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DEATH 'AWAYFROM HOME.' A CASE STUDYOF CAMEROONIAN IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN CAPE TOWN SOUTH AFRICA.

A full thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Sociology at the Faculty of Arts, University of the Western Cape

TERENCE FONTOH FRU
Student No.**3524349**

Supervisor: **Dr Sharyn Spicer**

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ABSTRACT

Death is an everyday occurrence for many urban Africans living in South Africa, and it is expressed through the everyday management of financial and social networks. The purpose of this study is to investigate what happens to African migrants, particularly the Ngemba people of Cameroon living in Cape Town when they die "away from home". In this study, I will be exploring the steps followed, the rites that are performed, perceptions regarding death and funerals, as well as the social implications that death has for the group members concerned, and the various challenges faced when someone dies 'away from home'. In other to achieve all this, I used a qualitative research design in which in-depth interviews and participant observation were administered to sixteen (16) participants. The participants were obtained through a purposive sample in which I decided to settle for snow ball or chain sampling. Living across, and in between worlds, heightens questions about identity, membership, and belonging. While transnational immigrants bear the burden of sending remittances to their families back home, aspects such as religion (rituals) have not been given proper thought by scholars dealing with migration studies. What happens to these individuals and their bodies when they die away from home? What activities follow to ensure that their souls "rest in peace" and also provide closure for the families concerned? To understand the dynamics that are involved when death occurs out of place, I employ the theory of acculturation, and Bourdieu's concept of social capital. There is very little research about transnational immigrants and death "away from home." Participants in this in this study expressed the zeal to one day return to their roots 'home', even in their death. They all saw the administering of autopsies to corpses as a blatant disregard to their identity and culture, arguing that it was not part of their culture and consequently a disregard to human rights which continues even in death. The fact that these Cameroonians are far away from home, and are within a space whose customs and laws circumscribing death are different, coupled with the absence of elders makes most of the rituals to be performed when death occurs to be done back home after repatriating the dead body. This qualitative study analyses the performance of and the meanings attributed to life crises like death, in the context of transnational ritual space.

KEYWORDS

Death

Rituals

Religion

Immigrants

Cameroonians/migrants

Social networks

Social capital

Acculturation

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This dissertation has seen the light of day because of the motherly and intellectual input of my supervisor, Dr Sharyn Spicer. I would like to particularly thank you for encouraging and believing in me even in my lowest moments. You gave me the strength to push on when I almost 'gave up' due to the pressure and volume of work. For that, I salute YOU.

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They say behind any successful man is a strong woman. I would like to salute my wife and two daughters for their unending love and prayers.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Buseka Alice Xhadi-Fru and to my daughters, Alieh Sinothando Fontoh Fru, and Azah Sisipho Fontoh Fru.
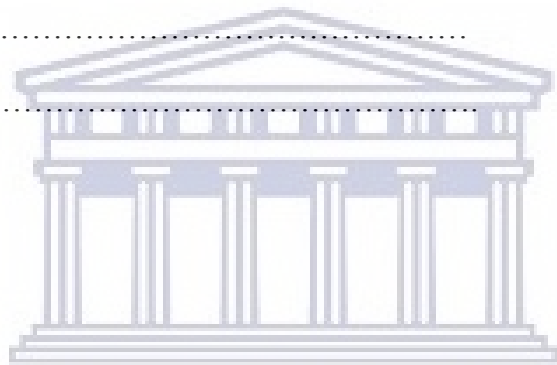
DECLARATION

I Terence Fontoh Fru, declare that this dissertation; Death "Away from Home." A case study of Cameroonian immigrants living in Cape Town South Africa is my own work. It is submitted to the University of the Western Cape in partial fulfilment for the Master of Arts in Sociology. This dissertation has not been examined at any academic institution or university for the procurement of any qualification.

Signature…………………………………………………………

Date……………………………………………………………..

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Death is a universal phenomenon that affects families and communities, and takes place in all social contexts. There is no clear-cut definition of death. Death is regarded as the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life at any time after birth has taken place (United Nations 1953), but for the purpose of this study, death would betreated as some form of movement between two spiritual worlds (from the visible to the spiritual) through which the dead person's spirit or soul, which is the essence of the person simply moves to the ancestors' realm rather than being destroyed (King, 2013). This definition of death points to the fact that Africans have different cultural, historical, epistemological and methodological perceptions of death. Again, given such perceptions, differences in cultural conceptions are likely to vary across cultures (Park, Haslam& Kashima, 2012).

On a more sociological note:

> "death is seen as the nucleus of a particular culture complex involving a group of interrelated cultural traits which function together in a more or less consistent and meaningful way. The study of the specific areas which make up this complex, such as the culturally defined meaning of death, the role of the functionaries, bereavement, death rites and practices, and the effect of attitudes towards death upon the general organization of the individual, could be made more meaningful by viewing these areas as aspects of a larger configuration surrounding death" (Faunce& Fulton, 1958: 205).

West Africans living here in South Africa, most often than not are faced with numerous obstacles with regard to the management of death. This can be explained by the fact that they are in a different space, whose culture and politics circumscribing death are different from theirs. In other words, the values, meanings, and practices the host nation ascribes to death are way different from their traditional beliefs back home. Faced with issues like this, these migrants are more often than not forced to adjust or change by mimicking their own culture,viz a viz, the culture of the host nation in issues regarding death and the management of death.The eventual marriage or interplay between these two cultures gives birth to acculturation. Berry (1977), notes

that in the event where there is a profound contact with a dominant culture in a new environment;the minority group can possibly be pushed to acculturate. Similarly, Adler and Graham (1989), observed that change is bound to be experienced if ideas from different cultures keep interchanging. Hertz (1960), opined that death involves some form of transformation where the dead moves from the physical world to the world of the spirits. He ascertained that the rituals carried out following a death, opens up opportunities and ways for the surviving kin of the dead to managetheir grief as well as deal with their loss when disposing of the body (for example, through burials or cremation). It is very important for the rituals of death to be performed because it not only ascribes a new identity to the dead but is also seen as a gateway for them to become ancestors. This is supported by Turner (1967: 93-111), who observed that in "considering the impact of death rites as rites of passage on individuals in society, such rights are often thought to collectively inscribe on people the new identities accorded to them by society as they proceed along their new life courses and to reincorporate them into society with newly assigned roles and identities".

The death of an individual is often accompanied by a series of laid down customs passed from generation to generation. These rituals are used solely and purposefully to acknowledge the life lived by the deceased, and also to summon the ancestors to accept the dead as they travel to the land of the spirits. Cultures may differ in the manner in which these rituals are performed but one thing remains certain, they must be carried out. Africans (Cameroonians) believe so much in 'life after death', and so these rituals serve the purpose of ushering the dead into the realm of the ancestors who are believed to look over the living. In African cultures, death involves a transformation from the physical into the spiritual realm (Lee & Vaughan 2008, Asuquo 2011). Death ceremonies and or funerals have special space in African traditional religions. Failure to perform the funerary rites of the dead is tantamount to losing ones' identity (Davies 2002). Historically, rituals play a vital role in ancestral worship and legends hold that the dead look over their surviving kin as ancestors, and can be reincarnated back to mother Africa (Asuquo 2011, Onyewuenyi 2008). Even though death is an inevitable aspect of life and is something everyone has to pass through at one time or another, its occurrence comes with confusion and requires careful organization as well as planning. This confusion becomes even greater when the death occurs in another country 'away from home'.

The events surrounding death and the confusion that it brings poseschallenges to the power of people to give meaning to their lives (ontological security). When someone dies in society, it not only creates a burden but also raises issues of belonging and identity. The occurrence of death makes an individual to "question the meaningfulness and reality of the social frameworks in which he/she participates" (Mellor 1993: 13). The religious act of these rites is done in a bid to offer some degree of closure for the living.

In this dissertation, I will investigate the role played bymigration in shaping or re-shaping culture, particularly laying emphasis on the lived experiences of the Ngemba People of Cameroon (Mankon, Bafut, Pinyin, etc) when they migrate into South Africa, viz a viz death management. The study examines how the surviving kin construct notions of identity and belonging. It explores how migration inevitably results in the loss of peoples' cultural practices. The theory of acculturation, and Bourdieu's concept, ofsocial capital, will be used to analyze the ways in whichmigrants respond to death, and the effects it has on them. This research also hopes to add to the scarce literature on transnational families and the experiences ofdeath away from home. A qualitative method of research is used to unravel these issues, as well as discussthe social and economic implications of these funerary practices. This means that the data for this study will be mainly descriptive and contextualized, thereby producing subjective data (Punch 1998).

Participants in this study are subject to in-depth interviews and participant observation in a bid to make them feel comfortable to discuss the phenomena being studied. This means that the questions being asked will not be predetermined, focused, or short, but rather will be inferred from the responses of the participants as the conversation flows (Given 2008:423). Through these interviews, I specifically tease out information on the phenomenon of death away from home, their perceptions, and how migrants (Cameroonians) construct their notions of identity. According to Valentine, (1997: 111), "in-depth interviews are people-oriented, as well as sensitive". Such interviews provide room for individuals to construct and navigate their own life experiences. Such a research design can be structured, semi-structured, and or unstructured.

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1.1. Background

The root cause of migration in and around Africa and the world at large can be linked to the many social, economic, political, and environmental upheavals which have brought about untold displacements, misery, and deaths. Turton, (2003) observes that hunger and human rights abuse in Africa resulting from wars accounts for a high death rate in Africa. Wars not only lead to impending death but acts as a push factor for migration to occur (Cohen & Deng, 1998). To strive to survive, oppressed people then sort refuge in distant lands (Beirens and Fontein, 2011).

Even though this is notthe case of Cameroon, other African countries like the DRC, have been war-torn as far back as 1996, with control over natural resources as prime cause (Samset, 2002).

The discourse on migration has more often than not vested interest in migrants who are alive, and the circumstances in which they find themselves. Migrants in South Africa usually face difficulties in obtaining legal status, services, as well as living in very die-hard conditions, and struggling to cope with the hassles of finding a job (Vearey & Nunez, 2010). As if this is not enough, these migrants have been in recent years subjects to xenophobic attacks, which lead to violence and death (Misago, Monson, Polzer, & Landau, 2010). Several journals (see discussion below) have linked the discourse of death and dying to migration. Beremauro (2010) holds that migrants always pray for a safe journey back home as their death looms. This is supported by Rapoo (2011), who unveiled the notion of home through a Setswana proverb, "Goora motto go thebe phatshwa". Home is used here as where one is generally safe and comfortable and is also tied to issues of kinship and belonging. To further solidify this issue of home burials, Segobye (2002), observed that the bodies of soldiers and hunters who died in a foreign land or in the bush were usually taken home for cleansing. This it is believed was an avenue for them to reconnect with their kin and home. Failure to perform such cleansing rituals will render their souls restless, and they might even return as evil spirits to haunt the living. The death of transnational migrants in South Africa whether in Johannesburg, Cape Town, etc, is regarded as out of place and so dealing with death by these groups of peoplerequires energies by their surviving kin or friends to allocate a dignified burial and funeral for the dead back home. Death management by migrants usually requires a pool of resources and shared beliefs, which makes repatriation inevitable (Lee 2011). Funerals and the eventual burial of the dead points to the important connections involved

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in the marriage between humans, land, and belonging. Whyte (2005), in her study of Ugandan women who died of HIV/AIDS-related deaths, demonstrates how to belong, centresaround what spot picked for the deceased's grave. On the contrary, Mbiba (2010) holds that Zimbabweans living in other countries who wish to be buried back home, see the choice of the grave as being influenced by political-economic, planning and health crises, which are not directly linked to notions of identity and belonging, as postulated by Geschiere and Gugler (1998) in a West African context (Mbiba 2010:145). Similarly, to show the important attachment Africans have in relation to where one is buried, Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (2001) in their research on the Bamiléké people of Cameroon discuss the rejection of a prominent politician of Bamiléké origin who grew up in an Anglophone area. These authors hold that his dead father was not interred (buried) in Bamiléké soil. For the politician to be accepted amongst the Bamiléké people, or rather for him to belong, he had to buy a piece of land in the Bamiléké region, exhume his fathers' remains, and do a re-burial.

The discourse on kinship or belonging and the political meaning of associations are a pointer to the fact that funerals in Africa serve multiple functions (Geschiere 2005; Page 2007). A good example would be funerals acting as a market place for marriage unions as observed by (De Witte2001,cited in Mazucatto, Mirjan, *et al*. 2006), as well as funerals being a time for 'bush fallers' (people living overseas) to continue patronizing their home villages. Van der Geest (2000: 104) describes the money spent on funerals as *"one that acts as an important social stage on which prestige can be visibly proclaimed"*. Similarly, Smith (2004) observes that rural-urban migrants of the Igbo ethnic group are faced with powerful expectations to be buried 'at home' in their ancestral villages as well as provide costly and elaborate funerals for their dead relatives. He further argues that funerals in Igbo land crystallizes many of the structural paradoxes associated with inequality in Nigerian Society, particularly as they are manifest in kin-based patron-client relations between rural communities and their migrant kin. For him then, tensions that emanate from burials and funerals are an illustration of the fact that these rituals do not only serve as avenues through which social cohesion and integration is achieved but also one that reveals, and contributes towards discontents regarding transformations in the organization and extent of social inequality.

The issue of migration has been studied in greater detail pertaining to living migrants, while death and death management of cross-border (dead) migrants is still left wanting. The issue of repatriation of dead bodies and the role of funeral parlors are all highlighted in this study, as rendering a dignified funeral and burial to the dead will be none existent without the former. Lee (2011) observes that the commoditization of funerals within South Africa is common among the funeral parlors. Funeral parlors employ sales strategies like "free mortuary facilities" to entice migrants to send their dead home. For countries within Southern Africa, (Zimbabwe, Swaziland Lesotho, etc), repatriating dead bodies are mostly done by road. For other countries like (Cameroon, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Sudan, Malawi, DRC, etc,), dead bodies are transported as cargo by air.

Funeral parlors help to lengthen the gap between death and the actual burial. They do so, by employing the refrigeration system, and embalming technologies of dead corpses. Through embalming, funeral parlors have made itpossible for migrants to be able to manage funerals. They can now have more time to plan (to raise funds, to gather family members for the occasion, for disputes within the family to be resolved), and also for the funeral parlors to secure the necessary documents for the corpse to be repatriated. Mortuaries, therefore, have become a place where in *"the experience of contemporary migration, international capital, transfers, and transnational families interact with universal and historic emotions of belonging and loss"*(Lee 2007:420).

Funeral parlors also act as cultural mediators in the repatriation process, and they not only help at the community level but also assist family members to break through the bureaucratic processes of obtaining documents for eventual repatriation. The documents required will include;

- Identification of the deceased citizenship

- A relative here in South Africa to confirm the deceased identity (in the absence of a passport)

- Notice of death from the Department of Home Affairs

- An unabridged death certificate from the Department of Home Affairs

- A letter of the non-existence of a contagious disease issued by the Department of Health

- Burial order from the Department of Home Affairs

- A letter from the Department of Health and Social Development, granting exportation of human remains from South Africa,

- A letter to repatriate from the home country, (from the respective embassy), and

- An embalming certificate.

In as much as funeralparlors make some profits in repatriation, they also are prone to economic risks as they keep the dead bodies in their mortuaries. This happens especially when relatives of the dead refuse to incur the cost of storage. In cases like this, the funeral parlors have no other option than to hand over the corpse to the state for a pauper burial. It is worth mentioning that the South African regulations regarding the rendering of Forensic Pathology Service; Section "removal, and transportation of body", Section "identification of the body" No. 30075 31 No.R.636 20 J, holds that "a body that has not been identified must be moved to a freezer within seven days of admission, and if such body remains unidentified for thirty days, the local municipality under which the designated facility is, may provide for a pauper burial or cremation for such a body" (STAATSKOERANT 2007).

From the above discussion, it is clear that funeral parlors need to work hand in glove with burial societies. Burial societies in South Africa have been in existence as far back as the labour migrations (Lee, 2009). Arising from colonialism and associated mostly with the British, English speaking colonies most often form their burial societies once in foreign lands. This practice is common with Zimbabweans, who according to Mbiba (2010:145), *"Zimbabweans outside their country save up to ensure that they will not be left forever in foreign soil, invest in insurance schemes and partake in burial associations that require weekly or monthly donations"*. This is not the case with French-speaking colonies in general and Cameroon in particular. The absence of burial societies among Cameroonians then leaves repatriation of the dead in the hands of community leaders, and their organizations (tribal/ethnic), and under the broader umbrella of the Cameroon Association of the Western Cape (CAASEWCA).

In South Africa death and the consequent studies of so-called burial societies revolve around its history, economy, and demography, but with no emphasis on foreign nationals (Schneider 2008). Funeral parlors turn to embalm dead bodies as a means to ensure mobility both for the dead and mourners (Lee, 2011:242). Similarly, the role of the mortuary cannot be underestimated. Mortuaries are used to change the dynamics of the funeral, providing storage at a cost; this no doubt is to buy more time in preparation for a grand funeral (Van der Geest 2006; Page 2007).

The texts above only accounts for the needs of the living. What about the dead themselves? The big question then is how then do African migrants who have died in a foreign land introduce cultural traits into burial organizations outside their home country? Death and the eventual funerals in Africa open up avenues for one to examine the potential pitfalls of being a migrant, how death in a foreign land is conceptualized, and the cultural importance of funerals and burials. It does not examine in depth the actual process that might be used to manage migrant death in a foreign land or country. Studies on migration help to inform, but do not provide sufficient clarity on how migrants imagine, anticipate and prepare for death 'away from home'.

The prime focus of this research is based on Cameroonians residing in Cape Town, South Africa. Cameroon has a population growth rate of 2.16% per annum with an annual GDP of just 4%. This means that its economic growth rate is low, and therefore puts a strain in the economy. This economic strain puts about 39.9% of the population in abject poverty and up to 87% of these poverty-stricken people are concentrated in the rural areas (Cameroon Economic Update 2011). In 2007 about 170.363. Cameroonians emigrated, of which 38.530 went to France. This figure was followed by Gabon with about 30.216, Niger with 16.980, and the U.S.A, with 12.835 (DRC 2007).

The periods between 1996 and 2002, saw a tremendous rush of Cameroonians into South Africa (Pineteh 2005, 2007, 2008). According to this author, the first batch of Cameroonian migrants saw themselves as forced migrants, who were escaping from political persecution from home, while the second group regarded themselves as economic migrants (referred to by Nyamnjoh, 2009: 53, as bush fallers).Whilst in South Africa, these Cameroonians from the (north and south west regions) sought asylum as refugees with the Department of Home Affairs. Upon application, they were allocated temporal permits as their individual cases were investigated

(Timngum 2001; Pineteh 2007). Given the fact that Cameroon is a relatively peaceful, and not a war-torn country, most of these applications were rejected. Upon rejection, and like our president Paul Biya always says, "Impossible is not Cameroonian", many entered into marriage unions with South African citizens. This opened the gates for them to apply for permanent residence and citizenship with the use of a spousal permit that is renewable.

The major reason for Cameroonians to emigrate is linked to the shortage of economic opportunities available to them in their home country. This, coupled with a lack of jobs and high unemployment, economic crisis, soaring population growth, poverty, and external debt that has burdened the country since the 1980s, has led to widespread emigration to South Africa.(Nyamnjoh 1999;Konnings 2002;Jua and Konnings 2004). According to poverty analysis indicators, there was a 55% incidence of poverty within the population in 2007 that is, far from the 25% objective set by the government and to be achieved by 2015 (INS, ECAM111, 2007). Moreover, the level of human development, generally seen as a process where more opportunities and liberal freedom is granted to people in a bid to foster their wellbeing. The tendency then for them would be, for them to be able to choose how they are to live, what they want to do, and possibly, who they also wish to be is just average, ranging from 0.500 and 0.779 (UNDP, 2004). Also, victimization, coupled with the abuse of political power that has eaten deep into the fabric of those in power in Cameroon is a root cause of migration (Konnings, 2002;Forje, 2008). The population of Cameroonians living in South African cities then is considerable, yet hard to quantify. They are made up of both Anglophones (English speaking), and Francophone (French-speaking), as Cameroon is a bilingual country. Pineteh, (2007; 2010) contends that it is difficult to obtain an accurate and actual number of Cameroonians living in South Africa. I concur with this, because most Cameroonians use South Africa as a stepping stone, in order to migrate to other countries.

Due to the circumstances and factors mentioned earlier, many Cameroonians both skilled and unskilled have to move out of their home country. For example, Docquier and Marfouk (2005), show that in the year 2000 alone, about 17% of the population with a higher degree emigrated elsewhere. Another 65% emigrated between 1995-2005, concerning specifically people holding medical degrees, such as doctors and certified nurse's (Clemens & Peterson, 2007). This is a

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situation of "brain drain": the Cameroon Medical Association has ascertained that about 4200 medical practitioners of Cameroonian descent are based and working in other countries. As aconsequence, in Cameroon, the ratio is 1 medical doctor for about 10-20 people.

Migration then is regarded as the movement from ones' country, region, and environment, with the hope of settling in some other place (Bhugra & Becker, 2005: 18). Pursell (2004), notes that a lot of challenges accompany migrating individuals in different spheres like xenophobic attacks, employment, access to medical services and also in dealing and managing death. The xenophobic attacks of 2008 in South Africa, led to the untimely death and displacement of many migrants. This coupled with the undocumented profile of most migrants' exposes them to all sought of exploitation, and poses particular problems of identity and belonging when they die.

On a broader scale, it will be vital to lookat the impact of South African law pertaining to death and to what extent it affects migrants in dealing with their dead. Pieterse, Groenewald, Bradshaw, Burger, Rhode, and Reagon (2009), note that death management in South Africa is too bureaucratic in terms of legal regulations. South Africa has its policies circumscribing death, which is different from the cultural settings of Cameroon. This would include the services of undertakers, forensic doctors, and Department of Home Affairs, etc (Pieterse *et al*., 2009).

Unlike other life crises (birth and marriage), that immigrants (Cameroonians) are exposed to here in South Africa, the rituals pertaining to death are deeply rooted in the minds of migrants and can be said that such rituals are internalized from childhood. Conforming to such rituals without alterations exemplifies, showcases their traditions and upholds their culture and identity. Culture is used here as:

> *"*an evaluative conversation constructed by actors out of the raw materials afforded by tradition and on-going experience. It is continually modified by them in the process of social interaction and their behaviour is guided by the anticipation of such cultural behaviour*"* (Hammel, 1990 cited in Brand, 2000:10).

These behaviours are also socially and culturally constructed and are produced and reproduced by actors.

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Repatriating dead bodies of their brothers from "there", (foreign land) to "here", (back home); by the Cameroon community in South Africa brings in untold blessings to the living. It equally shows that Cameroonians have not lost their identity and still know what it means to belong. By this singular act, the spirit of collective action is exercised which yields them praises from their families back home. Failure to repatriate the dead home for burial is considered shameful. On the other hand, when the dead are repatriated home, it not only completes his/her long-awaited return home (Sabar, 2010) but equally justifies the ritual of burial back home which further strengthens the very essence of an individuals' identity and the need to belong (Davies, 1997). By repatriating the dead, ill omens associated with not performing such rituals (generally termed witchcraft) are swept under the carpet, (see Moore & Sanders, 2001:Geschiere, 1997).

Chesson (2001:1) observes that death depicts "an arena in which the dead are mourned, memories created, bonds rekindled or broken, as well as events where individual and group identities are claimed and maintained". The notion then of "place" when a migrantdies, raises great concerns. Concerns regarding where their bodies would be buried ignite the zeal of identity and belonging (Geschiere 2005;Olwig, 2009). Migrants usually maintain a transnational lifestyle, and so when one of them passes away returning the dead body back home in line with their culture greatly confirms this double life of migrants (Geschiere & Nyamnjoh 2000, 2001; Gardener 2000). Cameroonians in Cape Town all but for a few do belong to different ethnic/tribal associations. These ethnic/cultural associations have a positive influence on the lives of these groups of people especially in rendering support to them when they just arrive in South Africa. To some, these associations are their insurance schemes and they hold it so dear in their hearts (some even refer to them as their mother and father in South Africa). In as much as these associations act as support mechanisms, their role is even more vital when one of them dies. The eye of sister associations are on them. In the sense that, they need to be the frontrunners with the support of the Cameroon Association of the Western Cape (CAASWECA) to organize the funeral and rituals associated with it and the eventual repatriation of the body back home so family members can have closure.

1.2.Research problem

The study of practices and rituals of death opens up doors for a sociological understanding of the

experiences of transnational families caught between two worlds. Life crises such as death bring into focus issues of identity, status, and belonging. There is a slight difference between death rites and death practices. When someone dies, the former is performed. The latter is used in the organization of the family (that is, to stabilize and promote continuity of the family). The complex nature of these rites and practices varies across cultures, and also highly depends on a number of variables such as (age, sex, status). In as much as these rites help in the re-generation of knowledge, it also involves a great deal of capital (both human and material).

Wide-scale migration, urbanization, and technological change have not only shaped the manner in which death may be experienced, but they have also yielded new tools through which Africans can negotiate, and appreciate the dying process (Lee and Vaughan, 2008). Death is an everyday occurrence for many urban Africans living in South Africa. It is evident in the everyday management of financial and social networks, as well as in the 'conspicuous consumption' that characterises many township funerals. Even though funeral schemes have provided a gold mine for some entrepreneurs, they have also made mourners cut a balance between the increasing costs, and the social pressures of furnishing the dead with a dignified funeral (Lee and Vaughan,2008).In the midst of these funeral-finance mechanisms, contemporary West African mortuary rituals have stood the test of time, and the recent commercialization of the funeral sector has not greatly transformed traditional burial rites (Arhin, 1994). However, moral and material economies of death are mediated by individuals, households, and communities who have a propensity towards movement.

Migration and the modernization of death go hand in glove with the modernization of society and culture at large. The modernization of death then is driven by a desire to be modern, secular, efficient, scientific, hygienic, and rational, to change traditional death customs in accordance with modern ideas. Surviving family members became death service consumers, (contributing to this death modernization together with undertakers, burial reformers, state administrators, church officials, and scientists) have been of prime focus on the changing funerary practices in the West African context (Page, 2007; Van der Geest, 2006). These authors have explored the impact of the technological changes that have made the performance of burial rites over distance possible. For example, the introduction of refrigerated mortuaries that preserves a corpse for longer

periods of time. Seen as a modern and hygienic form of preservation, the use of mortuaries has taken central stage through which mourners in West African cities and the world, participate in the reinvigoration of traditional funerary rites based in a rural locale.

1.3. Aims and objectives

This research has as objective, to explore and investigate what happens to African migrants, particularly Cameroonians when they die 'away from home'. The research aims at unpacking the lived experiences of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town, as well as understanding the meanings ascribed to death. It also strives to look at how Cameroonians manage and deal with a death away from home. I hope by the end of this dissertation I would have explored different rites and their cultural significance, examine types and amount of resources, and the length of time spent on funerary rites, as well as establish how people gain or lose knowledge with regards to these rites.

The research aims to address the following questions:

- What role does migration play in shaping Cameroonian experiences of death and death management in South Africa?

- How do the surviving kin construct notions of identity and belonging?

- What are the social and economic implications of Cameroonian migrant funerary practices?

1.4. Summary of chapters

Chapter 1:

This will comprise the introduction, the background, aims/objective/ justification of the study as well as the problem under investigation.

Chapter 2:

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Here, I will be exploring the underlying literature relevant to this research. Emphasis will be made to conceptualize the theoretical framework. I will discuss the theory of acculturation and will apply the concept of social capital, to shed light on the findings of the study.

Chapter 3:

This section is the methodological discussion of this study. In this chapter, I will be exploring the ways in which my research was carried out. Emphasis will be given to (1), the methods used for data collection, and (2), sampling and data analysis. Also, a discussion of how I undertook my fieldwork will be looked at, as well as the difficulties encountered within the field.

Chapter 4and 5

Inthese chapters,I will be presenting and discussing the findings derived from the data in chapter 3, while situating it within the conceptual framework that was outlined in Chapter 2. Chapter 4 will focus on the 'Agency of ethnic/cultural associations using MACUDA as a reference point, while Chapter 5 will comprise of narratives of how Cameroonians deal with the death of one of them here in Cape Town, as well as their perceptions.

Chapter 6:

This final chapter basically deals with the conclusion of the study. It will provide a summary of the main findings, the limitations of the study, provide recommendations, and also try to identify future areas of research.
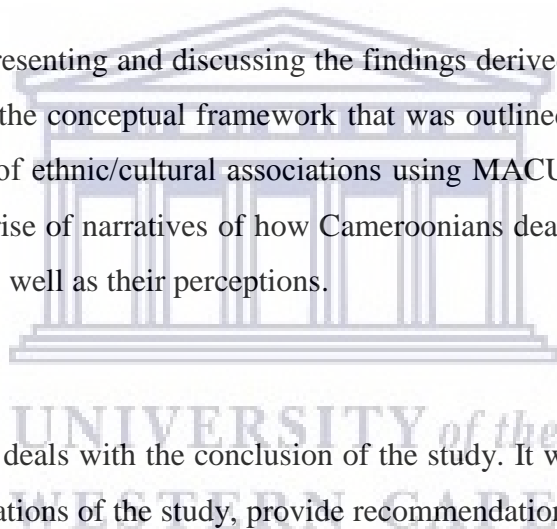
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews some of the literature pertinent to the proposed research. The scholarship that is reviewed will provide a framework for broadly understanding the issues at stake, thereby situating the research within an existing body of work. Some of the literature will revolve around conflicts and death in Africa, to try and demonstrate how cultural values are important to the African. It is by no means exhaustive, but hopefully, it captures the essence of this study. Many scholars across the world over time have been documenting death rites and practices, reiterating the fact that death is a universal phenomenon.

2.1. Refugee/immigrant funerals in a global context

A study carried out by Eastmond (1988) on a Chilean refugee funeral in Sweden, illustrates how central values of a group are unpacked and brought to the fore. It demonstrates how funerary rituals reasserted the meanings attributed to values, norms, which were not only seen as central to the group but also acted as a threat to the groups' unity. This funeral had a format of combining symbolic forms from political meetings with traditional church funerals. Most of the mourners were political exiles, and Eastmond (1988) concludes that the funeral served as a forum to temporarily unite the mourners in protest to the political situation in Chile by restating the norms concerning orientation and organization, that had been under stress for some time.

Similarly, in a study of Greek and Turkish funerals in Berlin, Jonker (1996, 1997), provides examples of funerals in immigration contexts. The focus of her study was on the transformation of ritual practice, on how a community adapts to constraints in exile, how religious authorities rationalize and legitimate ritual change and innovation, and how practices circumscribing death contribute to the construction of collective memory. She explains how ritual transformations in migration can to a large extent be attributed to pragmatic concerns and practical circumstances in the new environment, and she points out the pivotal role of the funeral director in these processes.

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2.2. Social and cultural responses to death

According to Aries (1981), research on death and dying illustrates the ways in which values, beliefs, behaviours and institutional arrangements pertaining to the event is structured by the social environment and the context. Societal responses to death differ as a result of differential cultural attitudes. The loss of an individual in society is followed by a dramatic display of grief among the living members, accompanied by efforts to memorialize the dead. Following a loss processes of meaning-making between the dying and their loved ones are, central to what we can call, 'the sociology of death' (the study of the ways that values, behaviours, beliefs, and institutional arrangements pertaining to death are structured by social environments and contexts). Although seen as a universal human experience, societal responses to death vary according to cultural attitudes, as well as contextual factors including the primary cause of death, and normative age at which death occurs.

Fulton (1965) argues in *Death and Identity* that preserving rather than losing personal identity is a critical aspect of the dying process. Marshall (1980) theorizes that the heightened awareness of one's impending death triggers increased self-reflection, reminiscence, and the conscious construction of a coherent personal history. Dying persons therefore actively construct a "post-self" or a lasting image of the self that will stay strong after they are dead (Schneidman, 1995). For Feifel (1977), meaning-making by survivors of the dead is expressed through the mourning periods following a loss. This allocates time through which the bereaved, redefines and integrate oneself into life. Mourning of the dead is, therefore, a universal phenomenon mediated by cultural and religious practices in different societies.

Olwig (2007) developed some form of an ethnographic method of looking at Caribbean migration trajectories from the standpoint of individuals and families, rather than ethnic communities. Olwig opines that rather than assume the existence of a well-established and clearly defined Caribbean community comprising an important context of life, for Caribbean migrants, ethnographic research should be directed towards exploring how migrants from the Caribbean, through statements and practices, create and sustain different forms of relatedness (cited from Carsten, 2000; Olwig, 2007) that may generate a sense of community. This he does by exploring the constitution of a community through an ethnographic analysis of the funeral of

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a Caribbean immigrant in Britain. At the funeral, Olwig observed that a Caribbean burial tradition had been established in Britain as it clearly followed a set pattern and all participants could recognize and were familiar with the rituals performed. Before as Olwig learned when someone dies mourners just go to see the bereaved, but today British-Caribbean funerals are observed with a lot of food, drinks, and merriment.

This new social gathering after the internment of the dead was indeed a new one but was very much organized in accordance with the Caribbean customs and traditions that were marked by the serving of food during Caribbean festive occasions. For there was unorthodox drinking of liquor, and it took the form of a sit-down dinner centred on the bereaved family and the minister. This social gathering also observed the format of Caribbean circular rituals set by Roger Abraham (1983), which showcased Caribbean funerals as a whole as one that could be envisaged as one that took two phases, and stroke a balance between two oppositional value systems, of respectability, associated with societal institutions like the church, and reputation, associated with the local Caribbean-African communities (Wilson 1969; 1973). This funeral can be regarded as an avenue through which cultural values associated with an ethnic minority are brought to the fore in British society. This is well captured by Gerd Baumann (1992) in an analysis of rituals among immigrants and their descendants in Britain, who holds that rituals denotes 'others' in relation to which the participants in the rituals wish to demarcate themselves, the 'others' being in the case of these immigrants mainstream British society. In the case of the cited funeral, by organizing large funerals these Caribbean immigrants serve to support each other at extremely trying times, thereby portraying a positive aspect of Caribbean immigrant life which is not usually reflected in a white majority society as these group of people have more often than not been regarded as a problem minority (Chamberlain, 1998: 6). The outright display of love, support, and solidarity for the dead distinguishes these Caribbean immigrants, showcasing them as a warm and caring people, who not only show respect for their dead but are equally prepared to travel to the extremes to demonstrate this love and accord a decent burial for their dead. The Caribbean funerals as coined by Myerhoff (1985: 272) could be envisaged as a 'defining ritual' which calls attention to a moral superiority of a minority community placed in a situation of structural inferiority.

2.3. African attitudes and diverse practices regarding death

Weizman and Kamm (1987), observe that people have become more controlled in their expression of grief across all cultural groups. This change is primarily attributed to the rise of industrialization and urbanization and advances in medical knowledge. This section describes various African beliefs and rituals associated with death, and also reflect on how these have changed over time.

Lee and Vaughan (2008: 345) hold that Africans usually make distinctions between a good and a bad death to instil moral concerns for the surviving kin and that ultimately, Africans are good at dealing with death. They regarded deaths through wars, diseases, accidents, and suicides as a bad death. For these authors, a good death can be linked to a reincarnation of ancestors, while a bad death leads to possessions and evil spirits. In the grass fields of Cameroon, Dillon (1990: 232) also opines that a similar view is held by ethnic groups in this region primarily as to what should be considered a 'bad' or 'good' death. Deaths resulting from leprosy, 'swollen belly', suicide, lightning, accidents, and pregnant women or during childbirth are all considered as 'bad' death. People who die as a result of the cited causes are laid to rest in the bush, outside the family compound and near the area in which they died. They are thus discarded without any mourning or celebrations but with special rituals performed to chase away the 'bad luck' and 'shame' they brought to their families. This is supported by Ayiera, (2009) and Nichols, (2011). For them, it is believed that people who die as a result of a good death will eventually become ancestors and intercede for the living. Africans are very religious people. On a cultural sphere, Africans value their relations with the dead (Lee and Vaughan, 2008). The spirit of the dead helps to keep peace within families (Ayiera, 2009). Many Africans would themselves want to be ancestors at one point in time, for being an ancestor is a mark of strength (to control visible and invisible things), (Nichols, 2011). In other, for the dead to live among the living as ancestors, certain cultural practices must be performed. The organization then of death plays a pivotal role in strengthening the social fabric as well as the belief system of these traditional African societies (Lee and Vaughan, 2008: 343).

More so, recent historical and social anthropological research has challenged the structural-functionalist account, dominant in the scholarship since the early decades of the 20th century, of the meaning and management of death in African societies (Lee and Vaughan, 2008).For example, funerals, are far from being static social institutions are now understood to be spaces of contestation, where the memory of the deceased as well as larger notions of communal identity and belonging are debated and expressed (Durham and Klaits, 2002; Jindra and Noret, 2011). Funerary and mourning rituals are themselves subject to historical processes of change, and so their performance can consciously reflect as well as assert, shifting social, spiritual as well as political allegiances in moments of profound transformation (Kalusa, 2011; Ranger, 2004;Geschiere, 2005).Joel Noret (2011) observes that the emotional aspects of death, as well as loss, have been neglected for far too long. This relegation to the background of the emotional tenor of death could be equated to the general take that Africans and their social institutions as opined by Lee and Vaughan (2008) are good at death management. In Norets' study of grief management in Southern Benin, this author makes the point that in other to acknowledge the deep social nature of emotions within the space of death, it will be very vital to first of all look at the nature of socialization, situating it within the lived experiences and the interiorized dispositions of these Africans. The death of Clovis's father is used by Noret as an example to show how interiorized habits of Benin culture learned from childhood are displayed by Clovis in his adept strife to accord a decent and proper funeral for his father. For Clovis then "any money that he and the rest of the family spent on their fathers' illness with cancer and the eventual organization of the funeral was considered by them as a debt they owed to him". According to Clovis, that debt could only be repaid with a decent funeral. Anything short of that would mean the death of their father, as well as grief management, would be incomplete which in turn hasdire consequences of psychic and physical exhaustion. Within the African context, therefore, there is some kind of a liaison between the emotional and transactional regimes of grief management.

When death strikes, it brings together people in a collective to mourn and provide support to the bereaved. It is through such processes of mourning the dead as postulated by De Boeck (2008), that social meanings are produced as a result of the performance of rituals. Some African cultures place a series of restrictions on the surviving kin during the mourning period of the dead. This will include amongst others, a stop to sexual encounters and foreplay by family

members. The performance of these rituals serves one purpose, that of moving the dead from a state of impurity to one of harmony in the land of the spirits (Davies, 2002). Whyte (2005), also stresses the importance African people attach to burying their dead in their homelands. In situations where African people die outside their homelands, ritualistic rites due to the dead could, or can be hampered because of a lack of material and human resources required for such rituals.Ayiera (2009) discusses the impact of globalization and the exponential increase in cross-border migration, stressing that the two have inevitably witnessed an increase in the redefinition of the concept of belonging. The accounts of the discussions made in his paper presents two concepts, viz; that of belonging, and place, arguing that the question of belonging is no longer a question of the geography where one resides (ties to location), but could be regarded as one developed with declining assertions to the notions of fixed place within a globalized society. Ayiera (2009) does this by presenting compelling experiences of death and burial rituals by Congolese refugees in Kenya. A rise of alternatives to place-bound identity is discussed here, in light with an increase in globalization, yet as refugees face the experiences ofthe death and burial of their loved ones in exile, they seem to cling to fixed place as a basis to assert their identity where they belong while in exile. Acknowledging that where one is buried is very important to Africans as a whole, burying their dead out of place (on foreign soil) by these Congolese refugees does not in itself generate a new sense of attachment to the foreign soil, but rather these Congolese consciously use their homeland as well as their geographical locations to ascertain their notion of belonging.In acute cases, where the deceased is finally laid to rest in a foreign land, the general take is that their souls cannot rest in peace (Ayiera, 2009). In the event of such a scenario, a set of rituals must be performed, to appease the dead before their souls can finally rest in peace (Nichols, 2011).

It is equally important to explore the role religion plays within the discourse around death. Just like Western religions believe in the existence of heaven and hell, so do Africans believe that the souls of their dead need to rest in some special space. Death is simply seen as some form of "relocation" as the soul of the dead moves from a physical realm to a spiritual realm (Nichols, 2011). Religion according to Awolalu (1976) exerts some power over Africans that cannot be explained. This is further reiterated by Nichols (2011), that Africans acknowledge believing in some "supreme power".

Africans are deeply religious people. There is no dichotomy between the Africans and religion. Africans, in addition to their ancestral worship, have through the years become Christians and or Muslims. According to De Vries (1998), Christianity was first introduced in the grass fields of Cameroon in 1903, by the Protestant Basel Mission. Today, there is a proliferation of different denominations and churches in Cameroon and they have indeed affected the discourse surrounding the major themes of the mortuary cycle in the grass fields (notably the pollution of death and fear of the dead). Religion has become so intertwined in the life of the Africans in such a way that even in the process of movement (migration), these people move along with their religion (Mbiti, 1991: 1). Saraiva (1999) provides a thorough explanation between religion and the people of Pepel Guinea. This author holds that religious beliefs and practices for this group of people are intimately related to the realm of death and the other world; funerals are seen as one of the most valued occasions for Pepel's social life. This group of Africans believes that the world of the dead is a photocopy (replica) of the world of the living, and in away follows the same social structure which entails when someone dies his/her soul goes to the land of the dead and eventually becomes an ancestor. Funerals carry symbolic weight for the Pepel, which starts with the cleaning of the corpse, and its wrapping in clothes for several days before inhumation, and then to the beating of the bombolom drums, and the sacrifice and bleeding of animals (cows, goats, pigs). The performance of these rituals is in a bid to promote good relations between the dead and the living. A good number of Cameroonians are Christians. As they move or migrate into South Africa, and other parts of the world, they do so together with their religion. The role then of religion cannot be under looked as far as issues regarding death are concerned.

The people of the northwest region or grass field of Cameroon (Ngemba people) are made of different ethnic groups, viz; the Mankon, the Bafut, Bali, Mbatu, Chomba, Pinyin, and a host of others all have a similar culture. Their attitudes and beliefs, especially about death and the dead, are the same. One can rightly say perhaps their only difference is in the pronunciation of words in their mother tongue (ethnic language). Death to this Ngemba people and the rituals that accompany itmust be treated with care and respect and a dignified burial accorded to the dead. Anything short of this may attract the wrath of the ancestors and 'bad luck' thrown on the path of the deceased children (Jindra, 1997: 254).The eventual death celebrations are done within a year or two and are an occasion for the living members of the group to remember and offer thanks to

the ancestors for showering them with blessings. Rituals accorded to the dead vary for these people and are done in line with the social position of the individual in question as well as their gender and age. Below I discuss the rituals that are performed when a titleholder or family head dies among the Mankon people of the grass field of Cameroon.

If the deceased is a family head and has a socially recognized position (title holder) and also belongs to the Kwifo society, then the rites and practices to be performed when he dies are very elaborate. A man who exercises power and authority over his wife and children is known as a family head. Family heads differ in their social positions within the Ngemba community, that is, some have highly recognized positions than others. It is a rule in the Mankon culture that the Kwifo (a secret society that is the most powerful among the Mankons. This regulatory society has only male members, who must be initiated into it. It is also used to mean the constituted authority of the Mankon people) is to be informed first when a titleholder dies. The Kwifo society has the highest political power among the Mankons. A messenger is usually sent with a special knotted plant that signifies a great loss. Any member of the group that receives it knows instantly that one of theirs is dead and so reports immediately to the dead man's compound to assist in the first secret death rites. This is followed by digging of the grave by brothers of the dead. The grave is usually dug behind the dead man's house, fenced with some special plants and he is buried with no noise. The viability of the family at this point is very important as Kwifo can only return to open the funeral if the items requested can be presented. If the items are presented, Kwifo can on the same night return, if not the family is given two or three weeks during which time they are expected to comply, and at the same time, no noise is expected to resonate from the dead man's compound. Upon their return, Kwifo this time leaves the Palace (this is where the paramount Fon, or FO, of the Mankon people, resides and also the abort of the Kwifo society) at say 8pm. Their coming this time is believed to bury the deceased. Their arrival is made known by the sound produced by their musical instrument, 'the Ngong'. They are not to be seen by the uninitiated and pregnant women. At the dead man's house, they proceed straight to a pre-arranged place for them at the back of the house. Here, the members play their instruments, come out at intervals moving around the compound. They eat, drink, and sound their musical instruments the whole night. As a rule, the family has to produce a fowl, believed to push the corpse into the grave. At about 5am, Kwifo returns to the Palace.

The departure of Kwifo at this point is welcomed by an influx of people from all parts of Mankon. There is general mourning, wailing, dances, gun firing, and more so, a display from other societies or groups to which the deceased was a member. Family, friends, and well-wishers bring in food and drinks to help feed the mourners. The gravediggers, though brothers to the deceased have to be provided with, depending on the family's economic status: a basket of achu (a traditional main dish of the Mankons, made from pounded coco yams and banana), one or two jugs of palm wine, and two fowls (chickens). This mourning phase can go on for weeks. It ends with shaving of hair and bathing in a stream as a means of cleansing the family from the ill omen of death. As the mourning phase is running out, and before family members go their separate ways, a day is set for the fowl roasting ceremony 'Njwi ntoh ngoo nevuh'. The preferred fowl is a red or white cock (male).The significance of this day is to trace the maternal line of the deceased. It is also an occasion for the reconciliation of family members who may have some long-lasting disagreements.

A variety of resources are needed to perform the fowl roasting ceremony. Children of the deceased will have to provide among others, two jugs of palm wine, four fowls (chicken), three bunches of plantains, a goat, two baskets of achu (this is the traditional or main dish among the Mankons), raw groundnuts, raw corn, salt, and palm oil. Upon the presentation of these items, a goat is killed and its intestines used in preparing the plantains and achu soup. The heart, liver, and kidney are shared among the elderly men of the family. In sharing the goat, the quantity each man receives depends on his family and social status, as well as his age. A live fowl is given to the maternal grandfather, and the rest roasted with the gizzards given to elderly men as a symbol of respect for their ages. All the roasted fowl must be eaten on the spot, to ensure that no maternal family has a grudge against any of the deceased's children. The raw corn, groundnut, salt, and palm oil, are shared among every member of the family.

In addition to sharing the items named above, discussions also take place on how to improve the conditions of the family. Libations are also offered to the ancestors by the maternal grandfather. He pours palm wine in the family cup for all the children to drink from it. This act instills confidence among the deceased children that their maternal family is on good terms with them. The fowl roasting ceremony ends with agreements on a day to perform the final death

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celebration of the deceased.

The second phase of the death rites and practices of a family head and titleholder is accompanied by his children sending someone to Kwifo informing them when they would be ready to carry out the death celebration of their father. In the Mankon tradition, Kwifo only comes out on such occasions on the traditional holiday, called 'Mamuttaa'. After squeezing out time from its busy schedule, Kwifo then levies the family. The amount to be paid to Kwifo varies from R1500 to R5000 (approximately 200.000fcfa) for wealthy families. A messenger carries it to the family concerned, who then make plans on how to raise the money. Assuming the money is raised, the same messenger then takes it back to Kwifo, alongside a jug of palm wine. Collecting the money, a list of food items and drinks to be supplied to Kwifo as the celebrations move on is sent to the deceased's children. The items include; nine fowls (five of which are cocks, used to demonstrate the manliness of the deceased), one goat or cow, achu in reasonable quantity, cooked corn and groundnuts, thirty jugs of palm wine two crates of beer, and cooked meat.

At about 9pm on the eve of the celebration, Kwifo arrives at the dead man's compound and is greeted with three jugs of palm wine. A fowl is given to the messenger who announces the arrival of Kwifo. They then move and settle in a sacred hut behind the house. After some time, five more jugs of palm wine, cooked meat, a crate of beer, and achu are given to them. Just like in the first phase, Kwifo performs to the rhythm of its orchestra, moves out at intervals round the dead man's compound dancing. The mourning period is marked by wailing which goes on for hours, after which food and drinks are assembled to feed the masses and individual dance groups. It is worth noting that individual family members take initiative in setting up seating places for dance groups. Various dance groups after eating and drinking, dance one after the other. Dancing is followed by gunshots in the air, and an individual whose group is on the dance floor presents one crate of beer, a jug of palm wine, and one fowl to the group as they dance. As the groups are dancing; tokens of appreciation are given out to them, which continue until all the groups finish dancing. All the children offer some form of support to each other's dance group.

While the groups are dancing, Kwifo remains in its hut and more 20 jugs of palm wine provided to them. Their interval come out is announced by the messenger so that everyone hides for them to perform their ritualistic activities. The goat they demanded is brought to them, killed, and

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divided among them before their departure at about 5am.

The departure of Kwifo from the scene of the celebrations is marked by a brief and sudden stop, wherein the head of the group, his assistant, and one of the members return to the dead man's compound for the succession phase of the rites. Their arrival is welcomed by a loud cry from a giant cock (signifying the worthiness of the successor), and a change of sound from their musical instrument. The dead man's children line up after giving the remaining jugs of palm wine to the group, who by now must have settled in their hut. The successor is then handed over to Kwifo by the eldest daughter of the deceased. Kwifo then carries out sacred rites on the successor and leaves for the palace. There is no set age for one to be crowned a successor. But in cases where the chosen one is still very young, he is crowned but then the eldest brother or uncle looks after the dead man's property and family, until such time when the chosen one comes of age and the mantle of leadership is transferred to him.

The final departure of Kwifo then is followed by the presentation of the heir by his sisters and brothers to their maternal and paternal uncles. This group of people pours libations asking their ancestors to empower the successor. The dead man's cup is also handed over to the successor by his uncles and is marked by gun firing and dancing. The chair removal ceremony is the final stage of the rites performed with the death of a family head. A day is actually set aside to seat the successor on his late fathers' chair. Again, food, drinks, and a fowl are provided on a set day. The chair is placed in the middle of the compound and the fowl is killed on it so that the blood spills on it. The successor's sisters dance around the chair, pouring camp wood on it. This signifies that they are giving their blessings to their new father, to rule the family in peace. More often than not rich families carry their successor to the FO (paramount ruler of the Mankon people) so he can give him more blessings. The rituals discussed above can only be carried out effectively back at home. Within a foreign locale, such elaborate details are not possible because, for the African, rituals are performed by the elderly who are custodians of tradition. Such people are most often very old and such persons do not travel out of their countries. Even if they do, it is just for short visits to their children or for a medical checkup (for wealthy families that can afford it).

The question of migration is in itself problematic. As observed by Adler and Gielen (2003: 9) *"regardless of the reasons, movement (migration) acts as impediments to the resourcefulness of*

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a people". Migration leads to cultural change either in a positive or negative way. In a positive way, it does still maintain kinship and ethnic ties as demonstrated by Mand (2006) in a study he did on South Asian transnationalism. Again, Gardner (2002) emphasized the importance of kinship ties and expressed the important role social capital plays in maintaining cultural (ethnic) ties among migrants, especially in times of distress like funerals. The sending of remittance scripts by migrants as well as the repatriation of the dead back home for burial is a testament to the fact that migrants are bent on maintaining such kinship ties and further express the importance they levy on identity and belonging (Gardner, 2002).

Gardner (2002) explores death rituals amongst British Sylhetis within a transnational ritual space. Transnationalism denotes "a process through which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc, 1994: 7). Focusing on gender and micro-politics of resource allocation, Gardner gives an analysis of how places are imagined and acted upon through the use of transnational household rituals. She emphasizes the importance of kinship maintenance and views the household as a starting point for the sending of remittance script (citing, the payment of ritual activities between households and the whole society among Sylhets and Britain as rampant today).

The death of Abdul Wahed, a British Sylheti and the rituals that followed was a pointer to the fact that Sylheti-Muslim funerals are highly gendered. In rural Bangladesh, dead bodies are washed and prepared for the journey beyond by close members of the patrilneage (men by men, and women by women, (Gardner, 2002). This was not the case for Wahed, as his body was handed over to Muslim undertakers based at the East London Mosque, Hajji Tasleeem who performed the ritual cleansing (ghosul). As it is very important according to Muslim tradition, for the dead to be buried as quickly as possible because the soul is thought to leave the body only when it is buried and equally to spare the emotional torture the living have to pass through from inquiring the loss of a loved one. This, therefore, suggests that British bureaucratic notions of autopsy and embalming, etc, which normally can take several months, are to be avoided. Wahed was one of the lucky Sylhetis, who had to be buried back home. Unfortunately for his widow, she could not accompany her husband's dead body home because their religion frowns at it, and

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she had to be indoors for 40 days after the passing of her husband.

According to Kalstrom(2004), the performance of death rites in funerals, as well as succession rites after funerals have stood the test of time and still continue to bring kinsmen together, thereby reproducing society. This provides the framework through which social changes geared at weakening clan solidarity and moral orders can be dealt with. Funerals are undoubtedly moments to express kin solidarity on the one hand, and also times through which family failures and kinship deadlocks are noticed. Geschiere (2005: 52-55), argues that Cameroonians attach a lot of importance to being buried at home. This author notes autochthony is enshrined in national politics in Cameroon but also adds that when urban elites return for burials and funerals they lavish money indiscriminately that such events are often accompanied by anxiety and of course fear. In as much as the above feelings are expressed in peoples' emotions, death rites and funerary rites continue to be practiced. The inability to accord a loved one a decent funeral is very rear. Even in situations where it does occur, or where people are buried without these rites, it is considered "shameful" and their souls will not be accepted in the realm of the spirits (Lee andVaughan, 2008).

Maloka (1998), makes a link between African attitudes to death as well as mortuary rites to ancestral worship (anacknowledgment of a parallel world of the afterlife), and the existence of witchcraft. Africans usually look at death from two dimensions, a 'good' death (as a result of age) and a 'bad' death (accidents). Death then in African cosmology only helps to reinforce the identity of the dead, as they move to the spiritual realm.

The way death is perceived in Africa, as well as the adoption of mortuary practices,have evolved over time. In the 1920s and 1950swhen someone die, Sotho immigrants to goldmines of the Rand prepared the body to be buried. Thecorpse is not left alone for fear that evil spirits could enter it. The body is then buried as soon as possible in a squatting position, (accompanied by seed for sowing, and grass for building a hut in the afterlife (Maloka,1998). The dark shadow (bad omen) brought about by death means that all surviving kin to dead need to be cleansed. After the cleansing ritual is performed which involves shaving of hair, the dead man's hut is either demolished or burnt down to free his spirit. The widow and children are given a cord of plaited grass to wear around their heads, replacing their copper and brass necklaces with beads.

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The maternal uncle of the dead, after a protracted period of mourning then carries out a series of rituals to cleanse the family (Willoughby, 1928; Ashton, 1967).

Sotho migrants used evocative corpus of idioms and songs of comradeship through which they could express the difficult situations that tormented them in the mines as well as their fear of death (Maloka1998). A fear that was groomed not in regards to an untimely death, but instead for one expressed in the line of one 'dying away from home'. Various authors (Maloka, 1998; Moodie, 1994; Lukhele, 1990) hold that mineworkers were afraid of being separated from their ancestral home even in the event of death. A situation, which can lead them, to be buried without any traditional rites.

During funerals and burials, a lot of dance groups compete with each other especially on the day the dead are being buried, as well as the day, marked for celebrating the life of the dead. Dancing makes the people seem happy and are likened to people preparing for the art of war (Dillon, 1971). Again, dancing during funerals as observed by Gwinn *et al.* (1989) are performed to meet specific purposes, like in the igogo dance of the Owo-Yoruba, where young men use stamping techniques to compact the earth on the deceased grave, as the earth is being shovelled into the pit.

Similarly, a research conducted by Nicholas Argenti (2001) in the grass field of Cameroon (Oku) reveals that a series of ceremonies termed "the death of tears" accompanies mortuary rites in the event of a death. According to Argenti, women throughout the village (in a show of personal grief), announce the death of an individual using wailing songs. These songs are usually channelled in such a manner as to praise the life of the dead and his achievements throughout his lifetime. On the actual day of the burial, young men will sing grave stamping songs as they dance on the coffin as the earth is shovelled into the pit. The songs can be political in nature and, showcase the history of the Oku people. But in the event where the dead had lived a full life and had children, hitherto referred to as "good die" such songs are full of jokes (Argenti, 2001). Moreover, it would be erroneous to talk just about dancing, without mentioning the drums. The two are used in a correlated manner. Drumming at funerals within the African context is very essential as it not only produces a sensible rhythm but is regarded as the voice of the ancestors (Chernoff, 1979:150).

Here is an excerpt from two songs used by the youths of Oku in the north-west region of Cameroon to shame death as discussed by Argenti (2001).

"The Good House is in the Ground";

Call: O house!

Chorus (repeated after each call): The good house is in the ground!

Call: You will die!

Call: You will go!

Call: Fons [must also die]!

Call: O house!

Call: My brother [exclamation of alarm]!

Call: Will die!

Call: My stepbrother!

Call: My/ your friend!

Argenti (2001) holds that this song acknowledges one's inevitable return to their 'home'. Home here is used to refer to the land of the dead, the resting abode of corpse. He uses satire to illustrate human nature, that some point in time we all have to die (even the Fons, and the elders too). The Fon he acknowledges under normal circumstances is said to be 'lost' when he kicks the bucket, but all the same, it does not change the fact that he too can die. This song gives the young men some form of consolation and even urges them to stamp the grave, even more, bearing in mind that one day it might also be them.

Another song popularly used for stamping the grave in Oku is 'You Call'

Call: You Call!

Chorus: Your call kills us!

Call Only: Harvest the corn!

Call Only: A oh! Get stamping!

The lead singer addresses god, or the spirits with some degree of respect, while in the chorus death and its daunting and traumatic nature is frowned upon. 'Harvest the corn' is used as a metaphor as death ushers in confusion amongst families. The call then, of "and oh! Get stamping" is simply away by the lead singer to instil some degree of confidence and strength so that the heartbroken young men can have the energy to stamp the ground as the dead are laid to rest.

2.4. Understanding Rituals in death.

A critical look at the history of Africa shows that Africans have over the years embarked on migration as a safe abode to either escape from persecution, and wars from their countries of origin in search of greener pastures in other countries. In line with the above, what remains interesting is the fact that these migrants (Africans) have not disregarded the importance of performing rituals during the life crisis of birth, marriage, and death (which happens to be the focus of this study). These are facts of life that sometimes we do not reflect upon. One of such is the fact of passage from one sphere, level, or stage in life to another and the rituals or rites that mark these transitions. It is in this light that Arnold Van Gennep (1960) tries to illumine our minds towards this reality. Thus, he began his work on "Rites of Passage" by underscoring different levels of civilizations in social groupings which are distinctly distinguished as profane or sacred.

According to Van Gennep, for a man to pass from one of these groupings to another; special conditions are to be fulfilled. This condition is applicable to all spheres of life be it priesthood or others. Thus, Van Gennep underlines incompatibility between profane and the sacred world, which a man cannot pass from one to the other without through an intermediary stage. Thus, social groups in such societies have magico-religious foundations, thus certain rites must be fulfilled. On this note, the life of an individual in any society is a series of passages from one

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stage to another and must be accompanied by special acts and no act is free of sacred and ceremonies. These rituals Davies (1997) concurs by articulating that, the performance of these rituals greatly connects one to and reifies one's sense of belonging, and implicitly one's identity, and by so doing sets people apart from the culture of their receiving countries.

Just like the above-cited authors Turner (1967), also opines that by carrying out rituals social order is maintained and actors (people) take up new functions within society. For the purpose of this study, rituals would be used to denote some form of a religious act performed to seek favors from supernatural forces. Since Cameroonians living in Cape Town belong in different ethnic groups, the performance of rituals of birth, marriage, or death are all performed within these ethnic enclaves. When people die, even away from home, it is only through the rituals of burial and funerals that their affiliations to a specified 'home' or community are expressed. The performance of these rites of passage empowers the individuals' identity and need to belong, as well as ushers the individual into the realm of the ancestors. The need to repatriate the dead back home is so important that many immigrant communities now use burial societies (Moore, 1980). For Block and Parry (1982), their stand is that the performance of rituals provides some form of social control in which such ritual functions gives room for the display of appropriate emotions by the participants, expressed in the acquisition and control of life. Rituals especially those that deal with death then, express strong emotions that are accompanied by the 'power of words' (Davies 1997: 8).The power of words (utterances) is an expression of a peoples' identity as they speak to the dead. This will be revisited in Chapter Five (5), as one elder beckons the spirit of the dead to co-operate with them in their struggle to send their dead bodies' home.

For us then to better understand these death rituals, it is vital we look at the role it plays in gathering people for material as well as social investments.It is imperative for one (when they are alive) to live a life that strengthens community values and norms. Such people are indirectly paving their way to becoming ancestors, and so when they eventually die 'kick the bucket' their funerals are well organized. People, who are known for participating and contributing to others during community events, create social networks that are not only made visible during death rituals but transcend their own funerals. Perhaps then the ultimate investment in death rituals is one's ability to be able to participate and donate to others. People within the African context

(using Ashante for instance) make such ritual investments in actual preparation for their impending demise (Stack, 1997).

2.5. The Enforcement of Kinship, and the Role of Tribal/Ethnic Organizations

Eyoh (1999: 291) observes that:

> "home town associations, (which hitherto for the purpose of this study are referred to as *tribal/ethnic/cultural associations) are an example of the efficacy of the ideologies of homes in ordering communal responses to modernization. These associations bind together individuals across diverse socio-economic spaces far away from their ancestral communities. They serve as powerful vehicles for the mobilization of resources, through levies on their members or prying for access to state resources in a bid to enhance the development of their home villages."*

Ethnic associations in most cases are made up of people (immigrants) from one country, or the same region, district, town, or village in that country (Burnet and Palmer, 1988; Campani, 1992). Besides geographical origin, there may be a basis for membership in an ethnic association. Among the Chinese in Canada for instance, one type of association was based on surname, this was used to emphasize kinship (Wickberg, 1982).

There is a proliferation of cultural associations in Cape Town. This is because Cameroon as a state is made up of about 250 ethnic groups, each having its own cultural traits and speaking its own local language that is unique to each group. These associations not only act as some form of a catalyst in empowering its members (especially the newcomers) but also promote social cohesion amongst communities in the host country, thereby showcasing their identity and the need to belong. Of paramount importance is the need to understand how these associations help migrants to negotiate and navigate life crisis moments (birth, marriage, and death). I will specifically dwell on the aspects of death, bereavement, and the funeral. Also worth discussing is the idea of "place". Transnational migrants, in this case, Cameroonians in Cape Town do keep close ties with communities and kin back home. This is done through the use of information technologies "internet, cell phones", (Nyamnjoh, 2013).

The very essence behind the creation of these associations is to empower its members (by providing economic and welfare assistance especially in death) and also fostering their culture within the host country. This, therefore, means that only people who are of that ethnic group can be admitted into the associations as members thereby re-iterating the concept of autochthons from their home country into the borders of the host country (Nyamnjoh and Rowlands 1998, Eyoh 1998; Konnings 2001, 2008; Konnings and Nyamnjoh 2000). This means that the concept of autochthony/belonging as discussed by the cited authors does take up a new dimension (Geschiere and Gugler, 1998: 313). Cameroonians believe so much and respect their culture. They do not want outsiders to invade their culture, the reason why admissions into these groups are based entirely on ethnic enclaves. By so doing these associations are in a way employing Appadurai's (1996) concept of predatory identities. Predatory identities refer to those 'identities whose social construction and mobilization require the extinction of other proximate social categories defined as threats to the very existence of some group, defined as 'we'. These predatory identities are usually majority identities and the minorities become an obstacle to their purity' (Appadurai, 1996: 51-53). Some of the groups are; Mankon Cultural Development Association (MACUDA), the Meta Cultural and Development Association (MECUDA), Pinyin Family Movement (PIFAM), and a host of others. Of all the cited associations only MACUDA has successfully galvanized support from all its other Mankon sub-groups in South Africa (Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town) to create a single group known as MACUDA South Africa. The creation of this group has greatly assisted its members especially in the event of a death as the amount required for each member to contribute to help repatriate the corpse of the dead has greatly dropped. This will be revisited in Chapter Four (4).

2.6. Theoretical Framework

This section describes the theoretical perspective and concepts underlying this study. It draws on the theory of acculturation and uses the conceptof social capital [1] to explain how immigrants cope and deal with their dead. It is first and foremost important to note that dealing with death in

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[1]As developed by Bourdieu in 1986.

a foreign land, is directly linked to adaptation strategies immigrants adopt given the difficulties posed by movement.

One of the most prominent proponents of the theory of Acculturation was Berry, who came up with four assumptive concepts, viz; (1) The need to understand the underpinnings of behaviour, (2) research from one culture is not enough to understand intercultural behaviour in another setting, (3) policies and programs can generate mutual hostility, (4) policies and programmes can enhance positive intercultural relations (Berry, 2001). The above points to the fact that positive steps need to be taken both by the minority and majority groups so as to promote mutual acceptance and respect. In other, for positive acculturation to occur, there must be an interaction between the minority and a majority group so as to give room for a blend in culture, referred to as contact participation and contact maintenance (Berry, 2001). The absence of contact participation acts as a limiting factor for the minority to have an influence on the majority. Contact participation, on the other hand, puts the minority on an upper hand to make their wishes and needs visibly acknowledged by the majority. Contact participation will help the minority in making friends, expressing cultural differences and similarities, as well as identifying problems that would make the majority sympathize with the plight of the minority. The process then of one group becoming part of (ignoring) the other group and merging (staying separate) from the other group, is what is termed cultural maintenance.

The interplay then of both positive contact participation and maintenance, creates an equitable ideology for the good of the minority and the majority groups. This further creates a multicultural ideology that acts in a positive manner for both groups (individuals and ethnic groups can now adapt without fear of losing their identity, minimize the effect of prejudice and discrimination, maximize positive attitudes, and cooperate towards common goals). For if groups or people are secured in their identities, they become more accommodating to those with different opinions; gain resources and accept both cultures (Berry, 2011).

According to Becker, Fray, Agnew-Blais, Guarnaccia, Striegel-Moore and& Gilman, (2010); Beirens and Fontaine (2011), changes in behaviour, and values, changes in original patterns that all emanate from a direct and most often frequent contact amongst cultures is what these authors termed acculturation. They, however, noted that acculturation as such is not the loss of one's'

own culture. In the case under study, challenges posed by socio-economic, as well as cultural factors in receiving countries, will open up doors for adjustments and at the same time, migrants can still maintain their culture on how to deal with their dead (Beirens and Fontaine,2011). If the above occurs, then it is referred to as cultural integration.

Acculturation takes various forms, viz; separation, marginalization, and assimilation. When people chose to stay steadfast in their culture of origin thereby ignoring the host culture, they are in a state of cultural separation. Again, when they lose their home culture, and at the same time ignore the host culture, they are in a state of cultural marginalization. If on the other hand, people chose to neglect their home culture, thereby not only absorbing but adopting the culture of the foreign land, they are viewed as being in a state of cultural assimilation (Padilla and Perez, 2003; Beirens and Fontaine, 2011). Looking at the above, it is quite evident that Cameroonians leaving here in Cape Town are faced with socio-economic and cultural issues in South Africa. An understanding of the theory of acculturation will help one to gain insight knowledge as to how they cope and manage death. Distinctions should be made in regards to collective or group level acculturation (Blanche, 2006). This author attests to the fact that a change in a group's culture or in a collective, can result in psychological acculturation which in turn paves the way for a change in peoples' behaviours. The possibility of an influx of migrants from different parts of the world, with different cultures, should not be ruled out in also influencing the culture of the host country (Rodriguez-Garcia, 2006).

The next concept that would be used in this study is Social Capital. It is inspired by the work of Bourdieu. He defined the concept as:

> *"the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintances or recognition. The profit that actors enjoy from being members in a group forms the platform on which this solidarity is generated"* (Bourdieu, 1986: 248-49).

In the presentation of this concept, Bourdieu looks at the potential gains that actors derive taking into account their very participation in groups and also in the build-up of their social networks to galvanize resources. The definition adopted by Bourdieu, makes clear three issues, viz; the social

relationship that enables actors to gain access to resources possessed by their associates, the amount of those resources produced by the totality of the relationships between actors rather than merely a common quality of the group; and finally, the quality of those resources. Bourdieu's theory of practice is used to guide the analysis of this study. Bourdieu in his grand theory makes distinctions among three types of capital, viz; economic capital, social capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital. He also demonstrates how all these forms of capital can be used to generate safety networks. These safety networks are used then as starting points for the creation of social networks that comes with the sharing of resources, that develop as coping strategies when death comes knocking on one's door.

Social Practice

Agentsand the interactions taking place between them are described by Bourdieu as taking place in an "arena of practice" and such interactions are perceived to take place within a social field. All agents operating within a certain field do so within a framework of rules which are internalized. The internalization of such rules serves as a guide to their "practice" which consequently, gives room for the creation of an internalized embodied (habitus) by agents. In other procure more capital, it is important for these agents to follow these dynamic rules. Therefore, the objective relations determine what agents can and cannot do. Different fields require specific capital for agents to get engaged in (Bourdieu, 1986).

Field and Capital

In Bourdieu's theory the concept of 'fields', is used to refer to the various social contexts in which agents (people) strive to acquire one form of capital or the other. Within the field, each player seeks to make their mark and acquire their own game. Thus, the generation of fields is a result of social practice. Actors within a field pose different levels of capital (economic, cultural social and symbolic), this alone affects their behaviors and forces them to behave differently across fields.

Forms of Capital

Economic capital as discussed by Bourdieu is a form of accumulated human labour. This means

that actors can obtain economic resources if they can acquire social capital. Within the field of death rites and rituals, for instance, economic capital could be used to refer to the cash and property available to process funerals and the eventual death celebrations.

Cultural capital is the collection of symbolic elements like skills, taste, postures, clothing, material belongings, etc., as a result of being a member of certain social class in society. Alternatively, it could equally be regarded as wisdom acquired childhood through the process of socialization. Cultural capital can be transformed into economic capital (Bourdieu andWacquant, 1992).

Symbolic capital most often than not has been used to refer to "honor" and or "prestige" The conversions of the other forms of capital discussed above are what produces this honor and prestige. Symbolic capital could be defined as "the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate" (Bourdieu, 1989: 17).

Last but not the least; Bourdieu looked at social capital as an individual's property, and not as that of a group. He stressed that the acquisition of social capital by individuals provides them with the opportunity to influence as well as control a group.His discourse then on social capital is tied to the fact that"capital is not only economic and that the social exchanges are not purely self-interested and to encompass capital and profit in all their forms" (Bourdieu, 1986:241). The group then or collective does not own social capital but is regarded then as the property of an individual. He points out that the acquisition of social capital by individuals allows them to exert some control over a group. Everyone within a group does not command the same amount of social capital. It is available to those who acquire positions of power and express goodwill towards others. "The concept then of social capital promotes the virtual acquisition of resources by individuals or groups through a more or less institutionalized relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 119). The use of the concept of social capital for analysis in this research is influenced by the fact that the concept really speaks to the ways these Cameroonian migrants manage and deal with the dead. The importance of social capital need not be over-emphasized to ensure a smooth and plausible funeral for the actors concerned. The ability for the actors to convert this social capital, into other forms viz, economic and cultural capital would greatly depend on the networks that these actors have over

the years created. The unequal nature of the distribution of resources in society also affects the ways in which people accumulate social capital. This means that some individuals in society command more social capital than others and it is expressed even in the performance of these death rites and funerals. It would not be totally wrong to say that in as much as the performance of these death rites and funerals produce social meanings in society (De Boeck, 2008), they also are an avenue through which inequality in class structures are reproduced (Olwig, 2009; Gardener, 2000: 199).

Dealing with death, requires a variety of cultural and economic factors, legal issues as well as the numerous participants involved in the process. The burial of the dead for the African has to be done back home which involves predetermined practices and rituals that would otherwise not be possible in a foreign local due to shifts in migration. Acculturation and Social capital, then as a theoretical framework can be used to navigate how migrants manage death away from home, amidst the numerous challenges they encounter.

The scholarship that has been reviewed places emphasis on deaths in and around Africa, as well as in some parts of the world. I believe by doing so, it provides an understanding, and in a way, portray the importance of the cultural significance immigrants ascribe to the life crisis of death, 'away from home'. Nunez and Wheeler (2012) hold thatthe issue of migration has been studied in greater detail pertaining to living migrants, while death and death management for these cross-border (dead) migrants have not been given proper thought. This can be attributed to the fact that death and the discourse surrounding the dead steers up some weird feelings and anxiety, and most societies and people turn to shy away from it (O'Connell, Kopel, Paris, Girardin and Batsel, 1977). There is, therefore, no doubt that this topic has only recently received some attention from scholars and there is a remarkable shortage of literature. I believe this study looks at the ways in which Cameroonians experience and deal with death in South Africa. To conclude then, this chapter of my study explored literature on different social and economic hardships that migrants encounter when dealing with death in host nations, their experiences and the eventual repatriation of the dead back home. The next chapter of this study will focus on the methodology, as well as the research process.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research places emphasis on the life crisis event of death, the rituals that follow and the eventual funeral and burial of the dead. Since it is a small-scale study, I decided to narrow it down to the Ngemba people of the grass fields of Cameroon living in Cape Town. The reason behind this is that Cameron is a diversified country with over two hundred and fifty (250) ethnic groups speaking different languages. The Ngemba people of the grass field of Cameroon have very similar cultures and traditions, with only slight differences in their local languages. These tribes/ethnic groups include Mankon, Pinyin, Bafut, Bali, Mbatu, Meta, Choumba, amongst others. Being also a product of the grass field, particularly from Mankon, and have lived with these groups of people in Cape Town since April 2011, as well as witnessed several Cameroonians die, I believe I would be able to relate with the experiences of these participants.

Several Cameroonians have died since my coming into South Africa. I was taken aback by the deaths of these fellow brothers and sisters, and this steered the desire for me to carry out this research project, bearing in mind that one day it might also be me. The big question then was, what if it was me, and how would my remains be treated? Since I, come from the same region as my informants, it was important that I adopt a reflexive approach. The issue of reflexivity in research is well articulated by Holmes (2010:140), who looks at reflexivity as "an emotional, embodied, and cognitive process, in which the social actors have feelings about and try to understand and alter their lives in relation to their social and natural environment as well as to others." Reflexivity, therefore, requires the researcher to reflect on such social processes that can influence the collection of data for a study. How then is this possible? Researchers who use a reflexive approach need to consider the following; adopt a critical attitude towards data, as well as recognize the influence on the research of such things like, the location of the research site, nature of the social interaction between the researcher and the researched, and lastly, how sensitive the topic under investigation is.By adopting reflexive approaches, then, I believe it would help me take stock of my own personal experiences as well as enables me to understand and be able to relate to the experiences of the participants in this study.

The basis for this section in my study is to showcase the methodology employed. It will describe

the research setting, as well as provide tips on answering the research questions and address the objectives set for this study, using a qualitative research design. The major instruments used for data collection are interviews and participant observation. Interviews in qualitative research enable the researcher to have a clear vision of his/her research interest, as well as know-how on the type of questions they throw at their participants (Loi and Pearce, 2012: 5).

It would be important for me to first and foremost define what I mean by methodology. The methodology of a study can be regarded as "that set of rules or procedures through which research is based and claims for knowledge evaluated" (Franckfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996: 15). Looking at the above quote, it is clear that the methodology of good research should be able to provide inter-subjectivity that allows for the sharing of knowledge within a scientific community, provide logical interpretation through which reliable inferences can be made, as well as provide facts that can be verifiable.

Qualitative research is geared towards an in-depth understanding of human behavior. It more often focuses on questions like what, where, and when, rather than questions like, how, and why, in decision making. Usually, qualitative research focuses on smaller groups rather than larger ones to formulate their hypothesis. The result of such research is mainly descriptive. I will have to immerse myself within the community, i.e. eat, and drink, among others like the members of the community. This is because I will have to rely on verbal information, observations, interviews, documents, and cultural artefacts, while at the same time analysing the relationship between different variables. It is important to also mention that these interviews will be on a face to face basis and will be recorded and later on transcribed to generate verbatim scripts that will be analysed (Creswell 2007; 2009). Interviews are also used to identify aspects that require more research. Drummond (2011) argues that from using interviews the depth of analysing a phenomenon can be expanded, thereby improving the validity and diminishing researcher bias.

The purpose of my research was qualitative in nature; this research had as objective to:

1. Explore and investigate what happens to African migrants, particularly Cameroonians when they die away from home.

2. To unpack the lived experiences of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town, as well as understand the meanings ascribed to death.

3. It also strived to look at how Cameroonians manage and deal with a death away from home. I hope by the end of this thesis I would have explored different rites and their cultural significance.

This thesis aligns itself more with a constructionist research design. This school of thought holds that the meanings attributed to social facts are constructed, interpreted, as well as re-constructed by actors (people) in their social interactions (Weber, cited in Castles 2012: 11). It is, therefore, the duty of the researcher (who is also an observer) to create meanings out of social actions while using participant observation, interviews, as well as ethnography.

3.1.Research design and data collection methods

This research project will be mainly qualitative in nature. This means that the data for this study will be mainly descriptive and contextualized, thereby producing subjective data (Punch, 1998).

Participants in this study were engaged with the use of in-depth interviews, and participant observation in a bid to make them feel comfortable (which is the duty of the researcher) to discuss the phenomena being studied. This means that the questions being asked will not be predetermined, focused, or short, but rather will be inferred from the responses of the participants as the conversation flows (Given,2008:423). Through these interviews, I specifically tease out information on the phenomenon of death away from home, their perceptions, and how migrants (Cameroonians) construct their notions of identity. According to Valentine, (1997: 111), *"in-depth interviews are people-oriented, as well as sensitive"*. Such interviews provide room for individuals to construct and navigate their own lived experiences. Such a research design can be structured, semi-structured, and or unstructured. A semi-structured design was employed for this dissertation. Using a semi-structured interview in a research such as this has the advantage of not only exploring people's attitudes, values, beliefs, and motives; preventing the respondent to receive assistance of any kind from others while answering a question; overshadowing poor survey rates; but also helps in evaluating responses from participants through the observation of non-verbal indicators (which is particularly important during sensitive discussions (Barriball and White, 1994: 330).

The interviews were conducted in "pidgin or broken-English", and at times some participants choose to re-iterate some vital aspects in the local vernacular (language). This worked in my favour as I could understand most of the local languages, thereby strengthening the observation made by Marcus (1995: 105), that the *'ability of a researcher to understand and speak a certain language during fieldwork, has a tremendous impact on the outcome of such a research'*. My ability to be flexible in the language I choose to communicate with the participants enhanced the outcome of the research as this made the participants more relaxed, and willing to discuss a topic that is not only considered a 'taboo', but also 'emotionally draining'. The interviews were made up of open-ended questions geared towards obtaining insights into the phenomenon of death and funerary rites. Moreover, these interviews were conducted at the participant's homes, and or job sites (this is where they were comfortable). Given the time frame for this research and also aware of the fact that interviews in qualitative research are time-consuming; I conducted sixteen (16) interviews. The average time spent on an interview was thirty (30) minutes, with the longest being one (1) hour.

I used in-depth interviews because my research is qualitative nature (involves a lot of narratives and descriptions), and the data obtained is much more flexible, and cost-effective, offers an opportunity for direct interaction with participants, provides for the procurement of a rich data that provides insight to more details. Again, interviews provide an opportunity for researchers to understand their participants well, and also this method is much faster and quicker. The major weaknesses in using in-depth interviews is that it is time-consuming, both to conduct, transcribe, as well as to analyse the data. Moreover, the time-consuming nature of this method allows for only a few interviews given a time frame,etc, (Patton, 2002).

The next research instrument used was participant observation. I had to attend two funerals (what is usually referred to as night vigil, or in our local parlance as 'cry die'). Since the corpse of these fallen brothers have to be repatriated back home, there are no burials here in Cape Town. The "cry die" was just an occasion for friends and well-wishers of the deceased to pay their last respects to the fallen brothers/sisters. In as much as I was part of the grieving community, I had to employ Kawulichs' (2005) observation guide to help me record the slightest details. Aspects such as the physical environment, duration of the activities, as well as interactions between and

amongst the mourners were all duly observed. This means that I had to be part of the informal discussions, listen to what others were saying, particular regard was given to people's gestures and symbols and what they represented. This greatly helped in the eventual write up of this thesis.

3.2.Sample and Recruitment

Boscaino and Giambalavo (2014) define a sample as the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they are selected and can be made inference to. Inferences can only be made if the participants are randomly selected so that they all have an equal opportunity to participate in the study. The procedures which are adopted in qualitative research are less rigid than those in quantitative research. This can be explained by the flexible nature of sampling. The flexibility that at times leaves most researchers confused and open to mistakes. This is the reason why Morse (1991), advocated for the adoption of clear guidelines pertaining to principles for the selection of samples in qualitative research. She believed such an endeavor would avoid such confusions and mistakes made by researchers. More so, the selection of a sample in qualitative research has a positive effect on the quality of research produced. If a sampling strategy is not adequately described, it will affect the findings and replication of such research (Kitson, Sussman, Williams, Zeehandelaar, Shickmanter and Steinberger,1982).

There are different sampling methods available to be engaged by qualitative researchers. For this research, I made use of a purposeful sampling technique.This is a non- probabilistic sampling method and it generates very good information. This would involve searching for individuals who meet certain criteria. In this case, individuals who have been affected by the life crisis of death. This study relied largely on the occurrences of death.A major shortcoming of this method is that it could be biased and not representative of the population (Yin, 2010).For (Patton 1990: 169),

> *"The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in the selection of information-rich cases for in-depth studies. Information-rich cases are those cases that one can learn a great deal about issues central to the purpose of the study."*

For this author, all the various types of sampling methods in qualitative studies be it, maximum variation sampling; snowball or chain sampling; operational construct or theory-based sampling; stratified purposeful sampling; extreme or deviant case sampling; intensity sampling; homogeneous samples; typical case sampling; critical case sampling; opportunistic sampling; criterion sampling; purposeful random sampling; etc., should all be regarded as "purposeful sampling".

This thesis adopted the snowball or chain sampling. This method I found was very useful as it helped me to easily locate participants for this research. With snowball sampling then, '*each person or unit is connected to another either through a direct or indirect manner*' (Newman, 1994: 199). The initial people I contacted, provided me with a list of other names whom they believed could liaise with the phenomenon under investigation. Such persons would include individuals that had experienced firsthand, the death of either their brothers/sisters, children, husband/wives, and even friends.

3.3. Selection of research Participants

This study focused primarily on Cameroonian immigrants of the Ngemba descent, both skilled and unskilled living within the environs of Cape Town (particularly in the northern suburbs). The study utilizes tribal organizations, community leaders, who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation. It also makes use of service providers (services related to death and funerals in Cape Town). The North West region of Cameroon or the grass field as it is normally referred to is made up of several tribes/ethnic groups. Almost all of these ethnic groups are represented here in Cape Town. These ethnic groups as indicated earlier include amongst others, Mankon, Bafut, Bali, Mbatu, Mundakwe, Choumba, Pinyin, and Meta, etc. I decided to follow four of these groups, from which I obtained my participants. All of these groups have monthly meetings and I had to attend some of their meetings. In these meetings, I had to introduce myself, and explain the nature of my research, as well as create connections with the group members. It was through such meetings and occasional social events, like soccer tournaments,etc, that I was able to locate my initial group of informants. Bearing in mind that the phenomenon under investigation was not the best of topics for people to talk about, I then decided to settle for snowball sampling. The initial group of informants I obtained had to refer

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me to other individuals that have been affected by the life crisis of death here in Cape Town.

In the selection of participants for this study, therefore, I had to rely on individuals who are versed with the culture and traditions pertaining to how the dead are handled back home, and also on the actual event of death both past and present here in Cape Town. Such participants ought to have been domiciled in Cape Town for at least 2 years and above. The study accommodates both sexes, with their ages ranging from twenty-five (25) to fifty-five (55) years of age. In total, sixteen (16) interviews were conducted divided as follows. From the Mankon ethnic group (n=5) people, (n=1) of whom is female; from the Cameroon Association, (n=1); from the Mundakwe ethnic group, (n=3) people; from the Pinyin group, (n=4) people; and lastly, from the Bafut ethnic group (n=2). One service provider was also interviewed, (n=1) was an undertaker. These participants were both skilled and unskilled. Below is a hypothetical table that shows the demographic layout of the participants.

Table 3.1: Showing the demographic layout of participants.

Participant	Ethnic group	Age	Place domiciled	Occupation	Gender	#yrs in SA.
Mambo	MANKON	38	MAITLAND	Hair stylist	F	8
Nde	MANKON	55	GOOWOOD	Electrician	M	20
Ndoh	MANKON	45	PAROW	Nurse	M	9
Anye	MANKON	37	MAITLAND	Mechanic	M	10
Nsoh	MANKON	25	BELLVILLE	General W.	M	4
CASWECA, president	CAMEROON ASSOCIATION	48	BELLVILLE	Business M.	M	20
Awah	PINYIN	40	PAROW	Student	M	6
Teneng	PINYIN	32	GOODWOOD	Diver	M	3
Muluh	PINYIN	47	BELLVILLE	General W.	M	9
Tasi	PINYIN	50	PAROW	Lecturer	M	15
Sti	MUNDAKWE	42	VASCO	Business M.	M	8
Ndeh	MUNDAKWE	33	MAITLAND	Nurse	M	12
Cho	MUNDAKWE	29	MAITLAND	General W.	M	7
Neba	BAFUT	30	BELLVILLE	Business M.	M	4
Ambe	BAFUT	36	PAROW	Driver	M	13
Smith	N/A	53	PAROW	Undertaker	M	+SA

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3.4.A brief history of the study area

The city of Cape Town had a population of 3.7 million people in 2011 (Stats. SA. 2011). Cape Town as early as 2006 has been governed by the Democratic Alliance (DA) and its leaders have always portrayed the city as pro-poor and market-friendly. As early as 1652 this city was home to the Khoisan people before a Dutch East Indian company established a temporary refreshment station for its shipping vessels trading in the Far East. Something that was thought of as "temporal" soon became "permanent", as this company soon claimed the Cape amidst other colonial rivals. As a way of consolidating their grip of the Cape, they strengthened their hold by fortifying themselves against an ever-resistant Khoisan people. These Dutch colonialists soon embarked on the importation of slaves from West Africa, and other areas to provide cheap labor in the Cape (Wilkinson, 2000: 195). The Dutch took a very short time frame to seize land from the indigenous Khoi people forcing them to either run away or stay and become servants. Since they had been roped off their grazing land, livestock, and access to water, and with the importation of cheap labor from other African countries, the resultant effect was the birth of the "colored" population (Western, 2000). This author notes that the Dutch–Cape colony was a "brutal-death dealing" for the Khoi people who were at the brink of extinction.

Great Britain seized the Cape from the Dutch during the Napoleonic Wars of the 1800s, and with the discovery of gold and diamond in the latter part of the 1800s this new British colony witnessed tremendous growth. Wilkinson (2000), and Western (2000), as well as Miraftab(2012), are of the opinion that with the gradual rise of a British merchant mining and professional class, coupled with the establishment of a class of Dutch and German farmers and retailers, as well as the subsequent immigration of a British working-class some form of a racialized governance regime dominated by imperial capital and associated with imperial visionaries like Cecil John Rhodes was established. Wilkinson (2000) opines that by 1865, the population of Cape Town had reached 28400, of whom 15100 were officially classified as "Whites", 12400 as "the other", and the remainder as "*Hottentots*" or "*Kaffirs*". The first half of the 1900s came with the creation of the Union of South Africa and Cape Town named as the capital of the republic. This happened in the Act of the Union in 1910, linking the former Boer republics in the Transvaal and Orange Free State with the British colonies in the Cape and Natal

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(Wilkinson, 2000:196). By 1920 some form of repressive urbanization based on passed laws were adopted for African migrants. Referred to as the 'Mother City' on the southern tip of the African continent, the city has been of extreme importance to both internal and international trade routes. Cape Town had a much larger "colored" population. With the implementation of the "Coloured Labour Preference policy", these "Coloureds" enjoyed some form of protection and so their market position vis-à-vis African blacks were better in some respects, even though they were still marginalized and brutally oppressed on the farms.

With the dawn of 1994 and with the eradication of the apartheid system of government Cape Town has experienced some substantial post-apartheid in-migration of Africans not only from Eastern Cape but also from other African countries. The Human Development Index (HDI) rates Cape Town higher than all other provinces with 0.68, largely due to its higher formal-sector employment rate, but due to rural-urban migration, this figure is gradually changing. In 1994, while most South African provinces voted the African National Congress (ANC), the Western Cape Province, elected the old National party as its governing party and in the late 2000s, the Democratic Alliance (DA) became the dominant party in Cape Town which then won the province as a whole. Cape Town then must be considered as different from the rest of South Africa. More so, Cape Town has attracted much scholarly and political attention in the last few years. Parnell and Pieterse (1999) observed that Cape Towns' "flawed beauty" is marked by extreme enduring and concentrated poverty. Samara (2011) shows that institutional exclusion and gang-related violence in Cape Towns' working-class townships such as Delft, Mannenberg and Mitchells Plain (where many foreign migrants now reside) are common but deeply destabilizing phenomena. Such residential areas have constant uncertainty and anxiety about criminality and this extends to foreign migrant communities who also have shops in these areas. Samara (2011) points out that statically black South Africans, especially in townships rather than white South Africans in very affluent neighborhoods are more likely to be victims of crime, while Mc Donald (2008) has written about the global ambitions of the ruling elite of Cape Town as a "world-class city", calling it a "syndrome". Besteman (2008) explored the feelings and experiences of local residents. He outlines racial fear, mistrust, and resentment as aspects that have accompanied the decimal promise to uplift all races with the abolition of apartheid.This has brought about the rise of gated suburbs in Cape Town and its surroundings further fragmenting

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the city into different societies (LemanskiandOldfield,2009; Miraftab, 2012). The problems associated with the historical and recent de-Africanisation of Cape Town have also been well articulated by McDonald (2008). This author argues that the increases in internal migration over a period of ten (10) years have greatly altered the demographics or the major parts of the city. More so, DA leaders have labeled the Xhosa speaking Africans who migrate into the Western Cape as "refugees", (Mail and Guardian, 2012). Most Scholars agree that Cape Town is spatially divided with poor areas mainly the Cape Flats being underdeveloped and the key centers of economic power and growth remaining in the former white areas (Turok, 2000; Samara, 2011). Other scholars blame urban neoliberalism for the failures of Cape Town but some (Western, 2012; Parnell andPieterse, 2010), find that the attribution of Cape Towns' social problems to neoliberalism is not a useful conceptual framework.

This research was carried out in Cape Town (particularly, in the northern suburbs of Maitland, Goodwood, Parow, and Bellville). This is because the northern suburb serves as a popular settlement zone for a very large number of Cameroonian immigrants, who are central to this study. The major reason why most of them choose to stay in these areas is because it is safe compared to the townships, flawed with rampant crime. These areas are also easily accessible to the central business district (CBD), and to their job sites.

3.5.Data analysis

This research utilizes a tool of qualitative research commonly termed as thematic analysis. Thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke (2006: 79) can be used in the identification of patterns as well as analysing qualitative data. It is worth mentioning that, an application of thematic analysis can generate rich qualitative data that answers the research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 97). Interviews were conducted in English and Pidgin English. The pidgin transcriptions are provided as-is and where necessary, the English translations of the quotes are also provided.

The data from this study wereanalysed carefully through a critical synthesis for trends, themes, and patterns. This means that in the organization of my data, I had to read through my transcripts so as to be familiar with the data collected. By so doing, the room was given for the

identification of patterns and themes, and or shared beliefs that would go a long way to unpack the interviews. In other to organize my data, since it was mainly qualitative, I had to re-read my transcripts, so as to familiarise myself with the data. Then, I had to identify themes that would emerge that would help facilitate the interviews and discussions that would follow (Creswell, 1994: 155). Relevant quotes will also be utilized where need be to further explain the emotions and views of participants (Barbie, 2013).

3.6. Delimitation of study

It is not always easy to conduct research on vulnerable groups within society. Certain authors have identified and made obvious some reasons as to why this is so. Authors such as Bose (2012), cite the lack of accurate data on immigrants within South Africa, as well as the difficult nature in locating these migrants. The absence then of concrete data about immigrants stating their countries of origin, gender, sex, etc makes it very difficult for one to meaningful insights about them and their overall wellbeing. Sanchez-Ayala (2012: 117), observed that "a key aspect when undertaking research with human subjects is that, it can be very stressful and challenging especially when it has to do with conducting interviews with minority migrant individuals". This can be attributed to the fact that these immigrants are always busy and it becomes difficult to locate them. Due to the work schedule of some of my participants, I had to visit, make and re-make appointments a number of times before finally being able to conduct the interviews. This exercise was time-consuming and very exhausting. It also had a negative impact on my finances, as I was already struggling with paying rents, school fees, as well as feeding myself and family. More so, some writers have acknowledged the fact that it is practically impossible to obtain reliable statistics on migrants here in South Africa as most of them are undocumented, making it difficult to actually know the total number of migrants, their demographic composition, their gender, and countries of origin (McDonald, Lephophotho, & Golden, 1999; Bose, 2012).

3.7. Ethical consideration

It is the duty of every researcher to ensure that the rights of those participating in research are well taken care of. That is why every effort was made in this study to ensure anonymity, integrity, and confidentiality for the participants involved. Again, a clearance certificate was

obtained from the University of the Western Cape Ethics Committee authorizing the researcher to venture into the field and carry out the research. Here contained is the certificate number (HS19/1/16).

Patton (2002) provided a checklist of general ethical issues to be followed; assessment of risk, confidentiality, informed consent form, reciprocity, and data access and ownership. A general trend in qualitative research is the contact of human subjects within a field, Silverman (2013). This, therefore, means that interviews were conducted subject to the participant's agreement and willingness to be part of the study. Anonymity was of prime importance. The names of the participants would not be mentioned in this study. Instead, pseudonyms would be allocated to identify participants. This is a vital way of ensuring anonymity (Wiles *et al*., 2012). Participants in this study were obliged to fill, and sign an informed consent form and were equally advised to feel free to withdraw at any time if they so wish.

Full and concise information with regards to this research was made known to the participants, particularly the nature and purpose of the research. Participants were also provided with details of the research questions and provided with informed consent forms that allowed them to participate or not in the research. Participants had the right to drop out of the research at any time as well as reject the use of tape recorders and cameras. Since this research was a very sensitive one that deals with death and bereavement, the researcher was also aware of the fact that this research can re-traumatize the participants. In that regard, pre-arranged counselling for the participants with a qualified grief counsellor was organized by the researcher should any of the participants need one (luckily for me, none of them needed one, as they all acknowledge talking about their dead as some form of healing to them). Participants in this research would be provided with feedback on the findings prior to the publication of the research. All notes and recordings were kept safe throughout the research. Information provided by participants was confidentially treated and were only used for the purposes of this study.

This chapter discussed and outlined the methodology of the study. A qualitative approach was presented and outlined. Finally, the ethical considerations were outlined. The next chapters, four and five discuss the findings of this research. Chapter four focuses on the agency of tribal associations on the life of migrants in Cape Town. Particular emphasis is placed on the Mankon

Cultural Development Association (MACUDA), not only because the researcher hails from this ethnic group, but because amongst all the ethnic groups of the grass field (North West region) of Cameroon represented here in Cape Town only MACUDA has successfully galvanized its people from (Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Cape Town), to gather together under one umbrella as MACUDA South Africa. Ongoing negotiations are being made to reach out to other parts of South Africa to gather all the sons and daughters of the Mankon descent as one.

CHAPTER 4
THE 'AGENCY OF MACUDA' AS AN ETHNIC ASSOCIATION IN CAPE TOWN

The forming of 'communities' by migrants has altered the focus thereof of documenting not only their movement, settlement, and integration but also ways of exploring and providing an adept account on migrant notions of cultural identity, belonging, as well as their 'unending marriage' to their place of origin (Chamberlain, 1998: 7; Cohen, 1998: 21; Foner, 2000: 183-6). Immigrant groups have of recent therefore been conceptualized or categorized in communities of co-ethnic groupings with the unit of measurement being their commonplace of origin.

This chapter in my research is to acknowledge the fact that ethnic associations have a very important part to play in the lives of Cameroonian migrants here in Cape Town. Other than being an avenue through which Cameroonians showcase their culture, identity, and express their sense of belonging, ethnic associations serve as a reference point for the acquisition of cultural capital. It is practically impossible to study all the ethnic associations that exist here in Cape Town that is why I decided to focus on one of such associations to somehow establish how they enable social cohesion among its members in the host country. Particular emphasis is placed on the notion of 'place'. According to Mercer, Page and Evans, (2008:6), when migrants talk of 'place', they discuss it as something that is fluid and not necessarily bounded. The 'place' where the Mankon people hold their monthly meetings is so 'sacred' to them, and they refer to it as 'Nda-ah mankon' (the house of the Mankon people). Scholars such as Eyoh (1999), have opined that the concept of 'place' for the migrant is so important that it extends right up to the way the migrant carry's out development projects, and where they so wish to be buried or interred at death. As earlier mentioned in chapter one, Cameroonians, unlike their Zimbabwean counterparts, do not engage in insurance schemes that will take care of their dead bodies when they 'kick the bucket' or die (see Mbiba 2010). For these Cameroonians therefore, belonging to one or several of these associations be it ethnic/cultural or social is very important as expressed by Nde:

> "We don cam for this country weh, man no get mami or papa. Some of we serf no get correct documents weh make say we fit stay for this country. The best tin man fit do na for join this our ethnic groups them, especially the one from where we originate. Socialization for this ethnic/cultural group na key because na we own

insurance scheme that weh we get for this country so that when problem cam, man no go stand ye one."(Interview with Nde on the 05/04/2019).

In this country where we have found ourselves, we do not have a father or mother. Some of us do not even have correct documentation (legal papers) to stay in this country. Our best option is to join our ethnic/cultural associations as they are our own insurance schemes, to help us from the inevitable aspects of life. This is very important so that when a problem comes you would not be left alone to handle it.

The above excerpt from an interview with Nde, who acknowledges that most or some Cameroonians are undocumented and that belonging in an ethnic/cultural association is of prime importance and is regarded as the migrants own insurance scheme, thereby according to these ethnic/cultural associations some form of parental roles in the life of the migrants.

Belonging to a cultural association helps these migrants not to forget their culture hence the popular adage 'a person without culture is like a tree without roots'. Migrants, therefore, strive as much as they can to replicate in the best way possible aspects of their culture within the confines of their host countries. When asked if migration has actually affected African traditional ways of dealing with death, Ambe had this to say:

"Once people migrate to different countries, their tradition or traditional beliefs can never be one hundred (100) percent the same again,a lot of compromises have to be made. To me, migration requires a little bit of giving up something and at the same time borrowing other aspects. Using South Africa as a reference point, he maintains that foreigners cannot just come into this country and impose their tradition on South Africans. There is an element of give and take somewhere along the line because our cultures are not the same. We do not expect to find the norms that govern circumstances back home to be the same here. For me, therefore, tradition is not stagnant but transforms with time and space. The best we can do is take what we consider good, and leave behind the bad habits" (Interview with Ambe 10/05/2019).

Ambe's take therefore on the acculturating strategy adopted by migrants is one of cultural marginalization. This acculturating strategy as developed byPadilla and Perez (2003) and Beirens and Fontaine (2010) depicts a situation where migrants lose their home culture (are not given room to practice their culture), and at the same time ignore (are not integrated to) the host culture.

4.1.Profiling MACUDA Cape Town

Table 4.1. Showing the profile of MACUDA

Type of Association	Home Based/Domestic
Characteristic	Domestic and transnational
Formed in	2009
Location	Maitland
Legal Status	Registered (NPO)
Membership	40
Objectives	Provide welfare and economic assistance to members, gather all sons and daughters of the Mankon descent and promote the culture and identity of the Mankon people.

MACUDA as an ethnic/cultural association was formed on the 6th of June 2009 by a few sons and daughters of the Mankon descent. The formation of this association resonates with the observation made by Feldman-Savelsberg and Ndango (2010:374) that a series of primordial, strategic, performative and reactive identities are some of the factors that make people belong in an ethnic association. This view was supported by Nyamnjoh (2011), who held that because minority migrant groups are left behind with little or no room given them for integration into host countries, the only way left for this migrants to uphold the culture and identity of their homes/village is by forming and belonging to such ethnic/cultural associations. Due to their small numbers, their meeting session was held every after two weeks and was only pushed to once every month on the 12[th]of June 2012, with the amendment of their constitution. Membership in this group is strictly for the Mankon people, wives and husbands of Mankon people (if they are non-natives). On a whole, since Mankon is the brain of the Mezam Division of the North West Region of Cameroon, the association is somehow liberal to admit persons who hail from that division, but after careful investigation of the applicant's background. This is

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because all non-sons and daughters of Mankon can only gain entry into the association through an application process. The association justcelebrated its 10th anniversary on the 15th of June 2019. The aims and objectives of the association are as follows; to provide welfare and economic assistance to its members; to gather all the sons and daughters of the Mankon descent; to promote their culture and identity in the host nation.

4.2.The Constitution

Just like a country whose constitution is the brain behind the governance of its people, MACUDA, as an ethnic/cultural association is no exception. The constitution of MACUDA was enacted to provide checks and balances within the association, and also to enhance social cohesion as well as instill a spirit of responsibility towards the actions of its members. Members who fail to conform to the rules and regulations of the association are punished in one of two ways; suspended for a period of six (6) months, and or dismissed for a period of one (1) year. The decision to suspend or dismiss a member is first handled in the executive body, chaired by the president of the association. During the joined seating of the meeting, he then informs the general assembly. This is because the general assembly has the power to accept or reject such decisions. A member who is expelled is given a chance to return back to the association when their suspension or expulsion period is over. MACUDA believes *'when a father beats his son/ daughter with the right hand, he uses his left hand to bring them back to the house'*. It is believed when such members return to the association, they would have learned their lesson and if they really want to belong they would cherish and uphold the rules and regulations governing their membership. Since its inception, MACUDAs' constitution has been amended twice due to its growth in membership and the occurrence of some unforeseen events. Particular emphasis is paid to happy moments like born house (when a child is born), graduations, marriage, and even more importance attached to the occurrences of the deaths of members, their mothers, fathers, children, and siblings. The contribution that each member makesvaries with each occasion. As mentioned earlier in Chapter one (1), MACUDA is the only ethnic group in South Africa, that has united its sons and daughters together into one body. That is why we now have MACUDA South Africa. Each branch still manages its own local affairs with the umbrella group only coming in times of death and developmental projects. In addition, there is a convention that is

rotatory and is to be hosted by each group after two (2) years. The aim of this convention is to create some sense of networking among members so they can liaise and see how they can better the lives of each other. The creation of this umbrella group makes contributions towards developmental projects, and repatriation of the dead back home less cumbersome for members.

4.3. Language

Evans (2010) argues that proverbs and their usage are a critical way for people to showcase their culture, and also to express the vital nature or way of transmitting a message. Proverbs are usually used when members bring shame on to the name of the group and are mostly expressed in the Mankon dialect. Members with unruly behavior are usually referred to as a conflict resolution committee (CRC) which enforces disciplinary sanctions on such members. The majority of the meeting sessions are most of the time done in 'pidgin English' (broken English). If the aim of this organization then is to promote their culture and identity, it, therefore, brings to mind to question this aspect of their language use. Why do they not discuss in their local dialect, so that their children and those that come after them can also learn and be able to articulate themselves in their lingua franca?

4.4. Attitude towards members and newcomers

Being a minority group within the host nation, the primary objective of MACUDA as an ethnic/cultural association is to gather all the sons/daughters of the Mankon decent together so as to promote their culture and identity as enshrined in their constitution. This constitution also, beckons on MACUDA, to support and carry out development projects back home. The big question then is, how do we carry out development projects back home when our members themselves have not been empowered? Charity they say begins at home. This is the reason why some of the money that had hitherto been earmarked for development projects back home were stopped and channeled in the form of loans to members to assist them in their various endeavors. Particular emphasis was also placed to assist in the integration of newcomers.

> "When a new Mankon pikin cam for Cape Town here and finally locate ye fellow
> brothers/sisters, them, weti weh we di do na say when ei cam introduce
> him/herself for meeting during meeting session. We di ask ye some small small

question them. Dis question them na for get a small knowledge of wetiei fit do. Some them di cam wey all them need for do na for go school. Usually such ones them no di generally get much trouble because their accommodation/ feeding be taken care by their papa. But this nobi the general trend. Take yourself for example (referring to me), when you be came here for late 2011 with almost nothing, we be introducing you for pitching (an economic activity which basically is hawking) and a R500 to start do pitching. That na we own small kind way for assist newcomers them" (interview with Nde, Cape Town 05/04/2019).

When a new Mankon child arrives in Cape Town and finally locates his brothers/sisters, he/she is given the room to introduce themselves to the meeting during their meeting session. During such introductions, they are asked some very pertinent questions so as to get some knowledge on what they can do. Some of them came solely to study. Usually, such children generally do not face a lot of trouble because their fees, accommodation, and feeding is being taken care of by their parents. But this is not the general trend. Take yourself for example (referring to me), when you arrived here in late 2011 with almost nothing, we had to introduce you to pitching (an economic activity, which basically is hawking) and a R500 to start. That is just our own small way of helping newcomers.

The above extract from an interview with Nde shows the way in which MACUDA as an ethnic/cultural association is willing to assist newcomers. Nde maintains that for MACUDA to be able to assist, the newcomer must first demonstrate the willingness and need to belong. He uses the researcher (me) as an example to demonstrate the associations' readiness to assist the members. Pitching is some form of informal trading that the researcher was introduced to, so I could raise money and take care of myself. Luckily for me, I was able to discipline myself and carry on with the activity. I am proud to say through it I have been able to pay my fees, send remittances back home and take care of my family.

MACUDA through collective action and in a bid to promote the spirit of oneness and Cameroonian-ness provides loans for newcomers to start up a small business. Small interest is charged for these loans just as a means to push the members to be responsible. In the events where these recipients get into trouble with the law, they are bailed out by the association and

charged to pay back the money used to bail them within a specified period of time. This association also in a bid to empower its members do run some kind of credit scheme "njangi" that assist its members with their various businesses. It provides members with funds that would not otherwise be possible to obtain through the banks if they had to hope on their temporary resident permits (with most of them being asylum seekers). This "njangi" provides financial stability and a means to accumulate wealth, as well as offer these Cameroonians greater social mobility (Nyamnjoh 2013). In the unfortunate demise of one of the constituting members of the "njangi," all the other members are required to contribute to the amount he/she invested before their death. The money realised is sent back home to their kinsmen.

4.5. Relations with other ethnic/cultural associations

MACUDA, as an ethnic/cultural association, does not operate in a vacuum. They have a host of other cultural associations with whom they have built solid relations over the years. These associations come together to help each other out during very trying moments and also assist each other in carrying out developmental projects back home/ or empowering each other in the host countries. For this Mankon people, it does not suffice to just be a member of MACUDA. There is even more pressing need to spread their wings to fellow Cameroonian groups so as to interact within that community of people thereby promoting national unity. Migrants even though away from their countries of origin always want to demonstrate a sense of unity/ community semblance (see, Thompson, 2009; Mercer, et. al 2008; Evans, 2010). There is, therefore, a common ideology, viz; that of newly formed ethnic/cultural associations to organize an opening of the uniform occasion in which the send out invitation letters to older associations. This is a sign of respect and an avenue for them to be officially accepted as an ethnic association here in Cape Town. These associations do invite each other for some grand occasions. For instance, MACUDA just celebrated its tenth (10th) anniversary on the fifteenth (15th) of June (2019-06-15). It was therefore mandatory for them to send out invitations to all those other fellow associations especially those that it had equally supported in the past. The manner in which these associations have been able to so easily reach out to and support each other can be attributed to the availability of information technologies (ICTs). ICTs have helped a lot to link up these groups as well as the ways in which they commune with each other. ICTs, therefore, have

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created sites for easy social interactions, which in turn have made group mobilization and affiliation simple (Thompson, 2009: 360). MACUDA has a forum called MANKON Forum (MF), through which it re-connects with other associations and groups from different diasporas. The driving force behind the creation of this forum is to educate the MANKON people in the diaspora on the need to carry out development projects back home, and as well as the importance of returning home even in death. MACUDA also has a phone that is meant only for the associations' activities. It is through this phone that all its members are contacted should need be outside the normal monthly meetings. This phone is kept by the chief whip and he is responsible for sending out SMSs from time to time.

Moreover, ethnic/cultural associations have through the years adopted some degree of virtual networks through which communication/networking amongst group members and also other associations have been made simple. The creation of virtual forums by migrant associations not only enables them to participate within multiple social spacesbut also aids these minority groups to showcase their transnational, as well as transcultural identities/bonding therebyre-iterating the importance of the old forms of ethnicity (Popkin, 1999). The birth then of the MANKON Forum, (which is not only limited to the Mankon people, as other ethnic associations also have their respective forums) as an online discussion space illuminates the desire of a people to continuously want to share a common identity, custom, and traditions. By so doing, this group of people can be regarded as forming some sort of a collective in their initiatives that brings about new social movements. These collective initiatives are largely self-reflexive and are a reflection of the collective action of the group members, for the outcome then is the creation of a collective agency (Melucci, 1989).

4.6.Conclusion

Ethnic/cultural association (such as MACUDA) as discussed in this chapter provides the ladder which migrants (Cameroonians) use to lean and galvanize support between the host country (South Africa) and their home. These cultural groupings in addition to promoting social cohesion amongst members, according to Nyamnjoh (2000) could be visualized as agents in themselves whose structures create new social relations based on status, power, and inequality. The relationship which exists between the agent (actor) and structure provides the basis for the

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creation of an agency space, regarded as the "the freedom possessed by actors in their interactions set by the structure" (Van Binsbergen, 2007: 17). Actors then as opined by Karp (1986: 137), will be those *"persons labelled as involved in all social actions" and agents "are seen as those charged with the exercise of power and the bringing about effects of actions that are constitutive".* If we then can understand the dynamics of kinship/fictive kin affiliations, as well as cultural associations in the lives of these immigrants (Ngemba people), then we would be able to understand how this migrant group (Cameroonians) cope with circumstances that be-fall them within this transnational space.

The next chapter, Chapter Five 95) continues to discuss the findings. Aspects such as people's perceptions and lived experiences in relation to death and how it was managed are explored.

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CHAPTER 5

THE EXPERIENCE, PERCEPTIONS, AND MANAGEMENT OF DEATH X-RAYED

This chapter is a continuation of the presentation of the findings in this study. Here I look at the perceptions and experiences of the Ngemba people of the North West Region of Cameroon viz-a-viz death, funerals, and burial practices both within South Africa as well as back home. Here, the causes of death among Cameroonians are also examined.

5.1.Examples of Cameroonian deaths and how they were managed in Cape Town

In this section, I explore and present some of the death cases that have occurred here in Cape Town. Quite a good number of Cameroonians have died here in Cape Town in very tragic circumstances. Some of the deaths discussed here happened during the course of this research, while information on others was obtained through interviews. I present some of the circumstances that led to these death cases, as well as how they were eventually handled/managed.

> You and I have traveled from 'there' (Cameroon) to come to settle 'here' (Cape Town). Trust me even if we stay here for even 40years, a time will eventually come when we would say we must return to our roots (home) even if it means doing so in a 'casket'. For it is not only disgraceful but also shameful for a grass fielder (Cameroonian) to be buried outside the home soil (interview with Tasi on 10/05/2019).

The above quote captures the very essence of this chapter, which illuminates the importance of interment of the dead on home soil stressing where he belongs as well as portraying a change in his/her identity (Davies, 1997; Miller, 2008).

One of the participants in this study by name Muluh provides a brief story about his childhood friend who unfortunately died here in Cape Town. I still cannot believe he is gone. He laments:

> Ray came to South Africa sometime in 2002, and six years later I followed him.
> He first settled in Johannesburg, but things were not moving for him, so he

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decided to join a friend here in Cape Town. While in Cape Town he was introduced to pitching. He carried out this economic activity to make ends meet until an unfortunate incident befell him which landed him in jail. Upon his release, and as broke as he was, he made one bad decision to another until he finally settled for the drug business. I am not proud to say this, but within a very short period of time, he made so much money that he bought a piece of land, built a house, and was equally making plans to visit home. Before his untimely death in a fatal car accident, he was married twice. The first marriage with a South African yielded two kids but ended in a divorce. The second marriage still with a South African produced another child. His body was eventually repatriated and buried at his house in Cameroon. (Interview with Muluh 19/04/2019).

At the cry die of Ray, group members of the ethnic association of which he was a part would gather together every night for about a week or so to sympathize with the dead until the corpse was ready to be repatriated. Group members were all charged a sum of R250, and the Cameroon Association of the Western Cape (CASWECA) charged each Cameroonian a sum of R100. For the duration of the cry die, the ethnic group which he belonged (PIFAM) provided food and drinks for the mourners. On the day of the final wake keep a traditional dance was organized called the 'mbahgahlum dance' and was supported by other ethnic associations like MACUDA to showcase the tradition of where the deceased hails. His dead body was prayed for by a man of God, who in his prayers called on the almighty to forgive the sins of the dead and have mercy on his soul so he can enjoy eternal rest. Before his death, Ray was an active member of a weekly njangi. His shares prior to his death, as well as properties, were sold and distributed amongst his children and family back home. His body was finally repatriated to Cameroon, accompanied by his wife and children.

On a similar note, Awah recounts the sad passing away of three of his friends in a ghastly motor accident.

It was on a very peaceful Saturday night. We had all come back from pitching and decided to go to Cape Town later to have some fun. 'They say all work and no play makes Jake a dull boy'. Little did I know that that evening would be the last

time I would ever set my eyes on my friends, for the four of us went out but only I alone returned? I am still baffled as to how I survived that crash. If only you saw the car I came out of (shaking his head). My brother, my God was with me that night. Tears dripping down his eyes… (Interview with Awah 25/04/2019).

Just like what happened with the case of Ray, a weeklong cry die was organized, during which time members were charged to contribute the sum of R800 each. It so happened that all the three dead were members of the same ethnic group (PIFAM). As is the tradition of Cameroonians in the Western Cape, each Cameroonian was to contribute R100 towards this venture. This was not to be the case because of infighting within CASWECA, and therefore no figurehead to co-ordinate the contributions. The reason why PIFAM (the bereaved ethnic association) undertook the challenge to bury its dead. Something they deed in 'grand' style with the help of other sister ethnic associations in Cape Town and in Johannesburg.

The rhythm of the mbahgahlum dance that was played at the cry die was mixed with cries and jokes as members of the ethnic group, as well as friends and well-wishers danced and cursed death for its cruelty and for snatching life away from such industrious young men. The actions of the mourners seem to concur with the observations of Rattary (1954 cited in Norbeck 1961: 1268), as 'the anti-thesis of funeral rites'. These authors hold that the replications of the gestures of the dead as well as the cracking of jokes during funerals are a way for those bereaved to overcome the very essence of their loss. It, therefore, can be seen as their own way of fighting death, as well as providing a remedy through the imposition of rituals (Wilson 1954), and a belief in a life of dancing and feasting (Norbeck, 1963).

On the day the dead bodies were to depart for Cameroon, something cynical happened. The corpses were laid in state for everyone who cared to view before their grand departure 'home'. All previous arrangements with the South African Airways (SAA) and the Ethiopian Air Ways were in some kind of a rupture. These two airways had been hitherto book to carry the corpses. The former from Cape Town to Johannesburg and the latter from Johannesburg to Cameroon. The reasons advanced by these flight companies for canceling the flights made little or no sense and it finally dawned on the ethnic group that the spirit of the dead was still rooming around in Cape Town and needed some form of appeasement. This ritual of appeasement was down by the

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eldest member of that ethnic group in the form of 'talking to the corpse'

> He stretched out his hands onto the caskets, "my pikin them, wona brothers and sisters, don gather for here for show wona their last respect. We know say wona love we, but we want make wona understand say we love wona more. For days now since wona die we no fit do anything, chop sef di pass we for chop. We di get sleepless nights, wona papa/mami/sisters/brothers/ them back home di wait anxiously for receive wona die body. Why wona di deny for go? Why wona don decide for plant all this obstacles them for we front? Wona want make we die follow wona? Surely nobi weti wona wish for we. If wona know say wona truly love we, I beg say all the obstacles them wey ei dey for we front make wona scatter am in Jesus name, so we fit send wona die body back home.

The above utterance ritual translates as follows:

> My children, your brothers, and sisters have gathered here today to accord you you're their last respects. We know you loved us, but we want you to understand that we loved you more. For days since you died, we cannot do anything, even to eat we cannot. Sleepless nights are what we have. Your fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters back home are anxiously waiting to receive your dead bodies. Why do you not want to go? Why have you placed all these obstacles in front of us? Do you want us to die as well? I am sure this is not what you wish for us. If you truly love us as you claim, I beg of you, please remove and scatter all the obstacles in front of us in Jesus name, Amen. This will enable us to send your dead bodies back home.

To the amazement and relief of everyone minutes after the proclamation of the 'utterance ritual,' SAA phoned to declare that the corpses would be transported to Johannesburg, while Ethiopian Air Ways also confirmed that it would transport two corpses and the other one the following day. We all assumed then that as the elder spoke to the corpses they understood and felt obliged to respect and obey him. The next thing the elder did was then to make an appeal to the mourners themselves. He asked them to own up if they are owed by or they owe the deceased. This ritual is

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very important because it is bad luck to lie against the dead. Davies (1997) bluntly puts this ritual into perspective "words spoken in the presence of a corpse carry symbolic weight, and can have far-reaching implications if tainted with lies". On this very occasion, yes, a number of individuals did own up that the deceased owed them, but they waved it away. One or two people also owned up that they owed some money to one of the deceased, and promised to pay back the money to the deceased's family through the supervision of the ethnic association. The corpses were eventually repatriated back home where the bulk of the rituals were then performed and the burials effected.

According to Lee (2012) in Death in Slow Motion: Funeral Ritual Practice and Road Dangers in South Africa, the utterance ritual or talking to the dead is a Xhosa speaking ritual that attempts to provide leverage against the harmful force at work on South African roads by communicating with the deceased's spirit. This interview provided on the 02/11/2008 by Malixole Rhaxo in Lee (2012) makes this Xhosa ritual even clearer.

> "Malixole Rhaxo, at the age of 66 now retired and living in his home village of Maqasho in the Eastern Cape, reflected on the state of fatal car accidents over the years which had killed several close family members, including his brother, uncle, his cousin, and his wife (who was the most recent victim, of a hit and run in Khayelitsha township in Cape Town in 2006). He explained that his family consulted a sangoma specialist about these deaths, who informed them that the reason for the frequency of fatal automobile accidents had to do with the unsettled spirit of Rhaxo's grandfather. Rhaxo's grandfather was shot and killed by white soldiers alongside a river near the village Lambonco (probably in the 19th century at the tail end of the Xhosa frontier wars with the British). His body had not been recovered or buried. Apart from the inability to locate his bones, Rhaxo explained a further complicating factor was that his grandfather's split blood had fed into the river because if a dying person's blood gets into the moving water, he can never rest in peace: 'He is restless because there was no one who did anything about his death'. The sangoma instructed them to locate the place in which the grandfather was murdered, retrieve his spirit and return it back to the ancestral

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homestead, or else the lethal car accidents would continue. Although the exact rituals concerning this 'virtual' exhumation were not yet agreed, and would, in fact, be the subject of intense conflict and negotiation in the coming months, Rhaxo stated that basically what they needed to do was to 'talk to him and slaughter a goat'. When asked about the purpose of 'speaking to' his grandfather's spirit, he replied matter-of-factly, 'we will tell them so that they know what is going on".

Lee (2012), contends that the fatal accidents of the 21st century could be as a result of the unsettled spirits of the deads' that resulted in the 19th Century frontier wars which have had untold ramifications for South Africans in dealing with road accidents, violent deaths/shedding of blood, as well as memorizing their dead. The Xhosa ritual of talking to the dead is something 'common' to all Africans. That is why in the car crash that resulted in three deaths talking to the dead by the elder was a significant milestone. It not only dwelled on the importance of 'the resting place' but also of their bodily fluids so that they are not left behind to room around and eventually become a burden in the form of bad spirits to torment the living.

One of the most horrific deaths that have ever happened to a Cameroonian here in Cape Town was one that left Cameroonians, especially MACUDA,confused. In an interview with Nsoh, he recounts the tragic event. He starts by taking a deep breath, gazed at a particular direction, tears almost running down his cheeks. No one will ever know what happened to Peter, only him and his God.

> Peter came to South Africa some 10 years ago. A motor electrician by profession, he was doing pretty well for himself, but in the last few years before his death,those close to him could notice a change in his behavior. He would go to work and take to himself talking to no one. When friends attempted to ask him what was going on, he would just look at them and keep quiet or carry his tools home. He then started losing weight and making unending visits to the Lagoon beach. One faithful morning in winter last year, he called me and asked if I could take him to the hospital that he was not feeling well. I quickly came bringing along my wife. To our dismay, when we were almost close to the Somerset

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hospital in Cape Town Peter asked me to go back home that he was not feeling sick any more. I refused, but Peter insisted. Reluctantly, I turned the car around and as we were driving back home I could see that Peter was just playing mind games and so I decided to turn towards the day clinic in Brooklyn. When we finally arrived and realized that Peter had not had anything to eat that morning, I left him in the company of my wife to go buy some food. My wife then stepped forward to place Peter's card into a box as is the tradition here in day clinics. Seeing this as his only chance, Peter sneaked out of the facility and that was the last anyone ever heard of him. Upon return, my wife thought he had gone to the toilet as he left his jacket on the seat. The food also came in and I asked after him. But Peter was taking too long in the toilet as his name was called again and again. I rushed to the toilet, but he was not there. The security guard described a man in Peters' built leaving the clinic. This was confirmed by another friend who saw him leaving. We waited for his return to no avail. We rushed to his house to check, nothing. I became worried and started making calls to anyone close to him and narrating my story. I called the president of our ethnic group (MACUDA). It was at this point that we decided to go to the police and open a docket for a missing person.

Prior to this saga, Peter had come to my house and what he did was so terrifying. He had never told me of any brothers/sisters/uncles. But on this night, he took out his phone asked for a pen and piece of paper and carefully wrote down a series of numbers, pointing at a particular one saying 'na dis one go receive me for airport'. He also gave me the papers of his two cars and the keys (I was baffled, and asked when did you book a flight and why are you giving me all these numbers and keys to your cars). I hesitated to take them, but my wife cautioned me and asked me to accept them. The following morning, I went again to the police station to find out if there was any information. To my greatest dismay, a detective told me the body of a dead foreign man matching the description I gave was found in the Lagoon beach. I did not believe. They asked for his picture, and I had one on my phone. So quickly called the MACUDA president and some few friends and together we

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drove to the forensics at Salt River where we were able to indeed identify and confirm that the body was indeed that of Peter. The big question then is how did he find himself at the Lagoon beech? (Interview with Nsoh on the 30/04/2019).

The reason I decided to dwell on Nsohs' interview is that, from all indications the death of Peter was clearly a case of suicide. Suicide is considered in the grass field or by the Ngemba people as a 'bad die', for it is shameful and a symbol of ill omen for the family concerned.Mbiti(1991) visualizes the African as very religious people, which means that suicide is not a product of Africa; it is considered as a taboo. This is supported by Lee and Vaughan (2008), who considered death by suicide, as 'bad death' and required a series of rituals to be performed to appease the gods of the land, less the spirit of the dead becomes a 'thorn in the flesh of the living'.

Death by suicide within African cosmology is not something that should be taken for granted. If it were 'back home', then:

> The body of Peter would have been buried immediately next to where he was found by a specialized group of masquerades sent from the palace. Nobody would be allowed to mourn his death, and anyone who came to witness the burial would be required to wash their hands in the river where he died. This is a sign or way of saying as he is going where he chooses to go, he should not look back at the living for what he did was very bad and so he must spare the living from his bad luck. Also, there would be no such thing as a night vigil, no food or drinks prepared to feed mourners, for suicide is a taboo and any death resulting from it must not be celebrated in any way. But fortunately for Peter, we could not follow our tradition here because we are in a different space altogether. Since it was considered a 'bad die', we had to make sure we sent the corpse home as soon as possible for the necessary rituals to be performed on it. Luckily for MACUDA Cape Town, members were not overburdened to contribute as the umbrella group, MACUDA South Africa, was involved. Instead of R1250 to be contributed by each MACUDA Cape Town member, with the involvement of MACUDA South Africa, all members had to contribute a token of R100 to assist in repatriating the

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body. The only rituals we observed here was that MACUDA did not prepare food or drinks for people and also the utterance ritual (speaking to his dead body) was carried out by the president of MACUDA.Also worth mentioning is that most Cameroonians here in Cape Town refused to contribute their normal tariff of R100 after looking at the circumstances surrounding his death. After the repatriation of his corpse, his properties (the cars, and other stuff) were sold and the money channelled to his family back home. (Interview with Nde on the 19/04/2019).

5.2.Rituals of death back home

The Ngemba people back home have a series of traditions that they uphold when death occurs. Being a strong traditionalist and son to a kingmaker from the Mundakwe tribe, Sti outlines some of the rituals that are to be followed in varied circumstances as a way of dealing with death.He starts by saying that:

"our tradition will always remain our tradition. This is the way we were socialized and brought up by our forefathers. Death is not something we would want to wish for anybody, but human beings are not immortal, we must certainly die one day. According to our culture,the burial of the dead is often done in ancestral burial grounds, or in the deads compound. Occasionally, some people in their will before death do indicate that they will want to be buried in church cemeteries. In Cameroon, therefore, people who are buried in council cemeteries are corpses that are either unidentified or abandoned."

If a man is in a relationship with a woman, and they have children even if they had lived together for the longest possible time and the woman dies without the man paying her dowry, that man has to pay that dowry, before the woman is buried. Again, the children that came as a result of their relationship are not considered as the man's children but are regarded as tradition demands the sons/daughters of the woman's father. If the man fails to pay the dowry, the woman would be buried at her father's compound. A man who dies without fathering a child is buried with a stone in his hand. Sti also cited a ritual that is

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increasingly losing its credibility as the years go by. That of man who loses his wife and is expected to marry the sister of his deceased wife, and vice versa. This traditional practice is regarded as outdated and most young ladies would rather die than be forced to marry their dead sisters' husband. For us leaving outside the confines of the village (diaspora), this traditional practice is not even doable but is still regrettably practiced in some rural communities (interview with Sti 03/05/2019).

The above rituals of death as mentioned by this respondent, which were corroborated by all the other participants of this research project, are just but a few of the rituals that are to be affected during funerals and burials. All of the participants of this study cited two major reasons why these rituals cannot be effectively carried out here in South Africa in particular, and in the diaspora in general. The absence of 'elders' and the fact that they live in a different space that has its own ways or culture circumscribing death were cited. Elders are those people who are regarded as the custodians of tradition, they are the ones who pour libations and communicate with the ancestors to either pardon or protect the living. Now if we look at the age bracket of Cameroonians that are present here in Cape Town or any other city here in South Africa, we would realize that this fact is indeed true. This is so because people who immigrate to other countries or even from rural to urban areas are often the youths.

5.3. A disturbing ritual of death in South Africa

In an interview with Ambe who originates from the Bafut tribe in the North West Region of Cameroon, he laments. It is a very bad thing for any foreigner to die here in South Africa. When I probed into the reason behind this statement, Ambe then recounts his cousin's story:

My cousin died in an accident here in Cape Town, and an autopsy was carried out on his body. My brother, (he paused)… It was a really a sad situation, because the way his body was slaughtered, and body parts removed, left me wondering what kind of a society we are living in. This left me questioning if that is what it means to die here in South Africa. Another Cameroonian also died sometime, and the same thing was done to him. After his corpse was sent home, his brother who was

a lawyer was so angry that he came here in South Africa and opened a lawsuit. The case kept on being postponed indefinitely until he got angry and left (interview with Ambe 10/05/2019).

A similar situation was admitted by Nde:

When my wife died, an autopsy was carried out on her body. I did not sign for this he said. Her body was butchered like a cow. I was devastated. When I took the corpse home I did not allow for people to open the casket and see this for themselves, for it would have added to the pains and trouble I was already passing through. This is not part of our tradition (interview with Nde on 05/04/2019).

From the testimonies of the above participants, it is clear as illustrated by Pieterse, *et al*. (2009) that in South Africa dead bodies are subject to forensic checks in which autopsies are administered to the corpses to ascertain the cause of death. This issue of slaughtering and taking out of body parts from corpses is something all participants in this research attested to and regarded it as a blatant disregard for human dignity and human rights. People from West Africa, are not accustomed to this. How do we expect our dead to find peace, if we bury them without their body parts? Why do the authorities butcher our dead without our consent, yet they need our signatures to identify our dead? Those are the questions the participants in this research were raising. These people (South Africans) do not consider human life as sacred and also do not recognize the fact that even the dead still have rights.

A very important ritual that must be performed when someone dies among the Ngemba people of Cameroon is the laying of the corpse in the homestead of the deceased. This is to allow for mourners (friends and well-wishers), to come to view the corpse and pay their last respects. In this respect death, burials and funerals bring people together in a collective to come to mourn and provide support to the bereaved. It is through such processes of mourning the dead that social meanings are produced (De Boeck, 2008). At the night vigils, Christian songs, as well as traditional songs, are played the whole night and people eat/drink while praising the life lived by the deceased. All the participants in this study cited the absence of this fact. Nde had this to say:

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"…na we tradition say when person die, we must organize a night vigil and then take that person ye corpse for ye house, for na during such time way all the rituals due to ye di be performed, and fo make say friends and family members them see and relate with the person for the last time. During the night vigil, we di play drums, sing, dance, drink, eat, (mostly boiled corn, and groundnuts) and then some people depending on how close them be for the dead, in their own way fo grief go di mimic the die person ye gestures them. These actions them go make other people them to laugh. This na just to show how funny and lovable the dead were. But regrettably, this nobi the case fo South Africa. 'Space' no dey. We di stay in small rented rooms with other people, wey them no even commot fo the same place with we. We no dibe allowed to express our tradition the way we want (sing/dance), thoughtless of hitting the drums and laying the corpse in his/her room" (interview with Nde 05/04/2019).

The above quotation translates as follows:

It is part of our tradition to organize a night vigil when someone dies, for it is during such a time that his/her corpse is laid in state at his/home for everyone to view and relate with the dead for the last time. At this night vigils, most of the rituals accrued to the dead are performed, the drums are played, people sing and dance, as well as drink and eat (mostly boiled corn and groundnuts). Again, friends and relatives depending on how close they were to the dead will emulate the deceased's gestures as a way to demonstrate their loss. Their actions will make other mourners to laugh (a sign that shows how likable and funny the dead were). Unfortunately, to our regret, this is not the situation in South Africa. We do not have the 'space'. We live in small crowded and rented rooms with people who are not even from the same place as us. The country we live in does not allow us to express our tradition the way we would have wanted, 'sing and dance' (they call it noise), not to mention bringing the dead into his/her room.

The actions of the mourners as described by Nde aligns with the observations made byRattary (1954 cited in Norbeck, 1961: 1268), as 'the antithesis of funeral rites.' These authors hold that

the replications of the gestures of the dead as well as the cracking of jokes during funerals are a way for those bereaved to overcome the very essence of their loss. It, therefore, can be seen as their own way of fighting death, as well as providing a remedy through the imposition of rituals (Wilson, 1954), and a belief in a life of dancing and feasting (Norbeck, 1963).

5.4. How funds are raised to secure the repatriation of the dead

The most daunting experience for the participants in this research is the procurement of funds to affect the repatriation of thedead. As noted earlier in Chapter Four (4), Cameroon is a very diverse country that is host to about 250 ethnic groups. Most, if not all are represented here in Cape Town in particular and South Africa in general. These ethnic groups as confirmed by participants serve as their own insurance schemes, and so it is expected that every right-thinking Cameroonian should belong to at least one of such groups. But there are some who vehemently do not want to socialize with others or even identify with a particular group. This makes repatriation sometimes cumbersome as indicated by the president of CASWECA.

> Cameroonians are not used to the idea of joining burial societies, so our best bet is to at least align ourselves to a particular ethnic group from where we originate. This is so because in the event of one's death there would be little or no difficulty to send the body back home. People who do not belong to any ethnic enclave, and who do not contribute a token of R100 (which has become our tradition) when others die, put CASWECA in a very stressful position. Now to repatriate a corpse to Cameroon takes about R30.000-R40.000, and sometimes even up to R50.000, depending on the weight of the corpse. How do we raise this money? There are no support structures for us, no organizations to assist us with our dead. All we rely on are the ethnic associations and the R100 levy per Cameroonian. When a Cameroonian is confirmed dead, the news is immediately relayed to other Cameroonians through three mediums,viz; by text message (Sms) or Whattsapp group of CASWECA forum, by word of mouth, and finally through the respective forums of the various ethnic/cultural associations. Individuals can either contribute through their respective ethnic enclaves or individually to CASWECA books. People who choose to do none of the above, and eventually'kick the

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bucket' die, will still be repatriated but then a corpse that is supposed to take 1-2 weeks can end up taking 2-3 months as we struggle to raise the funds. Presently as we speak we have a corpse still lying in the morgue for almost twomonths now (interview with CASWECA president 08/05/2019).

From the above, the importance of social capital is expressed. Bourdieu (1985: 248-49)discusses social capital as the:

> *"aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintances or recognition. The profit that actors enjoy from being members in a group forms the platform on which this solidarity is generated."*

In the presentation of this concept, Bourdieu looks at the potential gains actors derive taking into account their very participation in groups and also in the build-up of their social networks to galvanize resources. The networks that individuals create during their lifetime is very important, especially those who are out of place. From the interviews carried out with participants, and the observations I made in one of two of the funerals 'cry dies' I attended, it was clear to me that individuals who belong to ethnic associations or even social groupings and participate in the overall activities of these associations have nothing to worry about when a misfortune befalls them, or even their own death.People will immediately rush to their aid when news goes out that this and that happened to this and this person. The reason is simple, that person must have been instrumental or there, when so and so happened to other people. Thus, the common adage 'scratch my back, I scratch your own' is indeed a reality here in Cape Town.

Take Peter for instance, before his death he was not just a member of MACUDA, but an active participant. His contributions to all social events of the group were on point. That is to say, he owed the meeting nothing and so with his death, the meeting was indebted to him. Luckily for Peter and the MACUDA family, they had spread out their social networks to include Pretoria and Johannesburg which made the contributions less of a burden to MACUDA Cape Town members. The body of Peter was sent home within the shortest period of time possible in line with the culture of the Mankon people. What if

Peter was that kind of a person who cared less about others and also taking into consideration the circumstances of his death by suicide? What would have happened to his corpse? (Interview CASWECA president 08/05/2019).

5.5.The role of the undertaker

In an interview with one undertaker, he cites a number of documents that must be made available before a corpse can be repatriated. These documents will include; Identification of the deceased citizenship;A relative here in South Africa will have to confirm the deceased identity (in the absence of a passport), notice of death from the department of home affairs, an unabridged death certificate from the department of home affairs, a letter of the non-existence of a contagious disease issued by the Department of Health, burial order from the department of home affairs, aletter from the Department of Health and Social development, granting exportation of human remains from South Africa, a letter to repatriate from home country, (from the respective embassy), and an embalming certificate.

> *"If the above documents are not presented, there is no way that the corpse can leave the borders of South Africa. When asked about the slaughtering of corpses like a cow, the undertaker vehemently said that he or any other undertaker has nothing to do with that, and referred me back to forensics. Remember when someone is pronounced dead and is handed to the forensic department, that corpse can make up to five days with them. It is during that period that the autopsy is carried out. It is the government that carries out these autopsies, to ascertain the cause of death, not the undertakers. The undertaker was also quick to praise the love and solidarity that exists amongst Cameroonians. I have been contracted as an undertaker for a good number of Cameroonians who have died in this country, not a single one has ever been abandoned in my care. These groups of people are indeed self-reliant and kind. The reason he was quick to praise Cameroonians, is that nationals, sometimes abandon their corpses after swindling insurance payouts giving undertakers no option than to organize pauper burials"*(Interview with undertaker on 15/05/2019).

The interview with the undertaker confirmed two points voiced by other participants, the fact that autopsies carried out on corpses resulting from unnatural causes leads to the removal of body parts (which is not only limited to foreigners) and secondly, that foreigners (Cameroonians in particular), do not bury their dead in South Africa. Only isolated cases do occur, in which case then, it has to do with religion. If the dead are of the Muslim faith then their corpse will have to be buried here in South Africa or anywherethe victim passed on. This is a common practice for Muslims all over the world. One participant who hails from the Mankon tribe but now a converted and strong belie*ver in the Muslim faith had this to say:*

> *"When a Muslim dies, it is a common practice that they do not want a non-Muslim to touch the corpse, and also fear of what the government can do to the corpse (autopsy). Muslims are so attached to their faith and so wish to bury their dead as soon as the death is pronounced. So, specifically Cameroonians who are of the Muslim faith get buried where ever they find themselves as prescribed by their religion"* (Interview with Ndoh 20/05/2019).

5.6.Causes of death amongst Cameroonians

The last but not least of the findings of this research project has to do with the causes of death amongst Cameroonians here in Cape Town South Africa. Participants cited a variety of causes that are responsible for the untimely deaths of Cameroonians, viz; road accidents, stress, negligence, gunshots, and sickness.

On the issue of stress, Nde said:

> *"Cameroonians arrive here, in Cape Town with a lot of zeal to better their lives but the nature of the country is so frustrating. To start with lack of proper documentation is indeed a key cause. Someone can live in this country for even 10years without haven acquired permanent residence, or still using asylum permits, or better still undocumented. This gives room for employers to exploit such a person by paying them small wages and at the same time requiring them to work long hours. With such small wages, these Cameroonians have to pay rents (which are ridiculously high); send remittances back home to their families and*

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also feed. As time goes on, they will soon discover that they are living in circles, working so hard but getting nothing. Stress then takes a better part of them, and they start developing things like high blood pressure which again complicates their lives leading to their death"(interview with Nde 05/04/2019).

"More so, negligence has been attributed to a good number of deaths here in Cape Town. A lot of Cameroonians do not go for proper medical checkup to know their health status even though health care services are quite accessible in this country. Some who do, do not take their medications in time? Some take their medications for the first few days when they feel better; they ignore it and resort to drinking alcohol. Trust me, when the illness returns, it takes a better part of them leading to their death. This respondent also cites unproductive (stupid) comparison as one of the causes of death. Some people look at their situations, compared to others who just came and are doing well for themselves. This pushes them to do risky ventures in an attempt to make fast money. They either engage in pushing drugs, internet fraud, and even gangsterism so as to acquire a certain social status. This often has its dire consequences, for they say 'easy come easy go'. Death always finds its way around such individuals"(interview with Ndoh 20/05/2019).

For the past seven to eight years, Cameroonians have been victims of gunshots and stabbing. Those who set up their businesses in the locations, like Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Delft, Langa, Nyanga, etc., are often victims of violent crimes. It is either they get robbed of their money, high jacked, and their cars are taken from them or they get stabbed with a knife/ screwdriver to death or shot to death. The level of security in such areas is so poor that even South Africans living in such places are complaining. Road accidents and sickness are a major cause of death all over the world and have taken a good number of our brothers/sisters (CASWECA president 08/05/2019).

When asked if a critically ill Cameroonian is left to die here, one respondent revealed something that is worth applaudable amongst this group of people.

When a fellow Cameroonian is very sick and the biomedical model has failed to restore the person's health, if that person belongs to an ethnic association, the members of that group will contribute some money as stipulated by the constitution of that group. In the case where this

person isolates him/herself but is discovered in time, CASWECA comes to their aid, by pleading with other Cameroonians to put their hands deep in their pockets to help the ailing person. This is to assist send the person home so he/she can get help from other healing methods. The reason is simple, why wait till someone is dead before we show compassion? A good number of them have actually been sick and sent home and they regained their health and returned to this country, while others could not make it. Besides if we let them die here it becomes even a greater burden to us (interview with Ambe10/05/2019).

5.7.Conclusion

In as much as Cameroonians in this study find themselves in a different space all together whose culture and laws circumscribing death are different from theirs back home, these group of people have not forgotten or lost their traditional ways of dealing with death altogether.Using the theory of acculturation and the concept of social capital, I try to navigate how Cameroonians deal with and manage the death of their compatriots. I looked at the ways in which death, funerals and burials are done back home*viz-a-viz* South Africa, and also the controversy regarding autopsies. In this research project, I also exploit people's perceptions and narratives on how they dealt with the death of a loved one, and finally, I also discussed some of the causes of death amongst Cameroonians here in Cape Town, South Africa. This is purely qualitative research, the reason why my findings are mainly descriptive. Participants in this research were quick to acknowledge the fact that they still replicate some aspects of their culture here in their host environment to the best of their knowledge. Beirens and Fontaine (2011) observed that challenges posed by socio-economic, as well as cultural factors in receiving countries, could open up doors for adjustments and at the same time migrants can still maintain their culture on how to deal with their dead. If the above occurs, then it is referred to as cultural integration. From the findings of this research, this has not been the case (see the case of Peter's suicide). The acculturation strategy these Cameroonians have engaged in is that of cultural marginalization (by this, they lose their home culture, and at the same time ignore the host culture).Through the interviews carried out, participants echoed the importance of social capital and is demonstrated through the wide networks they create in and around themselves in happy moments (birth of a child, marriages, graduations, etc), and most especially in death. The most shocking of the findings of this

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research perhaps would be the issue of autopsies carried out on dead bodies. All participants in this research frowned at this South African ritual practice and saw it as a blatant disregard and disrespect to the dead.

The next chapter is the last chapter of this thesis and it basically provides a link to all the chapters of this thesis by drawing together the main ideas and findings.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

The rationale for this chapter is to link the various chapters in this research project so that one can adequately draw concluding remarks. In concluding this study, therefore, I present recommendations and proposals for areas of further research to be engaged in.

Death is a topic that not a lot of people want to talk about, the reason why most participants in this study thought I was crazy. To dismiss their fear and what they thought of me I had to use myself (to tell a personal story). Here is my story;

> *"I am a Cameroonian and have stayed in Cape Town, South Africa since 2011. I am married to a South African and this union has produced two children. Throughout these eight (8) years that I have been in this country, I have not had the opportunity to go visit my people back home because of a lack of finances. We only talk on the phone. It is my wish just like any other immigrant to one day return to my 'home'. We all know how insecure this country is, and see how fellow Cameroonians and other foreigners die day after day. This to me is a course for concern. What if it was me, or you, what will become of my corpse and family? How would my dead body be treated? There is, therefore, a need for this study, no matter how hard we try to shy away from talking about death."*

Death in human groups not only creates panic and confusion but also is occasions through which heightened questions about belonging and identity are expressed. Even in this 21st century, the dead still possesses some form of control over the living (Ember and Ember, 1981). The belief of a life after death has been part of our African religion from time immemorial. Death, funerals, and burials, therefore,require prolonged planning and expenditure. Such situations become even more cumbersome when the death happens 'away from home'.

This research project explores and unpacks the lived experiences of Cameroonian migrants of Ngemba origin living in Cape Town. It navigates their perceptions, meanings ascribed to death, and how this group of people manage and deal with a death away from home. In doing so then, it makes a connection or a link between migration and Cameroonian experiences of death and

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death management in South Africa. To achieve this, I had to use the theory of acculturation (which represent changes in behaviour, and values, changes in original patterns that all emanate from a direct and most often frequent contact amongst cultures) as observed by Becker *et al*. (2010); Beirens and Fontaine (2011), as well as the concept of social capital (the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintances or recognition. The profit that actors enjoy from being members in a group forms the platform on which this solidarity is generated) as discussed by Bourdieu (1985), to establish how these Cameroonians express their culture; construct their notions of belonging and inevitably their identity as a way of responding to death.Culture here is used as:

> *"an evaluative conversation constructed by actors out of the raw materials afforded by tradition and on-going experience. It is continually modified by them in the process of social interaction and their behaviour is guided by the anticipation of such cultural behaviour"* (Hammel, 1990 cited in Brand, 2000: 10).

This, therefore, means that a people's culture could be regarded as a system of knowledge (concepts, norms, language, customs, etc) learned from childhood through socialization and transmitted from generation to generation. Acculturation takes various forms, viz; separation, marginalization, and assimilation. When people chose to stay steadfast in their culture of origin thereby ignoring the host culture, they are in a state of cultural separation. Again, when they lose their home culture, and at the same time ignore the host culture, they are in a state of cultural marginalization. If on the other hand, people chose to neglect their home culture, thereby not only absorbing but adopting the culture of the foreign land, they are viewed as being in a state of cultural assimilation (Padilla and Perez, 2003; Beirens and Fontaine, 2011).

In other, for positive acculturation to occur, there must be an interaction between the minority and a majority group so as to give room for a blend in culture, referred to as contact participation and contact maintenance (Berry, 2001). The absence of contact participation acts as a limiting factor for the minority to have an influence on the majority. Contact participation, on the other hand, puts the minority on an upper hand to make their wishes and needs visibly acknowledged by the majority. Contact participation will help the minority in making friends, expressing

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cultural differences and similarities, as well as identifying problems that would make the majority sympathize with the plight of the minority. The process then of one group becoming part of (ignoring) the other group and merging (staying separate) from the other group, is what is termed cultural maintenance.

The interplay then of both positive contact participation and maintenance, creates an equitable ideology for the good of the minority and the majority groups. This further creates a multicultural ideology that acts in a positive manner for both groups (individuals and ethnic groups can now adapt without fear of losing their identity, minimize the effect of prejudice and discrimination, maximize positive attitudes, and cooperate towards common goals). For if groups or people are secured in their identities, they become more accommodating to those with different opinions; gain resources and accept both cultures (Berry, 2011). The scenario described by Berry has clearly not been the case drawing from the interviews that were conducted. The acculturating strategy adopted by Cameroonians here in Cape Town has been that of marginalization (they lose their home culture, and at the same time ignore the host culture). Cameroonians are not given room to practice their culture, especially in issues of death and the rituals that follow. The interviews conducted with several participants, and that of Nde especially high lights this fact. In his words:

> *"...na we tradition say when person die, we must organize a night vigil and then take that person ye corpse for ye house, for na during such time way all the rituals due to ye di be performed, and fo make say friends and family members them see and relate with the person for the last time. During the night vigil, we di play drums, sing, dance, drink, eat, (mostly boiled corn, and groundnuts) and then some people depending on how close them be for the dead, in their own way fo grief go di mimic the die person ye gestures them. These actions them go make other people them to laugh. This na just to show how funny and lovable the dead were. But regrettably, this nobi the case fo South Africa. 'Space' no dey. We di stay in small rented rooms with other people, wey them no even commot fo the same place with we. We no di be allowed to express our tradition the way we want (sing/dance), thoughtless of hitting the drums and laying the corpse in*

his/her room (interview with Nde 05/04/2019)".

To further corroborate this issue all participants in this study frowned or were not in support of the administering of autopsies to the dead. Autopsies are not a West African thing in general and Cameroon in particular. Participants argued that it is an infringement to their culture, and ultimately to the rights of the dead. How do we expect the souls of the dead to rest in peace if their body parts are removed?To make matters even worst, these autopsies are even carried out without the approval of the surviving kin of the deceased. In as much as these Cameroonians are far away from home and South Africa has its own policies circumscribing death, funerals, and burials, this cohort has not completely lost or ceased to practice some of its ritual practices due to the dead. But this in itself is very limited primarily because of the absence of elders. When an individual is proclaimed dead, the elders in his/her family would be left alone with the dead who then put water in their mouths. The water they give the dead is to offer them some form of energy to take them to the land of the spirits or to the 'other side'. Elders then are the ones who are expected to pour libations and make prayers to the ancestors, so that they in their infinite mercies should accept the dead in the realm of the ancestors as well as for the dead to grant their families with more offspring as they themselves become ancestors (Rattray, 1927). The "utterance ritual" talking to the corpse of the dead is the most of the rituals done here in South Africa. The bulk of the rituals are done back home with the eventual repatriation of the dead.

There is a need for further research to explore the extent to which migration has affected African traditional, religious, socio-economic as well as emotional ways of dealing with death within the framework of acculturation. Since tradition and religion are two sides of the same coin, it will be interesting to see how such a study could enhance cultural integration.

Further research is needed to investigate how this group of people deal with deaths related to a stigma related disease like HIV/AIDS. Sex and sex education is something that Cameroonian parents still consider taboo discussing with their children. So when someone is said to have died of HIV/AIDS, the first thing that comes to their mind is that the person must have been promiscuous. There is, therefore, a need for further research to educate these parents about sex, and redress the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS.

Again, there is a common practice amongst West Africans that I find very disturbing (which was also raised by one of the respondents), that which has to do with not taking care of someone when they are alive, but when they die a lot of money is spent for their funerals. Funerals and burials in West Africa have been plagued with so much expenditure that leaves most families bankrupt (Arhin, 1994). I believe these people, in fact, are living double standard lives, and further research should be conducted in this area to actually establish the rationale behind such reckless expenditures.

From the literature reviewed it is quite clear that the study of 'death away from home' is generally understudied as I struggled to get relevant literature for this topic. I believe this research will add to the scarce literature on this topic. It is therefore vital for further research to be conducted on such a topic as even in death, dead people still command social capital. Such research will help offer clarity on how we know the dead through the living.Researchers focusing on death, rites, funerals, and burials, need to carry out focus group discussions to help them develop as well as ascertain how the theory of social practice and the concept of social capital is used by immigrants to cope and manage their dead. This research project explored the perceptions, as well as the lived experiences of Cameroonian immigrants (Ngemba people) in Cape Town, South Africaviz-viz death, and death management. It demonstrates how this minority group strives to uphold and maintain their culture, identity, and their felt need to belong even in death.

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Annexure A: Informed Consent Form

UNIVERSITY *of the* **WESTERN CAPE**

I agree to take part in this study titled Death 'Away from home'. A case study of Cameroonian Immigrants living in Cape Town, South Africa. I understand that the study is conducted by Mr. Terence Fontoh Fru (3524349), student in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of the Western Cape. This study is in partial fulfillment of an MA Degree in Sociology.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any given time.

I fully understand that that the information given in the study is treated confidentially and I will be presented as an anonymous participant or given a fictional name.

The information provided by me I understand is not necessarily to be for my immediate benefit, only to present my views and form part of the larger data set collected by the researcher.

My autonomy should also extend to the answering of any question, should I feel uncomfortable not to respond to any inquiry I shall be allowed to decline to answer. I understand the information used here is for the benefit of the fulfillment of a task for the researcher for the Sociology degree.

The above is binding between the researcher (Mr. Terence Fontoh Fru) and me.

If you have any questions or queries with regards to the study, please contact the researcher Mr. Terence Fontoh Fru on email: 3524349@myuwc.ac.za or fontohf@gmail.com or call 0710107698.

Supervisor
Dr. Sharyn Spicer
sspicer@uwc.ac.za

Participant's signature………………………   Date signed:………………………..

Researcher's signature………………………   Date signed:…………....………...

A place of quality,
a place to grow, from hope
to action through knowledge

Annexure B:

Biographical Information.Please tick a box

1. What is your name? (Your identity will be kept anonymous).

2. How old are you?

	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-79	80+
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. How long have you lived in Cape Town?

	(less than 1)	1-5	6- 15	16- 25	26-35	35+
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. What is your gender?

M	F
☐	☐

5. What is your marital status?

Married	Single	Divorced
☐	☐	☐

6. Do you have any children YES / NO

If yes, how many children do you have?

Yes	1	2	3	4	5+
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

No ☐

General Questions

7. Do you associate yourself with any ethnic groups here in Cape Town?

8. Why do you come together as an ethnic group?

9. What according to you is death?

10. Is there an African way of dealing with death?

11. What are some of the major causes of death among Cameroonians here in Cape Town?

12. Has there ever been any case of death within your ethnic group?
If yes, how was it managed?

13. Do you think that experiences of death here in South Africa are similar or different from that back home? Please explain your answer.

14. When a Cameroonian dies or a member of your group dies, are there specific rituals that are to be followed? If yes, what are these rituals?

15. Are there any societies or organizations that assist in the repatriation of dead bodies?

16. How is the money raised to repatriate these dead bodies?

17. Does South African law impact on dealing with the dead? In what way/s?

18. What bureaucratic processes are followed?

19. Has migration affected traditional and religious customs relating to death?

20. Has migration affected the emotional ways of dealing with death?

21. What role does religion play in the performance of death rites, and funerals?

22. What is the role played by the family of the deceased both here and back home?

23. What financial, material and human resources are needed to perform death rites?

24. How is information disseminated when a Cameroonian dies in Cape Town?

25. Have there been cases where a Cameroonian or member of your ethnicgroup has been buried here in South Africa. If yes, what are the cultural implications?