

Music from Petauke of Northern Rhodesia, Vol. 2



Recorded and Edited by
John Blacking, University of Witwatersrand (South Africa) and Raymond Aporthe, University of Ibadan (Nigeria)

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MELODIES FOR THE KALIMBA
SIX TUNES ON A FOURTEEN-NOTE KALIMBA
THREE MELODIES ON A FOURTEEN-NOTE KALIMBA
SONG ACCOMPANIED ON A FOURTEEN-NOTE KALIMBA
TWO SONGS ACCOMPANIED ON A FOURTEEN-NOTE KALIMBA
TWO FUNERAL SONGS
THREE VERSIONS OF A SAWA-SAWA MELODY
MUSIC FOR MPANDA, OR DANSI
TWO UNACCOMPANIED BEER SONGS
OH DAI, DAI!
YOU CLOSE THE DOOR HALFWAY

RHYTHMS PLAYED ON TWO ONE-NOTE 'XYLOPHONES'
SONG WITH LIMBA ACCOMPANIMENT
NSENGA GIRLS' PUBERTY RITUAL
A HUNTING SONG
A BEER SONG
SONG ABOUT KALILAUMBA
ULIMBA SONGS
XYLOPHONE SOLO BY YODANI SAKALA
TWO SONGS FOR FEMALE VOICES
I ADMIRE SITELIYA
BEER SONG

Music from Petauke of Northern Rhodesia, Vol. 2

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Recorded and Edited, with Notes by

VOLUME II

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I. The Ethnography of the Nsenga of Petauke, Eastern Province, Northern Rhodesia,

by Raymond Apthorpe *

Introduction

The landscape of Petauke is dominated by that light to dense woodland association which is monotonously widespread in the Rhodesias and parts of neighbouring Angola, Moçambique, Congo, and Nyasaland. Undulating plateau topography is the rule, but in the Luangwa tributary valleys in particular there are level, comparatively treeless tracts with short grass. On the plateau, the long grass may exceed twelve feet.

Elephant, lion and game beasts roam widely on the plateau in the wet season (November - March), but in the dry season they are concentrated nearer the Luangwa River. The agricultural economy of Petauke is now one of peasantry, no longer one of subsistence. The staples are maize, sorghum and ground nuts. Fishing, except among the valley Nsenga, is not important.

Graphic art and the arts for the Nsenga are essentially domestic, private and personal. The casual visitor or official in Petauke might pass his time there without discovering Nsenga art. For instance, the small decorated clay pot used by both spouses for their marital intimacies of shaving and washing should be kept hidden from the sight even of close friends and relatives of the wife; and the woman potter who makes this kind of pot does not display it along with the household kinds. In size it is small, about 2 1/2 inches high, with a slightly concave or convex lid, all made of fired clay glazed with graphite, and profusely decorated with beadwork and strings of beads. 'Decoration' in this context does not mean 'ornamentation' only: beads are honours, and have the ritual significance of seeds, germination and final causes. This small pot, the personal possession of women, symbolizes woman. The hut, plastered and cared for by women though basically constructed by men is symbolically a womb. On certain ritual occasions, ceremonial passage through the single doorway signifies rebirth.

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Top: Ulimba

Center: Jasi Njovu and Zangose Lungu play together at Cikundu

Bottom: Musicians at Dance, Nyahwayo

Personal ornamentation among the Nsenga - bead strings, lip plugs, cicatrices and keloids for example - is of great diversity: women's ornamentation is more elaborate than men's, and it is chiefly for decoration rather than tribal identification. The figurines and designs made on the ground and on the hut walls during the girls' puberty celebration in Petauke, should be executed with artistic skill, and good results are admired in themselves for their beauty. The colours used are red, which represents blood and the feminine principle, white, which stands for semen and the male principle, and black, which seems to have two references - male-exercised authority, on the one hand, and emptiness, exhaustion or death on the other. These meanings are manifold, not single or absolute, and interpenetrate with each other. But they are, or rather some of them are, perfectly explicit in, for instance, the explanations of the designs and figurines given to the neophyte by the instructresses.

It is the commemoration of girls' puberty which calls for the greatest display of artistic, including musical, skills.

It is true that the arts among the Nsenga do not assume the far larger proportions they enjoy among the Lunda, for instance, or the Lozi. Nonetheless, girls' puberty celebration is a festival of the arts in itself. Unfortunately, objections by missionaries and others because of its 'sexual' element, have much modified its scale. But the factors accounting for the decline, especially of certain more public aspects, are by no means limited to that of simple disapproval by outsiders.

The Nsenga population of Petauke numbers now rather more than 80,000. The total African population of Northern Rhodesia is in the region of 3,000,000. So diverse do the people of that part of Central Africa regard themselves, however, that for all their relative modesty in numbers, the Nsenga may be counted as the fifth largest ethnic group in Northern Rhodesia - the big four being, respectively, the Plateau and Valley Tonga in the south, the Bemba in the north, the Ceŵa, and the Lunda in the north and north-west. There is a tendency for 'the Nsenga' to say that 'the Kunda' (20,000) and 'the Senga' (25,000) are practically identical to themselves in cultural respects, but not enough research has been carried out yet for this claim to be assessed. There are five principal language groups in Northern Rhodesia which are not mutually intelligible: Bemba, Nyanja, Lunda-Luvale, Tonga and Lozi. Oral testimony in Petauke has it that 'Nsenga' of the last century would appear to have been chiefly of the Bemba rather than the Nyanja group. But today the position may have been reversed. Ceŵa (of the Nyanja group) is now the official vernacular in most schools in Petauke. It is also the local language used in the various media of mass communication beamed on Petauke from Lusaka.

My own investigations amongst the Nsenga were carried out during ten months over the years 1958-1961. They were concerned primarily with

matters of social and political structure, and ritual only incidentally. My friends and assistants who translated for Mr. Blacking and who helped in other ways were Messrs. H.D. Ng'wane, M.C. Mazala, G. Mlimba, Thayo Sufyia (my cook), and Miss Mary Sakala. The puberty ceremony, whose music takes up the whole of the third record in this series, was the sixth that I had witnessed.

Culture History

Originally, and in belief rather than legend since there seems to be little mythology about it, the Nsenga derived from Uluwa, the Luba heartland in the present Congo Republic. The eastern neighbours of the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia, the Ceŵa, whose music is represented chiefly on Record I, Side 2, Cuts 4-7, also claim to have come originally from Uluwa. This putative common origin, however, shared by some other people in Northern Rhodesia, does not provide for any merging of the Nsenga and Ceŵa identities. These are conceived - by the former, at least - as reciprocally hostile and contradictory. A characteristic, if trivial, exemplification of this occurred during the puberty ceremony (Record III), when à propos the pinching ordeals that novices must undergo, an instructress tried to persuade me that "the Nsenga do not pinch at all, only the Ceŵa do that. Do you call us Ceŵa?" It appeared as if nothing could have offended her more.

Probably the Nsenga and the Ceŵa arrived in their present lands at different times, and by different routes. The Ceŵa, according to their oral tradition, journeyed from the northern to southern reaches of Lake Nyasa, either across the lake by raft or else by a land route bordering it to the east. They entered Northern Rhodesia from what is now Mozambique. To judge from my own information on Nsenga oral history and such fragments as have been made available by administrators, missionaries and others, the Nsenga have no tradition of migration relating to Lake Nyasa. However, in historical as well as in social, political and cultural respects, 'the Nsenga' should be regarded as a composite, not unitary, people. Certainly some Nsenga groups claim to have migrated to Petauke from the east, and thus may be regarded as Ceŵa offshoots. But probably the majority of the present-day Nsenga-speaking inhabitants of Petauke would assert that they settled in their present lands independently of the Ceŵa, coming from the north or the west, or even from Shona country in the south.

In the village of Menyani where the puberty ceremony was recorded, musicians, instructresses and others denied that even in the distant past they might have been in any way associated with the Ceŵa. It must, however, be mentioned that the clan memberships of the leading participants (including the master-drummer) in the puberty ritual recorded do suggest past Ceŵahood rather than Nsengahood. In view of the considerable clues to Central African history afforded by clanship, this should be considered alongside the musicological suggestion of Mr. Blacking that, in comparison with the Ceŵa and other Nsenga performances he heard in Petauke, the puberty music on Record III is distinctively Nsenga.

One historical possibility is that the Cewa, under Chief Undi, established themselves in their present lands as early as the 17th century. Nsenga oral tradition, on the other hand, might be interpreted as indicating that Nsenga settlement in Petauke dates only from the beginning of the 19th century. The Ngoni crossed the Zambezi in 1835 on their northward march. Their second period of encounter with the Nsenga was half a century later, on their penetration southward from Tanganyika. It would, I think, generally be said among the people of Petauke that Nsenga cultural influence on the Ngoni has been greater than that of the Ngoni on the Nsenga, for example in matters of puberty ritual and of kinship terminology and allied subjects. However, no one has inquired specifically into the topic and record should be made of the fact that Ngoni terminology is used by the Nsenga in respect of cattle keeping, although Nsenga claim to have had cattle before the Ngoni came. Also, Ngoni (or Zulu) terms crop up in connection with the designs on beadwork aprons, as well as with the beads and aprons themselves, worn by Nsenga instructresses at puberty ceremonies.

The topic of Nsenga-Ngoni culture history is one of many in this field in Central Africa which has scarcely been raised, let alone considered or partly considered. Musicological research offers one avenue of inquiry into cultural history, and this may be particularly fruitful.

Two other culture contacts in Petauke remain to be mentioned for any musicological significance they may have. In the last third of the 19th century, Kunda condottieri established themselves in regions in the northern half of the Petauke district. Some recordings (Record I, Side 1) were made in villages in the area where Kunda influence has been felt in some social and politi-

cal respects - but it would be outside the scope of the present note to discuss these. No musicological data in this respect is available.

Soon after the Kunda came British and Afrikaans traders, administrators, settlers, and missionaries, beginning in the late 1880's.

Matrilineal descent

The system of clanship and kinship among the Nsenga is dominantly matrilineal, although this does not mean of course that links through the patri-clan are unimportant. One context in which a patri-clan link is apparent is in the pattern of personal names. For instance, in the personal name 'John Mumbi Mwanza' the last component, Mwanza, the name of an Nsenga clan, is John's father's matri-clan, not his own. A person's own membership clan, which is the same as that of his mother from whom indeed he receives it, is not indicated in his personal name.

While matri-clans, which are exogamous, are not localised strictly speaking, there is nevertheless a close association in Nsenga ideas between particular clans and particular territories. A clan may be politically dominant (through the chieftainship and a large proportion of village headmanships) in a particular area. It is this ideational 'distribution' of Nsenga matri-clans which is shown in the map.

The master-drummer Menyani, the principal musician on Record III, has taught both his son and his nephew (sister's son) to drum for puberty ceremonies. Thus clearly in this context for one, the principle of importance to the Nsenga is not solely the matrilineal one. Menyani and his



7-string zither, Sherodani Banda (Cewa), recording at Mulipa



Finishing Cilengo, Ngwena, Mulipa



NYAU Dance, Masked dancer, Mulipa

brother were taught by his father. At a puberty ceremony in a more northern village in Petauke, an instructress explained to me that in ideal Nsenga practice the mother of the master-drummer would herself be an instructress, and she and her son, in their different capacities, should attend always the same ceremonies sharing one ciselo. Ciselo in this context may be translated as 'ritual kit', though it also has the connotation of the ritual skill itself and the inherited right to possess it and use it. Drumming for puberty ritual is considered by the Nsenga to demand more musical skill than that required on any other occasion.

II. The Music of the Nsenga, by John Blacking.*

Two of the set of three long-playing records contain a representative sample of Nsenga music, as well as some items of music either borrowed from the Ceŵa or played by Ceŵa people living in Nsenga country. The third record consists solely of items from a puberty ritual of the Nsenga, which Dr. Apthorpe and I attended.

Not every possible item of Nsenga music is represented: for instance, I was unable to obtain any recordings of boys playing the three-holed transverse flute, tulilo, but understand that the music played on it is like flute music in other parts of southern Africa -- probably because of the similarity and physical limitations of the instruments. Nor have I examples of percussion instruments in the form of hoes being struck, called nsengwe, or maize being rattled on a plate. I never heard a dance of spirit possession (mpanda, nzamba, or mashaŵi), but was told that the melodies and rhythms are very similar to those of the puberty ritual (sides 5 and 6). Master-drummers use the same set of drums for both types of music.

There are moments when Nsenga music is as poignant (e.g. cuts 1a and 8, side 1), as exciting (e.g. cuts 9 and 10, side 3), or as quietly uplifting (e.g. cuts 7 and 8, side 4), as anything in the Western classical tradition. If the listener is not affected as I am by such music, it is because recordings cannot transmit the human situations which formed the background to the performances; and it is this common denominator of human experience which enables us to enjoy music whose idiom and culture of origin, from which its techniques spring, are foreign to us. When I listen to this music again and again with the same intense enjoyment, it is hard to say how much of that enjoyment is purely musical, and how much the result of being reminded of the situation in which I first heard the sounds.

The texts of the songs reveal a range of topics and emotions which, especially in the case of the puberty songs, can only be properly appreciated in the context of Nsenga social life. Each style of music appeals primarily to those who are concerned with the social events which it embellishes: thus, for instance, mashaŵi music appeals principally to those who are members of the possession cult. Even those styles which are common to every section of the population, such as beer songs and pound songs, seem to become individualized, so that

the words sung in different districts interest a limited local audience which can appreciate the subtle allusions. Women may be overcome by weariness or sorrow as they pound grain, and so little by little, as the hours of work pass by, time is lost in music, and new words begin to take shape within the framework of an old tune. Sometimes even the tune itself may be modified. Ida's lovely song of sorrow (cut 8, side 1) and the pounding songs (cuts 4, 5, and 6, side 1) are examples of topical variations on familiar musical themes, and in the case of Ida's song I was told that it was virtually a new composition.

Self-pity is a common sentiment expressed in many songs; but it is a resigned, often optimistic, self-pity rather than a cloying preoccupation with misery. In the lullaby (cut 1a, side 1), the child's crying reminds the mother of her own troubles, but this does not mean that the mother then neglects the child in favour of herself: it is rather a symbolic affirmation of togetherness, especially relevant in a society where migrant labour and the instability of marriage, because of the matrilineal set-up, throw mothers and children together in a close, defensive relationship. (It should not be thought that because inheritance is matrilineal, women dominate in Nsenga society.)

The ideal instrument for personal meditation is the kalimba handpiano, whose music features in six cuts on side 3. Youths often play this as they walk alone, or with friends, repeating simple phrases over and over again, and sometimes adding a little 'hum'. The melodies are either 'transcriptions' of songs normally heard in other contexts, songs specially designed for the kalimba, or individual compositions of the performer. Men who play the instrument seem generally to be professional or semi-professional musicians, concerned with transmitting the more important of their reflections to a wider audience (e.g. Simoni Zulu on cuts 4 and 5a, side 3). I only met three such kalimba players, but I had the impression that they were expected to interlard their public performances with a considerable amount of clowning, whatever the nature of the themes.

This contrast between private meditation and public declamation is even more marked in the performances of a man like Sholodani Banda (cuts 8 and 9, side 2), though he never plays for laughs as Simoni Zulu does. Banda is more of a recluse and more of an astute social commentator than Zulu, but he is no less anxious to move his audience in his own quiet way.

Although the sounds of the dance music played by Pikilani Lungu (cuts 7 and 8, side 3) are almost vulgarly extrovert, the demeanour of Lungu himself was consistently introvert. Throughout the night and the following day he was all wrapped up in the music, as he wandered around through the dust and the swirling bodies of the dancers. Like Banda, he was shy and reserved, and I do not think that this was merely due to the effort of playing

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for a long time, because I met him, and formed an impression of his personality, about an hour before the dance began.

After all the introversion of individual performers, the strident, boisterous beer songs of the people of Kanyenye (cuts 9 and 10, side 3), with their ribald texts, come as a wonderful surprise. Their vitality is electric, and I became so absorbed by them and the riotous men and women who sang them, that the recordings I made were of poor quality!

'Nsenganness' is musically apparent, though not aggressively dominant, in pounding songs, in lullabies, and even in kalimba melodies: there are the long, finely balanced phrases, usually accompanied by at least one other part in organum, with halts on prolonged tones. But it is only in the singing of beer songs, and also in the music of the puberty ritual, that one becomes conscious of human, as well as musical, 'Nsenganness', of group feeling and a vague awareness of nationhood, in spite of the segmented character of the society. The transformation of a borrowed item of culture into something that is distinctly 'Nsenga', is aptly illustrated by the two cimtali dance songs (cuts 2 and 3, side 2). Cut 2 is like the music of Ceŵa, from whom the dance was borrowed; but in cut 3 a 'Nsenga'-type melody has been added to the Ceŵa rhythm, and the music has taken on a new character.

The music of the puberty ritual will be discussed in conjunction with the notes for Volume III. It contains some of the best, and also some of the worst, music I heard in the Petauke district. The work of the professional drummer, Menyani, was often magnificent, and rarely dull; but the dancing and singing of the aged instructresses was sometimes so disorganized as to be musically boring, and even unpleasant. The old ladies may be excused, however, since many of them had already reached the cackling stage, and in any case they were not so concerned with fine performances of the music as with meeting old friends, perhaps for the last time, and enjoying the occasion, which was essentially an expression of the solidarity of aged women. They were, however, very particular about performing the correct songs and rituals, and they made and decorated the symbols (vilengo) with loving care, even though they were often slapdash about the performance of the songs and dances. Menyani the master-drummer, on the other hand, was very conscientious about his musical performance, and the tone and pitch of the drums; he did not seem to be particularly interested in the rituals and, like many a good professional musician, was anxious to get to his hut, and to the beer he had been given for his services, whenever there was an interval. He enjoyed discussing music as much as I enjoyed helping him with his beer; but even so sophisticated a musician was unable to discuss music beyond a certain level of abstraction. Generally speaking, he did not question what he had learnt of drumming from his father, who had also been a fine musician: he was concerned with the reproduction of certain patterns of sound and the invention of variations on those patterns, and he was not able to discuss the rationale of the organization of the sounds; he accepted them as they came to him, and knew

what was right and what was wrong, but he could not always explain why, in terms of conscious aesthetics.

Recording the music.

The items on the records are selected from nearly two hundred recordings which were made in the Petauke district between July 25th and August 3rd, 1961. The project was sponsored and financed by the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, Lusaka, at the request of Dr. Raymond Apthorpe: I am most grateful to him for 'letting me loose' amongst friends with whom he had built up the most cordial contacts, and for allowing me to share some of his field experiences. I should also like to thank Mr. C. M. N. White, M. B. E., acting Director of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute; and the Council of the University of the Witwatersrand, whose Research Committee made a most generous grant to enable me to have a Nagra IIC Portable Tape Recorder. This machine I generally used at a speed of 7 1/2 IPS, except in some of the longer sections of the puberty ritual, where the poor quality of the performance and the length of many songs made it impractical. Above all I am grateful to the Nsenga musicians, who introduced me to new and exciting realms of musical experience and acquainted me with fresh aspects of the joy and agony of the human spirit.

Such concentrated and effective research was only possible because of Dr. Apthorpe's knowledge of the Nsenga and my own experience of studying music in other parts of Africa. My early training in recording techniques, especially the use of a moving microphone to highlight the performance of different instruments, was received from Mr. Hugh Tracey, who has more field experience in Africa than any other musicologist: any defects in the recordings are due, therefore, to my own failings as a student of his. Dr. Apthorpe prepared an ethnographic note on Nsenga music, so that I was able to begin collecting and studying relevant material on my very first day in the field. The recordings were accompanied by adequate notes on instrumental techniques, and in addition the texts of all songs were noted, and have been translated with the help of Nsenga assistants.

Note:

People's affiliations and musical heritage are often, especially in the case of the Nsenga, more intelligible in terms of clan, rather than tribal, membership: thus the clan membership of performers is given in brackets after their names. In the translations of the song texts, words and phrases that are repeated in the original, are given only once, and meaningless syllables are omitted. Full Nsenga versions of the texts will be given in the musical transcriptions and analysis, which will be published separately. c, in the Nsenga orthography, should always be pronounced ch (as in chin). ng' is pronounced as ng in singer, whilst ng is n plus g, as in longer. w is a bilabial fricative, pronounced like w with the lips pursed.

THE RECORDINGS

Volume II, Side I.

Cuts 1 to 6.

A selection of melodies for the Kalimba, a hand-piano (or 'sansa') with twelve, thirteen, or fourteen keys, and a small calabash resonator. The Nsenga play these instruments with the thumbs of the left and right hands. The descending scale is usually divided up on the left and right hand sides of the keyboard: thus, for instance, if one plays a succession of three notes on the left and three on the right simultaneously, so that both thumbs move towards the centre, one can produce a descending figure in parallel motion at the fourth.

Cut 1.

Six tunes on a fourteen-note kalimba; played by a lad, Taiad (tired) Mwanza (Banda), of Maŵilili.

- a). The house which has no child.
- b). Let us run from the rain.
- c). Good morning, mother of Booi.
- d). There are not many of you who are after women.
- e). The wife should kill a chicken, the husband a cow.
- f). Corn that is small gets dry soon: I have been chewing you for a long time.

Cut 2.

Three melodies on a fourteen-note kalimba, played by Ackson Zulu (Ng'oma) of Endawalo village.

- a). Kakwela mota ya Daligeni.
She went for a ride in Daligeni's motor-car.
- b). Linda na wela zilako.
Wait until I have opened up for you.
- c). Come, man, let's dance jive.

Cut 3.

Song accompanied on fourteen-note kalimba, by Gideon Bingaili (Mwanza), of Maŵilili village.

1. We have laughed, kakaka!
2. Let us mourn and look at the beer standing in lines.

Cut 4.

Two songs accompanied on a fourteen-note kalimba, by Simoni Zulu (Nguluŵe) at Cimate village. Zulu is a professional musician (cilimbi), who likes to make people sad and happy with his music and the antics with which he accompanies his playing.

- a). (A song composed by himself)
 1. Tear up European wealth, for it is for us all.
 2. We shall tear up; European wealth is for us all.
- b). (He sings only the chorus of the song)

There is meat: they cannot cry for nothing when the mother of Lova has cried.

The solo of this song should begin, 'Where the vultures cry koo, there is meat' (see line 3, cut 2, side 2).

Cut 5.

Two funeral songs, the first played by Simoni Zulu (Nguluŵe) -- see cut 4 above -- and the second by Ackson Lungu (Ng'oma), of Congololo village, on a twelve-note kalimba.

- a). 1. Kachepa will be mourned only by the honey-guide (a bird);
 2. He has died a poor man
- b). Camba waya oyelele.
Camba has gone, alas!

Cut 6.

Three versions of the same saŵa-saŵa melody, played by Beliya Phiri (Tembo) on three differently-pitched thirteen-note kalimbas at Congololo village. He had little difficulty in adjusting both his playing and singing to the different pitches of the instruments, and it will be noticed that he makes slight variations in the melody. Saŵa-saŵa is the Nsenga version of tsaba-tsaba, a Johannesburg urban dance which reached Northern Rhodesia in about 1945 and was popular until superseded by jive in about 1952. It was accompanied by erotic dance movements of the legs and thighs, while the top of the body was kept still. The music was played chiefly on guitars, and this recording is a 'transcription' for hand-piano.

The words are, 'Open up for me, my tsotsi friend!' (Tsotsis are the city slickers who live by their wits in urban areas of Southern Africa).

Cuts 7 and 8.

Music for Mpanda, or Dansi, played on the concertina and gazoo (voice-disguiser) by Pikilani Lungu (Tembo), accompanied on the drum and hoe by Senda Daka (Mwanza).

Organizing a dance is a recognized way of making money, and these recordings were made at Nyalwayo village, where a young married man had had an enclosure built, beer brewed, and meat cooked. He summoned the musicians from a neighbouring village, paying them five shillings each for coming; when they had played for thirty-six hours with very few breaks, he payed them another thirty shillings each. He also payed a few 'dance-hostesses' three shillings and sixpence each because they had not left the floor during this time, and the Master of Ceremonies (sipika, from 'speaker'), seven shillings and sixpence. The entrance fee was sixpence for men, threepence for women, and a penny each for children, and beer and meat were on sale within the enclosure.

Most of the couples danced a very animated type of ballroom dancing, bobbing and lunging and twirling about -- the men bending forwards from the waist and the women accordingly leaning backwards, but trying to keep their heads erect. There was so much dust that it was often difficult to see the dancers, even at close quarters.

The drummer sat under a specially built lean-to; with his left hand he beat the European-style bass drum, and with his right hand he struck with a small piece of iron a hoe-blade which was stuck into the lacing of the drum. The hoe-beat was always twice the speed of the drum-beat, and metronomic accuracy and amazing energy were required for the performance.

The other musician sometimes sat with the drummer, but more often he weaved in and out amongst the dancers, with a look of dedicated concentration. The gazoo, a voice disguiser obtainable at European stores, was constantly sticking out of his mouth like a pipe, and the concertina was slung from his shoulders.

The whistle of the Master of Ceremonies can be heard at the end of each recording.

The songs may have titles, but nobody knew them; the basic tunes are designed for this instrumental combination, but numerous variations are made by individual players.

Cuts 9 and 10.

Two unaccompanied beer songs, performed by Deli Lungu (Mvula) and her brother, Anderson Lungu (Mvula), with people of Ciwala and Kanyenye villages, in Ciwala village.

These two songs represent a type of song which has been composed and made popular by the people of Kanyenye's village. Ciwala's village was once part of Kanyenye, but there was friction between Ciwala and Kanyenye, and so Ciwala broke away. Ciwala is Kanyenye's sister's son.

The people of Kanyenye are widely known as small, vigorous people; some say that they are oversexed and that their women will accept any reasonable offer. Anybody in the district can tell that 'this is a man from Kanyenye'. They are very good singers, and they usually attend beer parties in a group.

Beer was on sale, and so we had a memorable afternoon at Ciwala, with humour, horseplay, and plenty of drinking, conversation and singing. Recording was very difficult, as singers made extravagant arm and body movements and soloists insisted on darting right up to the microphone; but these two songs are so exciting that I have included them in the collection, even though they tend to be messy and overmodulated. The words of the two songs require little explanation: they both have the theme of sexual impotence.

Cut 9.

Oh Dai, Dai!
You have associated with a fool;
You have associated with a fool, and made a fool of me.
You go on looking for a child when it is too late to have one.
I hear the grass rustling as you go about the bush looking for a child.
Your eyes are red -- it is I who set the bush on fire,
As if he is the impotent man.

Cut 10

You close the door halfway, and yet an impotent man sleeps in the house. *
This is my boy friend, but I prefer not to mention his name.
A child has cried at dawn.
I hear the grass rustling as you go about the bush looking for a child.
Stir up for me today --
Or else he is a fool.

* By half closing the door of a house, people show that there is someone inside who is worthy of respect. An impotent man does not deserve this honour. I did not know this when I was staying with a friend in a village; and so as often as my polite host and hostess half closed the door of my hut, I would open it, for the sake of fresh air!

Volume II, side 2

Cut 1.

Rhythms played on two one-note 'xylophones' (limba) by Jasi Njovu (Lungu) and his wife, Zangose Lungu (Nguluwe), at Cambata village.

Old Jasi and his wife were well-known for their duets, and were often in demand to provide rhythm accompaniments for beer songs. However, Jasi's popularity probably depended more on his ability as a singer than as a limba player.

As they play the instruments, they open and close with the left hand the mouth of the calabash resonators, thus producing a variety of tone and further subtleties of rhythm. The calabashes have mirlitons which produce the buzzing sound.

Cut 2.

Song with limba accompaniment, by Jasi Njovu (Lungu), with his wife (on a second limba) and a chorus of friends, two of whom played drums.

1. Oh, Cimbembe, I have gone:
You have taken my song. I, who have the equipment for drumming*,
Am a poor person, (the husband) of Maliya.
2. You see how nicely the husband of Maliya washes himself;
You can see, and you will agree that I should go to town,
Although I am an old man.
3. Where vultures cry koo! there is meat. (see also cut 4a, side 1).

* Refers both to the magical and practical equipment for drumming, called in Nsenga lucelo.

Cuts 3, 4 and 5.

The Nsenga girls' puberty ritual, recordings of which comprise Volume III of this series, is a draw for those men who are musicians, and who come to help, or substitute for, the master-drummer responsible for all the ritual music. They can thus earn some beer, as well as enjoy performing in musical ensembles. These three recordings were taken late in the evening (c. 11.15 p.m.) of the second day of the ritual, when several people had gathered to help the master-drummer drink his beer. Kapanda Banda was a good musician, who helped on several occasions with the puberty drumming.

Kalilaumba is a friction-drum, which is played by men or women at beer parties, or when hunters sing on their return from hunting, or when a hunter dies (see text of cut 5). It provides a basso ostinato reminiscent of the tonic-dominant notes of a tuba or double-bass. The Nsenga take the instrument seriously, and quickly corrected by mistakes when I tried to play with the ensemble. By our conversation about the instrument, and by their attitude when they introduced me to it, I had the impression that it also causes some amusement; rather like the bassoon in Western society.

Cut 3.

A hunting song, performed by Kapanda Banda (Ng'oma), solo voice and player of the chief drum (ng'oma ikhulu); Phineas Tembo (Nzovu) on the limba one-note 'xylophone', and Agnes Daka (Miti) on the friction-drum (Kalilaumba), with a chorus of friends and a second drummer playing the basic pilingilo rhythm.

I will go in the evening to the places where they cut up the animals,
And see how well they have stalked the game.

Cut 4.

A beer song, with the same ensemble as for cut 3.

We are strangers, we are going away:
But if there is beer, we'll stay for a drink.

Kapanda can always go outside and piss; so give him
some more beer to drink.

Cut 5.

Song about kalilaumba, the friction-drum. Same ensemble as for cuts 3 and 4, but without the limba.

Kalilaumba, kalilaumba, let us mourn for our brother. *

Let us sympathize with those who suffer.
You have destroyed my kalilaumba, mother, my kalilaumba.

Kalilaumba, let us sympathize with Banda.

*The friction-drum may have some special ritual significance, especially when associated with mourning for a hunter, but I was unable to find out more about it.

Cuts 6, 7 and 8.

The eight-note xylophone (ulimba -- note the relationship between kalimba hand-piano, limba one-note 'xylophone', and ulimba: - limba refers essentially to the 'keys' of the instruments) is played by men as an accompaniment to songs sung by women. It is not often heard these days, and knowledge of the instrument (both of manufacture and performance) seems to be inherited -- but by patrilineal descent.

Cut 6.

Solo for eight-note xylophone.

Yodani Sakala (Mwanza) took a long time to play this solo, which is designed to highlight the technique of playing the xylophone, whose melodies are almost identical bassi ostinati. First, he insisted that a boy should put a burning ember near the spider's web mirlitons, which were not buzzing nicely. Then he said he could not play unless someone beat the basic rhythm on a stamping block, and he refused to let me place the block away from the xylophone -- so that cuts 6, 7 and 8 are dominated by this rhythm. Then he said that he must have some girls to sing with him, and only when they had been mobilized would he agree to play the solo. Then, just as he was about to play, he said that he must have a cigarette. This then drooped from his mouth for the rest of the performance. After this, he seemed to have exhausted his professional ploys, and he was ready to play.

Cuts 7 and 8.

Two songs for female voices, accompanied on an eight-note xylophone.

Solos by Mafipa Tembo (Mwanza), xylophone by Yodani Sakala (Mwanza), accompanied by a stamping-block, turned on its side and beaten with two sticks, and a chorus of female voices.

Both melodies are similar, though the words differ, and the xylophone accompaniments are almost identical. Note how the xylophonist warms up by playing a two-against-three rhythm or two tones: this cross-rhythm is the basis of the melodies which the left and right hands play together.

Cut 7.

I admire Siteliya when she puts on her belt and doek (headscarf).

Cut 8.

Come out of the house so that people may play.
It is respectability which lasts -- give me a prize!

Cut 9.

Beer song, led by Gelevazi Daka (Ng'oma) and Join Phiri, with Asuwelo Mwale playing pilingilo drum rhythm. Daka also plays the chief drum part. Recorded at Congololo village.

I have given, I have given, kunengenela, I have given.

See these: they have stolen liver belonging to Filidili --

Liver belonging to another. Now there will be trouble.

Mwamba, Mwamba: child, child, pounding.

I am the child,

I, I, I -- really pounding.

Pounding, pounding; pounding, child, pounding.

Mine, mine, mine.

Mine, really mine.

I have given beer, beer;

My own beer.

It is dawn, dawn, dawn:

Truly dawn, Daka:

Daka, Daka, my sweetheart.

Child, child, child --

Child pounding like this.

See these; they have stolen liver belonging to Filidili.

How nice beer is! Do not underestimate it!

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Recordings and notes
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