

Chapter 2

The *Likota Iya Bankoya* manuscript

2.1. History of the *Likota Iya Bankoya* manuscript

Against the background of Nkoya ethnicization in the first half of the twentieth century, *Likota Iya Bankoya* sprang specifically from the grafting of Christian literacy upon the Nkoya *lukena* milieu.

After earlier abortive attempts,¹²⁷ the first successful Christian mission was established in the Nkoya area in 1923, by a fundamentalist Christian mission organization later known as the Africa Evangelical Fellowship — leading on to the Evangelical Church of Zambia. From the start (and in a way well documented by *Likota Iya Bankoya*) this undertaking enjoyed the patronage of the Mutondo royal family. One of its members, a close relative of several incumbents of the Mwene Mutondo title, was Malasha Shimunika (c. 1898-1981),¹²⁸ whose remarkable career (reputed to have started as a *nganga*, a traditional diviner-priest¹²⁹), via conversion to Christianity (when he received the

¹²⁷ The first attempt to establish a Christian mission in Nkoyaland was by A. W. Bailey, on the Lalafuta, in 1913. The project was abandoned in 1914; cf. Bailey (1913, 1914). For the second abortive attempt, see *Likota Iya Bankoya* (54: 1-4) and notes there (Parts II and III below).

¹²⁸ Mutumba Mainga (1973: 242-243) puts his year of birth at 1900, and adds that his mother, Shilandi, was a sister of Mwene Mutondo Kanyinca; similarly Brown (1984). A somewhat earlier date of birth was given in an extensive questionnaire which I administered to his son Mr Gideon Shimunika in 1976; Kaoma Research Project 1972-1976 questionnaire no. 46.

¹²⁹ Oral source [2] 30.9.1977.

baptismal name of Johasaphat) and work as a teacher, led him to be the first Nkoya pastor (as from 1950) and principal Bible translator. His Nkoya translation of the *New Testament* and the Psalms appeared in 1952 (Testamenta 1952); a draft translation of the Old Testament was completed shortly before his death, by a team under his supervision. Publication of the Old Testament translation is being delayed due to a shortage of funds; collections and subscriptions are currently being organized among Nkoya-speakers in Kaoma district and along the Zambian line of rail, largely within the framework of the Kazanga cultural society whose aim is the propagation of the Nkoya language and culture. In this connexion, workshops on Nkoya Bible translation were held in Luampa, 1986, and Lusaka, April 1987.

Besides his work as a teacher, pastor and Bible translator, Rev. Shimunika collected and collated Nkoya oral traditions all over Nkoyaland in an enthusiastic and conscientious way. In a personal interview¹³⁰ Shimunika claimed that he had started to collect Nkoya historical traditions in the 1920s, when he was working as a clerk at the Mutondo *lukena* and historical enquiries from the colonial administration could not be satisfactorily answered. These materials were committed to writing in the 1950s-1960s, under the title *Likota lya Bankoya*.

The title of the work poses a difficulty. The root *-kota* is not used in the Nkoya text except to indicate the title of the work. In Lozi, a language with which Rev. Shimunika was fully conversant, *likota* means 'tree', and thus the title already evokes not only the arboreal symbolism that permeates the book as a whole, but also the very Lozi domination it seeks to explode. In the course of my field-work, however, I found that the word *likota* (or the Mashasha form *jikota*), whatever its status as a Lozi loan word, was used by Nkoya speakers (most probably unaware of Rev. Shimunika's manuscript and its title) as a generic term for 'the group of people (perhaps best described as a bilateral kindred) centring on a village and on a hereditary title of village headmanship'.¹³¹ Thus one could speak of *Likota lya Shipungu*, 'the people who are "members" of Shipungu village' — not only the actual inhabitants of the present conglomeration of about ten dwellings known as Shipungu village (on the Kabanga stream, some 35 km east of Kaoma), but also such potential inhabitants of Shipungu village as are living either in other villages or in towns, and in fact all the people who by virtue of patrilineal or matrilineal descent from sometime actual inhabitants of Shipungu village have a self-evident right to take up residence there, who are eligible to participate in ancestral ritual at the village shrine, who may in principle receive a share of any bridewealth paid for female fellow-'members', and who — if not themselves clearly eligible to the Shipungu title — could have at least some say in the election of a new incumbent.

¹³⁰ Oral source [22].

¹³¹ E.g. oral source [14]; cf. van Binsbergen, in prep.

In the light of this Nkoya usage of the word *likota* the title of Rev. Shimunika's work would simply mean: 'The Nkoya people'. What remains confusing, then, is that Shimunika applies a term which normally refers to only the small specific village group within the wider society of central western Zambia, to an entire 'ethnic group' — for which latter concept Nkoya usage would prefer the word *mushobo*, 'tribe'. Does this reflect Shimunika's awareness of the historical heterogeneity of the Nkoya, and the artificiality of his attempt to forge them into one unit? Or does the genealogical connotation of 'family tree',¹³² on the contrary, convey the suggestion that, more than tribes in the usual sense, the Nkoya are united by ties of consanguinity? These questions were unfortunately not raised during my interviews with Rev. Shimunika, and the title remains puzzling.

Nkoya readers themselves have failed to offer an unequivocal translation of the title, wavering between 'people' and 'history' — in a way which is most significant considering the role of this book in the building of Nkoya ethnicity. I have adopted a translation which retains both shades: 'The History of the Nkoya People'.

The earlier mentioned *Muhumpu* pamphlet was a first installment of Shimunika's ethno-historical research which was to lead to *Likota Iya Bankoya*. In many respects it was a short draft for *Likota Iya Bankoya*, covering largely the same grounds: the Lozi ruler Mulambwa's request of Nkoya medicine and drums, which resulted in the first time that Nkoya drums were sent to Loziland; the second time the Nkoya drums went to Loziland — as captured by the Kololo; the exploits of the Lozi ruler Sipopa; his sending of representative *indunas*; the exploits of Shamamano; Mwene Mutondo Wahila's journey to Soliland; the arrival of the British and the founding of Mankoya boma, and the intervention of the Lozi *Litunga* Yeta III, Lewanika's successor, in the Mutondo succession in the late 1910s. However, half of *Muhumpu* (pp. 4-7) is taken up by a passionate account of the creation of the Mankoya Native Authority, the Naliele Appeal Court and the Mankoya Native Treasury in the 1930s, and the resulting conflicts between Mwene Mutondo Muchayila (during his first term of office, 1943-1947) and the Barotse Native Administration, which ended in Muchayila's demotion and ten years' exile to Kalabo, west of the Zambezi.

Rev. Shimunika also wrote a *Lwampa Mission short history from 1923*, of which I have not been able to trace a copy.

The original typescript of *Likota Iya Bankoya* was prepared at the Luampa Mission Bible translation office, and it is typed in a tradition

¹³² On Nkoya imagery of genealogical relationships, see below, 2.5, 'the handling of kinship terms and terms for social groups', and 4.1: 'the High God, Rain, and the Land'.

of Bible editions¹³³, with large numerals inserted into the main text as chapter numbers, with units of a few sentences indicated by a number — like Bible verses, and with running heads specifying chapters and verses for each page. Clearly, the text was meant to be definitive, and to be published.

In 1975 I came into contact with Mr Hamba H. Mwene, an examination officer in the Zambian Ministry of Education, living in Lusaka and from Nkoya background, who gave me a copy of the Nkoya text (60-odd densely typed pages) of *Likota lya Bankoya*, with a request to have it published in the Nkoya language. That manuscript was a rather heterogeneous bundle of typewritten pages, heavily edited in handwriting, and bearing on the title page the names of J.M. Shimunika and H.H. Mwene, as co-authors (see below, *Appendix 1*).

When in the autumn of 1977 the intervention of Mr Davison Kawanga, a senior medical assistant likewise of Lusaka and from a Nkoya background, enabled me to personally interview Rev. Shimunika in his house in Luampa, Kaoma district, it became clear that the latter was the only author of *Likota lya Bankoya*. In Rev. Shimunika's opinion (confirmed by other readers and in due course by Mr H.H. Mwene himself), the latter's contribution had been agreed to consist merely of copy-editing Shimunika's typescript. While he had done so conscientiously, he had taken the liberty of adding a number of paragraphs, an introduction, and additional kings' lists. So part of my editorial task was reconstructing the manuscript as originally written by Rev. Shimunika — while at the same time acknowledging such real formal improvements as Mr Mwene's work on the manuscript represented. In this task I could rely on Rev. Shimunika's own master copy of the manuscript which I could peruse at length in Luampa, taking photographs of significant variants (reproduced in the present volume as *Appendix 2*). Another source of information, from Mr Mwene's manuscript itself, were the telltale patterns of variously coloured pencil and ballpoint marks, the systematic differences between the typewriters used, between typists' mannerism and orthography, and a growing acquaintance with Mr Mwene's handwriting. Details are given in section 2.3 below.

In Summer 1978, while the work on the editorial reconstruction of the original manuscript was in progress, Mr M. Malapa, an assistant pharmacist of Lusaka, at the combined request of Mr D. Kawanga and myself, and with some financial support from the African Studies Centre, Leiden, made a draft translation, which I checked and corrected word by word, sending him my extensive notes and queries in November 1978, on the basis of which he soon afterwards produced a second draft translation.

¹³³ For a stimulating analysis of the ways in which Christian literacy may lead to the local production of pre-scientific ethnography and history, cf. Janzen 1985, with specific reference to the Lower Congo.

After work on the *Likota Iya Bankoya* edition had to be abandoned for some years due to the pressure of other work, the Nkoya text and the second draft translation were processed in the form of easily manipulable computer files, whose typography I subjected to systematic copy-editing, while continuing to work on the style, contents and both semantic and historical implications of the English translation. The move to ever more precise and consistent interpretation of the text, and to a growing awareness of the stylistic, editorial, linguistic, symbolic and historical problems arising in the course of that attempt, was particularly stimulated when I proceeded to an increasingly sophisticated decoding of the historical information *Likota Iya Bankoya* might contain. Concentrating, in this connexion, on gender relations in the process of Nkoya state formation, on Nkoya cosmology and symbolic structures, and on the structuralist-inspired methodology by which to crack *Likota Iya Bankoya*'s historical code, major progress was made in the years 1985-1987.

A decisive stage in the editorial process was reached when in August 1985 the first proofs of the Nkoya text and the draft English translation became available for correction. In the way set out in the Preface, I had soon four extensively reworked copies of the Nkoya text at my disposal. This remarkable response, across linguistic and geographical distances and despite pressures of time, money and wavering postal services, enables us to look at the final Nkoya text as more than one individual author's work and one foreign scholar's editing: *Likota Iya Bankoya* as it presents itself to the reader in Part II below, can to some extent be said to be realized by, and endorsed by, the Nkoya-speaking people themselves.

Meanwhile, the comments on the English translation (Part III below) were far less extensive: either the expert readers looked upon *Likota Iya Bankoya* as a text for exclusively local consumption, by members of the Nkoya language community, or — more likely — they did not feel sufficiently competent in English to criticise a translation on which Mr Malapa and myself had already worked for so long. During the years 1985-1988 I once again re-translated *Likota Iya Bankoya* word by word, on the basis of the now completely reconstructed Nkoya manuscript, Mr Malapa's second draft translation and my earlier queries, and especially of such methodological, philological, literary and historical insights as will be set out in this chapter and the next. In the process I also translated about 20% of the original text which Mr Malapa had left out of his drafts, while the final translation of the remaining 80% came to differ very substantially from these drafts.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Preparing the English translation for publication in 1987-88, I again, as in 1977-78, benefited from a 131 pp. typescript draft 'Dictionary Shinkoya-English', said to have been prepared by Rev. J.M. Shimunika and made available to me by Mr H.H. Mwene in order to settle certain details of interpretation and translation (Anonymous, n.d. (b)). The first published Nkoya word list (Yasutoshi Yukawa 1987) came too late to my attention to be used extensively.

The final text of the English translation was checked again between Mr Malapa and myself in Lusaka, May 1988; this cleared up (that is, to our personal satisfaction) most of the outstanding problems of interpretation and translation; the remaining few will be identified by specific footnotes below.

2.2. *Likota Iya Bankoya* as belonging to a genre of historiographic production

Likota Iya Bankoya does not stand on its own, but belongs to a genre of historiographic production. Following in Rev. J.M. Shimunika's footsteps, similar documents but of lesser scope and quality were prepared by educated Nkoya men of a younger generation: teachers and clerks. In the course of my research I have come across several manuscripts, of varying length and significance, often no longer than a few pages, normally written in dog-eared exercise books and held by family heads, teachers etc.¹³⁵ And of course, texts of this nature form a well-known genre throughout South Central Africa: that of 'literate ethno-history'. By analogy with 'ethno-botany', 'ethno-psychiatry' etc., the term 'ethno-history' (cf. White 1962) could serve to distinguish this image of the past as presented, without aspirations to modern scholarship, in *Likota Iya Bankoya*, and similar locally produced texts, from such history as a professional historian would write.

This genre is very popular among first-generation literate Africans. For western Zambia I could mention: Chibanza's Kaonde history (Chibanza 1961); Sandasanda's Kaonde history (Sandasanda 1972); Ikacana's Kwangwa history (Ikacana 1971, originally published 1952); the very influential Lozi history written by the missionary Jalla (1959);¹³⁶ Chief Siloka II Mukuni's Baleya history (Siloka II Mukuni n.d.); the Lala history edited by Munday (1961); and Sangambo's Luvale history as edited by Hansen and Papstein (Sangambo 1979). A Malawian

¹³⁵ They include: Jackson Shimunika, *Mr Clay's history commentary. On the early [sic] of the Mankoya. (Kaoma)*, 2 pp., original typescript in my possession; the author is a son of Rev. Shimunika; Dickson K. Makiyi, *Nkoya history — Kaoma, Western Province, Zambia*, 58 pp., manuscript in my possession; Moses Masheka Mutondo, untitled grey notebook (A) on Nkoya history and political structure, 18 pp., only dated entry 21.10.1977 (p. 16), original in my possession; Moses Masheka Munangisha, [identical to the previous author] Mutondo Royal Establishment, another unpublished manuscript (B), dated 1.1.1977 and later entries dated 10.8.1977, 24.8.1977, 10.4.1956, 14 unnumbered pages of which 4 are blank, no title, first line runs: 'Shihemwa. Biheka bya Mwene Mutondo Mashiku 2.1.1942'; H.H. Mwene, *Kafunte ka Shibinda*, typescript, 68 pp., original in my possession.

¹³⁶ Originally published 1921; occasionally one finds a 1909 edition quoted which I have not been able to trace. Prins (1980) mentions a considerable number of Lozi texts of the literate ethno-history genre to which I did not have access.

example that comes to mind is Heintze's edition of Ntara's *History of the Chewa* (Heintze 1973; cf. van Binsbergen 1976).

characteristics of the genre and methodological implications

One would greatly misrepresent locally produced historical texts of this genre if one took them for simple compilations of oral traditions. Their being committed to writing (either in an African language or in English), and their attempts, with varying degrees of success, to develop a sustained and integrated historical argument encompassing a number of local political and ethnic (sub-)groups over a number of centuries, force their authors to find solutions for problems of complex historical narrative, the linking up of separate traditions and of the historical figures featuring in them, and the specific group referents of these stories and traditions, to an extent that is atypical for unprocessed oral traditions in this part of the world.

For oral traditions within a viable rural culture do not need to be purposely integrated, juxtaposed and anchored to a specific group: however kaleidoscopic in their emphasis and however contradictory in their contents, they are united and rendered meaningful by their constant implicit reference to the surrounding village society and its culture. By contrast, the relatively new genre of literate compilations of oral traditions does not operate within such a relatively self-evident, secure environment. Its frame of reference is the relatively intimidating wider world governed by competence in foreign languages, literate typographical and syntactic conventions, the awareness of a similar historiographic production by neighbouring and rival groups, and of historiographic products of an altogether different academic standard and authority. The latter include particularly the published books on local history and ethnic cultures, by European colonial administrators and both African and European academicians. Elders and court chroniclers may offer the crude building bricks for the products of this literate ethno-historiographic genre, but the final models that its producers aspire to derive not from the village, the court shelter and the storytelling at the fireplace.

Among the genre's sources of inspiration and the standards of aspiration, *published academic and popular accounts* of local affairs loom large (we shall return to them when we consider, in chapter 3, the recycling of such accounts within the body of the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya*), but (as that text itself suggests, in its style and its typography) another such principal authoritative model may be furnished by the Bible. Besides being highly prestigious, the Bible could be termed inspiring in that it, too, and without apparent detrimental effect on its prestige and authority over the past three millennia or more, offers a practical combination of rambling and often totally disconnected or contradictory details incorporated into what yet appears (certainly to first-generation Christians in Africa) to be a unitary overall structure.

For the academic historian these characteristics of the genre mean that its products must be treated and analysed in a rather different fashion from oral-historical sources. A text like *Likota lya Bankoya* does not constitute raw data but it is rather a half-product, halfway between such traditions and reminiscences as operate within a strictly local frame of reference, on the one hand, and scholarly argument, on the other. Much more than as an informant, I came to look upon Rev. Shimunika as a colleague in the decyphering of the Nkoya past, and while we could only spend two days in historiographic debate, my own analysis of Nkoya precolonial history has greatly benefited from the initial structuring and weighing of extremely fragmented, contradictory and inconclusive oral evidence as available in central western Zambia. What is involved here is a creative restructuring on Rev. Shimunika's part, not a mere compilation. In chapter 3 we shall assess in detail to what extent this restructuring became laden, and to some extent perhaps biased, by Shimunika's own social and political position, and only after that assessment shall we proceed to use the elements of his argument for our own reconstruction of the Nkoya past.

In principle this restructuring by Shimunika and similar writers is similar to that which the academic analyst of oral sources does all the time, but there are two essential differences:

- (a) The creative process is in the hands of a native speaker, a fully-fledged member of the culture under study, and a participant in the history that is to be written; while this enhances the risk of specific particularistic biases such as we shall try to detect and compensate for, it dramatically reduces a much greater risk of Western scholarly projections across cultural, linguistic, political, class and historical divides. A restructured account like Shimunika's, merely by virtue of its having been written by him, is saturated with the, partly unconscious, assumptions, symbols and contradictions of Nkoya society and history — and if we manage to uncover them (as I shall attempt to do in the present argument) we have gained access to layers of ideological history few historians of Africa have sampled on the basis of unprocessed oral materials alone.
- (b) The analytical energy is not spent on the moment that a more or less coherent synthesis of the material is made, by someone like Shimunika, but that analysis is again processed — in the hands of an academician — in order to arrive at a more penetrating, more systematic, more abstract interpretation in generalized terms of scholarship — but only after the first synthesis has benefited fully from the African compiler's cultural and linguistic knowledge.

The dialogue thus emerging between the local historian and the cosmopolitan historian seems a fortuitous departure from the 'primitive appropriation' that has characterized Africanist scholarship of earlier decades (cf. van Binsbergen 1988b). The mode of research followed in

the present volume does problematize ethnic and local interests and Shimunika's historiographic dilettantism that springs from it, without however slighting the profound concerns of the African pursuers of literate ethno-history. The history we seek to create is theirs, not ours; and while their respect for the canons of scholarship may be sometimes undeserved, our circumspection and humility in handling their views may help us greatly along the way of reconstructing an African past that is both truthful, available and meaningful.

These considerations prompted me to engage in what must appear a rather unusual exercise: taking a twentieth-century Nkoya document as seriously as possible, treating it with what is essentially a philological-historical method, and making only selective reference to the more primal, unprocessed oral data at my disposal. Not only did this approach offer me the synthetic view of Nkoya history I had sought in vain to formulate entirely on my own impetus, in my first years of studying the Nkoya past; it also enabled me to situate this attempt at in precolonial historiography within the very processes of ethnic and political reconstruction that constitute Nkoya society today, and that both as a field-worker and a participant held me captive for many years. And thus I arrived at a point where I can present, and make sense of, my synchronic anthropological data — around whose collection my Nkoya research initially revolved in the years 1972-1974 — in a context where they are largely subservient to a historical argument spanning three centuries or more.

Of course, knowledge of the contemporary culture, language and politics is as essential for any oral historical research as it is for the analysis of literate ethno-history. But in our present endeavour we aspire to dialogue rather than academic monologue. We accept the lead of local people's own systematic structuring of their past, rather than immediately and from scratch imposing our own. Perhaps, in this way, an encounter is brought about that may be humanly more satisfactory because of its built-in equality, and from a scholarly viewpoint more rewarding and illuminating because of the input, through the compiler's (in this case: Shimunika's) mind, of local ideological and symbolic orientations that otherwise would be difficult to accommodate in historiographic discourse.

Finally, as for the *purpose* of the historiographic production within this genre, this always includes the quest for *identity*, after the latter has become problematic (as either a newly-invented, or as a threatened, entity) under the impact of twentieth-century political and economic incorporation processes. The colonial administrative structures have been most instrumental in creating and imposing boundaries between geographical areas and between groups, differentially allocating, to the fragmented spaces thus defined, prestige, political, cultural and linguistic recognition, means for participation in the wider economic and political structures of the colonial state, and scarce material resources (in the way of transport, medical and educational facilities).

Therefore it is far from surprising that the genre of literate ethno-history tends to take the colonizers' ethnic and geographical distinctions for granted, and seeks to force the (often far more diffuse, heterogeneous and contradictory) traditional data into that strait-jacket — rather than arriving, by its own impetus, at a historical critique of the administrative, ethnic and historical inventions and impositions of the colonial state.

between colonialism, missionary influence and ethnic concerns

The elements outlined above we do find back in Rev. Shimunika's *Likota Iya Nkoya*. Its principal aim is to claim and underpin the identity of the Nkoya people, as the inhabitants of the Land of Nkoya (which, amazingly in view of the arbitrary nature of colonial boundaries, under Shimunika's hands so very neatly coincides with that early colonial creation, the Mankoya district), and particularly in the face of Lozi domination. Shimunika's frame of reference is not the inward-directed contemplation of things Nkoya, but the operation of Nkoyanness within a wider setting involving rival and hostile ethnic groups in an overall context of the British-dominated colonial state.

This has interesting effects on Rev. Shimunika's style. On the one hand he organizes the entire universe from his actual vantage point, Luampa Mission. The immediate surroundings of Luampa Mission, the rivulets, villages and the location of some trading store which has now disappeared, are described with a sheer myopia which leaves even the other parts of the Land of Nkoya in blurred outlines, let alone the rest of western Zambia. Also, at the regional level, the district can simply and adequately be identified, in Shimunika's terms, by the word 'here':

'He returned to Loziland and he acceded to the kingship under the name of Mwene Sipopa. Then the Nkoya, along with Mwene Mutondo Kashina and his younger brother Kancukwe, returned *here, to Nkoya*. When they arrived *here in Nkoya* they did not want Mwene Mutondo Kashina to be their senior Mwene any more...' (34: 5; my italics).

'When he arrived in Loziland Sekeletu took him across the Zambezi to the Lukona area, to his elder brother Katushi. *Here* [, in Nkoya], meanwhile, the kingship went over in the hands of [Mwene Liyoka's] younger brother Libondo' (38: 4; my italics).

Fixation in place goes hand in hand with fixation in time, and the historiographic present which Rev. Shimunika observes is clearly that of the 1950s — when the Mankoya Native Authority was still a viable

institution,¹³⁷ when a great many ethnonyms and toponyms of colonial creation could be used as a matter of course even if they were meant to anachronistically refer to precolonial conditions, and when the use of selected English words in the Nkoya text could at least be hoped to further its clarity — at the same time confirming, perhaps, as a side effect, the author as a successful intellectual in control of the prestigious and dominant colonial language.

The belief (resented by contemporary Nkoya readers) that in certain respects the Nkoya language would be so imprecise as to necessitate the introduction of English words, can be seen reflected in the use of the word *chieftain* as an English clarification for the Nkoya phrase *Mwene wa mukazi*,¹³⁸ in the frequent insertion of English numerals, and of English words for the directions of the compass (which admittedly are confusing in Nkoya):

‘Our grandparents used to tell us that Libupe came from *ncelele*, ‘the north’ as we say today in the language of the English.’ (2: 1)

The word *wande* is accompanied, in the Nkoya text, by the translation ‘area’ (1: 6), and the Nkoya names of ethnic groups and subgroups are often accompanied by their better-known English or Lozi equivalents: e.g. ‘*Bakubu (Makololo)*’ (27: 10), or by such explanations in English as: ‘*Branch of Nkoya*’ (1: 2).

All these original clarifications are entirely unnecessary for the Nkoya reader, which raises the question as to what specific readership Shimunika actually had in mind. The apologetic thrust of the book, the intention to state the case for Nkoya identity and autonomy, was addressed as much to his fellow Nkoya speakers as to outsiders — but precious few among the latter would be able to read it in the original Nkoya.

That more is involved here than a fear to be misunderstood can be seen from the way the relations are described between Mwene Mutondo Wahila and the first two Britons living in his realm:

‘When Mwene Mutondo Wahila died in the year 1914, the Whitemen Mr Helm and Mr Brough went to attend the funeral of their great friend, together with all the people.’ (52: 10)

Is the purpose of this passage to show that the Nkoya, just like the Lozi, have their own independent share of goodwill with the colonial power? Are the British invoked as possible allies against Lozi domination — as they sometimes turned out to be in the case of Mwene

¹³⁷ Soon after Independence to be replaced by the Mankoya — later Kaoma — Rural Council.

¹³⁸ I.e. *female Mwene*, which I have preferred to translate as ‘Lady *Mwene*’; cf. (10: 2). Like many other Zambian users of English Rev. Shimunika assumed *chieftain* to be the feminine form of the English word *chief*.

Kahare Timuna (see chapter 1)? The description of Mwene Kanyinca's early career as a boma messenger (again to the full satisfaction of the District Commissioner as Shimunika does not fail to point out), hardly suggests that a stigma attaches to colonial 'collaboration'. Only at the very first encounter with the colonial power (52: 1f) is local autonomy stressed by a symbolic act: Mwene Mutondo shoots an arrow into a tree as a sign of legitimate ownership of the land (cf. van Binsbergen 1981a: 120), and he is at first claimed to refuse to pay taxes; however, this initial assertiveness apparently vanishes like snow before the sun.

But while on the one hand colonial power relations appear to constitute an overriding frame of reference, on the other hand Shimunika manages to partially reshape things colonial according to the logic of Nkoya culture. The District Commissioner is disguised as a Nkoya ruler: *Mwene Mangalashi*, whose 'dynastic' title is *Mubushishi* or *Kalela*¹³⁹ (ch. 51-52); *Ndona*, the (no doubt Portuguese-derived, and now general Zambian) honorific title of the missionary's wife (or any other European woman), is a term for exalted status very well comparable to that of *Lihano* (54: 5), and also such names as *Miloli*, *Muruti* and *Tokotela*, for early European colonialists in the area, somehow assume the connotations of Nkoya dynastic titles. In the same vein, missionary interrelations are depicted in the idiom of strife within royal families (54: 7). Yet when these missionaries visit the Lozi *Litunga* Yeta III, the latter is emphatically (and correctly, besides the spelling mistake of *Paramaunt*) called *Paramount Chief* — as if, when the Lozi are concerned, the colonial order and the English nomenclature it has created is incapable of being restructured in terms of the logic of Nkoya culture — so that one could not use a phrase such as 'Mwene Yeta'.¹⁴⁰

For Shimunika, the universe of colonial power relations and of the attending conceptualizations was taken for granted, and even when he was himself engaged in an attempt to describe and glorify the nineteenth-century political structures that preceded it, he cannot resist the temptation of the colonial administrative terminology — as if the book was written by a mentally lazy British district officer who had managed to pick up Nkoya:

'Bankoya Shibanda bakutelela ku Mumbwa, Bankoya Wushanga bakutelela ku Kasempa, nibo:

(1) Nkoya Shibanda **Chief** Kabulwebulwe wa ku Mumbwa **Boma**.

139 This word literally means 'ruler', from the radical *-lela*, 'to reign', which is also used for incumbents of the Nkoya kingship.

140 However, when in Shimunika's final chapter he refers to four *Litungas* from both the precolonial and the colonial period (56: 3) he does call them *Bamyene*.

- (2) Nkoya Wushanga **Sub Chief** Loto na Shihoka, baku Kasempa **Boma**, ku litunga Iya Kaonde **Land**.' (22: 4)¹⁴¹

In other passages the colonial administrative term 'District' enters Shimunika's discourse, even when he is referring to events occurring long before 1900. A colonial place name like Mongu is used with reference to very early Nkoya history:

'Likambi lived at Mongu with her mother Mulawa.' (10: 3)

And a typically colonial ethnonymic construct like 'the Kaonde-Luba' appears with reference to events from the mid-nineteenth century:

'...the Lalafuta. Here Mwene Mushima Mubambe, the Mwene of the Kaonde-Luba, was living with his people at that time.' (27: 3)

The universe of colonialism is so inescapable that even in a historical account it assumes the quality of an a-historic, perennial fact of life...

It is important to pinpoint this orientation in Shimunika's style, and to reflect on its implications. Yet it is entirely understandable that contemporary Nkoya readers resent both the anachronisms involved and the way these English insertions pollute what they consider a major monument of the Nkoya language. I have therefore tended to delete such colonial idiosyncrasies of Shimunika's style, particularly with regard to toponyms and ethnonyms, from the main body of the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya* — but of course carefully acknowledging every such deletion in a footnote, so that it remains available for further interpretation.

While thus *Likota Iya Bankoya* and its author make ample allowance for the colonial framework within which the Nkoya came to be incorporated and their identity problems came to be generated, the author's ethnic and apologetic concerns could only be served to the extent he managed to identify with the collectivity of the people he seeks to evoke. Hence the merging between himself and the Nkoya,

¹⁴¹ **Bold** words as in original manuscript before editing. In its unedited form, the passage means literally:

'The Nkoya Shibanda fall under Mumbwa, the Nkoya Wushanga [or: 'Shangaland Nkoya'; see note to Part III below, 22: 2] under Kasempa:

- (1) The Nkoya Shibanda of Sub-chief Kabulwebulwe who falls under the Mumbwa boma.
- (2) The Nkoya Wushanga [Shangaland Nkoya] of Sub-chief Loto and Sub-chief Shihoka who fall under the Kasempa boma, in the land of Kaondeland.'

Cf. below, Part II, 22: 4, for the edited Nkoya text of this passage, and Part III, 22: 4 for the English translation of the edited text.

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resolving his individuality in a collective plural 'we', such as in the title to chapter 21:

'WE RETURNED HERE, TO NAWIKO IN NKOYA'
(21: 1).

And in the final chapter, where the ethnic concerns of *Likota lya Bankoya* become most articulate, Rev. Shimunika significantly belittles his own working on the traditional data and invokes, no doubt for greater authority and appeal, a collective authorship:

'Those who have written this history *Likota lya Bankoya* and the earlier *Muhumpu* are asking all Nkoya to give their thoughts to the following problem' (56: 1).

As a writer, Shimunika is divided against himself, between the collectivity he wants to serve and the colonial frame of reference that both engendered that collectivity, and allowed it to be humiliated and threatened in its political and economic self-expressions.

narrative structure and style

In the narrative structure of *Likota lya Bankoya* we detect further peculiarities associated with the genre of literate ethno-history. Balancing between oral traditions and literate models, with a most serious ethnic message to convey, Shimunika as a narrator does not bind the heterogeneity of the many oral traditions at his disposal into one unified, captivating argument. It is not being over-critical to admit that *Likota lya Bankoya* is not a masterpiece of narration. The written form, with its standardized Nkoya vocabulary, deprived both the narrator and the audience from most of the usual rhetorical, dramaturgical and non-verbal instruments of orature. This made the text very dull at times — particularly when it degenerates into a mere summing up of names, residences, hydronyms and burial places, as it often does. On the other hand, many nineteenth-century events such as the capture of the Mutondo royal kin by the Kololo, the capture of Mwene Liyoka, the reign and downfall of Mwene Kashina, or the events relating to Shamamano and his brothers are described with convincing detail.

It is the fundamental disunity of the political organization of the Nkoya, and of their twentieth-century ethnic identity, which is reflected in the rambling narrative structure of the work. After a general introduction on clans and the origin of *Wene*, there are essentially four lines of argument which, although intertwined, hardly develop from a common source and are broken off at random: the stories of the four kingships of Mutondo, Kahare, Momba and Kabulwebulwe. The Shakalongo line (including Mwene Liyoka) and the way it is related to the other four remains very vague — in reflection of the peripheral

position to which the Shakalongo kingship, unrecognized by the colonial state, had been relegated in the twentieth century when Shimunika collected his data. But the treatment of Shakalongo is not the only allowance for political conditions wrought by the colonial state and the Barotse indigenous administration during the colonial period. Out of a great many Nkoya-related kingships which existed in precolonial western Zambia (see chapter 1 and *Appendix 7*), *Likota Iya Bankoya* has selected *only the four which made the grade of colonial and post-colonial recognition by the central state!* To those who did not survive into the twentieth century, Shimunika virtually denies any historical existence in the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries! The amount of detail on the Mutondo line is very considerable, whereas for the Kahare line resort had to be taken to a thinly disguised mythical story (that of *Kapeshi ka Munungampanda* — the Ladder Consisting of Joined Forked Poles) which (as I shall argue below) remains an alien element inserted in what is basically a narrative of nineteenth-century historical events from Mwene Shihoka Nalinanga to Mwene Shamanano. On the Momba and Kabulwebulwe title details are lacking to such an extent that not even a tentative genealogy can be drawn on the basis of the information in *Likota Iya Bankoya*. This is the reason why some members of the Nkoya editorial committees of the book have pronounced their fears that, after *Muhumpu*, also *Likota Iya Bankoya* is going to stir up internal conflict among the Nkoya, this time because of dissatisfaction from the side of Mwene Kabulwebulwe's and Mwene Momba's subjects. As one informant said:

'As it is, *Likota Iya Bankoya* is full of problems and bones of contention. Momba and Kabulwebulwe are not going to accept it. A history which writes against each group within the tribe is not a good history.'¹⁴²

Even within each of the four separate narrative lines it is clear that the compiler has not thoroughly reconciled the sources with one another: the book is full of false starts, abortive, repetitive and fragmentary lines of narration, and contradictory accounts involving the same sets of personal names. While this does not facilitate the analysis, it at least shows that the literate compiler has not tampered overmuch with his data in an attempt to seamlessly collate and streamline them — as happens so often in other specimens of this genre. In a way, he kept rather close to the nature of the local traditions — whose fragmentation and disconnection reflect the absence of enduring political integration and comprehensive political hierarchy in the Land of Nkoya, both in the nineteenth century and in its neo-traditional, colonial and post-colonial aftermath. The picture is however far from uniform. For on the other hand, the considerable consistence which the genealogical data in *Likota Iya Bankoya* display,

¹⁴² Oral source [7] 21.10.1977.

will lead us to conclude, in chapter 3, that there Shimunika effected more deliberate restructuring than the nature of his raw data warranted.

Shimunika's limited stylistic means include *repetition*, and of this he makes a use that again shows the proximity of the oral models. Just one example out of several:

'This kingship began when the Nkoya were living in the Lukolwe area on the Maniinga, a tributary of the Kabompo, of whom people say:

“The Kabompo has many canoes
Just like the Mwene has many slaves,”

because the Mwene does have many slaves. The explanation of this expression is that here in the land of Nkoya there are two things truly plentiful: the Kabompo with its canoes, and the Mwene with his subjects.’ (10: 1)

the uses of a religious education

Such authors as Janzen and MacGaffey (cf. Janzen 1985 and references cited there), who have drawn their inspiration from the Lower Zaïre, have enlightened us as to the cultural mutation precipitated by the introduction of literacy: the emergence of models or genres (including biblical, ethnographic and historiographic ones) emulated by first-generation literate Africans; and the interaction between these more or less external genres on the one hand, and the modes of perceiving and conceptualizing the past as present in African cultures, on the other.

In this respect it is significant that Rev. Shimunika has conceived *Likota Iya Bankoya* primarily as a Bible, with all the outside signs of enlarged chapter numbers, verse numbers, and running heads. These typographical elements have been painstakingly added in his own manuscript and therefore faithfully rendered in the present edition as well (with the exception of the page-specific running heads which were technically too costly to reproduce).

More is involved here than Christian piety. For many years *Testamenta ya Yipya/Nyimbo* has constituted the only major text available in Nkoya; and Rev. Shimunika was its principal translator. If a book had to be produced on Nkoya history, obviously that book, in order to be a real book, had to look like a Bible. The typography here spills over into contents: the ethnic and political concerns, of identity formation and assertion in the face of Lozi arrogance, which was the main motive to write the book. Cast in the form of a Bible, *Likota Iya Bankoya* was conceived as a sacred text, eminently earnest and truthful; the biblical typography was one of the most powerful means within Rev. Shimunika's grasp to add meaning and authority, revelation and redemption, to the history of the Nkoya.

I have not been able to penetrate the logic governing the distribution of verse numbers over and across the Nkoya sentences of the *Likota Iya Bankoya* text. Often the insertion of a new verse number right in the middle of a current sentence or halfway through a list of numbered items is puzzling; I take it that its principal aim — in a clever emulation of Bible verse numbers — is to suggest some ulterior systematics imposed by an authority beyond ordinary human control; just like fundamentalist Christians might believe that the distribution of verse numbers in the Bible springs from divine inspiration. Of course, in the translation it was not always possible to retain the sentence structure of the original Nkoya, and then the verse numbers had to be moved slightly.

The influence of the Bible as a model does not stop at such relatively superficial typographical means. The handling of repetitive genealogical material virtually devoid of narrative interest does have biblical parallels, and so does the neat chapter structure with each new, emphatically numbered chapter devoted to a new episode or protagonist. As Shimunika himself said:

{[The writing of] history is something that needs to go into detail. It is like in the Bible: where people go there should be a title. [In other words, every new event or movement of the protagonists should be highlighted by a separate heading.] So also with history.¹⁴³}

The major biblical influence meanwhile lies in the use of slightly stilted, formalized language. Language use in *Likota Iya Bankoya* is reminiscent of the *lukena* rhetorics yet deviates substantially from it. The book is written in the partially artificial language which Shimunika and his associates devised for the Nkoya rendering of the Bible itself, and (in addition to such recurrent phrases like ‘in the time of...’) it occasionally shows the same Lozi-isms — to the horror of contemporary Nkoya readers.

A more careful study of language use in the Nkoya Bible might have enabled the translators to convey these biblical stylistic elements more systematically in the English translation of *Likota Iya Bankoya*. However, in order to do so one would have needed a deeper personal acquaintance with archaic biblical English than either of us could boast; which is one reason why we shrank from this further complication of our translation task. Another reason is that the artificial language Shimunika concocted in order to convey the exotic contents of the Bible into a language understandable to presentday Nkoya, was lexically and conceptually much further removed from the current Nkoya language, culture and experience, than the text in which he describes the Nkoya past. In other words, using an archaic English biblical language in the English translation would have been

¹⁴³ Oral source [22].

unnecessarily estranging — a play at mirror images of mirror images, with very limited validity.

We have now gathered some initial appreciation of the *Likota Iya Bankoya* manuscript and the political and intellectual milieu within which it must be situated. Let us proceed to examine the various editorial and translatory problems which had to be overcome in its edition, as a necessary step toward historical criticism and analysis.

2.3. Reconstructing the original manuscript

The *Likota Iya Bankoya* manuscript as submitted to me by Mr H.H. Mwene in 1975 consisted of thirteen different parts — where each part is defined as a section characterized by unity of both typography and typing equipment used. A full description is given in *Appendix 1*.

On the basis of a repeated, most painstaking, examination of all these various components of the manuscript text of *Likota Iya Bankoya*, it was established, beyond reasonable doubt, that the manuscript sections 5 through 8 (as numbered in *Appendix 1*) constitute the original manuscript as written by Shimunika, while sections 1 through 4 and 9 through 13 constitute later additions by Mr H.H. Mwene, which for that reason are here either omitted (sections 1, 2, 3, 13) or are only presented as italicized appendices to the present text edition (sections 4, 9, 10, 11, 12). Use of different typewriters, different handwriting, different pens and pencils,¹⁴⁴ and a different pattern of word division, make it possible to identify any part of the manuscript, and virtually all manuscript corrections in every part, as either Rev. Shimunika's or Mr H.H. Mwene's.

It is clear that the biblical typography was original, i.e. imposed by Shimunika and not by Mr H.H. Mwene.

The crucial story of the Cooking-Pot of Kingship, which Mr H.H. Mwene had tried to rewrite in minor details (now largely restored back to original in the present Nkoya edition) also turns out to be an authentic part of Shimunika's manuscript; the false start occurring in the manuscript at the beginning of this passage,¹⁴⁵ is therefore not due to any editing on Mr H.H. Mwene's part. Besides, the story is referred to by Rev. Shimunika in another part of his manuscript (35: 1).

The reconstruction of the original manuscript was further facilitated by the existence of the *manuscript variants* which Rev. Shimunika allowed me to consult in Luampa in 1977. These variants were on stray and duplicate pages included in the same folder as the author's master copy. They have been included in the present edition as *Appendix 2*.

¹⁴⁴ Mostly Mr H.H. Mwene's: Rev. Shimunika's complete master copy as shown to me at Luampa in 1977 was almost entirely free of corrections in handwriting.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Part II below, the note preceding chapter 4.

Comparison with the main body of the reconstructed text offers a number of interesting observations concerning Shimunika's method of handling his materials. They make clear that the author continued to work hard on the presentation and style of his text, but that the contents themselves are rather fixed. When discussing the historical criticism of *Likota Iya Bankoya* (chapter 3), we shall have occasion to comment on the remarkable historiographic rigour and integrity of its author, which he managed to preserve even when this led to conclusions running against the grain of current Nkoya ethnic aspirations including his own. A similar rigour is detected here: the presentation, not the contents of the sources is at stake in these variants.

In some cases such difficulties of interpretation and translation as the main text posed could be resolved in the light of the variants. The variants have the biblical typography just as the main text, and form an extra argument for it being originally Shimunika's. What remains puzzling in these variants is their page numbering, which must relate to the practical routine under which the parts of the *Likota Iya Bankoya* manuscript were typed at the Luampa Bible translation office.

What the variants, and the inspection of the various constituent parts of the manuscript as submitted by Mr H.H. Mwene, particularly settle is the question of the final chapters of *Likota Iya Bankoya's* line of argument. The main manuscript as reconstructed proceeded to the death of Mwene Kanyinca shortly before World War II; then discussed the message of the book, the allegedly arrogant contemporary attitude of the Lozi, and the Lozi ruler Mulambwa's begging for Nkoya royal medicine in the early nineteenth century; and then (apparently with the sort of false start or abrupt transition the reader had by then learned to expect in this rambling narrative structure) the argument seemed to continue with a discussion of Mwene Manenga's exploits at Mushwalumuko and an account of the children of Mwene Manenga — after which would then follow Mr H.H. Mwene's additions on the burial sites of the Nkoya *Myene*, additions which we have already identified as non-original. The passage on Mwene Manenga does not have a proper ending, and moreover repeats, literally, an earlier passage in the book. The manuscript variants, particularly when confronted with Rev. Shimunika's reconstructed original table of contents, now make clear that this passage was never intended to appear as a separate chapter at that point in the book, where it destroys the envoy the author has been building up towards. The passage has simply got mislaid.

Once the original Shimunika manuscript had been restored, Mr H.H. Mwene's editorial and textual additions resumed a similar status to the comments and corrections that were proposed by other Nkoya readers. Thus some of Mr H.H. Mwene's editing has finally been incorporated in the present text edition, e.g. when Shimunika's inconsistent use of capital letters was standardized — even though it must be admitted that Shimunika himself, in his own handwriting, made a beginning with the editing of the original manuscript towards greater consistency in this respect.

A uniform procedure was followed with regard to Mr H.H. Mwene's and the other readers' commentaries and queries: a proposed change in the restored Shimunika manuscript text was only implemented if it represented a majority opinion among the four clusters of commentaries (Mr Mwene, Mr Malapa, the Kaoma editorial committee presided by Mr Kawanga, and the Luampa editorial committee presided by Mr Jackson Shimunika), with this proviso that I often invoked my own knowledge of Nkoya history and culture, and well as my concern for editorial consistency, as a fifth independent source of commentary. In many cases these consensual editorial alterations were none other than the editorial conventions that will be outlined in full below. Only such alterations as do not systematically spring from these editorial conventions will be specifically pointed out in footnotes to the Nkoya text.

Here we are only speaking of editorial, typographical alterations. In some cases the editorial commentaries, just like Mr H.H. Mwene's editing, would affect the contents of Rev. Shimunika's text. With the exception of a few isolated cases duly acknowledged and argued in the footnotes to the Nkoya text, such alterations of contents have not been entertained in the present critical edition, although the most significant proposals have been pointed out as such in footnotes.

This is all the more important since at crucial points Mr H.H. Mwene turned out to have essential differences of opinion with Rev. Shimunika, e.g. with regard to the gender of Mwene Manenga, which is almost unanimously considered to be female. Mr H.H. Mwene included Mwene Manenga in his discursive list¹⁴⁶ of the graves of the male Nkoya *Myene* and thus, despite the addition of the epithet *Manda Bankoya*, 'Mother of the Nkoya', implies her to be male:

'The following are the burial sites of the **male** Myene of the Nkoya:

- (1) Mwene Luhamba died at the Nkulo, a tributary of the Luena.
- (2) Mwene Kashina died at the Katetekanyemba, a tributary of the Nabowa. (...)
- (9) Mwene Kabazi died in the Mbuma valley near Shilumbilo.

¹⁴⁶ Contrary to the tabulated lists, which have been reproduced in the present book, Mr Mwene withdrew the discursive lists in the course of the editorial process of *Likota lya Bankoya*. See the end of Part II below, and my extensive notes there.

- (10) Mwene Manenga Manda Bankoya died on the Kamano, a tributary of the Lwashanza.’ (my emphasis)¹⁴⁷

2.4. Editing the reconstructed manuscript

A decision of principle had to be taken once I had managed to reconstruct, to my personal satisfaction, the original manuscript as written by Rev. Shimunika. Should I publish it exactly as it was, i.e. with its full range of anachronistically used colonial toponyms and ethnonyms, with English and Lozi words scattered through the Nkoya text, and with a number of other imperfections which to the Nkoya readers were sources of irritation? Or should I seek to produce a final text in which all these imperfections would have been corrected (but duly recorded in footnotes), taking into account the preferences and sensitivities of Nkoya readers, and therefore produce a text with which a modern Nkoya readership could truly identify and which they would accept as a major inspiration in their quest for ethnic identity and historical awareness?

The self-evident need to bring Shimunika’s text at least to the level of sheer copy-editorial consistency already tilted the scales in favour of the latter alternative. I felt it was imperative to apply rules of editorial consistency in such matters as: Nkoya orthography, the rendering of proper names (where a Nkoya spelling has been applied throughout), the exclusion of such English and Lozi words as Shimunika’s original manuscript contained, the identification (through quotation marks) of passages of direct speech, punctuation in general, word separation (which given the concatenative structure of this Bantu language is a subject of confusion even to ‘native speakers’), word division at the end of lines, etc.

The principal consideration for producing an aggregate ‘ideal’ Nkoya text however derived from the perception of the *Likota Iya*

¹⁴⁷ Mr Mwene’s Nkoya text runs:

‘Bizino bya bamyene ba balume ba Bankoya aba: —

- (1) Mwene Luhamba wafwila ku Nkulo mwana Lwena.
- (2) Mwene Kashina wafwila mu Katetekanyemba mwana Nabowa. (...)
- (9) Mwene Kabazi wafwila ku litoya Iya Mbuma ku ncango ya Shilumbilo.
- (10) Mwene Manenga Manda Bankoya wafwila ku Kamano mwana Lwashanza.’

Perhaps, Mr Mwene’s inclusion of Manenga in this list was a mere oversight and was not meant to declare her male: how else can we explain his own use of the epithet *Manda Bankoya*, ‘Mother of the Nkoya’? The slight theoretical possibility of ‘Mother’s Brother of the Nkoya’ would not do here.

Bankoya manuscript by presentday Nkoya readers: not as the idiosyncratic text written by one individual, Rev. Shimunika, and edited by another, myself (and a non-native speaker to boot), but as a collectively owned and produced work that, in the process of those readers' production of an ethnic and historical identity, has assumed downright sacred qualities — its mystical aspects further enhanced by its biblical typography, its unavailability and (as I should add to my personal embarrassment) the delays attending its publication (however, cf. van Binsbergen 1988a). When the idiosyncrasies of the original manuscript, historically and ideologically so extremely interesting, could be accommodated in footnotes to a scholarly edition, while at the same time a text would be produced that could be recognized as adequate, pure and non-anachronistic by Nkoya readers, such a solution appeared to be preferable.

Of course I realize that any systematic editing means the regrettable and dubious imposition of alien consistency and tedious 'improvements' upon Rev. Shimunika's highly personal and effective style, in which the author single-handedly pioneered between Nkoya oral conventions and stilted biblical models, within a colonial frame of reference. However, the full range of these idiosyncrasies has been preserved in footnotes for scholarly scrutiny. Meanwhile, the initial exploration, in the previous sections, of the inconsistencies and mannerisms of Shimunika's style (before it was affected by such editing) has already told us a great deal about the logic of the historical and ethnic argument he is developing. That line of analysis will be continued throughout my argument.

Nkoya as a written language

The real underlying problem at the editorial level is that Nkoya, as a written language, is still far too young to be in a position where consensual and practicable solutions have been found for the various orthographical, lexical and syntactic puzzles which arise whenever a spoken language is committed to writing. One cannot expect a language's orthographical and editorial conventions to have already fully crystallized by this time when the texts published in that language only comprise a few hundred pages in all.¹⁴⁸

More definite standards of vocabulary and consistency have begun to develop in the Nkoya-speaking community in recent decades — an aspect of a growth of self-confidence and literary competence which has been partly a result of Rev. Shimunika's own impact. Some of the standards which he was so obviously still struggling to invent, are now expected to be applied, as a matter of course, by the Zambian readers who advised and shared in the editorial process. Yet it must be realized that when *Likota lya Bankoya* was copy-edited according to these new

¹⁴⁸ Appendix 4 gives an overview of all printed Nkoya texts known to me.

standards, the price we pay for greater formal consistency is: a distortion of the very pattern of thought and discourse of Rev. Shimunika's text, and concealment of much of its symbolic richness and multi-interpretability. The discussion of Shimunika's style, method and logic in the present study is hoped to compensate such artificial smoothness and consistency as the reader would glean from reading the English translation alone.

Meanwhile the emerging consensus among Nkoya readers must not be exaggerated. Under the influence of the fact that the Nkoya language was committed to writing mainly in the context of the South Africa General Mission, which was more closely associated with the western part of Kaoma district and with the Mutondo kingship, an orthography evolved which reflected the Mutondo spoken usage. In *Likota Iya Bankoya* (41: 10) reference is made to dialectical differences between the western and eastern Nkoya speakers: where the former pronounce the equivalent of the English 'l', the latter pronounce 'r' or 'j': e.g. [*litala*], 'house', practically becoming [*jitarar*]. In their written documents (those listed in *Appendix 4*, and moreover unpublished manuscript histories and personal letters) present-day Nkoya tend to observe more or less the Mutondo usage, i.e. writing *l* instead of *j* or *r*. However, on other points, such as word separation between radicals and pronominal prefixes, and lexical purism vis-à-vis English and Lozi lexical material, there is much less consensus.

Considerable consistency exists with regard to word division, words being divided at the syllable ends, immediately after a (character representing a) vocal and regardless of whether that vocal is followed by just one or by a number of (characters representing) consonants. This usage has been adopted in the present volume, in Part II (the Nkoya text of *Likota Iya Bankoya*), and wherever Nkoya (or other Zambian) names appear in the English text.

Editorial conventions

The following editorial conventions have been systematically implemented in my edition of the Nkoya text (and will therefore not be pointed out specifically in each individual case):

- Shimunika tended to capitalize all persons, offices and material objects (instruments, paraphernalia, fence, land etc.) relating to the kingship. In my edition of the Nkoya text, capitalization has been dropped for material objects. It has however been added for honorific titles such as *Manda Bankoya* ('Mother of the Nkoya', an epithet of several Nkoya *Myene*), operative words in praise-names, and all toponyms, ethnonyms and other proper names or nominal parts thereof.

- Shimunika's pattern of word separation is rather inconsistent, but in general tends towards the longest possible concatenations of prefixes and suffixes, such as *hibakwambishanga* etc. Other Nkoya-speakers (e.g. H.H. Mwene in his own additions to the *Likota lya Bankoya* manuscript as well as in his frequent correspondence during the editorial process) tend to dissolve most prefixes and suffixes into separate words. In the present edition an intuitive middle course is steered. Only those few cases have been specifically discussed in footnotes where a different word separation would affect the meaning of the original.
- Shimunika's pattern of word separation following the personal plural article *ba-* is very inconsistent: now it is connected to the next word, now it is not. Instead, the following rules of thumb have been applied here:
 - (a) word separation is dropped and an initial capital added in the case of ethnonyms (*Bankoya*, *Bakawonde*), clan names (*Bakankomba*), and of names of offices (*Bamyene*, *Babilolo*);
 - (b) word separation is dropped before a verb;
 - (c) word separation is dropped when *ba-* primarily serves to produce a plural form;
 - (d) in most other cases, word separation is applied.
- In general, word separation is implemented after the prefix *baka-* ('those of', 'those from'), except in ethnonyms and clan names; thus: *baka livumo Katete*, 'the members of the matrilineage of Katete', but *Bakasheta*, 'the members of the Sheta clan'.
- Shimunika's use of word separation when kinship terms are followed by a possessive pronoun is very inconsistent, in itself and also when compared with other possessive pronouns; e.g. he would write *kanyantu kendi*, but also *kanyantukendi* ('his mother's brother') and usually *lukena lwendi* ('his *lukena*'), rather than *lukenalwendi*. Here I adopted the rule that word separation is only to be effected — but then systematically — when the possessive pronoun contains a prefix that is governed by the preceding noun, and the latter is not morphologically affected by the following pronoun; therefore: *kanyantu kendi*, *tati yendi* (his father), but *mwanendi* (his mother).
- Word separation in personal names poses difficulties of its own. Shimunika tends to write compound names as one word: *Shikalamo Shamundemba*, *Lyovulyambuwa*, *Lipepomwendanankuli*. Even though to the modern Nkoya ear some of the underlying meanings will have worn out to virtually meaningless clichés (partly because the lexical material involved is archaic), the constituent elements in these names remain

sufficiently distinct to make their separation preferable; hence: *Lipepo Mwenda na Nkuli*, i.e. ‘Lipepo Who goes Around with a Tribute Gourd’ (or, puzzling, ‘with a Heart’, or, even more puzzling, ‘with a Strong Wind’). In the case of such epithets the disconnected orthography helps to bring out the underlying meaning.

The structure of a name like, in Shimunika’s rendering, *Shamundemba* or *Lyovulyambuwa* is rather different: in most cases these would appear to be patronyms or matronyms, and to bring this out the relative prefixes *sha*, *lya* etc. are separated from the capitalized noun that follows: *sha Mundemba*, *Lyovu Iya Mbuwa*. As we shall discuss below, this editorial convention has considerable implications for the historical analysis of the text, since the parent’s names thus identified are then incorporated in the genealogies as reconstructed on the basis of *Likota Iya Bankoya*.

However, the genealogical information in the text could only be processed if the patronym-like phrases have been properly deciphered; when we failed to do so (e.g. in the case of Mashiku, with her epithet *a Mangowa Shimenemene sha Ndumba*) the genealogical implication, if any, remains undetected (2: 2).

- In many passages it was necessary to add one or a few words to the Nkoya text, for greater clarity, consistency and syntactic purity. Throughout the edited Nkoya text, such editorial additions will be indicated by *contrasting* italicization or non-italicization as the case may be. A specific footnote will only be added if the addition has a significance beyond stylistic or syntactic concern.

With these italicized additions and alterations we arrive at an aggregate ‘ideal’ Nkoya text. The English translation that is included in the present volume as Part III is simply a rendering of the edited Nkoya text considered as final. Therefore the process of reconstruction and editing of the Nkoya text does not show any more in the English translation, and contrasting italicization is suppressed there.

In compliance with official Zambian usage today, most Nkoya readers favoured the addition, in the Nkoya text, of present-day toponyms (e.g. *Kaoma*), after the original, obsolete ones (e.g. *Mankoya*). Of course, these additions remain identifiable by contrasting italicization in the Nkoya text. However artificial, these additions, while perhaps justifiably reducing the ethnic particularism of the text in the context of international publication, do not really do violence to the spirit of Rev. Shimunika’s original; he tended himself to explain Nkoya ethnic names (e.g. *Bakubu*) by a more generally known term (e.g. *Makololo*), and used toponyms anachronistically throughout.

- The editorial addition of quotation marks will be indicated, in the Nkoya text, by one asterisk * if unpaired original ones have merely been completed, and by two asterisks ** if there were none in the original. Shimunika's double quotation marks have been replaced by single ones except of course for quotations within quotations.
- Passages placed between quotation marks (original or added) and rendered in indented typography will always begin with a capital, irrespective of the original.
- Shimunika's spelling of proper names (names of persons, ethnonyms, hydronyms and other toponyms) is very inconsistent. With regard to proper names, the official colonial/English and/or Lozi spelling tends to prevail: *Sibitwane*, *Sipopa*, *Lealui*, *Kasempa*; although the Nkoya forms *Shibitwane*, *Shipopa*, *Lyalui* and *Kashempa* also occur in the original manuscript. However, Shimunika tends to write the Lozi name *Lewanika* as *Liwanika*.¹⁴⁹ In the edited Nkoya text, the Nkoya spelling has been used consistently, with footnotes giving Shimunika's alternative spelling, if any, the first time a proper name occurs.

In the English translation, the common Zambian English usage is adopted for names which have a wider circulation than just the narrowest Nkoya circles. Thus the Nkoya hydronyms *Lyambayi*, *Lwenge* and *Kabombo* are rendered as 'Zambezi', 'Kafue' and 'Kabompo'. Also in other names the Nkoya *-sh-* is commonly replaced by *-s-* in the English rendering. In accordance with time-honoured Rhodes-Livingstone Institute usage, plural personal prefixes (e.g. *Ba-*, *Ma-*) have been omitted in the case of English renderings of the names of ethnic groups, clans etc. Moreover, in the translation of clan names, the personal infix *-ka-* has been deleted, by analogy with such collective names as *baka livumo Shapita* ('those of the matrilineage of Shapita'), *baku Njonjolo* ('those of the Njonjolo area'), etc. Admittedly, in the case of clan names the deletion is not so obvious: most Nkoya readers would prefer to maintain *-ka-* and *Ba-* in the English translation, and even in Nkoya one may encounter a usage like *Kakalawve*: 'a member of the Lawve (or Kalawve) clan' (41: 4). In the same Rhodes-Livingstone Institute tradition, in adjectives denoting

¹⁴⁹ Incidentally, the Nkoya form *Liwanika* (or *Jiwanika* in the eastern Nkoya pronunciation) may be more than just an adaptation to Nkoya phonology: it is reminiscent of Nkoya, from a root *ku wana*, 'to find'. Lubosi's adopted name *Lewanika* might therefore be taken to mean 'founding' or possibly 'finder'. Mutumba Mainga (1973:127) is uncertain of the literal meaning but says that

'in all accounts it was clear that the name could be loosely translated to mean "conqueror".'

ethnic groups or languages the prefix *Shi-* or *Si-* is omitted in the English translation.

- Shimunika has a predilection for numbered series in the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya*. His typographical treatment of the device is inconsistent. The first and last items of a numbered series are not always specifically numbered, especially if the last item refers to a woman. In other cases no numbers appear at all although the list in form and function is similar to other, numbered lists in the book. In these cases the numbering has been completed or altered as necessary — italicizing the added editorial material and if necessary adding a footnote to this effect. Throughout, numerals which are clearly not meant to be verse numbers but instead mark the items in a numbered list, have been rendered between parentheses; a specific footnote to this effect will only appear when alternative interpretations might be possible. Sometimes numbers in a list eclipse verse numbers that should have been there; the latter will then be added in italics. Numbered items will be made to begin on a new line, even though the typographical conventions of the original are inconsistent in this respect. Likewise, lists will be followed by an indented new paragraph, whatever the usage in the original. Original lists tend to be preceded by the word *awa*, *aba* ('those') or *ebye* ('as follows'), followed by a dash; this dash has been deleted and in its place a colon has been inserted if not originally there. Figures between parentheses which do not mark the items in a list but merely explain, in Arabic figures, discursive Nkoya numerals as used in the text, have been distinguished by adding a '=' sign before the Arabic figure.
- In order to avoid confusion as to the original punctuation, no full stop will be added to notes ending on an original quotation.

2.5. Problems of translation

Having discussed the specific edited form in which the Nkoya text of *Likota Iya Bankoya* is presented in Part II of this volume, we can now turn to some major problems which cropped up when preparing the English translation of Part III. These problems particularly concern the identification of gender of specific characters in the book; the translation of kinship terms and terms for social groups; the genealogies that can be constructed on the basis of the information on kin relationships; terms for court offices; toponyms; and the hermetic language of the praise-names and clan names.

Reading, translating and editing the *Likota Iya Bankoya* text against the background of my historical and anthropological research among the Nkoya people since 1972, I was for a long time unaware of the fact that the book had a wealth of information to offer on inter-gender dynamics in the process of state formation. Admittedly, it depicted some early rulers as female; but since colonial and post-colonial Nkoya *Myene* have been invariably male, I read the historical accounts on precolonial rulers in the way any presentday Nkoya reader would: assuming that also those rulers whose gender was not emphatically stated, would of course be male, just like their modern heirs, who still carry their dynastic titles and are still called by the same generic term of *Mwene*. It was only when I prepared for a conference on 'The Position of Women in the Early State' (van Binsbergen 1986b), rereading the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya* in order merely to glean a few apt illustrations from it, that this tissue of contemporary male bias was suddenly rent, and I became aware of the full extent of female preponderance in early Nkoya history.

When introducing the term *Mwene* in chapter 1, I have already indicated its vagueness: it refers to political statuses in a number of different contexts. Neither is it gender-specific. In the light of male dominance in traditional politics today, Nkoya traditions may appear to discuss male *Myene* in the past, but in fact *Myene's* gender remains implicit and often may well have been female. Of course we suspect systematic historical reasons to lie behind this ambiguity (in terms of men ignoring or covering up their usurping of female royal power — a leading theme in the later chapters of my argument), but much of the effect simply derives from the Nkoya language itself.

Just as spoken Nkoya, the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya* is usually ambiguous as to gender. Many (but by no means all) personal names may be borne by men and women alike. This is a useful device in a society practising inter-gender name-inheritance: it widens the choice of potential heirs, in a fashion very typical of Nkoya social organization. Personal pronouns are rarely used in the Nkoya language; instead, person and number are indicated by verbal pre- and suffixes. Verbal forms are indifferent to gender.

So is kinship terminology (see diagram 4), with only a limited number of exceptions: fairly gender-specific are the words for father (*tati*), mother (*manda/mawa*) and mother's brother (*kanyantu*) when used for very close kin. Also, the term *mpanda* is almost exclusively used for — particularly elder — sister (and hardly ever for brother), but in general the gender-indifferent terms *mukondo/yaya* (younger sibling/elder sibling) are preferred for both brother and sister. Even such terms as *manda* and *tati* may lose their gender specificity: a father's sister is simply a *tati*, and only for emphasis one would say *tati wa mukazi*: 'female father'; likewise, a mother's brother is sometimes called *manda*. Incidentally, the highly classificatory nature of the Nkoya

kinship system means that genealogical information retains a large degree of multi-interpretability while yet rendering (or rather: encoding) actual biological relationships correctly when assessed in terms of the system's specific logic; that logic however differs dramatically from the genealogical distinctions of North Atlantic society and Indo-European languages, or from the technical language of anthropological kinship analysis. This state of affairs does pose a major problem of translation and interpretation.

With these peculiarities of the Nkoya language and social organization, specification of gender for the purpose of translation tends to be a matter of interpretation. Yet the English language often compels us to specify gender: a *Mwene*'s son (*Mwana Mwene*) has to be either prince or princess; someone's child is usually specified in English as either a son or a daughter; the human subject, third person singular, of a sentence has to be either 'he' or 'she', etc. One can only sparingly circumvent the issue by using 'the former', 'this person', 'child of', etc.

It was through close reading for the purpose of translation that the female preponderance among early *Myene* in *Likota Iya Bankoya* became fully manifest. The word *Mwene* does not have a female form, but when emphatically a woman is meant the phrase may be used *Mwene wa mukazi*: 'ruler-woman' — which I have decided to translate systematically as 'Lady *Mwene*'. Similarly, gender-indifferent statuses can be specified to be filled by a man by the addition of *wa mulume*, 'male'. In addition to certain kinship terms when applied to closest kin, certain roles and statuses are gender-specific: *Lihano* (*Mwene*'s wife); *Mukwetunga* (*Mwene*'s husband). Thus, a person who has a *Mukwetunga* or is a *Lihano* must be a woman; a person who has a *Lihano* or is a *Mukwetunga* must be a man. Such rules would appear to be too simple to require spelling out. The point is however that the assessment of a person's gender in *Likota Iya Bankoya* is often a question of comparing various, mostly non-gender-specific, and occasionally contradictory, passages from different chapters.

These formal criteria shade over into more semantic and symbolic ones. Certain verbs tend to have female rather than male connotations, although this is a statistical rather than an absolute distinction. For instance, a person said to *ku hema*, 'give birth to' children, is likely to be a woman, whereas *ku beleka*, 'to have children', seems to be a capacity open to both women and men.¹⁵⁰

A more profound semantic and symbolic analysis would look for clusters of gender-specific associations that constitute semantic fields.

¹⁵⁰ At least one contemporary Nkoya reader, Mr M. Malapa, however claims that *ku hema* is not applicable to humans at all and only refers to animals; this is not supported by my observations, nor by the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya*; e.g. the title of ch. 3:

KUHEMUWA KWABO — 'ABOUT THEIR [the Nkoya's] ORIGIN'.

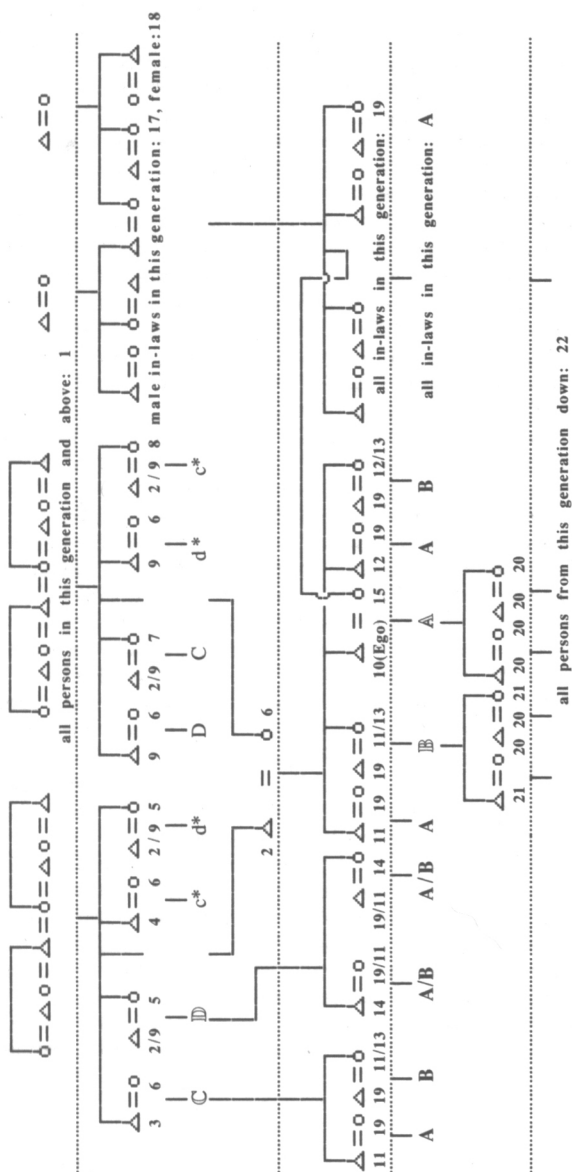


Diagram 4. Nkoya kinship terminology

legend diagram 4

- the eldest member of a sibling group appears to the left, the youngest to the right.
- a slash '/' indicates alternative terms.
- dotted lines separate generations
- terms for descendants have only been spelled out in full for the descent lines marked by outlined capitals **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**; for the other cases non-outlined capitals indicate what terms are used for descendants: A as **A**; **B** as **B**; C as **C**; D as **D**.
- descent lines marked with '*' use terms for descendants as according to the corresponding outlined capital (e.g. c* as **C**), with this proviso that 'yaya' becomes 'mukonzo' because parent of descendant is junior to Ego's parent.
- compound terms are often shortened to the main word, e.g. 'tati wa linene' becomes simply 'tati'.
- Here and below the following symbols are employed for genealogical diagrams:
 - triangle = a man;
 - circle = a woman;
 - symbol filled out in black = deceased;
 - symbol outlined only = alive;
 - horizontal line = sibling relation;
 - vertical line = filiation;
 - dotted line = putative link.

codes for kinship terms:

1. *nkaka* ('grandparent')
 2. *tati* ('father')
 3. *tati wa linene* ('senior father')
 4. *tati wa kanuke* ('junior father')
 5. *tati wa mbeleki* ('female father')
 6. *mawa* ('mother'; also used for mother's brother)
 7. *mawa wa linene* ('senior mother')
 8. *mawa wa kanuke* ('junior mother')
 9. *kanyantu* ('mother's brother')
 10. *ami* ('Ego')
 11. *yaya* ('senior brother/sister')
 12. *mukonzo* ('junior brother/sister')
 13. *mpanza* ('sister')
 14. *mufwala* ('cross cousin')
 15. *mukazi* ('wife')
 16. *mulume* ('husband')
 17. *mukowa* ('father-in-law')
 18. *mukokwa* ('mother-in-law')
 19. *mulamu* ('brother/sister-in-law')
 20. *mwana* ('child')
 21. *mwipa* ('sister's child')
 22. *muzukulu* ('grandchild')
-

E.g. in many African settings (including the Nkoya case) hunting/court/violence might be considered to have male connotations, collecting/dwelling house/pacifism might have female connotations, and the gender of any person featuring in a traditional text might be guessed at if these associations appear in the context. But unless used with much sophistication, the danger of circularity is considerable here. One could try to construct such semantic fields on the basis of information external to the text under analysis. It would be tempting, particularly, to rely on anthropological information on today's gender symbolism; but whereas such information is available in my field data, its use is subject to methodological limitations. For in a historical context, we are investigating not stable patterns of gender relations but their transformations; the present-day end products of these transformations may differ considerably from their equivalents several centuries ago. One of the conclusions of our argument in chapter 6 will precisely be that *Likota lya Bankoya* is *not* a faithful image of Nkoya culture today, and that this state of affairs is our best clue for sophisticated historical analysis.

A simple example might make this clear. Today receiving and wearing cloth has female connotations; the gift of a *chitenge* — a piece of material worn as a skirt —, or a European dress, is considered a man's surest way to a woman's heart and favours; and alternatively, a married woman possessing cloth whose provenance she cannot account for, risks an adultery case. Yet there was a time — as recent as the nineteenth century — when textiles were a luxury particularly associated with royals involved in long-distance trade, and so valuable as to be used for ancestral offering, while ordinary women wore a few beads or a narrow strap of bark cloth tied around the loins.¹⁵¹ In such a context, references to cloth in oral traditions may have connotations of entrepreneurship, maleness and ancestors, rather than of femaleness.

Similarly, if we believe, with contemporary Nkoya, that the status of *Mwene* is sufficient for any historical figure occupying that status to qualify as male, we would miss the many female *Myene* in earlier Nkoya history.

Clearly, an explicit method is needed here. The difficulty of anachronistic projection would be avoided if we consider the symbolic structure of the traditions themselves. They can be identified through a combination of a literary technique of close-reading and the anthro-

¹⁵¹ Relevant though rather more recent photographs from western Zambia, by Mr Brelsford, (1940s?) can be found in the photograph collection of the Zimbabwe National Archives, Harare: Barotse section, nos. 21212 and 21213. Their scanty attire is to be compared with, e.g. that of Lewanika I and his senior warriors, lavishly covered by cloth, as shown on photograph 2820 in the same series, depicting the *Litunga* during his Ila campaign in 1888. (The latter photograph is also included in Mutumba Mainga 1973: opposite p. 143.)

pological technique¹⁵² of the analysis of symbolic deep structures. Next we assess if these traditions display systematic and consistent patterns of gender symbolism, and on the basis of this overall pattern infer a male or female identity for those characters whose gender is not explicitly stated but who appear in association with symbolic attributes that we have identified as gender-specific.

gender and death from natural causes: an example

As an example of these possibilities of gender identification, let us look at the three *Myene* who, in *Likota Iya Bankoya*, are said to have died of *wulweli wa kalili*, 'the illness of the bed', in other words of natural causes; present-day Nkoya readers understand this to mean primarily gastro-enteritis, although in at least one case one source suggests that the cause of death was actually rabies.¹⁵³ The *Myene* thus claimed to have died from other causes than violence were: Mwene Libupe, Mwene Shikanda and Mwene Shinkisha Lushiku Mate, the first Mwene Mutondo.

The female gender of both Mwene Libupe and Mwene Shikanda is explicitly stated in the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya*.

Clay's claim that Shikanda was a man must be distrusted (Clay 1945: 5-6); not knowing the Nkoya language, he may have fallen victim to the syntactic peculiarities with regard to gender. However, also one of my own oral sources presents Shikanda, in passing, as male: as a son of Kahare and incumbent of the Kahare title.¹⁵⁴

I am satisfied that this claim is outweighed by the fact that the female gender of Shikanda is confirmed in one of our other oral sources,¹⁵⁵ which relates how she entered the contemporary Mashasha area (specifically the Kazo valley is mentioned) with her royal orchestra, and impressed and frightened the local headman Shiluwawa (alternatingly claimed to be Mashasha and Kaonde) with this royal music which was new to him, to the point that he consented to marry her. We shall come back to this story when discussing, in chapter 5, the male usurpation of female kingship, around which the story in this oral source revolves.

¹⁵² Cf. de Mahieu 1985; van Binsbergen & Schoffeleers 1985b; and references cited there.

¹⁵³ G.H. Nicholls [Collector, Baluba sub-district, March 1906], 'Notes on natives inhabiting the Baluba sub-district', 22 pp., enclosure in Zambia National Archives, KTJ 2/1 Mumbwa — some important papers; the reference is to Mwene Shikanda.

¹⁵⁴ Oral source [18] 14.10.1977.

¹⁵⁵ Oral source [3] 9.10.1973, 19.11.1973.

The story was absolutely rejected as apocryphal by a group of Nkoya elders in Lusaka;¹⁵⁶ significantly, however, in their rejection Shikanda's gender was not a point of discussion; it was again accepted to be female.¹⁵⁷

Shinkisha's gender is nowhere specified, and the fact that this *Mwene* immediately follows the great and violent Mwene Kayambila, and managed to select, in the accession praise-name, the *Mutondo* tree emblem which was to remain with the dynasty ever since, somehow suggests that Shinkisha fitted a standard pattern and — on the basis of a twentieth-century projection — might well have been male. So, dying from natural causes instead of violence is not, after all, a cosmological attribute of exclusively female *Myene*? On closer reading Shinkisha however turns out to be female. The first sentence of chapter 26 is puzzling as long as one assumes Shinkisha to be male, but translation becomes easy once the opposite is assumed:

'Mwene Kayambila died on the Mangongi. The Nkoya elected Mate Lushiku, the last-born child of that generation, as Mwene Manenga or Lady Mwene.' (26: 1)

Then also the statement in *Likota Iya Bankoya* (27: 4) becomes understandable: that Mwene Shinkisha was the sister (*mpanzabo*, with a possessive suffix for third person plural) of the Ladies Myene Kabandala and Shimpanya. *Mpanza* is one of the very few Nkoya kinship terms to be highly (although never entirely) gender-specific, and the translation 'their brother', while not totally impossible, would be very odd. All this seems very straightforward once the connexions fall into place, but I can assure the reader that the male bias in Nkoya royal affairs, and the multi-interpretability of the *Likota Iya Bankoya* text, are such that for more than ten years I yet retained the assumption of Shinkisha as male — thus following, moreover, my co-translator Mr M. Malapa who is a native speaker of Nkoya.

Shakalongo as female: another example

Also something of a puzzle is the gender identification of Mwene Shakalongo, one of the most powerful Nkoya rulers of the nineteenth century: the one who not only counted Mwene Kumika among the

¹⁵⁶ Oral source [20].

¹⁵⁷ An informant present at the Lusaka group interview later (oral source [7]) interpreted their refusal in terms of the all-pervading Kahare/Mutondo rivalry; the Lusaka elders had been predominantly from Mutondo, and they were supposed to have feared that the story, if accepted as historically valid, could be construed to make Mwene Kahare — Shikanda was an incumbent of that title — appear more splendid than Mutondo: introducing the central, awe-inspiring royal paraphernalia to Nkoyaland for the first time. We shall come back to this point.

retinue at the Kataba court, but who also extended sanctuary to Shambanjo and his brothers from the Ila blood feud, who became Shambanjo's principal parent-in-law, and who later saw to it that Shambanjo was installed as Mwene Kahare Shamamano under Lewanika's patronage. *Likota Iya Bankoya* suggests a female gender for the first Shakalongo as apical ancestress of a matrilineage of her own (35: 2). In another passage the link between the names Liwumbo and Shakalongo is stated:

'Mwene Liwumbo acceded to the kingship, adopting the following praise-name:

'I am Shakalongo
Who Goes Around with the Xylophone'' (37: 1).

Chapter 38, verse 6 sketches the ancestry of Mwene Liwumbo Shakalongo and her relationship with Mwene Liyoka to whose exploits *Likota Iya Bankoya* happens to pay far more attention than to Shakalongo herself. Yet despite this gender identification, a number of questions remain (also see *Appendix 3*, genealogy 3): did the *zinkena* of Liyoka and Liwumbo Shakalongo really exist side by side at the Kataba river in the same period? Why is it that we do not hear about Shakalongo during the Kololo war on Mwene Liyoka, which ended in his capture? In the tale of Mwene Liyoka's exploits, his classificatory mother Shapita appears as a silent, possibly reproachful witness when Mwene Liyoka made a human sacrifice to his drum (36: 2); there, Shapita looks like a dependent member of Liyoka's escort, rather than a major female *Mwene* in her own right — even though she may have been the mother of Lady Mwene Liwumbo Shakalongo. Considering that the Kololo episode in Barotseland ended in 1864, these events must be dated around 1860. Shamamano's refuge with Mwene Liwumbo Shakalongo was considerably later, and the Ila campaign that, after living at the Shakalongo *lukena*, gained him Lewanika's patronage was one of three Ila campaigns which took place in 1878, 1882 and 1888 — most likely the last one.¹⁵⁸ With the prevailing external violence and internal tendency to regicide, it is somewhat unlikely that Lady Mwene Liwumbo Shakalongo's reign spanned a quarter of a century or more.¹⁵⁹ Her classificatory son Liyoka's appearance as a major ruler might reflect the shift to male, violent rulers which is so clear throughout *Likota Iya Bankoya* (see chapters 4 and 5). Was the Mwene Shakalongo who was Shambanjo's patron another manifestation of the same pattern: a male *Mwene* succeeding to, and transforming, the rule of Lady Mwene Liwumbo Shakalongo? Or yet a female *Mwene*? And, if female, had she perhaps succeeded

¹⁵⁸ The extensive sources on these campaigns include: Coillard 1971; Mutumba Mainga 1973; Prins 1980; Selous 1893: 254f.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. 55: 8: 'Mwene Mutondo Kanyinca (...) was the only Mwene to rule the Nkoya for as long as twenty-six years.'

Liyoka, in the same Kataba region, rather than that her reign overlapped with his? These questions cannot be settled without additional, external historical data.

The pattern is further complicated since the Kaoma editorial committee suggests one of the *Myene* in Mr H.H. Mwene's discursive dynastic list for the Kahare title, Mwene Kasholongombe, to be replaced by Shakalongo — as if there were yet more incumbents of the latter dynastic name. *Muhumpu* however (p. 1) discusses Kasholongombe as a (classificatory) younger brother of Mwene Kahare, who against the payment of tribute (a gun and a slave) to Mwene Mutondo Lushiku (Mate Shinkisha) at the Kalimbata *lukena* on the Lalafuta river, obtained the right to settle at the Lunyati stream. The latter is a tributary of the Lalafuta, and very far away from the Luampa, Kataba and other rivers to the south, with which Shakalongo is usually associated.

Meanwhile, the accommodating attitude of Shambanjo's patron (offering sanctuary, a wife, and finally accession to the throne of Mwene Kahare) appears to be very well compatible with the image of a female *Mwene* realizing that the times have changed and that a powerful male incumbent, even if decisively backed up by Lozi overlordship, might be the best way to ensure some continuity for the declining Nkoya state structures. It is mainly for this reason that in the translation I have continued to treat Shakalongo as female. This view has been implemented in *Appendix 3*, but the footnotes there make clear that this was only one of several possible choices on the basis of the fragmentary and contradictory material offered by *Likota Iya Bankoya*.

the handling of kinship terms and terms for social groups

What becomes clear from this discussion is that, in translating *Likota Iya Bankoya*, the problems of gender identification shade over into those of the definition and translation of Nkoya kinship terms, and the handling of fragmentary, and apparently contradictory, genealogical information. A very specific kinship logic is ingrained in the English kinship terms (father, mother, brother, sister, etc.) which present themselves as translations for the Nkoya terms, and the English terms particularly lack the extreme implications of classificatory use as inherent in their Nkoya counterparts. Even when studying, and living, the Nkoya kinship system for years in a setting of anthropological participation, it is only gradually that one realizes the full extent of the working of a classificatory system. In contemporary Nkoya villages the *concrete, specific* genealogical ties between individuals are not important, and (beyond the primary relations between very close kin) are seldom known to any degree of detail and exactitude. What matters in the definition of kinship-based claims, obligations and expectations are the broad general group categories in which individuals fall. In the

great majority of cases, a *manda* featuring in the text of *Likota lya Bankoya* would not appear to be her *mwana*'s biological mother but more likely the latter's distant matrilineal relative, not even necessarily of one generation up. By the same token, *bakonzo*, which theoretically could mean 'younger siblings of the same father and the same mother', in any specific passage much more likely means 'classificatory junior parallel cousins', and practically amounts to either

- (a) 'rather distant junior kinsmen who happen to belong to the same micro-political faction, with a tendency toward co-residence and joint productive and military action' (in other words, a section of the village group or *likota*), or
- (b) 'junior branch of a matrilineal segment'.

The latter reflects the fact that a major conceptualization of genealogical and/or political ties among the Nkoya is that in terms of *livumo lyalyinene* versus *livumo lyalyishe*: 'big womb' versus 'little womb', or technically speaking 'senior matri-segment' versus 'junior matri-segment'. The expression is supposed to correspond to some genealogical reality: if A is claimed to be in the 'big womb' vis-à-vis B who is identified with the 'little womb', one is inclined to consider A's ancestress X as an elder sister of B's ancestress Y, or alternatively X is regarded as a senior co-wife of Y. With reference to previous generations the genealogical distinction between sisters and co-wives is slight, since the most common term for co-wife is '(junior/senior) sister'. In fact however, the senior and junior lines that are thus conceptualized are shifting and ill-demarcated political units, which reflect the history of valleys, villages and village sections, their struggle for succession to major titles, and the success with which they have managed to direct and to counter allegations of slavery status among each other. In the last analysis, here as elsewhere, genealogies are primarily shorthand expressions for political relationships (cf. van Binsbergen, in prep.).

With such diffuseness and flexibility, the pasting together of genealogies, and assigning such specific kinship terms as the English usage forces upon us, is a very difficult and uncertain task, in which one constantly moves back and forth between interpretation, translation, drafting of contradictory genealogical fragments, re-interpretation, etc.

The matter is further complicated by the fact that the major terms the Nkoya text uses for social groups are far from defined with anthropological scientific rigour. Thus *liziko*, literally 'branch', and in terms of social organization meaning 'minimal matri-segment', is used in a loose sense in *Likota lya Bankoya*, and the main operative term to denote kin groups is *livumo*, 'womb', 'belly', 'stomach'. Used in a genealogical context its principal meaning is 'maximal matri-segment', which however seemed too technical to form an adequate translation in the context of *Likota lya Bankoya*. Instead the term 'matrilineage' is used, but with considerable reserve. Matri-segments are not, in the

Nkoya consciousness and social practice, pieced together so as to form impressive genealogical chains mounting over many generations — in other words they do not form corporate units that could be construed to be matrilineages in the academic technical sense. Beyond the indisputable core membership, the demarcation of the *livumo* is on micro-political and residential grounds and not on genealogical ones. The unit thus designated may include agnates, affines and even non-kin clients and slaves, in addition to cognates (van Binsbergen, in prep.).

In this respect the logic of Mr H.H. Mwene's kings' lists, suggestive of clearly demarcated lines of descent, streamlined and with duly attributed dynastic numbers, is far removed from past and present Nkoya practice, and clearly seeks to emulate academic examples deriving from a totally different discourse than Nkoya political culture. We shall come back to this issue. Matri-segments are distinguished mainly *in order to be juxtaposed with one another*, as senior and junior lines:

'These, finally, are the Nkoya known as the Shikalu but they are the same stock as the Nkoya of Mwene Mutondo; they are all from one matrilineage: the junior line of the Sheta clan.' (38:7)

Seniority in this context is presented, in the Nkoya genealogical logic, as deriving from the sibling birth order of the ancestresses involved; but the 'sisters' thus juxtaposed as ancestresses are only classificatory sisters, who in fact may have been distant matrilineal or even affinal relatives belonging to different genealogical generations, or mere co-wives, — or even non-kin presented as kinsmen because the social and political universe is primarily structured, and positions therein are primarily legitimated or contested as the case may be, in terms of genealogical relations. Thus, slave status, descent from successive husbands or from junior wives, may affect the perception of junior status as much as the ancestresses' real or putative sibling birth order.

genealogies

Genealogies constructed on the basis of the principles outlined above are charters of group relations, of political claims, more than renderings of historical family trees involving real people in correct biological relationships. Nkoya genealogies are shallow and kaleidoscopic, both in a context of *Wene* and among commoners. The distinction is not too meaningful however since clan exogamy and ambilineal inheritance of clan affiliation effectively blurs the outlines and succession prerogatives of royal clans and makes dynastic groups into political factions rather than genealogically-defined matrilineal segments in the strict, technical sense.

Yet, in principle the abundant genealogical information in *Likota Iya Bankoya* invites us to paste it together into coherent genealogies. The

many specific problems which arise are discussed with reference to the actual data, in the footnotes to *Appendix 3*.

Here we encounter the full set of options for genealogical manipulation, with which the oral historian is familiar: telescoping (the collapsing of any number of adjacent generations); the spurious fusion of descent lines that in reality would be unrelated; the spurious fission of branches as unrelated whereas in reality they would be related; the placement of the same character in a number of contradictory genealogical positions; the reversion of a character's gender; the transformation of genealogical relations between close kin — parents changing positions with their children, nephews being represented one generation up, as cousins or brothers; the representation of descent in the dominant (matrilineal) line as patrilineal and vice versa; the representation of relations of political and social inferiority as relations between senior and junior kinsmen, or between adjacent generations, etc. The result is a most entertaining puzzle, which we can never hope to solve in terms of a reconstruction of historically accurate genealogical relations between specific individuals (for one thing, before the nineteenth century we do not even know if we are dealing with historical individuals, mythical constructs, or a mixture) — but which at best yields an awareness of the overall structural principles at work.

In the Nkoya case, the participants' genealogical manipulation is greatly facilitated by the institution of name inheritance (*ushwana*), which makes for the proliferation of personal names in successive generations. Namesakes in adjacent generations may tend to be merged as a result of telescoping, and in my genealogical reconstructions it sometimes proved helpful to assume that behind a particular name (the major example being Mwene Manenga) several characters were hiding, bearing the same name but belonging to successive generations.

The genealogies in *Appendix 3* demonstrate that often more or less acceptable solutions can be offered for the problems of kinship and genealogical interpretation and manipulation — without any claim to historical accuracy, yet managing to sum up the information in *Likota Iya Bankoya* with a lesser degree of internal contradiction than a first reading of the text would suggest. The genealogical relations thus emerging are the result of interpretation, cross-checking and re-interpretation of the Nkoya text; subsequently, they have formed the guidelines for the rendering of genealogical relations in the text of the English translation. *Their uses beyond those of making an internally consistent English translation are slight, their historical contents largely fictitious.*

genealogical over-interpretation: the case of Mwene Kayambila Shishopa

What kind of complex difficulties and spurious solutions may arise in the context of the genealogical interpretation of the material offered in the text of *Likota lya Bankoya*, may be illustrated by the case of Mwene Kayambila Shishopa.

Ascertaining the gender of this *Mwene* is not the major problem. Oral traditions consider him as male, which is in accordance with the connotations of prowess and cruelty which surround this figure. His praise-name characterizes him as a head-hunter:

‘When Shishopa acceded to the kingship he adopted the following praise-name:

‘I am Kayambila ka Matunga,¹⁶⁰
The Thatcher who Takes Care of the Skulls of People
Like the Thatcher Takes Care of the Roofs of Houses —
The Son of Manenga,
Shishopa Mikende.’ (23: 2)

His self-given praise-name *Kayambila* is a word play on the Nkoya verb *ku yamba*, ‘to thatch’. According to many sources, the Nkoya *Myene* used the upper part (‘the roofs’) of the skulls of their victims as drinking vessels — in this praise-name Mwene Shishopa compares the act of severing this upper part with that other form of roof treatment: thatching. Some sources take the thatching element more literally, and depict Kayambila as a *Mwene* who had the roof of his house thatched with human skulls.¹⁶¹

But what to make of the genealogical information concerning Kayambila as offered in *Likota lya Bankoya*?

According to (17: 4) and (23: 1) Kayambila was the ‘younger brother’ of his predecessor Mukamba. The puzzling element is the epithet *ka Matunga*, which follows the name of Kayambila, but is also employed in the name of Kayambila’s son Shipandu (1: 1), and in that of the great *Mukwetunga* Lwengu. Matunga does occur as a proper name among Nkoya today, and therefore a possible construction would be to postulate a person Matunga, male or female, (classificatory) sibling of Mwene Manenga I, and parent of both Shishopa (who therefore could call himself rightfully a — classificatory — son of Manenga provided Matunga were female) and of Mukwetunga Lwengu. Shishopa would then belong to a line of *Bakwetunga* rather than of *Myene*, and would be an example of the male usurpatory tendencies of *Wene* which we shall discuss in chapter 5; also see *Likota lya Bankoya*’s chapter (4: 7), where the tendency towards hereditary *Mukwetunga*-ship, and factional political clustering of *Bakwetunga* and their sister’s sons, becomes manifest. The following possibilities would present themselves for the genealogical reconstruction:

¹⁶⁰ The phrase *ka matunga* is left untranslated in this quotation: the following discussion seeks to interpret it.

¹⁶¹ E.g. oral source [17] 30.9.1977.

- (a) Assuming that the hypothetical Matunga was a woman, and Kayambila's mother, then Kayambila was not a biological but only a classificatory son of Manenga. He could still be a 'younger brother' of his predecessor Mukamba son of Manenga in the classificatory sense.
- (b) Alternatively, the hypothetical Matunga may have been male, in which case Kayambila's mother may still have been Manenga, but then, contrary to the emphatic statement in (17: 4),¹⁶² with another man than *Mukwetunga Mulyata*.

In both cases a setback is that Matunga nowhere in the text of *Likota lya Bankoya* occurs as a person operating in her or his own right, but always as (what appears to be) a parental epithet. Moreover, one is surprised to see the son of Kayambila bear the same parental epithet as his father (Shipandu sha Matunga).¹⁶³ is the name Matunga so common that both Kayambila's parent, and spouse, could have borne it? This in itself would not be enough to reject any of the genealogical reconstructions suggested so far, particularly alternative (a), and to maintain the link between Kayambila and Lwengu through their hypothetical parent Matunga, and hence the perspective on a usurping group of *Bakwetunga*. However, one unrelated oral source from the Kahare line casts a totally new light on this entire reconstruction. It gives the praise-name of Mwene Kabimba, an ill-fated incumbent of the Kahare title, as:

'Kabimba ka Matunga
Sinyonde sa milala vunda
Kato kaleyaleya kafabantu.'¹⁶⁴

In English translation as provided by the interviewee this is rendered as:

'Kabimba of the Lands
A Bat who sleeps in the Hole of a Tree
A Person who Goes to and fro
Like a Boat on the Water,
Killing the People.'

¹⁶² 'Their father however, Mukwetunga Mulyata, was a member of the Shungu clan, and it was this man who begot all the children of Mwene Manenga.' (17: 4)

¹⁶³ The article *sha* is governed by the noun class of Shipandu, and therefore differs from *ka* as in Kayambila's case.

¹⁶⁴ Oral source [1]; emphasis added.

The Nkoya word *matunga* does mean ‘lands’, and as such it also occurs in the name of one of the drums of kingship, the ‘Mboma luvunga matunga’ (27: 10).

Substituting the epithet ‘of the Lands’ in all cases where *sha Matunga* or *ka Matunga* occurs in the text of *Likota Iya Bankoya*, destroys our ingenious genealogical reconstructions around the hypothetical person Matunga, but at the same time draws our attention to the claims of territorial control that are central to the concept of *Wene*. The initial, simple genealogical reconstruction is maintained once *ka Matunga* is recognized as not being a parental epithet.

terms for court offices

The translation problems outlined here are anthropological as much as they are historical; they stem from the fact that language, as a reflection of one specific culture, can reflect the intricacies and structural implications of a different culture only imperfectly and at the expense of either imprecision or excessive elaboration.

The same problem crops up in the translation of the central terms for court offices in *Likota Iya Bankoya*: *Mwene*, *Lihano*, *Mukwetunga*, *Mwana Mwene*, *Mwanashihemi*, *Shilolo*, *Mukambuyu*. In translating these terms one has to negotiate between avoiding awkwardness in the English text, and avoiding the projection of alien and anachronistic concepts upon the Nkoya text.

Suppressing the temptation to translate *Mwene* by either ‘king’ (somewhat too grandiose) and ‘chief’ (which has anachronistic colonial connotations of incorporation and subjugation), I decided that this title could just as well be left untranslated. For the abstract noun *Wene* however, ‘*Mwene*-ship’ would have been too awkward. ‘Reign’ was rejected; first because it would seem to stress the period of time spanned by a ruler more than the role she or he discharged, secondly because its closest equivalent in Nkoya is not *Wene* but the derivatives of the verb *ku lela*, ‘to reign’; and most importantly because it suggests a fixed dynastic structure through which specific incumbents merely pass — whereas in the Nkoya case *Wene* is very much in a state of constant transition, shaped and redefined by each new incumbent. ‘Kingship’ seemed a plausible, if far from ideal, compromise. Meanwhile, as we have seen, plenty of passages in *Likota Iya Bankoya* bear witness to the fact that the term *Mwene*, just as in contemporary everyday usage among the Nkoya-speaking peoples, is also used as a honorific title of address outside the highest political office, and then it would best be translated as ‘Lord’; cf. *Mwene Shiyenge*, *Mwene Kapupa*, even *Mwene Nyambi* (‘the Lord God’). But then, the shading over between general honorific and specific title for politico-religious office is in itself significant, since it goes to show the extent to which the Nkoya *Mwene* can be regarded as a *primus inter pares* among the notables, courtiers and members of the royal families in general — just

as the very flexible succession practice blurs the boundaries of royal families, and makes agnates and affines in principle eligible to high office — the latter being far from monopolized by ‘royal’ matrilineages or even matri-clans.

The same reluctance to impose such alien connotations as derive from northwestern European political culture has kept me from translating the term *Mukwetunga*. A translation ‘Royal Escort’ would have missed the implication that here we are dealing with a court office in its own right more than with an individual marriage bond. In the same vein, the female equivalent of *Mukwetunga*: *Lihano* (pl. *Mahano*), has not been translated by ‘Queen’, since that would obscure the fact that *Mwene* is not exactly ‘King’.

Another major court office is that of *Mwana Mwene*, pl. *Bana ba Bamyene*: a *Mwene*’s child, regardless of the child’s or the *Mwene*’s gender. It has been left untranslated, partly because any translation (as ‘Prince’ or ‘Princess’ — which would often overlap with the semantic field of the word *Mwene* itself) would force us to specifically interpret a gender which in the Nkoya text is often left undefined, and partly for the same reasons why I have refrained from translating the word *Mwene* itself.

toponyms

Toponyms offered a major problem of translation, not only because of the existence of Nkoya forms side by side with more established Lozi and Zambian English forms, or because of the anachronistic use Shimunika tends to make of them, but also because of their sheer abundance. Much of the very detailed toponymical data could not be traced on the standard maps available to me. On this point extensive correspondence with Mr H.H. Mwene was especially enlightening.¹⁶⁵ At an early stage of translation and analysis I had to invest weeks in the writing of a computer program that enabled me to process and index all these data on toponyms — and on personal names, which turn the book into a veritable *Who’s Who* of Nkoya titles and family names.

Despite anachronistic use of such names as Angola (with reference to a period when this country was still known as Portuguese West Africa), Shimunika shows a remarkable historical awareness in reserving the colonial, Lozi-prefixed name of *Mankoya* (as distinct from the

¹⁶⁵ Sources used to identify the numerous obscure topographical references include: ‘Mankoya district [MS map] by Sililo Munyandi, 1957-59’, author’s collection; Surveyor General, ‘Republic of Zambia, scale 1: 1,500,000’, Lusaka: Surveyor General, 1986 edition; H.H. Mwene, [manuscript materials on Nkoya toponyms], 1986, author’s collection; Zimbabwe National Archives, Harare, map collection: [114] BSACo. Territories, 1901; and Zimbabwe National Archives, Harare, map collection: AC Rhodesia, 1895.

Nkoya toponym *Nkoya*) for reference to the colonial period only. *Mankoya* is first used in a context of the imposition of hut tax:

‘Pe oho mutelo wakumine ku litunga lya Mankoya’ (52: 7).¹⁶⁶

It was under this name that the district and its capital have been known from the creation of the district boma in 1906 until, five years after Zambia’s Independence, the name was changed into Kaoma. For pre-colonial reference Shimunika almost exclusively uses the name *Nkoya* or *Litunga lya Nkoya*, ‘the Land of Nkoya’, a name whose dimensions and implications we shall explore more fully in chapter 4.

A specific problem of translation is posed by the word *Wului*, which in Nkoya means simply ‘the land of the Lozi’, denoting the Lozi homeland in the narrower sense — *Bulozi* in the Lozi language, i.e. the Zambezi flood plain and its immediate environment, with its centres Lealui, Nalolo and Kalabo; and not the later, far more extended political units which were administratively known as Barotseland: the (real or alleged) territory of the Lozi state under the Kololo and Luyana chiefs or kings, the Barotseland Protectorate, and finally the Barotseland Province of the states of Northern Rhodesia and the Republic of Zambia. A translation ‘Barotseland’ would be anachronistic for a precolonial context. I have therefore normally translated *Wului* by ‘Loziland’, unless the specific administrative unit was meant under which western Zambia was known throughout the colonial period until its name was changed into Western Province.

more specifically literary problems of translation

Finally, specifically literary and linguistic problems crop up in the translation of praise-names, whose hermetic and archaic language offers layers of cryptograms which are exasperating even to presentday native speakers of Nkoya. A convincing example is Mwene Shinkisha’s praise-name, part of which we shall fortunately be able to unravel in the course of our argument:

‘You are the Wonderful Tree,
Daughter of Manenga,
With Branches only at the Top,
Without any Scars from fallen-off Branches,
Shinkisha who can Face the Cat,
The Snuffbox of Nyambi’s Child.’ (26: 1)

Here and in other cases only certain aspects of the Nkoya implications could be rendered in English; by making the translated praise-names

¹⁶⁶ ‘As soon as tax was introduced in the land of Mankoya...’

look like poems I have attempted to suggest the literary surplus value we could not capture in a more direct way.

Clan names are a similar case. All appear to have a meaning, and in some cases *Likota lya Bankoya* conveys their meaning or at least their popular etymologies: *Mvula* for the 'Rain' clan, *Shikumbawuyuyu* for 'The Bark Container Which Could Hear', *Bakonze* for 'Lickers', etc. Whenever available the meaning or association of these proper names is given in footnotes to the English translation of *Likota lya Bankoya* in Part III. In other cases however insistent questioning yielded no clear-cut meaning — perhaps for reasons of linguistic taboos such as are known to govern some other spheres of Nkoya life, possibly also because my informants' mastery of English was insufficient to render meanings both esoteric and precise, but probably for no other reason than that the actual meaning escaped contemporary native speakers.

The literary aspect of a text like *Likota lya Bankoya* is of course not confined to problems of translation alone. Towards the end of chapter 3 I shall come back to the literary contents and analyse them from a point of view of historical criticism, whereas chapter 6 will be devoted to the reconstruction of a symbolic deep structure on the basis of this type of material.

The text of *Likota lya Bankoya* now lies before us, we have edited and translated it and can begin to analyse it. Our next question is: *why* did the author write it, and how did this intention influence his writing? The next chapter will seek to address this question.