

CHRONICLES OF BAILUNDO

[Descriptive note by Merlin Ennis]¹

The Beginnings of Mbalundu² and a List of the Kings

It seems that this is a collection of legends about the old time kings and some salient facts about the more recent incumbents. King Ekuikui II is the central figure in this list of twenty three kings. Eleven kings precede him and there are eleven successors. In the two hundred or more years between the founding of the kingdom by the Ovimbundu eleven kings seem to be too few when we find the same number in the fifty odd years following Ekueikui³ The Great. In fact in the chronicle two are named as kings whose names are not included in the list. There is a third mentioned in the like⁴ of Kapila.

Before the coming of the Ovimbundu parts of the later kingdom were held by the Va Nganda and the Va Humbi and probably there were others. There is no account of the expulsion of those pastoral peoples nor the name of the leader who did it. The list begins with Ekuikui I whose father Chingi⁵ was king before him.

In the list of the kings of Wambu when there seemed to be too few names for the lapse of time, the informer pointed out that on occasion two or more kings, in succession, had the same name. It is possible that the same may be true of this abbreviated list.

The recorded legends throw a light on the ways of the past and the politics of the time.

THE BEGINNING IN BAILUNDO

¹ In the original, this observation appears handwritten in blue ink. As indicated by the remark in brackets, this index, in English in the original source, seems to have been compiled by Congregational missionary Merlin Ennis and added to the source in Umbundu, which was registered by Congregational missionary Uno J. Minto. Excerpts that are in English in the original appear in italics. If this is not the case, the text presented here has been translated from the original in Umbundu.

² Mbalundu is the Umbundu equivalent for Bailundo, the Portuguese transliteration for the name of this polity located in the Central Highlands of Angola.

³ Ekuikui is meant here.

⁴ This is probably a misspelling of "life" since the archives of the ABCFM include an autobiographical narrative of the life of Kapila, one of the first Umbundu speakers to be ordained a pastor by the Congregational mission.

⁵ Cingi is meant here.

1. Ekuikui the Elder I
2. Hundungulu the Elder I
3. Cisende the Elder I
4. Gunji said: "I am Gunji, who has the pillar; on the day it topples, all the plates and pot lids, everything will break."
5. Civukuvuku Sekeseke said: "If you are Gunji, I am Sekeseke; I shall saw this beam until it topples."
6. Utondosi
7. Ñafa⁶ Bonge
8. Cisende the Elder II
9. Katiavale the Elder I
10. Katiavala the Other II
11. Hundungulu the Second II
12. Ekuikui the Second II
13. Bulu
14. Cingi the Elder I
15. Cingi the Successor II
16. Kalandula I
17. Numa
18. Kangovi
19. Kalandula the Second II
20. Vasuovava
21. Ekongo
22. Cisende the Third III
23. Jahulu

THE BEGINNING IN BAILUNDO

⁶ ~ indicates the nasalization of vowels and consonants. † indicates nasalization of the letter 'l'. The symbols are reproduced as they appear in original source.

THE KINGS OF BAILUNDO: No. 1.

1. Ekuikui the Elder I. The insect that cannot be eaten by the bird.
2. Hundungulu I
3. Cisende the Elder I
4. Gunji – Who has the pillar; on the day it topples, everything on it will die.
5. Civukuvuku
6. Utondosi
7. Ñala [Lord] Bonge
8. Cisende II
9. Vasovava – I have never seen a kingdom like mine.
10. Ekongo – Of the Goats
11. Ekuikui II
12. Katiavala
13. Numa
14. Hundungulu II
15. Kalandula
16. Cisende III
17. Jahulu
18. Cingi
19. Kangovi

THE KINGS OF BAILUNDO: No. 2.

1. Ekuikui the Previous.
2. Hundungulu the Previous
3. Cisende I
4. Gunji said: “I am the pillar that holds the beam; on the day it topples, both the plates and the lids and pots, everything will die.”
5. Civukuvuku Sekeseke said: “If you are Gunji, I am Sekeseke; I shall saw this pillar until it topples.”
6. Utondosi
7. Ñafa [Lord] Bonge
8. Cisende II the Previous the Second

9. Vasovava said: “Water eyes, I have never yet seen anything from which I might die;⁷ if I will be expelled, I don’t know.”

10. Ekongo [the Elder]. He of the Goats.

11. Ekuikui the New

12. Katiavala

13. Numa

14. Hundungulu the New

15. Kalandula II

16. Cisende III the New

17. Jahulu Kandimba

THE FEATS OF THE KINGS IN BAILUNDO No. 1.

EKUIKUI I. (His feats are as follows:)

People liked him a lot. There were wars at that time that brought together many people. He also went to fight in these wars, in which the king accompanied his subjects. They warred to the east, very far away, where the Ngangela live.⁸ The name of that country⁹ is Luando. On the way, they encountered people who were fighting and King Ekuikui

⁷ *Olhos d'água* in Portuguese, which literally translates as ‘water eyes,’ means a spring or source of water. Here it refers to the idea that nothing has passed before his eyes to lead him to believe he might die – that is, that his power might be taken away.

⁸ The Ngangela inhabit an area east of the region inhabited by Umbundu speakers, an area to which the latter travelled constantly to trade and make war. They speak a language similar to Umbundu.

⁹ *Ofeka* (plural *olofeka*) can be translated as both ‘country’ and ‘village.’

emerged victorious. As a result, he captured many people, bringing them back to his *ombala*¹⁰. All of them became his slaves.¹¹

He did not allow them to build anywhere other than in his *ombala*, so that they would revere him. When these people became adults and acquired wisdom, he allowed them to leave, saying: "Build wherever you wish." So they built in the *ombala*; they built here above where there is an enclosure with young women.

After leaving there, they went up to Valverde and stayed there for some time. Afterwards, they left again and headed to the village of Cilume, where they remained with their children.

Even today, these people say that they are the ones who began the village of Cilume. And they call us lads¹² of the court. That means that the latter belong to the king's army.

EKUIKUI I. No. 2.

It was Cingi who fought against the whites and fled to Loanda. He sired the king Ekuikui when he was on the run in Loanda. When Cingi died, his son Ekuikui was brought to reign

¹⁰ The *ombala* is the center of the kingdom (in Portuguese, *sobado*), a political formation whose central figures of government are the king (Portuguese, *soba*) and the council of elders (*akulu*). Here we have opted to maintain the Umbundu term, not translating *ombala* as 'capital,' for example. The objective is to indicate the particularity of this political formation, which is described in detail by this source. However, this does not prevent future readers from establishing parallels between this and other political formations. In translating to English, the Portuguese term *soba*, itself a Portuguese inflection of the Umbundu term *osoma*, has been translated as 'king' in order to maintain the clarity of the text. In Angola, these terms are very often used in the original language or in transliteration to Portuguese (*soba* is utilized more than *rei*, or 'king,' for example, while *ombala* is utilized more than 'capital'). In Angola, people also use the translation of these terms, however, which suggests that the speakers concerned presume a degree of parallelism between the political institutions described here and the European monarchy, the institution from which the Portuguese terms used in the comparison are derived. *Ombala yinene*, or great *ombala*, refers to the main *ombala* of the region, in relation to which the smaller *olombala* (plural of *ombala*) maintain a relation of dependence, obliged to pay tribute to the former and provide it with soldiers in war time. The same applies to the *osoma yinene*, literally 'great king,' who governs the *ombala yinene* and maintains a hierarchical relation with the other kings, matching the hierarchy between the *olombala*.

¹¹ The social position of the *upika* (plural, *apika*) designates a relation of dependence, generally deriving from the sale of this person to settle family debts or from their capture during warfare or a raid. Another possible translation would be 'servant' or 'serf.' In Angola, the equivalent most frequently identified in Portuguese for the Umbundu term is 'slave.'

¹² The court (*elombe*) is composed of various positions, as will become clear over the course of this narrative. Each position corresponds to a function. In the case of 'lads' (*akwenje*), these are young men loyal to the king who defend him and participate in his wars. The court hierarchy, as in the rest of the society, follows age-based criteria. These young men are thus subordinate to the king, who is himself subordinate to the council of elders (*akulu*).

here in Bailundo. Afterwards Ekuikui went to make war in Luandu and against the people of Cilume, saying: "I will expel them from this village of Cilume."

KING EKUIKUI I.

It was Cingi who fought against the whites. Afterwards the whites won. He was a *mulato* [mixed race]. Many Ovimbundu liked him.

When the whites captured him, they took him to Benguela¹³ and gave him the work of feeding the pigs. After staying there for many years, he sired the son called Ekuikui Cikundiakundia, the insect who cannot be eaten by birds. This name recalled how he had remained alive even though the whites had captured him.

This son grew up in Benguela. Afterwards his father said: "I want you to go to Bailundo and inherit my throne. But, my son, do not fight anymore with the whites so you do not lose in the same way as I have, here in Benguela."

This son Ekuikui Cikundiakundia Cipuka, who cannot be eaten by birds, no longer passed through Elongo. He travelled along the Punguandongo path with the others instead and arrived as far as Bailundo. And he began to say: "If someone has difficult issues, they can bring them to me. I shall resolve them all." The people liked him a lot and said: "It's good that there is someone important in this country, since the father was a highly respected person." On hearing this, he killed some oxen that he had bought with a necklace. The people who ate it said: "He is the king! He is the king!"

His father was never released, since they said: "Otherwise he will embark on more wars with his son." And he died; he did not join his son.

But he did not build on the small mountain of Bailundo. Nobody knows where he built. "This king," the elders say, "built in Luvulo." They say that he built in Luvulo.

And he nominated Hundungulu, saying: "He will be my successor.¹⁴ If I die, he will know how to govern." We cannot explain how he died, since we were not told this. We did not see it with our own eyes; only our parents, grandparents and elders know.

¹³ Baka, or Mbaka, is the name by which the city of Benguela is called in Umbundu. It literally signifies "place of packing" (Alves 1951, p. 651). It was there that the trade caravans headed to fetch bundles of merchandise.

¹⁴ *Epalanga* can be translated as successor or viceroy. It comprises a position of the court of Bailundo chosen by the king. The *epalanga* acts as the king's spokesman when the latter is reigning and assumes the throne after his death.

EKUIKUI I. (His feats are as follows:) No. 5.

It was King Ekuikui who captured the inhabitants of Cilume, whose lineage came from Luandu. They were many when they arrived and it was the king's son who received all these people. Just six were left: three women and three men. These are the people who founded Cilume.

King Ekuikui was the son of the Soma¹⁵ Cingi, who went to Loanda with the whites. Ekuikui was the first to fetch the inhabitants of Cilume from their country in Luandu. When they came, they were many, but the king's son received them all and left just six: three men and three women.

So the king indicated Cilume to them, saying: "You are the king's inhabitants of Cilume, so that if there is something urgent, he will send word to here in Cilume as quickly as possible, since it is where he places the most trust."

EKUIKUI I. No. 1.

This king is the son of Cingi. Cingi is the son of Jahulu. Jahulu is the son of Katiavala. His governance was good and all the people liked him because he did well by them. He had begun his wars against the people of Ngangela. On arrival in Kuanja, which was a foreign country, they thought: "If we take weapons, we will be recognized and certainly killed." So, they collected leaves and let them dry. They then filled their sacks. And they carried them so that if someone saw them, they would say: "They are caravaners who went to trade."¹⁶ After arriving where they wanted, they made war, won and took with them many people along with everything that they liked. His people made the constructions in the surrounding area and baptized the place Cilume, which signifies "where hope is placed, my right hand." And he went again to Cisakela, from where he also brought many people.

¹⁵ In Umbundu in the original, Soma designates a position – the position of king – just like Cilala, Epalanga or Muekalia designate positions in the court. In those occurrences where the term refers to the name of a political post occupied by a specific person, this term has been maintained. In Angola, the term *osoma*, here translated as 'king,' has been transliterated into Portuguese as *soba*.

¹⁶ In the trade caravans, the main economic activity in the Central Highlands of Angola over the centuries that encompassed slave trafficking, its abolition and the trade in wax and rubber (seventeenth century to the beginnings of the twentieth century), the carriers transported in single file the produce to be sold on the coast (see Heywood 2000; Cândido 2013).

KING HUNDUNGULU I. No. 5.

King Hundungulu did not engage in many wars. After he died, King Utondosi governed.

KING HUNDUNGULU I.

This king remained little time; he soon died. And someone else began to reign, since that was how it was in the past: if the ruler died, someone would immediately take the throne.

KING HUNDUNGULU AND CISENDE. No. 1.

These two kings reigned at the same time. Because the people first chose Hundungulu as a king. A short while later they became annoyed and wanted Cisende. Then Hundungulu left there and fled. After Cisende annoyed them, they ordered for King Hundungulu to be called back and gave him the keys to the court. And Cisende fled to Cinjamba. After Hundungulu annoyed them again, they expelled him and called Cisende again. And so they continued until these kings died.

KING CISENDE THE ELDER I No. 2.

We do not know about the feats of this king. We heard that he went to Tanganyika to raid the Ngangela.

His other feats are unknown to us, otherwise we would narrate them.

KING CISENDE THE PREVIOUS I No. 5.

This king expelled King Bonge from the throne. But during the time when Bonge was expelled, the people warred frequently; for this reason, many people liked him a lot.

Cisende I did not govern for very long. He remained for just one year, he was burned inside his house and died.

KING GUNJI (Who has the pillar) No. 1.

King Gunji is the son of Soma Cisende I. This name, Gunji, comes from the proverb that says: "He is the beam that has the pillar; if it breaks, everything it supports will fall; whether troughs or pots, everything will die."

Lord Gunji had his army lad to make war. His name was Cimanda. He himself, the king, did not go to war; he just ordered his troops.

He [Cimanda] is the one who led the war. First, he went to Cango. On leaving, the king advised him, saying: "I cannot go; you go. But be smart with all the people who are with you and persevere. Do not slip up so that you are not defeated. If you are defeated, you will leave the great *ombala* so that we are not filled with shame when we face the people and other kings.

He replied: "You're right, I understand, oh, Soma." When they went to encounter these people, they did not stay for very long. They raided and captured people, loot and children, which they brought to the king. On seeing this, the king was overjoyed to discover that they had brought him people. In the past, the kings really liked having slaves. And it was not just slaves; some people were captured and sold to the whites in Portugal.

Some sold them for fabric or money. Others were sold for spirit because of the alcoholism.

Cango is the village of King Gunji.

The other war was as follows: the king went again to Civula. His lad called Cimanda had gone to capture more people and oxen. When he brought them to the king, the latter liked receiving people very much. Among them were some good-looking men, who he placed in his house.

But from the wars came a woman. The king liked her very much and married her. She became Nasoma, wife of the king. He had a son with her to whom he gave the name Cisende III.

When Cisende grew up, they put him in the place of the king, and he reigned.

The king's lad called Cimanda destroyed much of the country after waging various wars. People began to hate him a lot and, fearing that he would disperse the country, they hatched a plan to kill him. Because they said: "The king likes him a lot." So, they seized him and killed him.

THE FEATS OF KING GUNJI. These are the same because King Cingi came first; King Gunji replaced him.

The lad of king Gunji was killed by the people because they were jealous. He was killed because the people wanted king Gunji to be overthrown, but they were scared of his lad, who was a good warrior and knew how to fight. He fought against many countries. For this reason, they said: "Let's kill him first; after all this lad, as he is a good warrior, can help the king." So, they first killed the lad and afterwards expelled the king from the *ombala*.

As soon as the lad was killed, they betrayed the king, who was already hated for having killed an important elder, Muekalia. Consequently, the elders went to speak to another king, saying: "Our king who is in Bailundo, we don't want him anymore. We want you. Come, let's expel him together, you and us, elders, so that you can reign. We like you." The king immediately agreed. When they arrived, they found the king in his village. As they were arriving, the king heard, reflected a while and said: "I am the king; leaving the *ombala* here makes me ashamed; I am never leaving again, I shall simply kill myself." So he took a gun, entered his house, shot himself and died. He said: "I'm ashamed over these people." And King Civukuvuku reigned for real.

King Civukuvuku is the same one called Sekeseke; we did not see his feats well.

KING GUNJI. No. 2.

When King Cisende died he was replaced by Gunji because the latter was his successor. But Civukuvuku Sekeseke did not like him because he was the son of Soma Cisende. They wanted to wage war, but the people warned them, saying: "Don't do that!" They just engaged in a war of names. One of them said: "I am Gunji, who has the pillar; when it breaks, the plates and the lids and troughs, all of them will die." Sekeseke said: "I'll saw this beam until it breaks. It won't be me who is the beam because people like Sekeseke a lot." But Gunji did not wait until Sekeseke began the war, since he said: "Otherwise I'll be expelled like a dog." He entered his large house with a small gun and shot himself. Then began the kingdom of Soma Civukuvuku Sekeseke.

KING GUNJI. No. 2.

On dying, King Cisende left as a successor Gunji, who has the pillar. He said: "Leave me in the position like a beam held up by a pillar. I have to be strong; otherwise, it will split and all the objects will break."

During his governance, he wanted Bailundo to grow. As he had many people, he prepared wars to capture lots more in other countries. He had two strong lads: Cimanda and another one I do not recall.

At that time, the fight was for the spoils left by King Ekuikui, who had left Benguela. They headed to Sambu, captured many people and brought them here. In order to appear rich, the king took some of these people to Benguela and sold those who had poor behaviour. Among the king's slaves, some had good behaviour. Consequently, he gave them a village and said: "Build! But I shall seize and eat¹⁷ anyone who is stubborn."

These people marched for a long time. Afterwards they decided to build in the woods where there were lions. He gave them the name Kandingili: nobody manages to eat them, unless it is the king's son. The other name was Cilume, since all of those there are men who belong to me, the king. After many years, trouble brewed because king Cisende had left a son called Civukuvuku Sekeseke. This son said: "I want to receive the throne from my father." Gunji said: "I don't accept it! Don't you know that your father left me in the position like the beam held up by the pillar? And that when you remove me from there, the people will tend to scatter?"

He said: "I want to see this beam until it topples, because I am Sekeseke."

These stubborn disputes lasted many years, but the people liked Sekeseke. Gunji was hated because he despised the free; he only liked slaves. The people caused a real commotion because they refused to accept it. So Gunji reflected for a long time and said: "I shall shoot myself; otherwise, I shall be expelled like a dog or someone unimportant." The next day, the parents said: "He entered his large house and shot himself with a small gun." All the slaves dispersed. Only those to whom he had given the village of Cilume stayed.

And Civukuvuku Sekeseke had time to govern. But he was unable to sit any longer in Cilume because their Sekulu¹⁸ had died; he gave him just a name of his kingdom.

KING GUNJI.

No. 5.

¹⁷ 'Eat,' here, refers to the relation of strength between the king and his subjects. *Okulia* is used in Umbundu to designate a relation of submission in which the strongest 'eats' the weakest.

¹⁸ *Sekulu* is an elder who forms part of the king's council.

During the reign of King Gunji there was a drought. The people hated him because they felt very hungry. So king Civukuvuku wanted to remove him from the throne. And he [Gunji], believing that he had the power of a king and could not be sent away like a dog, entered the house and shot himself with a small gun. So King Civukuvuku governed.

KING GUNJI

He reigned in times of famine caused by the long drought that occurred during this period. For this reason, the people hated him a lot.

Because of the people's hatred, another king wanted to remove him from the position. Even so, he did not want to leave the throne like a dog and shot himself.

KING CIVUKUVUKU SEKESEKE No. 2.

This was the king who exonerated his father's successor. In his time, there was nowhere to make war because all the countries were subjugated¹⁹ in the time of Soma Gunji.

This king suffered a lot because all the people who he met were on the side of king Gunji. So he thought about silently convoking again some people who were on his side in order to wage some wars. But it was very hard work because Gunji had already raided all the countries; even so he went back to them, raiding all those that were still there.

He thought: "When Soma Gunji kills himself, I shall receive all his things." Eventually, when the Soma did kill himself, the people looted all his things: oxen, pigs, sheep, bales, everything that he had. All the servants became rich with the things of their Master.

King Civukuvuku thought about capturing all the looters but was unable to do so; all the slaves fled.

He thus suffered greatly. He encountered some riches where he came from because he once again raided all the surrounding villages.

These are the feats of Civukuvuku. He did not remain for very long; he was also decapitated and buried in the *ombala*.

¹⁹ The verb used here in Umbundu is *okupokola*. This refers to the act of "domesticating, taming, bowing, lowering" (Alves 1951, p. 1123), "serving, obeying, respecting, being subjected" (Alves 1951, p. 1124). In this context, the reference is to 'vassalization' or 'pacification' of the Central Highlands region by the Portuguese military forces, through which the colonial administration became established in the territory after the War of Bailundo (1902-1903). As well as the obligation of the kings, after this turning point, to provide a workforce and pay taxes to the Portuguese government, they were also prohibited from making war or forming independent alliances with surrounding political formations.

KING CIVUKUVUKU SEKESEKE No. 5.

Little was heard about King Civukuvuku. All that is known is that he plotted against the other king; but it is not known whether he did something about which people heard speak.

KING CIVUKUVUKU SEKESEKE No. 5.

Little has been heard about what he did during his reign. Perhaps because there was a lot of jealousy among the people. During the time he governed, not much was heard about his reign. It is thought he was very jealous of king Gunji, but when he reigned, he did nothing to make his name famous.

KING UTONDOSI No. 2.

King Utondosi did not do anything; he did not mistreat people or make war. So, he was loved by many people.

KING UTONDOSI No. 5.

King Utondosi reigned when they founded Cilume village. He remained until he died and was buried in his *ombala*. As he waged no wars, he did not become famous.

KING UTONDOSI

This king reigned when the people from Luandu built here in Cilume. In the time of his government there were no wars; consequently, this king had no fame. He did not stay much time; he soon died. After his death, he was buried in his own *ombala*.

KING ÑALA BONGE No. 1.

During his reign, Ñala Bonge warred against King Cisende II. The latter left his village in Kambala to fight against King Bonge.

King Ñala Bonge reigned for a long time in the *ombala*. Because of this, the elders hated him; all of them were closer to the new king, Cisende. They said: "Soma Bonge has already annoyed us." Consequently, they incited Soma Cisende to govern the *ombala* of Bailundo.

Ñala Bonge, on seeing the elders had abandoned him, said: "I'm going to leave." So he fled. He fled to Wambu in the village of the *imbundu*,²⁰ saying: "So they don't see me." At that time, there were no white people in the Wambu villages; there were just the *imbundu*.

On being expelled from the *ombala*, King Ñala Bonge took everything that was his. He did not leave anything there: people, oxen, pigs and sheep, he took everything with him.

KING ÑALA BONGE No. 1.

When Ñala Ekuikui died, the people went after another king whose name was Bonge. He was from the family of the king who had been expelled previously.

We realized this when he was already reigning and people soon began to plot against him, saying: "Let's choose someone else to govern us. We don't want Bonge anymore."

On seeing these people after him, he said: "But weren't you the ones who fetched me from our village, saying 'Come and govern us'? Why do you want to kill me? If you want the throne back, take it in peace. Okay! I shall not do anything to you. Don't kill me for this. Your throne is there, take it."

"I don't want it." And he left there in peace. On hearing him, the people said: "He had good sense." And in the language of the people, they say about someone who does something reasonable: "He has the good sense of Ñala Bonge."

KING ÑALA BONGE No. 2.

King Bonge belonged to the great family. He himself was the successor of king Utondosi. With the death of Utondosi, he inherited his throne in Bailundo.

His feats do not compare with those of King Utondosi, who really liked making war.

During his government, nobody went to war. For this reason, the neighbouring countries had much disdain for the kingdom of Bailundo.

²⁰ *Imbundu*, plural of *umbundu*, the form most often used locally to designate the person speaking the Umbundu language or a descendent of its speakers. Ovimbundu, the ethnic term, is rarely used in the Central Highlands by native speakers of Umbundu, who also apply the term 'umbundu' to speakers of the language. This overlapping of language and speaking population is also observed in relation to Kimbundu, whose speakers are also called Kimbundu.

In thinking of this, he began some wars against the people of Ciyanga. The people of Bailundo won and captured many people. It was from there that Sekulu Samuele Kapila came.²¹

People thought: “We will find another valiant king like Gunji or Sekeseke. But Bonge did not start other wars and they began to hate him, saying: “The countries are disobedient.²² Are you not going to start a war?” He said: “I can’t do it.” And the hatred for him just grew.

A little while later the lads of the court said: “We want to plot against this king because he is worthless.” On hearing this, Bonge fled during the night with all his family, taking the oxen, all his goods and his slaves. He left nothing for the people. He went to the mount located near to Kaputu. He died there, but his body was brought to the *ombala*.

KING ÑALA BONGE No. 5.

King Bonge was the king of peace. All the people liked him a lot because of his peaceful nature. That is why they plotted against him.

One time the king ordered his lad to the villages with a gun. Seeing a woman in the fields, the lad thought: “I shall test the king’s gun to see if it really works.” He shot at the woman and she died. When they learned about this, the people spoke with the king, saying: “If you are the king of peace, why is it that your lad killed someone? It’s because you didn’t rebuke him.” This is why the king was expelled from the *ombala*. So he settled on Mount Keve. But when he died, they brought him to the *ombala* to be buried.

KING ÑALA BONGE No. 5.

Many people liked this king because of his peaceful demeanour. One day the king sent his lad to the villages, but in doing so he handed him a gun. On the way he met someone and tested the gun in her direction, pretending to shoot to see if the gun worked. The

²¹ Sekulu indicates his status as an elder. Samuele is the transliteration of Samuel to Umbundu. Kapila is the name in Umbundu that became the surname of this man who was one of the first preachers of the Congregational Church in the Central Highlands. A letter handwritten by himself in Umbundu is available in the archives of the ABCFM in Houghton Library.

²² This observation related to the political-military superiority of the political formation of Bailundo in the region. The dissatisfaction with Bonge arose from the logic that in order for Bailundo to maintain this position, it was necessary to subjugate through force all the surrounding kingdoms that rebelled, pillaging them of their people and things, and making them pay tribute in recognition of Bailundo’s superiority.

gun fired mistakenly and the person died. When they saw this, the people said: “Why doesn’t this peaceful king rebuke his lads?” That is why he was removed from the throne. He then fled to the upper Keve river.

But when he died, they brought him to the *ombala*. King Bonge was buried in it.

KING CISENDE II. No. 1.

The birth village of King Cisende is in Kambala. It was from there that he came to reign. He replaced Ñala Bonge, but his reign did not last long. Just one hunt was permitted, which is narrated as follows: the king recommends to everyone close to him that they hunt animals in the woods, but our elders call this hunt Ekanjo. For they are allowed to kill many animals and this hunt is the king’s. The king did not live for very long after organizing the hunt. He died and was substituted on the throne by his son Vasovava.

KING VASOVAVA No. 1.

Vasovava is the son of King Cisende II who he replaced. During this reign there were some wars that came from Cisakela. The king initiated them and also fought in them. These wars were undertaken to capture many persons and many animals. Even today in Bailundo there are elders who came from these wars.

These elders became important. Some were assigned to lead people in the administrative works.²³

When the king concluded the wars, he did not remain for very long; he soon died. So king Ekongo reigned.

KING VASOVAVA No. 2.

In the time of Ñala Bonge, if the king did bad things, he would be expelled or killed. The same recommendation existed with Cisende. Today they want to enthrone Vasovava,

²³ Here it becomes clear how people captured in the wars and raids, though they could not return to their villages as they wanted, became integrated into local society. They could even occupy leadership positions. Hence, although the term *upika*, applied to people captured in these contexts, is commonly translated as ‘slave,’ the status of an *upika* in the Central Highlands is not equivalent to the status of ‘slave’ that the people transported through slave trafficking to the Americas would acquire on the other continent. Since although they could be sold, they could also occupy positions in the court. Translating the term as ‘serf’ is not a solution free of problems either, given that the term originates from Western European medieval feudal society. The *apika* belonged to the king who captured them, but this did not impede their upward social mobility.

whose name means: “Water eyes, I have not yet seen anything; whether I shall be decapitated or expelled, about these things I still don’t know.” He did not stay very long. He was killed because he did not want to subjugate the neighbouring countries for them to obey Bailundo.

KING VASOVAVA No. 2.

In the time of King Cisende there was a law stipulating that if a king did not do good things – if, for example, he did not know how to lead a trial in the tribunal – he would be expelled like a dog or shot dead by the lads of the court. After the death of Soma Cisende, they wanted his successor to reign, but the latter was already dead. For this reason, they let Vasovava Kasoma govern. This name is a form of denial that signifies: “Water eyes, I have not yet seen anything; whether I shall be killed or expelled, or whether there will be intrigues, I still don’t know.”

He did nothing in relation to wars, but people were marvelled by his manner of making decisions in the tribunal, because he did so with much wisdom.

We know nothing about his death because only the elders and our parents heard about it.

These are the feats of King Vasovava.

KING VASOVAVA No. 5.

King Vasovava is the son of King Cisende Kambala. As his father was not enthroned, they chose his son Vasovava to govern. King Vasovava went to Buim and brought back some elders who are in Cilume. These are: Citunda and Samuhongo. Buim has two names; it is also called Cisakela.

In the waters²⁴ of King Vasovava was born Sekulu Tomasi. King Vasovava governed for just a year and died. He was loved and strong. He had an enormous body.

KING VASOVAVA No. 5.

²⁴ *Kovava*, literally ‘in the waters,’ refers to the annual rainy season. Metaphorically it thus designates a year.

He is the son of Soma Cisende. The latter sired him. As his father did not stay very long on the throne and died shortly after, the people thought about making his son Vasovava reign.

When he reigned, this king went to Buim and brought back some elders. They are: Citunda and Samuhongo.

Vasovava was very strong and loved, but he did not govern for long. He soon died, he stayed just a year and it was over.

KING EKONGO No. 1.

This king was already old when he was chosen to govern. The people chose him for his good feats. For this, they said: "An old king has wisdom."

In the period of this king there was also a war coming from a country called Ciyanga. The Ciyanga people were much feared. Even so, King Ekongo was victorious against them.

So he began to capture the people and their oxen. These people were called Ngoya.

When he arrived with these people, he did not allow them to build far away from him.

They had to build in the king's village. He had many slaves, which he sold to the whites.

But these whites stayed only in Benguela. Here in Bailundo there were no whites. That is why they sold them in Benguela.

He married a woman. Her name was Katalina²⁵ and the people called her Inakulu [Elder Queen]. This queen also began wars. It was like that in the past: if the king began a war, he was also expected to go. In these wars to which the kings went, they would fight to the death and people would be captured to be the king's slaves. If he did not want to have slaves, he would sell them to the whites.

In the wars of Inakulu, however, they do not fight or kill people; they merely seize pigs.

In these wars, they took many pigs, which they brought here to the village in the *ombala*.

They called these wars *Ovita Viocipunda* [Raiding Wars²⁶]. The village of Katalina is in Ndambu and is also called Wombe.

²⁵ Katalina, the Umbundu form of Catarina (Umbundu has no 'r,' which is usually substituted by an 'l').

²⁶ In the literature on the region of Central and Southern Africa, the name commonly given to this type of attack against neighbours is the raid. In the translation, we have maintained the term 'war' because the source uses the same term in Umbundu, *ovita*, to speak of both wars and raids. In fact, the latter tended to be an important component of the former, given that it was how the army was remunerated.

People liked this king a lot because he was wise being an elder. All the country liked him a lot.

KING ÑALA EKONGO No. 1.

When Ñala Bonge left the *ombala*, who reigned was Ñala Ekongo lia Hombo. This king was not young; he reigned as an elder and was indeed already old. He was chosen due to a lack of nobles.²⁷ King Ekongo did not embark on any war; there were just two: the first was in Ciyanga with the Ngoya and the second was led by Inakulu Katilina, but it was not in this country, it was in Ngoya.

KING EKONGO No. 2.

He did nothing productive for the people; he only made them pay unfair fines by condemning them wrongly in the tribunal.

KING EKONGO No. 2.

In the era of Soma Ekongo, many things happened in relation to people being eaten. If someone met him carrying a beehive, this became an enormous problem because it signified the following: "Because you made me approach the corpse, you must pay me in oxen, people or wax."²⁸ If you meet the king while he was walking alone, with nobody accompanying him, you say: "I met the king." On arrival in the village, you say: "Pay me, because I walked with the king, conducting him." The successors of the king and Kasoma [Small King] must pay you even if you are a small child.

In his time, no child could walk alone because they would be captured.

They also placed large stones in the *ombala*; if the child did not know what these were and leaned on the stones, he or she would be captured. They would say: "You placed yourself in the king's service; if that's not the case, your father must pay."

He did not begin any war. It was in this period that our parents were born, we who are elders today.

²⁷ In Umbundu, *olombuale*. Another possible translation would be 'free people.'

²⁸ In Umbundu, *esela*, an Umbundization of the Portuguese *cera*, 'wax.'

At his death they say that he was twisted²⁹ like the others; but our parents did not see it, someone else told them.

These are the feats of Soma Ekongo lia Hombo.

KING EKONGO No. 5.

This king was blind, but he also participated in the wars fighting against the people of Wombe.

He went to the war in a sling,³⁰ but even so captured many people. Being blind, he did not know whether what he was wearing was a cloth; he had to ask people for them to tell him which cloth he was wearing.

He also did not stay very long; he soon died.

KING ÑALA EKUIKUI II No. 1.

King Ekuikui indeed achieved many feats. In his time, there were wars in the direction of Bongo. In these wars, on arriving in the latter country they found much meat; its inhabitants fled a lot and left the meat. In these wars, therefore, they did not capture people; they only looted their things.

The war expedition soon left there and, on the way, encountered a village. They fought against it because this village captured a member of the army; for this reason, they warred against it, defeated it and captured some of its inhabitants, who they brought here to the village. They were just six people.

Even so, many people came from these wars. From Viye³¹ also came people who had gone to war; people left for the war from many countries, including Civanda and Wambu.

²⁹ The reference is to the procedure of twisting the king's neck to separate his head from the body, as described below.

³⁰ In Umbundu, *owanda*. This was the method used to transport important people in the Central Highlands, where most of the transportation was made by porters, who commonly had the status of *apika* (see the earlier note on the translation of this term as 'slave'). In this specific case, the king was thus carried and stayed in the sling during the battles because he was blind as well as important. It was common, however, that for long-distance journeys both high members of the court and powerful whites were transported in this way.

³¹ Viye, transliterated into Portuguese as Bié, was one of the most powerful political formations of the Central Highlands in the period that preceded its 'vassalization.' As becomes clear in this narrative, it rivalled Bailundo in terms of military might and the range of its influence over neighbouring kingdoms.

When they go to these distant wars in this country, they go further than Benguela Velha.³² When the king reinitiated the wars, they went to a country called Kepuai. This country was close to Sumbe and its population was indeed much feared. Even so, in this war they captured just six people. Some people from the army also died in this war, but not many. All the people captured in the war became slaves of the king, who kept them in the *ombala*, saying: “So that they do my work.”

The wars of King Ekuikui are the same as the previous ones. He had begun a war to which he also went. In this country called Wombe, Sita-Liondombo came from the east.³³ This name is a proverb that means: “Bundle of summer firewood that burns those in a hurry”; the people abbreviated the name to Sita.

Thus, on departing the armies encountered the village of Sita; but this village does not have many paths leading to the entrance, there is just one path. So many members of the army died because all the people from this village were very astute; when they heard that the army was approaching, they set up ambushes on the path along which the army would pass.

As the army did not know this, they rushed ahead without perceiving the ambush. The village’s inhabitants killed them, but not all of them died, just some.

But who wrote about this was slightly mistaken because we were in a rush to write about the wars of Kepuai. It is not what happened. These wars of Sita were the first; the wars of Kepuai would come later.

Next the king began another war with many people in the direction of the country of Dondi.

KING ÑALA EKUIKUI II No. 1.

³² *Benguela Velho*, in Portuguese, appears in the Umbundu original. Benguela Velha (Old Benguela) was a port located close to the present-day Porto Amboim. It was a colony of Portugal in the second half of the sixteenth century, but the locality was abandoned for more than a century after the Portuguese resident in the locality were killed or expelled due to misunderstandings with the king concerning his sovereignty. At the start of the seventeenth century, the Portuguese presence in the region shifted further south, to the region where Benguela is found today. The region of Benguela Velha would be occupied again by the Portuguese in the second half of the eighteenth century.

³³ *Nano*, in Umbundu, can be translated as ‘east’ and as ‘above.’ The inhabitants of the Central Highlands were commonly designated as Vanano (literally ‘those of the high ground’ or ‘those from above’) by the neighbouring peoples due to the fact that they inhabited a higher geographic region than the adjacent regions.

He is the most important of the kings. But he was from the generation that precedes Namba. He did many things. It was during his fire³⁴ that the whites became firmly established in the country.

His name is Cisengele-Colongupa. On taking the throne, he said: "I am Ekuikui Cikundiakundia Cipuka Kaliwa la Njila [The Larva *Cikundiakundia* that Cannot Be Eaten by the Bird]." This means: "I escaped; I shall not be defeated by anything."

During his fire all the inhabitants of other countries began to respect the name of Bailundo more. He vanquished many countries. He made the inhabitants of Cilenge tremble on hearing his name. But the country he went to the most was Wombe; it was there that they fetched many people.

One day he sent a message to the Soma of Viye in which he said: "As there exists much rancour between us, come to talk properly. Because you are a child and I am older, it's not good that we provoke each other." King Ciponge of Viye replied: "Tell him that I wouldn't talk with someone toothless." On hearing this, Soma Ekuikui said: "Very well." And he waited for Ciponge to fetch his bales.³⁵ The Soma, Ñala Ekuikui, seized all his cargo. And he told Ciponge's lads: "Go to your Lord, my younger brother Ciponge, and tell him that Ekuikui, that toothless man, bites even without teeth. His gums bite hard enough."

The people of Ciyaka put him in a song that says:

Ekuikui, wow! Ekuikui, wow!

Let Civanda fall to earth.

Let Bailundo look to Ciyaka.

We shall not clear woods, we shall not cultivate.

We bow to Ekuikui, wow!

At dawn, all the birds of the sky sing his name alone.

³⁴ Here, fire indicates the time of his government. On being enthroned, the king puts out the fire of his predecessor and lights his own. Thus the time of a reign is equivalent to the time over which the fire of this king is alight. Ekuikui II governed from 1876 to 1890.

³⁵ As Viye is located east of Bailundo, the caravans that left there heading towards the coast passed through Bailundo on the way to Benguela.

He was the one who ordered the teachers³⁶ back to Viye. He simply did not understand. He thought: "They are my lads." Because the Soma liked everyone to obey him, both the whites and the Ovimbundu. But he liked even more to loot their things. He gave to this the name of Omaka ya Ñala Ekuikui [Provocation of Lord Ekuikui]. For this reason, he liked the whites.

One time Ñala Stover wanted to help the wife and son of one of his lads. Because the army that the Soma had sent had reached Njamba. But this army had gone to loot only, not to kill. They brought them to the *ombala*. Ñala Stover stood up to say words to save the woman, in line with the respectful ways of the whites. But the respect of the whites is disrespect for the kings here. The Soma was furious, he grabbed him, beat his head on the stone angrily and said: "You are just a little toad! You think you can speak to me standing up, me the king? You toads are very stubborn. Because of that, I am not going to hand over this woman, you should give something for her." So they took fabrics and delivered them to the Soma so that the woman and her son would be handed over.

After reigning for a long time, the most important people began to feel jealous of him and came to an agreement to kill him. They said: "So that we too can reign and not just him; our country belongs to many people." When dying, he said: "I am the last of the great kings; those who succeed me will not reach the same level."

HIS FEATS:

Fought against Viye.

Fought against Cilenge.

Fought against all of Wombe.

Fought against Esele.

Fought against Civanda.

Fought against Cisanji.

Raided the whites as far as Loanda.

Sustained Tisiela, the first *mueputu*.³⁷

Received the teachers.

³⁶ *Alongisi* here refers to the missionaries of the Congregational mission. They were called 'teachers' in Umbundu because they had settled in the Central Highlands with the promise to teach the young to read and write.

³⁷ *Mueputu* was the form by which the governors linked to Portugal (in Umbundu, Putu) were designated in Umbundu.

Raided Ciponge.

Cut people's nose and ears.

Punished the whites.

Made the whole of Bailundo a famous country.

Inakulu Cipapa died in 1924.

KING ÑALA EKUIKUI II No. 2.

It was in the period of King Ekuikui that the peaceful whites came to this country. This king in part was good for the whites because he allowed them to build in his kingdom, but he also punished them a lot. In his time, the population was large, both slaves and rich people. But anyone looking at the king's wife would be killed immediately. If the king's wife came, everyone fled; otherwise, they would make the person speak and consequently they would be killed. It is not permitted to receive a gourd from the hands of the king's wife; she must first place it on the ground and only then can one take it and drink. If you receive it from her hand and are accused, they will pierce your eyes or cut your hand, ear or leg.

Even when the peaceful ones [whites] came, they sent a message to the king of Viye, saying: "The whites are coming; order them all to be killed, king of Viye. If you don't do this, I will fight against you." He was an extraordinary man in strength and in war. All the surrounding countries – Esele, Viye, Bukusu – obeyed Bailundo. At that time, he perceived that he was someone loved by everyone, whites and Ovimbundu. When he was alive, he always said: "Sons, you won't be able to contain what is set to happen. You will obey the whites, you will be their slaves, they will be superior to you."

King Ekuikui, though he was highly esteemed, did some bad things. One day Ñala Stover spoke the word of God to him a little. Not liking it, he grabbed him, beat him on a large rock and said: "Sit down there, you little snail!" So he sat down and began to speak seated. Even when their things were looted, they remained happy; they did not get in the least angry and even made those who robbed them laugh. For this reason, they gave them the name of meek, because of the peaceful silence, a name that eventually caught on.

This King Ekuikui had a very light skin and possessed a large livestock of oxen, sheep, goats and so on.

During his reign, the number of whites began to increase considerably in the country. It was also during his reign that the teachers began to come up: Ñała Sandele, Sacikele, Meła³⁸ and others.

If we recount his feats, there are many bad ones and many good ones. In his time, many things happened, for example: if a bit of his saliva touched someone when he spat, this caused many problems. There are many [...] things that he did to eat people.

From the time of King Ekuikui came the habit of marrying many women. He himself married many. If someone addresses the king's wife, he is killed immediately, has his eyes pierced, his fingers cut, or something else.

During his time, nobody would receive an object from the hand of the king's wife. If she wanted to give something to someone, she had to put it on the ground in order for the person to take it and eat; otherwise the person would immediately die. He also had much poison³⁹ to kill people who criticized him or did him some wrong.

Even when the teachers came, he did not like it. As they settled in Viye, Ekuikui sent some inhabitants of Humbi to tell them: "Since there are many things, take the small asses for yourselves." And he also recommended: "Kill them on the road and bring their things to me." When the king of Viye heard this, he quickly sent messengers saying: "Return immediately! I don't want whites here in Viye. If you come, I'll kill everyone."

As they had been here for a long time, the king perceived that they were real people, they were not like the other whites. And he sent them back, saying: "Let them all return! Here if they do any harm, I shall kill everyone." And nothing bad was found in them.

When they returned to Viye after they had stayed a long time, he ordered all their things to be stolen. One day in the *ombala*, Ñała Stover spoke a little for them. On reading, he read seated, but to explain he wanted to stand up. They said: "You don't respect us!" Soma Ekuikui stood up and forced him to sit on the stone, saying: "Sit down, you little snail!" They gave him the name of snail: since they remain silent when they are robbed,

³⁸ Transliteration into Umbundu of the name of the missionary Miller.

³⁹ *Ovinenu*, transliteration of the Portuguese *veneno*, venom, poison.

he gave them the name Afuku [meek ones]. Even when they are robbed, they make the person who robs them laugh and love us a lot.

This king governed for a long time, like Soma Gunji who has the pillar. And many things were done in his time.

During this period, as he was very valiant, nobody managed to plot against him to remove him, since he bit and blew at the same time like the bug.

When he was very old he started to become very sick. They tried to cure him with various medications, but none worked. Shortly before he died, all the women were sent away from the court and the king remained with just the *apalanga*, *olomuekalia* and other dignitaries. In the middle of the night they twist his neck because he no longer had the strength to fight or cry out. Afterwards they tie a rope around his neck and when the neck comes loose, they say: "Today the king died." That was how it was at the time, no king died by himself. King Ekuikui died that way too.

KING ÑALA EKUIKUI II. No. 5.

Ekuikui made people suffer a lot. He had many lads who inflicted suffering on all the people in the country. King Ekuikui advised about stealing other people's things; nobody could steal maize from the other person's fields. And someone who slept with another's woman would have his eyes pierced and would suffer a lot or be killed. If his lad committed some crime, he would be stoned like a dog. In his time, everyone was very well. At the time, it was the whites who brought the custom of stealing.

When King Ekuikui went to Bongo, he wanted everyone to know that he was on his way. He was like that, when he went to war, he did not want his arrival to be a surprise.

KING ÑALA EKUIKUI II. No. 5.

King Ekuikui caused much suffering to people, including the whites. He had many lads who inflicted suffering on people.

This King Ekuikui put an end to all the afflictions oppressing the people. He put an end to theft. Whoever robbed had their eyes pierced. "Anyone who robs will be stoned," he said, "so those seeing him won't steal."

If he wanted to make war on a country, he had the habit of first sending a message so that the people there knew, since he did not like to do something by surprise, without anyone knowing.

The Customs of the Ombala (Capital) of Mbalundu

A New King located his entourage according to the status of each group.

The seven entrances to the audience pavilion of the king. The etiquette required of those entering the same and their seating.

There were four classes of those who dedicated themselves to the king (oku litumbikila).

The kitchen of the royal compound. In charge of two sub-queens, the title of the lesser has the same meaning as that of Cinderella. The king eats of the first fruits in order to make them available to his subjects. The ash dump for the capital village.

Affairs of the royal compound: Royal breakfast, the chapel, worship, prophesy, the name of God not pronounced, the making of mummies.

The king and his counsellors, the king's crier, the meat storehouse, the burial rites of a king.

Muělēkalia, the high priest, divinities, rites and ceremonies.

The hunt of Kandundu. The worship of Kandundu, religious ceremonies connected, sacred meal, the regular diet of Kandundu was honey.

Inheriting the kingship. New charms and insignia. The women of the defunct king go wherever they please.

The commander of the armed forces lives in a village separated from the head village, his perquisites.

The ceremony of eating the old man.

The ceremonies connected with having an audience with the king, the crown of feathers and the inherited insignia of the king.

The coming of Teixeira da Silva and the destruction of the capital.

[descriptive notes by Merlin Ennis]⁴⁰

⁴⁰ In the original, this observation appears handwritten in blue ink.

CUSTOMS OF THE GREAT OMBALA OF BAILUNDO

On assuming government, the king begins by naming the people who will build the kingdom. The names given to them explain the functions to which they correspond and how they are constituted, whether they are free persons, sons of kings, lads from the court or old slaves. Next these people are sent to the outskirts of the *ombala*, saying: “This family will construct here; that one, over there.”

HOW TO ARRIVE AT THE ONJANGO⁴¹ OF THE COURT:⁴² First one passes through the entrance door; sometimes they say: “It’s the men’s entrance” (since everyone passes through this entrance, both those coming and those going. Even the king, on leaving for war, also stops at this entrance as though it were the starting point). After comes the entrance of the hoes (the king ordered a hoe to be placed at this entrance to block the sorcery spells⁴³ of other countries.⁴⁴ This hoe is new and the *quimbandeiro*⁴⁵ sprays it with medication⁴⁶ so that the spell is unable to pass beyond and reach the king). Finally there is the entrance to the court of accusations; there the accused are judged.

In this *onjango*, people bring their advocates⁴⁷ and sit separately. On arrival, they leave their walking stick and hat at the entrance since they cannot enter with them. The court is divided by seating. People are not permitted to sit just anywhere since this could cause more problems.

⁴¹ The *onjango* is a circular structure, generally wooden with a thatched roof. It is customarily located in the center of the villages and the *ombala*. In it are performed political and social functions like meetings and trials. In the colonial period, its central location was appropriated by Christian missions, which established their schools there (Edwards, 1962; Dulley, 2010).

⁴² In Umbundu, *elombe* refers to the part of the *ombala* reserved for the dwelling of the king and his assistants.

⁴³ *Umbanda* is one of the terms in Umbundu that was translated into Portuguese as *feitiço* (sorcery spell) or *malefício* (curse).

⁴⁴ *Olofeka*, plural of *ofeka*, can be translated as both ‘countries’ and ‘villages.’

⁴⁵ In the Portuguese of Angola, *quimbandeiro* is the equivalent of *ocimbanda*. Other possible translations are *curandeiro* (healer) or *adivinhador* (diviner).

⁴⁶ *Ihemba*, translated as *remédio* (medicine) or *feitiço* (spell) in Portuguese, is usually a preparation of herbs. It is common, however, for *ihemba* to be seen in translation as more beneficial than *umbanda*, a term frequently translated as *feitiço* or *malefício* (curse) (cf. Dulley in press).

⁴⁷ *Ondaka* (plural *olondaka*) literally signifies ‘word.’ In this context, it means someone who exercises the role of defense or prosecution advocate.

These seats are arranged in the following form: next to the door there is a semicircle with the seats of the Akesongo;⁴⁸ afterwards comes the seat of Cilala (the court guardian) and Epalanga (the king's successor). On the right side are sat the sons of the king, followed by Muekalia (who has the power to instate and remove the king) and the Soma.⁴⁹ They are the ones who take care of the entrance to the great *onjango*. Those awaiting trial sit on the tribunal's floor, but since they have already been heard, they have an idea of who will be found guilty and who will be absolved. These too are kept separate: the seats of those deemed guilty on one side, and the seats of those to be absolved on the other, along with their witnesses.

In some cases, the advocates need the resources to take the poison ordeal.⁵⁰ These are provided by the Soma along with the food they will consume en route. Everything is deposited at the tribunal. On leaving, those who believe themselves to be guilty immediately admit their guilt, saying: "The other's offering must be repaid." And they themselves make the repayment (placing it in the hands of the Soma along with an extra amount) and pay the other party to the process (for considering improper things in relation to another person, whether through words or actions).

THE GREAT ONJANGO OF THE COURT: On entering this *onjango*, anyone who forgets to leave their hat at the entrance to the tribunal should carry it in their hand; anyone who forgets and enters with their hat on their head will receive slaps from the lads of the court.

In this *onjango* there are stones (used as seats). Inside is the seat of the small Kesongo, who also performs the role of Kongengele (who carries the skull (a fleshless human head) and the *ocindambala* (axe), in case they go to war). The other seats are those of the Soma, the big Kesongo, Muekalia, Epalanga and Cinduli (a former slave who also has

⁴⁸ *Kesongo* is translated by Alves (1951, p. 313) as 'guide.' Since it is a term that designates a position and the corresponding status, it has been maintained in Umbundu.

⁴⁹ In Umbundu in the original, Soma designates a position (the position of *osoma*), just like Cilala, Epalanga or Muekalia. In the translation, *osoma* (Portuguese *soba*) has been translated as king. Where the term refers to the name designating the political position occupied by a specific person, the term employed in Umbundu, Soma, has been maintained.

⁵⁰ *Ombulungu*, a method to ascertain guilt through ingestion of a poisonous substance. According to Alves (1951, p. 694), the definition of *ombulungu* is "proof by poison, when the innocence of a defendant is doubted: if they vomit, they are innocent; if they die, they are guilty." The same test is mentioned in Hambly (1934).

power). There are also other seats for those wishing to approach the king. If a different person sits on one of the reserved seats, he or she will be in trouble. When the Ñala⁵¹ entered this country and visited this *onjango*, Ñala Miller unknowingly sat on the seat of Kesongo Kongengele. So the Soma said to him: “Not there! If you weren’t white, I would apprehend you.”

OFFERING SERVICE: Everyone who suffers in his or her family, whether slave or sorcerer,⁵² seeks refuge from the Soma, placing himself at the latter’s service and bowing before him.

There are various customs for volunteering one’s service:

- (1) One may simply approach the king, sit down and tear a piece of his cloth.
- (2) One may come with an axe and strike one of the court’s trees with it.
- (3) One may go to the kitchen and touch the Ndumbila firewood or sit facing it.
- (4) One may come to the great *onjango* and sit on the king’s seat. The lads of the court bring to the court all those offering their service; Inakulu rubs the person with oil and dresses them with a cloth and they become a slave of the court. Thereafter the person’s former Master can no longer recover him or her.

But whoever volunteers to serve in the kitchen has to be a woman. Men do this in the *onjango* or in the court. Thus, on arrival, he asks: “Where is the Soma?” The court lads respond: “Why do you ask about the king?” And he says: “I wish to speak with him,” or simply: “That’s my concern.” Then, one of the court lads will advise the Soma, saying: “Lord Soma, there is someone who seeks help.” Because they already know that anyone seeking help in this way comes to volunteer their service.

Not only slaves offered to serve. The children of the country also did so, because some fathers, though begetting the child, do not look after them. The child ends up as though fatherless. And seeing that those who offer their service at the court fare well, eat well

⁵¹ In this case, the term Ñala, translated into Portuguese as *Senhor* (Sir/Lord/Master) and applied to both people and the Christian God, refers to the congregational missionaries themselves responsible for the present account.

⁵² *Onganga*, generally translated to Portuguese as *feiticeiro*, sorcerer. However, the boundary between *onganga* and *ocimbanda*, translated usually as ‘curer’ or ‘diviner,’ is rather fluid.

and have clothes to wear, they also volunteer their service to the king and their father no longer sees them.

THE COURT KITCHEN: The kitchen is located near to the great *onjango*. In it are fed all the people close to the king and the visitors. But food is not cooked for the king there. On the fire of this kitchen are three logs; the fourth, the largest, is placed to one side and consecrated by burying the head and fingers of a person underneath it. (This person is killed. The Soma invites some lads from the court to head to the woods. On encountering someone walking alone, they grab him, kill him and cut off his head and three fingers.) When making funge,⁵³ they first set aside a small portion, which they call *ekasa* (sometimes *ondambele*); before beginning to place the funge on the plates, they leave a small amount on the log, saying: "It is the food of the owner who is there." The woman who tends this log and places food on it is called Ndumbila⁵⁴ (because she is responsible for the offerings). There are two Nasoma [Queens]: Inakulu Unene [Great Queen] and Ciwocepembe [Responsible for the Kitchen].⁵⁵ Both wear a human finger on top of their head, which is placed under their hair, under the braids, so that nobody notices. Hence, even if they go to the fields, they do not carry baskets or water gourds on their head. They only give orders; the young women are the ones who do the work. When sitting in the kitchen, they leave the fire in the middle of them. Inakulu Unene (Cipapa) steps on Ndumbila's log every time she sits down.

This kitchen has two doors that look like the court entrance because they open in the same way; even closing them, the difficulty is the same, they are made in the same way.

RITUAL OF THE KING'S HARVEST (beginning to eat the new food):

When the maize is ripe and people are already eating it, the king and most important elders will not yet taste it; they plan the correct day to eat the new food.

⁵³ Funge is the name given in Angola to the porridge that, in most cases, comprises the population's staple diet. In the Central Highlands, it is usually made from white or yellow maize.

⁵⁴ From *oku lumba*, to offer; hence, the offeror.

⁵⁵ *Ciwocepembe*, a word derived from the juxtaposition of *ciwo* (kitchen) and *cepembe* (peace), thus signifying the queen responsible for bringing peace to the kitchen.

The king orders the lads of the court to look for someone to kill. After they have killed someone, they remove the innards (slicing off a part of all the members and organs of the body: liver, leg, heart, etc.). They mix these things with ox meat and ferment *ocimbombo*;⁵⁶ they eat and drink and thus the new food is tasted.

Some important elders have done this, but without killing people; they kill just a small pig or other small animal and eat it with the new food. They add: "The ritual is performed, since if it is not, there will be sickness." There is also the custom of advising the children not to taste any food from the new harvest, even if offered to them at another house, before the ritual is held in their own house.

WASTE HEAP: Next to the great *onjango* and the kitchen there is a large waste heap, meaning that throughout the court there is just a single waste heap. There is no object of worship⁵⁷ on this heap, although this occurs in other countries. Here they make just one waste heap because they think: "Some children may forget and even throw away ashes that are still alight and if there are any large embers and it is windy, they may burn the village down." They thus reserve just a single heap next to the *onjango* and the kitchen to dispense with the need for guards; if they see fire, they rush to put it out. In all the outer areas that have their own waste heap, the recommendation is the same.

One of the outlying areas of the court, the space of the Cilala and his lads, who take care of the king in the *akokoto*⁵⁸ (graves of the kings), also has its own waste heap. This is located near to the entrance leading to the court. Cilala is also the guardian of the gunpowder house and the spirit offerings.⁵⁹ From there leaves the path that leads to the large rock where the people who have killed someone are kept imprisoned; if these people are judged guilty, they are also killed and thrown in a grave (a very long hole).

This small entrance was conceived for anyone who wishes to bring the Soma something that not everyone can see. That is the entrance used. Perhaps the Soma himself asks for it, saying: "I want such-and-such a thing." Perhaps he asks for meat, spirit or even honey. That is where the food enters, since if it passes through the large entrance, everybody

⁵⁶ A kind of homebrewed maize beer.

⁵⁷ In Umbundu, *efendelo*, 'worship thing.'

⁵⁸ Sacred location where the skulls of deceased kings are conserved.

⁵⁹ *Owalende*, distillate of sugar cane.

will want the Soma to share it with them. The Soma cannot eat alone. Thus, he does not usually eat what comes through the main entrance; he has to offer everything to the people who come until none is left. What passes through the small entrance is just for him and arrives late in the afternoon. Only Cilala, Muekalia, Epalanga and Somakesenge know about this. They pass on the food and they should be given a little.

IN THE COURT OF THE KING: The path leading to the court on leaving the *onjango* is not a straight line. There are a few twists and turns before arriving at the *etambo*⁶⁰ of the court. It is very beautiful. At the front is a small stone wall, built as if woven from the sides; it was plastered on the rear side, making it very beautiful. It was built by a master from Ngoya (from Wombe or Cipala). Passing by this *etambo* there is a small entrance to the Soma's house. At the door of his house there is an *ombangalunda* stick and around it are placed *asanga* (pots of water with medications left there by Cimbanda).⁶¹ That is where the Soma seeks strength from his bespelled rope⁶² (taking precautions). As he prays, he sprays spirit on the rope and beats his feet and back with it; he points down and up, repeats the gestures and points to his ribs. Afterwards he washes himself with the water from the pots, proffering words (offering testimony of his acts). He does this every morning, every day of his life; he never forgets to perform his prayer.

The Soma has the habit of waking up very early in the morning. He goes to the pans and just washes himself without making a prayer. Then he goes back into the house and his wife has already prepared breakfast. He eats immediately and leaves a little bit of food for his wife. This is done so that even if someone wakes up very early (before dawn) to visit the Soma's house, he has already eaten. When the day dawns, he heads to the pots once again to perform his prayer and wash.

When he points upwards with his rope, it signifies a peace prayer; it means that the sun rises in peace and so too the kings above (in Galanganja, because he only fears them). Pointing downwards also signifies "that the sun sets in peace," since he fears the whites

⁶⁰ *Etambo* (plural *atambo*), generally not translated to Portuguese, is a temple in the form of a house.

⁶¹ Cimbanda, a proper noun that indicates the position occupied in the court, is also utilized as a common noun, *ocimbanda*. It is most commonly translated into Portuguese as 'curer' or 'diviner.' In Angola, its Portuguese transliteration is also used, *quimbandeiro*.

⁶² The word used in Umbundu is *umbanda*. Concerning the translation of *umbanda* as *feitiço* (sorcery spell) in the missionary writings, see Dulley (in press).

living in Mbaka,⁶³ so there is no war. Pointing to the right means “that there is joy in the most distant countries.” Pointing to the left means that “there is peace in the country of the Ngoya.”

In the Soma’s house there are many *atambo* (small worship houses), since each king who governs constructs an *etambo* for his elders and cares for all of them in the same way, including those already there.

Each *etambo* has a Cipuku (a young woman responsible for sweeping and performing the worship). Each king who governs, on encountering these women, treats them like he takes care of the *atambo*, since they are like his wives.

Cipuku is the spirit⁶⁴ who brings revelations. If a woman receives many revelations, people say: “It is the spirit *ocipuku*. Our ancestors blessed her with the gift of revelation.” They build her a small house and present her with offerings. This house is called *etambo*. Sometimes she incorporates [the spirit]⁶⁵ and says: “I am Sekulu So-and-So” and makes recommendations to the village elders, saying: “Come and let me tell you a few words.” Sometimes she says: “Assemble all the people.” When everyone has arrived, she makes all the warnings; if something is happening or about to happen, she immediately says what will occur. When making the revelation, she says: “Go to that place and search for that thing.” And when they go there, they will find exactly what she said. And they say: “Ekisi [the prophetess]⁶⁶ was the one who told us that.” They have the habit of memorizing everything that the prophetess said and remembering the fact. If she gives them a command, they follow it to the letter, instructing their children. The person who incorporates the prophecy is generally from the family; it may be a boy or an elder. If the incorporation occurs in the woods, he comes running to the *etambo* and calls the elders. But generally this occurs late at night; the prophet incorporates when falling asleep.

Even today, if someone receives revelations, they say: “I had a revelation.”

⁶³ Mbaka is how the city of Benguela is designated in Umbundu. Mbaka is associated with ‘low’ because Bailundo is in the Central Highlands and Benguela is lower down on the coast. ‘Above’ refers to the Highlands.

⁶⁴ *Ondele*, most commonly translated as ‘spirit,’ shares a root with *undele* or *ocindele*, terms used to designate white people.

⁶⁵ *Okusingila*, to incorporate spirit.

⁶⁶ The translation of Ekisi as ‘prophetess’ is proposed by the source itself. In Umbundu in the original, *Ekisi* (*uprofeto*).

We know that since the ancient times elders have trusted greatly in Suku.⁶⁷ His name is never pronounced with little suffering or little peace. If someone is sick, they make prayers to the ancestors in the *atambo*. One can only call Suku's name if the person is dying. They say: "The ancestors are not responding; we call Suku who formed us and gave us life." And they add: "Suku freed you; the sorcerers may boast about divining." They recognize in their heart that "Suku warned us about the things relating to worship and about our *olosuku*."⁶⁸

In the king's court there is a large house (warehouse)⁶⁹ for fabrics and gunpowder. The shelves and places where diverse things will be stored have already been given. The gunpowder has not yet been offered. The places are separated in the house of Kesongo and Cilala, where offerings of spirit are made.

Next to the warehouse there is a large house where people are laid. Inside this house a drain has been dug that leads outside (like a gutter to drain water). The people laid out there are not kings; they are simple people from the king's lineage⁷⁰ or former faithful servants.

People are laid as follows: when a person dies, they take the body to this house, place it sat carefully on a stool above the gutter and pour spirit over the corpse so that it dries more quickly. The liquid drains outside via the gutter. The gutter is well-built with stones; it looks like a burrow, so one cannot see that what drains out is disgusting. After the person dries, they bind a stick in his or her hand. When the liquid ceases to drain out, the person is removed from there and placed on the side along with the chair. This is done for everyone, meaning that the house becomes extremely full. The people are sat on the chairs with a stick in the hand as if they had not died. Taking care of this are two women who are close to the king and a woman who serves as a guide to them both. The name of the latter is Kacitu. This name applies to this kind of work because she is responsible for taking care of the *itutu*.⁷¹ They recognize her as part of them as they have

⁶⁷ Suku was translated into Portuguese as 'God.' He was probably an ancestor juxtaposed to the Christian God during the process of translation in the missions (see Dulley, 2009).

⁶⁸ *Olosuku*, a common noun, the plural of *osuku*, the common form of the proper name Suku.

⁶⁹ *Armazém* (in English, 'warehouse') in Portuguese in the original.

⁷⁰ In Umbundu, *ombuto* alludes to the consanguine lineage ties.

⁷¹ A type of spirit generally translated as 'ghost.'

the same name and she does no harm to anyone. Were that not the case, she would perhaps be eaten (dead).

Of these people laid, it is said: “They are the ones who protect the Soma from malefic attacks. If they pass the entrances of the hoes, they will not reach the king.”

THE SOMA SPEAKS TO HIS SUBJECTS:⁷² To speak to his subjects, the Soma chooses a man with a strong voice who can be heard at a distance. He dictates to him the words for him to repeat. This person is called Ndaka.⁷³ He is always summoned late afternoon or early morning. Ndaka stands still transmitting all the messages to all sides of the *ombala*. At this moment everyone should remain completely silent while they listen. A crying infant should be breastfed since everyone must make sure they listen to the message to avoid committing errors later in relation to the order given. For this reason, when the parents see that the child has grown, they begin to explain the customs of the *ombala*, so that if the person commits some error or is slow to act, they will tell be told how things should be done, or else they will be told that they are from the surrounding area. Because *kikanjo* (from the surrounding area) means that the person is not from the *ombala*, he or she is not smart (intelligent), displaying bad behavior because they were not taught to be smart. Even if he or she is an adult and presents a stubborn behavior, people also tell the person: “You’re from the surroundings.” Even if the person was raised in the *ombala*, people say: “You’re not intelligent like those from the *ombala*.”

ETANDA (THE HOUSE OF THE MEAT OF THE HUNTER). This house is very large because it is the court’s market.⁷⁴ It stores a lot of meat killed by the hunters and also meat sent to other countries. Outside the *etanda* there is a large terrain where a hunting dance is performed with *ocitunga* (sticks with their tips stuck in the ground on which the heads of all the hunted animals are skewered). Next to the door is Samemba (the sculpture of the hunter responsible for leading the animals to be hunted, posed as if he were about to shoot).

⁷² *Onungi* (plural *olonungi*), in Umbundu, signifies literally ‘inhabitant.’

⁷³ *Ondaka*, in Umbundu, signifies ‘word.’

⁷⁴ In Umbundu, *etanda* is a square where the markets are customarily held.

When this meat is cooked, people spend the entire night performing the hunting dance around the fire. The biggest hunter who killed the animal removes pieces of meat from the pot and, while he dances, throws it wherever there are people. These people are his family members or friends; he throws meat towards them and they receive it. When dawn arrives they make much funge. They begin by removing a little bit of funge with a piece of meat (*onute*),⁷⁵ which they put in Samemba's mouth. Only then does everyone eat, saying: "He has already eaten." Even after the hunter returns, he immediately sticks his finger in the animal (in the place where it was struck) and places the blood on Samemba's mouth, saying: "Let there be no more" (always lead so that I can shoot). To give meat to small children, the hunter takes a large container in which he puts some balls of funge and pieces of meat. He places the container on his head with all the children around him, each one wanting a piece. When each child has finally received his or her portion, they eat. After each child has vied for a piece and eaten, the hunter lets the container fall at the feet of Samemba, since it is like his meal too.

It is on this square that prayers are made when people are about to go hunting. There are two people there who are like owners of this square: the man is called Kapila and the woman Kuanja (these are names of hunters, which can also be given to dogs). The two are responsible for the prayers to Samemba wishing for abundant game. Kapila wears a *olombuangongo* (hare skin mixed with other things). Kuanja carries a basket (an *ocimbombo* gourd covered with a cloth).

Samemba of the court square is dressed with a cloth and a shirt like a real person; it is the same size. Before the hunt, the hunter dances holding an *ungembue* (axe) and a small hoe from the time of Kuanja. Only the great hunters can dance with *ungembue*. Whoever is not a hunter does not dance with *ungembue* or the hoe of time.

These names, Kapila and Kuanja, are only given to people in the *ombala*. All the hunters from the surrounding area give these names only to their dogs. Some call them Huvi (*ohuvi* is the bullet used to kill game in the woods) and Kuanja. But the name of the man changes a lot. Sometimes it is Kanyongo; the woman's name remains the same...

⁷⁵ In Umbundu, *onute* literally signifies "thing that fattens" (Alves, 1951, p. 997).

AKOKOTO: The *akokoto* become sacred, meaning that not just anyone can enter. They are screened with a very strong and tightly closed fence. All the nearby villages⁷⁶ are given the responsibility to bring hardwood logs, which are stacked against each other. Anyone visiting the *akokoto* brings a bundle of sticks. The name of the person chosen to take care of this gateway is Betatela⁷⁷ [Protector] (who protects the kings⁷⁸ of the *akokoto*). The cup from which he drinks spirit is split (both his cup and his pot or gourd are chipped). The gaps in his teeth lead people to think he is someone of no worth. He is always at the gate. When people arrive, they bring spirit with them, which he pours into his cup and drinks. That is why he is remembered every time, with people saying: "It is better that nobody forgets him." After all, he is not alone; he has his own family. The *akokoto* stay at the court. Thus, everyone who brings something for the king has to hand over a small amount to Betatela too, since the latter sustains the king. If not, they will say that our Ondavi [Guardian] has been given nothing. Sometimes, something very strange may happen in the capital of the kingdom.⁷⁹

When the king dies, a dance is performed on a mountain. In taking the body to the *akokoto*, they carry it up a slope, since they climb up fairly high to a site called *Ondondelo yolosoma* [Altar of the kings] (it is very tiring to climb up these slopes carrying the sling on the shoulders as far as the peak). The kings are not buried in graves. When they enter with the body in the *akokoto*, placing it in the coffin (the Betatela perform funeral services for the king (*vakuacisoko*); the *Vakuacisoko* are also the ones to bury him), they call an elder who used to be a slave (*upika*). The elders (*akulu*)⁸⁰ decide that this man, who really did use to be a slave, should be freed and go to his village.⁸¹ The elders call

⁷⁶ In this instance, the term used, *ofeka*, refers to a settlement governed by a king. In the system in question, only the main king governed from the *ombala*. The other kings, when visiting him in the *ombala*, were treated as members of the court, hierarchically below the main king.

⁷⁷ The names that appear in capitals in Umbundu "have meaning," as speakers of Umbundu insist even today. In addition, they are also names of positions in the local political structure, hence the decision to maintain the name capitalized in Umbundu and provide its translation in brackets.

⁷⁸ *Osoma*, plural *olosoma*, is translated as *soba* in Angolan Portuguese. In Umbundu, it designates the highest authority of a political unit and is also commonly translated as 'king' (*rei*).

⁷⁹ *Ci kola*, in this case, can be understood as "something very strange," referring to 'misfortune' or 'danger.' In other contexts, the same word is translated by the adjective 'sacred.'

⁸⁰ *Akulu*, here, refers to the council of elders who decide on the succession. During the king's reign, this council performs a consultative and decision-making role on political and military questions and can, according to circumstances, depose the king.

⁸¹ *Imbo*, a residential unit that can be translated as 'village.' This is a smaller political unit than the *ofeka*, which is translated as 'land' or 'country.' The form *kimbo*, preceded by the locative 'k,' that is, 'in the village,' was transliterated to Portuguese as *quimbo* and is frequently employed in the Portuguese of

an older man to come and bury the king. On arrival, this man finds the king in the hands of the elders to be placed in the coffin. The older man unties the sorcery belt that the king wore wrapped around his body. Other people soon arrive and run with him. They give him the head of a cow with horns, pack his bags and send him back to his homeland. He can never again return to the village. Even if he owes someone, the latter cannot go after him. This is how a slave is freed. This means that he is the one who buried the king. They give him the name Muecilova (the Sorcerer Himself).

MUEKALIA: In the *ombala*, the name Muekalia signifies that he is closest to the king, since he is the one who enthrones him and who can also depose him if he proves not to be a good person. He has the right⁸² to instate the king who the people want. For this reason, in all the kingdoms, whether small or large, the name Muekalia exists.

His gateway, which faces east,⁸³ leads down a very steep slope to a large grassy area. This is where killers are judged. There are two chairs there, one belonging to the Soma and the other to Muekalia.

If the person is found guilty, he or she will be killed there and then and thrown on the small mound (in the deep hollow). If he has no family,⁸⁴ he will rot right there; if there are family members, they will come to take the body at night in order to bury it.

At the end of Muekalia there is a house where the king's wives can weep on being widowed (a widow or widower is someone who mourns their husband or wife). In this house the women who weep sleep on their backs, stretched out in a row. There is a pot with medications⁸⁵ (which looks like a large clay pot) full of aloe and fixed on the ground. In this pot the women wash their face various times while they cry. During their widowhood, Muekalia has the right to these women as though they were his own. This pot with aloe still exists today.

Angola to designate 'village' or 'woods' in contrast to 'city' – that is, rural and urban – a form of hierarchization recurrent in the Angolan context.

⁸² *Omoko*, literally 'knife,' can also be translated as 'right' or 'power.'

⁸³ *Nano*, in Umbundu, can be translated as 'east' and as 'above.' The inhabitants of the Central Highlands were commonly designated as Vanano by the neighboring peoples due to the fact that they inhabit a higher geographic region than the adjacent regions.

⁸⁴ *Vangandiaye*, literally, "his/her kin."

⁸⁵ In Umbundu, *ihemba*.

Next to Muekalia there is an *eyemba*⁸⁶ (house) that belongs to Kandundu, also called Cihombo. (Suku speaks with them and not with the clown.)⁸⁷ Thus the respectful name given by them to this god is Ñala (Lord). His house is called Kelombe (at the Court). Who is linked to it is the intermediary, whose name is Citunda. The latter is followed by the woman called Cipuku, since this cult is similar to the one performed in the *etambo*. They say that this god speaks, but it is not true. The one who speaks is the young man in his service, who they call Citunda. When speaking, he alters his voice so they do not recognize him.

If a complication arises in the *eyemba*, or if by chance they see something strange, they say: "That is a bad omen."⁸⁸ Perhaps Ñala has shown us this because he wants something that we are not fulfilling." They then immediately go to a *quimbandeiro* to divine what is happening (resolve their complications). The *quimbandeiro* guides them in what to do, or perhaps the older ones meet and address the *eyemba*, saying: "Oh, Ñala, tell us what you want." He will then say that he wants them to do this or that. Thus, these are Citunda's ideas only. Those who are pleased, applaud. But if he has not yet told them, even the Soma is unable to eat, since people say that there is still something that the older ones must resolve in the Great Court so that worse catastrophes do not happen.

KANDUNDU'S GAME. If people want to eat funge, Kandundu guides them towards the game. People come to dance in the court and the *ocimbombo* is prepared. Afterwards, he himself will say where they should hunt. He wants to eat hare with funge, but the first hare has to be caught during the hunt; it cannot be a hare caught by a dog, it has to be killed with a stick or gun.

This is why the hare is placed in a sling, and the people who carry it say that they are carrying an elephant in the sling. When they kill a male gazelle, it is also carried in the sling. Both the hare and the gazelle are placed in the *eyemba*.

With the exception of the hare and the gazelle, all the other animals hunted by people may be taken home.

⁸⁶ A kind of temple.

⁸⁷ *Ekisi*, a type of ancestral spirit commonly translated into Portuguese as 'clown' due to the straw clothing used by people who incarnate him in the rituals.

⁸⁸ In Umbundu, *owima*, which can also be translated as 'misfortune' or 'catastrophe'.

When they cook, they spend the night performing the hunt dance. At dawn, they begin to make the funge and give it to people. Everyone eats in the house where they cook, whose yard is fenced off with sticks. They make Kandundu's funge, but the only one who can prepare his funge is Cipuku. This funge is sacred; it is not as soggy as the others and is made from rolled maize crushed in the mortar (this maize is transformed into cornmeal on the same day it is removed from the cob). When transforming it into cornmeal, one cannot spit on one's hands as is usually done so that the funge is not slippery. People say that "Ñała's cornmeal is not made the same as any other; it has to be done with great care," since Ñała does not eat what is prepared with saliva. After placing the funge in the *eyemba*, it is necessary to wait for it to cool so that it becomes hard enough to eat, since it is very sacred. The fork with which Ñała serves himself has to be new and cannot have been used by anyone else; the knife used to cut the meat also has to be new. Thus, Citunda stirs the funge, eats the bottom of the funge, stirs it slowly, afterwards returns it to the basket or on a deep plate, as though it had not been eaten. Then Citunda leaves the house, saying: "Cipuku, clear the table." When Cipuku takes the food outside, people admire it and say: "Ñała did not eat the funge." But the court elders know that he ate the bottom of the funge. Only Citunda does all this and thanks them, saying: "You prepared good food."

Kandundu speaks in a loud, nasal voice so that the elders outside the house can hear too. They express their thanks, promising: "Elders, all the words that you pronounced comprise your promises." Sometimes the man who speaks through his nose becomes angry and insults them; that is why the elders submit to him and say: "Don't be angry with us. We will do everything you wish. We are your children." Kandundu does not always eat funge; this happens only at the time of the hunt. His everyday food is honey. In the corners of his house are placed three large clay pots filled with honey. Even in the time of the hunt his *conduto*⁸⁹ is hare only. From the gazelle they remove just the tail to mix with the meat, but the gazelle meat is distributed to everyone. The man who shot the gazelle is paid in fabrics, around sixteen arrows and seven measures of gunpowder. The payment to the man who shot the hare is eight arrows and four measures of

⁸⁹ *Conduto* is the name given in Angola to the dish prepared to be eaten with the funge, generally with a sauce. It may be meat with vegetables, just meat or just vegetables.

gunpowder. The two hunters are offered a bottle of spirit and two gourds of *ocimbombo*.

THE SUBSTITUTION OF THE KINGS: When the king dies or is deposed, the man who will replace him invites a *quimbandeiro* to remove all the things that form part of the sorcery of his predecessor, since they say that “the spells of another king cannot be replaced.” At the gate of hoes they place another hoe with another spell. At the spot where Ndumbila sits another person is sacrificed. Everything that refers to the sorcery of the predecessor has to be changed; nothing remains. Even the *quimbandeiro* has to be someone different. Only the tree located between the paths remains; whether it is the *ombangalunda* tree or the *ohumbi* tree, nobody can disturb it.

The wives of the substituted king separate; if the husband dies, his livestock die. The substitute king will also arrive with his wives. It depends on the wishes of the king’s women if they will return to their villages or remain in the *ombala* in the care of the new king. If the court elders perceive that a woman is good, one of them agrees to marry her. If among the Inakulu (old widows) they recognize that one of them is virtuous and loved by everyone, the court elders will tell the king that she will be Nasoma (Wife of the King) or Inakulu (older wife of the king). Those women without qualities will be told to leave.

AKESONGO (First Leaders). The *akesongo* build their house at some distance of the *ombala*, but they are sneaky. Those who leave the *ombala* are expelled when found on the rivers where water is fetched. If they receive something from the king, sometimes they are imprisoned so that the king will pay for these men from his village to be freed. Only then will they be released. This does not mean that they plot or are enemies of the Soma. They obey the king all the time; in this case it is a kind of joke. Whenever an animal is slaughtered in the *ombala*, they are given the head, whether an ox or a pig. In the *ombala* all the names, when sharing out the meat, also share out the names.⁹⁰ Thus, meat on the bone goes to the name of so-and-so; it has to be given to him. For this reason, very often one knows from this both who butchers the animal and who receives

⁹⁰ Here the overlap between name (*onduko*) and position or social status, as expressed in Umbundu, is clear.

it. If they give someone a part that does not fit his name, the person will say: “This is not mine. Perhaps you, the younger person⁹¹ who brought it, are lost.” Those who share out the meat have to separate the portions because one of them is destined for the sovereign, another portion for the lads of the court, another portion for Cinduli, and so on.

KONGENGELE. When they go to war, he is the one who carries the skull and the *ocindambala*. This is the prayer of the king when going to war. The skull signifies the first person to be killed in the other land; *ocindambala* is the axe with which one cuts off the head of the first enemy killed. For this reason, the Kongengele leads from the front when they go into combat. Someone short (an individual who stopped growing and has mental disability) but courageous is always preferred as a leader. Even his mode of attire causes fear. Children flee because he wears only rags and a hat. He invents anything that makes people smile. If someone laughs at him, he becomes sad and he needs to be paid.

EATING THE OLD MAN. This is how one eats the old man: when the king reigns, perhaps he has plans to go to war. If no other place wishes to engage in war, a person from another village is captured, raised and fattened. Then, when they set off to war, on passing through this village, the father of the man who was caught, whether old or young, has to be well cared for while the war lasts. When the war elsewhere is over, they return with him. Afterwards the old people of the court organize the Soma’s inauguration and confer his ruler’s name. Since when kings reign, they do not do so under the name they had previously. They must receive the name of their ancestors⁹² or from a good narrative⁹³ in order to be able to govern well.

For this they assemble an ox and an old man in the same place. They then hold the old man and use a container to cover his mouth, since he cannot cry out at the moment of being sacrificed, lest his voice be heard by the king to be enthroned. As the people drink

⁹¹ In Umbundu, *umalehe*. The attribution to a younger person of less knowledge about what each person is due points here to the age hierarchy characteristic of the social formation of the Central Highlands.

⁹² *Olosekulu viyae*, literally, their elders.

⁹³ *Olusapo* is a narrative genre spanning from tales to proverbs. These are narratives that summarize a principle of action to be followed by the listener. A proverb is often a summary of a widely known story (see Dulley, 2010). The names, for their part, can allude to a proverb or tale of this kind (Chimbinda, 2009).

ocimbombo and spirit, play drums and sing loudly, they select one among the Kesongo who has a sword with which he pierces the person and the ox. After the ox and the person die, they cut a small piece of the human arm, perhaps shout out a series of insults (walking about aimlessly) and mix it with the ox meat that is being cooked. The body of the sacrificed man is discarded some distance away, since one does not eat the whole person; just his head is cut off. It is from this skull that the Soma will drink *ocimbombo* at home.

This meat is mixed with the old man's meat. Not everyone eats this meat, only the Soma and the great names of the kingdom. For this reason, this pot is kept apart; the rest of the people eat from the other pot. When the meal is over, the king is placed in the center. He blows the horn and gives himself various names from which people will choose just one. However, the Soma and the elders have already chosen a name inside the house with which everyone will concur. For this reason, it is explained to everyone that the Soma wanted to call himself by these names, but they did not agree and this other name was chosen for him. He is then acclaimed as the one who ate the old man, blew the horn and gave himself the name of king.

RESPECTING THE SALUTE TO THE KING. On approaching the king, even if the person is suffering or seeking the right words (to consult the king on questions relating to marriage), he must be honored (one kneels and bows, falling on the ground next to him). Afterwards they should salute the king, saying: "He is the lion, he is the lion" and applauding. The king then replies: "Akuku, akuku" or "Kalunga, kalunga." Afterwards the person sits down and begins to speak.

If the person came just to salute the king, they do not pay homage. Who comes to salute the king just kneels, claps and says: "He is the lion. Thank you." The king replies: "Thank you." Sometimes one salutes him saying: "He is the lion, he is the lion" or "Thank you, thank you." It depends on the individual's way of saluting. The king, in responding, beats his chest or applauds, but does not raise his voice like the person saluting him.

The salute citing the lion signifies that the person saluting him respects him as the lion who devours people, implying that if the king wishes to devour him like a lion, he can do (if he wants to sell him or kill him, he can too).

Sometimes when encountering the king, one cannot leave him. One cannot remain standing. The person must walk on his or her knees (stooping) and snapping their fingers, only rising when some distance away.

Whenever the king sits, everyone who is in the *onjango* must clap. Even if he is standing up and is still close by, it is necessary to applaud when he sits. The court elders who are close to him salute him, but do not raise their voice much and sit down in their chair again. If the king sneezes, these elders once again salute him. Someone remains close behind the king to cover his spit, catarrh or coughed mucus with sand. His name is Ukuavate [Saliva Catcher]. They do this because the king's saliva cannot be seen by these people, since there may be an enemy who wants to destroy him and who, by taking his saliva, can cast a spell and kill him.

Respecting the salute is not due to the king only, but also to the court elders if they are standing or sneeze. The Soma also salutes the elder next to him and the elders salute their peers. The young people, on rising to their feet, also have to salute them. This is done in the *onjango* even today.

CROWN: There exist three crowns: the king's is made with feathers from the *okalongo* and *onduva* birds,⁹⁴ since the feathers of these two species are red and these birds are rare. When the king dies, a feather is pulled out of his crown, which is then stuck in his hair so that he is buried with it. His crown remains in the *etambo*.

The war crown is made with white lamb's wool. It is used by the Kesongo or the Cilala. But all the important elders of the court, who also have *atambo*, also have lamb's wool crowns since they symbolize the power of war and of protecting people (fortifying them) with inviting words.

The crown of the *quimbandeiro* is made with feathers from chickens and other birds, as well as porcupine (an animal with long quills that look like arrows though these are actually its skin).

The weapons of war are the sword, the crown and the mace. These instruments always remain in the *atambo* because they are from the time of the ancestors. For this reason, they are kept in the most sacred place of the *atambo*. Only guns are stored in the house

⁹⁴ Large carnivorous bird (T.N.).

of the court members, if they are not hunters. If they are hunters, the guns are kept in the *etanda*.⁹⁵

CAPTAIN TEIXEIRA DA SILVA.

At this moment in time, our country was beginning to be invaded by whites. All the things that the kings did began to change. There would be a time when all the people and kings would be governed by white people, hence they would not allow us to do as we wished.

A certain Captain Teixeira da Silva was in Viye. So the war began and the Hona gathered to fight against Viye. After the Hona returned, perhaps he was scared of ending up alone. So he left there naked and arrived at the *ombala* of Bailundo. *Ñała*⁹⁶ Ekuikui immediately greeted him warmly. He gave him trousers, a shirt, a coat and some family, as well as a small house to live in. In the yard of this house there was a flat stone where he would sit to warm in the sun. Afterwards he wrote his name on that stone like someone driving in a stake. He picked up a hammer and a nail and, little by little, carved the stone and wrote his name. At that time, when he did this, people said: "The whites aren't lazy (it seems something simple but the person manages to do it). What is this for, it seems like a child's game?" They did not know he was governing us. Even today this name persists, therefore, it did not disappear. It functioned as he wanted.

It was during the period when they were looking after him. When the dance was convoked, they said: "Come and dance." And he danced. And they invited him to everything they did, saying: "He should do everything that we do because he is ours now. He cannot be absent from anything we do, if not we expel him."

In the beginning, the oldest pulled up the peanuts, saying: "Okatapi." The troop camp, where there were these bushes (peanut crops), was called "in the Katapi." When Captain Teixeira tired of staying in the *ombala*, he asked the king to give him some lads to try to live in the Katapi. The king agreed. He began to get better and sent messages to

⁹⁵ An enclosed space where the hunter stores his weapons and makes offerings to the ancestors.

⁹⁶ In Umbundu, *Ñała* can be used in relation to kings and ancestors. It was applied to the missionaries present in the Central Highlands and was also translated as Lord, designating the Christian God, in the Catholic and Protestant missions.

Benguela. Gradually the whites began to move away and transform into a government.⁹⁷ Even today this administrative post is called Katapi. As they gathered, they became many and launched a war against the Ovimbundu, burning down the *ombala*. Hence the Ovimbundu were defeated until today.

[unnumbered page with content description]

Chronicles of the Kings of Bailundu

Pages from 39 to 57 contain the chronicles of the kings who reigned in Balundu from the time of Ekuikui II to Kalandula. There is only one paragraph dealing with King Katiovela, for unfortunately 18 pages are missing: pages from 28 to 39.⁹⁸ It would appear that this portion deals with the circumstances that led up to the war of 1902.

[descriptive note by Merlin Ennis]⁹⁹

KING KATIVALA II. No. 5.

The time of this reign is the same time when Mutu was at war.

Mutu was the king's lad. He went about fighting with the whites. At this time he also came to the mission to ask whether the person who made the discourse that set off the fight was here. As he did not encounter this discourse, he simply killed many animals. They also set fire to the house of Sekulu Yakoba.¹⁰⁰ Then Ñaŋa Stover became very nervous and said: "If it's me they want, let them come and get me. But when they get me, don't bind me like your customs. Bind me like we do in our Portugal." Afraid that he would capture all of them, they let loose the pigs that they had looted and returned to their *ombala*.

⁹⁷ The term *ombonge* was initially used to refer to the military fortresses established in the interior of the region speaking Umbundu. The same term began to be employed in reference to the administrative posts that succeeded them with the implementation of a more effective colonial administration in the territory following the victory of the Portuguese in the War of Bailundo (1902-1903) to which this episode on Teixeira da Silva refers.

⁹⁸ In the box consulted at the archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at Houghton Library, Harvard University, pages 18 to 38 are missing.

⁹⁹ In the original, this information appears handwritten in blue ink.

¹⁰⁰ Sekulu designates an elder. Yakoba is the transliteration of Jacob into Umbundu.

KING NUMA No. 1.

It was in the time of King Numa that the war with the whites began. The trouble was initiated by the whites because they wanted the king's wives. So the king did not like it and began to wage war on the whites. It was a constant war. When the king was unable to continue, he fled to Bimbe, where he found a hideout.¹⁰¹ Even so the whites wanted to capture him. The first time that the whites went there to get him, they were unable and they fled. The second time, the king who replaced him went to capture him, following the orders of the whites. They also failed, since he remained quiet in the hideout.

As nobody managed to remove him from the hideout, he ended up dying. After that, the people who had been with him dispersed because the king had died.

KING NUMA No. 2.

As Katiavala had created a lot of mutiny in the country, people did not accept being governed by someone from his lineage¹⁰² again since they said: "If not he'll do the same as Katiavala." Thus, they chose Numa.

Numa helped his country a lot. He enabled the kingdom's rebirth, united people who had been dispersed during Katiavala's reign. Because of this, people liked Soma Numa a lot. During his reign, people returned to the land.

KING NUMA No. 5.

King Numa waged war against the whites and was defeated. On the day when the whites went to Benguela in search of tents they fired many shots, and the entire *ombala* was burned down. As the *ombala* burned they captured Ñała Gomes. An elder was accused of capturing the white man and, thinking about this, killed himself. Thus, the King fled to Bimbi. Afterwards the whites pursued him but did not find him. The king died in Bimbi.

KING NUMA No. 5.

¹⁰¹ *Eleva*, literally, 'cavern.'

¹⁰² *Epata*, in Umbundu, designates the extended family, both maternal and paternal.

This king waged war against the whites a lot, but was defeated. At the time, the whites had gone to Benguela in search of some tents. During this time that the whites were in tents, they fired many shots and the entire *ombala* was burned down.

It was at this time that they captured Ñała Gomes. His capture led to an accusation against an elder to whom they said: "It was you who captured him." As he thought about this, the elder became enraged and took his own life.

The king Numa fled to Bimbi. When the whites followed him, they did not find him and he died there.

KING NUMA No. 2.

At the time of the death of Soma Kalandula came his Epalanga Numa. During this period there was little peace and much suffering, since they did not want the whites to stay in the country. Even Kalandula was unable to expel them entirely. The whites returned and Numa tried to expel them again. After all this, the whites began to build in the same place without fighting with the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu tried causing some trouble and killed some whites, but they did not want to do the same with the white teachers. At that time the wars had moved upland, heading towards some whites who were in the east.¹⁰³ They came across Ñała Sandele¹⁰⁴ and thought about doing the same with him. They said: "This one is Portuguese." Luckily some recognized him and left him in peace. King Numa himself tried fighting but was also unable. So he began to sicken and later died just as others died. He was twisted in the same way. He did not do anything important, just that. During this period the Mission made a great advance with many whites spreading out. In these few days, Ñała Uti went to establish his village in Ndulu.¹⁰⁵

KING KANGOVI No. 1.

It was Soma Kangovi who replaced Numa on the throne. But his reign in the *ombala* lasted little time. He soon died. Consequently, he did not launch any war and did not achieve very much. He probably reigned for a year and a half and soon died.

¹⁰³ *Konano*, literally, on the side above.

¹⁰⁴ Transliteration to Umbundu of Sanders, the name of one of the missionaries from the Congregational mission.

¹⁰⁵ Today Andulo.

KING KANGOVI No. 5.

The father of Soma Kangovi was Gunji.

But he ruled by obligation. He was heavily persuaded, he did not want to accept the kingdom. When he reigned he was already old and never established himself. He soon died.

KING KANGOVI No. 5.

He was sired by Gunji.

He did not wish to reign. He was heavily persuaded to be king, because by the time they wanted him to be king, he was already old. For this reason, he did not reign for very long and died.

KING HUNDUNGULU II No. 1.

King Hundungulu replaced King Kangovi. In his homeland, this king was Kutalamo, but few people liked him.

This king had been captured by the whites but was not sent very far. He was imprisoned in the administrative post. So King Cisende came to the *ombala* and thought: "I'm going to reign." And he reigned. Afterwards the whites released King Hundungulu and he entered the *ombala* again. King Cisende was expelled and fled to Bimbi.¹⁰⁶

As Cisende fled, King Hundungulu reigned again for a long time. When King Hundungulu came to die, the reign of King Kalandula began.

KING HUNDUNGULU II No. 1.

He was a good king because he enabled the rebirth of the *ombala* of Bailundo. He made it a true city again, since the whites had burned it down. But he did not achieve many feats.

KING HUNDUNGULU II No. 2.

He did not last long. They let him reign only until the next king.

¹⁰⁶ Today Bimbe.

KING HUNDUNGULU II No. 2.

This king was only reigning on the throne of Kalandula, since the people wanted Kalandula, the son of Numa. Because Hundungulu was old he was not accepted. It had to be Kalandula, as he was younger, so he could launch a war against the whites and raid them.

But he too remained for little time. He did not complete even a year, he was deposed and subsequently King Kalandula reigned.

KING HUNDUNGULU II No. 5.

King Hundungulu remained for just two years, which is why he did not become famous. He soon died.

At the death of King Hundungulu they fired many shots, so many that the sun darkened from so much gunpowder.

KING HUNDUNGULU II No. 5.

This king reigned for just two years. When he reigned he did not become very famous and soon died.

When he died people fired many shots throughout the day. Even the sun failed to appear because of so much gunpowder from the guns.

KING KALANDULA II No. 1.

Kalandula succeeded Soma Hundungulu on the throne. The wars of Mutu-Yakevela occurred during his reign, the last one in which the government was based in the Bailundo mountains. This king had been captured by the whites, who took him to Portugal. But he never reached Portugal; he died en route, in Novo Redondo.

THE WARS OF MUTU-YAKEVELA.

These wars occurred in the time of King Kalandula. The name Mutu-Yakevela is a proverb that means "I am like the aged pumpkin, which even when cooked is never done."

This *ocimbundu*¹⁰⁷ person is the Epalanga of the king. When the king was captured and taken to the administrative post, he was in the *ombala*. Perceiving that the king had been captured, he began to wage war on the whites. However, when he warred against the whites he was expelled and fled. But as he fled, he gathered many people to raid other whites. He toured the country and returned to the administrative post with his group, firing shots.

Because of the many wars of the Ovimbundu, some whites came from Dondo to help the others. The leader of these whites was Kanjumbu, who came to scatter the wars of the Ovimbundu. This was the same white man who had gone to the Bailundo Mission. At that time he met the teachers Ñała Stover and Ñała Moffata there with whom he conversed a lot. Afterwards he returned and visited Mbinji again, but the latter village was burned. So he went to Cilume, a village that was set alight too. Sikutelevo was also burned down. The only place that was not burned down was Suse. At this point they returned to the administrative post.

After some days had passed, news came that Mutu-Yakevela was in the lower part of the Bongo and wanted to assemble people for war again. But they ambushed him at night. They went ahead of him and provoked him at dawn. When he decided to proceed ahead, there were already whites waiting for him there. They shot at him and he died. They cut off his head and the leg, which was crippled. They then took these body parts to the administrative post. When they arrived at the administration with the head, they cut off the ears and made the kings, a man called Katakua Sandukutu and some other elders chew them, saying: "Chew!" And they chewed. Because they were in the prison. When those whites captured all the kings, they took them to Dondo. However, they never returned. They died there along with the elders.

This king was the last to reign in the mountains, since the whites burned down the *ombala*.

KING KALANDULA II.

No. 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Ocimbundu* is the singular of *Ovimbundu*, the ethnonym used to refer to populations speaking Umbundu. Although these are terms used regularly in the ethnographic records, in Angola Umbundu-speakers still today generally say that someone is *umbundu*, rather than *Ovimbundu* or *ocimbundu*.

King Kalandula reigned in the times of the recent kings. His Epalanga was called Kaliki. He said: "I am Mutu-Yakevela," which means "I don't want to be changed any more, I want to continue as I am." He thought that he would become a very important king when he ruled. But in the end he did not achieve what he intended. Because in those days the Mueputu¹⁰⁸ began to rule for real.

One time he became indebted to a white man. And as he took time to repay, the white man slapped him. There were other things too that the whites did to him. This left him extremely angry. He fired some shots at the administrative post, on the whites who had built in Katapi. But he was expelled. He went to Wambu¹⁰⁹ and again gathered some war forces. It was enough. He had a good head and good reasoning. He was defeated and later killed. He was defeated by Njimbu, who had come from Esele with his fellow creditors.

MUTU-YAKEVELA AND HIS CILALA KATUMBILA.

When King Katiavala reigned, he chose Mutu-Yakevela to become his Epalanga. And finally, but no less significantly, since his power is great, Katumbila became Cilala. At this time the whites began to make the Ovimbundu suffer, using them as porters without paying them, lying about their wages and beating them.

On seeing the situation, Mutu, Cilala and everyone else lost their heads, since they had never seen anything like it. One day Mutu became indebted to a white man, who rowed with him and gave him a slap. Mutu left extremely agitated. He summoned his men and fired many shots at the houses of the whites.

Afterwards he departed and went to Wambu, where he gathered another army.¹¹⁰ Cilala gathered others here in the land.¹¹¹ These armies fought very well. But some people

¹⁰⁸ Authorities linked to Portugal.

¹⁰⁹ The transliteration into Portuguese is Huambo. Today the third largest city in Angola in terms of population and economic importance, it was one of the twelve political formations of the Central Highlands in the period prior to 'pacification' of the region by the Portuguese. (On the reigns or *sobados* in the region, see Childs 1949. On the wars of 'pacification,' see Pélissier 1997.) It is located about 80 km from Bailundo and was at the time a kingdom (*sobado*) dependent on Bailundo. The latter rivalled Viye in terms of political importance in the Central Highlands region.

¹¹⁰ *Ovita*, in Umbundu, designates both army and war.

¹¹¹ *Mulo vofeka*, "here in the country" or "here in the land." The reference is to Bailundo, where the narrative was collected.

were children of kings: Moma and Cimbulu. Moma is the father of Jorge Cingangu.¹¹² These people agreed the following: “We’re not going to fight any longer, because even if we win, we will not reign. Someone else will reign, so we’re not going to tire ourselves. Look, we who are the sons of kings, we do not reign. So, we should start a betrayal. Mutu and Cilala are very annoying. This way they’re setting back the entire country.” When Mutu heard this, he ordered: “Moma and Cimbulu, if you do this I’ll kill you.” On hearing this, they left Bimbi with their people and fought against the whites. There all these people died along with Moma and Cimbulu.

Moma is the son of Gunji. Cimbulu is the grandson of Gunji. Some people were fighting against the whites under a *mulemba* tree.¹¹³ When the enemy fired a cannon, the ball split the tree and part of it fell on the people below. But the people below did not think that it was a piece of tree. They thought: “The skies have fallen on us.” They abandoned their weapons, turned around and ran away fast. On seeing this, other people joined them. Then the whites entered the *ombala*.

Mutu-Yakevela went up the mountain and encountered a white man called Juau Pili (João Jesus Pires). When he wanted to shoot at him, he was expelled.

On reaching Cikondombolo, Mutu headed to the house of this white man in Cikondombolo. And the white man, seeing that he had gone there with his lads, began to shoot at them (because they were in the zinc houses).

When Mutu saw that his partners from Wambu were finished, he said: “Let’s go to the camp.” But at night people came from the white man and fired five shots at Mutu. Because it was night, the people awoke firing at each other as though they were sleepwalkers. When they realized that they were killing each other, they stopped. In the morning they found many dead. They stayed just a while longer and returned home.

When Mutu returned thinking that he would unite other things, Njimbu already came to encounter him at night. He fought against these people and they were scattered.

¹¹² Jorge Cingangu was probably a person known by whoever recorded the account. His name suggests a link with the Congregational mission, since it was the habit of these missionaries, at the time of baptism, to give the new name according to the following structure: a Biblical first name, in Portuguese or English, followed by a second name in Umbundu, which became the family surname on being transmitted from father to son in the following generations.

¹¹³ *Ulemba*, a common tree in the Angolan landscape.

Then Njimbu burned all the villages, killed all the animals, looted all the wealth. Thereafter, people began to face hardship. Even today there is no wealth.

Mutu fled to Bimbi and was found there. He was shot and died.

He made a speech, saying: "I have the *yondala* snake.¹¹⁴ As for you all, cheer up. Because if I die, I shall rest. So kill that one here." This meant: "while I am alive, make war like this. I can help you by guiding you so that later on you will find peace. So that when I die, you will be well, if we win. If I die, the whites will win and will make you pay for all the suffering you are making them go through now." And indeed everything happened as he said.

KING KALANDULA II. No. 2.

During the time of King Kalandula, there were some wars between the Ovimbundu and those of Cilenge. At this time, people advised him: "First let's drive out the whites as the other kings and the father did." He disagreed, saying: "First I want to make war in Cilenge, since that will bring me oxen." So the people rose. When they went to Cilenge, many from Bailundo were killed. The king fled and arrived here at night. So people put him in their songs, saying: "Kalandula was stubborn and made people's seed die. Ah, Kalandula!"

So he resumed the war against the whites. At this time, there was a man who was with the whites in Benguela. His name was Mutu-Yakevela. He helped the fight because the whites had given him two guns. He fought hard. People were already thinking: "The whites will probably be defeated." After the bullets were spent and he was captured and killed. Kalandula too was captured and sent to Benguela. We never saw him again.

The king himself proposed the following: "When the fight with the whites is over, I shall also expel all the teachers in this country." He also said: "Let me expel the teachers first; afterwards I shall begin the fight with the whites." But the elders did not accept the proposal, since the teachers were people of peace. Overhasty, he was quickly captured.

KING KALANDULA AND MUTU'S WARS No. 2.

¹¹⁴ Type of poisonous snake that spends most of its time in holes in trees (T.N.).

In the kingdom of Kalandula there was no peace. This is when the war against the whites began with King Kalandula and his Epalanga, Mutu-Yakevela. The latter was enraged with the whites for compelling people to pay taxes¹¹⁵ and pay them if some thief stole something. As a result, Mutu started to become indebted to the whites. They said: "Let's reclaim our debts." And he said: "I'm not going to pay. You give orders to our sons for free; just because I have debts with you, you order me to pay? I'm not paying..." This led to a fallout and the fights with the whites erupted.

During this period there were two men: one was called Cimbulu and the other Moma Katanya. Both were sons of kings. They wanted to betray Mutu. For this reason they did not agree to help him in the fight against the whites. They said: "If he wins, he will tend to become king and we, the sons of kings, we will not be." These men were in Bimbi. They did not agree in coming here to help in the war, nor did they send anyone. On hearing this, Mutu-Yakevela became very agitated and said:

"If they don't agree to come, I will go there to kick them." On hearing this, they all immediately rose up to go to war. And in this war, they died.

KING KALANDULA II. No. 5.

King Kalandula was dragged along by Mutu's wars. Mutu-Yakevela was the king's lad. He was fighting against the whites, but he was killed. But when he was fighting, he also visited the Mission to see if he could find the person who made the speech that initiated the war. And they killed many animals: pigs and chickens. They set fire to Sekulu Yakoba's house. Ñała Stover became nervous with this and told them: "If it's me you want, you can take me; but don't tie me up like just anyone, because we, in Portugal,¹¹⁶ if someone does something, we tie their hands. Do it like that." On hearing this, the warriors became afraid and dropped all the pigs they had captured. They quickly returned to the *ombala*.

KING KALANDULA II. No. 5.

¹¹⁵ In Umbundu, *olongoleta*.

¹¹⁶ Although Stover belonged to the Congregational mission, whose missionaries were sent from the United States and Canada, in Umbundu it was common for the origin of all the white foreigners to be attributed to Portugal.

The period of this reign is the same period when Mutu was at war.

Mutu was the king's lad. He went around making war on the whites. During this period, he also came here to the Mission to ask whether this is where the person was who started the discourse that set off the war. Failing to encounter this discourse, he just killed many animals instead. They also set fire to Sekulu Yakoba's house. Ñafa Stover then became very agitated and said: "If it's me you want, take me; but when you take me, don't tie me up your way; tie me up as we do in our Portugal. And afraid that he could capture them, all of them dropped the pigs that they had taken and went to their *ombala*.

KING CISENDE III. No. 1.

King Cisende reigned during the period when the wars ceased. But this king did not again reign in the mountains. He reigned in the lower part because the houses had been burned.¹¹⁷

This king was old and did not begin any war. People liked him. He did not remain for very long. Even the whites liked him a lot.

KING CISENDE III. No. 2.

When Kalandula died he left his Epalanga Cisende. At this time, he had been unable to do anything because the whites had already built their administrative posts. He simply gave food to the administrators.¹¹⁸ And he no longer constructed in the mountains, he moved to the lowlands.

KING CISENDE III. No. 2.

King Cisende no longer did anything related to wars since at this time the whites were already numerous. Even if they became tired [waging war], they were simply going to suffer. Because of this, he no longer went to war. He was also afraid of the other who had already been captured by the whites. This reign was designated the "white man's reign." At this time, the white people had already constructed the administrations and

¹¹⁷ It had been the custom since Soma Mbulu that the *ombala* stayed in the mountain. As Bailundo is located on sloping terrain, the *ombala* was situated in the higher region (T.N.).

¹¹⁸ In Umbundu, *akanga*.

no longer accepted King Cisende building in the mountains. Bailundo moved to the foothills. As a result, there were no more houses; all the houses had been burned down in the wars of the time of King Kalandula. He was very peaceful and had excellent judgment. And during this period many people had already accepted the schools of the foreigners.¹¹⁹

People cried a lot at his death. Even Ñafa Stover helped at the funeral of King Cisende. This king left much pain among the people.

KING CISENDE III. No. 5.

This king, Cisende, did not engage in any war. However, during the period in which he reigned, everyone already obeyed the whites. Even today, nobody thinks about fighting against the whites. When he died, they made a coffin at the Mission. And he was buried in the *ombala*. On his throne reigned Jabulu Kandimba.

KING CISENDE III. No. 5.

Not much was heard about this. He did not make war, he reigned for a short time. When he took the throne, people were no longer led to violent action. During this period, everyone already obeyed the whites. And after that nobody among the Ovimbundu thought any longer about fighting against the whites.

When he died, as there was nobody in the *ombala* who knew how to make a coffin, they asked here in the Mission to construct the coffin of King Cisende. When they came to fetch it, he was buried in his *ombala*. And another king reigned, called Jahulu Kandimba.

KING KANDIMBA No. 1.

King Kandimba was the Epalanga of King Cisende III. He replaced the latter.

In the time of King Kandimba there were wars in Esele. But these wars were not initiated by the kings; they were initiated by the whites. It was the whites who united the kings for war, in which they accompanied them.

When they arrived in Sele they encountered a very wild people. They were cannibals and ate the whites too. For this reason, the other whites hated them; this caused them

¹¹⁹ In Umbundu, *afulu*.

much pain. So they launched a war to capture [Seles's people]. When they went there, they encountered them. But this country has many caves and when the war arrived, everyone entered the caves. However, they were defeated because in the caves there was no food, only water. Because of their hunger, they themselves emerged and surrendered.¹²⁰ But some people did not leave and had to be lured. Only then did they leave. The lure was as follows: some people from the armies said to them: "Come and receive a flag¹²¹ so that the wars no longer devastate you." When all the people had left the cave, they were caught. Some people refused to leave their caves and they set fire to them. So they left due to the heat and smoke.

In these wars, many people and many oxen were captured, which were brought to this village. In Esele they encountered many kings, among them two who were more significant and commanded in the country in question. The oldest was called Ulundu Manda and he was the most important.¹²² He was the one who ordered people to raid the whites. This king married a *dona* (lady).¹²³ The other king, Cinguli, was the younger brother¹²⁴ of Ulundu Manda.

These two kings were captured along with the following elders: Sekulu Yakoba, Sekulu Tomasi, Sekulu Isake and Luis.¹²⁵ These kings were handed over to the whites, who took them to Luanda. But they failed to reach the destination; they died on the journey.

The Mueputu of Esele gave these elders who captured the kings \$ 5.00 per person. And then the armies returned to Bailundo.

At the time, the king was called Kandimba Jahulu.

KING KANDIMBA JAHULU No. 1.

¹²⁰ *Va litelekala*, neologism derived from the Portuguese *entregar*, surrender (T.N.).

¹²¹ *Ebandela*, transliteration of the Portuguese word 'flag.'

¹²² *Osoma yinene*, literally, 'great king.'

¹²³ *Ondona*, an Umbundization of the Portuguese term *dona*, 'lady.' This term, encountered in Angola since the slave-trafficking era, was applied on the coast to those women who trafficked slaves and to the wives and daughters of male slave traders. These women occupied prominent positions in the Luanda and Benguela societies (see Cândido, 2012; Oliveira, 2018). In Umbundu, the term indicates a distinctive woman, belonging to the elite.

¹²⁴ *Manja*.

¹²⁵ Yakoba, Tomasi, Isake and Luis are, respectively, transliterations of Jacó (Jacob), Tomás (Thomas), Isaque (Isaac) and Luís (Louis) into Umbundu.

The new king. His name is Kandimba, which means that he is clever. He went to Esele sent by Mueneputu Kawele to fight against the misers.¹²⁶ On returning, he renamed himself Jahulu, which means “paths of the elders, since I battled like the elders who preceded me, the ancient kings.” But he was not of royal ascent. His family only formed part of the kingdom (they sold meat).

He said: “I am Jahulu (path of the elders),¹²⁷ since I follow on the path of my elders, those who ate the best. As for me, it remains for me to search for something, since on this path there nothing is left; the older ones ate everything.”

KING KANDIMBA JAHULU No. 2.

When Cisende died, he left his Epalanga Kandimba. At this time we learnt that Soma Kandimba had gone to war in Esele to fight against this people for having eaten the whites. But he did not ascend to the throne like the others did; his ascension took place with the power of the whites. He did not do the same as the others, who wanted fame. These are the kings of Bailundo, who did good things and things of use.

KING KANDIMBA JAHULU No. 2.

During this period, there were already no more wars because there were many administrative posts. He did not do anything grandiose. He only participated in the wars of 1917, but these wars were organized by the whites.

These are the kings of Bailundo that we know.

KING KANDIMBA JAHULU No. 5.

He is the king of the whites, he is not from the royal lineage. Soma Jahulu has fame, since even among the whites he was really famous. This king was very obedient to the governors. He gained fame when fighting in Esele. He went to fight at the command of the whites and obeyed their orders. When he left Esele he took many people with him.

¹²⁶ In Umbundu, *ongoya*, the singular of *olongoya*, literally signifies “who closes the hand.” It has pejorative connotations, which are translated by Alves (1951: 956-9577) as “stingy, tenacious, clingy; prisoner of debtors, implacable creditor; barbarian, cruel, inhabitant of Libolo.” The Libolo region is located to the north of Seles, maintaining linguistic proximities with the region.

¹²⁷ *Njila yakulu* can also be translated as “path of the ancestors” or “path of the oldest.” In Umbundu, *ukulu* (plural *akulu*) designates older people, both living and dead.

So the whites murmured: “We cannot keep slaves.” And they obeyed. But the king did not release any. Just a few left the administration.

On returning from the war, Soma Kandimba ascended to the throne and became our really famous king.

KING KANDIMBA JAHULU No. 5.

This king does not have royal ancestry. He was chosen by the whites simply because he was intelligent.¹²⁸ In the past only those with royal ancestry could govern. Sometime the sons of the kings reigned. But as they might like to do what is bad, with the arrival of the whites it was agreed that only people of good judgement could become king.

Jahulu became very famous. Since the beginning of his reign he accumulated fame. This could be seen at the time he went to the war in Esele and Buim¹²⁹ and defeated many people. He captured many men, women and children, many utensils and as many oxen as there are grains of sand.

In the wars of Esele there was a multitude, but there were only 150 kings, each with his own war camp. Each king took his flag as a precaution. They said: “otherwise some people may get lost. If someone gets lost, on seeing his flag in another place, he will go there. And he will no longer be lost because of the flag.”

Not only *imbundu* went to these wars.¹³⁰ Four whites also left here from Bailundo. The whites are: Nãta Gomes Juiz, Padre [Priest], Martinho, Leis. They took care of people in the war. The Priest administered medications to sick people, the dying and the injured. These people in Esele and Buim gave the whites a lot of work. Some had their legs cut off, others their head; the skin of some was flayed; the women were given in marriage to the inhabitants of Esele.

When the whites went to Esele in these wars, they helped a lot the whites who had suffered, as well as their wives and children. They sent their wives and children to Sumbe

¹²⁸ *Olondunge* can be translated as ‘intelligence,’ ‘judgment’ or ‘cleverness.’

¹²⁹ Today Seles and Amboim.

¹³⁰ *Imbundu*, plural of *umbundu*, the form most often used locally to designate the person speaking the Umbundu language or a descendent of its speakers. *Ovimbundu*, the ethnic term, is rarely used in the Central Highlands by native speakers of Umbundu, who also apply the term ‘umbundu’ to speakers of the language. This overlapping of language and speaking population is also observed in relation to Kimbundu, whose speakers are also called Kimbundu.

with someone who could lead the way. But as these people, when they were in Esele, walked around naked, they were given many clothes on being sent to Sumbe.

There was much work to do there, since the war was intense. Among the people sent to the war, those who fought most were those from the Evangelical Mission. They were unafraid. The war was intense and they could pass the whole night shooting, it was pure courage on their part.

These wars lasted seven months. They left on August 6 and returned in March. They brought various slaves,¹³¹ oxen and utensils, which they had looted from the whites.

When they returned from these wars, Soma Jahulu acquired considerable power, so that even the whites respected him a lot; but among the Ovimbundu the respect was even greater. Thus, they named him “the true king, of great intelligence.” The great respect for him came from the wars of Esele, from where he came.

THE VERY FIRST KING OF BAILUNDO WAS BULU No. 5.

Soma Bulu was the first to construct in the *ombala* of Bailundo, which was called “In Katiavala.” But for those from Bailundo this means that “these people are very clever.”

THE EXPULSION OF BULU

On this day, the king went to the fields and encountered war in the village, since King Katiavala wanted the mountain. He had to leave the *ombala* and went to construct another village. When he died, people thought about burying him in the *ombala*. They went to fetch his body to be buried in the *ombala*, since he was the one who began it.

KING KATIAVALA I. No. 5.

When this king reigned in the *ombala*, he was not as famous as the others. He was just envious; he was not famous. When he died, he was also buried in the *ombala*. King Katiavala was Ndatembo [Son-in-Law] of King Bulu. Although the latter was his father-

¹³¹ *Ocikumba* can be translated as ‘slave’ or ‘servant.’ The term refers to the raids made during wars in which people were captured. The term in Umbundu applied to the wars of the slave trafficking period, which were designated as wars of the *kwata kwata*. It relates to the practice of raids since *oku kwata*, in Umbundu, signifies ‘take’ or ‘capture.’ Those captured would belong to those who waged the war and were inserted in the victors’ network of relations. The women were generally given in marriage. Among those in servitude, there was some degree of social mobility, associated with the skills of each person. As this text indicates, in some circumstances it was possible for them to be released.

in-law, due to the power that he wielded, he did not think of him as a father-in-law; he expelled him like he was just anyone. But in order to govern, kings need their family members. Even these kings, Bulu and Katiavala, remained Father-in-Law and Son-in-Law.¹³²

KING CINGI I. No. 1

King Cingi is the great king. He was the one who convoked the wars and went to conquer the entire country of Viye and its king. The wars in Viye were as follows. King Cingi also went there with his people. When they arrived, they found the country full of people and began to make war...! After the king of Viye was overthrown and was unable to achieve victory. So King Cingi began to capture people; he also captured the king and the oxen. Some people fled. The name of this *ombala* was Ekovongo, the *ombala* of Viye. But the sadness came from the wars themselves. In the period when the *ombala* was taken by the army of the kingdom of Bailundo, the king was very happy with his army and said: "There is nothing else that can stop us."

The members of the army began to wander wherever they wanted. Silence descended. So they went in the direction of some whites who had left Dongo; these whites were dark.¹³³ They went to raid them. Everyone set off and left the king alone. The entire army went to raid those dark whites of Dongo.

There were still some people from Viye¹³⁴ who had hidden. When the armies went to conduct the raids, the Viye people came to the king's encampment and found him alone. All the army had gone. When these people asked about the king, saying "where is the king?", the king pointed to his lad, called Muekalia, to which he replied: "Hey, Soma, by this point we are already dead; don't point to me saying that I am the king. It's not me; you yourself are the Soma."

¹³² In Umbundu, the term *ndatembo* designates the intergenerational relations of affinity, this same term applying to both positions irrespective of gender. It can, therefore, be translated as 'father-in-law,' 'son-in-law,' 'mother-in-law' or 'daughter-in-law.'

¹³³ *Indele viaco vi tekava*. In Umbundu, *okutekava* can be translated as 'to be dark.' In this phrase, it is clear that 'white' refers to a social positionality implying status, prestige and wealth. It does not necessarily refer to skin color, given that it was possible for 'whites' to be dark skinned.

¹³⁴ In Umbundu, *va Viye*. The *va* indicates that they are persons, in the plural, of *Viye*, whose Portuguese form is Bié. *Bieno* is the term used to designate these inhabitants in Portuguese.

As soon as these people heard this, they seized the Soma of Bailundo and cut off his head. When the army arrived, they found their king had been dead for some time. On leaving, though, they took only the people they had captured. They left their king there. They took just the people they had captured, along with the oxen and all the things they had looted. The sadness was great because their king, who they had left behind, was dead.

But this king was the first to govern. Gunji came next. When Soma Cingi died in Viye, it was King Gunji who replaced him.

KING CINGI I. No. 5.

King Cingi, who came to fight the Viye people, initially vanquished them. When the entire army left the camp to capture people, they left the king there with the children. He thought: "Perhaps everyone is already obeying; they won't do anything else." When those from Viye saw that the Soma was alone with the children in the camp, they felled him and cut off his head. Since then the people of Bailundo have ceased to like the people from Viye, although they live together on the same terrain. The elders did not like each other. Always, whether those from Viye or those from Bailundo, they just wanted to fight among themselves. So that when those from Bailundo subjugated those from Viye, they said: "We won." But today, because of God's word¹³⁵ that united us, there is not so much hatred between us.

KING CINGI I. No. 5.

At the time when this king reigned, they really liked to make war with the people from Viye. He said: "so that they start paying tribute to me."

Once, he went to fight the Viye people. At that time everyone stayed in the camp. When his entire army left to capture people, they left the king alone in the camp with the children. They thought that there would be no problem, since as the Viye people had already been subjugated, they would do nothing bad to the king.

At the moment when everyone departed and left the king alone with the children, the Viye people went to the Bailundo camp and encountered the king tranquil with the

¹³⁵ In Umbundu, Suku. Here the reference is to the Christian God.

children, since all the armies were scattered everywhere. So they tied the king up and ripped off his head.

Since then the peoples of Viye and Bailundo have not liked each other much; they hated each other. But today, because of God's word, they are well and eat well.

KING CINGI II. No. 5.

King Cingi hated Luanda. When Luanda gave the order to make war against him, the whites won. Consequently, he fled to Mount Elumbanganda. Afterward they removed him from there and took him to Luanda. He died in Luanda. However, he had another son: Ekuikui I. King Cingi II suffered a lot. All the elders from his court had also been captured. His son, Ekuikui, educated himself as he reigned; he even knew how to write. He reigned on the throne of his father, Cingi II. The latter gave him beautiful shackles to restrain people. He reigned in this city of Bailundo. He was the first Ekuikui, son of King Cingi II.

KING CINGI II. No. 5.

During this government, this king hated those of Luanda a lot. In Luanda, therefore, they ordered that war be waged against him, since he was very provocative.

During the fight, as he was defeated, he fled to Mount Elumbanganda. There he was captured along with his elders and they were taken to Luanda.

There they suffered greatly. However, he had a son in Luanda, whose name was Ekuikui I. This child educated himself during the time when he was alongside his father Cingi II. When he grew up, they sent him to his father's *ombala* for him to govern. When he came here, his father gave him shackles so that he could restrain those who did not obey the king properly.

KING KALANDULA I. No. 5.

King Kalandula was a warrior king. He warred in Sambu, Cilenge and Mosambe.¹³⁶ It was there that he captured the women. He died when he returned from the wars. He was very famous.

¹³⁶ In Portuguese, Sambo, Quilengues and Moçâmedes.

In Cilenge he went to loot many oxen and people which he brought from there. In Mosambe, he went to capture the whites and also some women. Hence, we recognize that Kalandula's reign saw many victories.

In Sambu, as they opposed the king, he captured all of them. Even today, this village lies abandoned; there is nobody left.

[unnumbered page with content description]

THE NAME, BALUNDU.

Pages [39, erased] 58 to 93.

It is possible that as in the case of Viye where the Portuguese changed the spelling to Bihe or Bié that they changed the name Va Lundu to Bailundo. In the phonetics of the Portuguese a final u sound is indicated with an o. Even if the Ba is retained, in Bantu languages ba and va are inter change'able. The royal family came from Lundu by way of Bonga, and consequently were Va Lundu, hence the name Valundu or Balundu.

According to this document the first king of Balundu was Bulu, a hunter who built on this rock hill and established himself as a king. Later he was expelled by his son-in-law Katiavala I. The names of those who reigned from the time of Katiavala to that of Chingi, the father and predecessor of Ekuikui I are not mentioned.

The pages from 61 to 93 are a rich mine of material for the anthropologist, explaining in detail the workings of a typical head village of an African kingdom, and its political, social and religious norms. This supplements the document marked, "The customs of the Ombala of Balundu."

[descriptive note by Merlin Ennis]¹³⁷

THE NAME BAILUNDO

No. 1.

There was a hunter who came and built on the Bailundo mountain. He built in such a way that his village grew considerably and became the *ombala*. It became very, very large and peaceful. But who held authority over it was Bonga.

¹³⁷ In the original, this observation appears handwritten in blue ink.

Some time later someone became a great king. His name was Bulu. He became the great king.

The nephew of the Soma of Bonga, who had given him permission to build in Bailundo, came, saw one of King Bulu's daughters and liked her. He wanted to marry her. The name of this lad was Katiavala. He married the daughter of Soma Bulu.

Katiavala soon constructed near to his father-in-law. When the latter reported the news to the population he had a headache. He was annoyed at his father-in-law doing this in the morning and afternoon numerous times. So he thought a lot... and decided: "That's it. I'm going to expel the father;¹³⁸ so I can stay in the mountain, I shall overthrow him." So he ordered his maternal uncle in Bonga to be told: "You are my mother's brother; I am your nephew¹³⁹ Katiavala; as I am rich, I am going to expel the father of the *ombala* because he is very noisy. He is the one who is in the small mountain. He thinks he'll report the news morning and afternoon? I've had enough."

The moment that Nãfa Bulu left, he was expelled from the *ombala*. So Katiavala seized his father-in-law's court. He sent all his belongings to Huvi. His father-in-law said: "I'll be back." Katiavala replied: "Ah! Father, you're already old. Your things are there in Huvi, you cannot come here. Because it's now mine."

Soma Bulu thought a lot... and said: "Wow!! Really!! I've never seen anything like it." He left the *ombala* with all his wealth and his entourage.¹⁴⁰ They walked to Utalamo, where he said: "Here is the Shout," which means: "I shouted with great shame because my son-in-law expelled me from the *ombala*." Leaving there he went to Kalesu. Further on, he arrived at Mount Lumbuambua. He named the mountain Bulu, but he gave himself another name: "I am Citomba,¹⁴¹ since my son-in-law deprived me of the throne and the *ombala*."

¹³⁸ *Tate*, a term that signifies 'father', is a common form of designating father-in-law and addressing him in Umbundu.

¹³⁹ The reference is to the privileged relation between the maternal uncle (*manu*) and his nephew (*ocikumba*). Having the prerogatives related to this position, Katiavala advises his uncle that "being rich" – that is, being his nephew – he will depose his father-in-law Bulu.

¹⁴⁰ The term translated by 'entourage' is *ocikumba*, which includes slaves and members of the family. It refers to all those who inhabit the same residential unit (in this case, the court).

¹⁴¹ Citomba means 'depreciated.'

But a king is a king nonetheless. When his village grew again, he reinitiated his reign. And the entire country immediately became Citomba.¹⁴²

When Katiavala discovered that his father-in-law had died, he climbed the mountain to his court. From there he governed. And he became the great king.

He governed well, the people liked him. And he undertook some wars against other countries.

THE KINGDOM OF BAILUNDO No. 1.

This kingdom, located on the side where the sun sets in Ngoveya, belonged to the Bonga family, because they had expelled the Bulu people. Hence, this kingdom belonged to them like a family. They did not accept anyone from outside the family governing. This family of Kaluelue Ngombe is from Citungu and the family of Njamba is from Kuvela. No one else can reign. When Kaluelue ascended to the *ombala* to be enthroned, his nephew Njamba went to live close to his maternal uncle. He moved, went to Lombundi and constructed there with all his slaves. Thus even today the people of Mbundi are no longer there.

When they went to war, all the kings brought many people. Houses were built for them in some villages. The sons of kings were not allowed to stay in the *ombala*. They built elsewhere where they reigned.

These are the regions¹⁴³ or countries: Cipuli, Longole, Katolo. These are the countries that were ruled by the sons of kings.

The people of Cindongo and Lombundi were governed by the grandsons of the kings. Their king was called Citekulu¹⁴⁴ as the king's grandson.

The people of Cilume, Hanga and Kaliki received a large cut of ox belly rib because, it was said: "They are indeed children of the belly." None of those we are narrating were born here; they emerged from the wars of the kings. Their ancestry comes from there.

The people of Cilume¹⁴⁵ originated in the wars.

¹⁴² Here the overlap between the territory and its ruler is clear, the cases being frequent where a village had the name of the person who possessed authority over it.

¹⁴³ In Umbundu, *aluvumba*, which can be translated as a "set of people dependent on a king; a territory subject to a chief; zone, region, district" (Alves 1951, p. 1687).

¹⁴⁴ Literally, the king's grandson. In Umbundu, grandson is *onekulu* (plural *olonekulu*).

¹⁴⁵ Given the overlap between people and territory, the translation for *va Cilume* could be both "those from Cilume" and "the Cilume."

The people of Cipuli originated in the wars.
The people of Longole originated in the wars.
The people of Mbonge of Kalesu came from Mbongo.
The people of Hanga came from the wars.
The people of Lombundi came from the wars.
The people of Kaliki came from the wars.
The people of Kapiñala are birth children.¹⁴⁶
The people of Njamba are birth children.

THE NOBLES¹⁴⁷

Those of Kapiñala, Njamba, Cikunga, Lunji, Mbonga, Kaundi, Cilumbu.
Those of Cilumbu were ruled by the sons of kings. Or on occasion by some Citekulu.
Those from Cinjamba, Mungu, Elinya, Lunji and Mbonga are *atumbu*,¹⁴⁸ that is, the kings originate from their countries.
The families of Mbongo and Ulundu have been free for some time. But they are not alone; they are connected to the *ombala*. The families are connected to the latter. They say: "We're not going to be alone; we're going to connect with the others."
But if someone among them kills an adult man, the people of Lundu send this person to Mbongo. If the people of Mbongo kill a diligent woman, they send this person to Ulundu. They exchange killers between themselves.
But if these persons behave badly, the people of Ndumbu, Kapiñala, Cipuaka and Samba Jahulu serve as advisors.

ATUMBU AND OVINDULI No. 2.

In the period when the kings liked to make war, when they were victorious they would take people back to their village. They gave them a place to build. For this reason, some villages are *Atumbu*, responsible for the *Ovinduli*.

¹⁴⁶ *Omaña voku cita*, literally, children of childbirth.

¹⁴⁷ In Umbundu, *olombuale*. Guennec and Valente (1972, p. 380) provide 'free' or 'independent' as other possible translations. In the context in question, freedom was linked to the person's social status. This was relational, however: a noble in one context could become a slave in another (for example, if captured in a war or sold as a slave).

¹⁴⁸ *Atumbu*, plural of *etumbu*, designates the original villages from which other villages derive.

Atumbu are those from their own village, the free people like Mbonga, Cikunga, Mbongo, Ulundu and others.

Ovinduli are those who were brought back from the wars, people to whom the king gave lands for them to inhabit his country, like Cindongo, Kaliki, Cipuli, Cilume, Longole, Lombundi. All these were *ovinduli*. These people were given belly meat, which signifies that they are birth children. These villages were ruled by *itekulu*, that is, by grandchildren of the kings.

THE INAUGURATION OF THE KING. No. 1.

When the king who is governing dies, the elders come to an agreement to choose a new regent from among the sons, maternal nephews or grandchildren of the kings.

Whoever chooses the king must have an important name like Muekalia, Ngambole, Cinduli, Civandu, Kaley, Citonga, Uciŋa, Henjengo, Ciwale and others. They meet at night in the house of the eldest among them, Muekalia. This group of people is called Vakalia. During the meeting at night, one of them says: "I want so-and-so to be king," and each of them expresses their opinion. After everyone has declared their preference, Muekalia, the leader of leaders, says: "I have chosen so-and-so" and everyone applauds. Whoever is chosen by Muekalia will govern.

Leaving there at night, in the morning they bring spirit-soaked cloths, which they hand to Kesongo for him to take to the person chosen by the kings.¹⁴⁹ And he learns that he was chosen. When choosing, they opt for someone who is a good speaker and has something to offer. Because they say: "If I am found guilty and cannot pay, the king can save me and I will become his slave."

After the assembly advises everyone that so-and-so will reign, the entire village stores *ocimbombo*. Everyone, great or small, comes to the *ombala* to watch the inauguration ceremony.

First everyone stays in their home. The elders go to fetch them. As they accompany them to the court, the walk is slow. At the entry to the court is a lad sat on a chair. The people

¹⁴⁹ In Umbundu, all rulers are called *osoma* (common noun) or Soma (proper name designating their title). This is why the people who choose the higher king are also called kings.

then arrive firing their guns, drumming, playing *olombendo*¹⁵⁰ and howling,¹⁵¹ in such a form that it is impossible to see the king due to the haze of smoke.

On arriving at the entrance, they advise: "Young man, get out of the way of the entrance, the king is going to pass." The lad refuses, reluctant to move. And he replies: "Here it is my entrance that leads to my court. If you want to pass, bring something for me to sell my entrance."

So they give him nine, six or seven, which the young man receives for the king to pass tranquilly. In purchasing the entrance, the court itself is also bought.

When the king is enthroned, they kill oxen and after much discussion choose just one to be butchered, since the people who belong to the *ombala* each receive a piece¹⁵² corresponding to their position, until everyone has some. But the throat is given to Ndaka because, as they say, he is the orator. And they also say: "He is the throat of the king."

On these days the king chooses a name to bear his greatness. But he does not choose hurriedly to ensure that people do not say: "He liked it." First he evades the issue, afterwards he refuses vociferously; it is the people who persuade him to accept the name.

The village from where the king originates is called Etunda.¹⁵³

THE KING'S GOVERNMENT No. 3.

When the king who was on the throne dies, the country's inhabitants choose someone with the maturity to govern well.

Sometimes, someone who has blood ties to the king will say: "I want to receive the throne of my father or grandfather." And if people recognize that he is mature enough, the country agrees to his reign. But he must love the country, and the country wants someone who has money so that when he governs he will kill oxen, sometimes two.

¹⁵⁰ Musical instrument (T.N.).

¹⁵¹ From *oku ulula*, a form of acclaiming using an acoustic variation with hand and mouth, in which the hand is raised to the mouth in alternating form, while a sound is produced with the mouth. Or the person simply cries "*ulu, ulu, ulu...*" as many times as necessary (T.N.).

¹⁵² *Ocikepa*, literally, large bone.

¹⁵³ *Okutunda* means to leave. Thus, *Etunda* is, literally, from where he leaves.

In order for the king to be able to govern properly he searches for someone. Sometimes they anticipate this moment and feed someone; when this does not happen, they lay ambushes on the paths. When someone is glimpsed walking alone, they grab him and take him where these people are killed; however, when this person is killed, they place a piece of wood in their mouth, called *oluvulu*, which prevents them from crying so that the king does not hear them die (this is what they used to think). They tie the person's hands and feet; they prepare an ox and tie it up. But in this execution the person is dragged like an ox; the great Kesongo holds a spear, pierces the ox and the person. At this moment all the lads of the Kesongo receive a red sign on their face, play the *andingu*, *alimba* and *oloñoma*¹⁵⁴ instruments and fire their guns. The sound of the guns is so that the king does not hear the slaughter.

When the person dies, they cut off some of the flesh and mix it in the pots of ox meat. They then unite all the persons who have blood ties to the king, saying: "Come and receive *atuña*"¹⁵⁵ (which is what this type of food is called); common people cannot eat even a slight amount of this meat.

When the meal is over, they say: "We went to receive *atuña*." They add: "Now the king governs." On this day no woman can leave the *ombala* to go to the river in search of water because the Kesonga's lads block the path. First the king must make the payment for people to be able to pass the gateway.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KING No. 3.

When he governs, the king chooses three people: first Muekalia, then Epalanga and Ngambole. Muekalia gives the final word to the entire country when they solicit his judgment.

Epalanga: if the king dies, only he can govern in his place. And if the relationship between the king and the country is not good, Epalanga can speak to the elders of the country for them to depose the king for him to take his place.

¹⁵⁴ *Elimba* (plural *alimba*) is a kind of mbira. *Oloñoma* (singular *oñoma*) and *andingu* (singular *endingu*) are two types of drum (the *endingu* has two skins).

¹⁵⁵ Literally, pieces of meat.

Ngambole: is the country's guide.¹⁵⁶ If there are conflicts somewhere – for example, if someone is behaving badly – then he visits the place with Kesongo and his lads to apprehend the people involved and bring them to the *ombala*.

If necessary, they fight with these people; they even have permission to kill whoever disrespects the king.

Kongengele: if they go to war, Kongengele takes the head of a person who they killed a long time ago. He carries it in a cloth tied to his back and leads the army from the front. All the people going to war follow him. If the army liked causing trouble, Kongengele would not go to the war accompanied by his personnel. When he accompanies the army, he manages to lure people since the head of the killed person and other amulets that he carries on his back generate trust: "This is what will win us the war." For this reason, not everyone can accompany Kongengele. Sometimes people go to him; if not, his sorcery¹⁵⁷ loses its power.

THE CUSTOM OF THE KINGS No. 1.

When the king is enthroned, he is very apprehensive about the family members of the one he replaced. At this moment, he only goes out to fetch sticks¹⁵⁸ to harm them and protect himself so that nothing touches his body and his house.

He substitutes all the hands¹⁵⁹ of the former king, including his Inakulu.

He changes the entrance to the court, he chooses Ndaka.

He chooses the sons of the kings who will replace the sons of the former kings in other villages. These are the villages we already mentioned above. For this reason, if the king does not have much power,¹⁶⁰ he is unable to reign.

When he begins to govern, all the important people bring something to salute him; it may be an ox or a fattened pig.

¹⁵⁶ In Umbundu, *ohando*, translated here as 'guide,' is the head of the caravan (Alves 1951, p. 129). This is a high position, bearing in mind that in the period that preceded the *avassalamento* (subjugation or 'vassalization') of the Central Highlands, trade was the main economic occupation of its inhabitants. The caravans were organized from the *ombala*, with the carriers people pertaining to the court.

¹⁵⁷ In Umbundu, *umbanda*.

¹⁵⁸ Roots used in rituals to destroy or benefit someone (T.N.).

¹⁵⁹ 'Hands' here refers to the people who used to serve the previous king.

¹⁶⁰ *Umbanda* here refers both to the rituals that were translated as *feitico* and to their outcome: the power of the king.

In his house are some insects, like bees, hornets and large wasps. Since if he wants to kill someone, he pulls apart a hornet and places it in the medicine; he then sends it to the targeted person and the latter dies. Afterwards it returns to the person who sent it. He marries women whose fathers are important. Afterwards, each of the elders will send him a daughter in marriage. Sometimes the king has 40 or 50 women.

He chooses a Kapila from the Kapila family. He carries his staff everywhere, along with his walking stick. The king must also consult a *quimbandeiro*.

THE KING'S WOMEN No. 3.

When he governs, the king encounters a woman whose name is Inakulu. She is the most important of the king's women and must be substituted, since even if the king leaves the throne, she will remain in the *ombala* and marry another king. The next most powerful woman is Civocepembe.

The Soma constructs a large kitchen for Inakulu to use with her six or so girls; if the king is important, he may have two women. When they finish the roof of the kitchen, the king offers her *ocisangua*,¹⁶¹ as soon as she drinks it, she dies. People say: "This is done so the kitchen functions well." The same occurs on completion of the roof of the king's house.

INAKULU'S CHAIR AND FIRE IN THE KITCHEN

In her kitchen, the fireplace is first dug; afterwards the head of a person is buried in it. Over it are placed thick logs, and on top of these is placed the pot used for cooking. The same occurs with the *inakulu's* chair. On the spot where it is placed too, the head of a person is buried; none of the young women can sit on it, even if she is a wife of the king.

BRAIDING INAKULU

When they braid Inakulu, they place a human bone in the braids on the top of her head. At the moment when this braiding is done, the women usually flee, since when the

¹⁶¹ Fermented maize drink.

braids are completed, the braider sometimes dies in fact because the medicines¹⁶² are strong. The person really dies.

When all these things are concluded, they say: “The king now reigns.” And Inakulu never carries a basket because of the human bone on top of her head.

RESPECT¹⁶³ FOR THE KING No. 1.

The king stays in the *ombala*, but the small kings who live in the surrounding countries revere him like a father. When they visit the *ombala*, none of the kings from the surrounding region is called Soma. They are simply called Sekulu. Because there is just one king in the *ombala*. One cannot clap in reverence when he sits, nor can one give orders. Because at this moment, all of them become lads of the great king. Only when they leave the *ombala* are they called Soma. They then return to the sling.¹⁶⁴

When the great king spits, the elder covers his saliva. When he finishes speaking, everyone applauds him. When he rises, they applaud him; when he sits, they applaud him. Nobody speaks in a loud voice close to the king because this is considered a lack of respect. One cannot pass close to the king.

If he addresses you, you reply saying: “Yes, great-grandfather; eternal great-grandfather; sacred eternal one; great-grandfather lion.”¹⁶⁵ That is the correct reply. If one wishes to respond to something that the Soma is saying, you begin by announcing: “Great-grandfather, without wishing to interrupt you,” or “Great-grandfather, if it’s not to grab a sharp knife,”¹⁶⁶ or “Great-grandfather, without wishing to put my hand in the flame.” Only then will the king wait for you to finish speaking.

But if he gives you something, you must say: “To the goat its skin; to the ox its skin; it’s bad to walk naked.”

But the sons of kings cannot treat him like a father; he has to be Sekulu or Soma.

It is up to an elder to wipe the sweat from the king.

¹⁶² In Umbundu, *ovihemba*.

¹⁶³ In Umbundu, *esumbilo* encompasses both the abstract meaning of respect and its physical incorporation in the form of the described forms of reverence.

¹⁶⁴ The sling here refers to the privilege related to the king’s position, which includes the possibility of being carried.

¹⁶⁵ In Umbundu, *Na-kuku oco*, *Na-kuku fuli*, *Akuku ci kola*, *Na-kuku ohosi*. The lion refers to the king’s power.

¹⁶⁶ *Nda ha ku kuata vo moko li teta*, meaning “if it’s not to abuse your power.”

Here in our country, there used to be more respect for the king and the elders. The children, when passing the elders, lower their eyes and walk on tiptoe; after passing by quickly, they raise their head. A woman when passing by the king or the elders of the country, even if she is carrying a gourd full of water, a bundle of firewood or a basket of produce from the fields, cannot leave them on her head. If carrying a basket, she lowers it to the height of her shoulders and only after passing them quickly at a distance does she put it back on her head.

If the women grinding maize at the stones to make cornmeal see the king approaching, nobody continues; all the women remain in silence and only start grinding again after the king has passed.

If a woman is pregnant, she becomes very wary when walking along the path; observing that the king is coming in her direction, she flees since if she does not she may have problems if caught.

Anyone, even an elder from the villages, when arriving where the king is found will crouch down and walk on tiptoe. This is true respect.

If the person is walking with *olondovi*,¹⁶⁷ they cannot salute the king's lad. Otherwise they will become involved in conflicts.

If someone is in the *onjango* making a mat and the court lad enters, he cannot be saluted, otherwise the person will be captured.

If male children are digging wells in the forest with women, they cannot salute whoever is leaving the *ombala*, since they become a prisoner and must pay bail.¹⁶⁸

When the king greets a lad, child or adult, the person should respond with a show of reverence; if they fail to do so, the king says to his court lads: "That lad mocked me." So you will be captured and will have to pay a fine to not be sold.

When the king greets someone, he says: "*Mba – Mbokuetu!* [Hey, so-and-so!]" And the person replies: "*Ohosi-Akuku!* [Grandfather Lion!]" or "*Ohosi-Ongulama* [Termite Lion]"

¹⁶⁷ A kind of rope made from tree bark (Alves 1951, p. 881).

¹⁶⁸ *Ovimbu* can be translated as 'bail' or 'fine.' It is what a person would pay when found guilty in order to avoid becoming a slave or being sold to repay the debt.

There are diverse ways to respond respectfully to being greeted by the king; but if the person does not respond with reverence, they may be captured.

When greeting the king, a person crouches and claps at the same time, saying: “*Ohosi-Akuku* [Grandfather Lion].” The Soma responds: “*Kalunga*,¹⁶⁹ *kalunga*,” and his voice transmits his calm and authority.

THE TRIBUNAL No. 1.

When someone wants to present a question to the court, they first take something to the Soma; afterwards they speak about everything that is causing them pain. On leaving the *ombala*, they seek out the person who was denounced in the court and bring him or her to the king for him to decide how to proceed. All the important people of the *ombala* also participate. First the situation of the person making the accusation is presented to the court, then the accused person summoned to the court also speaks. The advocates reply only when these persons conclude, but they speak carefully, since an elder who says something that contradicts the king will be scorned and they may even take away his seat. The king then has the final word.

If someone was judged and condemned, if it is the person who brought the other to the court, the punishment is greater: first they pay a pig for the request, then they pay for the trial and finally they pay what they owe the other. But if the accused person is condemned, they first pay the pig for the trial, then for the acclamation and finally what they owe the other. Everyone pays, who came and who was brought. And there was no justice.

THE TRIBUNAL No. 3.

If someone has robbed or killed someone else, hurt someone with a stone or owed some good to another person and does not wish to pay, the owner of this good goes to the *ombala* to expose the person in order for the king to force them to pay for this good promptly.

When someone takes a question to the *ombala*, they establish the date when the matter will be judged. When this day arrives, all the king’s elders and all the other people

¹⁶⁹ *Kalunga*, an interjection frequently used as a greeting with many meanings. Alves (1951, p. 258) states that it is related to the verb *oku kakula*, “shout, emit a sound.” It also refers to the sea and death.

involved meet in the *ocila* (the place where judgments are made). When they arrive there, they should sit in order, since under some seats the head of a person has been buried and only the Soma or some important elders can sit on these. If a common person sits there, he becomes a slave of the king and cannot leave the court.

All the people hurry to sit in the *ocila*. The Soma is the last. When everyone else is sat, he enters the court calmly with his robes dragging on the ground, and everyone remains in complete silence. When he sits, all the people who came to participate in the trial greet him with much applause. After sitting, he says a few simple words. Only then does he ask what the trial is about, although he knows. The person in question repeats what he or she has already said. Once finished, the Soma has the final word. At the end of the trial, all the people who brought a question before the king hand over two large pigs, which are roasted and divided up so that everyone who went to watch the trial receives their share.

But the person found guilty by the tribunal pays for other person's goods. If the payment is two oxen, the king keeps one and the owner the other.

BLOWING THE HORN No. 1.

When the king recognizes that the time is right, he commissions a festival with *ocimbombo* for the *ombala*. And he recommends that everyone from the countries under his jurisdiction, whether kings, nobles, slaves or the poor, comes to the *ombala* on these days of preparation. When the *ocimbombo* is ready, the king chooses a different name to add to his grandeur or smallness (see Ekuikui II above).

But it is necessary to be attentive, since as these days approach, people are sent to set ambushes on the paths so that if someone is captured, they will be killed. However, it must be a man, it cannot be a woman. And they say that it is a gazelle. These people are called Katokola because they remove heads (cut off heads).

They then kill this person on the day when the *ocimbombo* is ready. When the inhabitants of the *ombala* kill the ox, they cook its meat with the flesh of the person who was killed. When it is ready, they give it to all the people who have some connection to the *ombala*. They call this: "*Atunã*, we receive pieces of meat."

On this day, the Soma blows the horn and gives all the names that apply to his government. When he mentions the name that he chose, they applaud him, fire their

guns, play the drums and continue shouting for a long time. And the Soma dances joyfully. Afterwards he enters his house again. Because if he remains there for longer, they send him a statue¹⁷⁰ that can kill him.

They then say: "The Soma took the horn. He will give himself a new name or change the government."

ILLNESS AND DEATH OF THE KING No. 1.

Every king has a small gourd, a common container for storage, in which he places small portions of medications that he uses as treatment. Thus, each year he takes a little and eats; he does this every year. But this is done at the start of each year. And if he becomes sick during the year, he will not die. An elder will die, Muekalia, Epalanga or another elder until he is cured.

When important elders of the kingdom want to kill the king, they simply speak to the woman responsible for treatment of the gourd and receive it from her hand. When he says "I am the king, bring me a little more" and he does not receive what he asked for, he perceives that he will die that year. As soon as he begins to sicken the elders kill him. They tie him up from the rafters of the house, put a rope around his neck and each day twist his head a little more until it separates from his body. Later they announce that the king has died. The disease of all the kings is always from the feet. The king is buried but his head remains in the *ombala*. No king is buried with the head, only King Cingi II because he died in Portugal. His skull is not here in the country, but the heads of all the other kings are here even today.

After the burial, all small children should be guarded because people begin to capture other people's children, pigs, goats, chickens and everything else that is good. They say: "It's the festival of the king's death." These abductions last two or three months. Only the festival of the death of Soma Ekuikui II lasted the entire year.

When the king dies, his substitute is expected to be Epalanga or Sunguahanga, since they are important people close to the king. Who chooses and advises the king is Muekalia.

¹⁷⁰ In Umbundu, *iteka*. This is a statue to which malefic powers are attributed.

Thus, whether Epalanga or Sunguahanga, the recommendation is that the one to receive the throne is a good speaker, knows how to share, respects people, corrects his children and shows mercy by making alliances with his companions. If he walks around at night he should use bracelets and, as he approaches a place where people are speaking, jangle the bracelets so that if they are speaking badly of him, they fall silent right away. Because kings are not accustomed to hearing intrigues.

THE KING'S FUNERAL No. 3.

If the king becomes sick everyone becomes very sad. But if his sickness is long, Muekalia and other elders reach an agreement to put an end to his life.

They choose some men, go to the house where the king is sick and when there, enter, hold his head and twist his neck several times. They leave and return the next day to do the same. When the head falls off, they say: "The Soma died, the Soma died."

Over all these days on which they twist the king's neck, if someone comes to visit, they simply say: "The Soma is still sick," until the day that the head comes away from the neck. They then say: "Messengers, spread out and announce the king's funeral." And they do so.

THE FUNERAL OF KING EKUIKUI No. 3.

When he died they dressed him with a very beautiful hat and fabrics. They placed him sat on the wooden throne and placed the walking stick in his hand as if he were alive.

At his feet a woman and a man lay.

Muekalia, Epalanga and some of the lads from the court ensure that nobody approaches the court. When they send news to all the countries, they close all the paths. No woman or child should walk alone; if they become lost, they will be abducted and sold. When they encounter travelers on the path, they take everything that they are carrying; even the children are sold in Benguela.

Some of the things of the king who died are received by Muekalia; others are received by the elders; other things are stolen by the court's lads. They take everything: oxen, wax or rubber, since they say that the next one to govern the *ombala* should bring his own things.

All the women who were brides of the Soma return to their villages; the slaves and Inakulu are the only ones who stay at the court.

THE FESTIVAL OF DEATH (OHUNGUTA)

During this period, if the king died, the entire country was afraid because many people left the *ombala* to capture people in all the countries.

This festival of death would go as far as Cisanji, abducting and assaulting people. It even reached Mbuluvulu in Viye, abducting people until the king was buried. They kill many oxen, drink a lot of spirit and fire many shots! And dance.

When the funeral ends, the reign of the next king begins.

THE SONS OF THE KING No. 1.

The sons of the kings are many because the king has many women.

When the male children reach a height tall enough to fetch firewood for the *onjango* and make traps, they generate much wealth for their parents. What makes them rich is firstly playing with other poor children. If they drool and the saliva falls on the king's child, he lets it drip, since he will complain, saying: "Who spat on me has a serious illness." And the dripping saliva is shown as proof. This leads to wealth. If someone injures him, on returning to the village he leaves the injury on display; if he trips over, on returning to the village everything is shown. Consequently, no common children played with the king's son, otherwise it would entail a lot of expenses.

The same applies to the daughters. If they go to drink at a festival and a drunk grabs the king's daughter at night and vomits, she will instantly tell her father that night: "That sick man vomited over me." And when dawn comes, the problems appear. He may have to pay a lot or his entire family become slaves.

This brought a lot of suffering to the people.

Even if you kill your own animal, a haunch is owed to the Soma or to the king's son; if you cut the animal's shoulder or arm, he will say: "You slapped me." And you will pay a lot, because it will be understood that you struck the king.

Because of the deeds of the sons of kings and the corruption of their fathers, people did not have the strength or desire to help the kings when the whites started to make war

on them. Because they said: “If we go to war, we’ll be eaten.¹⁷¹ If we don’t go to war, we’ll be eaten. So, we’re all counting on the victory of the whites. They are the kings of the poor.”

When the whites arrived they were quickly victorious because they fought only against the king; the people refused to make war. Only two nobles fought: Katanya, father of Jorge Cingangu, and Cimbulu, a relative of Moma. But they were only afraid of Mutu and Cilala, since, they said: “They’re going to force us when the war ends.”

If the kings had governed with justice, perhaps the kingdoms would still be here today. Even though the whites arrived.

Nobody marries the king’s daughter unless he is from the same lineage.

You do not kill an animal without giving the haunch to the Soma.

You do not hunt a leopard without giving the skin to the king.

Nobody gains a name without giving something to the king.

Nobody gains their freedom in the tribunal without giving something to the king.

Nobody apart from the Soma blows the horn or constructs a veranda.

All the following are handed to the king: fattened pigs, oxen, in the past many bales, taxes and people.

The people had unnecessary expenses. What is a king for? How could one have the strength and desire to fight against the enemies attacking the king? Impossible.

The king who followed Ekuikui was the last one to do good. None of the others who followed him did any good, nor their children. Thus today there are far fewer kings.

All this was because of the sons of kings who provoked; had they not done so, they would be reigning today like their fathers, perhaps today they would be highly revered.

The proverb says: “We are little Kalunjinji ants; we eat people with prudence.” Because one day the ant went to fetch meat from a person’s body. When it went to deliver the meat to his lord, it met a fly. The fly asked it: “Ant, where did you get so much meat?” It replied: “I cut it from a person.” The fly asked: “Is this person dead?” The ant said: “They didn’t die or get sick. They’re completely healthy and very clever.” The fly, hurried, landed on the back of the first person it found and began to cut their flesh. The person

¹⁷¹ The reference here is to the fact that exploitation (“being eaten”) was inevitable, whether by the king or by the whites.

noticed, shook themselves and killed the fly. So the ant said: “You were stupid! I said to go calmly and bite the feet.”

From this story, people took the proverb saying: “I am Kalunjinji, the little ant that eats people with prudence.” The sons of kings should have done the same as the ant.

NARRATIVE OF THE KING

(Before becoming king)

Signals that he may be chosen.

Becomes generous and gives.

Acquires oxen and awakens people’s ambition.

Develops oratory skills and speaks to be heard.

(When becoming king)

Kills the oxen, ceases being stingy.

Shows people his heart.

Carefully chooses the elders who will receive names.

Begins wars.

Constructs a royal kitchen.

Consecrates the king’s sons.

Constructs a new court.

Marries Inakulu.

Educates his sons.

Constructs a camp for the circumcision.

Seeks out a *quimbandeiro* to proffer curses.

Lights a new fire (Citonga is responsible for this).

Blows the horn.

When this ends, he becomes calmer because his work is over. But on completing each of these works, someone is killed. Because, they say: “It is the spirit of the dead person¹⁷² who will care for this work; if this is not done, it won’t be sacred and won’t last.”

¹⁷² In Umbundu, *ocitutu*.

Hence, everything that is well conceived goes well.

FAMINE No. 3.

Here in our country, if there is little food during this period, people become worried about their children; not knowing what to do, some eat sweet potato leaves, others eat kizaca,¹⁷³ sweet potato roots or manioc shoots. When these are finished, exchanges are made (seeking or buying food) in distant countries. They take seeds and go to buy food with cloths, hoes, goats and pigs if there are any. Those without these things take children with them to where there is food and sell them for two or three measures of food.

Here in our country there are many people who were bought in Songo when there was famine. There are many people who used to buy people. But an adult person is bought for just two cans of maize flour; a child for a can and a half of maize flour or two cans of maize bran.

However, when there is famine in the country, people become irritated with the king and say: "Your fire is sad." Perhaps he will be deposed from government or admonished; they will say that he has no reverence for the kings who reigned on his throne, those who have died and he replaced. So he casts various spells so that the following year, when people begin to grow their crops, there is an abundant harvest.

If they really want to eat meat and the meat does not appear, the king will be questioned: "The hunters are hunting, yet there is no meat? We don't see anything. What's happening then? Who is governing?"

If there is no honey, people say: "Let's eat the hives without honey; the Soma is to blame."

If during this period the lions were very furious, eating people, they say: "This king's fire is no good." Whenever the country confronts turbulence, they remove the king from the throne and place someone else on it who brings food and other things that the people want.

FIRE No. 3.

¹⁷³ Crushed and cooked manioc leaves (T.N.).

People respect the fire a lot, but not just because when they want to cook, they can cook, and when they are cold, they can warm themselves. In relation to other things that make them happy, they also mention fire.

If there is a lot of illness in a village, people become very concerned and collect many tributes (payments) to give to the *quimbandeiros*. This is not always sufficient to cure the disease, though. Sometimes people spend a lot and are not cured, the *Cimbanda* simply eats what is theirs.

Sometimes, if there is a heightened risk of the oxen being devoured by lions or hyenas attacking many of the pigs, they pay the *quimbandeiro* large sums.

If people cause a lot of trouble or look to cause problems, they go to the *quimbandeiro*. On arriving in the village, he orders all its fires to be swept so that not a single ember is left in any of the houses. Then he performs his *umbanda* ritual.¹⁷⁴ Once completed, he searches for some *umbombolo* and *usiõsito* sticks¹⁷⁵ and gouges a small hole in the stick. He takes some reeds, binds some *ofukutu*¹⁷⁶ or threads at the top, places the small bundle in the little hole and blows once. He then calls all the children of the village, boys and girls, to blow on this fire.

Everyone spends the entire day in the village. None of the women go to the fields, all of them remain cheering for the fire. When it flares up and spreads through the *ofukutu* placed above the reeds used as tinder, everyone is happy. They give pigs to the *quimbandeiro* and he too is happy.

Some flames shoot from the *ofukutu*, from which he removes a few branches (small logs of firewood) to light a small fire. Then people approach one by one, gather around the fire to light the hearth in their own home. After everyone has lit their fire, *Cimbanda* removes a round piece of tree bark, places it on the ground as though it were a canoe and fills it with water. He then calls all the people from the village, who come to wash themselves one by one in this water filled by him with medications.¹⁷⁷ All of them wash themselves, saying: "Perhaps we will be blessed in this fire." And they pay the *quimbandeiro*. That year Suku allows it to rain heavily, the trees blossom with many

¹⁷⁴ In Umbundu, *olinga umbanda waye*, literally, "performs his *umbanda*."

¹⁷⁵ *Umbombolo* and *usiõsito* are types of trees.

¹⁷⁶ A bush used to light fires (Alves 1951, p. 91).

¹⁷⁷ In Umbundu, *ihemba*.

beautiful flowers, the bees transport nectar to make honey, and the hunters, when they go to the forest in search of prey, kill lots and lots of game. They say: “the Soma came to an agreement with the past elders because he swept away the old fire.”

But this happened because our ancestors did not know about the division of seasons.

RAIN No. 3.

If people sow their crops and the rain ceases to fall, they become very worried since they do not know what more to do. The maize turns to straw, the sweet potato grows slowly, everything that was planted ceases to thrive and people’s hearts are aflame.

Then the village elders go to the king: “King, can you see that the maize has turned to onion too. All the plantations are drying. This means that the elders and the kings who died are upset. It would be good to do something to please them.”

So, the king unites all the elders of the country and all the people weed the tombs. In the *ombala* they go to the *akokoto* (the place where the kings and important elders of the *ombala* are buried) to weed the tombs and also to construct mausoleums.

These days are hard work. People play drums, dance and revere the dead kings and elders of the past (those who have died) in order for them to release the rains, since they are the ones causing the problem. The people kill oxen and goats, pouring their blood over the tombs. They also scatter spirit and *ocimbombo* on the tombs, saying: “So that those who are in the tombs also eat this meat and drink this spirit and the *ocimbombo* to cheer their hearts.”

And on these days the rain begins to form. When it falls, they say: “Look, if we had not done this, our plantations would have died in the sun and we would have died of hunger.” Then the country is joyful seeing the rain fall tranquilly on the crops.

CULTIVATION No. 3.

Here in our country, if someone is recently married and does not yet have fields to plant, they buy an axe and hoe and go to the forest in search of a good place to start cultivating. When they find a suitable area of forest, they invite their relatives to help them prepare the *ongunda* (new plantation). A relative of the husband cuts down the first tree and the wife’s relatives plant the land for the first time. If the woman’s country is faraway, she cries and plants in this land for the first (any) time.

When they leave the field, they go back to the village. The couple then begin to work on their crops. These customs are carefully observed, since if they are not, the couple will suffer a sudden death. Thus, they chew the bark of the first tree cut down on this small area of land and sow a variety of crops in the plantation.

Here in the Umbundu country, agricultural work was more of a female responsibility. From the ancient times to the present, the countries have not learnt, they remain the same today. On cultivation, they say: "it is women's work. We men go in search of goods in other countries. Growing crops is not for us."

Men tend to plant just a few tobacco orchards to take with them when they travel and buy food. But they do not always cultivate tobacco.

When the rainy season arrives, the women busy themselves with the crops. They wake early morning to fetch water from the river, put the pot on the fire, and make funge, which they send to the *onjango* for the men to eat. Women eat directly from the sieve, and while they eat, fetch seeds, a hoe and their basket and go to the plantation to tend their crops.

Men just stay in the village chatting in the *onjango*. They do nothing. The most intelligent go to the forests to make hives and assemble them so that when the bees arrive, they can enter to produce honey and wax. They then sell the latter produce and make a lot of money for their sustenance.

All of them remain idle. When a woman leaves for the plantations, the men oblige her to prepare food even if it has rained. After arriving back from tending the crops, she goes to fetch water, makes funge and they eat. It is the woman who crushes the maize, makes the cornmeal, and fetches firewood. They leave all the housework for the woman, meaning that she does everything.

RESPECT No. 3.

Here among the Umbundu there are many forms of respect. If the owner of the village¹⁷⁸ is coming to the *onjango*, everyone is warned, and they reserve a space for him to sit. Nobody can sit in his seat; everyone is afraid of his chair.

¹⁷⁸ In Umbundu, *muelimbo* (*muele* is 'owner,' *imbo* is 'village'). The term refers to the main village authority, the person whom everyone obeys.

When he enters the *onjango*, everyone remains in complete silence. People only speak slowly and softly. Gradually all the elders greet him, and he accepts their welcome.

When an elder greets a child, the child should respond showing the proper respect.

When they pass by an elder, children cannot look up, they must bow a little and walk on tiptoe until passing him.

Children cannot take anything placed on high inside the house. If they do so, they are beaten.

Where there are elders, they cannot pass by with water, since if they let just a few drops spill and wet the elder, the child carrying the water is beaten. If this happens to a visitor, a fine must be paid.

Hence, everyone who has children has an enormous responsibility to educate them. If not, they may strike someone's head, injure the person and the family will have to pay, or the child may kill an animal or ruin someone else's belongings, all of which leads to trials.

And the women! From the past to the present, very little respect is shown them. People respect young men more than a woman. If a woman is seated and a boy comes towards her, she gives up the chair to the young man. They say: "The young man is the one of use in the world. He is the one who will do something important for the family when he grows up."

Women do not usually eat in vessels. They simply place the fudge on the sieve, the *conduto* remains on the serving spoon, sometimes they eat from the same pot in which the *conduto* was cooked. The portion for the men in the *onjango* is removed and their own portion is left in the pot. If a chicken is cooked, all of it goes to the *onjango* in the pot itself, leaving just the water and a little sauce for the woman. But everything sent to the *onjango* to be eaten by the men is denied her.

If the woman is inside the house menstruating and sees a young man approaching, she leaves the house and only enters when he does.

If the woman is leaving the plantation, if she encounters a man, even if she is carrying a heavy basket full of maize, zucchini, pumpkin and firewood, she must remove the basket from her head and hold it in her hands.

Here among the Umbundu, women have much power, men little. Theirs is exaggerated. When the cultivation season arrives, they have much work to do. If some women want to harvest a lot of maize, they go to the *quimbandeiro* to obtain some strong medicines. At the beginning of planting, she gathers bushes and some branches and takes them to one of the corners of the plantation. When she sets them alight, the smoke spreads across the field and blends with the smell of the medications. She says: "So I can harvest much maize." The women have the custom of killing their children and putting them in the food, since they believe that by so doing, they will obtain better maize while others have little. Even today this practice exists among us. Ovimbundu women are always worried about what to eat, always thinking of what to do in order to have a lot of maize. Some kill their children. After they are buried, she disinters them, cuts the head off and lets it dry. After beating the maize, when it is already in the granary, she places the skull of the dead person on top of it. When they need maize, they cannot send a child to the granary, otherwise they will discover what is placed on top.

Some women have insects that look like butterflies, but they are a little larger. They have the custom of sending these to plunder maize cobs growing in the plantations of others and bring them back to their own.

When it gets dark, some women leave their husband in bed and go to make enchantments in the houses of others, so that if the latter try to breed livestock, the animals will simply sicken and die, or if they try to save money made on trips, they make little profit. But they make these enchantments late at night or early morning when everyone is deep asleep, and nobody awake.

She leaves the house completely naked. She walks around as she came into the world. These women have a spell¹⁸⁰ called *ekulo*. Using it, the women from here, the Umbundu women, can obtain a husband if they have none. Because we, Umbundu men, have the custom of marrying many women. So the first wife, if she sees that her husband wants to marry again with another woman, goes to the *quimbandeiros* to receive these *ekulo*

¹⁷⁹ *Umbanda* here refers to power, the rituals performed to obtain it, and the amulets and preparations involved in them.

¹⁸⁰ *Umbanda* is the most generic term employed here and translated as 'spell,' or *feitiço* in Portuguese, while *ekulo* would correspond to a specific spell. On the generalization and particularization of *feitiços*, see Dulley (forthcoming).

medications again so that when mixed with the husband's food, he will only like her and like the other women very little. Even today, this practice exists among the people.

Kambundu or ombuiyu: if a woman frequently gives birth to stillborn children, she goes to the *quimbandeiro* and Cimbanda says: "Bring me a cockerel." When she brings it, he cuts its throat and removes the skin. The child wears this on the neck, they take white and red clay and make a paste to spread on the child's body. This is applied in the form of marks, a little is also dabbed on the forehead of the child and mother. When he has finished, Cimbanda hands the mother a rattle and a gazelle horn. She must play it every time she goes near a river, lake, cemetery or crossroad; when passing by other people, she must play the horn and shake the rattle, making a *caya, caya* sound. The same must be done if she makes a long journey.

They used to do this so that their child does not die again.

SAMBULU No. 3.

This disease of the neck manifests when the person carries a heavy weight and their neck begins to hurt. It is very difficult to treat. When they go to the *quimbandeiro*, he issues many instructions on the places they can or cannot visit, saying: "If you go there, you will strain your neck again and you will die." To cure this disease, you take a chicken and go to the crossroads. This is where the person is cured. The chickens are killed at this spot and the feathers inserted on the altar constructed on the crossroads in the appearance of a person.

Only Cimbanda eats these chickens. If the sick person also eats them, the illness can take hold of them again. They do what the *quimbandeiro* commands.

This *umbanda* among them is difficult. When they do it on the ground, it looks like a very tall person with arms, feet and head.

THE DIVINER¹⁸¹ No. 3.

If there is a *quimbandeiro* in a family and he dies, someone from this family goes to a *quimbandeiro* in another country to receive the *umbanda* of the deceased and Cimbanda shows him all the medications in the forest, ranging from those that cure

¹⁸¹ *Ocimbanda congombo* is the *quimbandeiro* who utilizes a basket full of objects in his divination sessions (Tucker 1940). On contemporary divination baskets, see Silva (2004).

diverse diseases to those that kill people. But Cimbanda tells this person that when they return they should spend an entire year as a diviner; in the second year they should kill someone from their own family – their father, younger brother, mother or maternal uncle, anybody will do – in order for their divinations to be successful and for people to accept everything that they say.

CARAVAN JOURNEYS¹⁸²

No. 3.

Since the ancient times, if people wish to leave on an excursion, they agree a month in the following year, saying: “We will set off that month.” They then grow tobacco and save up salt and beads so that when they depart, they have a reserve to buy food on the journey.

The goods that they take are blankets, guns, gunpowder, pots and sometimes tobacco, beads and salt. Those who have none of these things usually make deals so that when they make a profit, they walk around with cloths like rich people and traders.¹⁸³

Just before the caravan is about to leave, its guide goes to the *quimbandeiro*, who grates pieces of tree bark, mixes them with water and soil, and gives the concoction to the guide who wants to be the caravan leader, saying: “Drink it so that when you leave, the people you leave behind don’t curse you, and your business in the land of the Ngangela goes very well. Then, even though your enemies from here hate you and want your business to go badly, you won’t have problems and will make good deals.”

When setting out on an expedition, the rich people and the traders leave behind a lot of *umbanda*. Some have the custom of killing their children and throwing them in money in order to obtain profits in their business rapidly.

Travelling in a caravan requires considerable care. People transport their fire carefully, each one with their own, so that they do not do anything that causes bad luck for their business.

¹⁸² Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the inhabitants of the Central Highlands organized trade caravans with thousands of carriers, both in the direction of Benguela, on the coast, and towards the interior of the African continent. The route passed through the Viye and Bailundo kingdoms, which were the region’s main political formations (Heywood 2000; Santos 2016).

¹⁸³ *Olohuasi* and *olofumbelo*, translated here respectively as ‘rich people’ and ‘traders,’ are treated in the narrative almost as synonyms. This is due to the fact that the large majority of carriers worked for a minority formed by a socioeconomic elite, which made profits from commerce and displayed their social status through the goods they were able to show off. However, the text points to the possibility of upward social mobility through participation in the trade caravans.

And so they set off on the road... On this journey, if the guide perceives that they are arriving at the place where they will conduct the business, in the morning he makes a speech admonishing the members of the caravan who he will lead on this journey. He says: "Listen, listen well. We left our distant country and arrived in another land. Thus, the guides should instruct their children of the same hearth that if they encounter food on the road, they should not take it; if they encounter some object belonging to a Ngangela, they should not take it or step on it; if a Ngangela irritates you, you who are the sons of *ocimbundu* should not fight him; otherwise, when you hit him, all of the things that we brought to trade for rubber will be confiscated. You, adults, instruct your children. This is my advice to you." Then the entire caravan in the camp applauds, whistles and concurs.

All this time, they stay in Civokue, Lutiasi or Luva. They take precautions since if one of them causes trouble, kills or steals some object from a Ngangela, he will be seized, and all the things of the caravan will be confiscated too. For this reason, they take a lot of care, chewing their nails.

THE HOUSES CONSTRUCTED BY THE UMBUNDU

No. 3.

Here among the Umbundu the work involved is considerable given what our houses are like.

If someone wants to build a house, they cut down thick wooden trunks. When they have enough, they dig holes for the base of the house. Afterwards, they chop down other trunks to make the roof. They then drive the trunks for the base into the ground, cut some small and flexible laths and lash them with rope made from tree bark fiber. To finish, they cut grass to thatch the roof. When the house is covered, the floor is beaten down. After all this work is concluded, the door is fitted. The house is then left to dry and is ready to inhabit.

In this house, the bed is located behind the door. On the wall in front of the door are all the inhabitants' things. In the corner close to the fire is the firewood. The chickens sleep on the circle of firewood. The pots and other utensils are kept close to the fire. Some women are not very smart and when washing the pots, throw the water next to the fire. The man, if he smokes, spits the tobacco mucus casually next to the fire.

If the house is small and the window too, when the woman lights the fire to cook a meal, a lot of smoke is generated inside the house, but the window remains closed with a curtain. When the smoke rises to the ceiling it descends again since it cannot escape because so much is generated. Even so the woman and children remain inside the house.

CHILDREN

Here among the Umbundu a pregnant woman¹⁸⁴ requires a lot of care. She cannot eat funge leftovers from the previous day, eat from the pot, drink directly from the gourd, or eat pepper or anything bitter. If they place ropes made from tree fiber in the river, she cannot drink the water from there. And a pregnant woman cannot see ugly people; if not, people say that the child will not be beautiful either.

She cannot run. All these precautions are taught to all the country's women.

When the moment of delivery arrives and the mother enters labor, the woman accompanying her places a small pot to cook food for the child due to be born. As soon as the child is born, it is fed. This funge is called *ekela* because it is soft. Two months later the child begins to be fed with funge, sweet potato, beans and various foods that adults eat. They feed the child with these foods.

When the child cries, they place saliva on its forehead. They say: "so that it does not cry anymore." If the child coughs, the mother repeats her words, saying: "*koso-koso*." If the infant moves about in its sleep, the mother chews charcoal from the fire and spits on him or her. They say: "so that it is not startled anymore." Since they say: "It is the dead who are startling our child."

When it is several months old, the child already begins to be placed on the ground. Even when it gets dirty in the mud, they are not worried. Even if it eats earth mixed with pig manure, it does not enter their hearts that this may cause harm to the child.

If the child is very hungry and there is no food, the mother takes manioc, chews it and gives it to the child to eat. The same is done with maize because the child lacks the teeth to chew.

The child is dressed only at the front. If a boy, they use a piece of cloth, if a girl, she receives a large piece of fabric that covers everything. Much consideration is shown for

¹⁸⁴ In Umbundu, *okasi latimba avali*, literally, "she has two bodies."

children in various things. They accompany adults everywhere, do not observe the proper customs when walking near elders, and play. People say: "Do not hurt another's child if you do not wish to pay a fine." When meeting someone with an injured eye, one cannot stare or laugh at them, since this prompts a fine too. One cannot say to someone who you do not know: "You look like so-and-so." The fine may be large because the person may say: "I don't know whether this person who you are comparing me too is dead or has an incurable disease. Who is this person whom you say that I look like?" It can lead to a trial.

All these things are explained to children. Those children who pay heed will be wise.

BATHING

This word is very rarely heard in our country. Umbundu women seldom teach their children to bathe because they themselves lack this custom. If you give a piece of soap to an Umbundu woman and say: "Go and bathe," she cries and says: "Who gave me this smell is telling me to go to the river to bathe?"

For this reason it is very difficult for our country to advance, since it is necessary for women to teach their children so that they grow up with these habits.

The women's cloths are so dirty that even if they had a pattern, you would not be able to see it. If you buy a new cloth for an Umbundu woman, when she puts it on, she feels ashamed and says: "It smells." She goes to the whites to buy a bottle of oil and soak the cloth. If that is not enough, she uses another until the cloth becomes darkened. And they say: "So-and-so is very beautiful. She went to the store and when the white gave her *dendê* palm oil, she poured all of it over her head and body. The rest she wiped on the cloth." When the others encounter her, they praise her husband a lot, saying: "So-and-so's wife is very beautiful. She doesn't know what dust is."

If someone bathes, they say: "Smells like water." Men do not like her either, since they say: "She does not know how to care for herself." Unfortunately, thinking about this topic is hard work.

In the case of men, it is exaggerated, it seems they are indebted to the river. They refuse to bathe. Even in the past they lacked the custom of working. Only some of them planted tobacco orchards or made hives. Many remained idle. When they perceive that the dirt is too much, they go to sit down somewhere and, perceiving that the sun is scalding hot,

call over a child, saying: "Come and rub my back." When the child comes, they rub with their hands and the dirt starts to come away. The dirt is old. Even if the man's head is very dark from the amount of dirt, they do not bathe. Nor cut their hair. It becomes ugly looking, the hair set hard on their head. The same goes for the cloths used as blankets. They all end up very cold, since from the day they leave the house of the white man until they are worn away, they will never be washed.

FOOD No. 3.

When the women cook funge at home, all the children take everything intended for the fathers and older brothers to the *onjango*. When all the food arrives, they start to eat. They begin with a plate, one person takes some, another person too. When they have finished, someone takes another plate until everyone is fed. Only the village owner and the elder with the most authority in his absence eat together. But if an adult eats everything and leaves nothing for the children, people say: "That adult is greedy." Every adult, when they eat, leaves a portion for the child because such is the country's custom. A woman who does not cook much food for her husband is considered inattentive. Even the husband will be scorned because of his wife.

If meat is cooked at home, most of it will go to the *onjango* where the men stay. The wife leaves her portion in the pot, just a small amount.

People eat twice: in the morning and at sunset. If someone is hungry during the day, they snack a little.

In this country, if they eat just sweet potato in the morning, they say: "We've whetted our appetite." Equally, if they eat just hominy, sweet potato or some other kind of root crop at sunset, they say: "We shall go hungry tonight because we did not eat funge." Our favorite food of all is funge.

SLEEPING No. 3.

In this country, when the parents see that their son has already reached a certain height, they no longer allow him to sleep in the same house. He is left to his own devices, the parents not bothered where the son sleeps. The child himself looks for somewhere to sleep, not knowing what he will cover himself with. They give him a mat. For this reason,

children learn many customs in the houses where they sleep; sometimes girls and boys sleep in the same house.

When sleeping, people cover themselves entirely from head to foot. For this reason, they very often pick up chest infections. In this small house chickens also sleep; there too the firewood is stored, as well as pots and other utensils. Its small window is covered by a curtain. The small house is filled with smoke, but they do not realize that this causes illnesses.

MARRIAGE No. 3.

If a boy likes a girl, he will tell her father. But first the boy tells the girl that he likes her. After coming to an arrangement among themselves, the girl says to the boy: "Go talk with my father." To talk to her father, the boy must be accompanied by an elder since only then will the parents hand over their daughter.

The boy saves up money, which he sends with an elder who is a good speaker and is the committee leader. He is the one who asks for the wife. On making the request, the elder hands over the marriage money. When he is finished, he tells people to prepare the beer. When the day comes, the elder and a child take a gun and a girl takes the belongings to fetch the bride. When the latter enters the man's house, she finds food ready and they immediately eat. There is water to wash their whole body.

Everyone who enters the bride's house has to take a plate on which they place *dendé* oil, but those who married without performing the rites and did not celebrate the marriage cannot do so. Only those who celebrated their marriage put food on their plate.

Nobody who is polygamous can take any. But anyone who celebrated their marriage leaves a present or money when putting food on their plate.

Brides bathe twice a day and eat three times a day like white people. The bride celebrates the marriage over a period of four days. On the fifth day the bride leaves, but people go with her. At the place where she is taken, they encounter a lot of beer.

When the bride leaves her village, the man prepares a large pig for her to take and fills a basket, along with a bottle of oil, a handful of salt, eight pairs of cloth and sometimes eight blankets to make the woman's family members happy. Otherwise her parents will say to him: "They took our daughter for free."

However, when the bride returns, she takes a piglet. They say: "It's to wash the plates." Thus she constitutes a family and cooks a chicken and a pot of beans. When she cooks her first funge, all the people of the village eat it and say: "Now the bride has constituted a family."

POLYGAMY

Here, if the woman is marrying for the first time, but does not know how to do very much, how to cultivate crops or cook well, or work like the other women, or manage to feed her nephews, it does not work. The man seeks out another woman and marries again. Sometimes a man marries with six women. Some have three or four. Very often these women fight each other jealously. In order for peace to prevail between the women living in a polygamous situation, the man must be able to buy the same amount of food for all the houses.

If he buys cloth, he must give some to all of them. If some are well dressed and others do not have any decent clothes, the trouble only increases...

A polygamous man, if he has four wives, needs to sleep one night in one house, the next night in another, until the circle is completed. Then he begins again. If he does not do so and starts to sleep just in the house of the woman he likes, he will create a lot of jealousy between his wives.

NEPHEWS AND NIECES

No. 3.

The nephew or niece is the child of one's sister.

In this country, if someone becomes indebted, but has no oxen or other goods, he enters into an agreement with his family to take a male or female child from one of his sisters in order to settle his legal debts. Some people from the family hate this, but it does no harm, since nephews and nieces have always been used to eat¹⁸⁵ and pawn.

If a man has slept with another woman and has no means to pay, he hands over his nephew. For this reason, the Ovimbundu consider their nephews and nieces more; the birth child is shown very little consideration. Nephews are better fed by their uncles.

¹⁸⁵ Here 'eat' also has the sense of killing someone in order to get something.

And when the uncle dies, his birth child cannot inherit any object from the deceased father. People do not accept it.

It is nephews who inherit the things of their uncles. They hold much power over these things: slaves, cattle, all the business that is in their reach.

On this point, the Ngangela exaggerate by scorning their birth children and attaching more importance to their nephews. Among the Ngangela, the mother does not offer a plate of food to her birth child in the same way that she offers food to her nephew. Only when his aunt makes his father's funge will she add a little so that the father gives a little to his son. The *conduto* is placed on top of the funge given to him. The child has no power over anything, unless he has it with his mother's sister or with his uncles. Only then will he or she have power over everything, exercising authority over them.

They also have the custom of selling people. Among the Ngangela, if a man's wife dies, her family makes the man who married their dead daughter pay a lot. If they have no cattle, they pay in *ndungo* (slaves). One person alone is unable to pay for the death of a wife because it is very expensive. He needs help.

WHOEVER PAWNED, ATE

If someone has debts but is unable to pay them, they will go to talk with the family's elders and say: "Today these are the legal problems that afflict us. We don't know what to do. What should we do?"

Even if they have cattle, these elders refuse to hand them over. They fetch a nephew, the son of one of their younger sisters, and take him to the rich person. They say: "Today we give you this guarantee for you to give us two oxen. We're going to take them somewhere and when we get the other goods, we'll come to fetch our son. For now, we leave him as a guarantee."

Hence, we have the saying that goes: "whoever pawned, ate."¹⁸⁶ Because they will never return to recover the child they left behind. He becomes a slave for his whole life in the hands of a master, in the hands of the creditor.

RETURNING THE WIFE

¹⁸⁶ In Umbundu, *Wa yekela wa lia*.

If a wife is inattentive, does not know how to work, does not make good food and does everything badly, she is returned. Because sometimes the women from here will cast curses. Early in the morning, they go to the house of others cursing. She walks about completely naked, saying: "May you become miserable! May you become rich!" That way, these women go about saying what is in their heart. If they are caught cursing at the door of other people, her husband will start to hate her. Sometimes, if her husband dies, they talk to her and say: "It would be better if we accompany you to your village." They spread maize flour on her forehead, give her new cloths and take her to her village. On arriving with her, they say: "We liked your daughter and wish her well, but today Suku separated them. So we have come to return the other's daughter. If she meets a man, we recommend that she marries! Suku separated them. We really liked her, we were fine with her. She knew her husband's family, she fed her husband's nephews well." In this way, the wife's family will receive her back.

If she is a slanderer or an idler... if she is a witch¹⁸⁷ or a thief, the expressions are different. When returning her, they will explain what she was like.

Oku nyata signifies returning the woman who was married to her family.

THE FUNERAL¹⁸⁸

No. 3.

If a person has died and had family members nearby, they call the messengers and say: "Go and advise them about the death." When they advise them, many people come to mourn the dead.

When people meet, the women grind the maize, make *ocimbombo* and fetch drums to play and dance. All the people who came to the funeral become very happy.

The deceased is mourned for three days and buried on the fourth. The people called *vakuacisoko* dig the grave, sew the deceased's clothing and direct the funeral. If some family member of the deceased is not crying, they strike the person and say: "Start crying! It seems your relative didn't cause you any sadness?" They only leave the person after they cry.

¹⁸⁷ In Umbundu, *onganga*.

¹⁸⁸ In Umbundu, *onambi*. In Angola it is common to refer to the funeral as the 'death' (*óbito*).

The *vakuacisoko* are very insolent and shrewd. They kill the chickens and pigs only in the village where the funeral occurs. But the owners do not object, since they are not being insolent.

THE BURIAL

In all the families, there are people who are feared, since, they say: "It is you who killed the others, we will die like those you have killed." Before arriving at the cemetery, therefore, two or four men are secretly told: "When you are carrying the body, if we mention so-and-so, go forwards; if we mention so-and-so, go backwards. Going backwards signifies that the person was not the person who caused the death. But when we mention so-and-so, who we suspect of killing the deceased, you who are carrying the deceased should walk ahead. Walk in a confused way so that it's understood that he or she was the one who killed the dead person, who is very angry. See how the body is spinning!" At this moment, if the deceased is on their shoulders, but keeps moving about, everyone understands that it was this person who actually killed him or her. "Look how the deceased is moving about because of their anger at being killed!"

As they conduct the deceased, they carry a tray on which they place a little bit of flour. The family elder takes a little of it, spreads it on the face of the dead person and says: "Accept the white clay. If so-and-so killed you,¹⁸⁹ accept the white clay. Isn't that the way in our family? Didn't someone cast a spell on you¹⁹⁰ because you nurtured a mutual hate and that's why you left us? Accept the white clay. After all, was it not your own spell that killed you?"¹⁹¹ If the deceased was a man, perhaps they say: "Perhaps you received *ombungu*¹⁹² to accumulate goods in trade and be better than others. You didn't deal well with these things and that's why they killed you. Do you accept the flour?" And those carrying the deceased go backwards, since the person to whom responsibility for the death was attributed has not yet been mentioned.

While they conduct the deceased, they mention all the people of the family, from the children to the elders. But when they reach the person held responsible, they ask: "I

¹⁸⁹ In Umbundu, *nda ngandi wa ku lia*, literally, "if so-and-so ate you."

¹⁹⁰ In Umbundu, *oku lova owanga*, "cast a spell" or "cast a curse."

¹⁹¹ *Puai owanga wove muefe wa ku lia?* Literally: "After all, was it not your own spell that ate you?"

¹⁹² A spell used to obtain wealth (Alves 1951, p. 701).

keep asking. You don't listen, or maybe you think: 'I already left them, I won't tell them who took me from the world.' Could it be so-and-so? Accept the white clay." Those carrying the corpse then move forwards, signifying that it was this person who killed the deceased. Then all the people are astonished and shout: "He's a sorcerer! A sorcerer! A sorcerer! He doesn't deserve to be in the family, he also deserves to die."

The *vakuacisoko* then receive the corpse and take it to the cemetery for burial. All of those who were dancing to the sound of drums and firing shots return to the village.

When the people return to the village, nobody returns home. Everyone needs to pass through the same opening through which the deceased passed when carried to the cemetery, since they say: "Anyone who does not pass where they passed when carrying the deceased and simply returns home without going to the house where the death occurred takes the disease that killed the dead person home with him or her."

On the day that they take the person to the cemetery, they spend the night dancing again. On this day they kill an ox, which they call Yondombokua.¹⁹³ If they are poor, they kill just one pig. Everyone eats this meat. Part of it is for the *vakuacisoko* and the other part for those at the funeral.

DISCARDING THE FUNERAL ASHES

If the person was taken to the cemetery yesterday, today they will sweep away all the ashes from the site where the funeral was held, throw the ashes out in the forest and call this "discarding the firewood."¹⁹⁴ The person who takes the ashes goes ahead; all the others stay behind and also carry guns. When they throw the ashes on the ground, those who took a gun fire it and everyone shouts: "Ho! Ho! Ho!"...

On leaving the spot, they return to the village. As soon as they return, the owner of the funeral kills another pig and all of those who came to throw away the firewood eat it. They cook at the site of the funeral. If there are no pigs, then they kill a chicken. The next day they say: "Today the funeral is over."¹⁹⁵ Only the owners remain sad.

¹⁹³ The definition found for *ondombokwa* in Alves (1951, p. 871) is: "Corpse of someone murdered, over which the people jump, practicing other rites too, such as fire-extinguishing cures – aimed at placating the dead person's spirit."

¹⁹⁴ In Umbundu, *inasi ononga*.

¹⁹⁵ In Umbundu, *onambi ya yaluka*, literally "the funeral was undone" (T.N.).

If a man loses his wife or a woman loses her husband, they will be called *Ocikuluwiya* or *Kapulungu*, which means that they lost their spouse.

If it is a man, when his wife dies, first they make him sleep with the corpse. Between the bodies is placed a stick, which allows the widower to be woken up when moved, since he must wake up to weep when the sun sets. When leaving, he cries again. When he cries, he says: "Oh, my wife has gone! Oh, my *ocisangua*! Oh, my children! I don't know who will take care of them for me!" He walks around saying: "Oh, my lady has gone! My skinny one, little heron neck!"

If the *ocikuluwiya* is a woman, the same that occurs with the man applies to her. Only the crying is different. The woman remarks on the death of her husband, saying: "Oh, my cloth! Oh, my meat! My scarf, oh, my mother!" And she remembers the agreeable things they ate at home. She walks about speaking and shedding tears profusely. After spending a month inside the house being looked after and fed, she can only eat or cook in the same house every day. She cannot eat in another house or even drink *ocisangua*. She stays at home reddened because she never goes out. When she wants to relieve herself, it has to be very early in the morning or after sunset. People cannot look her in the eyes.

On the day that they leave the widowed house, they prepare beer and make the spouse come out. If a woman, her hair will be braided and she will receive a new cloth. The same for a man. But when the wife dies, the husband's family take a chicken leg and a cockerel leg, female and male, just like the basket is to the bow, meaning that their house has been undone, and send these items to the parents of the woman who died. If the husband has died, when the widow leaves the house, her hair is braided and she receives new cloths and scarfs. When the *ocimbombo* is ready, all the people of the village spend the night together. An elder who speaks well should accompany her to be returned. He tells her parents: "She was ours, that's why we have accompanied her here. She was not a sorceress, she was not a witch, she was not a thief, she was not rude. She got on well with her husband's kin. She fed the children well, the husband's nephews and nieces. Today Suku separated them. That's why we decided: 'Now let's accompany the other's daughter. If a man comes, let her marry. We are returning her already. We loved her. Kalunga separated them.'"

The slave is a person who was bought. Here there are many slaves. Some are slaves because their maternal uncle had many debts. When they are unable to pay, they take a nephew and use him to pay the debts. They become slaves.

Some slaves are from the time when the traders¹⁹⁶ would go to the Ngangela to buy many people. Some are slaves because when they are still with their family, while young, they do bad things. They go with other men's wives. The family pays once, pays twice. The next time he does something, the family agrees that it would be better to sell the lad. Otherwise one day he may cause considerable legal problems. They take him to someone wealthy, therefore, and sell him for oxen, rubber, wax or a bundle of cloths. Slavery is painful. It is better to have a large injury than be subject to the will of a master.¹⁹⁷ The slave must do whatever his master commands. The slave must subject himself to everything. Sometimes, if a rich person has many slaves, he bestows names on the smarter lads. One he calls Ukuavate; the other, Ukuelonga; the other, Ukuacalo.¹⁹⁸ Ukuavate must cover the saliva of the master when he spits.

As soon as the master finishes eating, Ukuelonga should take the plates home.

Ukuacalo takes the master's chair when he goes to visit smaller villages. On arrival, he places the chair on the ground and the master sits down.

There are many slaves, but they are different. Some are slaves properly speaking. Other slaves are very intelligent. Others marry slaves and breed pigs at home. These pigs yield many portions for the rich master.

In the case of slaves properly speaking, even if they manage to obtain many goods, all of them will go to the master: oxen, wax or anything else, everything will be received by the master.

There is a saying that goes: "They tell you, dog: 'Fetch!' They don't say: 'Eat!'"¹⁹⁹ This signifies that you, slave, because you belong to someone, even if you have something, this thing does not belong to you.

¹⁹⁶ *Olofumbelo* (singular: *ofumbelo*), which may signify both 'trader' and 'rich person.'

¹⁹⁷ In Umbundu, Cime refers to the master or owner of the slave.

¹⁹⁸ Ukuavate, Ukuelonga and Ukuacalo are, respectively, those responsible for the saliva, the plates and the chair.

¹⁹⁹ *Ovo wumbua va linga ka kuate, ka va lingile hati, Ka lie.*

There are many cases in which a person was a slave, but the master recognizes that he is intelligent and nominates him as leader of the others. When the master dies, it is this person who will lead the family in his place: slaves, nobles, children of birth or nephews. He is the one they will call Sekulu.²⁰⁰

In the past, the slave was treated like a dog. When he died, they wrapped him up, tied him with tree bark ropes, washed him and sometimes placed him in a hole or simply threw him out in the forest like a dog.

When a noble person dies, their funeral turns into a festival. They play drums, dance, play, fire guns and kill oxen. With slaves, this is not the case. It is true that slavery is painful. It is preferable to have a large wound.

THE SLAVE WHO VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE²⁰¹ No. 3.

Some people, when they suffer a lot, flee from their family and seek out another family of an important person, so that even if the family wants them to return, they are unable to get them back.

This practice is common among slaves and the wives of polygamous men. If a woman's husband does not treat her well and gives everything to just one of the women, if she says something and her husband beats her, this woman will perhaps run away suddenly and seek out the king... She goes to sit on the Soma's throne, on which common people cannot sit. She is seized and taken to the court. Even if her kin come to fetch her, they cannot take her since she has handed herself over. They only return her if her kin bring goods. Someone who volunteers their service is like a slave, since they handed themselves over.

Translated from Portuguese into English by David Rogers

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²⁰⁰ Sekulu can be translated as 'elder' and indicates the position of power and leadership of the oldest.

²⁰¹ In Umbundu, *ocilitumbike*. The slave who volunteers to serve differs from the *upika*, the person who is bought, because they voluntarily place themselves in a condition of servitude by going to offer themselves in the *ombala*.

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