shopkeepers were often in such intense competition with one another that they worked hard to maintain customers. “They [Africans] got the best prices because there was so much competition,” concluded one trader.¹³⁶ Another described how if a trader saw that his neighbor was gaining business selling a particular commodity, he might undercut him by selling the same item at a loss in order to win future customers.¹³⁷

Shopkeepers adapted strategies to attract business. These ranged from economic incentives to polite social practices to displays of authority that could protect their trade relationships but could also sometimes provoke misunderstanding, resentment, and tension with customers. Most relationships between traders and customers were mediated by credit. In a context where incomes were dependent on the seasonal sale of crops, the yearly flow of migrant labor, or the monthly wages of civil servants, economic transactions were often impossible without credit. Such transactions in turn relied on mutual trust that debts would be paid, goods would be delivered, and additional credit would be extended in future. Jash Doshi remembered how such relationships were often established. “They [an African customer] first come and buy in cash. Then one day they say, ‘Ah. I’ve forgotten [money]. Can I get credit for 200?’ And trust builds up.”¹³⁸ When African traders, civil servants, and other residents recalled positive characteristics of Kabale’s Asian traders

¹³⁵ A Goan man, Mr. Carvalho, ran a food shop at the bottom of the road leading up to Makanga, which catered almost exclusively to Europeans and closed around 1970.

¹³⁶ Interview with Ramesh Mulani, Kampala, July 2013.

¹³⁷ Interview with Baldev Valia, London, February 2013.

¹³⁸ Interview with Jash Doshi, Leicester, February 2013.

over four decades later, they often mentioned the availability of credit, even if some also emphasized tensions in the management of credit relations. The significance of Asian traders' position in networks of credit became more visible after the 1972 expulsion. African traders who were allocated Asian businesses were usually unable to secure loans from British banks or from suppliers with whom Asian firms had built up long relationships.¹³⁹ As a result, they were also unable to afford extending credit to customers, who (when provided safe venues for public expression) decried the lack of trust and understanding from African traders who failed to embody an anticipated ethic of economic racial solidarity [see Chapter 5].

As Jash Doshi's comment reflected, credit was a relationship of trust that was often established through face to face interactions. Among those traders who were in their 20s or 30s in the 1960s, many mentioned linguistic competence as an important variable. Baldev Valia emphasized the uniform ethic with which he and others approached visitors to their shop. "For us they were all customers. The only difference was language."¹⁴⁰ Kiswahili was the primary medium of communication for trade in East Africa spoken by nearly all of Kabale's shopkeepers. Some, however, learned enough words in Rukiga to issue commands and conduct basic transactions, and a few were fluent. Such fluency not only had the functional advantage of allowing direct communication with customers and business partners in their first language, but it also indicated that one's educational or social background extended beyond the borders of Kabale's Asian community. As Ugandans debated which criteria should govern non-Africans' rights to the formal privileges of national belonging, such as voting rights and citizenship, many identified proficiency in an

¹³⁹ Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, chap. 9.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Baldev Valia, London, February 2013.

African language (excluding Kiswahili) as a prerequisite [see Chapter 5].¹⁴¹ Language offered a means of performing citizenship and belonging.

Assessing customer demand and gaps in commodity supply was another important kind of knowledge that traders worked to cultivate. As Larimore observed in Jinja, “The Indian *duka* is stocked for a market composed of individuals whose pattern of life and consumer needs and desires bear little correspondence to that of the proprietor.”¹⁴² While such a conclusion overstates the incommensurability of Africans’ and Asians’ consumer desires, it points to the skill that traders required in order to attract business from customers often of lower economic means than themselves.¹⁴³ Part of this process involved quantifiable variables about how many items had been sold in a given period and the cost of supplies and transportation. However, the face-to-face interactions through which traders judged a customer’s creditworthiness or likelihood to purchase a given commodity depended in part on the shopkeeper’s capacity to imagine the desires and sensitivities of Africans on the other side of their shop counter.

Regardless of linguistic and cultural fluency between Asian traders and African customers, their interactions took shape in spatial arrangements that enabled the maintenance of racial, class, and gender hierarchies. Kabale’s central commercial district was separated from the rest of the town in an area dominated by Asian commercial and social life. However, unlike Makanga, the elite area of administrative buildings and luxury

¹⁴¹ The Citizenship Bill of 1962 required “an adequate knowledge of a prescribed vernacular language or of the English language.” Some African writers to the English-language press argued that English and Kiswahili should not count [see Chapter 5]. Uganda Protectorate, *The Uganda Citizenship Bill*, No. 62 of 1962, 3(1)(b).

¹⁴² Larimore, *The Alien Town*, 110.

¹⁴³ As Jeremy Prestholdt demonstrates for colonial Zanzibar, consumption of European goods complicated Westerners’ “notions of material difference” that were used to justify colonial rule. Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World*, chap. 6.

residences atop an imposing hill, Kabale's commercial district was not completely segregated from many Africans' daily lives. Africans experienced Main Street not only as a site for purchasing goods, but also as an area through which one had to walk in order to reach church or school in Rusharoza or Bugerere from Bugongi or other areas northwest of town. For some, the foreign character of this area was reinforced by their experience of verbal abuse and the perceived potential for physical violence, as illustrated by Alan Mulenga's recollections, with which this chapter began. While many Africans regularly saw and moved through the area, there were few occasions to loiter there except as a customer or employee. "In the evenings, there were no Africans [because] they had no business there," remembered Joshua Mwesigye, who now operates a veterinary shop in the same area. "It was just Asians."¹⁴⁴

Shops along Kabale's Main Street, as in most Asian commercial districts in Uganda, had a relatively uniform layout. A shopkeeper often sat on a stool in front of shelves stacked with a range of commodities that lined the surrounding walls from floor to ceiling. The room was made inaccessible, though still visible, to those outside by a wooden counter. The counter served, as it continues to serve in much of this area, multiple purposes. Its interior sometimes served as a display case with a glass exterior through which various commodities could be viewed from the outside. In a drawer or cupboard accessible from the inside, usually with a key, housed cash and a ledger, which tracked some debts and credit relations both with customers and the shop's suppliers. The ledger could serve a performative function, reminding customers of the fixed nature of their debts through the act of writing and demonstrating to authorities their efforts to comply with tax laws, even

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Joshua Mwesigye, Kabale, May 2012.

as many exchanges were kept off the books in efforts both to evade regulation and to signal trust between long-time partners and customers. The middle figures who were sometimes able to move between the front of the counter and behind it were African assistants, who were employed to bring merchandise down from shelves and to assist customers, often by translating across differences in language and moral expectations between their employer and customers. Some shops also made arrangements with African tailors, who operated a sewing machine on the outside verandah, where customers who bought cloth could have it sewn into clothing, curtains, or other items. From an interior door, other members of a shopkeeper's family or residence might appear, and as shops began to close and employees, tailors, and customers dispersed between five and six o'clock, women who lived in the rear residential quarters often occupied verandahs in order to prepare supper and converse with one another and passers-by.



Figure 3.4 “Kabale Main Street in the 1960s” Photo: Roger F.L. Wilkins. From Elizabeth Traill, *Venturesome Love: The Story of Constance Hornby, 1884-1972*, (Kampala: Handsel Press, 2011), 145.

The spatial segregation of Kabale’s commercial district from African residential areas, like the layout of shops, allowed traders to exert control over business interactions and maintain a distinction between commercial and domestic space. Verandahs separated shops from the street, and counters provided a barrier between customers and the goods they might purchase. As Alan Mulenga recalled in 2013, some shopkeepers regulated those who approached their shop with verbal abuse, attacking individual Africans for their presumed lack of money. Once a customer approached a shop, the shopkeeper could regulate access to goods. A shopkeeper only removed an item if they wanted to, controlling if and when a customer could handle it over the counter. The counter distinguished and separated trader from customer; it allowed the trader to control access to desired goods, to the material expressions of class mobility.

Counters impeded access to the domestic spaces behind shops. After the Asian expulsion with the rise of *magendo*, or smuggling, access to sugar, soap, beer, and other commodities in the 1970s and 1980s often required visiting a trusted seller’s home and purchasing goods that they hid under their bed. Before 1972, however, traders’ domestic spheres were inaccessible to their customers and employees, even as both were often located in the same building. During the implementation of the 1969 Trade Licensing Act, which revoked the licenses of most Asian traders on Main Street, African traders who moved into these shops complained that Asian residents adamantly refused to grant them access to latrines in their homes or servants’ quarters. The efforts of Asian traders to guard the separation of commercial and domestic space reflected assumptions that gendered the

former as male and the latter as female. Guarding access to domestic space sometimes reflected fears of contamination from lower caste individuals, or a patriarchal desire to protect the honor of wives and daughters.¹⁴⁵ Some Asian traders met with African business partners in their sitting rooms, but many in Kabale restricted Africans' access to their homes to domestic servants and occasionally a doctor from Kabale Hospital in Makanga. African access to Asian domestic space, which was associated with the patriarchal protection of women, would become a source of friction during the Africanization campaigns of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Shops were not the only spaces where Africans and Asians met or where racial and class hierarchies were performed. While, for some, bars appeared to offer a respite from the racial and class exclusion that characterized commercial life on Main Street, they could also sustain hierarchies in other ways. When describing bars in Kabale, many people, even those who did not drink, placed them in a hierarchy. The most exclusive was attached to White Horse Inn in Makanga. In the 1950s, the Australian-English author Alan Moorehead described it as a "delightful English Inn [with] a well-kept golf course just outside the grounds. ... In the evening one drinks French wine at dinner, reads the magazines in the lounge, plays bridge, and listens to the radio."¹⁴⁶ Its proprietors protected its English ambience through widely known practices of racial discrimination. Administrators had long worked to keep Makanga Hill secluded from the rest of town, and the occasional efforts of Indian children to play soccer on the golf course grounds were reportedly met

¹⁴⁵ Distinctions between caste, class, and family were often subtle. See Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa*, chap. 2.

¹⁴⁶ Alan Moorehead, *No Room in the Ark* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 128.

with the wrath of a European groundskeeper.¹⁴⁷ In 1947, the District Commissioner warned, “accommodation would not be available, ... certainly not under the present management” even for Buganda Kingdom’s Prime Minister, and that even if he managed to secure a booking, he “might feel awkward there.”¹⁴⁸ Despite the brief tenure of an African manager just after independence, such practices continued, and a subsequent British manager provoked two strikes from African staff and multiple complaints that he “was discriminating against African visitors at the hotel.”¹⁴⁹ Many Africans and Asians, including middle class traders, described their fear of even passing by White Horse Inn’s gates in the 1950s and 1960s. However, the distinction between racial and class exclusion blurred in the 1960s. Several of Kabale’s wealthiest Asian traders drank exclusively at White Horse Inn and the elite Kabale Club on the opposite end of the golf course, and the former was the preferred meeting place for politicians, including Milton Obote and Idi Amin. Secluded in Makanga, residents regarded it as a domain of “important people,” “educated people”, “whites only”, or “politicians and administrators.” Even elites who failed to show proper decorum could be excluded. When the writers V.S. Naipaul and Paul Theroux attempted to order supper there, they were turned away for not wearing jackets and ties.¹⁵⁰

Discrimination over entrance to bars encouraged a sense of equality for those inside. At the bottom of Makanga Hill, on the northern stretch of Main Street, was Snack

¹⁴⁷ As noted above, administrators had deliberately relocated the market in order to divert African foot traffic away from the hill. KDA file 56(a) pt II 1406 “Land – Bazaar” Kabale Township Authority Meeting Minutes, September 28, 1946: 204A.

¹⁴⁸ KDA old file ADM 14/3 “Annual Report 1952” DC Kigezi to Resident Buganda, n.d. [July/August 1947]: 85.

¹⁴⁹ KDA old box RC 542 file INF 59 c “News – General” New Manager for White Horse Inn, March 30, 1968: 15.

¹⁵⁰ Paul Theroux, *Sir Vidia’s Shadow: A Friendship Across Five Continents* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1998), 84.

Bar, a common destination for Kabale's Asian and African traders and working class to drink in the evenings and listen the jukebox. One man described how as a teenager he became tired of his Sikh father's Indian records and would risk beatings from his Mukiga mother by sneaking to Snack Bar to play Jim Reeves on the jukebox.¹⁵¹ Others, Africans and Asians, described it as a place to relax after work with men within one's social circle. One man recalled the occasional presence of a European tourist, but unlike White Horse Inn, it catered primarily to local Asian and African residents. When I asked Alan Mulenga why he felt that Asians could be friendly to him in Snack Bar but not a few hundred paces away at their shops, he emphasized how bar activity had a leveling effect. "You couldn't enter looking like you were dirty with no money." As everyone is drinking and relaxing, "They can be friendly and even buy you a drink," because they do not need to be as calculated as they were in assessing their customers. Others emphasized that friends tended to congregate together, sometimes using tables to play cards.

The class and gender segregation that characterized bars as spaces of male sociality also facilitated negotiations over access to women. This could promote feelings of social intimacy as well as fears of racial contamination. Some less prestigious bars allegedly had rooms available where sexual liaisons could be conducted, which served the obvious function of not requiring the use of domestic space under the surveillance of family and neighbors. One African man recalled being approached on several occasions in or outside of bars by young Asian men who asked where they could find African women for sex. Such

¹⁵¹ Interview with Madhu, Kabale, June 9, 2013. Reeves' 1962 hit cover of the gospel song "This World Is Not Home" was immensely popular in Kabale and across East Africa. While no one I interviewed offered an interpretation of the song, it evokes both a feeling of alienation from earthly competition and the promise of wealth in heaven, a potentially powerful message in Uganda's competitive urban communities. "This world is not my home, I'm just passing through. My treasures are laid up, somewhere beyond the blue."

interactions could lead to moments of social intimacy as men boasted of sexual exploits and exchanged lessons in how to use swear words in Gujarati and Rukiga. However, they also reflected a gendered racial hierarchy in which African and Asian women constituted objects of racial desire. As Dan Ojwang has noted, East African Asian literature often refers to Asians' figurative and literal penetration of an African "womb" as an act of inter-racial intimacy.¹⁵² Before the 1972 expulsion, Idi Amin denounced Asians' failure to "integrate with the indigenous people" by protecting female endogamy as an affront to Uganda's independence [see Chapter 5]. In practice, African-Asian sexual intimacy was usually shielded from public view. Asian men who had sex with or even formed long-term relationships with African women often kept it hidden from all but their closest peers in order to avoid rebuke from their families. Patriarchal ideologies that Asian women's honor had to be protected from contamination by lower caste or African men also gendered Asian domestic space as female, thus constricting the possibilities for such interactions to occur.

Racial and class hierarchies proliferated in the gendered spatial arrangements of Kabale town, as well as its shops and bars. The physical infrastructure that shaped African-Asian interaction allowed residents to manage commercial and social relationships that were often mediated by credit and gendered ideas of contamination and social hierarchy. However, interactions in these spaces could also provoke tensions that reinforced anxiety over the sustainability of racial and class hierarchies. We now turn to some of these tensions and expressions of anti-Asian politics.

¹⁵² Ojwang, "The Pleasures of Knowing," 48.; See for example Vassanji, *The Gunny Sack*, 39; Peter Nazareth, *The General Is Up* (Toronto: TSAR, 1991), 21.

Trust, empathy, and microtensions

The infrastructure of daily commercial and social interactions in Kabale facilitated the maintenance of gendered racial and class hierarchies. Deliberate or habitual micro-aggressions normalized inequality, while relations of trust often served to maintain economic relationships based on African debt to Asian traders and Asians traders' debt to wholesalers in Kampala or Mombasa. However, the trust upon which such interactions depended could also be denied, manipulated, or misconstrued. Expectations of political independence and Africanization could provoke tension in a customer's request for credit or mundane interactions along Main Street. Moreover, demographic changes and legislative interventions threatened the spatial order through which Asian social and business life functioned. Such challenges strained relations between Asian religious communities and provoked anxiety over the regulation of domestic space as well as the protection of female honor. In the years before the 1972 expulsion, some Asians also recalled acts of deliberate provocation from individual Africans against the segregation of Asian private life.

Licensing laws, building controls, and health codes shaped racial segregation, but the maintenance of social and spatial boundaries also required discipline and the subtle regulation of behavior and mobility. In some cases, authorities attempted to control residents' movements by enforcing laws against cattle grazing or loitering. In other instances, individuals aggressively guarded their businesses or neighborhoods, such as when British managers turned away Africans and Asians from White Horse Inn or when Asian shopkeepers on Main Street verbally abused Africans who were not employees or customers of Asian shops. However, residents' consumer habits and daily routines were also embedded in racial and class hierarchies that kept Asian traders and African

consumers and traders mutually dependent. Even as Africans opened shops in the trading area opposite the market, they struggled to attract customers, who preferred higher quality goods often at cheaper prices from Asian shops. Several Asian traders recalled that clothing was a particularly brisk business in the 1950s and 1960s. Missionaries such as Constance Hornby had encouraged converts to wear Western clothing (Magyar dresses for women) for Sunday Church services.¹⁵³ Dresses, sweaters, and jackets not only provided protection from Kabale's cool climate but also allowed for a style of self-presentation that could secure employment or access to centers of political power. The quality of one's clothing was often a determining factor in gaining entrance not only to elite churches but also to bars and clubs such as White Horse Inn and Snack Bar, where it was possible to display one's membership in a particular social class. Others recalled that in order to visit Kabale's District Headquarters, one had to be "smart" (i.e. well dressed). As Jeremy Prestholdt has argued about clothing in nineteenth century Mombasa, "items of public consumption were essential to social relationships," and "Mombasans had invested enormous social capital in the signifying qualities of consumer goods."¹⁵⁴ Consumers also invested labor and economic capital in order to acquire these goods, and the risk of paying more for lower quality items from African shops could undermine the maintenance of social capital needed in competitive urban social and economic life.

¹⁵³ Before moving to Kigezi, Hornby worked at Gayaza High School at the time when the headmistress commissioned a Goan tailor to add "a round-necked top [and] short Magyar sleeves" to the "suuka dress" worn by Baganda women. The design became Uganda's national dress known as the "Gomesi" after the tailor, Caetano Milagres Gomes. Elizabeth Traill, *Venturesome Love: The Story of Constance Hornby, 1884-1972* (Kampala: Handsel Press, 2011), 85, 41. See also John Nazareth, "The Origin of the Gomesi/Busuuti" Ugandansatheart, [April 2010], <http://ugandansatheart.org/2015/04/23/the-origin-of-the-gomesibusuuti/>.

¹⁵⁴ Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World*, 57.



Figure 3.5 Drivers permit photographs, Kabale. 1951-1958. These images were taken by one of two Asian photographers in Kabale. Asian traders in Kigezi controlled the sale of clothing like that worn by the men pictured here. Most applicants were civil servants or employees of Asian trading or mining companies.¹⁵⁵

African traders' dependence on Asian traders and the difficulties of coordinating collective buying groups also reinforced the dominance of Kabale's Asian trading district. In 1953, the District Commissioner lamented the seeming failure of African traders' organizations to break their dependence on Asian retailers by forming collective buying groups. "The Bakiga are essentially individualists. ... the man on the bicycle buying goods at retail rates [from Asian shops] in Kabale remains the rule."¹⁵⁶ One Asian trader remembered that despite only holding a retail license, he acted as a "semi-wholesaler" when "these African people start[ed] little businesses in the jungle."¹⁵⁷ Such patterns of

¹⁵⁵ KDA box ADM 35 file ADM 55 "Applications for Driving Permits"; KDA box ADM 61 file ADM 80 "Application for Driving Permits."

¹⁵⁶ KDA file CS TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance – Policy" DC to Commissioner of Commerce, March 4, 1953: 3.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Jash Doshi, Leicester, February 2013.

African consumption and trade were embedded in the spatial divisions of Kabale town, as Main Street shops remained the primary site where Africans acquired manufactured goods.

The social relations that shaped the spatial dynamics of Kabale's commercial district were also dependent on relations of trust and empathy. As noted above, trust between traders and customers built up through repeated exchanges and the gradual accumulation of credit. Empathy, by contrast, could enhance sales but also provoke distrust. Clifford Geertz once argued that anthropologists should reject empathy as a field method or category of analysis because it imposed "the Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe" onto contexts where other conceptions of personhood operated.¹⁵⁸ However, recent debates across anthropology, philosophy, and psychology have returned to the concept in order to theorize how seemingly selfless acts of cognitive and emotional understanding may be "motivated by, seduction, deception, manipulation, and violent intent."¹⁵⁹ Some have raised methodological and definitional objections to such efforts to identify an analytic link between empathy and malicious intent,¹⁶⁰ but such connections are often made in popular political rhetoric in order to discredit and cast doubt over the aim behind others' actions. A

¹⁵⁸ Clifford Geertz, "From the Native's Point of View': On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding," in *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self and Emotion*, ed. Richard Shweder and Robert LeVine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 126.

¹⁵⁹ Nils Bubandt and Rane Willerslev, "The Dark Side of Empathy: Mimesis, Deception, and the Magic of Alterity," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, no. 1 (2015): 6; Nils Bubandt, "From the Enemy's Point of View: Violence, Empathy, and the Ethnography of Fakes," *Cultural Anthropology* 24, no. 3 (August 2009): 553–88; Eva-Maria Engelen and Birgitt Röttger-Rössler, "Current Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Debates on Empathy," *Emotion Review* 4, no. 1 (January 2012): 3–8; Douglas Hollan, "Emerging Issues in the Cross-Cultural Study of Empathy," *Emotion Review* 4, no. 1 (January 2012): 70–78; Douglas Hollan and C. Jason Throop, "Whatever Happened to Empathy?: Introduction," *Ethos* 36, no. 4 (2008): 385–401.

¹⁶⁰ Eva-Maria Düringer and Sabine A. Döring, "Comment on Hollan's 'Emerging Issues in the Cross-Cultural Study of Empathy,'" *Emotion Review* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 79–80.

common response to Asian philanthropic initiatives since the 1960s has been to dismiss them as attempts to buy political influence or protect Asians' rights to future economic exploitation.¹⁶¹ When recalling transactions with Asian shopkeepers in the 1960s or referring to present-day transactions, African traders and civil servants across generations often associate the desirable trait of being skilled at business with the immoral quality of deception. "They [Asian traders] are good at business. I don't know how. You can't guess what he is thinking."¹⁶² The most common account of such deception refers to the practice of selectively offering sweets or other small items in order to earn customers' loyalty or even affection while ensnaring them further in debt. Deception and detachment are consistent themes in anti-Asian rhetoric. Echoing the language used by Idi Amin to justify the 1972 expulsion, Kabale's former Trade Development Officer recalled, "The Asians were so unscrupulous. ... [They are] always aloof."¹⁶³

Asian shopkeepers feared that Africans doubted their motives and envied their wealth. These fears provoked tensions in otherwise mundane interactions with their customers, employees, and others who passed through Kabale's commercial district. James Brennan writes about Dar es Salaam, "Different understandings of reciprocity also meant disagreement about what constituted moral behavior. Indian virtues of thrift, savvy, and efficiency appeared to Africans as selfishness, dishonesty, and exploitation."¹⁶⁴ Many traders framed mundane interactions over credit and goods as harmonious until the UPC

¹⁶¹ Anneeth Kaur Hundle, "The Politics of (In)security: Reconstructing African-Asian Relations, Citizenship and Community in Post-Expulsion Uganda" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan, 2013), 252; Gregory, *The Rise and Fall of Philanthropy in East Africa*.

¹⁶² Interview with Alan Mulenga, Kabale, December 7, 2012.

¹⁶³ Interview with E.W.B. Merete, Kabale, June 26, 2010. Amin's allegation that Asians evaded government regulations and remained socially exclusive helped to consolidate 'Asian' as a purge category. See Chapter 5.

¹⁶⁴ Brennan, *Taifa*, 71.

government's promise to Africanize urban space and commerce introduced "tension" and "nervous" feelings. Such tensions rarely escalated into confrontations that were recorded by district officials, journalists, or other observers. Furthermore, Ugandan Asians' descriptions of the late 1960s and early 1970s are inseparable from, and often explicitly framed in relation to, the trauma of the 1972 expulsion. After recalling restrictions on trade and his struggle to maintain strategic relationships with African business partners and politicians in the late 1960s, Baldev Valia concluded, "Everyone knew we might have to leave the country."¹⁶⁵ Some described how others' strategies that had once protected traders' market position and authority over their shops, such as the aggressive profiling of potential customers, provoked anxiety. Lona Sutaria disapprovingly described how some traders' aggressive style led many Africans to only talk to African assistants, which perpetuated images of Asian isolation and arrogance.¹⁶⁶ Asha Patel fondly recalled the unity of Kabale's Asian community but noted one point of division in the manner that some older shopkeepers acted "bad[ly] to customers."¹⁶⁷ Ramesh Mulani, who like many younger Asians expressed discomfort with a previous generation's style of defending Asian space against contamination from Africans, reflected, "If someone is racist, he may not know why he is racist. He isn't a bad person. It is just who he is."¹⁶⁸ As Africanization programs revealed the vulnerability of Asians' political and economic security, some younger Asians described being uneasy with their elders' behavior toward Africans, while the Ismaili community' efforts to distinguish its members as Ugandans led some Hindus to recall,

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Baldev Valia, London, February 2013

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Lona Sutaria, London, March 3, 2013.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Asha Patel, London, March 2, 2013.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Ramesh Mulani, Kampala, May 26, 2012.

“They changed. They stopped inviting us” to social functions and acted “somehow above.”¹⁶⁹

The texture of daily life in the bustle of Main Street produced opportunities for playful mockery and gossip.¹⁷⁰ In some cases, this humor naturalized the hegemony of racialized class hierarchies by mocking individuals who failed to act like their peers. Dilip Gohil described how his father was “the only Asian to ride a bicycle in Kabale” even though he owned a car. Whenever he rode down Main Street to the bank, “everyone laughed, ... even servants.”¹⁷¹ If the image of Asians engaged in manual labor had fed the menacing propaganda of the anti-Asian UNM in Buganda in 1959 [see Chapter 2], the specter of a wealthy Asian man laboriously pedaling through Kabale appears, by contrast, to have united Asians and Africans in amusement at the anomaly. Africans also developed nicknames for particular Asian men. The names often commented on a physical trait or personal characteristic such as Kaheka (hunched back), Karimiino (big teeth), Karyabulo (likes to eat millet), or Rushaki (rooster). African domestic servants had particularly intimate knowledge of Asian domestic life and passed on gossip to one another and other Africans along Main Street as they went on errands, such as delivering messages from their employers to other Asian households.

The familiarity that characterized daily life on Main Street could provoke tensions and anxiety, as Asian control of urban space became an increasingly prominent target of government concern and perceived popular resentment. Even as census data reported a

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Lona Sutaria, London, March 3, 2013.

¹⁷⁰ Without challenging broad patterns of urban segregation and economic inequality, these interactions played on what Brennan refers to as “the economic familiarity that joined – and the social distance that separated – Indians and Africans.” Brennan, *Taifa*, 70.

¹⁷¹ Interview with Dilip Gohil, London, March 2, 2013.

decline in Kabale's population in the 1960s,¹⁷² Asian residents appealed to authorities to check what they perceived as an increase in loitering and animal grazing. In 1964, district officials relayed reports that "well able bodied ... beggars come to the town every Friday" going "to shops" and "from office to office standing at windows with open hands to ask for bread."¹⁷³ In 1967, officials reported "members of [the] Asian Community had written ... complaining" about crime by "Youngmen found roaming about in the Town."¹⁷⁴ Complaints against cattle grazing on the edges of the commercial district also increased, prompting politically contentious efforts by police to limit unlicensed grazing without offending influential cattle owners.¹⁷⁵

Fear of African criminality increased with the perceived precariousness of Asian control over urban space. Very sparse information exists about crime in Kabale in the 1960s, as many of the files that once contained the district's case records and court reports have since been emptied and filled with court documents from the 1990s. However, as district officials debated how to respond to these complaints, they reported that crime was "under control" even as "the number of young men roaming about in the Town has not decreased."¹⁷⁶ Such observations suggest that some Asians' complaints may have responded as much to the perceived encroachment on Asian spaces as to actual crime. By 1967, three African traders had managed to rent commercial space in the Asian commercial

¹⁷² From 10,186 in 1959 to 8,234 in 1969.

¹⁷³ KDA "District Team Minutes" Beggars in Kabale Town, September 7, 1964: 58/64 (d) (iv).

¹⁷⁴ KDA "District Team Minutes" Young Men in the Town, May 8, 1967: 23/67 (a) (iv).

¹⁷⁵ Fines and imprisonment for "Grazing Cattle in the Town contrary [to] the Urban Authority Rules" remained steady throughout the late 1960s. KMCA ledger "Original Criminal Cases – Kigezi" 1968-1970.

¹⁷⁶ KDA "District Team Minutes" July 14, 1967: 30/67 (a) (iv).

district on Main Street.¹⁷⁷ Two years later, lawmakers passed the Trade Licensing Act, which, as discussed in the following chapter, demarcated central business districts including Kabale's Main Street off limits to non-citizen traders, a category that they explicitly linked with Asians.¹⁷⁸ The Africanization programs that brought African traders into this area were controlled by the UPC's governing bureaucracy, which attempted to suppress criminal behavior that could undermine its authority. As a result, there was little space for the political valorization of crime as acts of racial justice, which had characterized the latter stages of the UNM boycott in Buganda.¹⁷⁹

Anti-Asian politicians denounced criminality, but crime was embedded in the spatial dynamics of racial segregation in Kabale. The anecdotal recollections of Asian residents suggest that some Africans engaged in acts of provocation that transgressed the barriers that Asians attempted to maintain between public commercial space and private domestic life, through which female honor and endogamy were protected. When Lona Sutaria describes "difficulties" in Kabale in the years preceding the 1972 expulsion, she recalls two provocations in which African men violated or threatened her personal space. She recalls, "I was walking in town and a man just grabbed my breast." She believed that such an incident would have been "unthinkable before" the UPC and Amin governments' campaigns to Africanize urban space and attendant desires to access private Asian spaces. In a second recollection, she describes how a man stopped as he passed her family's verandah and leaned forward to tell her, "I will tie my goats here one day."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ KDA "District Team Minutes" Trade, October 20, 1967: 5.

¹⁷⁸ See Chapter 4. *The Trade (Licensing) Act, 1969*, Act No. 14 of 1969, (20 March 1969).

¹⁷⁹ Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, 212–221.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Lona Sutaria, March 3, 2013.

Such stories of provocation suggest growing tension around African transgression of private Asian space and Asian women's honor. The author Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, who grew up in Kampala, has criticized how Ugandan Asians' "Terror of contamination and failure encouraged the transformation of Asian women into porcelain ornaments, symbols of purity and wealth, exactly like middle-class Victorian women."¹⁸¹ In tensions over the control of urban space, Asian women and the spaces that they occupied became contested objects of desire. Some African men recalled unspecific stories from domestic servants that Asian women "believed African men are good at sex." Stories also circulated that an Asian woman in Kabale gave birth to an African child. "We would hear [such stories] from these people around outside who worked with them [Asians]," remembered one man.¹⁸²

Struggles for control of Asian spaces, from neighborhood streets to verandahs, contributed to tension in the competitive, intimate domains of small town life. The chapter concludes by considering how one anti-Asian politician and trader navigated local commercial and social networks that connected him with Kabale's Asian community even as he sought political capital by appealing to Africans' hostility to Asian traders.

Small town politics

Many of the most articulate proponents of anti-Asian urban populism were deeply familiar with Asians, not as distant landlords or exploiters, but as colleagues and competitors in small commercial communities. Traders who objected to their Asian counterparts' unfair competitive advantage, employees who resented rude treatment, and customers who were

¹⁸¹ Alibhai-Brown, *No Place Like Home*, 57.

¹⁸² I was unable to verify this story, which several Asian former residents denied.

frustrated with cycles of debt all regularly interacted with Asian traders, often across shop counters on Kabale's Main Street. Unease with the spatial arrangements that reinforced racial and class hierarchies in these interactions animated the rhetoric and popularity of anti-Asian politicians. However, these politicians often maintained deep social and commercial relationships with Asian individuals and communities. Relationships that were embedded in the scale and spatial dynamics of small towns shaped how politicians and provocateurs used anti-Asian language to summon and incite constituencies of urban Africans.

Kabale's most vocal critic of Asian traders was Semu Lugarama Itazya, a trader and divisive figure in Kigezi's UPC branch.¹⁸³ Itazya was born in 1923 in Bugongi, where his father was a chief and Anglican Church leader. After studying at the elite Kigezi High School in Kabale and Kings College Buddo in Buganda, he became a Government Forest Officer first in Kigezi and then in Bunyoro. In the early 1950s, he returned to Kabale where he worked for an Asian firm, Kigezi Wholesalers. After a short time, Itazya left to start his own business and became the first African to open a shop in Kabale's new African trading district. When the building was complete, he opened a general merchandise shop and moved into the rear residence with his first wife. He rapidly acquired a reputation as a shrewd trader and won the first ever Bell Cup in 1958, which the Ministry of Commerce awarded to the best African trader in the Protectorate. In 1962, he earned a scholarship to study commerce in the United Kingdom, where he studied for a year, cutting short the second year of his program in order to return to politics in Kigezi.

¹⁸³ Lugarama was sometimes spelled Rugarama. Background information on Mr. Itazya's life is based primarily on an interview with his second wife. Interview with Mary Rugarama, Kabale, June 2013.

In the 1950s, Itazyia joined the ranks of well-educated Bakiga men with experience in Uganda's civil service who pursued political ambitions alongside commercial enterprises. In 1953, he organized over fifty traders from across Kigezi into an association whose constitution demanded "universal suffrage for African traders in Kigezi District."¹⁸⁴ Officials considered him to be the most skilled African trader in the district and appointed him to Kigezi's Trade Development Committee, where he lobbied for government commercial education programs to reach aspiring traders.¹⁸⁵ Despite this appointment, district officials worried that he was "a politically agitated gentleman with four dismissals for dishonesty," who had surrounded himself with others who had been fired from the civil service for various offences.¹⁸⁶ Itazyia faced repeated conflicts within the Kigezi African Traders Association when other members and aspiring leaders accused him of embezzling funds and using the organization for his own purposes.¹⁸⁷ Police suspected that he periodically sent inflammatory letters to the press and district officials with the forged signatures of his political rivals. In one instance in 1954, he allegedly forged a letter under the signature of his political and business rival Paulo Ngologoza, which condemned a resettlement policy that the latter advocated. "A sad thing here in Kigezi, much of our land

¹⁸⁴ KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" Maltby Tour Report, March 26, 1954: 12.

¹⁸⁵ KDA old box 589 file ADM 20 J "Trade Development District Council" Trade Development Committee Minutes, June 25, 1956: 2; KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" DC to Commissioner of Trade, March 4, 1953: 4.

¹⁸⁶ KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" DC to Commissioner of Trade, March 4, 1953: 4; KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" Maltby Tour Report, March 26, 1954: 12.

¹⁸⁷ KDA old box 589 file ADM 20 J "Trade Development District Council" Trade Development Committee Minutes, October 31, 1956: 3; KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" DC, June 5, 1964: R61.

has been taken from us, the owners” while authorities “remove us into deserts and other unsuitable places.”¹⁸⁸

Itazyia’s forged letter reflected his provocative style and a political philosophy based on the authority of elder men over land and the movement of people. Itazyia had spent his formative years at Kigezi High School, a hotbed of the East African Revival, a movement that rejected the authority of communities bounded by a shared past and location, instead looking to a broader horizon of individuals accounting for their sins and preparing for God’s final judgment.¹⁸⁹ Whatever influence the Revival exerted over him as a student in the 1930s was replaced in the 1950s and 1960s with advocacy based on ancestral claims to land and heritage. He informed the Minister of Regional Administration in 1963, “I am writing to inform you that Kabale Township is a Town whereby natives have lived before the existance [*sic*] of British rule and its population has even become less and less because of unnecessary restrictions.”¹⁹⁰ For Itazyia, rights to urban entitlements, including business licenses and control of urban space, derived not from claims to the civic rights of cosmopolitan urban citizenship but from ancestral claims to land. “The Town is occupied by natives who live under customary laws and their way of living is not different from what other brothers of Kabale live in.”¹⁹¹ Drawing on the arguments of Bataka activists in Buganda who used ancestral graves to assert clan members’ rights to land, Itazyia asserted that he and his followers deserved representation on the Town Council and exemption

¹⁸⁸ UNA Confidential box 16 file C 904 “Press Censorship Ordinance (Policy)” Paul Kaguhangina Ngologoza [*sic*] to Editor Uganda Post, n.d. [January 1954]: 23A.

¹⁸⁹ Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival*, chap. 3.

¹⁹⁰ KDA box 506, file C MUN 4 “Township & Urban Development” Itazyia to DC, May 21, 1963: 40.

¹⁹¹ KDA box 506, file C MUN 4 “Township & Urban Development” Itazyia to DC, May 21, 1963: 40.

from township ordinances.¹⁹² “I was born in the same Town and my great grand father’s tomb is within the Town.”¹⁹³

A reading of Itazya’s public proclamations and correspondence with district officials provides a picture of a divisive demagogue who appealed to virulent anti-Asian sentiments among a constituency of Bakiga traders. “The trader has always been exploited by the Indian trader in his area,” he wrote in statement for broadcast on Radio Uganda. “The Indian wants to make a lot of money and remove it from this country to develop another Government and people in India his home of origin.”¹⁹⁴ In another attack on the enforcement of cattle grazing laws, he wrote to the District Commissioner “on behalf of the general public in Kabale” to complain about a public notice against the practice issued by the Goan town clerk. “If an Asian could now discuss for the African in Kabale I doubt how popular the Town Clerk is going to be!”¹⁹⁵ His letters, which he often copied widely to the Town Clerk, the District Commissioner, and relevant government ministries in Kampala, attacked what he perceived as government collusion with wealthy Asians against Africans in towns, whose rights derived from ethnic heritage. “The people are already over-taxed,” he wrote. The Town Authorities should raise assessment rates “at the expense of the rich men who are exploiting the poor African in Kigezi and sending the collections to other

¹⁹² On Bataka land in Buganda, see Holly Elisabeth Hanson, *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003).

¹⁹³ KDA box 506, file C MUN 4 “Township & Urban Development” Itazya to Minister of Regional Administration, July 27, 1967: 107.

¹⁹⁴ KDA box NC 3 file Inf 3 Pt III “Broadcasting” Itazya, Trends in Trade in Uganda, n.d. [1962]: 13A.

¹⁹⁵ KDA box 506 file C MUN 4 “Township & Urban Development” Itazya to DC, May 21, 1963: 40.

countries.”¹⁹⁶ “It is high time now we made money and increased our production and consumption here in our country – this is our Uganda.”¹⁹⁷

The racial and class Manicheanism in Itazya’s writing relied on appeals to struggles over particular commercial spaces in Kabale, which he generalized in order to appeal to pan-African unity against non-African minorities. The racial dynamics in which commercial space was produced in Kabale provided him with considerable material for concern. In addition to his condemnation of Asian traders and civil servants’ collusion to exclude Africans from grazing their animals near Asian residential and commercial areas, Itazya also denounced “the Asian encroachment in the zones in Township set aside for the African Trade.”¹⁹⁸ Itazya’s approach garnered support among small traders who were frustrated by the entrenchment of Asian business interests, but others were less inclined to antagonize members of Kabale’s Asian community. The sons of Itazya’s political and business rival Paul Ngologoza had been approved to develop a plot on the northern edge of Main Street near the Asian commercial district in 1954. However, when Ngologoza heard of “complaints raised by the Indians,” he requested their license be transferred to a plot in the African trading district. “Myself being a ruler and a leader of people, I should not like my sons to be involved into such complaints.”¹⁹⁹

Itazya attempted to garner support among African publics across East Africa by evoking tensions in negotiations with Asian shopkeepers over shop counters. In a letter to

¹⁹⁶ KDA box 506, file C MUN 4 “Township & Urban Development” Itazya to DC, May 21, 1963: 40.

¹⁹⁷ KDA box NC 3 file Inf 3 Pt III “Broadcasting” Itazya, Trends in Trade in Uganda, n.d. [1962]: 13A.

¹⁹⁸ KDA old box 589 file ADM 20 J “Trade Development District Council” Trade Development Committee Minutes, September 16, 1959: 33A.

¹⁹⁹ KDA old box 521 file C MUN 4 “Townships” Ngorogoza to Chairman Township Committee, January 28, 1954: 8.

Radio Uganda, he urged its editors to translate two essays on salesmanship and trade into all of Uganda's indigenous languages, as he defended only sending an English version: "it would not serve any purpose if I [translated] it in [just] one language."²⁰⁰ The documents instructed African traders to adopt a friendly persona with clients, in contrast with Asians who bullied their African customers.

In East Africa about 95% of township trade in retail is in the hands of Indians, and in the store customers find the salesman sitting on a chair or standing; the approach is 'what do you want?' - then the customer will state what she wishes to buy and then the article is either brought to her or placed on the counter. Shockingly the first price or marked price is high and then haggling take place until either the quoted price is halved or one third of the price is cut down. The customer is always prepared for abusive words. this is during the process of making a sale!²⁰¹

Itazya urged his listeners to condemn the unwelcoming, hierarchal arrangement of Asian shops and the abusive behavior that it allowed Asian shopkeepers to direct against an archetypal female customer. He concluded by exhorting male African traders to defend morality by exhibiting "courtesy" and "always be[ing] clean both in mind and body," which will "build goodwill for the store."²⁰²

If Itazya's writing used stark racial language to condemn injustices perpetuated by Asians in commercial spaces, they omitted mention of the wider connections that he maintained with Kabale's Asian community that extended beyond shop settings to homes and social spaces. As Itazya divided Kabale, Uganda, and East Africa between Indians and Africans in his political rhetoric, he cultivated relationships with Asians to assist in his

²⁰⁰ KDA box NC 3 file Inf 3 Pt III "Broadcasting" Itazya to PS Ministry of Information, October 5, 1962: 13.

²⁰¹ KDA box NC 3 file Inf 3 Pt III "Broadcasting" Itazya, Salesmanship, n.d. [1962]: 13A.

²⁰² KDA box NC 3 file Inf 3 Pt III "Broadcasting" Itazya, Salesmanship, n.d. [1962]: 13A.

business and political ventures. Asian traders remembered him as an “anti-Indian” politician, but they also recalled that he was a frequent visitor in the offices and homes of several Asian businessmen.²⁰³ His familiarity with rivalries among Asian traders gave him allies in Town Council disputes, including a heated debate over the licensing of Kabale’s largest construction project, which he felt would not bring “enough revenue from land as a gift of God.”²⁰⁴ Among the homes where he regularly visited was that of a Punjabi businessman, Mr. Sania Mohammed, who was known for providing assistance and favorable loans to African traders. In the 1940s, Mr. Mohammed’s family had taken in the six-year old sister of a domestic servant whose mother recently died. The girl, Mary, grew up in their home speaking Kiswahili and Gujarati and recalled that her only childhood friends were Asians, as she was the only African child in the Asian primary school. “They were like family.”²⁰⁵ After meeting Semu Itazya in 1956, she became his second wife.

Intimate connections among Africans and Asians within and across the segregated spaces of Kabale provoked fears of contamination and were inconvenient in racial political rhetoric, but they were also essential to small town commercial life. In some settings, Itazya moderated his language to appeal to a non-racial business fraternity in Kabale. In announcing the foundation of the Kabale Chamber of Commerce, he encouraged attendance from “all sections of the commercial community in the vicinity of Kabale ... as there is no white, black, red, yellow or brown money.”²⁰⁶ In other instances, cooperation among Asian

²⁰³ Interview with Ramesh Mulani, Kampala, July 2013.

²⁰⁴ KMCR “Plot No. 101 Kabale Rd.” Itazya to Town Clerk, November 18, 1963: 71.

²⁰⁵ Interview with Mary Itazya, Kabale, June 2013.

²⁰⁶ KDA box 537 file INF 7 “Kabale Town Council” Itazya “Notice to the General Public in Kabale Township Formation of Kabale Chamber of Commerce and Trade,” January 30, 1967: 8.

and African traders remained off stage affairs, conducted in sitting rooms or elite bars out of sight from wider African publics.

Racial populists such as Semu Itazya summoned African publics by presenting ideals of a common racial heritage that was threatened by the exploitative practices of male Asian shopkeepers. However, Itazya's rhetoric, like the memories of many Kabale residents, was deeply spatialized. Histories of urban geography, commerce, and administration created arenas of tense commercial and social negotiation that reproduced racial and class hierarchies. Efforts to manage or contest these hierarchies could produce misunderstanding and anxiety in a context dominated by government programs to bring Africans into commerce and make them visible in commercial centers.

State-directed programs to reallocate commercial space and remake the racial character of Uganda's towns failed to overcome legacies of segregation built into urban infrastructure. Asian traders targeted by Africanization programs attempted to protect their shops by playing on official anxiety over the maintenance of urban space. We turn to this subject now.

Chapter Four

Legal Claims, Spatial Histories, and the “Spirit of Africanization”

In late 1972, Pravin Nathwani and his brother Kish took a daylong journey from their home in Kabale to Kampala to verify their citizenship statuses. In August, President Idi Amin had declared: “Asians holding [non-Ugandan passports] will have to leave Uganda within three months,” and authorities would “carefully check the citizenship of those claiming to be Ugandan Asians.”¹ The brothers, born in Kabale, had registered as citizens after independence. With birth certificates and documents from the Ministry of Internal Affairs in hand, they proceeded one at a time into a room where an exhausted young clerk inspected their papers. Pravin, who entered first, emerged with a card confirming his status as a Ugandan citizen; Kish, who followed, returned “stateless,” since the same clerk had declared his documents invalid despite being identical to those of his brother. While the rest of his family moved to the United Kingdom, Pravin was the only one to return to

¹ On August 19, Amin told a rally in Kigezi “that all the 23,000 Asians who hold Ugandan citizenship will also have to leave the country,” but he quickly reversed course, instead using the mandatory verification of all “Asians and half-castes” to revoke many of their Ugandan citizenship claims. “Some Will Stay, Some Will Go,” *Uganda Argus* 10 August 1972, 1; “All Asians Must Go,” *Uganda Argus* 21 August 1972, 1; “These Asians Can Stay,” *Uganda Argus* 23 August 1972, 1.

Kabale, from where some 700 residents classified as Asian had departed. He became Kabale's only remaining Asian resident in 1972.²

The Nathwanis' experience was not unlike those of many others during the Asian expulsion of 1972. It could easily fit within the familiar narrative in which Idi Amin decisively separated and excluded the sociologically distinct Asian minority from a stable Black national whole. However, such emphasis on the expulsion as a moment of rupture diverts attention from the ways that families like the Nathwanis became enmeshed in Ugandan urban life and administration. Many scholars have tended to ignore the complex work – discursive, social, and legal – of producing and also effacing ways of being Asian in Uganda's rapidly changing politics of control over urban spaces.³ Neither racial nor legal categories mapped neatly onto the micro-politics of Uganda's small towns, whose spatial dynamics shaped struggles over racial, economic, and gender boundaries. Social categories lacked internal coherence immunizing them from being constantly reshaped by an array of actors at the intersection of the state and the wider field of local urban governmentality. The expulsion involved a silencing of earlier bureaucratic negotiations that validated claims to citizenship and property, like those certified by the documents Pravin and Kish brought to Kampala.⁴

² According to government officials. Several residents whom they regarded as "half-castes" have remained in Kabale continuously since the 1960s and identify as "Asian." Interview with Pravin Nathwani and Kish Nathwani, Watford, United Kingdom, June 20, 2012; KDA, Resettlement of Asians, Box 87, File "Confidential Flimsies"; KDA, Mr. Pravin Kumar Popatlal Jeram Nathwani, 26 March 1973, File "Immigration," 281.

³ The foundational Marxist literature on the expulsion largely conflated race and class, and thus explained Asian behavior and sociality solely in a functional relationship to the market. For example, Mahmood Mamdani, "Class Struggles in Uganda," *Review of African Political Economy* 4 (November 1975): 33.

⁴ Pravin Nathwani's success in retaining his citizenship illustrates that Amin's action did not entirely erase claim-making. Indeed, as Anneeth Kaur Hundle demonstrates, many

Just two years before the expulsion, with the Nathwanis still in their early twenties, their lawyer had convinced a lowly grade two magistrate to legally invalidate the 1969 Trade Licensing Act. The Act was President Obote's most far-reaching attempt to shape the relationship between Asians and Uganda's towns.⁵ This case exemplified openings and limits for policy-makers, administrators, and would-be citizens; it also reconstituted urban governmentality. This chapter examines such legal negotiations and petitions to local and national authorities in light of Chapter 3's historical ethnography of space in Kabale. It offers a lens through which to see the messy politics of urban administration; efforts to distinguish social and legal groups drew on ambiguous, contested histories. It analyzes the intersections of racial thought and governmentality in Kabale in the final years of Milton Obote's first administration under the Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC) administration and popularly known as 'Obote I'. By shifting attention away from Amin's expulsion decrees to the administrative challenges of the preceding Obote years, this analysis points to continuities as others have observed in Asian precariousness in relation to the political economies and regimes of Obote and Amin.⁶ Its originality comes from pointing to struggles over urban space and their challenges to local administration in Uganda's districts and small towns.

Asians who carried on residing in Uganda continued to successfully negotiate their legal rights to property and citizenship and to claim and remake specifically Asian spaces throughout the 1970s. Hundle, "Exceptions to the Expulsion."

⁵ KDA, 2nd Grade Magistrate's Court, Kigezi, Criminal Case No. 35/70, 20 February 1970, File "Kigezi District Intelligence Committee."

⁶ Mamdani, "Class Struggles in Uganda"; Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 467–657.

Administrative challenges

Administration had long posed particular challenges in Kigezi region in southwestern Uganda, a zone of economic, political, and social mobility well before the arrival of traders from India in the early 1900s. Entering Kigezi from the Mbarara and Kampala to the northeast goes with a distinct change in landscape. Sparsely populated plains give way to steep hills cultivated with terraced plots creating numerous small, densely populated valleys. This landscape has long facilitated deeply localized political allegiances that confounded leaders with territorial ambitions, who competed with authority cultivated through perceived individual and collective healing capabilities.⁷ For British administrators and their postcolonial successors in the region, the roughly 500 kilometers separating them from the seat of central government necessitated considerable on-the-spot resourcefulness, even as the uneven terrain inhibited their surveillance over the entire territory. Since at least the early 1920s district commissioners consistently complained of Kabale's unreliable telegraph service, and when a telephone connection between Kabale and Kampala was finally established in 1955, it remained prone to months-long outages into the 1970s.⁸ Even after the construction of a new tarmacked road connecting Kabale with Mbarara, mail was often delayed, leading district leaders in 1970 to complain that they were "tired of reading 'Old' news as paper were arriving one day or two days late."⁹

⁷ Feierman, "African Histories and the Dissolution of World History."

⁸ UNA Secretariat Topical box G1 file G. 3/9 "Telegraphic + Telephone Communications: Mbarara-Kabale Line" Asst Telegraph Engineer to CS, March 25, 1929: 2; KDA, Quarterly report of DC Kigezi, 20 April 1920, File: "Kigezi District: Report for 1921-3"; KDA, "Annual Report Kigezi 1954," n.d.; KDA, Police Message DC to COMPOL KLA, 13 October 1971. Box 124. File: "Asian Census," 22.

⁹ UNA President's Office box 7 file 19 "District Team Minutes" Kigezi District Team Meeting, October 16, 1970; KDA "District Team Minutes" INF 2, January 12, 1968: 2/68.

Kigezi's administrators also struggled to move around their own district with limited government resources. In his 1945 annual report, the district commissioner complained, "officers of all departments [were] seriously hampered towards the end of the year by lack of motor transport [and] the apparent inability of the Transport Section to post a staff car to Kigezi which could be kept on the road."¹⁰ Without dependable communication with and resources from the capital, the region's administrators were often left to follow their own initiative.

While Kigezi's landscape has long posed administrative challenges, it has remained an enduring zone of exchange and mobility. Kigezi peoples (Banyakigezi) were vigorous farmers, producing consistent surpluses that allowed for a thriving exchange with nearby regions.¹¹ British administrators, like their local predecessors, struggled to exert political control over the area or to reshape its economic base. When the border between Rwanda and Uganda was demarcated in 1914, twenty kilometers south of the new administrative outpost of Kabale, it added a further layer of negotiation to commercial and migratory networks. The Baganda chiefs through whom the British sought to exert control over the region found it difficult to pin down those officially under their authority who refused to comport themselves as grounded and obedient subjects.¹² Despite British efforts to introduce cash crops, Kigezi farmers found them undesirable given the profitability of food crops for domestic consumption and regional markets. As Grace Carswell argues, colonial authorities did not recognize this economic activity as proper commerce, since it largely

¹⁰ KDA "Annual Report Kigezi District 1945" n.d.

¹¹ Carswell, *Cultivating Success in Uganda*, 24–48.

¹² Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival*, chap. 3.

evaded state surveillance and taxation.¹³ Although this exchange escaped the full grasp of state control, Kigezi did contribute to the colonial economy as a labor reserve, as Bakiga, Banyarwanda, and other Banyakigezi went to work on plantations and small farms in Buganda and Ankole.¹⁴ Thus, administrative possibilities in the region have been entangled with its peoples' mobility and entrepreneurship, along with its particular geography.

Like many small East African towns from the 1910s onward, Kabale was established as a center of colonial administration and commerce, and became not only a base for British administration but home to an assortment of civil servants and traders from East Africa and the Indian subcontinent. If Banyakigezi's mobility and economic innovation frustrated administrative imperatives, the mobile, commercially ambitious, and legally ambiguous population of South Asians in eastern Africa posed equally challenging administrative and discursive difficulties. They often relied on family and community networks for employment as well as social and legal protection. Thus, for ambitious young men often seeking to marry into respectable families in India, cultivating strong community bonds in eastern Africa was critical to enhancing one's reputation and social standing in religious and caste networks that extended across the Indian Ocean and East African interior.¹⁵ British administrators, however, preferred to address a single "Asian" population, which was largely seen as a self-evident racial category that informed legal definitions. Thus, as discussed in Chapter 1, those positioning themselves as community leaders sought official recognition of Hindu, Ismaili, Sikh and other communities but also often presented themselves to administrators as leaders of a general "Indian", "Asiatic," or

¹³ Carswell, *Cultivating Success in Uganda*.

¹⁴ Rutanga, "A Historical Analysis of the Labour Question in Kabale District," 66–71.

¹⁵ Morris, "Communal Rivalry among Indians in Uganda."

“Asian” community.¹⁶ Census takers, seeking to map a controllable reality, reified such categories throughout Protectorate rule, even as officials recognized that “a significant Asiatic floating population could well be spared” from enumeration unless “some Officers ... poke about the inner rooms and the back kitchens [*sic*] of Indian shops and residences to discover what Asiatics are in the Protectorate.”¹⁷

For British administrators, “Asiatics” fell into ambiguous double-negative legal categories, simultaneously “non-native” for taxation and most legal purposes and “non-European” concerning government employment. Their straddling of these categories, combined with their perceived urban anonymity, physical mobility, and economic opportunism divorced from a European civilizing mission, made Asians a particularly worrisome object of colonial planning. After abandoning the idea of small-scale Asian agricultural settlement, Protectorate officials effectively barred the alienation of land to “non-natives,” who by 1923 were only permitted to lease plots in urban centers or for plantation agriculture.¹⁸ They simultaneously imposed laws that effectively limited lucrative cotton ginning to established Asian-owned firms while introducing similarly preferential licensing laws for buying agricultural produce.¹⁹ However, officials continually

¹⁶ Ibid.; Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, chap. 3 and 8.

¹⁷ Each Protectorate census (1911, 1921, 1931, 1948 and 1959) enumerated numbers of Asians identified as Hindus, Mohammedans or Muslims, and Sikhs, while the 1948 report introduced further distinctions within a “Non-Native” census that included Europeans. KDA, “Annual Reports by District Commissioner on Kigezi District for the Year 1931,” 30 January 1932, File: “Annual Report – 1930, 1931 & 1932,” 72; UNA A46 1701: 55, PC Eastern Province to CS, 6 November 1919.

¹⁸ West, *Land Policy in Buganda*, 135–138.

¹⁹ *The Uganda Cotton Ordinance, 1908* Ordinance No. 5 or 1908; *The Uganda Cotton Ordinance Rules, 1909 (No.1 and 2)*, (18 January 1909 and 30 December 1909); *The Uganda Cotton Rules, 1918*, (27 November 1918), page 124; *Native Produce Marketing Ordinance, 1932*, Ordinance No. 20 of 1932, (31 August 1932), sections 4-5, 11; Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation*, 72-79.

reiterated their view that although “many Asiatics [are] permanently settled in the country, ... natives are still more permanent.”²⁰ Likewise, Governor Hall introduced Uganda’s post-War Development Plan by declaring the government’s “established policy ... at developing Uganda for the benefit, not of imported Europeans or Asians, but of its African population.”²¹ Indeed, the Trading Ordinance of 1938 forbade “any non-native to trade outside any township or trading centre,” thus reinforcing an institutional connection between non-natives and urban space, while encouraging the promotion of African traders.²² Yet, many first, second, and third generation residents established social, commercial, and affective roots that established Uganda as their permanent home, despite their institutional recognition as non-native.

The extractive orientation of Protectorate infrastructure and the paternalistic ideals of government administration placed Asians in a precarious position in developmental post-War British policy. Under pressure from African political and social movements demanding immediate self-government, British officials began to situate ideals of colonial guidance in a limited, rapidly shrinking, time-scale. In 1957, Uganda’s Governor Frederick Crawford remarked, “There was a constant clamour for Africanization and if self-Government were to come in 10 to 15 years time, it was necessary to start now getting Africans in to the Civil Service as fast as possible, possibly by lowering standards slightly, while British tutelage was still available,” though he considered “25 years would best” in

²⁰ Acting Chief Secretary of the Legislative Council P.W. Perryman in “Legislative Council - Minutes of Meeting,” *The Official Gazette of the Uganda Protectorate*, (15 November 1929): 546; Motani, “The Ugandan Civil Service and the Asian Problem,” 103.

²¹ J. Hathorn Hall, “Foreword: Some Notes on the Economic Development of Uganda,” in Worthington, *A Development Plan for Uganda*, iii-iv.

²² *Trading Ordinance, 1938*, Ordinance No. 19 of 1938, (20 October 1938), section 5.

order “to hand over an efficient machine.”²³ African politicians’ opposition to multi-racialism and British paternalism in turning Uganda into a “primarily African” state encouraged a rapid effort to “Africanize” government employment. While officials promoted commercial education and assistance solely for Africans in the face of Asians’ dominance of trade, they faced ideological questions and political opposition in their approach to the civil service. As British officials on the Public Service Commission ramped up their efforts in 1957, they argued, “Strictly the term ‘Africanisation’ is incorrect, since it is the declared accepted policy of Government that all locally domiciled persons should rank equally ... A more accurate description of the policy might be some term such as ‘localisation’ or even ‘Ugandanisation’ of the Civil Service.”²⁴ African politicians were quick to argue that such an ostensibly non-racial policy contradicted official pronouncements about British paternalism toward African interests and the African character of a future self-governing state. “We are highly disturbed with the policy of ‘Localisation’,” wrote Milton Obote in 1959. “This policy is not in conformity with honest Trusteeship and the spirit of protection.”²⁵ Under such pressure, British officials insisted on Ugandanization, which included “Asians, and indeed Europeans, who have been born and brought up in Uganda,” but they deferred the question of “what is meant by a ‘Ugandan’” to future debates over “the conception of Uganda citizenship.”²⁶

²³ CO 822/1436 “Development of Constitution of Uganda” Record of Conference of East African Governors, October 18, 1957: 18.

²⁴ CO 822/1649 “Advancement of Africans in provincial administrations of Uganda” Appointment of Local People to Higher Posts in the Civil Service, September 19, 1957: 12E1.

²⁵ CO/1353 “The Uganda National Congress” Obote to Macleod, December 1, 1959: 100.

²⁶ Uganda Protectorate, Report of the Commissioners for Africanisation 1962, Sessional Paper No. 7 of 1962, (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1962), 2. For a discussion of debates over “Africanization” and “localization” in Tanganyika, see Brennan, *Taifa*, 154–157.

Official equivocation over the legal status of “permanently settled” “non-natives” and African suspicion of Asian political rights converged to limit Asians’ citizenship options. Between 1948 and 1962, The British Nationality Act had in theory, as Kathleen Paul describes, enshrined “a larger vision of universal imperial nationality [that] outweighed racialized difference” by placing colonial subjects under the same rubric as citizens of Great Britain itself.²⁷ However, with the independence of many of Britain’s colonies and protectorates and the rise of a Conservative government in the United Kingdom, Ugandan Asians saw their legal options tighten. As Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies or British Protected Persons,²⁸ Ugandan Asians belonged to a distinct legal category from African subjects, which, as Mahmood Mamdani has argued, endowed the former with limited civic rights but without claims to autochthony.²⁹ Fearful that decolonization would trigger non-white immigration from groups not included into nationalist projects, Britain’s new Conservative government passed the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, which required persons with these legal designations to apply for work or study exemptions in order to enter the United Kingdom, the quotas for which were far smaller than the number of applicants.³⁰

Uganda Protectorate officials were deeply influenced by Tanganyikan policy, and their Governors were in close contact on “Africanisation or Localisation.” CO 822/1437 “Development of Constitution of Uganda” Crawford to Turnbull, July 25, 1959: 122.

²⁷ This applied to “British protected persons” and the newly created category “citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies.” Kathleen Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 23; British Nationality Act, 1948 Part II.

²⁸ The two categories distinguished between individuals born in British colonies and those born in protectorates. Brennan, *Taifa*, 247 fn 229.

²⁹ Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*.

³⁰ *Commonwealth Immigrants Act, 1962*. Part I Section II.

As the United Kingdom redefined the rights of non-white Commonwealth citizens, Ugandan Asians' were also denied the protection of automatic Ugandan citizenship. At constitutional negotiations in London in June 1962, just a month before the Commonwealth Immigrants Act took effect, both British and Ugandan politicians attempted to minimize their legal responsibilities to Ugandan Asians after Ugandan independence. In the Citizenship Committee, British delegates argued that non-Africans in Uganda, regardless of current legal status, had stronger ties with Uganda than with Great Britain and should therefore automatically acquire Ugandan citizenship.³¹ Godfrey Binaisa with the UPC delegation objected, "that the Uganda Government were being asked to agree to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, without obtaining any advantage in exchange."³² He insisted on following Tanganyika's model, which required non-Africans to apply for citizenship within two years. He demanded that Uganda's government be able to test applicants' fluency in an African language other than Kiswahili and to require a "moral character test" to weed out "felons." For Binaisa and his fellow UPC delegates, "the conditions in Uganda were such that the Government felt [not only] that people should make a definite choice to become a Uganda citizen and declare their allegiance to the country" but that "the new state [should] have the right to decide the quality of its citizens."³³ The high drama of the negotiations culminated in a victory for most of the UPC's

³¹ CO 822/2440 "Uganda Independence Conference, 1962: Citizenship Committee: memoranda" Automatic Acquisition of Uganda Citizenship, June 15, 1962: 2.

³² CO 822/2441 "Uganda Independence Conference, 1962: Citizenship Committee: Records of Meetings" Record of Meeting, June 14, 1962: 3.

³³ Abu Mayanja argued that such requirements could separate those who were "settled" from mere "residents." CO 822/2441 "Uganda Independence Conference, 1962: Citizenship Committee: Records of Meetings" Record of Meeting, June 14, 1962: 3; CO 822/2441 "Uganda Independence Conference, 1962: Citizenship Committee: Records of Meetings" Record of Meeting, June 22, 1962: 9.

demands, though no language or character tests would be required and English or Kiswahili were considered acceptable. Only Mr. D.A. Patel with the opposition Democratic Party (DP) objected, pleading that the registration requirements which treated Asians as foreigners would render them vulnerable given that “Asians at present in Uganda had no country to which to go, as they were not citizens of either India or Pakistan.”³⁴

The settlement between British and UPC negotiators over Ugandan citizenship created a labyrinth of legal requirements that the British and Ugandan governments, as well as Ugandan Asians, attempted to manipulate for their own purposes. Individuals had two years to apply for Ugandan citizenship through a process that required several steps, each of which left a documentary trail for the UK government, the Ugandan government, and individual applicants to mobilize in their attempts to delineate or destabilize their respective obligations and claims. One had to apply to the Immigration Department and then, once registered, to take an oath of allegiance, to declare one’s intentions concerning residence, and to renounce one’s previous citizenship status by registering at the Home Office within three months.³⁵ British delegates had presciently predicted that the legal ambiguity of Ugandan Asians after independence “might cause friction between the Uganda Government and the United Kingdom Government,” as the former attempted to reward African constituencies at the expense of Asians and the latter wished to limit immigration.³⁶ Inconvenient to both governments, Ugandan Asians had to navigate a web of

³⁴ CO 822/2441 “Uganda Independence Conference, 1962: Citizenship Committee: Records of Meetings” Record of Meeting, June 18, 1962: 5.

³⁵ *Constitution of Uganda, 1962*, Articles 7, 8.

³⁶ CO 822/2441 “Uganda Independence Conference, 1962: Citizenship Committee: Records of Meetings” Record of Meeting, June 18, 1962: 5.

documentation and government bureaucracies in order to claim the protections of citizenship that neither the United Kingdom nor Uganda appeared eager to extend.

There was considerable continuity between the legal language of native and citizen,³⁷ but government policy was not a projection of a coherent logic that these categories contained; rather it was an arena of contestation, in which the slipperiness of legal and racial terms made them resources in a fractured political economy. While these categories informed segregationist policies and offered tools for the articulation of racialized nationalism, their inconsistencies left open a wider range of uses that upset efforts to map them onto local contexts. As Milton Obote's independent government deployed racial and legal categories in the management of urban space, people negotiated their claims to property and particular spaces with local administrators in ways that often frustrated the political aims underlying government policy.

Africanization under Obote I

At independence, the administrative history of Asians in Uganda formed into narrative controversies and political opportunities, which Milton Obote's government sought to harness. In 1968, the government-appointed Committee on Africanisation of Commerce and Industry issued its final report, which provided legislative recommendations that were to become central to Obote's loose political platform of economic nationalism called the

³⁷ Mahmood Mamdani, "When Does a Settler Become a Native? Reflections on the Colonial Role of Citizenship in Equatorial and South Africa" (University of Cape Town Inaugural Lecture Series, University of Cape Town, May 13, 1998).

“Move to the Left.” The report opened by foregrounding the social and aesthetic control of urban space:

It is a well-known fact that Uganda’s commerce and industry is predominantly in the hands of non-Africans most of whom are non-citizens. This fact also accounts for the non-indigenous character and appearance of our towns and trading centres, which to a first visitor to the country would look like a transplanted Bombay, Calcutta or Madras, except that they would perhaps be tidier and less populated.³⁸

This passage, like the legislation the report went on to propose, identified a legal language of citizenship as a means of remaking the racial character of Uganda’s urban commercial space. The authors lamented, only “a sprinkling of commercial concerns belonging to Africans may be found in our towns,” while “our young boys and girls” and “our African traders” lack educational preparation and institutional support like “Asians [who] band together against such an ‘intrusion’ [of] African trading in their midst.”³⁹ The report proposed “a Trade Licensing Act,” similar to one recently instituted in Kenya, that would exclude “non-citizens from carrying out business of any description in rural areas and certain parts of town,” which “will inevitably throw a good number of non-citizens out of business.”⁴⁰

The government’s increasing focus on the racial character of Uganda’s towns came at a time of growing economic instability. As neo-Marxist scholars were to subsequently note, Obote’s government faced a crisis by 1969 in the face of a stagnant productive base as it attempted to pacify diverse constituencies including a business class increasingly

³⁸ Government of Uganda, *Report of the Committee on Africanisation*, 3.

³⁹ Government of Uganda, *Report of the Committee on Africanisation*, 15, 3-4.

⁴⁰ Government of Uganda, *Report of the Committee on Africanisation*, 11.

enmeshed with the governing bureaucracy.⁴¹ By targeting Asians through a legal idiom of citizenship, the government could appeal to diverse and diffuse anti-Asian sentiment including among aspiring African traders cut out of Asian family business networks and among African consumers who resented racial hierarchy in debt relationships with Asian creditors. Like its counterpart in Kenya, Uganda's Trade Licensing Act was designed to expand an African commercial class allied with state power. Others have noted that such an effort to enrich a commercial class appeared to contradict the socialist rhetoric of the "Move to the Left."⁴² Yet Obote's programs, like those of Julius Nyerere in neighboring Tanzania, recognized the political volatility of urban social and commercial life.⁴³ He decried the "educated youth[s'] aimless love for urban life" and threatened that the mass "clearing of slums" was imminent in the final year of his rule.⁴⁴ With high unemployment, he simultaneously attempted to placate unemployed youth by expelling roughly 20,000 Kenyan urban workers from the country.⁴⁵ Yet, Uganda's urban politics in the 1960s and early 1970s have remained little studied, leaving stories of how such politics were actually negotiated largely invisible in narratives informed by the high politics of national leadership.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Mamdani, "Class Struggles in Uganda," 46–53; E.A. Brett, "The Political Economy of General Amin," *IDS Bulletin* 7, no. 1 (April 1975): 17–18.

⁴² T.V. Sathyamurthy, "The Social Base of the Uganda Peoples' Congress, 1958-1970," *African Affairs* 74, no. 297 (October 1975): 456.

⁴³ Ivaska, *Cultured States*; Brennan, *Taifa*.

⁴⁴ Obote, "His Excellency the President's Communication from the Chair of the National Assembly on 20th April 1970," in *Proposals for Document No. 1 on "The Move to the Left,"* 24, 34.

⁴⁵ Ali Mazrui, "Casualties of an Underdeveloped Class Structure: The Expulsion of Luo Workers and Asian Bourgeoisie from Uganda," in *Strangers in African Societies*, ed. William A. Shack and Elliott P. Skinner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 262–274.

⁴⁶ Peterson and Taylor, "Rethinking the State in Idi Amin's Uganda". On official rhetorical approaches to urban spaces under Idi Amin, see Alicia C. Decker, "Idi Amin's Dirty War:

The Trade Licensing Act of 1969 was the most far-reaching legal initiative to reshape the aesthetic and commercial character of Uganda's towns since independence in 1962. The act enabled "the Minister responsible for local administrations and urban authorities ... [to declare] any trading centre to be an area in which a person who is not a citizen of Uganda is prohibited from trading." It did so even as it upheld the 1938 Trading Ordinance that forbade "non-natives" and now "non-citizens" from trading "outside any city, municipality or town."⁴⁷ After the Act's passage, the Minister of Commerce and Industry William Kalema issued a four-page list of areas in every major town and numerous smaller trading centers where the act would take effect.⁴⁸ (His usurpation of a duty allocated to the Minister of Regional Administrations would later become the object of legal controversy in Kabale.) For Obote and his ministers, the Act's legal language of citizenship was openly intended to redress what they saw as a racial imbalance. Kalema informed a meeting of town clerks and administrative secretaries from each of Uganda's districts, "Although rightly according to the law [emphasis] for giving the new trade opportunities were placed on Uganda citizens ... the spirit of the Africanisation policy was that priority should be given to citizens of African origin."⁴⁹ The Africanisation Committee had promoted such a view, arguing that since colonial institutional discrimination had racialized the commercial sector, "the Government has an obligation to discriminate among

Subversion, Sabotage, and the Battle to Keep Uganda Clean, 1971-1979," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 43, no. 3 (2010): 489-513.

⁴⁷ *The Trade (Licensing) Act, 1969*, Act No. 14 of 1969, (20 March 1969), sections 1, 2b, 4a; *Trading Ordinance, 1938*, Ordinance No. 19 of 1938, (20 October 1938), section 5. [emphasis added]

⁴⁸ KDA. "Trade (Licensing) Act – Declaration of Restricted Areas." 28 July 1969. Box 175. File "Trade and Commerce," 81.

⁴⁹ KDA. "Notes Taken at a Meeting of Trade Licensing Authorities." 11 December 1969. Box 175. File "Trade and Commerce," 96.

its citizens on the basis of wealth” in order to support “the majority of the people (who happen to be Africans).”⁵⁰ The entanglement of legal and racial categories in the law and its public justification left considerable ambiguity over how these categories would correlate in the Act’s actual implementation. As Kalema acknowledged, the presence of “10,000 Ugandans [citizens] of non-African origin poses a problem in the implementation of the Africanisation policy.”⁵¹

By 1969, Obote’s UPC government found traction in arguments that identified Asians as a colonial class whose social exclusivity, urban concentration, and domination of commerce made their patriotism suspect. Restrictive licensing laws and segregationist town planning encouraged the concentration of Asians in urban commercial centers that they helped to develop, while economic inequality was stark. Economist Vali Jamal has estimated that by 1967 “non-African income” was thirty times greater than that of “African income” since “Asians maintained their monopoly of commerce and industry, and skilled and professional jobs.”⁵² To the Africanisation Committee and others in the UPC government, the aesthetic character of Uganda’s prosperous commercial centers reflected a painful colonial history that the political leadership had fought against. Rhoda Kalema, the wife of William Kalema, described her husband’s commitment to Africanization by comparing the organization of Kampala’s commercial thoroughfare with apartheid. “The town here before independence, the trade was under the hands of Asians. Almost wholly. Almost wholly Asians. All Kampala Road was Asian. Everywhere was Asians. ... It was just

⁵⁰ Government of Uganda, *Report of the Committee on Africanisation*, 10.

⁵¹ KDA. “Notes Taken at a Meeting of Trade Licensing Authorities.” 11 December 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 96.

⁵² Vali Jamal, “Asians in Uganda, 1880-1972: Inequality and Expulsion,” *The Economic History Review* 29, no. 4 (November 1976): 611–612.

like in apartheid. ... He hated apartheid so much. So freeing Africans ... this is how I'll come to [describe his work in support of] Africanization."⁵³

The history that Africanization advocates invoked was contested, and the status of Asians in relation to colonialism has been an object of both scholarly debate and political struggles. When faced with accusations that "Asian" was a colonial identity antithetical to national loyalty, some community leaders reframed Asian economic success as evidence of an independent pioneering initiative that developed Uganda and demonstrated investment in the country's future [see Chapters 1 and 5].⁵⁴ From this view, the racial spirit of Africanization policy appeared not as an obligatory redressing of colonial inequality, but as "African racism" against a people who had demonstrated their national loyalty through their investments and often their choice of citizenship.⁵⁵ A narrative of Asian loyalty to colonialism distorted a more complex picture. Some early activists who were critical of British rule in Uganda had found inspiration in and support from those seeking self-rule in India, and Asian-owned presses often printed African nationalist newspapers across East Africa.⁵⁶ Sugata Bose argues that alternative universalisms, in the form of both patriotic political and extra-territorial religious communities, were fostered in the circulation of

⁵³ Interview with Rhoda Kalema, Kampala, July 20, 2013.

⁵⁴ "Contribution of the Asian Community in the Economic Development of Uganda" in "Asian Makes Bridge Building Plea," *Uganda Argus*, (8 December 1971): 7; Ramchandani, *Uganda Asians*.

⁵⁵ Interview with Manzoor Moghul, Leicester, June 2012; Sushil Jain, "Expulsion of Asian Indians From Uganda: Or the Color of African Racism," *Migration World* 18, no. 3/4 (1990): 27–29.

⁵⁶ E.g. UNA, C Series Box 9, C.569 1919 File: "Native Affairs: Young Baganda Association." For newspapers in Kenya, see Bodil Frederiksen, "Print, Newspapers and Audiences in Colonial Kenya: African and Indian Improvement, Protest and Connections," *Africa* 81, no. 1 (February 2011): 155–72.

people and ideas across the Indian Ocean.⁵⁷ Thomas Metcalf⁵⁸ has recently contended that from the 1860s well into the twentieth century, “the web of imperial connections focused on India” shaped the social and political imaginations of peoples entangled in this web, which included Indians abroad, the peoples among whom they settled (many of whom were simultaneously invested in conjuring territorial patriotic communities⁵⁹), and European administrators.⁶⁰ However, the ascendancy of nationalist political movements left little political ground for celebrating Indian Ocean networks in Uganda, whether within or outside empire. Instead, some tried to establish a narrative of Asian economic entrepreneurship independent of British control, all the while reinscribing Asian identity with urban traders.

“Asian,” however, was not a stable discursive category. Its link to commercial exploitation, whether for good or ill, did not flow automatically from experience. Michael Twaddle urged scholars to “distinguish between [the] established prominence [of traders] in racial rhetoric and [their] supposed position in (largely absent) occupational statistics.”⁶¹ The 1948 “Census of the Non-Native Population” counted only half of all gainfully employed Asians in Uganda to be working in commerce, with significant numbers also in manufacturing industries and public services. Those in commerce, just over 5,000,

⁵⁷ Bose, *A Hundred Horizons*.

⁵⁸ Thomas Metcalf, *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 204. See also; Brennan, *Taifa*, 6–8.

⁵⁹ Derek R. Peterson and Giacomo Macola, eds., *Recasting the Past: History Writing and Political Work in Modern Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2009).

⁶⁰ Maini, “Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda.”

⁶¹ Michael Twaddle, “Was the Expulsion Inevitable?,” in *Expulsion of a Minority: Essays on Ugandan Asians*, ed. Michael Twaddle (London: The Athlone Press, 1975), 2.

constituted only fifteen percent of all those enumerated as Asian at the time.⁶² Historians have complicated an oft-repeated argument that class and race neatly coincided in Uganda⁶³ by demonstrating that South Asians were economically and professionally diverse despite their relatively small numbers.⁶⁴ Yet, census data itself inscribed racial categories that required constant reiteration to maintain relevance across varied social contexts. Urban segregation had not completely cut off interaction in politics, business, religious devotion, leisure activities, and sexual intimacy, while other ethnic, family, caste, and gender identities often rendered racial categories irrelevant in specific contexts.⁶⁵ There were marked limits to such social intercourse, from endogamous marriage norms to the spatialized divisions of urban life. However, as the work of Semu Itazya discussed in Chapter 3 illustrates, these were often accentuated in racial rhetoric, which was itself historically dynamic. Gardner Thompson observes that the numerically greater number of African traders in Uganda in the 1940s and 1950s were just as prone to overcharge their customers and resist competition as were their Asian counterparts,⁶⁶ though populist activists consistently portrayed these practices as a reflection of a peculiarly Asian character and lamented the perceived moral degradation of Africans employed by Asians.⁶⁷ While the Central Council of Indian Associations (CCIA) responded by portraying Asians as

⁶² Government of Uganda, *Report on the Census of the Non-Native Population*, table I, table XXXI and page 69.

⁶³ Mamdani, *From Citizen to Refugee*, 15; Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 213.

⁶⁴ Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa*.

⁶⁵ Tripp, "Women's Mobilization in Uganda."

⁶⁶ Thompson, *Governing Uganda*, 204–218.

⁶⁷ For example, Kizza, "Antipathy to Asians,."

a community committed to the common good and in harmony with African interests,⁶⁸ young activists in the Uganda Action Group (UAG) tried to empty the category Asian of political content altogether by affirming Asians' identification with African-dominated political parties [see Chapter 1].⁶⁹ "Asian" remained an ambiguous, politically sensitive category whose historical iterations allowed considerable malleability. As the following discussion of the Trade Licensing Act's implementation in Kabale demonstrates, the legal language of citizenship was equally manipulable, allowing petitioners to remake the relationship that policy-makers wished to draw between the two.

In 1969, less than seven years after independence, Milton Obote's government attempted to portray the enduring effects of racialized colonial policies as an affront to Uganda's national independence. As some scholars have argued, such a nationalist appeal was framed as a struggle by Africans, imagined self-consciously as a pan-ethnic race of indigenous Ugandans, to declare their entrance into modernity by claiming civic rights and Africanizing urban spaces.⁷⁰ Following their lead, the 1969 Trade Licensing Act could be read as a culmination of a nationalist politics of African empowerment, whose incomplete implementation paved the way for the more drastic expulsion three years later by Obote's successor, Idi Amin. However, this reading, however critical it may be of Obote's and Amin's initiatives, is shaped by a national archive, dominated by state planners and

⁶⁸ "Asians Confer on Common Roll," *Uganda Argus* (14 April, 1959): 1; Gardner Thompson, "The Ismailis in Uganda," in *Expulsion of a Minority: Essays on Ugandan Asians*, ed. Michael Twaddle (London: The Athlone Press, 1975), 39–40.

⁶⁹ "Minority Safeguards Not Needed, says Action Group," *Uganda Argus* (15 April 1959): 1; "U.A.G. 'Not a Political Party'," *Uganda Argus* (23 April 1959): 4; *Ibid.*, 40–41; Maini, "Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda," 117; Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 84.

⁷⁰ Mahmood Mamdani, "Beyond Settler and Native as Political Identities: Overcoming the Political Legacy of Colonialism," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43, no. 4 (October 2001): 654.

political figures invested in national projects. It does not demonstrate how such laws operated in practice or how Ugandans produced and used racial and legal knowledge to shape their communities. The stories with which people could account for their presence in Uganda and belonging to a community were multiple and contested, as were the futures to which they aspired. Drawing on histories of racial segregation, legal bifurcation, and the construction of domestic and commercial urban space, Kabale's Asian residents used legal and racial categories toward ends that administrators had intended to render impossible.

Race, space, and citizenship under the Trade Licensing Act

The legislators behind the Trade Licensing Act regarded the areas that were to be restricted under the new law as commercial zones whose racial character could be changed by reassigning trading licenses from non-citizen Asians to citizen Africans. However, the disputed legacies of urban racial segregation and legal recognition made the Act vulnerable to contestation. Individuals and communities that legislators attempted to exclude from urban commerce challenged the law's legal and racial premises by claiming entitlements to Ugandan citizenship and declaring their achievement of social integration. On Kabale's Main Street, as in other towns across the country, Asian families used both commercial and domestic spaces while managing boundaries between them. The law's narrow approach to commercial space allowed residents to block access to residential spaces, which complicated new traders' efforts to take over and operate the front shops without amenities such as latrines and sinks.



Figure 4.1 Plan of Kabale Town, 1950. Blocks A and B constituted the restricted zone under the 1969 Trade Licensing Act. Block C was the African trading area. Block J was the Asian residential neighborhood, popularly known as Kargote. The “Cinema Site” remained undeveloped until the construction of Town Council offices in 1974. For more on the spatial arrangements of Kabale, see Chapter 3. Map courtesy of Kabale Lands and Surveys Department.

The Act’s implementation required district and town council officials to match the legal categories of the law, and the racial categories used by the politicians who supported it, with individual traders in their administrative domains. In July 1969, Kigezi officials received instructions from the Minister of Commerce and Industry, William Kalema, to identify the citizenship status of all traders operating along “Main Street from Kirigime Road junction to the eastern end of the street” and to revoke the trading licenses of non-

citizens with shops in this area.⁷¹ Charged with enforcing “the spirit of the Africanisation policy” through the legal language provided in the Act, the officials responsible for its implementation, primarily the Town Clerk and the District Commissioner, faced the messy work of operationalizing slippery legal and racial categories. The immediate task facing the Town Clerk was to enumerate the traders of Kabale Road according to citizenship. However, his initial work showed that twenty-eight out of the thirty-three non-citizens he counted in the area had pending citizenship applications, rendering their legal statuses ambiguous since some had already renounced their previous citizenship.⁷²

The unresolved status of an estimated 12,000 out of 23,000 “non-native” applicants for Ugandan citizenship remained hotly contested until the expulsion decrees of 1972.⁷³ At independence, those subjects who did not automatically receive Ugandan citizenship faced conflicting pressures over what options to pursue. On one hand, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the Indian High Commissioner Apa Pant had urged Indians in East Africa to identify with the countries in which they were settled, while the Aga Khan advised his Ismaili followers to do the same.⁷⁴ The Commonwealth Immigrants Act reduced the protections offered to holders of United Kingdom of Colonies passport holders. However, many Ugandan Asians recognized their dependence as much in extra-territorial commercial and family networks, informed by histories of imperial citizenship, as in

⁷¹ KDA. Appendix to “Trade Licensing Act – Declaration of Restricted Areas.” 28 July 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 81. “Main Street” was also referred to as “Kabale Road” in other correspondence. KDA. Town clerk to Kigezi DC. 3 September 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 82.

⁷² KDA. Town clerk to Kigezi DC. 3 September 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 82.

⁷³ See “Uganda’s Case for Expelling Asians” in Government of Uganda, *Uganda’s Economic War*, 17-22.

⁷⁴ Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, 86; Stephen Morris, “Indians in East Africa: A Study in a Plural Society,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 7, no. 3 (September 1956): 208.

Uganda itself.⁷⁵ Meanwhile, the violent 1959 Uganda National Movement (UNM) anti-Asian boycott in Buganda and the anti-Asian rhetoric of many African politicians inhibited some Asians from throwing in their lot with a state led by advocates of Africanization.⁷⁶ Families sometimes sought security by having some members take Ugandan citizenship and others maintain their United Kingdom and Colonies status. As the former mayor of Kampala Sir Amar Maini observed, “There were a multitude of responses within the Asian community in Uganda, most of them designed to keep open as many options as possible. [This led to] charges of hypocrisy when private actions did not (and could not) match up to public, stated aspirations.”⁷⁷ Obote, like Amin after him, accused Asians collectively of vacillating loyalties as evidenced by the alleged high percentage of applicants for Ugandan citizenship who had failed to renounce their British nationality. Asian leaders meanwhile accused the government of failing to process applications made in good faith.⁷⁸

Citizenship did not so much provide a clear legal cover for analytically and politically amorphous racial categories as it presented another layer of contentious language for people to grasp and reshape. All but one of the twenty-eight non-citizens with pending applications counted by the Town Clerk collectively wrote to the District Commissioner, arguing that they should not be punished for the slow pace of immigration

⁷⁵ On imperial citizenship, see Sukanya Banerjee, *Becoming Imperial Citizens: Indians in the Late-Victorian Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

⁷⁶ Manzoor Moghal, *Idi Amin: Lion of Africa* (Central Milton Keynes: AuthorHouse, 2010), 75–76.

⁷⁷ Maini, “Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda,” 117.

⁷⁸ UNA. Office of the President 4: 8. “Report on Citizenship Submitted by Research Secretariat Office.” 1970; “Asian Makes Bridge Building Plea,” *Uganda Argus*, (8 December 1971): 8; “Memorandum of the Asian Leaders to His Excellency the President of the Second Republic of Uganda General Idi Amin Dada, in response to His Excellency’s speech dated 8th December, 1971” in Justin O’Brien, *Brown Britons: The Crisis of the Ugandan Asians* (London: Runnymede Trust, 1972), 40–42.

bureaucracy.⁷⁹ Sensitive to the “anxieties and fears” of some of his district’s large traders, the District Commissioner requested Mr. Kalema’s advice. However, the Minister, who was removed from the micro-politics involved in implementing the law, replied that it should be applied strictly, meaning that the petitioners were all required to vacate their shops.⁸⁰ Others found their trading licenses cancelled despite having acquired Ugandan citizenship, because they had inherited their businesses from non-citizen relatives. When district officials informed Minister Kalema on a visit to Kabale three weeks after the Act’s January first deadline that some businesses run by predominantly non-citizen families were legally held by a single citizen family member, Kalema declared that “this would not be accepted.”⁸¹

Such directives from the Ministry increasingly emphasized to local officials the racial spirit of the law in the face of petitions that invoked the same legal category of citizenship through which the Act was supposed to be operationalized. As the deadline for non-citizens to vacate their shops approached, officials in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry attempted to override the discretion of local officials and make the racial logic of the law clear. Permanent Secretary Katagyira instructed all town clerks in the country, “No non-African individual or company should be granted more than one trading licence ...

⁷⁹ The original letter was forwarded to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and no original copy survives in the Kabale District Archive. District Commissioner Malinga reported the contents in KDA. DC to PS Ministry of Commerce. 17 December 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 93.

⁸⁰ KDA. PS Ministry of Commerce to DC. 23 December 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 97.

⁸¹ KDA. “Hon. W.W. Kalema’s Tour of the Western Region Meeting Held at Kabale, on Tuesday 20th January 1970.” Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 120.

[including] non-African citizens also.”⁸² Katagyira’s directive was motivated by a concern that Asian traders’ commercial dominance might be more stable than the physical location of urban commerce. Uganda’s Cabinet ministers worried “that some of the affected non-citizens were trying to beat the law by transferring their businesses to areas declared as general business areas.”⁸³ This fear that the Act would merely shift the location of Asian commercial dominance prompted the Cabinet to instruct the Ministry of Commerce to exercise stricter control over licensing from local authorities. As a result, Katagyira ordered, “All applications from non-citizens intending to transfer their businesses to new or vacated premises should be rejected and such applicants should be referred to this Ministry.”⁸⁴

The racial language of the Ministry of Commerce’s instructions sat uneasily beside the Minister’s invocation of the Act’s legal language of citizenship “regardless of colour.”⁸⁵ However, where recourse to legal arguments over citizenship failed, some traders facing eviction invoked their role in Africanization itself in hopes of swaying officials to their defense. Thus, after the Town Clerk ordered the citizen owners of Kigezi Wholesalers to leave one of their two plots on Kabale Road, they appealed directly to the Ministry of Commerce, arguing that their business benefited Africans in Kabale by offering a commercial service and a source of employment, investment, and training. They argued that closing down one of their shops, which would force the company “to declare half its

⁸² KDA. “Trade Licensing Arrangements for 1970.” 22 December 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 100A.

⁸³ UNA President’s Office box 6 file 4 “Minutes of Special Meetings of the Cabinet” Cabinet Meeting December 20, 1969.

⁸⁴ KDA. “Trade Licensing Arrangements for 1970.” 22 December 1969. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 100A. [emphasis in original]

⁸⁵ KDA. “Hon. W.W. Kalema’s tour of the Western Region: Meeting with District Team and Planning in Kabale on 20th January, 1970.” Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 120.

[twenty-four African] employees redundant,” was counterproductive to the cause of Africanization.⁸⁶

Petitions over the Trade Licensing Act reveal not only traders’ efforts to exploit contradictions in the Act’s legal and racial justifications but also the topology of urban administration. Even where petitions were not copied directly to each of them, the Minister of Commerce Kalema or Permanent Secretary Katagyira, District Commissioner Malinga, and the Town Clerk Lugemwa routinely shared this correspondence seeking each other’s advice or approval. In so doing, they betrayed concerns particular to their respective positions in government bureaucracy. Except in politically sensitive cases, Mr. Kalema was primarily concerned that the racial spirit of Africanization policy should prevail. However, the District Commissioner was consistently more sensitive to the local economic and socio-political dynamics of the Act’s implementation, leading him to urge exemptions for several petitioners. For example, he successfully urged the Ministry to look favorably on an appeal from Nalal Kataria whom he characterized as a “humble old man ... [who] has, I gather, generously contributed to national causes.”⁸⁷ Given his responsibility for the social, political, and economic stability of the district, Malinga feared the consequences of implementing the letter of the law at the expense of the overall economic health of the district’s commercial center. He noted that during the first few days after businesses on Kabale Road owned by non-citizens had closed, few shops were opened with sufficient stocks, causing “a certain amount of embarrassment and inconvenience to the

⁸⁶ KDA. “Petition” to Minister of Commerce. 25 January 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 109.

⁸⁷ KDA. DC to PS, Ministry of Commerce. 2 February 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 117. This Minister’s response was initially negative, though Kataria reportedly continued to operate his shop until the 1972 expulsion. KDA old box 101 file TRD 1/3 3005 “Department of Commerce – Circulars” DC to PS Ministry of Commerce, July 28, 1972: 43.

customers.”⁸⁸ Thus, when six traders who had yet to leave their shops requested that they be able to keep their premises open on the edge of the citizens-only trading zone, Malinga promptly and successfully lobbied Minister Kalema to exempt their locations.⁸⁹ He did so despite protests from the Town Clerk Mr. Lugemwa, who objected that there were already more applications from Africans for trade licenses in the citizens-only zone than there were available shops.⁹⁰ Before Kabale became a municipality in the 1980s, its town clerks were civil servants charged with implementing statutes rather than appealing to constituents. Thus, although he recognized the near “hopeless” situation in the days after the Act’s initial implementation when few shops were open for business, Mr. Lugemwa’s primary concern was in the law’s enforcement.⁹¹ As such, he proved to be the most uncompromising of his colleagues.

While petitioners navigated these levels of bureaucracy in drawing officials to their side, others used different means to defend their control over commercial and residential spaces in the area targeted by the Trade Licensing Act. Some traders simply closed their shops and refused to leave or hand over their keys. Some Asian landlords demanded exorbitant rents that new tenants were unable to afford,⁹² while officials suspected that

⁸⁸ KDA. DC on Hon. W.W. Kalema Tour. 23 January 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 108A.

⁸⁹ KDA. Petition to DC. 19 January 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 103; KDA. DC to Town Clerk. 22 January 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 105.

⁹⁰ KDA. Town Clerk to PS, Ministry of Commerce. 9 February 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 122.

⁹¹ KDA. “Implementation of the New Trade (Licensing) Act, 1969.” 12 February 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 129.

⁹² KDA. W.W. Kalema’s Meeting with District Team. 20 January 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 131; KDA. PS Ministry of Internal Affairs to IGP. 25 March 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 145; KDA. Kagaba & Co to Karmali Kharamshi. 16 February 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 131. Kalema instituted a Rent Control Board in

others were conducting “‘window-dressing’ transactions” with Africans, who were employed to operate shop fronts on behalf of Asian owners.⁹³ Others attempted to sell their buildings or licenses to Africans, who hoped “that when the leases expire the controlling authorities will automatically grant them new leases ... which might not be the case.”⁹⁴

Officials could deploy police to prevent the illegal occupation or leasing of shops, but their legal mandate gave them little control over how residents’ guarded access to residential quarters. This action prevented new shopkeepers from accessing essential amenities and sustained the Asian character of Main Street. Despite the challenges faced by local officials, the Ministry of Commerce regarded Kabale’s implementation of the Trade Licensing Act as a success. By July 1972, district officials reported that only four non-citizens had managed to continue operating shops in the restricted area.⁹⁵ However, even when African traders managed to open for business, they often struggled with Asian landlords and tenants over access to the residential back rooms of Main Street’s commercial and residential buildings. Some residents bolted the doors leading into the front shops and refused to let the new operators use water and toilet facilities in their residences.⁹⁶ Meanwhile, Kabale’s Town Council “noted with very great concern the fact that there were some Land Lords, who were until now, still preventing the Shopkeepers who were rented only the front parts of the buildings from using all the existing facilities

an effort to curb rents charged to African shopkeepers. “Rent Control Boards Soon,” *The People* March 14, 1970: 1, 16.

⁹³ KDA old box 101 file TRD 1/3 3005 “Department of Commerce – Circulars” Haji RZ Wasike Restricted Business Areas Buganda Western Region, August 28, 1972: 44.

⁹⁴ KDA old box 537 file INF 7 “Kabale Town Council” Town Clerk Notice, June 2, 1970: 38.

⁹⁵ KDA old box 101 file TRD 1/3 3005 “Department of Commerce – Circulars” Haji RZ Wasike Restricted Business Areas Buganda Western Region, August 28, 1972: 44.

⁹⁶ KDA. W.W. Kalema Meeting Held at Kabale. 20 January 1970. Box 175. File “Trade and Commerce,” 120.

within the premises including their back parts, particularly water and toilets.”⁹⁷ As seen in Chapter 3, buildings on Kabale’s Main Street, like those in other Asian commercial districts across Uganda, integrated commercial and residential units in a design that was intended to enable shopkeepers to live by their shops while maintaining boundaries from African customers, employees, and domestic servants. Armed with legal instruments that could restrict licensing only of the commercial spaces in the front of these buildings, officials were largely powerless to mandate access to amenities in the rear residential quarters. When Town Council officials suggested that the Acting Town Clerk “should try and use his influence and persuade such people to accept those shopkeepers, who were now in a distressed position, to have access to water and toilets which were indispensable to human life,” he replied that “it was the duty of the intending shopkeeper first to negotiate with the shop owner as to whether he would be as well allowed to have access to the back part of the premises or else he should not accept to rent the shop.”⁹⁸ Minister Kalema threatened that “landlords [who] refuse to provide toilet facilities [to African traders] ... would not be tolerated,”⁹⁹ but officials reported no success in resolving this issue.¹⁰⁰

Official desire to Africanize commercial space using the legal language of citizenship proved difficult to implement when confronted with urban segregation and its infrastructures. Lawmakers’ focus on the visually Asian character of shops from the street neglected how shops were integrated with residential spaces behind in a built landscape

⁹⁷ KDA “Kabale Town Council Minutes” General Purposes Committee Meeting, November 17, 1970: 80/70.

⁹⁸ KDA “Kabale Town Council Minutes” General Purposes Committee Meeting, November 17, 1970: 80/70.

⁹⁹ KDA old box 175 file C TRD 4 “Trade and Commerce” Kalema Meeting Held at Kabale, January 20, 1970: 120.

¹⁰⁰ KDA old box 101 file TRD 1/3 3005 “Department of Commerce – Circulars” DC to PS Ministry of Commerce, July 28, 1972: 43.

that was shaped by histories of racial and class segregation. The forced cohabitation between Asian residents and African traders that the Trade Licensing Act required precipitated struggles over the boundaries between private and public space that local officials were unable to resolve. Just a few weeks before the military coup that brought Idi Amin to power, Kabale's District Team compiled a report on the Act's implementation. It concluded that despite their success in implementing the letter of the law, they were unable to achieve its aims by focusing exclusively on commercial space. "The view of the team was that non-citizens should move out of the buildings completely."¹⁰¹ A year and a half later, the District Commissioner reported, "The greatest problem now facing citizen traders in Kabale Town is that most Africans own [*sic*, most rented] only the front part of the shop and not the entire premises."¹⁰² The Act's implementation exposed to administrators how fully Asians were enmeshed in Uganda's urban infrastructure. A week after the District Commissioner dictated his report, Idi Amin attempted to completely purge Asians from Uganda when he announced that a dream inspired him to expel them all from the country. Such attempts to override and silence earlier claims to space were only partially successful and contributed to a continued proliferation of overlapping claims to property, citizenship, and urban belonging.

¹⁰¹ KDA file C TRD 1 "Trading Ordinance Policy (Including Licenses & Garages)" DC to PS Ministry of Commerce, January 8, 1971: 73.

¹⁰² KDA old box 101 file TRD 1/3 3005 "Department of Commerce – Circulars" DC to PS Ministry of Commerce, July 28, 1972: 43.

Silencing claims

If the will of a racialized government policy shaped local politics of control over commercial and domestic spaces, its legal instruments betrayed the limits of legal interventions. The Nathwani family not only maintained a consistent presence in the Minister's, the District Commissioner's, and the Town Clerk's files but also produced a legal opening that authorities could only close through extra-legal measures.¹⁰³ Even before the Trade Licensing Act's publication, Pravin Nathwani's father, who had not applied for Ugandan citizenship, transferred his business to Pravin, whose citizenship had been approved. Although they hoped that this would insulate them from legal actions against non-citizens, the Town Clerk still refused to renew Pravin's trading license.¹⁰⁴ Upon hearing of their situation through a mutual friend, a lawyer in Kampala, Novnit Shah, offered to take up the Nathwani's case. Rather than contesting the basis of the Town Clerk's decision, he instructed Pravin and his brother Kish to defy it by re-opening their shop, which prompted Pravin's arrest in the presence of the District Commissioner. At the hearing a week later in front of a Grade Two Magistrate on Makanga Hill, Mr. Shah did not raise the defendant's citizenship but instead argued that the Minister of Commerce and Industry had no authority to declare a restricted trading zone, since the Act allocated such authority exclusively to the "the Minister responsible for local administrations and urban authorities," which would have been the Minister of Regional Administrations. Grade Two magistrates such as Judge Ntegamehe generally did not handle cases that judged the

¹⁰³ Interview with Pravin Nathwani and Kish Nathwani, Watford, United Kingdom, June 20, 2012.

¹⁰⁴ KDA. Shah, Patel & Co to Minister of Commerce. 17 January 1970. Box 175. File "Trade and Commerce," 106; KDA. PS Ministry of Commerce to Shah Patel & Co. 13 February 1970. Box 175. File "Trade and Commerce," 132.

legality of ministerial directives. However, after adjourning the court for nearly five hours, he emerged to declare, "I do agree with the defence counsel that the Minister of Commerce and Industry had no jurisdiction to make such statutory instruments in accordance with the trade (Licensing) act 14/69. Therefore his action has no power of law. ... Therefore the charge dismissed and the accused discharged."¹⁰⁵

The decision did not exempt an individual but set a legal precedent within the court's regional jurisdiction that rendered all the work of implementing the Trade Licensing Act until then without legal authority. As such, it technically provided a legal opening for others in Kabale, including non-citizens, to bring cases to restore their trade licenses and shops at least until the proper minister issued a new set of instruments with new deadlines. Reports of the case soon circulated in the Ministry of Commerce, the President's Office, the Attorney General's chambers, and offices of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Although their initial reaction was to contest the case in a higher court, it does not appear that they did so, possibly because an unsuccessful appeal would have spread the legal precedent to a wider jurisdiction.¹⁰⁶ However, neither does it appear that anyone else took up this legal opening in Kabale. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry quickly ordered that Pravin Nathwani's individual trading license be reinstated. The officious Town Clerk refused, as doing so would have forced him to acknowledge the court's verdict that the Act's instruments he had implemented were invalid. When Pravin appealed in person to the new Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Commerce in

¹⁰⁵ KDA. 2nd Grade Magistrate's Court, Kigezi. Criminal Case No. 35/70. 20 February 1970. File "Kigezi District Intelligence Committee."

¹⁰⁶ KDA. PS Katagyira to President's Office. 13 March 1970. Box 175. File "Trade and Commerce," 142; KDA. DC Malinga to TC. 25 March 1970. Box 175. File "Trade and Commerce," 144.

Kampala, his license was quickly issued and the Town Clerk's objections overruled.¹⁰⁷ In 2012 Pravin recalled, "It was all buried. No one wanted it to spread."¹⁰⁸ This case exposed the vulnerability of government efforts to shape the relationship between racial categories and control over Uganda's urban commercial spaces, but it also showed the limits of legal claim-making. Although the case had made it possible for other claimants to roll back the Minister of Commerce's initiatives, its practical effect did not extend beyond the business license of the defendant.

Less than a year after the court case that challenged the legality of the Trade Licensing Act's implementation, General Idi Amin overthrew Milton Obote and his government. Within two more years, former Minister Kalema had been murdered by Amin's soldiers, and nearly all of those who had so energetically contested for their control of businesses and commercial spaces on Kabale Road had been compelled to leave Uganda. Such a transformation of the politics of control over urban space could only proceed by silencing claims to property and citizenship, since the fluid category "Asian" and the people to whom it referred were constitutive of much of Uganda's legal, administrative, and social history. When people such as Kish Nathwani were ordered to verify their citizenship claims in Kampala, many found them declared invalid without explanation.

Just as Milton Obote's Trade Licensing Act triggered a proliferation of legal claims to urban space, Idi Amin's expulsion decrees produced another layer of contest over commercial and residential buildings within a radically transformed urban landscape. Summarily deprived of citizenship and subjected to threats that they would be relocated to

¹⁰⁷ KDA. PS Ministry of Commerce to DC Kigezi. 26 August 1970. Box 175. File "Trade and Commerce," 148.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Pravin Nathwani and Kish Nathwani, Watford, United Kingdom, June 20, 2012.

remote Karamoja District as peasant farmers, all but a few hundred Asians left Uganda in 1972.¹⁰⁹ With his citizenship verification in hand, Pravin Nathwani informed local officials that he was “ready to settle in any village in Kigezi,” though he continued to run his shop in Kabale for a year and a half until fears for his security led him to flee to Rwanda and eventually to England.¹¹⁰ As the Departed Asians Property Custodian Board (DAPCB) allocated buildings, businesses, and other properties left behind after the expulsion, their decisions were sometimes nullified when influential military men seized property by force. When Uganda’s current government invited expelled Asians to reclaim their expropriated properties and invest in the country, many Ugandan Asian returnees struggled to reclaim properties to which multiple other parties had since staked legal, moral, and practical claims.

The physical and economic landscape of Kabale today is radically different from what it was in the 1960s. The departure of Uganda’s Asian commercial bourgeoisie contributed to a precipitous economic collapse. An over-dependence on coffee exports, low levels of foreign exchange, and the proliferation of violence by *kondos* (armed robbers) and soldiers created shortages of essential commodities.¹¹¹ Despite the shortages and

¹⁰⁹ Vali Jamal has compiled auto-biographical sketches of others “who never left,” and Anneeth Kaur Hundle has written an important analysis of how Asians negotiated personal and community security during the Idi Amin years in part by protecting domestic and communal spaces from appropriation by the military. Jamal, *Uganda Asians*, 753–843; Hundle, “Exceptions to the Expulsion.”

¹¹⁰ Interview with Pravin Nathwani and Kish Nathwani, Watford, United Kingdom, June 20, 2012. KDA old box 87 “Confidential Flimsies” Resettlement of Asians, n.d. [November 1972]; KDA [no file cover - Immigration] Ag DC, Mr. Pravin Kumar Popatlal Jeram Nathwani. March 26, 1973: 281; KDA [no file cover - Immigration] Wambete for DC, April 30, 1974: 382.

¹¹¹ Godfrey B. Asiimwe, “The Impact of Post-Colonial Policy Shifts in Coffee Marketing at the Local Level in Uganda” (Ph.D. thesis, Institute of Social Studies, 2002); Kasozi, *The Social*

insecurity that characterized the 1970s, it also facilitated a booming black market in smuggled goods, particularly in border areas such as Kabale, often under the control of military personnel.¹¹² As military men and their partners invested the proceeds of smuggling in concrete assets, such as buildings in towns, urban authorities lacked the resources or political protection to enforce building codes. Unregulated urban growth during the smuggling boom of the 1970s and 1980s saw a reconfiguration of urban space in Kabale. Swampland along the road out of town to Mbarara was a favored location for new buildings in the 1970s near the junction leading to Rwanda. Today, it is the bustling neighborhood of Kigongi, which is filled with multi-storied hotels, small shops, and the headquarters of Kigezi's radio station. More recently, a local investor has constructed a massive new commercial structure with lock-up shops adjacent to the old market and opposite the old African trading district. Kabale's old Asian commercial district along Main Street continues to house shops and residences, but it is no longer the town's center of commercial wealth and development. Municipal authorities have condemned all of the buildings along this road and required each plot to be redeveloped as their leases are renewed, which has already led to the construction of several new multi-storied commercial and residential structures. Supermarkets have replaced general merchandise

Origins of Violence in Uganda; D.A. Low, "Uganda Unhinged," *International Affairs* 49, no. 2 (April 1973): 219–28.

¹¹² Asiimwe, "The Impact of Post-Colonial Policy"; Reginald Green, "Magendo in the Political Economy of Uganda: Pathology, Parallel System, or Dominant Sub-Mode of Production?," Discussion Paper No. 164, Institute of Development Studies (University of Sussex, August 1981); Nelson Kasfir, "State, Magendo, and Class Formation in Uganda," *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 21, no. 3 (November 1983): 84–103; Edgar C. Taylor, "Race and Nation in Public Discourse: Debates Over the Status of Indians in Ugandan Nationalism in 1971" (M.A. thesis, Makerere University, 2008), 62–65.

shops, and much of Kabale's commercial activity has shifted to areas around the junction to Rwanda, including Kigongi and the former African trading district.

Walking along Kabale's dusty Main Street some decades after the Trade Licensing Act and the Asian expulsion, it is tempting to read shifts in the urban landscape as due to the collapse of African aspirations for economic self-determination and control of elite commercial space. Some of those Kabale Asians who have returned to visit remark on the town having "gone down" with overcrowding residences built for one couple or the decay of their former buildings.¹¹³ As we stood outside his shop in the old Asian commercial district looking south toward the old African trading area, an African businessman contrasted the old divisions between these neighborhoods with the town's present geography: "Now it is all the same."¹¹⁴ However, his tone and assessment of Kabale's fortunes did not mirror a "bitter, convulsive laugh" like the one that James Ferguson heard from a Zambian civil servant disparaging the town of Kitwe, "Now it's all 'second class,' isn't it?"¹¹⁵ Unlike Copperbelt miners, Kabale's traders do not recall their aspirations in terms of social projects embedded in routinized labor under industrial capitalism. The smuggling boom of the 1970s brought a wave of African investment to Kabale, and its economic climate oriented toward Rwanda and Congo rather than Kampala wholesalers. As in towns across Uganda, commercial development cuts across divisions that once segregated Asian and African traders. As the infrastructure of 1950s buildings decays, new sources of capital from cross-border trade and patronage by Kampala's commercial-political class, shape the location and style of construction projects. Ugandan Asian businessmen have worked to

¹¹³ Though common, this was by no means a universally shared assessment among those I interviewed.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Joshua Mwesigye, 2013

¹¹⁵ Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity*, 13.

reclaim property on behalf of their former owners. They have also staked legal claims to spaces no longer imbued with the same dynamics of racial exclusion that they remember from the 1960s.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that official efforts to remake the racial character of towns like Kabale vie with histories of segregation that shaped urban material infrastructure. Authorities assumed that a legal language of citizenship would provide a cover for an ideal of racial justice. However, Asians used petitions and court cases to challenge legal and racial languages. Citizens and non-citizens were not so easily distinguishable, and the role of Asian traders in facilitating commercial Africanization was equally open to contestation. Targets of the 1969 Trade Licensing Act also expertly navigated different layers to government bureaucracy to seek exemptions or, in the case of the Nathwanis, to undermine the laws the implementation. Government ministers like William Kalema assumed that urban administrators could reallocate property, including built infrastructure, with the proper set of legal instruments. Yet, commercial premises were not easily severed from Asian residential quarters in buildings and neighborhoods that had been designed to maintain racial and class segregation. The implementation of the racial spirit behind the Act require Kalema and other officials to act outside the strict parameters of the law and suppress Asian claims and petitions. The next chapter turns to arenas of debate that further suppressed histories of Asian claims to urban space.

Chapter Five

The Asian Expulsion and Infrastructures of Exclusion

In the wake of Idi Amin's decrees cancelling "every entry permit or certificate of residence" for "any person who is of Asian origin, extraction or descent,"¹ critics made two seemingly contradictory observations. First, scholars and expellees remarked that their immediate reaction was surprise and disbelief. Expelled Makerere political scientist Hasu Patel observed, "Indians in Uganda were shocked."² His colleague Mahmood Mamdani remarked: "at the time nobody expected anything so drastic to happen."³ Bert Adams emphasized the pessimism of those lacking Ugandan citizenship in 1971, though his surveys indicated that Asian Ugandan "citizens seemed to actually feel that they had a future in Uganda."⁴ "Amin, however, accomplished the unthinkable," wrote Yash Tandon in 1973, and it required explanation.⁵ Many in the Western press presented the expulsion as the product of a racist,

¹ *The Immigration (Amendment) Decree*, Decree No. 30 of 1972, (October 25, 1972), section 1. The latter section was added to *The Immigration Decree*, Decree No. 17 of 1972, (August 9, 1972).

² Hasu H. Patel, "General Amin and the Indian Exodus from Uganda," *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 2, no. 4 (Winter 1972): 12.

³ Mamdani, *From Citizen to Refugee*, 12.

⁴ Bert Adams, "A Look at Uganda and Expulsion through Ex-Ugandan Asian Eyes," *Kroniek van Afrika* 3 (1975): 238.

⁵ Justin O'Brien, "General Amin and the Uganda Asians: Doing the Unthinkable," *The Round Table* 63, no. 249 (1973): 91.

incompetent buffoon-like head of state's unpredictable dispositions.⁶ Yet scholars were quick to counter such representations by characterizing Amin's decision as an all but inevitable culmination of Uganda's underdeveloped class relations set in motion by colonial capitalism. These accounts insisted that human agency was subject to the structural requirements of colonial class relations, which by 1972 produced a "contradiction between the petty bourgeoisie and Asian capital."⁷ A scholarly consensus emerged that while the timing and form of Amin's edicts could have been different, independence in 1962 exposed Asians' collective political vulnerability, making their discursive and physical exclusion from Uganda unavoidable.⁸

The expulsion is now a foundational rupture in historical narratives about Uganda and Asians; these obscure earlier struggles shaping Asian belonging such as those explored in this dissertation.⁹ The influential work written in its immediate aftermath provided important insights into connections between racial thought and unequal relations of production. However, it allowed little room for considering the messy politics of urban space in which Ugandans used and contested racial and legal categories. We have seen how Ugandans navigated racial hierarchies in diverse ways even as racial categories hardened

⁶ Katono, "Western Newspapers' Coverage of Idi Amin."

⁷ Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 304.

⁸ O'Brien, *Brown Britons*, 10; Tarsis B. Kabwegyere, *The Politics of State Formation and Destruction in Uganda*, Revised and Expanded (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1995), 127–8; Yash Tandon, "Asians' Role in East Africa," *Patterns of Prejudice* 6, no. 6 (December 1972): 6.

⁹ The expulsion was also a global public "event" whose images and global reverberations were incorporated into multiple interpretive frameworks. For some it was a model of African economic nationalism, for others an example postcolonial dysfunction, and for still others an occasion to reckon with the injustices of imperialism. In some cases it garnered publicity outside Uganda and Britain because of Amin's charisma, though it also exposed the potential fragility of other racial minorities. The language of global public event is influenced by Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

in political discourse. Focusing solely on the structural forces of an elite political economy led some scholars to consider Asians who saw opportunities for renegotiating their legal claims to Ugandan citizenship in the early 1970s to have been “somewhat myopic.”¹⁰

This chapter examines the contexts of the 1972 expulsion in transnational political negotiations and press debates over Ugandan Asians’ citizenship. Even as Ugandan Asians successfully navigated state bureaucracy (Chapter 4) and the micro-tensions of daily life (Chapter 3), the discursive formation “Asian” increasingly became discordant with notions of Ugandan identity. The denial of Asian belonging in postcolonial Uganda, and in post-imperial Britain, dominated negotiations between the Ugandan and British governments as well as debates in the Ugandan press. These exchanges drew on historical grievances, but their content was abstracted from particular histories of contestation and accommodation in urban life. As such, they gave political actors like Amin a language with which to override Asians’ claims to property and belonging.

The following pages examine how legal negotiations and public debates over Ugandan citizenship constrained possibilities for imagining Asian belonging in Uganda in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Idi Amin announced the expulsion in the aftermath of struggles between the Ugandan and British governments over responsibilities toward Ugandan Asians. At the same time, print culture in postcolonial Uganda sustained debates over the relationship between citizenship and social “integration,” a concept that reinforced a normative masculine Black national identity. Promulgated in this context, the expulsion cast Asians as the primary purge category among many in a masculine racial

¹⁰ Jørgensen, *Uganda A Modern History*, 271.

nationalism centered on a shifting constituency of Black Ugandans. Amin conjured the latter through orders and decrees that treated all Ugandans as units in a military hierarchy.

The chapter concludes by considering how recent efforts to commemorate the expulsion have threatened to expose unresolved tensions of Ugandan Asian history. Amin's successors have condemned and worked to undo this defining act of his regime by inviting expelled individuals to reclaim their citizenship and property. Uganda's current government courts investment from expellees in an economy and urban landscape radically reshaped by shifts in capital flows since the 1970s. At the same time, the expulsion remains a defining experience in the self-narratives and political concerns of Ugandan Asians and other immigrant communities. Many African traders also invoke the expulsion, favorably comparing Amin's racial nationalism with present-day politics of international investment. However, this expulsion has yet to be consolidated in a Ugandan nationalist narrative. Its commemoration raises anxieties over histories of segregation and violence that have proven contentious when opened to wider publics. The historical connections that bind Ugandan Asians and Africans together in Uganda's urban life also render their shared histories divisive and Asians' legal, political, and social recognition in Uganda still unsettled.

Geopolitics, Africanization, and citizenship

Recently opened archival files in Uganda and Great Britain reveal contentious negotiations that rendered Ugandan Asians without protection of either Ugandan or British citizenship from 1968 on. Uganda's 1962 Constitution and Citizenship Ordinance established

principles of, and legal procedures for acquiring, Ugandan citizenship. The enshrinement of these principles, which excluded the possibility of dual citizenship and required an “oath of allegiance” to the Ugandan Constitution,¹¹ also enabled the articulation of what May Joseph refers to as legal and cultural “inauthentic citizenship,” as government officials and publics cast suspicion on the efforts of certain “citizens [to] reinvent themselves according to prevalent notions of authentic citizenship.”¹² Among nationalist politicians, Asians’ mobility, which was facilitated through earlier notions of imperial citizenship that spanned the Indian Ocean and the former British Empire, made any expression of their loyalty to an independent African state inherently suspect.¹³ As Milton Obote’s ruling Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC) attempted to advance commercial Africanization in order to reward its clients and transform the non-African appearance of urban commercial space, the party’s actions intensified contests over the legal requirements and adequate social performance of citizenship.

Ugandan Asians occupied myriad legal statuses at independence despite being regarded by African politicians as a homogeneous community within Uganda. Many had been active in the Indian National Congress in the 1930s and 1940s, but after independence and partition the governments of India and Pakistan were reluctant to offer legal protection and citizenship to people who were permanently settled in territories moving toward self-government. Some individuals who came to East Africa after 1947 arrived with Indian passports. However, the majority who were already settled in East

¹¹ The ordinance required an oath to the Ugandan Constitution and the Queen Elizabeth II as head of the Commonwealth. *The Uganda Citizenship Ordinance, 1962*, Ordinance No. 63 of 1962, September 26, 1962, First Schedule.

¹² May Joseph, *Nomadic Identities: The Performance of Citizenship* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 4.

¹³ Banerjee, *Becoming Imperial Citizens*.

Africa retained one of two statuses of British protection. British Protected Persons were born in British protectorates or princely states and were considered subjects rather than Commonwealth citizens. The 1948 British Nationality Act introduced the status of Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies, which effectively applied to most individuals who were born in British India but had not acquired Indian or Pakistani citizenship. As described in Chapter Four, constitutional negotiations between British and Ugandan authorities before independence led to an agreement that a Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies could apply for Ugandan citizenship within two years of independence if the applicant renounced his or her previous status within three months of receiving a Certificate of Registration. This procedure rendered some individuals effectively stateless if they applied for Ugandan citizenship but renounced their British status late. Although British Protected Persons born in Uganda could automatically register as Ugandan citizens, Ugandan authorities often refused to issue documents without proof of an individual's place and date of birth as well as that of their father, through whom descent was legally traced. By the mid-1950s, Ugandan Asians, who appeared in political discourse as a single unit, were legally divided among Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies, British Protected Persons, Ugandan citizens, stateless persons, Indian and Pakistani citizens as well as citizens of neighboring Kenya and Tanzania.

Despite the proliferation of documentation and efforts to enumerate and control East African Asians in the 1960s, British and Ugandan officials had little idea how many people would claim to fit in these categories. Until the publication of the 1969 census results in 1971, officials relied on estimates derived from rates of increase between the 1948 and 1959 censuses of the categories "Indians" and "Pakistanis." Census takers had

been instructed that these categories need not correlate with an individual's citizenship or self-identification but were based on "a combination of [a person's] colour and country of origin" or that of "their forefathers."¹⁴ Using such information from an earlier period of high immigration, the Ugandan government estimated the number of "Asians" in Uganda in 1969 at 106,700, while their British Foreign and Commonwealth Office counterparts came up with a similar figure of "Indians and Pakistanis Overseas" at 105,300, with wildly varying estimates regarding the percentage of whom were Citizens of Uganda, India, or the United Kingdom and Colonies.¹⁵ By 1969, Ugandan officials estimated that there were roughly 80,000 non-citizen Asians in the country. With the publication of the 1969 census, British High Commission officials were pleased to note that the "total Asian community of all nationalities was only 74,308 on census day."¹⁶

Census data provided aggregate numbers based on enumerators' crude racial assessments, but Ugandan and British officials were still unable to tally the number of people subject to their respective jurisdictions because of the inherently unstable nature of citizenship categories and the complicated procedures of acquiring and renouncing one's citizenship status. Both governments hoped to use the ambiguity of the legal process of acquiring citizenship to deny their responsibility for as many as possible. When Ugandan officials sent a team of ninety university students under the Research Secretariat to comb

¹⁴ Uganda Protectorate, *Uganda Census 1959: Non-African Population*, (East African Statistical Department, 1960), 7, 5.

¹⁵ UNA President's Office box 4 file 8 "Report on Citizenship Submitted by Research Secretariat Office" W. Okwanje, August 1970: p 3; FCO 31/275 "Asians resident in East Africa who are holders of United Kingdom passports" Draft Research Department Memorandum: Indian and Pakistani Communities Abroad, November 21, 1969: 68.

¹⁶ FCO 31/1068 "Population in Uganda: 1971 census of population of Asian origin" Byatt to Counsell, June 3, 1971: 2. The earlier estimates were based on rates of increase between 1948 and 1959 during a period of high immigration, while Africanization policies after independence had already encouraged many Asians to emigrate before 1969.

over immigration files, they found over 125,000, leading them to assume that some applicants had died or emigrated while others had applied multiple times when they received no reply. The team struggled to count individuals who often wrote their names in different orders or with different constructions depending on the context in which a given form was filled out. Others, whether through confusion or deceit, claimed to possess different legal statuses even within the same application forms.¹⁷ Because the achievement of Ugandan citizenship depended on an applicant shuttling documents between the British High Commission and the Ugandan Immigration Department, there was little correlation between the former's records of citizenship renunciations and the latter's tally of successful applications. While Ugandan officials worried about forged documents emanating from their Immigration Department, their British counterparts had no master list of individuals who had become Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies after 1948. Likewise, their only way of determining if someone could be considered a British Protected Person was to seek out birth certificates of the person in question and their father.¹⁸

The 1948 British Nationality Act had offered an ostensibly universal, non-racial imperial citizenship, but decolonization rendered the privileged mobility of such a status a political liability. As described in Chapter One, many prominent Ugandan politicians regarded the safeguarding of Asian interests, through special representatives or

¹⁷ UNA President's Office box 4 file 8 "Report on Citizenship Submitted by Research Secretariat Office" W. Okwanje, August 1970: p 5-7.

¹⁸ As officials attempted to determine if Rajat Neogy, whose case is discussed below, had acquired Ugandan Citizenship automatically as a British Protected Person, they asked his father in Bangalore to send a copy of his marriage license in order to determine that Rajat was "the legitimate son of his parents," who was "born in Uganda Protectorate of a father born in British India." FCO 31/490 "Uganda Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of" Foster to FCO, November 6, 1969: 15C; FCO 31/490 "Uganda Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of" Scott to FCO, November 14, 1968: 19.

guaranteed citizenship, as a perpetuation of the immoral exploitation of Africans. Although the elections of 1962 compelled political parties to appeal to Asian voters who often constituted significant urban voting blocks, they struggled to reward African constituents and to remake the aesthetics of urban space that many Africans who were embedded in Uganda's urban economy regarded as incompatible with the ideals of independence. These concerns brought Uganda's ruling elite in sympathetic alignment with the racial fear-mongering of conservative British politicians such as Enoch Powell, who roused British voters with the anxiety that non-white Commonwealth immigrants would sap government resources, "homes and neighbourhoods [would be] changed beyond recognition," and "in 15 or 20 years' time the black man will have the whip hand over the white man."¹⁹ These concerns with the protection of racialized class privilege and the aesthetics of urban space rendered Ugandan Asians an undesirable demographic for the British and Ugandan governments. "I agree with Enoch Powell," President Obote remarked to the British High Commissioner. "You have got to keep your race relations under control."²⁰ His successor, Idi Amin, also commended Powell for advocating on behalf of "indigenous Londoners" in order to support the principle of "London for Londoners, Scotland for Scottish, Wales for Welsh, and Uganda for Ugandans."²¹ As Stuart Hall argued, Enoch Powell's position marked an extreme version of a widely accepted official racism that characterized racial

¹⁹ The latter prediction Powell claimed to be quoting from a constituent in his infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech delivered in April 1968.

²⁰ FCO 31/1065 "Ugandan policy on citizenship of Uganda for UK passport holder of Asian origin" Kampala to FCO, January 6, 1971: 1. Obote reportedly claimed to fear that foreign visitors, such as Ugandan students, would be caught up in a backlash against other immigrants if immigration to Britain continued to rise.

²¹ BBC Academy: Journalism, *Jon Snow - Reflections - Idi Amin*, accessed November 23, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vFyYggn1EU>.

nationalism.²² In February 1967, The Foreign Office went so far as to instruct the BBC not mention the right of British East African Asians to enter the United Kingdom.²³ The following year, Britain's Labour government pushed through revisions to the Commonwealth Immigrants Act that required Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies to prove a "qualifying connection," such as ancestral claims or relatives already in the country, in order to enter the United Kingdom while reducing the quota to be accepted each year.²⁴

As the Ugandan and British governments attempted to limit responsibility for Ugandan Asians, they placed the burden of securing legal recognition on individuals. The laborious process of applying for Ugandan citizenship required the compilation and exchange of paper documents, which allowed for error, fraud, and confusion.²⁵ When Ugandan officials sifted through citizenship applications in 1970 in an effort to weed out individuals who had acquired citizenship improperly, they counted only 526 correctly completed applications out of 28,000, while the Immigration Department had yet to examine 12,000 additional applications. Roughly 4,500 "non-indigenous persons" who were eligible to automatically register as citizens would also have to be checked against their fathers' birth certificates.²⁶ Retaining British status rendered individuals subject to

²² Hall referred to this as "Powellism." Stuart Hall, "Racism and Reaction," in *Five Views of Multi-Racial Britain: Talks on Race Relations Broadcast by BBC TV* (London: Commission for Racial Equality, 1978), 29–30.

²³ FCO 31/17 "Status of Asians in East Africa" Scott to Storar, February 1, 1967: 2.

²⁴ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 160–164.

²⁵ On the relationship between graphic ideologies of official documents and "participatory bureaucracy," see Matthew Hull, *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

²⁶ UNA President's Office box 4 file 8 "Report on Citizenship Submitted by Research Secretariat Office" W. Okwanje, August 1970: p 13.

charges of disloyalty and without the legal entitlements of citizens, while Ugandan citizenship offered little insulation from Africanization programs promoted by African racial nationalists. As Sir Amar Maini recalled, many Asian families attempted to “keep open as many options as possible” by splitting citizenship statuses among family members or leaving applications unfinished by neglecting to renounce their British status.²⁷ After its implementation, officials noted a “flaw” in the Trade Licensing Act, as “the evidence of citizenship sought by Licensing Officers was the Certificate of Registration only [without] evidence of renunciation in respect of the citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies.”²⁸ Officials also noted that many families attempted to evade the Act’s prohibition against non-citizens in designated commercial districts by placing their businesses in the hands of a citizen while their relatives retained British passports.²⁹ The inconsistent file numbers that accompanied some files also suggested that some individuals forged or colluded with Immigration Officials to obtain Registration Certificates. Meanwhile, many Asians complained of the slow pace of Ugandan government bureaucracy and the apparent halt in processing applications beginning in 1966.³⁰ Caught between the racial logics of Ugandan Africanization campaigns and a two-tiered British immigration system, Ugandan Asians encountered a Kafkaesque labyrinth of immigration bureaucracy.

²⁷ Maini, “Asians and Politics in Late Colonial Uganda,” 117.

²⁸ UNA President’s Office box 4 file 8 “Report on Citizenship Submitted by Research Secretariat Office” W. Okwanje, August 1970: p 16.

²⁹ KDA box 175 file C TRD 4 “Trade and Commerce” Hon. Kalema’s Tour of Western Region Meeting at Kabale, January 20, 1970: 120.

³⁰ This accusation dominated the memoranda submitted by “Asian elders” at a conference organized by Idi Amin in December 1971, which is discussed later in this chapter. “Asian Makes Bridge Building Plea,” Uganda Argus December 8, 1971: 1, 7-8; Patel, “General Amin and the Indian Exodus from Uganda.”

In 1968, Obote's UPC government attempted to break the impasse between its goals of Africanization and small British immigration quotas. They did so by making an example of a man who had long struggled for ideals of non-racialism in Uganda. Rajat Neogy was a founding member in early 1959 of the Uganda Action Group (UAG), which attempted to undermine the political authority of Asian elders by advocating for the incorporation of Asians into African political parties on the principles of a liberal non-racial citizenship. However, as described in Chapter One, Neogy soon became disillusioned with the UAG's inability to forge organic connections with African politicians or across class lines among Asians, which led the Group to become increasingly focused on a narrower realm of Asian communal politics.³¹ By the end of 1959, the twenty-one year old Neogy had gone to Great Britain with the intention of settling there permanently. By 1961, however, he had returned to Kampala where he attempted in the creation of a literary magazine, *Transition*, to forge the sort of non-racial community that the UAG had failed to create in the political arena. Under his editorship, remembered Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, "*Transition* became the intellectual forum of the New East Africa, and indeed Africa," offering a platform for young authors from Wole Soyinka to Peter Nazareth to Paul Theroux.³² Although initially not an overtly political publication, *Transition's* editorial policy and literary style conflicted with the racial exclusivism and growing anti-intellectualism of Obote's nominally socialist programs of wealth redistribution. Obote's critics such as Ali Mazrui and Abu Mayanja were regular contributors. In a 1968 issue, Mayanja criticized the UPC for having "no ideology whatsoever" as it failed to create an "ideological bond" among all its citizens, "e.g. between

³¹ Rajat Neogy, "Letter to the Editor – Action Group Decisions," *Uganda Argus* May 14, 1959.

³² Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, "Asia in My Life," *Chimurenga*, May 15, 2012, <http://www.chimurenga.co.za/archives/2816>.

my honourable friend, M.N. Mehta, M.P., and his labourers in the Sugar Plantations.”³³ The insinuation that the UPC’s promises of Africanization were subject to elite collusion for personal enrichment rather than ideology landed Mayanja and the editor Neogy in prison on treason charges.³⁴

In the weeks that followed Mr. Neogy’s arrest, Obote and his cabinet attempted to orchestrate his trial in a manner that would expose racial bias and the legal contradictions in British treatment of Ugandan Asians, ultimately forcing the British Government to admit Ugandan Asian British citizens into the United Kingdom. When Neogy told police that he was a Ugandan citizen, they contacted immigration officials who asserted that he was he still a Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies because he had not produced proof of renunciation.³⁵ British High Commission officials were unable to locate such a document and reluctantly agreed to extend consular services. Only upon doing so did they grasp the implications that Ugandan authorities hoped to demonstrate through the case. Foreign Minister Sam Odaka argued that if Britain “recognize[d] consular responsibilities towards Neogy,” it must include the right to “enter Britain freely,” in which case similar treatment should be afforded to all “U.K. Asian citizens resident in Uganda.”³⁶ If not, Uganda would be forced to gazette them as refugees, which would technically enable the Ugandan Government to relocate them to camps, control their movements, and restrict their rights

³³ Abu K. Mayanja, “The Fact That We Hate Apartheid Should Have No Relevance in the Way We Punish Traffic Offenders,” *Transition* 37 (1968): 14–15.

³⁴ The British editor of the UPC newspaper *The People*, Daniel Nelson, was mistakenly arrested and beaten before police realized they had the wrong editor.

³⁵ UNA President’s Office box 6 file 4 “Minutes of Special Meetings of the Cabinet” Cabinet Meeting, December 10, 1968.

³⁶ FCO 31/490 “Uganda: Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of” Kampala to FCO, December 7, 1968: 34.

to conduct business.³⁷ The High Commission hoped to evade the issue by asserting that Neogy would have no trouble obtaining an immigration voucher.³⁸ Meanwhile, Obote painted Mr. Neogy as a participant in an international conspiracy against his government, which was not helped by the fact that *Transition*, and Neogy's lawyer's costs, were supported by the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom.³⁹ A British Foreign Office official pondered, "I have a nasty thought at the back of my mind that Obote is hoping that he will be able to use treatment of Neogy either (a) to hold it up as a precedent that should apply to all U.K. Asians in Uganda or (b) to declare it to demonstrate our special interest in the 'international conspiracy' that he has claimed Neogy was connected with."⁴⁰ Obote met with Neogy's American wife for nearly ten hours over two days during his trial and reportedly told her "that he had asked the British High Commission to ask for Neogy's release. When the High Commission did so he would reply 'Yes, by all means, but first take the other 39,999, oh no, I mean 79,999, because the number has doubled since I looked at the files'. This remark was followed by 'hideous cackles of laughter'," Mrs. Neogy told a British High Commission official.⁴¹

By the time that Rajat Neogy was released from detention in March 1969, his case had provided the Ugandan government with leverage in negotiations over the fate of Ugandan Asians. He eventually lobbied to obtain United Kingdom citizenship with the help

³⁷ UNA President's Office box 6 file 4 "Minutes of Special Meetings of the Cabinet" Foreign Affairs Press Statement, December 6, 1968.

³⁸ FCO 31/490 "Uganda: Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of" Kampala to FCO, December 16, 1968: 58.

³⁹ UNA President's Office box 6 file 4 "Minutes of Special Meetings of the Cabinet" Foreign Affairs Press Statement, December 6, 1968.

⁴⁰ FCO 31/492 "Uganda: Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson + Mayanja: Detention of" Tallboys, April 18, 1969: 143.

⁴¹ FCO 31/491 "Uganda: Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of" British High Commission Kampala to FCO, March 13, 1969: 124.

of the Foreign Office, though he told the British High Commissioner, "I cannot help still regarding Uganda where I was born as my home."⁴² Such constructions of home, which reflected Neogy's political commitment to non-racial citizenship and generations of Ugandan Asians' integral position in Ugandan social, economic, and political life, had no place in political brinksmanship that used a legal language designed to exclude "nomadic, conditional citizenship."⁴³

Some historians have argued that Uganda's political leadership under Milton Obote and Idi Amin confronted a shrinking resource base, which compelled them to push for the eventual expulsion of Ugandan Asians. However, it appears that a settlement on the numbers and security of those who would be absorbed by Uganda and Britain was nearly finalized on the eve of the coup that overthrew Obote in January 1971. British Foreign Office officials convinced their Home Office colleagues that they would "have to indulge in some horse trading with the Ugandans if we are to achieve our main objective of getting them to keep as many Asians as possible."⁴⁴ Some Ugandan Asians put pressure on the British High Commission by staging sit-ins outside their building.⁴⁵ Three young Asian men helped a sympathetic British official stage his own kidnapping in order to draw international attention to their situation.⁴⁶ Uganda's Government was also fearful of

⁴² FCO 31/491 "Uganda: Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of" Kampala to FCO, March 31, 1969: 129.

⁴³ Joseph, *Nomadic Identities*, 2.

⁴⁴ FCO 31/1065 "Ugandan policy on citizenship of Uganda for UK passport holder of Asian origin" Purcell to Le Toq, January 13, 1971: 6.

⁴⁵ FCO 31/1022 "Uganda: Annual Review for 1970" Slater Diplomatic Report No. 73/71, January 14, 1970: 1.

⁴⁶ UNA President's Office box 12 file 17 "Photostat Copies of Original Statements of:- Shafique Ahmed, P.V. Gosai, B.L. Rao"; FCO 31/730 "Kidnap of British Consul in Uganda Brian Lea"; Republic of Uganda, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into All Aspects of the Disappearance and Re-Appearance of Mr. B. A. Lea," (Entebbe: Government Printer,

dragging out the situation too long. Cabinet ministers initially suspected that victims of the Trade Licensing Act could have been behind an assassination attempt against President Obote, since “many people who had lost businesses ... were now very desperate and could commit any crime.”⁴⁷

The arbitrariness of citizenship as a legal category was laid bare in British and Ugandan official negotiations. The ground for talks had been paved by the Kenyan Government’s cancellation of Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies’ immigration statuses, which prompted stricter revisions to the Commonwealth Immigrants Act.⁴⁸ Both the Kenyan legislation and the Neogy case had tested Britain’s willingness to take in their non-White citizens who were declared undesirable in their host countries. Despite publicly threatening to force all “British citizens of Asian origin ... to disengage themselves from their hold on and continued residence in our country,”⁴⁹ Obote was privately open to negotiating how legal citizenship was applied. He conceded to the British-Hungarian aristocrat and author Judith Listowel, “we want to keep some [Asians] in Uganda because

1970). The incident was known as the “Lea Affair,” after the secretary to the High Commission Brian Alaister Lea, who spent the period of his alleged captivity relaxing on the shores of Lake Victoria.

⁴⁷ UNA President’s Office box 6 file 4 “Minutes of Special Meetings of the Cabinet” Cabinet Meeting, December 20, 1969. This was an emergency meeting the morning after the assassination attempt, in which a bullet passed through Obote’s cheek. The lengthy discussion of the Trade Licensing Act may have also been a way for Ministers to focus attention away from rumors that members of the cabinet and the military could have had a hand in the plot.

⁴⁸ Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain*, chap. 7; Paul, *Whitewashing Britain*, 179–181.

⁴⁹ A. Milton Obote, “Communication from the Chair of the National Assembly by the Hon. Dr. A. Milton Obote, M.P. President of the Republic of Uganda, on the Occasion of the Ceremonial Opening of Parliament on 20th April, 1970,” in *The Common Man’s Charter with Appendices* (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1970), 38.

we need them.”⁵⁰ He sent a message to British Prime Minister Heath “proposing co-operation over tackling the citizenship problems of Asians in Uganda.”⁵¹ In a proposal that divided the Ugandan cabinet, the Minister of Internal Affairs proposed allowing citizenship applicants who had been disqualified on technicalities or had yet to have their applications processed to become citizens.⁵² As Obote prepared to fly to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Singapore in January 1971, British High Commission officials met with officials from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, who suggested that “if UK could give assurance to Uganda that it would improve rate of flow to UK, UK might be able to persuade Uganda to accept greater number as citizens [within] two or three years.”⁵³ On the sidelines of the Commonwealth meeting, Obote approached the UK’s Secretary of State and proposed that if Britain increased its immigration quota to 5,000 British Asian heads of families from Uganda per year, “the Problem would be settled,” and “suggested that we should settle the matter in Singapore.” The Secretary of State indicated he could not take action without the involvement of the Home Secretary, and ten days later Idi Amin deposed Obote in a coup while the latter was still in Singapore.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ FCO 31/491 “Uganda: Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of” Remarks Made by Dr. Obote During a Private Party, n.d. [January 30, 1969]: 111E.

⁵¹ FCO 31/1022 “Uganda: Annual Review for 1970” Slater Diplomatic Report No. 73/71, January 14, 1971: 1.

⁵² FCO 31/740 “Ugandan citizenship proposals for Asian UK passport holders” Slater to FCO, December 15, 1970: 26.

⁵³ FCO 31/1065 “Ugandan policy on citizenship of Uganda for UK passport holder of Asian origin” Slater, January 12, 1971: 5.

⁵⁴ FCO 31/1065 “Ugandan policy on citizenship of Uganda for UK passport holder of Asian origin” Confidential Cypher Cat A FM H C Singapore, January 15, 1971: 10. After Obote’s comments, the Home Office instructed the High Commission (through Foreign Secretary and former Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home) to wind down their talks with the Ugandan Ministry of Internal Affairs. FCO 31/1065 “Ugandan policy on citizenship of Uganda for UK passport holder of Asian origin” Confidential Cypher Cat A Douglas-Home to Kampala, n.d.: 11.

As the two governments – ex-metropole and ex-colony – bartered over how to apply legal titles, official rhetoric and the legal requirements of citizenship placed the burden of proving loyalty and belonging on individuals who were called to account for an entire racial category. President Obote repeatedly denounced Rajat Neogy for being “disaffected towards Uganda” as allegedly shown by his failure to renounce his British status, a decision required exclusively of Ugandan Asians. “He had no particular desire to prove at any one moment that he valued being a Uganda citizen.”⁵⁵ Even as Obote worked to redefine the criteria according to which citizenship applications would be judged, he used such declarations to generalize “regarding the non-Ugandans who are also-non-Africans, the majority of whom are British citizens of Asian origin,” thus conflating legal and racial language. “They have never shown any commitment to the cause of Uganda or even to Africa. Their interest is to make money, which money they exported to various capitals of the world on the eve of our Independence.”⁵⁶ Such public declarations branded Ugandan Asians collectively as a unitary political problem at a moment when Asian interests, aspirations, and security strategies were fractured. Many small shopkeepers without recognition as Ugandan citizens were hurt by the Trade Licensing Act and hoped to obtain vouchers to enter the United Kingdom,⁵⁷ while citizens in manufacturing industries entered into mutually profitable partnership with Uganda’s governing bureaucracy through the nationalizations of 1970.⁵⁸ Documentation of one’s claims to citizenship could provide

⁵⁵ FCO 31/490 “Uganda: Legal Affairs: Neogy, Nelson, Mayanja: Detention of” Obote to Colin Legum, November 16, 1968: 60A p 16.

⁵⁶ Obote, “Communication from the Chair on 20th April, 1970,” 38.

⁵⁷ SOAS MCF box 63 COU/135 “Uganda 1961-71” The Unemployed, the Homeless and Destitute: A Report on the Situation of British Asians in Uganda, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, April 1970.

⁵⁸ Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 269–272.

limited security even as political negotiations redefined how such claims were to be acknowledged. However, the political problem of Ugandan Asians was not confined to official negotiations over the application of legal categories. Public debates that circulated in Ugandan newspapers focused on “integration” as a criterion for judging Asians’ rights to citizenship. As contributors to Uganda’s English-language press took up this line of argument in the early years of Idi Amin’s rule, they helped to consolidate a political and discursive construction of Asians as outsiders incapable of becoming “authentic citizens.”

Asians in print culture under military rule

In the 1950s, Asian leaders used the English-language press to push for the protection of Asian rights in a multi-racial state. The *Uganda Argus* was a natural forum for those appeals, as it encouraged its elite urban readers to imagine themselves among a cosmopolitan multi-racial reading public. As we saw in Chapter 1, however, those efforts were largely unsuccessful in the face of a widening political arena to which Asians had few connections. By the early 1970s, the public sphere to which the *Argus* appealed looked substantially different. Celebrations of metropolitan culture that had once reinforced racial hierarchy in colonial society gave way to struggles over postcolonial modernity. Uganda’s leaders did not propagate national culture projects like their Tanzanian counterparts, but they routinely conflated national belonging, citizenship, and racial identity in a manner that denied Asian claims to authentic citizenship.⁵⁹ African men used the *Uganda Argus* to claim belonging in such categories, replacing ideals of shared aspirations for metropolitan

⁵⁹ Ivaska, *Cultured States*.

cosmopolitanism that privileged colonial foreigners with affirmations of racially exclusive claims to citizenship defined by Black masculinity.

On January 25, 1971, listeners to Radio Uganda heard, “We men of the Uganda Armed Forces have this day decided to take over power from Obote and hand it to our fellow soldier, Major-General Idi Amin Dada, and we hereby entrust him to lead this our beloved country of Uganda to peace and goodwill among all.” Amin’s men detained or murdered thousands of soldiers and civilians suspected of disloyalty over the following weeks, but the rhetorical appeal to “peace and goodwill” gestured to a politics of reconciliation under a transparent “government of action” that appealed to many Ugandans who were unhappy with Obote’s increasingly secretive one-party state. Ugandan Asian businessmen and community leaders added to the many public expressions of support for the coup, which some hoped would enable a renegotiation of citizenship claims.⁶⁰

Amin’s ruthless suppression of dissent should not obscure the fleeting moment of optimism that some expressed for redressing injustices and forging an inclusive nationalism in the early months of his rule. Third among the eighteen points given as justification for the coup was “the lack of freedom in the airing of different views on political and social matters.”⁶¹ In the weeks and months that followed, editors of English-language newspapers the *Uganda Argus* and *The People* published articles on the meaning of press freedom and how Uganda’s journalists should use it.⁶² Attorney General Nkambo Mugerwa lamented in an article for *Transition*, which Rajat Neogy had revived in Ghana,

⁶⁰ KDA old box RC 541 file 60 “Stories” JWN, February 15, 1971: 9.

⁶¹ J. Nkambo Mugerwa, “Statement to the Nation by the Uganda Army” *The Uganda Gazette*, February 5, 1971.

⁶² “Viewpoint,” *Uganda Argus* July 8, 1971: 2; Ado Marina, “The Freedom of the Press,” *Uganda Argus* July 17, 1971: 3; Dent Ocaya-Lakidi, “The Press, The Public, and the Right to Know,” *Uganda Argus* July 24, 1971: 2.

“Now [that] we have freedom, the press would appear not to know how to exercise it,” as it continued to act as a “modern court jester or minstrel telling the King what ... it thinks he wants to hear [while ignoring] its duty to inform its readers and act as a guardian of their rights.”⁶³ Amin announced, “The days of lavish empty praise of anything that was said by past leaders, even though it was not in the interests of the country, have gone. ... This is the time for constructive criticism.”⁶⁴ Severe limitations to this sentiment became clear over time. Journalists investigating a massacre of soldiers in Mbarara disappeared in July 1971, and Amin denounced certain newspapers as “rumour-mongers.”⁶⁵ He later nationalized *The People*, a former UPC daily, and fired its editor in March 1972.⁶⁶ At the end of the year, he signed the Newspaper and Publication Decree, which empowered the Minister of Information, through the President’s directive, to “prohibit the publication of any newspaper for a specified or indefinite period.”⁶⁷

Journalists and editorial boards feared provoking government censorship, but letters to the editor provided a lively format through which readers could address Government. “While I do not fail to thank the Government of the Second Republic for the consideration it gives the Asian community I would be much obliged if the following points are considered before Asians are given citizenship,” wrote L. Musajjakawa in October

⁶³ P.J. Nkambo Mugerwa, “Notes in Transition – The Attorney General of Uganda on The Press,” *Transition* 39 (October 1971): 30.

⁶⁴ “Warning to the Press,” *Uganda Argus* November 13, 1971: 1.

⁶⁵ “‘Give Readers Correct Information’ President Stresses Role of the Press,” *Uganda Argus* September 13, 1971: 1.

⁶⁶ “‘People’ Ag. Editor sacked,” *The People* March 23, 1972: 1.

⁶⁷ *Newspaper and Publications (Amendment) Decree*, Decree No. 35 of 1972, (December 18, 1972).

1971.⁶⁸ “Priority should be given to that person who can mix well with black Ugandans. There is no use giving citizenship if they isolate themselves.” Such instructions to Government officials fit within a genre of newspaper letter writing dating back to Uganda’s first English-language daily, the *Uganda Herald*, which was superseded by the *Uganda Argus* in 1955.⁶⁹ The *Herald* began publication in 1912 primarily for Uganda’s small white settler community, but it gradually acquired a multi-racial readership and set of contributors (as columnists and letter writers), who used the paper to shape and claim belonging to elite colonial society.⁷⁰ Some African letter-writers criticized government policy, while sections such as “About People and Happenings,” “Mainly For Women,” and “Topical Topics” offered models for how middle class and elite Europeans, Asians, and Africans could participate in the cosmopolitan cultural life of Kampala.⁷¹ The *Argus*, which was partly funded by the Aga Khan, maintained a similar style until its nationalization in 1972, while *The People* appeared in 1964 as a government tabloid, which, like the *Argus*, maintained a European managing editor throughout much of the 1960s.⁷²

Under Amin’s rule, newspapers suggested an infrastructure of command. Amin approached governance as an act of instilling military discipline, by summoning and commanding publics through the radio and the press. Radio Uganda and *Uganda Argus*

⁶⁸ L. Musajjakawa, “Letter to the Editor – Let These People Stay,” *Uganda Argus* October 28, 1971: 3. The *Argus* instructed writers to provide their real names and address before a letter could be published, though they could request that a pseudonym be used in print.

⁶⁹ John Isoba, “The Rise and Fall of Uganda’s Newspaper Industry, 1900-1976,” *Journalism Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (1980): 224–33.

⁷⁰ On the interplay between the *Herald*’s presentation of authoritative truth claims and rumor, see Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), chap. 8.

⁷¹ Zie Gariyo, *The Press and Democratic Struggles in Uganda: 1900-1962*, Working Paper No. 24 (Kampala: Centre for Basic Research, 1992).

⁷² The *People*’s editor reported that its most popular content was its sports section. Daniel Nelson, “Newspapers in Uganda,” *Transition* 35 (March 1968): 32.

(which became *Voice of Uganda* in 1973) allowed the President and his officials to exhort imagined audiences to perform according to his directives, which often led to a lack of correlation between the world of administration on paper and the reality of lived experience under dictatorship.⁷³ Amin contrasted Obote's esoteric speeches with his own "government of action," which demanded that individuals comport themselves as part of a particular public whose responses to official directives could be constantly monitored (in theory, if not practice). During the first year of Amin's Second Republic, he toured the country and held rallies where authorities demanded communities organize themselves into particular categories and present requests and grievances on behalf of traders, farmers, Catholics, youth, Asians, or other groups. These tours helped to straightjacket expressions of opinion within the government's categories. As Amin worked to formulate policies, his form of governance opened a limited space where individuals could take up these categories to present problems they would like redressed.

Amin's infrastructure of command was also, as under Obote, an material way of shaping public participation and shoring up consent in ideals about authentic citizenship. Historians have recently begun reexamining how Africans used colonial newspapers to claim "social and economic *membership* in a society whose racial, spatial, and moral boundaries were under intense deliberation," within categories and style provided by the colonial press.⁷⁴ The postcolonial press, particularly under authoritarian rule, provided a tool for demonstrating belonging to a national community, whose membership the state

⁷³ Peterson and Taylor, "Rethinking the State in Idi Amin's Uganda."

⁷⁴ Harri Englund, "Anti Anti-Colonialism: Vernacular Press and Emergent Possibilities in Colonial Zambia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, no. 01 (January 2015): 223 (emphasis in original).

attempted to control.⁷⁵ As undemocratic as Amin's dictatorship was, it still required those under its rule to occupy the categories through which it sought to govern. In 1975, Amin described his ruling strategy to a group of journalists, "I have to discipline the people and after that I will train them to be friendly with one another. ... I called people from all corners of Uganda to discuss it [education, security, and co-operative produce marketing] with me – elders, young – and then I take a decision on that particular subject."⁷⁶ Such efforts to summon such groups were often direct. For example, in December 1971, Amin called a meeting of "all Asians ... to discuss all problems facing Asians."⁷⁷ However, there were subtler ways in which individuals adopted and shaped the normative categories of Amin's rule in the press. Letters to the editor, a long established genre, allowed individuals to present opinions on social issues or government policy while making claims about the position of certain groups within society.

Letters to the editor did not simply reproduce government propaganda. First, they provided examples to readers of individuals embodying roles demanded by the post-colonial state. Debates in the *Argus* letters section often revolved around particular social categories, such as youth or women, and their fulfillment of ideals outlined in government speeches. Letters were often written as if in dialogue not only with other letter writers but also with government officials, and they frequently justified a range of positions using the words and categories of government. Second, letters to the editor transcended local detail and complexity in order to make unequivocal moral pronouncements. Writers rarely

⁷⁵ Ivaska, *Cultured States*; Brennan, *Taifa*, chap. 5; Hunter, *Political Thought and the Public Sphere in Tanzania*.

⁷⁶ "Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada, President of Uganda," *Africa Report* 20, no. 5 (October 1975): 3–4.

⁷⁷ "Asian Leaders Summoned," *Uganda Argus* December 4, 1971: 1.

situated their writing in local contexts, instead offering grand conclusions about the inherent character of Asians, women, or other groups that did not embody a normative Ugandan identity. Third, letters homogenized perceptions of a reading public and of authentic citizenship. Writers often declared that “we Ugandans” should treat specific marginal groups according to particular moral criteria. In the letters discussed below, not only did writers portray “Asians” as a homogeneous group, but they also situated themselves and their readers in relation to a normative Black male Ugandan citizenry, despite frequent contributions from women and Asians who did not fit this model.

Amin’s coup interrupted what had appeared to be President Obote’s imminent decision about the fate of Ugandan Asians. As Amin settled in as President, newspapers printed numerous letters offering suggestions on how Asians’ citizenship claims should be handled. Such correspondence continued debates that had appeared in the *Argus* letters section since before independence. For example, two weeks before independence, future Supreme Court Justice George Kanyeihamba, wrote to warn, “Citizenship as such should not be regarded as a matter of convenience for doing business.” Instead, he argued, Asian “future citizens” should “accustom themselves to” the “sense of belonging [and] sense of duty” inherent in citizenship before earning recognition from an independent Ugandan state.⁷⁸ Six years later, as President Obote laid out a program of Africanization and publicly condemned British immigration policy toward British East African Asians, Ahmid Taib wrote to *The People* to ask, “Why should we give our dear citizenship to unfaithful

⁷⁸ Kanyeihamba was writing from the United Kingdom, where he reported that East African Asian students “like some of their community in Uganda, have been sitting on the fence for a long time.” George W. Kanyeihamba, “Apathy to Uganda Citizenship,” *Uganda Argus* September 25, 1961. For reminiscences of his experiences in England and Wales, see George W. Kanyeihamba, *The Blessings and Joy of Being Who You Are* (Entebbe: Marianum Press, 2012), 44–115.

Asians?"⁷⁹ In 1971, the *Argus* printed similar advice regarding citizenship. Kaboggoza

Mukasa wrote

Let me use this opportunity also to suggest to our beloved Government that when time comes for the award of citizenship to people of Asian origin, utmost consideration should be accorded to people with the following qualities: Those who are prepared to forget their origin and work hand in hand with the black citizens for the good of this country; people who are ready to associate with Africans and by so doing learn our culture and share the troubles we meet in national development.⁸⁰

Like many contributions to the *Argus*, Mukasa's letter treated Asians as a unitary group whose achievement of formal citizenship should require their social integration with "black citizens," among whom the author placed himself and his readers. Other contributions in 1971 similarly portrayed Asians as embodying a singular stereotype of an exploitative, socially isolated, urban male shopkeeper in contrast with a normative Black masculinity that defined Ugandan national identity.

Assessments of Asian rights to citizenship tended to use an archetype, an urban male shopkeeper, as evidence of Asian moral corruption or of the need for strict regulation. L. Musajjakawa argued in his letter that strict social and linguistic requirements should bar some Asians from acquiring citizenship, but those who qualified should "go back [to rural areas] in order to help villagers in getting things at the nearest shops instead of going to the main towns to buy things which their fellow Africans cannot get in their shops."⁸¹

Musajjakawa offered a nuanced perspective of an upcountry African customer who resented Asians' insularity but was frustrated with the inability of African shopkeepers to

⁷⁹ Ahmid Taib, "Letter to the Editor – Convince us that you are Ugandans," *The People* August 10, 1968: 8.

⁸⁰ Kaboggoza Mukasa, "Letter to the editor – Let's Get Together," *Uganda Argus* November 6, 1971: 3.

⁸¹ L. Musajjakawa, "Letter to the Editor – Let These People Stay," *Uganda Argus* October 28, 1971: 3.

sell goods of the same quality and price as Asians who had stronger connections with wholesalers in Kampala and Mombasa. By contrast, Lumala Zimbe's rebuttal, which was published two weeks later, rejected Musajjakawa's distinction between deserving and non-deserving Asians. "He want[s] some to stay and some to go. Why? ... We are economically colonized by Asians. This we must fight. ... They are the bosses in Uganda because trade is in their hands. So with me I say no citizenship for Asians."⁸² Jalmoro concurred, "They owe their affluence to this country and therefore have to show goodwill towards the indigenous citizens."⁸³

The figure of the socially insular Asian resonated with experiences of urban segregation. It also reinforced public statements by President Amin. Many writers were acutely aware that their knowledge of Asians solely as exploitative traders or businessmen was a result of social segregation. Kaboggoza Mukasa, cited above, noted, "Villages have been turned into towns by Asians – businessmen. Yet, while almost three quarters of their customers have been Africans, some Asians have managed to keep to themselves. ... Consequently, I should like to call upon our Asian brothers to come to us as we do go to them in business circumstances."⁸⁴ Jalmoro observed, "We see examples of Asians crowding at one table in a pub and not joining Africans and offering them one round of drinks or so."⁸⁵ Such condemnations of social insularity, and its connection with government policy on citizenship, fit in a broader public discourse on Asians that President

⁸² Lumala Zimbe, "Letter to the editor – Permits but no citizenship," *Uganda Argus* November 10, 1971: 3.

⁸³ Jalmoro, "Letter to the editor – "Shouldn't We Ask: What Can We Do For Uganda?" *Uganda Argus* November 27, 1971: 3.

⁸⁴ Kaboggoza Mukasa, "Letter to the editor – Let's Get Together," *Uganda Argus* November 6, 1971: 3.

⁸⁵ Jalmoro, "Letter to the editor – "Shouldn't We Ask: What Can We Do For Uganda?" *Uganda Argus* November 27, 1971: 3.

Amin also helped to shape. In between the publication of Mukasa's and Jalmoro's letters, the *Argus* reported Amin's statement to a group of Scandinavian journalists: "Indians isolate themselves from Africans. ... I've tried to tell them to associate with Africans, but they don't. ... I'd be happy if there were more Europeans here than Asians." The *Argus* explained, "General Amin said he was not against Asians, but was trying to explain how ordinary Ugandans feel."⁸⁶ The British High Commissioner was informed, "In fact the President spoke at greater length and more forcefully on this subject than the newspaper report suggests; commenting, amongst other things, that Asians are not very clean people."⁸⁷

There were often clear connections between the President's declarations and opinions expressed in letters to the editor. At the end of the report on Amin's condemnation of Asian insularity, the *Argus* referred readers to a letter on page three from "Muze Kobe," who echoed Amin's sentiments with a more explicit definition of social intimacy. "I am an African boy who is very perturbed [*sic*] by the Asians' culture of not allowing their daughters to marry African boys." Kobe continued to note with dismay, "Most Asians have already been issued with citizenship cards which say that they are allowed to stay in Uganda for life with the same African [*sic*] culture, yet their motto is to kill their daughters when found with African boys."⁸⁸ Whether composed by Amin himself, by an *Argus* reporter, or by a private individual, the letter situated the question of Asian citizenship claims amidst the desires embedded in the masculine nationalism that

⁸⁶ "How Uganda Could Develop Much Faster," *Uganda Argus* November 17, 1971: 1.

⁸⁷ FCO 31/1068 "Population in Uganda: 1971 census of population of Asian origin" Byatt to Duggan, November 23, 1971: 12.

⁸⁸ Muze Kobe "Letter to the editor – Let's all get together," *Uganda Argus* November 17, 1971: 3.

characterized the state under Amin. Alicia Decker has shown that “Amin utilized gendered discourses and performances to consolidate and maintain power.”⁸⁹ He dubbed his soldiers “fathers of the nation,” decried rumor-mongers for being like “women prostitutes,” and banned women’s organizations except the state-controlled National Council of Women, whose first chairperson promised to lead its members in “humble ways.”⁹⁰ The association of citizenship with Black masculinity permeated other letters. A letter from “Hardcore, Ugandan” supported Kobe’s denunciation of “Asian girls always trying to keep their distance,” and further condemned “their brothers [who] are terribly mad about black angels. ... How can we be degraded to this extent in our own land!”⁹¹

Letters condemning Asian insularity reinforced an association between citizenship and Black masculinity. In this formulation, Asian achievement of citizenship was conditional on erasing histories of segregation and exploitation through social integration. However, such invocations of a racialized national identity differed in their prescriptions for if or how Ugandan Asians could achieve belonging. Advocates of intermarriage may have been inspired by reports from 1970 of Asian girls forced to marry African members of Zanzibar’s Ruling Council.⁹² As discussed in Chapter 2, supporters of the farmers movement of the 1940s or the urban anti-Asian boycott of 1959 were concerned less with the possibilities of social integration than with using violence to increase economic and social distance between Africans and Asians, which they believed would empower Baganda

⁸⁹ Decker, *In Idi Amin’s Shadow*, 10.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 111–2.

⁹¹ Hardcore, Ugandan, “It also upsets me,” *Uganda Argus* November 25, 1971: 3.

⁹² Deborah Peters Amory, “The Politics of Identity in Zanzibar” (Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University, 1994), chap. 5.

traders. Nevertheless, debates over intermarriage closely paralleled those in Zanzibar.⁹³ If some Asians pointed to marriage between Asian men and African women as a sign of integration, African writers dismissed these arrangements as evidence of Asian immorality and hypocrisy. Underlying the latter position was not only an assumption that the woman was the subservient partner in marriage, but also a view that national pride was embodied in African men's dominance over women of marginal groups. Ali Mazrui argued that Amin regarded citizenship as form of kinship that he attempted to cement through his marriages to five women from different regions of Uganda.⁹⁴ There were persistent rumors that Amin became hostile to Asian citizenship claims after an Asian woman spurned his advances.⁹⁵ A letter from S.B.N. Bulanaziba asserted, "The most important issue is that of inter-marriage between the Asians and Africans." However, he lamented, even as "some Asian men love our African girls," there was no reciprocity. "What are we to do with these dumb and deaf people? Sweep them away from our country or refuse them citizenship?"⁹⁶

Other letters countered that integration was only possible through social interaction, not assimilation through marriage. "I object to the way in which the matter of Asian non-integration is being treated at such a tense and delicate moment in the history of

⁹³ Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, 140–2.

⁹⁴ Ali Mazrui, "The Resurrection of the Warrior Tradition in African Political Culture," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 13, no. 1 (March 1975): 67–84; O'Brien, *Brown Britons*, 13.

⁹⁵ Karugire, *Roots of Instability in Uganda*, 83. The accusation was leveled in a document supposedly by Milton Obote that was circulated by a clandestine opposition group in Kampala in 1972. Another document in Uganda's National Archive allegedly written by Amin, replied, "Obote seems to have added this point as a joke." UNA Elections box 1 file 4 "Comment by Amin on Obote's letter written in the same of Secret Council 777" Comment by His Excellency, n.d. [1972?]. In 1977, Major Bashir Juma married one of the few Ugandan Asian women who had remained in the country after the expulsion.

⁹⁶ SBN Bulanaziba, "Letter to the editor – They take no notice," *Uganda Argus* December 4, 1971: 3.

Uganda's race relations," wrote "Observer II." "Integration begins not in the bedroom, but rather in the classroom at the earliest possible level."⁹⁷ A.K. Kagwa urged, "Let us strive for some genuine racial harmony," but others doubted Asians' willingness to do so.⁹⁸ "Indian parents do not seem to educate their children to fit their new environment," wrote "Observer." "Instead they teach them to cling to their traditions and strictly remain in their so-called communities or castes."⁹⁹ Jalmoro regarded marriage as a "personal matter" but believed, "if Asians were inviting Africans to their homes more opportunity would be afforded to young people to get to know one another and perhaps fall in love."¹⁰⁰ These letters supported the ideal of Asian integration with a dominant African society, but some questioned whether assimilation was practicable given the inherent racial and cultural differences between Asians and Africans. Moses Ssekabira argued, "[Muze Kobe's letter] seemed to confuse two major things – marriage and co-operation. We are seeking more cooperation with the Asians. ... If he is from Zanzibar he should quit at once before he creates trouble here among the peace-loving people of Uganda."¹⁰¹ Ssekabira warned that inter-marriage would dilute rather than strengthen African racial identity. "Would [Mr. Kobe] prefer to turn Uganda into a country of half-castes? ... The Asian must have a different culture from our own, simply because we are different."

⁹⁷ Observer II, "Letter to the editor – Integration begins in school," *Uganda Argus* December 4, 1971: 3.

⁹⁸ A.K. Kagwa "Letter to the editor – Work for harmony and peace," *Uganda Argus* November 10, 1971: 3.

⁹⁹ Observer, "Letter to the editor – Putting it so clearly," *Uganda Argus* November 29, 1971: 3.

¹⁰⁰ Jalmoro, "Letter to the editor – "Shouldn't We Ask: What Can We Do For Uganda?" *Uganda Argus* November 27, 1971: 3.

¹⁰¹ Moses Ssekabira, "Letter to the editor – We don't want this law," *Uganda Argus* December 4, 1971: 3.

Whether writers supported Asian assimilation through marriage or greater cooperation in a plural society, all accepted that it was incumbent upon Asians to integrate themselves within a dominant “Black” society. Yash Tandon observed “three implied assumptions” behind the accusation, “the Asians have never integrated with us.” The first assumed “that there is a well integrated East African society into which the Asians do not fit.”¹⁰² The implied, and often explicit, model citizenry of “pure Black Ugandans” extolled by Amin and writers to the *Argus* was a shifting ideal that required the production of purge categories as different groups fought for the rewards of inclusion. The second and third assumptions noted by Tandon were “that the onus of integration, whatever it means, lies with the Asians” and their “failure to integrate is the cause of their ultimate demise.” In the economy of debate in the *Uganda Argus*, which was reinforced in President’s Amin’s speeches, lack of integration reflected a lack of will among Asians, whether to intermarry or to teach their children to reject discriminatory habits. A fourth presumption in the integration debate was that “Asians” referred to a coherent category of people whose behavior could be measured according to the demands of the state or a dominant Black African majority. Attempts to differentiate within these racial categories often provoked strong denunciations. As Michael Twaddle observed, “slogans such as ‘integration’ advocat[ed] objectives which were as unattainable as they were ambiguous.”¹⁰³

The *Argus*’s long tradition of promoting a sense of belonging for an elite multi-racial reading public did not cease entirely in the 1970s. Writers who did not identify with the African male perspective of the letters discussed above often urged African readers to

¹⁰² Yash Tandon, *Problems of a Displaced Minority: The New Position of East Africa’s Asians* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1973), 13.

¹⁰³ Twaddle, “Was the Expulsion Inevitable?,” 13.

distinguish between loyal and disloyal Asians or to appreciate the complexity of social integration among endogamous communities in a society that encouraged mutual segregation by Asians and Africans. In a letter signed, "Afro-Asian – Ahmed Khan," the author urged readers to make "a more emphatic distinction between Asians who are citizens and those who are not. For while the Ugandan Asians are here to stay and develop this country, the non-citizens will go when their time comes."¹⁰⁴ He agreed, "The Asian will have to come out of his shell and be more adjustable" but urged, "let us have more accomodative [*sic*] policies on the part of the Government. The Asians have done a lot for this country, ... We must make them feel at home as citizens." Such sentiments echoed distinctions that some Ugandan Asians had attempted to draw since the days of the Uganda Action Group in 1959 between a younger nationalist generation and their conservative elders. During Obote's Africanization campaigns, one N. Jiwani of Makerere College wrote to condemn Ahmid Taib's letter, cited above. "He is thinking of the Asian of the 1930s. ... Unlike our grandparents we Asian youths, having acquired Ugandan citizenship, are working hand in hand with our African comrades."¹⁰⁵ While Jiwani had asserted that "his relationship with a fellow African has become one of kith-and-kin," others acknowledged social distance with Africans but objected that it was not a result of Asians' lack of will or national loyalty. Responding to "Hardcore, Ugandan," A.P. Teraj asserted, "It is not true that Asian girls are trying to keep away from black males. ... Asian girls are usually shy and of nervous nature. You cannot after all force somebody to talk to you or go along with you, can

¹⁰⁴ Ahmed Khan, "Two Kinds of Asian," *Uganda Argus* December 4, 1971: 3.

¹⁰⁵ N. Jiwani, "This anti-Asian feeling is out-dates," *The People* August 17, 1968: 8.

you Mr Hardcore?”¹⁰⁶ Another letter, signed “De Said,” implicitly urging readers to “decide” on a more expansive understanding of integration, noted that the accusation of being socially exclusive could also apply “to a certain category of African females. To be specific — the educated, urbanised and working type.”¹⁰⁷ The author reported an ostensibly fictional Asian man and African woman’s night out on a date in Kampala. “Friends of her own sex wonder how she could aim short of the proverbial ‘permanent secretary’, and the African males take it as an affront to their pride because this girl went in for an Indian.” The class aspirations of young Africans, the author implied, created social barriers to public acceptance of African-Asian intimacy.¹⁰⁸

As African and Asian men argued over Asian capacity to achieve authentic Ugandan citizenship, letters by African women challenged the ways that normative masculine nationalism encouraged immorality. “This hunger on the part of our men for Asian girls is disgusting and insulting to African women,” wrote “Nurse.” “Are not we black women attractive enough for them? These men talk of marriage but believe me all they want is sex.”¹⁰⁹ Julia Salongo compared Asian men favorably with their African counterparts. “Most Asian Muslims have only one wife. Why do we Africans have more than two wives? ... If a married man thinks of other girls, why don't we married women also have the right to think of other men? We are at fault, spoiling our own culture, traditions and hearts of black

¹⁰⁶ AP Teraj, “Letter to the editor – Asian girls are just shy,” *Uganda Argus* December 2, 1971: 3.

¹⁰⁷ De Said, “Letter to the editor – What about this kind of couple?” *Uganda Argus* December 16, 1971: 3.

¹⁰⁸ On the generational politics of desire and wealth accumulation that pitted government bureaucrats against African students in a struggle for the affections of the “border figure” of the female office worker in postcolonial Tanzania, see Ivaska, *Cultured States*, chap. 2 & 3.

¹⁰⁹ Nurse, “Letter to the editor – Disgusting Hunger,” *Uganda Argus* December 17, 1971: 7.

women.”¹¹⁰ Such open rebukes of the sexual overtones of debates that were ostensibly concerned with Asians’ claims to Ugandan citizenship revealed the gendered hierarchy of racial nationalism.

In Uganda’s print culture, debates over Asian citizenship allowed writers to occupy the position of normative Black male citizens to which all citizens must aspire. In a letter to the *Argus*, N.P. Karema dismissed Nurse’s accusation against “us — African men — of being mad about Indian girls. ... By the thickness of the hair, we are not interested in Indian girls. All we are interested in is to get rid of all differences between the Indian community and Africans ... so that we can live a happier life in our Second Republic of Uganda under the leadership of our father—Gen Idi Amin Dada.”¹¹¹ Karema’s letter established himself among a citizenry of “African men,” to which others must aspire to join in order to achieve citizenship. Ahmid Taib made more explicit the impossibility of retaining Asian identity while achieving belonging in masculine Ugandan nationalist discourse: “The very moment you get the honour of holding our very dear and great nationality, you should convince yourselves that you are no longer Asian or red man, but you are Ugandan and black.”¹¹² Some Asian writers indulged in a fantasy of integration. In an interview for *Flamingo Magazine*, Hassan Sunderani said, “I am an African pure and simple. I have been trying to get a dark dye to colour myself so as to drive my point home.”¹¹³ “De Said,” cited above, declared romantically, “I for one, await the day when an Asian man will sit sipping malwa

¹¹⁰ Julia Salongo, “Letter to the editor – A Woman’s Plea,” *Uganda Argus* December 9, 1971: 3.

¹¹¹ NP Karema, “Letter to the editor – Don’t be envious, Nurse!” *Uganda Argus* December 29, 1971: 3.

¹¹² Ahmid Taib, “Letter to the Editor – Convince us that you are Ugandans,” *The People* August 10, 1968: 8.

¹¹³ “Sunderani: ‘exemplary Asian’,” *The People* June 8, 1968: 19.

through a straw with his African father-in-law outside in the garden, while his wife helps her mother prepare the evening meal. ... [If they quarrel over cultural differences] they only need to look into each other's eyes to wonder what all the fuss is about."¹¹⁴ For these writers, racial assimilation or social integration appeared as the only means of gaining acceptance in a Ugandan public sphere.

The debates in the Ugandan newspapers went to press amidst President Amin's efforts to count and command Ugandan Asians. The President declared "a census of all Asians (including Arabs and Half-Castes one of whose parents is of Asian Origin)" ostensibly in order to help settle their legal statuses.¹¹⁵ "All Asians," regardless of age, health, gender, religion, or citizenship, were required to report to enumeration centers on October 17th, 1971 with immigration documents, including Ugandan Citizenship certificates, certificates of renunciation of other citizenships, birth certificates, entry permits, marriage certificates, passports, and all general receipts issued at the time of applying for Ugandan citizenship.¹¹⁶ Despite such demands for documentation and a comprehensive sixty-two question form,¹¹⁷ the census did little to clarify the actual numbers or legal statuses of Asians in the country or to build trust with government officials. The Ministry of Internal Affairs instructed enumerators, "Do not enter into unnecessary conversation with these persons as they may confuse you. Just follow the

¹¹⁴ De Said, "Letter to the editor – What about this kind of couple?" *Uganda Argus* December 16, 1971: 3.

¹¹⁵ KDA old box 124 file CST 2/1 2685 "Asian Census" Census of the Population of Asians, October 11, 1971: 27.

¹¹⁶ KDA old box 124 file CST 2/1 2685 "Asian Census" Press Release (Ref 8636), October 4, 1971: 26.

¹¹⁷ UNA President's Office box 8 file 21 "Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Cabinet on Uganda Citizenship" Census Form, July 23, 1971: 1 annex 1.

points printed on the census form.”¹¹⁸ Some reports indicated “that the count was conducted most inefficiently by certain enumerators, some of whom were alleged to have been drunk whilst others could barely understand the questions on the Enumeration Form, let alone record the appropriate answers.”¹¹⁹ One man wrote to *The People* to applaud the “cheerful” manner of all involved, but reported waiting with his family for nearly six hours at the counting center.¹²⁰ The British High Commission heard that when some centers ran out of forms, “some Asians ... got tired of waiting ... and simply went off home!”¹²¹ A number of “enumerators only finished their task within the allotted day because they had the good sense to hand out enumeration forms to be filled in by their waiting clients” rather than doing so themselves as instructed.¹²²

The results of the census were never published, but the exercise left many Asians fearful for their futures in Uganda. In the preceding weeks, *The People’s* editorial board condemned “eleventh hour applicants” for citizenship and reported buses “unusually full of Asians” headed for the Kenyan border supposedly to avoid having their fraudulent citizenship forms discovered.¹²³ Many felt that it contributed to an atmosphere of persecution. Twenty-five Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies signed a letter to the British High Commissioner decrying his failure to protect them “from being targets of an

¹¹⁸ KDA old box RC 523 file C MIS 13 “Asian Census – Kigezi District” Ministry of Internal Affairs Notes on the Counting of Asians, n.d.: 1.

¹¹⁹ FCO 31/1068 “Population in Uganda: 1971 census of population of Asian origin” Hawkins to Richardson, October 25, 1971: 11.

¹²⁰ “Asian census: We are accused of bias reporting,” *The People* October 25, 1971: 1 & 8.

¹²¹ FCO 31/1068 “Population in Uganda: 1971 census of population of Asian origin” Hawkins to Richardson, October 25, 1971: 11.

¹²² FCO 31/1068 “Population in Uganda: 1971 census of population of Asian origin” Byatt to Duggan, November 23, 1971: 12.

¹²³ “Voice of the People – Asians and Enumeration,” *The People* October 7, 1971: 2; “Asian Census – Bogus Citizens Panic,” *The People* October 16, 1971: 1.

exercise which has undertones of racial discrimination. ... Thousands of men, women and children will be assembled together at local market places, schools or elsewhere, open to ridicule from people not being counted.”¹²⁴ After its completion, one S.K. Varma wrote to the *Argus* to condemn the census as akin to discrimination “in South Africa with its notorious pass laws, [or] in Nazi Germany with its infamous ‘Jewish problem’.”¹²⁵ Mr. Varma, like several other writers, singled out for condemnation the requirement of fingerprinting, a practice that Mahatma Gandhi had vehemently rejected in the early twentieth century for threatening the gendered respectability of Indians in South Africa’s racial hierarchy.¹²⁶ Mr. and Mrs. Bat Dev Basudev, warned against “attempts to equate [human beings] with notches in a computer tape or thumb prints.”¹²⁷ The physical means by which enumerators were instructed to count Asians, collectively in open locations with forms and fingerprints, exacerbated many Asians’ fears of racial discrimination and disrespect for gendered honor at a time when public debates over Asians’ citizenship raised similar concerns. In interviews conducted with Ugandan Asians in Kampala in early 1972, the sociologist Amber Chand heard that many regarded it as a “highly discriminatory” effort to challenge “their continued residence in Uganda,” prompting many to flee the country.¹²⁸ For its part,

¹²⁴ FCO 31/1068 “Population in Uganda: 1971 census of population of Asian origin” petition to Slater, October 10, 1971: 8A.

¹²⁵ SK Varma, “Letter to the editor – The census and the Asians,” *Uganda Argus* November 1, 1971: 6

¹²⁶ Keith Breckenridge, *The Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 23 & chap. 3.

¹²⁷ Mr and Mrs Bat Dev Basudev, “Letter to the editor – Thank You, Mr. Varma,” *Uganda Argus* November 8, 1971: 2.

¹²⁸ Amber Chand, *A Study on the Dynamics of a Minority Group as It Adjusts to External Pressures in the Society – with Special Reference to the Asians in Uganda*, Sociology Working Paper No. 121 (Makerere University, 1972), 58.

the British High Commission concluded, “we can hardly be fussy about the treatment of UK citizens whom we are not prepared to have in the UK.”¹²⁹

The October census marked the label “Asian” as a suspicious category in official thought, a feeling largely confirmed by Amin’s December conference of “Asian elders.” His practice of summoning constituencies allowed some Ugandans to occupy the position of loyal citizens. However, it presented a difficult challenge for groups such as Asians, which were already marked as lying outside a model national identity. Rather than work through established community organizations, Amin directed that a notice appear in the *Uganda Argus* on a Friday instructing “all Asians [to] send a delegation of ten from every district” to a conference in Kampala on Tuesday to “discuss all problems facing Asians.”¹³⁰

Photographs from the conference indicate that all delegates were men. On the first of the two-day affair, Minister of Defense Oboth Ofumbi presided over a meeting at which delegates presented several memoranda that attempted to situate a unitary Asian identity within the racial nationalism Amin had outlined in his speeches.¹³¹ Some made legal arguments about their citizenship applications, while others argued for Asian entitlement based on their material investments, and still other presented Asians as critical facilitators of commercial Africanization through apprenticeship and partnerships.¹³²

The man elected as leader before the conference, Manzoor Moghal, had gone to Kampala with “high hopes.” “We had great expectations,” he recalled of Amin.¹³³ The

¹²⁹ FCO 31/1068 “Population in Uganda: 1971 census of population of Asian origin” Byatt to Duggan, November 23, 1971: 12.

¹³⁰ “Asian Leaders Summoned,” *Uganda Argus* December 4, 1971: 1.

¹³¹ For a more detailed discussion of the rhetorical strategies adopted in these memoranda, see Taylor, “Race and Nation in Public Discourse,” chap. 5.

¹³² “Asian Makes Bridge Building Plea,” *Uganda Argus* December 8, 1971: 1, 7 & 8.

¹³³ Interview with Manzoor Moghal, Leicester, June 11, 2012.

latter's work to reconcile the central government with Buganda and his rhetorical attacks on corruption, discrimination, and insecurity under Obote led Moghal and others to believe there was an opportunity to make a fresh start in negotiating Asian security in Uganda. "We thought that the Asian community, which was beleaguered for such a long time, had found a saviour and he was inviting us to discuss the future of the country."¹³⁴ However, on the second day of the conference, delegates nervously listened as Amin launched into a "most virulent, most vicious attack" on Asians for being socially insular, exporting capital abroad, and defying the Trade Licensing Act by "renting to African traders only the front-room in the shops in controlled areas."¹³⁵ He also told the assembled delegates: "It is you, yourselves, through your refusal to integrate with the Africans in this country which has created this feeling towards you by the Africans."¹³⁶

In prepared remarks, Amin raised many of the same concerns voiced in letters to the *Uganda Argus* over the preceding months. He too connected integration through social interaction and intermarriage with accusations of disloyalty to the nation. Amin said: "[Asian] girls are under their parents' strict instructions never to fall in love with Africans. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that many Asian men in this country are loving and living with Africans girls."¹³⁷ He echoed Muze Kobe's accusation that Asian men threatened to kill their daughters who eloped with African men. Amin even produced a

¹³⁴ Manzoor Moghal, "A Life between Pakistan, Uganda and Leicestershire: Manzoor Moghal," *Moving Here Stories*, 2006, http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.movinghere.org.uk/stories/story_EMMHUganda29/story_EMMHUganda29.htm?identifier=stories/story_EMMHUganda29/story_EMMHUganda29.htm.

¹³⁵ See Chapter 4. "General's Challenge – Not It is Up To The Asians," *Uganda Argus* December 9, 1971: 1 & 7.

¹³⁶ "Part of the Family," *Uganda Argus* December 9, 1971: 1.

¹³⁷ "General's Challenge – Not It is Up To The Asians," *Uganda Argus* December 9, 1971: 7.

letter he claimed to have received from “an Asian girl, who is married to a Ugandan African.” He departed from his prepared remarks to read this letter aloud to the Asian delegates. It had instructed Amin: “please be very careful while you talk to them because ... in front of people they say they like Africans but when the girl of Indian loves an African they take it very seriously.”¹³⁸



Figure 5.1 Cover of *The People*, December 9, 1971.

As Idi Amin worked to summon a countable and commandable Asian constituency, press debates, like his own statements, reinforced Asian exclusion from a normative national identity. The infrastructure of command through the press and radio, which enabled Amin to summon groups, allowed members of this reading public to situate

¹³⁸ “Asian Girl’s Letter to President Amin,” *Uganda Argus* December 9, 1971: 7.

themselves within his categories of rule. It also rendered these categories free from moral and political ambiguities within local dynamics (like those explored in Chapters 3 and 4).

Through this process, the discursive possibility of Asian belonging in a “Black” African state narrowed in the early months of Amin’s rule. Amin and the press placed particular scrutiny on the social practices and the protection of gendered respectability among Asians, without distinction based on community, citizenship, or other factors.¹³⁹ By framing social segregation outside of the legal and material infrastructure that sustained it, writers blamed it on Asians’ collective lack of will. Although demands for integration were impossible to fulfill, they allowed Amin and his supporters to consolidate an assumed constituency of “pure Black Ugandan” men into which all others must fit in order to ensure the entitlements of citizenship.¹⁴⁰ If delegates to the Asian conference had hoped for a genuine dialogue to settle the legal status and political controversy surrounding Asians’ position in Uganda, one delegate recalled simply, “It was a one-way traffic.”¹⁴¹ An Ismaili citizen businessman told the sociologist Amber Chand in early 1972, “Although we pretend to be brave and unworried by the situation in this country, deep down every Asian is afraid. We have learnt to expect the worse [*sic*] now and feel that any day something might happen. Who can tell? Whatever we do we will always be second-rate citizens.”¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Hundle, “The Politics of (In)security,” 295–304.

¹⁴⁰ The phrase comes from Government of Uganda, *Uganda’s Economic War* (Kampala: Publications Section of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1975), 15.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Baldev Valia, London, February 2013.

¹⁴² Chand, *A Study on the Dynamics of a Minority Group*, 47.

Expulsion as event

Debates and negotiations over Ugandan Asians' citizenship were eclipsed in August 1972, when President Amin ordered the expulsion of all Ugandan Asians from the country within three months. Amin's speeches and expulsion decrees reflected how the legal language of citizenship and the racial language of integration collapsed into one another in a manner that inhibited Asians' capacity to construct home and belonging in Uganda in a manner recognized by the state of other Ugandans. Amin spoke of "Black Ugandans" and "Ugandan citizens" interchangeably, and he directed officials to closely inspect Ugandan Asian citizens' documents for any technicalities with which they could be nullified. As justification, he routinely condemned Asians for being socially aloof, exploiting Africans, and monopolizing urban commercial space. Although Western journalists characterized Amin as a dictator who lacked the sophistication to provide a legal argument for his uniquely racist act, there was remarkable continuity in the ways that Amin, Obote, Ugandan newspaper publics, and British officials framed Ugandan Asians in the 1960s and 1970s. The concerns that they raised about Asians' relationship to postcolonial Ugandan bureaucracy and urban life were embedded in histories of urban material infrastructure and political institutions described in each of the previous chapters. In this light, Amin's action appears to have been neither an aberration nor an inevitable culmination of underdeveloped class relations but instead a strategic deployment of an inherited language about Ugandan Asians. As such, it created a traumatic displacement of people without displacing the institutions, material infrastructure, and discursive fields in and through which Africans and Asians became embedded.

Amin first described his expulsion plan on August 4th in a speech he delivered to soldiers in eastern Uganda at a stop on his way back to Kampala from the remote Karamoja region.¹⁴³ His threat to expel “the over 80,000 [*sic*] Asians holding British passports who are sabotaging Uganda’s economy and encouraging corruption” in order to empower “black Ugandans” was remarkably similar to Milton Obote’s address to the National Assembly on April 20, 1970, in which Obote declared, “non-Ugandans who are also non-Africans” were “not entitled to remain in our country at their own will or because they cannot be admitted into any other country. ... Government ... will arrange for a systematic manner through which these persons are to disengage themselves from their hold on and continued residence in our country.”¹⁴⁴ Even the figure that Amin used of 80,000 British passport-holders came from the report produced by Obote’s Research Secretariat, though the publication of census results in 1971 had shown the number of all Ugandan Asians to be significantly lower.¹⁴⁵ Amin’s initial formulation of the expulsion, like Obote’s threats two years earlier, used racial stereotypes that implied all Asians were non-citizens, which led anti-Asian legislation to target British passport-holders.

By August 1972, Amin could draw from multiple models of expulsions that folded legal and racial logics into one another. In November 1969, the Ghanaian government passed the Alien Compliance Order that targeted Yoruba traders by requiring “those

¹⁴³ Karamoja, where Amin allegedly reached his decision, had the fewest Asian residents of any region of Uganda.

¹⁴⁴ “The Future of Asians in Uganda,” Uganda Argus August 5, 1972: 1; Obote, “Communication from the Chair on 20th April, 1970,” 38.

¹⁴⁵ UNA President’s Office box 4 file 8 “Report on Citizenship Submitted by Research Secretariat Office” W. Okwanje, August 1970.

without residence permits to leave Ghana within fourteen days.”¹⁴⁶ Some have suggested that Amin was inspired by the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council’s decision to expel twenty thousand Italians in July 1970.¹⁴⁷ Just prior to Libya’s action, Uganda’s Minister of Labor Eric Lakidi unveiled a new “Ugandanization” policy that targeted Kenyan Luo urban workers. Though President Obote allowed some to remain in the country by exempting a flexible category of “skilled and semi-skilled labour,” roughly 20,000 Kenyans were compelled to leave in 1970 in a manner similar to that later suffered by Ugandan Asians.¹⁴⁸ Officials proceeded under the assumption that certain categories of people distinguished by citizenship could be extracted from the country through legal order. However, as with Ugandan Asians, the lengthy social and economic histories that embedded people with connections across East Africa in Uganda’s urban economy made it a difficult exercise for local officials to implement. Mr. Lakidi acknowledged “identification of Ugandans and non-Ugandans was difficult at times,” but he empowered “local chiefs” to assess individuals’ claims to be Ugandan citizens without providing criteria for doing so.¹⁴⁹

The Kenyan expulsion of 1970 not only provided a precedent for the Asian expulsion order, but it also revealed the amorphous relationship between racial nationalism and expulsion as a legal intervention. Some of those affected by the order

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in Jean-Marie Henckaerts, *Mass Expulsion in Modern International Law and Practice* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1995), 64; see also Jeremy Seymour Eades, *Strangers and Traders: Yoruba Migrants, Markets and the State in Northern Ghana* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993).

¹⁴⁷ “A Uganda Diary,” *Transition* 42 (1973): 14. On the impact of the arrival of Italians from Libya on Italian national identity, see Pamela Ballinger, “Borders of the Nation, Borders of Citizenship: Italian Repatriation and the Redefinition of National Identity after World War II,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 3 (December 2007): 713–41.

¹⁴⁸ Mazrui, “Casualties of an Underdeveloped Class Structure.”

¹⁴⁹ KDA old box RC540 file 2 “District Commissioner & Assistants (News)” Ugandanisation of Semi-Skilled and Unskilled Jobs, Ministry of Labour, June 1, 1970: 208.

argued that such a violation of racial solidarity rendered Africans across East Africa vulnerable to Asian disdain. Two Kenyan employees of an Asian-owned sugar estate, Charles Osundwa and J.K. Buluma, wrote directly to President Obote, "... most of the foreigners of Asian origin are now laughing at us that how can your black brother kick you from a Country that belongs to East Africans and let you suffer at the expense of foreigners?"¹⁵⁰ Others argued that such efforts to relocate individuals based on arbitrary citizenship criteria ignored the histories of migration and cooperation that bound Africans together. The president of the Adholla Association in Kenya wrote to Obote, "We have in these territories each citizens who have been there for centuries and now they are being treated like enemies and refugees. It is quite unfair to treat our brothers (Africans) in such way."¹⁵¹ In these formulations, racial solidarity was rooted in histories of migration rather than the legal formulation of citizenship, which could include "foreigners" such as Ugandan Asians while excluding "black brothers." Finally, as Kenya's Minister of Labour protested to his Ugandan counterpart, the practicalities of expulsion were dehumanizing. Kenyans, he wrote, were "regarded as unwelcome animals," as they were "not allowed to take their property with them" and their "money was taken by your Police and the Army at the Border. ... Mr. Minister, human beings are human beings and we expect the Uganda Government to realize that a human being from Kenya is no different from a human being from Uganda."¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ UNA President's Office box 1 file 11 "Miscellaneous: Ugandanisation of Unskilled and Semi Skilled Jobs" Charles Osundwa and JK Buluma to Milton Obote, November 24, 1970.

¹⁵¹ UNA President's Office box 1 file 32 "Ministry of Labour" Joel Ofuono to President of Uganda, July 14, 1970: 41.

¹⁵² He concluded, "Mr. Minister, I regard this as the biggest crime of the century which have [*sic*] been committed by a friendly country against another." UNA President's Office box 1

As Amin addressed the unresolved question of Asian citizenship in 1972, he drew on precedents of expulsion with their dehumanizing application of racial and legal thought. Like the Kenyan expulsion and the Trade Licensing Act discussed in Chapter 4, the Asian expulsion required negotiation of the relationship between racial and legal categories, which were embedded in histories of government institutions and material infrastructure. Anti-Asian politicians who worked in the intimate arena of small town trade, such as Semu Itazya discussed in Chapter 3, incited their followers by pointing to economic inequality and racial hierarchy embedded in the spatial arrangements of their communities. Negotiations over citizenship criteria between the Ugandan and British governments were constrained by the institutional legacy of decolonization that in turn was shaped by histories of Asian political organizations' relationship to African nationalist politics discussed in Chapter 1. However, the infrastructure of command under Amin's rule, including the national press that printed letters to the editor and Amin's directives, enabled certain publics to imagine themselves in the position of an ideal gendered (male), racialized (Black) citizenry outside the multi-layered claims that shaped uses of the racial category Asian and enmeshed the people that it labeled in local and institutional contexts.

Amin's expulsion orders were deliberately vague and contradictory especially regarding their practical and legal implementation. In a Presidential decree published on August 9th, Amin ordered that the immigration documents of "any person who is of Asian origin, extraction or descent and who is a subject or citizen of" the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh "shall cease to have any validity whatsoever," though the Minister of Internal Affairs was empowered to exempt any individual or class of permit at his

file 11 "Miscellaneous: Ugandanisation of Unskilled and Semi Skilled Jobs" Mwendwa to Lakidi, October 7, 1970.

discretion.¹⁵³ At a news conference the same day, Amin announced that such individuals had 90 days to leave the country, and he used statistics compiled by Obote's research department to justify calling on "all those persons [of Asian origin] claiming to be Uganda citizens ... to produce documentary proof in support of their claims."¹⁵⁴ In the ensuing days, reported the *Uganda Argus*, Ugandan Asians of all citizenship statuses "besieged" banks, the immigration department, high commissions, and other offices seeking documentation with which to prove their Ugandan citizenship, to demonstrate their critical service in support of an exemption, or to secure entry to other countries.¹⁵⁵ The British High Commission initially examined entry applications according to the same criteria as before, but Amin quickly indicated that his government would not recognize the legal and institutional claims that tied them to Uganda and over which Ugandan and British authorities had negotiated in the past. Many individuals who went to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to have their citizenship certificates and passports validated had them confiscated or rejected on technicalities. On August 18th, Amin revoked exemptions for "professional British Asians ... because they cannot serve the country with a good spirit after the departure of other Asians."¹⁵⁶ Two days later, he announced that the expulsion would transcend the institutional and legal histories that had enabled some Ugandans Asians to claim formal citizenship. "All the 23,000 [*sic*] Asians who hold Uganda citizenship will also have to leave the country," the *Argus* reported Amin telling a rally in Kigezi, which provoked "wild cheers

¹⁵³ *The Immigration (Cancellation of Entry Permits and Certificates of Residence) Decree*, Decree No. 17 of 1972, (August 9, 1972), section 1.

¹⁵⁴ Willy Mukasa, "Some Will Stay, Some Will Go," *Uganda Argus* August 10, 1972: 1 & 8.

¹⁵⁵ "The Asian siege for documents," *Uganda Argus* August 12, 1972: 1.

¹⁵⁶ "Exemption Clause Deleted," *Uganda Argus* August 18, 1972: 1 & 12.

from a mammoth crowd.”¹⁵⁷ Though he backtracked a few days later, conceding that citizens could stay after a careful check of their documentation, Amin threatened that those who remained would be relocated out of urban commerce and onto farms in the remote, arid Karamoja region.¹⁵⁸ A subsequent decree added “any other person who is of Indian, Pakistani or Bangla Desh origin, extraction or descent” to the list of persons whose immigration documents were invalidated, without reference to citizenship.¹⁵⁹ Expelled individuals were also forbidden from selling their businesses without government approval and were eventually banned from exporting capital or property as they left.¹⁶⁰ Through such threats and directives, Amin extracted the question of Asians’ claims to urban space, wealth, belonging, and citizenship from their institutional histories in order to declare them invalidated.

British authorities eventually admitted their citizens residing in Uganda into the United Kingdom as an emergency measure. British publics have subsequently celebrated this act as a triumph of British humanitarianism and tolerance over the anti-immigrant sentiment channeled by Enoch Powell and the African racism of Idi Amin. Canada accepted thousands more, largely thanks to the Aga Khan’s lobbying of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Thousands more became “stateless” after Ugandan authorities revoked their

¹⁵⁷ “All Asians Must Go,” *Uganda Argus* August 21, 1972: 1.

¹⁵⁸ “These Asians Can Stay,” *Uganda Argus* August 23, 1972: 1. Amin told a group of foreign journalists that Asians who stayed past the ninety-day deadline would be “sitting on fire. ... I think they will not sit comfortably here in Uganda.” AP Archive, “Uganda Amin Luncheon,” AP Archive video, 3:09, August 9, 1972,

<http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/youtube/abb889f8839208bd918bbf206140c9e6>.

¹⁵⁹ *The Immigration (Amendment) Decree*, Decree No. 30 of 1972, (October 25, 1972), section 1 (b).

¹⁶⁰ *The Declaration of Assets (Non-Citizen Asians) Decree*, Decree No. 27 of 1972; *The Declaration of Assets (Non-Citizen Asians) (Amendment) Decree*, Decree No. 29 of 1972 (October 25, 1972),

Ugandan citizenship papers or after they destroyed these documents themselves in an effort to be able to follow relatives abroad or avoid remaining subject to Amin's threats. Through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, many were accepted as refugees in other European countries as well as the United States, while several thousand trickled out of the country shortly after the deadline to neighboring Kenya. Although many individuals retained spiritual and family ties in India, few settled there, as Indian authorities did not offer mass settlement and many worried about the availability of economic opportunities there.¹⁶¹

The legal instruments and official pronouncements that surrounded the Asian expulsion papered over social and institutional histories that enabled Asians to claim recognition in Uganda's political, social, and legal arenas. Amin argued that his action was the culmination of unrealized African desires for racial justice in response to Asian insularity, commercial exploitation, and disloyalty to the nation conditioned by colonial privilege. However, the expulsion also required silencing certain inheritances of the past both in its official narratives and in public debates over how it was implemented and, more recently, how it should be overcome and remembered. The physical dispersal of people did not sever Ugandan Asians' ties with Uganda nor did it resolve the issues of urban belonging, commercial morality, and authentic citizenship that Amin claimed had justified his action. Several hundred managed to remain in Uganda and worked to maintain ideals of community sovereignty throughout the 1970s until some expellees returned under Milton Obote's second administration in the early 1980s and again under the current government

¹⁶¹ Chand, *A Study on the Dynamics of a Minority Group*, 29.

of Yoweri Museveni in the 1990s.¹⁶² As the return of Ugandan Asians to Uganda to invest and reclaim lost property has prompted renewed debate over the expulsion's legacy, their historical entanglements in Uganda's social, institutional, and intellectual histories remain unsettled.

Commemoration and historical intimacy

In 2011, the Indian Association of Uganda and the Ruparelia Group of Companies announced a "Golden Jubilee Uganda Reunion" to be held in October of the following year outside Kampala. The event's elaborate website explained,

This year, 2012, Uganda celebrates 50 years of Independence. This year also marks 40 years since the decrees of Idi Amin forced many Ugandans to leave, and created a large and diverse Ugandan Diaspora in many parts of the world. Uganda now invites her sons and daughters from abroad to come back home, to reconnect with our roots, to celebrate our Golden Jubilee, and to reflect on our country's varied past, its booming present, and its promising future. ... This is an event for all communities of Uganda.¹⁶³

The organizers attempted to channel Ugandan Asians' collective identification through this traumatic event into a celebration of Ugandan nationalism and an invitation to participate in the investment economy of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government, which formally invited expelled Asians and their descendants to return, reclaim property, and invest in 1994. Attendees were promised "networking opportunities" with "top dignitaries", "a business/social hub" for assessing "current and future opportunities in Uganda" as well as a chance to "walk down memory lane with those old school mates

¹⁶² Hundle, "Exceptions to the Expulsion."

¹⁶³ Ruparelia Group, "Golden Jubilee Uganda Reunion 2012," 2011, accessed June 2012, <http://www.ugandareunion2012.com>.

whom you left 40 years ago.” The keynote address was to be given by President Yoweri Museveni.

The invitation circulated widely on Ugandan Asian email groups and social networking sites, but barely a handful of people registered. Eight weeks before the gathering was scheduled to take place, organizers seized on an outbreak of Ebola in a remote western district as an excuse to cancel the event. Other occasions marking the fortieth anniversary among particular Ugandan Asian communities or oriented toward non-Ugandan British or Canadian publics proceeded successfully.¹⁶⁴ The overlapping anniversaries of the expulsion and of independence also provided an occasion for some African politicians to celebrate Idi Amin’s legacy of racial nationalism among receptive publics consisting of urban Africans who feel disenfranchised by or in competition with non-African investors. Even as the expulsion anchors the self-narratives of Ugandan Asians and some of aspiring African businesspeople, it leaves an unsettled legacy that undermines efforts to fold its commemoration into celebrations of an inclusive Ugandan nationalism. Public discussion of the expulsion entangles the anxieties and aspirations of Africans and Asians around a singular moment of rupture that shifts focus away from the historically contingent registers and infrastructure through which feelings of racial injustice have been articulated. Instead, it draws attention to a government action and experience of disruption that rendered invisible the relationships and claims that entwined Asians and Africans

¹⁶⁴ Maya Parmar, “Memorialising 40 Years since Idi Amin’s Expulsion: Digital ‘Memory Mania’ to the ‘Right to Be Forgotten,’” *South Asian Popular Culture* 12, no. 1 (2014): 1–14. Hundle has analyzed “ongoing reverberations of the expulsion event in Uganda and its transnational diasporas.” In this section I am particularly interested in the anxieties and tensions that some of those reverberations create within Uganda. Hundle, “The Politics of (In)security,” 16.

together in urban life while bolstering the mutual exclusivity of racial categories in popular usage and in legal practice.

Among many Ugandan Asians, the expulsion had a leveling effect that created a sense of common experience. The expropriation of property and document verifications forced people of different communities and classes into similar experiences of public and official ridicule and exclusion, particularly in long immigration queues. Over the course of the ninety days that Asians were given to leave, Mahmood Mamdani noted, “Gradually a primitive racial solidarity emerged out of a common racial predicament. ... An Asian was an Asian in the eyes of both the British and Ugandan authorities.”¹⁶⁵ Treated like foreigners in Uganda and refugees in the United Kingdom, Ugandan Asians found their different strategies of identification and claim-making, which were embedded in long institutional and social histories, deliberately rejected by British and Ugandan authorities. Few families had been able to move their wealth before the decree preventing the export of no more than the equivalent of 50 British pounds. Thus, regardless of their previous status in Uganda, most Ugandan Asians initially found themselves on an equally precarious economic footing in exile. Formerly wealthy businessmen took low-paying factory jobs, and socially conservative families were compelled to allow women to work outside the

¹⁶⁵ Mamdani, *From Citizen to Refugee*, 27–28.

home.¹⁶⁶ Many had similar encounters with personal and institutional racism and xenophobia in the countries where they moved.¹⁶⁷

Life in exile reinforced some existing social boundaries while also producing new ones. Since the 1930s, the Aga Khan had promoted institutions among his followers that encouraged them to identify with the countries in which they were settled.¹⁶⁸ As a result, Ismailis constituted a disproportionate number of applicants for Ugandan citizenship who were rendered stateless during the expulsion and admitted to Canada through the efforts of the Aga Khan. Meanwhile, the majority of families admitted to Britain on the basis of their British passports identified as Hindu. In addition to the geographic dispersal of different religious communities, some lament that these divisions have grown sharper with the spread of racial and religious profiling of Muslim communities with the global war on terror after September 2001. Commercial success after 1972 did not always correspond with one's previous social position in Uganda. Thousands of British passport holders, such as Taj Kassam whose story is mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, who managed to obtain tightly rationed travel vouchers under the Commonwealth Immigrants Act had been able to bring a portion of their property and wealth with them and were often able to arrange a smoother transition for their relatives. As the generation of expellees ages, some along with their descendants have either returned to Uganda or rebuilt

¹⁶⁶ Joanna Herbert, "Oral Histories of Ugandan Asians in Britain: Gendered Identities in the Diaspora," *Contemporary South Asia* 17, no. 1 (2009): 21–32; Judith Brown, *Global South Asians: Introducing the Modern Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 47–49.

¹⁶⁷ Mamdani, *From Citizen to Refugee*; Mike Bristow, "Ugandan Asians: Racial Disadvantage and Housing Markets in Manchester and Birmingham," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 7, no. 2 (June 1979): 203–16.

¹⁶⁸ Morris, "Indians in East Africa," 200–2; Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, chap. 6.

connections there through commercial investments and social networking, while others have not.¹⁶⁹

Uganda's economic and political landscape has also changed since 1972. The country lost the commercial expertise of Asian traders and connections to international suppliers sustained by Asian firms' credit with foreign banks at a moment of extreme financial insecurity. On taking office, Amin's new finance minister E.B. Wakhweya warned, "Uganda is at present facing the most serious financial crisis since Independence" with low foreign exchange reserves, a serious balance of payments deficit, and a poor exports outlook exacerbated by an overdependence on coffee exports.¹⁷⁰ Asian traders were dependent on foreign capital, and when British banks seized their properties following the expulsion because of their inability to repay their loans, Amin decreed that all "abandoned property" shifted to the state.¹⁷¹ A government-appointed Departed Asians Property Custodian Board (DAPCB) allocated these properties to individuals based on their

¹⁶⁹ On different experiences of the expulsion itself, see Bert N. Adams and Mike Bristow, "Ugandan Asian Expulsion Experiences: Rumour and Reality," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 14, no. 3-4 (1979): 191-203.

¹⁷⁰ UNA President's Office box 1 file 36 "Agenda for Cabinet Meeting Due to be Held on Tuesday, 5th October, 1971" 1971/72 Budget Review, n.d. [September 1971]. The military regime was unwilling to heed Wakhweya's advice in support of "cuts or deferment of Defence expenditure." He eventually fled into exile in January 1975. Colin Legum, "Behind the Clown's Mask," *Transition* 50 (October 1975): 90.

¹⁷¹ On Amin's policies toward British banks, see Mahmood Mamdani, *Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda* (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983), 65-6. Asian traders' dependence on foreign banks was particularly evident during the 90 days expellees had to wind up their affairs in Uganda. A British High Commission official reported, "According to my banking friends, it is surprising how few of them [departing Asians] have merely left the country without informing the banks of their departure. Most have tried to pay their debts, and where they have been unable to do so, have left their keys with the banks so that the latter can take possession of the premises as they would do normally when a customer fails to meet his financial obligations. This has brought the banks into conflict with the provisions of the Decree." FCO 31/1357 "Activities of British Banks in Uganda" Beer to Paskins, October 23, 1972: 4.

commercial expertise or political connections, though many businesses quickly collapsed without access to credit or supply chains. While some African businessmen prospered from running formal businesses allocated by the DAPCB, others acquired wealth through illegal coffee smuggling with neighboring countries.¹⁷² Despite the violence and insecurity of the 1970s and 1980s, African traders used profits from smuggling to construct buildings and other secure immovable investments, which helped to transform the material infrastructure of many Ugandan towns [see Chapter 4].

The status of early postcolonial history remains unresolved in Uganda's politics and popular memory. Much of the NRM's leadership, led by Yoweri Museveni, was influenced by the leftist politics of 1970s Dar es Salaam, where many of Uganda's political exiles, including President Obote, lived during Amin's rule.¹⁷³ Having supported armed struggles against each of Uganda's postcolonial rulers to date,¹⁷⁴ they were not keen on excavating an edifying postcolonial political legacy with which to build a sense of common national heritage after seizing power in 1986. Instead, they promised a break with the past by pushing the language of warfare and struggle into the arena of everyday governance,¹⁷⁵ which constantly promises to bring Uganda into a new stage of economic and spiritual development.¹⁷⁶ In official pronouncements, the pre-1986 past is a degrading burden of

¹⁷² Godfrey B. Asiimwe, "From Monopoly Marketing to Coffee Magendo: Responses to Policy Recklessness and Extraction in Uganda, 1971–79," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 104–24; Asiimwe, "The Impact of Post-Colonial Policy," 128–31.

¹⁷³ Ivaska, *Cultured States*, 152–3.

¹⁷⁴ With the exception of the brief transitional administrations of Yusuf Lule, Godfrey Binaisa, and the Military Commission of Paulo Muwanga in 1979–1980. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, *Battles of the Ugandan Resistance: A Tradition of Maneuver* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2010).

¹⁷⁵ Peterson, "Heritage Management in Colonial and Contemporary Africa," 18–29.

¹⁷⁶ Joshua Rubongoya argues that this discursive frame conceals continuities with previous regimes. Joshua Rubongoya, *Regime Hegemony in Museveni's Uganda: Pax Musevenica* (New

shame and trauma to be overcome through faith in the NRM's transformative power, whose temporality was initially shaped by Marxist principles and more recently by evangelical Christianity.¹⁷⁷ Efforts to reckon with the contents of this past have been discouraged. Upon seizing power, the NRM established a Commission of Inquiry into Violations of Human Rights committed between independence and the fall of the previous regime. However, rather than working like similar commissions around the world in "producing robust and authoritatively objective truth in the midst of contending subjectivities associated with competing perspectives on bitterly divided and contested pasts,"¹⁷⁸ Uganda's commission lacked political support, and its final report, which took eight years to produce, received minimal publicity.¹⁷⁹ When President Museveni and NRM officials mention the postcolonial past at all, they do so not to impose a unifying narrative but rather to paint it as a unitary epoch of sectarianism and collective national sin to which Uganda could return without NRM leadership.

The primary means through which the NRM promises to propel Uganda into a new age of wealth and virtue is foreign investment, and the archetypal imagined figures of of

York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). For an article that historicizes this devaluing of history in Uganda, see Richard J. Reid, "Ghosts in the Academy: Historians and Historical Consciousness in the Making of Modern Uganda," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56, no. 2 (2014): 351–80.

¹⁷⁷ Museveni's son reinforces the Messianic tone of NRM philosophy in his account of the guerilla war. "Just like the early Christians, who driven by the gospel of Jesus Christ, were ready to die facing down the power of imperial Rome eventually overcome all hardships, Museveni and his vanguard knew that the power of human convictions can overcome mountains." Kainerugaba, *Battles of the Ugandan Resistance*, 54.

¹⁷⁸ Deborah Posel, "History as Confession: The Case of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission," *Public Culture* 20, no. 1 (2008): 120.

¹⁷⁹ Arthur H.O. Oder et al., "The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Violations of Human Rights" (Kampala: Republic of Uganda, October 1994); Joanna Quinn, "Constraints: The Un-Doing of the Ugandan Truth Commission," *Human Rights Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (May 2004): 401–27.

this process are once again Ugandan Asians.¹⁸⁰ In 1994, President Museveni invited expelled Ugandan Asians to return to Uganda, to reclaim their expropriated properties, and to invest in the country's economy, though he declined to recognize Ugandan Asians as an indigenous ethnic group in the country's new constitution.¹⁸¹ Unlike a similar gesture in 1982 from President Obote, Museveni assured returnees of their physical and legal security.¹⁸² Today, some of Uganda's wealthiest citizens are Ugandan Asian returnees. Industrialist families such as the Madhvanis and Mehtas have expanded on their pre-1972 enterprises, while Uganda's wealthiest person, Sudhir Ruparelia, returned to Uganda in 1986 with a few thousand dollars and built a business empire in tourism, banking, and education that is now worth over a billion dollars.¹⁸³ Ugandan Asian investors are widely believed to be generous contributors to the ruling party.

The NRM's dismissal of history provides a powerful model for Ugandans seeking to leave behind past suffering and injustices. Yet, it has drawn growing critique in recent years especially from younger Ugandans who do not sense that they may be included in this vision of future prosperity. In 2009, the leader of an opposition political party presided over the launch of businessman Christopher Sembuya's book *The Other Side of Idi Amin*, a

¹⁸⁰ Hundle, "Exceptions to the Expulsion," chap. 4; Godfrey B. Asimwe, "The Roots and Dynamics of the Indian Citizenship Question and Relations in Uganda" (CODESRIA Multi-National Working Group On Citizenship, 2007).

¹⁸¹ Syed A.H. Abidi, "The Return of Asians to Uganda," *Africa Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1996): 45–58.

¹⁸² By contrast, Obote's ministers accompanied their invitation to expelled Asians with warnings reminiscent of those from the Africanization campaigns of the late 1960s. "To them personally," wrote Obote's cousin and spy chief Akena Adoko, "We have no cause for respect, if they need any Then let them earn it." Akena Adoko, *Akena Adoko on the Need for Partnership: A Plea to Alien Former Owners* (Kampala: Africa Publishers Ltd., 1984).

¹⁸³ "Sudhir Ruparelia," *Forbes*, accessed January 3, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/profile/sudhir-ruparelia/>.

celebratory narrative of Amin's economic nationalism.¹⁸⁴ In a popular music video, Amin's image appears in an imagined "Heroes Museum" as the singer describes how some people are not appreciated until they are gone.¹⁸⁵ Ugandans who find themselves in competition for business or employment with those regarded as foreign investors frequently criticize the present government's laissez-faire approach with what they perceive to have been Idi Amin's economic nationalism. As they and other NRM critics seek a frame through which to criticize or to demand favors from the current government, historical narratives that purport to recover admirable accomplishments of past leaders provide a measure of political currency, particularly among Ugandans who prospered in the 1970s or who are too young to remember the violence of that period.¹⁸⁶

Many Ugandan Asian returnees remain nervous about expanding a public sphere in which discussions of the expulsion take place for fear of provoking a counternarrative that

¹⁸⁴ Christopher C. Sembuya, *The Other Side of Idi Amin Dada* (Kampala: Sest Holdings Ltd., 2009); "Idi Amin Had a Good Side – Author," *New Vision* May 20, 2009. Mr. Sembuya, described by one journalist as "Uganda's very own Rockefeller," developed successful industrial and banking firms during the 1970s and 1980s. He recently lamented, "The economy is slowly going back to foreigners and government seems to empower them so much in all possible ways at the expense of Ugandan investors." Joseph Were, "Sembule Owners Can Aim Beyond Museveni," *The Independent* (Uganda) April 13, 2014; Brian Ssenoga, "Sembule Thriving on Resilience and Re-Invention," *Daily Monitor* September 10, 2013.

¹⁸⁵ Jose Chameleon, *Basima Ogenze - Dr. Jose Chameleone* (Leone Island, 2010), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2e7v80ibbu0>.

¹⁸⁶ Political opposition to the ruling NRM is not united around the retrieval of an edifying historical legacy. Leaders of Uganda's main opposition party the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), most of whom defected from the NRM, argue that the NRM has merely exacerbated a longer history of division. FDC presidential candidate Kizza Besigye recently condemned Uganda's 53rd Independence Day celebrations, arguing, "The Independent Uganda is an embarrassment and a humiliation to Ugandans. Ugandans are powerless, lack basic social amenities, poor, less educated and lack skills to engage in production. They lack control over their taxes and expenditures and natural resources." Blanshe Musinguzi, "The Independent Uganda is an embarrassment and a humiliation to Ugandans–Besigye" *Red Pepper* October 12, 2015.

celebrates their persecution. Sudhir Ruparelia, whose conglomerate co-sponsored the 2012 Reunion, is a strong NRM supporter, and like other wealthy Asian businesspeople, he often attracts criticism from opponents of the NRM's promotion of foreign investment, which led some Ugandan Asian returnees not to register for the event. However, there is more than rudimentary political calculation about the unwillingness of some Ugandan Asians and Africans to forge a shared arena of historical commemoration. Histories of racial thought and exclusion in political, intellectual, legal, and social arenas constitute a "collective representation of intimacy" that shapes a sense of mutual recognition among Ugandan Asians and Africans unhappy with NRM investor capitalism. Ugandan Asians often describe themselves as those once expelled, while some Ugandan Africans attempt to summon up political constituencies who would benefit from a return to Amin's racial nationalism.¹⁸⁷ These invocations of the past elide histories of contestation and accommodation, and cohere around the same perceived rupture point. Despite efforts to draw lessons and inspiration from a shared past, its memories remain largely a source of shame that conceals desires for sectarian justice rather than serving as an authoritative truth that binds Asians and Africans together. Michael Herzfeld has argued, "National identity comprises a generous measure of embarrassment together with all the idealized virtues."¹⁸⁸ While this anthropologist of citizenship identifies forms of "rueful self-recognition" as fundamental to "*cultural intimacy*," shared historical narratives may expose analogous forms of

¹⁸⁷ Ugandan Asian returnees have worked to differentiate themselves from Indians who have come to Uganda since the 1990s to make money and leave. Asiimwe, "The Roots and Dynamics of the Indian Citizenship Question"; Godfrey B. Asiimwe, "Migrations et identité des minorités d'origine indo-pakistanaise en Ouganda," in *L'Afrique indienne: les minorités d'origine indo-pakistanaise en Afrique orientale*, ed. Michel Adam (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2010), 320–60; Hundle, "The Politics of (In)security," chap. 4.

¹⁸⁸ Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*, Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 2005), 6.

discomfiting self-perception, particularly in contexts where the state devalues history as shameful rather than as a reserve of a virtuous heritage.¹⁸⁹

If critics like Christopher Sembuya have searched for promise in accounts of Idi Amin's approach to Ugandan Asians, the NRM has worked to empty that history of any inspirational content, portraying it as a time of national shame. While President Museveni did not speak at the cancelled "Golden Jubilee Uganda Reunion," he did use the fiftieth anniversary of Uganda's independence to address thousands of Ugandans who attended National Jubilee Prayers at Mandela National Stadium outside Kampala. He addressed God "on my own behalf and on behalf of our past leaders to repent" for "sins" such as sectarianism, rebellion, and exploitation in order "to close the evil spiritual past ... [and] give us a new beginning."¹⁹⁰ For Museveni, all Ugandans may recognize themselves as sinners in the nation's past, sharing a shameful inheritance that must be cast off through devotion to God and the NRM in order to propel Uganda forward into prosperity and morality. Since 2010, the NRM has attempted to blunt criticism through historical narrative by flooding the landscape of historical commemoration with presidential medals without accompanying spaces to reflect on individual awardees' accomplishments.¹⁹¹ Among the recipients of the fifteen types of honors awarded by the President have been the leader of

¹⁸⁹ My emphasis. Herzfeld points to ways that "structural nostalgia" is sometimes shared by the state and by those it regards as criminals. However, he has less to say about embarrassment and anxiety surrounding the production of historical narrative. *Ibid.*, chap. 7.

¹⁹⁰ Bishop Joshua Lwero, *President Museveni Repents for and Covenants Uganda to God*, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo-FCyddMfk>; Moses Molondo, "For the sins of Uganda, I repent - Museveni" *New Vision* October 18, 2012.

¹⁹¹ *The National Honours and Awards Act, 2001* established a structure for determining the recipients of Presidential Awards. It was assented to in 2005, and the mass awarding of medals began in 2010. John Musinguzi, "Understanding Museveni's Medals," *The Observer (Uganda)* February 25, 2013.

the 1959 UNM boycott Augustine Kamywa and the minister who implemented the 1969 Trade Licensing Act William Kalema. All of Uganda's former heads of state have also posthumously received medals except for Idi Amin. However, the thousands of awards issued in the past few years have not been accompanied by public commemorations of individual accomplishments within an official narrative.¹⁹² There remains little space in national forums for revisiting debates, struggles, and infrastructural legacies that have shaped ideas about and negotiation of racial inequality.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how Ugandan publics as well as British and Ugandan officials excluded Asians from ideals of Ugandan national identity. In doing so, they extracted Asian belonging from the complex local contexts and histories through which Asians lived in Ugandan urban spaces while making claims to property, citizenship, and other forms of membership. Treating Idi Amin's expulsion decrees as a rupture event perpetuates an idea of a singular, undifferentiated Ugandan Asian identity and history. The infrastructures for historical commemoration in contemporary Uganda and the evangelical designs of NRM governance have together inhibited forging a shared public sphere where difficult histories of unequal urban entanglements may be discussed and justice sought without exclusion.

¹⁹² The government maintains an online database of medal awardees but provides profiles for only eleven recipients of the most prestigious honors. The format of the brief profiles resists the production of narrative history, as all information is provided in bullet points. Office of the President, "National Honours and Awards," 2012, <http://www.presidentialawards.go.ug>.

Conclusion

I met Taj Kassam at his Kampala office in July 2013. It was 54 years after he fled his home in Gomba due to the UNM boycott, 44 years after he left Uganda for Canada, 41 years after Idi Amin expelled his siblings in the Asian expulsion, and 17 years after he moved back to Uganda. He occasionally paused our conversation when employees came to him with questions about customer orders for generators, dairy processing equipment, and commercial food industry ingredients. Such interruptions provided him with the opportunity to emphasize how he earned respect through the continuity of his business ethic. Whether as a young shopkeeper in a small upcountry town, a corporate manager in Vancouver, or a wholesaler in Kampala, he aimed to “just be honest and sincere” and “treat every customer as equally important,” which trumps context. He also expressed his love for Uganda and for the opportunity to contribute to the country’s economy.¹

When we returned to our conversation, however, he stressed that the tensions that disrupted his life in 1950s Gomba and again in 1960s Kampala remained unresolved. Horizontal relations of relative honesty and sincerity had failed to override the backlashes against his superior position within the racial hierarchies of small town life. He has worked

¹ Interview with Taj Kassam, Kampala, July 15, 2013. See also his interview in Julius Businge, “Executive Style – Adding value, creating wealth,” *The Independent (Uganda)* June 21, 2013.

to no longer feel bitter over the way he was treated during the 1959 boycott, when his African neighbors boycotted his businesses and refused to sell him food. Dispirited by the poverty into which his former hometown had sunk in the 1990s, he has returned to Gomba only twice since he has returned to Uganda, which he described as “the most depressed trips I ever had in my life.” For Taj Kassam, as for many Ugandans, the legacies of Asian claims to – yet exclusion from – urban life remain unsettled despite the government’s legal reversal of the 1972 expulsion policy.

Studying a single arena of urban life in isolation -- whether via print culture, law, or everyday commercial transactions -- may provide an illusion of no more than a linear history of racialization in late colonial and postcolonial Uganda. Aili Mari Tripp has demonstrated that the intense racialization of political constituencies within the rhetoric of elite male politicians was largely absent from the politics of elite women.² The commercial spaces where Asian traders guarded access to merchandise and enforced credit relationships fueled African racial populists, whereas bars and other social spaces could render racial segregation less visibly objectionable and even sustain fleeting feelings of social egalitarianism.³ When many Asians expressed optimism that Idi Amin’s coup would help them resolve their citizenship and licensing claims, some scholars claimed that they were acting “myopically.”⁴ The evidence suggests that Taj Kassam and other Ugandan Asians did not face a unitary structure of exclusion that impinged equally on all aspects of their lives. Rather, multiple histories mattered. Material infrastructure, discursive practice,

² Tripp, “Women’s Mobilization in Uganda.”

³ Bars were a prominent target of UNM enforcers, who aimed to create social distance between Asians and Africans through violence and surveillance.

⁴ Jørgensen, *Uganda A Modern History*, 271.

and legal architecture shaped how all Ugandans navigated urban life. Histories of Asians in urban Uganda are likewise broader than perceived origins and legacies of expulsion.

This study examined infrastructures of racial thought across multiple contexts in late colonial and early postcolonial Uganda. Horizontal axes of African-Asian interaction and intimacy intersected uneasily with vertical hierarchy, shaping how Ugandans understood racial difference and pursued ideals of racial justice. We have seen how efforts to forge a non-racial public sphere through the elite press failed to prevent the entrenchment of racial publics. As a twenty year-old student in 1959, Rajat Neogy hoped that the English-language press would allow a vanguard of youthful activists to dissolve racial categories as a basis for Uganda's burgeoning nationalist politics. He became rapidly disillusioned with political activism as his colleagues reinforced "Asian" and "African" domains of political activity in their struggles with Asian community leaders. He created a productive arena of intellectual and literary exchange in *Transition* magazine, whose appeal spread well beyond narrow claims to national belonging or citizenship. *Transition* allowed Neogy to place political and cultural struggles in a transnational frame. However, these contents could not override the vertical demands of the Ugandan state, including on Neogy himself. The publication of an article critical of Uganda's ruling party sparked a sedition trial in 1969 that enabled the state to not recognize the claims of Ugandan Asian to belonging as part of the country. *Transition* ceased publication. Yet Uganda's national press printed lively exchanges maligning Asian claims to national loyalty.

Organic intellectuals denounced Asians as insular exploiters. They relied on a myth of social segregation while others attempted to enforce it through violence and intimidation. Chapter 2 showed how activists like Augustine Kamyia and Christine Nkata

used public rallies to incite African publics to sever economic and social relationships with Asians. In dense urban centers, youth enforced this prohibition with anonymous threatening letters and violence. Threats and aggression reminded individuals that their behavior, which connected them in unequal commercial relationships with Asian shopkeepers, was under surveillance. Scholars have shown elder men attempting to retain control over women and young men in colonial East African towns by restricting mobility and invoking the authority of centralized ethnic associations. The UNM boycott however opened political space for women whose positions as consumers and market vendors placed them at the center of activist activity. Unlike the punitive actions of ethnic associations, the UNM boycott relied on decentralized surveillance. It allowed the anonymous authors of “*Muzinge*” letters to command authority without speaking for an identifiable constituency.

The sometimes hostile intimacy of urban life took shape in places of commercial interaction and leisure, whose histories shaped their gendered, classed, and racialized uses. People challenged and reinforced racial hierarchies through conscious acts of violence and habitual responses to the micro-tensions of daily life. Chapter 3 showed that residents of Kabale experienced these tensions differently. Their relationships within the town’s infrastructure mattered. Histories of urban segregation made commercial exchange, conducted across shop counters in a separate Asian business district, subject to acute tension. African consumers relied on lines of credit with Asian shopkeepers, while the later closely protected access to merchandise. Politicians like Semu Itazyia attempted to build support among aspiring African traders and disgruntled urban consumers by inviting them to see daily commercial interactions as evidence of an exploitative racial hierarchy.

However, Itazya, like many of his followers, also met Asians in bars and other places of leisure that did not reinforce forms of racial antagonism. The articulation of racial thought, its use in summoning political constituencies, required selective appeals to urban experiences and the elision of African-Asian arenas of sociality and cooperation. Such elisions discounted less hostile forms of social intimacy, such as when an Asian family introduced Itazya to his second wife. These omissions also allowed him and his followers to argue that Asians' history in Kabale was one of unjust exploitation of Africans and not the basis for claims to belonging, property, or citizenship.

Constructivist accounts of racial formation argue that political identities emerged out of colonial legal categories and that the latter determined the protections people of each category could claim from the state.⁵ However, colonial and postcolonial legal codes rarely produced the sorts of juridical and political identities that their authors intended. Chapter 4 described administrators' efforts to implement the 1969 Trade Licensing Act. Milton Obote's government had intended it to reshape the racial makeup of urban centers by reserving urban commercial districts for African Ugandan citizens. In towns like Kabale, histories of racial and class segregation shaped built architecture, which prevented authorities from severing residential and commercial spaces contained in the same buildings. The racial and legal categories that informed the letter and spirit of the law were subject to contestation, as Asian shopkeepers claimed Ugandan citizenship and others appealed to authorities with various notions of belonging. Pravin Nathwani's legal case exposed the weak legal underpinnings of such legislation but also the limits of legal

⁵ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*.

negotiation, as government officials prevented future cases by occasionally enforcing restrictions outside the letter of the law.

The expulsion of Asians from Uganda did not culminate a single history of segregation and exclusion. It involved the selective denial of Asian entanglements in urban life. Those crossings spread through material infrastructures that grew out of histories of economic and legal inequality. This study examined the multiple registers in which Ugandans articulated ideas of difference, hierarchy, and justice between Africans and Asians in late colonial and postcolonial Uganda. Each register revealed arenas of social and intellectual life in which Ugandans drew on their experiences of urban infrastructure to shape ideas about Asians and moral community. Ugandan Asian history remains deeply contested because the same connections that wove Ugandan Asians into the fabric of urban life evoked tensions over economic accumulation, participation in diverse public spheres, and control over urban space.

Sources

Note on archival sources: Two of the archives in which I worked – the Kabale District Archive (KDA) and the Jinja District Archive (JDA) – were recently recatalogued. In some cases, the new catalogues provide new file and box numbers that do not correspond with those that were available to me. I have provided as much identifying information as possible so that anyone wishing to locate a file cited here can do so by searching the new catalogues by “File Name” and “Old Ref. Number.”

Archives

CB EMK	Cambridge University, EMK Mulira Papers
CO	Colonial Office, British National Archives
CoU	Church of Uganda
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, British National Archives
HO	Home Office, British National Archives
KDA	Kabale District Archive
KMCA	Kabale Magistrates Court Archive
KMCR	Kabale Municipal Council Registry
JDA	Jinja District Archive
LSE Richards	London School of Economics, Audrey Richards Papers
SOAS MCF	School of Oriental and African Studies, Movement for Colonial Freedom Papers
UNA A	Uganda National Archives, A Series
UNA C	Uganda National Archives, C Series
UNA Confidential	Uganda National Archives, Confidential Collection
UNA Elections	Uganda National Archives, Elections Collection
UNA OP	Uganda National Archives, Office of the President Collection
UNA Secretariat	Uganda National Archives, Secretariat Collection
UNA ST	Uganda National Archives, Secretariat Topical Collection

Newspapers

Daily Monitor

The Independent (Uganda)
New Vision
The Observer (Uganda)
Obuggaga
The People
Uganda Argus
Uganda Empya
Uganda Eyogeera
Uganda Herald

Interviews

Note on interviews: “(p)” indicates a pseudonym has been used. As a precaution, I have used pseudonyms for most individuals who were not public figures. (r) indicates that the interview was recorded. In most conversations, particularly those that covered potentially sensitive issues of personal life and opinions, recording felt like an unnecessary intrusion. In addition to those listed here, my research notes cover numerous other less structured conversations about aspects of the study. I have also not included interviews that predated my dissertation research, including twenty that I conducted in Kabale and Busia in 2007 for my M.A. thesis on economic life in the 1970s, which piqued my interest in the micro-politics of small town life. I am grateful to everyone who spoke with me, though none should be held responsible for any errors of fact or judgement contained in this study.

Bruce Atahuire (p)	June 2010	Kabale
Janam Kanyanyozi	June 2010	Kabale
Janet Atajuire (p)	June 2010	Kabale
Jonathan Rugunda (p)	June 2010	Kabale
Pius Rehemurana	June 2010	Kabale
E.W. Bairubabu Merete	June 26, 2010	Kabale
Firoz Khan	November 2011	Kampala
Vali Jamal	November 2011	Kampala
Constanti Kataratambi	April 2012	Kabale
Ezekiel Balaba	April 2012	Kabale
Faith Mwesigye (p)	April 2012	Kabale
Festo Karwemera	April 2012	Kabale
Herbert Batuma (p)	April 2012	Kabale
Moses Balaba (p)	April 2012	Kabale
Sheilesh Patel	April 2012	Kabale
Ezra Nkwasiwe	May 2012	Kabale
Joshua Mwesigye (p)	May 2012	Kabale
Remigio Kataratambi	May 12, 2012	Kampala
Ramesh Mulani (p)	May 26, 2012	Kampala
Manzoor Mohul	June 11, 2012	Leicester
Kish Nathwani	June 20, 2012	Watford
Pravin Nathwani	June 20, 2012	Watford

James Zatwoshaho	July 2012	Kabale
Hamil Pirani (p)	November 13, 2012	Kampala
Lakshan Kyada (p)	November 26, 2012	Kampala
Riju Kyada (p)	November 26, 2012	Kampala
Jonathan Rugunda (p)	December 2012	Kabale
E.W. Bairubabu Merete	December 3, 2012	Kabale
Alan Mulenga (p)	December 7, 2012	Kabale
John Ochu (p)	December 7, 2012	Kabale
Madhu (p)	December 7, 2012	Kabale
Ghalib Chokshi (p)	February 24, 2013	Leicester
Nandlal Lakhani (p)	February 24, 2013	Leicester
Amaresh Karia (p)	February 28, 2013	Reading
Devi Pandya (p)	February 28, 2013	Reading
Jash Doshi (p)	February 28, 2013	Reading
Asha Patel (p)	March 2, 2013	London
Baldev Valia (p)	March 2, 2013	London
Dilip Gohil (p)	March 2, 2013	London
Lakshmi Patel (p)	March 2, 2013	London
Prakash Mulani (p)	March 2, 2013	London
Suresh Patel (p)	March 2, 2013	London
Chatur Patel (p)	March 3, 2013	London
Daksha Asher (p)	March 3, 2013	London
Lona Sutaria (p)	March 3, 2013	London
Shobhi Patel (p)	March 3, 2013	London
Hajji Mohammed Kasirye (r)	April 3, 2013	Kawempe
"Q.C." (p) (r)	April 4, 2013	Kawempe
James Sekagya (r)	April 10, 2013	Kampala
Nick Ssali (r)	April 10, 2013	Kampala
George William Luboyera (r)	April 25, 2013	Kalisiizo
Hajji N. (p) (r)	April 25, 2013	Masaka
John Jones Salongo (r)	April 26, 2013	Masaka
Jessica Bukenya (p)	May 2013	Kampala
Joshua Mpanga (p)	May 2013	Kampala
Nick Ssali	May 2013	Kampala
Mary Musisi (p) (r)	May 12, 2013	Kampala
James Sekagya (r)	May 19, 2013	Kampala
Eli Nathan Bisamunyu	June 2013	Kabale
Joshua Mwesigye (p)	June 2013	Kabale
Mary Rugarama Itazya	June 2013	Kabale
Usha Jog	June 2013	Kampala
Madhu (p)	June 9, 2013	Kabale
Christopher Mulenga	June 11, 2013	Kabale
Ivan Ochu (p)	June 11, 2013	Kabale
Hummaa Ahmad	July 2013	Kampala
Maherah Ahmad	July 2013	Kampala
Musa Ahmad	July 2013	Kampala

Rajni Tailor	July 2013	Kampala
Ramesh Mulani (p)	July 2013	Kampala
Vali Jamal (r)	July 2013	Kampala
Rajani Patel	July 15, 2013	Kampala
Taj Kassam (r)	July 15, 2013	Kampala
Nick Ssali	July 20, 2013	Kampala
Rhoda Kalema (r)	July 20, 2013	Kampala
Christine Nkata	August 5, 2013	London

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