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**LIKUMBI LYA MIZE  
AND OTHER  
LUVALE  
TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES**

**Patrick Wele**



**Zambia Educational Publishing House  
Lusaka**

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*First Published 1993 by  
Zambia Educational Publishing House  
(Publishing and Printing Division)  
P.O. Box 32664, Lusaka, Zambia*

**ISBN 9982-01-174-X**

*Printed in Zambia by Zambia Educational Publishing House  
(Publishing and Printing Division)*

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## DEDICATION

This book is specifically dedicated to the 'Chilengamili' personalities whose contributions towards the sustenance of the Luvale traditional culture have helped to blend this book into the form that it is now:

Charles 'Kausanga' White  
Mose Kaputungu Sangambo  
Robert Joseph Papstein  
John Mwondela  
Willie Robert Mwondela



## PREFACE

I was commissioned by my publishers (ZEPH) during the reign of Senior Chief Ndungu Pulu way back in 1986. Little did I know that the Chief himself and most major contributors to this book would never see it.

Fate always befalls us in an unexpected way. The first to board the train of fate was the Senior Chief, Ndungu Pulu, followed by John Mwendela, the missing link in the chain of *Likumbi lya Mize* ceremonies, and lastly Mose Kaputungu Sangambo, the historical doyen of our time, decimated by fate at the age of one hundred. These three great Luvale men's contribution to the preservation of Luvale history as well as traditional attitudes and values will be unequalled for years to come.

It is, therefore, my hopeful prayer that the many children the Luvale people have produced in ideological confusion will carry on with the work.

In writing this book, I encountered different unprintable attitudes from a cross-section of our Luvale society. Some of the 'convulsions' will however surface through the passage of time.

I wish to thank Charles White, Mose Sangambo, Robert Papstein and Willie Mwendela, the historians without whose help the material content of this book would have been scanty. I also owe profound gratitude to my publishers, Zambia Educational Publishing House, for their patience; to Phenox Kaumbu Konga for offering solace at the time when the whole world seemed to turn upside down; to Roy Fungula for providing some of the *Mukanda* songs and to Mr Kambinda for rescuing me with *tusona* when all hope of ever finding them was dim; to my then boss, Goodwin Mwangilwa, who relentlessly encouraged and comforted me during the time of personal psychological embitterment; to the directors of the National Archives, University of Zambia Library and National Museums Board; and lastly to Nelson Chikomo who provided the rare, reflective eulogy — *kulifukula*; and to Margaret Kunda and Regina Chilanga for creating orderliness out of chaos.

To all these people I say: *Ngunasakwila mwane* (Thank you).

Patrick Mutondo Wele  
Lusaka, June 1992





## CHAPTER I

### THE LUVALE: ORIGIN

South of latitude 13°S and east of longitude 22°E, lies the upper Zambezi area of Zambia stretching from east of Angola south-wards to the northern part of Namibia, Caprivi Strip, and east-wards to part of the plain in Western Province: Lukulu, Kaoma and Sesheke. It also incorporates the areas of Chavuma and Kabompo districts of the North-Western Province on the eastern side of the Zambezi River. The area is inhabited by the Luvale, Luchazi, Mbunda and Chokwe peoples. Historically, these are a matrilineal group of Bantu which migrated from the once-famous Kingdom of Mwata Yavwa in Zaire (Belgian Congo).

The Luvale call the area *Yambeji*, a common Lunda-Luba word meaning 'place of plenty of water'. Hence the source, which is in Mwinilunga, is known by the Lunda by the name *Yambezi*.

The area has undergone various political, social and economic changes. Colonisation ushered in tribal conflicts resulting in civil wars. Brothers and sisters on both sides of Angola, Zaire and Zambia could not visit each other.

The Luvale are a group of Bantu who came from the north of Lake Tanganyika. This could probably be the triangular area between Kilimanjaro and Kenya mountains, and Lake Victoria. This assumption is supported by both traditional features and customs of the tribes found in these areas and the royal (chiefly) eulogy (*kulifukula*) of the Luvale, Luchazi, Mbunda and Chokwe. These introductory remarks relate to the 'cloud in the North' (*kalivwi katoma*). This physical feature referred to is obviously snow on both Kilimanjaro and Kenya mountains.

Oral history states that the first leader of this group of immigrants from the 'North' was Kenga Naweji<sup>1</sup> who during the course of the trek became too old to move. She pegged her first camp along Lake Tanganyika in present-



day Tanzania. However, the exact location is difficult to determine owing to the passage of time. The trek then continued until it reached Kasala Katoki<sup>2</sup> in present Zaire. This is where the Luvale dynasty originated from Konde Mateti. The marital relationship among the chiefs of this group was such that a 'brother' could marry a 'sister'. This trend, however, became abrogated by Luweji's marriage to Chibinda Ilunga – a Luba from Chief Kongolo's dynasty.

Konde Mateti had six children. The first was Chinguli, who is believed to be the founder of the tribes in the north of Namibia and south of Angola. His descendants resisted Portuguese occupation and at one stage even defeated them. The second was Chinyama cha Mukwamayi, the founder of the Luvale chieftainship. Then came Kalumbu, a girl who was followed by a boy called Ndonji. Historians associate Ndonji with the Chokwe. He was a war-like and brave warrior whose people still exhibit some of these characteristics. The fifth was another boy called Lukombo who died at an early age. Last to be born was Luweji, a girl – the creator of the famous Luunda diaspora. This was through a seduction masterminded by a foreigner, Chibinda Ilunga, which resulted in the subsequent surrender of the *Lukano*.

Chibinda Ilunga was a subject of a Luba chief, Kongolo, who had a hunting safari within Luweji's domain. It, therefore, happened that after tracking a wounded eland, he rested at a stream near Musumba. This news of a stranger was quickly reported to Luweji who summoned him to her palace. She was later physically attracted to Chibinda Ilunga and a marriage was consummated.

As years went by, Chibinda Ilunga developed some interest in the Luunda chieftainship. Certain taboos had to be strictly followed. During her menstruation, Luweji had to leave the *Lukano* in a separate place where her husband Chibinda Ilunga lived. During this period, Chibinda Ilunga decided to 'instal' himself as chief of the Luunda dynasty – resulting in the departure of Luweji's brothers Chinguli and Chinyama in protest.

The Mwata Yavwa dynasty branched off through the founding of the chieftainships of Kazembe, Liwanyika, Chitimukulu, Kanongesha, Shinde, etc. These were not brothers of Chinyama but his 'sons'. They are primarily descendants of the marriage between Chibinda and Kamongalwaza – the daughter of Mukachilanda and Kasompa Luwazi<sup>3</sup> through their two sons Yavwa Ilunga and Yavwa Nyaweji the original founder of the name Mwata – a title he conferred upon himself after annihilating the Luba leader, Mwene Yavwa Kanyoka.

After the *Lukano* dispute, Chinguli was the first to leave Musumba for an adventure in the country to the south-west. He established his chieftainship farthest to the south of Angola into the present northern Namibia. He was later followed by his brothers, Chinyama cha Mukwamayi and Ndonji,



and his sister Kalumbu. They helped him establish the Luvale, Chokwe, Luchazi and Mbunda tribes in Angola in about 1524 AD.

Chinyama, still in pursuit of more land, established the Kakenge chiefdom around 1747 near Lumbala stream in Angola. It is from this group that the famous chiefs Nyakatolo and Kangombe Kayambi in Angola hailed. The genealogy of Chief Nyakatolo probably dates back to 1840 when she emerged as a very notorious slave and rubber trader. She was, in fact, known as *Nana Kandundu* (mother of rubber). It was during her reign that a slave route linking the Atlantic coast and Zaire was opened.

### First Language Spoken: 1980 Census

	Luvale			Luchazi		
Province	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Western	13096	14936	28032	6621	7800	14421
N/Western	23871	27700	51571	5846	6894	12740
TOTAL	36967	42636	79603	12467	14694	27161

	Mbunda			Lunda		
Province	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Western	31620	38232	69852	1183	1364	2547
N/Western	2383	2554	4937	50899	57321	108220
TOTAL	34003	40786	74789	52082	58685	110767

Source: *Central Statistical Office: Lusaka 1987*

\* First spoken language indicated

Chief Kangombe, short and stocky, was a menace to the surrounding tribes. Frederick Arnot wrote this about his cruelty: 'His raidings had turned the greater part of the Lunda country into a desert... He was later killed by a Lunda headman, Chipenge.'<sup>4</sup>

The wars of Ulamba were fought under Kakenge Chivanda Sakayongo. One of such wars was against Chief Mulambwa of the Lozi. Mulambwa had to seek reinforcement from the Mbunda of Mwe Kandala but was repulsed with humiliation. Kakenge Chivanda Sakayongo was the founder of the *Likumbi Iya Mize* Ceremony. His capital then was at Nguji in present-day Angola. He is remembered too as a very good and generous Luvale chief.

The Luvale, Chokwe, Luchazi and Mbunda are closely related to the Lunda, Ndembu and Luyi historically. The Luvale comprise 20.4% of the population of the North-Western Province and share their territory with



Southern Lunda (33.3%), Kaonde (27.5%), Luchazi (5.4%) and Chokwe (4%). (Anita Spring: COS 1969.) It is important to define the role of each unit to determine the relationship.

The Mbunda are part of the Luvala group which was led by Chinyama cha Mukwamayi who settled in the area between Lunyameji and Lungevungu rivers and parts of the Lumbala in Angola. Their most important chief was known as Likovu Iya Matumbo and his followers were Mwe Kandala and Mwe Chiyengele, who later migrated to Barotseland, now Western Province of Zambia. Various theories have been advanced regarding their migration. Some Lozi historians attribute their migration to either the invitation of Mulambwa (Jalla) or the dispute in Angola among the Mbunda chiefs (Nawa and Mainga). Whatever the reasons were, the Mbunda had an impact and influence on the Lozi.

According to Nawa Mataa, 'their military, economic and cultural benefits to the Barotse empire notwithstanding, the Mbunda were in many respects an unfortunate addition, a divisive group to an already divided society'.<sup>5</sup>

The first to arrive, however, was Mwe Kandala who Mulambwa set out to deliberately absorb into his social and government structures, totally subduing him.

The second to follow Mwe Kandala was Mwe Chiyengele, three years later. After Mulambwa's death, there was a bitter dispute over succession to the Lozi throne. The two Mbunda chiefs supported two different camps with Mwe Kandala supporting Silumesii while Mwe Chiyengele was for Mubukwanu.<sup>6</sup>

But it came to pass that Mwe Chiyengele did not desire to be absorbed into the Lozi society where some of the Mbunda traditions were frowned upon. As a result, he and his followers migrated to areas such as Kalabo, Kaoma, Luampa, Mangango and Lukulu. It is common for the Mbunda people to be referred to either as *Kambunda Kashwamuka* or *Kambunda ka Mema*.<sup>7</sup> The basic difference lies in the acceptance and absorption of the Lozi traditional culture related to circumcision. Mwe Kandala's group was easily abandoned, while the latter traditionally inclined group resisted such acculturation by migrating to places other than those around Mongu. This group practises *Mukanda* and *makishi*.

As has been stated above, the arrival of the Mbunda not only helped Mulambwa win some of his wars but their 'influence became noticeable in the period after 1864 — politically the Mbunda were highly centralised'.<sup>8</sup>

The Luchazi migration from Ikalanyi began during the departure of Chinyama cha Mukwamayi together with his younger brother Ndonji, sister Kalumbu and niece Ngambo ya Mushinda. Chinyama left to find new lands in Angola. Ndonji became the leader of the Chokwe while Ngambo married a Mbwela and had a son with him called Mutunda. Mutunda wa Ngambo



became the leader of the Luchazi. The Luvala and Luchazi are, therefore, blood cousins. The name Luchazi is derived from the stream in Angola where their leader camped. Chinyama and his followers defeated the Mbwele and lived amongst them. To create division, Chinyama gave the Mbwele chief, Matunga a Ngongo, his niece Ngambo ya Mushinda who later became the mother of Chivanda, Chisengo and Nyakapeshi. The Luchazi are comparatively recent migrants from Angola into Zambia and their home was near the sources of the Luena and Lungevungu rivers where Chief Mutunda had a capital.

Their first noticeable migration began in about 1918 under Samujimu who was only a headman. The early migrants, Samujimu, Kasaka, Katali and their followers settled along Lupwepwe and Chivombo streams in Chavuma area of the Zambezi District.

The Luchazi migration into Zambia was probably ignited by the trading (poll tax) dispute with a Portuguese trader nicknamed 'Kamulya Seta'. This happened between 1914 and 1920 in Kwanza Province of southern Angola. The early migrants were later followed by headmen Liveve, Ngongola, Kavalata and Chikololo.

During the dispute between Luvala-Lunda and Lozi, Samujimu, the leader of the Luchazi, being very much pro-Lozi, migrated to Western Province in 1942 but became disillusioned with the Lozi and trekked back to settle in Kabompo District.

The Luyi migration to Zambia from Mwata Yavwa is very significant to the Luvala people and the *Likumbi iya Mize* Ceremony in particular.

Within Mwata Yavwa's palace the subjects were assigned certain responsibilities such as digging fortification structures while others were sent to conquer other lands. One of such people was Kakoma Liwanyika.<sup>9</sup> His departure was actuated by the ascension to the throne of his brother Mufundi Kakoma ka Milonga. Liwanyika departed in fury through Angola into Zambia. He passed through the Chavuma cataracts to Lukulu. Kakoma Liwanyika and his wife Mbuya had twin daughters: Mbazi and Mbuya. Traditionally, the giving of titles was done by elders and they named the elder Mwambwa wa Ilunga. Later as she grew up, she was known as Mbuya Mwambwa. Hence the analogy: *Kaluyi Mwambwa, Kalunda Mwambwa*. Mbuya grew into a beautiful and attractive woman and had a 'husband' who fathered Mulambwa.

The Chokwe are a mixture of the Lunda led by Chinyama and Ndonji and the Mbwele. They linguistically use animate and inanimate subclasses of nouns, direct and descriptive possessive codes, in their speech. Their ancestor Ndonji ya Konde, brother to Chinyama, set out to find the Chokwe chieftainship. He and his followers appear to have journeyed west-wards from



Katalakatonyi. Other known Chokwe leaders were Mwa Ndumba, Mwa Tembo and Mwa Kawewe.

The Chokwe expansion began in the 19th century through trading in ivory and slaves. According to McCulloch in 1878: 'The Chokwe grew powerful enough by mid-19th century to invade the Lunda Kingdom of Mwata Yavwa (Muteba) on several occasions, once killing the chief himself and capturing the queen mother.'<sup>10</sup>

For ten years they were able to control the Lunda Kingdom until they were dislodged. Traces of their influence is prominent in the Lunda language and culture in Katanga (Zaire).

Their migration to Zambia began in about 1920. Their leaders such as Samafulo, Sengwa and Samiyengo established homes in the eastern half of Zambezi and Kabompo Districts. The main wave of Chokwe migration from Angola began in about 1928 after heavy reprisals by the Portuguese there.



## CHAPTER II

### THE LIKUMBI LYA MIZE CEREMONY

Across the mighty Zambezi River and approximately two kilometres east of Zambezi Boma is Senior Chief Ndungu's capital Mize. It is flanked by a plain stretching five kilometres and dotted with four big ponds which supply the local population with fresh water and fish. At the capital itself neatly strewn streets with name plates add beauty to the surrounding. This is the official venue for the annual Luvale traditional ceremony – *Likumbi lya Mize*.

#### Historical Background

*Likumbi lya Mize* means 'Mize Day'. It is a ceremony which derives its name from the early capitals of Chief Kakenge Chivanda Sakayongo in the present Angola. As indicated earlier, Kakenge Sakayongo sent two of his skilled *Vakwetunga* (consorts) during the war with the Lozi under Chief Mulambwa. He was, thus, the last of the Luvale chiefs to be able to speak the Luunda language.

On the bank of Lumbala River in Angola were two capitals built by Chivanda Sakayongo.<sup>6</sup> The first was Nguji where Mwanauta Kapalu, Chinyama cha Ngambo's son – the medicine-man who was invited by Mulambwa and later killed by a *Kakaza* – hailed from. The capital itself had a beautiful, scenic landscape worth being a tourist attraction. The surroundings were covered by river sand which was fetched by Sakayongo's subjects to cover the grounds annually. The squeak sound provided a melancholy effect to his ear.

The second capital was built among *mize* shrubs. These mostly grew on alluvial sands. After 'sand macadamisation' of the surroundings, Chivanda Sakayongo Kakenge would feast his people with plenty of food and beer.



This chief is credited with the origination, revival and continuity of the present *Likumbi Iya Mize* annual ceremony. He was so over-aged that he had to be chaperoned. And so was Sombo Nyamulombwe, the founder of the present capital in Zambia who died at the age of 105 on 23 June 1963.

In 1956, the present capital was built by Chief Sakavungu who is remembered for his 'modernisation policy' in running the affairs of the Luvale people. Prior to the building of the present capital, two capitals existed during the reign of Chinyama Lyato Satome. One was on the eastern side of the Zambezi District in Chavuma area and the other was opposite Mwalya pond on the western side of the Zambezi River—just opposite Zambezi Secondary School.

During the migration from the old capital to the present one, an enormous festival was organised partly to praise Kakenge and partly to inaugurate the newly-built capital. The Luvale people, however, looked eagerly towards the day that their chief would enter the new capital. On 25 July 1956 the enthusiastic Luvale people gathered at the capital where various nationalities were conspicuous. Willie Mwendela, the younger brother to John, the moving spirit behind the *Likumbi Iya Mize*, aptly described the event in his book *Chiseke*:

'The ceremony appeared exactly as we have written when at 09.00 hours the *mwondo* sound vibrated. It took everybody by surprise because *mwondo* is not practised these days. When it sounded, *makishi* began to appear within the palace. At 09.30 hours most chiefs began to arrive one by one from the old palace.' Mr John Mwendela, who was the main organiser of the ceremony, had to be summoned for this occasion. This is what he said:

'Today is the day for Luvale people, a big day for showing the Luvale palace of Mize, and the entire new palace of Chief Ndungu. Most chiefs and Luvale people have come to witness the entry of Chief Ndungu into his big palace.'

Mr John Mwendela explained to the people the arrival of the chiefs to the new palace. He said:

'Look at the Kasemu road (path) to see Kucheka where the Semi Iya Mbumba who comes smiling, and Mbumba comes crying, children of Chisengo cha Ngalango, here they come, the children of Chisengo on whose knot a basket is made but remembered when parted.

'The leader is Chief Chinyama of Litapi who is walking together with his kinship. Clad in the royal crown of Chinyama and other traditional regalia. Tall as he is, together with his dressing signifies Chinyama cha Mukwamayi.

'Second to follow is Chief Kucheka who lives at Kashiji. He is also walking together with his entourage and clad in the traditional regalia. Opulent as he appears, he is Kucheka proper, an animal that is never trapped.

'Third are children, nephews and *sambeza* in the same company.'



After the eulogy, *mwondo* sound vibrated again at 10.00 hours. John Mwendela continued and said:

'At last the Kasemu road (path) has opened to Sombo Iya Mbumba. Mulombwe wa Mbumba has now appeared. Mulombwe who does not drink from ponds but drinketh in a well. Chief Ndungu is moving in his tom-cart in the company of thirteen people. He is clad in a cloth of *swala*, very expensive cloth. On his head is the royal crown of Chief Chinyama cha Mukwamayi Kasonu who came from Lwalava. People in his company are all clad in the black and white striped cloth around their sleeves and neck. Clad also in black hats, they appear much glorious. Leading the procession is the *kapasu* holding the flag – white with red hem. In each corner there is a picture of four chiefly knives (*mukwale*) of Chinyama cha Ngambo Kayombo ka Kutemba – conqueror of Mbwela people. In the middle is a wrapped cloth. It is the picture of the royal bracelet. Behind the chief *kapasu* are two other *kapasus* – carrying a cloth inscribed Mize Day. Behind them are two people playing accordions and thereafter next to the tom-cart is one who is playing a xylophone.

'Both sides have two women who move with the chief. Behind the tom-cart are four people – two on *chikuvu* and the other on *mukupelo*. Now Chief Ndungu has finally arrived. He disembarks from the tom-cart.' The flag is hoisted near the chief's chair. The chair is then placed on the lion's skin, both sides bear two wooden carvings depicting lions. Chief Muwena conducted the royal salute before Musongo wa Ndungu.

After *kulifukula* (royal salutation) various speeches were delivered but the most noted ones were from Mose Kaputungu Sangambo who later in his life wrote *The History of the Luvale People and Their Chieftainship*. He historically outlined the Mize capital and its importance to the Luvale people. The other was Chief Sakavungu, who at the time had not succeeded his mother – Nyamulombwe Sombo. He thanked every one who made the festival a success.

The success, however, lay in the hands of John Mwendela, the moving spirit behind that festival and the subsequent annual *Likumbi Iya Mize* ceremony. John Mwendela was born on 24 July 1919 at Kaleni Hill Mission in Mwinilunga District, North-Western Province. Young John, at the age of six, entered Chitokoloki Mission School under the care and tutorship of the education and missionary colossus George Suckling. During his tenure at Chitokoloki, a Mr Ooh began to recognise John's artistic talent. The strings of success Mwendela achieved at school were astounding. He obtained the Standard 4 school leaving certificate on 3 January 1934 and went on to obtain upper middle school certificate Standard 6 on 20 August 1940. Prior to the middle school certificate, he obtained the certificate for elementary School Teachers in December 1935.



After obtaining the teachers' certificate in 1935, he taught in mission schools from 1935-39 and was later sent to Chalimbana for a senior teachers' course which was later changed to a supervisor's course for two years up to 1941. Upon his return to Chitokoloki, the Northern Rhodesia government recruited him to teach in their school. He taught at Chinyama Litapi, Kabompo, Chavuma, etc.

While on vacation enroute to Angola to collect his uncle Philip Mukuma and also to study the Portuguese educational system he was recalled by his bosses with a message of his imminent departure to Scotland in 1949 for two years to study graphic design. While at Morey House the District Commissioner requested the British Government authorities to give young John extra grounding in graphic design. What then impressed the relevant authorities was Mwondela's ingenuity to whistle and hum simultaneously. Later the British Broadcasting Corporation auditioned him on the children's programme which handsomely earned him one guinea (50p) per minute.

Returning triumphantly from Scotland, Mwondela was posted to Ndola as Assistant Education Officer – later to become Manager of Schools in 1953. He was transferred to Solwezi in North-Western Province at the time when the perennial Luvale-Lunda intrigues were at their height. It was indeed a crucial period in the life of Mwondela. He was in North-Western Province for six years before being transferred back to Ndola where he remained in charge of Ndola rural and Kitwe rural for three years.

Before Zambia's independence in 1964, he was transferred to Lusaka as Secretary to the Public Service Commissioner in Cabinet Office for ten years when he retired and opted to go into active politics. He became Member of Parliament for Zambezi North in 1978 until his retirement in 1988. All along, the educationist-turned-politician was above all a crusader in the sustenance of the *Likumbi lya Mize* annual ceremony.

The successful inauguration of the Mize palace including the festivals culminating into the present annual ceremony, *Likumbi lya Mize*, was torpedoed by the death of Chief Sakavungu on 27 March 1967. According to the Luvale traditional customs, at the death of a chief (see Chapter 6) all functions of all shades or colours grind to a halt until a new chief ascends to the throne. So the *Likumbi lya Mize* went into a slumber from 1967 to 1976 when John Mwondela, again answering to the voice of the Luvale people, revived it, this time under the reign of Nguvu Samukelenga (Ndungu IV) who was installed on 10 September 1968. Accordingly no reason was indicated to me for discontinuing the ceremony until 1976.

However, the ascension of Nguvu Samukelenga to the Ndungu throne in 1968 saw quite some considerable development in other fields like agriculture and education save for the social and cultural segments of the Luvale people. Chief Nguvu Samukelenga (Order of the Distinguished Services –



Third division) was by nature a legal man who had served continuously under various legal courts on the Copperbelt. In 1975 the *Likumbi lya Mize* Association, in line with the law, became established with John Mwondela as Chairman, Wilson Muvumbo – Vice Chairman; P.K. Muswenyesa – Secretary; John Saviye – Vice Secretary, Johnstone Ngonga – Treasurer and M.E. Katengo – Committee Member. The entire committee comprised fourteen (14) members from places such as Kucheka, Lukulu, Kitwe, Luanshya, Maheva and Litapi.

All in all, the Executive Committee was made up of six office bearers, ten elected and four nominated by Senior Chief Ndungu; thus constituting a committee of twenty members.

In accordance with the pursuit of its policies, programmes and activities the Association conducted its affairs within the framework and in the spirit of the United National Independence Party (UNIP) and the Government in a manner conducive to the enrichment of the cultural life of the nation as a whole.

Some of the Association's objectives are:

- a) to organise and hold *Likumbi lya Mize* celebrations;
- b) in connection with *Likumbi lya Mize* celebrations, to promote, organise and ensure the execution of programmes relating to:
  - i) the construction of buildings and structures;
  - ii) traditional handicrafts including the smelting and fabrication of iron into implements and traditional iron objects;
  - iii) traditional music and *makishi*;
- c) to provide guidance and assistance in connection with the traditional ceremonies, celebrations and rites pertaining to installations and funerals of chiefs of the Zambezi tribal groups comprising the Luvale, Luchazi, Mbunda and Chokwe people;
- d) to ensure the repair, maintenance and upkeep of the chief's enclosure (*lilapa*).

To crown it all, revival, preservation, promotion and ultimate protection from 'foreign' influences over the cultural heritage and traditions of the Luvale, Luchazi, Mbunda and Chokwe people should be the guiding light in pursuit of some of the stated objectives.

Moving with the pendulum of time – the *Likumbi lya Mize* ceremonies continued from August 1976 to 1983 when another tragedy occurred. This time Nguvu Samukelenga died in 1983. Reasons will, however, be given for the bad omen that has always afflicted the male lineage of the Ndungu chieftainship.



## The Ceremony

The ceremony then lay in coma for another two years and in August 1985 saw the revellers' hearts and nerves on edge – and the ceremony of the Luvale people emerged from its slumber again and dazzled chiefs, politicians, etc, for four days and five nights of an action-packed cultural festival. Two good reasons marked the 1985 ceremony as unique and special: the installation of Chief Davison Chinyama Pulu and the ceremony itself after an absence of two years.

Davison Pulu (Ndungu V) was born in 1930 at Mize Palace. Born of Nyaulembe – daughter of Sombo Nyamulombwe (Ndungu II) to Mukwetunga Pulu, Davison began his education at Mapachi Primary School within the palace itself. He went for his upper primary school at the famed Chitokoloki Mission School where he completed his Standard 6. Upon completion, he entered the judicial services of the Northern Rhodesia government as a Court Clerk – Nyaviye Local Court, from 1958 – 65. In 1968, he was transferred to Mukandakunda Local Court. He stirred a hornet's nest amongst the Lunda for his being a son of a Luvale chief. Ugly tribal conflict ensued and, at his own request, he was transferred to Kucheka Local Court in the same capacity. He succeeded Chief Kucheka, in 1974, who died on 13 April 1974. Davison Pulu ruled as Chief Kucheka from 1974 to 1984 when on a popular vote from various Luvale *Vilolo*, he was enthusiastically crowned as Senior Chief Ndungu V on 28 August 1985.

Scheduled for August 29 - 31, the cultural performance was encouraged by action-thirsty carnivalists who had slid into the main arena two days earlier and set the drums in motion. The throbbing drums and the singing and dancing continued until September 1. Journalist Elias Nyakutemba wrote in the *Zambia Daily Mail*:

'On August 31, the crowd had swelled to more than five thousand people. The crowd gripped with joy, went wild with the famous rhythms of *kachacha* drums. Sweating bodies, a jostling press, a multitude of gay children and dancing crowds sprawled all over the palace grounds, watching, moving and singing — a modern people for once drowned in a frenzy of cultural action reminiscent of their great grandfathers' days.

'With 20 various types of *makishi* performers, seven bands of *kachacha*, *makopa* group, *sambalakata*, *fwifwi*, *shombe* and a host of various types of traditional dancers performing all the time, the deafening roar and rumble could only be quietened by speech-makers.<sup>11</sup>

At this juncture, the carnivalists witness the arrival at the main arena of all the sub-chiefs in colourful regalia amid tumultuous sounds of various *mikupelo*. Before their arrival the sound of the *mwondo* drum is heard signalling the start of the procession to the main arena.



According to the day's programme, shortly before the chiefs emerge, the general public, including invited guests, spend some time viewing the various curios on display. There are a wide range of knives (*jipoko*), baskets (*misalo*, *jimbango*), holsters (*jindalo*), cooking sticks (*viko*) and an array of other crafts. One of the most interesting attractions is the *lutengo*.

While the onlookers anxiously await the arrival of the Senior Ndungu to the main arena, an array of assorted *makishi*, led by the 'king' of *makishi* – *kayipu* – saunter into the main arena. *Kayipu* is only associated with the royal establishment and is immaculately designed to fit the dignity befitting a chief. With him are other fifteen to twenty smaller *makishi* (a more detailed description of the *makishi* appears in Chapter 3). Others are the pig, a 'swallow bird', *chikishikishi* (giant with a smoking head), *chikwekwe*, *likopitulu* (helicopter), *katotola*, *ndondo*, *chizaluke*, *chileya*, etc. The cluster of this assortment of *makishi* becomes the most important single attraction during the ceremony apart from the Senior Chief Ndungu himself.

Back at the palace entrance, a throng of ululating women converge to welcome and escort the Senior Chief to the main arena. Clad in a long overflowing embroidered dress with wonderfully decorated head regalia (*muchama*) and carrying a fly-whisk is Senior Chief Ndungu himself being drawn in a tom-cart. Heading the procession is *chitapanga* (executioner) carrying a double-edged sword. Following him are two *vikuvu* drummers, then *jinjimba* (xylophone), *Mwalya* (chief's first wife) and finally Senior Chief Ndungu himself seated in a *kalikoke* (tom-cart). Historically, chiefs were carried in a hammock but with passage of time the mode of carriage was substituted with a tom-cart. Behind the chief a horde of ululating and chanting women continue to sing:

Ngongola  
Waulambe-ee mama wo -o,

Mutambukise Ngongola  
Mwalilambe - ee

Let's escort his majesty,  
In glory,

Ngongola,  
Our Chief in glory indeed.

The procession continues unabated to the main arena to enable the revelers and dignitaries to take a broader view of their chief – a rare occasion indeed, for the Senior Chief only appears once a year or only on very impor-



tant occasions. After alighting from the *kalikoke*, he saunters majestically to take his seat on a special chair carved like a lion — a symbol of authority and power. This special chair is only located where special guests sit.

At this juncture, the frenzy of the ceremony begins with an expert dancer who takes up the floor and performs a royal dance, *kutopoka*, to the rhythm of *mungongi* drumming. This type of dance, according to the Luvale, was only performed by a senior village headman and never by a chief. The man, painted in red and white ochre (*pemba na ngula*) and wearing *sala ya njimba* (large head-dress of assorted feathers of whydah) sets the onlookers agog with his back-and-forward movements. With his stern eyes fixed on the throne, he swings the *chimbuya* (small ornamented axe) in all directions, grinding his teeth, twisting his shoulders and wriggling his waist to the crescendoes of rising royal music — fulfilling the wrath of the throne.

After *kutopoka*, the climax of the occasion focuses on the *kulifukula* (royal salute or self-reflective eulogy) by a reciter who squats on his knees, inclining slightly towards Senior Chief Ndungu, reciting the whole history of the royal family, urging and praising the important dead to rise and give strength to the new chief and pledging the people's loyalty to the throne — in a ceaseless mixture of Luvale, Luunda and Luba dialects. Below is the full text:

#### Luvaie/Luunda Version

Wavulye, wavulye  
Chinyama cha Mukwamayi  
Kasongo ejile ku Lwalava  
Chikanga wa kwota  
Kasongo wakulala

Wavulye, wavulye,  
Chinyama cha Mukwamayi  
Tambwe ya Masango  
Tambwe nakulya,  
Tambwe na kutokola

Wavulye, wavulye,  
Kanyama wafwa wasangukila vakwavo  
Kavungu mazala kuvungunuka hikulyana  
Lipengele linyama kalili mwila  
Lyalya usolusolu wangombe  
Chimbulu kumutwe, kumakasa  
Ngongo mulya watu



Wavulye, wavulye,  
Linyama pengo, Linyama soto  
Linyama kavate likazo  
Linyama kavali mapwevo  
Lya savalila kumapili  
Lyalya namapweyo kuvizambiko

Wavulye, wavulye,  
Mundumbu wachinwa manyinga,  
Malovwa awa nwina pwila  
Samwauka auka lyambai mafuwatela  
Ambanda akilwa hachau chapako nangaji  
Hazaukile utunda naulamba  
Utunda kwishi ulamba helu

Wavulye, wavulye,  
Kadunwami keshi nangiza  
Namungiza na Kasaji  
Mukwangu ngiza na mweniputu kumeji  
Kasaji kasaji kamata  
Mbamba chipata mavaya,  
Mbambo vikungo kulema

Wavulye, wavulye,  
Chinguli cha Konde  
Chinyama cha Konde  
Ndonji ya Konde  
Luweji lwa Konde  
Chinguli mukwangu  
Chinyama ha Yambeji  
Ndonji ha Kalimba  
Mwachiyavwa ku Luunda

Wavulye, wavulye,  
Ngambo ya Mushinda  
Mushinda wa Liwengele  
Liwengele lya Mutupa

Wavulye  
Vana va Chisengo cha Ngalango  
Valongelele mujimo  
Chisengo nyaka valika  
Kutunga mbango namahongo  
Chisengo cha Nyaluwaya



*Kutwama nenyi unuka  
Kuya kumushinganyeka*

*Wavulye, wavulye,  
Koma Iya Pezo  
Akoma vyavakwavo  
Vyenyi vyakulila matemo namazembe*

*Wavulye, wavulye,  
Chinyama cha Ngambo  
Muwema wa Ngambo  
Kayombo ka Kutemba, jindamisa vambwela*

*Sombo Iya Mbumba  
Mulombwe wa Mbumba  
Mulombwe kanu meya amuchijiva  
Nanu muchimbombolonga  
Kutemba kuusoko... kuulo.*

*Sombo Nyamukambakamba wakusamina peto  
Wakusengelela valala  
Sombo Nyakuhutwa ahutwa  
Nakawakala nge kahina  
Sombo Nyamwalakana  
Vamwalakana vangeji  
Venyembo valitwamina  
Nyaluya Kayumbu mwana lakali  
Lunamuwane*

*Wavulye, wavulye  
Kakenge wa Sachivunda fwota mitengi  
Kakenge wa Mayadi wanguji, wazenguzengu  
Azengukila kumapango  
Vaya vonyi vasala  
Vonyi vana Mukelenga Chivunda avunda  
Vamwene kuvula*

*Wavulye, wavulye,  
Chiteta mikoshi kayenge wakuteula  
Lyato Iya mukula kuvomba ndu  
Lyalupusa mayanga  
Wavulye*



*Kalipa ka Mahongo luvaji mwangana  
Tambwe chiwape chakulya nenyi  
Wanganyina uswiza  
Hungwahungwa chilume wakwona  
Chilume wakumwimba na ndaji  
Chizaji wa kumwimba nandaji*

*Chinyama kadimanga adimana adi mupata  
Kayembe kadimanga amudimina  
adi mupata  
Wavulye, wavulye, Kalombo*

### **English Version**

Praise his Majesty  
Chinyama son of Mukwamayi  
Whose ancestor Kasongo came from Lualava  
With his burning furnace and became  
A torch-bearer

Praise his Majesty  
Chinyama son of Mukwamayi  
The king of the forest who  
Devours anything in his way

Praise his Majesty.  
The dead animal who resurrects  
Upon others  
Clenched are his claws,  
Once released destroys  
The beast which eats no grass but  
Eats the offals of cows  
Resembles a horse, yet possesses  
Deadly hands

Praise his Majesty,  
The vicious rhinoceros  
The untrappable animal,  
The unpalatable animal  
Which women hate  
He sleeps in the mountains,  
Yet eats with women at manioc's roots hole



Praise his Majesty,  
The dracula of blood,  
Yet drinks water with insatiable thirst  
He drinks water with insatiable thirst  
The colossus who rises upon land  
And whose women rise upon glory  
He rises with dignity yet superseded

Praise his Majesty  
Your latent boundaries  
Except Kasaji river  
Yours is Mbangala country,  
Near the Portuguese ocean  
Kasaji laden with guns and different metals  
Kasaji so heavy to carry

Chinguli son of Konde  
Ndonji son of Konde  
Luweji daughter of Konde  
Chinguli in his Mbangala country  
Chinyama in his Yambeji country  
Ndonji in his Chokwe country  
Mwachiyavwa in his Luunda country

Praise his Majesty  
Ngambo daughter of Mushinda  
Mushinda daughter of Liwengele  
Liwengele son of Mutupa

Praise his Majesty  
Children of Chisengo  
Daughter of Ngalango  
All stuffed in her womb  
Chisengo, the producer of baskets  
Chisengo, daughter of Nyaluwaya  
Obnoxious, once lived together  
Unforgettable, once deserted

Praise his Majesty  
Likoma, daughter of Pezo  
Causes misery to others  
Yet adorns civility



Praise his Majesty  
Chinyama son of Ngambo  
Muwema son of Ngambo  
Conqueror of Mbwela people

Praise his Majesty  
Sombo daughter of Mbumba  
Mulombwe drinketh no water  
Not even from a well  
Except in a pond  
The jealous Kutemba who  
Cherishes relatives  
Yet becomes an instant  
Enemy over marriage

Praise his Majesty  
Sombo Nyamukambakamba  
A beauty to look at  
Yet poverty-stricken to the bones  
Both visitors and strangers  
Don't visit her  
Yet she is a problem-solver

Praise his Majesty  
Kakenge son of Sachivinda  
The discoverer of countries  
Wide and bound  
Kakenge son of Mayandi  
So lean are his ornamented legs  
That he is easily deserted  
Yet he is the custodian of many

Praise his Majesty  
Chiteta, the executioner  
Cremated with silver-shaven head  
His canoe made of *mukula* tree never drowns  
He succeeds where others fail

Praise his Majesty  
Kalipa son of Mahongo  
Reverent with glory  
The lion who eats alone



Apprehensive of others  
Yet his spider-web horn is  
Melodious to many

Praise be to his Majesty  
Chinyama never ploughs ordinarily  
Except in the forest  
Kayembo never ploughs ordinarily  
Except in the forest  
Hail, hail the Majesty

The ceremony, after the eulogy, enters a crescendo when all the *makishi* parade for the Senior Chief, and begin to dance to the enthralling amusement of the reveller. Never does one see and witness such classic workmanship of qualitateness in dancing. Truly and actually, the ceremony becomes a land-mark in the Luvale traditional culture – a momentous occasion worth seeing again and again.

Before the display of various dancers, the leading National Chairman delivers his report to the Senior Chief Ndungu (see appendix iv) which is followed by a leading political leader invited to represent the party leadership as enshrined in the *Likumbi lya Mize* Constitution.

Just as the heat reaches intensity, the various assortments of *makishi* leave the arena and later the Senior Chief Ndungu leaves for his palace where a luncheon is laid on for the invited guests.

Back at the arena, the revellers continue with various displays of dance until dawn when a film show marks the end of the *Likumbi lya Mize* ceremony.



### CHAPTER III

#### MAKISHI, DANCES AND OTHER ARTEFACTS

Physical *Likumbi Iya Mize* comes to an end as soon as Senior Chief Ndungu departs from the main arena for his place to entertain the invited guests. Following him would be the tirade of the *makishi* who also leave for obvious reasons — the main ingredient in the artistic creation of *kayipu*.

In spite of the imminent departure of Senior Chief Ndungu and the main attraction — *makishi* — dancing continues. Culturally, the Luvale and closely allied people are of exceptional interests. For long decades, various studies have been conducted in African art. There is hardly any other sphere of African life to which more attention has been devoted.

In spite of the interest, the Luvale art and music have been slightly distorted and unrepresented for obvious reasons of both missionary and post-independence ideological influence. However, apart from *makishi*, there are various artefacts, dances and music too.

Wood-carving is an activity with a long tradition which is all over Africa. The Luvale people are not an exception to this situation. Even wood-carving offers wide possibilities to artistic expressions. It should be noted, however, that the same applies to pottery, basketry, metal-work (*lutengo*) and finally bone-carving.

Of all the traditional dances (music inclusive) performed at *Likumbi Iya Mize* Ceremony, the notable ones will be given and outlined, where more detailed description is required, it will also be given. Of the *makishi*, a selected few will be described inclusive of their role, function and responsibility as regards the Luvale traditional life.



Therefore, in this chapter emphasis will be given to *makishi*, dances and various artefacts.

### *Makishi*

All *makishi* are traditionally believed to be spirits which rose from the grave and this story is told to both women and children. The uninitiated are not supposed to know that there is a man inside the costume. Today, that tale does not hold water for obvious reasons of post-independence ideological manipulation. According to Charles White:

'In this sense a *likishi* is a rare creature returned from the world of the dead, but the notions which are associated with the masks are highly complex and in this case the *katotola* is associated with the actual ancestral spirits of the matrilineage of the holder of the rites and bears the name of an important lineage founder.

'But the women and children were told of the risen *likishi* from the dead as a result of the fracture of the castor-oil-filled bottle on the grave of the important lineage founder. But the actuality prevails when a *chilombola* of the *kandanji* marked a *likishi* similar to his at the time of his circumcision cubation.<sup>12</sup>

The ingenuity accredited to the expert creation of the *likishi* is the main phenomenon which manifests itself among the Luvale and associated allied people. It takes an expert to weave various dyed threads into various patterns.

An outline of process, including various materials pertaining to the production of a *likishi*, is aptly stated by Willie Robert Mwendela: '... first material has to be collected to make white rope. A tree known among the Luvale as *muzawu* and found in thickets besides streams, was used, its bark being of the required whiteness. Other secondary ropes were obtained from the tree known as *mufufu*. To make an attractive *likishi*, ropes were dyed into a number of assorted colours... Leaves of another tree were pounded and mixed with water to produce red ochre. *Munganga*, a hard charcoal from Lutengo was crushed and later *musungwa* leaves, yellow, were pounded and added.'

Other materials required to make *likishi* costume were a big piece of bark cloth, a special kind of wax, a piece of red cloth and white paper for decoration. Usually, measurements were taken from the person who would use the *likishi*, after which the bodice was woven on a tree trunk, the weaver following a memorised pattern. The framework of the head of *likishi* was made of wood.

The duration of the production of both the *likelevende* (mitre-shaped head-gear) in case of the bigger *makishi* and smaller ones is relatively short



and this is due to the fact that the process has been done behind the circumcision school.

During the *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony, various shades of *makishi* are exhibited before Senior Chief Ndungu. It should be noted that the Luvale, being very artistic and superbly creative people, exhibit different types of *makishi* every year. For example, both the Angola liberation and civil wars brought into Zambia – among the Luvale, consequently – the helicopter, wasps, etc. These became a common feature during the ceremony. Quite an array of *makishi* are exhibited but the most important of them are:

*Kapiyu*: Popularly known as the 'king' of the *makishi* is, specifically, associated with royalty. He is actually the Chief's *likishi*. Heavily decorated and always escorted by a 'body guard', *kapalu*, *kayipu* behaves like a chief in the traditional sense. Distinct from the rest of the *makishi* in his category, he wears a blanket as opposed to animal hides. He does not speak except when issuing commanding instructions to *Kapalu*. In most instances, the slaughter of a goat is done by *kapalu*, but during the *Likumbi lya Mize Ceremony*, the slaughter is done by *Kayipu* himself – a complete departure from the traditional norm. He always carries a *chimbuye* axe.

*Mupala*: Next to *kayipu*, in the *likelevende* category, comes *mupala* with an enormous head, an enlarged forehead and an equally enlarged mouth. He is the most feared because of his aggressiveness during the circumcision of the male children and holds a relatively high position in the *Mukanda* ceremony (see Chapter 4). His utmost and immediate function during the surgical operation is to carry each child to the *chipungu* (circumcisor) and draw away the attention of the women by entertaining them to subdue the agonising screaming of the children at *Mukanda*. Because of the nature of his function, *mupala* always carries in both hands whips with which he jostles joyous women.

*Katotola*: Designed in red, white and black, his 'mitre' is keel-shaped. Normally, the first to appear at the inception of the *Mukanda*. *Katotola* always carries whipping sticks and plays with women. Although fearsome and aggressive, he is loved by most women. During *kulyachisa* (first bath of the children), *katotola* plays a leading role in preventing mothers of the children from snatching their children. Most women become so brave that they whip each other toe-to-toe! During the surgical operation, he scuttles women and children to enable the *vilombola* to prevent their candidates from fleeing at his first sign of appearance. He appears as a figure armed with a spear and sword



(*mukwale*) and gives the appearance of murderous frenzy as he raves and gesticulates at the company. His other important function is to commute between villages of the candidates alerting various principalities before opening and closure of the school.

*Chikuza*: Portrays an impression which attains total perfection in his duties. With a long conical mitre, his main function is to teach the candidates the art of *kuhunga* – a dance where the twisting of the legs coincides with the waist-movements resulting in the *jizomo* swivel in flight. This dance is practised so often that the *kandanji* has to achieve maximum perfection.

*Kalelwa*: A fascimile of the *chikuza*, although mostly in junior capacity. His duty is to assist in the perfection of *kuhunga* dance of *tundanji*.

*Utenu*: A tiny but ferocious and aggressive disciplinarian who can only be consoled by the village headman. Whenever a mishap happens, *utenu* appears scattering everybody in that village including men. People have to be indoors during his appearance resulting in confiscation of whatever item the school requires.

*Ngondo*: A small *likishi* whose mitre is kite-shaped and only 'speaks' by simultaneously clicking two stubs of sticks to announce his arrival. Only fast runners excel to perform the duties of *ngondo*. He is the emissary of *kayipu*.

Apart from the aggressive and ferocious *makishi* outlined above, there are other sets whose performance and characteristics resemble humility, entertainment and wisdom. Their main facial feature is the circular head-gear dotted with wool on the wooden head like *likishi lya mwanapwevo*. Notable ones which are conspicuous at the *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony are:

*Ndondo*: A fetish, but stubborn, midget-type. His pot-belly is believed to be the result of poisoning due to stubbornness. Usually, short men are preferred in order to consummate his funny outlook. He is the little 'darling' of most women.

*Chizaluke*: The most highly decorated and well-designed *likishi* in this category. He saunters with a very dignified personality. He always walks with a *mbwechi* (wood-carved walking-stick) symptomatic of old



age. Unlike the *makishi* in his category who wear hides, he is normally clad in very soft woollen animal skin and a colourful calico. His head is decked with white wool denoting grey hair which is mostly associated with wisdom found among elderly people. He is easily approachable.

*Chileya cha Mukanda*: Literally referred to as a fool of the school. During the tension leading up to the surgical operation of *tundanji*, *chileya* appears to have an important role in helping to ease the mounting tension and anxiety of the women as the moment of crying of *tundanji* draws near. Fetish and childish character who mimicks at the slightest movement. His dressing is totally undignified — a short cloth in the waist with white wool on his head. In short, he is the black sheep of the school.

*Ngaji*: Probably one of the two most beautifully decorated of the non-aggressive set of *makishi* in this category. He is a beauty to watch! Wrapped around the waist is a multi-coloured and well-designed cloth with a special cap made from the feathers of a whyddick bird — *njimba*. This special dress is only worn by diviners and performers of *kutopoka* during *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony. *Ngaji* is also the 'darling' of the women because of his impeccability in cleanliness. He dances with elegance, paralleling his fine walking step. His main characteristics are grace, elegance and tidiness.

*Munguli*: A representative of rogues who are a menace to society. Literally means a hyena. He is designed to represent the hyena in the forest.

*Chikishikishi*: His name generally appears in folklore stories during camp-fire with children. He is depicted as a monster who carries a boiling pot and devours the mischiefs of the community or society. His main characteristic is discipline.

*Likishi lya Mwanapwevo*: A stylish, gymnastic acrobat whose name literally means 'likishi of a teenage girl'. He is best known for his acrobatic display on two ten-metre poles connected by a rope. It is generally believed that he places magic medicines at the foot of the two poles as he ascends and goes through mystical gyrations to receive the spirit of his wife, which, it is believed, will stay with him until he descends and it



returns to her. In the meantime, his wife keeps her face turned away from him. The poles are selected and erected by himself; it is a taboo for one to walk between them! An awkward accident happened involving two of the famous Luvalé *makishi*, Kameya and Munjuta of Balovale (Zambezi) in 1956. Kameya was betrayed by Munjuta resulting in Kameya crashing to the ground and ending up in Zambezi Hospital for resuscitation by medical personnel! The other 'culprit' who witnessed the mishap took to his heels!

*Kanyengenyenge*: The pelican whose strength and vitality enable him to survive an amphibious type of life.

*Katoyo*: Purely for entertainment within the community. Mostly associated with Chokwe and a master *chiyanda* dancer. *Katoyo's* stylish dance supersedes that of *likishi lya mwanapwevo*.

*Likopetulu*: A clear version of a helicopter. As stated earlier, the Angolan wars brought different *makishi* designs. This is a clear testimony of that. Another form of creativity is the tortoise.

## Dances

A great variety of dances become a common feature at the *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony. Most dances performed by *makishi* are exclusively reserved for a soloist and backed by a group of women. He is usually a possessed medium whose skill as a 'virtuoso' is keenly watched and enjoyed. In some dances more than one individual is featured such as *shombe* and *kachacha*. This mode of group-dancing results in different turns of solo, duet or large-group exhibitions. The most common dances are as shown below:

*Kachacha*: At most Luvalé traditional ceremonies such as female (*wali*) and male (*mukanda*) this type of dance features prominently. It is a 'circular line dance' for all who may care to join in – men and women. Members of the group perform two distinct roles by turns. In addition, one expert beats four to six drums (*jingoma*) simultaneously in accordance with the sound and rhythm. The dance can continue for two nights and two days. It is a beauty to watch.

*Shombe*: A circular line dance like *kachacha*, except that no drums are introduced. The line itself is interspaced with both women and men. For every turn either a woman or man goes in. The irony of this dance is the erotic attitude of the dancers – eventually the 'two-by-two' affair



ensues. Most young men and women prefer this for the obvious reason stated. It is only performed at night.

*Kuhunga*: This is a special dance performed only by *tundanji* who after healing are taken to the river (*kulyachisa*) to have a bath for the first time since their enrolment at the school. They wear kilts (*jizombo*). These are strips of bark rope from the *mulende* tree which are made by their *vilombola* (attendants) for their charges. During the *kulyachisa* rite, the *tundanji* are dressed in their kilts and rubbed with ash and led by *sakambungu*. *Makishi* as well as other men escort them.

Apart from *kulyachisa*, *kuhunga* is performed finally before a huge audience at the end of 'school term'. By simultaneously twisting the legs and the hips, the kilts fly horizontally to the waist like a peacock's tail.

*Fwifwi*: This dance is performed during *chilende*, the last phase of the *Mukanda* period. These are mainly bark-strips of the *mulende* tree which are made into a bundle using both hands and strung to the waist of the dancer using both hands. The dancer flickers the straws in front of him. The *makishi* dancers gather at a special place called *chilende*, the day after burning the 'school'. They dance and mimic to the accompaniment of singing and clapping from the women. The *chilende* is most preferred to be conducted in a plain where visibility of the *makishi* is assured. Each *likishi* moves a distance and in response to the drumming begins to flicker the straws with both hands while at full speed, falling by the sides as he approaches the drums. The occasion becomes ecstatic when all the *makishi* perform together.

*Chiyanda*: This is a special dance associated with the female puberty ritual. *Wali* and performed by *mwali* before either a bridegroom or onlookers who present her with gifts. The dancer wears a *chiwamba*. Hanging from the belt are strips of cloth. On her legs are tied small percussions (*sangu*) which rattle once shaken. The dancer shakes her buttocks in stumping stance thereby making the *chiwamba* bounce up and down to the accompaniment of the *jisangu* (rattle). The dance is also performed by *katoyo* and *Likishi lya Mwanapwevo*, a very common and popular dance today among Zambian women of all tribes.

*Sambalakata*: A dance mainly connected with fertility. It is actually a belt from which hang many beads on which are strung slender bits of reed, longitudinally and some transversely. The strings of various lengths form a kilt. Together with percussion on both legs, the women dance thereby lifting their buttocks in unison with the thronging drums.



## Artefacts

Apart from the *makishi* – masks, costume and various dances outlined above, there are a lot of other artefacts that are closely associated with *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony. In accordance with the aims and objectives of the Likumbi lya Mize Association of promoting traditional handicrafts including smelting and fabrications of iron into implements and traditional iron objects, these artefacts are displayed. Basically, the Luvale are by tradition innovative and highly artistic people and bearers of a developed tradition of wood-carving. Under this section, an outline of the artefacts is given under three categories. These are wood-carving, basketry, metal fabrications and vessels and receptacles.

### Wood-carving

Wood-carving is an activity with a long tradition among the Luvale and other associated traditional allies – Luchazi, Lunda, Chokwe, and Mbunda. This, therefore, makes a most interesting chapter in the history of Zambian art.

#### *Likishi Head Gear*

The face is modelled in soft lines (*henya*) beside the eyes. Horizontally, along the forehead down to the nose is an evenly soft line (*mukomongo*). On the cheeks are four distinct circular designs designating a young woman. The facial make-up adds human beauty to the *likishi*.

Apart from these which are a semblance of a human face, others with a long mitre and a big face denote aggressiveness. These are mostly found in the *likelevende* category.

It was fashionable among the Luvale to sharpen their teeth. It was not compulsory though fashionable at that time. The story behind it was that the teeth left the mouth of its owner and went to fetch human faeces at night. And to stop such a trend, the sharpening of the teeth became common. The final naturalistic effect is achieved by the hair, obviously made of sisal threads dyed black with either bone or stick embedded in the mouth denoting teeth. Generally, the front of the face is made of wood, the back and neck being made of fibre like the rest of the *likishi* costume.

#### *Stools, Wooden Plates*

Some stools are carved entirely from wood while others have a hide seat on a wooden frame (*likupu*). The art of carving human or animal figures is noticeable and has become a common feature among today's carvings. It is quite wide-spread. It is also very common to the designer to feature wooden paddles (*viko*). Wooden combs with long teeth and ornamental handles (*visakulu*) popularly known as 'afrocombs' are a common feature.



## Musical Instruments:

Wood-carving conjures also with instruments which produce sounds. This class includes rattles and bells:

*Jinjimba*: This xylophone was brought into Zambia by the Mbunda from Angola during the migrations of Mwa Kandala and Mwa Chiyengele. This instrument has become a common feature at other ceremonies but plays a leading role at the *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony. The *jinjimba* are composed of wooden slats fastened upon a wooden framework and a calabash under each slat to act as a resonator.

Two sticks with heads of *ulezo* (raw rubber) are used to beat the slat to produce the required sound. They can be tuned like a guitar or piano.

*Likembe*: Known by racialistic sociologists as 'kaffir piano'. This is a small instrument with iron keys mounted on a rectangular board and plucked by both thumbs. The board may be hollowed or a small calabash may be used as a resonator.

## Drums

There are quite a variety of skin stretched musical instruments available during the *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony. Commonly found are the usual type consisting of a hollow wooden cylinder with an animal skin stretched over the end. In the centre of the skin is *ulezo* which is intermittently warmed to give it better resonance. This drum is beaten by both hands. The sides are also beaten with a short stump of a stick (*mikakaji*).

In this category are:

*Chikuvu*: This is a double-ended skin drum specifically associated with royalty. One side of the *chikuvu* is thicker than the other to give it double tone – low and high pitches. During the *Likumbi lya Mize* Ceremony two drums feature prominently during the procession to the main arena.

*Ngoma Pwita*: Popularly known as friction drum. It has a stick driven through the centre of the drum-head and stuck to the skin by means of traditional devices. The drummer applies wet cloth to the stick, pulling back and forth – thereby producing a squeaky sound. The *ngoma pwita* is a general purpose musical instrument.



*Mwondo*: Ironically referred to as the 'talking drum'. It actually acts as a radio through which the chief summons his people for consultations. It has hollow wooden cylinders with two slits at the top. Two stubs of sticks are used as vibrators.

### **Basketry**

Another field of the Luvale artistic ingenuity is basketry. The common feature is the high quality of design. Common baskets are tall ones used for either holding meal or grain, etc. Others are the flat baskets in which other objects such as cassava and millet are exposed for drying or which are used to separate chaff from grain by rattle-shaking.

Among these are:

*Mbango*: Mainly used for storage of meal or grain. It is medium-sized and made with tough springly roots (*vikenge*) which are dyed in various colours.

*Mutonga*: A long basket used for carrying fruit, vegetables, cassava roots or dried fish. It is popular and essential to most Luvale women. Modern developments of basket work are straw hats, satchels, table mats and even attache cases – for the younger generation.

*Musalo*: For separating chaff from grain.

Weaving of cloth is common and the most impressive is the ornamental type usually with mosaic type of design. Mats (*visalo*) mostly referred to by the rich as 'Persian', are common. This type of weaving is done with sisal-like fibres, although papyrus fibres are a common feature too. More of this design is now adopted in the making of deck chairs – very popular among urban dwellers.

### **Metal-workings, Weapons and Tools**

Characteristic of the Luvale and other associated allies is iron-working which produced various useful instruments both as implements and weapons during the marauding war of Ulamba. The modernisation of our society has seen the Luvale blacksmith's art transplanted by imported goods like hoes. More emphasis, now, is given through the Association to encourage the production of arrows and spear-heads. The blacksmith makes spare parts such as strikers and triggers for muzzle-loading guns.



*Lutengo*: One of the main attractions of the *Likumbi lya Mize* annual ceremony is the crude method of extracting iron ore. Generally, the black-smith at the *Lutengo* is surrounded by numerous taboos such as abstention from sexual misconduct while working on iron. How observant and faithful one can be is hard to believe. But the *Lutengo* smelter is made as follows:

*Smelter*: This is built of clay and is about five centimetres high. An air intake is moulded at the lower side of the furnace. A metal drainage exit is provided with an entrance dug under the earth.

A channel leads to the door where the smoulder iron finds its exit. Attached to the smelting furnace are bellows covered with skin and stuck in the middle are two sticks which act as blowers to create a current of air for removing the impurities.

*Process*: The mineral deposits are crushed and mixed with charcoal and ignited. Usually, the upper part of the smelter is left open to expose the product to air. The process is left for a day before the door is broken and the cast iron forked out. Later the cast iron is introduced back to the smelter. The iron is then removed and worked on an anvil with hammered tongs.

Out of this process emerges various products such as:

*Axes*: Heads which are usually fashioned with one end tapering off to jut out of the handle and may be detached and used as a crowbar. Battle-axes with half-moon-shaped blades are also made. Ornamental axes of miniature size like *chimbuye*, *likandu*, etc., often resembling the battle axes or sometimes with two blades are commonly carried at dances. The blades are usually very thin and this differentiates them from the small axes.

*Hoes*: The normal type of hoe is composed of a flat surface with a jutting out tong which is fastened to a handle (*muhinyi*). The sizes vary without much distinction. But the smaller ones are analogous of the miniature axes which are carried at dances.

*Arrows*: Going in partnership with the arrows are bows. They are both offensive weapons but a lesser weapon is a *ndavi* used for killing birds. The bow is a long, well-smoothened stick approximately two metres with a twisted string attached to the end of the carved stick and tied.



Arrows are normally made of a shaft of a reed, with the iron head being attached to the shaft and tied round with fine bark rope. Most arrows have quills for guidance.

Another type is that of rounded barbs (*ndavi*), which are mostly used for shooting small birds or small animals.

*Spears:* Are mostly used for fishing (*kusohwa*) and game-hunting. Usually, the head is fastened into half by the projecting tong, bound round with metal. The fish spears have rings or projections and barbs (*muumba*).

*Knives:* Most conspicuous are knives with a short blade, broad basally and cut across sharply at the point. The knife has a handle of wood mostly ornamented with a different grand design. It is carried in crude leather sheaths (*vindalo*). These knives are given a clean edge (*mbeli*) for shaving and performance of the traditional surgical operation.

### Vessels and Receptacles

Pottery plays a significant role in the art of making household objects and utensils. The figural decorations spread into elaborate scenes indicative of normal life.

*Earthenware:* Clay pots and calabashes are the usual types. The traditional technique of pot-making involves collecting clay (*uma*) from the known sites. The vessel is roughly moulded - and set to dry. The pot is smoothened and framed with a stone. Finally the pot is oasthoused with bark chips.

*Vessels:* Mostly used as containers of water, honey or beer. They come in various sizes, *suhwa* being the largest; with *chituvo* being the smallest. Normally, a small calabash with a long narrow spout is used for administering enema (*linyongi*) and the rather larger one which serves as a hookay (*mutopa*), the calabash holds water for reducing potency of tobacco while *musaka*, the receptacle, is attached to the calabash by a hollow reed. Small gourds (*seta*) serve to hold the snuff, tobacco and castor-oil.

The Luvale tradition is quite interesting. Indeed having ploughed through the various artistic expressions, the *Likumbi* *lya Mize* offers a unique opportunity to scale through the unscathed artistic ingenuity of the Luvale people and their associated tribes.



## CHAPTER IV

### MUKANDA AND WALI

Associated with *Likumbi Iya Mize* Ceremony are two of the most accomplished and revered ceremonies within the Luvale traditional culture - *Mukanda* and *Wali*. In any given group of people within a society there are certain patterns and ways of behaviour which transcend themselves in form of art, music or folklore stories. It is, therefore, these patterns and behaviour that are a form of education which is imparted to the young people in order to groom them for the onerous tasks ahead of them.

Educational training, within the Luvale society, is categorised in three distinct stages: first, from childhood up to ages ten to twelve. These children irrespective of sex undergo the same training such as cleaning pots and drawing water, which is mostly associated with kitchenry. The early form of training is supplemented with story-telling which is aimed at moral purification with a clear emphasis on good behaviour.

When children reach the adolescent stage, they are introduced to a more refined form of education which commemorates the termination of the relationship between a son and the mother and the introduction of the defining of a new relationship between them and the child's incorporation into the world of men and subsequently into marriage. Equally, the girl's departure from that stage into womanhood is an embodiment of the process involving the symbolism and recognition of growth, the magical assurance of fertility and formation of marriage.

Two important processes ensure the boy and girl's passage to adulthood and these are *Mukanda* (which I will refer to as a 'school' as opposed to 'camp') and *Wali* respectively.



## Mukanda Male Puberty Ceremony

When boys reach the ages between twelve and seventeen, the second stage of their educational training commences when they are enrolled into the *Mukanda* 'school' where they are then introduced to adult life.

The *Mukanda*, where the penis surgical operation is performed, is normally held by a single village and other surrounding villages are invited to participate. Usually, the initiative is taken by a single village headman (*chilolo*) who, after noticing quite a sizeable number of uncircumcised youths, consults other men in his village and a decision is arrived at to hold the *Mukanda*. Preparation then begins with news being communicated to relatives. At this stage, the initiator of the *Mukanda* ceremony becomes known as *chijika mukanda* which 'literally means the 'planter' of *Mukanda*'. The senior child, normally the holder's son or nephew, becomes known as *sakambungu*. At this stage, the invocation of spirits before a *muyombo* tree is done to bless and purify the children who will undergo the operation.

### Preparation

Feverish preparation then culminates into great pleasure felt by the adults in the village. Anxiety among the uncircumcised children can be seen written on their various faces. To most adults, this is the period of dancing and consummation of abundant beer and meat which is chaperoned at this stage.

The *Mukanda*-holder acquires the services of very important specialists - a *Nganga mukanda* (a medicine-man), the *chipungu* (the circumciser or penis surgeon), and *chilombola* (attendant). The choice of the *chilombola* always rests with the parent. Traditionally, a link of white beads placed around his neck is a passport to become a *chilombola* but today the habit has changed with money substituting beads.

*Nganga mukanda* then chooses the site for the school to be built where the 'students' will spend their time in total seclusion. Ideally, the 'school' should be sited on the western side of the sponsoring village with the entrance facing the sunrise direction. One of the most essential features is the choice of the tree where the 'students' will urinate. This is normally a *mupepe*, *musole* or *munyenye*. The siting of the school also should be within the proximity of the village for the choral songs. Later magical pegs are inserted at various points to keep the witches at bay.

Apart from the three important specialists, there are others such as *Nyachijika mukanda* (wife of the 'planter'), *sakambungu* (the headboy) and *sakasula* (assistant headboy), who is always the last to be operated on. He is the least attended to except during mealtime. The other responsibility is to deputise for *sakambungu* who enjoys extreme commanding respect by all



the other students. Any misbehaviour results in stern and swift punishment.

When the preliminaries are completed, comes the day of the rites. The date having been fixed, the enjoyants assemble for the feasting and dancing. More beer is brewed in plentiful supply for relatives irrespective of lineage. Prior to the actual circumcision, the stage called *kunyingama ngoma* (dance the whole night) is held. During the night the students are gathered by a fire with their *vilombola* who intermittently escort them to the village to dance in pairs. At this stage *nganga mukanda* displays the medicine which is made to repel wizards. These contain *funda*, which is a bundle of protective medicines and *kaliwe* (a small calabash which resembles a penis), the power of a man to produce children.

As dawn approaches, the revellers go to rest and eat, but the next day around mid-day the *chijika mukanda* laboriously distributes beer to all and sundry. At the same time, the students eat their last meal before the actual penis surgical operation begins. Emotionally affected mothers wonder about their children's fate as the first and famous song vibrates as an indication of the commencement of the ceremony – *mbimba kaluku talilenu helu* (locusts hover and sky-dive from the sky). The *likishi*, mostly *chileya*, appears in an amusing way to relax the tension before the murderously frenzied *Katotola* performs his services. With a sword and spear, *katotola* slaughters a goat whose blood is used by *nganga mukanda* to invoke the ancestral spirits at the *muyombo* tree in the presence of *sakambungu*. The invocation of the ancestors ends with the naming of the *katotola* as a returned ancestral spiritual lineage (*mukulu*). From the shrine the *katotola* allows the challenged students to touch him. The courageous ones volunteer while the frightened ones have to be dragged.

After this the *nganga mukanda* (the medicine-man) rubs preventive medicine and white clay onto the students before the *katotola* snatches (*kuhukula*) the pounding mortar (*liyanda*) and the pole (*mwishi*) which he carries to the circumcision theatre. At the village, the *katotola* firstly snatches the *sakambungu* to the theatre. After this the *vilombola* begin to escort the students to the circumcision theatre called *fwilo* which is meant to be the 'death place'. At this place, drumbeats with renewed and redoubled vibration drown any cries which might be heard by the parents.

At the circumcision theatre, the penis surgeon eagerly and methodically works on each student with swift meticulousness – the foreskin (*muvumbo*) being retrieved to prevent the *chipuku* from taking it for medicinal purposes. As each student is operated on, he is made to sit on a block of hard wood. Traditionally, a *lifwika* is hollowed to catch the dripping blood from the student's penis which should not drop to the ground. As blood dries up, medicine which is made from *pundukayina* (a shrub with red fruits symbolic of fertility) is applied. The penis is then wrapped in a leaf attached to the



fibre and properly secured. During this process, no actual shelter is constructed and no singing is done. All of them sleep on their backs with stretched legs.

### Seclusion

The next stage during the *Mukanda* process is referred to as *tundanji vali hamafyo* (students are on leaves). Quite early in the morning just after the operation, the students rise around 03.00 hours on pain of the danger of impotence and at dawn they stand at the fire singing and clicking the *min-gongo* sticks in unison rhythmically. These sticks are mostly referred to at the school as *vifuhya vya vafu* (skeletons of the dead). Each student is told to carry a phallus and a fly whisk to fan away flies from the penis.

As dawn approaches, the co-operative spirit of the Luvale men stirs them into building the school which is made of leafy branches, unroofed but high enough to provide privacy. A hole is left in the branch screen for the students to throw the left-over food (*futa*) through it. It is taboo for the students to look at the back of the school. This hole in the branch screen is called *ndambi*. The dormitory type of layout consists of a series of pens of sticks at the rear of the school — *mbangalakachi* — in which the students sleep with fire continuously burning all night within each pen for warmth. Two tresses exist both in and outside for the purpose of urination and the accumulation of ashes which are not swept. Found inside too is a stake upon which a basket of protective medicine called *mwima* rests. During the early stages of *kutwama ha mafyo* (sitting on the leaves) the *vilombola* are mandatorily compelled to dress the wounds of the students every morning. This is referred to as *kusoza* (iodine type of medication) which is very painful once administered.

At day break, a strict set of observations have to be adhered to such as eating on leaves and not plates. The first to eat is always *sakambungu* before the rest of the students eat. During mealtime, no one speaks or stands up no matter how satisfied one is because doing so will result into the rest abandoning the meal. The *vilombola* bring food in baskets and not plates although the trend now has changed due to passage of time. Any infringement of the set rules by the students during mealtime results in the confiscation of the food and it being thrown through the *ndambi* — the forbidden place. The essence of this teaching is to instil discipline into the students to respect their parents, elders and the attendants.

During the period of seclusion the students are heavily introduced to adult life. Handicrafts are also taught — such as wood-carving, mask-making, weaving, basketry, pottery and iron-making. Many sporting games are also introduced to enable the students to achieve maximum aptitude. The most interesting is *tusona* which constitutes a tradition of ideographic writing. Dr



Gerhard Kubik, probably the most noted Luchazi specialist notes:

'Ideographs which are sized anywhere between half a metre square and two flat palms of the human hand joined together. These are drawn usually by adults and elders, with a certain performance technique.'<sup>14</sup>

The meaning and content of *tusona* are so complex that they would need a complete chapter of their own. They are often very philosophical in entertaining the community as a form of written code for expressing abstract ideas on some of the people's most central issues and institutions. The graphic components are worked in elaborate configuration whose meanings are variable. For example, a single dot or a series of dots, produced in the characteristic technique with the first and third fingers of the right hand impressing the dots into the sand can represent completely different things or ideas, according to context: tree, person, animal or beer vessels. As regards to the lines, a line which is drawn with the right index finger can symbolise either a path, a river, fence or contours of the human body. Directional concepts are also well defined in structures.

However, the *tusona*'s originality is obscure as most of their structures are more or less connected with footprints of animals including birds e.g., *lingano lya tengu* (footprint of the roan antelope).

Apart from what has been outlined above, the students are also told to keep the secrets of the school from uncircumcised (*vilima*, plural; *chilima*, singular) boys and women and to be aware of succumbing to female seduction which could lead them to reveal the secrets.

The last phase of the seclusion starts when all the students recover from their wounds. The *vilombola* remove the fire restriction and the students can now play with other sharp instruments such as knives. Later kilts (*zombo*, singular; *jizombo* plural) are made by their *vilombola* (see Chapter 3 on *kuhunga* dance). They come to realise that the fig tree is about to germinate when they are taken to dig *kangamba* roots. While lugging at the roots they are struck with switches by the attendants – the process is called *kufula kangama* (digging up a shank).

After the kilts are made the students are made to stand on one leg to the pleasure of the attendant. Whoever buckles during the exercise, his parents pay a chicken to the attendant. This is the moment most mothers see their children when the students are escorted by *katotola* to the river for purification which would allow them to wash. Most mothers vie to reach the students. The carnival reaches a point of crescendo when the *sakambungu* is made to leap over the 'fire' in the river. This ritual is called *kulyachisa tundanji*. After bathing, the students dress again in kilts and return to the school while men and *katotola* struggle with excited women in repelling them from reaching the students.



Once back at the school, they are allowed to do chores such as catching birds, fishing, collecting wood for the fire. They are no longer confined to the *mafulo* which has been their resting place. Such structures as sleeping pens are demolished and students are allowed to sleep on mats and even use blankets. Most of the taboos are, at this juncture, relaxed.

The conclusive stage of seclusion is called *kukosa chikula*. Its main purpose is to remove the restriction about sexual intercourse imposed on the attendant as well as the village. Secondly, to allow the students to release the anxiety during the sexual taboos. After this ceremony the students live a relatively free life until graduation.

### Some Taboos Associated with Mukanda

During the seclusion, the students are not only bound to strictly adhere to disciplinary rules during their stay at the school but even after graduation.

#### While at Mukanda

- i) The students must not touch or look at the mattresses of their mothers otherwise the pain of developing convulsion (*lukuku*) is assured.
- ii) It is forbidden to wash with water except with ashes.
- iii) All the students must sing when required to do so and any student who fails is beaten. If he cries, he must weep until he has filled a small cup with tears and will be beaten unless he does so.
- iv) A student must not doze during the singing period otherwise cold water is poured on him as punishment.
- v) Students are told to avoid contact with fire; if the night is cold when they are sleeping, they should not stir their fires but must rattle their *mingongo* sticks on the poles of their pens to alert their attendants to stir the fire for them.
- vi) Student should never look in the direction of *mwima*.

#### After Graduation:

- The students should never reveal such secrets as:
- i) Tibia of the dead – meant to be used in singing. These are two short stumps of sticks.
  - ii) Shorts worn before cure.
  - iii) Plates used by *tundanji*.



- iv) Blankets (*hulu*).
- v) Huts made of sticks.
- vi) Stools used by the student by the fire-side (*njamba*).
- vii) Both *chilombola* and his mother's houses are forbidden places and are strictly out of bounds.
- viii) Always to swear over *chilombola*/mother when speaking the truth (*kunyima ya mama/chilombola*).

### Songs Sung at Mukanda

During this period, various types of songs are sung at both sunrise and sunset. This course of education is called *kukuwa*. Some of these are:

#### Sunrise:

*Hawe, lelo vanana vovo*  
*Vo navakokakola kumwe;*  
*Lelo hawe;*  
*Kumbyee-e neha musana hawe*

Oho, here are our mothers;  
 They are bringing the sun;  
 O sun, bring warmth so that we  
 May warm ourselves;  
 Here are our mothers

#### Sunset:

*Khumbyee lyinayi mukangongo, lyoliya;*  
*Chikuwakuwa chavamba mukangongo, lyoliya;*  
*Vanoko kavatukwila mukangongo, lyoliya*

The sun has gone,  
 It is going into the grave,  
 Going into the grave as we sing  
 We sang to your mother,  
 But it is going into the grave  
 Your mother does not sing back to us  
 And it is sinking into the abyss

Other songs are directed at *nyatundanji* (mothers of the students at night):

*Ho-hwee--*  
*Eee----*  
*Lelo kwimbwe-e-*



This is followed by women ululating. The students begin singing accompanied by the rattle of sticks:

*Kasanda kuve kachiyengo-ee*

*Meso to-o-o*

*Kasanda kuve-e*

*Kachiyengo meso-to-o*

*Savala kuche-yee-oo*

*Ove chijikamukanda likishi lyove*

*Na weme mutwe-e*

*Savala kuche-o-e-e*

*Linaweme-e*

*Savala kuche-yee oo*

**Twalonga**

*Twaloonge, eh eh kuloonga twaloonga*

*Hawe*

*O-lelo twaloonge kulonga twalonga hawe*

(Leader)

(Rest)

(Leader)

*Kuloonga chetu twaloonga hamene tukalongolele,*

(Rest)

*Twaloonge*

**Teto Kajila**

*Wata wahanjika wahanjike yavelela*

*Teto wange nana-a, wange nane-e-e-e*

*wata wahanjika*

(Leader)

*Tetweye teto kajila!*

(Rest)

*Wata wahaji ke-e-e-e*

**Saikapula**

*Saikapula yomweza, Saikapula yomweza*

*Tusangu twakulanda, twose mali ndondondao*

*Hayove saikapula*

*Here comes Saikapula,*

*Here comes Saikapula,*

*Bought all rattle gourds,*

*Spent all the money,*

*This is Saikapula.*

**Waisamba  
kekeke**

*Keke wakeke, wayisamba kekeke*

*Musuvo yanoko, wayisamba kekeke*

*Kukengilamo, wayisamba kekeke*

**Kanongo**



nging accom-

*Mbumba luhundu wayisamba kekeke*  
*Chikonya mutete, wayisamba kekeke*  
*Hafwika noko, wayisamba kekeke*  
*Kafukununaho yove, wayisamba kekeke*  
*Mbumba luhundu, wayisamba kekeke*  
*Chikonya mutete wayisamba kekeke*  
*Wolelo pundukayina,*  
*Ove watela kasasa,*  
*Yee- ndele pundukayina,*  
*Ove watele kasasa,*  
*Yee welelo pundukayina*

(Leader)

We unfortunate dozers,  
The school is how it is  
Eh, we dozers, eh

(Rest)

Eh, dozers aye  
Lets go and sleep  
Eh, dozers aye

Taboo, taboo,  
In your mother's house,  
Taboo, taboo,  
To enter it,  
Taboo, taboo,  
Leprosy, vicious  
Taboo, taboo,  
Epilepsy, sour  
Taboo, taboo  
Where your mother is covered  
Taboo, taboo,  
Never uncover  
Taboo, taboo  
Leprosy, vicious,  
Taboo, taboo,  
Epilepsy, sour  
Taboo, taboo  
Eh, we dozers  
Eh, we dozers  
Those at home sleep soundly

Kanongo

*Eh kanongwee-ye (x2)*  
*Valikwimbo tala muvakosa tulweye*



Chorus  
(Leader)  
(Rest)

*Etu vakwayo tala mutwanongojoka*  
*Mukanda wapwamo*  
*Eh kanongwe ye*

*Eh kanongwe ye tundanda tuyenu*  
*Eh kanongwe ye*

Eh, we dozers  
Eh, we dozers  
Those at home sleep soundly.

When the *vilombola* bring food to the school a song accompanies them.  
They always bring in baskets and not plates. The students sing:

*Ngulyee, hawee,*  
*Mavemya a eee*  
*Nana yo, nyali mwalikwenda*  
*Wambata kamozi kalinjenga*

Let me eat, *hawee*  
Red-eyed, *hawee*  
Here is mother  
Brother (or sister), sister-in-law  
Is coming and brings something to eat

Then the attendants call *kulyee hawee* and when they hear the response  
the students continue.

*Chilinga ee, njiya mwili ee*  
*Njiya mwilu chamba mulonga mbagwe*

I am flying away like a butterfly

Then the students reply:

*Eyaye twalonga ee,*  
*Vanoko vovo,*  
*Vovwe*

We have learnt the right actions  
Here and yours mothers



At the school, any visitor who did not contribute towards the preparation of the school is always greeted by the following song before he pays:

*Chinjate*  
*Watulyatee-lelo*  
*Watulyata*

You have stepped on us  
You have stepped on us

Another is sung when the attendants charge for the food. All must stop eating and stand up with closed legs. It begins:

*Ndambalweye nandamambala, yoyiya;*  
*Ndambala kuvewuka nandamavala*  
*Kuzangama ndambaia*

The food is going to be thrown,  
Through the *ndambi*;  
The forbidden place  
The penalty for looking at  
It is impotence  
Be careful not to look

During the purification at the river, the students sing:

*Ndonje ye*  
*Ndonje lila e Ndonyi*  
*Ndonje ye Ndonje lila, eyaya mama Ndonje,*  
*kwahichila tundanji kwazuma*  
*Eyaya mama kwazuma*  
*Kwahichila chilima kwanuka, eya*  
*Mama kwanuka,*  
*Ndonje lila, Ndonje lila.*

Ndonje, cry out  
Where the students have passed is warm,  
Where the women have passed is cold;  
Where an uncircumcised person passes stinks



The last phase of the *Mukanda* ceremony culminates into the rite called *kulovola* (graduation) at the instigation of the *chijika mukanda*. Like the earlier preparations, beer and food are prepared for the graduation ceremony.

Extra *makishi*, as indicated in Chapter 3, are made to grace extra glamour to the occasion-*nganji*, *chizaluke*, etc. A day before the graduation, the students undergo a process of artificial cohabitation with an old 'woman'. Each student goes through the process beginning with *sakambungu* right up to *sakasula*.

Later, in the evening, the students get plenty of wood which is taken to the village – all dressed in their special kilts and keeping their heads down in a single file. Women get excited at the sight of the 'lost' children. They shout and ululate. The boys return to their school awaiting the last stage of the graduation. Leaving the school is by passing under the arch leading outside and fleeing to the village where a mat is laid for them to sit on. Then the elderly men burn down the school in their absence. During the burning of the school, the attendants, together with the students, have to stay awake the whole night to enable them perform the *kuhunga* dance in pairs. The merry-making continues till morning when the students finally undergo the last purification rite at the river. After this, the students are taken to a separate place where the *kateu* is performed – their hair is cut and they are allowed to eat.

In the afternoon the students get dressed in their new clothes bought by the *vilombola*. Then they are triumphantly taken shoulder high by their *vilombola* to the village – led by *sakambungu*. Excitement engulfs the revellers after seeing the graduated *Mukanda* students. The students are each given a plate on which all the presents for the attendants are kept. Each attendant then relates to the parents the child's up-keep during the period. Dancing continues for quite a period of time during which the *vilombola* are feasted with various foods. Later a formal payment to the attendant is made by the parents.

At the village the student has to undergo a process called *kusukula chikula* – cohabitation with a female who is supposedly ignorant of the student's tenure at the school. All students formalise blood friendship with each other and the attendants give a chicken to their students whose parents are also expected to do likewise.



## Wali

As already observed in the male puberty ceremony the maturity leads to the seclusion of a girl. The Luvale people do not practise clitoridectomy as in other tribes. *Wali* is an educational process which a girl who has attained maturity undergoes. The main determining factor to hold *Wali* is the first reported menstrual period by the girl to her grandmother. In this way the girl individually goes through the process as opposed to a group in the case of *Mukanda*. She has to observe certain rules such as not running quickly, lying on her stomach and avoiding being slapped on her buttocks. She has also to avoid eating certain types of food. She has also to constantly refrain from contact with fire which is closely associated with life and its absence (coldness) is symbolic of death – only her grandmother kindles the fire for her. Just as *Mukanda* for boys, *Wali* goes through three distinct stages.

First, the preparatory, later seclusion and finally the graduation – except the last stage is connected with marriage and makes a way for convenient departure.

First to be appointed is the instructress (*chilombola*) who should have had many years of experience in this form of educational process. In addition to an instructress, the girl is provided with a young girl below puberty stage called *kajilu* or *kasambijikilo* who performs domestic chores for the student such as drawing of water and attention to food.

## Preparation

At this stage, the girl is referred to as *mwali*. A tree which is close to the village and is associated with fertility, usually *muulya*, *musole* or *muwangwa* is chosen. Quite early in the morning the girl is taken to the chosen tree for loincloth and administration of protective medicine by the *chilombola* accompanied by other women singing songs. As the sun rises, the entourage leave the girls at the tree to enable them to prepare the *litungu*, or the shelter in which the student will stay. It is mostly built in the village preferably near her nephew's house. Before the cross-polarisation of the Luvale traditional culture, the Luvale used to betroth the girl for marriage. In fact, the parents chose the bride for their son in consonance with the moral behaviour of the bride's family. The bride, therefore, was known as *sakakeza* who is informed to come and help build the shelter (*litungu*). Both the instructress and *sakakeza* go into the forest to bring poles for the same purpose. The *litungu* resembles a conical-shaped hut.

After completion, the *sakakeza* climbs onto the top of the hut and sits there until payment is effected by his in-laws. A meal is prepared during the construction of the shelter. She supervises the preparation of the chicken for



*sakakeza*. When the food is ready the *sakakeza* and his helpers are ushered into the shelter to enjoy their meal – the chicken bones must not be broken otherwise the *sakakeza* pays a fine. He has to provide a blanket (*zeva*) which is used by *mwali* throughout the ceremony.

In the meantime, the girl who was left at the tree has to be fetched. The *chilombola* sing the *lilombola* song as mockery in arousing sexual appetite within a home.

The last phase of the preparatory stage culminates into escorting the girl to the village in the evening. Back in the village, *mwali* is dressed in a blanket which covers her head along with three small packets of medicine. The instructress carries the girl on the back, accompanied by other singing women circling the village while at the same time she has to bow her head. She is, later, taken to her uncle's house where purification is carried out on her before she receives her meal since menstruation. Once completed, the *mwali* is taken to the *litungu* and is later joined by the *kasambijikilo*.

### Seclusion

The second phase of *Wali* is the girl's seclusion at *litungu* where the educational training begins. It is always mandatory for the instructress to awaken the *mwali* quite early in the morning and be taken to a special place – *mukanda*. This routine is adhered to during the period of seclusion. During the first day, the *mwali* has to go into the bush and dig up roots of *pundukanyina* which is used to make a girdle for her.

Just as the male puberty seclusion period marks the beginning of the educational training, the *mwali* is taught the use of string games and figures which are purely for recreational purposes. These could be categorised as – beds, hoes, birds, eyes, stars, etc. Others are *katambwilo* whose inference is related to a woman's labia which receives the man's penis during coitus, *kakweji* (moon), symbolic of menstruation. *Lichimbi* (navel), which is also symbolic of fertility, *kahama ka pembe* – a big and protruding puberty area and so is *lungano lwa tengu* (roan antelope's foot print).

### Taboos Associated with Wali

Whilst the *mwali* is under instructions, she has to strictly observe certain restrictions such as:

- (i) that the girdle and apron she wears must not get wet;
  - (ii) that during menstruation, she should not touch fire;
  - (iii) that she must cover her head to avoid seeing the roofs of houses;
- (This restriction also applies to *tundanji*);



- (iv) that during menstruation, she should not touch cooking utensils and neither cut fire-wood nor cultivate;
- (v) that she should speak in a very low voice. But when she needs attention, she must whistle (*kutwa chitwoli*);
- (vi) must avoid contact with *tundanji* otherwise she would be beaten.

Other prohibitions relate to foods as well since these are more related to sexuality and fertility:

- (i) Avoid eating fish especially *chivende* which makes *wali* become lukewarm.
- (ii) Avoid eating *mbovo ya musombo* fish which creates excessive vaginal mucus (*kuzova*).
- (iii) Avoid eating *musuta* fish which will either lead to epilepsy or frigidity during sexual intercourse.
- (iv) Avoid eating fish that will cause vaginal constriction and wet vagina, such as *mbuli* (barbel).

### ***Songs Sung at Wali***

At the entry of the girl into seclusion the dance known as *lilombola* is held:

*Enu malunga eh-e*  
*Eh - malomo enu,*  
*Enu mwazanga jimbiyo*

You men eh  
 Eh - your penis  
 You who like pubic tattooing  
 You also like labia

*Ove mukoka mukakundwingila kulihi?*  
*Lomo lyahola lyehi*

Clitoris where do you find a sensation  
 When the penis has lost its erection?

*Twamuwananga mbembele*  
*Twa,uwananga lomo lya Samalenge*  
*Muchichima ngwenji kwatako*  
*Livoko ngwenji vyambala*

We found him without a creation the penis of Samalenge,  
 In his heart he wants intercourse



## CHIEFS AND OTHER IMPORTANT FIGURES



*Senior Chief Ndungu at his palace during Likumbi Iya Mize*





*Chief Ndungu IV (Nguvu)*



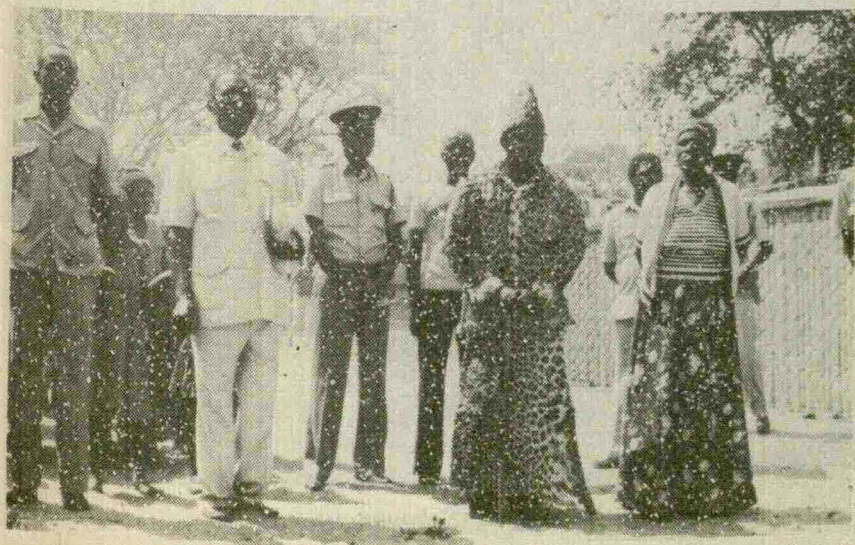


*Chief Shinde (left) and Mwata Kazembe (right) in 1952. To the right of Chief Shinde is Mose Sangambo*





*Mwata Yamvu Ditend*



*Chief Chinyama Litapi with John Mwendela (on his right) on Mize Day*





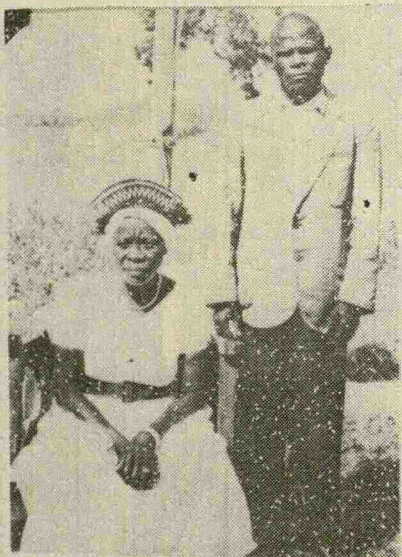
*Ndungu III (Sakavungu)*





*Ndungu II (Nyamulombwe)*





*Chieftainess Nyakatolo and her mukwetunga*



*George Suckling*



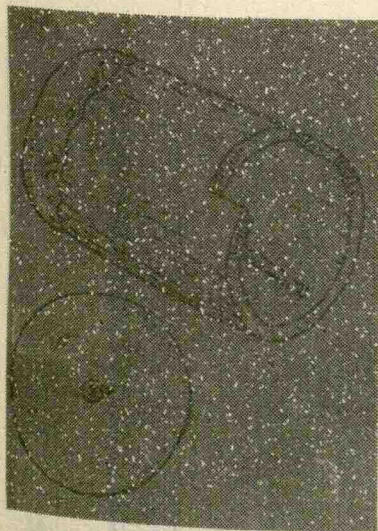
# ARTEFACTS



Mwondo



*Hand or Kaffir piano*

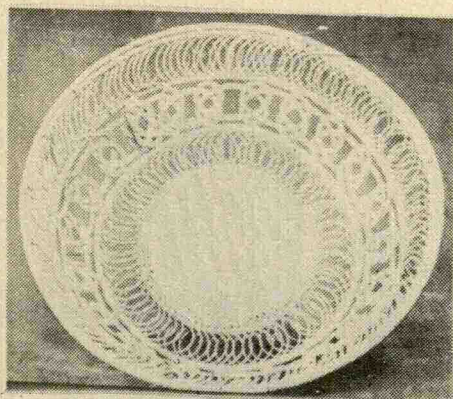


*Diagrammatic illustration of ngoma pwita*

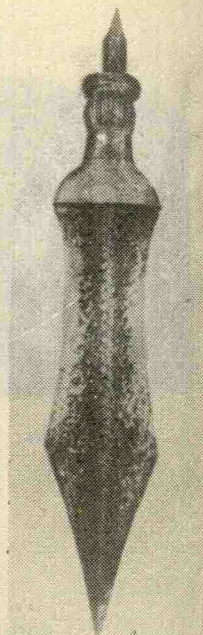


Ngoma

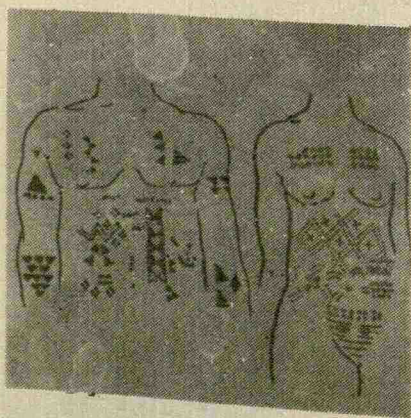




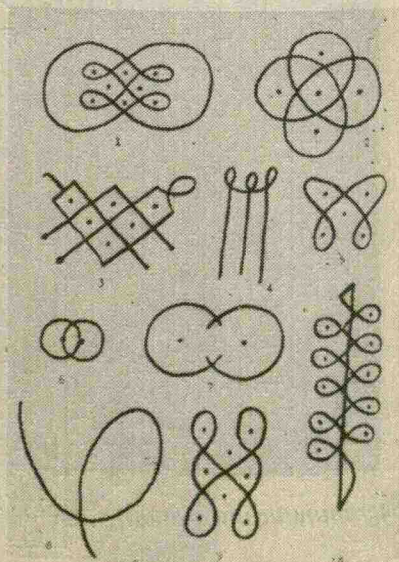
*Basket*



*Royal matchet*



*Decorative tattoo*

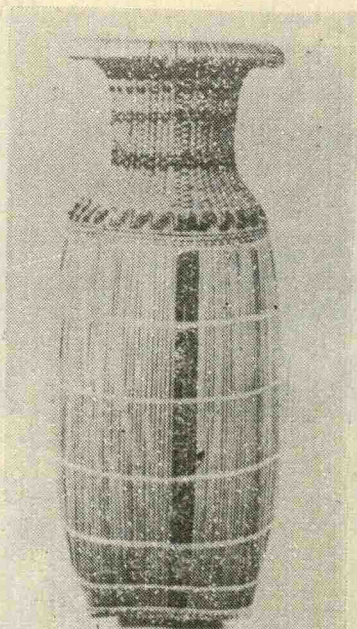


*Tusona*

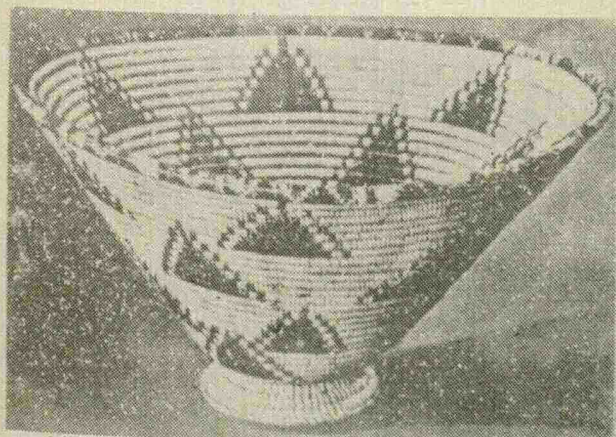




*Woodcarving and earthenware*



*Musalo basket*



*Chilele basket*



# MAKISHI



*A chileya on Mize Day*

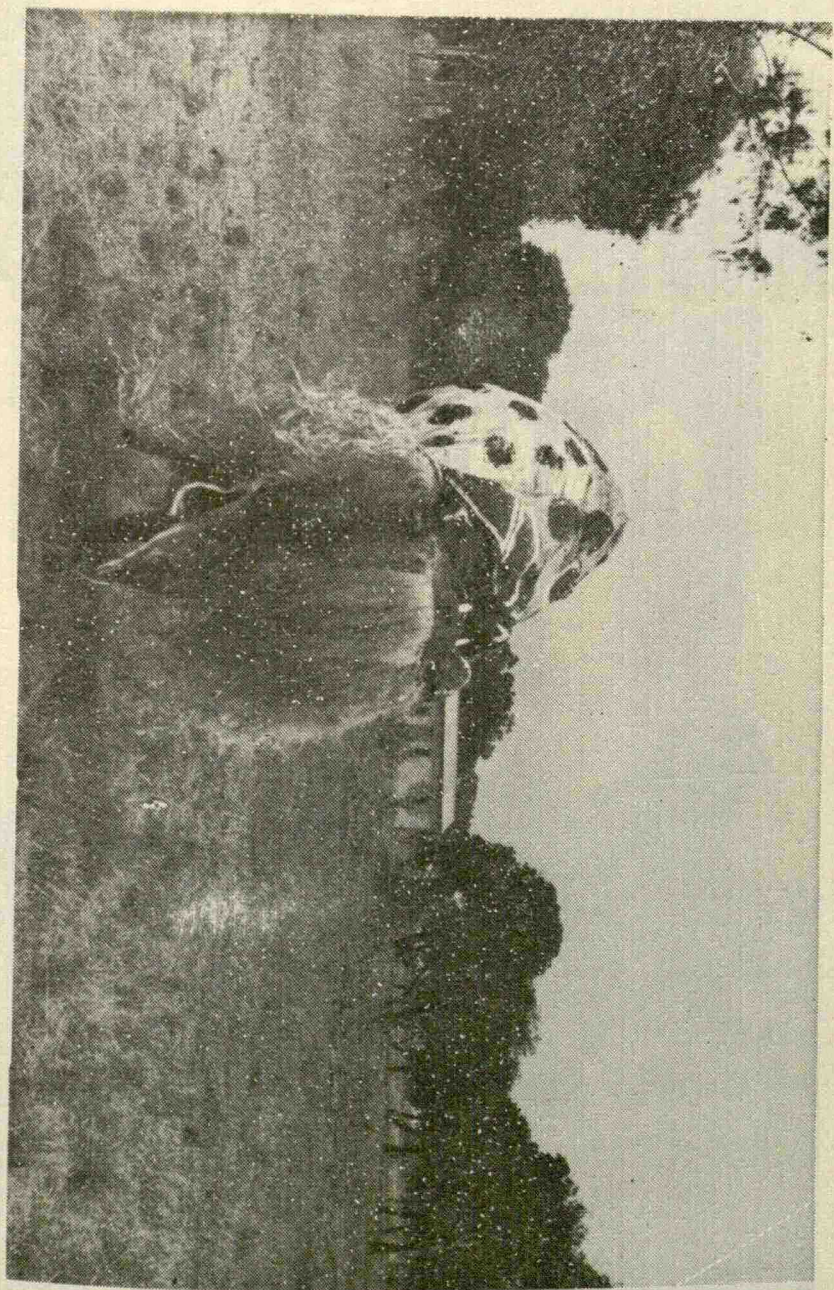


*Ndondo in action*



*Kanengenenge during Mukanda*





*Likishi on Mize Day*





Likopetulu



Likishi lya pwevo



*A likishi with a child*





Munguli





*Dr Ludwig Sondashi (in darkglasses) and Mr Roger Sakuhuka with kayipu  
(1986 Mize Day)*



*Makishi on Mize Day*





Katoyo



## OTHER CEREMONIES



*Kutopoka or royal dance*



*Tundanji at the camp after circumcision*