

A Political History of the Kingdom of Kazembe (Zambia)

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Thesis Submitted in Candidacy for the Degree of PhD, School of Oriental
and African Studies, University of London, 2000



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Abstract

This is a study of the eastern Lunda kingdom of Kazembe, the political history of which has never received detailed treatment despite its indisputable regional significance between the mid-eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth century. This work differs from most monographic studies of the history of the eastern savanna of Central Africa in its attempt to examine both the pre-colonial and the colonial experiences of the Kazembe kingdom. This approach reflects awareness of the manipulability of historical consciousness and the extent to which oral sources were moulded by the colonial context. The implementation of a flexible set of symbols and institutions of rule was the principal contribution of the rulers of the Kazembe kingdom to the political transformation of the territory to the east of the upper Lualaba River. It enabled them to wield a measure of influence over peripheral societies in both southern Katanga and the plateau to the east of the lower Luapula valley, the heartland of the kingdom and an ecological niche conducive to the development of political complexity and centralization. The disparity between the articulations of political control in the heartland and the periphery, together with the role of long-distance trade and the growing importance of external influences and threats, are essential to understand the decline of the power of the eastern Lunda in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was a much enervated polity which faced British and Belgian empire-builders in the last decade of the century. The kingdom was easily subdued, but the aspirations of its rulers lived on throughout the colonial period. An examination of the interactions between Lunda leaders, British officials and subjects of both shows that the royal family was better placed than the aristocracy to take advantage of the new political circumstances and answer the challenges of economic change and mission education. The furtherance of a new ethno-history was another manifestation of the fundamental adaptability of the royal family.

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Acknowledgements

It is a sincere pleasure to express my gratitude for the invaluable support which I have received from a number of institutions and individuals in the course of the present research. A 'Fees Only' Postgraduate Studentship from the British Academy and a Research Student Fellowship from the School of Oriental and African Studies helped me to overcome the stringencies by which the lives of graduate students in London are generally marred. My stay in Zambia between September 1998 and August 1999 was further assisted by small grants from the Central Research Fund of the University of London and the SOAS Scholarship Committee (Additional Award for Fieldwork). All these financial aids are thankfully acknowledged.

The SOAS History Department provided an exceptionally welcoming and stimulating environment. I am indebted to Professor Richard Rathbone and Dr. David Anderson, who liberally imparted advice and encouragement, and, especially, to Emeritus Professor Andrew Roberts, my supervisor and the scholar who did most to put Zambian history on the academic map. I was immensely lucky to work with Andrew both before and after his retirement, for almost every page of this thesis bears the mark of his constant guidance and rigorous criticism. Professor Ian Cunnison – whose absorbing anthropological studies introduced me to the complexities of the lower Luapula valley and suggested the initial idea for this project – took a keen interest in my work and, touchingly, made the bulk of his original fieldnotes available to me. I am also grateful to Michael Mann and Professors Jean-Luc Vellut and Jeffrey Hoover for their pertinent suggestions at various stages of the research. Needless to say, none of these distinguished scholars should be held responsible for any error and misconception which remain in the thesis despite their much appreciated cooperation.

In Europe and Zambia, I benefited from the assistance of the members of staff of numerous archives and libraries. I am particularly obliged to Dr. Boris Wastiau, of the Department of Cultural Anthropology of the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, and Patricia van Schuylenbergh, of the Historical Archives of the MRAC, both of whom welcomed me and spared me much time during two separate visits to Belgium. Fr. Ivan Page guided me through the Archive of the Generalate of the White Fathers and thus helped me to make the most of a fleeting trip to Rome. As for the National Archives of Zambia, the unwavering kindness of the entire staff was one of the greatest pleasures of my long months in Lusaka.

Several members of the History Department and the Institute for Economic and Social Research of the University of Zambia provided useful advice. Here, I wish to record my thanks to Dr. Mutumba Mainga Bull, Friday Mulenga, Ilse Mwanza, Dr. M. Phiri and Chris Simuyemba. This thesis also owes a great deal to conversations with the following friends and acquaintances in Zambia: Linda Beer, Professor Christine Choi Ahmed, Henrik Ellert, Dr. Jeremy Gould, Fr. Hugo and Marja Hinfelaar, Mulenga Kapwepwe, Flexon Mizinga, Medard Kasese and Joost Vranken. My fieldwork in Mweru-Luapula would not have been possible without the cooperation of my assistant, Victor Kawanga Kazembe. Victor and I eventually fell out, but I bear no rancour and harbour fond memories of our months together. I am, of course, especially indebted to all my Zambian informants. Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya and Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba deserve perhaps special mention as the first local historians to overcome the natural initial reluctance to talk to a nosy but obviously helpless *musungu*. The recently appointed Mwata Kazembe XIX Paul Mpemba Kanyembo showed a great interest in my work and spared no effort to facilitate it. I hope that after reading this study the gates of his *cipango* will still be opened for me.

Glossary

Some of the following terms or related forms may mean different things in different languages or dialects. Unless otherwise stated, our translation reflects the usage of the eastern Lunda. While the initials of personal political titles and offices are written in capital, the hereditary names of *bacikolwe* (cf.) and *bacilolo* (cf.) are not included in this glossary. Plural forms are given in parentheses only when employed in the text.

<i>akatasa</i>	head-gear of red feathers and insignia of 'Lundahood'
<i>bacanuma</i>	the members of the family of the mother of a reigning <i>Mwata Kazembe</i>
<i>Chitimukulu</i>	paramount chiefly title of the Bemba
<i>cikolwe (bacikolwe)</i>	clan or lineage head
<i>cilolo (bacilolo)</i>	aristocrat; territorial representative
<i>cipango (fipango)</i>	fence; enclosure
<i>citente (fitente)</i>	section or ward of a village
<i>ibulu</i>	open square outside the eastern gate of the royal <i>cipango</i>
<i>Inamwana</i>	cf. <i>Nyina-Mwana</i>
<i>induna</i>	Lozi aristocrat
<i>inshipo</i>	cow belt and insignia of 'Lundahood'
<i>iyanga (amayanga)</i>	colony of a <i>cilolo</i>
<i>Kakwata</i>	head of <i>kwatas</i>
<i>kahulua (bakahulua)</i>	a <i>cilolo</i> whose <i>ntombo</i> has given birth to a prince who has become <i>Mwata Kazembe</i>
<i>Katadofo</i>	'inspector' of the royal wives
<i>Katamatwi</i>	chief-executioner in the <i>musumba</i>
<i>katongo (tutongo)</i>	district of a <i>mwine wa mpanga</i>
<i>kilungu</i>	conus-shell and Yeke symbol
<i>kwata</i>	constabulary in the <i>musumba</i>
<i>lubembo</i>	gong
<i>Makwe</i>	cf. <i>Mwadi</i>
<i>masembe</i>	area to the west of the royal <i>cipango</i>
<i>mashamo</i>	graveyard
<i>mfumu</i>	chief
<i>Mfumumu ya Nseba</i>	intermediary between the <i>Mwata Kazembe</i> and foreign visitors
<i>Mfumwa-Lubinda</i>	'inspector of works' in the <i>musumba</i>
<i>mpembwe</i>	defensive ditch
<i>mpok</i>	sword
<i>Mukanso</i>	head of <i>bene mashamo</i>
<i>mukonso (mikonso)</i>	royal and aristocratic skirt; insignia of 'Lundahood'
<i>mulambo</i>	tribute
<i>Mulopwe</i>	Luba royal title
<i>musumba (misumba)</i>	royal capital
<i>mutentamo (mitentamo)</i>	solemn public audience chaired by the <i>Mwata Kazembe</i>
<i>mutomboko</i>	royal dance of conquest (yearly ceremony from 1961)
<i>muzimo</i>	royal spirit
<i>Mwadi</i>	principal royal wife

<i>Mwadyansita</i>	court official
<i>Mwami</i>	Sumbwa and Yeke royal title
<i>Mwanabute</i>	heir designated
<i>mwanangwa</i>	Yeke territorial representative
<i>mwana wa mfumu</i> (<i>bana ba mfumu</i>)	prince
<i>mwanso (myanso)</i>	office of royal appointment
<i>Mwant Yav</i>	Ruund royal title
<i>Mwata Kazembe</i>	royal title
<i>mwine (bene)</i>	head of a <i>citente</i> of the <i>musumba</i>
<i>mwine mashamo</i> (<i>bene mashamo</i>)	royal gravekeeper and spirit medium
<i>mwine wa mpanga</i> (<i>bene ba mpanga</i>)	'owner of the land'
<i>Nambansa</i>	sister of <i>Mwata Kazembe</i>
<i>nganga</i>	'medicine-man'; diviner
<i>Nkuba</i>	paramount chiefly title of the Shila
<i>Nswanamulopwe</i>	the <i>Mwata Kazembe</i> 's personal adviser and spokesman
<i>ntombo</i>	wife given to a reigning <i>Mwata Kazembe</i> by a <i>cilolo</i> or a subordinate
<i>Nyina-Mwana</i>	mother of <i>Mwata Kazembe</i>

Abbreviations

AAMAA	Archives Africaines de l'ex-Ministère des Affaires Africaines, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Brussels
ACWM	Archive of the Council for World Mission, School of Oriental and African Studies, London
ARGS	Archive of the Royal Geographical Society, London
BCAG	<i>British Central Africa Gazette</i> , Zomba
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CFS	Congo Free State
CSK	Comité Spécial du Katanga
DC	District Commissioner
EA-MRAC	Ethnographical Archives of the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren
<i>ES</i>	<i>Echoes of Service. A Record of Labour in the Lord's Name</i> , Bath
<i>HA</i>	<i>History in Africa</i>
HA-MRAC	Historical Archives of the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren
<i>IJAHS</i>	<i>International Journal of African Historical Studies</i>
<i>JAH</i>	<i>Journal of African History</i>
LMS	London Missionary Society
LNA	Lunda Native Authority
NAZ	National Archives of Zambia, Lusaka
NC	Native Commissioner
<i>NRJ</i>	<i>Northern Rhodesia Journal</i>
PB	Plymouth Brethren (Christian Missionaries in Many Lands)
PC	Provincial Commissioner
PRO	Public Record Office, London
RWC	Robert Williams and Company
SNA	Secretary for Native Affairs
TCL	Tanganyika Concessions Limited
UMHK	Union Minière du Haut Katanga
WF	White Fathers
WFA	Archive of the Generalate of the White Fathers, Rome
WFA-Z	Archive of the White Fathers-Zambia, Lusaka

Introduction

Francis Xavier Munona Chinyanta, the eighteenth ruler of the eastern Lunda kingdom of Kazembe, Luapula Province, North-Eastern Zambia, died suddenly on 14th June 1998, aged 53. Munona Chinyanta – who, before being enthroned in 1983, had worked as a teacher in Lusaka¹ – was buried two days later in the royal *mashamo*, the graveyard on the Lunde stream, some fifteen miles to the north of Mwanabombwe, the capital of the kingdom. Among many others, President Frederick Chiluba, Minister without Portfolio Michael Sata and Finance Minister Edith Nawakwi attended the funeral². No sooner was the late Mwata Kazembe laid to rest than the hereditary titleholders (*bakaluhua* and *bacilolo*) who form the so-called ‘Lunda Traditional Electoral College’ set about selecting a suitable successor among the members of the royal patrilineage. Initially, the aristocrats’ choice fell upon Nawezi Chinyanta, son of Mwata Kazembe XIV Chinyanta Nankula (d. 1950) and brother of the departed king. Due to Nawezi’s seeming unwillingness to forsake his business ventures in the Copperbelt and Congo, the eastern Lunda throne was offered to Emmanuel Kanyembo Ng’ombe, another Kitwe-based entrepreneur and the son of Mwata Kazembe XV Brown Ng’ombe (d. 1957)³. Shortly afterwards, and despite obtaining Emmanuel’s enthusiastic agreement, the Electoral College led by Robert Yamfwa, holder of the *Inamwana Kashiba*, the principal non-royal eastern Lunda title, made a U-turn and ruled that Paul Mbemba Kanyembo, the 37-year-old son of Mwata Kazembe XVII Paul Kanyembo Lutaba (d. 1983), should be the next king.

In the eyes of most of the aristocrats, Paul’s youth, educational achievements as a University of Zambia graduate and modest demeanour compared favourably with Emmanuel’s alleged ‘bossiness’ and drinking habit⁴. By now, though, Emmanuel was determined not to go down without a fight. Apart from rallying the support of fellow members of the royal family in Kitwe⁵, Emmanuel sought to divide the Electoral

¹ F.X.M. Chinyanta & J.C. Chiwale, *Mutomboko Ceremony and the Lunda-Kazembe Dynasty*, Lusaka, 1989, pp. 22-23; B. Kakoma, ‘A Look at the Lunda Succession Schism’, *Sunday Times of Zambia*, 9 August 1998. My thanks to Linda Beer for drawing my attention to this and other press cuttings.

² ‘Mwata Kazembe Put to Rest’, *Times of Zambia*, 17 June 1998.

³ *Zambia Daily Mail*, 3 August 1998.

⁴ Interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 5 April 1999.

⁵ On 11 August 1998, princes Shadrack Kamina Chinyanta and Potiphar Ng’ombe Chinyanta publicly announced that ‘appointing another chief from another line other than from Mwata [*Kazembe XV*

College in Mwanabombwe by bribing some of its least resolute members. When this latter stratagem was unearthed, the holder of the *Mwinempanda* title, guilty of accepting Emmanuel's presents, was barred from taking further part in the deliberations of the aristocratic council⁶. Having resisted Emmanuel's charge, *bacilolo* and *bakalulua* embarked on the lengthy preparations for Paul's installation ceremony, scheduled to take place on 4th and 5th September. However, the disgruntled Emmanuel had one last card up his sleeve. Unlike the Lunda's, the official Zambian legal code tends automatically to favour seniority in succession disputes. Emmanuel contrived to exploit this latent judicial conflict by filing a suit against his rival in Kitwe High Court on Thursday, 3rd September. Mr. Justice Muyinda Wanki endorsed Emmanuel's plea and ordered the installation of the new king to be postponed, pending a definite verdict on the matter. Unfortunately for Emmanuel, the court injunction only reached Mwanabombwe in the early hours of Saturday, when the ceremony was all but complete⁷. Having paid homage to the ancestral shrines of Chinyanta and Kasombola and having been ritually washed in the Ng'ona River, Paul was expected to be formally enthroned a few hours later after being 'shown to the people' (*kufumya Mwata*) and performing the *mutomboko* royal dance of conquest⁸. The arrival of the injunction plunged *bakalulua* and *bacilolo* into a difficult situation. No historical precedent justified the interruption – let alone the reversal – of the installation proceedings. Also, the aristocrats knew that Emmanuel would have been likely to prevail over his junior Paul, if the matter were to have been left entirely in the hands of the High Court in Kitwe. Although aware of the charges to which they were exposing themselves, the members of the Electoral College decided to defy the injunction and proceed with the remaining celebrations⁹.

The jubilant scenes which accompanied Paul's enthronement on Saturday morning did not deter Emmanuel from citing the new Mwata Kazembe and the

Brown] Ng'ombe's line at this stage would be a violation of the Lunda succession.' D. Kaminda, 'Politicians Hijacking Lunda Chief's Selection?', *Zambia Daily Mail*, 12 August 1998.

⁶ Interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala & Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Mwanabombwe, 9 April 1999; interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 7 May 1999.

⁷ 'Injunction Finds Mwata Kazembe Already Crowned', *Sunday Mail of Zambia*, 6 September 1998.

⁸ Interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 7 May 1999. For a detailed description of the royal installation ceremony of the eastern Lunda, see I. Cunnison, 'The Installation of Chief Kazembe XV', *Northern Rhodesia Journal (NRJ)*, I, 5, 1952, pp. 3-10.

⁹ Interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 7 May 1999.

Electoral College for contempt of court¹⁰. A few weeks later, however, Emmanuel voluntarily withdrew the lawsuit, and the whole affair seemed to have finally been put at rest¹¹. It was not to be. In the early hours of 30th December 1998, Emmanuel and 33 supporters armed with antiquated muzzle-loaders burst into the royal palace in Mwansabombwe and ejected the reigning king. Before a police unit from Kawambwa arrived at the scene, Emmanuel wore the royal garments and ordered drums to be beaten to signify his accession. It is unlikely that Emmanuel was looking for anything more than a publicity stunt, but the inhabitants of Mwansabombwe who had gathered outside the royal *cipango* (enclosure) were in no joking mood. Although the conspirators, charged with criminal trespass, did not resist arrest, the police, in the words of Innocent Kalembwe, officer in charge, Kawambwa District, 'had a tough time restraining the angry crowd from inflicting mob justice on the attempted coup plotters.' Ten days later, Emmanuel and his followers were still held in Kawambwa jail, as the police feared for their safety upon release¹². Eventually, Emmanuel made his way back to Kitwe, but the lengthy succession wrangle and the mock *putsch* that he promoted have left a deep scar in the community, some of whose members anticipate that Emmanuel's constant machinations will end up upsetting the royal spirits and result in disgrace and premature deaths¹³.

This narrative shows how relevant the Kazembe kingdom has remained to both local and national politics nearly forty years after Zambian independence. Of course, students of Zambian history and society were not unfamiliar with the eastern Lunda kingdom before the unfolding of the dramatic events of 1998, for its position within the social landscape of the lower Luapula valley in about 1950 had been celebrated by Ian Cunnison's anthropological researches. His acclaimed *History on the Luapula*¹⁴, a pioneering study of oral tradition, brought to the fore the pervasiveness of the relationship between past and present in colonial Luapula and the socio-political role of history. Cunnison's well-known monograph – *The Luapula Peoples of Northern*

¹⁰ D. Kaminda, 'Mwata's Coronation Team Faces Contempt Charge', *Zambia Daily Mail*, 10 September 1998.

¹¹ 'Mwata Kazembe in Mini Palace "Coup"', *Times of Zambia*, 31 December 1998.

¹² 'Peace Returns to Kazembe's Palace', *Zambia Daily Mail*, 11 January 1999.

¹³ E. Mwape & O. Lukhelo, 'New Mwata Conquers All Despite Hiccup', *Sunday Mail of Zambia*, 1 August 1999. See also I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples of Northern Rhodesia. Custom and History in Tribal Politics*, Manchester, 1959, p. 173.

¹⁴ I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula. An Essay on the Historical Notions of a Central African Tribe*, Rhodes-Livingstone Paper, 21, Cape Town, 1951 (reprinted, Manchester, 1969).

Rhodesia – embodied the conclusions of a series of papers published over almost a decade¹⁵. While his anthropological observations are of special interest to the historian of the colonial period in the lower Luapula valley, Cunnison never sought to trace the historical development of the political conformation of the Kazembe kingdom, from the origins onwards.

As for strictly historical works, the sparse secondary literature bearing on pre-colonial Kazembe is dominated by the preoccupation to elucidate the external relations of the kingdom. In particular, owing mainly to the nature of the most readily available evidence, it is the role of long-distance trade in the 19th century that has invariably attracted scholarly attention. Again, Cunnison led the way with two short papers based on published literary sources¹⁶, one of which he himself had recently translated from the Portuguese¹⁷. Similar sources were used by St. John a few years later; his study of the regional and long-distance trade of the lower Luapula valley and the Tanganyika-Malawi corridor built upon Cunnison's analysis and broadened its geographical focus¹⁸. The resulting neglect of endogenous processes of political innovation and change does not compare favourably with the achievements of the historiography of the eastern savanna of Central Africa in the 1960s and 1970s¹⁹. Andrew Roberts' work on the pre-colonial political history of the Bemba and Reefe's study of the Luba

¹⁵ I. Cunnison, 'Perpetual Kinship: a Political Institution of the Luapula Peoples', *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal (Human Problems in British Central Africa)*, 20, 1956, pp. 28-48, discusses the political implications of the twin institutions of positional succession and perpetual kinship. *Id.*, 'History and Genealogy in a Conquest State', *American Anthropologist*, LIX, 1, 1957, pp. 20-31, examines the configuration – as opposed to the function – of the Luapulans' historical lore. (A complete list of Cunnison's published studies of the lower Luapula valley is to be found in the bibliography at the end of this volume.)

¹⁶ I. Cunnison, 'Kazembe and the Portuguese, 1798-1832' *Journal of African History (JAH)*, II, 1, 1961, pp. 61-76; *Id.*, 'Kazembe and the Arabs to 1870', in E. Stokes & R. Brown (eds), *The Zambesian Past. Studies in Central African History*, Manchester, 1966, pp. 226-237. I. Cunnison, 'The Reigns of the Kazembes', *NRJ*, III, 2, 1956, pp. 131-138, an attempt to establish a tentative chronology of the reigns of the pre-colonial *Mwata Kazembes*, has been challenged by A.D. Roberts, 'Tippu Tip, Livingstone, and the Chronology of Kazembe', *Azania*, II, 1967, pp. 115-131.

¹⁷ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, Lisbon, 1960, 2 vols.

¹⁸ C. St. John, 'Kazembe and the Tanganyika-Nyasa Corridor, 1800-1890', in R. Gray & D. Birmingham (eds), *Pre-Colonial African Trade*, London, 1970, pp. 202-228. The trade of the eastern Lunda has also been discussed by J.-L. Vellut, 'Notes sur le Lunda et la Frontière Luso-Africaine (1700-1900)', *Etudes d'Histoire Africaine*, III, 1972, pp. 61-166; A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba. Political Growth and Change in North-Eastern Zambia before 1900*, London, 1973, pp. 189-194; E.A. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves in East Central Africa. Changing Patterns of International Trade to the Later Nineteenth Century*, London, 1975, pp. 121-122, 161, 178-182, 243-248; A. Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar. Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873*, London, 1987, pp. 81-82, 158-161, 189-190.

¹⁹ Following the geographical partition adopted by D. Birmingham & P.M. Martin (eds), *History of Central Africa*, I, London & New York, 1983, we define the eastern savanna of Central Africa as the territory bordered by the upper Kasai River, in the west, and Lakes Tanganyika and Malawi, in the east.

'empire' are a reminder of what has *not* been done for the eastern Lunda and their kingdom²⁰. A full-length political history of the lower Luapula valley was probably envisaged by Lary in the early 1970s, but his prospective research only yielded two unpublished seminar papers²¹.

A number of scholars have dealt with the colonial history of Mweru-Luapula, but, curiously, its most "visible" political institution has been rather overlooked. Our knowledge of the economic history of the region in the colonial era owes a great deal to Musambachime's published and unpublished works²². While the mind-set of the London Missionary Society missionaries in colonial North-Eastern Rhodesia and some of the consequences of their activities in the lower Luapula valley have been examined by Morrow²³, Cross' unpublished thesis has established a correlation between migrant

²⁰ Apart from A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, and T.Q. Reeve, *The Rainbow and the Kings. A History of the Luba Empire to 1891*, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1981, the following are the principal monographic studies of the eastern savanna's pre-colonial history based on fieldwork undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s: M. Mainga, *Bulozi Under the Luyana Kings. Political Evolution and State Formation in Pre-Colonial Zambia*, London, 1973; R.E. Schecter, 'History and Historiography on a Frontier of Lunda Expansion: the Origins and Early Developments of the Kanongesha', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1976; J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji: Reconstructing Ruund History (The Nuclear Lunda: Zaire, Angola, Zambia)', unpublished PhD thesis, Yale University, 1978, 2 vols; R.J. Papstein, 'The Upper Zambezi: a History of the Luvale People, 1000-1900', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California-Los Angeles, 1978; G. Prins, *The Hidden Hippopotamus. Reappraisal in African History: the Early Colonial Experience in Western Zambia*, Cambridge, 1980; J.C. Yoder, *The Kanyok of Zaire. An Institutional and Ideological History to 1895*, Cambridge, 1992.

²¹ P. Lary, 'Aspects of Luapula Society and History in the Later 19th Century', paper presented at the Political and Administrative Studies Seminar, University of Zambia, 1973, and *Id.*, 'The Luapula: Cunnison's Image and the Mid-Twentieth Century Reality', paper presented at the African History Seminar, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 1974.

²² M.C. Musambachime, 'The Agricultural History of Mweru-Luapula Area to 1940', in R. Palmer (ed.), *Zambian Land and Labour Studies III*, National Archives of Zambia Occasional Paper, 2, Lusaka, 1976; *Id.*, 'Northern Rhodesia Policy Towards African Agriculture: the Case of Mweru-Luapula, 1890-1950', paper presented at the History Seminar, University of Zambia, 1979; *Id.*, 'Development and Growth of the Fishing Industry in Mweru-Luapula, 1920-1964', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1981; *Id.*, 'The Social and Economic Effects of Sleeping Sickness in Mweru-Luapula, 1906-1922', *African Economic History*, 10, 1981, pp. 151-173. (Reference to Musambachime's numerous other works will be made in due course. For full details, the reader is again referred to the bibliography.) The post-colonial economic trajectory of our study area has been examined by R.H. Bates, *Rural Responses to Industrialization. A Study of Village Zambia*, New Haven & London, 1976, and J. Gould, *Luapula. Dependence or Development?*, Vammala, 1989. On the kinship structure of the lower Luapula valley in the 1970s and its interactions with economic development, see K. Poewe, *Religion, Kinship, and Economy in Luapula, Zambia*, Lewiston, Queenston & Lampeter, 1989. The works produced by the controversial author during what she calls her 'feminist phase' include K. Poewe, *Matrilineal Ideology. Male-Female Dynamics in Luapula, Zambia*, London, 1981, and *Id.* [Manda Cesara], *Reflections of a Woman Anthropologist: No Hiding Place*, London, 1982.

²³ S.F. Morrow, 'Some Social Consequences of Mission Education: the Case of Mbereshi, 1915-1940', *History in Zambia*, 11, 1981, pp. 10-23; *Id.*, 'Policy and Practice: the Economic Role of the London Missionary Society in Northern Rhodesia to 1914', *Zambia Journal of History*, 1, 1981, pp. 15-31; *Id.*, 'Motives and Methods of the London Missionary Society in Northern Rhodesia, 1887-1941', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 1985; *Id.*, "'No Girl Leaves the School

labour and the local appeal of the millennial ideology of Watch Tower prophets²⁴. Whereas, then, several aspects of the socio-economic and religious history of the region have received detailed treatment, no historian has ever touched upon the evolution of the kingdom of Kazembe and the struggle which its various components waged to adapt to the new political environment brought about by the imposition of European rule. It must also be noted that none of the recent and highly influential works concerned with the 'invention of tradition' and the 'creation of tribalism' in colonial Central Africa bear specifically on the lower Luapula valley²⁵.

One of the unfortunate by-products of this otherwise commendable new emphasis on the manipulability of historical consciousness and the potential for distortion embodied in oral sources has been the rapid evaporation of the commitment to the study of the pre-colonial history of the eastern savanna from the early 1980s. Nowadays, as the disenchantment generated by the economic and political decay of the continent intermingles with the growth of historical scepticism, it is only a slight exaggeration to say that the study of Central Africa's pre-colonial history – let alone pre-colonial political history – is a speciality threatened by extinction²⁶. It is our contention that a recognition of the weaknesses and limitations of oral or once oral texts need not lead to the demise of pre-colonial political history; rather, it must result in the repudiation of conventional compartmentalizations. Our basic assumption is that of the near impossibility of producing a sound pre-colonial history of a given African polity. In order to be sound, that history must be *both* pre-colonial and colonial. The politicization of the memory of the past predated the European occupation of Central Africa, but there is little doubt that the unfolding of a new socio-economic order and the countless local administrative revolutions experienced by African communities

Unmarried": Mabel Shaw and the Education of Girls at Mbereshi, Northern Rhodesia', *International Journal of African Historical Studies (IAHS)*, XIX, 4, 1986, pp. 601-635.

²⁴ S. Cross, 'Jehovah's Witnesses and Socio-Economic Change in the Luapula Province', paper presented at the Political Science Workshop, University of Zambia, n.d. (but 1972); *Id.*, 'The Watch Tower Movement in South-Central Africa, 1908-1945', unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford University, 1973 (especially, chapter VI).

²⁵ For the manipulation of customary law, see M. Chanock, *Law, Custom and Social Order. The Colonial Experience in Malawi and Zambia*, Cambridge, 1985. On the ossification of ethnic paradigms in Belgian Congo and British Northern Rhodesia, see the relevant articles in L. Vail (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, 1989, and W. van Binsbergen, *Tears of Rain. Ethnicity and History in Central Western Zambia*, London & New York, 1992.

²⁶ L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation. Histoire Socio-Politique de la Région entre Luapula et Copperbelt*, Tervuren, 1987, and H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire. Une Histoire du Royaume Yeke du Shaba (Zaire)*, Brussels, 1996, are the two proverbial exceptions which confirm the rule.

during the first half of the 20th century attributed an unprecedented urgency to this universal tendency. In so far as they confined their analyses to the period prior to the inception of colonialism, most historians of Central Africa have overlooked the real nature of the documentation at their disposal, as they did not pay sufficient attention to the forces and processes which were shaping – or had recently shaped – that documentation. Given the extent to which oral sources were ‘moulded by the political circumstances of colonial rule’ – a dynamic which even Vansina’s most recent methodological guide does not take systematically into account – ‘at least in some areas, it may be less important to collect traditions afresh than to clarify the context in which traditions have already been recorded, by doing research in the colonial archives.’²⁷ The significance of this approach to orally-derived materials is exemplified in chapter I with a detailed analysis of *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*²⁸, a justly famous example of literate ‘ethno-history’ and the principal “internal” source of evidence for the pre-colonial history of the kingdom of Kazembe²⁹.

The regional importance of the eastern Lunda kingdom may be judged from the considerable number of European or Europeanized travellers who visited its heartland in the lower Luapula valley from the end of the 18th century. Five major exploratory ventures – a brief survey of which is also included in chapter I – reached the successive capitals of the *Mwata Kazembes* between 1798 and 1883. Apart from providing generally invaluable eyewitness accounts, all these literate observers of pre-colonial Kazembe recorded fragments of the historical knowledge of the eastern Lunda. So did Belgian and British colonial representatives, who, spurred by their frequently changing administrative preoccupations, conducted continuous investigations into the past of Mweru-Luapula throughout the first four decades of the

²⁷ A.D. Roberts, ‘The Use of Oral Sources for African History’, *Oral History*, IV, 1, 1976, pp. 41-56 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 51); J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, Madison, 1985, and A.D. Roberts’ review of the latter in *Cultures et Développement*, XVIII, 4, 1985, pp. 757-758. My thinking along these lines has also been influenced by Papstein’s works. Despite its pre-colonial focus, Papstein’s unpublished PhD thesis is introduced by a discussion of the ‘historical environment’ of the Upper Zambezi region at the time of his fieldwork. ‘For without a knowledge of the modern history of the area [...], the current sociology of Luvale society, the current political setting and the aspirations of the Luvale in modern Zambia, it is impossible to interpret their oral traditions accurately.’ R.J. Papstein, ‘The Upper Zambezi’, p. 27. See also *Id.*, ‘The Transformation of Oral History under the Colonial State: the Case of the Upper Zambezi Region of Northern Rhodesia, c. 1906-1964’, *Zambia Journal of History*, 2, 1989, pp. 1-16.

²⁸ E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi* [My Ancestors and My People], London, 1951.

²⁹ Throughout this work, we shall follow van Binsbergen’s definition of literate ethno-history as ‘a half-product, halfway between such traditions and reminiscences as operate within a strictly local frame of reference, on the one hand, and scholarly argument, on the other.’ W. van Binsbergen, *Tears of Rain*, p. 60.

20th century. The quality and chronological distribution of the available written records of oral accounts mean that the case of the kingdom of Kazembe is unusually well suited to illustrate the historiographical relevance of the distinction between 'personal' or 'secondary' reminiscences and traditions proper. Even very cautious approaches to oral history recognize the overall validity of the former as 'relatively straightforward representations' of actual historical events, 'relying less on clichés and episodes than do oral traditions.'³⁰ This study draws upon the implications of the distinction – with which very few historians have taken issue³¹ – and can indeed be seen as an attempt to write history by placing one's focus of observation on the temporally shifting watershed where primary or secondary reminiscences are transfigured to the extent of becoming full-blown oral traditions.

While this work takes up the challenge of the growing body of insights into the problems posed by the historical study of oral texts, it does very little justice to historical linguistics, a resource the full potentialities of which have been demonstrated by Vansina over the past decade³². Chapter II, which seeks to account for the emergence of a discrete identity among the culturally heterogeneous migrants who gave birth to the kingdom of Kazembe in the first half of the 18th century and to describe the economic and political landscape of southern Katanga and Mweru-Luapula before that time, would no doubt have benefited a great deal from the adoption of comparative semantic linguistics (or 'Words and Things' approach). The same is true of archaeology. In this instance at least, my own deficiencies are less responsible than the almost complete lack of relevant data. Unlike the Upemba

³⁰ J.C. Miller, 'Introduction: Listening for the African Past', in *Id.* (ed.), *The African Past Speaks. Essays on Oral Tradition and History*, Folkestone, 1980, p. 9. Whereas Miller's remarks referred strictly to 'personal' reminiscences, several scholars have seen fit to extend some at least of the characteristics of the latter to 'secondary' reminiscences or 'first-stage tradition', it being an 'intermediate category' consisting 'of the reported experiences of those who were old when today's elderly informants were young.' C. Wrigley, *Kingship and State. The Buganda Dynasty*, Cambridge, 1996, p. 8. See also A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 377-378, and D. Henige, *Oral Historiography*, London, 1982, p. 108.

³¹ C. Hamilton, 'Ideology and Oral Traditions: Listening to the Voices "from Below"', *History in Africa (HA)*, XIV, 1987, pp. 67-86; J. Willis, 'Two Lives of Mpamizo: Understanding Dissonance in Oral History', *HA*, XXIII, 1996, pp. 319-332.

³² J. Vansina, *Paths in the Rainforest. Toward a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa*, London, 1990; *Id.*, 'Government in Kasai Before the Lunda', *IJAHS*, XXXI, 1, 1998, pp. 1-22.

depression of central Katanga or the westernmost sector of the Zambian Copperbelt³³, the archaeology of southern Katanga and Mweru-Luapula remains largely unknown³⁴.

A subsidiary reason for the current disregard of pre-colonial political history may well lie in the fact that earlier, functionalist-inspired surveys have often tended to project foreign models of state upon fluid systems of political relationships which bore little or no similarity with the polities of feudal Europe or their later bureaucratic offshoots³⁵. This work attempts to avoid this pitfall and to confirm the extent to which African pre-colonial states were 'first and foremost [...] constructions of the mind', to use one of Vansina's memorable phrases³⁶. As shown in chapter III, the fundamental contribution of the rulers of the Kazembe kingdom to the political development of the territory to the east of the upper Lualaba River between the 18th and the 19th century is precisely to be found in the perfecting of an original set of flexible institutions and symbols of power which worked towards mitigating the effects of geographical separation and helped them to maintain a degree of influence and control over much of southern Katanga and the westernmost reaches of the plateau to the east of the Luapula River. In the lower Luapula valley, on the other hand, Lunda rule impinged much more profoundly upon the prerogatives of autochthonous communities and hence called for the elaboration of legitimizing devices of a special kind. The disparity between the intensity of political control in the heartland and the periphery, together with the role of long-distance trade in the political economy of the kingdom and the ensuing materialization of external influences and threats, are essential to understand the sudden decline of the power of the eastern Lunda in the second half of the 19th century. These closely interwoven dynamics are discussed in chapters IV and V.

Paradoxically – in light of the aforementioned neglect of pre-colonial political history – the enduring socio-political significance of chiefly institutions in independent Africa has recently begun to attract scholarly attention³⁷. Contrary to the evolutionistic

³³ P. De Maret, 'Sanga: New Excavations, More Data, and Some Related Problems', *JAH*, XVIII, 3, 1977, pp. 321-337, and references cited therein; M.S. Bisson, 'The Prehistoric Coppermines of Zambia', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California-Santa Barbara, 1976.

³⁴ In 1973-4, Derricourt conducted a preliminary survey of some of the presumed archaeological sites in the Luapula Province, but no excavations in the Luapula valley proper were undertaken. R. Derricourt, *People of the Lakes. Archaeological Studies in Northern Zambia*, Zambian Papers, 13, Manchester, 1980.

³⁵ G. Prins, *The Hidden Hippopotamus*, is probably the most notable exception to this pattern.

³⁶ J. Vansina, 'Foreword. From Memory to History: Processes of Luba Historical Consciousness', in M. Nooter Roberts & A.F. Roberts (eds), *Memory: Luba Art and the Making of History*, New York & Munich, 1996, p. 13.

³⁷ E.A.B. van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal & R. van Dijk (eds), *African Chieftaincy in a New Socio-Political Landscape*, Hamburg, 1999; D. Maxwell, *Christians and Chiefs in Zimbabwe. A Social*

assumptions and modernizing expectations of nationalist politicians and historians, the task of nation-building in Africa has rarely resulted in the complete exclusion of “traditional” rulers from the political arena³⁸. Our analysis of the period 1890-1950 hopes to make a small contribution to the debate. While chapter VI charts the failure of Mwata Kazembe X’s endeavour to preserve his pre-colonial prerogatives intact in the last decade of the 19th century, chapter VII examines the interactions between Lunda territorial leaders, British officials and subjects of both in the course of the following fifty years. Its underlying argument is that the ability of contemporary chiefs to preserve a room for independent political manoeuvre is rooted in the ingenious ways in which their predecessors adjusted to the new intermediary position in which they found themselves following their forced inclusion in the administrative structures of the colonial states. The eastern Lunda royal family and its talent for taking advantage of transformed political circumstances dominate chapter VIII, which discusses the relationships between the different factions of the local élite. Not only did the royal family succeed in increasing its administrative prerogatives within the much curtailed boundaries of the kingdom, but it also proved better equipped than the aristocracy to handle the social consequences of economic change and mission education. The epilogue of the thesis returns to the published eastern Lunda ethno-history and locates its production within the framework of the social tensions which pervaded the lower Luapula valley in the middle colonial period.

History of the Hwesa People, c. 1870s-1990s, Edinburgh, 1999. On the Zambian case, see W. van Binsbergen, ‘Chiefs and the State in Independent Zambia. Exploring the Zambian National Press’, *Journal of Legal Pluralism*, 25-26, 1987, pp. 139-199.

³⁸ R.J.A.R. Rathbone, *Nkrumah & the Chiefs*, Oxford, 2000, pp. 1-8.

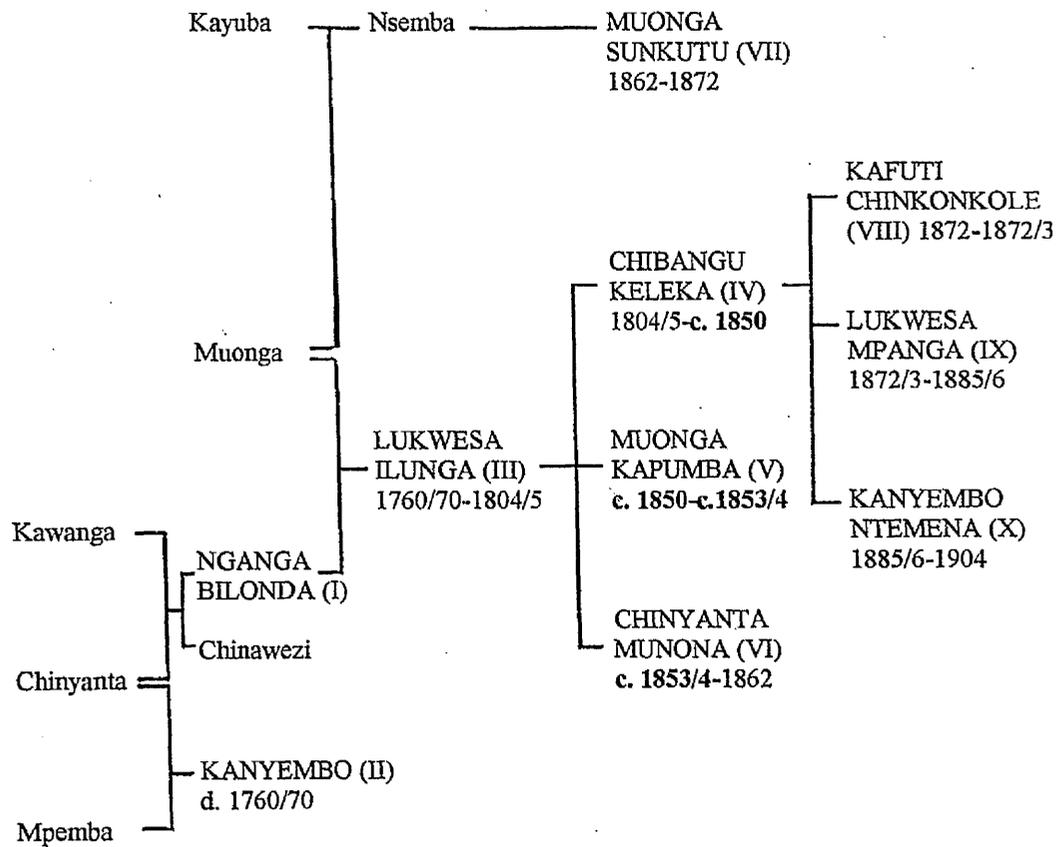


Fig. 1 **Genealogy of Pre-Colonial Mwata Kazembes.** From E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', unpublished typescript, n.d. (but 1948-9). (The names of *Mwata Kazembes* are written in capital. The dates in bold are based on H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, pp. 27-29. All the other dates follow A.D. Roberts, 'Tippu Tip, Livingstone, and the Chronology of Kazembe'.)

Chapter I

METHODOLOGY & SOURCES

“Tout livre d’histoire digne de ce nom devrait porter un chapitre [...] qui s’intitulait à peu près “Comment puis-je savoir ce que je vais dire?” Je suis persuadé qu’à prendre connaissance de ces confessions, même les lecteurs qui ne sont pas du métier éprouveraient un vrai plaisir intellectuel. Le spectacle de la recherche, avec ses succès et ses traverses, est rarement ennuyeux. C’est le tout fait qui répand la glace et l’ennui.”¹

This chapter examines the sources at our disposal and elaborates on some of the methodological points sketched in the introduction. Even though our study purports to bridge the conventional gap between pre-colonial and colonial history, the evidence relating to the former presents particular problems and hence requires a lengthier discussion. This is especially so, since most of the “oral traditions” with which we shall be dealing in the next chapters are not oral traditions in the original sense of the word, but written records of oral sources. The latter, as recently pointed out by Hamilton, have a history in their own right.

‘We need to know under what circumstances oral texts came to be transcribed, and by whom. We need to know all about the background, interests, and experiences of the transcribers. We also need to know who the informants were, their backgrounds, interests, and experiences. We need to establish how they gleaned the information provided, and we need to know the same things, in turn, about their original sources.’²

Plainly, when a free-floating oral historical account becomes crystallized in a written form, its nature changes abruptly. In some respects, this may be an advantage in that the oral narrative may be written down – and thus stabilized once and for all – before the personal or secondary reminiscences which constitute it turn into a full-blown oral tradition. In addition, the recorded text may become the bedrock from which to judge later versions of the same account. Yet, Hamilton’s list of the background information necessary to evaluate the character and faithfulness of a written tradition cannot be held to be complete unless the ultimate fate of the text is also assessed. Indeed, it is one thing if the written record remains safely kept in a

¹ M. Bloch, *Apologie pour l’Histoire ou Métier d’Historien*, Paris, 1974, pp. 67-68 (1st edn., Paris, 1949).

colonial or missionary archive; quite another if the narrative is collected in vernacular for publication purposes. In this latter case, the 'ethno-historical' text is likely to conflate several separate traditions and to be influenced by previously published literary sources. Furthermore, the socio-political impact among a given population of a published text in the local language is bound to be incommensurably greater than that of any oral account. The likelihood of it influencing beyond recognition the state of knowledge in the area and bringing about a new and artificial uniformity must be taken into consideration³. As will be seen in the following pages, the historian of the pre-colonial kingdom of Kazembe has to be ready to face all these questions. In order to disentangle them effectively, it is necessary to describe in detail the principal sources available for study, beginning with the literary ones.

1) Literate Observers of the Pre-Colonial Kingdom of Kazembe

The first known non-African to visit the eastern Lunda capital in the lower Luapula valley in 1796 was the Tete-based trader Manoel Caetano Pereira. The first-hand information which he brought back to Mozambique prompted Francisco José Maria de Lacerda e Almeida, the new Governor of the Rios de Sena, to organize the first official Portuguese expedition to the kingdom of Kazembe in the summer of 1798. Apart from paving the way for the inauguration of regular trading relations between the Luapula valley and the lower Zambezi River, Lacerda also hoped to establish a direct overland communication between the Portuguese possessions in Mozambique and Angola. Following the untimely death of Lacerda, the leadership of the expedition was taken over by Father Francisco João Pinto, under whose command the caravan spent several months in the Lunda royal capital and then headed back for Tete, where it arrived at the end of 1799 after travelling through the southern borders of the kingdom. The records which the expedition left in its wake illuminate not only the modalities of the long-distance trade revolving around the lower Luapula valley, but also the

² C. Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty. The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention*, Cambridge (Mass.) & London, 1998, pp. 52-53.

³ On the ubiquity of 'feedback', the process whereby written and, especially, published materials are assimilated into oral historical lore so swiftly and thoroughly as to become components of the 'local orthodoxy', see D. Henige, 'Truths yet Unborn? Oral Tradition as a Casualty of Culture Contact', *JAH*, XXIII, 3, 1982, pp. 395-412, and J.-P. Chrétien, 'Confronting the Unequal Exchange of the Oral and the Written', in B. Jewsiewicki & D. Newbury (eds), *African Historiographies, What History for Which Africa?*, Beverly Hills, 1986, pp. 75-90. For a 'counterexample', see J. Willis, 'Feedback as a "Problem" in Oral History: An Example from Bonde', *HA*, XX, 1993, pp. 353-360.

organization of the royal capital and its relationships with the southern periphery at the end of the 18th century⁴.

The first eyewitness account of the western periphery of the kingdom to the west of the Luapula River is to be found in the travel diary of Pedro João Baptista, one of the two well-known Angolan *pombeiros* who accomplished the *viagem à contracosta* between 1804 and 1814. After a stay of either two or four years in the capital of Chibangu Keleka⁵, Mwata Kazembe IV, the two travellers resumed their journey towards Tete and charted the changes in the southern periphery of the kingdom since the passage of Father Pinto ten years previously⁶. Due to the temporarily tense relationships between eastern Lunda and Bisa, and despite the *pombeiros*' undisputable success, the contacts between the Luapula valley and Portuguese Zambesia suffered a setback during the second and third decade of the 19th century. Even though it is highly likely that a handful of traders continued to follow the route laid open by the previous exploratory ventures, these small-scale undertakings do not seem to have left substantial documentary traces⁷.

Somewhat ironically, the most significant Portuguese literary source relating to pre-colonial Kazembe resulted from the least successful official mission into the interior of Mozambique. Although the 1831-2 expedition to Kazembe did not achieve any of its aims – and in fact did much to end every kind of Portuguese interest in the lower Luapula valley – Antonio Candido Pedroso Gamitto, the second-in-command, produced a superb diary, rightly described as a 'pioneering achievement in ethnography'⁸ and as 'one of the best of all the travel books written by European explorers in the nineteenth century.'⁹ Apart from his first-hand information on the

⁴ Lacerda and Pinto travel diaries – together with other relevant documents like the 'Noticias Dadas por Manuel Caetano Pereira' – were originally published in the *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes* (parte não oficial), IV, 7-11, 1844; V, 1-5, 7, 9, 10-12, 1845. They were subsequently reprinted in the *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colónias*, II, 15-20, 1926, and in F.J.M. de Lacerda e Almeida (ed. M. Murias), *Travessia da Africa*, Lisbon, 1936. The original 1844-45 edition has been translated into English by R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, London, 1873, pp. 33-164.

⁵ F. Bontinck, 'Le Voyage des Pombeiros: Essai de Réinterprétation', *Cultures au Zaïre et en Afrique*, 4, 1974, pp. 39-70.

⁶ Baptista's travel diary and related documents were first published in the *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes* (parte não oficial), III, 5-7, 9-10, 1843. An English translation by A.B. Beadle is to be found in the second part of R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 167-244. There also exists an almost complete and usefully annotated French translation by A. Verbeke & M. Walraet (eds & transl.), *La Première Traversée du Katanga en 1806. Voyage des "Pombeiros" d'Angola aux Rios de Sena*, Brussels, 1953.

⁷ I. Cunnison, 'Kazembe and the Portuguese', p. 72; E.A. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves*, pp. 243-244.

⁸ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 2.

⁹ M.D.D. Newitt, *Portuguese Settlement on the Zambesi. Exploration, Land Tenure and Colonial Rule in East Africa*, London, 1973, p. 138. See also M.G. Marwick, 'An Ethnographic Classic Brought to

turmoil shaking the former southern periphery of the kingdom, Gamitto's prolonged stay in the valley allowed him to observe the workings of the Lunda state and identify some at least of the functions performed by the most important title-holders both in the capital and outlying areas. Furthermore, Gamitto's descriptions of the impact of long-distance trade and overall economic life of the kingdom are remarkably more precise and acute than those of his predecessors.

Following the abandonment of the Portuguese policy of penetration into the interior of Mozambique, the historian has to register a temporary interruption in the series of written records. In 1858, Richard F. Burton gathered some information on the kingdom of Kazembe while navigating Lake Tanganyika¹⁰, but for the next eyewitness account one has to wait until 1867-8, when David Livingstone sojourned for two brief spells in the capital of Muonga Sunkutu, Mwata Kazembe VII. Livingstone's account throws light on both the internal and external causes of the crisis which was then sapping the foundations of the eastern Lunda kingdom and undermining its regional position¹¹. In the 1860s, the effects of Muonga Sunkutu's usurpation of the throne intermingled with the growing assertiveness of East African traders in Mweru-Luapula and the worsening of the relationships between eastern Lunda and Msiri's newly formed Yeke kingdom in Katanga. Fifteen years later, the deepening of the crisis and the involvement of new African actors in it were witnessed by the next literate visitor to Kazembe: the French explorer Victor Giraud¹². Also, the political impact of Swahili traders in the lower Luapula valley is illustrated by the published memoirs of Tippu Tip and Abdullah ibn Suliman¹³.

Light', *Africa*, XXXIV, 1, 1963, pp. 46-56. Originally published in 1854, Gamitto's memoirs were reprinted with the title *O Muata Cazembe*, Lisbon, 1937, 2 vols. Again, an excellent English translation of the text is available: A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*. The third and final part of R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 247-257, contains a short 'Resumé of the Journey of Mm. Monteiro and Gamitto' by C.T. Beke.

¹⁰ R.F. Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa*, New York, 1961, II, pp. 147-152 (1st edn., London, 1860).

¹¹ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals of David Livingstone*, London, 1874, 2 vols.

¹² V. Giraud, *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale*, Paris, 1890.

¹³ Tippu Tip (ed. & transl. W.H. Whiteley), *Maisha ya Hamed bin Muhammed el Murjebi, yaani Tippu Tip*, Nairobi, Kampala & Dar es Salaam, 1974. Tippu Tip's autobiography in Swahili was originally published by H. Brode in 1902-3. Whiteley's English translation first appeared in the *Journal of the East African Swahili Committee*, 28-29, 1958-1959. There also exists a splendidly annotated French translation of Tippu Tip's account by F. Bontinck, *L'Autobiographie de Hamed ben Mohammed el-Murjebi Tippu Tip (ca. 1840-1903)*, Brussels, 1974. Abdullah ibn Suliman's biography was collected in 1913 by a British official in Kawambwa and subsequently published by A.D. Roberts (ed.), 'The History of Abdullah ibn Suliman', *African Social Research*, 4, 1967, pp. 241-270 (the original text is to be found in the Kawambwa District Notebook (DNB), II, pp. 81-97, National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), KSG3/1).

Between 1890 and 1899, the period comprised between Alfred Sharpe's treaty-signing expedition to North-Eastern Zambia and Katanga and the final subjugation of the eastern Lunda by the British South Africa Company (BSAC), the number of written sources relating to the kingdom of Kazembe and the whole of Mweru-Luapula increases significantly. All these records allow the researcher to follow in some detail the early dealings between eastern Lunda royals and colonial representatives. Before the establishment of the Kalungwishi BSAC station in 1893, Sharpe, Harry H. Johnston's subordinate and the BSAC's representative, passed twice through the lower Luapula valley and reported on the overall political situation of the territory¹⁴. The limited surviving records of the Kalungwishi officials for the mid-1890s can be found in the Public Record Office¹⁵, London, and the National Archives of Zambia¹⁶, Lusaka. Some of them – often in an abridged form – were published in the *British Central Africa Gazette (BCAG)*, which also includes excerpts of the correspondence of Poulett Weatherley, an explorer and big-game hunter who travelled extensively in Mweru-Luapula between 1895 and 1900¹⁷. Much light on the immediate background to the military expedition against Kazembe in 1899 is thrown by the correspondence of the Commissioner of the British Central Africa Protectorate, also at the PRO¹⁸

Missionary sources are a useful supplement to early colonial records. From the late 1880s, the Plymouth Brethren (as the Christian Missionaries in Many Lands were then known) dwelling in Bunkeya, Msiri's capital, began to consider the possibility of opening a mission station on the eastern bank of the Luapula River. Before finally succeeding in 1899, Dan Crawford, the leader of the Plymouth Brethren (PB) in Katanga since the early 1890s, conducted several preliminary trips in British territory to the east of the Luapula. In May-June 1893, Crawford travelled through the territory to the south-west of Lake Mweru and reported on the aftermath of the Lunda-Yeke war

¹⁴ Sharpe to Johnston, 4 March 1891, encl. in Johnston to Foreign Office (FO), 6 May 1891, Public Record Office (PRO), FO84/2114. The lengthy despatch was later published with the title 'Alfred Sharpe's Travels in the Northern Province and Katanga', *NRJ*, III, 3, 1957, pp. 210-219. Sharpe described his expedition in a rather more "academic" fashion in 'A Journey to Garenganze', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, XIV, 1, 1892, pp. 36-47. Sharpe's account of his second journey to Mweru-Luapula is to be found in Sharpe to Johnston, 17 December 1892, encl. in Johnston to FO, 2 February, 1893, PRO, FO2/54. A revised version of the report, polished of its most compromising political statements, was published with the title 'A Journey from the Shire River to Lake Mweru and the Upper Luapula', *Geographical Journal*, I, 6, 1893, pp. 524-533.

¹⁵ FO2/68; FO2/89.

¹⁶ NER/A1/5/1-2.

¹⁷ Some of Weatherley's unpublished travel diaries and letters are housed in the Archive of the Royal Geographical Society (ARGS), London.

¹⁸ FO2/210-11.

and the turmoil brought about by the slaver Shimba. He then crossed the Luapula and visited the capital of Kanyembo Ntemena, Mwata Kazembe X. A few months later, Crawford trekked around Lake Mweru until he found a suitable location for a new mission along its north-western shore. In the summer of 1897, Crawford and his wife paid another visit to Kanyembo Ntemena and gathered information on the ongoing war between the latter and the Kalungwishi boma¹⁹. The PB, installed around Johnston (now Mambilima) Falls from 1899, were soon joined by the White Fathers (WF) and the London Missionary Society (LMS). Since these latter two societies only began reporting from Mweru-Luapula in 1900, the nature and quality of their records will be discussed in the next section²⁰.

Following the death of Msiri in December 1891 and the rapid foundering of the Yeke polity, Kanyembo Ntemena set about reasserting the eastern Lunda sway over the territory to the west of the Luapula. This brought him into collision with the Congo Free State (CFS) officials of the Lofoi station, some of whom have left essential published and unpublished memoirs²¹.

To be sure, the quality of the above materials is uneven, and the possibility of reciprocal influences cannot always be discounted²². Moreover, as we shall see below, published literary sources cannot automatically be collated with *Ifikotwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*, the mid-20th century eastern Lunda ethno-history. However, the great

¹⁹ Extracts from Crawford's travel diaries are to be found in G. Tilsley, *Dan Crawford. Missionary and Pioneer in Central Africa*, London & Edinburgh, n.d. (but 1929). Substantial excerpts of the correspondence and journals of the missionaries on the field were printed in the *Echoes of Service. A Record of Labour in the Lord's Name*, the PB's two-weekly journal. Much less useful are Crawford's inflated and rather self-congratulatory recollections: D. Crawford, *Thinking Black. 22 Years without a Break in the Long Grass of Central Africa*, London, 1912, and *Id.*, *Back to the Long Grass. My Link with Livingstone*, Toronto, London & New York, n.d. (but 1924(?)).

²⁰ Carson, a member of the LMS Kawimbe mission between Lakes Tanganyika and Malawi, visited the eastern Lunda kingdom in 1894. Unfortunately, as already noted by A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 244, n. 150, his journey has left very little archival evidence.

²¹ E. Verdick, *Les Premiers Jours au Katanga (1890-1903)*, Brussels, 1952, and H. Delvaux, *L'Occupation du Katanga, 1891-1900. Notes et Souvenirs du Seul Survivant*, Elisabethville, 1950. The private papers of both authors – together with those of Clément Brasseur, the real protagonist of the "pacification" of Katanga – can be consulted in the Historical Archives of the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale (HA-MRAC), Tervuren. Heavily censored excerpts of Brasseur's private correspondence have been printed in *La Belgique Coloniale*, II, 2, 17, 25, 40, 1896; III, 11-14, 19-20, 1897; IV, 16, 1898, and *Le Mouvement Géographique*, XIV, 35-38, 1897.

²² While Livingstone seems to have been familiar with earlier Portuguese accounts, Sharpe had probably read R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, for he noted that 'the Kazembe of to-day is not such a great chief as the Kazembe of one hundred years ago, when Dr. Lacerda's expedition visited this country.' (A. Sharpe, 'A Journey', p. 531.) Of course, Sharpe himself and most British officials and missionaries in Mweru-Luapula are bound to have been influenced by Livingstone's *Last Journals*.

advantage of possessing a rich series of written sources spread over a relatively long period of time lies precisely in the fact that it allows the historian to examine phenomena which fall outside the scope of oral tradition. If oral traditions (whether undigested or systematically edited as in *Ifikohwe Fyandi*) were all we have, very little could be learned about, say, the organization of the royal capitals or the emergence and subsequent erosion of the royal monopoly over long-distance trade.

Some of the above-described literary sources suggest another historiographical possibility. As will be seen in chapter III, in their endeavours to put their newly acquired powers on a firmer base, the rulers of the eastern Lunda kingdom exploited to the full the potentialities of historical reconstruction. The production and preservation of an account of the prestigious beginnings of the royal dynasty, its evolution and early dealings with the previous inhabitants of the lower Luapula valley served the dual purpose of fostering a dominant Lunda identity and cementing the links of subordination between foreign conquerors and autochthonous communities²³. So significant did royal history seem that several of the literate observers of pre-colonial Kazembe were led to include fragments of it in their writings. During the first decade of the 19th century, Baptista recorded the story of the rise of Mwata Kazembe I Ng'anga Bilonda and his conquering thrust to the east of the Lualaba River²⁴. Since the Lunda of Kanyembo Mpemba, Ng'anga's brother and immediate successor, appear to have reached the lower Luapula valley in about 1740²⁵, Baptista is bound to have heard about Mwata Kazembe I from either a very old eyewitness or, more probably, from someone who had been instructed by a direct protagonist. The narrative that Baptista collected, in other words, was not a tradition, but a reminiscence from which a full-blown tradition had not yet burgeoned out. Due to the chronological contiguity between the events and the recording of the narrative (*reminiscence*) about them, one has reason to expect a relatively low degree of distortion. Or, if one prefers, a less high degree than one would find had the narrative (*tradition*) been collected for the first time, say, two-hundred years after the actual occurrence of the episode which it describes. In this latter case, the simple transmission of the tradition through generations, coupled with the successive and highly mutable 'homeostatic' pressures

²³ I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, pp. 25-28, and *Id.*, 'History and Genealogies', pp. 27-28, are particularly relevant to our argument.

²⁴ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 231-232.

²⁵ In 1799, the 'Murundas' told Fr. Pinto that 'sixty years ago they came from the Western regions [...]'. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

of the present upon the memory of the past, would have rendered the historical adherence of the narrative much harder to postulate²⁶.

To say that traditions proper are generally less reliable than reminiscences is not to deny that the latter are also affected by the politics of history-making. The main difference is possibly to be found in the degree of wilfulness with which reminiscences and traditions are manipulated. Reminiscences may be tailored to suit political contingencies, but this often – although not always²⁷ – presupposes a conscious effort by the narrator. Conversely, when a specific tradition is recited, it embodies a chronologically stratified series of distortions, most of which are likely not to be known to the narrator. The difference is relevant to the historian, for intentional manipulations are much easier to identify than unconscious ones. The memory of the past is always ‘prostituted’ to socio-political contingencies²⁸, but reminiscences offer far more opportunities to counteract the effects of this tendency than traditions proper. A discussion of the extensive colonial records of oral sources for Mweru-Luapula will take us one step closer to understanding the full significance of this line of reasoning.

2) Colonial and Missionary Records of Oral Sources

Insofar as British colonial records are concerned, most of the pre-colonial histories and chiefly genealogies of the eastern Lunda and neighbouring peoples are to be found in the Kawambwa, Fort Rosebery and Chiengi District Notebooks, all housed in the National Archives of Zambia. Throughout the colonial period, the eastern Lunda were enmeshed in a series of disputes with both contiguous ethnic groups who had once acknowledged their sway and foreign communities who had settled in the heartland of the kingdom in the late 19th century. The Notebooks illuminate most of these conflicts and the role that the memory of the past came to play in them. Occasionally, some references to pre-colonial political history are also to be unearthed in selected Northern Rhodesia Government files dealing with quarrels over chiefly succession or general ‘chiefs’ misconduct’.

²⁶ For a critique of ‘homeostasis’ – that is, the mechanism whereby a perfect ‘congruence between a society and its traditions’ is alleged to be attained – see J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, pp. 120-123.

²⁷ D. Henige, *Oral Historiography*, pp. 110-112.

²⁸ I borrow this memorable expression from W. Kula, *Riflessioni sulla Storia*, Venice, 1990, p. 80 (Italian translation of *Rozwazania o Historii*, Warsaw, 1958).

Following the 1933 reform which abolished *sous-chefferies* and recognized *chefferies* and *secteurs* as the only units of native administration²⁹, Belgian *Administrateurs Territoriaux* were assigned the gigantic – and ultimately hopeless – task of forcing the kaleidoscopic political and ethnic reality of southern Katanga into the new coherent and homogeneous (so at least they were perceived to be) administrative categories. In the process, many more historical and political enquiries were conducted than had been in previous decades. Fortunately, many of these fundamental documents were copied in about 1950 by the ethnographer Olga Boone and deposited in the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale. They have thus survived the well-known depletion of the colonial archival patrimony in Mobutu's Zaire³⁰.

The value and the shortcomings of this class of documents have been discussed by Roberts, for the British side, and by Reeve and Legros, for the Belgian one³¹. I will therefore limit myself to adding a few points. Even though, in some cases, these written records of oral materials may be indebted to each other (after all, it was only natural for a colonial official to borrow freely from the written information that his predecessors had gathered on a particular ethnic group or chiefdom), they are generally independent of 19th century literary sources. Apart from Livingstone's *Last Journals* among the British³², colonial collectors of oral accounts were not so conversant with explorers and travellers' diaries as to interpolate their contents within the narratives that they were recording. A safe and fruitful comparison can therefore be established between these two types of sources.

The distinction between reminiscence and tradition is particularly cogent when handling colonial records of oral materials, for the overwhelming majority of the latter were collected before 1940. To be sure – and this equally applies to both British and Belgian documents – the precise informants of colonial officials are seldom named; yet, it is clear that elderly men and, rarely, women were generally approached. This being the case, one must conclude that, insofar at least as the 19th century is concerned,

²⁹ E. Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule. The Politics of Ethnicity*, Cambridge (Mass.) & London, 1975, pp. 100-101.

³⁰ The Fonds O. Boone is housed in the Ethnographical Archives of the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale (EA-MRAC), Tervuren. This heartening story of survival is briefly sketched in H. Legros & C.A. Keim, 'Guide to African Archives in Belgium', *HA*, XXIII, 1996, p. 405. The consultation of the Fonds O. Boone proved to be all the more important to me, given the impossibility to travel and research safely in the Democratic Republic of Congo at the time of my fieldwork.

³¹ A. D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 6-9; T.Q. Reeve, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, pp. 17-19;

³² See above, p. 27, n. 22.

most of the evidence included in colonial historical records came from personal or secondary reminiscences. Reminiscences – it has been argued above – bear the mark of the political use of history. When compiling their historical surveys, colonial officials were seldom driven by an academic or dispassionate interest in the past of their subjects; they normally obeyed urgent political and administrative preoccupations. They might have sought to disentangle a succession dispute to some high office, or prove the historical legitimacy of the unification of several *chefferies* into a single *secteur*: whatever the cause of the officials' interest in the past, it is obvious that this set of pressures was highly conducive to generating wilful manipulations and distortions. But the possibility to identify the officials' – and thus their African informants' – “extra-historical” agenda also makes it viable to distinguish those sections of the accounts that they collected which are most likely to be biased. In order to achieve this aim – as our analysis of the eastern Lunda ethno-history will show – it is imperative to study in detail the colonial political and administrative context.

Following the foundation of the Plymouth Brethren mission of Johnston Falls, the White Fathers reached Mwansabombwe, the capital of the Kazembe kingdom, in 1900. Sadly for them – and for the historian – they were forced to leave the lower Luapula valley in that same year due to the British South Africa Company having already earmarked the area for the London Missionary Society³³. Unable to settle in the heartland of the kingdom until 1930 (when Lufubu mission was finally inaugurated), the WF opened a series of stations in what had once been the extreme periphery of the eastern Lunda state: Chibote mission, to the south of the middle Kalungwishi River, Chilubi and Lubwe missions, on Lake Bangweulu. In the meantime, at the end of that same 1900, the LMS had launched its Mbereshi station, only seven miles to the north of Kanyembo Ntemena's capital³⁴.

It is generally recognized that the overall evangelical policy of the WF stimulated a professional-like interest in the history and ethnography of the peoples among whom the Roman Catholic missionaries worked. The same cannot be said about PB and LMS missionaries. Doubtless, in those instances where these two

³³ Salelles to ‘Très Révérend Père Supérieur’, 18 October 1900, Archive of the Generalate of the White Fathers (WFA), Rome, Period II (Livinhac), Nyassa-Bangweolo, 108-Chilubi Correspondence. See also B. Garvey, *Bembaland Church. Religious and Social Change in South Central Africa, 1891-1964*, Leiden, 1994, p. 123.

³⁴ Purves to Thompson, 17 December 1900, Archive of the Council for World Mission, London Missionary Society (ACWM, LMS), SOAS, London, Central Africa Correspondence, box 11.

societies began proselytizing before the effective setting up of a colonial administration, very compelling pressures forced them, so to speak, to take a measure of interest in African politics and history. (The above-discussed materials produced by Crawford in the 1890s are a case in point.) Once the consolidation of European rule secured their own survival, even this interest faded away. To put it crudely: post-1900 records of LMS and PB are not the place to look for written accounts of oral sources for the pre-colonial history of Mweru-Luapula³⁵. This said, the historian is left wondering about what the volume and quality of the sources at his disposal might have been, had the WF's caravan led by Father Louveau been allowed to settle in the lower Luapula valley in 1900. Even so, a considerable number of the published and unpublished vernacular accounts of the pre-colonial histories of both the eastern Lunda and neighbouring peoples bear the mark of the WF's intervention. Of particular note, in this respect, is the role played by Father Edouard Labrecque, a veritable organizer of culture throughout the whole of colonial North-Eastern Zambia. Apart from being directly involved in the editing and publication of the official eastern Lunda ethno-history, throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Labrecque compiled or helped to compile tribal histories and ethnographies of the Bemba, Bena Mukulu, Ushi and Shila³⁶.

³⁵ William Freshwater's personal papers – housed in Edinburgh University Library – are only a partial exception. Freshwater, one of the early Mbereshi missionaries, has left a private journal which describes his first tour of duty in the lower Luapula valley (1902-7). It includes lengthy sections devoted to Lunda and Shila pre-colonial histories which, according to Peter Freshwater, grandson of the missionary, 'reveal a great interest in how the people round him lived, and in their history.' (P.B. Freshwater, 'The Personal Papers of Will Freshwater (1872-1936), Missionary in Northern Rhodesia', *African Research and Documentation*, 18, 1978, p. 17). Having personally ascertained that Freshwater's tribal histories are mere copies of the accounts contained in the Kawambwa DNB, this judgment may need to be somewhat reformulated. The relevant sections of Freshwater's personal papers were kindly made available to me by Professor Ian Cunnison.

³⁶ E. Labrecque, 'La Tribu des Babemba: I, Les Origines des Babemba', *Anthropos*, 28, 1933, pp. 633-648; *Id.*, 'Les Origines des Babemba de la Rhodésie du Nord (Zambia)', *Annali del Pontificio Museo Missionario Etnologico*, 32, 1968, pp. 249-329; *Id.* (ed.), *History of the Bena Ngoma (Ba-Cungu wa Mukulu)*, London, 1949; *Id.* (ed.), 'The Story of the Shila People, Aborigenes of the Luapula-Mweru along with Their Fishing and Hunting Customs, Folklores and Praisewords', unpublished typescript, n.d. (but late 1940s(?)), Archive of the White Fathers-Zambia (WFA-Z), Lusaka, Section 1: Manuscripts. At first sight, B. Chimba, *A History of the Baushi*, Lubuto Series, Ndola, 1943 (reprinted in 1945 and, with some modifications, in 1949) seems not to have anything to do with Labrecque. In fact, it is now certain that Chimba's text is nothing but a revised version of E. Labrecque, 'Milandu ya Kale ya Baushi', unpublished typescript, 1938. (See Labrecque to Verbeek, 15 April 1981, in L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation*, p. 361.) I am grateful to Professor Andrew Roberts for lending me his copy of an unpublished English translation of *A History of the Baushi* by Simon S.E. Mwewa. During my stay in Zambia, I commissioned English translations of both the *History of the Bena Ngoma* and 'The Story of the Shila People'. The first text was translated by Mr. Besa Mwape, the second by Mr. Victor Kawanga Kazembe.

Although these texts must be handled with extreme caution³⁷, their value for historians of pre-colonial political history is indisputable³⁸.

3) Cunnison's Fieldnotes

Professor Ian Cunnison conducted extensive anthropological research in the historical heartland of the kingdom of Kazembe between 1948 and 1951. His undigested fieldnotes are best described as a special type of written record of oral sources. In many of his published works, Cunnison has insisted upon the contemporary significance of history in the lower Luapula valley. His fieldnotes include the material which allowed him to draw such conclusions. Of particular relevance – since they were never systematically published – are the genealogies and attached narrative episodes which form the histories of all the principal eastern Lunda hereditary titles.

Once again, the timing of the recording of these narratives appears to be worth stressing. Most of the title-holders interviewed by Cunnison were born in the latter part of the 19th century. Thus, bearing in mind the distinction between personal or secondary reminiscences and traditions proper, we can assume their knowledge of 19th century history to have been comprehensive and generally reliable, being largely based upon direct eyewitnesses' testimonies. *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi* – the eastern Lunda ethno-history to which we shall shortly turn – has had an unmistakable impact upon the Luapulans' historical consciousness. But, given that *Ifikolwe Fyandi* was first published at the end of Cunnison's stay in the valley, it is reasonable to suppose that all of his informants who had not been directly involved in the production of the text were still relatively uninfluenced by its contents. In being partially based upon personal or secondary reminiscences, and in being largely independent of *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, Cunnison's fieldnotes resemble colonial records of oral sources. Yet they differ from these latter in one important respect. Unlike colonial officials', Cunnison's interest in the Luapulans' past was purely academic; thus, it is perhaps less likely that

³⁷ A. D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 10-11.

³⁸ Between 1923 and 1959, Belgian Benedictines were in charge of the mission of Kasenga, on the western bank of the lower Luapula River (P. Legrand & B. Thoreau, *Les Bénédictins au Katanga. Vingt Cinq Ans d'Apostolat (1910-1935)*, Lophem-lez-Bruges, 1935, pp. 100-106; L. Verbeek, *Ombres et Clairières. Histoire de l'Implantation de l'Eglise Catholique dans la Diocèse de Sakania, Zaïre (1910-1970)*, Rome, 1987). Given that the founder of the mission, Dom Hadelin Roland, was an amateur historian and ethnographer (see, for instance, his 'Résumé de l'Histoire Ancienne du Katanga', *Problèmes Sociaux Congolais*, 61, 1963, pp. 5-41), some relevant historical records might quite possibly be housed in the Archive of the Abbaye de Saint-André, Lophem-lez-Bruges.

his informants consciously manipulated the knowledge that they were transmitting him. One likes to think that Cunnison's interviewees were aware of the difference between the colonial representatives who sporadically enquired about the past obeying a none-too-hidden political agenda and the dispassionate scholar. After all, this seems to be borne out by the very African name – *Kalanda Mikowa* ('the one who discusses the history of the clans') – which Cunnison was given during his stay among the eastern Lunda³⁹.

4) Oral Historical Research among non-Lunda Peoples

For all the usefulness of his fieldnotes, it should be pointed out that Cunnison was mainly interested in the mid-20th century social landscape of the lower Luapula valley. Hence, even though he often interviewed non-Lunda chiefs and headmen whose predecessors had either inhabited the valley before the arrival of the Lunda in the 18th century or had entered it during the late 19th and early 20th century, he rarely travelled outside the area to talk to the leading representatives of those neighbouring groups whose histories had nonetheless been deeply influenced by the inception and subsequent evolution of the Kazembe kingdom. In some cases, as has been seen above⁴⁰, these separate ethnicities produced – thanks to missionary encouragement – their own official or semi-official published accounts⁴¹. A first-hand recognition of the pervasiveness of feedback among the Lunda of the lower Luapula valley decided me not to attempt to conduct oral interviews among these latter peoples, and to rely on what reasonably safe information their printed histories are liable to provide.

A different research strategy was adopted for those groups – Bena Ngoma or Chishinga of the plateau to the east of the Muchinga Escarpment; Bena Mbeba of the middle Luapula valley; Shila of *Mumunga* of the lower Kalungwishi River – who, for one reason or another, never managed to have their historical traditions published. In all these instances, it was judged that there existed enough room for carrying out oral interviews centring on pre-colonial history. Generally, these proved to be useful

³⁹ Ian Cunnison, personal communication to the author, 16 June 1998.

⁴⁰ See p. 32, n. 36.

⁴¹ The country-wide production of vernacular historical literature in Northern Rhodesia and its relationships with the process of crystallization of ethnic identities are important aspects of the history of ideas in colonial Zambia which I plan to examine in detail in the near future. Relevant local studies of the phenomenon are R.J. Papstein, 'From Ethnic Identity to Tribalism: the Upper Zambezi Region

additions to the colonial records of oral narratives stemming from these same groups⁴². Ideally, the Bwile or Anza to the east and north-east of Lake Mweru, and the Bisa of *Matipa* or Lubumbu to the north and north-east of Lake Bangweulu – two other peoples whose pre-colonial histories, albeit related to the eastern Lunda's, have never been published in the vernacular – should have been also interviewed. Lack of funds made this project impracticable⁴³.

5) Deconstructing the Eastern Lunda 'Tribal Bible'

The principal consequences of the publication in 1951 of a vernacular account of the pre-colonial history of the eastern Lunda have already been mentioned in the preceding pages; they will now receive fuller treatment. First and foremost, *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi* is the 'tribal Bible'⁴⁴ that shapes the present historical knowledge of most title-holders and makes interviews with them an often pointless exercise. The contemporary historian of the kingdom of Kazembe cannot fail to notice the impressive diffusion of the text in the whole of the lower Luapula valley. Most of my Lunda informants – whether Mwansabombwe-based councillors or territorial chiefs and headmen – possessed a worn-out copy of *Ifikolwe Fyandi* or claimed to have read it in the past and/or to be generally familiar with its contents. I also suspect that, in recent years, the government-sponsored publication of booklets and pamphlets promoting the *Mutomboko* ceremony – first devised as a regular annual event in 1961 – has worked towards strengthening the hegemony of *Ifikolwe Fyandi*. Indeed, in the

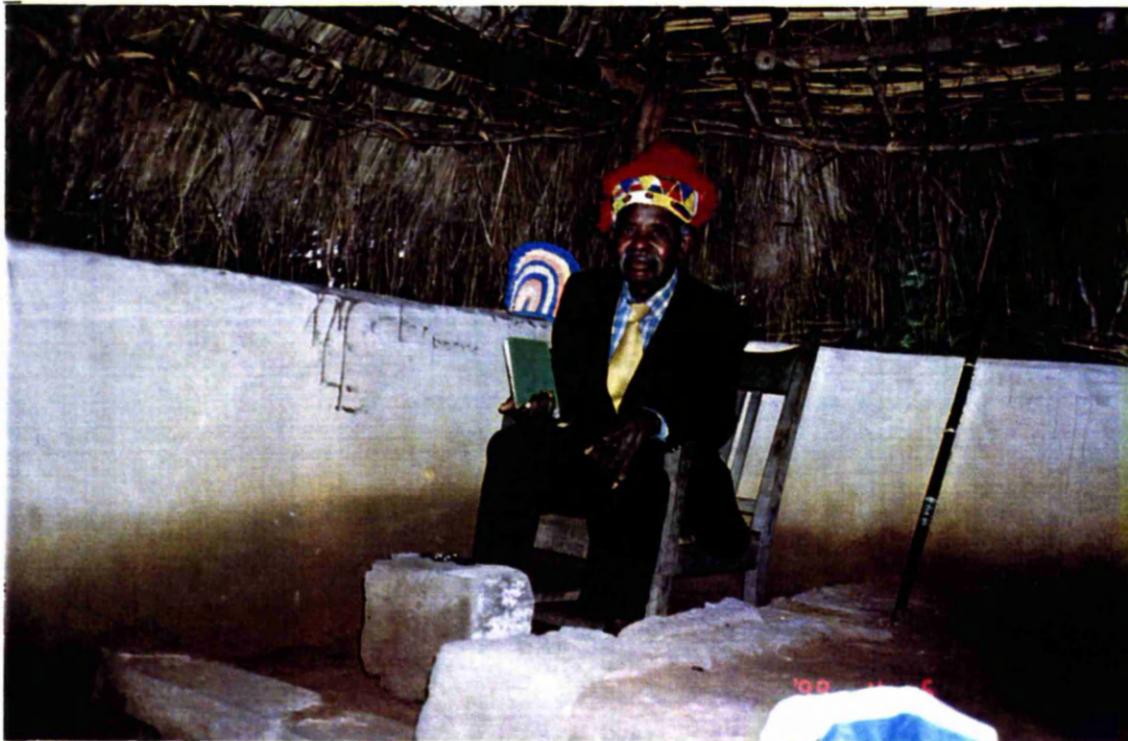
of Zambia, 1830-1981', in L. Vail (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism*, pp. 372-394, and, especially, W. van Binsbergen, *Tears of Rain*.

⁴² Needless to say, the probability of archival materials (the tribal histories and genealogies included in the aforementioned District Notebooks) intruding the contemporary historical knowledge of a specific ethnic group is too remote to be seriously considered. Worth mentioning is the case of the most complete historical narrative relating to the Bena Ngoma leaders of the plateau. Soon after his accession in 1941, Buyaka Katebe Makulu Mushyota dictated a vernacular 'History wa Bena Chishinga'. This manuscript was copied by Andrew Roberts in the 1960s and subsequently translated into English. The original text appears to have been lost during the reign of Buyaka's successor, Joseph Mutuna Malubeni, for the present Mushyota, Chama Musaba, seems not to be familiar with it. There also exists a fairly scholarly summary of the pre-colonial history of the Bena Mbeba and Bena Ngoma of the plateau: J. Vranken & I. Mwape, 'The Chishinga of the Luapula Province Plateau: an Early History', unpublished typescript, 1998. The text, the authors of which are both former history teachers at Kawambwa Boys' Secondary School, is based upon a short series of four oral interviews conducted in the summer of 1993.

⁴³ Some useful information on the Bisa of *Matipa* or Lubumbu are to be found in M. Kasese, 'The Bangweulu Bisa of Lubumbu', unpublished typescript. At the time of my fieldwork in the Luapula Province, Mr. Kasese had not yet completed his work.

⁴⁴ I borrow this expression from G.I. Jones, as quoted in D. Henige, 'Truths yet Unborn?', p. 395.

composition of their historical chapters, the authors appear to have invariably relied upon the lengthier account contained in *Ifikolwe Fyandi*⁴⁵. This said, it is our intention to demonstrate that, provided it is carefully handled, the eastern Lunda ethno-history might still turn out to be a resource in the historian's hands and not just an annoying and overbearing presence. In order to accomplish this aim, *Ifikolwe Fyandi* must be analysed in detail, beginning with its puzzling editorial history.



Illus. 1 Chief James Kabwebwe Kambwali Showing his Copy of *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*. Photograph by the author, April 1999.

⁴⁵ The two booklets that I was able to get hold of – but there may be more – are A.H. Mwenya, *Mutomboko (Lunda Royal Dance of Conquest)*, Lusaka, 1986, and J.C. Chiwale & F.X.M. Chinyanta, *Mutomboko Ceremony and the Lunda-Kazembe Dynasty*, Lusaka, 1989. The latter text also draws extensively on J.C. Chiwale, *Central Bantu Historical Texts III. Royal Praises and Praise Names of the Lunda Kazembe of Northern Rhodesia. The Meaning and Historical Background*, Rhodes-Livingstone Communication, 25, Lusaka, 1962. As far as I have been able to ascertain during my fieldwork, Chiwale's collection of royal slogans and praise-names is much less well-known in the Luapula valley than *Ifikolwe Fyandi*. So is *Baluunda, Imilandu ya Ba-Kasembe*, an historical

Editorial History

Since the publication of the English translation of *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*⁴⁶, historians of the eastern savanna of Central Africa have often questioned the “purity” of the eastern Lunda royal tradition in its written form. On the one hand, its composite character has been stressed: it being, in Cunnison’s own words, a collective undertaking which ‘brought in the use of historical criticism, the comparison of the various traditions, which is quite foreign to indigenous histories [...]. The Lunda written history [...] is more than a man can remember.’⁴⁷ On the other, scholars have often wondered about the extent of the role played by Labrecque, the editor of the Bemba text, whose involvement in the production of several other vernacular histories has already been noted. Following Cunnison’s remarks, it has been commonly believed that in 1942 Labrecque was present at the meetings during which Chinyanta Nankula, Mwata Kazembe XIV, and some of his title-holders spelled out the patrimony of historical data which they had inherited from previous generations. What worried most scholars was the possibility that Labrecque might have interpolated within *Ifikolwe Fyandi* his own knowledge of the broader regional history⁴⁸. Of particular relevance for our purposes was the suggestion that Labrecque’s likely familiarity with some of the published literary sources relating to pre-colonial Kazembe could have led him to impress upon the Lunda narrators the need for consistency between the contents of these literary sources themselves and the tribal history which they were reconstructing.

Thanks to a thorough archival and philological examination, it is now possible to prove beyond dispute the fundamental validity of this intuition and follow closely, almost step by step, the modalities of Labrecque’s intervention. Somewhat surprisingly, a search of the relevant White Fathers’ records shows that the first – and subsequently lost – draft of what was later to become *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi* was written between 1942 and 1944 *without* Labrecque being involved at all. At that

pamphlet written by Fr. F. Tanguy in the early 1940s. In spite of all my efforts, I have always failed to locate a copy of this extraordinarily elusive text.

⁴⁶ I. Cunnison (transl.), *Central Bantu Historical Texts II. Historical Traditions of the Eastern Lunda*, Rhodes-Livingstone Communication, 23, Lusaka, 1962.

⁴⁷ I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, pp. 5-6. This is how Cunnison described in 1950 the still unpublished typescript – ‘History of the BaLuunda People’ – which was then being edited by Father Labrecque.

⁴⁸ I. Cunnison (transl.), *Historical Traditions of the Eastern Lunda*, p. iii; A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 10, n. 48; p. 53, n. 39; p. 96, n. 10. Schecter has also presented Labrecque as having been ‘deeply involved in the project which led to the production’ of *Ifikolwe Fyandi*; R.E. Schecter, ‘History and Historiography’, p. 101.

time, as the Lufubu's Cahier des Mutations and Mission Diary demonstrate, Labrecque was nowhere near the lower Luapula valley. He only joined the Lufubu mission's staff in February 1945, after spending the first half of the 1940s in Kayambi and Chilubula missions⁴⁹. It was only in 1946 that Labrecque began to display an interest in the manuscript that Chinyanta Nankula and his brains trust had completed two years previously. After enquiring with the Mwata Kazembe himself at the beginning of February, Labrecque was informed that a manuscript indeed existed – 'Yes', wrote Chinyanta, 'I have a copy of the full Lunda history which were made by the Lunda elders, important men and myself in 1942-44, which is a very correct one' – and that the king appreciated Labrecque's idea 'to have it printed for us with some more particulars which you collected from some books made by old European Travellers who visited my fore grand-fathers long time ago.' The only problem was that the text had already been sent to 'Sir William Lammond', 'one of the missionaries who have had been in Northern Province for many years and knows our or Chibemba language well to translate the history in English for publication.'⁵⁰ In the end, due to an untimely and prolonged illness, Lammond left the task of translating the eastern Lunda history into English to Labrecque.

Two years after Labrecque's letter to Chinyanta Nankula, the first fruits of the missionary's work started to appear, and the latter was in a position to forward to the Director of Information in Lusaka his English 'A Summary of the History of the Ba-Luunda', a typescript, so Labrecque explained, which had 'been made from the MS written by a Committee of Lunda Elders under the Chairmanship of Mwata Kazembe himself; I have made use also of some other historical Documents and of controlled oral traditions.'⁵¹ In the same communication to the Director of Information, Labrecque noted that the king was 'earnestly wishing to have the History of the Lunda people published in English and Bemba Literatures' and that, 'with regard to his MS in

⁴⁹ The Lufubu's Cahier des Mutations et Etat Civil du Personnel can be consulted in the WFA-Z, Section 5: Zambia White Fathers. The Lufubu's Mission Diary is to be found in the WFA. Labrecque's obituary provides further information on his Zambian career and rather tragic end in a Canadian mental hospital; *Petit Echo*, 1985.

⁵⁰ Chinyanta Nankula to Labrecque, 16 February 1946, encl. in E. Labrecque, 'A Summary of the History of the Ba-Luunda. The Kazembe of Lwapula (Kawambwa District)', unpublished typescript, 1948, WFA-Z, Section 1: Manuscripts. Willy Lammond, the doyen of European missionaries in Mweru-Luapula, had joined Johnston Falls mission in 1905, after spending four years at Luanza with Dan Crawford; W. Lammond, 'An 88-Year-Old Missionary Looks Back', *East Africa and Rhodesia*, XLI, 2089, 1964, pp. 141-143.

⁵¹ Labrecque to Director of Information, 7 January 1948, encl. in E. Labrecque, 'A Summary of the History of the Ba-Luunda. The Kazembe of Lwapula (Kawambwa District)', unpublished typescript, 1948, Archive of the History Department of the Livingstone Museum, Livingstone, TH 2/17, box 1.

Bemba', he was 'helping him in view of publication by the African Literature Committee.' Shortly afterwards, the revised Bemba typescript – 'History of the BaLuunda People'⁵² – was also completed. The 'History of the BaLuunda People' is doubtless the immediate predecessor of both *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi* and Labrecque's slightly differing 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe'⁵³.

To sum up: between 1942 and 1944, Chinyanta Nankula and his most knowledgeable local historians produced an early draft of eastern Lunda history. This text – which has subsequently disappeared – was purely a collection of oral traditions and reminiscences. No literary sources were employed in composing it. From 1946, Labrecque began to work on this manuscript with the explicit aim of enriching it by means of 19th century literary sources. Labrecque's early editorial efforts resulted in the production of two unpublished typescripts; of these, the vernacular 'History of the BaLuunda People' is surely the most significant, as the published *Ifikolwe Fyandi* stemmed directly from it.

But 'A Summary of the History of the Ba-Luunda' is also important, for it reveals very clearly the principal literary sources with which Labrecque was conversant. The text includes ample quotations from Lacerda, Pinto, Baptista and Gamitto's travel diaries as translated into English in *The Lands of Cazembe*. Livingstone's *Last Journals* and Giraud's *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale* are also cited. Furthermore, some unspecified 'Belgian writers' are said to have helped the author to sketch a basic chronology of the Yeke kingdom of Msiri⁵⁴. Labrecque's extensive quotations disappear from subsequent versions (partial exception made for the 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe'), but this simply serves to highlight the need to look for the more disguised manner by which literary data have worked their way into the final eastern Lunda ethno-historical account. A good case in point are the many dates which figure in both the 'History of the BaLuunda People' and *Ifikolwe Fyandi*

⁵² On its second page, as another proof of Labrecque's involvement, the undated (but 1948-9) typescript bears the French title 'Histoire des Ba-Kasembe (Baluunda)'. A copy of the 'History of the BaLuunda People' was donated to Cunnison during his fieldwork (I. Cunnison (transl.), *Historical Traditions of the Eastern Lunda*, p. 131, n. 23) and is still enclosed in his fieldnotes. Although the second existing copy of Cunnison's fieldnotes has disappeared from the library of the former Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for Social Research (now Institute for Economic and Social Research) in Lusaka, a copy of the 'History of the BaLuunda People' is still miraculously to be found there in the file 'Luapula Province. Historical Manuscripts'. Throughout the present work, I will employ Mr. Victor Kawanga Kazembe's English translation of the 'History of the BaLuunda People'.

⁵³ E. Labrecque (ed. & transl.), 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe, Chefs Lunda du Luapula', *Lovania*, 16, 1949, pp. 9-33; 17, 1949, pp. 21-49; 18, 1951, pp. 18-67.

⁵⁴ E. Labrecque, 'A Summary of the History of the Ba-Luunda', p. 18.

na Bantu Bandi. The reader, for instance, might be surprised to learn that Chibangu Keleka, Lukwesa Ilunga's son and future Mwata Kazembe IV, was born in Tabwa country in 1779⁵⁵. The mystery behind this astonishing chronological precision is not too hard to solve. In February 1799, Pinto wrote in his travel diary that 'Muenebuto', the heir designated to Ilunga's throne, 'care[d] only for amusement, and his age – twenty years – permit[ted] nothing else.'⁵⁶ Plainly, Labrecque never took into account the possibility that Pinto's estimation of the age of the then holder of the *Mwanabute* position might have been mistaken, or that the heir designated in 1799 might not, after all, have been that same Chibangu Keleka who succeeded to the throne a few years later.

The interpolation of dates obtained from literary sources is easy to identify, but there are more subtle forms of influence. After crossing the Chambeshi River in September 1798, Lacerda and his party passed through the villages of the Bisa chiefs 'Chinimba Campeze' and 'Chipaco'. These two chiefs' subjection to the reigning Mwata Kazembe was duly recorded by the Portuguese explorer⁵⁷. Now, according to both the 'History of the BaLuunda People' and *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*, the *Mwinempandas*⁵⁸, whose capital lay on the Kabundi stream, were the territorial representatives whom Mwata Kazembe Lukwesa Ilunga had deputed to administer the plateau to the south-east of the lower Luapula valley. But while the 'History of the BaLuunda People' is rather vague about the boundaries of the colony of the *Mwinempandas* and certainly does not name any of the Bisa chiefs placed under them, 'Chinyimba' and 'Chipako' are described in *Ifikolwe Fyandi* as being two of the three Bisa chiefs over whom the holders of the *Mwinempanda* title ruled⁵⁹. Although the absence of the names of the two Bisa chiefs from the 'History of the BaLuunda People' may be due to nothing more than a casual omission, it is more tempting to relate it to Labrecque's belated realization of the possibility of combining the Lunda

⁵⁵ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 29; E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, p. 53.

⁵⁶ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 125.

⁵⁷ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 94-95.

⁵⁸ Following the convention adopted by J.C. Miller, *Kings and Kinsmen. Early Mbundu States in Angola*, Oxford, 1976, all hereditary names and titles are written throughout in italics. This is meant to emphasize that, in most cases, we are not referring to a particular individual but to a succession of holders of the same position. The plural form (e.g. the *Mwinempandas*) or expressions such as 'the holders of the *Mwinempanda* title' are also employed to make the point even more explicit. The title is written in standard characters only when accompanied by the personal name of the holder (e.g. *Mwinempanda Kafwanka*), or when the context makes it plain that we are referring to one particular, if unnamed, individual holder.

⁵⁹ E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, p. 65

story-tellers' version with that of Lacerda. The following sequence may thus be hypothesized. The text prepared by Chinyanta Nankula and his brains trust between 1942 and 1944 simply asserted that one of the first *Mwinempandas* supervised the south-eastern borders of the heartland of the kingdom from his capital on the Kabundi. This same statement was repeated in the 'History of the BaLuunda People'. Although Labrecque had already begun to supplement the original manuscript with literary sources, at the time of the composition of the 'History of the BaLuunda People', he had not yet realized that Lacerda's travel diary offered him the opportunity to be more precise – if less faithful to the original Bemba version – about the territory of the holders of the *Mwinempanda* around the end of the 18th century. Before the final publication of *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, a revision of Lacerda's writings must have finally prompted the missionary to alter the initial and much less specific statement .

It is unnecessary to bring to the fore further examples of feedback. What has been shown so far justifies our decision to rely as little as possible on the similarities between the written eastern Lunda ethno-history and published travellers' accounts. By so doing, we shall avoid the risk of mistaking mere repetitions for genuinely independent confirmations. On the other hand, since very little stands in the way of comparing 19th century literary sources and colonial records of oral materials⁶⁰, the latter can also be employed to crosscheck the validity of the eastern Lunda ethno-history.

It remains to be said that whenever the eastern Lunda ethno-history will be made use of throughout the present work, the unpublished 'History of the BaLuunda People' will be preferred to *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*. As suggested by the foregoing example, the relationship between the 'History of the BaLuunda People' and the original pre-Labrecque manuscript is probably closer than that between the latter and *Ifikolwe Fyandi*. The fact that some details included in the 'History of the BaLuunda People' are nowhere to be found in *Ifikolwe Fyandi* also points in this direction. Again, the solution of the riddle is not hard to find, when one bears in mind that Labrecque had complained to the Director of Information that the 'several compilations of oral traditions [*which formed Chinyanta Nankula's original manuscript*] are so considerable that we have to reduce them in order to not [*sic*] publish a too voluminous book.' Whereas, for instance, the 'History of the BaLuunda People' mentions the clan affiliation of most of the local leaders with whom the

conquering Lunda came in contact, only the (often more artificial) tribal identity of these same leaders appears in *Ifikolwe Fyandi*. According to the 'History of the BaLuunda People', the incoming army of Mwata Kazembe II Kanyembo Mpemba was outsmarted by the tricks of both 'Cisamamba-Kampombwe' and 'Cisamamba-Cibale', two Bena Ngoma representatives dwelling on the western bank of the Luapula River.⁶¹ Surprisingly, the first Chisamamba encountered by the Lunda disappears from *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, which only deals with Chisamamba Chibale and his ruse.⁶² Two Chisamambas and two corresponding tricks resurface in the French 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe'.⁶³ Presumably, unlike the African Literature Committee, the editors of *Lovania* did not impress upon Labrecque the need for concision! One last example will make the point sufficiently clear. According to the 'History of the BaLuunda People', the following were the most important chiefs who came to accept Mwata Kanyembo's sway between the Lualaba and the Luapula Rivers: Mpande, Katanga, Lukoshi ('Lukozi'), Ntondo, Mpoyo, Kyembe ('Chembe'), Kaponda, Musaka and Mwashya ('Mwanshya')⁶⁴. While these same names also figure in the 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe',⁶⁵ Labrecque seems to have chosen to edit out of *Ifikolwe Fyandi* the names of Musaka and Mwashya⁶⁶.

The Eastern Lunda Ethno-History as a Colonial Product

The preceding section has been concerned with the most fundamental bias brought about by Labrecque's editorial intervention. But our task of disentangling the "safe" from the "unsafe" historical evidence in the 'History of the BaLuunda People' cannot be held to be complete until the likelihood of another set of distortions having entered the eastern Lunda ethno-history is also taken into account. As has already been suggested, colonized Africans themselves had often some compelling reasons to present a partial view of their history. Above all, one needs to look closely at the realm of inter-African relationships in the first half of the 20th century and consider the multiple ways in which the memory of the past became a political tool to be employed to foster corporate interests during the struggle for supremacy precipitated by colonial

⁶⁰ See above, p. 30.

⁶¹ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 21.

⁶² E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, pp. 37-38.

⁶³ E. Labrecque (ed. & transl.), 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe', 17, p. 25.

⁶⁴ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 20.

⁶⁵ E. Labrecque (ed. & transl.), 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe', 17, p. 23.

⁶⁶ E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, p. 35.

administrative practices. Although one cannot go so far as to speak of 'the emergence of a new historical tradition [...] as a result of colonial administrative procedures'⁶⁷, the eastern Lunda ethno-history was clearly influenced by the competitive context of its compilation.

As a matter of fact, it seems that the driving force behind Chinyanta Nankula's decision to set up an historical committee in 1942 was his resentment over the 'many mistakes and exaggerating words [...] lies and words of exalting themselves' that 'our fellow neighbours Bemba Chiefs made [...] in their history before some White Fathers at Chilubula Mission.'⁶⁸ Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the rivalry between eastern Lunda and Bemba was kept very much alive by the colonial government's decision not to award to the *Mwata Kazembes* the same title – 'Paramount Chief' – as the *Chitimukulus*. In 1947, for instance, the District Commissioner (DC), Kawambwa, was forced to tour the unruly Bena Mbeba section of the Lunda Native Authority to dispel 'widespread rumours that [*Mwata Kazembe Chinyanta Nankula*] was no longer a senior chief [*and*] that he had [...] been put under Chitimukulu'⁶⁹. As late as 1954, Brown Ng'ombe, Mwata Kazembe XV, wrote to the then DC to remind him of his kingdom's 'very long history' and of the Government's unfulfilled promise that 'the name of a Paramount be proclaimed on me as it was in the past before Europeans came in this country.'⁷⁰ Given these premisses, the historian cannot be blamed for looking at the Lunda-Bemba relationships as depicted in the 'History of the BaLuunda People' with a robust degree of scepticism.

To be sure, in most cases, one can merely suspect the Lunda narrators to have wilfully altered their historical record; yet, in a few instances, due to the exceptional quality of the available evidence, the occurrence of historical manipulations can be adequately demonstrated. A direct consequence of the internal and external wars which shook the kingdom of Kazembe in the latter part of the 19th century was the settlement of foreign communities in the lower Luapula valley. British officials, with their

⁶⁷ R.J. Papstein, 'The Transformation of Oral History', p. 4.

⁶⁸ Chinyanta Nankula to Labrecque, 16 February 1946, encl. in E. Labrecque, 'A Summary of the History of the Ba-Luunda. The Kazembe of Lwapula (Kawambwa District)', unpublished typescript, 1948, WFA-Z, Section 1: Manuscripts. It is highly likely that Chinyanta Nankula was referring to *Ifyabukaya: Fourth Bemba Reader*, Fr. van Sambeek's 'first comprehensive Bemba history in the vernacular, a school reader published in 1932 at Chilubula mission, near Kasama.' A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 9; B. Garvey, *Bembaland Church*, p. 158.

⁶⁹ E.C. Thomson, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 16 September – 30 September 1947', NAZ, SEC2/874.

⁷⁰ Brown Ng'ombe to DC (Kawambwa), 9 August 1954, encl. in DC (Kawambwa) to Provincial Commissioner (Northern Province), 10 August 1954, NAZ, NP2/6/10.

successive efforts to perfect the administration of the heartland of the kingdom, often upset the delicate balance between these circumscribed communities and the eastern Lunda élites. Insofar as the Bemba of *Mwabamukupa* are concerned, this set of local tensions can be shown to have had an unequivocal effect upon the official eastern Lunda ethno-history.

In the late 1880s, Mwata Kazembe X Kanyembo Ntemena fled the Yeke and their Lunda ally Kaindu Kakasu and sought refuge among the Bemba of Mwamba III Mubanga Chipoya. The latter acceded to Kanyembo's appeal for help and deputed his son Mwabamukupa I to lead an army bound for the Luapula valley⁷¹. Upon the successful completion of their mission, Mwabamukupa and his brothers Machende and Chikalamo settled near Kanyembo's capital in 'the country given to the WaWemba by Kazembe in recognition of the services rendered him in assisting to expel Mushili [*Msiri*].'⁷² The first indication of the existence of some sort of animosity between the eastern Lunda and the Bemba of either Mwabamukupa I or II dates to 1908. In that year, Chilombe and Chipandawe, two Lunda inhabitants of Sankwe's village, were charged in the Kalungwishi court with assault on the then Mwabamukupa and some of his followers. The two accused pleaded guilty, but stated in their defence that, while passing through Sankwe's village on 8th of November, Mwabamukupa and his retinue had openly cursed Muonga Kapakata, Mwata Kazembe XI. Chilombe and Chipandawe were sentenced to pay a fine of 3/- each or, alternatively, to one month imprisonment⁷³. A few years later, Chikalamo, Mwabamukupa II, sparked a row by claiming 'the ownership of the territory in which he reside[d] [...] Mwepya, Chituwa and Katuntulu, Wemba natives of Mwamba, stated that Kazembe Kanyembo [...] had given him a portion of territory as his own. The present Kazembe denied this [...] Mwawamukupa then stated that he was quite willing to occupy the land, recognising Kasembe as the owner, provided that he was allowed the control of the Wemba villages situated therein. The disputed [*sic*] was settled accordingly, Kazembe being recognised as the owner of the land while Mwawamukupa retain[ed] the control of the Wemba villages.'⁷⁴ Apparently, behind Mwabamukupa's decision to give way, there lay the

⁷¹ For fuller details, see below, pp. 151-152.

⁷² 'Note by the Native Commissioner', 5 November 1913, Kawambwa DNB, II, p. 155, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁷³ Kalungwishi Criminal Record, 45a, 1908, NAZ, NE/KTL1/1/2.

⁷⁴ 'Indaba Held at Kawambwa on 17 January 1914', in G. Lyons, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', encl. in *Id.*, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', NAZ, ZA7/1/1/8.

intervention of the then Mwamba, who 'sent word through Kasama Boma that Mwawamukupa was to respect Kazembi and obey him.'⁷⁵

The dispute lay dormant until the implementation of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances. In 1929, Dismas Misengo Mwabamukupa III was denied his own Authority and Court and became part of Chiboshi's Authority, subordinate to the Superior Native Authority and Court of Mwata Kazembe XII Chinyanta Kasasa. Dismas Misengo, who strongly 'disliked' this solution⁷⁶, enlisted the support of the then Mwamba, but to no avail⁷⁷. In the meantime, Chiboshi, exasperated by Mwabamukupa's constant opposition, had expressed the wish to have him removed from his territory⁷⁸. In 1931, Dismas Misengo left the lower Luapula valley, having been chosen by the then Chitimukulu to take up the *Luali* title⁷⁹. The then DC was naturally well pleased, for 'the abandonment of the Wemba claim to a portion of the Lunda country' was likely to 'put an end to a dispute that ha[d] been a source of trouble for some thirty years.'⁸⁰ According to Moffat Thomson, Secretary for Native Affairs, 'the withdrawal of Mwawa Mukupa from the Lunda country' was 'welcomed by Kazembe' and was a true 'statesmanlike action on the part of Chitimukulu.'⁸¹ Even though their chief and his immediate followers had left the valley, Mwabamukupa III's former villagers seem to have maintained a separate and somewhat antagonistic identity, which prompted Chinyanta Kasasa to appoint Kasumpa I as headman of Mwabamukupa's old village. To this day, Kasumpa's is one of the very few villages in the lower Luapula valley the headman of which is directly chosen and appointed by the *Mwata Kazembes*⁸².

Let us now return to the eastern Lunda ethno-historical account. According to the 'History of the BaLuunda People', Mwabamukupa I was not granted the right to occupy a portion of the Luapula valley as a reward for his military help. The 'History of the BaLuunda People' denies that he was a member of the military force set up by

⁷⁵ 'Mwabamukupa's Division', n.d., Kawambwa DNB, II, p. 171, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁷⁶ M.J.B. Otter, 'Revised List of Native Authorities and Courts. Kawambwa District', October 1929, encl. in Hillier to Moffat Thomson, 4 December 1929, NAZ, ZA1/9/27/5G

⁷⁷ Moffat Thomson, 'Report on Tour of the North-Eastern Districts', 6 October 1930, NAZ, ZA1/9/99.

⁷⁸ A. McKisack, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 11 September - 27 September 1929', NAZ, ZA7/4/7.

⁷⁹ For a colorful account of Mwabamukupa III's departure, see E.S. Kapotwe, *The African Clerk*, Lusaka, 1980, pp. 9-10.

⁸⁰ Thomson to PC (Mweru-Luapula Province), 13 February 1931, NAZ, ZA1/4/7.

⁸¹ Moffat Thomson to Chief Secretary, 18 March 1931, NAZ, ZA1/4/7.

⁸² R.H. Bates, *Rural Responses to Industrialization*, p. 15; interview with Peter Ntambo Kasumpa & Paisonni Sunkutu, Kasumpa village, 7 May 1999.

Mwamba III with the aim of restoring the runaway Kanyembo Ntemena. Rather, Mwabamukupa and his brothers are said to have fled their country and to have reached the Luapula valley sometime after the reinstatement of Mwata Kazembe X. Hence, the permission to settle in proximity to the royal capital is there presented as a generous concession of the Lunda king and not as a well-deserved recompense⁸³. Now, there is no doubt that the version given in the 'History of the BaLuunda' is distorted, for the account which we have taken from the Kawambwa District Notebook was recorded a mere 25 years after the events⁸⁴. What is significant is that the rationale for the historical falsification can only be understood in the context of the long-standing rivalry which we have summarized above.

Another foreign community had profited from the Lunda-Yeke war to get a foothold in Mweru-Luapula. In the late 1880s, a group of coastal and Nyamwezi traders under the leadership of Shimba gained control of Kilwa Island after granting Nkuba Bukongolo VII Chipenge the military help that he had requested against Msiri's Yeke⁸⁵. Between 1893 and 1894, Belgian forces from Lofoi tried at least three times to cut the Kilwa raider's career short. Their attacks were repulsed and, following Shimba's accidental death, Kilwa was occupied by British troops from Kalungwishi in 1895⁸⁶. According to a source very near the events, the then Kashinge, the Lunda governor of Kilwa, fled his village on the island during one of the ill-fated Belgian attacks⁸⁷. Following the British recognition of 'Waswa', Shimba's son, as chief of Kilwa, Kashinge, who had in the meantime returned to his old village, tried repeatedly 'to sever any connection with Simba [II] and to set himself up as chief of the island.'⁸⁸ In December 1904, the then Kashinge and Chishite were charged by the Kalungwishi magistrate with disobedience of the chief's orders (they had refused to pay their taxes to Shimba II) and with trying to 'entice men from Kilwa Is. to the Congo Free State Territory.' When given the chance to reply to the accusations, Kashinge merely 'stated that he was dissatisfied with Simba rule'. The two men were sentenced to six month imprisonment with hard labour⁸⁹. After his release from prison, Kashinge continued to

⁸³ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 53, 56.

⁸⁴ See above, p. 44, n. 72.

⁸⁵ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Watson to Johnston, 18 May 1895, encl. in Johnston to FO, 29 July 1895, PRO, FO2/89. See below, pp. 154-156.

⁸⁶ See below, pp. 163-166, 171-172.

⁸⁷ 'Kilwa Island', n.d. (but between 1913 and 1918), Chiengi DNB, I, pp. 199-200, NAZ, KSW2/1.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Kalungwishi Criminal Record, 41, 1904, NAZ, NE/KTL1/1/1.

oppose Waswa's rule. In the 1910s, the Lunda inhabitants of his 'large village' were still accused of not paying 'much attention' to the fact that Shimba II was the recognized chief of the island.⁹⁰

The dispute between the holders of the *Kashinge* title and the successors of Shimba I dragged on throughout the colonial period (and is still largely unresolved to this day). No doubt, the bone of contention was the loyalty of the inhabitants of Kilwa. In 1930, Nshimba III – who had recently been appointed at the head of an independent Native Authority and Court – laid a complaint in the DC's Court in Kawambwa against 27 islanders who had refused him tribute labour to build a hut. One of the accused, Dauti, defended himself and his companions by asserting that they had already 'perform[ed] "mulasa" for Kashinge'⁹¹. The dispossessed *Kashinges* seem to have continued to resort to the strategy of fomenting migrations to Congo. In 1935, for instance, 'a number of natives left Kilwa Island for the Congo mainland [...]. They gave as a reason the lower rate of tax in the Congo, but their exodus would appear to be due mainly to differences with Chief Nshimba.'⁹² A few years later, the then Kashinge was temporarily expelled from Kilwa for carrying out 'subversive activities against Nshimba.'⁹³

As in the case of Mwabamukupa I's history, the study of the 20th century conflict over the fate of Kilwa Island suggests an explanation for the discrepancies setting the eastern Lunda ethno-history apart from other, more reliable versions of the same events collected in the first two decades of the century. According to the 'History of the BaLuunda People', the then Kashinge fought the Yeke alongside Shimba and Nkuba Bukongolo Chipenge. Following their victory over the Yeke, Mwata Kazembe Kanyembo Ntemena granted Shimba permission to settle on the island. Some years later, while Kashinge was away visiting the royal capital, the British landed on Kilwa and mistook Shimba for the real chief of the island⁹⁴. If the then Kashinge – as stated in the Chiengi District Notebook⁹⁵ – had really fled the island during one of the Belgian expeditions against Shimba, the Lunda narrators' reluctance to relate the

⁹⁰ 'Kilwa Island', n.d. (but between 1913 and 1918), Chiengi DNB, I, pp. 199-200, NAZ, KSW2/1.

⁹¹ Kawambwa Criminal Case Record, 21, 1930, encl. in M.J.B. Otter, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 10 February – 22 February 1930', NAZ, ZA7/4/17.

⁹² W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on Native Affairs, 1934', encl. in PC, 'Northern Province, Annual Report, 1934', NAZ, ZA7/1/17/4.

⁹³ H.A. Watmore, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 7 December – 17 December 1939', NAZ, SEC2/873.

⁹⁴ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 56.

⁹⁵ See above, p. 46, n. 87.

episode is hardly surprising as it would have undermined their attempts to reassert the *Kashinges'* rights of governance over Kilwa.

As already pointed out, the episodes of Mwabamukupa I and Shimba I are exceptional in that the rich documentary evidence has allowed us to identify both the blatant manipulations in the official eastern Lunda history and the 20th century tensions which made them expedient. In most other cases, we lack direct proof of the manipulations, but we have sufficient reasons to presume that they did take place. As shown by colonial archival documentation, the conflicts with the Bemba of *Mwabamukupa* and the East Africans of *Shimba* were just two out of the many disputes into which the eastern Lunda élites found themselves plunged soon after the inception of European rule. Some of these tensions will be discussed in chapters VII and VIII. At this stage, it suffices to stress that the awareness of their local significance has influenced our understanding of the eastern Lunda 'tribal Bible' and our treatment of the data contained therein. In all those cases where there exists clear proof of the eastern Lunda élites being involved in a colonially-induced dispute with any of the ethnic groups dwelling in the heartland of the kingdom or in its proximity, the data relating to the pre-colonial history of these same groups and the eastern Lunda dealings with them have been handled with extreme caution and often, in the absence of additional supporting evidence, discarded. Needless to say, my reasoning along these lines is somewhat mechanical. Furthermore, it can be argued that neither colonial materials nor personally conducted oral interviews may be sufficient to apprehend all the circumstances which might have affected the Lunda story-tellers' historical reconstruction in the 1940s. Still, one must start somewhere, and the method advocated here, however imperfect, is certainly the only one I can think of to "rescue" the historicity of the eastern Lunda ethno-history.

Having dwelt upon the difficulties associated with the fruition of the 'History of the BaLuunda People', it is probably appropriate to conclude this section on a more optimistic note by considering briefly the composition of Chinyanta Nankula's historical committee in 1942-4. Out of the five local historians who constituted it, Kamweka, the holder of the *Chibwidi* title, has left the most vivid memories. According to Nathan Chinyanta, the eldest surviving son of Mwata Kazembe XIV and a young boy at the time of the composition of the original manuscript, it was only

Kamweka's 'extensive knowledge' which made his father's historical project viable⁹⁶. When questioned on the matter, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, my best informant among the Lunda aristocrats, agreed wholeheartedly: 'Kamweka was over 100-year-old [...]. He knew a lot and was present throughout the writing of the book.'⁹⁷ Bearing in mind the often-noted distinction between personal or secondary reminiscences and oral traditions proper, Kamweka's extreme old age and recognized ability enhance the historical value of the 'History of the BaLuunda People'. Once more, we seem to be dealing with a text which, insofar as the 19th century is concerned, is likely to adhere pretty strictly to actual historical occurrences – exception made, of course, for the deliberate manipulations arising from the colonial context.

6) Sources for the Colonial History of the Kingdom of Kazembe

While the scope for recording untapped oral traditions is severely limited by the present dominance of *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*, life-stories and reminiscences revolving around the colonial experiences of Lunda titled representatives can be collected without any fear of undue interference. In one way or another, most contemporary oral testimonies pinpoint the relevance of two processes. First, the alteration of the internal balance of the kingdom which resulted in the overall lowering of the role of non-royal territorial representatives and the dilatation of the prerogatives of the *Mwata Kazembes* and their family. Second, the evolution under colonial rule of that 'problématique de la légitimité' with which the eastern Lunda leadership had learnt to cope since the inception of the kingdom in the mid-18th century⁹⁸. How, to put it succinctly, did eastern Lunda chiefs position themselves between their subjects (the "internal" source of their legitimacy) and British policy-makers (the "external" source of their authority)?

Much light on these political trends is also thrown by colonial archival material. Given that 'chiefs and headmen' were always their preferred interlocutors, it is obvious that local colonial officials took much pain to keep abreast with – and indeed influence – the direction of chiefly politics. Since January 1909, all the officially recognized Lunda chiefs and headmen dwelling on the eastern bank of the

⁹⁶ Interview with Nathan Chinyanta, Lusaka, 24 December 1998.

⁹⁷ Interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Bene Mashamo, Mwanabombwe, 15 July 1999.

⁹⁸ I borrow this expression from H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 159.



Luapula became part of the Kawambwa Sub-District (or Division) of Mweru (later Mweru-Luapula) District⁹⁹. In 1928, Kawambwa became one of the Districts of the newly dubbed Mweru-Luapula Province¹⁰⁰. Kawambwa Annual and Tour Reports are thus of primary value to the historian of colonial Kazembe¹⁰¹. Regrettably, apart from the early official correspondence mentioned above¹⁰², reports stemming from Kalungwishi and Kawambwa for the first two decades of colonial rule appear not to have been preserved. To some extent, oral interviews allow the historian partially to fill the gap. So does another class of archival documents: the Kalungwishi (Kawambwa from 1909) Record Books¹⁰³, covering the period 1904-11, and the Kawambwa Criminal Case Records (1912-30)¹⁰⁴. Record books are not case records proper, but still 'give full details of the case[s], being written up in his own hand by the Judge, Magistrate, or Commissioner.'¹⁰⁵ I was unable to trace the bulk of the records of the Kawambwa DCs' court after 1930, the year in which most jurisdictional powers were transferred to Senior and Subordinate Native Courts. The records of these latter – the quality of which is likely to have been poor, anyway – are also nowhere to be found.

Apart from the historical and political surveys which constitute the Fonds O. Boone¹⁰⁶, some useful data on the socio-economic history of the *District du Haut-Luapula* – which after 1920 included both the *Territoire de Kasenga* and the *Territoire de Kilwa*¹⁰⁷ – are also to be found in Belgian administrative reports. The surviving reports, housed in the Archives Africaines de l'ex-Ministère des Affaires Africaines (AAMAA), Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Brussels, fall into two main categories: 'Rapports Politiques du District du Haut-Luapula' (three-months reports, covering the

⁹⁹ Mweru-Luapula District was constituted in 1911 following the unification of Mweru District (the headquarters of which were in Kalungwishi and, from 1909, Kawambwa) and Luapula District (headquarters in Fort Rosebery (Mansa)). Kawambwa became the new District's headquarters until 1921, when it was substituted by Fort Rosebery.

¹⁰⁰ Mweru-Luapula Province ceased to exist in 1934, when it became part of Northern Province.

¹⁰¹ The almost complete series of Kawambwa Annual Reports for the period 1913-37 is to be found in the NAZ, mostly in the ZA (Secretary for Native Affairs) file. The series of Kawambwa Tour Reports – also in the NAZ, distributed between the ZA and SEC2 (Secretariat-Native Affairs) files – only starts in 1928, but proceeds uninterrupted until the end of colonial rule.

¹⁰² See p. 26.

¹⁰³ NAZ, NE/KTL1/1/1-2.

¹⁰⁴ NAZ, KSG2/2/1-11.

¹⁰⁵ I.M. Graham & B.C. Halwindi, *Guide to the Public Archives of Zambia*, Lusaka, 1970, p. 151.

¹⁰⁶ See above, p. 30.

¹⁰⁷ The *District du Haut-Luapula* (*District du Haut-Katanga* from 1940) changed its boundaries very frequently. For fuller details, see L. de Saint Moulin, 'Histoire de l'Organisation Administrative du Zaïre', *Zaire-Afrique*, XXVIII, 224, 1988.

period 1915-8)¹⁰⁸, and 'Rapports sur l'Administration Générale du District du Haut-Luapula' (six-months reports, 1922-9; yearly reports, 1930-1)¹⁰⁹. These reports were written by the *Commissaire de District* on the basis of the detailed communications which the officials in charge of the various *Territoires* regularly forwarded him. Regrettably, the AAMAA appear not to house any of these territorial reports, apart from two yearly reports for the *Territoire de Kasenga* (1932-3)¹¹⁰.

Even those European missionaries – Plymouth Brethren and London Missionary Society – who regarded African rulers as a mere hindrance along their evangelical path and deemed their pre-colonial histories irrelevant could not afford to ignore completely the evolution of chiefly politics in the first half of the 20th century. Moreover, the sincerity of their pronouncements on the disruptive social impact of the economic transformation of Mweru-Luapula stands in sharp contrast with the sometimes impenetrable bureaucratic platitude of colonial reports. The annual reports and general correspondence of the LMS Mbereshi missionaries from 1900 are to be found in the Archive of the Council for World Mission, SOAS, London¹¹¹. The PB have destroyed their archival records for the pre-World War II period, but, as has already been noted, their two-weekly journal – the *Echoes of Service (ES)* – published excerpts of the correspondence of the Johnston Falls missionaries. As for the White Fathers, useful material from 1930 onwards is contained in the Lufubu's Mission Diary and the scanty correspondence of the Lufubu missionaries – both of which are kept in the Archive of the Generalate of the White Fathers, Rome.

¹⁰⁸ AAMAA, Affaires Indigènes (AI), Fonds Affaires Indigènes Main-d'Oeuvre (AIMO), 1697/9376-9378.

¹⁰⁹ AAMAA, AI, AIMO, 1697/9379-9388.

¹¹⁰ AAMAA, AI, AIMO, 106/361-362.

¹¹¹ Central Africa Correspondence, box 11-box 33, 1900-1940; Central Africa Reports, box 1-box 5, 1880-1938.

Chapter II

ORIGINS

The automatic ascription of political and cultural innovation to population movements 'was part of an intellectual tradition that sought to explain cause and effect by discrete, discernible events, denying the complex interplay among processes that are quite impossible any longer to give shape to.'¹ The early 1970s witnessed the beginning of a reaction against the application of this theoretical framework to Central African history – a reaction which went hand in hand with the search for more subtle models of state formation and the growing awareness of the problems posed by the use of clichés in oral traditions². As a result, the interest in African pre-colonial migrations faded away, to be superseded by a new emphasis on local developments and innovation. The first section of the present chapter – based almost exclusively on Schecter and Hoover's unpublished works³ – does not wish to question the overall validity of this historiographical revision; its more limited intention is to offer a word of caution against the indiscriminate rejection of migration theories. With its stubborn refusal to abide by the new orthodoxy, the kingdom of Kazembe reminds us that relatively abrupt conquering thrusts *did* occur in pre-colonial Africa. Since the founders of the Kazembe kingdom did not migrate in a vacuum, the last two sections of the chapter hazard some suppositions on the economic and political landscape of southern Katanga and Mweru-Luapula before the mid-18th century.

1) The Origins of the *Kazemb* in the Mukulweji-Lualaba Region

Most 20th century eastern Lunda accounts explain the origins of the *Mwata Kazembe* royal title in the following terms⁴. During the reign of Mwant Yav II Muteba, Mutanda Yembeyembe, younger brother of Naweji, Muteba's predecessor, was sent to fight Mwin Tibaraka and his 'nephew' Chinyanta of the Chiyongoli (Millipede) Clan. The

¹ D. Henige, *Oral Historiography*, pp. 94-96. See also R.J. Papstein, 'The Upper Zambezi', p. 61.

² J.C. Miller, *Kings and Kinsmen*, pp. 4-11.

³ R.E. Schecter, 'History and Historiography'; J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji'.

⁴ The fullest version is to be found in E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 8-16. Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Lunda History', n.d., and 'History of Mwatas by Aram Lukwesa', n.d., are independent and yet compatible narratives.

latter two descended from Dyulu, a brother of the Ruund princess Ruweji, but refused to acknowledge Muteba's suzerainty. Following their defeat, Chinyanta and his children – Ng'anga Bilonda and Chinawezi, sons of Kawanga, the sister of lineage head Kashinge; Kanyembo, son of Mpemba, a woman belonging to Chilembi's family; Chintende, son of Mwadi Kainda, a relative of Chibamba and Musanda – submitted to Muteba's rule and resolved to live in his capital.

Mutanda Yembeyembe was later deputed to lead an eastward expedition with the aim of capturing the runaway Lubunda⁵; Chinyanta was appointed as Mutanda's deputy, along with a series of other officials – Kashiba, Kalandala, Kasengula, Chintombe and Nakazembe Lukoshi – whose successors would become leading aristocrats within the kingdom of Kazembe. Mutanda and Chinyanta failed to apprehend Lubunda, but, having conquered the Kosa of Mwinempanda, Chipepa, Mpuya, Kaindu, Kabimbi, Mpakamabo, Mayoka and Kasumpa, they established a new capital on the Mukulweji River, an affluent of the Lubudi, and gained control of the Kechila salt deposits on the upper Lualaba. The defeated southern Luba or Sanga chiefs near Kechila included Chibwidi, Mwilu, Mwelwa Kamonga, Mpibwe and Koni. Mutanda then instructed Chinyanta to escort all these foreign leaders to Mwant Yav Muteba's capital, and hence ensure that they were awarded the insignia of "Lundahood". Chinyanta was also enjoined to refrain from disclosing the existence of the salt-producing district on the upper Lualaba. Chinyanta disobeyed the order and presented some Lualaban salt to the king. Mutanda, informed of Chinyanta's betrayal, took his revenge once the latter and his "Lundaized" followers returned from Muteba's court. Chinyanta and his brother Kasombola were caught and drowned in the Mukulweji River.

Muteba reacted to Mutanda's insubordination by bestowing upon Ng'anga Bilonda, son of the late Chinyanta, the title of *Kazemb* (later corrupted into *Mwata Kazembe*⁶) and by assigning him the country between the Mukulweji and the Lualaba Rivers. Mutanda fled his capital and settled on the Lukoji stream, giving birth to the dynasty of the *Kazembis Mutanda*. After spending 'many years' on the Lualaba, Mwata Kazembe I Ng'anga Bilonda and his father's former subordinates inaugurated a series of conquests to the east of the river. During the reign of Mwata Kazembe II

⁵ The episode of Lubunda and its implications are discussed below, p. 99.

⁶ On the uncertain etymology and linguistic history of the title, see J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', II, pp. 537-538.

Kanyembo Mpemba, these culminated in the foundation of a new kingdom centred on the lower Luapula valley.

The traditions of several contemporary Ndembu titles along the Congo-Zambezi watershed and the headwaters of the Zambezi (*Kazembi Mutanda*, *Kanongesha*, *Ishinde* and *Musokatanda*) also suggest the existence of a direct link between their inception and a short-lived polity on the Mukulweji River (1670 – 1700, according to Hoover's plausible estimate)⁷. On the basis of this broad cultural uniformity and Miller's innovative reading of the traditions of the Mbundu of Angola⁸, Schecter argued in favour of the essential historicity of the eastern Lunda narrative relating the trajectory of the Mukulweji colony and related developments. Since the eastern Lunda consider Chinyanta as the founder of their royal dynasty, the Mukulweji period belongs to their 'present dynastic time', as opposed to those 'past structural epochs' where 'the names of the characters in each generation appear to be titles representative of the leading political groupings which dominated the various stages of the past.'⁹ Mutanda and Chinyanta, in other words, were not 'epoch personifications', but real individuals who controlled the territory between the Mukulweji and the Lualaba Rivers on behalf of the Ruund king. Their clash brought an end to the Mukulweji polity and triggered off a series of migrations which spread Lunda principles of political organization and transformed the landscape of several regions situated on both sides of the contemporary border between Zambia and Congo¹⁰.

To be sure, as Hoover noted as early as 1978, the application of Miller's paradigm to the Ruund heartland or indeed the frontiers of Lunda political expansion poses problems. Historical linguistic data suggest that by the 18th century the system of descent of the Ruund, unlike the Mbundu's, was no longer purely matrilineal. The configuration of traditional accounts further distinguishes the Ruund from the Mbundu, for the former do not share the latter's 'structure of alternating genealogies and narratives [...]'. The perpetual kinship relationships among titles appear in narrative history rather than in each title's dynastic genealogy. Nor do Ruund often use

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, p. 267. When Hoover visited the presumed site of the capital of the Mukulweji polity in the 1970s, the remains of ancient circular earthworks with an approximate diameter of 300 metres were still visible on the ground; *ibid.*, p. 251, n. 9.

⁸ J.C. Miller, 'The Imbangala and the Chronology of Early Central African History', *JAH*, XIII, 4, 1972, pp. 549-574; *Id.*, *Kings and Kinsmen*.

⁹ R.E. Schecter, 'History and Historiography', p. 32, 98.

¹⁰ Following Hoover's lead, we shall employ throughout the word 'Ruund' strictly to designate the inhabitants of the heartland of the *Mwant Yavs*' state and their language; 'Lunda', on the other hand, will refer to the political and cultural system of the Ruund and to its broad ramifications.

marriage as a metaphor in perpetual kinship.¹¹ However important these considerations, the likely historicity of the Mukulweji episodes as related by the Lunda of *Kazembe* seems corroborated by the records of the *pombeiros*, which contain the earliest written report of the story of Chinyanta and Mutanda.

'Mutanda' – Baptista was told at the beginning of the 19th century – ruled over the 'Acosa nation' and the Lualaba 'salt district, by order of Muatayanvo Muncanza.' Whilst Mutanda was absent on a military expedition, 'his Quilolo¹² and slave Quinhata [...] began to send a more important Mulambo (tribute), muconzos [*Lunda royal skirts(?)*], beirames [*cotton clothes*], and cloths, big pans of salt, and other things much esteemed by the Muatayanvo, than that of Mutanda, the "son".' Upon his return, Mutanda forwarded his own share of tribute to Mwant Yav Mukaz, but the latter refused the offering, 'saying that what his slave Quinhata had sent was larger than his "son's", who had neither love nor obedience for him.' Mutanda, greatly aggrieved, 'ordered Quinhata to be captured, and to be thrown into the river Mucuregi.' Mukaz, 'on hearing this, immediately sent and expelled his "son" from the government of the Salina, giving the same to the son of the deceased Quinhata, named, after the land-fashion, Ganga Abilonda, who was invested with the clay, knife, shield, javelins, together with other Quilolos to maintain him in his domains. He ordered him to govern the Salina and conquer all the lands he could [...]'¹³

The similarity between Baptista's version and later eastern Lunda accounts is striking. Exception made for the identity of the Mwant Yav who is said to have supervised the ascent of both Chinyanta and Ng'anga Bilonda – Muteb for the eastern Lunda, Mukaz according to Baptista – the main characters, geographical locations and themes tally neatly. If one accepts that the death of Chinyanta and the demise of the Mukulweji polity under Mutanda took place in about 1700, one must also conclude that the narrative that Baptista collected one century later owed more to secondary reminiscences than traditions proper. Thus, for the reasons given in chapter I, it can be presumed to reflect a relatively unadulterated picture of actual historical events.

Twentieth century eastern Lunda accounts openly acknowledge the non-Ruund origins of many of the followers of Chinyanta and, later, Ng'anga Bilonda. In about 1950, the principal aristocrats within the kingdom of *Kazembe* were still divided according to their alleged geographical provenance. Whereas the successors of the

¹¹ J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 172, 169. Further doubts on Miller's thesis have recently been cast by J. Vansina, 'It Never Happened: Kinguri's Exodus and its Consequences', *HA*, XXV, 1998, pp. 387-403. Perpetual kinship is the logical – but not the inevitable – extension of positional succession, a widespread institution in the eastern savanna of Central Africa. Through positional succession, the successor to a name or position 'inherits not only his predecessor's title, insignia, rights and duties, but also his social and political relationships.' (A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. xxviii.) Positional succession serves to maintain the form of descent groups and may evolve into perpetual kinship 'between social positions. The perpetual relationship is an expressed kinship relationship between the holders of two names, which does not vary with the actual genealogical relationship of the people who are at any time holding the names. It is a fixed relationship between hereditary names which remains constant through the generation.' I. Cunison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 105.

¹² See below, p. 78, n. 8.

¹³ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 231-232.

title-holders who inhabited Mwant Yav Muteb's capital on the Nkalany River and joined Mutanda and Chinyanta at the outset of their first eastward expedition were known as 'true Lunda' (Bena Kawand, Bena Nkaland or Bena Nkalanye), the Bena Lualaba were those aristocrats whose Kosa and Sanga predecessors dwelt in the region between the Mukulweji and the Lualaba Rivers and were Lundaized during the Mukulweji period in the late 17th century¹⁴. Despite the eastern Lunda claim to the effect that Chinyanta was a member of the Ruund royal family, there are indications that the progenitor of the *Mwata Kazembes* himself belonged originally to a southern Luba cultural context. 'Chiyongoli' – the name of the clan to which Chinyanta is said to have been affiliated – 'is not a Ruund term for "millipede", and the only close forms are in Luba languages.'¹⁵ 'Mwin Tibaraka', Chinyanta's 'uncle', seems to correspond to the modern Ruund title of *Mwin Chibalak*. At the time of Hoover's fieldwork, the then holder of the title claimed Luba origins and admitted that his predecessors were first incorporated into the *Mwant Yavs*' state sometime after its inception¹⁶. Last but not least, Hoover has confirmed Chiwale's intuition that the eastern Lunda royal slogans and praise-names 'for all periods except the past hundred years are in an archaic Luba dialect, called "chiLunda" now that the eastern Lunda speak a form of Bemba.'¹⁷

When all these fragments of evidence are pieced together, the background to the foundation of the kingdom of Kazembe acquires neater contours. Chinyanta was probably a southern Luba-speaking lineage leader who inhabited the periphery of the *Mwant Yavs*' state and came under its sway during the early stages of a political and cultural expansionist thrust towards the upper Lualaba River. The subsequent constitution of the Mukulweji polity – within which Ruund representatives, such as Mutanda, were doubtless outnumbered by autochthonous leaders – accelerated the spread of Lunda influences between the Mukulweji and the Lualaba Rivers. Once the clash between Chinyanta and Mutanda brought an end to it, these influences were not lost, for a new stratum of Lundaized title-holders had emerged which was ready to

¹⁴ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 152, 170. Not all the genealogies of the leading eastern Lunda aristocrats included in Cunnison's fieldnotes are consistent with their averred antiquity. It is possible that some of these titles were relatively recent creations, the inception of which was artificially placed in the era of Chinyanta and Mutanda in order to boost their legitimacy and reinforce their allegiance to the kingship.

¹⁵ J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 258.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

¹⁷ J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 260; J.C. Chiwale, *Royal Praises*.

carry them further away from the Ruund heartland and employ them to carve out a series of independent states, such as the Kazembe kingdom or the Ndembu polities. The contribution of Lundaized peripheral leaders to the eastward and southward expansion of the 'Lunda commonwealth'¹⁸ was greater than that of 'true' Ruund.

Their foreign roots notwithstanding, it is clear that when the first two Mwata Kazembes and subordinate titled representatives travelled through Katanga and settled on the lower Luapula River in about 1740¹⁹, their affiliation to the Lunda cultural universe had superseded whatever identity they might originally have shared. Lunda-derived, as we shall see in chapter III, were the insignia and institutions of rule around which the new state came to be structured. Whereas southern Luba dialects survived in the arcane vocabulary of the royal praises, the court language which the eastern Lunda grandees seem to have spoken until at least the mid-19th century was probably a corrupted form of Ruund. Gamitto found the 'Kampokolo' language 'incomprehensible' and only managed to record two words: '*cupso* and *mame*, fire and water', the Ruund equivalent of which appear to be *kasw* and *mem*.²⁰

Throughout the 18th and most of the 19th century, the rulers of the Kazembe kingdom, although politically independent from the *Mwant Yavs*, kept in constant communication with the Ruund heartland. In 1796, Pereira learned that a 'journey of sixty days' separated the Luapula River from the capital of the then *Mwant Yav*. 'From the Moropue's kingdom to the Cazembe's country pass[ed] cloths' and other items 'common on the western coast, as mirrors, tea-things kept for show, plates, cups, beads of sorts, cowries, and broadcloths of various kinds.' Mwata Kazembe III Lukwesa Ilunga reciprocated by sending 'his chattels to his "father", who remit[ed] them to Angola.'²¹ The *Mwata Kazembes'* 'chattels' – Baptista reported a few years later – included slaves and copper from southern Katanga. In 1806 or 1808, Baptista himself travelled between the two capitals without encountering any serious obstacle and noted the existence of 'houses' accomodating the 'travelling Arúndas.' One of these was 'Cabuita Capinda', whose encampment lay between the Lualaba and the Dikulwe Rivers. 'Cabuita' was an 'ambassador of the Cazembe who was going to take the

¹⁸ I borrow this definition from J. Vansina, 'It Never Happened', p. 387, n. 1.

¹⁹ See above, p. 28, n. 25.

²⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 117; J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, pp. 264-265, n. 37.

²¹ 'Manoel Caetano Pereira's Deposition', 22 March 1798, in R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 41. It is significant that Pereira's informants employed the Luba royal title, *Mulopwe*, to designate the Ruund king.

Mulambo to the Muatahianvo.²² In 1831-2, Gamitto and his party met an 'envoy' of the then Mwant Yav at the capital of Mwata Kazembe IV Chibangu Keleka. Although he was accused of having bewitched the king, no harm was done to him, the *Mwata Kazembes* not being 'in the habit of killing Kampokolos.'²³ As late as 1868, Mwata Kazembe VII Muonga Sunkutu planned to send a 'tribute of slaves' to 'his paramount chief, Matiamvo'²⁴. Since cultural and political symbols were no doubt exchanged along with trading goods, the itinerary joining the Ruund heartland and the Luapula River enhanced the prestige of the rulers of the kingdom of Kazembe and contributed to maintain them 'au sein des différentes communautés participant à la Grande Tradition Lunda.'²⁵

2) A Selective Economic Profile of Southern Katanga and Mweru-Luapula before the Inception of the Kingdom of Kazembe

The importance which traditional accounts attribute to the salt-producing district on the upper Lualaba River suggests that the ambition to secure access to the mineral resources of southern Katanga may have been one of the principal causes of the eastward migration of the Lunda of *Kazembe*. Given the dearth of archaeological and historical linguistic data, most of our information refer to the 19th century, but the networks of production and exchange which they illustrate can be assumed partly to reflect much older economic patterns²⁶.

Copper – a mainly ornamental metal associated with wealth and prestige – was probably worked in southern Katanga from at least the last quarter of the first millennium A.D. In the Later Iron Age, two of the most important copper-producing districts were located to the west of the upper Lualaba, near present-day Kolwezi, and to the east of the Dikulwe, near present-day Kambove. At the time of the *pombeiros*' passage through southern Katanga, the 'owners' and 'head smiths' of the first cluster of mines were the *Mwilus* ('Muiro') and *Kanzenzes* ('Canbembe'). Malachite was dug from 'the summit of the hills', and copper bars were made by the "'sons'" and 'slaves'

²² R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 173, 213, 232.

²³ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 51-52.

²⁴ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 295.

²⁵ J.-L. Vellut, 'Notes sur le Lunda', p. 61.

²⁶ I am here following A.D. Roberts' line of reasoning as summarized in 'Pre-Colonial Trade in Zambia', *African Social Research*, 10, 1970, pp. 715-746 (especially, p. 724).

of the two title-holders²⁷. Copper from the area was no doubt traded extensively. In the late 1860s, the large I-shaped ingots smelted 'about a month to the west' of the eastern Lunda capital could be found 'all over' Mweru-Luapula; local smiths drew 'the copper into wire for armlets and leglets.'²⁸ Not later than the early 18th century, the Lemba of *Katanga* gained control of the second group of copper mines²⁹. Every year, towards the end of the dry season, 'le chef avec tout son peuple' left his village and spent two months 'dans la montagne [...] occupé à l'extraction du cuivre [...] Le minerai [était] transporté dans les villages et travaillé pendant la saison des pluies.'³⁰ The country of the *Katangas*, according to a visiting missionary, 'teemed with' malachite and might have yielded as many as 30 tonnes of copper each year during the 19th century³¹.

Locally produced salt played an equally essential role in the regional exchanges of southern Katanga. By the 17th century, the aforementioned Kechila salt deposits on the upper Lualaba River were probably heavily exploited and attracted sizeable numbers of foreign salt-buyers. In 1806 or 1808, the *pombeiros* met many of them both to the west and east of the river. Salt-makers burnt the rich saline grass of the flood-plain and 'dissolve[d] the ashes in water and [threw] the lye into small pans which they [made]; then they boil[ed] it.' Salt thus obtained was 'exchange[d] for what they consider[ed] wealth, namely, woollen cloth, Indian tissues, beads, and straw-cloths.' Salt must have also been bartered with foodstuffs, for local villagers seem to have neglected agriculture. Not surprisingly, they were 'put to great straits' during the rainy season, when, due to the 'river-plain [...] being flooded', salt-traders stayed away from Kechila³². The salt pans near the confluence of the Lufira and Kafila Rivers were controlled by the Bena Ngoma of *Mwashya* from the early 18th century, if not before³³. Salt obtained from the saline soil of the depression was certainly traded at the beginning of the 19th century³⁴.

'The famous salt-pans' of the *Mwashyas*, wrote Crawford in 1892, were 'a wonderful sight, the long stretching expanse of white reminding one very forcibly of a December scene at home. The old chief took me through the large salt plain [...] and, stepping over the salt with conscious pride, he stopped to

²⁷ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 222. Herbert has remarked that 'what Europeans referred to as rights of ownership should more properly be defined as usufructory rights, that is, rights of exploitation.' E.W. Herbert, *Red Gold of Africa. Copper in Precolonial History and Culture*, Madison, 1984, p. 43.

²⁸ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 265.

²⁹ See below, p. 83, n. 41.

³⁰ C. Brasseur, in *La Belgique Coloniale*, IV, 16, 17 April 1898, pp. 185-186.

³¹ D. Crawford, 1 August - 31 August 1892, in *ES*, May 1893, p. 107; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 115.

³² R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 223.

³³ See below, p. 80, n. 26.

³⁴ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 183.

ask if I had ever in my life beheld *such* a sight [...]. He really did seem to think that he had, in this salt of his, one of the seven wonders of the world.³⁵

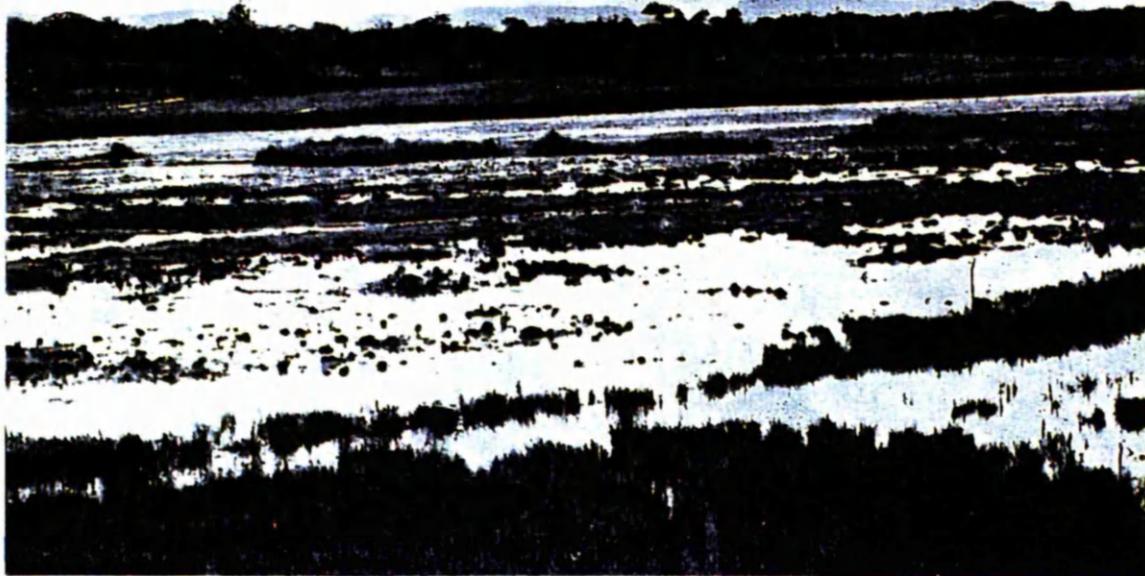
70 or so tonnes of salt were still extracted each year from the *Mwashyas'* salt deposits during the first decades of the 20th century³⁶.



Illus. 2 Ancient Copper Workings to the West of the Upper Lualaba River. From A. Verbeken & M. Walraet (eds & transl.), *La Première Traversée du Katanga*, non-indexed.

³⁵ D. Crawford, 1 August – 31 August 1892, in *ES*, May 1893, p. 105.

³⁶ R. Marchal, 'Chefferies de Mwashya et de Mulenga', 1939, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.



Illus. 3 Salt Pans near the Confluence of the Lufira and Kafila Rivers. From A. Verbeken & M. Walraet (eds & transl.), *La Première Traversée du Katanga*, non-indexed.

It will be seen in chapter III that the institutions of peripheral rule implemented by the eastern Lunda enabled them to impose a measure of control over the copper and salt-producing districts of southern Katanga and the regional trading networks which revolved around them. However, it was the lower Luapula valley which developed into the historical heartland of the kingdom of Kazembe. The reason for this seeming paradox may well lie in the contrasting ecological profiles of the two areas. Despite its supply of rare natural resources, the scattered population and poor soils of the southern Katangese plateau did not compare favourably with the 'special' environmental conditions of Mweru-Luapula³⁷.

The lower Luapula River and its many tributaries originating from either the Kundelungu Range or the Muchinga Escarpment flow through extensive swampland. The edges of the swamp and the numerous inhabitable swamp islands are covered by

³⁷ M. Robert, *Le Katanga Physique*, Brussels, 1950, pp. 208-209, 233-248; S.E. Katzenellenbogen, 'Southern Katanga's Copper Trade in the Pre-Colonial Period and its Collapse on the Eve of Belgian Penetration', in G. Liesegang, H. Pasch & A. Jones (eds), *Figuring African Trade*, Berlin, 1986, p. 672; W. Allan, *The African Husbandman*, Westport, 1977, p. 140 (1st edn., Edinburgh, 1965).

tall grasses and trees (*cipya*) growing on rich and moisture-retaining soils. The agricultural potential and carrying capacities of *cipya* soils are much higher than those of the *miombo* woodlands of the adjoining plateaux³⁸. *Cipya* soils are particularly 'well suited to cultivation of cassava'³⁹, and the introduction of this latter crop – whether due to the arrival of the Lunda of *Kazembe* themselves or to earlier westerly influences – made the adoption of a 'semi-permanent hoe cultivation' possible⁴⁰. Cassava is planted on large mounds using the 'grass-manure technique'. The roots are ready to be dug up from the second year, following which they can be harvested at any time, up to the fourth or fifth season⁴¹. A short fallow period of no more than six years takes place after the first or second cycle⁴². Around 1800, cassava – eaten 'in dough, toasted, and boiled and even raw' – was the 'principal' food in the area⁴³, but villagers also grew 'millet, maize, large haricot beans, small ditto, round beans [...], fruits, as bananas; sugar-canes, potatoes, yams, gourds, almonds (ground-nuts) [...]' As a result, the lower Luapula valley was 'supplied with provisions all the year round and every year.'⁴⁴ 'Hunger' – a Lunda aristocrat told Crawford in June 1893 – 'we don't know what it is. It is never here.'⁴⁵

The availability of large quantities of fish in almost all the watercourses and lakes of Mweru-Luapula offered the chance to integrate the low protein content of a cassava-based diet. The foundations for the impressive development of the fishing industry in colonial Mweru-Luapula were no doubt laid down by centuries of local endeavours. 'Much fish' from the Luapula River and Mofwe ('Mouva') Lagoon reached the eastern Lunda capital at the beginning of the 19th century⁴⁶. 'Fish in great numbers' were caught on the lower Kalungwishi River 'when ascending to spawn: they [*were*] secured by weirs, nets, hooks.'⁴⁷ Livingstone himself recorded the names of thirty-nine species of fish in Lake Mweru, and was told by Mpelembe ('Pérémbé'),

³⁸ C.G. Trapnell, *The Soils, Vegetation and Agriculture of North-Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka, 1953, pp. 25-26; I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 2-4.

³⁹ W. Allan, *The African Husbandman*, p. 144.

⁴⁰ J. Schultz, *Land Use in Zambia. Part I: the Basically Traditional Land Use Systems and their Regions*, Munich, 1976, pp. 39-40; I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 6.

⁴¹ W. Allan, *The African Husbandman*, p. 142; J. Schultz, *Land Use in Zambia*, p. 69. 'Manioc' – Pinto wrote in 1799 – was 'collect[ed] and sow[n] all the year round [...] they [*dug*] up a small quantity to last for a few days, and in its stead they bur[ie]d a few bits of stalk which act[ed] as seed.' R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 129.

⁴² I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 23.

⁴³ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 129.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 231. See also D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, pp. 246-248.

⁴⁵ D. Crawford, 19 May – 4 July 1893, in *ES*, February 1894, p. 51.

⁴⁶ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 231.

⁴⁷ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 244.

the then holder of the *Katele* title, that the first Mwata Kazembe to settle near Mofwe Lagoon had been 'attracted by the abundance of fish in it.'⁴⁸ Game, including elephants, lions, zebras and buffaloes, was also plentiful in the valley⁴⁹.

All these favourable ecological features account for another seemingly enduring characteristic of the local setting: its relatively high demographic density. Most foreign observers in the 19th century were struck by this latter aspect. Gamitto, for instance, albeit 'unable to calculate the number of inhabitants per square league', thought that 'the population of Kazembe's country must [*have been*] very numerous'. In some places, 'there was a series of small villages, full of people, in close proximity to one another [...]'.⁵⁰ Even though no accurate comparison can be made between the pre-colonial and contemporary situations, it is nevertheless significant that the eastern half of the lower Luapula valley is nowadays one of the most densely populated areas in rural Zambia⁵¹. In the 1960s, an estimated 100 persons per square miles crowded the edge of the swamp, as opposed to a national average rural density of only 9.5⁵². The intensive agricultural system which seems to have prevailed in the valley since at least the early 18th century meant that riparian villages tended to be relatively stable⁵³. In 1900, Purves, the founder of the LMS Mbereshi mission, trusted that the inhabitants of the district between the Mbereshi River and the eastern Lunda royal capital, some seven miles to the south, would not have 'fluctuate[*d*] like [*they did*] in some others, for there [*was*] an abundance of good garden ground near at hand and the river abound[*ed*] in splendid fish, it [*was*] therefore the kind of place a native lik[*ed*] best.'⁵⁴

It must also be noted that the lower Luapula valley and, especially, the adjoining territories both to the north and east were not short of important trading resources. Whereas the produce of the saline grass of Chibondo and Matoto swamp islands, along the western bank of the river, was probably consumed locally⁵⁵, wider

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 252; Mohamed ibn Saleh, the doyen of East African traders in Mweru-Luapula, reckoned that Katele Mpelembe was '150 years old'! See also I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 214.

⁴⁹ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 99, 185; A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 81-82; D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 248.

⁵⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 115. An intelligent guess, based on the earliest available colonial estimates, would be that the population of both banks of the Luapula between Mambilima Falls and Lake Mweru throughout the 18th and most of the 19th century cannot have been much more or much less than 40,000.

⁵¹ J. Gould, *Luapula*, p. 22.

⁵² W. Allan, *The African Husbandman*, p. 141; G. Kay, 'Agricultural Progress in Zambia', in M.F. Thomas & G.W. Whittington (eds), *Environment and Land Use in Africa*, London, 1969, p. 499.

⁵³ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 21-23.

⁵⁴ Purves to Thompson, 17 December 1900, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 11.

⁵⁵ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 35, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M.C. Musambachime, 'Changing Roles: the History of the Development and

networks of exchange revolved around the salt obtained from the saline soils of the lower Kalungwishi River and the marshes between Lake Mweru and Mweru wa Ntipa. Presumably, Gamitto's informants were referring to the Kalungwishi when speaking of 'a river three days to the north' of the eastern Lunda capital. Apart from containing 'many stones of different colours', the river 'ha[d] near it some low ground which [was] permanently dry, except at the time of new and full moon when it [was] covered in salty water, and when this disappear[ed] it [became] dry and some days afterwards salt [was] extracted from the surface.' The saline soil was thrown 'into pots filled with water to filter it. The water [was] then placed at a fire to evaporate and the salt remain[ed].'⁵⁶ The salt pans at the north-eastern corner of Lake Mweru were to be ranked among the most productive in pre-colonial North-Eastern Zambia⁵⁷. In 1867, salt from Puta was taken 'to Lunda and elsewhere.' On his way down the eastern shore of Lake Mweru, Livingstone met 'parties of salt-traders daily.'⁵⁸ Between Lake Mweru and Mweru wa Ntipa, 'everyone [was] a salt-maker.' The inhabitants of the area resembled those of the upper Lualaba salt-producing district in that 'they [grew] little or no food crops, but [bought] from others with salt.'⁵⁹

Although Mweru-Luapula lacked copper deposits, several iron outcrops were to be found on the plateau to the east of the Muchinga Escarpment, and especially on Kamananpango Hill, near present-day Chibote mission⁶⁰. The inhabitants of the plateau were the main producers of iron tools, but, following their installation in the valley, the Lunda of *Kazembe* appear to have also taken up iron-smelting. In 1867, Livingstone bought five iron hoes 'at two or three yards of calico each' near the capital of Muonga Sunkutu, Mwata Kazembe VII⁶¹.

Disintegration of Nkuba's Shila State to 1740', unpublished MA thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1976, p. 69. Chibondo is perhaps to be identified with 'Cabomba', which according to Baptista was one of the salt-producing districts controlled by Mwata Kazembe IV Chibangu Keleka; R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 231.

⁵⁶ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 81, 119.

⁵⁷ A.D. Roberts, 'Pre-Colonial Trade in Zambia', pp. 725-726; *Id.*, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 187.

⁵⁸ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, pp. 243-244.

⁵⁹ A. Sharpe, 'A Journey', p. 527.

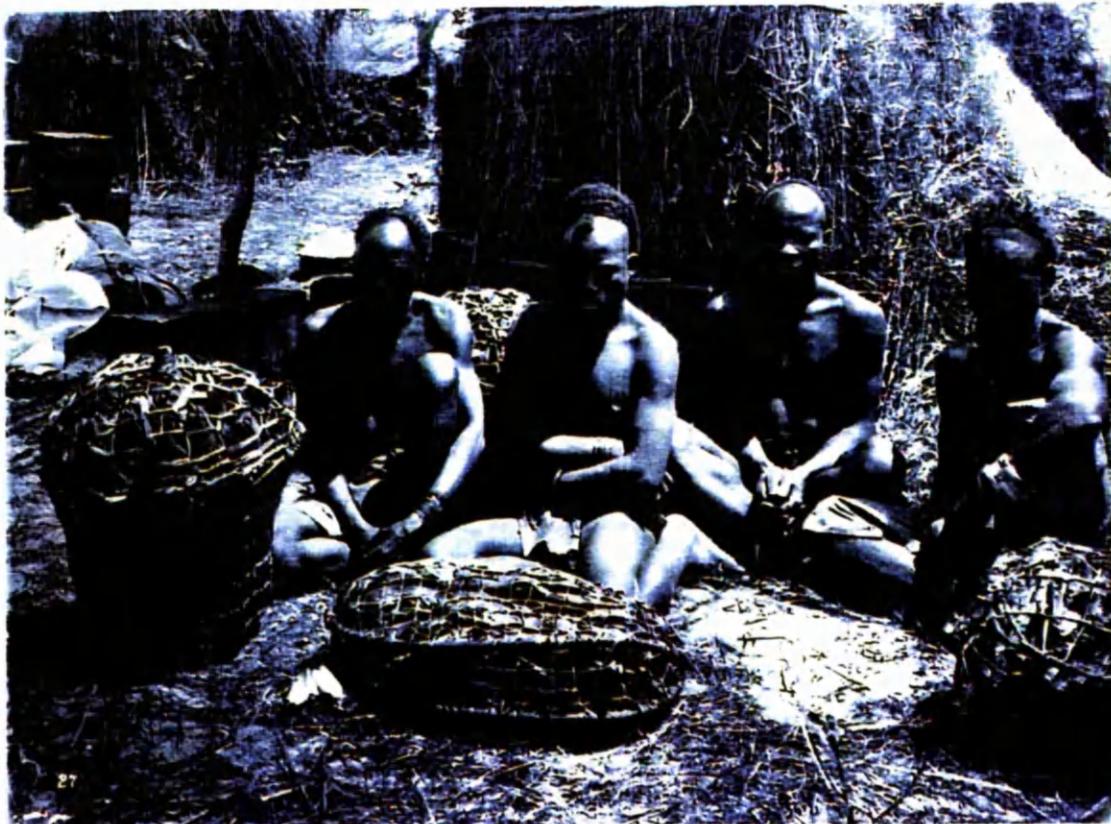
⁶⁰ A.D. Roberts, 'Pre-Colonial Trade in Zambia', pp. 725; *Id.*, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 186; G.E. Fane Smith, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 28 September - 12 October 1940', NAZ, SEC2/874.

⁶¹ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 268. See also I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 19.

For all these reasons, long before the arrival of the eastern Lunda, the Luapula valley had attracted successive groups of foreign settlers and stimulated the growth of a political organization above the lineage or clan levels.



Illus. 4 Cassava Garden near Mwanabombwe. Photograph by the author, April 1999.



Illus. 5 **Catches of Fish on the Luapula River.** Photograph by Poulett Weatherley, ca. 1900. Courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society.

3) **The Political Landscape of Mweru-Luapula before the Inception of the Kingdom of Kazembe**

The information relating to the pre-18th century political history of the Luapula valley is limited and very hard to interpret. Again, in the absence of any thorough archaeological or historical linguistic study of the area, the discussion will not go beyond the attempt to make sense of a series of very disparate traditional data collected during the last 100 or so years⁶². It goes without saying that the reconstruction presented here is highly conjectural and, as such, open to revision.

A useful starting point is Reefe's description of the likely political features of the territory between the Lomami, Luvidjo and Lovoi Rivers before the establishment of the supremacy of the Luba *Mulopwes* in the late 17th century. It was a landscape

⁶² I am painfully aware that by so doing I fall far short of Vansina's recently enunciated standards. It is generally 'more or less assumed *a priori* that a social system in the past must have been some simpler version of the society as known from later times. That is not necessarily so. If one reasons backwards from recent ethnographic material alone, the unexpected is by definition weeded out. [...] One should never merely assume a "logical" scenario but test it by other means such as comparative semantic linguistics [...]'. J. Vansina, 'Government in Kasai before the Lunda', *IJAHS*, XXXI, 1, 1998, pp. 1-22 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 22).

'marked by a mosaic of small, lineage-based states overlaid with lines of supernatural authority derived from ancestral spirits.' Insofar as our study-area is concerned, the term 'polities' ought to be preferred to the term 'states', for the latter may be misleading in suggesting the existence of a degree of political centralization which the societies inhabiting the Luapula valley almost certainly did not possess. In fact, until the rise of the *Nkubas* around 1700, there is no evidence at all that lineage heads in Mweru-Luapula 'manipulated the succession of village chiefs to guarantee the presence of loyal subordinates within their spheres.'⁶³ Rather, fragmentation and instability must have characterized these small polities and the relationships between them. Hierarchies within and between these largely independent groups are likely to have been fragile and subject to frequent renegotiation. No doubt, due to particularly favourable circumstances, individual lineage leaders were sometimes able to impose a measure of control over their neighbours. But, as Verbeek noted with reference to the Congolese pedicle to the south of the Kafubu River, 'ces groupements n'ont probablement jamais pu survivre beaucoup de temps.' Thus, until they were incorporated into either the eastern Lunda or the Yeke conquest states, 'un pouvoir centralisé et solide n'a jamais pu se maintenir [...]'.⁶⁴ After all, it seems that the ethnonym 'Bwilile' was first employed by the founders of the *Nkubas*' state to describe the autochthonous inhabitants of the lower Luapula valley and their fundamentally decentralized structure, tainted, as it were, by the lack of institutionalized tributary networks⁶⁵. On the other hand, the principle of common clan affiliation was probably sufficiently stable to mitigate the overall fluidity of the Luapula political environment and the independence of the various lineage-based polities which composed it⁶⁶.

Although it is useless to speculate on the ultimate geographical origins of most of the clans or sub-clans which inhabited the Luapula valley before the rise of the holders of the *Nkuba* title, an intelligent guess would be that their spread in the area

⁶³ T.Q. Reeve, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, p. 79. In a later publication, Reeve himself spoke of the 'persistence of small-scale polities' as being 'the most striking feature' of the political landscape of the eastern savanna until about 1700. 'States' proper are said to have entered the scene only after this date. T.Q. Reeve, 'The Societies of the Eastern Savanna', in D. Birmingham & P.M. Martin (eds), *History of Central Africa*, I, p. 165.

⁶⁴ L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation*, p. 171.

⁶⁵ On the etymology of the term, see I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 38.

⁶⁶ The evidence for Mweru-Luapula, in other words, does not seem to support so thorough a revision of the notion of clans as enduring social structures as that advocated by Willis for western Uganda; J. Willis, 'Clan and History in Western Uganda: a New Perspective on the Origins of Pastoral Dominance', *JAH*, XXX, 3, 1997, pp. 583-600.

was more likely to have been the result of relatively localized movements, rather than the epic migrations described in some at least of their histories. The precise timing of their formation or arrival in the Luapula valley are equally impossible to determine. Whereas, then, a detailed chronology of the peopling of the valley before the 18th century cannot be produced, due to the nature itself of the lineage or sub-clan traditions recited on the Luapula in the 20th century, the relative antiquity of a few clans' representatives can be reasonably postulated⁶⁷. As far as one can gather from the Bena Mbeba (Rat Clan) traditional accounts, the Bena Nshe (Locust Clan) are likely to have been one of the most ancient clans of the eastern bank of the Luapula and the plateau to the east of the Muchinga Escarpment⁶⁸. Of all the hereditary lineage or sub-clan heads which must have belonged to the clan at one time, only the names of *Malebe* and *Bimbye* are still remembered nowadays as having dwelt in present-day Lubunda and Kashiba's chiefdoms⁶⁹.

Before 1700, both banks of the lower Luapula to the north of the Bena Nshe settlements were probably inhabited by sections of the Bena Mumba (Clay Clan), Bena Ntamba (Tortoise Clan) and Bena Lungu (Calabash Clan). The holders of the *Matanda* title were Bena Mumba dwelling to the south of Mambilima Falls, in present-day Ushi country. Other Bena Mumba lineage heads – *Mumbi* in Mwambo swamp island, *Mubola* in Nkole Island, and *Kaponto* in Kilwa Island – seem to have been junior to the *Matandas* in the clan hierarchy⁷⁰. The *Twites*, Bena Ntamba, and their “sister”,

⁶⁷ 'Certain themes are dominant in sub-clan [...] histories. These are: place of origin; reason for leaving that place; movements undertaken on the way to the valley; ownership of the part of the valley at which the clan arrived; relations with these owners; detailed accounts of changes of land ownership in which the group concerned is involved.' (I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, p. 11.) Although the episodes revolving around the change of ownership in land 'are seldom free from a mythical element' (*ibid.*, p. 19), it is plausible to assume that social pressure made it difficult for the successive repositories of a given lineage or sub-clan history to forget or alter the identity of the original occupants of the territory in which their ancestors settled at the time of their entry in the valley. Outright inventions, on the other hand, might have entered much more easily the recitation of the early, pre-Luapulan episodes of sub-clan or lineage histories.

⁶⁸ J. Vranken & I. Mwape, 'The Chishinga', have even suggested that the Nshe clansmen may have been the first Bantu to reach our study area, introducing farming and iron smelting in the early centuries of the second millennium A.D. For all its attractiveness, Vranken & Mwape's hypothesis is not substantiated by any serious evidence.

⁶⁹ I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, p. 19. The dealings between Bena Mbeba and Bena Nshe are described in very similar terms in two vernacular typescripts which the current holders of the *Lubunda* and *Mulundu* titles, the two most important Bena Mbeba representatives on the Luapula River, prepared and then donated to me during my fieldwork in the Luapula Province. I am referring to Mulundu Elders, 'Mfumumu Mulundu Yaisa mu Zambia Ukufuma KuKola Kuchalo ca Congo', and K.M. Lubunda, 'Ukwisa kwa Mfumumu sha Bena Mbeba pa Kufuma ku Kola'. I employ English translations of the two texts by Mr. Victor Kawanga Kazembe and Mr. Besa Mwape, respectively.

⁷⁰ On *Kaponto* and the famous story of his encounter with the Pygmies of Kilwa, see I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 34-35. On *Mumbi* and *Mubola*, see M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 6, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

Mwele, lived in Kasato and Chisenga swamp island, respectively. *Mulimba*, the *Twites*' "son", dwelt in Chibondo, the salt-producing swamp island to the south of Kasato⁷¹. The *Chishites*, also Bena Ntamba, were in Kawama, to the north-west of Chibondo⁷². *Kabungo* and *Misange* inhabited Mwati swamp island, to the south of Chibondo⁷³. *Mwepeya*, prophetess of a spirit dwelling in the caves of Kilwa Island, occupied Lukanga, on the south-eastern shore of Lake Mweru, together with *Mukanje* and *Katoto*. The *Kalapwes*, possibly Bena Lungu, lived near Lake Chifukula, surrounded by *Makandwe* and *Kadimawamandia*, their junior. The village of the holders of the *Chimamba* position was in Matoto, another salt-producing area⁷⁴.

By the early 18th century, all these small-scale, lineage-based politics located in the lower Luapula valley had had to come to terms with the formation of the *Nkubas*' state and the broadening of the political horizons which it had entailed. Before discussing this process, however, it is appropriate to examine briefly the political landscape of those sections of the valley and adjoining territories both to the east and west which never became part of the Shila state. Before the end of the 17th century, the Bena Nshe of the middle Luapula valley and easterly plateau appear to have been swamped by the spread of the Mbeba clansmen. Nowadays, the most prominent Bena Mbeba lineage heads claim Ruund origins. But, since this might simply be the result of their late 18th century incorporation into the Kazembe kingdom, not too much weight ought to be attributed to this claim⁷⁵. Possibly, as Vranken and Mwape have suggested, a study of the Bena Mbeba Bemba dialect could throw additional light on the matter. Lacking this, all suggestions of a Ruund origin should be taken with a degree of scepticism⁷⁶.

⁷¹ M. Lacame, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 6, 33, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; A. L'Heureux, 'Historique de la Chefferie de Kuba-Kawama', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. According to I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 38, the *Twites* and related lineage leaders were Bena Lungu.

⁷² M. Lacame, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 38, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁷³ M.C. Musambachime, 'Changing Roles', p. 23.

⁷⁴ M. Lacame, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 34-35, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. The hereditary names and likely locations of other Bwilile lineage heads are shown in the maps of the lower Luapula valley enclosed in I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, p. 36, and *Id.*, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 36.

⁷⁵ For a more elaborate discussion, see below, p. 99.

⁷⁶ This is all the more so, since neither *Mulundu* nor *Lubunda*'s traditions dwell at any length upon the movements undertaken on their way to the valley nor allegedly leaving the capital of the *Mwant Yavs* on the Nkalanyi River. Apart from the unpublished sources cited above (p. 68, n. 69), fairly elaborate versions of the two traditions are also to be found in Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Mulundu History', July 1949, and 'Lubunda History', April 1951.

The fact that the sobriquet 'Bwilile' was never grafted onto the Bena Mbeba representatives has led Cunnison to surmise the existence of a distinction between these latter and the other clans inhabiting the middle and lower Luapula valley. Unlike Bena Nshe, Bena Mumba, Bena Ntamba and Bena Lungu, Bena Mbeba polities are said to have been under 'chiefs' (*mfumu*) and not mere 'clan or lineage heads' (*bacikolwe*), who differed from the former in 'the absence of wealth, tribute and military power.'⁷⁷ To be sure, the distinction is somewhat artificial, mainly because, 'Bwilile' ethnonym apart, there is no direct proof that the 'lineage heads' of the lower Luapula valley did not enjoy some at least of the alleged prerogatives of the Bena Mbeba 'chiefs'. Furthermore, unlike later Shila territorial representatives and very much like the coeval lineage-based polities of the lower Luapula valley, Bena Mbeba polities appear to have always preserved a high degree of mutual independence and equality. Indeed, the seniority of the holders of the *Mupeta* title in the clan hierarchy seems not to have entailed a right to influence the selection of the new incumbents to lesser hereditary lineage headships⁷⁸. Yet, despite all this, the very fact that they always maintained their independence *vis-à-vis* the Shila of *Nkuba* does suggest that the Mbeba clansmen introduced superior organizational techniques wherever they settled. And their remarkable geographical dispersion points in a similar direction. In about 1700, apart from the *Mupetas*, who dwelt along the lower Luongo River, and the *Lubundas*, *Mulundus*, *Katutas*, *Lubebes* and *Mwabas*, who inhabited the middle Luapula valley around Mambilima Falls, Bena Mbeba leaders were also to be found near present-day Kawambwa (*Munkanta*, *Kabila* and *Ntenke*), along the swamps formed by the Luena and Pambashe Rivers (*Kabanda*, *Chibu* and *Kabonde*, among many others), and on the lower Kalungwishi River (*Kapema*).

Probably, following their occupation of the middle Luapula valley and the plateau to the east, the Bena Mbeba began to be known as 'Chishinga'. This ethnonym,

⁷⁷ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 35.

⁷⁸ W. Stubbs, 'Note on the Bena Mbeba and their Pretensions', 1937, Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 198, NAZ, KSG3/1. A proof of the basically egalitarian nature of the past relationships between Bena Mbeba lineage heads is possibly to be found in the fact that, in 1932, the then Katuta Kampemba installed both Nshinka, the new holder of the *Mulundu* title, and Shimwansa, the new Lubunda. Four years later, on the other hand, the new Katuta, Chisama, was installed by Nshinka Mulundu himself. (Collcutt to Stokes, 28 June 1932, encl. in Stokes to Chief Secretary, 14 July 1932, NAZ, SEC2/1190; Collcutt to Hinds, 15 December 1932, encl. in Hinds to Chief Secretary, 23 December 1932, NAZ, SEC2/1190; PC (Northern Province) to Chief Secretary, 29 August 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192.) In more recent years, something must have happened to alter this pattern, for chief Kabaso Makanta Mulundu told me that the holders of the *Katuta* – whom he described as 'younger brothers' – have no right to install any of their fellow Bena Mbeba leaders. Interview with Kabaso Makanta Mulundu & Elders, Mulundu village, 8 April 1999.

which was certainly already employed at the time of the *pombeiros*' stay in the eastern Lunda capital⁷⁹, might have been grafted onto the incoming Bena Mbeba by the original inhabitants of the area and might have had something to do with their skills in iron smelting. The Bemba word *amashinga* (sing. *cishinga*) means 'big logs of firewood'; these were perhaps employed to heat up the iron-ore of the plateau⁸⁰. When, in the latter part of the 19th century, the Bena Ngoma under the leadership of the holders of the *Mushyota* title left the Bena Mukulu area and conquered most of the Bena Mbeba of the plateau⁸¹, they also adopted the tribal sobriquet. The subsequent imposition of colonial rule contributed to sanction and crystallize this broadening of the Chishinga ethnicity⁸².

While it was only in the second half of the 19th century that a section of the Bena Ngoma under the *Mushyotas* occupied what was certainly known by then as the Chishinga plateau, at about the same time as the Bena Mbeba settled along the eastern bank of the middle Luapula, other Bena Ngoma lineage heads left Lake Bangweulu and established themselves on the western bank of the Luapula, to the south of the Lutipuka River. The migration of the so-called 'trois Kisamamba' (*Chibale*, *Chikungu* and *Kampombwe*) was perhaps spurred by the consolidation of the supremacy of the holders of the *Chibwe* title among the Bena Mukulu (that is, Bena Ngoma inhabiting the area known as Mukulu) at the end of the 17th or the beginning of the 18th century⁸³. One of the early *Chisamambas* is remembered in both *Mulundu* and *Lubunda*'s histories as having helped them to free the country from the curse which one of the *Malebes*, Bena Nshe, is said to have pronounced before being killed by the Bena Mbeba.

By the beginning of the 18th century, the western bank of the Luapula between the Lukaka and the Lualala Rivers was probably inhabited by lineage heads belonging to two more clans: the *Makungus* and the *Nkambos* of the Bashimba (Leopard Clan),

⁷⁹ According to P.J. Baptista, the first Mwata Kazembe to reach Mweru-Luapula 'established himself in the Quixinga land.' R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 232.

⁸⁰ White Fathers, *The White Fathers Bemba-English Dictionary*, Ndola, 1991 (reprint of the 1954 edn.), p. 129; J. Vranken & I. Mwape, 'The Chishinga'.

⁸¹ See below, pp. 143-144.

⁸² Interestingly, as late as 1945, H.M. Waluzimba, younger brother of the then Munkanta, still refused to accept the Bena Ngoma as "true" Chishinga. 'Chief Mushyota is not Mwine-Chishinga or Chama [a title subordinate to Mushyota], but they are Mukulu, and their tribal chief is Chungu, in Luwingu District [...] This Government should put it right!'. Waluzimba to Gore-Browne, 15 June 1945, encl. in Fane-Smith to Chief Secretary, 7 August, 1945, NAZ, SEC2/301.

⁸³ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur les Trois Kisamamba. Historiques. Généalogies', 1935, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; E. Labrecque (ed.), *History of the Bena-Ngoma*, p. 18.

and the *Mwabas* and *Kabingandus* of the Bakunda (Frog Clan)⁸⁴. Other Bakunda representatives – *Nsonga* and *Mukupa* – lived on the Lufukwe River, at the foot of the Kundelungu Range⁸⁵.

The inception of the Shila state of the *Nkubas* represented the first radical innovation in the pre-Lunda political landscape of the Luapula valley. The ethnonym ‘Shila’ (in Bemba, *bashila* is the plural form of *mushila*, fisherman) is here employed to describe the holders of the *Nkuba*, their subordinate hereditary titles and the people who considered themselves subjects of both before the intrusion of the Lunda of *Kazembe*. In about 1950, ‘Bwilile representatives [...] sa[id] that they were the original bashila (meaning fishermen) and that *Nkuba* adopted this name as the name of his tribe.’⁸⁶ However, the hypothesis could also be advanced that the term ‘Shila’ first acquired clear ethnic connotations only once the *Nkubas*’ polity had been subdued and incorporated into the kingdom of Kazembe. At the time of Pinto’s stay in the royal capital, the term ‘Vaciras’ or ‘Messiras’ served precisely to designate the people whom the ‘Murundas’ had conquered in the lower Luapula valley⁸⁷.

Once more, we are forced to admit our fundamental ignorance regarding the origins of the founders of the Shila state. Most 20th century versions of Shila history assert that Mukuka – the first remembered *Nkuba* – was a member of the Bemba royal clan, the Bena Ngandu, who fled Bembaland after quarrelling with one of the early *Chitimukulus*⁸⁸. But, given that the Bemba of *Chitimukulu* ‘appear to know nothing of Shila history’, the Shila claims may be ‘no more than aetiological explanations.’⁸⁹ There is also a very broad agreement over the fact that Nsenshi – who was killed by

⁸⁴ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 73-74; M. Lacanne, ‘Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero’, 1935, pp. 10-15, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁸⁵ A. L’Heureux, ‘Rapport d’ Enquête et Historique de la Chefferie de Songa’, 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. *Id.*, ‘Rapport d’Enquête et Historique de la Chefferie de Mukupa’, 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁸⁶ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 39, n. 2.

⁸⁷ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 126. Thirty or so years later, Gamitto wrote that the Shila were ‘the pure descendants of the conquered chief’ of Chisenga swamp island. A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 116.

⁸⁸ Wens, ‘Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique. Démographie’, 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, ‘Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero’, 1935, p. 34, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; A. L’Heureux, ‘Historique de la Chefferie de Kuba-Kawama’, 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; E. Labrecque (ed.), ‘The Story of the Shila People, Aborigenes of the Luapula-Mweru along with their Fishing and Hunting Customs, Folklores and Praisewords’, unpublished typescript, n.d. (but late 1940s(?)), WFA-Z, Section 1: Manuscripts, pp. 17-18; I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 37-38; M.C. Musambachime, ‘Changing Roles’, pp. 33-34.

⁸⁹ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 61, 69.

the Lunda of either Kanyembo Mpemba, Mwata Kazembe II, or Lukwesa Ilunga, Mwata Kazembe III⁹⁰ – was the fourth Nkuba. Since Nsenshi is said to have been the nephew (ZS) of the first two holders of the *Nkuba*⁹¹, two generations would seem to have elapsed between the formation of the Shila state under Mukuka and its conquest by the incoming Lunda in the second half of the 18th century. This being so, the reign of Mukuka is unlikely to have started much earlier than 1700.

The state over which the *Nkubas* ruled in the first half of the 18th century encompassed a degree of centralization unmatched by any of the previous lineage-based polities of the lower Luapula valley. By the end of the reign of Kasongo, Nkuba III, several members of the chiefly lineage, collateral relatives and simple appointees had been deputed to build new villages all around the *Nkubas*' capital on Chisenga swamp island. This naturally entailed the imposition of a measure of control over most of the inhabitants of the area. Insofar as the western bank of the Luapula is concerned, *Kabemba*, *Mumpundu* and *Mukelenge* are remembered as having settled in the *Kalapwes*' area. Mwati I was probably chosen by Mubemba, Nkuba II, to live in *Kadimawamandia*'s territory. Following Mulimba Kabungwe's flight, control over Chibondo swamp island was assumed by the Shila *Walya*, *Kambombwe* and *Mungo*⁹². A Kalembo was sent to live with the *Chishites* in Kawama⁹³. Mukobe Kaboshya, possibly Mukuka's nephew, built his village on the Lufukwe River, to the south of the *Mukupas*⁹⁴. The villages of *Mulumbwa*, *Lwamfwe* and *Kapala*⁹⁵, in Kaombe, on the eastern bank of the Luapula, were a buffer against the Bena Mbeba of the middle Luapula. Whereas the first Katele – Mubemba's sister's son – was assigned an area on the Lunde stream, *Mulwe* and *Mubamba* settled in Lukanga, to the south of the Mwatishi River. The north-eastern border of the Shila polity – the lower Kalungwishi River – and the areas of the Bwilile *Mukanje* and *Katoto* were guarded by the village of *Mununga*⁹⁶.

⁹⁰ See below, pp. 87-89.

⁹¹ M.C. Musambachime, 'Changing Roles', p. 117.

⁹² M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 34-35, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁹⁴ A. L'Heureux, 'Historique du Groupement de Mukobe', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁹⁵ Luamfwe I and Kapala I are said to have been sons of Nkuba II Mubemba.

⁹⁶ M.C. Musambachime, 'Changing Roles', p. 49; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'The Story of the Shila People, Aborigenes of the Luapula-Mweru along with their Fishing and Hunting Customs, Folklores and Praisewords', unpublished typescript, n.d. (but late 1940s(?)), WFA-Z, Section 1: Manuscripts, p. 25.

No doubt, in order to assert their sway, the Shila of *Nkuba* did sometimes resort to blunt military means. Nkuba I Mukuka is generally remembered as having died in the course of an expedition against one of the *Kapontos*, the Bena Mumba of Kilwa Island. This same Kaponto was later defeated by Nkuba II Mubemba, and Kasongo – Mubemba's son and future Nkuba III – built a village on the island. Recollections about the war between Mubemba and Mulimba Ntamba are also numerous. The marriage between Mubemba and one of the *Mweles* prompted the insurrection of Mulimba Ntamba of Chibondo. Mubemba is said to have been able to quash the rebellion thanks to the help of one of the *Nkambos*, Bashimba. Ntamba was killed, and his successor, Mulimba Kabungwe, fled Chibondo with the aim of settling outside Mubemba's sphere of influence. Having allied himself with one of the early *Chiakas*, he was granted permission to build a village on the Lusekelwe River, to the west of Lake Mweru, where his descendants are still to be found nowadays⁹⁷.

However, as suggested by the episode of Mulimba Ntamba itself, the Shila only turned to military conquest when all other means had failed. The establishment of a rather different set of relationships – most notably, marriage alliances with autochthonous lineage heads – is likely to have played a far greater role in consolidating the *Nkubas'* rule. Nkuba I Mukuka seems to have set the trend for future rulers. The full political significance of his marriage with the daughter or granddaughter of one of the *Mwepyas*⁹⁸, the Bwilile prophetesses of Lukanga, came to light some years later when Mukuka's wife herself inherited the *Mwepya* title. Among matrilineal societies shaped by the twin institutions of positional succession and perpetual kinship⁹⁹, marriages between alien rulers and women belonging to local leading lineages carried obvious political implications. The aforementioned union between Nkuba II Mubemba and one of the *Mweles*, the *Twites'* "sisters", resulted in all of the successive *Twites* becoming the perpetual sons of the holders of the *Nkuba* title. 'A permanent kinship link, more apt to the situation than the mere exercise of

⁹⁷ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 11, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; *Id.* 'Historique de la Chefferie de Mulimba', 1934, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; A. L'Heureux, 'Rapport d'Enquête et Historique de la Chefferie de Kiaka', 1937, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; A. Van Herreweghe, 'Chefferie de Kambo. Rapport d'Enquête. Historique', 1939, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁹⁸ M.C. Musambachime, 'Changing Roles', pp. 41-42; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'The Story of the Shila People, Aborigenes of the Luapula-Mweru along with their Fishing and Hunting Customs, Folklores and Praise-words', unpublished typescript, n.d. (but late 1940s(?)), WFA-Z, Section 1: Manuscripts, p. 20; Interview with Mason Mutuka Mununga & Paulo Chisanga, Mumunga village, 17 July 1999.

⁹⁹ See above, p. 55, n. 11.

power, was forged and maintained in this way.¹⁰⁰ There is evidence to suggest that the reverse also occurred, as recently incorporated lineage heads married women belonging to the *Nkubas*' matrilineage. In some instances, this seems to have caused Shila rulers to manipulate the succession to these same lineage headships. The case of *Chimamba* is instructive in this regard. One of the *Chimambas*, the owners of the Matoto salt deposits, took Kabongila, a relative of Nkuba II, as spouse. After the death of Kabongila's husband, the latter's children were imposed as successors, instead of his sisters' sons. As a consequence, the *Chimamba* title and the related control of Matoto were wrested from the original descent group to the advantage of the members of the Shila ruling lineage¹⁰¹.

The workings of this set of institutions and practices will receive fuller treatment in the next chapter. It will be shown that the rulers of Kazembe – influenced as they were by a Lunda political culture in which perpetual kinship was the ultimate 'constitutional idiom of [...] political thought'¹⁰² – greatly perfected them and broadened their application. Yet, the important point to be noted here is that the eastern Lunda were not the first settlers in the valley to exploit the political significance of perpetual kinship and 'lineage powerbrokering'¹⁰³. The centralizing institutions of Shila rule had already forced the autochthonous communities of the lower Luapula valley to lose, so to speak, some of the centrifugal characters which they originally shared with most other societies of the eastern savanna. This might have had made them more receptive to coming to terms with the eastern Lunda's domination, and hence might well have had a bearing upon these latter's decision to settle in what had been the heartland of the Shila polity. The same, on the other hand, cannot be said about the Shila ruling groups, whose prospects for further growth were fundamentally thwarted by the arrival of the Lunda. Thus, it is not surprising that they attempted to resist the intruders. That it took these latter several decades finally to subdue the Shila resistance is probably another proof of the relative strength and cohesiveness of the *Nkubas*' state.

¹⁰⁰ I. Cunnison, 'Perpetual Kinship' p. 46. See also *Id.*, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 232.

¹⁰¹ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 35, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

¹⁰² J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruwej', I, p. 114.

¹⁰³ I borrow this useful expression from T.Q. Reece, *The Rainbow and the King*, p. 7.

Chapter III

THE KINGDOM OF KAZEMBE TO THE EARLY 19th CENTURY

Early literate visitors were invariably struck by the sophistication of the *Mwata Kazembes'* capitals in the lower Luapula valley. But the 'ceremonial, pomp and ostentation' prevailing in them rested upon an equally sophisticated system of rule in both the heartland and the periphery of the kingdom¹. It is this system that the present chapter purports to describe; a detailed discussion of the organization of the eastern Lunda *misumba* in the first half of the 19th century will be found in the next chapter.

By the mid-18th century, Mwata Kazembe II Kanyembo Mpemba and his followers had entered the Luapula valley. During their journey through southern Katanga, preliminary contacts were made with some of the lineage-based polities of the region. It has been suggested that the military superiority of the migrants might have had something to do with their early successes in the territory to the east of the upper Lualaba River². Yet, quite apart from the difficulty of ascertaining the real impact of the small number of Portuguese firearms which they are likely to have possessed³, such an explanation does not account for the enduring significance of their influence after they left the area to settle finally in the lower Luapula valley. In their attempt to solve the dilemma – how to maintain their authority where, due to the distances involved, they did not have the means to enforce it – the rulers of Kazembe drew upon the Lunda cultural resources with which they were conversant and elaborated that set of institutions which were to become their fundamental contribution to the political development of southern Katanga and Mweru-Luapula. The forms of rule in the heartland of the new kingdom were not dissimilar from those on the periphery. What varied greatly – as Kopytoff would argue – was their relative pervasiveness and local impact⁴.

¹ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 21.

² I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 39.

³ A.D. Roberts, 'Firearms in North-Eastern Zambia before 1900', *Transafrican Journal of History*, I, 2, 1971, pp. 3-21.

⁴ 'The peripheries of large polities [...] were often a systemic product of the territorial organization of the larger African centralized polities. What one might call the "technology of reach" of African polities [...] imposed clear limits on the political penetration that the center could achieve both in geographical

In this chapter, we shall seldom attempt to follow in detail the uncertain chronology of the early Lunda conquests in Katanga and present-day North-Eastern Zambia as related in the 'History of the BaLuunda People', the mid-20th century eastern Lunda ethno-historical account. Rather, this latter text will be systematically collated with Belgian and British colonial records of oral sources and neighbouring peoples' traditions in order to sketch a possible geography of the sway of the eastern Lunda around the beginning of the 19th century. The records of Lacerda and the *pombeiros*' expedition will also help us to map the boundaries and forms of the *Mwata Kazembes*' influence, although, for the reasons given in chapter I, a comparison between these literary sources and the 'History of the BaLuunda People' will not be seriously pursued.

1) The Western Periphery

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Lubudi River was probably the centre of the frontier zone delimited by the respective 'technologies of reach' of the *Mwant Yavs* and the *Mwata Kazembes*' states. Early in September 1806 or 1808, the *pombeiros*, on their way to the Luapula valley, reached the village of 'Cha Muinga Mucenda'. The inception of the *Shamusinga* title – the holders of which are now classified as Ndembu⁵ – was perhaps a consequence of the explosion of the Mukulweji polity⁶. Regardless of whether they shared a common origin with the *Mwata Kazembes*, at the time of the *pombeiros*' visit, the *Shamusingas* appear to have recognized the ultimate political supremacy of the rulers of the lower Luapula river. The then *Shamusinga* was said to be a 'chief of the Cazembe, who render[ed] obedience both to the Muropue [*Mwant Yav*] and to the Cazembe.'⁷ His territory was 'the boundary of the lands of the Muatayanvo.' On the other side of the Lubudi were 'found the people of the Cazembe,

extent and, locally, in depth [...]. At its maximum extension, the pattern may be represented as a structure of concentric "circles" of diminishing control, radiating from the core.' I. Kopytoff, 'The Internal African Frontier: the Making of African Political Culture', in *Id.* (ed.), *The African Frontier. The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies*, Bloomington & Indianapolis, 1987, p. 29.

⁵ O. Boone, *Carte Ethnique du Congo. Quart Sud-Est*, Tervuren, 1961, p. 189, where *Shamusinga* is spelled as 'Samujina'.

⁶ *Administrateur Territorial*, 'Resumé de l'Histoire des Tribus d'Origine Lunda Peuplant le Territoire du Haut-Lubudi et Comprénant les Lundas, les Bandembo, les Bene-Lunda ou Ba-N'Samba', 1916. AAMAA, AI, 1409.

⁷ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 176.

who subject themselves to the Quilolo of Cazembe – Quibi [*also spelled as Quiburi or Queburi*].⁸

The territory of ‘Quibury’, the ‘lord of the [...] Salina Quegila [*Kechila*]’, was reached by the two travellers after a week-long march in the course of which they crossed the Lufupa (‘Lunfupa’) and Kamoia (‘Camoia’) Rivers. ‘Quiburi’ – or, more probably, Chibwidi – is likely to have been the personal name of one of the first holders of the *Kazembe ka Kechila* title (*Kazembe wa Lualaba*, according to the eastern Lunda)⁹. Chibwidi’s village lay along the eastern bank of the upper Lualaba River and was certainly in frequent contact with the heartland of the kingdom of Kazembe¹⁰. One of the tasks of Chibwidi – who is described by Baptista as either a ‘maternal relation’ or as the ‘uncle of Cazembe’¹¹ – was to send a ‘tribute of salt, and the goods of the Muatayanvo’ to the lower Luapula valley¹². Goods which salt-buyers exchanged locally are also said to have been forwarded to both the *Mwant Yavs* and the *Mwata Kazembes*’ capitals. The copper-producing districts of the *Mwihus* and *Kanzenzes*¹³ – whose villages were situated to the west of the Lualaba – were reported to be under Chibwidi’s control. Having conquered them, Chibwidi exacted tribute in copper bars, part of which reached the lower Luapula valley¹⁴. Chibwidi’s sway – which may not have been unquestioned¹⁵ – appears to have extended as far as the *Kamungus*, whose village, in the 20th century at least, lay near the confluence of the Kasonga and Tshilongo Rivers¹⁶.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 222. *Cilolo* (pl. *bacilolo*) – an appellative which we prefer to apply exclusively to hereditary territorial representatives in the heartland of the Kazembe kingdom – is a derivative of *chilol*, the Ruund word for ‘district administrator, subchief’. J.J. Hoover, ‘The Seduction of Ruweji’, II, p. 527.

⁹ J.J. Hoover, personal communication to the author, 25 October 1999. According to the ‘History of the BaLuunda People’, pp. 15-16, the name of the first Kazembe wa Lualaba appointed by Ng’anga Bilonda, Mwata Kazembe I, was Chisenda. Chibwidi is instead described as a southern Luba or Sanga chief (see above, p. 53), whose daughter Muonga, married by Ng’anga Bilonda, gave birth to Lukwesa Ilunga, future Mwata Kazembe III. In view of what has been said about Labrecque’s certain familiarity with published Portuguese sources, the discrepancy is all the more noteworthy.

¹⁰ Chibwidi, as the *pombeiros* discovered, was well aware of Lacerda’s expedition to Kazembe in 1798-9; R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 179.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 212, 222.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹³ See above, pp. 58-59

¹⁴ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 222. Pinto noted that the copper bars and ‘uncut’ malachite to be found in Lukwesa Ilunga’s capital in 1799 were not ‘indigenous’ articles; *ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁵ In the early 19th century, the Bena Samba of the Dimai River valley, to the south of the Luba heartland, seem to have repeatedly challenged the eastern Lunda for ultimate lordship over the copper mines of south-western Katanga. T.Q. Reefe, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, pp. 99-100.

¹⁶ A. Verbeken & M. Walraet (eds & transl.), *La Première Traversée du Katanga*, p. 60, n. 2.

The Sanga village of the *Mpandes* ('Pande'), which the *pombeiros* attained five days after leaving *Kamungu's* area, was located near the Mulungwishi ('Murucuxy') River, to the east of the 'Ancula' River¹⁷. Quite apart from the Labrecque-influenced 'History of the BaLuunda People', 'Mpandi' is also identified in a much earlier version of eastern Lunda history as having been one of the southern Katangese leaders conquered by the incoming Lunda of *Kazembe*¹⁸. This seems to be borne out by Baptista's records: the ruling Mpande was unable to receive the two travellers as soon as they entered his village for 'he was occupied with messengers from King Cazembe [...]'.¹⁹ The fact that Mpande's 'son' was known as 'Muana Auta' is also indicative of a strong eastern Lunda influence in the area²⁰. Presumably, following their incorporation into the Kazembe kingdom, Sanga lineage heads had begun to address their presumptive heirs with the title that the eastern Lunda reserved for the heir designated to the throne: *Mwanabute*.

Still trekking eastward, the *pombeiros* next came to the villages of the then Lukoshi ('Luncongi') and Mwashya ('Muaxy'). The former, who was possibly a Lemba lineage head junior to the *Katangas*, told the travellers that 'King Cazembe was well'²¹; the latter, who controlled the salt-marshes near the confluence of the Lufira and Kafila Rivers²², 'entertained [*the pombeiros*] on behalf of King Cazembe.'²³ Between the two villages lay 'the place of a small potentate named Muene Majamo Amuaxi', whose real appellation was probably *mueni majamo wa Mwashya*²⁴. The title of *mueni majamo* (royal gravekeeper) is not used among the Ruund of *Mwant Yav* and is likely to have first arisen in the Mukulweji polity. After the foundering of this latter, the title continued to be employed by the Lunda of *Kazembe*. On the Luapula, the Bembaized form – *mwine mashamo* (pl. *bene mashamo*) – gradually imposed itself²⁵. Now, if the Lunda of

¹⁷ Verbeken and Walraet believe Baptista's 'Ancula' to have been in fact the Dikulwe River; *ibid.*, p. 61, n. 3.

¹⁸ 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe', n.d. (but before 1907), Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 147-153 (copy in III, pp. 235-238), NAZ, KSG 3/1.

¹⁹ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 181.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

²² See above, pp. 59-60.

²³ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 183.

²⁴ A. Verbeken & M. Walraet (eds & transl.), *La Première Traversée du Katanga*, p. 65, n. 3.

²⁵ J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruwej', I, p. 272, n. 56.

Kazembe were the first to introduce the innovative position in the territory to the east of the upper Lualaba River, its adoption by the Bena Ngoma of *Mwashya* must be interpreted as another proof of the regional ascendancy of the eastern Lunda and their model of political organization between the 18th and the 19th century²⁶.

The *Mwashyas*' salt deposits were much closer to the royal capitals in the lower Luapula valley than the 'Salina' Kechila. The economic relevance of the *Mwashyas*' district helps to account for the very active role which the eastern Lunda appear to have played in the political history of the area since the foundation of their kingdom. According to the *Mwashyas*' own traditions, sometime before the end of the 18th century, a clash occurred between two claimants to the title: Kiwena and Kabambi. The former is said to have prevailed over the latter thanks to Mwata Kazembe Lukwesa Ilunga's intervention. Lunda symbols of power – the *mukonso* skirt and the *inshipo* cow belt²⁷ – were bestowed upon the new lineage head²⁸. The Lunda of *Kazembe* seem to have continued to engage in lineage politics in the *Mwashyas*' area well into the 19th century. After the death of Kiwena, the then Lukoshi appears to have usurped the control of the salt-producing district until one of the *Mufungas*, Lomotwa leaders, asked the then Mwata Kazembe, possibly Chibangu Keleka, to intervene on behalf of Lusenga, the son of Kanya, a woman belonging to the late Kiwena's descent group. Following the Mwata Kazembe's intervention, the usurper is said to have willingly abandoned the area. Significantly, one of Lusenga's successors was called Lukwesa, a typical eastern Lunda name²⁹.

Past *Mwashya*'s, the *pombeiros* began to ascend the Kundelungu Range ('Cunde Irugo'). As they followed the course of the Lutipuka River downhill, they entered the

²⁶ Since the *Mwashyas* are Bena Ngoma, they may well have settled on the Lufira River at about the same time that the *Chisamambas*, their fellow clansmen, established themselves on the western bank of the middle Luapula. See above, p. 71.

²⁷ For a detailed description of Lukwesa Ilunga's *mukonso* or 'gala-dress' in 1799, see R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 126-127. At the time of Pinto's stay in Lukwesa's capital, only the king himself was entitled to possess cattle 'to show his greatness'; *ibid.*, p. 129.

²⁸ Lunda insignia were still treasured by the *Mwashyas* in the first half of the 20th century; R. Marchal, 'Chefferies de Mwashya et de Mulenga', 1939, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

²⁹ *Ibid.* According to an unspecified tradition cited by O. Boone, *Carte Ethnique du Congo*, p. 193, the name *Mwashya* itself 'aurait été donné au possesseur des salines par le grand chef Lunda Kazembe, *mwashya* = plaine où se récolte le sel.'

first village of the heartland of the eastern Lunda kingdom: Sonta ('Sota'). They did not meet the headman, however, for he had 'gone to pay tribute to Cazembe.'³⁰

Before examining the organization of the heartland of the kingdom to the east of the Kundelungu, it is necessary to summarize the information we possess on the early dealings between eastern Lunda and some of the Katangese polities which the *pombeiros* did not visit. Baptista's writings have already helped us to throw light on the institutions and relationships which defined Lunda rule on the periphery of the kingdom. The following discussion will put them into sharper focus.

According to the 'History of the BaLuunda People', the *Ntondos*, Bakunda lineage heads to the north of *Mpande* and *Mwashya*³¹, were first conquered by the Lunda of Ng'anga Bilonda, Mwata Kazembe I. Ng'anga Bilonda died while purifying the head of *Mufunga*, a Lomotwa leader slain by one of the early holders of the *Kaindu* title. Kanyembo Mpemba (d. 1760-70), Ng'anga's brother and successor, operated further south, bringing under Lunda rule not only the aforementioned *Mpande*, *Mwashya* and *Lukoshi*, but also the Lemba *Katanga*, *Kyembe* and *Mpoyo*, and the Baseba *Musaka* and *Kaponda*. The next Lunda forays along the middle and lower Lufira River took place during Lukwesa Ilunga's reign (d. 1804-5)³². Following their successful completion, one of the first *Inamwana Kashibas* built a village on the Kalundwe River, in the *Ntondos*' area, and ruled over Bakunda, Nwenshi and Lomotwa lineage heads. A later capital of the *Kashibas*' Lunda colony was located near the confluence of the Lufira and Lofoi Rivers, to the east of the *Ntondos*' village on the lower Bunkeya River³³.

Insofar at least as the territory to the north of *Mpande* and *Mwashya* is concerned, Belgian colonial records of oral sources indicate the overall reliability of the 'History of the BaLuunda People'. The earliest written version of the *Ntondos*' history

³⁰ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 184.

³¹ Belgian officials struggled to find a suitable ethnic label for the *Ntondos* and their fellow clansmen, the *Mukebos* and the *Chimungus*. They wavered between a 'Lembwe' and a 'Kunda' identity. See, for instance, O. Boone, *Carte Ethnique du Congo*, p. 107.

³² The foregoing dates are discussed in I. Cunnison, 'The Reigns of the Kazembes', and A.D. Roberts, 'Tippu Tip, Livingstone, and the Chronology of Kazembe'.

³³ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 16-34.

was recorded in the late 1890s³⁴. According to Verdick, Ntondo V Mwamba ('Muamba') was the first Bakunda lineage head to be conquered by the eastern Lunda. Mwamba was killed in battle by the Lunda and was succeeded by his brother Chikungu ('Tshikungu'), who was personally appointed by the then Mwata Kazembe. During Chikungu's tenure of office, two Lunda representatives, Kaponyole ('Kaponona') and Kanyemba, settled near the Kalundwe River.³⁵ These events are likely to have taken place in the first half of the 19th century, for Chikungu's successor, his sister's son Mwemena ('Muemena'), is said to have died in the early 1860s. However, there are signs that the Lunda of *Kazembe* had begun to encroach upon the internal affairs of the *Ntondos'* polity from a considerably earlier date. The name of the second remembered Ntondo – Kanyembo ('Ka-Nuembi' or 'Ka-Nyembi') – is in itself suggestive of an early Lunda influence. Since, according to Mpalanga Mitindo, the holder of the *Kashiba* title in 1951, the name of the 'Lembwe' leader in whose territory one of his predecessors built a village was also Kanyembo³⁶, the inception of the Lunda colony among the Bakunda of *Ntondo* may reasonably be placed sometime in the second half of the 18th century. If this was the case, it is also plausible to surmise that Kaponyole and Kanyemba were posted to the area in the early 19th century, following the then *Kashiba's* decision to shift the location of his capital to the Lofoi River.

Data stemming from the nearby Lomotwa polity of the *Mufungas* confirm the eastern Lunda propensity for lineage powerbrokering and provide the first clear example of the establishment of marriage alliances between eastern Lunda territorial representatives and local leading lineages. During some very early 'Luba' incursions led by 'Kiombo-Luba-Kamwe', the *Mufungas* appear to have relied upon the military support provided by the then *Kashiba*. Around 1800, Mufunga Kapumbulu chose Kitshabula, his brother's son, as his successor. The nomination of Kitshabula provoked the rebellion of the legitimate heir to the *Mufunga* title: Nyandwe Katonta, the son of

³⁴ Papiers E. Verdick, Carnet IV, HA-MRAC, RG664. The *Ntondos'* tradition was subsequently published, with very few variations, in E. Verdick, *Les Premiers Jours au Katanga*, pp. 110-111.

³⁵ Contemporary Lunda informants describe these latter as having been subordinate to the *Kashibas*. (Interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Kosam Derrick Chipepa & Lobson Chinyanta Lubabila, Mwanabombwe, 14 July 1999.) The present holder of the Kanyemba title is one of the councillors of chief Inamwana *Kashiba*; interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana *Kashiba*, *Kashiba* village, 7 May 1999.

³⁶ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Bukashiba', April 1951.

Musoka, Kapumbulu's sister. While Nyandwe Katonta perished in a battle against the 'Luba', Kitshabula himself was killed by 'Kiula Ubata', a client of the *Kashibas*. Musabi, son of the late Kapumbulu, took advantage of the death of both contenders: he sent his son, Musabi Tengu, to the eastern Lunda capital in the lower Luapula valley and managed to have him recognized as the next Mufunga. In the meantime, Mukabanya, the wife of the deceased Nyandwe Katonta, had been rescued from her 'Luba' captors and taken as spouse by the then Kashiba. When their offspring, Kanyembo Ilunga, inherited the *Mufunga* in the second half of the 19th century, a perpetual father-son relationship came into being between the holders of the *Kashiba* title and the successive *Mufungas*³⁷.

In second half of the 18th century, marriage alliances are also likely to have been forged between the *Mwata Kazembes* or their local representatives and the *Sambwes* and *Kitobos*, Nwenshi lineage heads. At the beginning of the 20th century, female relations of the *Sambwes* were still remembered as having been sent as 'tombo' wives to the *Mwata Kazembes*³⁸. Until at least the foundation of the Yeke kingdom, Lunda *mukonso* and *inshipo* formed part of the *Sambwes*' chiefly accoutrements³⁹.

Much less detailed, in the absence of most of the relevant Belgian historical surveys, are the data concerning the impact of the eastern Lunda between the upper Lufira and the Kafubu Rivers, the territory lying to the south of the *pombeiros*' itinerary. Some useful clues are provided by Verbeek's political history of the Congolese pedicle. The Baseba of lineage head *Kaponda* are probably to be ranked among the oldest occupants of the region⁴⁰. Sometime before the migration of the Lunda of *Kazembe*, the *Kapondas* were probably displaced by the *Katangas*⁴¹. At a later date, the *Kyembes*

³⁷ H. Wera, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur la Cheffeire de Mufunga', 1931, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; E. Verhulpen, *Baluba et Balubaisés du Katanga*, Anvers, 1936, p. 396. The present Kashiba still considers the *Mufungas* as his 'children'; interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 5 April 1999

³⁸ H. Wera, 'Historique de la Tribu Banwenshi. Procès Verbal', 1930, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. The *ntombo* institution – which commonly involved women belonging to eastern Lunda aristocratic lineages given as gifts to a ruling Mwata Kazembe – is discussed below, pp. 96-97.

³⁹ M. Lacanne, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur la Chefferie de Sapwe', 1935, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁴⁰ 'Dans le cas de Kaponda, il n'y a aucun récit qui établit le droit d'occupation pour la région de la Lufubu. C'est que ce droit se perd dans le lointain passé et, vu son fondement ancien et incontesté, on n'aurait pas vu la nécessité de se baser sur des récits d'occupation.' L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation*, p. 114. The Baseba are a sub-clan of the Lamba Bena Mishishi (Hair Clan).

⁴¹ According to *ibid.*, pp. 113-114, Katanga I was left on the upper Lufira River in the wake of the eastern Lunda migration. Since all the extant versions of eastern Lunda history – including E. Labrecque (ed. & transl.), 'Histoire des Mwata Kazembe', 17, p. 23, which was doubtless one of Verbeek's sources

appear to have also encroached upon the *Kapondas*' territory. Verbeek believes the migration of the founder of the *Kyembes*' line – a mwina Mpumpi (Hyena Clan) from present-day Zambia – to have occurred at the end of the 18th century⁴². If this was so, the eastern Lunda claim to the effect that the *Kyembes* were among the southern Katangese leaders conquered by Mwata Kazembe Kanyembo – whose reign was probably over by ca. 1770 – is to be regarded as anachronistic. Furthermore, still according to Verbeek, the late 18th century rise of the *Kyembes* could be seen as an indication of the limited control that the Lunda of *Kazembe* exerted in the region⁴³.

However, the likelihood that the impact of the eastern Lunda in the area was far from negligible is borne out by the history of the nearby Bena Nsoka (Snake Clan) of *Mumakasuba*, some 80 kilometres to the north-east of the *Kyembes*. Sometime in the early 19th century, the then Mumakasuba seems to have refused to receive the Lunda insignia. As a result, the Lunda removed him from power and sponsored the ascent of the holders of the *Ngandubesa* title, who became the new sub-clan leaders⁴⁴. There exists another tantalizing indication of the former power of the eastern Lunda. Whereas the *Kapondas* are nowadays settled near Lubumbashi, the territory of their fellow Baseba, the *Musakas*, became part of Northern Rhodesia following the colonial partition. In the early 1950s, impending soil conservation measures – together with an ongoing dispute with the neighbouring Kaonde chiefs Mujimanzovu and Kapijimpanga – convinced the then Musaka that his chieftainship was about to be abolished. This largely imaginary threat prompted him to seek the support of Brown Ng'ombe, Mwata Kazembe XV. In Brown Ng'ombe's own words, 'Musaka wrote to me because I am the man who knows the chieftainship of Musaka according to our history of chieftainship.'⁴⁵ Unless one accepts that the relationship between the Lunda of *Kazembe* and the Baseba of

– describe the *Katangas* as autochthonous leaders, their alleged Lunda origin is certainly to be ruled out. This said, the fact that a fictitious connection with the eastern Lunda royal dynasty has become part of the contemporary historical consciousness of the Lemba might be interpreted as an indirect proof of the prestige and influence which the *Mwata Kazembes* wielded in the area at some stage in the past.

⁴² L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation*, p. 115.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 117; R. Marchal, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur la Chefferie de Katete', 1934, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁴⁵ Brown Ng'ombe to Bayldon, 25 September 1953; Brown Ng'ombe to Musaka, 10 September 1953, encl. in Bayldon to DC (Solwezi), 16 September 1953; DC (Solwezi) to Bayldon, 30 September 1953, NAZ, NP2/6/10.

Musaka had an historical base, it is hard to account for the reasons which led the then *Musaka* to approach the eastern Lunda king as late as 1953.

The main purpose of the foregoing survey was to place in their historical context the operations of the flexible institutions and relationships which, by minimizing the consequences of geographical remoteness, helped the eastern Lunda kings to maintain a measure of influence and control over distant peripheral societies. It is probably true that functionalist-inspired historians have exaggerated the significance of tribute exchange as an index of political centralization⁴⁶, and that the latter no longer needs to be seen as 'the most fundamental expression of political loyalty on the central African savanna.'⁴⁷ As early as 1978, in fact, Hoover took issue with the view that 'collecting tribute was a major activity of the [*Ruund*] state. There is truth in this, yet it should not be overemphasized since the state did not collapse in the colonial era with the end of enforced tribute collection and the redirection of the economy.'⁴⁸ For all these cautionary remarks, there is no doubt that, following the early military forays of the eastern Lunda, the relationships between the *Mwata Kazembes'* capitals on the lower Luapula and some at least of the polities of the western periphery involved a degree of exploitation. Baptista's eyewitness account cannot be seriously questioned: tribute from salt and copper-producing districts *did* reach the heartland of the kingdom. After all, it is not coincidental that the route which the *pombeiros* followed in order to reach *Mwata Kazembe Keleka's* capital passed through – or very near – the naturally rich areas of the *Mwilus* and *Kanzenzes*, *Kazembes wa Lualaba*, *Katangas* and *Mwashyas*.

To be sure, the existence of tributary relationships between southern Katanga and the lower Luapula valley increased the resources at the *Mwata Kazembes'* disposal, and hence their opportunities to manipulate redistributive levers and patronage links. Yet, tributary networks alone would not be sufficient to account for the cohesiveness of the kingdom, which rather rested upon a different series of institutions. If we accept that the mid-20th century practices observed by Cunnison reflected older patterns, we must conclude that the spread of Lunda insignia was important not only in that it allowed

⁴⁶ M. Nooter Roberts & A.F. Roberts, 'Introduction. Audacities of Memory', in *Id.* (eds), *Memory*, p. 28

⁴⁷ T.Q. Reeve, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, p. 5.

⁴⁸ J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 105.

recipients to superimpose an additional 'Lunda' identity to their original one, but also because it made it imperative for local leaders to keep in frequent touch with the eastern Lunda royal capitals. Indeed, the potency of the attributes of 'Lundahood' does not seem to have outlived their original recipients. And the only way for these latter's successors to acquire new insignia was to travel to the *Mwata Kazembes'* capitals and renew their links of allegiance⁴⁹.

The spread of Lunda insignia and political titles – which we have encountered in the *Mpandes*, *Mwashyas*, *Sambwes* and *Ngandubesas'* histories – may be seen as both a cause and a consequence of the *Mwata Kazembes'* sway. The systematic involvement of the eastern Lunda in local succession disputes was its logical antecedent. Lineage powerbrokering appears to have been a strategy to which the Lunda of *Kazembe* consistently resorted in order to strengthen their hold over peripheral societies. By promoting the ascent to local leading positions of particular claimants (whether legitimate or illegitimate), the eastern Lunda brought into being a web of peripheral collaborators who knew that they ultimately owed their privileged status to the *Mwata Kazembes'* support. There are signs that lineage politics did not always turn to the advantage of the eastern Lunda. Sometime in the early 19th century, for instance, the Lunda failed to impose their own Nwenshi nominee – Kitempatempa – against the ruling Kitobo, Kilundu Mwepu⁵⁰. But wherever their candidates did succeed in gaining power, it is obvious that the eastern Lunda rulers expected – and indeed received – a high degree of loyalty. The establishment of marriage alliances – and subsequent fashioning of perpetual kinship relationships – with local leading lineages was a corollary of the eastern Lunda encroachment upon the internal affairs of peripheral communities. Although we were only able to demonstrate its occurrence in very few instances, this latter practice is bound to have played a fundamental role in the governing of the periphery of the *Mwata Kazembes'* state.

It may be hypothesized that the ability of the eastern Lunda to turn local leaders into loyal allies – together with the prestige which indisputably surrounded the foreign dynasty during the century or so which followed its migration through Katanga – made it

⁴⁹ I. Cumison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 174-175.

⁵⁰ A. van Malderen, 'Historique de la Chefferie Kitobo', 1936, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

less urgent to rely upon the deployment of externally-imposed territorial representatives. In fact, only the holders of the *Kazembe wa Lualaba* and *Kashiba* titles – both of which appear to have overseen the affairs of extremely wide stretches of territory with the help of a handful of subordinate title-holders – have been identified in our survey of the western periphery of the kingdom. The number of Lunda title-holders dwelling in the heartland was incommensurably greater than on the periphery. In the heartland – the area to which we shall now turn – it is not anachronistic to speak of a veritable Lunda administration.

2) The Heartland

Between the mid-18th and the early 19th century, all the communities dwelling in the lower Luapula valley and the westernmost reaches of the easterly plateau were incorporated into the emerging kingdom of Kazembe. As we have seen in chapter II, early Portuguese visitors were well aware of the ethnic cleavages setting the Lunda conquerors apart from the main groups of previous occupants of the area: ‘Vaciras’ or Shila and ‘Quixinga’ or Chishinga⁵¹. However, especially insofar as the Shila of *Nkuba* are concerned, the actual chronology of Lunda conquest is unclear.

According to the ‘History of the BaLuunda People’, an early and inconclusive confrontation with the Shila of *Katele* and *Nakabutula* took place before the death of Kanyembo Mpemba, Mwata Kazembe II. Following the then Katele’s flight, Kanyembo took over the latter’s village on the Lunde stream. The decisive conquests are said to have taken place during the reign of Lukwesa Ilunga, Kanyembo’s successor. Shortly after his accession, Mwata Kazembe Lukwesa began a series of military campaigns in the region between Lake Mweru and Lake Tanganyika. During the king’s absence, his ‘uncle’ Chibamba was deputed to take charge of the royal capital on the Lunde stream. Lukwesa also ordered Chibamba to capture the runaway Katele, but to refrain from killing him. Upon his return, Lukwesa discovered that Chibamba had disobeyed his orders and killed Katele. Chibamba was punished accordingly, his ears being amputated for not listening to the king. Thereafter, Lukwesa shifted his capital from Lunde –

⁵¹ See above, pp. 70-72.

which, following the death of Kanyembo, had become the royal graveyard (*mashamo*) – to Mofwe Lagoon. In the new capital, Lukwesa was visited by Nachituti, sister of the ruling Nkuba, Nsenshi. The latter had killed and skinned her son, and Nachituti begged the Lunda to avenge her. Upon hearing Nachituti's story, Lukwesa ordered Mabo Kalandala and the then Nswana Ntambo to kill Nkuba and conquer Chisenga swamp island. Following the successful completion of their mission, the two title-holders presented the heads of the slain Nkuba and his 'brother' Mulumbwa to Nachituti. Nachituti then filled a basket with earth and a pot with water. These she gave to Lukwesa, saying: "I have given you all the land and waters of this country. You are not only the Lunda king, but the king of all of us." Mabo Kalandala was then chosen to rule over Chisenga and the successor of the late Nkuba, whom Lukwesa himself selected and appointed⁵².

An earlier version of eastern Lunda history belies this sequence. According to the previously cited 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe'⁵³, a text which was certainly produced in the first decade of the 20th century, the assassination of Nkuba by Kalandala took place before the death of Mwata Kazembe Kanyembo and preceded the clash between Katele and Chibamba. The latter is said to have occurred during the reign of Kanyembo's successor, Lukwesa. On the other hand, the 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe' agrees with the 'History of the BaLuunda People' in asserting that the location of the royal capital shifted to Mofwe Lagoon soon after the demise of Katele.

Early Portuguese records seem to support the view that the subjugation of the Shila paramount – Nkuba IV Nsenshi – was accomplished before the last redoubt of Shila resistance under the *Kateles* was finally quashed. The *pombeiros*' first attempt to reach Tete between 1806 or 1808 and 1810 was cut short almost before it began. Having arrived at a 'war-camp' about 'half a league' from the royal capital,

'a great disturbance took possession of them (the Cazembe's people) [...] On account of the treason that now prevailed amongst his people, the Cazembe proceeded to examine who was the instigator of the disturbance [...] the Cazembe banished to other lands his cousin Quibanba [...], and ordered his hands and ears to be cut [...] He [*the Mwata Kazembe*] then returned from the road to Senna, and went to carry on war in the land called Tanga [...] He was occupied in this war two and a half months.'⁵⁴

⁵² E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 24-25, 28-32. The clearly aetiological nature of the episode of Nachituti is discussed below, p. 98.

⁵³ See above, p. 79, n. 18.

⁵⁴ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 188, 226.

Given the striking similarity, one must conclude that Baptista's 'Quibanba' was none other than the Chibamba mentioned in *both* the 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe' and the 'History of the BaLuunda People'. Now, if the harsh punishment which befell Chibamba was really connected to his unauthorized assassination of the then Katele, this would mean placing the final defeat of the Shila as late as the beginning of the 19th century and the reign of Chibangu Keleka (the king who was ruling at the time of the *pombeiros*' visit) and not – as stated in both of the examined versions of Lunda history – Lukwesa. Pinto's travel diary further complicates the riddle, for Lacerda's successor appears to have witnessed the inauguration of the new royal capital at the northern end of Mofwe Lagoon in 1799, during the latter part of Lukwesa's reign⁵⁵. If we accept the Lunda version, namely, that this move soon followed the capture and assassination of Katele, this latter event would evidently need to be placed before the end of the 18th century and the reign of Lukwesa. Plainly, the two hypotheses are irreconcilable.

The discussion, inconclusive though it is, does suggest that the subjugation of the Shila was a lengthy process, and that the Lunda of *Kazembe* were only able finally to overcome their resistance either at the end of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century. Even though the date of the decisive defeat of the Shila of *Katele* remains uncertain, there is no doubt that, by the beginning of the 19th century, an independent Shila state had ceased to exist. Following Nsenshi's death, either Kanyembo Mpemba or Lukwesa Ilunga appointed Muchinda – a son of Nsenshi who had fled Chisenga swamp island during Mabo Kalandala's raids – to succeed his father as Nkuba V. Muchinda received the Lunda insignia and agreed to pay tribute to the *Mwata Kazembes*⁵⁶. Ntambo, Muchinda's sister, was married by Kanyembo Kalandala, possibly Mabo's successor⁵⁷. The offspring of the union, Lukwesa, became Nkuba VII in about 1850⁵⁸. Thus it was that the *Nkubas* – the rulers of most of the lower Luapula valley before the

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 138-139.

⁵⁶ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 40, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; A. L'Heureux, 'Historique de la Chefferie de Kuba-Kawama', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁵⁷ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kalandala', August 1949. According to some of my Lunda informants, Kanyembo was just another name of Mabo Kalandala; interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Kosam Derrick Chipepa, Mwansabombwe, 5 May 1999.

⁵⁸ A. L'Heureux, 'Historique de la Chefferie de Kuba-Kawama', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; I Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 232. M.C. Musambachime, 'Changing Roles', p. 117, does not mention Nkuba VI Kabeya and hence presents Nkuba Lukwesa as Muchinda's immediate successor.

arrival of the Lunda – became the perpetual sons of the holders of the *Kalandala* title, Lunda representatives on Chisenga⁵⁹.

Nsenshi's defeat and the subsequent ascent of Muchinda were not accepted by Chimbala, Nsenshi's own brother or cousin. After escaping his Lunda captors, Chimbala fled to the north-western shore of Lake Mweru, in the territory (Chibwe) belonging to the *Zela Kapoposhi* and the *Bakunda Kanfwe*. Having allied himself to the then Mobanga⁶⁰, he succeeded in imposing his authority over the previous occupants of the area. During the 19th century, as we shall see in the next chapter, the *Nkubas Bukongolo* – as Chimbala and his successors seem to have been known – were to become a thorn in the flesh of the Lunda of *Kazembe*⁶¹.

After Nkuba Muchinda's accession, Lunda *bacilolo* were sent to live among those western Bwilile lineage heads who had been incorporated into the *Nkubas'* state at the beginning of the 18th century. The *Kalapwes'* area, near Lake Chifukula, became the colony (*iyanga*; pl. *amayanga*) of the *Mutebas*. One of the first *Kalilos* was deputed to control the Bena Ntamba of *Twite* and *Chishite*, in Kasato and Kawama, respectively. Kalilo seems to have followed the lead of his superior, Kanyembo Kalandala, and married a sister of the then Twite. Unsurprisingly, the offspring of the union ended up inheriting the *Twite* title⁶². The *iyanga* of the holders of the *Chikondo* title was in

⁵⁹ The Ubutwa secret society – about which it proved impossible to learn anything during my fieldwork – seems to have provided an alternative political arena within which the former paramountcy of the *Nkubas* continued to be celebrated. M.C. Musambachime, 'The Ubutwa Society in Eastern Shaba and Northeast Zambia to 1920', *JAHIS*, XXVII, 1, 1994, pp. 77-99 (see, especially, p. 82); B. Fetter, 'African Associations in Elisabethville, 1910-1935: their Origins and Development', *Etudes d'Histoire Africaine*, VI, 1974, pp. 205-223 (see, especially, p. 207).

⁶⁰ The *Mobangas* were possibly Bashimba from Lungu country. The niece of one Kasongo Mobanga had been married by Mubemba, Nkuba II; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 94-95, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁶¹ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. A different account of the inception of the *Nkubas Bukongolo's* polity is to be found in M.C. Musambachime, 'Changing Roles', pp. 95-96. According to Musambachime, Kaweme was a member of the Shila chiefly matrilineage whose candidacy to the *Nkubaship* was rejected at the time of the accession of Nsenshi. As a result, Kaweme adopted the title of *Nkuba Chimbala* and founded a splinter polity at the foot of the Bukongolo Range. Following the imposition of Lunda rule in the lower Luapula valley, 'Nkuba Chimbala changed his title to Nkuba Bukongolo and became the Shila de-facto leader' (p. 111). For all the exhaustiveness of Musambachime's tradition, I am inclined to favour Wens' version, since at the time of his fieldwork in the lower Luapula valley (early 1970s), hostile political circumstances prevented Musambachime from conducting research on the Zairean side of the border and thus talking to the direct descendants of the protagonists of the events (p. 2).

⁶² I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 232.

Mwambo, the swamp island under the *Mumbis*, Bena Mumba. The *Mpuyas* ruled over Nkondo Lagoon, to the east of Mwambo.⁶³

Although most of the necessary data are lacking, the impression is that, following the defeat of Nsenshi and the flight of Chimbala, the Shila leaders inhabiting the western bank of the lower Luapula River – unlike the *Kateles* and other Shila of the eastern bank – did not continue seriously to oppose Lunda rule. Similarly, the histories of the *Kapwasas*, Bena Nsoka dwelling on the upper Lualaba at the foot of the Kundelungu, the *Nkampos* and *Makungus*, Bashimba, and the *Chisamambas*, Bena Ngoma, do not contain any evidence of armed clashes with the Lunda of *Kazembe*. The likelihood that all these lineage heads readily adapted to the new distribution of power is possibly borne out by the example of Fishi Kapwasa, who is said to have helped the Lunda of Kanyembo Mpemba in the course their march towards the Luapula. Fishi was duly rewarded with the bestowal of a whole array of eastern Lunda insignia, including the *mukonso* skirt, the *mondo* drum, the *mpok* sword, and the *lubembo* gong⁶⁴.

Among the Bwilile of the western half of the heartland, only two groups appear to have actively resisted the Lunda of *Kazembe*: the Bakunda of *Nsonga* and the Bena Ntamba of *Mulimba*. Mwanwa Kiata, the sixth remembered Nsonga, fought the Lunda army-leader Chifwalakene. In the end, Mwanwa Kiata surrendered and received his share of Lunda symbols: *mukonso*, *inshipo*, *mpok* and *akatasa* (head-gear of red feathers)⁶⁵. Following their capitulation, the Bakunda of *Nsonga* are said to have begun to worship a nature-spirit (also called *Nsonga*) dwelling in a cave in the Kundelungu Range. The inception of this territorial cult and the enhancement of the regional position of the *Nsongas* which it brought about can be interpreted as local answers to the political and cultural hegemony of the eastern Lunda. Mulimba Kabungwe – successor to that Mulimba Ntamba whose rebellion against Nkuba II Mubemba we have discussed in the

⁶³ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 30, 40-41, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone, and Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Amayanga', August 1950, 'Myanso', February 1949.

⁶⁴ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 51, 128, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 21.

⁶⁵ A. L'Heureux, 'Rapport d'Enquête et Historique de la Chefferie de Songa', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

<i>CILOLO</i>	<i>IYANGA</i>
<i>Chibwidi</i>	Lower Mununshi River
<i>Chilalo</i>	Cabu
<i>Chilembi</i>	Upper Mununshi River
<i>Chikondo</i>	Mwambo swamp island
<i>Chipompolo</i>	Kayo
<i>Chiyombo</i>	Lower Luongo River
<i>Kaindu</i>	Ngona
<i>Kalilo</i>	Kasato & Kawama
<i>Kalandala</i>	Chisenga swamp island
<i>Kalumbu</i>	Cabu
<i>Kashinge</i>	Kilwa Island
<i>Kasumpa</i>	Lower Kalungwishi River
<i>Kawala</i>	Lower Luongo River
<i>Koni</i>	Ngona River
<i>Mpuya</i>	Nkondo Lagoon
<i>Mulanda</i>	Mambilima Falls
<i>Muteba</i>	Lake Chifukula
<i>Mwilu</i>	Lwena River
<i>Mwinempanda</i>	Yanga
<i>Nkondolo</i>	Lukanga
<i>Nsemba</i>	Kaombe

Fig. 2 *Bacilolo* with Respective *Amayanga*, ca. 1800. (Peripheral *amayanga* are not included in the table.)

previous chapter⁶⁶ – was killed by the Lunda of Chifundu Nkamba and the then Kashinge – the Lunda *cilolo* in charge of Kilwa Island – for refusing to submit to the *Mwata Kazembes'* rule. The *Mulimbas* appear to have struggled to retain their independence throughout the first half of the 19th century, for the first five successors to Kabungwe are said to have also been killed by the Lunda under the leadership of the *Chifundus*. The eastern Lunda institutions of rule seem to have failed to pacify the *Mulimbas* of the Lusekelwe River. In the early 19th century, Mutombo Wamapela, presumptive heir to the lineage headship, was taken to the eastern Lunda capital and trained in Lunda culture and in the tasks pertaining to a loyal subordinate. Mutombo was then installed as the new Mulimba. Against all expectations, Mutombo followed his predecessors' path and challenged Lunda rule. He too was killed⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ See above, p. 74.

⁶⁷ M. Lacanne, 'Historique de la Chefferie de Mulimba', 1934, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kashinge's History', n.d.

In the eastern half of the heartland, apart from the aforementioned struggle against the *Kateles*, the eastern Lunda fought the Shila of Mutampuka Mununga and *Munkombwe*, on the lower Kalungwishi River. Around the time Katele was finally killed, the Lunda Kanyemi was chosen to reside among the Shila of the Kalungwishi. Kanyemi – who was possibly one of the early holders of the *Kasumpa* title⁶⁸ – married a niece of Mutampuka. We do not know if any of their scions later inherited the *Mununga*⁶⁹.

Although an exact chronology cannot be established, by the beginning of the 19th century, Lunda *bacilolo* had seemingly been posted all along the south-eastern shore of Lake Mweru, to the south of the Kalungwishi, and the eastern bank of the lower and middle Luapula, to the north of the Mansa River. One Nkondolo is remembered as having built a village in Lukanga. The *amayanga* of the *Konis* and the *Kaindus* were on the middle Ngoni River, near Ntumbachushi Falls. Kayo, between Mofwe and Pembe Lagoons, became the *Chipompolos' iyanga*. Early holders of the *Chibwidi* and *Chilembi* titles dwelt, respectively, along the lower and upper Mununshi River, to the south of Pembe Lagoon. The first Nsemba settled near the Shila villages of *Lwamfwe* and *Kapala* in Kaombe. The ferry at Cabu was guarded by *Chilalo* and *Kalumbu*. Since the Bashimba *Nkambos* are the *Kalumbus'* perpetual nephews, it is highly likely that a marriage alliance between the two titles was forged at some stage in the past. Tribute from the *Nkambos* and the Bakunda *Mwabas* and *Kabingandus*, all dwelling on the opposite bank of the Luapula, is said to have reached the *Mwata Kazembes'* capitals through the mediation of the *Kalumbus*. The Bena Mbeba leaders of the middle Luapula were briefly placed under one of the early *Kashibas*. When the latter left the area to form a Lunda colony among the Bakunda of *Ntondo*⁷⁰, his place appears to have been taken by the *Mulandas*. *Chiyombo* and *Kawala*, “sons” of the *Kashibas*, are also said to have remained behind and to have ruled over the lower Luongo River⁷¹. Before the end of the

⁶⁸ E. Labrecque (ed.), ‘History of the BaLuunda People’, p. 35.

⁶⁹ ‘History of the Wa-Sila Tribe’, n.d. (but before 1907), Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 139-143, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁷⁰ See above, pp. 81-82.

⁷¹ This synchronic sketch of the distribution of Lunda *bacilolo* in the eastern half of the heartland around the beginning of the 19th century is based upon a collation between E. Labrecque (ed.), ‘History of the BaLuunda People’, pp. 33-36, and Cunnison’s Fieldnotes, especially ‘Lukwesa’s Chiefdom’, July 1949, and ‘Amayanga’, August 1950.

18th century, the Lunda of *Kazembe* must have extended their sway over the Bena Mbepa of the plateau, to the east of the Muchinga Escarpment. The existence of the Lunda *amayanga* of *Mwinempanda* and *Mwitu*, near present-day Kawambwa, was indeed signalled by both Lacerda-Pinto and Baptista⁷².

The position and functions of all these territorial representatives in the heartland have been aptly summarized by Cunnison.

'Wherever governors went, a system of communications and tribute was set up between the outlying capital and the metropolis. The governors were also responsible for warning the king of the approach of hostile warriors [...]. The *Mwata Kazembes* 'did not generally send governors to unoccupied parts of the country but sent them to cover Owners of the Land in their respective districts. Each district capital was a centre of Lunda-hood. Members of the family of the aristocrat concerned would accompany him to his *iyanga* [...] and [*the Mwata Kazembes*] would also appoint other Lunda to go and swell the numbers. Each capital was fenced and ditched, and the governor lived inside a fence of his own.'⁷³

In 1831-2, 'each' Lunda *cilolo* wielded 'over his own servants and dependants, wives, children and vassals in his own dominions' a 'despotic power similar to that which Kazembe ha[d] over the lives and possessions of all his subjects, without distinction of rank, sex or age.'⁷⁴ Furthermore, although Gamitto noted that, in time of peace, there was no such a thing as a Lunda standing army, he also reported that, in time of need, the eastern Lunda king could command the mobilization of 'every man without exception who [*could*] serve.' The troops upon which the *Mwata Kazembes* relied were

'divided into corps, or *Mangas*, formed each by a fief holder with his men; and each of these, according to circumstances, operate[d] by itself or unite[d] with another or others; in this latter case the *Mwinempanda* or any *Chilolo* of first rank t[ook] command; but this happen[d] only in the unusual event of a general war, and not one such ha[d] occurred since the death of Mwata Lukwesa'⁷⁵

The *bacilolo*, led by the holders of the *Inamwana Kashiba*, *Mwinempanda*, *Kalandala* and *Kashinge* titles⁷⁶, were responsible for selecting each new *Mwata Kazembe*, but did not themselves belong to the royal lineage. As will be shown in

⁷² See below, pp. 104-105.

⁷³ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 180.

⁷⁴ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 90.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115. 'The only defensive arms used by the Lunda' - Gamitto went on - were 'oblong shields made of a white wood, light and porous like cork, and crossed with strips of a reed called *Mama* which gr[ew] in the lagoons of the country. To prepare for a fight, they wet[ted] the shield and the material expand[ed] until it [*became*] impenetrable to the blows of the enemy. Offensive weapons [*were*] bows, arrows, spears and the *mpok*. They also [*had*] muskets, supplied by the *Mwata*, but use[d] them only to frighten the enemy, since they charge[d] them with powder alone. From the time they enter[ed] a campaign, the troops receive[d] no supplies, and [*had*] recourse to pillage in order to obtain provisions and other necessities of war.'

⁷⁶ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 171.

chapter VIII, it was only in the colonial era that potential heirs to the eastern Lunda throne began to be appointed to positions of territorial power. Before the European takeover, princes were obliged to reside in the royal capitals, where a street to the east of the king's palace was reserved to them⁷⁷. The pre-colonial heartland of the Kazembe kingdom was – to employ an anachronistic terminology – organised along feudal, rather than bureaucratic lines. Some at least of the principal aristocratic names or titles – as has been seen in chapter II – had been the hereditary properties of non-royal descent groups since before the foundation of the kingdom. Most other *ciloloships* can be presumed to have been *ad hoc* royal creations. Even in these latter cases, however, it is clear that, following the original royal selection, the choice of each new incumbent to a particular title was the exclusive responsibility of the elders of the family of the deceased *cilolo*. The *Mwata Kazembes* are said to have simply ratified the decision of the lineage concerned and formally installed the new title-holder by bestowing upon him special Lunda insignia⁷⁸. In the past, aristocratic titles appear to have been generally inherited patrilineally; nowadays, a bilateral or, in some cases, matrilineal system of descent tends to prevail⁷⁹.

In a structure of this kind, the control which the kings exerted over their subordinate territorial representatives could not have been absolute. In the handling of *bacilolo*, the *Mwata Kazembes* are bound to have relied upon tactful diplomacy rather than sheer force. The kings did possess the ultimate right to depose individual title-

⁷⁷ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 166.

⁷⁸ Interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala & Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Mwanabombwe, 9 April 1999.

⁷⁹ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 158, 161. The gradual intrusion of matrilineal elements – typical of the original inhabitants of Mweru-Luapula – within the predominantly patrilineal Lunda system of descent emerges quite clearly from a comparison between the aristocratic genealogies collected by Cunnison in the mid-20th century and those that I have personally collected during my stay in the lower Luapula valley. Thus, for instance, all the remembered predecessors of Ntanda Mwanwa Wapatwa, the holder of the *Kalandala* title whom Cunnison interviewed in 1949, are said to have been related patrilineally. Following the death of Kwilwa, Ntanda's brother and successor, the *Kalandala* was inherited by John Mwandwe, brother of the present Kalandala, Davidson Kanyembo, and Kwilwa's sister's daughter's son. Davidson Kanyembo also declared that he did not consider his own children as potential successors. (Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kalandala', August 1949; interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Kosam Derrick Chipepa, Mwanabombwe, 5 May 1999.) On the other hand – and this should suffice to underscore the limited value of all-encompassing generalizations in this sphere – the present Chipepa, Kosam Derrick, inherited the title from his father, Joseph, who, in turn, had inherited it from his stepbrother Kapumba. Kapumba was the son of an unnamed Chipepa who married the mother of Joseph at the end of the 19th or the beginning of

holders guilty of gross misconduct⁸⁰, but were probably reluctant to resort to drastic means which might have shaken the delicate balance upon which their supremacy rested. After all, since power always reverted to them during the interregna, the *bacilolo* could have easily retaliated against too assertive a king by conspiring to exclude his descendants from succession to the throne⁸¹.

At all events, the chances of an open confrontation between the royal family and the aristocracy were further reduced by marriage alliances, which were not just employed to consolidate the links of subordination between newcomers and autochthonous lineage heads. Throughout the pre-colonial era, the rule was strictly enforced that each king had to be the son of a previous *Mwata Kazembe* and a *ntombo* wife (from *ntombw*, the Ruund word for 'political pawns'⁸²) given to the latter by the holder of one of the aristocratic titles⁸³. *Bacilolo* whose daughters or sisters gave birth to a prince who subsequently became king entered the special *bakalulua* class. The prestigious status of *kalulua* was then transmitted to the descendants of the title-holder upon whom the dignity was first bestowed⁸⁴. In addition, the members of the family of the mother of a reigning king were known as *bacanuma*. The *bacanuma* of each *Mwata Kazembe* were naturally different, but, for the entire duration of the reign of any given king, the latter's mother's kinsmen represented an especially favoured group of people. 'They flock[ed] to the capital on his installation', received a share of tribute and were granted important positions within the kingdom. Paramount among these was the office of *Nswanamulopwe*, the 'king's personal adviser' who 'was changed with each reign.'⁸⁵

the 20th century. Joseph himself was the son to whom this latter woman had given birth during a previous marriage.

⁸⁰ Interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Kosam Derrick Chipepa & Lobson Chinyanta Lubabila, Mwanabombwe, 14 July 1999. According to Gamitto, 'the nation of Kazembe [was] divided into fiefs which the Mwata [gave] and [took] as he like[d] without any form of process; usually when the fief holder los[t] his fief he los[t] his life too, and the Mwata [gave] the fief to whomsoever he like[d] [...].' (A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 114.) Since Gamitto's informants were probably members of the royal circle, his description is likely to be somehow overblown. Yet it confirms the existence of the royal prerogative to which we are referring.

⁸¹ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 173.

⁸² J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 105.

⁸³ Out of the ten *Mwata Kazembes* who ruled before 1900, Muonga Sunkutu, Mwata Kazembe VII, was the only one whose father had not been a king himself. As we shall see in chapter V, Muonga never managed to legitimize his accession in 1862, and was finally toppled after a mere ten years in office.

⁸⁴ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 157.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 164. *Nswanamulopwe* is the Bembaized form of *nswan mulopwe*, the Ruund term for 'second to a chief'; J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 195.

Therefore, from the point of view of the *bacilolo*, the links with the kingship which were forged through the *ntombo* system were not just prestigious, but also materially advantageous. To be sure, not all the *ntombo* wives ended up giving birth to future *Mwata Kazembes*; yet, the fact itself of having provided a wife to a ruling king brought about a strong 'political association with the royal house, the equivalent of a kinship relationship.'⁸⁶ Bearing in mind that the *bacilolo* also benefited from the redistribution of resources and items of trade through the royal courts⁸⁷, it is reasonable to assume that Lunda territorial representatives were generally disinclined to do anything that might have jeopardized their connection with the *Mwata Kazembes*. It was the existence of all these ideological and material bonds which gave the administration of the heartland of the kingdom its distinctive centripetal character.

The deployment of a network of territorial representatives accounts for the high degree of control which the *Mwata Kazembes* appear to have exerted over the autochthonous communities of the lower Luapula valley. It was precisely the intrusive nature of Lunda rule in the heartland which made it necessary to perfect what Legros calls the 'travail de légitimité'⁸⁸. Kings and *bacilolo* expropriated autochthonous lineage heads of their former right to allocate land to new villages and settlers, but at the same time respected the original occupants of the valley as 'owners of the land' (*bene ba mpanga*) endowed with special ritual powers over their districts or *tutongo*.⁸⁹ In addition, *bene ba mpanga* appear to have retained the ultimate control of fishing activities within their respective *tutongo*⁹⁰. The new rulers' quest for local legitimacy also led them to capitalize on the

⁸⁶ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 158.

⁸⁷ This is discussed more fully below, pp. 136-137.

⁸⁸ H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 9.

⁸⁹ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 81-82, 211-229. On the widespread practice of distinguishing between political chiefs and ritual owners of the land, see also J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, pp. 102-103, 322-325. More recently, Legros has brought to the fore the unresolved cultural clash which weakened the Yeke state throughout its brief existence. Whereas the worldview of autochthonous Katangese communities acknowledged the distinction between 'chef politique et chef de terre', the Sumbwa political culture around which the Yeke built their polity in the second half of the 19th century did not. The Yeke 'ont trop négligé la contradiction fondamentale qui existe, dans l'univers symbolique katangais, entre le chasseur étranger, dépositaire du pouvoir sur les gens, et les représentants des premiers occupants du sol, responsables de la terre et de ses rituels. Considérés par les autochtones comme les chasseurs détenteurs du pouvoir sur les gens, leur appropriation du sol ne pourra jamais être, culturellement et idéologiquement, légitime.' H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 188.

⁹⁰ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 10.

potentialities of historical reconstruction. In Central Africa and all over the world, emerging polities have always relied upon the 'invention of tradition' to sanction the political equilibria and relationships which underlaid their inception. The kingdom of Kazembe was no exception. The production and diffusion of a Lunda-centred history gave birth to a shared culture and contributed to bind foreign rulers and subject peoples.

Let us return to the episode of Nachituti⁹¹. Given the 20th century diffusion of the tale⁹², it is remarkable that none of the Portuguese travellers who recorded versions of eastern Lunda royal history between the end of the 18th century and the early 1830s were told about it. The earliest written mention of the episode is to be found in the above-cited 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe', a text dating to the beginning of the 20th century⁹³. This being the case, the cliché revolving around Nachituti's request for help and her subsequent gifts, which symbolized the transfer of the ultimate political powers to the Lunda, can be presumed to have become the standard aetiological explanation of Lunda-Shila relations sometime after Gamitto's visit; that is, according to the tentative chronology suggested above, some few decades after the Lunda of *Kazembe* had finally completed the subjugation of the Shila of the lower Luapula valley. Even though the archetypal form of the cliché is likely to have stemmed from Lunda narrators, the fundamental point to be noted is that, in time, as attested by the 'History of the Wa-Sila Tribe'⁹⁴ and by all the successively recorded versions of Shila history, it came to be accepted by Shila leaders too. Doubtless, the fact that the episode which accounted for and justified the Lunda assumption of political control in the former Shila area became part of a common – or, to employ Cunnison's terminology, 'universal' – history can be seen as both a cause and a consequence of the consolidation of the Lunda hegemony in the heartland. (I am inclined to think that the mid-20th century Lunda claim to the effect that Nachituti's gifts were unnecessary, as they had already acquired the right to rule Shila country thanks to their military conquest of Nkuba Nsenshi, is nothing but a recent, authority-enhancing elaboration, and that not too much weight ought be attributed to it⁹⁵.)

⁹¹ See above, p. 88.

⁹² I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, p. 10; *Id.*, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 149.

⁹³ See also D. Crawford, *Thinking Black*, pp. 232-233.

⁹⁴ See above, p. 93, n. 69.

⁹⁵ I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, p. 18.

A similarly instrumental use of history is likely to have played a role in the definition of the relation between the Lunda of *Kazembe* and the Bena Mbeba of the middle Luapula River. The alleged Ruund origins of the Bena Mbeba have already been questioned above⁹⁶. In the light of the foregoing suggestions, the discussion may possibly be expanded. Once more, we are faced with a shared memory, as the claim of Ruund origins for the Bena Mbeba lineage heads is to be found in the histories of both these latter and the Lunda of *Kazembe*. Both Lunda and Bena Mbeba present the first Lubunda (or Mulundu) as having been the headman of one of the sections of the capital of the *Mwant Yavs*. Both mention his flight from the Ruund heartland following his inability to comply with the then Mwant Yav's request to build a tower to bring down the sun, and agree in describing this latter event as the ultimate cause of the eastward migration of the founders of the Kazembe kingdom. Finally, both accounts stress that the common origin explains the fact that the incoming Lunda did not fight the Bena Mbeba of the middle Luapula⁹⁷. Again, we might rightly suspect that the fashioning of this episode followed the incorporation of the Bena Mbeba into the emerging eastern Lunda kingdom. The creation of a fictitious link between the Bena Mbeba and the *Mwant Yavs*' capital – from which, as we know, the progenitor of the *Mwata Kazembes* themselves was said to have originated – enhanced the prestige of the Bena Mbeba within the worldview of the eastern Lunda and eased the interactions between the two groups by attributing an unquestioned historical foundation to them.

⁹⁶ See p. 69.

3) The Eastern and Southern Periphery

According to the 'History of the BaLuunda People', during the reign of Mwata Kazembe II Kanyembo Mpemba (d. 1760-70), military expeditions were conducted against the 'Aushi' of Mbulu and *Kalaba*, to the south of the Luongo River, and against the Bena Mukulu of *Chibwe* and *Chungu* to the north of Lake Bangweulu. It is said that an early holder of the *Kashiba* title was killed by Mbulu and that it was only Kanyembo's intervention – and his magical duel against the Makumba, the nature-spirit of the Ushi – which granted the Lunda the final success. Similarly, after the then Mwinempanda was defeated and killed by the then Chungu, Kanyembo's timely arrival tipped the balance in favour of the eastern Lunda. Bisa chiefs to the south-east of the Mukulu were also personally conquered by Mwata Kazembe Kanyembo. Lukwesa Ilunga, Mwata Kazembe III (d. 1804-5), pursued his predecessor's expansionist policy and brought under Lunda rule numerous Tabwa, Lungu and Mambwe chiefs dwelling between Lake Mweru and Lake Tanganyika⁹⁸.

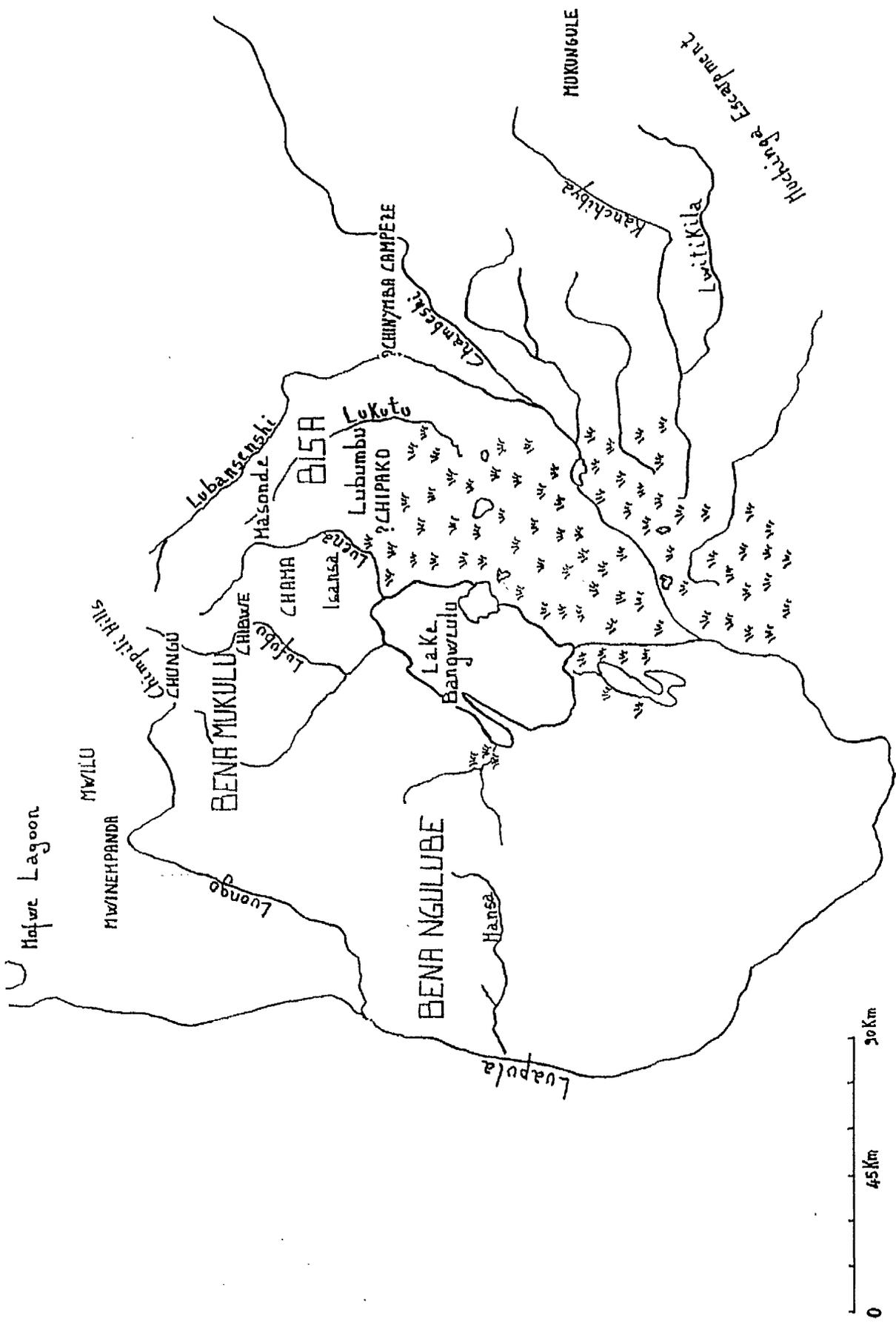
Out of all of these averred local frontiers of military expansion, the only unequivocal data relate to the late 18th-early 19th century dealings between eastern Lunda and Bisa of Lubumbu and surrounding areas. In all of the other cases, the mid-20th century Lunda claims pose problems. Lunda forays among Tabwa, Lungu and Mambwe may well have taken place, since the 'History of the Wena-Lunda Tribe' also dwells upon them. Furthermore, 'the land called Tanga' in which Mwata Kazembe IV Chibangu Keleka fought for 'two and a half months' at the time of the *pombeiros*'s stay in the royal capital may be presumed to correspond to the southern shore of Lake Tanganyika or its surroundings⁹⁹. Yet, the overall paucity of references in the 'History of the BaLuunda People' suggests that the Lunda conquests in the area – if any – did not have any lasting impact¹⁰⁰. It is also doubtful if further research in the Mweru-

⁹⁷ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 10-12, 32-33; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Mulundu History', July 1949, and 'Lubunda History', April 1951; Mulundu Elders, 'Mfumu Mulundu Yaisa mu Zambia'; K.M. Lubunda, 'Ukwisa kwa Mfumu sha Bena Mbeba'.

⁹⁸ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 23-24, 25-26, 28-29.

⁹⁹ See above, p. 88.

¹⁰⁰ Commenting upon the slaves, cattle and iron bracelets which, according to Gamitto, Keleka received from a Lungu leader (possibly, the then Mukupa Kaoma), St. John wrote that it was 'certainly unlikely



5. The Southern Periphery, ca. 1800

Tanganyika corridor could throw additional light on the matter, for whatever influence the Lunda might have once wielded was certainly superseded in the second half of the 19th century by that of the Bemba of Chitimukulu Chitapankwa (early 1860s – 1883) and his successor¹⁰¹.

As for the alleged conquests of Kanyembo to the south of the Luongo River, we must note, first of all, that there is nothing to suggest that, by the end of the 18th century, the various Bena Ngulube (Bushpig Clan) lineage heads had achieved the degree of unity and cohesion that the adoption of the ethnonym 'Ushi' would seem to imply¹⁰². Even though there are obvious dangers in the argument *e silentio*, it is nevertheless significant that none of the early 19th century visitors to Kazembe learned anything about such a thing as a southerly tribe called Ushi. In fact, it is possible that the Bena Ngulube lineage leaders only started to call themselves – or be called – Ushi after the Yeke-sponsored accession of the usurper Milambo Myelemeye and his successful series of conquests from the late 1860s¹⁰³. Be this as it may, it is not just the terminology of the 'History of the BaLuunda People' which is likely to be anachronistic. Mbulu – the lineage leader whom Kanyembo is said to have defeated – appears to have been one of the several names of Kasongo-Cali¹⁰⁴. Now, if the genealogy of *A History of the Baushi* is anything to go by, the ascent of Mbulu Kasongo-Cali cannot be placed much earlier than, say, 1830-40. *A History of the Baushi* confirms that Kasongo-Cali clashed with the Lunda, even though a previous leader – Kabungo – is also remembered as having repelled an earlier Lunda invasion¹⁰⁵. Conversely, the war of 'Mburu Kasongochali' with the then Mwata Kazembe is presented as the first confrontation with the Lunda in one of the earliest recorded versions of Ushi history¹⁰⁶. Although a degree of uncertainty

to represent political control by the Kazembe over the Lungu or Mambwe, or to have gone unreciprocated.' C. St. John, 'Kazembe and the Tanganyika-Nyasa Corridor', p. 213.

¹⁰¹ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 142-160.

¹⁰² Ushi or Baushi, 'serait un nom, qui, comme d'autres, indique l'appartenance à un endroit, dans le cas des Baushi, leur lien avec la rivière Kyaushi [...]. C'est là le pays des Benangulube. Ainsi, Baushi est synonyme de Benangulube [...]'. L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation*, p. 158.

¹⁰³ The earliest written mention of the 'Batisi' and 'Meréré' is to be found in D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 331, 358. (On the ascent of Milambo Myelemeye, compare B. Chimba, *A History of the Baushi*, pp. 29-34, and H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 94.)

¹⁰⁴ B. Chimba, *A History of the Baushi*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10, 20.

¹⁰⁶ C.R. Rennie, 'History of Native Tribes-WaUsi Tribe', May 1917, Fort Rosebery DNB, IV, pp. 19-21, NAZ, KDF3/1.

remains, this latter view is probably to be preferred. If the eastern Lunda only clashed with the Bena Ngulube to the south of the Luongo around the mid-19th century¹⁰⁷, the episode revolving around the death of one of the early *Kashibas* and the duel between Kanyembo Mpemba and the Makumba is likely to be a later distortion. After all, given the regional significance of the Makumba-cult in the early 20th century¹⁰⁸, the Lunda story-tellers (or their editor, Father Labrecque!) may have felt that the history of their early conquests in Mweru-Luapula could not have been held to be complete unless the famous nature-spirit was somehow incorporated in the narrative.

Kanyembo's ostensible conquest of the Bena Mukulu (or Bena Ngoma) of *Chibwe* and *Chungu* must equally be treated as doubtful. In 1831, Gamitto and his party passed through the village of Chungu Kakomwe, in the Chimpili Hills, to the north of Lake Bangweulu¹⁰⁹. According to the Bena Mukulu's own ethno-historical account, Kakomwe was only the second holder of the *Chungu*¹¹⁰. Since Kakomwe succeeded to his cousin (MZS) Shamumanga Cimpulumba, Chungu I, it would appear that the inception of the *Chungu* cannot have occurred before the end of the 18th century. Kanyembo, in other words, cannot have fought one of the early *Chungus*, as the death of the second Mwata Kazembe is likely to have antedated the rise of the Mukulu title. Furthermore, no direct indications of a very early clash between the *Chibwes* and the Lunda of *Kazembe* are to be found in the *History of the Bena Ngoma*.

The 'History of the BaLuunda People' also asserts that a second expedition against Kunda wa Lulanga, Chibwe IV, and the then Chungu (either Shamumanga or Kakomwe) took place during the reign of Chibangu Keleka, Mwata Kazembe IV. In this latter case, the occurrence of the war is duly confirmed by the published Bena Ngoma historical account¹¹¹. At the end of 1810, soon after fording the Lufubu ('Lufunbo')

¹⁰⁷ As a matter of fact, the 'History of the BaLuunda People' itself mentions a second war with the 'Aushi' during the short reign of Mwata Kazembe V Muonga Kapumba (ca. 1850 – ca. 1853/4). See below, p. 116.

¹⁰⁸ R. Philpot, 'Makumba. The Baushi Tribal God', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, LXVI, 1936, pp. 189-208; I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 220; J. Gould, *Luapula*, pp. 85-86.

¹⁰⁹ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, I, p. 192; A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 116.

¹¹⁰ E. Labrecque (ed.), *History of the Bena-Ngoma*, p. 45, 73.

¹¹¹ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 40; *Id.* (ed.), *History of the Bena Ngoma*, pp. 37-38. To be sure, one could suspect that the similarities between the two texts are merely due to Labrecque's almost contemporaneous interventions in the editing of both of them. Yet, the validity of the argument is belied by the fact that, as we have said, the two accounts are not always compatible.

River to the south of present-day Luwingu, and before entering the Bisa territory of Isansa, the *pombeiros* reached the village 'of a deceased potentate named Luibue, whom Cazembe had killed in battle [...].'¹¹² The location of the village of Baptista's late 'Luibue' seems to correspond neatly to the site, Mukula Pembe, where, according to the *History of the Bena Ngoma*, all the successive *Chibwes* since Chibwe II had built their villages. Even though the Bena Ngoma ethno-history states that Chibwe Kunda wa Lulanga was not killed by the Lunda of *Kazembe* but by the then Chama, another Bena Ngoma lineage head in whose village he had sought refuge from the Lunda raiders, the discrepancy does not seem sufficient to cast doubts upon the identification between Baptista's 'Luibue' and Chibwe IV. Thus, when all is said and done, the most likely hypothesis is that the Lunda of *Kazembe* only succeeded in imposing a measure of control over the Bena Mukulu in the first decade of the 19th century, during the reign of Keleka; that is, some 50 years later than suggested by the 'History of the BaLuunda People'. Following the death of Kunda wa Lulanga, the *Chibwe* title seems to have disappeared and its role among the Bena Mukulu to have been taken by the more recent *Chungu*, whose holders, as has been pointed out above, did not at first reside in Mukula-Pembe but in the more isolated Chimpili Hills. At the time of Gamitto's passage, Kakomwe Chungu II 'said he was subordinate to the *Mwata Kazembe* [...].'¹¹³

The case of the Bisa to the south-east of the Bena Mukulu is less problematic. Early Portuguese records show that the eastern Lunda were the dominant force in the area at the end of the 18th century. But they also indicate that their supremacy over the Bisa was never totally unquestioned, but rather rested upon a mutually profitable relationship, and that, at the time of their war against Chibwe IV, the Lunda of Chibangu Keleka were already struggling to uphold their sway in Lubumbu and surrounding areas. Manoel Caetano Pereira, the first known non-African to visit the kingdom of *Kazembe* in 1796, learned that the 'Muizas' to the north-west of the Chambeshi River had been conquered by the eastern Lunda¹¹⁴. The information collected by Pereira were confirmed two years later by Lacerda. The then Mukungule, a 'powerful Muiza kinglet' to the south-east of the Chambeshi, traded ('*contrata*') with the eastern Lunda king but was

¹¹² R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 191.

¹¹³ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, I, p. 192.

¹¹⁴ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 38.

‘not really a subject’. The Portuguese travellers were indeed impressed by the ‘respect’ with which their eastern Lunda guide ‘spoke to Mambo Mucungure’¹¹⁵.

The influence of the eastern Lunda, on the other hand, became unmistakable once the Portuguese party crossed the Chambeshi on 10th September 1798. Two days later, the travellers reached the village of ‘Chinimba Campeze’ – not to be confused with the more north-westerly rulers of Masonde, who also adopted the name of Chinyimba in the early 19th century¹¹⁶. From Chinyimba Campeze’s ‘a tribute of poultry [*was*] exacted by the Cazembe, to whom the people sen[*t*] as many as they [*bred*]’. The village of Chinyimba Campeze was situated on the long-distance trading route between the lower Luapula valley and the eastern coast. While staying there, Lacerda ‘was visited by sundry Muizas returning from the city of the Cazembe with ivory, intended for sale to the Caffres of the Eastern Coast.’¹¹⁷ After leaving Chinyimba’s, the expedition entered the country of ‘Chipaco’. The geographical location of this latter’s village – ‘the largest and most populous of all’ the Bisa villages visited by Lacerda – suggests that Chipako might have been another name for either Yombwe Nama or Kabamba, respectively, the seventh and eighth remembered Bisa rulers of Lubumbu¹¹⁸. Chipako, who is said to have greatly ‘fear[*ed*] and respect[*ed*]’ Lukwesa Ilunga, the then eastern Lunda king, described himself ‘as a slave of the Cazembe [...]’.¹¹⁹ To the west of Lubumbu lay Isansa, the Bisa region under the holders of the *Chama* title (not to be confused with the aforementioned *Chamas* of the Bena Ngoma)¹²⁰. At the time of Lacerda’s visit, the ruling Chama was one ‘Mouro-Atchinto’, also spelled as ‘Muilachiutu’¹²¹. Leaving Isansa behind, the travellers skirted Mukulu country and, after crossing the Chimpili Hills, reached *Mwilu*’s (‘Mouro’), the first Lunda *iyanga* on the Chishinga plateau. Lacerda ‘did not see one Muiza’ there. The explorer was welcomed by ‘a vast crowd of both sexes and all ages [...] with festive instruments: so anxious were they to see [*him*] that some were perched on tree-tops, and after [*he*] had passed they descended and accompanied [*him*], singing,

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

¹¹⁶ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 109, 115, n. 103.

¹¹⁷ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 94-95.

¹¹⁸ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 114.

¹¹⁹ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 95-96.

¹²⁰ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 108.

¹²¹ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 98, 149.

playing instruments, dancing, and at the same time clearing the road.¹²² The then Mwilu's territory – which the Portuguese attained on 28th September 1798 – lay at a distance of three to four days-march from Lukwesa Ilunga's capital on the Lunde stream.

Lacerda's observations suggest the existence of a firm eastern Lunda grip over the Bisa territory to the north-west of the Chambeshi River. Pinto's experiences during his return journey were of a different nature. Although the then Mwinempanda – the governor of the second Lunda colony on the Chishinga plateau – dutifully obeyed the order that 'he had received from his king and lord, the Cazembe, to supply [*Pinto's party*] with refreshments and provisions'¹²³, there was little that either he or the 'Fumo Anceva' – the Mwata Kazembe's escort¹²⁴ – could do to force the Bisa leaders to the south-east to do as much. While staying in Chipako's area at the end of August 1799, Pinto began to detect a growing Bisa hostility. The chief himself asked the Portuguese to leave his village as they had 'stayed there long enough'¹²⁵. The Mfumu ya Nseba, in the meantime, had reached the village of Chilando ('Chirando'), the Bisa ruler of Masonde¹²⁶, where 'the rebel Muizas would not receive him nor allow him to pass.' A few days later, Pinto received the chilling news that the Mfumu ya Nseba had resolved to give up his mission to escort the Portuguese to the Chambeshi ford. He 'held himself dismissed as he could not move forwards [...]'¹²⁷. The Bisa belligerence towards the Portuguese increased after they left the sphere of influence of the eastern Lunda to the north-west of the Chambeshi River. Between Mukungule's and the Luangwa River, the travellers experienced constant pilfering and could buy few provisions. The Bisa also resorted to open violence and repeatedly attacked or ambushed the retreating caravan. Manoel Caetano Pereira was wounded with a poisoned arrow¹²⁸. In the end, the Portuguese made it to the Luangwa, but only after having been forced to abandon most of the ivory and slaves that they had received from Mwata Kazembe Lukwesa Ilunga. In fact, according to Pinto himself, it was precisely the perceived threat to their trading

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

¹²⁴ The *Mfumu ya Nseba* – about whom more will be said below (pp. 127-128) – were the court officials in charge of dealing with foreign visitors.

¹²⁵ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 150.

¹²⁶ Most probably, Chilando Chipala; A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 109.

¹²⁷ R.F. Burton, (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 150.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

interests which led the Bisa to adopt such an hostile posture. The Bisa 'were envious of [*the*] ivory and slaves' of the Portuguese and looked upon them 'as their rivals in the trade.'¹²⁹

The involvement of the Lunda and the Bisa in the long-distance trade will be further discussed in the next chapter. What has been said so far, however, suffices to advance the suggestion that the Bisa of Lubumbu and surrounding areas were willing to recognize the *Mwata Kazembes*' sway only as long as the latter's commercial policy did not threaten to undermine their intermediary position along the route between the lower Luapula valley and the eastern coast. By attempting to establish a direct link with the Portuguese of the *Rios de Sena*, Lukwesa Ilunga had probably sought to bypass the Bisa mediation. That the Bisa were ready to resort to war in order to fend off the danger is a definite proof of the extent to which the long-distance trade had permeated the fabric of their society.

Pinto's return journey through Bisa country may well have been the spark which ignited a general northern Bisa uprising against eastern Lunda rule. Indeed, according to Pereira de Azevedo, Governor of the *Rios de Sena*, one of the causes of the deficient trade of the district under his charge in the first decade of the 19th century was that the Lunda 'nation had carried on war with the Muize people ever since [...] we attempted the opening up of communications with those interior places.'¹³⁰ At the time of the *pombeiros*' stay in the eastern Lunda capital, the Bisa unrest was still unresolved, and the two travellers experienced its disruptive consequences. The *pombeiros*' second attempt to proceed to Tete between 1806 or 1808 and 1810 was called off due to the impracticality of the south-eastward route. On that occasion, Chibangu Keleka, Mwata Kazembe IV, had ordered a seemingly formidable escort to be set up as a protection against 'the highwaymen and robbers who [*met*] with and intercept[*ed*] people on the road coming to communicate with him [...].'¹³¹ Apart from the then Mwinempanda, two other *bacilolo* – Chilembi ('Quilembe') and 'Chabanza Mutemba' (Muteba(?)) – were deputed to accompany with their respective followers the *pombeiros*. Keleka's

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

¹³⁰ Pereira de Azevedo to Count das Galveas, 20 May 1811, encl. in *ibid.*, pp. 167-169.

¹³¹ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 188.

Nswanamulopwe ('Soana Mulopo') was also a member of the expedition¹³². Near Mwinempanda's village, the party was approached by messengers of the then Chama ('Quiana'), Bisa ruler of Isansa, and Chibwe of the Mukulu ('Quebue')¹³³. The envoys donated an ox 'to induce the Muenepanda and his war-men to go back [...]; they said the road was quite clear.' The aim of the superiors of the two messengers – as Baptista was later to discover – was to rob undisturbed the trading goods which Keleka had entrusted to 'Chabanza'. Once they reached Isansa proper, Chama's bribery achieved the desired effect. Mwinempanda accepted the gift of two more oxen and ordered his soldiers to retreat, 'thus neglecting to carry out Cazembe's orders, which were to escort [*the pombeiros*] to the river Aruangua [*Luangwa*]',¹³⁴. Mwinempanda sought to justify his action by declaring that the 'force he [...] had to oppose to the potentates he might meet on the road was very small [*and*] that he did not wish to run any risk.'¹³⁵ The weakened party was detained fifteen days in the village of Chama 'Catanba'. The latter intended to wait for the return of his soldiers, kill 'Chabanza' and seize the Mwata Kazembe's goods. Fortunately for the *pombeiros*, Chilando ('Quirando') – who still considered himself as 'a friend of the Cazembe' – warned them of Chama's plans¹³⁶. They were thus able to retreat hastily towards the Luapula valley, anticipating the arrival of Chama's warriors. 'Robbed of a great deal', the *pombeiros* made it to Keleka's capital. On the road, they 'found the Quilolo Muenepanda very comfortably settled at his farm, and the Cazembe much enraged with him and the other Quilolos.'¹³⁷

The experience of the *pombeiros* confirms our suppositions regarding the prime rationale for the unrest of the northern Bisa in the early 19th century. After the *pombeiros*' departure in 1810, Keleka seems to have forsaken his father's aspiration to trade directly with the *Rios de Sena*. As a result, Lunda-Bisa relationships resumed a

¹³² R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 227.

¹³³ Presumably, then, Chibwe IV Kunda wa Lulanga was killed between the *pombeiros*' second ill-fated attempt to reach Tete and December 1810, when, as has been seen above (p. 103), they passed through the village of a 'deceased potentate named Luibue'.

¹³⁴ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 227.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹³⁶ This Chilando was perhaps Chilando Chinyimba, successor of Chilando Chipala, the ruler of Masonde who had detained the Mfumu ya Nseba Ƨɛ ɲ or so years previously. See above, p. 105, n. 126.

¹³⁷ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 227-228.

peaceful, commercially-oriented course, only to be disrupted again by the Bemba south-westward expansionist drive from the late 1820s.

Chapter IV

THE KINGDOM OF KAZEMBE TO 1862

This chapter examines the first challenges to the eastern Lunda regional position in the 1830s and the subsequent political history of the kingdom until the accession of the usurper Muonga Sunkutu, Mwata Kazembe VI. Before discussing the external and internal crisis of the kingdom after 1862, it is appropriate to include in this chapter an analysis of the organization of the royal capitals and the long-distance trade. The successive royal capitals represented models of incipient urbanization; their regionally unparalleled sophistication enhanced the magnetism of the eastern Lunda state during the first half of the 19th century. So did the vast array of exotic resources, the distribution of which the *Mwata Kazembes* effectively controlled in virtue of their monopolistic involvement in the long-distance trade.

1) Military and Political Threats in the 1830s

The Southern Periphery

The chronology and overall geopolitical consequences of the Bemba south-westward expansion in the early years of the reign of Chitimukulu Chileshe (late 1820s – ca. 1860) have been studied in detail by Roberts¹. In the present section, we shall limit ourselves to recapitulate his findings and place them in the context of the foregoing discussion of the early 19th century interactions between eastern Lunda, on the one hand, and Bisa and Bena Mukulu, on the other.

The first news of the ongoing Bemba-Bisa conflict reached Gamitto and his party as they traversed the territory of the Bisa of *Mukungule* on their way to the Luapula valley². By 1831, Bemba military leaders had succeeded in imposing their sway over much of Chinama, the Bisa region between the Muchinga Escarpment and the Chambeshi River, and were extending their conquests further north. At the time of

¹ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 107-119.

² A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, I, p. 157.

Gamitto's first passage through the territory to the north-west of the Chambeshi, the Bisa districts of Lubumbu, Isansa and Masonde had already suffered from repeated Bemba raids. The inhabitants of Isansa had been forced to abandon many of their villages and fields. They lived in temporary hamlets 'of branches and leaves which they use[d] as shelters, for they [were] wandering around in hiding from the Bemba and feeding on wild fruits and on fish [...]'. The standing of the then Chama, Mushili Chilumba, whom the Portuguese reached on 15th October 1831, 'was once great but [had] diminished with the Bemba conquest.'³ Similarly, the neighbouring village of Nkalamo, Mushili's brother, was 'small' and 'almost deserted.'⁴ Beyond Nkalamo's and the Luena River, Gamitto's party entered Masonde, the territory of Chilando Chinyimba⁵. The Portuguese were told 'that in these parts there [had been] many battles between Bemba and Bisa, and when the Bemba [had been] victorious they [had] destroyed everything.' Only the 'remains of ruined cassava gardens' were left. Chinyimba's capital was 'encircled by a strong stockade, and the Bisa sa[id] that they [were] still prepared to resist [...]'⁶.

In 1810, when the *pombeiros* travelled through Bisa country to the north-west of the Chambeshi, the authority of Mwata Kazembe IV Chibangu Keleka, albeit questioned, was still a force to be reckoned with. Twenty years later, following the Bemba aggression, all vestiges of Keleka's control had disappeared, and Lubumbu, Isansa and Masonde lay well outside the sphere of influence of the eastern Lunda. While in Isansa, Gamitto indeed noted that the 'lands of Kazembe [were] still very distant.'⁷ In 1831, the eastern Lunda sway did not extend beyond the Bena Mukulu of Chungu Kakomwe and the then Chikumbi, both of which dwelt in the Chimpili Hills, at a distance of three to four days-march to the south-east of the *Mwinempandas*' 'frontier district'. Whereas Chikumbi's people still 'pride[d] themselves on having the manners and customs of the Lunda', Chungu Kakomwe, as has already been mentioned⁸, described himself as a 'subordinate to the *Mwata Kazembe*', but also added that he 'was [...] under threat of invasion from the Bemba [...]'. Expecting a Bemba attack,

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

⁵ See above, p. 107, n. 136.

⁶ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, I, p. 188.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

⁸ See above, p. 103.

Kakomwe had ordered the construction of a protective 'stockade and a small ditch' around his village⁹.

Between the end of 1831 and the summer of 1832, the Bemba pursued their military advance in the former southern periphery of the Kazembe kingdom and consolidated their hold over the Bena Mukulu and the Bisa of Lubumbu and surrounding areas. Chungu Kakomwe's village – as Gamitto learned on his return journey – had been conquered by the Bemba army-leader Kabungu¹⁰. Kakomwe himself might have been killed by the Bemba invaders¹¹. Nothing is known of the fate of Chikumbi, the other Bena Mukulu leader of the Chimpili Hills. However, since Gamitto did not mention his village in July 1832, it is likely that he had fled the Bemba of Kabungu. For all their pugnacious intentions, the Bisa of Chilando Chinyimba, ruler of Masonde, had also failed to hold their ground against the Bemba. Chinyimba's village, which 'had been peopled and surrounded by a strong stockade' in October 1831, lay 'deserted and completely destroyed' some nine months later¹². Further to the south, there are indications that Chama Mushili Chilumba, chief of Isansa, was also killed by the Bemba of Kamfwa. At about this time, Mushili's brother, the aforementioned Nkalamo, was installed as ruler of Lubumbu. Significantly, Nkalamo moved his capital to Chilubi Island, well protected from Bemba incursions¹³. Control over Lubumbu proper seems to have been assumed by the Bemba 'Londamo', whose village was situated along the eastern bank of the Lukutu River, and 'Kabasha', who settled on the Lubansenshi ('Lwanseshi'), to the south of Londamo's.¹⁴

Until at least the 1860s, the Bemba military exploits did not culminate in the establishment of a lasting territorial administration. But even though the Bemba proved unable to retain their first conquests in the territories to the north and north-west of Lake Bangweulu¹⁵, the Lunda failed to benefit from their temporary withdrawal. To be sure, once they had absorbed the initial disruption brought about by the military forays of the Bemba, the north-western Bisa resumed their trading activities along the route between

⁹ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, I, pp. 191-192.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, p. 132.

¹¹ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 116, n. 108.

¹² A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 135.

¹³ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 115.

¹⁴ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 137, 139.

¹⁵ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 116-117, 139-142.

the lower Luapula valley and the eastern coast. Yet the Lunda never managed to reassert their political supremacy over them and the Bena Mukulu. Quite apart from these later developments, the seeming passivity of the eastern Lunda in face of the Bemba expansionist drive in the early 1830s calls for an explanation¹⁶. Gamitto, whose intense dislike of Keleka crops up throughout his writings, contrasted the figure of the latter – ‘the most barbarous and cowardly’ Mwata Kazembe – with that of his father and predecessor, Lukwesa Ilunga, whom he saw as a ‘humane and generous’ conqueror¹⁷. Whatever Keleka’s personal shortcomings, the eastern Lunda decision to shun a war with the Bemba is likely to have had much more to do with the perceived need to concentrate their military efforts on the defence of the north-western periphery, menaced, in its turn, by a contemporaneous – and potentially more dangerous – expansionist undertaking.

The North-Western Periphery

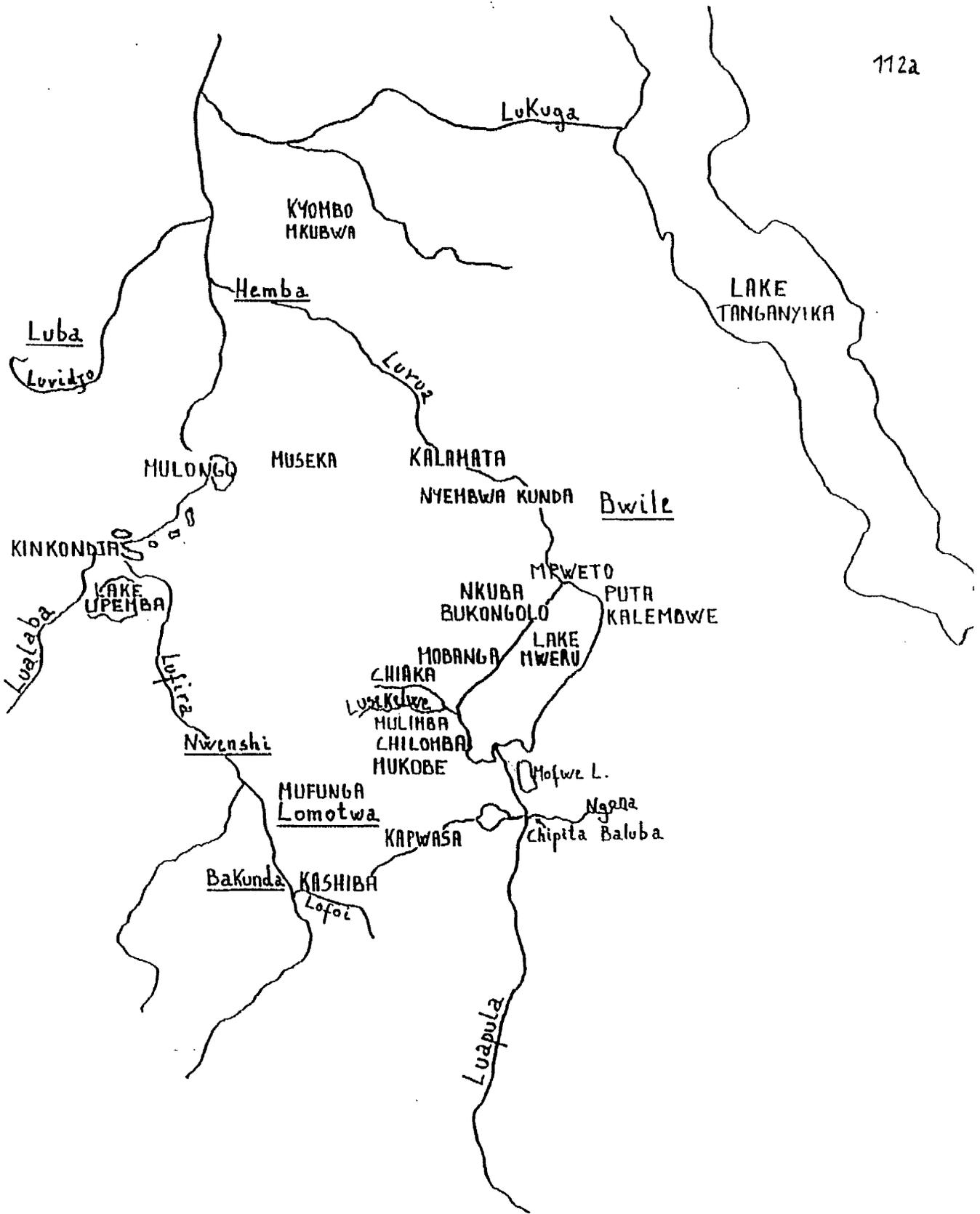
Although some early clashes between eastern Lunda clients and representatives and Luba or Lubaized peoples have been mentioned in chapter III¹⁸, Reefe has shown that the main military confrontation between Lunda of *Kazembe* and nuclear Luba occurred soon after 1832¹⁹. Before that date, Kumwimbe Ngombe, the Luba Mulopwe, spearheaded a series of military conquests to the east and south-east of the Luba heartland. The territories obtained by Kumwimbe as a result of these successful raids provided him with a platform from which to launch an attack against the north-western periphery and even the heartland of the kingdom of Kazembe. Following his accession in about 1810, Kumwimbe Ngombe reincorporated within the Luba polity the Hemba ‘fire-kingdom’ of Kyombo Mkubwa, which had severed its links with the heartland after the death of Ilunga Sungu, Kumwimbe’s predecessor. Thereafter, Kumwimbe’s ethnically heterogeneous armies reached the north-western Bwile of the upper Luvua River. Luba title-holders settled among the inhabitants of the salt-producing districts of

¹⁶ E. Labrecque (ed.), ‘History of the BaLuunda People’, says nothing about the Bemba encroachment upon the southern periphery of the kingdom.

¹⁷ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 130. See also *ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁸ See above, pp. 82-83.

¹⁹ T.Q. Reefe, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, p. 139.



6. Luba South-Eastward Expansion, ca. 1810 – ca. 1835

Kalamata and Nyembwa Kunda²⁰. At about the same time, the Hemba client state of Museka came into being in the region between the upper Luvua and the Upemba depression. Finally, still during the first decades of the 19th century, Kumwimbe brought under Luba control the kingdoms of Kinkondja and Mulongo, to the north of Lake Upemba²¹.

Reefe argued that the attempted expansion of the Luba towards southern Katanga and the Luapula valley in the early 1830s was primarily motivated by Kumwimbe Ngombe's desire to establish direct communication with Bisa long-distance traders²². But there is little evidence for this. The natural resources of southern Katanga are likely to have represented a much more powerful and immediate inducement. If the ultimate rationale for the Luba-Lunda conflict remains uncertain, there is no doubt that its political significance was far-reaching. The Lomotwa, Bakunda and Nwenshi areas along the middle Lufira River were the first regions on the periphery of the Kazembe kingdom to bear the brunt of Luba incursions. Luba armies from Mulongo and Kinkondja ascended the Lufira in the direction of the *Kashibas'* Lunda colony. While Lomotwa historical accounts collected by Belgian officials are remarkably silent on the details of this phase of Luba expansion, traditions stemming from the Upemba depression vividly remember the marriage between Seya, daughter of the then Mufunga, and Kaulu Kabi Twite, the Luba title-holder whom Kumwimbe had installed as guardian of the Mulongo ferry²³. Although Malale, the offspring of the union, is said not to have returned to his mother's homeland, the episode is highly significant in that, when collated with the aforementioned marriage between Mukabanya and the then Kashiba around the beginning of the century, it suggests the overlapping of two competing systems of peripheral rule along the middle Lufira from about 1830. So does the attested

²⁰ According to E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 35, the *Chipepas* (later substituted by the *Chilubis*) were the holders of a Lunda *iyanga* among the Bwile of *Mpweto*, *Putu* and *Kalembwe* since the completion of Lukwesa Ilunga's conquests in Mweru-Luapula. However, the existence of a permanent Lunda colony at the north-eastern corner of Lake Mweru is doubtful, not least because there is nothing to suggest that Lunda representatives dwelling among the southern Bwile tried to prevent the Luba of Kumwimbe from attacking the neighbouring Bwile of the Kalamata and Nyembwa Kunda salt-producing districts.

²¹ T.Q. Reefe, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, pp. 132-137.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 134; E. Verhulpen, *Baluba et Balubaisés*, p. 371.

introduction among the Lomotwa of the *bambudye* secret society, a powerful instrument of Luba political unity²⁴.

A second course of military expansion – south of Museka and Nyembwa Kunda, and along the western shore of Lake Mweru – led Kumwimbe Ngombe's army right into the heartland of the eastern Lunda kingdom. Following the arrival of Kumwimbe's raiders, the then Chiaka (Zela), Mulimba (Bena Ntamba), Mobanga and Chilomba (Bashimba) are said to have fled their villages and sought refuge in the caves of the Bukongolo Range²⁵. Mwata Kazembe Chibangu Keleka reacted to the Luba advance by dispatching to the north-western border of the heartland a military contingent under the leadership of Mulingana. The latter established a temporary alliance with Chipenge, Chimbala's successor as Nkuba Bukongolo II²⁶, and defeated Kumwimbe's soldiers on the Lusekelwe River²⁷. Despite this setback, the Luba invaders continued their southward drive. A Luba division led by the ruler of Nyembwa Kunda and by one Kitemu seems to have raided the Bena Nsoka of *Kapwasa*²⁸ and the Shila of *Mukobe*²⁹ before rejoining the main Luba army in Chibondo swamp island. The ensuing battle – 'the earliest known case in this part of Central Africa of combat between forces led directly by rulers of two major dynastic states'³⁰ – marked the final defeat of the Luba of Kumwimbe. It also gave birth to one of the most widely known episodes of eastern Lunda history, commemorated in the name of the canal – Chipitabaluba – which the Luba invaders allegedly dug in their ill-fated attempt to reach the bulk of the eastern Lunda forces positioned on the eastern bank of the Luapula³¹. Before finally returning to

²⁴ T.Q. Reefer, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, p. 141.

²⁵ M. Lacanne, 'Rapport d'Enquête et Historique. Chefferie de Kilomba', 1934, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

²⁶ See above, p. 90.

²⁷ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. A different version is to be found in E. Labrecque (ed.) 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 41. According to the mid-20th century eastern Lunda ethno-history, Keleka deputed 'Mungoma' to fight Nkuba Bukongolo Chipenge himself, and not the Luba invaders. Some confusion with a later war with Mukeke, Chipenge's successor, is very probable here. See below, p. 116.

²⁸ M. Lacanne, 'Historique du Groupement de Kapwasa', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. Kitemu was probably a Hemba client chief and military leader; T.Q. Reefer, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, p. 125, 142.

²⁹ A. L'Heureux, 'Historique du Groupement de Mukobe', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. Kiele, the then Mukobe, is said to have taken refuge in Keleka's capital on Mofwe Lagoon.

³⁰ T.Q. Reefer, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, p. 144.

³¹ I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, p. 38; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 43.

the Luba heartland, Kumwimbe's decimated troops ascended the Luapula and fought some of the peoples of the pedicle³².

While, in the heartland, the eastern Lunda victory against the Luba may have enhanced their local authority and standing, the Luba forays in the north-western periphery are likely to have undermined them. It has been argued in chapter III that the establishment of marriage alliances with local chiefly lineages was a strategy which the eastern Lunda employed to stabilize and perpetuate their influence on the periphery of the kingdom. The marriage between the then Mufunga's daughter and the Luba Kaulu Kabi aptly reminds us that the Lunda did not enjoy a monopoly over the adoption of this and related practices of peripheral rule. Their sway over much of Katanga was certainly related to the prestigious aura which had surrounded the foreign dynasty, its institutions and insignia, since its arrival in the region in the early 18th century. This being so, the *Mwata Kazembes'* influence was always at risk of being superseded by that of any successive group of intruders able to introduce a new – and hence more prestigious – set of institutions and symbols of rule. Furthermore, the competition between two “imperial” systems is bound to have favoured precisely those people – Bakunda, Lomotwa and Nwenshi – which both eastern Lunda and Luba strove to control, for their leaders must have exploited the greater room for manoeuvring and the option to play one power against the other. Thus, for instance, one could easily imagine that Seya's father might have sought to take advantage of the privileged relationship which, after the marriage of his daughter, linked him to the *Twites* of Mulongo to negotiate a less demanding form of subordination with the then holder of the *Kashiba* title.

Even though the Luba remained a political and military threat long after the conclusion of Kumwimbe Ngombe's reckless war against Chibangu Keleka³³, it does not seem that they were ever able fully to substitute the eastern Lunda as the hegemonic power along the middle Lufira River. The attempted encroachment by the Luba upon the north-western periphery of the Kazembe kingdom can be best described as an harbinger of future developments. In the 1830s, the eastern Lunda were equal to the Luba

³² T.Q. Reeve, *The Rainbow and the Kings*, p. 143.

³³ The *Kitobos* and the *Mufungas'* histories indicate that Nwenshi and Lomotwa continued to suffer from localized Luba raids until at least the 1860s. A. van Malderen, 'Historique de la Chefferie Kitobo', 1936, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; H. Wera, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur la Chefferie de Mufunga', 1931, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

challenge; some 30 years later, in a very transformed political environment, they proved to be no match for the Yeke of Msiri.

2) The Reigns of Muonga Kapumba and Chinyanta Munona (ca. 1850³⁴-1862)

The short reign of Muonga Kapumba, Keleka's younger brother, is especially remembered for his clash with the Bena Ngulube to the south of the Luongo River³⁵, and his war with Mukeke and Chishiapakata, respectively, Nkuba Bukongolo III and IV. Following his collaboration with the Lunda army of Mulingana, Nkuba Bukongolo II Chipenge is said to have agreed to submit to Lunda rule. His successor Mukeke, however, appears to have resumed the defiant attitude of Chimbala, the founder of the Shila polity on the Bukongolo Range. A Lunda military contingent under the leadership of *bacilolo* Kashinge Kantampa and Kalilo Kabala was promptly dispatched to the area by Kapumba. The opposing armies met on the Kilambwa River. Both Mukeke and Kabala died in the ensuing battle. Thereafter, Chishiapakata – cousin and successor to Mukeke – allied himself with the Bwile leader Mpweto Kayembwe and got the better of Kashinge Kantampa's soldiers near the N'Sasia River. After losing two war-gongs which Kapumba had personally entrusted to him, Kantampa retreated to his *iyanga* on Kilwa Island³⁶. Informed of the setback, Muonga Kapumba decided to lead a second military expedition which, according to Lunda accounts, also included some of the followers of Chilundu, the former Kazembe wa Lualaba whom Kapumba himself had recently deposed³⁷. Kapumba's army followed the eastern shore of Lake Mweru until it reached the Lwao River and the soldiers of Chishiapakata and Kayembwe. After Chishiapakata was killed in the battle, both his and Mpweto's followers surrendered to the Lunda. Peace was finally declared once Kapumba retrieved his war-gongs and

³⁴ I subscribe to Legros' view that Chibangu Keleka, Mwata Kazembe IV, died between 1847 (when he was visited by three Swahili traders from Zanzibar) and 1850; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 28.

³⁵ See above, p. 102, n. 107.

³⁶ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 81, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 45, adds that Nkuba Bukongolo and Mpweto killed the then Kasumpa, the *cilolo* dwelling on the lower Kalungwishi River;

³⁷ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 45-46.

married Kayambi, a woman from Mpweto's family. Both Mpweto Kayembwe and Kabunda – the new Nkuba Bukongolo V – swore obedience to Mwata Kazembe V³⁸.

Kapumba died suddenly upon his return from Bwile country. Since Kapumba's reign appears to have lasted no more than three or four years, his death is unlikely to have occurred after 1854. The ensuing interregnal period seems to have been marred by the first clear instance of succession dispute. Chinyanta Munona, Kapumba's brother and heir designate, was temporarily absent, and several claimants are remembered as having vied with each other for the throne. Among the latter was Muonga, the son of Nsemba. Nsemba was the son to whom another Muonga, Ng'anga Bilonda's first wife³⁹, gave birth after she married again, to Kayuba, a commoner, following Mwata Kazembe I's departure for the Luapula. In the early years of Chibangu Keleka's reign, Nsemba was granted the status of *cilolo* and a *iyanga* in Kaombe. In due course, Nsemba's own son acquired a colony on the Chishinga plateau and took the name of Sunkutu. Muonga Sunkutu's claim to the throne was weak, since he was neither the son of a previous *Mwata Kazembe* nor did he belong to the royal patrilineage. He possessed, however, a distinctive advantage over legitimate claimants: unlike royal sons, he was not confined in the capital and forced to depend on the support of his maternal kinsmen scattered all over the country, but could rely upon an independent power base among the Chishinga. In this occasion, Chinyanta Munona's timely arrival meant that Muonga's bid for the throne was rejected⁴⁰. Muonga returned to his colony but did not abandon his ambitions. In the early 1860s, the death of Chinyanta presented him with another chance to finally fulfil them.

True to its un auspicious beginnings, the reign of Chinyanta Munona, Mwata Kazembe VI, is generally associated with the first phase of the Yeke conquest of Katanga. The relationships between Msiri and the eastern Lunda did not start on an hostile footing, for both Yeke and Lunda accounts assert that Msiri and his few Sumbwa followers were initially granted permission to settle in Katanga by Chinyanta Munona

³⁸ *Ibidem*; Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. Bwile accounts confirm the occurrence of a major war with the eastern Lunda, but mistakenly place it during the reign of Mwata Kazembe Keleka. See 'Wa-Ansa or Wa-Wiri Tribe; Puta's Division' and 'Wa-Ansa or Wa-Wiri Tribe; Mwao's Division', n.d., Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 115-117, 123-125, NAZ, KSG 3/1.

³⁹ See above, p. 78, n. 9.

⁴⁰ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 36, 40, 47.

himself. Moreover, two daughters of Mwata Kazembe VI – Mukunto and Muswa Bantu – are remembered as having been taken as spouses by Msiri during his stay in the eastern Lunda capital⁴¹. Msiri's alliance with Chinyanta soon revealed its purely tactical character, and the Yeke leader began to impose his supremacy over the clients and tributaries of the eastern Lunda who inhabited the territory between the Bunkeya and the Lufira Rivers. Following Msiri's assumption of power among the Sanga of *Mpande* and his military conquest of the Lemba of *Katanga*, all uncertainties about his real intentions must have been dispelled. However, until after the accession of Muonga Sunkutu, Msiri's successful impingement upon the kingdom's western periphery does not seem to have led to open hostility between eastern Lunda and Yeke⁴².

The growing number and political assertiveness of coastal traders operating in the kingdom's heartland or on its borders were a further source of future instability which began to make its impact felt during Chinyanta Munona's reign. As we shall see in the next chapter, all these external and internal tensions finally surfaced and coalesced after the death of Chinyanta. But before we turn to the troubled political history of the kingdom after 1862, it is necessary to examine the functioning of the royal capitals and long-distance trade during the first half of the 19th century.

3) The Royal Capitals

A methodical sifting of Portuguese records makes it possible to describe in some detail the configuration and attributes of the successive royal capitals or *misumba* (sing. *musumba*⁴³). Portuguese sources are all the more important, since, owing to the radical changes which the Kazembe kingdom underwent in the 20th century, contemporary ethnographical observation throws only a limited light on the organization of the royal capitals and courts before the inception of colonial rule.

From 1799, the year in which Lukwesa Ilunga appears to have abandoned Kanyembo Mpemba's old village to build a new *musumba* at the northern end of

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 14.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 42-47.

⁴³ From the Ruund word *musumb*; J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', II, p. 531.

Mofwe Lagoon⁴⁴, the successive eastern Lunda capitals have always been located at some distance from the royal *mashamo* on the Lunde stream. Although geographically distinct, it is clear that the proximity of the *mashamo* greatly enhanced the awe-inspiring aura which surrounded the royal capitals in the lower Luapula valley. Each dead king was buried in an individual grave, the upkeep of which was in the hands of an hereditary *mwine mashamo* drawn from the late king's *bacanuma*⁴⁵. The head of the *bene mashamo* was the holder of the *Mukanso* title, the *mwine mashamo* of Kanyembo Mpemba, the first Mwata Kazembe to be buried in the Lunde graveyard. Whereas the *Mukansos* lived – and still live – in a village near the Lunde burial ground, it is uncertain whether the other *bene mashamo* resided on the Lunde stream or, as is the case today, scattered all over the lower Luapula valley⁴⁶.

Even though dreams were believed to be an important form of contact with the spirit world⁴⁷, there is no doubt that the *bene mashamo* were the principal intermediaries through which a ruling king and the spirits of his departed predecessors communicated with each other. The 'Murundas', noted Father Pinto in 1799, had 'great veneration for their Azimos (murimos), or dead, whom they consult[ed] on all occasions of war or good fortune. The Caffre servants of any Moçaza, or place in which a king is buried, [had] many privileges. The Azimos require[d] offerings of provisions [...] and of *pombe*, the millet-beer [...]'. The Lunda 'greatly respect[ed] what the oracle sa[id] to them.'⁴⁸ The royal spirits needed to be regularly propitiated and informed of what was going on in the capital. This accounts for the fact that all Portuguese visitors were directed to pay their homages to the Lunde *mashamo* before being allowed to enter the royal *misumba*⁴⁹. A

⁴⁴ See above, p. 89.

⁴⁵ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 164; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Benamashamo', January 1949. According to Gamitto, the *mwine mashamo* of a dead king was nominated by 'the new Kazembe'. The nominee was usually 'one of the servants of the deceased, and his duties [were] inherited by his descendants in turn.' A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 126.

⁴⁶ Interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & *Bene Mashamo*, Mwansabombwe, 15 July 1999. It has sometimes been assumed (see, for instance, R.E. Schecter, 'History and Historiography', p. 21) that the eastern Lunda *bene mashamo* were each responsible for the preservation and transmission of an historical narrative relating to the life of the individual king whose grave they manned. This may have been so in the past, but all my enquiries with the Mwansabombwe-based *bene mashamo* indicate that, nowadays, the possession of specialized historical knowledge is *not* one of their distinctive attributes.

⁴⁷ During Gamitto's stay in the royal capital, Mwata Kazembe IV Chibangu Keleka 'repeatedly' dreamed that his father Lukwesa Ilunga warned him not to neglect the maintenance of the *mashamo* and not to mistreat the Portuguese visitors; A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 92.

⁴⁸ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, pp. 127-128.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 101-103, 187.

vivid description of the proceedings which took place on these occasions is to be found in Gamitto's diary. On 17th November 1831, Chibangu Keleka's messengers intercepted Gamitto's party as it approached the *musumba* and led its members

'to the *Mashamo* where Mwata Kanyembo is buried [...] Here three guns were fired, and I and the interpreter each gave a present [...] we had these placed before a Kaffir who sat, entirely covered with *mpemba* [white powder], cross-legged on a lion skin outside the exterior gate of the *Mashamo*. He was called *Mwine-Mashamo*.' After requesting three more pieces of cloth, the gravekeeper 'took them inside the *Mashamo* and [...] bade us enter. A heap of skulls was piled outside this front gate. It gave entry to a spacious wide square some hundred yards each way [...] The square was swept perfectly clean. In the middle was a great round thatched hut and opposite its entrance another mountain of skulls. The hut is the vault or *Mashamo* in which Mwata Kanyembo is buried. The place is sad and sombre, and all the more so for being surrounded with thick and bushy foliage. [...] Inside this tomb [...] the *Mwine-Mashamo* sat with legs crossed, our presents in front of him; and after some time of silence during which he appeared to be engaged in deep meditation we heard occasional murmuring; and finally he exclaimed in a loud voice "Avidye", which means "thankyou very much". He turned towards us and said "The *Muzimo* is well pleased with the Whites [...]"

The following day, the same ceremony was repeated at the nearby grave of Mwata Kazembe Lukwesa Ilunga⁵⁰. The cult of the royal ancestors was the pivot upon which the eastern Lunda ideology of kingship and the legitimacy of each reigning king hinged. Thus, it is not surprising to discover that the road which joined the royal enclosure and the *mashamo* on the Lunde stream was one of the widest and best kept in Keleka's *musumba*⁵¹.

Although their dimensions varied, it seems that most royal capitals were surrounded by imposing earthworks. Particularly noteworthy was the defensive ditch (*mpembwe*) which encircled Lukwesa's capital at the northern end of Mofwe Lagoon. Lukwesa's *mpembwe* enclosed a very 'large area of 325 ha [...] and reached 3 m in depth and 5 m in width, with a U section.'⁵² When Gamitto visited the site of the capital of Keleka's predecessor, the ditch which had surrounded it was still 'very deep although much encumbered with rubbish.' It delimited an area which Gamitto himself considered to be 'much bigger than the *Musumba*' of Keleka⁵³. In the 1890s, the 'remains of the earthworks of various towns of the Kazembes in many parts of the country to the south of Lake Mweru' were still impressive. Apart from their sheer size, Blair Watson, one of the early British South

⁵⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 12-14.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16. See below, p. 123, illus. 7.

⁵² R. Derricourt, *People of the Lakes*, p. 21.

⁵³ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 83.

Africa Company officials in Mweru District, wondered at the 'tremendous amount of labour which must have been expended on them.'⁵⁴



Illus. 6 Remains of the 'Mpembwe ya Keleka', Mwata Kazembe IV. Note that parts of the ditch had been cleared of vegetation for the 1999 *Mutomboko* ceremony. Photograph by the author, July 1999.

The limited available data indicate that the size of the population of the eastern Lunda royal capitals in the first half of the 19th century was very substantial. Gamitto thought that Keleka's capital – although smaller than Lukwesa's – was 'perhaps the greatest town in Central Africa.'⁵⁵ On the day of Keleka's first official reception, the Portuguese explorer guessed that as many as 'five or six thousand men, all armed with

⁵⁴ B. Watson, 24 November 1895, in *BCAG*, III, 4, 15 February 1896. The circumference of Lukwesa Ilunga's *mpembwe* was approximately 6 km (see the map enclosed in R. Derricourt, *People of the Lakes*, p. 22). Given an average depth of 3 m and width of 5 m, it would have been necessary to remove about 75,000 cubic metres of soil to form the ditch. The amount of labour at the disposal of Lukwesa and the number of working days necessary to build the fortification can be surmised if we assume, as Yoder did when describing the earthworks surrounding the capitals of the Kanyok rulers Mulaj a Cibang and Ilung a Cibang, that 'a man using a basket and a hand-forged hoe could move one cubic meter of dirt per day [...]'. J.C. Yoder, *The Kanyok of Zaire*, p. 70.

⁵⁵ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 15.

bows and arrows, *mpok* and spears', thronged the open space (*ibulu*⁵⁶) outside the eastern gate of the royal enclosure (*cipango*; pl. *fipango*)⁵⁷. To be sure, Gamitto's estimate need not be taken at face value. Moreover, it is uncertain whether all these men actually lived within Keleka's *mpembwe*. Yet, Gamitto's testimony *does* suggest that the entire population of Keleka's *musumba* could hardly have numbered less than, say, 10,000⁵⁸. By 19th century Central African standards this was an extraordinary figure; in Mweru-Luapula it was unique.

The need to control this large number of people led the eastern Lunda leaders to develop a veritable apparatus of urban administration. In the early 1830s, the latter seems to have been working effectively, for Gamitto was struck by the relative order and cleanliness prevailing in Keleka's capital. On the day of their arrival, the Portuguese walked for a mile or so along a

'street of enclosures made with posts fixed into the ground and interlaced with grass to a height of ten or twelve spans and which, by the regularity of their construction, looked like walls. On each side were small gates opening into a straight grass fence bordering the road [...].' The *ibulu* at the end of the street was a 'large rectangular space eight hundred spans long by five hundred wide; it was swept quite clean, and not a blade of grass could be seen on it.'⁵⁹

As Gamitto later discovered, a special official – the *Mfumwa-Lubinda*, or 'inspector of works to the Mwata' – was responsible for this incipient town-planning, his duty being 'to repair and maintain [...] the fences and houses of the *Musumba*, the *Masembe*, the *Mashamos* and so on.'⁶⁰ Fire-precautions might also have been the responsibility of the *Mfumwa-Lubinda*. In a capital where the houses were 'very close together and connected by fences of dried grass', fire was a very serious risk. Hence, nightfall was invariably accompanied by 'continual cries of *mulilo* (fire), as from a town crier, which [*gave*] notice to the inhabitants to extinguish their fires.'⁶¹

⁵⁶ Bembaized form of *dibur*, the Ruund word for 'public square before chief's enclosure'; J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', II, p. 531.

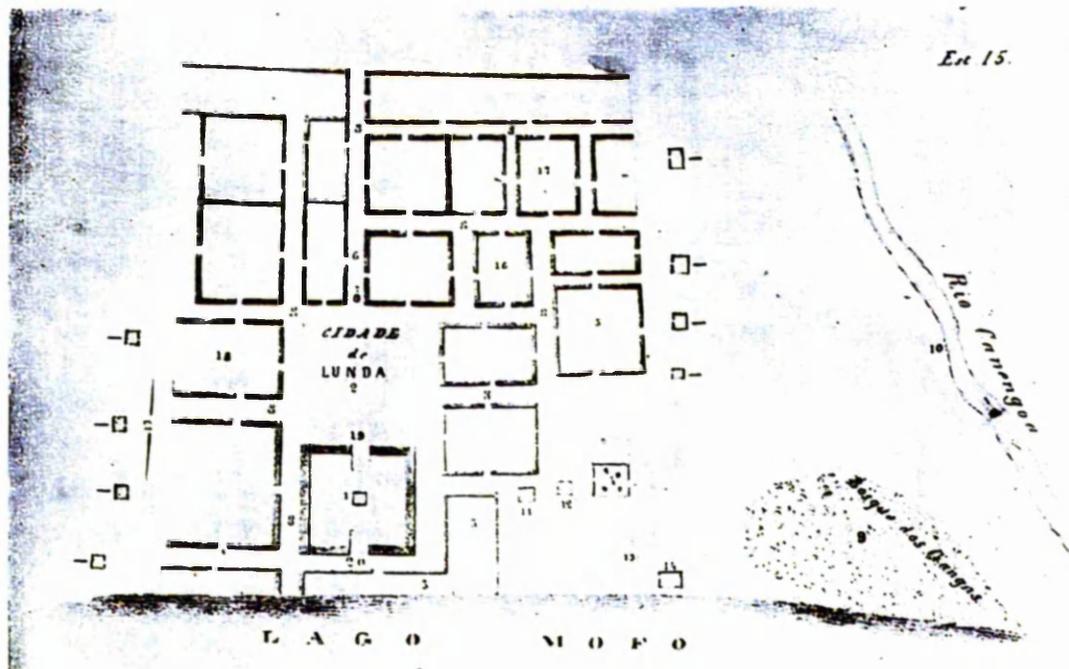
⁵⁷ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 17.

⁵⁸ In 1900, despite having recently been overrun by the British South Africa Company, the capital of Kanyembo Ntemena, Mwata Kazembe X, was still a 'grand village' inhabited by '6000 âmes, peut-être plus'; Louveau to 'Monseigneur et Vénéré Père', 26 March 1901, WFA, Period II (Linhac), Nyassa-Bangweolo, 108-Chilubi Correspondence.

⁵⁹ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 15-16.

⁶⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 112.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 126.



Illus. 7 Gamitto's Map of the *Musumba* of Mwata Kazembe IV Keleka. The Portuguese caption read as follows: '[1] Mossumba [sic, but royal cipango] - 2 grande praça - 3 Mazembe - 4 acantonamento da expedição - 5 casa da Calulua - 6 grande rua que vem dos Maxamos a Lunda - 7 barraca no fim d'ella, onde está a figura - 8 [...] Ruas - 9 bosque horrivel onde habitam os Gangas - 10 rio Canengoa - 11 casa do Fumo-Anseva - 12 dita do seu predecessor - 13 parte poco povoada - 14 casa do enviado de Angola [sic, but Mwant Yav] - 15 um grupo de quatro palmeiras de Incoma, as unicas que ha em Lunda [...] - 16 casa de Muaniancita - 17 casa do Muanempanda - 18 dita do Suana Murôpue - cccc casas do povo meudo.' (A.C.P. Gamito, *O Muata Cazembe*, II, pp. 16-17)

Even though the large population of the *Mwata Kazembes'* *misumba* set them apart from most other pre-colonial capitals in the eastern savanna, the former shared with the latter the principle of the division into wards or sections (*fitente*; sing. *citente*). Each *citente* was led by a headman or, as Gamitto put it, a 'kind of judge, who [was] responsible for everything which occur[ed] in it, and all small matters involving the street in question [were] judged by him. [...]. These *Mwines* [had] as insignia a small hoe stuck into the end of a long cane, with a small iron ring set in such a way on the tenon of the hoe that it tinkle[d] when they lean[ed] on it.'⁶² Nowadays, these section headships are the hereditary properties of non-royal aristocratic lineages, but this seems to be a colonial development, for, at the end of the 19th century, most of the *fitente* into which Mwansabombwe was then divided were led either by sons or sister's sons of the

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 113.

*Mwata Kazembes*⁶³. Since this would be consistent with the already noted tendency to oblige potential heirs to the throne to reside in the royal capitals, it may well be that the late 19th century situation reflected an older arrangement. At the time of Gamitto's visit, each *mwine* was subordinate to a court official known as *Mwadyansita*. If unhappy with their *mwine*'s judgement, litigants could 'appeal to the *Mwaniansita* [...] and from him also appeal [*might have been*] made to Kazembe, from whom there [*was*] no further appeal [...].'⁶⁴

Whereas the *bene* and the *Mwadyansita* were in charge of the administration of justice, the policing of the capitals since at least the end of the 18th century was ensured by 'different *corps de garde*, patrols and rounds [*which kept*] the peace and [...] repress[ed] disorders and drunkenness.'⁶⁵ Gamitto reported the existence of at least thirty *kwatas* or constabularies. Apart from their *mpoks*, the *kwatas*' 'insignia of office' were 'loops of rope which they use[*d*] whenever they require[*d*] to seize prisoners [...].'⁶⁶ The *kwatas*, who may also have acted as Keleka's personal bodyguards, were led by an official known as *Kakwata*⁶⁷. Due to the repressive nature of his task, the latter was both 'respected [*and*] detested' by the inhabitants of Keleka's *musumba*⁶⁸. Another office subordinate to the *Kakwata* was that of *Katamatwi*, 'a name which literally signifies "cutter of ears"⁶⁹. In the late 1860s, Muonga Sunkutu's chief-executioner always carried 'a broad Lunda sword on his arm, and a curious scizzor-like instrument at his neck for cropping ears.'⁷⁰

Each royal capital gravitated towards the king's court, the seat of the central government of the kingdom. The residences of the *Mwata Kazembes* were always enclosed by a *cipango*. Keleka's pale was 'a rectangular enclosure of tall trees, supported by a fence of leaves ingeniously and very strongly constructed.'⁷¹ The main entrance was located on

⁶³ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Mwansabombwe', May 1951.

⁶⁴ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 113.

⁶⁵ 'Manoel Caetano Pereira's Deposition', 22 March 1798, in R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 43.

⁶⁶ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 112-113.

⁶⁷ From the Ruund word *kakwat* ('catcher'); J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 105.

⁶⁸ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 112.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁷⁰ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals of David Livingstone*, London, 1874, I, pp. 250-251.

⁷¹ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 16.

the eastern side of the *cipango*; 30 skulls ornamented this eastern gate or *cinshi ca mu amenso*⁷². The houses of the king and his *ntombo* wives lay within the royal enclosure. Gamitto estimated the number of Keleka's wives at 600. Only the first four, however, 'live[*d*] in state and enjoy[*ed*] titles.' All the remaining wives acted as their servants⁷³. To some extent, then, the condition of the majority of the royal wives merged with that of the numerous domestic slaves and attendants who also lived and worked in the royal palace⁷⁴. The *Katadofo* was the official in charge of the vast royal harem. 'This executioner' – Gamitto wrote – 'was a negress who had as her badge of office a large knife curved like a sickle. She resided in the *Chipango* as inspector of the wives, and she executed justice upon them, cutting off sexual parts, hands and ears either at the least infidelity or at the slightest suspicion. She was a fury.'⁷⁵ To the west of the *cipango* lay the *maseembe*, a square enclosure containing four large houses belonging to the four principal wives. The *maseembe* – which was 'guarded by eunuchs' – was the place where all the royal wives went 'at their menses since they [*were*] forbidden to be in the [*palace*] during this period in order not to spoil Kazembe's medicines.'⁷⁶

Although the *Mwata Kazembes'* chief wives and their followers attended the *mitentamo* (sing. *mutentamo*)⁷⁷ – solemn public audiences chaired by the kings – their direct political responsibilities appear to have been limited. Their economic function was perhaps more important. At the time of Livingstone's stay in Muonga Sunkutu's *musumba*, the king's principal wife (*Mwadi* or *Makwe*) was in charge of a plantation of cassava on the outskirts of the capital. She was 'very attentive to her agriculture'.⁷⁸ It is plausible that each of the first four wives attended to the production of some of the royal gardens and controlled the labour provided by the lesser wives and slaves. The output of the royal gardens – suitably stored – would have been employed to feed the staff of the

⁷² *Ibid.*; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Cipango, Basano, Kasaka', December 1950.

⁷³ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 124.

⁷⁴ 'Manoel Cactano Pereira's Deposition', 22 March 1798, in R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 42. According to Cunnison's informants, the *Mwata Kazembes'* personal attendants 'were always sons of *bakalulua*, so that if they succeeded their fathers they would know all about the goings on in the palace.' Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Myanso', February 1949.

⁷⁵ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 29.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁷⁷ *Mutentamo* is the Bembaized form of *chitentam*, the Ruund word for 'public meeting'; J.J. Hoover, 'The Seduction of Ruweji', I, p. 106.

⁷⁸ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 251, 302.

palace and its frequent visitors⁷⁹. Among the latter were the mother (*Nyina-Mwana* or *Inamwana*) and sister (*Nambansa*) of the reigning king⁸⁰. The *Nyina-Mwana* did not live within the royal enclosure. She is said to have had a *cipango* of her own, where she sometimes held court and received a share of her son's *mulambo*⁸¹.

Judging from Gamitto's map, the most important officials who formed Keleka's court also lived in separate houses outside the king's *cipango*⁸². Most of their working days, however, were doubtless spent in the Mwata Kazembe's presence. The eastern Lunda kings habitually consulted their courtiers during what Fr. Pinto called 'assembl[ies] of *pombe*'. Lukwesa Ilunga held 'assemblies of his chiefs, who [were] invited to drink *pombe* [...]. These drinkings [began] with the full moon, and continue[d] to the end; they commence[d] daily at or before 1 P.M., and they last[ed] two hours.'⁸³ These beer-drinking sessions differed from the aforementioned *mitentamo*. While the latter were public audiences, exceptionally held to celebrate specific occurrences, such as the arrival in the capital of foreign visitors or the return of a military leader from a successful war⁸⁴, the former were regular meetings, the purpose of which was to deliberate upon the matters affecting the daily administration of the kingdom and to dispense justice.

According to Pinto, the crimes which were most harshly dealt with in the *Mwata Kazembes'* courts were 'witchcraft, adultery and theft. The first, and the most enormous, [was] always punished capitally; the second sometimes, but more often by mutilation of the hands, the ears, and the offending member. [...]. Although they cut off the thief's hands and ears, many wretches [had] exposed themselves to such mutilation.'⁸⁵ All Portuguese witnesses noted that witchcraft was a source of special concern for the

⁷⁹ For a similar dynamic in late 19th century Buganda, see R. Reid & H. Medard, 'Merchants, Missions & the Remaking of the Urban Environment in Buganda c. 1840-90', in D.M. Anderson & R.J.A.R. Rathbone (eds), *Africa's Urban Past*, Oxford, 2000, p. 102.

⁸⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 111.

⁸¹ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Nyinamfumu', August 1950.

⁸² It is not clear whether, as in 19th century Buganda, the spatial disposition of the enclosures of officials and title-holders in the eastern Lunda *misumba* was meant to reproduce the overall political structure and hierarchy of the kingdom; R. Reid & H. Medard, 'Merchants, Missions & the Remaking of the Urban Environment in Buganda', pp. 103-106.

⁸³ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 120, 126.

⁸⁴ Detailed descriptions of *mitentamo* are to be found in A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 17-22, 65-68.

⁸⁵ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 129. See also A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 88-89.

Mwata Kazembes. Pinto once saw Lukwesa Ilunga delivering a heated speech during which he rebuked 'his Caboceers and people' for not 'abandon[ing] and abominat[ing] the crime of sorcery, to which he attributed all his illness.'⁸⁶ Due to the prestige and privileges associated with their position, the *Mwata Kazembes* were – and are – regarded as being particularly vulnerable to witchcraft⁸⁷. Hence, they were always surrounded by 'medicine-men' (*nganga*), responsible for divination, human sacrifices and the preparation of protective 'fetishes'⁸⁸. An area to the south of Keleka's enclosure was especially earmarked for the royal *nganga*'s use. The grove of the *nganga* was, according to Gamitto, 'the most horrible and mournful spot imaginable; its barbarous cannibal inhabitants inspire[d] terror by their ferocity and savagery.'⁸⁹

It is doubtful whether a set of strict rules existed which regulated the attendance to the *pombe*-assemblies. From the limited available data, it would seem that the *Mwata Kazembes*' closest courtiers belonged to three distinct groups. First, there were the holders of the most important *myanso* (sing. *mwanso*): offices of royal appointment, as opposed to hereditary titles⁹⁰. Some of these *myanso* – notably, the *Mfumwa-Lubinda*, *Mwadyansita*, *Kakwata* and *Katamatwi* – have already been mentioned. Another fundamental *mwanso* was that of the *Mfumu ya Nseba*, the official in charge of dealing with foreign visitors and traders⁹¹. At the time of Gamitto's stay in the capital, the then *Mfumu ya Nseba*'s private dwelling was strategically located very near the open space to the south of Keleka's palace where foreign traders were required to establish their temporary encampments. The existence of this *mwanso*, of course, is indicative of the growing importance attached to long-distance trade from the latter part of the 18th century⁹². The position of *Mfumu ya Nseba* must have been highly coveted; in fact, as all the Portuguese accounts indicate, its holders often exploited their intermediary role

⁸⁶ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 121.

⁸⁷ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 169

⁸⁸ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 126.

⁸⁹ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 68.

⁹⁰ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 152, n. 2.

⁹¹ The perpetuation of the office of *Mfumu ya Nseba* and most other court-based *myanso* was interrupted at the beginning of the 20th century; interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Kosam Derrick Chipepa & Lobson Chinyanta Lubabila, Mwansabombwe, 14 July 1999.

⁹² Similar considerations apply to the *Mwadyansita*. In fact, quite apart from his aforementioned judicial role, the holder of the position in the early 1830s was also expected to act as 'intendant of the roads, with the responsibility of finding guides' for long-distance caravans. A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 112.

between visiting traders and *Mwata Kazembes* in order to enrich themselves⁹³. Naturally, these covert dealings entailed risks. In March 1832, for instance, Gamitto witnessed a sort of “ministerial reshuffling”, which ended in the *Mfumumu ya Nseba* being stripped of his dignity. Keleka appointed the then *Kakwata* as the new *Mfumumu ya Nseba*⁹⁴. Two months later, the former *Mfumumu ya Nseba*, evidently back in favour, was installed as the new *Kakwata*. Keleka gave his nominee ‘a Capotim [*blue cloth*], a leopard skin and a feather headdress [...] On receiving these objects [*the new Kakwata*] withdrew and soon came back with all his subordinates, all of them smeared from head to waist with dust, and repeatedly giving the cry “Avidye”.⁹⁵ This example suggests that the *Mwata Kazembes* took advantage of their right freely to appoint and dismiss *myanso*-holders to exert tight control over the workings of their courts.

This germ of absolutism was somehow counterbalanced by the second group of courtiers. Most of the *bacilolo* – the hereditary territorial representatives discussed in chapter III – appear to have enjoyed the right to a dual residence, as they frequently commuted between their *amayanga* and the *misumba*. *Bacilolo* personally took their tribute to the royal capital, where they relied upon the hospitality of the king and their family members. While in the capital, they discussed the affairs of their colonies with the king and sat in his court⁹⁶. In the early 1830s, one at least of the *bacilolo*, the then Mwinempanda, had chosen to reside permanently in Keleka’s *musumba*. As ‘general-in-chief of the warriors’, he was a central figure whose authority was said to be second only to that of the Mwata Kazembe⁹⁷. The direct supervision of Mwinempanda’s colony on the Chishinga plateau was taken over by ‘an administrator called Ntikala who govern[ed] in [*Mwinempanda*’s] name the land over which he [*was*] lord.’⁹⁸

Along with functional officials and hereditary title-holders, the members of the third group of court personnel were drawn from each king’s *bacanuma*. Among the latter were the successive holders of the office of *Nswanamulopwe*, the kings’ personal advisers and spokesmen. Due to the *Nswanamulopwe*’s direct kinship relationship with

⁹³ See, for instance, R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 110, 124-125.

⁹⁴ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 73.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

⁹⁶ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 183; interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Kosam Derrick Chipepa & Lobson Chinyanta Lubabila, Mwanabombwe, 14 July 1999.

⁹⁷ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 111-112.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, I, p. 194. The *ntikala* (‘deputy’) itself was probably a *mwanso*; Cunnison’s Fieldnotes, ‘Myanso’, February 1949.

the reigning king, his role was regarded as radically different from that of the other members of the royal court. The *Nswanamulopwe* was the 'king's prop against the power of the aristocrats.'⁹⁹ This seems to be borne out by Gamitto's description of the spatial disposition and attire of court members during the *mutentamo* which Keleka arranged to celebrate the arrival of the Portuguese in November 1831. The 'grande'es' of Keleka's court formed a semicircle in front of the king.

'They were sitting on lion or leopard skins, and each held an umbrella. They were dressed cleanly and respectably in the same way as the Mwata except that they did not wear the capuchin and scarlet feathers. They were positioned according to their rank. In the middle of the semicircle and forming a part of it, two men stood out who had scarlet feathers and armbands like the Mwata's but smaller. These were relatives; one his uncle called Kalulua, and the other his nephew, by name Nswanamulopwe.'¹⁰⁰

The *Mwanabute* – or heir designated to the throne – occupied a place of his own within the *Mwata Kazembes'* courts. As has already been pointed out, in pre-colonial Kazembe, princes (*bana ba mfumu*) were obliged to dwell in the royal capitals, distinguished from the other grande'es by the small-sized *mikonso* which only they were allowed to wear¹⁰¹. It was from within their ranks that a reigning king selected his presumptive heir. Not all *Mwata Kazembes* decided formally to appoint a *Mwanabute*, and such a choice, even when it was made, was not binding for the *bacilolo* whose job it was ultimately to nominate and install a new king¹⁰². According to Gamitto, Keleka was unwilling to select a *Mwanabute* 'in case [*the latter*] should bewitch him.'¹⁰³ This observation, coupled with the attested occurrence of a serious succession dispute after the death of Mwata Kazembe V, suggests that the *bana ba mfumu* – albeit confined in the royal capitals – remained an unruly and dreaded group. As we shall see in the next chapter, following Muonga Sunkutu's usurpation, the competition between princes

⁹⁹ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 164.

¹⁰⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 20. Gamitto's 'Kalulua' was probably Keleka's mother's brother; that is, the aristocrat who, in accordance with the principle discussed above (p. 96), had gained the right to be included in the prestigious *bakalulua* class upon Keleka's accession. Since Kafuti, Keleka's mother, was the *ntombo* whom Lukwesa Ilunga had received from the then Kashinge, *cilolo* of Kilwa Island (E. Labrecque, 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 29; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Bacanuma; Kazembes' Mothers', May 1949), Gamitto's 'Kalulua' may have been none other than the holder of the *Kashinge* title (possibly, Kantampa Kashinge's immediate predecessor; see above, p. 116). Given that the term 'nephew' is very likely to have been employed to express a classificatory relationship, it is difficult to specify the precise kinship tie between Keleka and his *Nswanamulopwe*. All that can be said is that the latter belonged to the same family as the 'Kalulua'.

¹⁰¹ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Lunda Dress', May 1951.

¹⁰² Interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Kosam Derrick Chipepa & Lobson Chinyanta Lubabila, Mwansabombwe, 14 July 1999. See also I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 168.

¹⁰³ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 116.

transcended the realm of witchcraft and, intermingling with the manoeuvrings of foreign traders and conquerors, led to military confrontation.

4) Long-Distance Trade

In chapter II I discussed local and regional exchanges in southern Katanga and Mweru-Luapula before the inception of the Kazembe kingdom. The present section will centre on the set of economic activities generally subsumed under the category of 'long-distance trade'. As Roberts argued, in Central Africa, it is often problematic to postulate a clear-cut separation between regional and long-distance trade, for the two networks of economic exchanges interpenetrated and fed upon each other¹⁰⁴. Some of the products exchanged at the regional level – most notably, copper ingots and crosses – also entered the long-distance networks. Conversely, ivory and slaves – the typical commodities of long-distance trade – were not excluded from geographically less extensive trading spheres. The distinction between the two networks, then, did not primarily hinge upon the character of the items of trade, but upon these latter's ultimate destination. The long-distance trade was the trade between the interior and coastal settlements. Even though the eastern Lunda, in virtue of their privileged and enduring connection with the Ruund of *Mwant Yav*¹⁰⁵, were in indirect contact with the western coast, from about 1760-70, most of their ivory and slaves are likely to have taken the eastern routes towards the Portuguese and Swahili regions of present-day Mozambique and Tanzania.

Due to its unquestionable significance and the relative abundance of literary evidence, the long-distance trade of the kingdom of Kazembe has often attracted scholarly attention¹⁰⁶. The chronology of the eastern Lunda participation in the trade of East-Central Africa and the articulation of the caravan routes along which the latter transited are thus fairly well known. From the beginning of Lukwesa Ilunga's reign, the eastern Lunda were dependent upon the intermediation of the Bisa for most of their trade to the south-east. Whereas it is doubtful whether the definition of 'professional traders'

¹⁰⁴ A.D. Roberts, 'Pre-Colonial Trade in Zambia', pp. 716-717.

¹⁰⁵ See above, pp. 57-58.

¹⁰⁶ I. Cunnison, 'Kazembe and the Portuguese', and *Id.*, 'Kazembe and the Arabs'; C. St. John, 'Kazembe and the Tanganyika-Nyasa Corridor'; J.-L. Vellut, 'Notes sur le Lunda'; A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 189-194; E.A. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves*, pp. 121-122, 161, 178-182, 243-248; A. Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory*, pp. 81-82, 158-161, 189-190.

could rightly be applied to the Bisa¹⁰⁷, it is obvious that their commercial activities grew steadily throughout the latter part of the 18th century¹⁰⁸. To be sure, ivory and slaves originating from Mweru-Luapula occasionally found their way to Portuguese Zambezia; yet, right from the start of their involvement in the long-distance trade, Bisa caravans exchanged most of their wares with Yao traders to the south and east of Lake Malawi. Yao themselves had traded much at Mozambique Island, but, as an often quoted passage from Lacerda aptly demonstrates, by the end of the 18th century, Kilwa, where they could 'get more for their ivory', had supplanted Mozambique as the main outlet for their trade¹⁰⁹. Portuguese attempts to counteract this worrying trend intermingled with Lukwesa Ilunga's willingness to bypass the costly mediation of the Bisa. As we already know, the rebellion of the north-western Bisa at the beginning of the 19th century and the subsequent consolidation of their intermediary position meant that the planned Lunda-Portuguese direct relationships never really took off. When, in the early 1830s, Monteiro and Gamitto tried to revive the old project, they failed to capture Keleka's interest. Some of the latter's courtiers are indeed reported as having told Gamitto that 'Tete was unnecessary', since the Mwata Kazembe received all the cloth he needed from 'the Poane' (and Gamitto thought that they 'referred to the Zanzibar coast') 'as well as from Angola.'¹¹⁰ Gamitto's diary, in fact, contains the first indisputable reference to Swahili trading activities within the heartland of the kingdom of Kazembe¹¹¹. Although the number of East African traders in Mweru-Luapula remained limited until the 1850s, the inauguration of a new northerly line of trade towards Lake Tanganyika and the Zanzibar coast did not augur well for the Bisa. The latter recovered from the Bemba raids in the early 1830s, but there was little that they could do to avert the growing marginalization of their south-eastward route from about 1840-50.

¹⁰⁷ P. Lary, 'Aspects of Luapula Society', pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁸ So much so as to warrant their inclusion in Sundström's broad category of African 'middlemen tribes'. 'A trader is by definition an intermediary between producer and consumer. A number of African tribes, in virtue of their geographical location or technical accomplishments, secured an intermediary role between inland producers of raw materials and the overseas buyers of these goods. If such an intermediary managed to keep his trading partners socially and spatially isolated from one another, he might achieve a middlemen monopoly. In actual practice, this amounted to a ban on all foreign transit trade through the area.' L. Sundström, *The Exchange Economy of Pre-Colonial Tropical Africa*, London, 1973, p. 50.

¹⁰⁹ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 95.

¹¹⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 87.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

This broad picture needs to be supplemented by an examination of what Legros calls 'le processus d'accumulation des productions locales [...]. Il intervient en aval des processus de production et en amont de la commercialisation qui consiste à échanger ces biens contre d'autres formes de richesses [...].'¹¹² In other words: what local networks did the *Mwata Kazembes* rely upon in order to obtain the commodities – ivory and slaves above all – which they subsequently bartered with foreign traders? Elephants appear to have always been numerous in the marshes of the lower Luapula river. As late as the late 1860s, a time when herds were becoming scarce over most of East-Central Africa, elephants wandering in the 'mud flats' of Mofwe Lagoon were still said to be 'annually killed in numbers.'¹¹³ It is likely that one at least of the tusks of any elephant killed in proximity to the royal capital would have been forwarded to the reigning king. Indeed, by instituting a ground-tusk tax, early British officials in Mweru and Luapula Districts were probably merely adopting a much older African usage¹¹⁴. Apart from counting on chance killings of roaming elephants, it appears that the *Mwata Kazembes* drew most of their revenue in ivory from specialized hunting societies which they themselves patronized¹¹⁵.

¹¹² H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 109.

¹¹³ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 248, 269-270, 303. See also R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 99. In 1894, Mweru-Luapula was still described as 'astonishingly rich in ivory'; H.H. Johnston, 10 March 1894, in BSAC, *Report on the Company's Proceedings and the Condition of the Territories within the Sphere of Its Operations, 1892-1894*, p. 101.

¹¹⁴ See below, pp. 170-171.

¹¹⁵ As late as 1931, there was still 'a common feeling between elephant hunters, who [might have] observe[d] certain rules of conduct and adopt[ed] a somewhat exclusive attitude.' M.J.B. Otter, 'The



A celebrated hunter, south of Lake Mweru

Illus. 8 'A celebrated hunter, south of Lake Mweru'. Photograph by Poulett Weatherley, ca. 1900.
Courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society.

Human Geography of Inter-Tropical Africa. Kawambwa District of Northern Rhodesia', May 1931,
NAZ, ZA1/15/O/1.

According to Livingstone, owing to the unpopularity of Muonga Sunkutu's reign, 'the elephant hunters [*had*] either left him or neglect[*ed*] hunting.' As a result, the king 'had no tusks to sell to the Arab traders who [*came*] from Tanganyika.'¹¹⁶ Finally, a tribute in ivory was paid to the *Mwata Kazembes* by their territorial representatives based in the heartland¹¹⁷.

The contribution of slave labour to the economy of the kingdom of Kazembe and, more broadly, the lower Luapula valley was certainly less significant than among the Lozi of the upper Zambezi flood plain¹¹⁸. Slaves – as has been pointed out above¹¹⁹ – were employed in both the royal palaces and gardens. They are also likely to have swelled the followings of *bacilolo*, whose households, according to Gamitto, included sizeable numbers of female captives.¹²⁰ This said, given the high demographic density of the heartland and the pervasiveness of the control which the *Mwata Kazembes* and their territorial representatives exerted over its residents, conscript labour in the form of tribute was probably sufficient to fulfil such state requirements as the construction of the royal *fipango* and *mpembwe* or the clearing of the channels and canals which cut across the swamps. (Never did the eastern Lunda rulers embark on anything even remotely comparable with the massive canalisation and drainage works sponsored by the Lozi king Lewanika in the 1890s.) In the heartland of the kingdom, slaves appear not to have formed a separate and clearly identifiable class: besides eastern Lunda royals and aristocrats, the totality of the inhabitants of Chibangu Keleka's *musumba* and surrounding areas were seemingly known as '*bashya* or servants'¹²¹. At most, the social formation of the lower Luapula valley was similar to that of the Ruund heartland, which was not 'une société esclavagiste où, comme en Angola par exemple, l'essentiel des forces de production [*était*] constitué par des esclaves, mais [...] une société de type intermédiaire, "à éléments esclavagistes"¹²². After all, if large-scale internal slavery had

¹¹⁶ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 265.

¹¹⁷ R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 188, 229; A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 49; I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 184.

¹¹⁸ M. Maiga, *Bulozi under the Luyana Kings*, pp. 59-60, 148; G. Prins, *The Hidden Hippopotamus*, pp. 70-77; A.D. Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, London, 1976, pp. 132-135.

¹¹⁹ See p. 125.

¹²⁰ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 122.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹²² J.-L. Vellut, 'Notes sur le Lunda', p. 78.

really been part and parcel of the socio-economic landscape of the lower Luapula valley, one would have expected Livingstone to have “exposed” it with the same vigour with which he denounced its existence elsewhere in Central Africa.

Consistently with the increment in the exports of slaves from East Africa during the first half of the 19th century¹²³, there are indications that the *Mwata Kazembes*’ willingness to dispose of their slaves grew throughout the period. At the time of Gamitto’s visit in 1831-2, Keleka’s capital seems to have been swamped with slaves for sale, and the Portuguese were much annoyed by the king’s continuous attempts to force upon them slaves whom they were unable to feed¹²⁴. No doubt, Keleka – whose harsh rule Gamitto repeatedly and wholeheartedly condemned – faced the problem of controlling the growing number of slaves dwelling in his *musumba* while waiting to be sold to long-distance traders. On 24th December 1831, after the Portuguese had refused to accept a slave whom Keleka had wanted to exchange with them, the latter complained that they ‘had done very badly to send the slave back, because his own slaves as a result had grown disrespectful [...]; he was therefore obliged to go on killing them [...].’¹²⁵ During both Lukwesa Ilunga and Chibangu Keleka’s reigns most slaves were probably acquired as a result of the many successful wars waged by the eastern Lunda. ‘On return from war’, Keleka’s army-leaders were ‘obliged to present to the Mwata the prisoners and the heads of the slain enemies.’¹²⁶ Gamitto went as far as to suggest that the need to obtain captives led Keleka to remain, as a matter of policy, ‘in a state of hostility with the petty Mambos [*chiefs*] round about, from whom he hope[*ed*] to draw advantage by these means, or upon whom he [*could*] extract vengeance or satisfy caprice.’¹²⁷ However, Lunda themselves suffered the consequences of the growth of the slave trade. People who, in the 18th century, might have become pawns as a form of punishment or compensation¹²⁸, were increasingly exposed to the risk of being sold to long-distance traders. According to Livingstone, ‘the people of Casembe [...] [*could not*] esteem the slave-trader, who [*was*] used as a means of punishing those who [*had*] family differences

¹²³ E. A. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves*, p. 209.

¹²⁴ See, for instance, A. C. P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 41-42, 58.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 66. For an earlier example of the same practice, see R. F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 114.

¹²⁷ A. C. P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 110.

¹²⁸ Pinto was perhaps referring to this institution when he wrote that Lunda women could ‘be sold by their husbands’. R. F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 127.

[...] The slaves [*were*] said to be generally criminals, and [*were*] sold in revenge or as punishment.¹²⁹

Much as the Portuguese were impressed by the size and variety of Lukwesa and Keleka's treasures¹³⁰, the latter were only a small part of the commodities imported by foreign traders throughout the years. Most of these exotic goods constituted a capital which the kings spent with a view to strengthening links of political subordination and patronage¹³¹. To be sure, court officials and *bacilolo* in the heartland were the prime recipients of the *Mwata Kazembes'* largesse; yet, it is highly likely that the kings' redistributive networks extended well beyond the lower Luapula valley and thus reinforced the centripetal effects of the institutions of peripheral rule discussed in chapter III.

Especially in the heartland, the value and prestige of the goods distributed by the *Mwata Kazembes* were proportionate to their scarcity. It was therefore in the kings' interest to enforce a monopoly over the transactions with long-distance traders. Foreign traders naturally tended to be drawn to the royal *misumba*, for these attracted most of the local wealth and items of trade. However, the eastern Lunda kings saw fit to implement a set of formal rules which forbade all exchanges between territorial representatives and long-distance caravans. Thus, for instance, the then Mwinempanda's *ntikala*¹³² resisted all Portuguese demands to sell food 'for fear of Kazembe who, if he learned about some transaction, would punish the vendor severely.'¹³³ In the royal capitals, the freedom of trade was even more severely curtailed. Commoners were generally prevented, 'under penalty of death', from bartering foodstuffs with foreign visitors, since all exchanges with the latter had to pass through either the ruling king or his representative, the *Mfumuya Nseba*¹³⁴. The *Mwata Kazembes'* courtiers were sometimes able to sell 'small

¹²⁹ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, pp. 302-303.

¹³⁰ Shortly after the arrival of Gamitto's party, Keleka displayed what were probably his most prized possessions: 'two large bundles of silk and wollen cloths of all colours; ten boxes of assorted stones; forty very clean shot guns, and six hunting carabines wrapped in lace-trimmed cloth. All this ostentation was to show us that the Mwata had many possessions. We took little notice, although we were much surprised to see him the possessor of all these things.' A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 25. See also R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 109.

¹³¹ Lukwesa Ilunga, noted Pinto, was 'very generous at times in giving slaves and pieces of cloth to his vassals [...]'; *ibid.*, p. 125.

¹³² See above, p. 128.

¹³³ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, I, p. 195.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, II, p. 25, 59-60; R.F. Burton (ed. & transl.), *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 109.

quantities' of ivory, but only if the kings' 'express permission' was forthcoming¹³⁵. Keleka openly declared that he would not have left 'the commerce to his Chilolos [...] until he was satisfied with the merchandise he [*had*] received.'¹³⁶ We shall see in the next chapter that the arrival *en masse* of coastal traders in the 1850s and their buccaneering trading practices made the royal monopoly increasingly difficult to enforce. This, in turn, shook the political economy of the kingdom and loosened the web of vertical relationships upon which it rested.

¹³⁵ 'Manoel Caetano Pereira's Deposition', 22 March 1798, in *ibid.*, p. 44.

¹³⁶ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, pp. 32-33.

Chapter V

THE UNDOING OF THE KINGDOM, 1862 – 1892

In the last two chapters, the availability of detailed literary sources has enabled us to expand the narrow focus of oral or once oral texts and strike a healthy balance between narrative and analytic accounts. This will no longer be possible in the present chapter. The lower Luapula valley was visited by Europeans in 1867-8 and again in 1883. But since reporting on the Kazembe kingdom was neither Livingstone nor Giraud's principal objective, their observations are less thorough and profound than those of their Portuguese predecessors. (Of course, we do not know what the *Last Journals* would have looked like, if Livingstone had had the chance to revise and presumably expand them.) In other words: even though Livingstone and Giraud's travel diaries are often useful to crosscheck colonial records of oral sources, they are insufficient to rectify the highly selective and elitist conception of history which these latter express and which, consequently, informs our narrative. This chapter is dominated by lengthy and intricate accounts of dynastic disputes and external wars, but has very little to say about the extent to which these dynamics affected the everyday lives of Luapulan communities. We know, for instance, that mass flights from the western bank of the Luapula River took place after the Yeke invasion in the early 1880s, but their social impact and long-term demographic effects can only be guessed.

Even though it does not answer many of the questions which modern historians would raise as a matter of course, the evidence upon which this chapter is primarily based can at least be considered as highly reliable. The personal or secondary reminiscences which constitute it throw light on the rapid contraction of the sphere of influence of the eastern Lunda kingdom and its increasing vulnerability to disruptive external interventions in the course of the thirty years which followed the accession of Mwata Kazembe VII Muonga Sunkutu in 1862. These two related processes resulted in a profound transformation of the political and, to some extent, ethnic landscape of Mweru-Luapula. The new balance of power, as we shall see in the next chapter, became ossified once the Belgian and British colonial representatives adopted it as the baseline for their early administrative policies once they entered the area in the 1890s.

1) The Reign of Muonga Sunkutu (1862 – 1872)

The Accession of Muonga Sunkutu

Following the death of Mwata Kazembe VI Chinyanta Munona – thus the official eastern Lunda version goes¹ – the leading hereditary title-holders began consultations with a view to selecting a successor. Their choice fell initially upon Lukwesa Mpanga, the son of Mwata Kazembe IV Chibangu Keleka, but they changed their minds after it was reported that Lukwesa had behaved contemptuously in the circumcision lodge and threatened to liquidate most of them². *Bacilolo* and *bakaluhua* appealed to Muonga Sunkutu, whose bid for the throne some ten years earlier had not been forgotten³. Muonga left his colony on the Chishinga plateau and rushed to the capital, where he was promptly enthroned as Mwata Kazembe VII.

It is doubtful whether this account can be taken at face value. Since Lukwesa Mpanga was generally remembered for his later, dishonourable alliances with both Swahili and Yeke intruders, it is possible that Lunda historians in the 20th century felt it was necessary to vilify his figure from the very beginning of his rise to fame. On the other hand, Lunda accounts were also bound not to be forthcoming about the real nature of Muonga Sunkutu's accession, if this latter was, as Livingstone was indeed led to believe, the fruit of a simple usurpation *mamu militari*⁴.

This latter hypothesis seems substantiated by the numerous indications which suggest that Muonga suffered from a constant lack of legitimacy throughout his brief reign. Muonga – it will be remembered – did not belong to the royal patrilineage and could not therefore rely upon the legitimizing attributes of the cult of the royal ancestors. It is certainly significant that, unlike all previous literate visitors, Livingstone himself was not asked to stop by the royal *mashamo* before being granted permission to enter Muonga's *musumba*. Muonga – whose alleged inability to control the activities of the elephant hunters has already been noted⁵ – appears to have reacted to his predicament by adopting a particularly repressive form of rule. But this simply

¹ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 50.

² Unlike all other *bana ba mfumu*, Lukwesa Mpanga is said not to have been circumcised as a boy by then holder of the *Kalandala* title. (The circumcision of the sons of kings and aristocrats was a 'real badge of Lunda hood', but was seemingly discontinued at the beginning of the 20th century. I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 166-167).

³ See above, p. 117.

⁴ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 265.

⁵ See above, p. 134.

exacerbated the problem, for his 'severity in cropping ears and other mutilations, selling the children for slight offences, &c., made [*his people*] all flee to neighbouring tribes.' This – Livingstone went on – was 'the common mode by which tyranny [*was*] cured in parts like these, where fugitives [*were*] never returned.' As a result, Muonga was said to be 'very poor', with only 'a little ivory and slaves [...] to sell.'⁶ Whereas Gamitto had presented Keleka's *musumba* as 'perhaps the greatest town in Central Africa'⁷, Muonga's capital was best described as a 'rural village rather than a town', the population of which 'was under a thousand souls.'⁸

The fragility of Muonga's position was compounded by the machinations of Lukwesa Mpanga, who, after having been denied the throne, had taken refuge among the Tabwa of Nsama III Chipili Chipioka⁹. In the early years of his reign, Muonga unsuccessfully sought to eliminate this alternative centre of power in Itabwa by mounting an expedition against Chipili. Even though the king enlisted the support of 'Mpamari', the coastal trader Mohamed ibn Saleh, the Lunda force failed to apprehend the runaway Lukwesa¹⁰.

The Beginning of the War with Msiri's Yeke

Sometime before 1867, the tension between the Lunda of *Kazembe* and the Yeke of Msiri – whose early conquests between the Bunkeya and Lufira Rivers have been mentioned in the previous chapter¹¹ – finally led to military confrontation. Following a request for help from 'Kifomgo', 'son' of the then Katanga, Muonga Sunkutu dispatched a military contingent under the leadership of his 'nephews' Lubabila and Shakadyata. Msiri's followers got the better of the affray, and Lubabila himself perished in the battle¹². Presumably, the Lofoi colony of the *Kashibas*¹³, the only ever

⁶ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 254, 265.

⁷ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 15.

⁸ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 262.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 297; 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe', n.d. (but before 1907), Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 147-153, NAZ, KSG 3/1; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 50; A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 152-153.

¹¹ See above, pp. 117-118.

¹² Papiers E. Verdick, Carnet IV, HA-MRAC, RG664; E. Verdick, *Les Premiers Jours au Katanga*, pp. 35-36; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 17; D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 276, 297; 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe', n.d. (but before 1907), Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 147-153, NAZ, KSG 3/1; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Bushakadyata', May 1949. According to E. Labrecque (ed.), *History of the BaLuunda People*, p. 51, Msiri was instructed by the then Kashiba to kill both Lubabila and Shakadyata, as these latter were attempting to flee the lower Luapula valley and settle on the Lualaba River. The eastern Lunda claim, of course, is very likely to be a mere attempt to conceal the defeat suffered at the hands of the Yeke.

sign of an eastern Lunda *direct* rule in this part of Katanga, was evacuated at the time of Lubabila's death or shortly afterwards. The then Kashiba settled on the eastern bank of the Luapula River, to the north of Mambilima Falls, where his descendants are still to be found nowadays.

Msiri celebrated the defeat of Muonga's belated effort to preserve the eastern Lunda sphere of influence in Katanga by founding a new capital on the Bunkeya River and by assuming the Sumbwa royal title of *Mwami*¹⁴. Bunkeya, a fitting symbol of the increasing power and prosperity of the Yeke polity, grew so swiftly as to rival the only other urban-like settlements in the region: the successive *misumba* of the *Mwata Kazembes*. Throughout the late 1860s and 1870s, Mwami Msiri spearheaded a series of successful military conquests which resulted in the imposition of Yeke rule over most of the former clients and tributaries of the eastern Lunda dwelling between the upper Lualaba River and the Kundelungu Range. Yeke representatives or *mwanangwa* were deployed in the surroundings of Bunkeya¹⁵. To the north of the new capital, Kikunkuluka, Msiri's own brother, and Kifuntwe are remembered as having settled among the Bakunda of *Ntondo* and the Lomotwa of *Mufunga*, respectively¹⁶. The salt-producing district of the *Mwashyas*, near the confluence of the Lufira and Kafila Rivers, was also bound to attract the attention of the Yeke. The first Yeke incursions in the area seem to have taken place during the time of Mwashya Kapenge, successor to Mwashya Lukwesa¹⁷. The resistance of the Bena Ngoma of *Mwashya* was finally crushed shortly after the accession of Mwashya Kapopolo. Dikuğu, another brother of Msiri, was deputed to control the salt deposits¹⁸.

Further away from the heartland of his emerging kingdom, Msiri resorted to Lunda-inspired institutions of peripheral rule. By means of systematic lineage powerbrokering and the spread of insignia of power (most notably, the *kilungu* conus-shell), the Yeke succeeded in imposing their sway over distant territories and societies, such as the copper-producing districts of *Mwilu* and *Kanzenze* to the west of the upper

¹³ See above, pp. 81-82.

¹⁴ H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, pp. 48-52.

¹⁵ The Yeke *mwanangwa* were generally 'choisis parmi les proches parents patrilatéraux de M'siri, surtout ses frères et ses fils'; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 83.

¹⁶ H. Wera, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur la Cheffeire de Mufunga', 1931, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Papiers E. Verdick, Carnet IV, HA-MRAC, RG664; E. Verdick, *Les Premiers Jours au Katanga*, pp. 110-111; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, pp. 83-84.

¹⁷ See above, p. 80.

¹⁸ R. Marchal, 'Chefferies de Mwashya et de Mulenga', 1939, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 83.

Lualaba, and the Baseba of *Kaponda* near present-day Lubumbashi¹⁹. In addition, the Yeke encroachment upon the internal affairs of the lineage-based polities of the upper Luapula from the late 1860s seems to have had a good deal to do with the sudden rise of the mwina Mumba Kinyama Mwansa, whose capital was situated near the confluence of the Kafubu and Luapula Rivers, and the mwina Ngulube Milambo Myelemeyele, to the south of the Luongo River²⁰.

The Clash with East African Traders and the Rise of the Bena Ngoma of Mushyota

Meanwhile, the defeat of Lubabila and Shakadyata's army had led Muonga Sunkutu to pit himself against the coastal traders operating in the heartland of the kingdom. Suspecting his one-time ally Mohamed ibn Saleh of complicity with the Yeke, Muonga ordered an attack against the trader and his followers. 'During the turmoil a hundred frasilahs of copper were stolen from him, and many of his people killed. Casembe kept him a prisoner till sixty of his people were either killed or died, among these Mohamad's eldest son: he was thus reduced to poverty.'²¹ To be sure, there is nothing to suggest the existence of a direct military or political alliance between Yeke and Swahili; yet, it may be argued that the dealings of the latter were as pernicious to the continuing stability and prosperity of the Kazembe kingdom as those of the former. Whereas the Yeke of Msiri resorted to blunt military means to conquer the western periphery of the kingdom and intercept the flow of tribute from southern Katanga, East African traders aimed at bypassing Muonga Sunkutu's trading monopoly and establishing profitable relationships with Lunda *bacilolo* in the heartland. By 1868, the strategy of East African intruders was certainly well under way, for Livingstone reported that Mwinempanda Kafwanka was in heavy debt to foreign traders²². Kafwanka 'showed no inclination to get out of it, but offered about a twentieth part of the value of the goods in liquidation.'²³ Somewhat surprisingly, Kafwanka remained loyal to Muonga and indeed died while defending the latter's capital against a Swahili-led military expedition. However, it seems certain that the weakening of the royal trading monopoly had a bearing upon Muonga's attested 'poverty', which, in turn,

¹⁹ H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 91, 94; L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation*, p. 120.

²⁰ H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 94; L. Verbeek, *Filiation et Usurpation*, pp. 178-183.

²¹ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 276, 297.

²² Unlike his unnamed predecessor (see above, p. 128), Mwinempanda Kafwanka seems not to have resided permanently in Muonga Sunkutu's *musumba*.

²³ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 305. See also C. St. John, 'Kazembe and the Tanganyika-Nyasa Corridor', p. 220.

accounts for his manifest inability to broaden the spectrum of his supporters and thus effectively protect the integrity of the kingdom and, ultimately, his own position against aggressive external forces.

In the spring of 1867, coastal traders under the leadership of Hamed ibn Mohamed el Murjebi ('Tippu Tip') routed Nsama III Chipili Chipioka and established a permanent colony among the Tabwa²⁴. Having secured their position between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Mweru and made preliminary contacts with Lukwesa Mpanga, the Lunda royal exile, Swahili traders are likely to have begun to consider the possibility of ousting the hostile Muonga Sunkutu. Chipili's defeat had indeed hardened Muonga's animosity towards East Africans and prompted him to issue 'strict orders to his people not to allow the Arabs who fought Nsama to enter his country.'²⁵ From Muonga's standpoint, no trade at all was probably better than free trade. In 1869-70, Tippu Tip himself was forbidden to enter the eastern Lunda heartland and came very close to fighting Muonga²⁶. After this latest affront, it was only a matter of time before the eastern Lunda king was done away with.

The resolve of the Swahili traders of Itabwa intermingled with the aspirations of the Bena Ngoma of *Mushyota*, yet another group of intruders bent on eroding the regional position of the eastern Lunda. In the early 1860s, the then Chikumbi, Bena Mukulu (or Bena Ngoma) leader of the Chimpili Hills²⁷, wrested control of the lower Luongo River from the Bena Mbeba of *Mupeta*²⁸. Whereas Chikumbi settled on the Cibalashi River, to the east of the lower Luongo, his brother Chama Mushyota, who had also been a member of the expedition against Mupeta, pursued his advance and built a village on the Chishinga plateau, to the south of the Pambashe swamp, where he was joined by other Bena Ngoma army-leaders and lineage heads from Mukulu and Ngumbo countries²⁹. After his death, Chama was succeeded by Mambwe Muyinda

²⁴ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, pp. 208-232; A.D. Roberts (ed.), 'The History of Abdullah ibn Suliman', pp. 249-252; *Id.*, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 153; M. Wright & P. Lary, 'Swahili Settlements in Northern Zambia and Malawi', *African Historical Studies*, IV, 3, 1971, pp. 547-573 (especially, pp. 554-555).

²⁵ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 260.

²⁶ A.D. Roberts (ed.), 'The History of Abdullah ibn Suliman', p. 254. The divergence between this latter text and Tippu Tip (ed. & transl. W.H. Whiteley), *Maisha*, p. 53, is discussed by A.D. Roberts, 'Tippu Tip, Livingstone, and the Chronology of Kazembe', pp. 119-123.

²⁷ See above, pp. 110-111.

²⁸ See above, p. 70.

²⁹ E. Labrecque (ed.), *History of the Bena-Ngoma*, pp. 51-54; B.K.M. Mushyota, 'History wa Bena Chishinga'; 'History of the Wena Chishinga Tribe', n.d., Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 179-182 (copy in III, pp. 241-244), NAZ, KSG 3/1; Mutipula Mushyota, untitled, 1936, Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 245, NAZ, KSG 3/1. K.M. Lubunda, 'Ukwisa kwa Mfumum sha Bena Mbeba', mistakenly asserts that

Mushyota II, the dominant figure in the history of the Bena Ngoma of the plateau from about 1870³⁰. Under the leadership of Mambwe Muyinda – who is remembered as having founded several villages before finally settling on the Lwena River – the newcomers set about imposing their sway over most of the Bena Mbeba of the plateau (a process which was only cut short by the European intervention in the 1890s) and directly challenged the eastern Lunda hegemony in the area.

In 1872³¹, a section of Mambwe Muyinda's Bena Ngoma under the then holder of the *Chama* subordinate title joined the ranks of the Swahili expedition which Juma ibn Sefu ('Pembamoto') had finally set up with the aim of overthrowing the reigning Mwata Kazembe. Pembamoto, who could also count on the support of the Bena Mbeba of *Kapema*³², led his army to the lower Kalungwishi ford, where it was met by the Lunda of Mwinempanda Kafwanka. The Lunda force got the worst of the affray, and Kafwanka himself was captured and beheaded. The decisive battle seems to have taken place near the royal *mashamo* ('Mashama'). After his army was routed, Muonga abandoned his capital and was subsequently killed in Chama's territory, to the south of the middle Kalungwishi River, by a band of Nyamwezi soldiers sent ahead by Mohamed ibn Masud el Wardi ('Kumbakumba'), Tippu Tip's brother and the most prominent coastal trader in Itabwa at that time³³.

Kumbakumba then resolved to install Lukwesa Mpanga as the new Mwata Kazembe. As Lukwesa's foreign escort neared the lower Luapula, Kafuti Chinkonkole – who, in the meantime, had seized the throne as Mwata Kazembe VIII – crossed the river along with his brother Kanyembo Ntemena Chipepa and, perhaps, sought to ally himself with the Yeke of Msiri. Chinkonkole's efforts proved vain: abandoned by his

Chikumbi conquered the Bena Mbeba of *Kabila*. A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 141, has suggested that Chikumbi's westward migration may have been prompted by Mwamba II Chilesheye's conquest of the region to the north of Lake Bangweulu in the 1860s. In the late 1860s, Chikumbi clearly wielded considerable power. Having allied himself to a group of heavily armed Nyamwezi traders, he was able to repel a band of Ngoni ('Mazitu') raiders. Thereafter, Chikumbi turned against the Nyamwezi and assaulted the stockade of their leader, 'Kombokombo'. Chikumbi's army was defeated, but the attack prompted the Nyamwezi to leave the region. D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, pp. 310-311, 330-332.

³⁰ B.K.M. Mushyota, 'History wa Bena Chishinga'; interview with Chama Musaba Mushyota & Simon Engaenga, Mushyota village, 8 May 1999. (Mambwe Muyinda Mushyota II died in 1903; see Fane Smith to E.H. Cooke, 31 July 1941, NAZ, NP2/7/3.)

³¹ A.D. Roberts, 'Tippu Tip, Livingstone and the Chronology of Kazembe', p. 122.

³² See above, p. 70.

³³ A.D. Roberts (ed.), 'The History of Abdullah ibn Suliman', p. 256; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 51. While the head of Muonga was taken to Kumbakumba, those of his escort may have ended up ornamenting Chama's stockade. D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, II, p. 258.

closest supporters, he was defeated on the Mununshi River and executed³⁴. In about 1873, Lukwesa Mpanga was finally proclaimed Mwata Kazembe IX. His accession – as Cunnison rightly noted – ‘started a whole new pattern of political behaviour’³⁵, and inaugurated a series of foreign interventions in the internal affairs of the kingdom. Since the mid-18th century, the eastern Lunda had consistently resorted to lineage powerbrokering in order to affirm their hold over peripheral societies; in the late 19th century, it was their turn to bear the brunt of the practice which they had so successfully exploited in the past.

The alliance between the Bena Ngoma of Mushyota II and the Swahili of Itabwa was short-lived. Soon after his installation, Lukwesa Mpanga requested his Swahili backers to help him to bring the Bena Ngoma of *Chikumbi* into subjection. A first expedition under the leadership of Bushiri ibn Habid (‘Chafulakuta’), Kumbakumba’s own son, proved to be no match for the soldiers of Chikumbi³⁶. Following this setback, a new army commanded by Chafulakuta himself and Pembamoto was sent to the Chishinga plateau. Although the details of this widely remembered episode vary³⁷, there is no doubt that the ensuing battle resulted in a Bena Ngoma triumph, as the Swahili force hastily retreated after the death of both of its leaders. Regardless of whether it was the desertion of Tabwa warriors serving under the Swahili³⁸, or rather the timely intervention of Chungu V Kapopo Sempela that made Mambwe Muyinda’s victory possible³⁹, it seems certain that, following the military disaster of the early 1870s, large areas of the Bena Ngoma territory on the plateau became no-go areas for East African traders. In 1883, the Ushi chief Milambo Myelemyele warned Giraud against the ‘Vuakissinga, le peuple le plus farouche qu’il existe; chez eux, ni fusils ni étoffes; ils ne veulent pas en entendre parler et tuent les

³⁴ A.D. Roberts (ed.), ‘The History of Abdullah ibn Suliman’, p. 257. Neither this latter text, nor E. Labrecque (ed.), ‘History of the BaLuunda People’, say anything about Chinkonkole’s alliance with Msiri, but the episode is mentioned in a series of successively recorded Yeke accounts: Papiers E. Verdick, Carnet IV, HA-MRAC, RG664; E. Verdick, *Les Premiers Jours au Katanga*, p. 42; A. L’Heureux, ‘Groupement des Bayeke du Luapula’, 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison’s Fieldnotes, ‘Yeke History’, May 1949; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d’Ivoire*, p. 20. (The possibility cannot be ruled out that Yeke narratives have been influenced by the later – and universally acknowledged – coalition between Lukwesa Mpanga and Msiri.)

³⁵ I. Cunnison, ‘Kazembe and the Arabs’, p. 236.

³⁶ A.D. Roberts (ed.), ‘The History of Abdullah ibn Suliman’, p. 257.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 258; B.K.M. Mushyota, ‘History wa Bena Chishinga’; interview with Chama Musaba Mushyota & Simon Engaenga, Mushyota village, 8 May 1999; E. Labrecque (ed.), *History of the Bena-Ngoma*, pp. 60-61; ‘History of the WenaChishinga Tribe’, n.d., Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 179-182, NAZ, KSG 3/1.

³⁸ A.D. Roberts (ed.), ‘The History of Abdullah ibn Suliman’, p. 258.

³⁹ E. Labrecque (ed.), *History of the Bena-Ngoma*, pp. 60-61.

étrangers pour le plaisir de les tuer.'⁴⁰ As late as February 1896, Mushyota Mambwe Muyinda was still described as having 'a great dislike of Arabs' and as 'doing his best to keep them out of his country.'⁴¹

Free from the Swahili threat, throughout the 1870s and early 1880s, the Bena Ngoma of Mushyota II consolidated their position on the Chishinga plateau and along the lower Luongo River. In about 1875, they held their ground against some Bemba of Mwamba II Chilesbye who were chasing the runaway Lungu chief Chitoshi III. Having repelled the invading Bemba force, Mambwe Muyinda allowed Chitoshi to settle in his country, near the Munena River⁴². In the late 1870s or early 1880s, Kafwimbi, Mushyota II's nephew, built a village near the lower Luongo. This move drew him into a war against a coalition between the Bena Mumba of *Matanda*, the Bena Mbeba of *Mulundu*, *Lubebe*, *Katuta* and *Mwaba*, and the Bena Ngulube or Ushi of *Chimese* and *Chisunka*. Kafwimbi was equal to the challenge thanks to the support of his fellow clansman Mwindi Chikumbi, also known as Chibwe wa Lusaka⁴³. The local impact of the Bena Ngoma offensive to the south of the lower Luongo was evidently far-reaching: when Giraud passed through the area in October 1883, Kafwimbi ('Kasimbé') was reported to be 'le chef vuakissinga le plus à craindre.'⁴⁴ At about this time, Chikumbi Chibwe wa Lusaka himself repelled a group of Yeke raiders led by Muchembe and Likuku⁴⁵. Still in 1883-4, the Bena Ngoma of Mushyota II played a decisive role in the early phases of the civil war between Lukwesa Mpanga and Kanyembo Ntemena. However, before we turn to this further indication of the growing power and influence of the Bena Ngoma of the Chishinga plateau, it is necessary to examine the violent history of Lukwesa Mpanga's reign and, in particular, the invasion of the eastern Lunda heartland by the Yeke of Msiri.

⁴⁰ V. Giraud, *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale*, p. 326.

⁴¹ B. Watson, 24 November 1895, in *BCAG*, III, 4, 15 February 1896.

⁴² B.K.M. Mushyota, 'History wa Bena Chishinga'; 'History of the WenaChishinga Tribe', n.d., Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 179-182, NAZ, KSG 3/1; A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 139, n. 56.

⁴³ B.K.M. Mushyota, 'History wa Bena Chishinga'; Mulundu Elders, 'Mfumu Mulundu Yaisa mu Zambia'.

⁴⁴ V. Giraud, *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale*, p. 360.

⁴⁵ B.K.M. Mushyota, 'History wa Bena Chishinga'; D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 18 June - 2 July 1897, in *ES*, January 1898, p. 31.

2) Lukwesa Mpanga *versus* Kanyembo Ntemena (ca. 1880 – 1892)

The Yeke Invasion of the Heartland

Having spent the best part of twenty years eroding the eastern Lunda sway over the territory to the east of the upper Lualaba River, in about 1880, the Yeke of Msiri assailed the heartland of the Kazembe kingdom, to the east of the Kundelungu Range. While, in the 1830s, the threat of the Luba of Kumwimbe Ngombe had been successfully averted by Mwata Kazembe IV Chibangu Keleka, the consequences of the Yeke invasion of the heartland some 50 years later proved to be much more devastating for the enervated eastern Lunda kingdom. As the war dragged on throughout the 1880s, the Luapula River became for the first time in the history of the kingdom a barrier separating hostile parties. Although the Yeke never managed to occupy effectively the eastern half of the heartland, the narrow belt between the Kundelungu and the western bank of the lower Luapula was rapidly conquered by Yeke or “Yekeized” army-commanders, such as Kilolo Ntambo Muyofia, who built a fortified village on the Katula River, near the Bakunda of *Mukupa* and the Shila of *Mukobe*⁴⁶, and Mulengale Kasala, who settled on the upper Luisa River, to the south of the Bena Nsoka of *Kapwasa*⁴⁷.

Due to the brutal and exploitative nature of Yeke rule to the east of the Kundelungu⁴⁸, most local leaders – whether Lunda *bacilolo*, Shila or pre-Shila representatives – appear to have fled their home areas alongside their followers and taken refuge in the shrinking Lunda-controlled territory to the east of the Luapula River. Although a precise quantification of the phenomenon is obviously impossible, the lengthy list of notable refugees suggests that it took the form of a veritable mass flight without precedent in the history of the region. The first to escape, of course, were the peoples among whom Yeke army-leaders had established their headquarters. Kapwasa Chisanda Myaba forded the Luapula and died in exile. In 1893, his successor

⁴⁶ A. L'Heureux, ‘Rapport d'Enquête et Historique de la Chefferie de Mukupa’, 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; *Id.*, ‘Historique du Groupement de Mukobe’, 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁴⁷ M. Lacanne, ‘Chefferie Mulengale. Rapport d'Enquête. Historique’, 1939, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁴⁸ H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 130.

Mupepo Mutonio Kyanda had yet to return to the upper Lualaba River⁴⁹. The Shila Mukobe Chikonde followed the path of his predecessor Mukobe Kiele⁵⁰, and settled near present-day Mbereshi mission, in a presumably unoccupied stretch of land which Lukwesa Mpanga and, later, Kanyembo Ntemena seem to have specifically earmarked to accommodate the growing number of refugees from the opposite bank of the Luapula. Chikonde returned home in the early 1890s, only to be killed shortly afterwards by Shimba's *rugaruga*⁵¹. Several other Shila leaders chose the option of the exile. The then Nkuba of Chisenga swamp island retreated to Mbereshi, together with the then Walya, Mungo and Chimamba of Chibondo and Matoto⁵². Twite and Chishite, Bena Ntamba owners of Kasato and Kawama, respectively, are also said to have migrated to the Lunda-controlled bank of the Luapula, followed shortly by the then Kalapwe, Kadimawamandia and Makandwe of Lake Chifukula⁵³. To be sure, the western bank of the lower Luapula was the most seriously disrupted area; yet the effects of the Yeke occupation made themselves felt further up the river too, for the so-called 'trois Kisamamba' are also reported as having fled their villages following the arrival of the Yeke⁵⁴.

Even though it is difficult to assign a precise date to each of these separate movements, most of them are likely to have taken place in the early 1880s. By the end of 1883, in fact, the Lunda-Yeke war in the heartland had already reached a critical point, and Yeke armies felt strong enough to raid the eastern bank of the Luapula. On 9th October 1883 – as Giraud learned on his journey between Milambo Myelemeyele and Lukwesa Mpanga's capitals – the Bena Mbeba village of Mulundu ('Mlundu'), near Mambilima Falls, 's'attendait à une attaque prochaine des gens de Msiri, et toutes les pirogues se tenaient prêtes à transporter d'un coup les habitants sur l'autre rive de la Louapoula.'⁵⁵ Following this or another raid, Nanshike, sister of the then Mulundu,

⁴⁹ M. Lacanne, 'Historique du Groupement de Kapwasa', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; *Id.*, M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 52, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; D. Crawford, 19 May – 4 July 1893, in *ES*, February 1894, p. 55.

⁵⁰ See above, p. 114, n. 29.

⁵¹ A. L'Heureux, 'Historique du Groupement de Mukobe', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 63-64, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁵² E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 57; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 41-42, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; A. L'Heureux, 'Historique de la Chefferie de Kuba-Kawama', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁵³ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 41-42, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁵⁴ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur les Trois Kisamamba. Historiques. Généalogies', 1935, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁵⁵ V. Giraud, *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale*, p. 362.

was kidnapped by the Yeke and taken to Bunkeya. Before Nanshike was ransomed, the Bena Mbeba of *Mulundu* appear to have agreed to pay tribute to the Yeke representatives dwelling on the opposite bank of the river⁵⁶. The ferry at Cabu under the holder of the *Kalumbu* ('Kalundu') title was attacked by the Yeke on the night of 13th October 1883. 'La moitié de la population mâle fut égorgée, toutes les femmes emmenées en captivité.'⁵⁷ Three days later, the survivors made it to the *musumba* of Lukwesa Mpanga, who, judging from his impressively fortified *mpembwe*, was also expecting a Yeke assault.

'Le fossé circulaire, profond de 2 m. 50, est garni d'épines; les talus d'escarpe et de contrescarpe, percés de meurtrières, mesurent 1 m. 50 de hauteur et abritent entièrement les huttes d'une fusillade extérieure. Le terre-plein qui, d'ordinaire, permet l'accès des portes au dessus du fossé, est remplacé par un tronç d'arbre qu'on n'a qu'à enlever au moindre cri d'alarme. Les trois portes sont défendues de l'intérieur par des miradors élevés; enfin, l'une d'elles donne sur la Louapoula, et permet de puiser de l'eau constamment, en cas de siège. Tout auprès, dix pirogues sont prêtes à assurer la fuite de Cazembe et de son harem.'⁵⁸

Mwata Kazembe IX, moreover, did nothing to hide his dire need for firearms and ammunitions. After requisitioning fifty guns belonging to Giraud's expedition, he is alleged to have scoffed at the latter's remonstrances: 'J'aurais la chance de posséder cinquante fusils neufs, et tu crois que je vais les rendre au moment où je suis menacé de tous côtés par mes voisins!'⁵⁹ The Yeke menace prompted Lukwesa Mpanga to seek to form a defensive alliance with Milambo Myelemeyele, who by 1882 had fallen foul of his one-time Yeke supporters. Lukwesa forwarded three ivory tusks to the Ushi chief and asked for gunpowder in exchange. But the tentative agreement came to nothing, for Myelemeyele himself was under direct threat of a Yeke invasion⁶⁰.

Kanyembo Ntemena's Coup and its Aftermath

Whilst the Yeke aggression held the attention of Lukwesa Mpanga, his internal enemies prepared his demise. After the death of Kafuti Chinkonkole⁶¹, Kanyembo Ntemena seems to have continued to plot against his brother Lukwesa. When the latter finally attempted to kill him, Kanyembo fled the lower Luapula valley and placed himself under the protection of Mwambe Muyinda Mushyota II⁶². At the time of

⁵⁶ Mulundu Elders, 'Mfumu Mulundu Yaisa mu Zambia'.

⁵⁷ V. Giraud. *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale*, p. 363.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 369-370.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 378.

⁶⁰ V. Giraud, *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale*, pp. 318-319, 326-327.

⁶¹ See above, pp. 144-145.

⁶² E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 51; A. L'Heureux, 'Groupement des Bayeke du Luapula', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Yeke History', May 1949.

Giraud's stay in Lukwesa's capital, 'des négociations avaient été entamées entre eux, et Cazembé lui avait déjà envoye six femmes, pout tâcher de rentrer dans ses bonnes grâces; mais chacun disait qu'il ne le rappelait que pour le faire massacrer.'⁶³ When Kanyembo did return, presumably in 1884, he was accompanied by an escort of Bena Ngoma warriors given to him by Chibwe wa Lusaka and the then Ntumbanya. Lukwesa's accession had been brought about by the intervention of external agents, the coastal traders of Itabwa. But the strategy which he had inaugurated now recoiled upon him, as Kanyembo's Bena Ngoma backers proved too strong for his local supporters. After Lukwesa was driven out of his capital, Kanyembo was installed as Mwata Kazembe X.

The civil war reached its climax when, in a desperate attempt to regain the throne, the runaway Lukwesa allied himself with his erstwhile foe Msiri. A collation between the 'History of the BaLuunda People' (or *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*⁶⁴) and independent non-Lunda accounts permits a circumstantial reconstruction of the events which followed Lukwesa's journey to Bunkeya. After marrying Msiri's daughter, Kalofia or Matolela, and being invested with the Yeke *kilungu*⁶⁵, Lukwesa returned to the lower Luapula valley escorted by a large Yeke contingent. Kanyembo Ntemena's followers were defeated in the ensuing battle, and the ruling Mwata Kazembe was forced to withdraw to the village of his *Nambansa* in Lukanga. Despite his victory, Lukwesa did not occupy the eastern bank of the Luapula, resolving instead to settle on Chibondo swamp island, along the Yeke-controlled western bank. Lukwesa then grew suspicious of the influence of his Yeke supporters and decided to release them. As soon as they left, Kanyembo crossed the Luapula and attacked his brother in Mwambo, to the south of Chibondo. After both Lukwesa and his son were killed, Kanyembo regained possession of the capital⁶⁶.

However important, Kanyembo's success proved insufficient to defeat his opponents, whose leadership was now taken by the aristocrat Kakasu, the holder of the *Kaindu* title and Lukwesa Mpanga's former *Nswanamulopwe*. In about 1886, it was

⁶³ V. Giraud, *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale*, p. 381.

⁶⁴ The final phase of the Lunda-Yeke war is only partially covered by E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', which sometimes simply refers the reader to Fr. Tanguy's *Baluunda, Imilandu ya Ba-Kasembe*. See above, p. 36, n. 45.

⁶⁵ A. L'Heureux, 'Groupement des Bayeke du Luapula', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Yeke History', May 1949, and 'Kaindu's History', May 1949.

⁶⁶ E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, pp. 98-99; A. L'Heureux, 'Groupement des Bayeke du Luapula', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Yeke History', May 1949.

Kakasu's turn to travel to Bunkeya and entice Msiri into providing further assistance. Msiri mounted an expedition under the command of Mbobola, Tete and Tuntepe⁶⁷. After a fierce battle during which many Lunda were killed or captured, Kanyembo fled his capital and sought refuge among the Bemba of Mwamba III Mubanga Chipoya. Kaindu and his Yeke forces established their headquarters in Mwambo. Prompted by Kanyembo – who had in the meantime adopted the name of Mubanga – Mwamba III set up an army led by four of his sons: Mwabamukupa, Chikalamo, Machende and Chipemba⁶⁸. On his return journey, Kanyembo passed through the territory of his Bena Ngoma allies and was granted further reinforcements by Mambwe Muyinda Mushyota II. The Bena Ngoma contingent was placed under the leadership of Kapesa, Chibanga, Kamfuli, Mutuna and Chishamo⁶⁹.

Back in the valley, Kanyembo's first move was to order the construction of a fortified settlement on the lower Ngoma River, the nucleus of present-day Mwansabombwe. Shortly afterwards, the then Nkuba was sent to fight the Yeke of Mbobola in Mwambo. The latter retaliated by dispatching an army to occupy Chisenga swamp island, but the Yeke force under Chiyombo, Mbobola's deputy, could not hold out for long against a Lunda counterattack led by Muonga Kapakata, son of Mwata Kazembe VI Chinyanta Munona and future Mwata Kazembe XI⁷⁰. Next, Kanyembo and all his foreign allies launched an attack against the Yeke stronghold in Mwambo. The Yeke of Mbobola and Tuntepe were temporarily driven away, but regrouped in Kasenga, near Lake Chifukula⁷¹. Presumably, Sharpe's arrival in Mwansabombwe at the end of September 1890⁷², followed soon after this inconclusive Lunda offensive.

⁶⁷ E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, p. 99; A. L'Heureux, 'Groupement des Bayeke du Luapula', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Wens, 'Historique de la Sous-Chefferie de Kaindu', 1923, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Yeke History', May 1949, and 'Kaindu's History', May 1949.

⁶⁸ 'Note by the Native Commissioner', 5 November 1913, Kawambwa DNB, II, p. 155, NAZ, KSG3/1; interview with Peter Ntambo Kasumpa & Paisoni Sunkutu, Kasumpa village, 7 May 1999. According to A. L'Heureux, 'Groupement des Bayeke du Luapula', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone, and Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Yeke History', May 1949, Kanyembo Ntemena had already enlisted Mambwa III's support following his first flight to Lukanga.

⁶⁹ Interview with Misheck Kaoma Kapesa, Kapesa village, 15 July 1999. (Throughout the interview, Misheck Kaoma relied upon a manuscript produced by his predecessor Mwape Kapesa, who, in turn, is said to have simply copied an account written as early as 1935.) There is some confusion regarding the composition of the Bena Ngoma army. Whereas Kapesa I is mentioned in all accounts, the names of his followers vary. 'Boundary Dispute. Kazembe *versus* Mushota: Yanga Country. Heard by Mr. Jones in April 1918', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 290, NAZ, KSG3/1; interview with Chama Musaba Mushyota & Chama Pinot Laurent, Mushyota village, 16 July 1999.

⁷⁰ E. Labrecque (ed.), *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, pp. 101-102.

⁷¹ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 54-55; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique', pp. 73-74.

⁷² See below, pp. 157-158.

Due to Kanyembo Ntemena's point-blank refusal to grant him permission to cross the lower Luapula, Johnston's subordinate was forced to change his planned itinerary towards Bunkeya⁷³. At about this time, Tuntepe died of smallpox, while Mbobola, suspected of having conspired against the latter, was executed by Msiri. Mbobola was succeeded by Mbobola II and Tuntepe by his son or brother Makolati Kashobwe. Kashobwe settled on Chibondo swamp island, where he was joined by Kaindu Kakasu, who, in the meantime, had taken part in Mukanda Bantu and Muya Usonsa's expedition against Shimba and Nkuba Bukongolo Chipenge⁷⁴.

The death of Msiri in December 1891 did not bring an immediate end to the hostilities, but seems to have greatly weakened Yeke forces in the lower Luapula valley and to have tipped the balance in favour of the eastern Lunda. While Kafununa, Kanyembo Ntemena's younger brother, defeated Tete in Kasenga, the Yeke of Mbobola II were finally expelled from Mwambo by a Lunda force under the leadership of Mumpolokoso, another brother of the ruling Mwata Kazembe, and the Bena Ngoma Kapesa. Whereas Mwambo itself was assigned to Chinyanta Kabimbi, a *cilolo* who had contrived to escape his Yeke captors, Kapesa was rewarded with the allocation of a territory on the Mununshi River, to the north of the ferry at Cabu. Meanwhile, Kanyembo's Bemba auxiliaries had founded a series of villages to the south of Mofwe Lagoon.⁷⁵

The final episode of the lengthy war is likely to have taken place towards the end of 1892, and certainly before Crawford's first visit to the lower Luapula valley in the spring of 1893. After the victories against Tete and Mbobola II, Mwata Kazembe Kanyembo led a large expedition against Chibondo swamp island, the last remaining Yeke stronghold on the western bank of the lower Luapula. Although both sides are said to have suffered heavy losses, the battle appears to have convinced the Yeke of Makolati Kashobwe and Kaindu Kakasu of the inanity of their predicament. Their leaders travelled to Mwansabombwe and declared their willingness to surrender. Kanyembo Ntemena agreed to marry Mapena (or Menena) and Kabanshi, women

⁷³ Sharpe to Johnston, 4 March 1891, encl. in Johnston to FO, 6 May 1891, PRO, FO84/2114; C.A. Swan, 17 October – 9 November 1890, in *ES*, June 1891, pp. 148-150.

⁷⁴ M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 73-75, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Wens, 'Historique de la Sous-Chefferie de Kaindu', 1923, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Yeke History', May 1949, and 'Kaindu's History', May 1949. See below, p. 155.

⁷⁵ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 55; A. L'Heureux, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur la Chefferie de Kabimbi', 1937, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kabimbi

belonging to Kashobwe's family, and granted the latter permission to remain in Chibondo. The renegade Kakasu was magnanimously reinstated in his former position as *cilolo* and deputed to safeguard Lunda interests in Chibondo⁷⁶. Having survived the onslaught of the Yeke, Kanyembo Ntemena sought to reassert his suzerainty over the former western half of the heartland. His design – as we shall see in the next chapter – was marred by the arrival of the first representatives of the Congo Free State.

3) Shimba and the Western Shore of Lake Mweru to 1892

The foundation of a Swahili colony on Kilwa Island in the early 1890s further illustrates the basic vulnerability of the kingdom of Kazembe on the eve of European occupation. In order to understand how this old Lunda *iyanga* fell into foreign hands, it is necessary to examine the consequences of the Yeke expansionist drive along the north-western borders of the heartland of the kingdom. The Yeke war effort was not in fact confined to the lower Luapula valley, for, sometime after the invasion of the heartland in about 1880, a series of military outposts were also established further north. Whereas the inhabitants of the western bank of the lower and middle Luapula River seem to have generally retreated under the pressure of the incoming Yeke armies, most local leaders of the western shore of Lake Mweru attempted to check these latter's advance. The resistance was spearheaded by the most powerful among them: Nkuba Bukongolo VI Kapunikwa.

From the beginning of the hostilities, Kapunikwa was anxious to set up a broad anti-Yeke coalition, and is indeed remembered as having gone for assistance to the then Kashinge⁷⁷, the Lunda *cilolo* of Kilwa Island, in about 1884-5. His initial appeal for help to the Lunda did not bring the expected results, but Kapunikwa was nevertheless able to ambush and kill Musaka, a Yeke army-commander, thanks to the intelligence which the then Chilomba, Mushimba lineage leader of the lower Kabesa River, had passed on to him. Following the death of Musaka, Kapunikwa founded a fortified village on the lower Katete River, to the north of the Bena Ntamba of

History', June 1949; interview with Misheck Kaoma Kapesa, Kapesa village, 15 July 1999; 'Note by the Native Commissioner', 5 November 1913, Kawambwa DNB, II, p. 155, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁷⁶ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 55; *Id.* (ed.), *Ifikohwe Fyandi*, pp. 105-106; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kaindu's History', May 1949; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 75, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁷⁷ Either Misube or Kasumba; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Bukashinge', May 1949.



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KIBANGALWA YeKe Leader

8. The Western Shore of Lake Mweru to 1890

Mulimba, where he was joined by both fellow Shila – such as his nephew Kafwimbi⁷⁸ and Kapingwe Shula – and by some Lunda of Kanyembo Ntemena who were being pursued by Yeke forces⁷⁹. A large Yeke army under the leadership of Kilolo Ntambo Muyofia⁸⁰, Kifuntwe⁸¹ and Lombe was promptly dispatched against Kapunikwa's stronghold. After an early clash between Kafwimbi and Lombe, the besieging force was strengthened by the arrival of Kiabangalwa Mundebe and his followers. Aware of the impossibility of holding out against so strong an army, Kapunikwa complied with the instructions of Kalongo and Lubinda – envoys of Kanyembo Ntemena – and withdrew with all his troops to Kilwa Island⁸². Pumina, the then holder of the *Mobanga* title, is also said to have taken refuge in Kilwa. Following Kapunikwa's retreat, the deserted fort on the Katete River was taken over by the Yeke of Kiabangalwa.

Thereafter, Kapunikwa died in Kilwa and was succeeded by Chipenge, Nkuba Bukongolo VII (d. 1932). Chipenge resumed his predecessor's quest for foreign allies. Whereas Mpweto Muntala refused to become embroiled in the ongoing conflict, Kanyembo Ntemena remitted twenty gunmen, presumably just before his flight to Bemba country. The desertion of Kanyembo's auxiliaries upon their arrival in Kilwa Island underlined the all-too-evident inability of the eastern Lunda to provide adequate protection and support, and prompted Chipenge to seek the assistance of the coastal traders dwelling between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Mweru⁸³. Unlike 'Palangwa', the Swahili in charge of the colony of Itabwa, Shimba, a trader operating to the south of Lake Tanganyika, acceded to Chipenge's request for help and, in about 1887, dispatched an expedition consisting of 30 of his armed Nyamwezi followers under the command of one Katonkolo⁸⁴. Thanks to these additional troops, Chipenge and

⁷⁸ Not to be confused with Mushyota Mambwe Muyinda's nephew. See above, p. 146.

⁷⁹ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 82, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁸⁰ See above, p. 147.

⁸¹ See above, p. 141.

⁸² Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 82, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁸³ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 56, challenges this version and states that Lunda forces under the leadership of the then Kalandala abandoned Kilwa Island due to Chipenge's military ineptitude.

⁸⁴ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 82, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Watson to Johnston, 18 May 1895, encl. in Johnston to FO, 29 July 1895, PRO, FO2/89.

Kafwimbi were able to repulse Kiabangalwa's forces when they attempted to land on Kilwa Island. Despite suffering a series of reverses on the mainland, Chipenge and Kafwimbi succeeded in regaining possession of the Katete fort shortly before the appearance of Shimba himself in 1888.

Shimba's arrival seems to have brought about an extraordinary political realignment, as most of the leaders of the western shore of Lake Mweru – including some former allies of Kapunikwa and Chipenge, such as Mulimba Musoka and Chilomba Djuka – joined the ranks of the Yeke, their one-time enemies, to fight against the incoming East Africans and the growing influence of Nkuba Bukongolo VII⁸⁵. Undeterred by the withering of their local support, Chipenge and Shimba launched an attack against Kiabangalwa's camp on the Lusekelwe River. Both Kiabangalwa and his deputy Kasomena were killed in the ensuing battle. The combined Shila-Nyamwezi army pursued its southward offensive, but was repelled by Kilolo Ntambo on the Katula River. Mukupa Kinshebe Kalenga – who, unlike most neighbouring leaders, had not fled to the eastern bank of the Luapula in the early 1880s – fought alongside Kilolo Ntambo and perished in the struggle⁸⁶. The revival of the Shila of Chipenge and the defiant attitude of Shimba caused considerable apprehension in Bunkeya⁸⁷, and prompted Msiri to dispatch to Lake Mweru yet another expedition led by the aforementioned Tete and Kaindu Kakasu (temporarily relieved from their tasks in the lower Luapula valley), and by his sons Mukanda Bantu and Muya Usonsa⁸⁸. The opposing armies met on the Katete River at the end of 1890; after a long siege and a violent battle, Chipenge and Shimba, who had run out of ammunition, were

Nothing is known of Shimba's biography, apart from a tantalizing report that he was 'a Uganda boy trained by Arabs'; D. Crawford, 23 July – 23 August 1894, in *ES*, February 1895, p. 36. Two years earlier, Crawford himself had described Shimba as a 'Munyamwezi'; D. Crawford, 25 June – 10 July 1892, in *ES*, March 1893, pp. 56-57.

⁸⁵ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Historique de la Chefferie de Mulimba', 1934, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; *Id.*, 'Rapport d'Enquête et Historique. Chefferie de Kilomba', 1934, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁸⁶ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; A. L'Heureux, 'Rapport d'Enquête et Historique de la Chefferie de Mukupa', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 59, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁸⁷ In September 1889 Shimba sent a 'very insulting letter to Msiri', threatening to 'come to his capital, bind him and carry him off' to the eastern coast. C.A. Swan, 14 July – 28 September 1889, in *ES*, July 1890, p. 215.

⁸⁸ The expedition was probably also intended to recapture a group of Lunda prisoners who had fled Bunkeya in October 1890. Apart from Chinyanta Kabimbi (see above, p. 152), the most prominent escapee was Nakafwaya ('Ina Kafwaya'), the former *Mwadi* of Mwata Kazembe VI Chinyanta Munona (E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 49) who had been captured by the Yeke and taken as spouse by Msiri. (C.A. Swan, 17 October – 9 November 1890, in *ES*, June 1891,

forced to abandon their stronghold and withdraw once more to Kilwa Island⁸⁹. The military situation on the western shore of Lake Mweru stalled until the death of Msiri, which, unlike in the lower Luapula valley, seems to have been followed by the precipitate retreat of Yeke occupying forces.

By obliging the Yeke to concentrate their efforts on the northern front, Shimba's intervention is very likely to have contributed to ease the pressure on the lower Luapula and the eastern Lunda heartland. But the Lunda of *Kazembe* paid a heavy price for these immediate benefits. The withdrawal of the Yeke notwithstanding, Shimba and his mainly Nyamwezi following remained in Kilwa and, after imposing their supremacy over the pre-existing local authorities, turned it into the capital of a short-lived – but nonetheless influential – conquest regime based on ruthless ivory-trading and slave-raiding. Afraid of being assassinated by Shimba, Chipenge is said to have encouraged his heir Kafwimbi to leave the island and settle among the Lunda in Lukanga, where Crawford met him in November 1893. Chipenge himself abandoned Kilwa and returned to Chibwe – his home area along the north-western shore of Lake Mweru – during one of the three ill-fated Belgian expeditions against Shimba between the end of 1893 and 1894. This was also the case of the then Kashinge, whose authority over the island, by the time he withdrew to Mwansabombwe, was doubtless merely nominal⁹⁰. The story of Shimba's 'free-booting' regime and its contribution to the devastation of Mweru-Luapula in the early 1890s will be further examined in the next chapter.

pp. 148-159.) In 1897, 'the great Ina Kafwaga' lived in Mwansabombwe, in the harem of Kanyembo Ntemena; D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 10 June – 14 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 365.

⁸⁹ Wens, 'Chefferie Kuba-Bukongolo. Historique, Démographie', 1924, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; *Id.*, 'Historique de la Sous-Chefferie de Kaindu', 1923, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 75, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kaindu's History', May 1949.

⁹⁰ D. Crawford, 24 October – 11 November 1893, in *ES*, July 1894, p. 165; M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 83, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Watson to Johnston, 18 May 1895, encl. in Johnston to FO, 29 July 1895, PRO, FO2/89; 'Kilwa Island', n.d. (but between 1913 and 1918), Chiengi DNB, I, pp. 199-200, NAZ, KSW2/1.

Chapter VI

EUROPEAN OCCUPATION, 1890 – 1900

Before 1890, the only Europeans with whom the eastern Lunda had become acquainted were isolated explorers, whose aims may have been regarded as mysterious but who posed no immediate threat to the kingdom. In the last decade of the century the situation changed abruptly, as Mweru-Luapula was entered by several groups of Europeans whose short-term strategies and priorities did not necessarily coincide. While the proximity to an utterly artificial international frontier generated constant tension between British and Belgian officials, the methods of colonial representatives as a whole were sometimes censured by the protestant missionaries who were also settling in the region. The presence of European pioneer traders – about whom more will be said in the next chapter – added further complexity to the political arena. In his endeavours to safeguard some at least of his pre-colonial prerogatives, Mwata Kazembe X Kanyembo Ntemena – the real protagonist of this chapter, given the paucity of data relating to subordinate Lunda title-holders – learned to distinguish between all these groups and sought to exploit their differences. In the end, the kingdom of Kazembe was conquered, but the aspirations and adaptability of its rulers lived on and helped them to come to terms with the reality of colonial domination.

1) Early Relations between Kanyembo Ntemena and Colonial Representatives (1890 – 1893)

In October 1889, Rhodes' newly formed British South Africa Company was granted a 'Royal Charter of Incorporation'. In return for extensive economic privileges, the BSAC undertook to administer on behalf of the British government a wide portion of South-Central African territory, the precise limits of which were to be determined by means of the stipulation of treaties of 'protection' with local rulers. Rhodes' chief aim to the north of the Zambezi River was to secure Katanga and its mineral wealth, an inflated representation of which was then being popularized by the Plymouth Brethren

missionaries dwelling in Bunkeya from 1886¹. In August 1890, Johnston, Rhodes' ally and the British consul in Mozambique, entrusted Sharpe with the task to travel to Katanga via the Tanganyika-Mweru corridor and make treaties with the principal African leaders whom he would come upon along the way. Sharpe attained Bunkeya in November of the same year, but he failed to reach an agreement with Msiri. In fact, the proposal to 'sign papers [...] was the cause of a fit of anger on the part of Mshidi (who is a regular Tartar)', and Sharpe 'thought for some time [*his*] party was going to be attacked in the town'². By disclosing the BSAC's territorial ambitions, Sharpe's ill-fated mission prompted Léopold II to hasten the administrative occupation of Katanga. The latter was effectively inaugurated by the arrival in Bunkeya of Le Marinel's expedition in April 1891 and the subsequent foundation of a Congo Free State station on the Lofoi River, to the north-east of the Yeke capital. According to an informal deal struck around this time, the south-eastern frontier between the CFS and the BSAC's territory to the north of the Zambezi was to follow the course of the Luapula River between Lake Bangweulu and Lake Mweru. The agreement was later given official sanction in the comprehensive Anglo-Belgian boundary settlement of 1894³. Even though Sharpe failed to obtain Katanga, his journey in the latter part of 1890 did at least secure the inclusion of the eastern half of the kingdom of Kazembe within the British sphere of influence.

On 30th September 1890, shortly before refusing Sharpe permission to cross the Luapula River and proceed to Bunkeya, Kanyembo Ntemena, Mwata Kazembe X, was 'amiable' with Johnston's deputy and 'willing to sign' the two treaties which the latter submitted to his attention⁴. By subscribing the first treaty, which Sharpe himself signed 'for and on behalf' of the British Crown, Kanyembo undertook to remain at peace with 'the subjects of the Queen of England' and to respect these latter's freedom of movement and trade. In addition, the eastern Lunda king pledged to acknowledge the British jurisdictional superiority ('should any difference arise between [...] British subjects and me the said Kazembe [...], the dispute shall be referred to a duly authorized representative of Her Majesty, whose decision in the matter shall be binding and final'),

¹ H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 138.

² Sharpe to Johnston, 4 March 1891, encl. in Johnston to FO, 6 May 1891, PRO, FO84/2114.

³ A.D. Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, p. 162.

⁴ Sharpe to Johnston, 4 March 1891, encl. in Johnston to FO, 6 May 1891, PRO, FO84/2114.

and to refrain from entering into any further 'agreement with any Foreign Government except through and with the consent of the Government of Her Majesty the Queen of England.'⁵ Kanyembo Ntemena also consented to sign a second treaty, put forward by Sharpe 'in his capacity as the representative of the British South Africa Company'. In virtue of the agreement, the BSAC acquired exclusive mining rights within the king's territory and a series of related economic prerogatives. In return for these 'concessions', the Company undertook 'to protect the said King and nation from all outside interference or attacks' and 'to appoint and maintain in the said territory a British Resident, with a suitable retinue and suite of British subjects, and an escort of British police for the due maintenance of law and order within the said territory.' Finally, and very ambitiously, the Company committed itself to assist, 'under the King's supervision and authority, [...] in the establishment and propagation of the Christian religion, and the education and civilization of the native subjects of the King, by the establishment, maintenance, and endowment of such churches, schools, and trading stations as may be from time to time mutually agreed upon by the King and the Resident hereinbefore mentioned [...].'⁶

Since these and several other contemporary treaties were to provide the legal basis for the prospective occupation of North-Eastern Rhodesia by the BSAC, Sharpe was keen to impress the validity of the agreements with Kanyembo Ntemena upon his superiors. He thus solemnly swore that the full texts of both treaties had been 'accurately translated and explained to the said Kazembe by the witness Bandawe in the Kiswahili language.' Sharpe's claim, of course, is utterly unconvincing: apart from the obvious linguistic problems which the hapless Bandawe must have encountered, it is not at all clear whether the non-literate Kanyembo could appreciate the long-term implications and irrevocable character of the written treaties that he was asked to undersign⁷.

⁵ The treaty was appended to Johnston to FO, 3 May 1891, PRO, FO84/2114.

⁶ BSAC to FO, 5 August 1892, FO Print 6337, p. 342, PRO, FO403/174. See also F. Macpherson, *Anatomy of a Conquest: the British Occupation of Zambia, 1884 - 1924*, Harlow, 1981, pp. 29-32.

⁷ The eastern Lunda historical memory seems to have consigned to oblivion the stipulation of the treaties, for E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People' says nothing about Sharpe's visit in 1890. This is perhaps to be interpreted as a proof of the fact that, when subscribing to the treaties, the eastern Lunda king was unaware of the momentousness of his choice. The position of Kanyembo Ntemena and his councillors in 1890 did not differ significantly from that of the Maori leaders fifty years earlier. For the Maori who signed the treaty of Waitangi, 'the very form of public discourse and decision-making was *oral* and confirmed in the consensus not in the document. It is inconceivable that

However important these considerations, it is not surprising, given the urgency of the Yeke threat in 1890, that the eastern Lunda king was willing to enter into an agreement which, among the other things, seemed to hold out the promise of immediate relief. While the disclosures of the Plymouth Brethren are alleged to have empowered Msiri to reject all European offers of 'protection'⁸, Kanyembo had no access to this additional source of knowledge. In the light of his own past experiences, the Mwata Kazembe may well have failed to differentiate between the BSAC and those external supporters that he had repeatedly fallen back upon in the course of his troubled reign.

The treaties notwithstanding, for the next two and a half years the BSAC left the eastern Lunda almost completely alone. Late in 1891, Johnston – who, as Commissioner of the British Central Africa Protectorate, remained responsible for the administration of the BSAC's territory north of the Zambezi until June 1895 – sent Crawshay to open the station of Fort Rhodesia, near Chiengi, at the north-eastern corner of Lake Mweru⁹. But the location of Fort Rhodesia, coupled with the lack of funds which crippled the functioning of the station before its abandonment in October 1892¹⁰, meant that its impact upon the Kazembe kingdom was negligible. In the eyes of the eastern Lunda élites, the assassination of Msiri in December 1891 was probably a much more significant event. Even though – as has been pointed out in chapter V – the eastern Lunda were to benefit from the disappearance of Msiri and the subsequent enervation of the Yeke occupying forces in Mweru-Luapula, Kanyembo Ntemena seems to have been disturbed by the news of the elimination of his old enemy, for the latter revealed unequivocally the extent to which some Europeans were prepared to go in order to achieve their aims. At the end of April 1892, when Bia and Francqui of the *Compagnie du Katanga* attempted to cross the Luapula from Chibondo swamp island, Kanyembo

Williams' explanations to them in Maori were wholly one way, that there was no response and no demand for reverse mediation. In signing the treaty, many chiefs would have made complementary oral conditions which were more important than (and certainly in their own way modified) the words on the page. For the non-literate, the document and its implications were meaningless [...]. D.F. McKenzie, *Oral Culture, Literacy & Print in Early New Zealand: the Treaty of Waitangi*, Wellington, 1985, p. 40. I owe this reference to Professor Giovanni Levi.

⁸ Sharpe to Johnston, 4 March 1891, encl. in Johnston to FO, 6 May 1891, PRO, FO84/2114.

⁹ Johnston to FO, 14 December 1891, PRO, FO84/2114.

¹⁰ Sharpe to Johnston, 17 December 1892, encl. in Johnston to FO, 2 February 1893, PRO, FO2/54.

'made a great noise, and refused out and out, asserting that he was under the English flag, in English territory, and wished to know what they, the murderers of Msidi, wanted in another country, etc.'¹¹ To be sure, Crawford is likely to have overestimated Kanyembo's understanding of the Anglo-Belgian partition; yet, it is not unreasonable to suppose that, following Msiri's death, the Mwata Kazembe had begun to distinguish between the British, by whose actions the eastern Lunda had not yet been affected to any significant degree, and the Belgians, who must have been regarded as potentially more dangerous. In October 1892, Sharpe returned to Mweru-Luapula and noted that

'the recent death of Mshidi [...] had evidently made Kasembe somewhat afraid of Europeans, but knowing me of old he soon became reassured. I made him a present, from H.M. Commissioner, of a large tent umbrella; he gave me a tusk and told me he should always be glad to see the English in his country; that he has the Treaty he made two years ago, and considered himself "the Child of the Queen".'¹²

Despite the foundation of a BSAC station on the lower Kalungwishi River in May 1893¹³, Kanyembo Ntemena's favourable disposition towards the British did not falter throughout most of the year. Having both succumbed to disease within months of their arrival, neither Kydd ('Kalindo'¹⁴) nor Bainbridge, the two Collectors briefly in charge of the station, had the time to penetrate the heartland of the kingdom, concentrating instead on policing the territory to the north of the Kalungwishi¹⁵. As a result of a series of anti-slavery expeditions led by Bainbridge, the Swahili traders of Itabwa were reported to be 'wandering about the country in as uncomfortable a condition as a hermit crab without a shell.'¹⁶ Bainbridge's activities, however, are unlikely to have seriously disrupted the slave trade of the eastern Lunda, for in June 1893, when Crawford paid his first visit to Mwansabombwe and surrounding areas, he encountered 'Nyassa Arabs [...] in large numbers, extremely polite and well dressed.'

¹¹ D. Crawford, 19 May – 4 July 1893, in *ES*, February 1894, p. 51. R.J. Cornet, *Katanga. Le Katanga avant les Belges et l'Expédition Bia-Francqui-Cornet*, Bruxelles, 1946, a book the editing of which leaves much to be desired, says nothing about the incident.

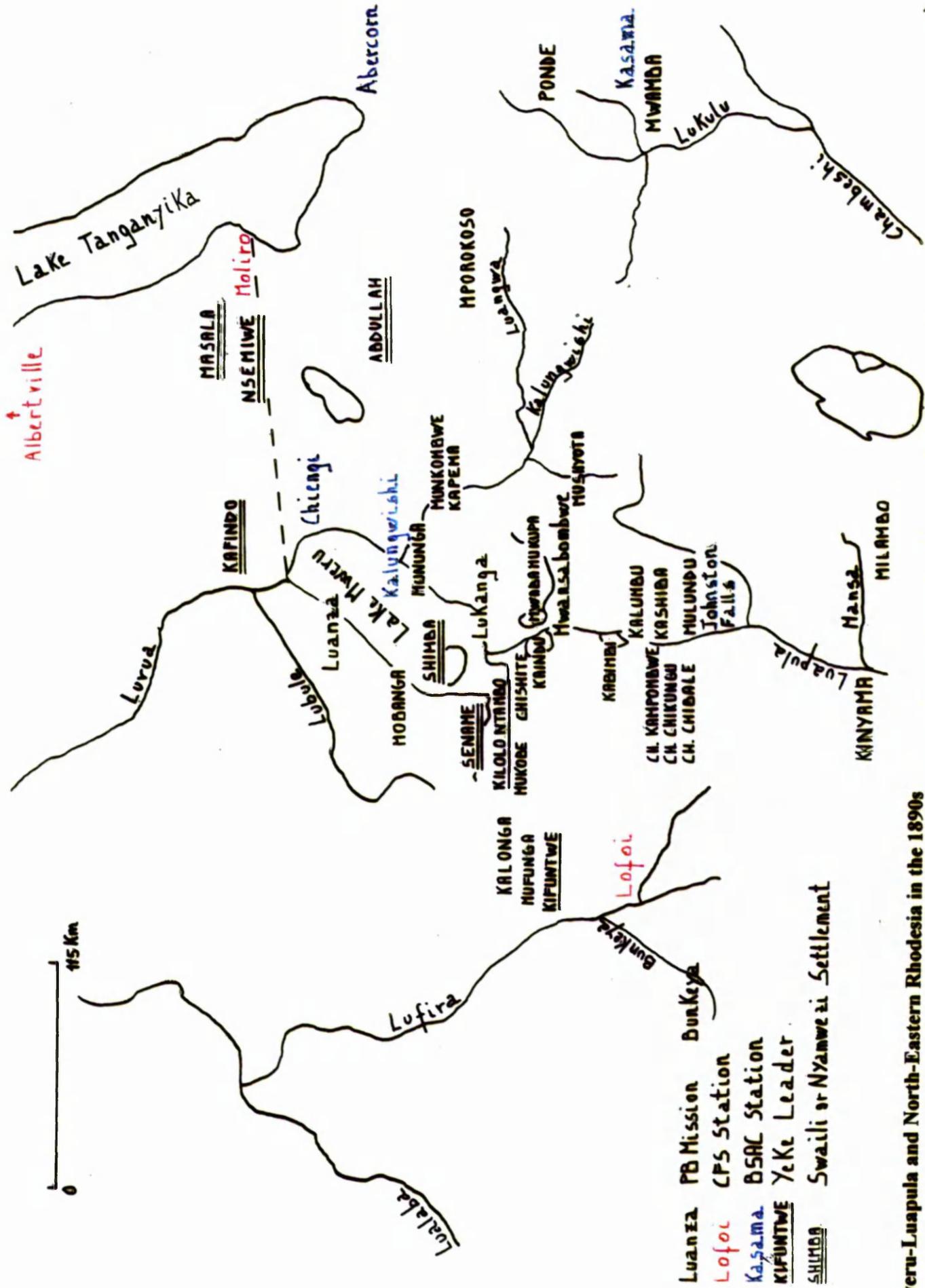
¹² Sharpe to Johnston, 17 December 1892, encl. in Johnston to FO, 2 February 1893, PRO, FO2/54.

¹³ *BCAG*, I, 6, 30 April 1894.

¹⁴ There may be some confusion regarding the identity of 'Kalindo'. According to 'Native Names for Europeans', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 225, NAZ, KSG3/1, 'Kalindo' was Collector Kydd, but according to Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 140, the nickname – meaning 'celui qui fait quelque chose qui ennuie les autres' – was first applied to Sharpe by the Yeke.

¹⁵ According to Harrington, who joined the Kalungwishi staff in 1895, an unsubstantiated rumour existed to the effect that the two officials 'had been poisoned by the natives.' H.T. Harrington, 'The Taming of North-Eastern Rhodesia', *NRJ*, II, 3, 1954, pp. 3-20 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 9).

¹⁶ *BCAG*, I, 4, 7 March 1894. See also *ibid.*, I, 2, 1 February 1894.



2. Mweru-Luapula and North-Eastern Rhodesia in the 1890s

- Luanza PB Mission BunKeya
- Lofoi CPS Station
- Kasama BSAC Station
- KIPUNTWE YeKe Leader
- SHIMBA Swali or Nyamwezi Settlement

Crawford himself recorded the 'decidedly friendly and encouraging' attitude of Kanyembo Ntemena and his keenness to display 'a lot of the finery given him by the British South Africa Company.'¹⁷

In October-November of the same year, Crawford returned to the lower Luapula valley and visited the eastern shore of Lake Mweru and the BSAC station on the Kalungwishi. By this time, the latter had already grown into a 'veritable "cave of Adullam"', attracting 'all the mal-contents for many miles around.' Along with former dependants of the Swahili of Itabwa, 'many' subjects of Kanyembo Ntemena – 'soured by the hand-lobbing and general mutilations carried on three days to the south' – had sought refuge inside the boma's 'formidable stockade' and submitted 'to the rigorous discipline of the government [...].' It was perhaps for this reason that Kanyembo's enthusiasm for the BSAC had somewhat cooled down: the king had become 'haughty with a slight disposition towards friendliness.'¹⁸ The Mwata Kazembe may have sensed that the seeds of future troubles were being planted, but did not take any action. Between the end of 1893 and 1894, his attention shifted to the former western half of the heartland, where his interests were entering into collision with those of the Congo Free State officials of the Lofoi station.

2) Shimba, Kaindu Kakasu and the Belgians (1892 – 1900)

Following the demise of the Yeke threat and the homeward journey of the refugees between the end of 1892 and the beginning of 1893¹⁹, Kanyembo Ntemena and the former renegade Kaindu Kakasu began to reaffirm the eastern Lunda sway over the western bank of the lower Luapula River. By the end of 1893, the royal strategy was well under way, for Crawford noted that 'all' the inhabitants of Kawama and the south-western shore of Lake Mweru were the Mwata Kazembe's 'slaves'²⁰. But these cross-boundary links of subordination and the tributary exchanges that went with them were

¹⁷ D. Crawford, 19 May – 4 July 1893, in *ES*, February 1894, pp. 52-53.

¹⁸ D. Crawford, 24 October – 11 November 1893, in *ES*, July 1894, p. 165.

¹⁹ See above, pp. 152-153.

²⁰ D. Crawford, 24 October – 11 November 1893, in *ES*, July 1894, p. 164.

bound to run against the well-known taxation policy and trading monopoly of the CFS²¹, which, 'depuis le début de l'occupation', had ruled that 'un chef étranger ne [pouvait] exercer aucune suzeraineté sur sol congolais.'²² Initially, what caused the Belgians to take a keen interest in the western bank of the Luapula was the rapid growth of Shimba's power.

Profiting from the sudden retreat of Yeke forces in 1891-2²³ and the early weakness of the Lofoi station²⁴, Shimba and his deputy Sename – installed, respectively, on Kilwa Island and the lower Kabesa River – embarked on a series of slave-raiding forays which terrorized and depopulated much of the already prostrated western shore of Lake Mweru²⁵. Throughout 1892 and 1893, Shimba and his following seemed almost unstoppable. At the beginning of March 1892, Stairs' expedition reached the Lubule River, near the north-western corner of Lake Mweru. The district 'appeared sparsely populated, and the inhabitants looked upon all strangers as probable enemies [...]. We understood this timidity on reaching a village called Parasonga. It had been raided and burnt by a Suahili scoundrel, Simba by name, who returned to his head-quarters [...] with slaves galore.'²⁶ Less than four months later, Shimba, spurred by the Lomotwa of *Kalonga* and *Mufunga*, joined forces with Kafindo, a Swahili raider whose stronghold was situated on the upper Luvua River, and marched against Kifuntwe, the local Yeke *mwanangwa*²⁷. Kifuntwe attempted to reach the CFS station on the Lofoi River, 'but a

²¹ R. Slade, *King Léopold's Congo. Aspects of the Development of Race Relations in the Congo Independent State*, London, 1962, pp. 175-178; W.R. Louis & J. Stengers (eds), *E.D. Morel's History of the Congo Reform Movement*, Oxford, 1968, pp. 33-46.

²² M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, pp. 40, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. The Belgians – wrote Crawford in June 1897 – always sought to 'accentuate [the] differences' between the Lunda villages along the eastern bank of the Luapula and the remaining Yeke settlements on the opposite bank, 'their idea really being to keep their people in the west interned as long as possible, with no inlet or outlet for commerce.' D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 10 June – 13 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 363.

²³ See above, p. 156

²⁴ Until September 1893, Legat and Verdick, the officers in charge of the station, could only count upon thirty soldiers of the *Force Publique*. (C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.) 'Since Msidi's death' – Crawford noted in June 1892 – 'things ha[d] swung round to the unpleasant extreme of every man doing pretty much as he like[d], and this [was] explained by the fact that the force at the command of Lieut. Legat [...] [was] quite inadequate to govern this large country'; D. Crawford, 25 June – 10 July 1892, in *ES*, March 1893, pp. 56-57.

²⁵ D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 16 May – 8 June 1897, in *ES*, November 1897, p. 343.

²⁶ J.A. Moloney, *With Captain Stairs to Katanga*, London, 1893, p. 241.

²⁷ See above, p. 141.

passage along the road was denied him by the Va-lomotwa, and following him into his own fields they cruelly murdered the poor aged man [...].²⁸ After Kifuntwe's assassination, Shimba retreated to Kilwa Island, whence he re-emerged at the end of the year, 'landing on the west shore of the Lake and harassing the chiefs there.' Shimba advanced as far as Kilolo Ntambo Muyofia's, who for the second time managed to repel the raider²⁹. In May 1893, Shimba was 'continually crossing to the mainland and surprising the villagers' of the south-western shore of Lake Mweru. Most of the latter had 'given up resistance and yield[ed] tribute, while those who refuse[d] [were] all together inside the stockade of Chilolo Ntambo [...].'³⁰ Apart from Kilolo Ntambo, Msiri's former army-commander, the only other local leader who seems to have been equal to Shimba's challenge was the then Mobanga. Mobanga repulsed Shimba twice, but paid a heavy price for his bravery. In December 1896, the old chief was still lamenting the loss of 'many of his people, specially women', who had been 'captured by Shimba, and [...] sold beyond redemption into distant slavery.'³¹ In 1893, Shimba was even rumoured to be planning an attack against the Lofoi station³². Legat did not find the report implausible and promptly reinforced the defences of the boma. In addition, a permanent sub-station or *poste* manned by four African soldiers was established near Kilolo Ntambo's with a view to controlling Shimba's movements³³.

Following the arrival of Brasseur's relief column in September 1893 and the substitution of Legat, the hitherto cautious policy of the CFS in Katanga changed abruptly. Brasseur – who never sought to disguise his profound racism and violent penchant³⁴ – added 'some fifty more soldiers' to his predecessor's limited force and set

²⁸ D. Crawford, 25 June – 10 July 1892, in *ES*, March 1893, pp. 56-57. See also H.B. Thomson, 19 June – 12 August 1894, in *ES*, March 1895, p. 66.

²⁹ D. Crawford, 1 January 1893, in *ES*, October 1893, p. 239. See above, p. 155.

³⁰ D. Crawford, 19 May – 4 July 1893, in *ES*, February 1894, p. 50.

³¹ D. Campbell, 28 November – 8 December 1896, in *ES*, July 1897, p. 204.

³² H.B. Thomson, 2 March 1893, in *ES*, October 1893, p. 238.

³³ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, and *Id.* to *Id.*, 1 March (*sic*, but 12 March) 1897, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15. At the beginning of 1894, the sub-station was transferred to Mukobe's, on the Lufukwe River.

³⁴ Brasseur considered 'tous les nègres comme des juifs de premier ordre [...] ils n'obéissent qu'à la force; avant il en venait quelques-uns au Lofoi et encore avait il l'air de dire "vous savez [...] c'est un grand honneur que je vous fais." Une première palabre, les plus tremblants arrivent. Une seconde, ils commencent à ne plus se sentir à leur aise. Une troisième, ils accourent en masse [...] Quand j'en aurai encore fait une vers le Lualaba, le Luapula et le Moëro, il n'y aura plus à 15 jours à la ronde que des gens ... ventre à terre! Voilà la civilisation cependant, et ceux qui la critiquent devraient se trouver comme cela au coeur de l'Afrique avec 40 hommes pour voir s'ils se contenteraient d'user de bonnes

about to 'thoroughly take in hand' the country³⁵. Having placed the Lofoi valley 'virtually under martial law' and established a mutually profitable alliance with Mukanda Bantu's Yeke³⁶, Brasseur began a series of campaigns of "pacification" destined to assert the power of the state and coerce local leaders to comply with the instructions relating to taxation in kind and labour.³⁷

Of course, Shimba and his *rugaruga* topped Brasseur's list of necessary targets. In November 1893, Verdick was deputed to lead an expedition against Kilwa. Verdick and his 30 soldiers landed on the island, but failed to take Shimba's fortified boma by surprise. The latter – doubtless built by means of slave labour – consisted of a stockade with '2 blockhaus impénétrables aux balles, pas de fossé mais des bois de 2 ou 3 mètres de hauteur qu'on ne pouvait escalader.'³⁸ As a result of this first abortive attack, Shimba's stronghold was further reinforced³⁹, and thus withstood a second offensive launched by Brasseur himself in May 1894⁴⁰. Three months later, Sename was still strong enough to ambush a caravan of the African Lakes Company en route to

paroles pour ramener ces moricauds dans la ligne blanche.' (C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.) Brasseur's ruthless methods are borne out by his African nickname: 'Nkulukulu'. 'Le "Nkulukulu"' – wrote Jenniges, Public Prosecutor in Lukafu between 1903 and 1905 – 'est un oiseau dont la face interne des ailes est d'un rouge sanglant. Or, disent les indigènes, M. Brasseur n'était content que quand il avait du sang jusqu'aux aisselles. Alors il rassemblait à l'oiseau en question; de là son nom [...] Quand un noir dit "udi na bukulukulu", il veut dire: "tu es un tyran, un cruel", mais il dit litt. "tu es un Brasseur"'. Jenniges to 'Procureur d'Etat', 1 March 1903 (*sic*, but 1905), Papiers L. Guebels, Dossier "Affaire Campbell", HA-MRAC, RG917.

³⁵ D. Crawford, 25 September 1893, in *ES*, April 1894, p. 101.

³⁶ F.S. Arnot, 3 December 1894 – January 1895, in *ES*, June 1895, p. 142. As early as February 1893, Crawford had noted that the Yeke's 'only chance of protection' against the popular hostility which surrounded them lay 'in their crouching behind the white men.' D. Crawford, 12 February 1893, in *ES*, November 1893, p. 251. See also E.M.W. Boyd, 'Europeans in Katanga, 1877-1923: the Effects of their Policies and Actions upon Katanga's People', unpublished PhD thesis, Indiana University, 1982, pp. 67-68; J.-L. Vellut, 'La Violence Armée dans l'Etat Indépendant du Congo. Ténèbres et Clartés dans l'Histoire d'un Etat Conquérant', in *Cultures et Développement*, XVI, 3-4, 1984, pp. 671-707 (especially, p. 692); H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 147.

³⁷ By the beginning of 1895, the Belgian officer had already accumulated between 1,600 and 1,700 kilograms of ivory, 'dont [il espérait] bien retirer une certaine %.' 'D'ailleurs' – Brasseur boasted – 'en supposant même que je n'en retire rien, je n'en exigerais pas moins le paiement des chefs, rien que pour pouvoir dire que l'on peut retirer de l'ivoire du Katanga parce que l'on m'avait affirmé qu'il n'y avait pas 10 pointes à avoir dans tout le pays.' C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 1 January (*sic*, but 12 January) 1895, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

³⁸ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

³⁹ Watson to Johnston, 18 May 1895, encl. in Johnston to FO, 29 July 1895, PRO, FO2/89.

⁴⁰ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, and *Id.* to *Id.*, 1 March (*sic*, but 12 March) 1897, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

Crawford's new mission of Chipungu, on the north-western shore of Lake Mweru⁴¹. A third expedition against Shimba's redoubt in October 1894 proved similarly disastrous. After taking part in the campaign against the Swahili settlements of Masala and Nsemiwe between Mweru and Tanganyika, Verdick enlisted the support of Descamps and Duvivier, the officers in charge of the stations of Albertville and Moliro, and advanced to Sename's with more than 60 soldiers 'largely made of Manuema men – ex-slaves of Rumaliza.'⁴² Following the death of Duvivier, killed on Lake Mweru by a wounded hippopotamus, Descamps assaulted the boma of Sename.

'Il s'est d'abord fait tuer et blesser une dizaine d'hommes, puis a du battre en retraite ne pouvant faire le siège pour cause de famine. Pendant ce temps, d'autres soldats sous la conduite d'un sergent noir avaient été dirigé sur Simba avec mission d'établir une palissade non loin de l'arabe. Je t'en fiche, les autres ne voyant pas de blanc sortent de leur trou et tombent à bras raccourcis sur les soldats qui n'ont que le temps de déguerpir. Il a fallu 2 jours pour les ramener de l'île [...] De même qu'à Sénamé, Simba avait ramassé toutes les plantations des environs et aurait pu soutenir un long siège.'⁴³

If Shimba's position and aura of invincibility were left largely unscathed by the Belgian forays, the same cannot be said about Kanyembo Ntemena, whose main representative on the western bank of the lower Luapula was made to pay a heavy price for his cross-boundary activities. On his way to Kilwa early in May 1894, Brasseur paused in the then Chishite's village and instructed local chiefs to provide the canoes for the lake crossing. While waiting impatiently, the Belgian officer was informed that Kaindu Kakasu – who had always refused to visit the Lofoi station – was in constant communication with the opposite bank of the Luapula and had recently forwarded some ivory to Mwansabombwe. Kaindu spurned Brasseur's summons and, allegedly, declared his willingness to fight. Brasseur took most of his 40 soldiers with him and proceeded to Kaindu's village, which he threatened to burn had the Lunda *cilolo* refused to come out.

'Il fallut envoyer 3 courriers, enfin le soir il arriva avec tout son peuple armé. Je le laissai s'installer au milieu de l'autre village, puis j'allai à lui avec 2 soldats et lui mis sans plus de façon la chaîne au cou,

⁴¹ D. Crawford, 23 July – 3 September 1894, in *ES*, February 1895, p. 36. In the spring of 1895, the mission was transferred to the Luanza River, eight miles to the south, in Nkuba Bukongolo Chipenge's territory.

⁴² D. Crawford, October 1894, in *ES*, April 1895, p. 101.

⁴³ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15. See also Descamps to 'Gouverneur Général', 12 December 1894, encl. in 'Inspecteur d'Etat' to 'Secrétaire d'Etat', 15 March 1895, AAMAA, Affaires Etrangères (AE), I, 200/4.

devant ses gens abîmés et prêts à s'enfuir. Sur l'heure je nommai chef son fils⁴⁴ et les renvoyai tous chez eux.⁴⁵

After spending the night in the village of 'Tchafonguluta', Brasseur and his prisoner returned to Chishite's. Kakasu was "tried" before the then Chishite and Mukobe. His old allies Makolati Kashobwe and Kilolo Ntambo Muyofia were also present⁴⁶. Brasseur exposed his grievances and, 'sans autres formes de procès et devant les autres chefs étalés, [*Kakasu*] reçut 6 balles dans la poitrine.'⁴⁷

The cold-blooded execution of Kakasu showed unmistakably that the Belgians were prepared to do all that was in their power to frustrate Kanyembo Ntemena's attempt to re-establish the unity of the heartland of the kingdom. Not surprisingly, the Mwata Kazembe was reported to be 'very indignant'⁴⁸. The king's 'indignation' may well have had a bearing upon his decision to turn down Carson's request to build a London Missionary Society mission in the valley in June 1894⁴⁹. Kanyembo is alleged to have justified his refusal by 'saying that when a white man came to a country a chief's power was gone.'⁵⁰ Despite all this, in the summer of 1894, the eastern Lunda king had not yet turned against the British South Africa Company station on the lower Kalungwishi River. Kanyembo had indeed 'several times sent messengers with presents, and friendly messages', which Watson had returned⁵¹. In view of what has been said above, it is likely that the king was still clinging to the distinction between BSAC and CFS; quite possibly, he hoped to use the former against the latter. As will be seen in the next section, a few months proved sufficient to dispel any illusions that the Mwata Kazembe might have entertained.

⁴⁴ Kaindu Chitandala. See Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kaindu's History'; Wens, 'Historique de la sous-chefferie de Kaindu', 1923, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

⁴⁵ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

⁴⁶ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 1 March (*sic*, but 12 March) 1897, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

⁴⁷ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 20 October (*sic*, but between 23 and 31 October) 1894, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

⁴⁸ Watson to Johnston, 8 July 1894, encl. in Johnston to FO, 19 November 1894, PRO, FO2/68. Watson, BSAC Collector and magistrate in Kalungwishi from the end of 1893, added that Kaindu Kakasu, whom he mistakenly described as a 'son of Kazembe', had been 'captured with some slaves he had bought in Mshidi's country'.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*; Carson to Thompson, 14 September 1894, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 9.

⁵⁰ H.B. Thompson, 19 June – 12 August 1894, in *ES*, March 1895, p. 67.

⁵¹ Watson to Johnston, 8 July 1894, encl. in Johnston to FO, 19 November 1894, PRO, FO2/68.

The assassination of Kaindu Kakasu was not an isolated episode. Throughout the mid and late 1890s, Kanyembo Ntemena's enduring ascendancy over the western bank of the Luapula remained a source of concern for CFS officials in Katanga. Shortly after Kakasu's demise, Brasseur received a request for help from Kiba, who refused to pay tribute to the eastern Lunda king. Kiba – a follower of Msiri who had usurped the then Chisamamba Kampombwe's position during the Lunda-Yeke wars – was allocated 'des fusils et de la poudre avec la promesse de secours au cas où Kasembe l'attaquerait.'⁵² However, given the historical profundity of the relationship between the two banks of the Luapula, the impact of these *ad hoc* interventions was bound to be short-lived. Only a stable Belgian presence along the western bank could effectively police the area and prevent Kanyembo Ntemena and his representatives from encroaching upon it. From 1895, Brasseur realized that the solution to the problem lay in the extension and systematization of the so-called 'sentry system'. By the beginning of 1896, the *poste* of Mukobe⁵³ had been supplemented by sub-stations near the villages of Kinyama Mwansa, Kabimbi Chinyanta and 'Tchafonguluta'⁵⁴. The sub-stations were manned by soldiers of the *Force Publique*, whose duties comprised the enforcement of the collection of ivory and, later, wild rubber and the patrolling of the Luapula 'aux principaux points de passage, empêchant le commerce de se porter vers Kasembé [...]'.⁵⁵ Inadequately supervised and driven by purely economic imperatives, Katangese sentries immediately developed into petty tyrants, lording it over their respective sectors 'as darkly as ever any black despot did.'⁵⁶ According to Campbell, Plymouth Brethren missionary in Katanga from the end of 1893, the sentry system was the 'greatest curse which [*had*] befallen the once prosperous country of Katanga.'

'It was inaugurated to serve one end, and that was to collect all the ivory in the country, and see that the Chiefs and the hunters sold none elsewhere. Ivory had to be brought, the alternative being villages burned and pillaged, and people taken to serve as State prisoners [...] When two black soldiers were deputed to a sentry post, how did they proceed to fulfil their duty? The Chief's wives were paraded, and village

⁵² M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur les Trois Kisamamba. Historiques. Généalogies', 1935, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; H. Legros, *Chasseurs d'Ivoire*, p. 131.

⁵³ See above, p. 164, n. 33.

⁵⁴ C. Brasseur to 'Gouverneur Général', 1 March 1896, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15. The number of sub-stations along the western bank of the lower Luapula swelled during the following years: they were nine in 1900, the year before the system was abolished. Van den Broeck, quoted in Hennebert, 'Rapport Mensuel sur la Situation Générale du District, Septembre 1900', 10 October 1900, encl. in Walhis to 'Secrétaire d'Etat', 14 December 1900, AAMAA, AE, I, 200/4.

⁵⁵ C. Brasseur to 'Gouverneur Général', 1 March 1896, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

⁵⁶ D. Crawford, 27 February – 28 March 1896, in *ES*, September 1896, p. 282.

women, and several of the best looking were picked out to become sentries' wives. The remainder, and the men, were then paraded and told off to build a large house for the white men, and camp for the carriers in the event of their visiting; also two large houses for the sentries. They had to plant gardens and to do whatever other work was required. Beer also had to be brewed regularly and brought; goats, fowls, and other food had to be produced. These sentries sometimes lived eight to ten days from any European officer. I have known them tie up Chiefs for a week in ropes and keep them tied until a sufficient ransom was brought – for example, Kashonwe [*Kashobwe*], on the Luapula, and others [...] I have met them on the road on plundering expeditions, travelling in hammocks with from twenty to thirty carriers – these, of course, impressed into the work – besides other carriers who carried their pots, cloth, provisions, and guns wherever they went, and helped them in their raiding, sometimes sharing the spoils [...] These sentries had to appear with the chiefs before the white officers each new moon, and, if the tale of tribute fell short, they were always in terror of punishment. It was a common practice to remove the sentries who were unsuccessful in securing sufficient ivory, and to replace them by others more ruffianly disposed, whose ivory-extorting powers had been previously tested.⁵⁷

All these abuses triggered off a new series of mass flights across the Luapula, similar in extent to those of the early 1880s⁵⁸. The first to flee was probably Kilolo Ntambo Muyofia. 'Hunted on a false charge' by the sentries of the sub-station of Mukobe, Kilolo Ntambo crossed the Luapula at the beginning of 1895. Kanyembo Ntemena, his former enemy, 'invited him to his court until the storm blew past, and this extraordinary act on the part of an African sp[oke] volumes for both [...].'⁵⁹ In June 1897, Kilolo Ntambo lived in a village to the south of Pembe Lagoon and longed 'for his old home down the left bank – "the elephant-shooting side" [...].'⁶⁰ Kilolo Ntambo's example was followed by several other neighbouring leaders and villagers. On 14th August 1895, Brasseur himself recorded in his travel diary that 'pas mal de gens du Katanga [*étaient*] filés jadis s'installer chez' Kanyembo Ntemena⁶¹. 'Protest migrations' continued, largely unchecked, throughout the late 1890s and the first years of the 20th century. At the end of July 1896, the hunter and explorer Weatherley, writing from the village of Kinyama Mwansa on the middle Luapula, noted that the western bank of the

⁵⁷ Campbell to Fox-Bourne, 14 May 1904. Campbell's letter to Fox-Bourne, Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, was published in both the official organ of the Society – *The Aborigines' Friend*, October 1904, pp. 201-214 – and, with minor modifications, in E.D. Morel, *King Leopold's Rule in Africa*, London, 1904, pp. 452-462. (A copy of the letter is also enclosed in Fox-Bourne to FO, 18 August 1904, PRO, FO10/811.) Asked to comment upon Campbell's allegations, Jenniges frankly recognized their substantial accuracy: 'Pour ce qui concerne les postes de sentinelles, la nomenclature faite par Mr. Campbell est exacte et la conduite de ces soldats sentinelles, telle que la dépeint Mr. Campbell n'est pas exagérée. Ces gens étaient les maîtres réels. Que de fois les indigènes ne m'ont-ils pas raconté de leurs exploits.' Jenniges to 'Procureur d'Etat', 1 March 1903 (*sic*, but 1905), Papiers L. Guebels, Dossier "Affaire Campbell", HA-MRAC, RG917.

⁵⁸ See above, pp. 147-148.

⁵⁹ D. Crawford, 14 December – 27 December 1895, in *ES*, August 1896, p. 232.

⁶⁰ D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 18 June – 2 July 1897, in *ES*, January 1898, p. 28.

⁶¹ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 10 October 1895, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

river was 'gradually becoming a desert'. The 'natives in the few inhabited bomas one come across are as timid as hares. Why? "Because we thought you were Kulukulu (Brasseur) or Késekééré (don't know his Belgian name). They are bad, they burn, and beat, and shoot."'⁶² One year later, Weatherley further remarked that 'no white man with any respect for himself' would have employed soldiers from Manyema. The Belgians 'unfortunately' did, and as a result their country was 'a desert', 'village after village' having taken refuge in British territory.⁶³ By the beginning of the 20th century, according to Campbell, as many as twenty villages had migrated to the eastern bank of the lower Luapula⁶⁴.

3) Kanyembo Ntemena, the British South Africa Company and the Plymouth Brethren (1894 – 1900)

For all the Belgian violence, it was with the BSAC that the eastern Lunda finally clashed in the summer of 1895. Given the fragmentary character of the evidence, it is not possible to examine in detail the background to the outbreak of the hostilities. However, some hypotheses can be advanced as to the causes of the worsening of relations from the latter part of 1894. Throughout 1894, Watson and Croad employed the limited police forces at their disposal to pursue the campaign against the Swahili traders of Itabwa and reinstate some of the Tabwa, Lungu and Shila leaders who had fled their home areas as a result of the latter's raids in the 1880s and early 1890s. On the north-eastern border of the heartland of the Kazembe kingdom, the then Mununga, Munkombwe and Kapema – all of whom had sought refuge among the eastern Lunda and settled near present-day

⁶² Weatherley to Sharpe, 31 July 1896, P. Weatherley's Correspondence, ARGS.

⁶³ Weatherley to Daly, 2 June 1897, NAZ, NER/A1/5/2.

⁶⁴ Campbell to Fox-Bourne, 14 May 1904, in *The Aborigines' Friend*, October 1904, p. 210. An official enquiry promoted by Rutten, Jenniges' successor as Public Prosecutor in Lukafu, confirmed that fifteen villages out of the twenty listed by Campbell had fled to the British bank of the Luapula between 1895 and 1903. As late as May 1905, many of them were still in British territory. Rutten himself added seven runaway villages to Campbell's original list. Rutten to 'Procureur d'Etat', n.d. (but May 1905), Papiers L. Guebels, Dossier "Affaire Campbell", HA-MRAC, RG917. On Rutten's early career in Katanga, see C. Moffa, 'Il Katanga "Terra di Nessuno" fra Tratta Schiavista e Nuovo Ordine Coloniale. La Costruzione dello Stato Coloniale nei Rapporti del Sostituto Procuratore Martin Rutten, 1902-1903', *Africana*, 1996, pp. 109-121.

Mbereshi mission – resumed possession of their former villages⁶⁵. In return for the BSAC's protection, Watson called upon these chiefs to forward a payment in ivory to the boma. The magistrate seems to have been prepared to go a long way to put the new measure into effect. At the beginning of 1895, for instance, 'Chocha', a local village headman, was temporarily deposed and placed under arrest for having attempted 'to defraud the Administration in the matter of ground tusks' by smuggling his ivory into Congo⁶⁶. It was perhaps with a view to increasing the revenue in ivory that Watson resolved to 'detach [...] from Kazembe's rule' the aforementioned 'south Kalungwizi chiefs'. Watson – who acted under the conviction that 'this northern portion of the Lunda kingdom was very loosely connected with Kazembe from its geographical position and from the extreme cruelty of his government and from the fact that the original chiefs were still there'⁶⁷ – is unlikely to have taken into consideration the effects that his decision might have had upon Kanyembo Ntemena's hitherto amicable disposition.

Late in 1893, at the time of Crawford's visit, the Kalungwishi station was already growing into an alternative centre of regional power⁶⁸. Watson's rule accelerated the process. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the BSAC did not have the means to set up a modern administration and bureaucracy. Since the articulation of political control continued to depend upon pre-colonial practices and notions, the BSAC was obliged to compete with local authorities on their own terrain. The ability of the Kalungwishi boma to provide a measure of protection in a volatile environment and attract growing numbers of clients meant that Watson and his deputies took on some of the attributes (such as the collection of a tribute in ivory) which had formerly been the exclusive prerogative of the eastern Lunda kings. This being the case, a clash between the two jurisdictions became almost inevitable.

⁶⁵ Watson to Johnston, 8 July 1894, encl. in Johnston to FO, 19 November 1894, PRO, FO2/68; *BCAG*, I, 15, 21 November 1894; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 56-57.

⁶⁶ B. Watson, in *BCAG*, II, 13, 1 September 1895; BSAC, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, p. 419. See also P. Lary, 'Aspects of Luapula Society', p. 20.

⁶⁷ B. Watson, 24 November 1895, in *BCAG*, III, 4, 15 February 1896.

⁶⁸ See above, p. 162.

In April 1895, Watson took advantage of Shimba's accidental death⁶⁹: escorted by 'thirteen Wanyamwezi police and eight Amambwe and others', he occupied peacefully Kilwa Island, placed within British territory by the 1894 Anglo-Belgian boundary agreement. Thereafter, Watson endorsed the right of 'Waswa', Shimba's son, to succeed his father and be recognized as chief. 'Owing to his youth, however, things were managed by a triumvirate of the chief men: Sudi, a middle-aged Zanzibari; Kofila and Siname [*Sename*], the two latter being the chief Wanyamwezi [...].'⁷⁰ The prerogatives of the holders of the *Kashinge* title – the Lunda *bacilolo* who had been in charge of Kilwa for more than one century – were thus totally disregarded. Once again – judging from what we know about the long-standing and still unresolved dispute centring on the administration of Kilwa Island⁷¹ – it is plausible to assume that Kanyembo Ntemena and his title-holders felt aggrieved by Watson's actions⁷².

Kanyembo Ntemena's unwillingness to forsake the slave trade seems to have been the spark which ignited an already explosive situation. In July 1895, having been informed of the 'presence of four coast caravans' in Mwansabombwe, Watson undertook a 'punitive expedition' against the eastern Lunda.⁷³ This offensive stood in sharp contrast with the extreme caution displayed by the BSAC in its dealings with the neighbouring Bemba in the mid-1890s⁷⁴. The Kalungwishi magistrate probably underestimated the military strength of the eastern Lunda and their Bemba and Bena Ngoma auxiliaries⁷⁵. Even though Watson's contingent, in this occasion, appears to have been relatively large⁷⁶, it failed to reach Mwansabombwe and was repelled on the Mbereshi River by a force under the leadership of Mwabamukupa I⁷⁷. Watson's police

⁶⁹ A seemingly reliable account of Shimba's last moments is to be found in G. Tilsley, *Dan Crawford*, pp. 342-343.

⁷⁰ Watson to Johnston, 18 May 1895, encl. in Johnston to FO, 29 July 1895, PRO, FO2/89.

⁷¹ See above, pp. 46-47.

⁷² In May 1896, according to Crawford, 'a Kilwa man (*i.e.* a Shimbaite) [*couldn't*] look a Kazembite in the face, and if they had stumbled across each other a few miles out from Luanza a combat would have probably resulted'; D. Crawford, 16 May – 27 May 1896, in *ES*, November 1896, p. 329.

⁷³ *BCAG*, II, 16, 15 October 1895.

⁷⁴ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 258, 269.

⁷⁵ 'The reputation' of the eastern Lunda – Watson wrote as late as 1899 – was 'decidedly unwarlike'; Watson to BSAC, 30 September 1899, encl. in BSAC to FO, 2 October 1899, PRO, FO 2/248.

⁷⁶ According to an almost certainly inflated estimation, it consisted of 'some hundreds of native Police'; Young to Gore-Browne, 20 July 1914, published with the title 'Bobo Young Relates His Exploits', *NRJ*, II, 2, 1953, pp. 65-71 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 69).

⁷⁷ See above, pp. 151-152.

'had to, well, retire as well as they could to Kalungwisi [...].'⁷⁸ As a result of the defeat, Croad was prevented from travelling southward to open the station of Fort Rosebery among the Ushi of Milambo Myelemeyele⁷⁹.

Watson's desperate attempt to present his expedition against Kanyembo Ntemena as a success was nipped in the bud by Weatherley's frank assessment of the most serious consequence of the setback.

Watson's retreat – he noted – 'has [...] roused the natives to a sense of our weakness – a weakness which ought to have been concealed at almost all costs, instead of displaying it to a man who, ever since we took over his country, has been more or less of a thorn in our sides, and who have been insolent and overbearing to almost all the whites who have visited him from time to time.'⁸⁰

In the latter part of 1895, Watson, albeit unwilling to accept an offer of help from Brasseur⁸¹, was certainly planning to take a quick revenge for the humiliation suffered at the hands of the eastern Lunda. Weatherley was distinctly unimpressed and remarked that 'to proceed against Kazembe, risking almost certain defeat with a very small force and next to no ammunition, [*was*] scarcely wise.' 'Kazembe' – he went on – should have been either 'crushed or left entirely alone until a more fitting opportunity present[ed] itself.'⁸² The soundness of Weatherley's argument could hardly be disputed. Thus, in 1896, despite the indications that Kanyembo Ntemena would have been ready to strike a deal with the BSAC⁸³, Watson sought to broaden the spectrum of his local allies and asked Weatherley himself to begin negotiations with the Bemba of Mwamba III Mubanga Chipoya and Mporokoso I Mulume. Watson changed his mind when the two Bemba chiefs declared that their willingness to fight the eastern Lunda was conditional

⁷⁸ Whereas E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', pp. 59-60, is not forthcoming about the role played in the battle by the Bemba of Mwabamukupa, the latter is explicitly mentioned by D. Crawford, 1 September 1895, in *ES*, February 1896, pp. 45-46, and 'History of the WenaLunda Tribe', n.d. (but before 1907), Kawambwa DNB, II, pp. 147-153, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁷⁹ *BCAG*, II, 16, 15 October 1895.

⁸⁰ B. Watson, 24 November 1895, in *BCAG*, III, 4, 15 February 1896; P. Weatherley, 4 January 1896, in *BCAG*, III, 7, 1 April 1896. Weatherley's observations incensed Watson and resulted in a rabid row between the two Europeans; I. M. Graham, 'A Quarrel at Lake Mweru: 1896-1897', *NRJ*, IV, 6, 1961, pp. 552-556.

⁸¹ Brasseur volunteered to put his forces at the disposal of the BSAC, for he assumed that the subjugation of the eastern Lunda would have prevented other Luapulans from seeking refuge across the river and caused those who had already fled to return. C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 10 October 1895, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

⁸² P. Weatherley, 4 January 1896, in *BCAG*, III, 7, 1 April 1896.

⁸³ In May 1896, Kanyembo sent two oxen to Luanza and seems to have asked Crawford to mediate between himself and the Kalungwishi boma. D. Crawford, 16 May – 27 May 1896, in *ES*, November 1896, p. 329; G. Tilsley, *Dan Crawford*, p. 365.

upon Weatherley taking charge of the subsequent peace arbitration. The tentative agreement ended up in a 'fiasco', and Weatherly 'told Dr. Watson what [he] thought of his stupidly selfish and jealous action in the matter [...]'.⁸⁴ The lack of reinforcements notwithstanding, before the end of the year, Watson was able to chase the eastern Lunda from Lukanga. A stockaded village was built in the area with the explicit aim of preventing the inhabitants of the heartland from acceding Chimbofuma Bay, at the south-eastern corner of Lake Mweru. 'Under Kazembe', Watson was pleased to report, 'this was an important place – his chief canoe port on the lake, from which its occupation cuts him off except by the Luapula route, which Kilwa commands.'⁸⁵

In June 1897, when the Crawfords visited Kanyembo Ntemena's 'huge' and 'formidably' fortified *musumba*, a new attack by the BSAC was imminent. Dan Crawford was indeed determined 'if the English appear[ed] [...] to go out under a flag of truce and pledge the people's cause.'⁸⁶ The assault, which culminated in yet another 'English defeat at Kazembe's north gate', took place shortly after the Crawfords left Mwansabombwe on 18th June 1897⁸⁷. Exception made for this rather obscure episode⁸⁸, throughout 1897 and 1898, the Kalungwishi police appears to have restricted itself to a war of attrition destined to block the northern lines of communication and trade of the eastern Lunda. This policy must have increased the Mwata Kazembe's resentment, for it exacerbated the isolation into which the heartland of the kingdom was being plunged as a result of the contemporaneous occupation of the western bank of the Luapula by the Congo Free State. Even at such a late stage in the confrontation, however, there still existed room for negotiation, which the BSAC's administration deliberately decided not to pursue.

⁸⁴ Weatherley to Forbes, 14 December 1896, NAZ, NER/A1/5/1. See also A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 280.

⁸⁵ B. Watson, 'Lake Mweru and the Luapula Delta', *Geographical Journal*, IX, 1, 1897, pp. 58-60 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 59).

⁸⁶ D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 10 June – 14 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 364; *Id.*, 15 June – 17 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 376.

⁸⁷ D. Crawford, 14 September – 4 October 1897, in *ES*, March 1898, p. 92.

⁸⁸ Weatherley, who regarded Watson as 'a perfect disgrace to the name of an Englishman with his morphia habits [...] and cowardice', thought that the magistrate had 'retreated through sheer funk from Kazembé'. P. Weatherley's Travel Diary, II, 25 June 1898, ARGS, MSS.

After the outbreak of the war with the BSAC in 1895, the only Europeans upon whom the eastern Lunda king could still rely were the Plymouth Brethren missionaries of Luanza. In June 1897, Kanyembo Ntemena welcomed the Crawfords' visit and made no mystery of his intention to use the latter's good offices to negotiate a way out of his predicament. The king appears to have been under the illusion that 'a word' from Dan would have been sufficient to 'clear out' the British⁸⁹. Crawford himself was impressed by Kanyembo's 'unconscious dignity and dispassionate demeanour' and went as far as criticizing the BSAC's policy. Instead of attempting 'to conciliate a man of this sort', the methods of the Kalungwishi boma 'ha[d] not been to England's honour.'⁹⁰ Despite all this, he could not help remarking the 'delicateness' of his own position, 'as far as [*the king was*] the vanquisher and not the vanquished. Coming in on the wake of an English victory would be different.'⁹¹

Although Kanyembo seems to have agreed to build 'a small rest-house' in the capital for future visiting missionaries⁹², it is not at all clear whether the Crawfords openly discussed with the king the possibility of founding a mission near Johnston (Mambilima) Falls. Be this as it may, Dan Crawford, encouraged by Kanyembo's favourable disposition and by the successful launch of the *Mtume wa Imani* ('Messenger of Peace'), a sturdy schooner with which the Brethren of Luanza hoped to reach and evangelize the riparian population of Mweru-Luapula, decided to go ahead with his plans. On 21st-23rd September 1897, Pomeroy and himself 'slipped over to the British side' of the Luapula a few miles down from Johnston Falls, and proceeded to the Bena Mbeba village of the then Mulundu, the site of the prospective mission. A few days later, the two missionaries received a message from Kanyembo Ntemena. The king enjoined his southern subjects not to harm in any way the Europeans, but urgently summoned the latter to Mwansabombwe to 'have a great palaver about a white man building up river.'⁹³ According to Grace Crawford, who had remained at Luanza, Kanyembo felt 'a little slighted' because neither her husband nor Pomeroy had paid him a visit before

⁸⁹ D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 15 June – 17 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 376.

⁹⁰ D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 10 June – 14 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 364.

⁹¹ D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 15 June – 17 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 376.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 377.

⁹³ D. Crawford, 14 September – 4 October 1897, in *ES*, March 1898, p. 92.

beginning to build the new mission⁹⁴. Presumably, the king's wariness had also something to do with the fact that his high hopes regarding the possible mediation of the PB had been blown up by the battle with the BSAC which had followed the Crawfords' departure in June. No doubt, Kanyembo's message reminded Crawford and Pomeroy of the weakness of their position, for at the beginning of October they 'darted' back to Luanza without stopping in Mwansabombwe.

On 24th December 1897, Pomeroy left Luanza with the intention of navigating to Johnston Falls. Along the way, he paused in Mwansabombwe and was informed that the eastern Lunda king – although wishing to remain on friendly terms with the missionaries – did not consent to his settling in Mulundu's village. Early in January 1898, Pomeroy was therefore obliged to cross over into Belgian territory and establish a temporary base in the village of one of the holders of the *Chisamamba* title (probably, the then Chisamamba Chibale)⁹⁵. A few months later, Mulundu set fire to the half-finished mission of Johnston Falls⁹⁶. Already in June 1897, Crawford had conceded that a British victory against Kanyembo Ntemena would have furthered the missionary cause in Mweru-Luapula. Pomeroy's expulsion from the eastern bank of the Luapula testified to the validity of this view and gave the PB a compelling motive to align themselves with the BSAC's belligerent orientation. Kanyembo Ntemena had no option left but to face the closing ring of British occupation in utter isolation.

At the beginning of 1899, the situation in the heartland of the kingdom was very tense, as attested by Weatherley's experience on his return journey from his third trip to Lake Bangweulu. On 21st February, Weatherley paid a visit to the then Kashiba⁹⁷: only the 'old and ugly' villagers gave him 'a good reception. The others at first hand bolted or remained hidden away'. Four days later, he landed at Cabu, the *iyanga* of the holders of the *Kalumbu* title, and was instantly confronted by a menacing 'mass of armed men'. Once the initial 'excitement and tension' gave way to more peaceful intents, Weatherley

⁹⁴ G. Crawford, 3 October – 30 October 1897, in *ES*, March 1898, p. 93.

⁹⁵ D. Crawford, 30 November 1897 – 1 January 1898, in *ES*, May 1898, p. 142; G. Crawford, 15 January – 31 January 1898, in *ES*, July 1898, p. 202. The same issue of the journal (p. 204) contains the précis of a letter written by Pomeroy on 15 January 1898.

⁹⁶ P. Weatherley, 9 October 1898, in *BCAG*, V, 17, 24 December 1898; P. Weatherley's Travel Diary, II, 2 July 1898, MSS, ARGS.

⁹⁷ See above, pp. 140-141.

was openly told that 'had [*he*] been any other white man' (and the traveller presumed 'they meant a Kalungwishi white man'), he 'would have been shot'⁹⁸.

Following the subjugation of the Bemba of Ponde and Mporokoso Mulume in March-April 1899⁹⁹, the days of the eastern Lunda were also numbered. In September of the same year, having ascertained that Sharpe, Commissioner of the British Central Africa Protectorate, planned to visit North-Eastern Rhodesia, Codrington, the recently appointed Deputy Administrator, wired him, 'asking [*him*] to bring up a small military expedition [...] to settle the Kazembe question definitely'¹⁰⁰ Codrington sought to persuade Sharpe by writing that after the clash of 1895,

'there has been periodical troubles with Kazembe towards whom our policy has been one of reconciliation rather than aggression [...] Last month [...] Kazembe again raided villages under our protection, and captured and put to death seven men. He has strengthened his stockade and has gathered to himself all the slavers and Coast men who are unreconciled to this Administration. The successes of the rebels in the Congo Free State, with whom Kazembe is said to be in communication, and with whom he has certainly expressed his sympathy, has had some share in inducing Kazembe to assume his present attitude [...] This country which is otherwise quiet and orderly is becoming unsettled owing to Kazembe's attitude, and it is distinctly advisable that he should be brought to reason, as he may at any time be led on to some action which would necessitate the immediate despatch of an expedition against him at a less opportune moment [...].'¹⁰¹

As I have argued at length elsewhere¹⁰², Codrington's reconstruction needs to be taken with a degree of scepticism, if only because his averred 'reconciliatory' policy can hardly be harmonized with Crawford's disapproval of the BSAC's 'dishonourable' methods. To be sure, it is highly likely that Kanyembo Ntemena continued to trade in slaves with East Africans from Lake Malawi¹⁰³, and that some former followers of the

⁹⁸ P. Weatherley's Travel Diary, II, 21 February, 25 February 1899, ARGS, MSS.

⁹⁹ A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 278-281.

¹⁰⁰ Sharpe to FO, 17 September 1899, PRO, FO2/210. After the BSAC had taken over from the Commissioner of British Central Africa the administrative control of the territory north of the Zambezi, an agreement still existed 'by which the armed forces of the Protectorate were made available for service in North Eastern Rhodesia in return for an annual subsidy by the Company.' A.J. Hanna, *The Beginnings of Nyasaland and North-Eastern Rhodesia, 1859-1895*, Oxford, 1969, p. 132 (1st edn., Oxford, 1956).

¹⁰¹ Codrington to Sharpe, 14 September 1899, encl. in Sharpe to FO, 29 September 1899, PRO, FO2/210.

¹⁰² G. Macola, 'La Fine dell'Indipendenza del Regno Lunda del Luapula (1890-1899). Il Mwata Kazembe X fra British South Africa Company e Plymouth Brethren', *Africa* (Rome), LIII, 3, 1998, pp. 338-366.

¹⁰³ In June 1897, 'Arabs [*had*] a settlement outside' Mwanabombwe and were also to be found near Mulundu's; D. Crawford & G. Crawford, 15 June - 17 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 376; *Id.*, 18 June - 2 July 1897, in *ES*, January 1898, p. 30.

late Mlozi (d. 1895) had sought refuge among the still independent eastern Lunda¹⁰⁴. However, the king's links with the so-called Batetela rebels are open to doubt, and so is his alleged refusal to enter into any kind of agreement with the BSAC's administration. If Collector Young's account is to be trusted, only a few months before the final showdown in October 1899, Kanyembo Ntemena 'on 3 or 4 occasions sent ivory and messengers' to Kasama, asking Young himself 'to come to his country and build a Boma and be his friend [...]'. When Young informed Codrington of Kanyembo's pliable disposition, the Deputy Administrator is said to have replied that the king had to be 'punished' for his earlier offences.¹⁰⁵ Codrington, in other words, had decided to make an example of the eastern Lunda: their subjugation would have not only inflicted 'a final blow' to 'Arab influence, the slave trade, and illicit traffic in arms and ammunition', but also 'reminded' all the Bemba chiefs that the Company was 'ready to make war if necessary [...]'.¹⁰⁶

After an initial hesitation, Sharpe acceded to Codrington's request and ordered Captain Margesson and Lieutenant Barclay, BCA Rifles, to join him in Abercorn (Mbala) with a force consisting of '12 Sikhs, 59 Rank and file BCA Rifles and one seven pounder gun.'¹⁰⁷ At the beginning of October, Sharpe and Margesson proceeded to Kalungwishi, where they were met by a 'further force of 12 rifles of the BCA Rifles' and by Codrington with 70 African police of the BSAC armed with one Nordenfelt gun.¹⁰⁸ In all probability, Harrington and Johnstone, the two Collectors in charge of the Kalungwishi station during Watson's furlough, had also secured the support of the Bena Ngoma of Mushyota II Mambwe¹⁰⁹, who appears to have allied himself with the BSAC in order to strengthen his recently acquired ascendancy over the Chishinga plateau¹¹⁰. On 18th October 1899, having been reached by a telegram from the Foreign Office which

¹⁰⁴ Sharpe to FO, 29 September 1899, PRO, FO2/210; H.T. Harrington, 'The Taming of North-Eastern Rhodesia', p. 12.

¹⁰⁵ R. Young, 'Bobo Young Relates His Exploits', p. 69.

¹⁰⁶ Codrington to Sharpe, 14 September 1899, encl. in Sharpe to FO, 29 September 1899, PRO, FO2/210.

¹⁰⁷ Margesson's Report, encl. in Sharpe to FO, 29 December 1899, PRO, FO2/210.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ See above, pp. 143-144, 146.

¹¹⁰ J. Vranken & I. Mwape, 'The Chishinga'; B.K.M. Mushyota, 'History wa Bena Chishinga'; Cumison's Fieldnotes, 'Shila History - Mununshi', May 1949; interview with Misheck Kaoma Kapesa, Kapesa village, 15 July 1999. E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p.60, also states that the British army in 1899 included several local African auxiliaries.

urged him to avoid, 'if possible', military enterprises¹¹¹, Sharpe was still confident that the 'Kazembe's matter' could have been settled 'without any resort to force, the arrival of small armed expedition having desired effect.'¹¹² But an ineffectual exchange of messages with Kanyembo Ntemena and Codrington's resoluteness – 'if you stop the show now you ruin our prestige, almost as much as if we sustained a definite reverse in the field'¹¹³ – convinced the Commissioner of the opportunity to act. On 26th October, Sharpe led his force to within seven miles of Mwansabombwe.

'Messengers were again sent to Kazembe inviting him to meet us and discuss matters in a quiet way [...]. The message sent back by Kazembe however was that he would not meet us, nor had he anything to say to us, but that if we proceeded further he would attack us. On the morning of the 27th October we therefore advanced against Kazembe's town. Before we reached it however we received news that during the night a number of the chief's headmen having deserted him, and a large number of his warriors having followed them, Kazembe himself had suddenly decided to fly, and that in the early hours of the morning the whole population of the town had fled, and had made for the Luapula [...].'¹¹⁴

Kanyembo Ntemena with 'a considerable number' of his followers took refuge in Kabimbi ('Kafimbi') Chinyanta's village, on the Belgian bank of the river, and the BSAC immediately began to build a sub-station in the 'deserted' *musumba*¹¹⁵. After spending a few days in Kabimbi's, the king proceeded to Mulundu's village, where, less than two months earlier, the Andersons had reopened Pomeroy's short-lived mission¹¹⁶. While at the mission, Kanyembo, whose misery was compounded by a severe attack of dysentery, received the BSAC's 'terms of surrender', which promised that 'if he chose to come back and give himself up no harm would come to him.'¹¹⁷ Before the end of the year, the king, escorted by Mrs. Anderson, made his way back to Mwansabombwe, the new headquarters of the Kazembe or Lunda Division of Mweru District.¹¹⁸ Despite the

¹¹¹ FO to Pearce, 4 October 1899, PRO, FO2/211.

¹¹² Sharpe to FO, 18 October 1899, encl. in Pearce to FO, 6 November 1899, PRO, FO2/210.

¹¹³ Codrington to Sharpe, 23 October 1899, encl. in Sharpe to FO, 29 December 1899, PRO, FO2/210.

¹¹⁴ Sharpe to FO, 29 December 1899, PRO, FO2/210.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 60, claims that the Europeans set fire to the capital, but this is explicitly denied by Sharpe.

¹¹⁶ M. Anderson, 24 August – 10 September 1899, in *ES*, March 1900, pp. 75-76. The timing of the Andersons' undertaking implies that in the summer of 1899 the PB of Luanza knew that Kanyembo Ntemena was about to be attacked *en force*. 'Poor old Kazembe!' – wrote Grace Crawford at the beginning of October – 'This is the month he is to be subdued, I hear. I am sorry for him; he was so exceedingly nice to us when there, but I hear he has been sending cheeky messages to Kalunguizi.' G. Crawford, 1 October 1899, in *ES*, February 1900, p. 47.

¹¹⁷ J.A. Anderson, 15 November 1899, in *ES*, April 1900, p. 123; Sharpe to FO, 29 December 1899, PRO, FO2/210.

¹¹⁸ The BSAC boma in Mwansabombwe was staffed by Collector Johnstone and twenty African police. After only a few months, the headquarters of the Kazembe Division were transferred to Kampana, on the Chishinga plateau, near present-day Kawambwa. Kampana was closed down in 1904, the year in

return of Kanyembo and his surrender, Mwansabombwe was only gradually reoccupied by its former inhabitants; at the beginning of 1901, some of them were still said to be living 'scattered' as a result of the BSAC's 'invasion' more than one year earlier¹¹⁹. As we shall see in the next two chapters, Kanyembo Ntemena – unlike most other Luapulans – recovered swiftly from the trauma of European conquest and, in cooperation with the colonial administration, laid down the foundations for a major transformation in the internal structure of the kingdom.

which the station on the lower Kalungwishi River resumed the administrative control of the entire district. BSAC, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1898-1900*, p. 73; 'General History of the Kawambwa Division', Kawambwa DNB, I, pp. 10-13, NAZ, KSG 3/1

¹¹⁹ Purves to Thompson, 25 January 1901, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 11.

Chapter VII

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE & THE PREDICAMENT OF THE EASTERN LUNDA TERRITORIAL LEADERSHIP, 1900-1950

'The strong try to force circumstances to their will and are often defeated, the weak survive by adapting themselves to these circumstances.'¹

From the historian's viewpoint, the appearance of a rich series of data appertaining to the socio-economic history of Mweru-Luapula is the most notable by-product of the establishment of a firm European presence in the region. This new evidence calls for a new approach and ushers in the possibility of broadening the political focus of the previous chapters. The eastern Lunda élite will remain the protagonist of our story, but its internal evolution and adaptive strategies *vis-à-vis* the European rulers will be placed in the context of the new socio-economic order which these latter brought in their wake. The aim of the present chapter is to tease out the implications of the intermediary position in which Lunda territorial leaders – those that colonial officials invariably referred to as 'chiefs and headmen' – found themselves from the beginning of the 20th century². The changing composition of this territorial leadership and, more generally, the interactions between the different factions of the local African élite will be examined in the next chapter.

The imposition of European rule transformed the relationship between eastern Lunda leaders and their subjects. Since Lunda royals and aristocrats were no longer the ultimate source of political authority, all the legitimizing institutions upon which they had relied in the past lost part of their meaning and effectiveness within the much curtailed boundaries of the kingdom – now officially restricted to the eastern bank of the lower Luapula valley. The problem was exacerbated by the British South Africa Company's early resolve to 'control the people through the authority of their chiefs and

¹ M.D.D. Newitt, *Portuguese Settlement on the Zambesi*, p. 170.

² For a discussion of the category of chiefly 'intermediarity' in colonial and post-colonial Africa, see E.A.B. van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, 'Chieftaincy in Africa: Three Facets of a Hybrid Role', in *Id.* & R. van Dijk (eds.), *African Chieftaincy*, pp. 21-47 (especially, pp. 34-42).

headmen'³. This meant that no sooner had the eastern Lunda territorial leaders been finally forced to acknowledge the British takeover than they were required to place themselves and whatever influence they wielded at the new masters' disposal and collaborate with these latter in implementing a series of entirely new policies, the unpopularity of which cannot be seriously disputed.

The difficulty of the task delegated to African chiefs and headmen has long been recognized by both anthropologists and historians of colonial Africa.

Their 'support was courted both by the Administration and the people [...]. Ideally, they were to serve two masters and please them equally, but in the rigours of the social change that was afoot and the emotional upheaval that went with it, they very often found themselves falling in between two stools or leaning towards one side or the other. In either of these situations they inevitably incurred the displeasure and the wrath of one of the two sides of the conflict.'⁴

Not all the scholars writing from within the framework of nationalist historiography shared Meebelo's subtlety, and the notion that mere self-interest induced most African rulers to obliterate their responsibilities towards their own subjects became the standard explanation for the emergence of an alternative, nationalist or proto-nationalist, leadership. The self-validating character with which this Manichaean model was eventually endowed resulted in it being applied to a broad range of situations, irrespective of regional diversities and the abundant evidence suggesting the need for a much more nuanced stance. The main problem with all the studies which, long before the publication of Mamdani's analysis of the institutional legacy of indirect rule⁵, have purported to describe colonial chiefs as obsolete and isolated agents of 'decentralized despotism' is that they have consistently failed to account for the enduring political significance and social appeal of chieftaincy in most post-colonial African states⁶.

³ BSAC, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, p. 407. K.H. Fields, *Revival and Rebellion in Colonial Central Africa*, Princeton, 1985, p. 39, has wittily qualified the period of Company rule in Northern Rhodesia (1900-24) as 'indirect rule' before 'Indirect Rule'. The 'enfeebled condition of the colonial state in Northern Rhodesia' during the first two decades of the century – Yorke has argued in a similar vein – 'caused a greater dependence upon local African agencies to transmit colonial demands than in other colonial territories.' E. Yorke, 'The Spectre of a Second Chilembwe: Government, Missions, and Social Control in Wartime Northern Rhodesia, 1914-18', *JAH*, XXXI, 3, 1990, pp. 373-391 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 375). See also *Id.*, 'A Crisis of Colonial Control: War and Authority in Northern Rhodesia, 1914-19', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1983, p. 22.

⁴ H. Meebelo, *Reaction to Colonialism. A Prelude to the Politics of Independence in Northern Zambia, 1893-1939*, Manchester, 1971, p. 99.

⁵ M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject. Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton, 1996.

⁶ See D. Maxwell, *Christians and Chiefs*, p. 5.

Chipungu's reading of the role played by Northern Rhodesian chiefs and the outcome of their forced inclusion in the colonial state has come much closer to providing a satisfactory answer to this question. Following some of Datta's earlier intuitions⁷, Chipungu has made plain that in the late colonial period Northern Rhodesian "traditional" leaders, far from being passive pawns in colonial hands and petty oppressors of their people, were generally able to profit from the ambiguity of their intermediary position and kept waging a 'struggle for relative autonomy against the central government even when they appeared to serve colonial interests by performing such critical roles as revenue collection, maintenance of law and order through Native Courts, and the curbing of nationalism.'⁸ This chapter builds upon Chipungu's analysis and seeks to supplement it by adding a diachronic dimension to it. For, having demonstrated the existence of a discreet populist strategy among Northern Rhodesian Native Authorities in the 1950s and early 1960s, it becomes necessary to reconstruct the history of the efforts and learning experiences whereby it became clear to African territorial leaders that the adoption of this posture was a possible solution to the predicament in which they were trapped.

1) Social Upheavals and the Initial Collaboration between Chiefs and Colonial Officials (1900-1920)

The humiliating defeat of October 1899 must have convinced Kanyembo Ntemena, Mwata Kazembe X, that his own survival depended on his finding a *modus vivendi* with the new European masters. At the end of August 1900, the king welcomed the arrival in Mwansabombwe of a caravan of White Fathers from Chilubula. 'Les jeunes gens surtout étaient plein d'entrain et répétaient aux marchands de caoutchouc qui nous avaient précédés combien ils étaient heureux de posséder les Balungu (les hommes de Dieu) pour les instruire dans l'art de lire et d'écrire [...]'.⁹ Even though the WF were forced to

⁷ K. Datta, 'The Policy of Indirect Rule in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), 1924-1953', unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1976, pp. 28-34, 131, 214-215.

⁸ S.N. Chipungu, 'African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia', in *Id.* (ed.), *Guardians in Their Time. Experiences of Zambians under Colonial Rule, 1890-1964*, London & Basingstoke, 1992, pp. 50-73 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 70).

⁹ Louveau to 'Monseigneur et Vénéré Père', 26 March 1901, WFA, Period II (Linhac), Nyassa-Bangweolo, 108-Chilubi Correspondence.

leave the lower Luapula valley shortly afterwards¹⁰, the eastern Lunda king was equally well-disposed towards the London Missionary Society, the first representatives of which reached Mwansabombwe at the end of November 1900. He was 'pleased' that the missionaries 'had come to teach his people' and ordered the latter to help the newcomers to build a mission on the lower Mbereshi River¹¹. Before the end of the year, the LMS missionaries opened a school which 'some' of the king's children appear to have attended¹². In 1902-3, Kanyembo was not only 'very kind and obliging' to European missionaries of all denominations¹³, but also 'assisted the Administration to the best of his ability'¹⁴. His death in January 1904 was indeed described as 'a great loss' for the BSAC. The king – wrote a local missionary – had not taken 'kindly to the invasion of his territory by the Administration', which was 'both natural and justifiable', but 'as he was brought to understand their motives and methods, they had no better supporter or more loyal subject than "Kazembe wa Lunda".'¹⁵

The forging of an harmonious relationship between Kanyembo Ntemena and the British South Africa Company did not shelter the inhabitants of the newly formed Mweru and Luapula Districts of North-Eastern Rhodesia from the sudden disruptive consequences of the imposition of British rule. During the first few years of the century, the peoples of Mweru-Luapula, already much enervated by the wars and slave-raids of the late 19th century, had to contend with a natural calamity of seemingly unprecedented proportions. No sooner had Kanyembo Ntemena returned to Mwansabombwe than a smallpox epidemic swept through the area, causing 'considerable havoc' and 'completely upset[ing] the normal conditions of Native affairs.'¹⁶ Prior to the intensification of long-distance trade and external contacts in the second half of the 19th century, smallpox was probably endemic in the Luapula valley: Gamitto signalled the existence of the disease in 1831-2¹⁷. The arrival of coastal caravans and their high

¹⁰ See above, p. 31.

¹¹ Purves to Thompson, 17 December 1900, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 11.

¹² Nutter to Thompson, 27 September 1903, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 12.

¹³ J.A. Clarke, 24 February – 5 March 1902, in *ES*, August 1902, p. 296.

¹⁴ BSAC, *Report on the Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia for the Year Ending 31st March, 1903*, p. 44.

¹⁵ Nutter to Thompson, 24 January 1904, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 12.

¹⁶ Goode to BSAC, 18 January 1902, NAZ, NER/A2/4/1/4; BSAC, *Report on the Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia for the Year Ending 31st March, 1903*, p. 2.

¹⁷ A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 56, 70-71, 80, 127.

mobility were no doubt responsible for the outbreak of some serious epidemics, such as that witnessed by Livingstone to the south-west of Lake Tanganyika in the late 1860s¹⁸. In 1892, one of the seven 'Bihéan caravans' operating near Bunkeya 'had the misfortune to bring small-pox with it, and owing to the gross immorality which always exist[ed] between a caravan and the natives of the country', the disease quickly spread throughout the region¹⁹. In September of the same year, smallpox was also reported to be 'raging throughout Mweru, Lunda, and Luapula.'²⁰

In 1900-1, Mweru-Luapula was probably exposed to two different infectious strains stemming from the Zambezi valley, on the one hand, and from northern Katanga, on the other. This, together with the turmoil and population movements which followed the final subjugation of the Kazembe kingdom, may account for the 'very severe character' of the epidemic and the incapacity of the local BSAC's officials 'to keep it within bounds'²¹. Despite the construction of segregation camps and the promotion of inoculation, 'death, death, death [was] all around' the Plymouth Brethren of Luanza in March-April 1901²². By the end of the year, smallpox was 'very bad in nearly all the villages' of the eastern Lunda heartland²³, and had reached the upper Luapula River and Lake Bangweulu. Near Sokontwe, Wright, a Scottish trader in ivory and rubber, 'vaccinated many hundreds of natives, mostly by the arm-to-arm method', but mortality remained 'high', for 'natives would not burn the huts in which victims of the disease had died, and the clothes and belongings of the deceased were carried away and used by others.'²⁴ In the summer of 1902, Lyons, Native Commissioner (NC) of the Upper Luapula Division of Luapula District, reckoned that 'over fifty' local chiefs and headmen 'had succumbed, besides numbers of their people.'²⁵ The following year,

¹⁸ D. Livingstone (ed. H. Waller), *The Last Journals*, I, p. 215.

¹⁹ D. Crawford, October 1892, in *ES*, August 1893, p. 179.

²⁰ Sharpe to Johnston, 17 December 1892, encl. in Johnston to FO, 2 February 1893, PRO, FO2/54.

²¹ B. Watson, in BSAC, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, p. 421; Goode to BSAC, 18 January 1902, NAZ, NER/A2/4/1/4.

²² G. Crawford, 23 March - 21 April 1901, in *ES*, August 1901, p. 294.

²³ Purves to Thompson, 22 October 1901, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 11.

²⁴ R. Wright, 'Trading on the Luapula, 1900-4', *NRJ*, V, 2, 1962, pp. 123-134 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 126).

²⁵ W. George, 28 June 1902, in *ES*, September 1902, p. 356. See also H.T. Harrington, 'A Short History of the Luapula District', November 1907, Fort Rosebery DNB, I, pp. 300-303, NAZ, KDF3/1.

smallpox, although abating, had 'not yet quite cleared away' from the Kazembe Division of Mweru District²⁶.

The presence of numerous caravans of European traders roaming the country in search of ivory and wild rubber aggravated the spread of the epidemic and contributed to the general instability of Mweru-Luapula in the early years of the century. The arrival of European fortune-seekers attracted by the natural riches of the Luapula valley and southern Katanga predated the completion of the BSAC's occupation of North-Eastern Rhodesia. Lucoschow, a Russian, settled near Mwansabombwe as early as 1895²⁷. His agents flouted the Congo Free State's trading monopoly and the sentry system, and bought much ivory and rubber in southern Katanga. Early in 1896, Lucoschow plundered the village of Chitandala, Kaindu Kakasu's successor²⁸, who, fearing Brasseur's reprisals, 'ne se défendit pas et s'enfuit dans les bois.' Brasseur's repeated warnings caused Lucoschow to flee the lower Luapula valley. He died near Bihe at the end of the year; his porters later told Brasseur that 'le malheureux Lucoschow voyageait pieds nus et qu'il n'avait plus de chemises et qu'en un mot il était mort de misère [...]'.²⁹

The number of traders in Mweru District swelled during the following years. In 1901-2 – apart from the Austrian Rabinck, who owned a store in Kanyembo Ntemena's capital and whose far-flung activities resulted in his conviction and mysterious death at the hands of the Belgians³⁰ – 'trading licences were held by several Europeans who either travelled the district themselves, or who had native agents located in different villages [...]'.³¹ By that time, the rubber-bearing vines of Mweru and Luapula Districts

²⁶ BSAC, *Report on the Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia for the Year Ending 31st March, 1903*, p. 5.

²⁷ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 10 October 1895, and *Id.* to 'Gouverneur Général', 1 March 1896, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

²⁸ See above, p. 167, n. 44.

²⁹ C. Brasseur to D. Brasseur, 1 March (*sic*, but 12 March) 1897, Papiers C. Brasseur, HA-MRAC, RG768/81.15.

³⁰ Rabinck's fate became one of the *causes célèbres* of the Congo Reform Association (E.D. Morel, *King Leopold's Rule*, pp. 261-296) and prompted an official enquiry by A. Sharpe, 'Report from His Majesty's Commissioner for British Central Africa Respecting the Anglo-Congolese Frontier in the Neighbourhood of Lake Mweru and the Circumstances Attending the Arrest of the Late M. Rabinck', *Parliamentary Papers*, Africa, 4, cd. 1536, XLV, 1903, pp. 631-642. For a recent reappraisal, see J. Marchal, *E.D. Morel contre Léopold II. L'Histoire du Congo, 1900-1910*, I, Paris, 1996, pp. 57-69.

³¹ B. Watson, in BSAC, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, p. 420.

had been all but exhausted³², and traders had extended the scope of their illegal operations in Katanga, to the dismay of the Belgian officials of the new Lukafu station³³. In the first half of 1900, Delvaux failed to lay his hands upon the English trader Wilson, but was able to catch Morton in Belgian territory with 800 kg. of rubber and 200 kg. of ivory. Having had his merchandise confiscated, the Irishman was allowed to return unscathed to his headquarters on Kilwa Island³⁴.

All these European pioneer traders were wont to abuse the power which their large armed followings conferred upon them. In July 1900, two visiting missionaries were surprised to find the Ushi village of the then Chisunka, to the south of the lower Luongo River, 'deserted except by three old women, who, but for Mrs. Anderson's presence, would also have fled. This result[*ed*] from fear of the rubber-traders' boys, who often invade[*d*] a village and carr[*ied*] off all the available produce [...]. The testimony borne by white strangers in many of these villages ha[*d*] been a bad one.'³⁵ Near the eastern Lunda capital, women, 'especially the young' ones, hid from white men. Purves, of the London Missionary Society Mbereshi mission, was sorry to report that 'they [*had*] good reason for doing so', but trusted that the proximity of his mission would have 'help[*ed*] to protect these people in the future.'³⁶ Missionaries frequently expressed their disapproval of the life style of rubber and ivory traders. Those operating near Johnston Falls seem to have been 'opposed to the gospel on account of its discipline [...].' Plenty of 'grace and discretion' were necessary 'to get a word in season with them [...].'³⁷

European frontiersmen resembled earlier long-distance traders, whose activities and harsh methods they partly embraced. This being the case, they were bound not to outlive the gradual stabilization of colonial rule under the British South Africa Company and the Comité Spécial du Katanga. In 1901, the BSAC began to collect a 3 shillings hut tax throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. Until 1903 the tax could be paid in either cash

³² In 1831-2, the lower Luapula valley 'abound[*ed*]' in 'India rubber', which was only used 'in the making of percussion instruments.' A.C.P. Gamitto (transl. I. Cunnison), *King Kazembe*, II, p. 118.

³³ Lukafu replaced the old Lofoi boma in 1899 and was taken over by the Comité Spécial du Katanga (CSK) in the summer of 1900.

³⁴ H. Delvaux, *L'Occupation du Katanga*, pp. 82-84.

³⁵ J.A. Anderson, 15 July - 6 August 1900, in *ES*, November 1900, pp. 349-350.

³⁶ Purves to Thompson, 14 April 1901, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 11.

³⁷ D. Campbell, 30 October 1901, in *ES*, February 1902, p. 75.

or produce and was 'practically a poll-tax on the able-bodied male hut owner rather than a hut-tax [...].'³⁸ In 1901-2, 6,270 out of an estimated 6,764 tax-payers inhabiting Mweru District were said to have fulfilled their fiscal obligations. The following year, the collection of the hut tax in both the Kalungwishi and Kazembe Divisions was allegedly 'attended with no difficulty except that of finding employment for men who wished to earn money.'³⁹ In fact, despite the BSAC's official protestations to the contrary, there is little doubt that the imposition of the tax in Mweru and Luapula Districts was accompanied by much brutality on the part of Europeans and widespread African resistance. From about 1903, Luapulans resorted once more to protest migrations, their time-honoured way of challenging overbearing foreign rulers. What changed was the direction of the mass flights, as many inhabitants of the British-controlled territory profited from the cessation of the grossest Belgian abuses and took refuge on the western bank of the Luapula. No doubt, some of the refugees were merely returning to the country from which they had fled at the end of the 19th century⁴⁰. All of them, as Rutten discovered in 1905, deplored the "Nut tax" [*sic*] and the procedures

'employés pour la percevoir. [...] Les Native Commissioner chargés de la perception d'une taxe aussi impopulaire, éprouvent de sérieuses difficultés dans l'accomplissement de leurs mission et en viennent à employer des moyens qu'ils blâmeraient avec indignation si, de ce côté du Luapula on s'avisait de les imiter. Ces moyens sont: l'emprisonnement du débiteur récalcitrant et l'incendie de sa maison [...] Il est hors de doute que [*ces*] moyens ont été employés souvent et dans les endroits les plus divers: autrement comment expliquer les dépositions absolument concordantes de Shiniama [*Kinyama*] par ex. et des chefs habitant au nord de Kasenga, témoins séparés par une distance de plus de cent kilomètres et n'ayant entre eux absolument aucune relation!'⁴¹

Early in 1904, Kangombe Mundemba – none other than the then Inamwana Kashiba, the most important non-royal eastern Lunda title-holder – abandoned his village on the eastern bank of the river and settled near the newly built CSK station of Kasenga. Massart, the local *Chef de poste*, apprehended him and 'le livra de la main à la main à Mr. Harrington', N C, Luapula District. 'Sans cet acte certainement irréfléchi de Massart' – Rutten went on – 'toute la population de Kashiba aurait passé dans le territoire de l'État Indépendant [...] il en aurait été de même de nombreux autres

³⁸ B. Watson, in BSAC, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, p. 420.

³⁹ *Ibid.*; BSAC, *Report on the Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia for the Year Ending 31st March, 1903*, p. 4.

⁴⁰ See above, pp. 169-170.

⁴¹ Rutten to 'Procureur d'Etat', n.d. (but May 1905), Papiers L. Guebels, Dossier "Affaire Campbell", HA-MRAC, RG917.

chef qui n'hésitèrent pas à venir chez nous, s'ils ne craignaient d'être aussi comme Kashiba livrés aux autorités anglaises [...].⁴²



Prisoners (desperate characters) at Ft Rosebery.

Illus. 9 'Prisoners (desperate characters) at Ft Rosebery'. Photograph by H.T. Harrington, NC, Luapula District, 1899-1911. Courtesy of the Livingstone Museum, Livingstone, Zambia.

Mudemba was jailed in Fort Rosebery and forcibly deposed. He was succeeded by either Tuba or Chikuswe Kalenga Mwalamuna⁴³. By 1906, the loss of inhabitants fleeing the rigours of the hut tax seems to have so worried Mwata Kazembe XI Muonga Kapakata (1904-19) as to prompt him to institute an unofficial patrolling system along the lower Luapula. Some of his paddlers – wrote the then *Chef de poste*, Kasenga – became known locally as 'sentinelles de Kazembe' and 'se livr[ai]ent à des actes de piraterie [...] pour appréhender et retenir de force les indigènes de la Rhodésie qui

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Cumison's Fieldnotes, 'Bukashiba', April 1951; interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 13 July 1999. The southern portion of the eastern Lunda heartland ruled by the *Kashibas* and the Bena Mbeba of *Mulundu* remained part of Luapula District until 1908-9, when control of the territory between the Luongo and Nsikaluba Rivers was transferred to Mweru District. 'Boundaries of the Luapula Sleeping Sickness Area', Fort Rosebery DNB, II, pp. 1-2, NAZ, KDF3/1.

[*avaient*] l'intention de s'établir chez nous.' 'Kitungu' and his followers had migrated to Congo in 1906. At the beginning of the following year, they were attacked by the eastern Lunda 'sentries' and prevented from returning to their former village on the eastern bank of the river to harvest the cassava that they had left behind. Four women and one boy were kidnapped and taken to Mwanabombwe. The *Chef de poste* ignored what had happened to them.⁴⁴

By attempting to keep them in check, the eastern Lunda king acknowledged the fact that the mass flights were partly a rejection of his authority and involvement in colonial policies. Since the beginning of the century, the principal territorial leaders in both Mweru and Luapula Districts began to be 'rewarded' with occasional payments 'according to [*their*] deserts.'⁴⁵ When, in 1909, these 'small presents' became regular stipends, the principle continued to be upheld that these latter were paid only on condition that the recipients had 'earned' them by performing the duties which the administration had assigned to them⁴⁶. Apart from 'assist[ing] the Administration in the collection' of the much despised hut-tax, Mweru-Luapulan chiefs and headmen were also called upon to satisfy the early demands of the BSAC for forced paid labour to be employed locally for portage and works of public utility⁴⁷. It is hardly surprising that the fulfilment of these tasks led the chiefs to incur their people's displeasure. As early as December 1900, 'many' of Mambwe Muyinda Mushyota's followers were reported to be 'hid[ing] in the forest [...] owing to the demands made upon them for labour by the B.S.A. Comp.'⁴⁸ The exaction of forced labour remained an important source of local grievances until at least 1920. In January 1912, the then Chama, Bena Ngoma leader of the Chishinga plateau, was asked to provide a certain number of labourers for the Kawambwa boma. Chimpilinti, Chama's son, passed the request on to village headman

⁴⁴ Gooris to Gheur, 28 January 1907, encl. in Wangermée to 'Gouverneur Général', 22 February 1907, AAMAA, AE, I, 332/272. It is worth noting that the data summarized above challenge Musambachime's contention that sizeable mass flights from the British bank of the Luapula began only after the implementation of sleeping sickness regulations in 1907-8; M.C. Musambachime, 'Protest Migrations in Mweru-Luapula, 1900-1940', *African Studies*, XLVII, 1, 1988, pp. 21-30.

⁴⁵ 'Chiefs Subsidized', 1908 (?), Fort Rosebery DNB, I, p. 406, NAZ, KDF3/1.

⁴⁶ 'Chiefs' Pay & Allowances', 1 April 1909, Fort Rosebery DNB, III, pp.466-476, NAZ, KDF3/1.

⁴⁷ Goode to BSAC, 18 January 1902, NAZ, NER/A2/4/1/4. Until 1914, chiefs themselves were generally exempted from payment of the hut-tax; G. Lyons, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', NAZ, ZA7/1/1/8.

⁴⁸ Purves to Thompson, 17 December 1900, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 11.

Mumpempa. When this latter's followers refused to obey the orders, Chama himself travelled to Mumpempa's, but his arrival only served to exacerbate the tension. The chief was attacked and badly beaten by thirteen villagers. While seven of them fled the area on the very night of the aggression, the remaining six were sentenced to one year's imprisonment and ten strokes each in the NC's Court at Kawambwa⁴⁹. There is probably no better illustration of the strained relationships between Mweru-Luapulan chiefs and their subjects during the early years of Company rule.

Even though tax evasion remained high throughout the first decade of the century⁵⁰, it is clear that growing numbers of Mweru-Luapulans were eventually forced to come to terms with the new fiscal burdens and their far-reaching social consequences. Given the still limited local opportunities, many of them began to seek wage employment in the white farms of Southern Rhodesia and, to a much larger extent, in the developing copper mines of southern Katanga. As early as the beginning of 1905, 'beaucoup d'indigènes de la rive droite du Luapula' were said to be travelling independently to the Tanganyika Concessions Limited (TCL) mines of Kambove and Ruwe in order to earn 'les quelques shillings dont ils [avaient] besoin pour payer le "Nut tax" [sic].' So afraid were they of the consequences of tax-defaulting in North-Eastern Rhodesia that, unlike early Katangese miners, they did not object to working underground⁵¹.

Labour migrations from Mweru-Luapula increased in 1906 after Robert Williams and Company (RWC), a subsidiary of TCL, was formed to handle labour recruitment on behalf of the newly constituted Union Minière du Haut Katanga (UMHK)⁵². Between the end of 1905 and the beginning of 1906, MacDonald, a RWC's employee, built a recruiting centre to the south of Johnston Falls. In May of the same year, 'Madona' was

⁴⁹ Kawambwa Criminal Case Record, 9, 1912, NAZ, KSG2/2/1.

⁵⁰ The Kalungwishi (Kawambwa from January 1909) Prison Register, for instance, shows that between 17 March 1908 and 12 March 1909, 233 out of 326 prisoners were convicted for breaching the 'Hut Tax Regulations'; Kalungwishi-Kawambwa Record Book, 1908-1911, NAZ, NE/KTL1/1/2. See also M.C. Musambachime, 'Protest Migrations', p. 31, n. 89.

⁵¹ Rutten to 'Procureur d'Etat', n.d. (but May 1905), Papiers L. Guebels, Dossier "Affaire Campbell", HA-MRAC, RG917.

⁵² C. Perrings, *Black Mineworkers in Central Africa. Industrial Strategies and the Evolution of an African Proletariat in the Copperbelt, 1911-41*, London, 1979, pp. 10-14; M.C. Musambachime, 'Proletarianization and Manifestations of Worker Consciousness among North East Rhodesian Workers in the Katangan Mines, 1911-1924', paper presented at the History Seminar, University of Zambia, 1983, pp. 2-4.

already described as a 'rising township' in need of 'a missionary, on account of the population and the great traffic passing to and from the Katanga mines.'⁵³ In the course of the first four months of 1907, MacDonald recruited as many as 1,138 miners and 2,437 carriers for loads destined to Kambove⁵⁴. A similarly large number of Luapulans were engaged to work on the completion of the railway line between Elisabethville (Lubumbashi) and Broken Hill, where, according to a visiting missionary, they were 'treated as so many dogs.'⁵⁵ MacDonald also purchased sizeable quantities of locally produced foodstuffs – most notably, dried fish and cassava – for both his miners and porters⁵⁶. Labour migrations – as missionaries in Mweru-Luapula were only too aware – 'drained' a territory of its 'smartest and fittest [...] young fellows' and threatened pre-colonial social hierarchies, for workers returned home 'with a smattering of "Kitchen Kaffir" and no end of conceit.'⁵⁷ Returning migrants were sometimes wealthier than their chiefs and looked down upon the latter's limited horizons and purely local frame of reference⁵⁸. However, for all their attempts to 'discourage' prospective miners⁵⁹, local missionaries could not realistically be expected to check the course of economic change and the powerful interests behind it. By the time the presence of tsetse flies of the *Glossina palpalis* species was detected along the Luapula River and the eastern shore of Lake Mweru, the transformation of the region into a reservoir of both labour and food for the mines of the UMHK was well under way.

The stringent sleeping sickness regulations implemented by the BSAC from 1907-8 slowed momentarily the pace of the transition. While labour recruitment was suspended until 1911, the eastern bank of the Luapula and adjoining lagoons were declared no-go areas within which all fishing activities were proscribed. Furthermore, between the end of 1908 and 1910, all the riparian villages between Johnston Falls and the lower Mununshi River and along the lower Kalungwishi were forcibly moved and

⁵³ D. Campbell, 5 May – 2 June 1906, in *ES*, November 1906, p. 434.

⁵⁴ 'Labour', 1907, Fort Rosebery DNB, III, pp. 179-187, NAZ, KDF3/1.

⁵⁵ G.W. Sims, 13 May 1907, in *ES*, August 1907, p. 297. See also W. Lammond, 16 March – 31 March 1906, in *ES*, July, 1906, p. 250.

⁵⁶ M.C. Musambachime, 'The Agricultural History', pp. 9-10; *Id.*, 'Development and Growth of the Fishing Industry', pp. 86-87.

⁵⁷ W. Lammond, 21 February 1912, in *ES*, May 1912, p. 194.

⁵⁸ K. Datta, 'The Policy of Indirect Rule', pp. 21-27.

⁵⁹ D. Campbell, 9 February 1907, in *ES*, June 1907, p. 215.

relocated on higher ground⁶⁰. The resettlement scheme was a massive – and yet very imperfectly planned – exercise, involving perhaps as many as 12,000 people⁶¹. ‘The Northern Rhodesia Government’ – an eyewitness recalled some forty years after the events – ‘actually did move every man, woman and child;

every hut was burnt down to prevent return to the villages [...]. The luckiest villages were moved a matter of thirty miles, but some were moved close on 100 miles. I trust I shall not witness such misery again. More people died of hunger and hardship than died of the sleeping sickness. [...]. The government tried to help the people a little but what they did was altogether inadequate, and crowds of the weaker and older people succumbed.’⁶²

Luapulans opposed these highly disruptive precautionary measures and persistently sought to evade them. Between 17th March 1908 and 12th March 1909, the convictions for ‘Breach of the Hut Tax Regulation’ still outnumbered those for sleeping sickness-related offences in Mweru District (‘Breach of S/S Regulations’; ‘Breach of Movements of Natives Restricting Regulation’; ‘Breach of Epidemic and Contagious Diseases Regulations’). The following year registered an abrupt change. Out of 209 prisoners gaoled between 1st April 1909 and 1st April 1910, only 39 were condemned for tax-defaulting, while as many as 93 were sentenced for violating one or more of the sleeping sickness regulations. The proportion of convictions continued to rise in the following months: between 6th April 1910 and 20th September 1910, a staggering 71% of the total number of prisoners held in Kawambwa jail were guilty of sleeping sickness-related offences⁶³. As usual in Mweru-Luapula, repression resulted in mass migrations. The latter reached unprecedented heights, as the Belgians withstood British pressures and made no serious attempt to implement similar precautionary measures along their side of the border⁶⁴. Already in 1908, ‘the stringent British sleeping-sickness regulations

⁶⁰ M.C. Musambachime, ‘The Social and Economic Effects of Sleeping Sickness’. In 1910, the Plymouth Brethren temporarily abandoned their Johnston Falls mission and settled in Kaleba, on the upper Mununshi. (W. Lammond, 7 November 1910, in *ES*, February 1911, p. 57.) The previous year, the old Kalungwishi boma of the BSAC had also been closed down and replaced by Kawambwa, the new headquarters of Mweru (Mweru-Luapula from 1911) District; ‘General History of the Kawambwa Division’, Kawambwa DNB, I, pp. 10-13, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁶¹ W. Lammond, 7 November 1910, in *ES*, February 1911, p. 57.

⁶² W. Lammond, ‘The Luapula Valley’, *NRJ*, II, 5, 1955, pp. 50-55 (the above quotation is to be found on p. 54).

⁶³ Kalungwishi-Kawambwa Record Book, 1908-1911, NAZ, NE/KTL1/1/2.

⁶⁴ ‘I cannot emphasise [...] too strongly’ – wrote W.H. Townsend Storrs, Medical Officer, Fort Rosebery – ‘that, as long as the lack of co-operation and the apparent indifference which obtains on the part of the Belgian authorities, all our efforts will be in vain. The opposite bank of the Luapula is thick with villages and more are being built (unfortunately it must be admitted that some of these at least are peopled by refugees from this side), and as long as these villages are allowed to remain on the river bank

[were] leading to the depopulation of [Kilwa] Island. The free-and-easy, come-and-go fishermen could not stand them; so one calm moonlight night they packed up in a hurry, and slipped across to the Belgian side [...].⁶⁵ 'About 2,000 tax-payers' seem to have fled Mweru District in 1910. Among the refugees was Nkuba Chifwalekene, the Shila paramount of Chisenga swamp island. Chifwalekene moved his capital to Kawama, and was appointed as chief of a large area by the Belgians a few years later⁶⁶. By the time the south-eastern shore of Lake Mweru, Mofwe, Pembe and Kaombe Lagoons were declared safe and fishing allowed to resume⁶⁷, it was estimated that as many as 10,000 former inhabitants of the Fort Rosebery Sub-District (or Division) of the newly formed Mweru-Luapula District had settled on the Congolese bank of the Luapula⁶⁸. In 1918, some trial villages were granted permission to resettle the eastern bank of the Luapula in Kaombe; four years later, all the regulations were finally lifted and the displaced people authorized to return to the original sites of their villages⁶⁹.

The sleeping sickness emergency is very likely to have increased the tension between territorial leaders and their subjects, for the BSAC relied heavily on the former to compel the latter to comply with the 'undoubtedly unpopular' precautionary measures⁷⁰. There exists, in fact, a tantalizing indication that Mwata Kazembe XI himself resented the regulations and was aware of the 'uneasiness' and 'dissatisfaction' which they were generating among his people⁷¹. At the end of March 1909, Chilungu of Mwansabombwe was caught by Government messenger Chitopi while entering a

affording every facility for fishing and the like, they will be a continual temptation and therefore a continual menace to our own people.' Townsend Storrs to Principal Medical Officer, 10 April 1909, encl. in Rangeley to BSAC, 25 May 1909, NAZ, NER/A2/4/3/10.

⁶⁵ G. Crawford, 17 July - 4 August 1908, in *ES*, November 1908, p. 434.

⁶⁶ W. Lammond, 'The Luapula Valley', p. 54; A. L'Heureux, 'Historique de la Chefferie de Kuba-Kawama', EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone, 1938; M.C. Musambachime, 'Protest Migrations', pp. 28-30; *Id.*, 'The Social and Economic Effects of Sleeping Sickness', pp. 160-161.

⁶⁷ 'Indaba Held at Kawambwa on 17 January 1914', in G. Lyons, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', encl. in *Id.*, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', NAZ, ZA7/1/1/8.

⁶⁸ C.R. Rennie, 'Fort Rosebery Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', encl. in G. Lyons, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', NAZ, ZA7/1/1/8.

⁶⁹ G. Lammond, in *ES*, December 1918, p. 306; M.C. Musambachime, 'The Social and Economic Effects of Sleeping Sickness', pp. 165-166.

⁷⁰ M.J.B. Otter, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Extracts from the Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1918', encl. in E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Extracts from the Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1918', NAZ, ZA7/3/6.

⁷¹ J.C.C. Coxhead, 'Report on Native Affairs for the Year Ending 31 March, 1910', NAZ, NER/A8/1/4.

forbidden area in his canoe. Chitopi tried unsuccessfully to arrest the offender. Unable to overcome Chilungu's resistance, the messenger paid a visit to the royal capital and asked Muonga Kapakata to help him bring Chilungu to his senses. Not only did the king refuse to collaborate but, after taking Chilungu away, he also struck Chitopi three times. Tried in the Court of the NC, Chilungu was 'found guilty of resisting [*a*] messenger in the execution of his duty' and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. Significantly, Muonga Kapakata was not even rebuked for his high-handed action⁷².

Even though the sleeping sickness crisis might have impressed upon the eastern Lunda leaders the urgent need to dissociate themselves from the most obviously vexatious measures sponsored by colonial authorities, the outbreak of the First World War and its effects in Mweru-Luapula led them to collide once more with their people's interests and expectations. Due to its relative proximity to the Anglo-German border and to the Luapula valley's population density and agricultural potential, Mweru-Luapula District became a fundamental purveyor of military porters and foodstuffs destined to Abercorn and surrounding areas. From 1915, a 'levy' was imposed on Kawambwa 'natives for meal for the native troops.'⁷³ Between 31st March 1915 and 31st March 1916, 280,000 lbs. of foodstuffs were forwarded to the northern border from Kawambwa Sub-District. In the same year, as many as 10,000 Africans were employed for 'war-work', an unknown proportion of these being recruited as long-distance porters⁷⁴. 'By the end of July 1916, out of 2,367,190 lbs of foodstuffs actually supplied to the border area, the Mweru and Luapula regions supplied 554,000 lbs, nearly twenty-five per cent of the whole. This was compared to a mere 200,000 lbs supplied from East Luangwa district [...] and 260,000 lbs from Kasama area.' As many as 800,000 lbs. might have been supplied from Mweru-Luapula in the course of the following year. Not surprisingly, the District became known as the 'granary of the north'⁷⁵. Between May 1916 and

⁷² Kawambwa Criminal Record, 3, 1909, NAZ, NE/KTL1/1/2. In 1913-4, assaults against patrols of sleeping sickness guards were still a frequent occurrence on the lower Luapula; G. Lyons, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', encl. in *Id.*, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', NAZ, ZA7/1/1/8.

⁷³ W. Lammond, 19 May 1915, in *ES*, August 1915, p. 295.

⁷⁴ P.J.C. Reardon, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1916', encl. in E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1916', NAZ, ZA7/1/3/8.

⁷⁵ E. Yorke, 'A Crisis of Colonial Control', p. 186, 190, 234.

November 1917, 3,388 Kawambwa residents (or 30% of the taxable males in the Sub-District) were engaged for six months or more to transport loads to the northern border⁷⁶.

Although Mweru-Luapulans were paid for their services, military portage – in the words of the then DC – could ‘hardly be called popular’⁷⁷. The unpopularity of the task was not only due to the strenuous efforts which it entailed or the life-threatening sanitary conditions in which carriers were forced to operate⁷⁸. Equally important in African eyes was the length of the period they were required to spend away from home. None of the porters engaged in 1917 were ‘less than eight months absent from their villages, and a great number even ten to twelve months according to their luck in being relieved [...]’. No doubt, the consequences of the resulting contraction of the locally available agricultural manpower were more immediately felt on the Chishinga plateau, where *citemene* was widely practised. In 1917-8, ‘many villages’ on the plateau were reported to be suffering from a ‘considerable shortage of food, almost amounting to starvation’⁷⁹. But the people of the richer lower Luapula valley were hit hard too. Having gone ‘long distances as carriers’ and ‘supplied food to the degree of starvation’, it was ‘no secret – and not a surprise – that they [*had*] become very tired of the war.’⁸⁰ In the second half of 1917, ‘Lunda natives’ – a ‘poor lot physically’ – were said to be giving ‘a good deal of trouble in collecting.’ A ‘large number’ of them ‘succeeded in avoiding the Messengers, headmen and Officials, by getting across the Luapula into Congo territory.’⁸¹ ‘Chiefs and Headmen’ were unable to ‘stop these desertions as the natives usually clear[*ed*] off in the night.’⁸² At the outset of the war, African leaders in Mweru-Luapula District had been informed that they would have been ‘liable to punishment if they [*did*] not provide food and carriers for the troops [...] on the frontier.’⁸³ They were thus left with little choice but to collaborate with the British war-effort and face the ensuing popular hostility. Between 14 June 1916 and the end of the year, as many as 111 Kawambwa residents were either fined or imprisoned for refusing to carry loads to Abercorn. The extent to which the nature of the role played by local chiefs mingled with that of colonial officials is illustrated by the fact that the crime with which these Africans were charged in the NC’s Court was ‘Breach of Native Customary Law, i.e.

⁷⁶ E.A. Averay Jones, ‘Kawambwa Sub-District, Half-Yearly Report for the Half-Year Ending 30 September 1917’, NAZ, ZA7/3/5; M.J.B. Otter, ‘Kawambwa Sub-District, Extracts from the Annual

Disobedience of Chiefs' Orders'. The 111 accused were convicted in a total of 18 proceedings: Mushyota IV Chishyeta was the injured party in seven of them, Mwata Kazembe XI Muonga Kapakata in three⁸⁴.

2) When 'Kazembe Came as at War': the Trial of Chinyanta Kasasa (December 1920)

After twenty years of colonial rule, the chiefs' popularity and standing in Mweru-Luapula were at an all-time low. Some Belgian officials, struck by the increasing opposition to chiefly customary exactions in produce and labour, went so far as to doubt whether in the future 'l'institution des chefferies pourra se maintenir'⁸⁵. In Mweru-Luapula District, the end of the Great War was also followed by the ravages of the

Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1918', encl. in E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Extracts from the Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1918', NAZ, ZA7/3/6.

⁷⁷ E.A. Averay Jones, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Half-Yearly Report for the Half-Year Ending 30 September 1917', NAZ, ZA7/3/5.

⁷⁸ Seventy-six (or 2,2%) of the 3,388 porters enlisted between May 1916 and November 1917 died during their term of engagement. In trying to account for this 'high mortality', Otter, NC, Kawambwa Sub-District, conceded that 'the work required of Porters [was] undoubtedly heavy and [...] likely to exhaust any not physically fit.' (M.J.B. Otter, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Extracts from the Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1918', encl. in E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Extracts from the Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1918', NAZ, ZA7/3/6.) The harshness of the treatment meted out to military porters from Mweru-Luapula is a recurrent theme in a series of interviews collected in the early 1970s around the town of Mansa (Fort Rosebery): University of Zambia History Department, 'Joint History Research Project', unpublished typescript, 1974. See also E. Yorke, 'A Crisis of Colonial Control', pp. 169-181.

⁷⁹ E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Extracts from the Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1918', NAZ, ZA7/3/6.

⁸⁰ H.C. Nutter, 'Mbereshi Annual Report for 1918', ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Reports, box 3. Worst affected of all were the inhabitants of the country between Fort Rosebery and Lake Bangweulu, 'many' of whom died as a result of a 'serious famine' brought about by 'the local demands for food and men for work in "German" East Africa'; D. Campbell, 19 January 1918, in *ES*, May 1918, p. 130; *Id.*, 18 April 1918, in *ES*, September 1918, p. 232.

⁸¹ E.A. Averay Jones, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Quarterly Report for the Quarter Ending 30 September 1917', NAZ, ZA7/3/5.

⁸² C.R. Rennie, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Report for the Half-Year Ending 30 September 1918', NAZ, ZA7/3/6.

⁸³ E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1915', NAZ, ZA7/1/2/8. See also E. Yorke, 'A Crisis of Colonial Control', p. 222.

⁸⁴ Kawambwa Criminal Cases Records, June 1916 - 1917, NAZ, KSG2/2/2.

⁸⁵ *Commissaire de District*, 'District du Haut-Luapula, Rapport Trimestriel sur l'Administration Générale, 4ème Trimestre 1916', AAMAA, AI, AIMO, 1697/9377.

worldwide influenza pandemic⁸⁶, and by a sharp increase in the yearly poll-tax (from 5 to 10 shillings), which fomented further bitterness among ordinary Luapulans⁸⁷.

It is in this context of dwindling chiefly legitimacy that we must place one of the most dramatic episodes of the colonial history of the kingdom of Kazembe. Early in December 1920, Chinyanta Kasasa, the newly appointed Mwata Kazembe XII⁸⁸, was given instructions by the boma to tour the villages around Mofwe Lagoon and collect the increased tax from their inhabitants. From the outset, the king encountered a resolute opposition, as most of the male inhabitants of the villages that he meant to visit fled as soon as his retinue approached. Chinyanta reacted by detaining the women whose consorts he suspected to have run away. The hostages were released only after their husbands had come out of their hiding places. When the news of what was happening reached Kawambwa, NC Dewhurst, fearing complications, sent a letter to Chinyanta asking him to free all the women in his charge and avoid any inconsiderate action. Despite receiving these orders, the king appears not to have changed his conduct. On 4th December, Chinyanta and his porters stopped in the then Shanyemba's village, near the northern end of Mofwe. While collecting the tax, the king ordered all the women of the village to be paraded before him; Bwalya and Mwafe, whose husbands were nowhere to be found, were taken as prisoners. As the king's party was leaving the village, Chimbalanga, Mwafe's husband, emerged from his hide-out and ran up to the royal *umuselo*. Protesting his and his wife's innocence, he began to shake violently the king's hammock and cut one of its poles with his axe. This outrageous behaviour sparked Chinyanta's fury. After flogging and severely beating Chimbalanga and Bwalya's father,

⁸⁶ Mwata Kazembe Muonga Kapakata was one of the 1,100 Kawambwa residents who seem to have succumbed to the disease in 1919. M.C. Musambachime, 'The Social and Economic Effects of the 1918-1919 Influenza Epidemic in Northern Rhodesia', unpublished typescript, 1993, p. 22; Chinyanta Nankula to DC (Kawambwa), 31 March 1945, Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 290, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁸⁷ As early as 1916, four years before the actual implementation of the new tax, Averay Jones, DC, Mweru-Luapula, expected 'the Natives [to] experience some difficulty in earning their 10/-, unless the country develop[ed] considerably'. (E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1916', NAZ, ZA7/1/3/8.) Wareham, a LMS missionary evacuated to Mbereshi in 1915, reacted angrily to the news of the planned tax rise: 'the Administration are such fools. They seem to think that because the southern portion of the territory about the Zambezi can stand it, that all the territory can. [...] It is not just that a man should have to work about 3 months in order to pay his tax.' Wareham to Hawkins, 13 October 1915, ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Correspondence, box 17.

⁸⁸ Chinyanta Kasasa (1919-35) was the son of the usurper Muonga Sunkutu, Mwata Kazembe VII. But since there is nothing to suggest that his accession was contested, it is unlikely that the events discussed in this section were in any way related to the new king's family background. (For a discussion of the selection of the *Mwata Kazembes* in the first half of the 20th century, see below, pp. 210-212.)

the king and his followers returned to the centre of the village. In the words of Julius, a 25-year-old resident, they 'came as at war.' While some of his *umuselo*-bearers 'ran amok' in the village, beating people and confiscating goods worth £5, Chinyanta forced eight women into a hut, stripped them naked and sexually abused one of them. The other women, still undressed, were taken out of the hut and humiliated by being paraded before a fire. As 'divisional headman' Chiboshi⁸⁹ – who had been summoned to Shanyemba's village by the eastern Lunda king as soon as the troubles had started – openly complained against the abuses which were being perpetrated, the prisoners were given their clothes back. But for six of them the ordeal was far from over. After carrying heavy loads of beer to the nearby village of Mwimbe Mulundu⁹⁰, they were detained in a hut throughout the night; four of them were repeatedly raped by four of the king's porters. Only the next morning were they finally set free⁹¹.

The ensuing trial lasted four days (15-18 December) and was exceptionally attended by Rev. Freshwater of Mbereshi mission. Chinyanta Kasasa was found guilty of 'indecent assault' and 'false imprisonment'. The charge of assault relating to the beating of Chimbalanga was dismissed, as Dewhurst judged that the victim had behaved in 'a violent and cheeky manner without showing the respect which a Chief has a right to expect. He probably deserved a beating.' The eastern Lunda king was fined £5, £2.10.0 of which were set aside to compensate the women who had been abused. He was also enjoined to restore all the properties that his followers had stolen from Shanyemba's villagers or, alternatively, pay these latter £5. Furthermore, since the NC deemed it necessary to ensure that the king would not have retaliated against the complainants, he ordered Chinyanta 'to keep the peace for a period of one year and to pay into court a security of £5'. Dewhurst was well aware of the leniency of the sentence⁹², and felt impelled to justify it.

⁸⁹ On the ascent of Chiboshi, see below, p. 219.

⁹⁰ Mwimbe Mulundu was the Bena Mbeba leader of Johnston Falls. Both he and the then Kashiba had been relocated along the eastern shore of Mofwe as a result of the resettlement scheme of 1908-1910 (see above, pp. 192-193). Interview with Kabaso Makanta Mulundu & Elders, Mulundu village, 8 April 1999; interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 13 July 1999.

⁹¹ Kawambwa Criminal Case Records, 90, 1920, NAZ, KSG2/2/4.

⁹² The preferential treatment accorded to the eastern Lunda king is borne out by the outcome of the separate proceedings instituted against Mwansabombwe, Tente, Chisesa and Pesu, the *umuselo*-bearers who stood accused of sexually abusing four of the women kept overnight in Mwimbe Mulundu's village. Unlike Chinyanta, charged with 'indecent assault', the four men were charged with the more

'In considering the sentence' – he wrote – 'the court takes into consideration the difficult position in which Kazembi was. He had been sent out to get the people to start taxing [sic, *but paying (?)*] the new 10/- tax. In this he was successful. The people of Shanyemba Village are on the border of this country and the Belgian Congo. They are largely under the influence of ideas which they have got from the Congo mines. All the young men in this section are liable to be cheeky and independent. It was necessary for Kazembi to assert his authority. He failed to distinguish between the asserting of his authority and the abuse of his authority.'

The events of December 1920 throw much light on the predicament of the eastern Lunda leadership under Company rule and the risks which too close an identification with European interests entailed. The widespread opposition to Chinyanta Kasasa's tax-collecting activities suggests that the king's manifest compromise with European rule and its unpopular measures had led him to fall foul of his subjects' expectations and moral standards. Paradoxically, the way in which Chinyanta Kasasa reacted to the rebellious conduct with which his subordinates expressed their fundamental dissatisfaction also led him to fall foul of the expectations and moral standards of his European masters. Hence the trial and the conviction.

3) 'Intelligent but Lazy': the New Policy of the Eastern Lunda Leadership (1920-1950)

Chinyanta Kasasa's misdeeds and humiliating court appearance are still vividly remembered in the lower Luapula valley and can be presumed to have had a momentous local impact⁹³. Since the first consistent indications of a transformation in the overall attitude of African leaders in Kawambwa Sub-District date from the early 1920s, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Chinyanta's experience acted as a catalyst, accelerating the adoption of a new strategy which might have otherwise taken longer to become entrenched.

After the end of the war, colonial officials began to detect a distinctive populist streak in the behaviour of territorial authorities, whose active collaboration was reported

serious count of 'rape', the shaky justification offered for this difference being that Namuma, the woman accusing the king, was the only witness 'who appeared to [*have been*] exaggerating the facts'. As a result, and even though the Court asserted to have weighed the fact that the 'accused were demoralized after seeing the action of their Chief', Mwansabombwe was sentenced to 1 year imprisonment and 10 lashes, the remaining three to 6 months imprisonment and 10 lashes each. Kawambwa Criminal Case Records, 91, 1920, NAZ, KSG2/2/4.

⁹³ Interview with Shanyemba's Villagers (names purposely withheld), Shanyemba village, 12 July 1999; interview with Lukwesa Musanda, Musanda village, 14 July 1999.

to be increasingly difficult to obtain. As early as 1919, Wickens, NC, Kawambwa, was disturbed by the 'disinclination on the part of the Chiefs and Headmen to exercise the authority given them by the Government, probably due to their being afraid of losing their popularity with their people.' The NC also hinted at the prudence with which chiefs and headmen were forced to proceed. While the lingering threat of deposition meant that Lunda leaders could not openly challenge the agenda of the British administration – and indeed it had not 'been found that Chiefs and Headmen [*were*] in any way obstructive to the Government' – they could nonetheless opt for a low profile posture destined to limit as far as possible their direct involvement in European-sponsored policies and hence regain some of the legitimacy and respect that they had lost during the previous two decades. 'Chiefs and Headmen' – Wickens went on – were 'prepared to assist a messenger in carrying out his duties, but [*were*] not prepared to take the initiative themselves.'⁹⁴ Given the existing balance of power, inaction was bound to be more effective than flagrant defiance.

From the mid-1920s, local officials of the newly constituted Crown Colony of Northern Rhodesia began to think about how best to counteract this disquieting trend. The possibility of offering some technical training to chiefs and future chiefs was long considered. In 1926, after lamenting that 'considerably more assistance could be given by the chiefs and headmen who [*were*] lacking in energy and initiative', Owen, Assistant Magistrate, Kawambwa, suggested that 'if the heirs to the various chiefs could be given some training to fit them for carrying out their duties, a large stride would be made towards the efficiency and usefulness of the chiefs.'⁹⁵ Despite the enthusiastic approval of the then DC – 'the suggestion that there should be established a school for the training of young chiefs and headmen, ruling and designate, is one that deserves all possible support. Without opportunity for increasing their efficiency one can scarcely expect them to be better than they are.'⁹⁶ – Owen's project seems not to have gone very far. As

⁹⁴ E.H.B. Wickens, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Extracts from the Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March, 1919', encl. in C.R. Rennie, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Extracts from the Annual Reports for the Year Ending 31 March, 1919', NAZ, ZA7/3/7.

⁹⁵ W. Owen, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1926', encl. in E. Cholmeley, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1926', NAZ, ZA7/1/9/4.

⁹⁶ E. Cholmeley, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1926', NAZ, ZA7/1/9/4.

late as 1936, having received an unsatisfactory report about Chinkonkole, the new Mwata Kazembe XIII (1936-41), Dutton, Chief Secretary, conveyed to the Provincial Commissioner (PC), Northern Province, his hope that 'any possible heirs' to the eastern Lunda throne were 'receiving some kind of education.'⁹⁷ A few weeks later, the DC, Kawambwa, justified the lack of progress in this direction by the impossibility 'to go in guessing at likely successors [...]. For reasons of prudence the successor may not be named before the reigning Chief's death, and any attempt, however tactful, to select one or two of the "possibles" for education would be certain to cause trouble.'⁹⁸

Another suggestion put forward in 1926 concerned the possibility of raising the salary of African leaders, the stipends paid to them being judged 'insufficient to induce them to become unpopular among the people by industriously carrying out the duties imposed upon them [...].'⁹⁹ In this instance, DC Cholmeley did not simply back his subordinate's idea: he brought it to its ultimate consequences by noting that

'it would be interesting to know whether any consideration has been given to the suggestion made in his last year's report by the Native Commissioner, Lawingu, that the chiefs and certain headmen should be paid a percentage of the tax collected from their people. It would be worth trying, in my opinion, as an experiment. The objection to it is that the percentage would have to be a considerable one in order to induce apathetic headmen to overcome their reluctance to incur unpopularity.'¹⁰⁰

Tagart, Secretary for Native Affairs, opposed this latter recommendation on the ground 'that it would [*have tended*] to turn the chief into a tax collector for Government on a commission basis'¹⁰¹, which, of course, was precisely what the proponents of the scheme were driving at. The policy – the purpose of which was to inject new life into the decaying bond between colonial and chiefly interests – was never implemented, and British officials in Kawambwa Sub-District continued to bemoan the chiefs' 'apathy' and fear of popular antagonism.

Between the early 1920s and 1930, the lower Luapula valley benefited from the expansion of the mining industry in both southern Katanga and Northern Rhodesia.

⁹⁷ Dutton to PC, 24 April 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192.

⁹⁸ DC (Kawambwa) to PC (Northern Province), 15 May 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192.

⁹⁹ W. Owen, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 December 1926', encl. in E. Cholmeley, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 December 1926', NAZ, ZA7/1/19/8.

¹⁰⁰ E. Cholmeley, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 December 1926', NAZ, ZA7/1/19/8.

¹⁰¹ Tagart to DCs, 21 January 1927, NAZ, SEC2/313.

Following the end of the war, Mweru-Luapula District was 'thrown open again for the recruitment of native labour for the Congo mines'¹⁰². 927 Kawambwa residents were engaged by Robert Williams and Company in 1920-1, but the number of independent job-seekers is likely to have been larger¹⁰³. Although Luapulans continued to work in southern Katanga throughout the 1920s, by the end of the decade, the developing mines of Northern Rhodesia had seemingly become the principal employers of local labour. In 1930, only 1,620 (or 25%) of the 6,420 voluntary mineworkers from Mweru-Luapula Province were estimated to have proceeded to southern Katanga. All the others were said to have gone to the Copperbelt, attracted by its comparatively 'high wages, good conditions and urban amusements'¹⁰⁴. However, the new – and, as it turned out, precarious – prosperity of the lower Luapula valley in the second half of the 1920s owed less to labour migrations than to the development of the fishing industry, which in this period became an alternative to wage employment for a growing percentage of local residents. In 1919, the urban population of southern Katanga – the main market for Luapulan fish throughout the colonial era – seems to have consumed no more than 130 tonnes of dried fish from Mweru-Luapula¹⁰⁵. By 1927, the lower Luapula valley alone was reported to be exporting 'some 500 tons of fish worth £5,000 and nearly the same quantity of native flour valued at £600'. As a result, the 'natives along the Luapula' had 'plenty of money' and, in that year at least, paid their tax 'splendidly'¹⁰⁶. From the mid-1920s, the lower Luapula valley and its burgeoning fisheries began to attract sizeable numbers of settlers from the relatively underdeveloped Chishinga plateau¹⁰⁷.

But the increasing involvement in the urban, market-oriented economy also bred new anxieties, an inchoate response to which was provided by Watch Tower prophets. The rapid spread of the movement in the lower Luapula valley from 1924-5 was widely

¹⁰² C.R. Rennie, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Extracts from the Annual Reports for the Year Ending 31 March 1919', NAZ, ZA7/3/7.

¹⁰³ C.R. Rennie, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1921', encl. in E.A. Averay Jones, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1921', NAZ, ZA7/1/5/8.

¹⁰⁴ J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1930', NAZ, ZA7/1/13/8; J.B. Thomson, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report, 1930', encl. in J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1930', NAZ, ZA7/1/13/8.

¹⁰⁵ M.C. Musambachime, 'Development and Growth of the Fishing Industry', pp. 127-129.

¹⁰⁶ W. Owen, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report, 1927', encl. in E. Sharpe, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report, 1927', NAZ, ZA7/1/11/8.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*; I. Cumison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 44.

interpreted as an alarming symptom of social malaise and may well have been an additional stimulus to the post-war populism of eastern Lunda chiefs and headmen. Most Watch Tower leaders were disaffected mission teachers and evangelists who had adhered to the millennial creed in the labour centres of both southern Katanga and Southern Rhodesia¹⁰⁸. In this respect, the career of Thomas Sanduluka – convicted in Fort Rosebery in March 1930 for ‘Preaching without a Certificate of Authorisation’ and ‘Refusing to obey a Reasonable Order of a Chief viz. to stop preaching in his Section’¹⁰⁹ – may be held to be typical. Sanduluka was originally a junior teacher at Mbereshi. After spending some years in Bulawayo, he returned home in 1923 and sought employment as an evangelist. His application was rejected by the London Missionary Society, and Sanduluka went back to Southern Rhodesia, where he worked in the Bulawayo police force. Next, he enrolled in a Wesleyan School, possibly Marandellas. ‘They looked upon him there as a joke and soon got rid of him telling him that teaching or learning was not his forte.’ Soon afterwards, Sanduluka ‘joined the Watch Tower crowd.’¹¹⁰

Watch Tower prophets in Mweru-Luapula found a receptive audience among returning labour migrants who had become ‘aware of the insufficiency of the old norms’ and needed an ideology ‘to compensate for and adjust to their peculiar position as a semi-proletarianised group stranded between town and village.’¹¹¹ Early Watch Tower converts formed insular communities and did not mix with the ‘pigs and snakes’ who kept away from the movement¹¹². They preached the imminent end of European rule and antagonized chiefly authority by refusing to sit on the ground or pay taxes and tribute¹¹³. Not surprisingly, eastern Lunda leaders were ‘extremely hostile to the movement’¹¹⁴,

¹⁰⁸ S.F. Morrow, ‘Motives and Methods’, p. 165, 206.

¹⁰⁹ Acting PC (Mweru-Luapula Province) to SNA, 7 March 1930, NAZ, SEC2/1172.

¹¹⁰ Wareham, quoted in Otter to PC (Mweru-Luapula Province), 24 February 1930, encl. in Acting PC (Mweru-Luapula Province) to SNA, 7 March 1930, NAZ, SEC2/1172.

¹¹¹ S. Cross, ‘Jehovah’s Witnesses’, p. 9, 11. See also, *Id.*, ‘The Watch Tower Movement’, and J. Higginson, ‘Liberating the Captives: Independent Watchtower as an Avatar of Colonial Revolt in Southern Africa and Katanga, 1908-1941’, *Journal of Social History*, XXVI, 1, 1992, pp. 55-80.

¹¹² Thus Pearson Musanda (‘Piala’) – later to become one of the most active Watch Tower leaders in Elisabethville – is alleged to have labelled his opponents in the Lunda village of the then Chibwidi; Kawambwa Criminal Case Records, 227, 1924, NAZ, KSG2/2/7. Piala was sentenced to three months imprisonment for ‘teaching and preaching without holding a current certificate of authorisation’.

¹¹³ Interview with Lukwesa Musanda, Musanda village, 14 July 1999.

¹¹⁴ Colcutt to Hinds, 6 June 1931, encl. in Sharratt Horne to Chief Secretary, 30 June 1931, NAZ, SEC2/1172.

and indeed continued to oppose it even after its most radical and prophetic wing had been marginalized as a result of the Jehovah's Witness takeover from about 1935¹¹⁵.

The sudden impact of the industrial recession of the early 1930s was perhaps regarded by some as a vindication of the apocalyptic predictions of Watch Tower zealots. Mweru-Luapula, which depended on the copper mines as markets for both its labour and produce, was very adversely affected by the depression. Mining companies in both southern Katanga and the Copperbelt reacted to the slump in copper prices by curtailing production and reducing the size of their labour force. Most unskilled mineworkers were discharged and repatriated¹¹⁶. Early in 1931, all labour recruiting activities in Mweru-Luapula Province were suspended. The lack of wage employment and the reduction in the demand for fish and other foodstuffs resulted in the abrupt impoverishment of the region¹¹⁷. By 1932, the 'spending power of the natives' had become 'negligible', and tax returns in Kawambwa District had fallen by almost 35%¹¹⁸. Bicycles – commodities in which increasing numbers of Kawambwa residents had been able to invest in previous years – were 'made to travel in weird and wonderful ways, but not as intended by the makers, spare parts evidently being considered an unwarranted luxury [...]'. 'European clothes' were now 'patchwork. Another sign of the times was the amount of small change collected, tax being tendered in small coin, showing its accumulation by small and numerous transactions.'¹¹⁹ In short, the situation was 'fast becoming desperate'¹²⁰. The resulting 'atmosphere of gloom and uncertainty as to the future' lasted until the first signs of recovery in 1934-5¹²¹.

¹¹⁵ S. Cross, 'Jehovah's Witnesses', pp. 11-12; I. Cunnison, 'A Watchtower Assembly in Central Africa', *International Review of Missions*, XL, 160, 1951, pp. 456-469 (especially, pp. 456-457).

¹¹⁶ C. Perrings, *Black Mineworkers*, pp. 99-109.

¹¹⁷ J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1931', NAZ, ZA7/1/14/8.

¹¹⁸ J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1932', NAZ, ZA7/1/15/8.

¹¹⁹ E.O. Colcutt, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 17 November – 5 December 1932', NAZ, ZA7/4/35.

¹²⁰ J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1932', NAZ, ZA7/1/15/8. The state of affairs in the Belgian *Territoire de Kasenga* was equally 'disastrous'. '[La] capacité financière des indigènes est nettement diminuée, par suite du relentissement du commerce et du moindre appel de main d'oeuvre, sur place et dans les centres. Les faibles rentrées dans les magasins, malgré les prix bas, en sont un indice sûr. Les travailleurs sont moins nombreux, gagnent moins, et les envois d'argent, jadis considérables, qu'ils font à leurs parents dans les villages sont tombés à rien [...]'. O. van Huffel, 'Territoire de Kasenga, Rapport Annuel A.I.M.O., 1932', AAMAA, AI, AIMO, 106/361. See also M.C. Musambachime, 'Development and Growth of the Fishing Industry', pp. 163-165.

¹²¹ W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on Native Affairs, 1935', NAZ, SEC2/1299.

During these difficult years, the lower Luapula valley witnessed both an upsurge of Watch Tower activity¹²², and a seeming determination on the part of the eastern Lunda leadership to speak up on behalf of the people and their many grievances. In May 1932, James Maxwell, Governor of Northern Rhodesia since 1927, paid a visit to Kawambwa and addressed a gathering of local chiefs at the boma. After a few preliminary remarks on the newly introduced Native Authorities and Courts system, the Governor 'said he would be glad to hear anything Chiefs had to say'. Chinyanta Kasasa 'said that this year the people were very poor, and could not earn their Tax Money.

HIS EXCELLENCY replied that in this part of the country the people were really very well off [...] Further, the tax at Ndola and in the Western area was higher, 12/6 instead of 10/-.

Chief Kazembe said that the people were looking prosperous, because they were earning money in Ndola and elsewhere. Now that is not so, because all the mines are closed.

HIS EXCELLENCY replied that all the mines were not closed [...].

Chief Kazembe said that the young men had been sent away from the Mines; how then could work be found?

HIS EXCELLENCY said he hoped that some of the mines would reopen after two or three years. Meanwhile others were open.

Chief Kazembe said that if that was so, the tax might be reduced till the people could earn more.

HIS EXCELLENCY replied that the tax was not a heavy one, and he was not prepared to lower it [...].

Chief Kazembe said he would not trouble His Excellency about the Tax any further. But the D.C. would see many Tax Defaulters this year.

HIS EXCELLENCY replied that they would see when the time came.

Chief Kazembe asked why Natives should pay Wheel Tax, seeing that they had to hoe their own roads for nothing.

HIS EXCELLENCY replied that in every country he knew taxes were paid on bicycles, motors, and other vehicles [...].

Chief Kazembe said that when he went to Broken Hill to see the Prince of Wales [1925], he found good roads made by the Government. It was alright that natives should pay Wheel Tax there; but not here.

HIS EXCELLENCY said that when the people were called out to hoe the big roads, the people were paid. The natives are supposed to keep their own small roads clean, and at Broken Hill only the big roads are paid for by the Government.

Chief Kazembe said that he made a road from Johnston Falls to Mbereshi, and that the people were not paid for that.

HIS EXCELLENCY said that that was a Mission Road.

Chief Kazembe said that it was a Mission Road, but was made through instructions from the Boma.

HIS EXCELLENCY said that he could not promise anything, but he would inquire into the matter when he returned to Livingstone.¹²³

The implementation of the Native Authority and Native Court Ordinances of 1929 conferred new responsibilities upon Mweru-Luapulan territorial leaders and forced many

¹²² In 1934 – wrote Fr. Van Hofwegen of Lufubu mission – 'la secte des Watch-Towers' thrived in the valley. 'Ce sont de vrais bolshevistes. Quelle race de diable, et dire que depuis quelques années de milliers de noirs y sont entrés, c'est triste et très triste.' Van Hofwegen to 'Très Révérend Père', 22 November 1934, WFA, Period III (Voillard), Bangweulu, 213/2-Postes Divers.

¹²³ 'Minutes of an Indaba Held at Kawambwa on 16 May 1932', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 512, NAZ, KSG3/1 (copy of the document in NAZ, ZA1/9/59/1).

of them to refine their skills in the 'art of manoeuvring between two opposite poles.'¹²⁴ Some chiefs, such as Chinyanta Kasasa, persevered in their opportunistic passivity in day-to-day administration. Thus, when the king died in 1935, he was described as 'an elderly man who took little interest in any form of work [...]. As far as Government was concerned he did nothing, apart from court work.' As a result, 'the best that [*could*] be said of him [*was*] that he was popular with his people.'¹²⁵ This was a remarkable epitaph for a man who, only fifteen years previously, had been brought to trial by Shanyemba's villagers for the abuses committed during a tax-collecting tour. Around the same time, the then Mununga, head of an independent Shila Authority on the lower Kalungwishi, was said to be 'intelligent but lazy'. Since he had 'done nothing to remedy the bad state of [*his*] villages', the chief was 'popular with his people', who had an 'easy life.'¹²⁶

Most chiefs, however, could not afford simply to ignore their new prerogatives; rather, they sought to employ them demagogically or without aggravating their subjects. Insofar as the dispensation of justice was concerned, Native Courts in Mweru-Luapula appear to have been invariably reluctant to avail themselves of their right to sentencing to imprisonment. Jelf, DC, Fort Rosebery, suspected that they were 'afraid to use this power.' There was, in other words, a proclivity 'for more and more cases to be treated as civil rather than as criminal offences – the payment of damages tak[ing] the place of fining or imprisonment.'¹²⁷ This leniency, on the other hand, was selective and gender-biased, as women were punished 'for being jealous, for cursing their husbands, and so on.' Jelf 'quashed a few such cases', for he did not approve the 'tendency to overdo the business of making crimes out of what [*were*] just the petty annoyances and difficulties of native life merely to please the populace.' Chiefs, concluded the official, had to be prevented from 'inventing Native Customary Law'¹²⁸.

¹²⁴ I borrow this expression from K. Datta, 'The Policy of Indirect Rule', p. 34.

¹²⁵ W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on Native Affairs, 1935', NAZ, SEC2/1299.

¹²⁶ W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 4, 1937', NAZ, SEC2/872.

¹²⁷ P.W.M. Jelf, 'Fort Rosebery District, Annual Report, 1930', encl. in J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1930', NAZ, ZA7/1/13/8; R.L. Moffat, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on Native Affairs, 1937', NAZ, SEC2/1299.

¹²⁸ P.W.M. Jelf, 'Fort Rosebery District, Annual Report, 1930', encl. in J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1930', NAZ, ZA7/1/13/8. A 'tendency to penalise the woman in divorce cases more or less on principle, even though she may be the injured party' was reported from Kawambwa in 1934. (W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on Native Affairs, 1934', encl. in PC, 'Northern Province, Annual Report, 1934', NAZ, ZA7/1/17/4.) M. Chanock, *Law, Custom and Social Order*, seems to have overlooked Jelf and Stubbs' perceptive remarks.

In their executive and legislative capacity, Native Authorities were expected to promulgate orders pertaining to the administration of their respective areas. Whenever colonial pressures made it impossible to avoid issuing unpopular rules, Mweru-Luapulan Authorities boycotted them by taking no interest in their actual enforcement¹²⁹. Lunda Native Authorities, for instance, were said to be 'inclined to be backward [...] in the control of the brewing and consumption of intoxicating beer.' British officials found it necessary to '[bring] home to those people whose overindulgence in drink has been the cause of much trouble in the past that the law will be enforced and control established, if not by the Native Authorities themselves then by the Government [...].'¹³⁰ Migrations from the Chishinga plateau had come to a halt during the depression of the early 1930s, but resumed 'steadily' from about 1935¹³¹. By 1937-8, the population of the plateau had 'decreased enormously'¹³², and the lower Luapula valley was in 'danger of serious overcrowding'¹³³. As a result, Mutipula Mushyota V, the then head of the Chishinga Native Authority, had issued strict orders 'forbidding the removal of Natives from the Chishinga area to the Luapula.'¹³⁴ No doubt, the arrival of new settlers gave birth to local inter-lineage competition for land and fishing rights and may have played a role in bringing about the "historically charged" atmosphere witnessed by Cunnison at the time of his fieldwork in the valley¹³⁵. However, Luapulan chiefs seem to have been unwilling to antagonize the aspirations of Chishinga migrants, not least because their tribute and salaries were proportionate to the number of subjects who inhabited their respective areas¹³⁶. This being so, Lunda Authorities must have seen no reason to cooperate with the colonial government and the Chishinga Native Authority. The measures issued by the latter remained a dead letter, and migrations to the valley were allowed to continue

¹²⁹ J.B. Thomson, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report, 1930', encl. in J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1930', NAZ, ZA7/1/13/8; K. Datta, 'The Policy of Indirect Rule', pp. 214-215; S.N. Chipungu, 'African Leadership', pp. 58-60.

¹³⁰ J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1932', NAZ, ZA7/1/15/8.

¹³¹ W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 8, 1936', NAZ, SEC2/872.

¹³² G.C.M. Heathcote, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 16 March - 5 April 1938', NAZ, SEC2/872.

¹³³ G.C.M. Heathcote, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 28 October - 26 November 1937', NAZ, SEC2/872.

¹³⁴ H.A. Watmore, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 3 June - 25 June 1938', NAZ, SEC2/872.

¹³⁵ I. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, and A.D. Roberts' remarks on the latter in *A History of the Bemba*, pp. 21-22.

¹³⁶ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 121.

unabated throughout the 1940s¹³⁷, a decade of unprecedented local economic development.

Having survived the worldwide slump, the Northern Rhodesian and Katangese copper mines entered a phase of sustained growth, which was further accelerated by the British and German rearmament programmes in the late 1930s and the Allies' demands during the Second World War¹³⁸. Soon, the effects of the renewed industrial advance radiated towards the lower Luapula valley. By 1937, fish exports to southern Katanga had seemingly returned to their late 1920s level. In that year, 400 tons of dried fish and 100 tons of fresh fish were estimated to have been sold to European (mostly Greek) traders in Kasenga for a total value of £6,200¹³⁹. Fish exports from the lower Luapula rose incessantly throughout the 1940s; the number of long-distance labour migrants decreased accordingly. In 1949, the latter represented 23% of the taxable males in the valley, a lesser proportion than in most other rural districts of North-Eastern Rhodesia¹⁴⁰. By then, most valley-dwellers were engaged in commercial fishing: whereas full-time fishermen spent 'the greater part of their year in camps away from the villages', 'casual' fishermen only fished when 'in need of some ready cash.'¹⁴¹ Some successful fishermen started to diversify their activities and invested their earnings in storekeeping. In about 1950, there were only 'few villages in the country without a store or a tea-room'¹⁴². Throughout the valley, newly built brick houses replaced wattle and daub huts¹⁴³. It was in this period that Luapulans began to think of themselves as living in a kind of rural Copperbelt¹⁴⁴.

¹³⁷ Between 1942 and 1946 – wrote Anderson, the then DC, Kawambwa – the Chishinga were 'continually migrating from the austerity of the plateau to the fleshpots of the valley.' Anderson to Cunnison, 21 February 1948, encl. in Cunnison's Fieldnotes.

¹³⁸ A.D. Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, p. 186.

¹³⁹ R.L. Moffat, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on Native Affairs, 1937', NAZ, SEC2/1299. From the late 1930s, owing to the construction of iceplants in Kasenga, fresh fish began to supplant dried fish in the trade between southern Katanga and the lower Luapula valley; M.C. Musambachime, 'Development and Growth of the Fishing Industry', pp. 170-171.

¹⁴⁰ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁴³ M.C. Musambachime, 'Development and Growth of the Fishing Industry', p. 186.

¹⁴⁴ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 25.

CHAPTER VIII

OLD & NEW ELITES, 1900-1950

Chapter VII has examined the socio-economic history of colonial Luapula and the interactions between Lunda territorial leaders, British officials and subjects of both. The present chapter takes a closer look at the Lunda leadership itself. For, while grappling with the problems posed by its new intermediary position, the latter was also undergoing a number of internal transformations. Not only did the royal family gradually outstrip the aristocracy by taking over most of its direct territorial responsibilities, but both components of what had been the pre-colonial élite were also confronted by the emergence of new social actors whose claims to prominence depended less on their inherited status than on their personal qualities and educational achievements.

1) The Royal Succession (1900-1941)

Throughout the colonial era, the eastern Lunda kings continued to be selected and installed by the most important *bakaluhua* and *bacilolo*, who formed what colonial officials referred to as either the royal 'council of elders' or 'Electoral College'. The *Mwata Kazembes* were chosen from within the ranks of those sons of past kings (*bana ba mfumu*) who were born *pa kamenga* – 'by the hearth of the Kazembe's own papyrus-mat hut' – that is, after their fathers' succession¹. This custom, which may be presumed to have been practised in pre-colonial times too, was meant to reduce the number of potential heirs – and hence competition between them – and avoid the risk that children whom princes had fathered with lowly women before their accession to the throne could aspire to become *Mwata Kazembes*. By upholding this convention, the aristocrats defended both the repute of the kingship and their prerogative to provide *ntombo* wives to ruling kings².

¹ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 166; 'Notes on Kazembe', n.d. (but after 1941), Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 292, NAZ, KSG 3/1.

² Interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 7 May 1999. See above, pp. 96-97.

The composition of the aristocratic Electoral College varied considerably over time. This point is borne out by a comparison between the lists of royal electors in 1941 and 1998. With the exception of a core of hereditary titles – which included the four most important non-royal eastern Lunda positions (*Inamwana Kashiba*, *Mwinempanda*, *Kalandala* and *Kashinge*) and the *Chipepa*, *Chibwidi*, *Musanda*, *Kasumpa* and *Mwehwa Kamonga* – most of the aristocrats who elected Mwata Kazembe XIV Shadrack Chinyanta Nankula in 1941 seem to have been subsequently demoted and/or replaced by other holders of hereditary posts³. The expulsion of Mwinempanda during the 1998 succession dispute exemplifies one of the modalities whereby this change of personnel is likely to have come about⁴. The *Kashibas* were the undisputed leaders of the Electoral College. They did not take part in its deliberations but enjoyed the right to sanction – and eventually overrule – the choice made by their fellow title-holders⁵.

The relative seniority of the different branches of the royal lineage to which the various candidates to the throne belonged was not a 'vital' consideration in the selection procedures⁶. In truth, the principle appears to have been rigidly observed until the accession of Chinyanta Nankula, but this had probably less to do with custom than with the electors' opposition to cultural change and subsequent resolve to live under middle-aged or elderly kings whose maturation and schooling in Lunda affairs had taken place long before the inception of colonial rule and the spread of European influences. Mwata Kazembe XI Muonga Kapakata (1904-19), Mwata Kazembe XII Chinyanta Kasasa (1919-35) and Mwata Kazembe XIII Chinkonkole (1936-41) – the sons, respectively, of Mwata Kazembe VI Chinyanta Munona, Mwata Kazembe VII Muonga Sunkutu and Mwata Kazembe VIII Kafuti Chinkonkole – were all born between the early 1850s and the early 1870s. Local British officials, whose abortive educational plans have been examined in the previous chapter⁷, were far from pleased with the aristocrats'

³ 'Notes on Kazembe', n.d. (but after 1941), Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 292, NAZ, KSG 3/1, and M.G. Dyulu Kabeya, 'Lunda Traditional Electoral College', typescript in possession of its author, 1998.

⁴ See above, pp. 11-12.

⁵ 'Notes on Kazembe', n.d. (but after 1941), Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 292, NAZ, KSG 3/1; I. Cunnison, 'The Installation of Chief Kazembe XV', p. 3.

⁶ 'Notes on Kazembe', n.d. (but after 1941), Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 292, NAZ, KSG 3/1; DC (Kawambwa) to PC (Northern Province), 15 May 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192; interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, 7 May 1999.

⁷ See above, pp. 201-202.

predilection for non-literate, pagan kings, but were also disinclined to interfere too blatantly in the royal succession for fear of upsetting future interlocutors⁸. Mwata Kazembe Chinkonkole, for instance, was appointed in spite of the negative opinion of the then DC, 'who considered him senile and useless'⁹. Chinyanta Nankula (b. 1907), a Christian (although a polygamous one) and a former clerk in the Union Minière du Haut Katanga at Jadotville¹⁰, was the first king whose selection is likely to have been prompted by overt European pressures. Chinyanta was the son of Muonga Kapakata, and his enthronement resulted in the temporary exclusion of the sons of Mwata Kazembe X Kanyembo Ntemena. Although the conservative choices of the aristocrats during the first four decades of the century proved to be no guarantee against the loss of their pre-colonial territorial responsibilities in the heartland of the kingdom, they at least secured the continuity of their influence in the royal capital.

2) The Reorganization of the Heartland (1900-1940)

The consolidation of Msiri's kingdom from the late 1860s and the invasion of Mweru-Luapula by the Yeke in the early 1880s impaired direct communications between the Ruund heartland and the lower Luapula valley¹¹. Thereafter, the contacts between *Mwant Yavs* and *Mwata Kazembes* seem to have suffered from the policy of the Belgians, who, throughout the colonial period, did their utmost to prevent Northern Rhodesian chiefs from infringing upon Congolese territory¹². Even though the authority-enhancing connection with the Ruund remained an essential and celebrated component

⁸ DC (Kawambwa) to PC (Northern Province), 15 May 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192; interview with Dennis Frost, Gumley, Leicestershire, 14 May 1998. Mr. Frost, who was DC in Kawambwa between 1959 and 1961, told me that colonial officials in Northern Rhodesia were generally 'reluctant to override – or seek to subvert – the normal tribal process. One sought to influence, rather than subvert, if you like. Because you got to know what the main contenders were, and, where it was possible and advisable, you might ... sort of express a preference.'

⁹ 'Kazembe', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 289, NAZ, KSG3/1. For a more elaborate discussion of the circumstances of Chinkonkole's accession, see below, pp. 226-227.

¹⁰ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 65; interview with Nathan Chinyanta, Lusaka, 30 December 1998.

¹¹ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, untitled, July 1949.

¹² See, for instance, M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 40, 135-136, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone. As late as 1954, Mwata Kazembe XV Brown Ng'ombe was refused permission to visit Chibondo swamp island, on the Belgian bank of the lower Luapula River. Brown Ng'ombe to Mignolet, 13 June 1954, NAZ, NP2/6/10; Mignolet to DC (Kawambwa), 14 June 1954, NAZ, NP2/6/10; Kennedy-Browne to Brown Ng'ombe, 15 June 1954, NAZ, NP2/6/10.

of their historical and ethnic consciousness, the eastern Lunda, unlike the Lunda and Luvale of the upper Zambezi area¹³, do not appear to have striven to renew their pre-colonial links with the *Mwant Yavs*' state¹⁴. The historical relationship between the two polities may well have been recognized and played upon in the southern Katangese labour centres (Chinyanta Nankula, for instance, is said to have been a great friend of a son of the then Mwant Yav whom he had met in Jadotville¹⁵), but the evidence relating to this is minimal and inconclusive¹⁶.

Although the eastern Lunda had long ceased to be the principal power in southern Katanga, the *Mwata Kazembes* continued to wield a measure of authority over the former western half of the heartland. The Lunda chiefdoms of the *Kaindus*, in Chibondo, and the *Kabimbis*, in Mwambo, remained to all intents and purposes parts of the metropolitan polity, forwarding tribute and paying regular visits to Mwansabombwe¹⁷. When Kaindu Kapaso succeeded Kaindu Milambo or Lumbwe in 1927, 'un envoyé de Kasembe et beaucoup de petits notables Lunda de Rhodésie' canoed to Chibondo and attended the installation ceremony¹⁸. Similarly, when Chinyanta Kabimbi's long tenure came to an end in 1936¹⁹, Mwata Kazembe Chinkonkole dispatched 'trois de ces grands notables pour assister à ses funérailles et pour assister à l'investiture coutumière de son successeur', Chiambala François²⁰.

Some non-Lunda or Lundaized leaders of the western bank also persisted in acknowledging the *Mwata Kazembes*' ultimate political supremacy. When he fled to

¹³ R.J. Papstein, 'From Ethnic Identity to Tribalism', pp. 383-387.

¹⁴ I. Cunnison, personal communication to the author, 11 August 2000; J.J. Hoover, personal communication to the author, 7 August 2000.

¹⁵ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, untitled, July 1949.

¹⁶ On the eve of Congolese independence and the secession of Katanga, the construction of an inflated representation of the pre-colonial Lunda 'empire' served the purpose of providing a 'common ground' between the *évolués* of Moïse Tshombe's Conakat party and Ruund royal circles. On 25 February 1960, Mwant Yav Ditend produced a list of 'no fewer than thirty-two tribes and sixty major chiefs claimed as traditional subordinates' of his pre-colonial predecessors. The inclusion of the Lunda of *Kazembe* in Ditend's list and, more generally, this instrumental accentuation of a Lunda 'imperial mystique' does not seem to have culminated in the resumption of formal contacts between Ruund and eastern Lunda dignitaries. E. Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule*, pp. 191-195, 243-244.

¹⁷ G. Van Herreweghe, 'Rapport Préalable à la Constitution du Secteur du Luapula', 1941, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 175.

¹⁸ A. L'Heureux, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur le Groupement de Kashiobwe', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Kaindu's History', May 1949.

¹⁹ See above, p. 152.

²⁰ A. L'Heureux, 'Rapport d'Enquête sur la Chefferie de Kabimbi', 1937, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

Kawama in 1910²¹, Nkuba Chifwalekene was escorted by a Lunda *cilolo*, the then Kalilo. Until his death in 1927, Kalilo resided in the *Nkubas*' new capital, 'exerçant en fait l'autorité [...] à l'insu des Européens [...]'.²² Shyamwana, who succeeded Kapwasa Mpenza in the 1910s, was apparently installed by Mwata Kazembe XI Muonga Kapakata. In the early 1920s, Kapwasa Shyamwana 'aurait encore envoyé, à titre de tribut, du tabac et du miel à Kasembe.'²³ While the Lunda of *Kazembe* continued to pay homage to the *Nsongas*' nature-spirit and the territorial cult which revolved around it²⁴, the *Nsongas* themselves were still wearing Lunda insignia of power as late as the late 1930s²⁵. Despite these indications of the survival of pre-colonial networks of allegiance and exchange, there is no doubt that the Belgian resolve to keep the *Mwata Kazembes* out of Katanga became more and more effective as the century progressed. The gradual erosion of their ascendancy over the territory to the west of the lower Luapula may help to account for the determination with which Lunda royals pursued a policy of self-aggrandizement along the eastern bank of the river, the only region of which they remained officially in charge.

The restructuring of the Kazembe kingdom along bureaucratic lines was probably the single most important consequence of the initial alliance between Lunda royals and British officials. By the time this alliance began to crumble in the early 1920s, the kingdom was already very different from its pre-colonial antecedent, due to the increasingly manifest marginalization of non-royal territorial representatives and the related enhancement of the prerogatives and influence of the *Mwata Kazembes* and their family.

The process seems to have been set in motion by the administrative renovation of Lukanga during the last years of Kanyembo Ntemena's life. In the late 19th century, the *Mufwalwas* were the Lunda *bacilolo* in charge of Lukanga, the district along the south-

²¹ See above, p. 194.

²² M. Lacanne, 'Enquête Politique sur la Région du Luapula-Moero', 1935, p. 40, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

²⁴ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 220; M.C. Musambachime, 'The Social and Economic Effects of Sleeping Sickness', p. 157. See above, p. 91.

²⁵ A. L'Heureux, 'Rapport d'Enquête et Historique de la Chefferie de Songa', 1938, EA-MRAC, Fonds O. Boone.

eastern shore of Lake Mweru²⁶. Whereas the then Mufwalwa appears to have fled the area following Watson's occupation at the end of 1896²⁷, Kafwimbi²⁸ remained in Lukanga and is alleged to have made common cause with the British during the final stages of their clash with the Lunda of *Kazembe*. As a result, from about 1897, Kafwimbi began to be regarded as the chief of Lukanga by the Kalungwishi boma. In 1903, having been judged insane, Kafwimbi was deposed by his erstwhile British sponsors and replaced with the Lunda prince Muonga Kapakata Kambwali I, Kanyembo Ntemena's FBS. The choice of Kambwali was not surprising, for the latter seems to have begun to cooperate with the British South Africa Company sometime before the final victory of 1899²⁹. The reigning king sanctioned the appointment of his cousin and compensated the dispossessed Mufwalwa by according him and his descendants a section headship in Mwansabombwe³⁰.

Having obliterated the threat of armed rebellion and violent interregal strife, colonial rule rendered it unnecessary to continue to exclude potential heirs to the throne from positions of territorial responsibility. In fact, shortly before the ascent of Kambwali himself, Kanyembo Ntemena appears to have granted his brother Mumpolokoso I permission to found a separate village to the south of Mwansabombwe³¹. Upon the death of Kanyembo Ntemena, Muonga Kapakata was appointed as Mwata Kazembe XI. The new king left Lukanga at the beginning of 1904 and chose Sendama, his sister's husband, to replace

²⁶ I ignore the causes and timing of the replacement of the *Nkondolos*, the first *bacilolo* of Lukanga.

²⁷ See above, p. 174.

²⁸ See above, p. 156.

²⁹ This tentative reconstruction is based on 'WenaLunda Tribe-Kambwali's Division', n.d. (but between 1913 and 1928), Kawambwa DNB, II, p. 159, NAZ, KSG3/1, and Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Lukanga History', n.d., 'History: Kilwa, Lukanga', August 1949, and 'Amayanga of Bana ba Mfumu', January 1951.

³⁰ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Mwansabombwe', May 1951.

³¹ Interview with Shadrack Chinyanta Lukwesa, Lukwesa village, 6 May 1999; interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 7 May 1999. In 1894, Mumpolokoso – whose participation in the Lunda-Yeke conflict has been mentioned above (p. 152) – was living in the capital and was reported to have 'as much to say in the affairs of the country as his brother.' The king and his younger brother '[go] along very creditably for Africans, although Kazembe [was] undoubtedly hard put to at times to hold in the impetuous and insatiable Mpolokoso.' (D. Crawford, 19 May – 4 July 1893, in *ES*, February 1894, p. 52.) Four years later, Mumpolokoso was openly described as 'really a rival' of Kanyembo Ntemena. D. Crawford. & G. Crawford, 10 June – 14 June 1897, in *ES*, December 1897, p. 365.

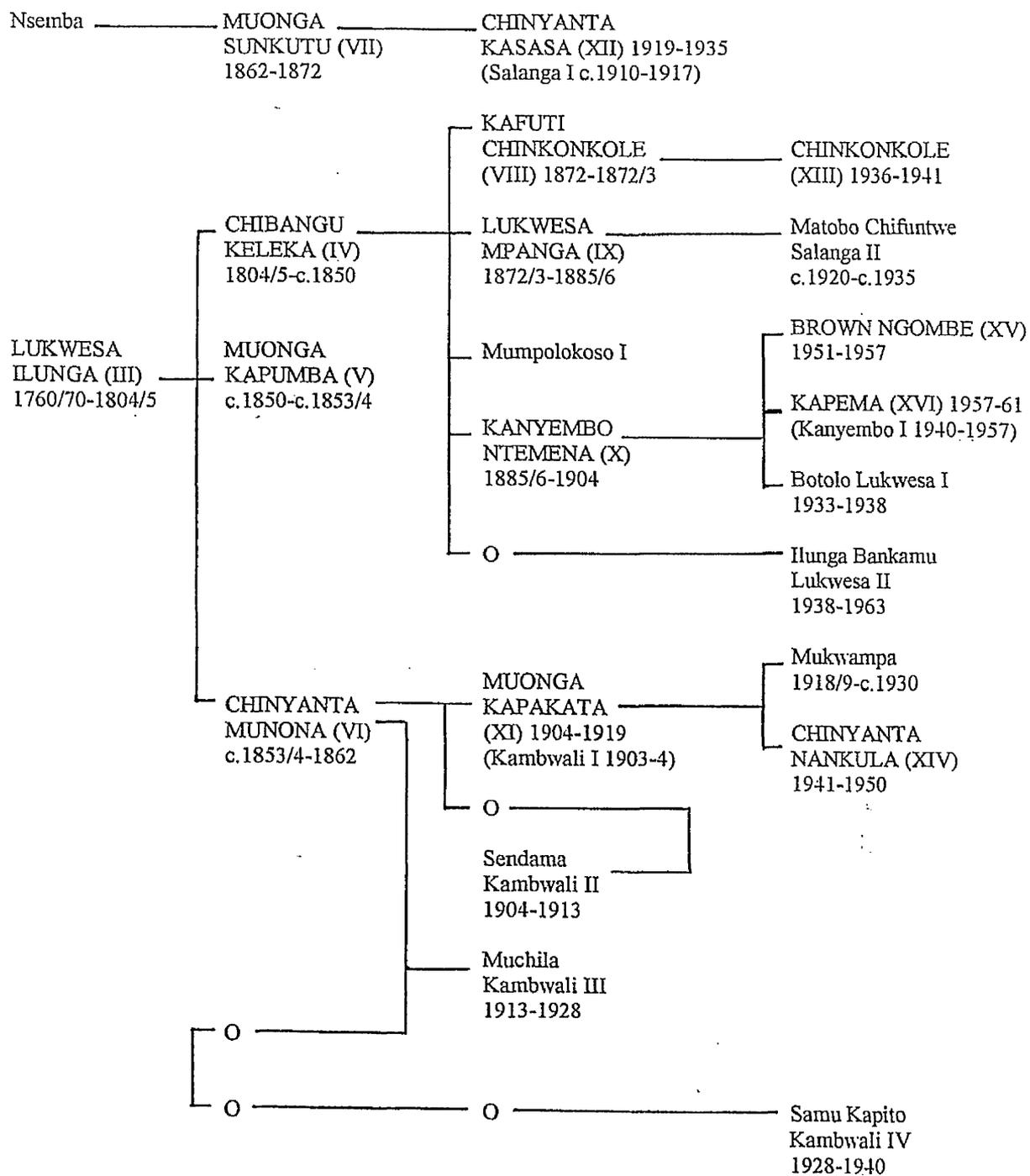


Fig. 3 The Royal Family to the Early 1960s. (*Mwata Kazembes* in capital.)

him as Kambwali II³². The net result of all this was that, in less than one year, control of Lukanga had been wrested from the hereditary *Mufwalwa* title to the advantage of the new position of *Kambwali*, an office of royal appointment reserved to the members of the kings' patrilineage or their kindreds. The *Kambwali* was essentially a *mwanso*³³, the holders of which were to be freely nominated and removed by the ruling Mwata Kazembe and his successors³⁴.

During the reign of Muonga Kapakata – a king whom *bacilolo* understandably remember as having been 'very tricky'³⁵ – the attribution of territorial *myanso* to members of the royal family became a standard practice employed to boost the ascendancy of the king and his control over the running of the polity and the tributary networks which still cut across it. Not later than 1910, Muonga deputed Chinyanta Kasasa Salanga I to rule over the territory between the Lufubu and the Mununshi Rivers³⁶. Contemporaneous developments on the Chishinga plateau meant that Chinyanta Kasasa's tenure of the new governorship was brought to an end after only a few years. Sometime in the early 1890s, Mwinempanda Nawezi or Muonga was killed by Kanyembo Ntemena. Control of Yanga – the Lunda colony on the plateau – was taken over by Kabulubulu Muyembe I, son of the late Mwinempanda and Mwape, sister of Mushyota II Mambwe Muyinda. Lubansa, another son of the deceased Mwinempanda, inherited his father's title, but remained in Mwansabombwe. So did Chikalamo, who became the next Mwinempanda upon the death of his brother Lubansa³⁷. Before 1914, Muyembe (either Kabulubulu or his immediate successor, Chinsumba) and the eleven villages that he controlled were placed under Chishyeta,

³² 'Kambwali', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 293, NAZ, KSG3/1.

³³ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 167, n. 2.

³⁴ After the death of Sendama in 1913, Muonga Kapakata appointed his half-brother Muchila Kanyembo Mumba as Kambwali III. 'Kambwali', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 293, NAZ, KSG3/1; G. Lyons, 'Kawambwa Sub-District, Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 March 1914', in *Id.*, 'Mweru-Luapula District, Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 1914', NAZ, ZA7/1/1/8.

³⁵ Interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Kosam Derrick Chipepa & Lobson Chinyanta Lubabila, Mwansabombwe, 14 July 1999. It is unfortunate that, save for the occasional glimpse, the available evidence throws very little light on the hostility with which hereditary *bacilolo* are likely to have reacted to the royal impingement upon their ancient prerogatives.

³⁶ Interview with Jestas Chinyanta Salanga, Salanga village, 12 May 1999.

³⁷ 'Boundary Dispute. Kazembe *versus* Mushyota: Yanga Country. Heard by Mr. Jones in April 1918', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 290, NAZ, KSG3/1; E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p.

Mambwe Muyinda's ZDS and Mushyota IV³⁸. This sparked off a controversy, and the following year an indaba was held at Kawambwa in the presence of Averay Jones, DC, Mweru-Luapula, with the aim of deciding 'who had the right to appoint Muyembe [...] and in whose country he was, Chief Kazembe claim[ing] the "Yanga" country in which Muyembe resided.'³⁹ For the time being, the matter was settled in Muonga Kapakata and the then Muyembe's favour.

In the meantime, Mwinempanda Chikalamo had died, and Muonga Kapakata had taken the unprecedented step of conferring the *Mwinempanda* title upon a prince, none other than Chinyanta Kasasa Salanga I. In 1917, when Mushyota Chishyeta tried again to have his rights over Yanga recognized, the new Mwinempanda was directed to leave the lower Luapula valley and settle on the plateau to back up Muyembe against the assertiveness of the Bena Ngoma or Chishinga⁴⁰. Whereas the *Salanga* developed into a *mwanso* identical to the *Kambwali*, the *Mwinempanda* was a previously non-royal, hereditary title, control of which was temporarily seized by the royal lineage. Chinyanta Kasasa followed closely in Muonga Kapakata's footsteps; after spending a mere two years on the plateau, he was recalled to Mwansabombwe and enthroned as Mwata Kazembe XII. On assuming the kingship, Chinyanta Kasasa gave up the *Mwinempanda*, which seemingly reverted to the original proprietors. The latter did not take up residence in Yanga and have continued to live in the valley ever since⁴¹. In about 1920, Chinyanta

57; Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Mwinempanda', August 1950; interview with Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Kosam Derrick Chipepa & Lobson Chinyanta Lubabila, Mwansabombwe, 14 July 1999.

³⁸ P.J.C. Reardon, 'List of Villages in Kawambwa Division', encl. in Lyons to SNA, 28 August 1914, NAZ, ZA3/1/14; Fane Smith to Cooke, 31 July 1941, NAZ, NP2/7/3; interview with Chama Musaba Mushota & Simon Engaenga, Mushota village, 8 May 1999.

³⁹ 'Kazembe and Mushota Boundaries. Indaba Held at Kawambwa on 6 and 7 May 1915', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 290, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁴⁰ 'Boundary Dispute. Kazembe versus Mushota: Yanga Country. Heard by Mr. Jones in April 1918', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 290, NAZ, KSG3/1; Wallace to High Commissioner for South Africa, 14 October 1919, NAZ, NR/HC1/3/57.

⁴¹ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 187. Following Chinyanta Kasasa's departure, the *Muyembes* were once again alone in defending the eastern Lunda position on the plateau. Their final downfall was brought about by the 1929 Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances. In June of that year, the then Muyembe was provisionally assigned an independent Authority and Court (M.J.B. Otter, 'Native Authorities and Native Courts', June 1929, encl. in Sharpe to Moffat Thomson, 12 September 1929, NAZ, ZA1/9/27/5G). But a few months later, when the number of authorities and courts in Mweru-Luapula Province was drastically reduced, Muyembe and his villages became part of the then Munkanta's Authority, subordinate to the Superior Native Authority of the *Mushyotas*. The new grouping was one of those which Otter, DC, Kawambwa, described as 'unfortunate'. He doubted that Muyembe would have 'willingly recognize[d] Mushota as [his] paramount. If not allowed to be independent, [he] would [have] probably elect[ed] to be under Kazembe' (M.J.B. Otter, 'Revised List of

Kasasa nominated another prince, Matobo Chifuntwe, son of Mwata Kazembe IX Lukwesa Mpanga, as Salanga II, the position having remained vacant after Chinyanta himself had been posted to the plateau as Mwinempanda⁴².

Along with the *Salanga*, two more new offices of royal appointment were brought into being during Muonga Kapakata's innovative reign. Following the sleeping sickness emergency and the radical relocation scheme that went with it⁴³, Chiboshi, one of the king's *bacamuma*⁴⁴, was chosen to supervise the resettlement area to the east of Mofwe Lagoon and the district of the Bemba of *Mwabamukupa*⁴⁵. In 1918-9, Mukwampa, Muonga Kapakata's first born, was put in charge of the group of villages which were being allowed to return to the eastern bank of the Luapula in Kaombe. Despite its antiquity, the authority of the then Kalumbu, the neighbouring *cilolo* of Cabu, was rapidly eclipsed by the rise of Mukwampa⁴⁶.

By the early 1920s, all the holders of the territorial *myanso* created during the previous two decades had attained a remarkable local status. Kambwali III Muchila (d. 1928)⁴⁷ controlled no less than twenty villages in Lukanga and was one of the three officially recognized 'chiefs' of the lower Luapula valley. His yearly subsidy – £4.10.0 – was more than half the salary paid to Mwata Kazembe Chinyanta Kasasa (£8) and was higher than that of Kapesa Semiwe (£ 3.10.0), the only other 'chief' of the area⁴⁸. Before 1929, all local leaders ruling over more than a handful of villages were classified as

Native Authorities and Courts. Kawambwa District', October 1929, encl. in Hillier to Moffat Thomson, 4 December 1929, NAZ, ZA1/9/27/5G). As late as 1951, the then Muyembe still 'regard[ed] himself as being subordinate to the Lunda and the Lunda [...] consider[ed] that Muyembe's area should be under their control. Thus both the Lunda and the Chishinga regard[ed] Muyembe area as theirs.' A.B. Shone, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 15 March – 18 March 1951', NAZ, SEC2/878.

⁴² Interview with Jestas Chinyanta Salanga, Salanga village, 12 May 1999.

⁴³ See above, pp. 192-193.

⁴⁴ Chiboshi was seemingly the son of a member of Muonga Kapakata's mother's family who had been awarded the honorary title of *Nambansa*, sister of the king. Interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Kosam Derrick Chipepa, Mwansabombwe, 5 May 1999.

⁴⁵ After the departure of Dismas Misengo Mwabamukupa III in 1931, headman Kasumpa I (not to be confused with the former *bacilolo* of the lower Kalungwishi River, also called *Kasumpa*), another royal nominee, was deputed to control the remaining Bemba communities to the north of the lower Mbereshi River. See above, p. 45.

⁴⁶ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Amayanga of Bana ba Mfumu', January 1951, and 'Lukwesa's Chieftdom', July 1949; interview with Shadrack Chinyanta Lukwesa, Lukwesa village, 6 May 1999; M.C. Musambachime, 'The Social and Economic Effects of Sleeping Sickness', pp. 165-166.

⁴⁷ See above, p. 217, n. 34.

⁴⁸ 'Kazembe', 'Kambwali', 'Kapesa', and 'Minutes of an Indaba Held at Kawambwa on 30 June 1928', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 289, 293, 305, 512, NAZ, KSG3/1.

'divisional headmen' and received an annual payment proportionate to the size of the territory and the population under their charge. Mukwampa, with a yearly subsidy of £2, was the most highly paid headman in the lower Luapula valley. Next came Chiboshi and Chifuntwe Salanga II, whose salaries – £1.10.0 each – equalled those of the holders of much older positions, such as the then Mulundu and Kashiba⁴⁹. Whereas the aforementioned Kalumbu had to settle for a mere £0.15.0, many of the *bacilolo* who continued to reside outside the royal capital were by then so unimportant as to be deemed unworthy of a subsidy⁵⁰.

The 1929 Native Authority and Native Court Ordinances ratified the new territorial responsibilities of the members of the royal family and eliminated every prospect of a return to the pre-colonial administrative layout. The Lunda Native Authority (LNA) as planned in October of that same year was composed of the Superior Native Authority and Court of Mwata Kazembe Chinyanta Kasasa and five Subordinate Authorities and Courts under Kambwali IV Samu Kapito⁵¹, Chiboshi, Mukwampa, Kashiba Mpalanga Mitindo and the then Lubunda⁵². Lunda leaders, in other words, controlled four of the five Subordinate Authorities and Courts comprised in the original LNA; as many as three out of these four Subordinate Authorities – Kambwali, Chiboshi and Mukwampa – were in the hands of members of the royal family nominated by either the ruling king or his predecessor. This was impressive, considering that the oldest of these positions was less than 30 years old.

⁴⁹ Both Mulundu and Kashiba left Mofwe Lagoon and returned to their former districts near Mambilima Falls in 1921-2. See above, p. 199, n. 90.

⁵⁰ 'Divisional Headmen', 31 March 1922, Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 366, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁵¹ Samu Kapito was ZDS of the mother of his predecessor Kambwali Muchila; 'Kambwali', Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 293, NAZ, KSG3/1.

⁵² M.J.B. Otter, 'Revised List of Native Authorities and Courts. Kawambwa District', October 1929, encl. in Hillier to Moffat Thomson, 4 December 1929, NAZ, ZA1/9/27/5G. Mwimbe Mulundu was initially included in Kashiba's Subordinate Authority. In 1932, he was granted the right to constitute his own Authority and Court, subordinate to the Mwata Kazembe's (Moffat Thomson to Hillier, 8 February 1930, NAZ, ZA1/9/27/6; Colcutt to Stokes, 28 June 1932, encl. in Stokes to Chief Secretary, 14 July 1932, NAZ, SEC2/1190). Mwimbe died shortly afterwards and was succeeded by Nshinka, who 'considered that he should be the head of the Luapula Mbeba' and began to campaign to establish a Bena Mbeba Authority separate from the LNA. Nshinka found an ally in Chisama, the then Katuta, who was assigned a Subordinate Authority and Court after being detached from Fort Rosebery District in 1937 (W. Stubbs, 'Note on the Bena Mbeba and their Pretensions', 1937, Kawambwa DNB, III, p. 198, NAZ, KSG3/1). Even though the Bena Mbeba of the middle Luapula river could probably count upon the support of Mushyota V Mutipula (1923(?) – 1941), their claims came to nothing, as they were always opposed by the British administration. See, for instance, W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 8, 1936', NAZ, SEC2/872.

Among the successors of pre-colonial *bacilolo* of the eastern bank of the Luapula, only the *Kashibas* managed to retain most of their former prerogatives under the new administrative arrangements⁵³. Due to the *Kashibas*' rank within the eastern Lunda hierarchy, their presidency of the Electoral College and their relative geographical separation from the royal capital, none of the *Mwata Kazembes* who ruled during the colonial era appear to have ever sought to replace them with royal appointees or else erode their authority by other means⁵⁴. The *Kashiba* title remained the hereditary property of the original aristocratic lineage, whose elders continued – and still continue – to select each new incumbent independent of the *Mwata Kazembes*⁵⁵.

As has been seen in chapters III and IV, the prerogatives of the *Mwata Kazembes* before the inception of colonial rule tended to be balanced by those of their hereditary territorial representatives. The heartland of the eastern Lunda kingdom was built around the tension between the feudal and the bureaucratic – or, to use Mamdani's slightly less eurocentric terminology, the 'traditional' and the 'administrative'⁵⁶ – variants of state authority. Despite the enduring importance of the *Kashibas*, there is no doubt that the innovations of the early 20th century culminated in the disintegration of this uneasy equilibrium, for the *bacilolo* – whether confined in Mwansabombwe or linked to small, often non-stipendiary village headships – were no longer in a position to act as effective counterpoises against the enhanced territorial authority of the *Mwata Kazembes*.

The downfall of Mukwampa and Chiboshi in the 1930s was merely another manifestation of the increasingly absolute nature of the kings' rule. In about 1930, the leader of Kaombe is alleged to have begun to display the first signs of madness. Having been deposed, Mukwampa settled in Congo, where he died shortly afterwards. In 1933, Mwata Kazembe XII Chinyanta Kasasa appointed Botolo Lukwesa I, son of Kanyembo Ntemena, as the new head of the Kaombe Subordinate Native Authority. Following Botolo's death in 1938, Mwata Kazembe XIII Chinkonkole nominated Ilunga Bankamu, son of Mukolo or Muonga, Kanyembo Ntemena's sister, as Lukwesa II. Bankamu ruled

⁵³ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 187.

⁵⁴ Cunnison's Fieldnotes, 'Tribute', August 1950; interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala & Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Mwansabombwe, 9 April 1999.

⁵⁵ Interview with Robert Yamfwa Inamwana Kashiba, Kashiba village, 5 April 1999.

⁵⁶ M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, pp. 43-48.

until 1963⁵⁷. Chiboshi's demise seems to have had a good deal to do with his inability to control the 'bad brand of Watch Tower' which had taken root in his area from the mid-1920s.⁵⁸ Chiboshi failed to support Chinyanta Kasasa's repressive campaign, which included the confiscation of the Watch Tower hall in Mwansabombwe and its redeployment as a cattle kraal⁵⁹, and was finally removed from office immediately after the accession of Chinkonkole, early in 1936. The Subordinate Authority of the deposed Chiboshi was taken over by Chinkonkole's own Authority until 1940, the year in which Kapema "Hitler" Kanyembo I, son of Kanyembo Ntemena, was appointed at its head⁶⁰. Chiboshi – it will be remembered – was related to Muonga Kapakata through the latter's mother⁶¹; Kanyembo I, on the other hand, was Chinkonkole's first cousin (FBS). In this occasion, then, the ruling king appears to have employed his unrestrained control of the allocation of territorial *myanso* to consolidate the position of the branch of the royal lineage to which he himself belonged⁶².

The ascent of Lukwesa I and Kanyembo I completed the restructuring of the heartland of the kingdom. In less than forty years, the eastern Lunda aristocracy had been forced to renounce most of its pre-colonial territorial responsibilities and to transfer them to an upstart stratum of *myanso*-holders belonging to the royal patrilineage or closely related to it. Subsequent reforms of the structure of local government would not have altered substantially the new balance of power on the eastern bank of the lower Luapula River.

⁵⁷ Interview with Shadrack Chinyanta Lukwesa, Lukwesa village, 6 May 1999; H.A. Watmore, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 4 October – 11 October 1938', NAZ, SEC2/872.

⁵⁸ W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 1, 1937', NAZ, SEC2/872.

⁵⁹ W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 9, 1936', NAZ, SEC2/871.

⁶⁰ G.E. Fane Smith, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 8 July – 1 August 1940', NAZ, SEC2/874; interview with Augustin Mubanga Kanyembo, Kanyembo village, 6 May 1999.

⁶¹ See above, p. 219, n. 44.

⁶² After "Hitler" Kapema became Mwata Kazembe XVI in 1957, Chungu Kasangambayo, probably another son of Kanyembo Ntemena, was chosen as Kanyembo II and ruled until 1975. Interview with

3) 'Simply because we Cannot Write': the Challenge of New Social Actors (1900 – 1950)

Colonial rule brought about new sufferings but also new opportunities for socio-economic advancement. However tiny, the minority of Luapulans who were able to benefit from the accelerated modernization set in motion by the European occupation of Central Africa posed an unprecedented threat to the eastern Lunda aristocracy. Even though the clash between old and new élites only came into the limelight in the middle colonial period, its origins can be traced back to the early years of the century and the heterogeneity of local responses to mission education.

Unlike the Lozi *indunas*⁶³, Lunda *bacilolo* as a group are said to have opposed mission education. With the notable exception of Joseph, the then Chipepa's stepson and, later, successor⁶⁴, they remained 'very uncouth' (*batutu sana*) throughout the colonial period; in about 1950, most of them were still indifferent to 'higher education' and much more interested in the past than in the future.⁶⁵ The first European missionaries to operate in the lower Luapula valley – London Missionary Society and Plymouth Brethren – were far from being favourably disposed towards the eastern Lunda kingship and aristocracy. Contrary to the 'White Fathers' – who did not settle in the valley until 1930 – their evangelical policies tended to exclude *a priori* the possibility of turning pre-colonial political institutions to Christian purposes. To be sure, these preconceptions and the endless misunderstandings which they are likely to have generated help to account for the cultural exclusivity of the Lunda aristocracy; yet, the latter must also be set in the context of the political dynamics of the early 20th century. The ongoing encroachment upon their territorial prerogatives in the heartland forced *bacilolo* on the defensive and can be presumed to have led them to fall back upon their

Augustin Mubanga Kanyembo, Kanyembo village, 6 May 1999; 'Extract from Northern Rhodesia Gazette, 22 November 1957', NAZ, SEC5/104.

⁶³ G. Caplan, *The Elites of Barotseland, 1887-1969: a Political History of Zambia's Western Province*, London, 1970, p. 110, 120-121

⁶⁴ Joseph, who was educated at Mbereshi and Livingstonia, worked as 'native clerk' in Kawambwa, Chiengi and Fort Rosebery bomas between 1909 and 1919. 'Native Clerks', Kawambwa DNB, III, NAZ, KSG3/1; interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Kosam Derrick Chipepa, Mwansabombwe, 5 May 1999. See also above, p. 95, n. 79.

⁶⁵ Interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Kosam Derrick Chipepa, Mwansabombwe, 5 May 1999; I. Cunison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 186.

electoral responsibilities as the principal source of leverage *vis-à-vis* the royal family. And since the aristocrats' electoral function depended on their continuing ability to present themselves as the custodians of the 'ritual and historical knowledge' of the eastern Lunda and their kingdom⁶⁶, it is not surprising that they eschewed all exposure to a religious message which openly condemned much of African pre-colonial life and its customs⁶⁷.

The generally low social standing of early Christian followers may have strengthened the aristocrats' determination to steer clear of mission education. As elsewhere in Northern Rhodesia⁶⁸, PB and LMS missions and schools in the lower Luapula valley tended to attract what 'Selim bin Raschid' – one of the few Swahili traders still to be found in the region at the beginning of the 20th century – unceremoniously called 'the scum of the country'⁶⁹, socially disenfranchised people with whom eastern Lunda title-holders would not have normally been expected to mix. Former slaves⁷⁰, lepers⁷¹ and 'old grannies poor and friendless in this world'⁷² were probably preponderant among PB converts until at least the First World War. Similar outcasts are likely to have gravitated towards the LMS mission, the local position of which was further undermined by its reliance upon a large number of "foreign" Mambwe and Lungu followers⁷³. As late as the 1920s – wrote the son of one of these immigrants – the residents of Mbereshi village still 'lived as a separate community' and

⁶⁶ I. Cunnison, 'A Note of the Lunda Concept of Custom', *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal (Human Problems in British Central Africa)*, 14, 1954, pp. 20-29 (see, especially, p. 27); *Id.*, *The Luapula Peoples*, pp. 169-172, 186-187.

⁶⁷ Conversely, the royal family, the sources of whose power were to a lesser extent "cultural", could afford a degree of openness to foreign influences. Muonga Kapakata, for instance, was 'anxious' that one of his sons – presumably Chinyanta Nankula – 'should be sent to Tiger Kloof'. Muonga's project, for the realization of which 'he had saved a few pounds', was cut short by his death in 1919. H.C. Nutter, 'Mbereshi Annual Report for 1919', ACWM, LMS, Central Africa Reports, box 3.

⁶⁸ R.I. Rotberg, *Christian Missionaries and the Creation of Northern Rhodesia, 1880-1924*, Princeton, 1965, p. 42; C.C. Guthrie, 'The Emergence and Decline of a Mission-Educated Elite in Northeast Zambia, 1895-1964', unpublished PhD thesis, Indiana University, 1978, pp. 73-78; S. Küster, *African Education in Colonial Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. Government Control, Settler Antagonism and African Agency, 1890-1964*, Hamburg, 1999, p. 274.

⁶⁹ D. Crawford, 11 March – 21 March 1905, in *ES*, July 1905, p. 276.

⁷⁰ D. Lammond, n.d. (but late 1908-early 1909), in *ES*, May 1909, p. 196; G.W. Sims, 6 August 1912, in *ES*, December 1912, p. 458.

⁷¹ G.W. Sims, 6 March 1918, in *ES*, September 1918, p. 232.

⁷² W. Lammond, 18 May 1909, in *ES*, September 1909, p. 356.

⁷³ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 43.

had 'very little communication' with 'the local people who lived in surrounding villages.'⁷⁴

The foundation of Mbereshi Girls' Boarding School (1915) and Boys' Boarding School (1926), where pupils could reach up to Standard VI, improved the educational facilities in the lower Luapula valley and favoured the emergence of a self-conscious, English-speaking élite⁷⁵, the members of which alternated periods of local employment as mission teachers and evangelists with periods of clerical employment in the colonial administration or the southern labour centres. 310 boys attended Griffith Quick's Boarding School during the first fifteen years of its life. By 1941, only 35 former pupils were engaged in rural activities; most of the remaining 275 'were in jobs of the highest kind normally available to Africans at that time, such as the seventy-eight fully certified teachers, and the thirty-nine clerks in government or other services.'⁷⁶ The 'existence of a small class of "educated" natives while the great mass of the people remain[ed] illiterate' was a source of concern for local British officials.

'For among these "educated" natives, who as a class are an admirable and valuable body of citizens, there are necessarily a certain number who are claiming from literary education the distinction that rightly belongs only to ability and character and whose resentment when they are taken at their true rather than their own self-arrogated value is not only a social nuisance but is liable to become a public danger. And it is only with the more general spread of education and its ceasing to have in itself a "scarcity value" that these men will find their true level and will cease to be a source of irritation to the respectable and industrious elements in the native population.'⁷⁷

These upstarts – 'young, educated and well-dressed' – were naturally keen to dissociate themselves from their 'less fortunate neighbours, to whom they referred as "Shenzis" [*Swahili word for "scruffy"*]. In 1935, taunts led to open violence, and a 'serious fight' involving more than 50 people broke out near Mbereshi mission. The 'uneducated

⁷⁴ E.S. Kapotwe, *The African Clerk*, p. 6. Dauti Yamba, whose role in the LNA will be discussed shortly, was also the son of a Lungu convert who had accompanied Purves, the founder of Mbereshi, on his journey from Kawimbe in 1900. M.C. Musambachime, 'Dauti Yamba's Contribution to the Rise and Growth of Nationalism in Zambia, 1941-1964', *African Affairs*, XC, 359, 1991, pp. 259-281 (Yamba's family background is sketched on p. 261).

⁷⁵ 'All teaching' in the Boys' Boarding School, 'was through the medium of English, and English was the schoolboys' *lingua franca* even outside the classroom'; S.F. Morrow, 'Motives and Methods', p. 167.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 171; *Id.*, 'Some Social Consequences'.

⁷⁷ J.B. Thomson, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report, 1930', encl. in J.W. Hinds, 'Mweru-Luapula Province, Annual Report, 1930', NAZ, ZA7/1/13/8.

faction' carried the day and 'did considerable damage.' 46 villagers ended up in the DC's jail⁷⁸.

Western-educated commoners are likely to have perceived their initial exclusion from the Lunda Native Authority as a failure to appreciate the value of their capabilities and achievements. Throughout the 1930s, Mwansabombwe-based title-holders monopolised the salaried posts of councillors and assessors in the *Mwata Kazembes'* Superior Native Authority and Court, respectively. The then Mufwalwa, Tumbishya, Chaleshya, Shamende and Chipota – five of the six councillors who constituted Mwata Kazembe Chinyanta Kasasa's original Superior Authority – were section heads in the royal capital. The *Mufwalwas*, as has been seen above⁷⁹, were also former territorial representatives, and so was the then Kasumpa, the sixth councillor installed in 1929-30. Chinyanta Kasasa's Court, the president of which was none other than the aforementioned *cilolo* Joseph Chipepa, was similarly dominated by the aristocracy⁸⁰. Under these circumstances, the LNA could hardly expect a high degree of loyalty from the members of the mission-educated intelligentsia. As early as 1930, the latter were said to be hostile to Chinyanta Kasasa's First-Class Court and 'particularly to his criminal jurisdiction.'⁸¹

The death of Chinyanta Kasasa late in 1935 presented this embryonic pressure group with a chance to vent its dissatisfaction and articulate its modernizing demands. Throughout December 1935 and January 1936, the competing claims of the numerous candidates to the throne were weighed by the eastern Lunda Electoral College. The contrast between the two main contenders could not have been greater. While Chinkonkole, in common with his predecessors, had no educational attainments⁸², the much younger Shadrack Chinyanta Nankula was a 'smartly-dressed, well-educated native who wrote an intelligent, neatly-typed letter giving a family tree of the Kasembes

⁷⁸ W. Stubbs, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on Native Affairs, 1935', NAZ, SEC2/1299. See also S.F. Morrow, 'Motives and Methods', p. 164.

⁷⁹ See pp. 214-215.

⁸⁰ M.J.B. Otter, 'Native Authorities and Native Courts', June 1929, encl. in Sharpe to SNA, 12 September 1929, NAZ, ZA1/9/27/5G; interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Kosam Derrick Chipepa, Mwansabombwe, 5 May 1999.

⁸¹ J.B. Thomson, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 7 November 1930 – 28 November 1930', NAZ, ZA7/4/26.

⁸² PC (Northern Province) to Chief Secretary 27 March 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192.

and urging his own appointment.⁸³ Chinyanta, who at the time was still working in Jadotville, could count upon the support of the most advanced sections of the large Mweru-Luapulan community in southern Katanga. Once it became clear that Chinyanta's bid for the throne had failed, his partisans wrote to the DC, Kawambwa, to declare their firm opposition to Chinkonkole. Significantly, the core of their argument revolved not so much around the new king's personality – albeit he was alleged to be 'senseless' and a 'drunkard' – as around his being short of the necessary educational prerequisites. 'We are very sorry here in Belgian Congo to understand that Kaniambo Chinkonkole he is on the throne of chief Kazembe. But we here we are indispensable a son of chief who was at School, KINIANTA SHADRICK, c/o U.M.H.K., Jadotville, Belgian Congo'. The anonymous authors of the petition – copies of which were also forwarded to the PC, Northern Province, and the SNA – did not question the ideological foundations of European rule, but hinted at the seemingly inconsequential policy of its local representatives who had not prevented Chinkonkole's accession. 'We are now through the British and Belgian Government sent free by sending us Governors, Commissionars and Officials Agents and Missionaries [...]. Without the cooperation of our overseas we could not know any thing we black people [...]. We are thanking to our Representatives in Africa because now we natives we are peace [...].' What was the point of colonial rule – this was the implicit line of reasoning – if the eastern Lunda were to be ruled by a king who had not benefited at all from the enlightenment brought about by the arrival of the Europeans? In short – thus ended the letter – 'we need only who was at school. But not Kaniambo Chinkonkole.'⁸⁴ Arguably, emerging Luapulan élites sensed that they stood a better chance of working their way into the LNA, if this latter were to pass under the guidance of Chinyanta Nankula – a man who, in many respects, must have seemed to them to be one of their number, having been enriched, just as they had been, by mission education and lengthy work-experiences in the cosmopolitan environment of southern Katanga.

As we know, Chinyanta's royal ambitions were fulfilled as early as 1941, to the delight of British officials. His western-educated sponsors, on the other hand, had to wait

⁸³ DC (Kawambwa) to PC (Northern Province), 15 May 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192.

⁸⁴ '800 People in the Congo' to DC (Kawambwa), 6 April 1936, NAZ, SEC2/1192.

until 1948, the year in which the entire structure of local administration in Northern Rhodesia underwent a thorough reorganization⁸⁵. In the lower Luapula valley, the executive responsibilities within the LNA were brought under the exclusive control of the Superior Authority of Mwata Kazembe XIV. The Lunda Superior Authority was subdivided into four separate departments (Education, Health, Agriculture & Fishery, Public Works), each of which was to be led by an elected or nominated councillor (or secretary). The activities of the various departments were to be supervised and coordinated by a chief councillor – or ‘Prime Minister’ – responsible to the king and the British administration. Subordinate Native Authorities, with no modern councillors and no officially recognized executive functions, became ‘very much [...] purely judicial establishment[s].’⁸⁶

It is symptomatic that the list of prospective candidates for the new posts was drawn on 11th July 1948 during the second meeting of the Lunda National Association, the welfare society founded and chaired by Dauti Yamba ‘in order that young, educated men might discuss points to bring before the Administration.’⁸⁷ Chinyanta Nankula himself spelled out the criteria for the nominations in his opening address to the conference.

‘There is a need of finding some educated young men who should be appointed to work [...] as Ministers for four departments [...]. And there is a need for one Prime-Minister of our Lunda Area to be appointed [...]. The qualifications necessary for these appointments will be based on the character of that person and his experience as well as efficiency. These are so because these men will be your country service men.’⁸⁸

Plainly, the king envisaged an administrative body in which the members’ personalities and capabilities would play a far greater role than their families’ status. Whereas Ashford Mwaba, the Chief Councillor, was elected a few days later in what seems to have been an aristocratic-dominated ‘Royal Meeting’⁸⁹, all the other councillors – Dauti Yamba, Education; Fred Machende, Health; Peter Nkonkomalimba, Agriculture &

⁸⁵ K. Datta, ‘The Policy of Indirect Rule’, pp. 242-244.

⁸⁶ A.B. Shone, ‘Kawambwa Tour Report, 11 August – 21 August 1950’, NAZ, SEC2/877.

⁸⁷ I. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples*, p. 188.

⁸⁸ ‘The Lunda National Association – Meeting Held on 11 July 1948 at Mwansabombwe’, encl. in Yamba to DC (Kawambwa), 27 January 1949, NAZ, NP2/1/7.

⁸⁹ ‘Royal Meeting Held at Mwansabombwe on 25 July 1948’, NAZ, NP2/7/13.

Fishery; Joel Nkandu, Public Works⁹⁰ – were probably chosen directly by Chinyanta Nankula on the basis of the list drafted by the Lunda National Association.

All these newly appointed departmental heads were relatively highly educated commoners⁹¹. By the time he joined the LNA at the age of 37, Yamba had already a distinguished professional and political career behind him. Having completed Standard II at Mbereshi and Standard VII in Southern Rhodesia, he became Headmaster of Luanshya Central School in 1942. After forming the Luanshya Welfare and Recreation Leadership Association, he was appointed to the local Urban Advisory Council, which later elected him to the Western Province African Provincial Council. Between 1946 and 1948, Yamba was one of the chief protagonists in the Federation of African Welfare Societies of Northern Rhodesia and the Northern Rhodesia African Congress. In 1951, having been elected to the Northern Rhodesia Legislative Council, Yamba left the LNA⁹². While Nkonkomalimba became the new Education Councillor⁹³, the Agriculture & Fishery Department was taken over by Sandford Lukwesa. The latter had completed Standard VI at the Plymouth Brethren mission school of Mubende (Lubunda's area) and had worked as a court clerk in Kambwali VII Lukwesa's Subordinate Court⁹⁴. Machende, the Health Councillor, had reached Standard V and was sometimes employed by touring officials as an interpreter⁹⁵. Mwaba, the pivot around which the new executive came to revolve, was also a commoner or 'distantly related to the royal family'⁹⁶. After teaching in Mbereshi between 1930 and 1941, he had worked as a

⁹⁰ 'The Lunda Native Authority Council. Minutes of the Meetings Held at Mwanabombwe on 8 September 1949', NAZ, NP2/1/7.

⁹¹ Interview with Moses Kapumba, Lusaka, 1 April 1999; interview with Nathan Chinyanta, Lusaka, 2 April 1999; interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala & Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya, Mwanabombwe, 9 April 1999.

⁹² M.C. Musambachime, 'Dauti Yamba', pp. 260-268.

⁹³ Nkonkomalimba resigned in 1954 and became the Headmaster of Chinyanta School, one of the three elementary schools administered by the LNA; P.A. Large, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 6 December – 16 December 1954', NAZ, NP2/6/10.

⁹⁴ E.C. Thomson, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 10 December – 21 December 1947', NAZ, SEC2/874; P.A. Large, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 8 October – 23 October 1953', NAZ, NP2/6/10.

⁹⁵ J.M.E. Took, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 11 June – 27 June 1951', NAZ, SEC2/878; P.A. Large, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 8 October – 23 October 1953', NAZ, NP2/6/10.

⁹⁶ Interview with Nathan Chinyanta, Lusaka, 30 December 1998. Sadly, Ashford Mwaba died in January 1999 before I was able to interview him.

Jeanes-school supervisor and mass education supervisor in Fort Rosebery and Luwingu⁹⁷.

Following the 1948 reform, hereditary title-holders retained control of Chinyanta Nankula's Superior Court – which in 1949 was still presided over by Joseph Chipepa and included section heads Shamende Ilunga and Rawsen Muselemu⁹⁸ – but were completely cut off from the reorganized Lunda Superior Authority. The rise of a new stratum of lowborn civil servants displeased both the Mwansabombwe-based aristocracy, now deprived of all residual executive functions in the colonial administrative scheme, and the territorial chiefs (whether belonging to the royal family or not). Despite the unwavering support of the king, Mwaba never succeeded in stamping out an undercurrent of traditionalist opposition. The latter – noted the DC, Kawambwa – remained a 'very real and [...] important factor in the working of the Native Authority.'⁹⁹ Only a few days before the sudden death of Chinyanta Nankula in October 1950, Mwaba voiced his resentment at chief Chimambi Mulundu's 'non-cooperation' and deplored the fact that 'he was not recognised when he came to Mulundu's area and that the Chief did not look after him'. Unlike Mwaba – wrote Mosse, District Officer, Kawambwa – Chimambi was 'not so well educated and slightly resent[ed] this new comer telling him what to do.' One solution to the problem was to impress upon departmental councillors that they were 'acting not in their own right (and therefore [were] not people of enormous importance) but only as implements of the Superior Chief [...].'¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Northern Rhodesia Government, *Record of the Second Meeting of the Western Province African Provincial Council Held on 23-25 April 1951 at Luanshya*, Lusaka, 1951, NAZ, Box 4F.

⁹⁸ Shi-Lukwesa Roma, the fourth assessor, was Chinyanta Nankula's own brother. 'The Lunda Native Authority Council. Minutes of the Meetings Held at Mwansabombwe on 8 September 1949', NAZ, NP2/1/7; interview with Kanyembo Davidson Kalandala, Mwelwa Godwin Dyulu Kabeya & Kosam Derrick Chipepa, Mwansabombwe, 5 May 1999. See also A.L. Epstein, 'Divorce Law and the Stability of Marriage among the Lunda of Kazembe', *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal (Human Problems in British Central Africa)*, 14, 1954, pp. 1-19 (especially, pp. 16-17).

⁹⁹ The DC's considerations were a commentary to an episode described by Cadet Took. While visiting chief Kanyembo's Subordinate Authority with Health Councillor Machende, Took was impressed by the 'good old fashioned dignity' of "Hitler" Kanyembo I and by his having 'precious little time for the Lunda [*Superior*] Native Authority'. One morning, he 'could not help being thoroughly amused [...] on hearing the chief roundly charging the Lunda Councillor [...] to the effect that he was a nasty little bureaucrat and that when he became a chief, then, perhaps he could throw his weight about!' J.M.E. Took, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 11 June – 27 June 1951', NAZ, SEC2/878.

¹⁰⁰ P.M. Mosse, 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 18 September – 3 October 1950', NAZ, SEC2/877.

The mood of the aristocracy after the restructuring of the Lunda Superior Authority is aptly exemplified by the public speech delivered by Ntanda Kalandala in the course of the ceremony held to mark the installation of Chinyanta Nankula's successor on 1st February 1951.

'You see' – thus Kalandala addressed Brown Ng'ombe, the new Mwata Kazembe – 'it is Kashiba and I who set you in your place. Amongst the Lunda there is none greater than us. It is we who grant you the position of Kazembe, it is we who put you in the daylight. Now you will give preference to others. Simply because we cannot write, can you deny us, the representatives of your ancestors, a living? If a European has children, some may go to school and earn money, others may not go to school; but will these for that reason be discarded by their parents? They will not. Their father will give them work with him and they will enjoy money. [...] I, who caught Nkuba¹⁰¹, have nothing now.'¹⁰²

4) Epilogue

Despite his commitment to modernization and strong links with western-educated commoners, Chinyanta Nankula did not wish altogether to alienate *bacilolo* and *bakalulua*, who still possessed the power to exclude his descendants from the eastern Lunda throne. In chapter I, we argued that the setting up^{of} an historical committee in 1942 was first and foremost a defensive response to the demands of the inter-ethnic competition precipitated by colonial administrative practices. In the light of the above-described social dynamics, the production of the pristine version of *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi* can also be seen as the result of Chinyanta Nankula's determination to grant *bacilolo* and *bakalulua* a room for self-assertion and demonstrate his respect for the past heritage that they incarnated. The eastern Lunda ethno-history, however, was a culturally hybrid product: whereas the preservation of the memory of the past was the exclusive domain of the aristocracy, its presentation in a written form would have been inconceivable without the contribution of the emerging élites, represented in this occasion by the three 'writers' (*tulemba*; sing. *kalemba*) – Isaiah Chiko Mukunku, Joseph Lutina Chifumanda and Bell Duncan Katapa¹⁰³ – who sat in the committee

¹⁰¹ This, of course, is a reference to the episode described above, p. 88.

¹⁰² I. Cunnison, 'The Installation of Chief Kazembe XV', p. 7.

¹⁰³ E. Labrecque (ed.), 'History of the BaLuunda People', p. 1. In 1952, Bell Duncan Katapa was chosen to lead the newly formed Information Department of the Lunda Superior Native Authority (Mwaba to Brown Ng'ombe, 19 April 1952, NAZ, NP2/7/13; 'The Lunda Native Authority Council. Minutes of the Meetings Held at Mwansabombwe on 13 February 1954', NAZ, NP2/1/7.) Joseph Lutina Chifumanda was born in Mbereshi and had been employed as 'native clerk' in Kawambwa between 1916 and 1918; 'Native Clerks', Kawambwa DNB, III, NAZ, KSG3/1.

alongside the holders of hereditary titles, such as the then Chibwidi, Kabimbi or Shakadyata. In this latter respect, then, Chinyanta Nankula's initiative became an opportunity to draw together the modern and traditionalist factions in the lower Luapula valley and the separate cultural symbols and skills which defined their antagonistic identities.

The ossification of Lunda ethnicity which the publication of *Ifikolwe Fyandi* brought in its wake failed to provide a lasting solution to the social tension which pervaded the lower Luapula valley in the 1940s and early 1950s¹⁰⁴. The death of Chinyanta Nankula paved the way for an aristocratic revival, the most symbolic manifestations of which were the 'regrettable dismissal' of Mwaba in 1953 and the resignation of his successor, Silas Chama, in 1955¹⁰⁵. But the reign of Mwata Kazembe XV Brown Ng'ombe (1951-7) was also characterized by the local repercussions of the broader historical processes which were shaping the future of Northern Rhodesia. While the 'spectacular' expansion of the Copperbelt accelerated the socio-economic transformation of the colony¹⁰⁶, the widespread opposition to the settler-dominated Central African Federation with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland marked a decisive stage in the growth of African political consciousness and inaugurated the struggle destined to lead to Independence in 1964¹⁰⁷. For all its interest, the story of how the Kazembe kingdom and its various components successfully readjusted to the exigencies of this new historical phase lies beyond the scope of the present work.

¹⁰⁴ The most lucid discussion of the role played by 'African members of the educated petty bourgeoisie' in the redefinition of ethnic paradigms in colonial South-Central Africa remains L. Vail, 'Introduction: Ethnicity in Southern African History', in *Id.* (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism*, pp. 1-19 (especially, pp. 10-14). See also T.O. Ranger, 'African Identities: Ethnicity, Nationality and History. The Case of Matabeleland, 1893-1993', in J. Heidrich (ed.), *Changing Identities. The Transformation of Asian and African Societies under Colonialism*, Berlin, 1994, p. 181.

¹⁰⁵ H.T. Bayldon, 'Kawambwa District, Annual Report on African Affairs, 1953', NAZ, NP2/2/43; Chama to Brown Ng'ombe, 5 September 1955, NAZ, NP2/7/13.

¹⁰⁶ A.D. Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, pp. 212-213.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 208-211, 218-22. As everywhere else in Northern Rhodesia, the hostility to Federation in the lower Luapula valley was motivated by the conviction that 'any form of closer association with Southern Rhodesia [*would have been followed*] by the arrival of Europeans to take over the land.' (P.M. Corfe 'Kawambwa Tour Report, 5, 1952', NAZ, SEC2/879.) Among the eastern Lunda, the fear of Federation also intermingled with the opposition to fishing regulations; M.C. Musambachime, 'Rural Political Protest: the 1953 Disturbances in Mweru-Luapula', *IJAHS*, XX, 3, 1987, pp. 437-453.

Sources & Bibliography

List of Informants

The interviewees are listed according to the relative chronology of the interviews. The name of each informant is followed by his title (in capital), year of birth or approximate age, location and date of the interview or interviews. Additional information concerning non-titled interviewees are also provided. The tapes and transcripts of the best interviews will be deposited in the Special Collection of the Library of the University of Zambia, Lusaka.

- 1) Dennis Frost; approximate age: 80; Gumley, Leicestershire, 14 May 1998. District Commissioner in Kawambwa between 1959 and 1961.
- 2) Nathan Chinyanta; approx. age: 70; Lusaka, 24 December, 30 December 1998, 2 April 1999. Eldest surviving son of Mwata Kazembe XIV Chinyanta Nankula (1941-50)
- 3) Moses Kapumba; born 1924; Lusaka, 1 April 1999. Court Clerk and Treasury Clerk in the Lunda Native Authority between the early 1940s and ca. 1960.
- 4) Robert Yamfwa INAMWANA KASHIBA; b. 1930; Kashiba village, 5 April, 7 May, 13 July 1999.
- 5) Kabaso Makanta MULUNDU & Elders; approx. age: 55; Mulundu village, 8 April 1999.
- 6) Mwelwa Godwin DYULU KABEYA; b. 1931; Mwansabombwe, 9 April, 5 May, 14 July, 15 July 1999.
- 7) Kanyembo Davidson KALANDALA; approx. age: 60; Mwansabombwe, 9 April, 5 May 1999.
- 8) James Kabwebwe KAMBWALI; approx. age: 80; Kambwali village, 12 April 1999.
- 9) Shadrack Chinyanta LUKWESA; b. 1947; Lukwesa village, 13 April, 6 May 1999.
- 10) Kosam Derrick CHIPEPA; b. 1914; Mwansabombwe, 5 May, 14 July 1999.
- 11) Augustin Mubanga KANYEMBO; b. 1959; Kanyembo village, 6 May 1999.
- 12) Peter Ntambo KASUMPA; approx. age: 50; Kasumpa village, 7 May 1999.
- 13) Paison Sunkutu; b. 1917; Kasumpa village, 7 May 1999. Prominent member of the Bemba community of the lower Luapula valley and local historian.
- 14) Chama Musaba MUSHYOTA; b. 1932; Mushyota village, 8 May, 16 July 1999.
- 15) Simon Engaenga; b. 1924; Mushyota village, 8 May 1999. Eldest councillor of chief Chama Musaba Mushyota.
- 16) Edward Musonda; b. 1941; Kanyembo village, 11 May 1999. 'Acting' *Mukanso* at the time of my fieldwork in the lower Luapula valley.
- 17) Jestas Chinyanta SALANGA; b. 1921; Salanga village, 12 May 1999.
- 18) Kafuti Fester KALUMBU; b. 1909; Kalumbu village, 13 May 1999.
- 19) Shanyemba's Villagers (names purposely withheld); Shanyemba village, 12 July 1999.
- 20) Lukwesa MUSANDA; approx. age: 90; Musanda village, 14 July 1999.
- 21) Lobson Chinyanta LUBABILA; b. 1935; Mwansabombwe, 14 July 1999.
- 22) Misheck Kaoma KAPESA; b. 1925; Kapesa village, 15 July 1999.

- 23) Miriam Mubanga (f); approx. age: 30; Mwansabombwe, 15 July 1999. *Mwine mashamo* of *bana ba mfumu*.
- 24) Kapela Kanyembo (f); approx age: 60; Mwansabombwe, 15 July 1999. *Mwine mashamo* of Mwata Kazembe XIV Chinyanta Nankula (1941-50)
- 25) Chama Pinot Laurent; b. 1936; Mushyota village, 16 July 1999. Councillor of chief Chama Musaba Mushyota and local historian.
- 26) Mason Mutuka MUNUNGA; b. 1947; Mununga village, 17 July 1999.
- 27) Paulo Chisanga; b. 1913; Mununga village, 17 July 1999. Eldest councillor of chief Mason Mutuka Mununga and well-known local historian from at least the late 1960s (see A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, p. 385).
- 28) Kingstone Mwape LUBUNDA; b. 1943; Lubunda village, 19 July 1999.

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Since full references are given in the footnotes in the text, only the principal archival sources are listed below.

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