

Centre for African Christian Studies Museum



Main items in the collection – a catalogue

2012



The Centre for African Christian Studies in Kampala



In many parts of Uganda, community museum owners, supporters and managers, passionate about culture and heritage, have collected artefacts, oral history, and other elements of the local culture. Community museums also link past and future through their collections, which are accessible to schools, local residents and those from farther away.

The Centre for African Christian Studies - CACISA - was established in 2004 by a group of Ugandan Christians and

scholars. For more than ten years, these professionals have grappled with what they consider to be the nexus between Christianity, African cultures and holistic development. A museum was established at CACISA as an endeavour to understand Christianity within the African context and its impact on the socio-cultural development of Uganda.

The museum has a rich collection of ethnographic objects from different parts of the country.

*The Museum is located at the National Seminary
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1. Mugomo (Luganda) - Fish trap

Conical fishing trap, made of interwoven sticks, 81 long, 55cm diameter; central Uganda

(See detailed descriptions at the end of the catalogue)



2. Ekiyonjo (Luganda) – Poultry basket

*Pear-shaped basket, forest
creepers, with lid; 90cm high;
central Uganda*



3. Omuzinga gw'enjuki (Luganda) - Bee hive

Tightly woven forest creepers, covered with cow dung, with dry banana fibres lid, 87x37cm; central Uganda



4. Enfuka y'empesi (Rutooro) - Hoe

*Spear shaped and double edged
metal hoe; 40cm high; Tooro*



5. Ensekuro (Rutooro) - Mortar

Wooden mortar and pestle. Mortar: height 40cm, width 23cm. Pestle: 78cm x 6cm; Western Uganda



6. Entamu (Luganda) - Saucepan

Clay vessel; 40 cm diameter; Buganda.



7. Ekitonga (Rukiga) - Sacred Basket

Banana fibre basket; 46 cm high; south-western Uganda



8. Emikalabanda (Luganda) - Clogs

*Wooden clogs (musambya timber);
central Uganda*



**9. Akambe akaganda (Luganda) -
Knife**

*Steel knife with hooked blade
and wooden handle; 30cm; central
Uganda*



10. Omweso (Luganda) - Board game

Wooden rectangular board game, 32 circular depressions, with black seeds obtained from the omuyiki tree; 42 cm x 25 cm; central Uganda



11. Engombe (Luganda) - Bugle

Waterbuck horn; 30 cm long, central Uganda.



**12. Kpokponga (Kakwa) -
Sacred stool**

*Wooden stool; 60cm long; Kakwa,
West Nile*



**13. *Entebe y'ekiransi* (Tooro) -
Elders' stool**

*Ornate wooden stool; 35 cm in
diameter; Tooro.*



14. Soina Mata (Kakwa) – Traditional attire

Python skin, 130cm long; West Nile



15. Elyato ly'omwenge (Luganda) – Beer brewing vessel

Hollowed out tree trunk with wide opening and two protruding ends; 70cm length; central Uganda.



16. . Adungu (Alur) - Harp

Wooden sound chamber and arm, cow's hide, 12 nylon strings; 258cm long; Alur, West Nile



17. Emindi (Luganda) - Pipe

Clay pipe; 25cm long; central region.



18. Ensaamo (Luganda) - Mallets

Set of three wooden mallets, with parallel grooves, 39cm high; central region



19. Obulira bw'abalongo (Luganda) – Twins' umbilical cords

Ring preserving umbilical cords of twins, decorated with bark-cloth and beads; 30cm diameter; Central region.



20. Imbalu (Lumasaaba) - Circumcision gear

Colobus monkey skin and cowry shells costume, eastern region.



1. Used to trap fish, especially mudfish (*nsonzi*), with the open end positioned to face upstream so that a fish, once inside, cannot escape. Still in use among fishing communities in Uganda, especially along rivers.

*Collected by the late Fr. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011*

2. This basket was used to keep poultry and is still common among Baganda in central Uganda.

*Collected by late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011*

3. This hive has a large opening (to the left) with a cover, for collecting honey, and a smaller one at the other end for bees. Hive-making skills date back to the late 19th century, replacing collecting honey from dry trees and ant-hills. Making hives, bee rearing and honey harvesting was traditionally a male activity.

*Collected by late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi, CACISA Museum
Curator, 23.8.2011*

4. This hoe was used to till land among many communities in Uganda. This type is no longer in use, with the advent of more user-friendly manufactured hoes. The largest hoe belonged to the family head, considered more energetic than other members of the family.

*Collected in Western Uganda by Deogratius
Kabagambe.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011*

5. Used in many Ugandan communities for pounding foodstuffs, including groundnuts and dried cassava, as well as herbs, while keeping their flavour. The invention of a mortar marked the transition from using grinding stones. Norms attached to the use of a mortar and pestle include the prohibition to sit on a mortar or to jump over it for fear of 'not growing tall'. Pounding at night was also prohibited, for fear of disturbing spirits.

*Collected in Western Uganda
by Deogratius Kabagambe.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011*

6. With a large depression to accommodate different foodstuffs, this *entamu* was used to steam and warm plantains. Traditionally, women were responsible for making saucepans. They were maintained and kept by 'senior women' and grown up girls, for fear of breakage.

*Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi, CACISA Museum
Curator, 23.8.2011*

7. This type of basket was used to feed traditional spirits among the Bakiga people. Because of its size, one had to work hard to be able to feed and satisfy them.

*Collected by Deogratius Kabagambe.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
Curator of CACISA Museum, 23.8.2011*

8. In Buganda, clogs were mainly used by family heirs as a sign of social status.

Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.

Source: Monica Mutesi,

CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

9. Commonly used among the Baganda in central Uganda, this knife had many uses, including peeling plantains. Its hook helps reach distant objects. Such a knife still serves as a symbol of responsibility, especially during funeral rites. It is given to a female heir to signify that she has to peel and prepare food for visitors in a home. It is also given to the bride before her wedding to safeguard her marriage. Traditionally, it was only given to women and at no time was it to rest on the ground as this was seen as a sign of laziness.

Collected in the central region

by late Fr. A. Waliggo.

Source: Monica Mutesi,

CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

10. A traditional game in many Ugandan communities, *omweso* is played by two parties at a time. It is believed to have been introduced by the Bachwezi, the legendary dynasty, as early as the 14th century. People of the 'lower classes' rarely played *omweso* and women were discouraged by being told that they would be not developing breasts if they played the game. It was also forbidden to play the game at night. *Omweso* is still played today for companionship, recreational purposes, to exercise the mind and for developing arithmetical skills.

Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.

Source: Monica Mutesi,

CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

11. Obtained from a waterbuck (*enjobe*), one of the totems in Buganda, the bugle has a small opening in the middle which is blown to create sound. It was widely used as a means of communication among different communities in Uganda, and is still in use today among hunters to mobilise them or announce a catch, as a musical instrument, or to invoke spirits such as *Ddungu*, the spirit for hunters among the *ganda* people.

Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.

Source: Monica Mutesi, CACISA Museum

Curator, 23.8.2011

12. This stool, carved out of a root of a tree, has a seat and two stems for support. It was only used by the chief/priest (*Mata*), among the Kakwa in West Nile who performed sacred duties and presided over sacred functions, while sitting on the 'Kpokponga'.

*Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011*

13. The stool symbolises authority. At times, it was used by practitioners to administer traditional medicines. It was only used by rich or elder members in Tooro society.

*Collected by Deogratius Kabagambe.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011*

14. The *soina mata* was worn by Kakwa chiefs of West Nile while performing traditional and sacred duties.

*Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
Curator of CACISA Museum, 23.8.2011*

15. Used to make juice by squeezing and trampling on bananas. The same vessel was used to ferment juice to make local beer (*tonto*). Women were forbidden from stepping into the vessel.

*Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011*

16. Common musical instrument among West Nile communities, especially the Alur. Other ethnic groups have imitated the instrument. It is played on different occasions, including church ceremonies, traditional anniversaries, etc.

Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

17. This pipe was used to smoke tobacco for leisure, but also regarded as sacred and used for burning incense to invoke spirits. Herbs could also be smoked to appease gods or to cause bad luck among certain communities, especially among the Baganda.

Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

18. Mallets used to make bark cloth, at different stages of production: the starter (*empuuzo*) on the left, *etenga* in the middle and the finisher (*ettula*) on the right. Bark-cloth making involves stripping off the bark of *mutuba* tree and hitting it with a mallet. The texture and thickness of the fabric varies with its intended use (burying the dead, bed sheet, clothing, among other uses).

Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

19. Preserving the umbilical cords of twins is common among the Baganda. Twins' umbilical cords are treasured, feared and preserved to avert any calamity the twins will otherwise bring to the family (poverty, burning, lightning, famine). The preservation of the cords is preceded by ceremonies which lead to the making of a circular object decorated with cowry shells, bark-cloth and beads.

Collected by late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

20. Worn during traditional ceremonies, such as initiation and circumcision (*imbalu*) for young boys among the Bagisu in eastern Uganda. The *imbalu* ceremony is still much treasured as it marks the transition from boyhood to adulthood. An uncircumcised man in Bugisu will be referred to as a boy even when older and will not be allowed to drink or associate with circumcised men.

Collected by the late Fr. A. Waliggo.
Source: Monica Mutesi,
CACISA Museum Curator, 23.8.2011

Throughout Uganda, inspired individuals, families and groups of people have established *community museums* open to the public to preserve and promote the local cultural heritage.

This catalogue, one of a series for 11 community museums across Uganda, highlights the most important items held by the Cultural Assets Centre and Museum, Kibale District.

It is meant to publicise and record the collection, as well as to act as a reference point, reflecting Uganda's cultural diversity.

The catalogue was produced by the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda, an organisation dedicated to promoting the recognition of culture as vital for human development that responds to Uganda's national identity and diversity. As part of its cultural heritage programme, the Foundation supports community museums in Uganda.

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[www. crossculturalfoundation.or.ug](http://www.crossculturalfoundation.or.ug)

