

young ones are said to have been heard in Mulumbwe's garden at Mukolwe's village, calling out, *Mama mpembeni-po*, "Mother, wait for me!" The reply given was, *Kawendeshya ili nalemo kwita, wekaiwanda!* "Hurry up, I'm tired of calling you, you little demon!" This calling has been heard at night, early in the morning, and late in the evening.

Elsewhere in the bush in the early morning the *ifinkuwaila* are said to make noises imitating people; they say, *Wele wele wele wele!* At times, when walking through the bush in the late afternoon, one may hear in the distance the sound *ḡaḡwá ḡaḡwá ḡaḡwá*, and think it is a child crying. Then will come the mother's voice, comforting the young one, "*Rr . . . rr . . . rr . . .*" Some one not in the know will feel sure that he has come near to a village of people. He will become tired out with searching, and then he will hear the same sound again behind him. Then will he realize that it is an *ichinkuwaila*, and make off with speed.

The present Mushili stated that his elders recorded the singing of the *ifinkuwaila* as follows:

*Pumputu, pumputu, ngatuwe,  
Fwenkashi shyakubweleshya.  
Twalukuchinda neḡakawa.*

"Trip, trip, let us fall,  
Us sisters who will go back.  
We were dancing with those who will fall."

A Lamba, Paul Kaputula, related that one night, the rest of the people being away sleeping in the gardens (*mututungu*), he and Chiweshya and an old woman were the only ones sleeping in the village of Senkwe. Early in the morning they heard wailing voices approaching the village. They came out from the huts to see what was coming along the road, and heard a tremendous noise of persons passing along and through the village, but saw no one. In fear they went back into the huts, while the wailing passed on through the village and along the road to Kalimbata. When the people returned from their gardens they asked what the wailing had been about, for it was heard afar off. Those in the village said that they were *ifinkuwaila* which had passed.

Kawunda Nkana, an old woman from Mushili's village, related how, long ago in the winter-time (*pamwela*), when she was in Lenjeland, she saw *wamumpilwe* (another name for *ifinkuwaila*) early in the morning in a column passing in the sky from east to west. They were carrying *amasasa* and *imisengelo*. There were little ones, and the big ones were carrying loads and smoking.

One day when, travelling with a number of carriers, I was

passing the Chipese river I heard a lion roaring in a swamp forest about half a mile away. My carriers contradicted my assertion that it was a lion, and assured me that I heard an *ichinkuwaila* imitating a lion.

At the Minshinshye stream, a tributary of the Kafulafuta river, no native will pass the night if he can help it, for his sleep, they say, will be disturbed. He will hear *ifinkuwaila* passing to and fro, and calling, *Palalo'muntunshi pano*, "A human is sleeping here!" and others crying, *Mweḡame tupembeleni-po*, "Mates wait for us!" Men are too scared to sleep through that.

At times, when men are travelling after dark with dogs, the dogs get on the scent of these *ifinkuwaila*, who, it is said, call out, as they drive the dogs away, *Topoke'mbwa shyoḡe nshino wemuntunshi!* "Take away your dogs. Here they are, O human!" Anyone hearing that would run for his life in another direction, calling to his dogs.

*Ifinkuwaila* are thus invisible to all except the *wamoḡa* who are already possessed by one of them. Nevertheless, they like the company of human beings, and will call out to them when travelling, *Pembeni-po*, "Wait a bit!" When, however, a traveller stops, thinking it is his companion, no one will appear. A man may turn at hearing a cough behind him, but will see no one—it was an *ichinkuwaila* wanting his company. The Lambas have this saying of the *ichinkuwaila* making his lament over a deserted village: *Mwali wantu, mwali wantu, mwamwene muno, shimusachilamilundu, mwali wantu*, "There used to be people, there used to be people, here in the chief's village; it is overgrown like the veld; there used to be people."

### Wamoḡa

It is said that if a man gets into a crowd of *ifinkuwaila* they do not touch him, but just move aside to let him pass. Should one of these beings, however, choose to possess the man, he strikes him in the face with his hand. On his return to the village the man becomes ill, and sees visions of beings in endless march across the heavens, going westward, arrayed in feather headdresses and carrying their sleeping mats. His companions say, *Mipishi waḡona*, "'Tis ghosts you have seen!" With others the visions are even more definite. They see the *ifinkuwaila* travelling in lines, some arrayed in white feather headdresses and some carrying drums. These catch up their quarries, take them off to

the hills, and to the beating of their drums dance the night through.

When the sick man describes this his companions will say, "Fetch an initiated *mukamoŵa*!" And one is fetched. He comes carrying his *inkombo shyamusoolo*, calabashes with long, straight handles. In them he has his medicine, a special medicine which the *ifinkuwaila* have told him how to dig and concoct. This medicine he gives to the patient to drink, together with *umufuŵa*, soaked meal, the food of the *ifinkuwaila*. After that there is a dance at night, for which the patient, who is now the initiate, pays the *mukamoŵa* as much as ten shillings. Then a new name is given to the initiate by the initiator, a name which is supposed to be that of the possessing *ichinkuwaila*. Such names are those of Mutolowale, a man of Mpokota's village, Kantumoya, another man from Mpokota, Mukalutoŵala, a woman from Mukungu's village, Funkwe, another woman from Mukungu, Kankobwe, a man from Mukungu, Mukankwashi, a man from Chikolwa's village, Lutwika, a man from Chimbalasepa's, and many others.

These spirits generally enter young men and women. It is immaterial of what *umukoka* (clan) the person may be, as the *ifinkuwaila* have no totemic clan distinctions themselves.

#### Dancing of Wamoŵa

When possessed by an *ichinkuwaila* a person is called *moŵa* (plural, *wamoŵa*) or, alternatively, *mukamoŵa* (spouse of the *moŵa*—plural, *wamukamoŵa*). These *wamoŵa* may not eat *imita* (barbel) or *imbishi* (zebra); they are taboo. This taboo lapses when the *wamoŵa* grow old and are treated with special medicine. These people have a certain standing in the community on account of their skill in dancing. As their services are much in demand at mourning and initiation ceremonies, and as they are paid for dancing, *ukuwilwa wumoŵa*, becoming possessed as a *moŵa*, is a lucrative business. Not only are they known for their dancing, but they are the composers and singers of a special type of song, called *inyimbo shyawamoŵa*. Their dances too are called after them, *ishyawamoŵa*, though they sometimes dance the *ifimbwasa* dances.

Here are four examples of songs composed by *wamoŵa*:

- (1) *Inshima ilaŵa yakulya-po, kanshi ngawalishyo'lumbeta, nganailya-po neŵo . . . !*

"Pap for food is to be desired; if only they would blow the horn I would eat of it . . . !"

- (2) *Aŵaŵakashi ukuchyenjela wapile'misenga, washya kwaŵo, alaye mama!*

"What a cunning wife this is, who has bailed out sprats, [but] left them at her home [with her mother]. Well, I never, Mother!"

- (3) *Ili yakolele'nsale'chimbayambaya chyalilele!*

"When the hunger became severe the rejoicing in plenty went to sleep!"

- (4) *Akale panyingo'kwelawila, munshi yachiti nakukungama neŵo; ifyende'shitima nikumungwenyuko, munshi yachiti nakukungama neŵo!*

"Long ago up and down I bobbed upon a bicycle, under a tree will I lean; the way the train travels is with a sweep down the incline, under a tree will I lean!"

#### Umulenda Waŵamoŵa

When a man becomes possessed as a *moŵa* he procures *insangwa*, rattles for the ankles, and an *uwuyombo*, a dancing skirt made of a

fringe of grass beads; and for the storing of these insignia of his profession he builds a special kind of shrine, called *umulenda waŵamoŵa*, the professional dancer's shrine. This type of *umulenda* is built as an *insama*, a shelter erected for bird-scaring, with open sides. A number of upright poles are planted in a circle, and a thatched conical roof erected above them. Often the trappings of the dance are left exposed to view beneath this shelter<sup>1</sup>

day and night, but no one would think of stealing them, for fear of death at the hands of the *ifinkuwaila*. There are no ceremonies gone through on erecting these *umulenda*, and the

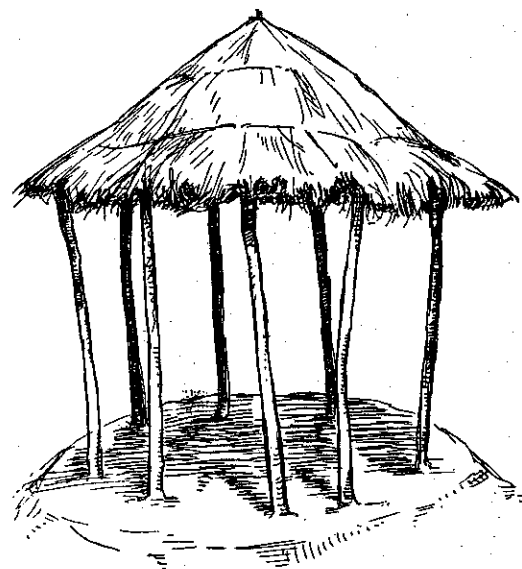


FIG. 75. UMULENDA WAŴAMOŴA

<sup>1</sup> See Fig. 72.

whole work is carried out by the *moŵa* himself. The term *umulenda* is used in this connexion because the *ifinkuwaila* are looked upon as *imipashi yaŵamoŵa*, the spirits of the *ŵamoŵa*.

The term *ŵamoŵa* is of recent origin;<sup>1</sup> in older Lamba these people were called *amashyaŵe*, or *ŵamukupe*. The Kaonde people believe in similar possession, and they used to call the persons possessed *ututangu*, but now *aŵayembe*. The Lalas also believe in *ifinkuwaila* possession, and call the possessed *ŵachiwila*.

*Ifinkuwaila* are found in Lamba folklore, wherein they usually play some ridiculous part in scaring people.

### Aŵayambo

The *aŵayambo* are the professional hunting dancers. It is believed that the spirits of dead Twa hunters, from the Ŵatwa or Lukanga Swamp region, take possession of certain Lamba men—never women. These possessed men are not necessarily themselves hunters, but they follow the profession of composing *inyimbo shyachinsengwe*, songs of the chase, and of singing and dancing in the *ichinsengwe* dances.

The way in which the Twa spirit takes possession of a man is much like that described in the case of the *ŵamoŵa*. One day a man falls ill, and dreams that he is singing *inyimbo shyachinsengwe* in the company of many *aŵapalu*, hunters. When morning dawns he actually begins to sing, and all those who hear him recognize his songs as those sung by *aŵayambo*. They send for an acknowledged *umuyambo* (hunting dancer), who comes that evening, bringing with him his particular medicine, *umusamu*, which he gives the sick man to drink. Afterward, that very night, an *ichinsengwe* dance is held, in which the patient takes part. Thereafter he will recover his strength, and be in a position to dance professionally. He will pay his initiator about ten shillings for his services on this occasion. The *aŵayambo* have the same food taboos as the *ŵamoŵa*, and, like the *ŵamoŵa*, make their dancing a lucrative business. They are requisitioned to dance at hunting celebrations, and go from village to village, receiving payment at each place. While the hunters themselves dance the *ichinsengwe* in honour of *mwishayanombe*, the *aŵayambo* dance it in honour of the Twa hunters by whose spirits they are possessed. These *aŵayambo* are dressed with rattles (*amansangwa*) on their ankles, a feather headdress (*ichingalangala*), and round the waist a grass-bead skirt, called *uŵuyombo*. The payment (*imfupo*) they receive is in beads, fowls, or money.

<sup>1</sup> It is said to have come into use about the year 1915.

*Inyimbo shyachinsengwe* are very numerous. Two of them were given when dealing with the ceremonies connected with the building of an *umulenda*. Here are two more examples:

- (1) *Akale lukoso akale,  
Nali muyinga akale!  
Nalukwipaya akale!*

“Long, long ago,  
I was a hunter long ago!  
I used to kill long ago!”

- (2) *Bwachya, wo wo ya ya!  
Pano bwachya, bwachyo'ŵushiku!  
Aŵapalu ŵanama ŵaliweme, bwachya!  
Ŵalepaye'nama, katulya-po,  
Bwachyo'ŵushiku!*

“’Tis dawn, *ta ra ra ra!*  
Now ’tis dawn, the night has cleared!  
Hunters of game are fine, ’tis dawn!  
They kill game, and we eat of it.  
The night has cleared!”

### Isambwe

The *aŵayambo* are said to be able to give to hunters medicine to give them success in hunting, especially to favour them with finding the game out grazing, not lying in concealment. A bowl of this medicine is called *isambwe*. The *umuyambo* procures a certain root, and gives the hunter the following instructions: “Prepare a bark plate [*umukwa*], and put this powdered medicine upon it; then pour water over the medicine. Next tie together a bunch of leaves of the *umusamba*-tree, and make this resemble the tail of an animal. Then dip the bunch of leaves into the *isambwe*, and sprinkle your body all over with the medicine by continually flicking the bunch.” One cannot help noticing the element of sympathetic magic which comes into this prescription. The bunch of leaves resembling an animal’s tail is flicked or ‘swished’ in applying the medicine. This is the normal action of the tail of a grazing animal. Then there is a remarkable connexion between the terms used. The whole operation is called *uku-samba*, to bathe. This same root is found in the word *isambwe*, indicating the particular bowl of medicine, and it is leaves from the *umusamba*-tree that are needed to make the switch. *Aŵalaye* (doctors) and *ŵamukamwami* (mediums) are also able to supply this medicine to hunters requiring it.

Like the term *moŵa*, the term *umuyambo* is of recent origin;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is said to have been first used about 1910.

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the older Lamba term was *wóutwa*. The Lambas think it likely that both terms, *moŵa* and *umuyambo*, will eventually give place to new terms, according to the whim of the time.

Possession by the spirits of Twa hunters has nothing whatever to do with the *umukoka* (clan). The original hunters may have belonged to any of the clans, and Lamba men of any clan may become possessed. *Aŵayambo* take the names of the spirits which possess them, and it is significant that all the new names of *aŵayambo* are in the Twa language or are Twa names prefaced by the Lamba prefix *muka*, "the spouse of." Such names are Chinkunta (a village headman of commoner's clan), Tampila (a man at Luntantwe's village), Mukandoso (a man at Lupumpaula), Mukachyeso (a man of Kaponde), and Mukalyuni (a man of Malakata). All these men are *aŵayambo*.

### Aŵami and Wamukamwami

The most influential of the spirit-possessed people in Lamba-land are the *wamukamwami* (literally, the spouses of the chief). In Lenje and in Ila *mwami* is the term for 'chief,' and the *wamukamwami* of the Lambas are said to be possessed by the spirits of Lenje chiefs. Lamba chiefs are not known to *wila* (possess a person), not even in another tribe. The clan of the Lenje chiefs is that of the *aŵenatembo*, the wasp clan, but the same clan among the Lambas is a clan of commoners, and has no connexion with the *aŵami*. The Lambas say that they know that the *aŵami* are Lenje spirits, because the *mukamwami* gives the name of the deceased chief; e.g., one will say, *Neŵo ninechitanda naisa*, "I, Chitanda, have come!" Chitanda was a prominent Lenje chief.

### Ukuwilwa Kwaŵamukamwami

This is how the possession is said to come about. A person falls ill, and his illness gets worse and worse, no remedy giving any relief. He then begins to speak in a weird way, using the most extravagant language, telling of wonderful things he says he has seen. On hearing these things the villagers send for a prominent *mukamwami* to come and see the patient and prescribe the necessary medicine, for they have recognized that this is not an ordinary sickness, but probably possession by an *umwami*. When the *mukamwami* comes, and finds the patient singing, he says, *Wami aŵa!* "This is a Lenje chief!" He then orders the drums to be brought for the dancing. That night a great concourse of people comes together in order to greet "the chief," as

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the initiate is called, and to hear the matters he has to tell them. Then that man who had been so ill begins to speak with a loud voice. Sometimes he will climb on to the *ichitupa* (loft) of the house to speak. He says, "I have come from Chitanda's village; I am Chitanda himself. I am moving my residence from that country; I have come here to my relatives; so I have caught this my servant [indicating himself]. Furthermore, behind me I have left many pestilences—they are coming. Behind are smallpox and locusts. All of these [latter] are coming to eat your food-stuffs; they are my soldiers, with which I travel." On hearing that fear takes hold upon the people, and they all bring offerings (*imilambu*) to the chief, to prevent those disasters from coming upon them. Then the chief says, "It is well, my children. I have warded off the locusts, and the smallpox too I have warded off; I shall cause them to pass round you to your neighbours; maybe they will go to the Luapula river and destroy the people there."

In the morning the new *mukamwami* will go out and travel through the gardens, accompanied by many people, who keep up a chorus of *lululu*-ing, calling out, "*Aŵami* are going through the gardens, warding off the locusts." In this fashion the *mukamwami* goes from village to village through the country; he provides medicine for drinking and for washing lest the people should contract smallpox.

It is one of the most lucrative practices of the *wamukamwami* to foretell the coming of evils, which they claim to be able to control, in order that the people may bring them offerings to induce them to exert their power. It can readily be understood that these practitioners are generally held in awe by the people, and that they are in great demand when any real calamity threatens.

The old *mukamwami* who pronounced the new initiate as possessed of an *umwami* is the one who instructs him in the herbal lore necessary to his trade, and initiates him into the mysteries of prophecy. The initiate will pay his initiator as much as the value of a gun for his services.

### Appearance of a Mukamwami

The *mukamwami* does not cut his hair; he plaits it so that it hangs down in tassels all round his head, freely anointed with castor-oil and red ochre (*ulushila*). He also wears *impande*, as a symbol of chieftainship. These are generally discs carved from elephant tusk, and attached to a string encircling the head. The genuine *impande*, cut from the huge shell, used to be obtained by trade from the Mbundu traders, but are becoming increasingly

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rare now among the Lambas. A circlet of threaded cowrie-shells (*imiwela*) is also worn on the head, and ivory bracelets (*amakoosa*) on both arms. A woman *mukamwami* may also wear *insambo*, bracelets of twisted wire. Calico is worn round the waist and over the shoulders. The *mukamwami* observes the same food taboos as the *moŵa* and the *umuyambo*. In addition he may not eat *inshima* prepared by *aŵanichye*, young people, but only that made by *aŵakulu*, elders. When travelling the *mukamwami* carries over his shoulder a small knob-headed ornamental axe, called *impompwe*, *imbafi*, or *ichiwanga*, and also his *akasako*, a long staff with beads wound round the centre. This is his sign of office. His sleeping mat, blankets, and other belongings are carried by his *chipyaila*, or by others who are acting as his servants.

### Chipyaila

The *chipyaila* is a youth who enters the employ of a *mukamwami*. He shares a proportion of the 'spoils' gained by his master when a journey is undertaken. His work consists in looking after the *akapeshi*, to protect it from the termites, in sweeping the house of the *umulenda*, or, as it is called in Lenje, *ichyonde*, and in carrying the *akapeshi* on journeys. The *ichyonde* is a small lean-to house (*inkunka*), in which are kept the *akapeshi* and other paraphernalia of the *mukamwami*, and in which sleeps the *chipyaila*. The term *chipyaila* is derived from *ukupyaila*, to sweep. A *chipyaila* never becomes a *mukamwami*.

### Akapeshi Kaŵami

The *akapeshi* is a small grass basket (*ichilukwa*) with a support beneath it (*ishyula*), like that of a beer-basket (*intumbe*). This basket, *akapeshi kaŵami*, is the receptacle for the offerings (*imilambu*) of the people. These gifts, whether of beads or money, are placed in the basket, which is wrapped up in a piece of red calico (*ichimbushi*) such as used to be obtained from the Mbundu traders, and carried on the head of the *chipyaila* as the *mukamwami*, accompanied by a concourse of people, goes from village to village. This *akapeshi* is revered by the people as though it contained the spirit of the *umwami*, or, as the Lambas express it, *Walachichindika'ti ŵami*, "They reverence it, believing it to be the *umwami*."

### Consultation

Occasionally, at the time of the new moon, a *mukamwami* is heard to scold to himself or to his wife in the house at night.

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The people say, *Ŵamukamwami pano ŵalukubwa muyanda*, "The *mukamwami* is now 'popping' in the house." *Ukubwa* is the term used of fish 'popping' in a still river, and is used in this connexion and in that of the 'popping' out of ejaculatory information at intervals by the *mukamwami*. Sometimes he will imitate the roar of a lion. Then they will hear him say, "This year you will see no harvest, and the rain will not fall, because you do not humble yourselves [*lambila*] before the *aŵami*. And here I have in my hand smallpox and disease, birds and locusts. I shall let them out." On hearing that many of the people leave their huts and assemble at the prophet's hut to beg for pardon (*ukusaasa*).



FIG. 76. ICHILUKWA, AKAPESHI, AND INTUMBE

Photo by W. Paff

Then, when they have satisfied him with offerings, the *mukamwami* takes out some *umusamu* and gives it to them, saying, "Take and pound this medicine, and mix it with your seed corn [*amasaka*]; then sow, and you will see an abundant harvest." And this rejoices the hearts of the people.

The *mukamwami* claims power over the elements. It is said that when a great storm of wind and rain comes, if there is an *umwami* in the village he rushes out of his hut, scolding (*pata*), disregarding the fact that he is getting drenched through, and shouts out, *Tamubwene, mweŵashya, mwe mulukupichishya, ŵoneni ifi ŵalukuchita'ŵami!* "Don't you see, ye slaves, ye who are arguing, see what the *aŵami* are doing?" Every one on hearing these boastful words is afraid, and all rush out from their huts, uttering the shrill *impundu*, praising the *umwami* and uttering his name. "Ward off this wind, *shikulu* [lord]," they plead, "that it kill us not." Again they all utter the *impundu*. Then, when they see that the hurricane has passed, they say, "Indeed our

*umwami* has helped us to-day; he has saved us. Were it not for him all our huts would have been blown down!"

### Rain-prophet

When the rain is long delayed, or when that which falls is insufficient, the people say, *Awami wakana kwiulu*, "The *awami* have refused in heaven!" When consulted the *mukamwami* says, "First build an *umulenda*, and let us put therein the *akapeshi kawami*; then you will see the rain." They set to work and build the *umulenda*, and the prophet says, "Now, my children, the rain is near!" If still the rain holds off, the *mukamwami* says, *Iseni mulukuwomba!* "Come and humble yourselves!" *Womba* is a term used in much the same way as *lambila* and *saasa*. It indicates grovelling servility, and is what is done by a defeated enemy. *Ukuwomba kuwami* can, then, hardly be taken as equivalent to worshipping the *awami*, but rather as humbling oneself before the *awami*. When thus called by the prophet many go and humble themselves; but the rain still holds off. Then one day the rain comes, and far and near it is heard that rain has fallen at such and such a village, where the *mukamwami* lives; and people flock there with their gifts to beg for rain from the *awami*.

Sometimes the *mukamwami* travels from village to village prophesying rain. He may do this for as long as two months at a time, going all through Mushili's country and as far as the Congo, everywhere collecting offerings of money and kind. All of this goes to increase the wealth he amasses.

### Hunting-prophet

Sometimes the *mukamwami* will reach a certain village and say, "Don't you eat meat here in this village?" The answer may be, "No, *shikulu*, we get no meat here." Thereupon the *mukamwami* tells them all to bring their guns. The guns are all brought, and the *mukamwami* stacks them together near to a fire. He then goes and picks a quantity of leaves, which are his special *umusamu*, throws them on to the fire, and blows the smoke produced over the pile of weapons. He then asks, "Who is there here who wants to kill an eland?" Some one answers, "I want to kill an eland!" He asks again, "How many eland do you want to kill?" The reply may be, "Three, *shikulu!*" Then the *mukamwami* gives him three leaves, and says, "Smoke them! When you have smoked these three leaves you will kill three eland!"

In the same way he distributes leaves sufficient for everybody. The people in return hand over money to him. When he has finished distributing the leaves he moves on elsewhere. Those who remain, however, have no success in hunting; their money has been thrown away. By such methods of deceit the *wamukamwami* amass their wealth, playing on the credulity of the people, and then returning home to enjoy their ill-gotten gains.

### Ukuwomba

The *wamukamwami* have established themselves in the country as prophets, oracles, and mediums for the spirits of the *awami* to such an extent that people come often from a great distance to consult them. These consultations are carried out with certain formalities, and are called *ukuwomba*, the term already discussed as indicating a servile submission to the spirit of the deceased Lenje chief. On these occasions the *mukamwami* remains silent in his house, but his assistants, *awantu wamilimo*, and his *chipyaila* keep up a continual shouting (*ukuwela*) during the night, and *lishye'mpundu*, utter that shrill sound which resembles *lululululu!* Meanwhile, the people are gathered in the court (*uluwansa*) outside the house of the oracle. The *mukamwami* does not appear outside. From time to time his assistants sing. There seems to be but one definite *ulwimbo lwakuwomba*, song of the consultations; it is this:

*Nalawila lukoso,  
Nikaseŵa, awene wankanga,  
Yo!*

"I have merely spoken,  
I, Kaseŵa, Nkanga herself,  
Yo!"

When they have finished singing the *mukamwami* will begin his business. For a time he will consider the cases brought before him; then there will be singing again, and after that more cases. Sometimes the aid of the *mukamwami* is sought because the birds are eating the corn. The people will gather at the door, and beg him to forbid the birds to eat the corn. If this is done, on the next morning they go through the gardens, as has been already described, carrying the *akapeshi*, and forbidding the birds. In some cases the *mukamwami* enters his *ichyonde* for consultation. The *chipyaila* acts as his mouthpiece outside the door to communicate to the people what he says, and to give him the people's reply.

At times there is no singing, only the consultation and the *impundu*. But all is invariably carried out at night.

### Birth-prophet

Quite commonly people come to ask for children, and the *mukamwami*, who has ready-prepared medicines of every kind in his house, gives them *umusamu* to drink, with the promise that they will have a child. For this ample payment is made, and if perchance (though this seldom occurs) a child is born additional money is claimed by the *mukamwami*. The child is called *katungu*, and the *mukamwami* will address him as *umwana wabwanga* (child of the charm). The same is done by the *awalaye*.

Sometimes the *mukamwami* calls or sends out his *chipyaila* to call the people, saying, "I know that you people have matters; come and ask me!" Then a woman and her husband will come and sit in the doorway of his hut, and say, "As for us, our children die as soon as they are born." The *mukamwami* says, "I shall give you some *umusamu*, of which you are both to drink, and then your children which will be born will be strong." They move away for the next to come, maybe a woman who says, "I have some internal trouble [*ndi mulwele mumala*] and do not give birth." To her he gives some *umusamu*. The *umusamu* of the *awami* is called *ichitondo*. All of these supplicants place money, beads, or calico on the floor of the hut for the *mukamwami* to take.

They will pay as much as five shillings for childbirth medicine; for success in hunting, for the driving off of birds from the corn, or for the prevention of locusts each person may pay a shilling. For the bringing of rain much more is collected. In any one village the chief will pay as much as five shillings, each adult a shilling, and each child the equivalent of sixpence.

### A Lucrative Profession

It is only too well known in Lambaland that the *wamukamwami* 'get fat' on the credulity of the people. Some ten years ago I knew a lazy young man of the name of Lumina, who used to act as mail-carrier for the mission, and who worked so badly that his services had to be dispensed with. On one occasion he was one of a squad of natives carrying boxes of bricks from a kiln to a new building. He was found to have but three half-bricks in his box, and when detected dropped the box and went home. I think that was the last stroke of 'work' he did, for shortly after-

ward he fell ill, visited by the spirit of a Lenje chief, and recovered to find himself a *mukamwami*. For ten years he has never done any real work, yet I hear he has bought a bicycle now for £7 10s., and that is no little wealth for a Lamba.

After a tour round the country the *mukamwami* often settles in his own village. Sometimes he is accompanied by a number of people who have come to hoe his gardens for him, as they had been unable to give any donation in money or kind to his funds. These *wamukamwami* may be of either sex. Some are the owners of their own villages, as, for instance, Mukamwami, a Wulima chief on the Mpongwe river, Mukamwami Umwanakashi, a Lenje chieftainess on the Chisangwa river, near Lwamala, Mukachintu, a Lenje chieftainess on the Kasu river, Chiwatata, a Lamba chieftainess who died in 1922, near Kachyeya, the mother of Stephen Lutongamina, and Mukaluwumba, a Lamba chieftainess from the Kafuwu river, near Old Ndola. Others are commoners, as, for instance, Lumina, an *umwinangumi*, a man from Chibweshya, Kanujuna, an *umwinatambo*, a man from Katanga's village who died in 1924, and Mwanamashyawe, an *umwinansofu*, a man from Kachyule.

### The Spouse of the Spirit

Male *wamukamwami* usually marry but one wife. Many female mediums do not marry at all, as they consider the *umwami* to be their husband. It is significant that only male *awami* take possession of female *wamukamwami*, while both male and female *awami* enter male *wamukamwami*, and the men are permitted to marry in the ordinary way. Sometimes a married woman becomes possessed, and then her marriage is dissolved. Here is an instance. Chiwatata was married to a man named Chipotela, and gave birth to Lutongamina (male), Mutakula (male), Kalendu (female), and Chyembo (female). Then she became possessed (*ukuwilwa*), and the marriage was dissolved, for, she said, "Now I am married to the *awami*." So she lived alone. Her husband went elsewhere, and married again. The children remained in the village with their mother. In such a case it is said that a woman could not refuse the *umwami*, lest she should die. Some women, who are not respected as true *wamukamwami*, do marry.

A Lenje chief, named Musaka, died, and his spirit was said to have entered a youth named Kawunda, who became a *mukamwami*, and was called Mukamusaka (the spouse of Musaka). Kawunda feared the chaffing of his old companions, who had come under Christian influence, and his power waned through *insoni*, a feeling

of bashfulness. He practised less and less, then took the name of Jim. His friends called him Longwani ("Long One"), but in self-depreciation he dubbed himself Jimu Half, because of his small stature. He married a woman named Sula, of Katanga's village, but failed to have any children, and this caused him considerable embarrassment. He has now become a Christian, and has abandoned all his previous practices.

Some *awami* are reputed to enter persons *mukutushishya-mo*, in order to rest therein, and then to pass on. There are thus some who are *wamukamwami* only temporarily. It has also been known that one *umwami* has taken possession of more than one person at the same time. This is akin to the spiritual influence which we noticed to be an essential element in the Lamba belief in reincarnation, not the whole spirit, but a kind of afflatus taking possession of the person. The spirit of the Lenje chief Chitanda is said to possess a man at Mwefyeni, on the Lufuwu river, and also a woman at Kalumbwe, in the Lala country.

From time to time the *mukamwami*, whether man or woman, brews beer (*kumbo'bwakwa*) in honour of the *umwami* which is possessing him. He calls together the people to the beer-drink; and after the drinking is over the *mukamwami* dons his *uwuyombo* (dancing skirt) and the *insangwa* (rattles). The *insangwa* are fastened round the calves of his legs; on each leg are four sticks, on each of which are threaded four rattles, making a total of thirty-two. Holding his ornamental dancing axe (*impompwe*), the *mukamwami* now commences to dance the *ichimbwasa*. In the middle of the court (*uluwansa*) is a grass mat (*isasa*); on this is placed the *akapeshi*, on top of which is the *akasako*, or wand of office. The people bring offerings of beads. This is called *taila*. They do not give the beads into the hand of the *mukamwami*, but place them in the *akapeshi*.

Female *wamukamwami* sometimes dance for payment at initiation ceremonies, *ifisungu*; the dance in which they take the leading part is the *ichimbwasa*.

In addition to the medical prescriptions of the type already described, the *wamukamwami* are able to prepare *ubwanga bwashiwuwungu*, the charm for protecting the gardens, as are the *awalaye*. This is dealt with under the subject of "Ubwanga" in Chapter XVIII.

There is an important rule which must be observed when with a *mukamwami*—no one must step on or over his shadow, for it is reckoned to be the shadow of the *umwami*, who is a chief, and such action would be insulting to a chief.

## Prophecies

Though generally using the Lamba term itself when referring to the *wamukamwami*, I have sometimes used the terms 'prophet' and 'medium.' Such a man without doubt acts the part of a medium in conveying to people the wishes of the spirit possessing him, but I think the term 'prophet' is perhaps the more significant of the two. There are several well-known prophecies of the *wamukamwami* which are said to have been fulfilled. Long, long ago it is said that they predicted, *Mukanwo'mukalo'mo*, "You will all drink in one well!" meaning that race-distinction would be lost. Now that the white men have come into the country, and inter-tribal fighting has ceased, this prophecy has come true. Another has it, *Nanga'wa'ti tulikele fino, kulukutuhila kumbonshi awantu wamutongola ukupinta wonse sela!* "Although we are living thus now, there are coming from the west loadsmen all fully loaded!" Many, many people have entered Lambaland with the opening up of the mines, but not from the west. And now they prophesy that the time will come when the white men will 'roll up' again their railway-line, and take their departure with it back to the sea from whence they came!

## Ifimpelampela

It is not out of place, in a consideration of the Lamba beliefs concerning the spiritual world, to close with a short account of the belief in the possibility of transmutation. We shall see how this is connected with their conception of the workings of witchcraft; but they relate as historical certainties some of these transmutations, and treat them all as *ifimpelampela*, miracles. There are four of which I have heard: (1) a man turning into a stamp-block or mortar, (2) people turning into long grass, (3) people turning into trees, and (4) a man turning into a pheasant.

(1) The Chikunda raiders came to a certain village early one morning, while it was still dark. All the young men rushed out and made off, shouting that the enemy was upon them. But the old chief of the village could not run. He came out of his hut, stood in the centre of the village, and turned into an *ichinu*, a hollowed log, stood upright, in which mealies are stamped. When the raiders arrived they knocked over the stamp-block and stamped on its side, shouting, "The demons have gone off with haste and left a stamp-block!" and passed on. The chief resumed his own form, re-entered his hut, and began to smoke. Only his back was sore, where they had trodden on him. In the evening



his 'children' all returned, and he recounted to them what had happened. They all marvelled at him.

(2) Swahili raiders came to the village of Lumina, near Nsakanya, but the chief Lumina was forewarned, and with all his people rose very early in the morning and left the village. Shortly afterward the raiders reached the village, and, seeing that the people had gone, followed hot-foot on their tracks. Presently they espied their quarry crossing a plain, and doubled their speed to catch them. Lumina looked up and saw them coming, and called together his people. They came together, each with a heavy load of goods, and they changed into clumps of long grass. The raiders arrived and searched everywhere, without avail; they found no traces of them. Then they gave up the search and returned, saying, "Lumina is too clever for us!" Then the grass clumps (*imisanse*) changed back into people, and all returned to their village. Lumina died about 1900.

(3) There is a story of people turning into trees when pursued by their enemies, but I have not been able to ascertain the locality or occasion of this 'miracle.'

(4) A man named Lyongoli, from near Lesa's village, was once entrapped by the enemy in his own fenced garden. He saw no other way of escape, and so turned himself into a pheasant, flew up with a whirr, and went and settled in the plain. All who saw it were amazed. His own people who were with him said, *Walyongoli waaluka musokoshi, fweidaŵyaŵo ŵatushila!* "Lyongoli has changed into a pheasant, and left us, his companions, behind." Lyongoli died about 1924.

## CHAPTER XVI

### UWULAYE—THE RÔLE OF THE DOCTOR

#### Professions

IN the previous chapter we dealt with three distinct professions, those of the *mozŵa*, the *umuyambo*, and the *mukamwami*, professions of considerable status in the tribe, professions which carry with them considerable authority and no little opportunity of acquiring wealth. These professions are the result of spirit-possession, *ukuwilwa*; those concerned have no choice—at least, they are believed to have no choice—in the taking up of their profession. But involved in the social structure of the Lamba people are certain other professions which are entered upon by deliberate choice. Four of these are of such importance as to demand special individual treatment. Of the four, three carry with them very considerable social standing in the tribe, and one considerable social degradation and abhorrence. They are the professions of (1) *umulaye*, the doctor or diviner, (2) *imfwiti*, the witch or wizard, (3) *umupalu*, the hunter, and (4) *umufushi*, the blacksmith. There are many minor professions of necessity carried on in village and tribal life, but none of these commands any special respect from the people. These four professions, which will now be considered in turn, may be learnt by anyone desiring to enter them and willing to pay the price for initiation into the mysteries. For mysteries there are in each one of these, mysteries which touch upon the realm of spiritism in some cases, but principally upon that other realm which plays so large a part in Bantu religion, the realm of dynamism, that hidden power in nature which only the initiated may tap with impunity.

#### Umulaye

In the discussion of the character and work of the *umulaye*, or, as he is also called by the Lambas, the *inyanga*, the assurance was given that there is no *umupashi waŵulaye*, spirit of divination or doctorship, but that *awene ŵalasalulula*, men choose for themselves, and learn the profession. It is difficult to find a satisfactory

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derivation for the term *umulaye*, though it has been given as from the word *laya*, promise, summon, for in Lambaland the doctor never looks for his patients, nor practises his healing arts until sent for; he answers the summons, he promises to come when called. In a Lamba village a man could break his leg next door to the doctor's house, but the doctor would not move a finger to apply any remedy until he was called by the patient or by his relatives. Another significance of the term *laya* is 'make an appointment,' and the Lamba explains the connexion of this with *umulaye* by saying that when anyone goes to fetch the doctor *mukwûka* (in order to smell out a witch), the doctor remains to make ready his things, and does not come till the next day, so as to divert suspicion from the one who called him. The other term, *inyanga*, is clearly connected with the terms *ubwanga* and *ichyanga*, which, as we shall see presently, indicate charms variously used to ensure good fortune, protection, or guidance, and may even be used of poisons for detecting witchcraft or charms to kill thieves. The *inyanga*, then, is one who has the knowledge and power of preparing and administering these charms, bound up as they are with dynamic belief.

### Learning the Profession

If a young man desires to enter the profession of a doctor he will come to some well-known *umulaye* and say, *Naisa mwewachiwinda, ndukwenda nenu, munsambishye uwûlaye*, "I have come, O great doctor. I would travel with you, that you may teach me the art of divining!" If the doctor agrees the young man becomes his disciple. The first thing he is taught is *ukwûka kumupini*, to divine by means of an axe-handle. Should the *umulaye* be called in to prescribe for some one suffering from chronic headache, he will send his new pupil, saying, "Go and divine, but, remember, do not diagnose the case as one of demon interference; you must say it is his *umupashi* [spirit], which is angry because light beer [*ifisunga*] has not been brewed in his honour." Such are the instructions the pupil gets continually. The Lambas say, *Ichiwanda tachikatwa kumulaye umwanichye*, "A demon is not caught by a young doctor!"

### Ukwûka Kumupini

When the young doctor reaches the village he finds that the interested friends and relatives of the sick man have already congregated in his hut. The patient is lying on his bed, and they

## UWULAYE—THE RÔLE OF THE DOCTOR

squat on the floor around, some sitting on his bed. The *umulaye* sits down just within the doorway, and places his axe on the floor in front of him, the axe-head toward himself and the handle (*umupini*) pointing toward the patient. Then those who have summoned him, the chief one of whom may be the sick man's mother, begin to put forward the usual questions for the doctor's divination. This is called *ukusanshila*. The first question may be, "Is it an *ichiwanda* which has come to this young man?" On hearing the question, the doctor repeatedly strikes the axe-handle with the under-side of his closed fist, as though to hammer it firmly into the ground; he then rubs the axe-handle backward and forward. It has not stuck tight to the ground, and he says, "It is not a demon; *ubwanga bwakana* [the charm has replied in the negative]." With the Lamba *umulaye* divining seems to be dependent upon the efficiency of the *ubwanga* of which he has control. As will be seen presently, *ubwanga*, though often referred to by the term 'charm,' really signifies much more; it is inseparably connected with the belief in dynamism.

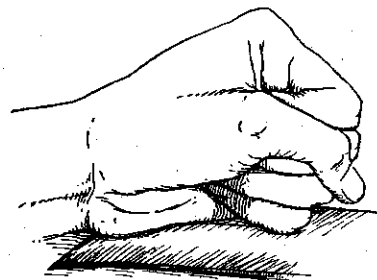


FIG. 77. DIVINING BY MEANS OF THE AXE-HANDLE

The freedom of movement of the *umupini* having demonstrated that the *ubwanga* "has not caught," the questioner puts forward another question (*ukusanshila*). "Is it perchance his *umupashi* which is angry?" The doctor says, "Just listen whether his *umupashi* is angry or not." He then proceeds to knock with his knuckles on the axe-head, making as though to pull the axe up; again he strikes the axe with the under-side of his clenched fist, this time upon the flat of the blade. Then he pretends to try to tear up the axe-head by catching it with his fingers, wrenching at it unsuccessfully. In the eyes of the credulous audience the axe is no longer loose; it is held tightly to the ground by the power of the *ubwanga*. *Ubwanga bwaikata*, "The charm has caught!" Clearly it is the *umupashi* who is offended, and who has caused the illness of the young man. The wrath of the *umupashi* must be appeased. There is no need for medicines or medical treatment, so the doctor says, "Brew *ifisunga* [light beer], and make your peace with the spirit to-day, and the young man will recover. *Epo chyambule'chyanga popele apa!* It is just here that

the charm has caught on!" He warns the people, however, that if they do not brew the *ifisunga* quickly the man will die. Again he pretends to wrench with all his might at the axe, but it will not come away. Then he says, "Give me *ichyakulambulo' bwanga* [an offering for the charm], that I may go." The people thereupon make an offering for his services. Immediately the *ubwanga* lets go the axe—it is loose; and the doctor takes it up and goes his way.

#### Ukuwuka Kumisewe

It very often happens that the patient gets no better for all these instructions. The light beer has been brewed and the *umupashi* has been honoured, but there is no difference in the patient's condition. The mother of the sick man then goes off to summon the *umulaye umukulu*, the fully qualified doctor, that he should come and ascertain if perchance it is an *ichiwanda* (demon) which is troubling her son. He does not come immediately; his dignity and position do not permit him to exercise undue haste, and he does not want the villagers to connect the woman's visit to his village with his own visit to her village. He waits until the next day. Even then he does not go to the hut of the sick man; the doctor does not need to see his patient in order to diagnose his complaint. When he reaches the village he goes off to a spot in the bush a little distance away. He takes with him his pupil, and maybe the father and mother of the patient, but no one else. He is going to *wuka kumisewe*, divine by means of the rattles, and to *sanshile'misewe*, put the questions to the rattles; this he will do by himself. His pupil makes a small clearing (*uluwansa*), scuffling away the grass and small bushes with a hoe borrowed from the village; he next brings a little water in a small pot, puts some *umusamu* in the water, and sets the pot on an *inkoshyanya*, a ring of grass set on their heads by the natives to assist them in carrying water-pots, firewood, and loads of all kinds. He then sets on end one horn. Meanwhile, the *umulaye* himself is sitting on the ground, and begins to rattle one *umusewe*. The mother of the sick man begins to *sanshila*, and says, "My child is dying, and will not recover." Thereupon the *umulaye* says, "Just listen; she is telling you!" He shakes his rattle, and listens to it with his head on one side. "She says her child is dying!" And he bends over the pot of water and gazes into it. Then he says, "No, he is not going to die; but it is witches that I see sporting in the water!" and adds, "It is all right, I shall speak with them at night, lest they should kill him."

After this he searches for the appropriate *umusamu*, a portion of which he administers to the patient as a draught, using another portion to foment his body (*china*). This medical treatment is not intended to cure the patient, but to strengthen the weakened body. The doctor depends on other means for the cure; he simply uses herbs in order to keep the patient alive until the effect of the witchcraft has been removed. Without doubt, however, in many cases these *awulaye* use really effective remedies, which directly contribute to the patient's recovery.

When night has fallen the *umulaye* climbs an *ichyulu*, a great anthill, and shouts out, "You, O witch, who are in this village, I see you! It is my demand that you loosen the grip [*sunsulula*] which you have on this young man. If you kill him, I too shall not go away. I am waiting to kill you! I saw you last night walking about this village; it was you I saw." On hearing that everybody is afraid, believing that the *umulaye* has seen the witch.

In the morning the doctor goes back home to his village, and his pupil, the young doctor, goes from time to time to visit the sick man. When he is recovered a handsome offering (*ichilambu*) is made. Should the patient die, however, the doctor is summoned to catch the witch or wizard whom he saw in the first instance. The procedure in this case will be fully dealt with when we consider the whole subject of witchcraft. For attention to the sick man the doctor is paid anything from two to ten shillings in cash or in kind. As we have said, the *umulaye* has considerable real knowledge of herbal remedies, but it is important to realize that these are dispensed with a view to strengthening the man who has become weakened by sickness; the doctor holds out no hope of recovery unless the offended spirit is appeased, or the evil-working witch or wizard is frightened enough to remove the power of his evil charms, or some other power for ill is countered.

During his period of learning and probation the pupil is taught by the older *umulaye* the different types of herbs, their preparation, and their uses; and his daily association with his master teaches him all the arts of the diviner. When he has completed his training, he pays his teacher as much as £2 or a gun, and then leaves him, to set up on his own.

#### Ukufishya Kuwulaye

Before leaving his master, however, there is one important rite which has to be performed. This is called *ukufishya kuwulaye*,

bringing into the profession of doctor, and is gone through by all who aspire to the title of *umulaye wachishyala*, doctor of the instrument bag, *ichishyala* being the name applied to the bag containing the doctor's paraphernalia. Such a doctor must have the sign of having killed a man, for he will be called for the detection of witches. Doctors who do not aspire to this eminence are called *awalaye wakankwese*, doctors of the circling of the axe-handle, for they divine by means of the *umupini*, or with one *umusewe* only.

When the old *umulaye* is summoned to another village in order to *wuka* (divine) he takes with him the younger man, and maybe diagnoses the case as one of an *ichiwanda* (demon). In the morning they, with their attendants, go to the grave of the person whose *ichiwanda* has been causing the trouble. The older man will give his *ulusengo* (horn) into the right hand of the younger man and his *umuchila* (zebra-tail switch) into his left. The younger man now goes ahead and sticks the *ulusengo* into the grave, saying, *Naikata mwekwakalume*, "I have caught you, ye slaves!" The attendants now come and dig up the grave in the way described already for 'settling' an *ichiwanda*. When the body is reached the workers come out from the grave; the two *awalaye* enter, and take out the body to give it to the assistants. The assistants now cut up the body, the two *awalaye* sitting and looking on. When the head is cut off the old *umulaye* takes it, cuts off the back of the skull (*akabwangala*) with his axe, and cleans out any of the brain still adhering, leaving a clean bowl. This he gives to the younger *umulaye*, saying, *Lelo wafika*, "To-day you have arrived." After this the younger man superintends the work of burning the remains of the body in the approved fashion, while the older man watches him. In this way he is fully initiated. The *akabwangala* he will carry in his *ichisoko* (bag), and from it cut off bits to make the *umutahi* (medicine for exorcizing) when it is needed.

During his time of probation a learner will gradually amass sufficient money to make the necessary payment to his teacher, as it is an understood thing that he keeps the offerings made to him when he is sent by the master-doctor to divine.

#### Cause of Sickness

Among the Lambas there is no natural death, and no illness due to natural causes. All illness, apart from that which results in the *ukuwilwa* (spirit-possession) of the *wamukamwami*, the *wamorwa*, and the *awayambo*, is attributed to one of four causes:

(1) the anger of the *imipashi*, (2) bewitching by *imfwiti*, (3) capture by *ifiwanda*, and (4) the direct dealing of *Lesa*.

(1) As we have already noticed, the resentment of the *umupashi* (spirit of the departed) is roused if the owner does not erect the *umulenda* (spirit hut), but allows the *inkombo* (gourds) representing the spirit to lie outside, for the spirit argues, "It is we who are then sleeping outside." The cure of a person suffering as a result of this negligence depends upon the carrying out of the necessary duties. Beer has to be brewed, people summoned to honour the *umupashi*, the *umulenda* built, and the *inkombo* placed therein. The result anticipated is the recovery of the sick person. The resentment of the *umupashi* is also roused if the periodical brewing of *ifsunga* (light beer) is not carried out. The spirit must not be neglected.

(2) If the sickness is persistent the evil machinations of a witch or wizard are suspected. Jealousy or enmity or the desire for revenge may be the cause behind the practice of witchcraft. We have already described how the *umulaye* shouts from the anthill to frighten the witch into undoing the spell she has cast. The sickness is but the outward manifestation of the hidden power; it is useless to depend upon medicines; the root cause must be sought and eradicated.

(3) The illness may be caused by an *ichiwanda* (demon) punishing a man who has secretly indulged in unnatural vice, anti-social evil. If the man does not confess when confronted by the accusation of the *umulaye*, madness is the expected result. This matter was dealt with when the whole question of the *ichiwanda* was considered. It is significant that this belief in interference by a demon is a strong incentive to the confession of rape, incest, or murder.

(4) Such scourges as smallpox, Kafir pox, leprosy, and 'Spanish influenza' are often said to be sent by *Lesa*. For the Lambas there is no way of pleading with *Lesa* for a cessation of these evils; the *umulaye* can prescribe no remedy; they must have their way.

#### Medical Treatment

In a few cases only the doctor does not divine (*wuka*), but uses some type of medicinal treatment. For instance, some *awalaye* are said to treat persons struck by lightning, giving them medicine to drink (*ukupuupulula'wantu*) even when they are unconscious. In cases of barrenness in women (*injumba*) the doctor prepares certain roots and gives a potion to the woman to drink. This

medicine is usually composed of stamped roots mixed with meal and then heated to the consistency of *uwusunga*; it is taken every day. This medicinal gruel is placed in a calabash (*insungu*) and hung above the doorway. Should she after such treatment bear a son, she would have to make a substantial payment to the doctor, perhaps as much as a gun. Such a child is called *katungu*, or *lukamfi*, and is addressed by the *umulaye* as *umwana wabwanga*. If the treatment had no satisfactory result no payment at all would be made. Generally if a mother loses each child in infancy the doctor will divine for possible witchcraft, but sometimes it is found that the woman is suffering from some internal disease, in which case the *umulaye* prescribes a medicine.

Though medicine is usually administered in the form of a drink (*nwinshya*), certain ailments are treated by hot fomentation (*china*). Various medicinal leaves are placed in a pot of water, which is heated, but not to boiling-point. The wet leaves are taken out and repeatedly pressed against the affected part, being dipped in the water again and again when they have become dry. This type of treatment is not confined to *awalaye*; numbers of ordinary folk know how to foment.

#### Detection of a Thief

When some article of value is missing the village headman says, "Bring the *chimulonda*. Let it come and help us!" Thereupon the *umulaye* is summoned to come with the *chimulonda*,<sup>1</sup> a long sable antelope horn filled with a certain powerful medicine. When he arrives one of the villagers takes hold of the horn, while the *umulaye* shakes his rattle (*akasewe*). The person who holds the horn does so with both hands, keeping it near the ground. It is said that the horn draws its holder on and on, wavering from side to side, and causing him to move forward in the right direction. When they come to the houses the holder passes near the doorways with the horn, while the *umulaye* follows behind, shaking his *akasewe* and saying, as they come to each house, "If the thief is in here, *ukose* [harden]!" After a while, when they reach a certain house, the horn commences to bob violently up and down. This is called *ukukosa*, hardening. The holder has to grip it more tightly to prevent its slipping from his hands. Then the people know that the thief is in that house. If it is a case of maize-stealing the culprit will confess that he broke off the cobs. At the confession the *chimulonda* will stop its violent movements,

<sup>1</sup> See the illustration on p. 176 of Melland's *In Witch-bound Africa*.

and lie passive in the villager's hands. Having served its purpose, it will be restored to the *umulaye*.

#### Ichisoko

Unlike the doctors in many other Bantu tribes, the *awalaye* of the Lambas perform no bone-throwing or divining by means of bones or similar counters. Nevertheless, the Lamba doctor of renown has his bag of instruments, and this is called *ichisoko*, or, in old Lamba, *ichishyala*. This bag contains his *imisamu*, medicines made from leaves, bark, roots, twigs, etc. (but never from stones), sometimes in the form of powder made up in packets, and the *umutalu*, medicine for exorcizing spirits, demons, etc. Sometimes the various medicines are put up in horns (*insengo*); they are then called *ifishimba*, and comprise nail-parings, hair, rags which have been discarded, python-skin, lion-skin, elephant-hide and rhinohide, human skull-bones, roots, herbs, etc. The doctor is never without *ulushila*, the red ochre so necessary to certain forms of divination. Then in his bag he carries the *imisewe*, those rattles which play so large a part in his divining, the *impindo*, the pieces of stick used in divination, and an *umusashi*, a double calabash used as a container for castor-

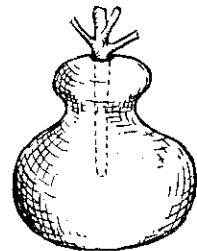


FIG. 78. UMUSASHI WITH INSHINKO

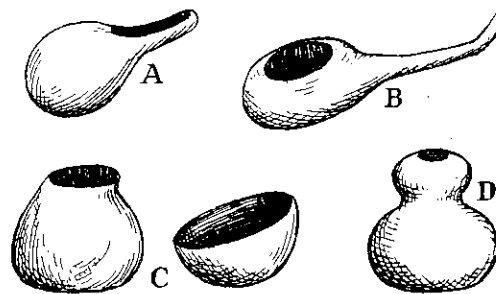


FIG. 79

A, *ichinkuti*; B, *ulukombo*; C, *ifitelo*; D, *umusashi*.

oil and for certain medicines. This is closed by a small stick chosen and cut because of protruding twigs which can act as a grip for pulling out this 'stopper.' The whole stopper is about six inches in length, with about one inch of twigs protruding. His bag also contains a zebra's tail (*umuchila wambishi*), two horns (*insengo*), and some small sticks for drawing lots (*ututi twafipa*). He also usually has the *akabwanga*, part of the skull of a man whom he has had to disinter and burn for being an *ichiwanda*. Some *awalaye* also carry *inkusu*. The kernel of the fruit of

the *inkusu*-tree is taken and whittled down until it is about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and oblong in shape. Sometimes the *inkusu* is smeared with medicine which has been pounded up. A hole is pierced through the centre for a string, and the 'charm' is often worn by the *umulaye* himself on his ankle. When he enters a hut where there is death he takes it off. Others carry *imbilichila*, another kernel treated in the same way. Neither of these is of Lamba origin, and they are seldom met with. Most *awalay*e carry portions of armadillo shell (*inkaka*) or bones of this animal, and put them into horns or shells of tortoises; the whole charm resulting is also termed *inkaka*, and is used for rendering an opponent helpless.

Sometimes the doctor carries his *ichisoko* himself, but very often it is carried by a boy who acts as his attendant. The doctor also carries spear and axe. His attendant (*mulonda*) carries his big sable horn. The *umulaye* does not have any special dress to distinguish him, as does the *mukamwami*, for the doctor's name is sufficiently known everywhere.

The duties of the *umulaye* in the community are varied. He will be summoned at times of sickness, as we have already seen, to divine the cause and prescribe the remedy, which in very few cases is medicinal. He will be called at death to 'smell out' the witch or wizard, or after a theft to detect the thief. He will prescribe for barrenness, and prepare charms (*ubwanga*) for many contingencies. The part the *umulaye* plays in the detection of witchcraft will be considered in Chapter XIX, and the whole subject of dynamism, lots, and charms is dealt with in Chapters XVII and XVIII.

The *umulaye*, principally on account of his powers of divination, is a person of very considerable standing in the community. Especially owing to his powers of witch-detection, his influence and sway over the people are unbounded. He is feared, and people fear to provoke his anger, for, with all their belief in genuine witchcraft, they know well enough that the cry of "Witch!" can be raised only too readily if they offend those in authority.

#### Inferior Doctors

Among the Lambas there are other doctors whose status is much inferior to that of the *umulaye* proper. Two of these are called *awalomweshi*—the *awalomweshi wansoka*, snake-bite doctors, and the *awalomweshi wabwanga*, charm doctors. The third type of inferior doctor is called *umulaye watuluwi*, the ventriloquist doctor.

#### Umulomweshi Wansoka

The Lambas have a strange belief regarding the *lukungwe*, a long, thin tree snake. They say that its bite is not poisonous, but that it often attacks in quite another way. Holding in its mouth a stick, twig, grass-stalk, or stone, it throws the stone at its victim or strikes him with the twig, causing him to fall immediately. If two natives are travelling together and one suddenly falls, his companion, should he see a *lukungwe* making off, travelling with head erect and body bent backward, will know that it has struck his companion. If the village is near he runs to call assistance, shouting, "My companion has been struck!" He dare not mention by what he has been hurt, for it is taboo to mention the *lukungwe* in the village, lest the victim should die. In practically every village are to be found *awalomweshi*, and one, hearing the man's shout, quickly fetches some *uwusunga bwamawo* (gruel made from the small red millet), which is always kept in his hut, adds to it some *umusamu*, and carries it to the stricken man, who is made to swallow it. The sick man vomits violently, throwing up a black bile. When the fit of vomiting is over it will be seen that he opens his eyes a little; then he is given some other liquid *umusamu* to drink. After that he quickly recovers, and the people conduct him to the village. For such services a patient may pay the *umulomweshi* from five to ten shillings, according to the seriousness of his case.

If a man is bitten by an *umuswema* (a dun-coloured snake) or an *akapinisansa* (a small species of adder) he is quickly brought to the village. The *umulomweshi* goes and collects a quantity of medicinal leaves and piles them in a heap. They are set on fire, and the affected limb, arm or leg, is held in the smoke. Further *umusamu* is chewed by the doctor and smeared on the wound. Then a sharpened stick, resembling a knife, is taken and the wound scraped, in the belief that thus the teeth of the snake will come out of the wound, where they are believed to have been left. After the scraping further *umusamu* is bound over the wound, and another oily medicine supplied for rubbing on. Recovery is assured to the patient. Kalimanama, a village headman on the Kafulafuta, is an *umulomweshi wansoka*.

#### Umulomweshi Wabwanga

An *umulomweshi* of another type will treat a patient suffering, for instance, from a swollen leg. The doctor, when summoned, addresses the swelling with the words, *Kani uli bwanga ufume-mo*;

*kami toli bwanga koikele!* "If you are a charm, come out of it; if you are not a charm, stay there!" Then he cuts incisions (*inembo*) in the leg, and rubs in certain *umusamu*. After that he takes a stick with a sharp edge like a knife and begins to scrape, saying, "Don't you see what quantities of *ubwanga* are coming out [this when the white scrapings of the skin appear]? Witches have badly bewitched you!" On hearing that the patient's heart is greatly cheered. When he has finished this treatment the doctor says, "Now pay me, that I may go home!" Payment up to ten shillings will be given to him. Sometimes such a swelling goes on year after year without relief, and the sufferer throws away all his money on doctor after doctor. Kapumba, of Nsentsenta's village, and Nswana Nkashyafiputa, of the same village, are *awalomweshi wabwanga*.

The *awalomweshi* are a very inferior type of doctor. They are never honoured with the name of *awalaye* or *inanga*, and travel about with their bag of medicines looking for patients. When asked for tobacco they say, "No, this is *umusamu wakulomona* [medicine for treatment]." In this way they advertise their trade. The *awalaye*, on the contrary, are renowned for their skill, and never go to a sick person unless summoned.

#### Awalaye Watuluwi

The doctor who practises by means of ventriloquism also commands but little respect among the Lambas. The term *akaluwi* (plural, *utuluwi*) is applied to any imitation of a person, such as a doll or figure. The doll is the centre of the work of the *umulaye watuluwi*. In some cases it is made out of a small *umusashi* (type of double calabash), into which is put certain *umusamu* called *umutalu*. In other cases the doll is carved out of a piece of wood, with legs, arms, and head like those of a man; bee's-wax is stuck to the head, and holes made in it so that castor-oil beans may be inserted into the huge nostrils of the *akaluwi*. People come to this image to consult it. The image is called *mukolo*, the principal wife, and is considered as such in relationship to the *umulaye*. The people say, "We have come to the *mukolo*, that she should give us information." The doctor sits at the back of the hut, with the image near him. Those who come to *wuka* (consult) sit in the doorway. The *umulaye* proceeds to address the *akaluwi*, saying, "People have come, O *mukolo*, to see you!" The people say, "Let the *mukolo* tell us!" Then in a small piping voice the *akaluwi* says, *Mbacisa'cewo?* "What is

the matter?" They reply, "Our child, O *mukolo*, is sick. We are wearied with getting *umusamu*, O *mukolo*, but he shows no improvement!" She replies, *Mipashi yakwe!* "It is his spirit!" On hearing that the people go away, saying, "We shall pay our respects to the spirit, and brew some *ifisunga*." They leave an offering in the hut for the doctor.

One of these doctors was Chifunshya, of Nkambo's village. One day a certain woman found that her meat had been eaten by some one. She made up her mind to consult the *mukolo* in order to find the thief. The woman arrived and said, "Tell me, O *mukolo*, for my meat has been eaten by somebody!" The answer came, "It is your husband who ate it, while you were away at the river!" The woman went home, and her husband immediately asked her what was the result of the divination. She replied, "The *mukolo* says it is you who ate the meat!" The husband was furious. He caught up an axe-handle, and went straight to the person who had made the *akaluwi*. He vigorously belaboured the *umulaye*, shouting, "Where did you see me stealing the meat out of my own house?" People came and separated the men, rescuing the much-battered doctor. The *akaluwi* was not seen; it had been hidden.

## CHAPTER XVII

## IFIPA—LOTS

## Ukuwũka and Ifipa

IN the previous chapter we considered the art of divination as practised by the *umulaye* in order to discover what had happened in the past and to ascertain the cause of illness, theft, etc. All of this is covered by the term *ukuwũka*. We shall in this chapter consider the art of divination when directed to discover what the result of sickness, a journey, etc., will be. In order to probe into the future *ifipa* (lots) are used; in Lamba the term used for casting or drawing lots is *ukuteye'fipa*. The use of the term *ichipa* (lot) is not, however, confined to ascertaining what is going to take place. As we shall see, *ifipa* are used even in detecting the cause of illness; and there is one use of this term closely akin to that of *ubwanga*, a charm designed to bring about some definite result. This is discussed in the next chapter. As with *ubwanga*, or *ifyanga*, the use of *ifipa* is not entirely restricted to *awalaye*; certain *ifipa* are cast by ordinary people.

## Ifipa in Illness

When a person falls ill the *umulaye* is often summoned to cast lots in order to ascertain whether the sick man is going to die or to recover. The doctor brings with him his three *ifipa*. These are little sticks, the length and size of a finger, scraped evenly, so that they have the shape of a cigarette when finished. A special tree is chosen from which to carve out the *ifipa*, but I have not been able to discover the name of the

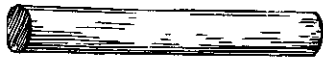


FIG. 80. ICHIPA

tree. The people say to the doctor, "Set [*teya*, the same word as is used for the setting of a trap] the *ifipa*, for the man is very ill, and we want to know whether he is going to die." Thereupon the doctor takes his *ifipa* and goes into the bush beyond the village, sometimes alone, sometimes accompanied by his assistant. There he clears a small *uluwansa* of rubbish and bushes, and in the centre

digs a little hole. To one side of the hole he places meal, making a white strip several inches in length. Then he takes some leaves, mixes them with a certain *umusamu*, and chews the mixture. Next, holding the three *ifipa* in his hand, he spits the chewed mixture upon them, squeezing them together in the same way as a man works putty. The three *ifipa* stick together, and the doctor takes them and sets them up on end at the edge of the hole he has dug, between it and the line of meal. The *umulaye* then addresses his *ifipa* as follows: *Utuwũle wefipa<sup>1</sup> fyanji; kani uyumuntu wakufwa uponene mukalindi; kani akuwũuka uponene*

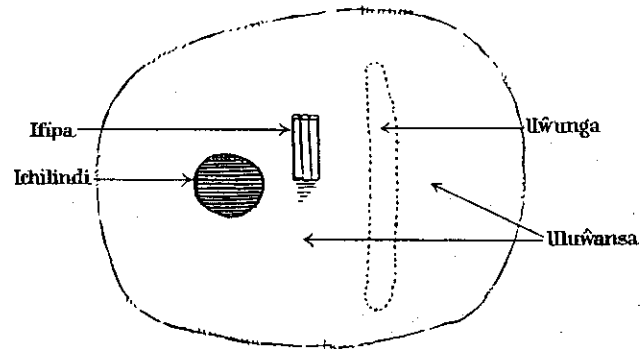


FIG. 81. HOW THE IFIPA ARE SET

*muwunga*, "Tell us, O *ifipa* of mine. If this man is going to die, fall into the hole; if he is going to live, fall into the meal."

As is only to be expected, the various elements in this performance are symbolical. The meal (*uwunga*) invariably represents life, as is seen when considering its ceremonial use after the payment of the death-dues. The hole (*ichilindi*, or its diminutive, *akalindi*) symbolizes the grave, and hence death. The *ifipa* in this instance represent the sick man, and the fact that they are three in one may be due to the Lamba conception of man's being made up of body (*umuwũli*), spirit (*umupashi*), and person, or soul (*umuntu umwine*). The test is to see whether the *ifipa* (the sick man) will go into the *akalindi* (into death) or into the *uwunga* (into life).

When the *umulaye* has thus arranged his symbols he leaves them and returns to the village. After a considerable time he goes back and finds the *ifipa* still standing. He returns to the village, and later once again visits his symbols. They are still standing.

<sup>1</sup> *Ifipa*, though a plural, is here treated as singular, since the three have become one; the concords for 'thou' are used.



He therefore goes back to the village, and says, "He is merely ill, he will recover." But in order to make quite sure he will go in the evening and set the *ifipa* again, and address them, saying, "If he is merely ill, and is going to recover, tell us." That night maybe the *ifipa* fall into the meal. The *umulaye* will then say to those who are caring for the sick man, "Don't be anxious; he is going to recover." After that the same *umulaye* will find the necessary medicine for strengthening the patient; and, says the Lamba, "The man will recover if Lesa tells him to."

If, however, the *umulaye* finds that the *ifipa* have fallen into the hole (*akalongelo*, or *akalindi*) he is afraid, seeing in this the sign that the man is going to die. Very early in the morning he takes up his *ichisoko* (bag) and leaves the village. He has been paid in advance for his services, and he leaves before anyone is about. When his host carries to his hut his morning food he finds the hut empty, and the villagers say at once, "The man is going to die, for the *umulaye* has run away secretly."

The people, however, are seldom satisfied with such a verdict, and send for another doctor, who comes with his bag and his lots. He sets the *ifipa* in the same way, and addresses them, saying, "Tell me if he is going to die!" When he next visits the place maybe he finds the *ifipa* still standing. He takes them up, puts more *umusamu* upon them, and says, "If it is an *ichiwanda* [demon], tell me!" Having set them again, he returns to the village. When he goes back in the evening he finds, perhaps, that the *ifipa* have fallen into the hole; from this he divines that his last question has been answered, and that an *ichiwanda* has knocked them in, showing that he is concerned in the man's illness. The *umulaye* then goes to the village, and says, "No, it is an *ichiwanda*, and the man will recover." It is now his business to discover what it is that has caused the anger of the *ichiwanda*. Fear of death or of madness now seizes the patient, and he confesses to some unnatural sin which he has committed. When he has confessed the demon can no longer hold him. The *umulaye* now procures for him the necessary medicine, and he begins to recover. When he is fully recovered he gives to this second doctor a handsome gift of goods. This type of *ichipa* is sometimes called *ichipa chyabwanga* or *ichipa chyafiwanda*.

#### Ichipa Chyakuŵa

There is another way in which an *umulaye* may *teye'fipa* (cast lots) when summoned to divine whether a patient will recover or

not. He goes out early in the morning, and chews certain leaves just as the sun is emerging red in the east. He then spits out the chewed leaves (*pala*) in the direction of the sun, and begins his divination by questioning (*sanshila*), saying, *Kani pali ichyewo ichyakufwo'muntu, wekasuwa, ulukuwilaka! Kani teshi afwe, teku-lukuwilaka!* "If this is a matter involving the death of the person, O sun, boil! If he is not to die, don't boil!" Then, as the doctor stands and gazes, he seems to see the sun whirling round as though it is boiling. Again he puts a question: *Kani wuwule bwakukula, kani akutenda-po lukoso, wekasuwa utuwule!* "Whether the sickness will get worse, or whether the man is merely unwell, tell us!" Again he sees that the sun is boiling. He goes back to the village and says, "Whether he will recover one cannot tell!"

#### Ichipa Chyaminyeyu

When the time for the return of a man from a long journey—maybe one of three or four months' duration—has passed his mother or his wife will go to the *umulaye* and say, "Set an *ichipa*, that we may see whether the traveller is ill or whether he is dead." Thereupon the *umulaye* goes and begs some salt. He chews this with certain medicinal leaves. He finds a nest of large black biting ants, *iminyeyu*, and spits the chewed leaves into the mouth of their hole, saying, *Kani alifwile mutuŵuule mushinchile, kani epwali mufumishye posonde umusamu napala mubwina bwenu!* "If he is dead, tell us and shut it in; if he is alive, bring outside the medicine I have spat into your hole." Then he leaves the place and goes back to the village. After a little while he calls the mother of the man, and says, "Let us go and see!" Perhaps they find that the ants have brought all the leaves outside, in which case the *umulaye* says, "Look, your child is living!" The woman will go home contented. If, however, they find that the ants have taken all the leaves into the hole, and closed up the hole with mud, the doctor will say, "Your son has no life!" and the mother will go away to wail, fully believing her son to be dead.

In this type of *ichipa* we again see that what happens is symbolic. The hole of the *iminyeyu* represents the grave. The taking in of the chewed leaves and the closing up of the hole is symbolic of burial, the pushing of the leaves outside symbolic of escape from the grave. It may also have further significance. *Pesonde* (outside) is the term used of mortal life. The phrase, *Walale' myaka inga pano pesonde?* "How many years have you slept

here outside?" indicates "How old are you?" The outside, then, like the meal, indicates life.

### Ichipa Chyakwe Sumba

There is another type of *ichipa* used in cases such as the above, and also in the detection of adultery. This is called *ichipa chyakwe sumba*, testing of the green lizard, or *ichipa chyapa-wuchyende*, testing for adultery. It may be carried out by an *umulaye*, but is more commonly performed by an ordinary person.

If a man has been away from his home for several months, and now the last day of his journey home has come, he will set an *ichipa* in order to find out whether his wife has been faithful to him or not. He gets a number of leaves of any kind and chews them, making from the pulp (*ulukamfi*) a small round ball the size of a marble. Then as he walks along he keeps a look-out for a *sumba*, a large green lizard with a very long tail, and watches where it goes into its hole at his approach. These lizards are very commonly seen along the path. The man then puts the *ulukamfi* at the mouth of the hole, and says, *Wechipa chyanji, kani umukashi alichitile uwuchyende winjishye mubwina ulukamfi; kani tachitile wiinjishya, yo!* "O my *ichipa*, if my wife has committed adultery, take the *ulukamfi* into your hole; if she has not done so, don't take it in!" He then goes away to a little distance and sits down by himself. He allows a considerable time to elapse, and then returns to the hole of the *sumba*. If he finds that the *ulukamfi* has not been taken in he accepts it as a sign that his wife has been faithful, and goes on to the village happy in mind.

If, however, he finds that the lizard has taken the *ulukamfi* into his hole there is hate in his heart, and that night he will tie up his wife, and demand that she give him the name of the man who has injured him. Often the woman will have no answer, and will just cry with fright at her husband's violence. But sometimes, owing to the pain of the cords, the distracted woman will name some man. When the accused man is caught in the morning he will demand that the woman explain her accusation, and she will say it was untrue, but that she spoke in order that her husband might loosen her quickly. In such a case the husband would have to compensate the wrongly accused man. The Lambas, despite such happenings, pin great faith to the accuracy of this type of *ichipa*. Without any doubt here too we have a test which is symbolic. The taking into its hole of the *ulukamfi* by the lizard is symbolic of the action of an adulterous woman.

### Tossing-up

The term *ifipa* is also used in cases equivalent to those in which a coin is tossed by Europeans. When travellers are not certain which of two paths they should take they decide to *teye'fipa* (cast lots). They pluck two leaves of any kind, and throw them into the air to see if they *pa'wama*, come down right side up, or, as the Lambas put it, *akapafu peulu*, stomach upward; for with them each leaf has an *akapafu*, a stomach, and an *inuma*, a back. If only one leaf descends *akapafu peulu* the travellers will take it as an endorsement of their choice of the path over which they are 'tossing' the leaves. This type of test is sometimes called *ichipa chyeshyamo* (trial of ill-luck).

Something similar is done when honey is being sought. If the men have found honey they put it on a dish made of bark and then eat it. The chief man among them will then take the bark dish (*umukwa*), point in a certain direction, and say, "If we go that way, shall we eat honey?" He will thereupon throw the *umukwa* into the air. If it comes down bottom upward (*ifunama*) he says, "It has refused over there." Again he will say, "Shall we go that way?" and will again throw the *umukwa* into the air. If it comes down face upward (*pa'wama*) he says, "It has consented. Let us go this way."

### Ichipa Chyamalya

When natives set out to visit friends at a neighbouring village they very often decide to *teye'fipa* in order to see whether they will get *inshima* (thick porridge) given to them. They look for a certain bush called *ulupaapi*. Taking a small branch, they tear it down between forked pieces, dividing it as is done with withies (*imango*). If it snaps quickly it is understood that they will not get anything to eat, but if it splits right down (*lende'wuka*) they expect to find food provided. If the latter happens they will go on to the village fully expectant. Then when their friends begin at once to prepare food for them they will say, *Ichipa chyesu chyachita bwino*, "Our *ichipa* has done well." This is called *ichipa chyamalya*.

*Ifipa fyamalya* are also used to settle a quarrel over the ownership of food or even of any article and to find the direction in which honey may be found. The term *amalya* is derived from the verb *lya*, eat, and has to do primarily with food.

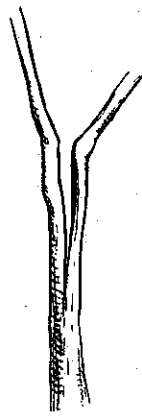


FIG. 82  
UKUKWAMU-  
NO'LUPAAPI

## Ichipa Chyaŵukulu

Children indulge in a game of lots, also called *ukuteye'chipa*. When arguing as to who is the biggest in their company they often appeal to the *ichipa* to settle their dispute. They plait a piece of string from old cloth and set fire to it half-way up. Standing round, they pass it quickly from hand to hand, and the person in whose hand the string eventually burns through and breaks is called the biggest. "Yes," he says, "I'm the biggest!" The others all laugh and say, "You are the child of a witch, because the *ichipa* has told us."

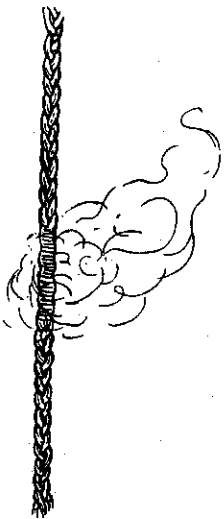


FIG. 83. ICHIPA  
CHYAŴUKULU

## The Delaying of Sunset

Under the heading of *ichipa* the Lambas include a peculiar practice which they have for the purpose of 'delaying' the sunset. When a man on a journey sees that the sun is about to set while he is still some distance from his objective, he knocks off the top of a small ant-heap (*ifwasa*) and sets it up on a stick, saying, *Wekasuŵa ukuwa ili nakuya kufika uko ndukuya epakuwa!* "O sun, in setting, when I arrive where I am going, that is when to set!" It is then believed that the man will reach his destination before dark. This use of *ichipa* is much akin to that of *ubwanga*.

## Ichipa in Folklore

In folklore *ifipa* of various kinds are recorded, but they are regarded by the natives as being merely fanciful, and hence are not believed in as genuine tests. One such is recorded in the *Ichishimichishyo ichyaŵamwana-nkalamu naŵamwana-ŋombe*, "The Story of Mr Lion-child and Mr Cow-child."<sup>1</sup> When the two heroes were about to part company the one who was going away, Cow-child, conjured (*chite'chipa*) with porridge in a cooking-pot, covered it over with leaves, and gave it to his brother's wife, saying, "Now I am going far, five nights and five days; so if my *ichipa* dries up you will know that Cow-child is dead!"

<sup>1</sup> See *Lamba Folk-lore*, by C. M. Doke, p. 19.

In the story of *Wakalulu neyaliile Wulambe*, "Mr Little-hare and what ate Wulambe,"<sup>1</sup> the term *ichipa* is used to indicate a trick, a feat of strength or unusual cleverness. The Little-hare lures the lion into his big sack by saying, "Sir, I have a splendid trick [*ichipa*]! If you were to see it you would just love it at once!"

<sup>1</sup> See *Lamba Folk-lore*, p. 37.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## UBWANGA—THE CULT OF DYNAMISM

## Ubwanga

WE have already dealt with two aspects of the Lambas' religious beliefs, that of the existence of Lesa, the Creator, a monotheistic belief, and that of a spiritual world of disembodied spirits, demons, and other spiritual beings, a spiritistic belief; and now we come to consider their belief in a power quite separate from that of Lesa or of the *imipashi* or the *ifiwanda*—what has been termed a dynamistic<sup>1</sup> belief.

Dynamism with the Lambas indicates a belief in the inherent potentiality of certain preparations, charms, medicines, actions, and even words to bring about certain definite results. The operation of this dynamic power is, generally speaking, automatic, but in many cases it is seen to be controlled by the *umulaye* (doctor). Most of the preparations used in this connexion are made by the *umulaye*, though we shall see that the *awapalu* (professional hunters), the *awami* (mediums), and even ordinary people may make these preparations in particular cases. This dynamic power generally is covered by the terms *ubwanga*, or *ichyanga*, and a practically synonymous term, *umusamu*. In derivation *ubwanga* has the same root as the Lamba word *inanga*, synonymous with *umulaye*. It is the power behind the *umulaye*, a power which the uninitiated may well fear to dabble with. The word *umusamu* is the Ila equivalent of the Lamba *umuti* (tree), which is generally translated as medicine. *Umusamu* is the visible form which the unseen *ubwanga* takes when it is being manipulated by the *umulaye*. It matters not whether the doctor has prescribed a herbal remedy which we should recognize as a genuine medicine or whether he has prepared a duiker's horn of some special concoction which has to be hung in a specified place; both are called *umusamu*, and both represent the *ubwanga*, the power for healing or for destroying, for protecting or for hurting. One of the most sinister things in this dynamistic belief is the

<sup>1</sup> See Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, vol. ii, chapter xx.

conviction that *imfwiti*, witches or wizards, can also tap this hidden source of power, and use it for their nefarious purposes. The *umulaye* is always trusted to exercise the powerful *ubwanga* in a way beneficial to the whole society, but the *imfwiti* is invariably credited with using it for the hurt of the society. The *imfwiti* is therefore a danger to the community; his or her presence is regarded as a cancer which must be cut out at all costs.

*Ubwanga* is of many kinds, for many purposes, and prepared and administered by several types of people. In this chapter we shall consider those manifestations of it controlled by the *awalaye*, by the *awami*, by the *awapalu*, and those which may be controlled by anyone. The *ubwanga bwakulowa*, that of the *imfwiti*, will be considered in the next chapter.

It must further be pointed out that the term *ubwanga* is also used synonymously with *uwulembe*, the poison which the Lambas put on their arrows. The *uwulembe* is a type of creeper, with long trailers the thickness of one's finger, found hanging in the trees. It has a sausage-shaped fruit about seven inches in length. These are picked, and broken open. The seeds are then extracted, dried, and pounded; the fatty pulp resulting is pasted on to the arrows behind the head.

## Ubwanga for Protection

We have already observed that the *awalaye* do not offer their services for the diagnosing of diseases, divining of causes, or the healing of the sick—they wait to be summoned. There is, however, one thing which they do advertise, and that is the *ubwanga* which they stock for the prevention of certain evils. On his arrival at a village an *umulaye* may announce, *Nawo ndikwete amano, ndi nemusamu wakuwulo kwikatwa kunkalamu; nebwanga bwansoka ndikwete nawo!* "I am wise, I have medicine to prevent one's being caught by a lion; and a snake charm I also have!" This will attract customers, and in the morning he will go into the bush to dig about for the necessary roots, bring them to the village, skin them, and pound them. He then calls all the people, old and young, to bring duiker horns (*insengo shyanshya*). Everybody has to take the horns by night to the *umulaye* in the bush, and there he fills them with the potent *umusamu*. This process is called *ukupando'bwanga*. The doctor also prepares *impindo*, small sticks with dynamic power, to be worn on arm or leg to prevent snake-bite. These *impindo* are about an inch long, and

the thickness of a pencil; through one end is a hole for inserting a string. All of these charms, whether *insengo* or *impindo*, are hung up in the trees in the bush, and thus left during the night. In the early morning the owners come to take them down, and the *umulaye* instructs them in some of the needful prohibitions (*imishiliko*) to be observed by the holders of these charms. He says, *Tekupiniko' lukuni uúushiku neli kutwo'úushiku. Kani mukatwe, inkalamu ikamwikateni; nelukuni kani mukapiniko' úushiku ikamwikateni*, "Do not chop any firewood at night, or stamp food at night. If you do stamp, a lion will catch you; and if you cut a piece of firewood by night it will catch you!" These prohibitions are carefully observed; they are called *imishiliko yaúwalaye*, prohibitions of the doctor.

#### Ubwanga Bwankalamu

To secure protection from lions certain pounded roots, known only to the *umulaye*, are placed in a duiker horn and two *impindo* cut by the *umulaye* from various roots, one of which is that of the *umumpulumpumpi* shrub. The *impindo* are strapped one on either wrist. When travellers are going to sleep in the bush, they build a zareba (*umutanda*), and hang their *insengo* on trees outside, believing that these will drive away any lion that may approach, and so protect them.

#### Ubwanga Bwansoka

As a protection against snake-bite one *ulupindo* (singular of *impindo*) is worn above the ankle. This type of charm is called *ulupinga*. It is said that a snake will sense this charm and make off at speed when the wearer approaches. It is further said to prevent a snake from biting the wearer even when he treads on it.

#### Ubwanga Bwangwena

There is a type of protection, *ubwanga*, prepared by the layman to give him safety from crocodiles when crossing rivers. Incisions (*inemo*) are made on the legs below the calf and over the shoulder-blade. The roots of the *intetele*, a kind of wild snapdragon, are dug up and burnt, and the powder rubbed into the incisions. Then two *impindo* are worn on the leg below the calf when a river is to be crossed in the rainy season. A man so protected is believed to be immune from attack by a crocodile.

#### Ubwanga Bwamfwiti

*Ubwanga bwamfwiti* (charm against witches) is prepared by the *umulaye*, and placed in a duiker or grysbok horn. Usually the horn is secreted in the side of one of the doorposts. It is said that the horn has the power to leave its place and pursue the witch, driving her away. Others say that when the witch or wizard approaches the horn causes the hut to become invisible, so that the visitor is baffled in his attempt to do evil. If the owner of the hut goes away for any length of time he leaves the horn at the village to protect his home. Sometimes a man will have more than one of these potent horns, and will place one at the back of the hut as an added protection.

#### Ubwanga Bwalwela

There are two types of *ubwanga* prepared by the *awalaye* to give assistance in warfare, the *ubwanga bwalwela*, for protection in the fight, and the *ubwanga bwachimbwembwe*, for putting fear into the enemies' hearts. The day before a party sets off to fight the *umulaye* procures a certain *umusamu*. He then brings a little child (*ichinjishi*), one who has not yet commenced to talk. The *ichinjishi* urinates, and the urine is mixed with the *umusamu*, the resulting concoction being placed in little horns (*utusengo*). The intention of this is that the enemy, on meeting the fighters with these little horns on their persons, will all become like *ifinjishi*, and be overcome by fear.

When such a party of fighting men, having spent a night on the road within striking distance of their objective, set off to the attack, with their officer behind, they all wear these *utusengo* attached to a circlet round the head. When they reach the village they are to raid they take another *ubwanga*, *ubwanga bwachimbwembwe*, intended to give their enemies such fear that they will be unable even to get up. This particular *umusamu* is mixed with gunpowder (*imfundanga*), and with it one of the guns is loaded. In this way the men reach the village early in the morning, and surround it. Then the gun with the medicated powder is fired, and is believed to ensure complete victory. The men issue terror-stricken from their huts, and are quickly dispatched. The women and children fall a prey to the raiders, and are carried off into slavery.

If the raid is unsuccessful, and the enemy is found to be on the watch for them, the men will throw the blame upon the child chosen for the preparation of the *ubwanga bwalwela*. "This

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child," they will say, "did not arrange the preparation properly." Or maybe they will look for an offender among their number. It is an *umushiliko* that no brave may lie with his wife on the day before going to war. Maybe one has offended in this respect.

### Ubwanga Bwalukawo

A bundle of special leaves is tied up and attached to a pole set

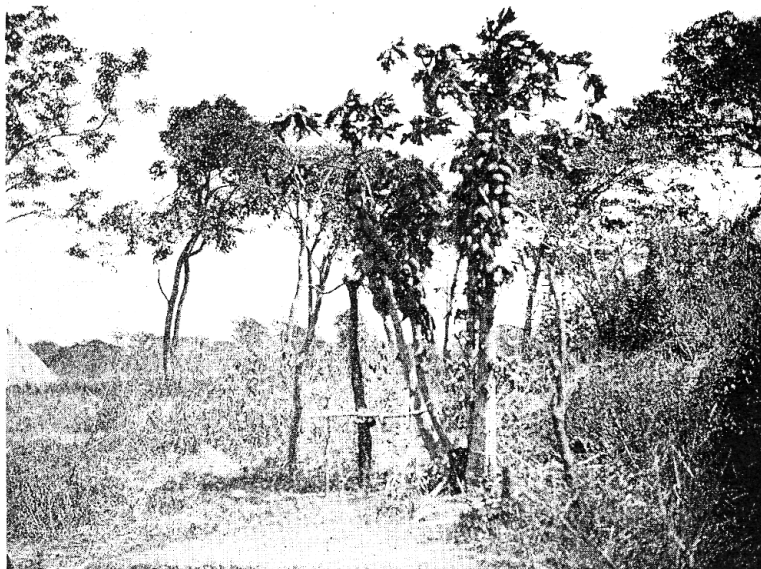


FIG. 84. PAWPAW-TREES PROTECTED BY UBWANGA BWAYAMBA

Photo by C. M. Doke

in the midst of a garden of foodstuffs, such as ripening maize, pumpkins, potatoes, or nuts. It is said that if a thief comes and touches any of the foodstuffs his hand is caught fast, so that he cannot let go the thing he is trying to steal. When the owner of the charm comes the thief is secured.

### Ubwanga Bwayamba

*Ubwanga bwayamba* is also a potent charm for the protection of foodstuffs and the harm of any would-be thief. A man who has a special crop, such as some fruit-trees or a patch of tobacco, which he wishes to protect from thieves will go to the *umulaye* to procure *ubwanga bwayamba*. This may consist of certain

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pounded leaves, which he puts into a duiker horn. The horn is tied on to a cross-pole (*umutembo*) supported by two upright forked sticks (*impanda*), which are planted in the ground near the foot of the tree. There is sympathetic magic in the preparation of this charm, for it is said that the person who now plucks



FIG. 85. UBWANGA BWAYAMBA, SUPPORTED LIKE A DEAD BODY ON A CARRYING-POLE, TO PROTECT PAWPAW-TREES FROM THIEVES

Photo by C. M. Doke

this fruit will to-morrow be carried *pamutembo*, by means of a carrying-pole, as is a corpse, the supported duiker's horn representing the dead body of the offender. Some believe that the death of one ignoring the *ubwanga* will be by lightning. They say, at all events, that such a one commits suicide; the onus of his death is upon himself.

### Yamba Wamulukombo

There is another type of *yamba*, called the *yamba* in the calabash, which is used for prevention of rain. At the time of the early

rains people will go to an *umulaye* and say, "We want to drink *yamba*." The doctor prepares a mixture of water with flakes of mica (*amamba akwe Lesa*) and certain pounded roots and leaves in it. This he puts into a drinking calabash (*ulukombo*), and gives it to his client to drink. The doctor may be called *umwine wayamba*, the owner of the *yamba*, though this term is generally applied to the person who has drunk the potion. Such a person is more commonly called *uwayamba* (plural, *awayamba*), and is credited with special powers in the prevention of rain. During a rain-storm, if much thunder is heard (*Lesa alukupata*), the *uwayamba* rushes out shouting, *Kopata bwino, ulukutiinishya' wantu mumfulo'mo!* "Steady with the thundering. You are frightening the people in this rain!" He then shouts in the village, *Kani pali uwalya-po umusale, kani kwiiwa awa fmbi, ngalawile, yamba wafutwa!* "If there is anyone who has eaten young maize-stalks, if some of them he has stolen, let him speak; the rain-charm is angry!" Some one in fear will come out from his hut and say, "It is I who ate So-and-so's maize-stalks. I took no one else's!" And the *uwayamba* replies, *A'a, nawona Lesa ukufitwa, kanshi niwe!* "Aha, I saw that God was angry, and it was you who were to blame!" Other types of rain-prevention will be considered under *ubwanga bwamfula*.

#### Ubwanga Bwashiwuwungu

As it is believed that certain persons, called *washiwuwungu*, are able to practise witchcraft in order to transfer the strength of a neighbour's crop to their own, *ubwanga bwashiwuwungu* is prepared to thwart their designs. Both *awalaye* and *wamukamwami* are able to prepare this *ubwanga*. They bring certain roots and leaves to the garden in question, make a great heap of them, and set fire to the heap, so that dense clouds of smoke are given off. This smoke they try to drive to all parts of the garden. It is then believed that if any *washiwuwungu* come to take the 'virtue' from the crops this *umusamu* will drive them away before they have accomplished their purpose.

#### Ubwanga Bwanama

It will be seen when we consider the hunting profession, *uwupalu*, that the whole of the hunter's success depends upon the efficacy of the *ubwanga* which is at his command. *Ubwanga* is necessary to ensure straight shooting; it is necessary to ensure coming upon game in the first place; and it is necessary to ensure

the safety of the hunters. Here we shall consider but one instance of its use. In order to ensure that he will quickly find and kill an animal the professional hunter, *ichiwindi*, digs up the roots of a shrub called *umumpulumpumpi*. He then prepares a bark dish, *umukwa*, and places in it the roots and some water. The roots are not pounded, but are placed in the water as they are. He next takes a sprig of the *umusamba*-tree with leaves on it—this to represent the tail of an animal, an instance of sympathetic magic—dips it into the *umukwa* of medicated water, and sprinkles his weapon as though to wash it. Then he is ready to set out for the hunt. The *umusamba* is usually the tree used in connexion with washing (*ukusamba*) ceremonials. The connexion of the roots of these words is obvious.

#### Ubwanga Bwawulwele

*Ubwanga* is employed for both the prevention and the cure of sickness. For certain ailments ordinary people may prepare the *ubwanga*, or they may obtain it from a doctor.

#### Ubwanga Bwamatwi

As a cure for headache the Lambas carve *impinga shyandale*, charm-sticks from the *ndale*-tree, and tie them round the head of the patient with a string of beads. They further pick *ndale* leaves, chew them, and rub them on to the patient's head. It is possible that the *ndale*-tree is used because of the connexion of its name with *lala* (to sleep)—for example, *Ndale* means "Let me sleep!"

#### Ubwanga Bwakalwani

For chest troubles, such as pneumonia and pleurisy, they carve four *impindo shyamulemu*, charm-sticks of the red protea, pierce them, thread them on a piece of string, and carry them on the person. If a woman or an old man has one, it is worn round the waist. When some one is taken ill this charm is taken and tied round the affected part. A medicinal drink made from the root of the *mukona*-tree is given to the patient, and some is put into his gruel. All this is practised by people who are not necessarily doctors. The 'pneumonia string' is consistently worn round the chest by old men to keep away pneumonia and other chest complaints. The term *ubwanga* may thus be applied to preventive medicine, which in cases of sickness is identical with the curative. It may also be applied to the sickness itself, or, rather, to the

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dynamic force behind the sickness. Such phrases as these are heard: *Ubwanga bwanjikata mukuulu*, "Ubwanga has caught me in the leg," *Wandowo'bwanga mukuulu*, "They have bewitched me with *ubwanga* in the leg."

### Ubwanga Bwamfula

Charms for the prevention of rain are very common. We have already noticed the use of *yamba* in this connexion. When a person is starting on a journey early in the morning during the rainy season he comes out of his hut at dawn, plucks a handful of fresh green grass (*umwefu*), heats it over the fire, and sets it on the end of his spear. As he starts along the path he says, *Wemfula ukalochye uko natulila, kuntanjile nyendele-ko bwino*, "O rain, you may rain where I have come from, but ahead of me let me have a comfortable journey!"

### Awakoleshi Wamfula

Certain individuals are credited with further power over the rain. They are ordinary people themselves, but it is not every one who has this ability. They are called *awakoleshi wamfula*. When rain is threatening these people pluck leaves of the *akapota*-, *umwenje*-, or *umusafwa*-trees, and throw them toward the clouds. It is believed that just as the storm travels in the direction in which the wind carries the leaves from the trees, so this will have the effect of driving the storm in the direction in which the leaves have been thrown. This is another case of sympathetic magic.

Another type of *umukoleshi wamfula* does not drink any water on the road. In the early morning he goes out and picks some leaves of the *akapota*-tree, and enters the house chewing them. He then spits some of the *inkamfi* (chewed leaves) about the house; the rest he rolls in the ashes, until they become white, and then puts them on a stump of wood outside. Other *akapota* leaves are stuck up above the doorway, and the people are instructed that when evening comes they must take them down and burn them, so that it may rain. The same is done with the ash-covered *inkamfi* on the stump. They are thrown on to the fire, lest they should keep the rain away indefinitely.

When travelling the *umukoleshi wamfula* ties a bunch of *umusuku* leaves to the end of his spear and carries it over his shoulder. This is called *ichipeela*, for it swings from side to side as he walks (*peela*, to swing to and fro). When he wants to rest by the way he hangs up the *ichipeela*, sits down, and makes his meal. When

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he resumes his journey he takes the *ichipeela* down again. On his arrival at the village to which he is going he undoes the spell by throwing the *ichipeela* into the fire. If he wants to bring rain he puts the *ichipeela* on the ground and pours water over it. This charm is always hung up if there is no desire for rain.

The principle of sympathetic magic is seen in all this. Abstinence from drinking on the road is designed to minimize the likelihood of rain. The ash-covered *akapota* leaves are probably symbolic of the dry winter-time (*umwela*), when no rain falls. The constant swinging of the *ichipeela* denotes the moving onward of the clouds; its being hung up indicates that the clouds will remain high; while when it is put on the ground and drenched with water we see a picture of the lowering clouds discharging their moisture.

The *awakoleshi wamfula* believe that they have the ability to ward off lightning. If they are inside a hut and see that there is much lightning about they go outside, spit into the air (*shipila' mate mwiulu*), and say, *Koloka bwino, nindo twachita, fwewana wowe?* "Rain carefully. What is it that we, your children, have done?" This is addressed to Lesa. The women, meanwhile clapping their hands, utter the shrill *impundu*, a sign of humbling themselves (*saasa*) before Lesa, lest he should throw down their houses. At other times the *awakoleshi wamfula* snap their fingers (*lishyo' lusota*), and address Lesa, saying, *Koloka bwino, fwewantu wowe twakuwomba!* "Rain carefully. We, your people, have paid homage to you!" At other times they scatter ashes into the air and address the deity.

### Ubwanga Bwankatulo

A special process of *ubwanga* is gone through to prevent the *utuyewela*, those peculiar creatures employed in witchcraft, from stealing foodstuffs. This is called *ubwanga bwankatulo*. The day before seed is sown, roots of the *umukokolo*-tree are dug up, peeled, and pounded. The seed, whether maize, sorghum, or pumpkin, is mixed with these ground roots, and on the next day it is sown. It is believed that the *utuyewela* would know that the *umusamu* was there, and that, should they steal, they would no longer be invisible.

### Ubwanga Bwaususuko

*Ubwanga bwaususuko* is used if the pumpkins begin to rot. Leaves of the *uwukumbwanjombe* bush are picked and placed on



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a small bark dish (*akakwa*), and then sprinkled on the runners of the pumpkins. When the sprinkling has been completed the dish of medicine is covered over.

### Ubwanga Bwakufyala

To ensure successful and easy birth a pregnant woman obtains from an *umulaye* what is called *katungu*, or *ubwanga bwakufyala*, a charm for giving birth. A small horn is cut through at both ends, *umusamu* inserted, and the ends closed each with four beads. Holes are pierced near both ends for the insertion of a string. The charm is worn suspended from the neck.

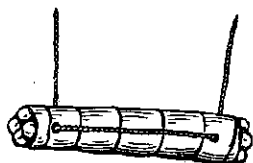


FIG. 86. KATUNGU

### Various Uses of Ubwanga

It must be observed here that *ubwanga*, this mysterious power, is said to be behind the work of the *awalomweshi* (see Chapter XVI), and to be at the root of the *ifimpelampela*, or miracles of transformation practised by certain individuals (see Chapter XV). *Imfwiti*, witches and wizards, are believed to tap its sources for their nefarious work, and even thieves bring it to their aid. One day I was visited by a man named Malisope, who had taken a violent fancy to the skin of a long-haired hyena which adorned my floor. I would not part with it. Recently I found that he wanted to use the skin as *umusamu* to procure for himself invisibility while carrying out a theft he was planning.

### Ukushilika

In Chapter XIII the term *umushiliko* was noted as indicating a taboo of the strongest kind. The word is derived from the verb *ukushilika*, which means to prohibit, forbid, prevent, or ward off. In connexion with hunting it will be noticed that there are numerous *imishiliko* to be observed to ensure successful hunting. *Kaaluwe*, the sprite of the animals, has to be propitiated and guarded against. The observances necessary for this are termed *ukushilika Kaaluwe*. The same term is used in connexion with certain preventive observances carried out for the protection of the crops. Here are three such:

(1) *Ukushilike'nguluwōe*, warding off wild pigs. If wild pigs are worrying the crops certain *umusamu* is procured, together with the snout-bone of a wild pig. At night the people go to the

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gardens, sit down on the west side, light a fire, and place on it the snout-bone and the *umusamu*. The owner of the gardens then fans (*pekawila*) the smoke over them. When the medicinal leaves (*umusamu*) are all burnt the people retire silently and return to the village. The next day no one goes near the gardens, but the day following that they may go.

(2) *Ukushilika wōakolwe*, warding off monkeys. Medicinal leaves and an old monkey's skull are brought. The people then dig up *umumbu* marsh roots, which are carried by little children. When they reach the gardens a fire is made. The skull is broken to pieces, and it and the leaves are thrown on to the fire. Then the children climb up on to tree-stumps and eat the *umumbu* roots, imitating monkeys. When this is done all return to the village. The children are now warned by their elders, *Tekulukuminina pafishinga, wōalishilichile awene wōwōala*, "Don't climb on to the stumps any more, for the owner of the garden has forbidden them!"

(3) *Ukushilike'fyuni*, warding off birds. As in the other cases, smoke is produced in the gardens by medicated leaves, and while this is being done the people shout out, *Wa! Kalyeni kumulyashi ekuli ifyakulya fyenu twamupeleni. Tekwisa kulya kuno yo!* "Wa! Go and eat at the burial-ground—that is where the food we have given you is. Don't come to eat here again!"