ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF CLASSIFICATION AND BELIEF
IN BISA USE OF MAMMALIAN RESOURCES

by Stuart Alexander Marks

Unlike studies of the ecological relationships of non-human components of the natural world, studies of man's environmental relations must take into account another set of variables. For between man and his environment is interjected a "middle term"--belief based perception which influences man's selectivity and use of his resources. The present study attempts to delineate and to define the perception of wild mammals by a Central African society and to show how social and belief systems operate to influence the selection and utilization of resources. The nexus between the social and natural worlds is examined by describing the role and beliefs of Bisa hunters.

The data upon which the dissertation is based were gathered in fourteen months of field work among the Valley Bisa of Zambia. The Valley Bisa number approximately 6,000 and inhabit roughly 900 square miles between the two Luangwa Valley Game Reserves. The Bisa have no domestic stock other than pigeons and chickens, and as a consequence, wild game is their predominant source of meat.

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An introduction is given to the Valley Bisa in terms of their oral history, physical environment, and socio-political organization. Fortune or misfortunes are normally interpreted in terms of ancestral assistance or its withdrawal. The Bisa classify mammals and birds by size, sex, and color. Dangerous mammals and those formerly used as tribute to chiefs are two additional classes. The distribution of and prohibitions on the consumption of certain meats are discussed. The Bisa expound their refusal to consume hippo flesh in terms of fear of leprosy, but they also realize that at one time they consumed it. This widespread prohibition may be related to decreases in hippo herd levels in the first decades of this century and to the impact of European labor recruitment on Bisa hunting organization. Individual prohibitions on the consumption of certain striped mammals (zebra, eland, kudu, bushbuck), also rationalized in terms of leprosy, result from their symbolic roles as anomalous mammals according to Bisa classification. Their pelage combines two prominent colors. The sightings of a number of mammals and birds are used by hunters as omens, and in the past, game hunts and the procurement of male or female animals were used for divinatory purposes. The status and role of hunters was secured through their esoteric knowledge and medicines commensurate with their proven skills. Ranking among hunters was traditionally based upon the hunters killing important mammals such as antbear, eland, lion, and elephant.

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A rite of passage for a maturing hunter is described and its symbols interpreted in terms of the hunter's entry into manhood and his accompanying duties, privileges, knowledge of tradition and responsibilities to his kin. The use of symbols in this ritual portrays a segment of Bisa beliefs and values. Such beliefs and values channel a society's perception and use of its environmental products.

THE ROLE OF CLASSIFICATION AND BELIEF IN BISA USE OF MAMMALIAN RESOURCES

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A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Fisheries and Wildlife

1968

FRONTISPIECE

Chando (in front) leads Lubeles back to the elephant carcass. Note that Lubeles holds the gun with which he shot the elephant, eyes closed, and head bowed in a submissive posture.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Initial acknowledgments must go to my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Sandy C. Marks, dentists by profession but missionaries by concern. I first experienced living in another culture as a child, and I was encouraged by my parents to be sensitive to others whose cultural orientations differed from my own. To my father I owe an early interest in animals and hunting. As my interests in them have turned academic, he has continued in his encouragement.

My wife, Martha, has encouraged me throughout the greater part of my graduate studies. She endured the rigors of the field work among the Valley Bisa and has since helped in compiling and synthesizing materials.

For their understanding and for their willingness to channel my interests into an interdisciplinary study I am grateful to the members of my graduate committee at Michigan State University comprising the following: Dr. George A. Petrides, Professor of Fisheries and Wildlife, Zoology; Dr. John E. Cantlon, Professor of Botany and Plant pathology; Dr. Charles C. Hughes, Professor of Anthropology and Chairman, African Studies Center; and Dr. Moreau Maxwell, Professor and Chairman, Department of Anthropology. Without their encouragement and flexibility my study might have never been undertaken.

My study was supported under a fellowship granted by the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, without whose support my research would not have been attempted. However, the conclusions, opinions, and other statements within this dissertation are my own and not necessarily those of the Fellowship Program.

In the Republic of Zambia there are many people who helped in the initial stages of my research and who continued to be of assistance throughout my residence in Zambia. Professor Alastair Heron, former Director of the Institute for Social Research, and his entire staff were most helpful. The Honorable Solomon Kalulu, former Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, and his staff initially suggested the location of my study area in the Munyamadzi Corridor. Mr. W. S. Steel, Director of Game and Fisheries, was very helpful and enabled me to study the elephant ritual. Mr. W. R. Bainbridge, Chief Game Officer, helped in many ways and materially assisted us in the field, as did Mr. L. D. C. Allen, Game Warden, Luangwa Command. Mr. W. L. Astle, ecologist in the Luangwa South Game Reserve, aided in identifying plants. Mr. David Patton, wildlife biologist on assignment with FAO/UN Ecological Survey, encouraged and assisted us in many ways. The District Secretaries at Mpika, Messrs. Liambiye and Chitah, showed their concern and cooperation throughout our stay at Nabwalya.

For their help and patience in interpreting phases of their culture, I am indebted to the Valley Bisa and their

Chief Nabwalya (Kabuswe Mbuluma). They were hospitable hosts and tolerant of our inquisitiveness. Bisa proper names and clan affiliations mentioned are ficticious. My special appreciation goes to two individuals who must remain anonymous but whose close association enabled me to penetrate deeply into Bisa society and culture. For sometimes when we pre-empt the stage, it is in others that we find ourselves.

Language training was essential in my study, and I acknowledge the efforts of Professor I. Richardson (Michigan State University),Dr. Guy Atkins (School of Oriental and African Studies), and Mr. Michael Mann (School of Oriental and African Studies) in providing me with a fundamental working knowledge of Bemba and Nyanja. Schoolteachers J. Ngulube, R. Simusokwe, S. Mwape, and A. Chileshye, stationed at Nabwalya Government School, were very helpful in interpreting more esoteric phases of Bisa life and language.

Part of my research training was undertaken at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. I especially wish to thank Professor C. von Furer-Haimendorf, Dr. P. Gulliver, and Miss B. Ward for their guidance and assistance. Dr. A. I. Richards, Cambridge University, and Dr. G. Kay, University of Hull, were also most helpful.

Professor H. DeBlij and Mr. Don L. Capone, Department of Geography, Michigan State University, assisted in creating the map of the Munyamadzi Corridor.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Mr. Dyson Luben, our research assistant. By his faithfulness and understanding he taught us much about present pressures on Valley Bisa society.

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INTRODUCTION

> When the ethnographer visits a strange people he carries with him such concepts as "god," "power," "debt," "family," "gift," and so on, and however thorough his professional preparation he will tend at first to look for and identify what his own culture denotes by these words and to interpret the statements of the people in terms of them. But gradually he learns to see the world as it is constituted for the people themselves, to assimilate their distinctive categories. Typically, he may have to abandon the distinction between the natural and the supernatural, relocate the line between life and death, accept a common nature in mankind and animals. He cannot pretend to perceive the phenomena involved in any entirely new way, but he can and must conceptualize them in this foreign cast; and what he learns to do in each instance is essentially to classify. Rodney Needham (1963: viii).

Because a society's universe is culturally defined, in one sense it is true that people everywhere inhabit the same world; yet in another sense they inhabit very different ones. It is not just a matter of constructing different worlds from the same or similar evidence, but rather the evidence itself is different. In this dissertation, I attempt to present a small part of the complex system of symbols, beliefs, and values which the Valley Bisa of Zambia impute to the natural world which surrounds them.

I begin by presenting an outline of Valley Bisa history and a brief sketch of their environment and economy. These notes are followed by a review of principles of Bisa

social organization--the rules determining their residency in villages, the important "offices" of headman and chief and their position in the political hierarchy. Each of these "offices" is surrounded and reinforced by rites and ceremonies which imply that the well-being and harmony of Bisa life is ascribed to their remembrance of their ancestors and to the performance of kinship obligations. Each performance of these rituals reinforces the position and authority of those mediators (headmen, chief) who function between the social and supernatural spheres. Deviation from prescribed patterns of kinship behavior is believed to result in withdrawal of ancestral help and blessing. Yet beliefs in such sanctions do not curtail disputes or social strife among them; segments of matrikin still quarrel, split, establish different villages and continue to propitiate their ancestors through leaders more acceptable to the separate groups. I describe their ancestral cult as an extension of the Bisa social system and describe some of the ways spirits are believed to afflict their living descendants. The following section outlines Bisa classification of mammals, birds, and vegetation and the organization and attributes ascribed to them.

The criterion of their basic system of classification and the anomaly which it produces help explain some of their food prohibitions. This explanation is developed and is followed by discussions on other uses to which some resources are put by the Bisa. The final section portrays

the background and genealogical positions of a senior huntsman and a son maturing in huntsmanship. The ritual surrounding the successful slaying of an elephant by the latter is described and interpreted as an example of an important rite de passage. The symbols in this rite portray some of the values and beliefs implicit in Bisa society. It is impossible to understand the meaning of these rites themselves, without prior knowledge of the social arena in which they are played and the genealogical ranking of their participants.

My materials on the Valley Bisa were gathered during ten and one-half months that my wife and I resided among them in the Luangwa Valley in 1966-1967. Materials presented in this thesis were gathered from interviews, surveys, observations, and questions asked of hunters whom I accompanied afield. My knowledge of the Bisa language was sufficient for questioning huntsmen afield and for more general observations. But for more detailed questioning on esoteric information, interviews with individuals were held. At these sessions information supplied by the informant was translated into English by one of the several schoolteachers stationed at Nabwalya Government School. These schoolteachers were from neighboring tribes whose languages were mutually intelligible with that spoken by the Valley Bisa. Sessions were tape recorded and typed later the same day.

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It should become obvious in this analysis that I have drawn deeply upon the analytical tools and insights provided by Douglas, Turner, Beidelman, Beattie and others. If my observations result in any contribution, it stems from the flexibility and relative freedom introduced into my graduate program by my guidance committee at Michigan State University.

Beliefs and Symbolic Expressions

It is a difficult task to synthesize beliefs of an alien society and to translate into another language its modes of thought. Yet no sensitive researcher who resides for any length of time within another society can remain unimpressed by the ways in which meanings and values which that society attaches to objects, ideas, and behavior differ from his own. Unfortunately, his sensitivity in no way ameliorates the difficulties inherent in his task of interpreting these differences; on the contrary, he may become aware of errors inevitable in any explication.

In discussing an alien society's beliefs one is intimately concerned with their perception, classification, and ordering of their universe, their methods of discovering and symbolizing that order, and the ways and means by which members of that society adapt themselves to their defined world. In attempting to define the universe as perceived by another society, it is necessary to sympathize and understand rather than to assess the truth or falsity of their

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premises and assertions. One should be aware, as Beattie (1964: 68-69) has written that:

> The predominantly scientific orientation of modern thought has much obscured the fact that peoples who are less concerned than Western Europeans are with scientific experimentation and logical method think about the world they live in terms which are often symbolic and "literary" rather than scientific. . . . Coherent thinking can be symbolic as well as scientific, and if we are sensible we do not subject the language of poetry to the same kind of examination that we apply to a scientific hypothesis.

Beliefs and values in any society are expressed through symbols. But what is a symbol and how is it used? Continuing to paraphrase and to make the analytical distinction provided by Beattie (1964), symbols, first of all, not only provide information but are considered appropriate for the uses in which they appear. Because of their appropriateness, it is necessary for the researcher to discover the nature of the association between a symbol and its referent, and for this he must use insights provided by participants in that society. Secondly, symbols usually stand for and suggest an abstract notion. They provide a means by which a people can express profound ideas about themselves and their world which may be impossible by other means. And finally since symbols are for the most part expressive, that which is symbolized is thought to be sufficiently worthwhile to the society to be portrayed. Thus people express their values and sentiments through their use of symbols.

Symbolism should be studied on several levels. Turner (1964) in his study of ritual among the Ndembu found it

necessary to infer the structure and properties of their symbols from three types of data. These included a) noticeable characteristics of the symbols; b) interpretations of the symbol and its use by specialists and laymen; and c) and interpretations suggested by his exposure to other sections of that culture. Turner (1961, 1962) showed that symbolic meanings may be seen in at least three different "levels" or "fields": a) exegetical--meaning contributed by one's informants; b) operational--by equating a symbol's meaning with its use in rites; c) and positional--meaning attributed to a symbol by examining it in relationship to other symbols belonging to the same complex of symbols. Therefore a symbol's significance need not be restricted to the actors' own interpretation, for they may be unaware of some meaning explicit in the ritual action itself. Thus when a symbol has an operational meaning rather than an exegetical one, its interpretation may be understood and assessed only by specialists and a trained or perceptive observer. As to the use of symbols in ceremonies, Turner (1964) hypothesizes that these, by virtue of their ambiguous associations, enable individuals to present complex aspects of beliefs and values in a succinct, compact way without dissociation from their opposite or contradictory properties.

Not all segments of a society are equally articulate or perceptive about their cosmography. Among the Valley Bisa, for example, traditional and European beliefs are

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held in a different amalgum by all adults--dependent upon the extent of their exposure to western influence. I encountered a number of young men who were intolerant of traditional beliefs. Further, some Bisa were more willing than were others to discuss symbols and their meanings.

As an area of major interest, I attempted to analyze hunters and to learn some of the forces which they perceive operative in the natural world. In retrospect I have found that I could not have chosen a more auspicious arena in which to express my own inter-disciplinary interests of anthropology and ecology. Characteristics attributed to animals by the Bisa and the reference points expressed in their hunting rituals were understandable only if one were aware of the nature of their society. Bisa hunters still dependent upon a limited and ineffective weaponry were an ideal reservoir of traditional beliefs and values. Beliefs which hunters expressed in their occupational rituals and symbols also reflected their perception of Bisa society of which they were also a part.

I have mentioned Turner and his analyses of Ndembu rituals to indicate some of the complexities and different levels of meaning expressed in rituals and ritual acts. My own assessment of Valley Bisa hunting rituals may seem modest by comparison to those for the Ndembu. I suggest several reasons why this should be so. First, my period of residence and research among the Valley Bisa was more

limited than Turner's among the Ndembu. Secondly, the Bisa hunter does not face the same odds in securing game that Ndembu hunters do in their country where populations of wild mammals are at low levels. By contrast, mammals of all kinds are abundant in the Luangwa Valley, and the uncertainty of seeing and securing game is not so great as among the Ndembu. As a consequence, a Valley Bisa huntsman's investment in esoteric magical substances which are socially terrifying and akin to sorcery is not so heavy. Turner (1957: 32) mentions that successful hunters among the Ndembu are regarded as sorcerers who derive their hunting powers from killing humans, and for this reason Ndembu regard them as unlikely candidates for the office of village headmanship. Most skilled hunters among the Bisa during their careers serve as village headmen, and although their skill is assumed based upon magical substances, their accusations of sorcery are voiced toward only a few individuals. I hope in a later article to clarify the connections between elaborateness of hunting rituals and magic and limited effectiveness of weaponry and game supply. Suffice it to mention here that some of the explicit meanings in Ndembu hunting ceremonies are not found among the Valley Bisa.

Symbolic Classification

Since the work of Durkheim and Mauss (1903) 'De quelques formes primitives de classification: contributions a l'etude des representations collectives,' it has generally

been accepted that a structural relationship exists between the symbolic and social classification of a society. Both of these authors were concerned with the classification of religious and moral symbols which they differentiated from technological distinctions. For them the human mind was incapable of conceiving complex classificatory schemes; consequently, their research was directed toward describing the model from which these classifications evolved. They found their answers in the way primitive society itself was organized. Accordingly, the first classes and divisions were those found in society, and in primitive classification their social categories, models, and interrelationships between these were extended to describe categories and the relationships between these categories in the natural world. With the recent rediscovery and translation of Durkheim, Mauss, and the others of the French Annee Sociologique school, serious criticism (see Needham, 1967) has been voiced concerning both their inductions and conclusions. But there still appears abundant evidence that categories and relationships perceived as operative in the natural world by participants in simpler societies are based upon sociological models. This correlation seems clear at least among the Valley Bisa.

With the rediscovery and translation into English of Robert Hertz's, Death and the Right Hand there has been a revival of interest in the nature of primitive classifications. Hertz (1909; trans. 1960) discusses the symbolic

opposition of right and left hands and discusses their alignment in a paradigm with other oppositions such as male/female, good/bad, sky/earth, strength/weakness, etc. Dual classificatory systems are characteristic of many African societies (Needham, 1960; Beidelman, 1961, 1964; Rigby, 1966). In these, the symbolic use of some elements of a series in rites and ceremonies must be understood in terms of their complementary dualism; the relationship defining their use in rites is in terms of its opposite (Beidelman, 1964; Needham, 1967). A dualism prominent in Central African symbols and ceremonies is black/white, and its use expresses two polar values. Thus a section of Bisa classification, which should become clearer upon reading the sections which follow, is constructed below:

white	black
purity	impurity
security	danger
health	sickness
good spirits (mipashi)	bad spirits (fibanda)
good omens	bad omens
light	darkness

Thus there is a complexity of ideals and values which if symbolized in a ceremony by the use of the colors black or white can only be explained and understood when they are integrated by analogy into such a series of complementary oppositions.

Turner (1966) shows that among the Ndembu of Zambia a tripartate scheme of primary colors is employed (black, white, and red). Black and white are associated with

negative and positive attributes, respectively, when used as symbols. Red, on the contrary, has ambivalent social value and can be used in opposition to black or white, or together with them, depending upon the intent.

The distinctiveness of male and female form two basic social classifications in all societies; each sex is allocated different roles. Members of societies are further differentiated by relative age. And in the "simpler societies" stages in the life cycle--birth, puberty, marriage, parenthood, and death--are usually punctuated by rites of passage (see below). Seniority among adults may be recognized by elaborate rites, or one's status may be measured by such indices as genealogical position, number of children, etc. Hunting for the Valley Bisa is exclusively a male activity, and one in which assumption of skill is, for the most part, based upon genealogical descent. Recognized skilled hunters are descendants of such hunters, and these skills are passed from generation to generation. Seniority in huntsmanship stems from the pursuit and slaying of certain prestigious mammals (i.e. elephant, lion, eland, and antbear). Hunters who have killed these mammals are referred to by the respected title of bankambalume, and their initial attainment of such status is marked by an elaborate rite de passage.

Perception and Cultural Patterns

In his introduction to African Worlds, Professor Forde (1953: vii) mentions:

> There is reason to believe that a close relation exists between dominant attitudes towards social relations and the proper use of resources and established beliefs concerning the nature of human society and its place in a wider universe of cosmic forces.

Each of this volume's contributors outlined the cosmological ideas and social values of an African society which they studied. One contributor to the volume, Dr. Mary Douglas, who did her fieldwork among the Lele of the Congo, continued her interest in classificatory schemes (Douglas, 1955, 1957) and in 1966 published a volume entitled Purity and Danger--an analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo. My ideas on perception and classification were influenced by sections of her analysis as well as by sections of an article published by Leach (1964).

Whatever a person perceives in the universe is organized into a pattern for which the perceiver himself is largely responsible, in that perception and organization are not in themselves passive. Culture, in the sense of a "public, standardized value or discriminatory grid," mediates experience and perception of the individuals composing a society. Culture provides the basic framework and patterns into which an individual's ideas, values, and beliefs are ordered and structured. Because of its public nature, cultural grids possess authority and rigidity which

impede revision and modifications and in this same way, may express continuity between generations of society members. One may distinguish between cultural and individual schemes of classification in that an individual may ponder and revise his premises and patterns of assumptions based upon his experiences, but a culture normally is resistant to such attempts.

But any classificatory scheme produces anomaly and ambiguity. These objects form a residual category composed of items rejected from the normal scheme of classification. And every society must have provisions for dealing with items which it normally rejects (i.e. "dirt"). Douglas (1966: 39-40) suggests five ways in which these objects may be handled by a culture: (1) a culture can offer an interpretation so that the ambiguity is reduced; (2) in some instances, it can physically control anomaly; (3) it can prescribe avoidance of anomalous events so that the categories to which these events do not conform are strengthened; (4) it can label anomalous events dangerous; (5) or it can employ ambiguous symbols in rituals to enrich meaning and to suggest other levels of experience.

The approach taken by Leach (1964) varies in a few important details from that presented above by Douglas. He suggests that the physical and social environment of a young child is initially perceived as a continuum in which there are no intrinsically separate entities. In the course

of his training a child is taught a discriminatory pattern which delineates a number of separate things along this continuum. Each of these separate entities is named; therefore, through training, a child learns to discriminate a discontinuous environment. This training is reinforced by the simultaneous use of both language and taboo. Through the selective use of language a person learns to distinguish "things" in his environment; through the selective use of taboo he is inhibited from recognizing parts of the continuum which separate the named "things." But language does more than provide for a "classification of things; it actually molds our environment; it places each individual at the center of a social space which is ordered in a logical and reassuring way." (Leach 1964: 36).

In his paper Leach is primarily concerned with "verbal category sets which discriminate areas of social space in terms of distance from Ego (self)." He delineates three such categories in his paper:

a) Self...sister...cousin...neighbor...stranger

b) Self...house...farm...field...far (remote)

c) Self...pet...livestock..."game"...wild animal

All of these categories are arranged in terms of progressively more distance from the individual self. With this the case, Leach assumes that the kind of "relational statement" one could make about any one of these sets of categories would hold with equal validity in the remaining two.

He then examines associations between eating (edible and non-edible species of animals) and sexual intercourse (acceptable and incestuous categories) in English and Burmese societies.

Rites of Passage

Van Gennep (trans. 1960) in his analysis of "life crisis" ceremonies, points out that activities composing these rituals, when examined in terms of order and content, fall into three major phases--separation, transition, and incorporation. These ceremonies begin with rites of separation which remove the subject from his social environment. Next follow transition rites in which the participant is taught skills or behavior commensurate with his new status or position. Finally the subject is ritually reincorporated into society in his new status. But even Van Gennop recognized that all three categories may not be expressed to the same extent in all ceremonies.

Rites of passage are pregnant with symbolic meanings. The rites surrounding the killing of an important mammal such as an elephant by a maturing huntsman (described later) proves no exception. But what is a ritual? For a definition I concur with that given by Beattie (1959: 135-136) as

> formal and socially recognized procedures the meaning of which is symbolic rather than empirical. What is symbolized we presume to be some abstract notion and we suppose that there exists some kind of intelligible correspondance between the notion and the symbol in question.

This answer raises a further question on methodology. What criteria and data are used for interpreting symbols and expressive behavior?

Kluckholm (1943) was attempting to develop such ideas when he wrote about "covert" culture. He was concerned about unstated yet implicit premises of a culture the participants of which were aware of but seldom expressed such premises. He referred to "covert" culture as being the "subtler, more elusive phases of social life and thought." Hoebel (1943: 228) in his reply to Kluckholm's article suggests that interpretation of "covert" culture must be left to the "feel" of the investigator, and he advised that:

> By "feel" for a culture I mean the observer's sense of what is congruous, probable, and fitting in the way of behavior patterned in accordance with the basic principles of the culture under consideration--especially with respect to the non-verbalized, non-overt systems within the whole complex. On the basis of "feel" the investigator can formulate judgments or interpretations about motivations underlying observed behavior or similar interpretations may be offered as interpretations of expectancy in behavior not actually observed or reported by informants. (Hoebel 1943: 228).

INTRODUCTION TO THE VALLEY BISA AND THEIR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

> Nature unfettered and unrestrained is there on all sides. The tropical beauties of the Luangwa, the majestic masses of the Muchingas, the monotony of the great plains . . . all sink deeply into one's very being after a few months of wandering in that land of wild beasts and uncivilized men, where the vegetation has run riot, and the great mammals which the Creator put on this earth roam free and wild. Owen Letcher (1911).

Migration and Settlement

The Bisa, like most tribes inhabiting northern Zambia, had their origin in the former Luba-Lunda empire of the Congo Basin (Thomas, 1958; Vansina, 1966). Migrations originating from this area probably began as a haphazard process of small kinship groups pushing out in search of new lands. In the course of these migrations the Ngona (mushroom clan) emerged as the dominant clan in the group destined to become the Bisa tribe. Future Bisa chiefs were chosen from this Ngona clan. According to Thomas (1958), it was not until the early eighteenth century that the Bisa emerged as a tribe and settled on the Plateau between the escarpment and Lake Bangweulu.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Bisa acquired a reputation as keen merchants. Initially, their wares were mainly ivory, cloth, and beads, but later when the

Portuguese began to prefer slaves the Bisa readily switched commodities. Gamitto (trans. 1960) in 1831 noticed Bisa merchants active among their neighboring tribesmen east of the Luangwa, and Burton (1873) thirty years later described them as "acute Levantines" and well-known traders in parts of East Africa.

The Luangwa Valley was a hunting territory for the Bisa before some settled there permanently. Seasonally, groups of specialized huntsmen descended the escarpment and established temporary hunting camps in the Valley, shifting them to the vicinity of a carcass once a kill was made. But it was the conquest of Bisa land on the Plateau by their northern neighbors, the Bemba, in the late 1820's which caused permanent Bisa settlement in the Luangwa Valley. Roberts (1966) suggests that it was the lucrative eastern trade and a dispute over the control of the Chibwe salt pans which the Bemba shared along their border with the Bisa which led the less prosperous and less industrious Bemba to conquer Bisa lands. Under the Bemba onslaught most Bisa fled toward the Bangweulu Swamps. Those who settled in the Valley were in time to become culturally and linguistically more similar to the tribes living east of the Luangwa with whom they shared a similar environment than they were with their tribesmen who remained on the Plateau.

On his journey to the Luapula in 1831, Gamitto (1960) noted that land from west of the Luangwa River to the

escarpment belonged to Kazembe, a MuBisa, and although he did not visit him, Gamitto sent him tribute. Gamitto (1960: 151) described Kazembe and his people as "notorious highwaymen" who subsisted "on game and wild fruits." This Kazembe was probably the first Ngona chief, or one of the early successors to this title, who settled permanently in the Luangwa Valley. He established his musumba (chief's village) along the Munyamadzi near the Ngala foothills--a position midpoint between the Muchinga escarpment and the Luangwa River. Other Ngona clansmen who later came to settle in the Valley were given land by Kazembe either on the Luangwa or near the base of the escarpment. In this manner Kazembe, was assured of some protection against Bemba or Ngoni surprise attacks.

Despite their settlement in the Valley, for most of the nineteenth century the Valley Bisa suffered raids and yielded slaves and ivory both to the Bemba to their north and west and to the Ngoni and half-caste traders from the east and southeast. The precipitous Muchinga escarpment with its caves and hollows served as a refuge for the Bisa during the earlier Bemba and Ngoni raids. Today Valley residents remember particularly Chibwe Mabimba ("stone thatching") located south of Ntunta, for it was to this and neighboring caves that the Bisa fled while the Ngoni and Bemba ravaged their countryside. Later the Valley Bisa were to build large stockaded villages capable of withstanding these raids.

By the time of Livingstone's visit in 1866 the Bisa under Kazembe were more firmly in control of their sections of the Valley floor. Livingstone was led to Malenga's village, then situated near the confluence of the Mupamadzi with the Luangwa, before he could proceed to Kazembe. Unimpressed with Kazembe's village, Livingstone referred to it as "a miserable hamlet" and its inhabitants as "suspicious and will do nothing but with a haggle for prepayment." Closer to the escarpment, Livingstone met still another unaccommodating Bisa chief, Kavimba, who had recently repelled the Ngoni.

By 1880, however, the Valley Bisa were sufficiently strong to undertake conquests of their own. In 1885 when civil war broke out among the Cewa across the Luangwe River, a group of Bisa warriors under Kambwili helped defeat Mwase, the reigning Cewa chief. For their assistance, Kambwili, a Ngona clansman, was awarded the chieftainship over a section of land east of the Luangwa which had previously been populated by Bisa.

When agents of the British South Africa Company arrived near the end of the nineteenth century, they found the Valley Bisa governed by a chieftainess. She gave her name respectfully as Nabwalya (mother of Bwalya) Chiombo (her father's name) although this was not the proper chieftainship title. But the name Nabwalya was inscribed as the chieftaincy and has remained so since. The name Kazembe

had been inherited by a clansman then living on the Mutinondo River. The Europeans established a boma (administrative post), which operated from 1901-1908, on the crest of Ngala hill near Nabwalya's village. When district boundaries were redrawn in 1908, the boma was abandoned and its former territory west of the Luangwa was administered by Mpika, a boma located on the plateau (see Figure 1).

Under European administration the number of recognized Ngona chiefs in the Valley was reduced to one, Nabwalya. Other Ngona clansmen became subordinate to him. The Kambwili chieftaincy east of the Luangwa was given back to the Cewa under Mwanya.

The creation of the two sections of the Luangwa Valley Game Reserves in 1938 did not entail the eviction of many Bisa villages, but since that time Bisa settlement in the Valley has been restricted to the neck of land between the two sections of the game reserve. Today this section of land is commonly referred to as the Munyamadzi Corridor (Figure 1).

Physical Environment and Economy

The Munyamadzi Corridor is approximately 45 miles long and 25 to 30 miles wide lying athwart the Luangwa Valley. The northern and southern boundaries of the corridor are the southern limit of the North Game Reserve and the northern limit of the South Game Reserve, respectively. The Luangwa River is its eastern boundary which also forms the political

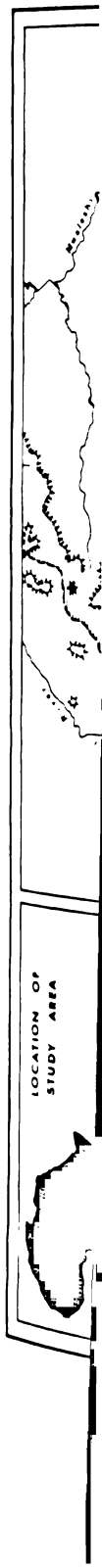
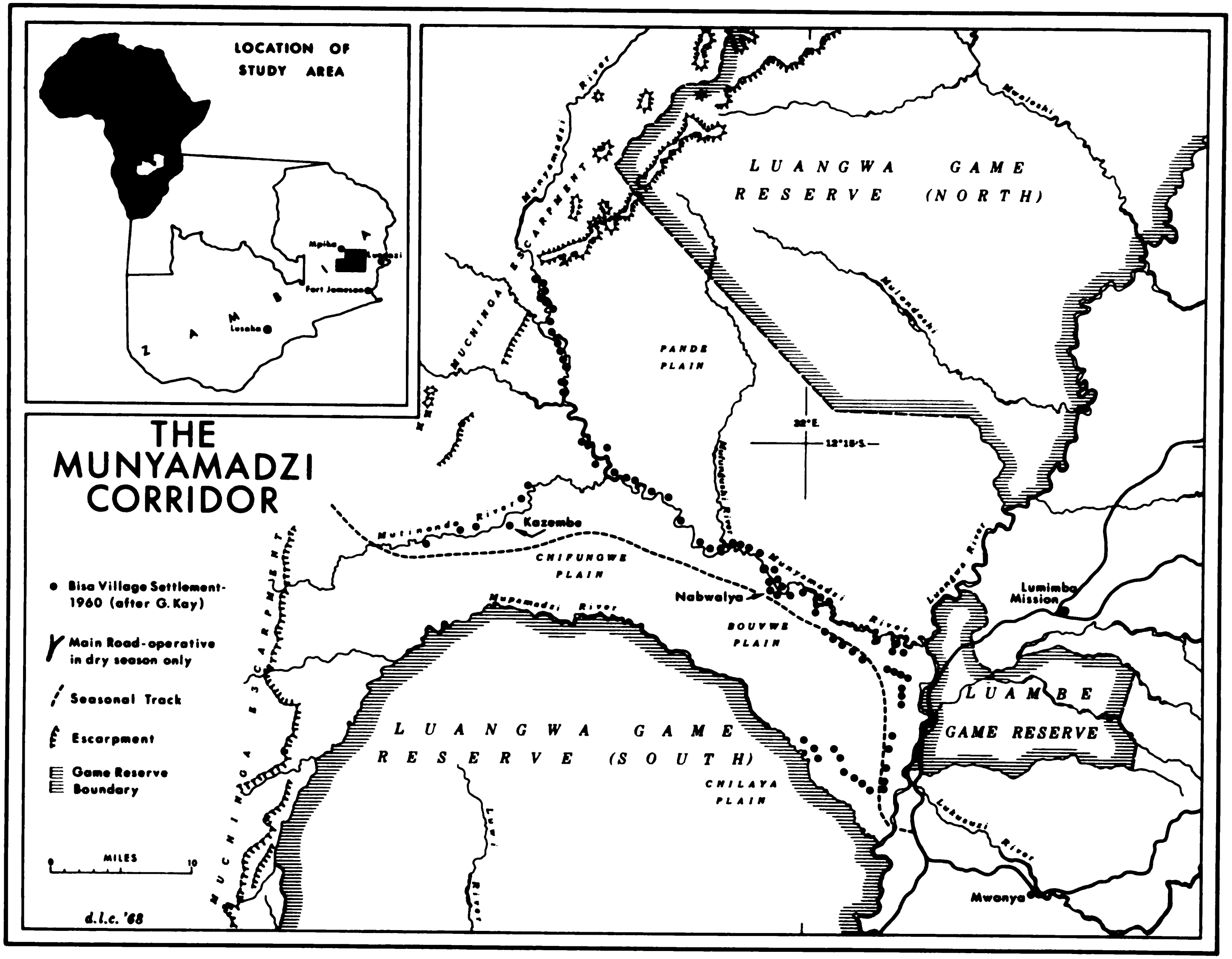


Figure 1.--Location and map of Munyamadzi Corridor, Zambia.


LOCATION OF STUDY AREA
Mpika
Lundazi
Fort Jameson
Lusaka
Z A M B I A
THE MUNYAMADZI CORRIDOR
Bisa Village Settlement-1960 (after G. Kay)
Main Road-operative in dry season only
Seasonal Track
Escarpment
Game Reserve Boundary
MILES
0
10
d.l.c. '68
LUANGWA GAME RESERVE (NORTH)
LUANGWA GAME RESERVE (SOUTH)
LUAMBE GAME RESERVE
PANDE PLAIN
CHIPUNGWE PLAIN
BOUVWE PLAIN
CHILAYA PLAIN
Munyamadzi River
Mutinondo River
Mufunguzi River
Mupamadzi River
Luangwa River
Lukusuzi River
Luwi River
Mulandoshi
Mwaleshi
MUCHINGA ESCARPMENT
Kazembe
Nabwalya
Lumimba Mission
Mwanya
30°E
12°15'S

division between Zambia's Northern and Eastern Provinces. Physical and environmental conditions on either side of the river are much the same, and inhabitants, whether Bisa or not, share a similar culture and remain closely related. The western boundary, the precipitous Muchinga escarpment, forms a natural barrier which, until recently, encouraged Bisa isolation from their tribal stock on the Plateau.

From the top of the Muchinga escarpment to its base entails an abrupt change of over 2,000 feet in elevation. Following the Munyamadzi River from the base of the escarpment (2,150 feet elevation) to its confluence with the Luangwa (1,545 feet elevation), one can divide the Valley floor into two distinct topographical regions--the rocky, water worn hills near the abrupt escarpment and the Luangwa plain. The hilly terrain, characterized by several species of Brachystegia, Terminalia servicea, Combretum, Colophospermum mopani and associated species, ends abruptly at the Ngala foothills near Chief Nabwalya's village. From Nabwalya to the Luangwa, the Munyamadzi meanders over a flat surface. Here the banks of the river are flanked by Acacia albida, Sclerocarya caffra, Kigelia pinnata and other woody plant species typical of riverine savanna. Vegetation along the rivers has been much disturbed by the agricultural activities of the Bisa. Away from the river, mopani woodland (predominantly Colophospermum mopani) predominates with occasional opening of grasslands.

The Luangwa, Mupamadzi, Munyamadzi and its tributary the Mutinondo are all perennial streams. During the dry season, water flow is reduced, but it begins to swell with the local rains of December. Local flooding over the lowlands near the Luangwa may occur in the later part of the wet season. The rainy season begins in late October or early November and lasts until March and April, but rainfall is not evenly distributed throughout this period. Much of it comes in short, sudden downpours, swelling the rivers and flooding the lagoons and depressions in the mopani woodland. At such times the black clay soils become a greasy adhesive closing the Valley to vehicles, and even making journeys on foot slow and ponderous.

At the end of the rains comes the cold season with temperatures frequently dropping to a low 50° F. in the evenings. But these chills are soon replaced by the depressing heat of the hot season beginning in August. Under high temperatures and humidity, Valley inhabitants wilt until these conditions are relieved by the coming of the early rains. Some weather conditions at Nabwalya Village as we found them are given in Table I.

Mammals of many species abound in the Munyamadzi Corridor. Large mammals such as elephant, black rhinoceros, hippopotamus, and buffalo are common as are also smaller antelopes and other game. Populations of these mammals are scattered during the rains but concentrate near the rivers in the dry season.

TABLE 1.--Weather data, 1966-1967 at Nabwalya's Village, Zambia. Temperature measurements taken in the shade of a hut veranda at 6 feet above ground level.

Month/Year	TEMPERATURE (degrees F.) Average Max.	Av. Min.	Highest	Lowest	Rainfall (inches)	No. days rain	No. of cloudy days*
August 1966	90.1	61.7	98	53	0.00	0	5
September	96.9	68.5	105	58	0.1	1	3
October	102.2	75.0	110	70	0.89	2	4
November	99.2	74.7	109	69	2.80	16	22
December	95.3	72.8	107	69	6.48	20	25
January 1967	90.3	71.5	98	68	5.73	20	27
February	91.0	71.3	98	68	8.25	18	25
March	88.8	70.8	98	68	9.04	20	29
April	92.0	71.1	98	68	2.69	10	15
May	89.5	66.9	97	60	0.83	4	11
June	87.2	62.4	92	56	0.04	1	11
July	86.4	58.7	92	50	0.00	0	8

*Defined as over 60% cloud cover at any time during day.

The principal mode of Bisa subsistence is agriculture. The agricultural cycle mirrors the rainy season with clearing and planting at the beginning of the rains and reaping before and during the cold season. The main crop is sorghum although maize, groundnuts, sugar cane, cowpeas, pumpkins, and tobacco are also grown. Generally, rainfall is sufficient for agriculture,although crop success is dependent upon the timing and duration of the rains. Frequent local crop failures reflect varagies of rainfall, and regional droughts are not uncommon.

Dense populations of large wild mammals make the growing and storage of crops difficult for the Valley Bisa. The morphology of their villages reflects a protective format, with granaries toward the center surrounded by individual huts. During the growing season, however, these villages are for the most part abandoned while the Bisa devote themselves toward crop protection. Individual households and their matrikin move to the areas which they have cleared and brought under cultivation, and during the rains they reside in individual huts surrounding the cultivated area. They return to their respective villages when the crops are harvested.

Most agricultural chores are shared by men and women alike, but the heavier work of constructing granaries and field huts is predominantly a masculine activity. Fishing is by both sexes, although by different methods. Hunting

is the masculine activity par excellence for a small core of adepts.

Population

The Munyamadzi Corridor comprises approximately 900 square miles and contains about 175 miles of perennial streams. Today Bisa settlement is concentrated along the river banks of these perennial streams where sorghum, maize, and pumpkins are grown on the rich alluvium.

For the fifty-three years during which population figures are available, the Valley Bisa population has shown a steady increase (Table 2). But these figures should be understood as population estimates only and as a general indication of population trend. If the 1963 population figure is accepted, population density is 5.8 people per square mile,but, Bisa settlement is not equally dispersed throughout the corridor. Instead, most settlement occurs within one-half mile of water, and the distribution of population reflects the course of the river (see Figure 1). On the basis that the population normally resides within a half mile on either side of the perennial streams, the density figure of 33 persons per square mile more closely approximates the average circumstances along the 175 miles of streams. But even there, of course, settlement occurs in clusters interspersed by uninhabited country.

The major source of income for the Valley Bisa is employment as unskilled male labor in urban centers. As a

TABLE 2.--Population estimates of Nabwalya Chieftaincy, 1910-1963. Information abstracted from District Travelling Reports and Mpika District Notebooks.

Year	Adult Males	Adult Females	Male Children	Female Children	Total Population
1910	1519		1132		2651
1912	1596		1163		2759
1918	448	840	641	509	2438
1921	515	877	687	622	2701
1928	630	1084	703	700	3117
1934	735	1028	829	889	3481
1953	543	1340	1284	1099	4266
1963	848	1376	1696	1863	5783

consequence a high proportion of adult males (50-60%) are to be found away in urban employment at any one time. Labor migration begins early in life, and for most males much of their early adulthood is spent away from the Valley (Table 3). Of the sixty adult males I interviewed, 92% had held some job away from the valley. Only 30% of the 111 women interviewed had ever been out of the Valley, and for the most part their journeys were of only a few weeks in length. The infant mortality rate approaches 40%, concentrated mainly during the first year. But once beyond the first year, child survival is high.

TABLE 3.--Adult age structure of 12 settlements in environs of Nabwalya Village, 1967. Note the uneven sex ratio between ages 19-39.

Age	Male	Female
19-24	8	28
25-29	7	21
30-34	6	17
35-39	8	14
40-49	14	12
50-59	11	12
60+	5	7
	59	111

BISA SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

> Nali mwana wa mukulu, tekungangula. Nali ne bata bamfwele. Nali akunda. Nali kwangala kumitenge.
>
> I am the son of a great man, now don't debase me. I had a father who bore me. I was a pigeon playing on the roofs.
>
> Bisa drinking song.

Clan and Matrilineage

The Valley Bisa, in common with many neighboring tribes, are matrilineal in matters of descent, social status, inheritence, and succession. Each individual belongs to a matrilineal descent group, members of which are descendants of the same founding ancestress traced back through the oldest living member of the group. The Bisa use the term lupwa for this group which is composed of related people who have the right to inherit property from each other and to choose a successor to fill a vacant position created by the death of a member of the group. Members of this group accept responsibility for each other, and the men of the group may be expected to inherit each other's widows.

In addition, all Bisa belong to a clan (mukowa); this affiliation is inherited from one's mother (mukowa wapacifulo). But when asked the name of his clan, a MuBisa is just as likely to give the name of his father's clan, for he is also known as a "son" of this clan. He calls all

members of his father's clan "father" (bena tata) although this group is not responsible for him to the same extent as are members of his mother's clan. An individual is also linked to a group called bena sikulu (grandparents) who comprise his mother's father, father's father, and members of his grandparents' clans.

Clans are exogamous and marriage to a cross-cousin (mother's brother's daughter or father's sister's daughter) is preferred for the first marriage. To marry, a Bisa man must initially reside in his wife's village (uxorilocal), for a period of service to his in-laws is a part of the marriage contract. Gradually (and usually after producing several children), the man acquires the right to return with his wife to his natal village.

Because of the principles of matrilineality and initial matrilocal marriage, women are the core of localized descent groups and villages. The relevant grouping among the Valley Bisa is the group of sister siblings with their descendants and their uterine brother (born of the same mother) as village headman. And it is such a group of uterine sisters and their brother, who has left his village of marriage, which forms the core of Valley Bisa villages.

Each woman within these local descent groups may become the point of future cleavage or fission, eventually resulting in the formation of new villages. For as the descendents of each uterine sister increase in number

through time, the descendants of each tend to stick together. In times of social stress within a village leading to its eventual breakup, it will be these groups of siblings which withdraw and set up their own village.

Village Organization and Headmanship

As in many Central African societies, most inhabitants within a village are related in some way to their village headman. The Bisa speak of villages as belonging to particular clans--the clan of the village headman and those belonging to the same matrilineal descent group. Valley villages, for the most part, are small (mean village size 8.5 huts) and composed of close kin. Villages are named after their founding headmen, and successors to the position inherit the name of the initial headman. But by the rule of matrilineal descent, the headman's descendents belong to his wife's clan and may not succeed to his title; yet while the headman lives they are linked to the matrilineal core of the village through its headman. On the death of a headman ideally he should be succeeded by his brother, then by his maternal nephew, and finally by his maternal grandson. But succession does not always follow this pattern. As the Bisa point out, succession to headmanship is dependent also upon personal qualifications, age, and residence. Men out of the village, married matrilocally or away on migrant labor, might be passed over for someone who is resident in the village but of inferior genealogical

rank to those absent. The new headman succeeds to his predecessor's name and may inherit (ukupyani) his wives and any symbols of office such as a spear, gun or axe. In the past the new headman of some villages also succeeded to a perpetual relationship within the political hierarchy under the chief. Richards (1950) suggests that the inheritance of personal property among the Bemba and Bisa is not an important determinant of kinship sentiment among males. The possibility of succession to office and positions of authority among one's matrilineal kin seems to be an important aspiration for men.

Today, as in the past, value and prestige are attached to the headmanship of a large village. A large village is identified with its headman and he is credited with the values and understanding which are necessary to hold so many people together. But disputes crystallize about leaders of subordinate lineage sections who also aspire to leadership. As a village grows in size, segments polarize around leaders, who if their following is sufficiently large, may wish to leave the village and set up on their own. As Mitchell (1949: 94) has written:

> The village headman and the men under him are motivated by the same system of values so that in any village at any time there is a balance between the desire of certain members of that village to break away and establish units with their own dependents, and the desire of the headman to retain those people under his charge.

As has been mentioned, there are not many large villages in the corridor; yet the values deemed inherent in headmen of large villages are those which are extolled. Deceased headmen are remembered for their harmonious attributes, and when a new headman succeeds, he is commanded, "When a person makes trouble, make peace. If the dead person had not made peace, we would not still be together in a group."

Two basic principles mainly determine residency and affiliation within villages--uxorilocality and matrilineal descent. Men must leave their village to marry. Uxorilocality is the initial principle in fixing the residence of married men, and during the initial stages of marriage men must reside in their in-laws' village. Husbands marrying into a village are called bena buko, and they have few rights in their wife's village. Matrilineal descent identifies a man with his mother's clan and lineage group.

The headman is responsible for discipline and attends to small disputes. Since most residents of his village have kinship ties with the headman, he is involved closely with the struggles between groups and persons within the village. Yet it is expected that the headman will preside fairly over village problems and disputes and render impartial decisions. Rendering impartial decisions under such conditions is difficult, and the headman may assemble his neighboring headmen to listen to the discussions and to aid in decisions.

Disharmony within the village and tension between its component groups are reflected on the surface by charges of witchcraft. The role of headman is susceptible to the charge of using witchcraft techniques to acquire his desires. On the other hand, a headman believes his role makes him very vulnerable to witchcraft. Villages may change in size and composition at any time; yet radical changes in both size and composition most frequently occur when a village shifts its site or upon the succession to office of a new headman.

The headman's authority is derived mostly from his position as head of his matrilineal descent group. In this capacity he is the ritual intermediary between his living matrikin and those members of the descent group who upon death became ancestral spirits. In November or December he and other men resident in his village build spirit huts (mfuba) on the edge of the village. The headman acquires sorghum beer (ubwalwa bwa mipashi) and sorghum flour (bunga) which is then prepared by the women for the propitiation of the spirits. The headman gives these to a grandson and granddaughter of the previous headman. These grand children place the offerings within the mfuba as the headman recalls ancestral names and asks for their blessings. When the blessings come later in the form of harvest, it is the headman who performs first fruits (ukutumona) ceremonies for the whole village.

It is the headman who chooses a new site for the village. The Bisa headmen say good soil (vyonde) close to

permanent water are the most important criteria when prospecting for a new village site; yet the headman solicits ancestral help when making a choice. The headman protects his village both from wild animals and sorcerers by magical means (nshipa). He is the first one whom a kinsman consults should he fall ill. Should the headman know a cure, he will gather the prescription (muti) himself or, if not, he will approach someone else on behalf of his sick relative.

Chieftainship

The Bena Ngona are the traditional rulers among the Bisa. Until their number was reduced recently by government, the west bank of the Luangwa was populated by a number of Ngona chiefs, some of whom were subordinate to Nabwalya. The separation of the chief's clan from commoners is justified in the following myth: During their migration from the Congo two sisters paused after a rain and looked for mushrooms. The following day when the march was resumed the younger asked her older sister for some mushrooms to feed her hungry child. The older sister refused, saying that she had none, and the child died from hunger. Later the older woman stumbled and dropped the pot she was carrying. It broke, revealing a horde of mushrooms inside. She and her descendents were condemned for this selfish act which had resulted in the death of her sister's child. Her descendents are therefore called Bena Ngona Samfwi and are denied

the chieftainship. The descendents of the younger sister became the Bena Ngona, who traditionally rule LuBisa.

In the past the chief maintained a "spiritual" monopoly over the land and its products. Clansmen who approached the chief were given land upon which to settle, and the chief's village was the focal point for external trade and contact. It was the chief from whom traders, strangers, and travelers sought permission to pass through his land, hunt his game, or trade with his people. His bargaining position was enhanced economically through his rights to tribute and his control over ivory, slaves, salt, skins, and the other valuable resources within his territory. Politically the chief's position was secured by the number of his followers and through ties of kinship and alliances with neighboring chiefs. He controlled an army which he protected by special magic.

The relationship between the chief and his people was one of mutual independence, although both shared a common system of values. The people provided the chief with tribute both in work (umulaza) and in produce (umutulo), and they staffed his army and caravans. The chief provided protection, both physical and ritual, was the final arbitrator in their disputes, and dispatched those guilty of asocial crimes. In addition, the spirits of dead chiefs were believed to control the well-being and fruitfulness of the land, and these spirits could be approached only through the living chief.

Succession to the office of chieftainship is based upon matrilineal descent within the Ngona clan. Within the clan itself are smaller lineage groups within which succession becomes stabilized after a few generations. Rank is based upon close kinship to the living chief and these, of either sex, are entitled to special respect.

In time, under both colonial and independent governments, many of the traditional relationships between the chief and his people have become undermined. The chief's control over settlements was taken away by the early colonial government, which stipulated minimal village size and granted permission for village movement. Some of this authority was returned to the chiefs under Indirect Rule. The formerly important natural resources now belong to the government; ivory, lion and leopard skins should be delivered to the government boma, no longer to the chief's musumba. Tribute in labor, meat, work, and grain has been stopped. This tribute has been replaced, in the Bisa's eyes, by government taxes and by game and trade licenses. With the chief's economic position undermined, he may be no longer the wealthiest person in his territory. He receives a small stipend from the government and has become largely dependent upon government for his position and status. As a consequence, the interpendance with his people is weakened, for it is necessary for him to act upon and enforce decisions made by an alien administration

whose values and goals may not be understood or appreciated by his people.

Yet in certain aspects the Nabwalya chieftainship remains strong. The ritual surrounding his office continues, and the belief is still strong in his spiritual control over the fertility of the land and its mammals through his access to the spirits of his predecessors (see beyond). Certain large mammals, i.e. eland, lion, and elephant, traditionally associated with the chief still retain this association. Should any of these be killed by a Bisa hunter, the chief should be notified, even if he is only sent symbolic tribute.

THE ANCESTRAL CULT

> There obviously is continuity, biological and cultural, between the living and the dead. We are partly formed by the past, even the distant past. Sacrificial offerings for ancestors symbolically recognize this. Further, those who remember their dead together, and share the same dead, also of necessity emphasize their living relationships among themselves: commemoration of the ancestor is affirmation of the range of relationships he created among the living, a holding together of all those who count him important in their past. Godfrey Lienhardt (1966: 144).

The Nature of the Supreme Being

The Valley Bisa say that Muzili Mfumu (Lord of the Earth) created the world and all therein. Traditional myths relative to this creative process have now been supplanted by an indigenous interpretation of the Book of Genesis. But the Bisa maintain that upon the completion of his creative role, Muzili Mfumu withdrew and is no longer directly approachable by living men.

Muzili Mfumu is but one of the names ascribed to the Supreme Being. This name connotes both his creative and sovereign roles. The Bisa are conscious of his activities on many fronts, and his additional names refer to these other roles. In their creation myths, the sun and moon are subordinate dieties which quarreled. These quarrels led to their separation so that the sun shines during the day for men and the moon provides light at night for the animals.

The anger of God is seen in thunder (Kalumba) and his promises in the rainbow (Mukolamvula). Lesa and Mulungu are additional names of the Deity. The name Lesa is used by the Valley Bisa in pronouncing an oath or curse. To remove such a curse, one must bathe using a wild shrub, muti waku Lesa (Cassia peteriana).

Lucele Nganga, a mythical being, appears in both Bemba and Bisa tradition, but his place among supernatural beings is not clear. The Valley Bisa believe that he was tall, white, single and accompanied on his journey by a dog. His footprints, those of his dog, and impressions of his basket (lupe) and mortar are embedded in the rocks of the Muchinga range. From the direction of these prints, the Bisa surmise that he travelled from east to west. Richards (1939: 344) records Lucele Nganga as a mythical hero who taught the Bemba how to use medicine. Lucele is a synonym for the Supreme Being among the Ambo (Stefaniszyn 1964: 135).

Mulenga is a deity confined to the natural world, where he occasionally vents his wrath and kills whole herds of buffalo or other mammals. The Bisa say they know Mulenga has been active when they come upon whole herds of dead mammals. They say that these animals are healthy (fat) when killed so they must have been killed capriciously by Mulenga. A middle-aged MuBisa explained Mulenga in the following manner:

> Mulenga is a chibanda. Sometimes spirits of the dead arise from the ground and kill children. Mulenga is not such a spirit, but has been created (chiapangwafye). He moves with the air or wind. Often he moves in cold air, and when he goes there all the trees will get dry and die. Such cold air affects animals and trees but does not affect people's lives.

The rinderpest which decimated the Valley's populations of hoofed animals at the end of the last century is attributed to Mulenga, and most Bisa remember stories of this carnage from their parents. Occasionally, unexplained deaths still occur among mammals, especially buffaloes, but if they are fat, they are readily eaten by the Bisa.

The pattern which emerges from these beliefs is that the Supreme Being is an omnipotent creator but is far removed from the daily affairs of men. But the Bisa are reminded of his power and presence in the occurrence of certain natural phenomena and through their dependence upon the vagaries of climate.

The Spirits of Ancestors

Muzili Mfumu, the creator and controller of the universe, is approachable only through the ancestral cult. Such aloofness and disjunction is consistent with Bisa behavior toward clan strangers. The spirits of one's ancestors are considered to reside with Muzili Mfumu and, in their capacity as spirits, are capable of influencing him to product circumstances favorable to their living descendants. Thus, when a MuBisa seeks supernatural aid from

Muzili Mfumu, his petition is directed to his ancestors, who in turn will approach Muzili Mfumu. This hierarchy is not necessarily expressed in all Bisa rites. In some instances, it would appear that the ancestral spirits themselves are capable of granting certain requests rather than serving only in an intermediary capacity.

Ancestral spirits form an extension of the Bisa social structure and are believed to interact continuously with their living descendants. But as Marwick (1965: 65) points out, the term ancestor as applicable for a matrilineal society needs to be clarified. Within a matrilineal society one is not concerned for the most part with lateral but, rather with collateral ancestry. A man's closest and most influential ancestral ties are with his senior collateral kin, such as his mother's brother or mother's mother's brother. On occasion he may also address his father's spirits, for such spirits are regarded as benevolent though less influential.

An individual before undertaking a severe journey or making a difficult decision may invoke the spirits of both his deceased mother and father. Thus, a headman of a new village, which he had founded, called upon ancestral help with the following words:

> Bata (name), Bama (name), musalisha. Napapata imwe mupashi yanji. Mwamona mpano apo naikele. Ndokwenda vye umutende.
>
> Spirits of my father and mother, I surrender to you. I beseech you, my spirits. You see me here where I stand. May I live a healthy life.

But in a corporate ceremony the headman of a village which has endured for two or more generations calls only upon the spirits of his deceased predecessors who had also been headmen. Such a ceremony is performed on the edge of the village each November or December. Here the men clear an area and construct a small spirit hut (mfuba). In the ground beneath the straw roof a hole is dug for each deceased leader of the matrilineage. The women brew beer (bwalwa bwamipashi) and grind sorghum flour (bunga) as an offering. Then the village headman as titulary head of the matrilineage calls upon each ancestor by name in the following manner:

> Ba (ancestral name), muleefwaya ubwalwa? Nabikamo ubunga nobwalwa. Muleefwaya nsaka? Twaimaka. Tuamubikila akasalu akabuta.
>
> Ancestral name, do you want beer? I have placed both flour and beer. Do you wish a shelter? We made one. We put a white cloth on top.

The beer and flour are poured into the hole by a grandson and granddaughter, respectively. Offerings by grandchildren are in keeping with Bisa traditions of amiable relations between alternate generations. In these corporate ceremonies only spirits of one's matrilineage are invoked.

The Bisa distinguish two kinds of spirits, chibanda and mupashi. Chibanda is an evil, troublesome and haunting spirit, whereas, all good and benevolent events are believed caused by the action of the mupashi (plural mipashi). Affliction may be caused by good spirits, but these relent when

ancestral names have been remembered and an offering of beer and flour dedicated to them. An elderly MuBisa distinguished between the two spirits with the following:

> You can tell whether this is a mupashi or a chibanda when a person becomes sick. You go to a diviner and ask him to tell you frankly the cause of the sickness. So after using all sorts of magical powers, the diviner comes back and says, 'It is that father or mother or maternal uncle or grandmother or your brother who died but to whose name beer has never been brewed in remembrance of his good works.' Now when people come and brew beer they do so in remembrance of that particular person whose name was given by the diviner. Then the people say [probably the village headman], 'This beer we have brewed in remembrance of your good name. Here it is. We worship your name so help us.' If the sick person recovers, it is said that he was afflicted by a good spirit (mupashi uusuma). But if the sick person does not recover when the offering is poured, we know that he is afflicted by a chibanda.

Other informants said that a person may be afflicted by a mupashi or chibanda dependent upon how he felt. A cantankerous, unpeaceful person was assumed to be under the influence of a chibanda. The Bisa believe that if a person dies feeling an injustice, his shade will be revengeful and haunting and may not afflict only his relatives. Bisa funeral rites are not elaborate, but any wish of the deceased, expressed in words either before death or through dreams after death,should be fulfilled. The brewing of funeral beer, bwalwa bwa chililo, made in remembrance of the deceased follows his burial,and all adults who knew the deceased well are invited to partake of this beer. Bwalwa bwa bupwanyi, inheritance beer, is brewed and consumed only by the family

of the deceased. At this time, a new person assumes the deceased's role among his matrikin. In such a series of rites the Bisa hope to secure the good will of the deceased's spirit.

Ancestral spirits normally manifest their interests and concerns negatively. Shades cause affliction for two reasons: (1) neglect in performance of obligations owed the spirits, and (2) default of kinship obligations. The spirits are entitled to receive offerings and sacrifice both before and after each year's harvest. In passing on a gun or spear the assembled matrikin should invoke its previous owner's name to secure his blessing and help for the one assuming his social position.

A young hunter recalled the inheritance of his maternal grandfather's muzzle-loading gun with the following words:

> In my clan my gun was my grandfather's (mother's mother's brother). When he died, it was given me by my grandmother (mother's mother). The older clan people met together and said that I was a fit boy to feed them as my grandfather had done in the past. They collected white beads (bulungu bwabuta) and sorghum flour (bunga). They mentioned the various ancestral hunters in the clan saying,
>
> 'Nimwe bene bamfuti, tatupele umbi iyoo. Twapela umuisikulu wenu. Vyonse ivyo mwalichita kumfuti vise pali uyu. Kumutanjilila kuntanzi kuwakoya kuswete kube imilopa yanama nimwe bene bakuita inama. (Name of mother's mother's brother), twamupa mfuti mutanjilileni. Nintunlulu ubusweshi kuntanzi twapwa. Twakubapo ubunga pacifuba chakwe.'
>
> (You the owners of this gun, we are not giving it to another. We give it to your grandson. All which you were able to accomplish with this gun may it be the same with its new user. Go before him [in the bush] when he goes. May red be the

> animal's blood which you have called. (Name of mother's mother's brother),we give him the gun, go before him. May we hear the shrill (of the light-skinned one) in the future. We spit flour on his chest).
>
> Then my grandmother mixed some flour and water and spat on my chest while invoking the spirit of my maternal grandfather to help me. Meanwhile the others present yelled moving their tongues from side to side (ntungulu). The gun was then given to me.

In this manner, the gun was placed in the custody of a grandson, but what was significant in the rite was that the individual had inherited not only a weapon but also the position as a responsible hunter for his non-hunting matrilineal relatives. In his capacity as hunter, it is assumed that ancestors protect him while he is afield and enable him to kill game. In turn, it is expected that upon his return to the village he will equally distribute his kill to those dependent upon his skill. Failure in his obligations toward kin is believed to be reflected in the hunter's lack of success in the bush. Lack of success is thought to be caused by the withdrawal of ancestral aid. In this case, the gun was placed in the hands of a custodian, but every related male could use the weapon by requesting permission from its custodian. It is through such social institutions as inheritance that the living incur tangible debts to their forebears (Goody, 1962).

The second type of ancestral affliction is wrought upon those who fail in their performance of kinship obligations. Their affliction for the most part is reserved for

individual acts which deny the validity of kinship:

> It is difficult to state in general terms what the role of ancestral-spirits is in safeguarding kinship norms. They are not always directly concerned with the immediate fulfillment of each duty owed to a particular kinsman. Their wrath seems to be provoked rather by actions which deny the validity of kinship itself, as establishing a network of mutual rights and duties between the ancestors' descendants. These rights and duties depend mainly on recognition of the superiority of elders of various kinds, since they represent among the living the power of the ancestors, whom they will in due course join. They alone can approach the ancestors on behalf of their junior dependents. Hence an ancestral spirit is divined as the cause of misfortune when some descendant acts so as to deny his dependence on his senior kinsman. Among the living, this belief appears in the powerful effects of a curse by such kinsman (Gluckman, 1965: 277).

Gluckman (1965) also suggests that ancestral cults control relationships between kin in another manner. Offerings and sacrifices must be made only when amicable relations exist between assembled kin. For to propitiate spirits in times of social stress and disharmony is to spoil the sacrifice and endanger those assembled. Such beliefs mean that until minor groups are sufficiently independent to seek ancestral aid, they must maintain sufficiently amiable rapport with other members of the group. Yet, the ancestral cult and its attendant rites do not obscure all social conflict. Social conflicts in avowed principles remain, but the validity of those principles governing social organization is elevated to a "mystical plane where they are beyond question" (Gluckman, 1965).

In addition to the above, the Bisa believe that certain individuals may become spirit-possessed and while possessed are capable of forecasting events or dispensing medicines to others. I heard the Bisa refer to such individuals as chipao and ngulu, although both the White Father's Dictionary and Richards (1939: 358) restrict the term ngulu to secondary divinities which inhabit specific natural objects or areas. Spirit-possession takes place in late evening, and catharsis is accompanied by loud drum beating and dancing.

The Spirits of Chiefs

An Ngona chief is still described as having a "great spirit" (mupashi mukulu) and as "owner of the land" (mwine cialo). The spirits of dead chiefs are believed to survive as a guardian presence over their successor to the chieftaincy and to become tutelary deities over the land. In these capacities they control the fertility of crops and animals. Before the crops are planted, the men resident in the villages around that of the chief build small spirit huts (mfuba) near the chief's village. Members of the chief's clan brew a special beer, grind flour gathered from surrounding villages and present these to the spirits of the dead chiefs. Small holes are dug in the ground beneath the roofs of the spirit huts to represent each of the guardian spirits. And while the chief appeals to each ancestor by name, offerings of beer and flour are placed in designated holes by a classificatory grandson and granddaughter of the dead chiefs.

Spirits of dead chiefs are believed to be capable of reincarnation as lions (kupakishya mfumu). Lion claws and teeth placed in a chief's grave are vishimba(activating particles) necessary for this transformation. In 1966, culminating many years of bitter fighting within his clan on the Munyamadzi, the chief built a new musumba some eight miles away on the Mupamadzi. A few months after the chief withdrew from his traditional site, a pride of lions troubled the Bisa then living in mitanda (field huts) along the Munyamadzi. These Bisa returned to their villages for protection and summoned the chief back from the Mupamadzi. The chief addressed his spirits at the mfuba, which had been erected earlier for the rain ceremony, with the following words:

> Namona mwe bene bachialo. Ndi nakumusungila icialo chienu. Ndi naukuya kupapatile munfuba nzenu twamuimakila. Ngamuli nimwe muikekalo pansi uko mualala. Abantu imibili ikofina. Mukobatinya mu cialo chienu, tabakosanguluka.
>
> (I see you the owners of the land. I have to keep your land. I will be worshipping in your mfuba that we built for you. If it is you, sit down where you have slept (where you were buried). People are going heavily with fear. You are frightening them in your land. They are not going happily).

Shortly after this address the lions left the area. It was said that these "spiritual" lions were protesting the deteriorating relationships between the chief, his relatives, and people along the Munyamadzi.

The chief is still believed to control access to game mammals inhabiting his territory. Cialo cikokalipa

(the land has become angry [hot]) was an expression heard on several occasions in reference to the difficulty encountered by government officials or others who attempted to secure game without first requesting permission from the chief. Its reference is that ancestral spirits have become angry and have withheld game from those who deny the sovereignity of the chief over these animals.

CLASSIFICATION OF SPECIES IN THE NATURAL WORLD

> Every ordered society necessarily classes not only its human members, but also the objects and creatures of nature, sometimes according to their external form, sometimes according to their dominant psychic characteristic, or sometimes according to their utility as food, in agriculture or in industry, or for the producer or consumer . . . A. Van Gennep,(1920).

Village and Bush Dichotomy

Heretofore I have described the main features of Bisa social life and the interactions between the Bisa and the spirits of their ancestors. Theoretically, one could make a distinction between the living and the deceased or spirits, but it would prove a difficult dichotomy to maintain in practice. For the Bisa, ancestral spirits are concerned with and active in their descendants' daily lives; these spirits manifest themselves positively through dreams, omens, and health, and negatively through sickness and affliction. It is for this reason that I described lineage ancestors as an extension of their survivors' social system. A more apparent dichotomy,from the standpoint of Bisa classification and expression in ritual,is that between humans and animals and the different spheres which they inhabit.

I have alluded already to these separate spheres in Bisa creation myths whereby quarrels between the sun and

moon led to their separation. The brighter sun shines in the day for humans while the moon shines at night for the animals. Mulenga, a deity, is restricted to the animals. People live in villages (mizi), whereas animals live in the bush (chonde). In villages people live orderly lives under the protection of headmen and their magic (nshipa). This magic is buried in the center of the village, and small sections are distributed around the circumference of the village.

The bush is metaphorically the antithesis of the village. It is not just the haunts of wild animals; evil spirits (fibanda), dangerous mammals (fiswango), and sorcerers (balozi) lurk there to snare unsuspecting and unprotected humans. But these two worlds are not totally independent, for most animals, according to the Bisa, exist to be the prey of hunters. Hunters pursue their quarry in the bush and normally are protected from harm by magic and by their ancestral spirits. Should it be necessary to spend the night in the bush, they must protect their temporary encampment by magic. And while the hunter is afield his kin should not quarrel or fight, and his wife should remain faithful, for disturbance or disorder among kin is believed not only to endanger the hunter but also to make the village vulnerable to the evils of the bush.

Sorcerers in many ways operate in a manner reverse to that of hunters. They have turned their backs on

village life and kinsmen and reside in the bush. Here they associate with dangerous animals and return to villages at night to cause sickness or death. Sorcerers may also send their animal associates to harm people or to rob them of grain or chickens. But their influence is felt only should ancestral protection be withdrawn as a result of quarrels or neglect of kin.

So within the confines of villages live men, women and their dependents, their domestic stock--chiefly chickens, pigeons, and dogs--and a host of other animals such as rats, mice, and several birds which have anomalously forsaken the bush. Normally these latter animals are not eaten as food. Within the bush dwell the natural prey of hunters and a host of malevolent beings ready to cause misfortune should "normal" relations break down among village residents. In this section I shall describe attributes of mammals and Bisa classification of mammals, birds, and plants.

Attributes of Mammals

Each herd of mammals is believed to be under the control of a leader or guide (ntungulushi or chilongozi). This individual mammal is usually the biggest in body size and hoofprint and is usually in front leading the rest.

> The ntungulushi has to lead its fellow animals where there is good grazing. When it goes ahead, the others must follow. When it feels that it must go or should go, it leads the others and shows them where to sleep. The ntungulushi are

> very difficult for hunters to kill, and if one happens to kill such a leader when a herd is raiding crops, it will be a long time before the rest of the animals of that herd will come back to raid those same crops. This is because there hasn't come again another leader to replace their dead one.

Implicit in these comments is that such large, powerful leaders possess medicine. Some old mammals possess more powerful medicines (changa) than hunters and for this reason are able to escape predation by lions and hunters. Elephants and warthogs, which are known to dig frequently in the ground for roots, are said to be looking for medicines against their predators. Lions and other large carnivores are understood to have powerful hunting medicines (muti wabufundi).

> The lion is the best of all in searching for medicines to help it catch animals. We suspect it to have hunting medicines because when it catches an animal it first opens the abdomen and picks out the kafisa (one of the several parts of an ungulate's stomach--said to have many 'pages' like a book). The qualities of this medicine are known only to the lion. Then it digs a hole and buries the kafisa before it comes back to feed on the carcass. I have seen this (behavior) many times--also the hole and the contents.

Mammals have their protective spirits (mipashi) but these spirits are not as powerful as those possessed by humans. An informant told me that he could not differentiate between the spirit of an animal and that of a person as both were created by Lesa. He continued:

> I have never seen mfuba shanama (animal spirit huts) but I suspect they must have these spirit huts because when they are shot and the hunter is certain that the shot is in a good place on the animal it may go away. The next time the hunter sees that very same animal he will find that the

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> wound has healed, and he knows that the animal must have been worshipping at its mfuba. . . . Certainly they are not houses or huts like people have. One expects them to have mfuba by looking at where they eat and play. Oftentimes I have seen where an animal has dug into a certain anthill. This has been a small anthill only, and one wonders what it is doing. This must have been his mfuba. Again one finds areas where impala like to play and where other animals such as elephants congregate and the ground is bare of grass. Then one wonders why these animals come to this particular place. Such places are not areas which attract animals because salt is found there.

Some younger hunters were clear in their assertions that animals did have their own specific mfuba areas, but of more concern to all Bisa was that all mammals had fibanda (evil shades) which were capable of afflicting the hunter and his relatives should not the proper ritual be performed. Such fibanda were described in the following manner:

> They have very nasty fibanda. There are many people who have short tempers. Some animals have such tempers also. They have bad hearts and are easily made wild. When you shoot one of these dangerous animals (i.e. elephant, lion, or eland), you must get the medicine from an experienced hunter who has previously killed such an animal.

All mammals have fibanda (evil spirits or shades) which are capable of reacting against the hunter. These mammalian shades are ranked according to their believed power; shades of antbear, eland, lion, wild dog, and elephant are potentially more dangerous than those possessed by other mammals. The consequences for not obtaining medicines, should a hunter kill one of these mammals having powerful fibanda, is death to the hunter or within his family and

clan. The fibanda of lesser ranked mammals may enter the hunter's gun and render it impure (kuikata mfuti).

The elephant, because of its size in relation to other mammals, is figuratively called the "mother of all mammals." The python stands in the same relation to all snakes. An elderly MuBisa whom I was pressing for a reason why magic could not be used to keep elephants from raiding their fields rationalized as follows:

> Medicine (muti) can't stop elephants. The elephant is wonderfully made. Its body is a mixture of all animals. The muscles in its neck (indicating with his hand the area on his skull behind the ears) are made of the same substances as impala, zebra, and all other animals. All fibanda are in the elephant. People used to call the elephant zimwe-zimwe--the most powerful and biggest of all mammals.
> The elephant is like a python (lusato), the'mother' of all snakes. The python when it bears young, bears them alive. It produces cobra, lusato, and all other snakes. The poison of all snakes is in the python. If one is bitten by a python and lives, he can be protected from all other snakes. The elephant is the biggest animal in the whole country. It is all-powerful. You cannot make medicine against it.

I became intrigued by some of the attributes ascribed to mammals. It seemed as though the attributes ascribed to these were not so different from those ascribed to men, so I inquired further.

> Q. What is the difference between people and animals? We know of the similarities but what are some critical differences?
>
> A. Pantu inama tayakwata inanda,pantu bantu balikwata inenda. Makambi inama tezisalakupa. Ziupaupa vwe. Pantu bantu balasala ukupa mukazi ne mulume babidi. Inama tezisala, ziupa nanyina. Bantu tebopa nyina. Inama teikwete nsoni. Ee mulandu tuapusana ne nama.

> Because animals do not have houses as people do. Also animals are not selective in their matings. They have intercourse with any other animal whereas people select man and wife together. Animals do not do this; they may have intercourse with their own mothers; people do not do this. Animals do not have shame. These are the ways in which we differ from animals.

Classification of Mammals

In discussing mammals and their groupings the Valley Bisa employ the same terms by which they differentiate among humans. Mutundu is the common word for tribe; it is also employed in reference to natural species. For example, elephant, buffalo, impala, and warthog all belong to different mitundu. Lupwa, meaning family or matrilineal descent group in reference to humans, may also imply a group of adult mammals with offspring. I heard several Bisa refer to a herd of cow and calf elephants as zilibumba. A village headman used mbumba in reference to his sorority group of female dependents (cf. Marwick, 1954; Stefaniszyn, 1964). Kasanje and mulongo may be used interchangeably in reference to groups of animals or men.

Each species of large mammal has its own specific name (Table 4). In addition, some mammals are further differentiated by size and sex categories. Largeness is a characteristic stressed in such a classification and is synonymous with "maleness" if the species shows obvious secondary sexual characteristics. Additional terms may be employed to distinguish age in most species: kana

TABLE 4.--Differentiation within species among large mammals. No hierarchical ranking suggested by the order in which names are given.

Bisa Name	English Equivalent
Nsofu	elephant
Nkungulu	large male elephant
Nyinansofu	female elephant
Chilumelume	small male elephant; term used for small elephant which wanders alone
Kanyinansofu	diminuitive class, small female elephant
Nyungwa	elephant without tusks, considered very dangerous
Chikwembe	elephant with one tusk
Sante	elephant with four tusks
Chipembele	rhinoceros
Bukodi	large rhino of either sex
Mboo	buffalo
Kakuli	large male buffalo
Nyinangombe	female buffalo
Nsefu	eland
Bulundwe	large male eland
Mpulupulu	kudu
Magobede	large male kudu
Nyinampulupulu	female kudu

TABLE 4.--Continued.

Bisa Name	English Equivalent
Chuswe	waterbuck
Chipangala	large male waterbuck
Chimbwete (Cholwa)	zebra of either sex. No sexual differentiation although in certain cases mulume cholwa (large male zebra) or cholwa mwanakazi (female) may be used.
Impala	impala
Kakonje	large male impala
Namavwamba	female impala
Munjili	warthog
Chembelume	large male warthog
Litunta	young warthog of either sex
Chikwiba (Chisongo)	bushbuck
Mambi	male bushbuck
Nsebula	puku
Kapempe	male puku
Ndiabuluba	giraffe, no sexual differentiation except Ndiabuluba yanalume (male) and Ndiabuluba yanakazi (female).
Mvubu	hippopotamus
Chipandwe	large hippo of either sex

TABLE 4.--Continued.

Bisa Name	English Equivalent
Nyumbu	wildebeest
Munpangwe	large wildebeest of either sex
Nkonzi	Lichtenstein's hartebeest
Chinkovbanya	large hartebeest of either sex
Mpelembe	roan antelope
Iloko	large roan of either sex
Impombo	common duiker, sexes may be indicated by use of modifying terms
Katidi	Sharpe's grysbok, sexes may be indicated with modifying terms
Kolwe	baboon
Tumbidi	large male baboon
Chibuli	honey badger
Chizenga	large male honey badger
Ngulube	bushpig
Chilondwe	large bushpig of either sex
Nkalamo	lion
Mundu	large male lion
Nyinankalamo	lioness

TABLE 4.--Continued.

Bisa Name	English Equivalent
Ngoo	leopard
Lunda	large leopard of either sex
Chimbwi	hyaena
Chindingo	large hyaena of either sex
Mumbulu	hunting dog
Kamutu	adult hunting dog of either sex
Mumbwe	jackel
Ngwena	crocodile
Ngandu	large male crocodile
Ipungwe	small crocodile
Nengo (Mpendwa)	antbear

(i.e. kana kakuchimbwete--young zebra; kana kampala--young impala); chilume-lume (refers to most, if not all young males); and mukote--very old mammal (i.e. nsefu yanakazi mukote--old female eland).

Beyond this specific classification, the Bisa recognize certain mammals as sharing certain common characteristics. Chiswango (chipondo) refers abstractly to any wild mammal or reptile capable of harming or killing human beings. Normally elephants, hippos, buffaloes, lions, leopards, venomous snakes, and crocodiles are referred to by this term; though the term may be extended to include an individual hyena, wild dog, rhino, or other wild animal which has killed a human being. Chiswango also describes a person who either accidentally or purposely kills another human. Dangerous mammals are never addressed by their specific names should they be encountered in the bush and should it be necessary to frighten them from one's path. Otherwise, I was told, the mammal's chibanda might realize it was being summoned and attack rather than flee.

Mammals are classified by size. Namakulu refers to large mammals such as elephant, buffalo, rhino, eland, zebra, lion, hippo, and giraffe. Most antelopes are called namapele. Smaller mammals like the bushbaby (changa), mopani squirrel (kasidiye), mongoose (munzulu), rats and mice (bakoswe) are collectively called tunama tunini.

Apparently the Bisa primarily classify mammals according to color. As among many of the Central African tribes,

the Bisa color scheme is based upon a triad of primary colors--red, black, and white (see Turner, 1965). Inama ziasweta, literally "red animals," includes the tawny or khaki mammals such as impala, lion, puku, roan, hartebeest, and others. The roan is placed in this category because it is wabuta kanwa (white about the mouth). This group also includes the hippo (swetulukila--red-like). Black mammals, inama ziafita, form another group which includes the buffalo, rhino, elephant, jackel, antbear, warthog, and waterbuck. Occasionally white or albinistic forms of these species are encountered by hunters. Such mammals are considered as mipashi--protective spirits which guard the herds with which they run. Several hunters confided that they had encountered albino buffalo, impala, and waterbuck, and that they had considered it impossible to kill an animal from its herd. Other "mythical" animals, described as red or white, are believed to associate with and to protect large herds of buffalo from hunters.

All other mammals which have two or more distinctive colors on their pelage are grouped together and called vizemba. Included in this category are zebra, leopard, wild cat, bushbuck, kudu, eland, wild dog, striped polecat, and giraffe. Most mammals of this class are considered inedible; yet those few which are palatable (eland, kudu, bushbuck, and zebra) are prohibited to certain individual Bisa (see next section). Giraffe are found only

occasionally as far north in the Valley as the Munyamadzi River.

Not every MuBisa is equally knowledgeable about all types of mammalian classification. My list was compiled mainly from hunters whom I felt would be primarily concerned with such classification. Whiteley (1966) suggests that there is variability which is inherent in classificatory schemes solicited from non-specialists. The White Fathers' Dictionary of Bemba mentions an additional category nama nsako (hairy animals) as encompassing all animals eaten by the "natives." I never encountered this classificatory term used,although I made inquiries about other criteria such as animals with claws, horns, etc. One casting a spell over an antbear's lair addresses the animal as "kanama liamala"--small animal with claws--but I did not encounter the criterion of claws employed in ranking or classifying mammals.

Classification of Birds

Birds are sorted in a manner similar to mammals with respect to size and color. In addition, a number of birds have specific names which may refer to obvious habits, calls, or other associated activities (cf. Brelsford, 1945 for Bemba bird lore). But I did not notice that the same classification system for birds was as precise as that of mammals. Lories and go-away birds, although strikingly different in plumage, both are called kuwe, an

onomatopoeic reference to their calls. Cuckoos and cuckoo-shrikes, which appear just before the rains, are called luitamvula (callers of rain). Both the sacred and glossy ibis were called munganga after their distinct calls. The cordon-bleu and firefinch both were called pwiti, although both were recognized as two different species (mitundu). Birds feature prominently in Bisa lore and omens.

A small black and white bird, the African pied wagtail (Motacilla aguimp), designated the chief of small birds (mfumu yatuni), has forsaken the bush for residence among people. A Bisa tale, given below in free English translation, relates why:

> Several animals went to Muzili Mfumu to ask for favors. The dog came and asked for added height so it could reach heights where people usually stored their meat (munani). The hyena requested more strength to enable it to break bones and get into chicken coops and have access into kraals where people's livestock was kept. The lion wished for more offspring.
>
> Muzili Mfumu was considering granting these requests when a wagtail appeared on the scene. The wagtail reminded Muzili Mfumu that if the dog's request was granted his people would have no meat. If the hyena's request was granted his people would be unable to have any domestic stock and would live in terror at night for hyenas would be able to enter their dwellings. More lions in the bush would mean that his people would have to stay in the village all the time.
>
> Muzili Mfumu then recognized the intents for these requests from the dog, hyena, and lion and dismissed them from his court. But since that time the wagtail has never been able to survive in the forest. It is always found in the villages or their proximity, and for its concern in protecting human interests, it is never harmed.

Having a wagtail resident in a village is considered a good omen,and it should never be harmed. In the past,

if it were snared per chance by children, it had to be buried with white beads around its legs. Otherwise, it might curse the village. Omens associated with the sightings of certain birds are given in the next section.

Classification of Plants

The Bisa say Lesa named all the trees and shrubs and told these names and their properties to their ancestors. Individuals learn plant names from their parents or older people whom they accompany into the bush. Plants, they say, are distinguished by aspect, shape of leaves, or color and shape of flowers and fruits. Yet while some names of plants are widely known, knowledge of their specific properties and uses is restricted to a few elders or specialists in magic (nganga).

Muti, the Bisa term for tree is also the term for magic or medicine. Some plants have important names (likulu ishina) such as musambamfwa (cleansing of the dead), muti waku Lesa (tree of God) and others (see Table 6). The nature of latent powers residing in trees or herbs in some cases is attributable to the color of their bark, roots, or fruits, but possibly there are other symbolic connotations as well.

Young trees and shrubs are called collectively lumpukuza, but all mature trees are referred to by specific names. Mopani (Colophospermum mopane) is differentiated into two classes--mopani mamba and mopani mumana on the

basis of bark quality. Only the latter has pliable bark suitable for use as rope (luzizi).

Plants are grouped by the Bisa into associations or communities which are definable in terms of soil and dominant species compositions. In most cases, these associations would be recognizable as discrete units or communities by plant ecologists. These associations are ilambo (mopani woodland), chizanze (riverine savanna), chibenzela (grassland), chunga (seasonally water-logged ground with characteristic grasses), and lusaka (thicket composed of particular species).

BISA USE OF CERTAIN RESOURCES

> Although the Ndembu, like many other simple societies, may be said to have "an otiose God" nevertheless that God may be considered active in so far as from him stream unceasingly the three principles of being that are symbolized and given visible form in the white-red-black triad. Evidences of these principles or powers are held by Ndembu to be scattered throughout Nature in objects of those colors, such as trees with red or white gum, bark or roots, others with white or black fruit, white kaolin clay or red oxidized earth, black alluvial mud, charcoal, the white sun and moon, the black night, the redness of blood, the whiteness of milk, the dark colour of faeces. Animals and birds acquire ritual significance because their feathers or hides are of these hues. Victor W. Turner (1966: 57-58).

Soil and Plants

The complete uses to which resources are put by the Bisa are beyond the scope of the present dissertation. De Schlippe (1956) has detailed the complexity inherent in describing the agricultural system of the Zande in the Sudan, and I hope elsewhere later to describe in detail both the Valley Bisa system of agriculture and their use of vegetation. Regarding their agricultural system, suffice it to mention that they plant their crops on rich alluvium, which may retain its fertility for ten or more years. By comparison, the Bisa and Bemba living on the Plateau do not possess soil of such fertility; as a consequence, they must continuously clear new land each

year and augment its fertility with ashes of branches and leaves from lopped trees. The Valley Bisa realize that the fertility of their land is derived primarily from the deposition in the Valley of eroded soil elements from the Plateau; and if now they reside in the Valley rather than on the Plateau this is a fortunate circumstance due largely to the benevolence and foresight of their ancestors. And it is for fear that their ancestral (supernatural) aid will be withdrawn that most Bisa ascribe their resistance to recent government attempts to resettle them elsewhere.

Bisa craftsmen know the physical properties of most trees and accordingly select different trees for construction of their houses, granaries, drums, sorghum mortar and pestles, hoe handles, gunstocks, etc. An offering is made at the base of a tall tree before it is chopped down for shaping into a canoe. The canoe is given a clan name before it is launched on a river. It is considered women's work to select vegetables, grass, and firewood, while the selection of trees used in construction of houses, granaries, hoe handles, etc. is left to the men.

Shrubs and herbs are used for a variety of medicinal purposes, and knowledge of their properties and patterns of use belongs mainly to adult men. Knowledge of the types of shrubs, roots, and herbs used to remedy common ailments such as diarrhea and other stomach diseases, goiter, eye sores, etc., is for the most part, personal

lore which is not necessarily systematized. But more esoteric lore, involving cures from sicknesses believed caused by possession or affliction, is known only to specialists (nganga) who demand payment (nsomo) for revealing the curative substances. The following medicine (muti wakusatamuka) prescribed for a person suffering from haunting dreams,reveals some of the therapeutic attributes ascribed to some plants:

> Take the bark (amapapa) of Munga wa fita (black thorn tree--Acacia sp.) and the roots of Munga wa buta (white thorn tree-Acacia sieberana) and place these together with water in a small earthen pot (nongo). Then take a small plant lwenya (unidentified). It is a green herb which smells very strong. This is also put into the pot. When the person is fast asleep about midnight, you wake the afflicted one by dripping cold water on him from the branches of the lwenya. When the patient wakes up from feeling the cold water on his body, then he should be taken and washed all over with the cold water in the pot. This application is repeated several evenings in succession until the chibanda leaves the patient.
>
> Explanation: A person troubled by haunting dreams is believed possessed by a chibanda (or evil shade), and is said to be "hot." The chibanda afflicting him is black. Whiteness is the color of mipashi (good spirits) and when brought together with blackness neutralizes it and drives it away from the person. The lwenya herb smells strong and forces the chibanda to leave the patient quickly.

Prohibitions on Consumption of Certain Meats

Not all types of meat are consumed by every Bisa; certain individuals regularly abstain from eating one or more types of relish. Of course, there are several mammals (lion, rabbit, hyena, etc) which all Bisa normally avoid.

But most Bisa consume the flesh of most animals listed in Table 5 (with the exception of the hippo). None of these food prohibitions were related to specific groups or sexes (except the chief) as is the case in some societies (pregnant women and certain cults among the Lele, cf. Douglas, 1957). For the most part, these food prohibitions were imposed by African doctors (nganga) who made the cure of a patient conditional upon the avoidance of certain foods. A few individuals,too,instituted their own prohibitions of certain meats because of some personal association with the animal. Thus, one elderly woman refused to eat buffalo meat because her father had been killed by that mammal.

Of those mammals listed in Table 5, the flesh of hippo is the most generally avoided as a relish today. Yet, Lacerda (Burton, 1873) in 1798 encountered Bisa hippo hunters along the Luangwa and commented that "All the caffres of these lands and, as far as I see, of Inner Africa generally, prize the flesh, and the more tainted it is the better they like it." Later,in 1831 Gamitto (trans. 1960) also visited a camp of hippo hunters on the Luangwa River, and the Bisa were prominent in this group. Several elderly Bisa men recalled that their parents ate hippo and some of these men still eat hippo meat. But today most Bisa refuse hippo. Reasons are stated in terms of "fear of leprosy," "our parents didn't eat it," or "it lives in the water."

TABLE 5.--Some food prohibitions among adult Valley Bisa. Total respondants in 12 villages: male 62, female 91.

Mammal flesh	Males	% Sample	Females	% Sample
Hippo	56	90	91	100
Baboon[1]	27	44	34	37
Zebra*	11	18	19	21
Bushbuck*	6	10	4	4
Eland*	2	3	3	3
Elephant	2	3	1	1
Warthog	2	3	-	-
Other large mammals	3	4	5	6
Fowl				
Chicken	1	2	6	7
Fish				
Kaponta (cat fish)*	5	8	13	14
Mbubu*	2	3	3	3
Other fish	1	1	2	2

[1]Most Bisa today refuse baboon, so this figure should show a much higher percentage of refusal. The importance attached to baboons is not as significant as that for hippo and vizemba animals.

*Vizemba: animals with two or more prominent colors on body (see text).

Several independent observations reinforce my evidence that Bisa refusal of hippo meat is genuine. A reliable informant confided that in 1963 he had helped his village headman dislodge a hippo carcass back into the Munyamadzi River. This animal had been mistaken in his field for a buffalo during the black of night, and he had killed it as it climbed the river bank. During our residence at Nabwalya, a dead hippo washed up on a sand bank in the Munyamadzi, but its meat was not consumed by any Bisa residents. Instead, they sent for the Bemba schoolteachers and ridiculed them as they salvaged meat from the rotting carcass. Outsiders who eat hippo are the objects of social ridicule, as is illustrated in the following account by a Mambwe schoolteacher resident at Nabwalya:

> A report came to me that the male hippopotamus had been shot dead by the headman in his garden near his house store. I went there with my fellow teachers to see the animal and collect the meat. When we arrived at the headman's house, we saw the dead hippo just near the store some ten yards from the headman's sleeping room. We told the headman to let his village men cut well the meat so that we should have our share. The men and women who had collected there to see the hippo laughed at us when they heard that we wanted its meat very much. Because many of the Bisa people do not eat hippo meat traditionally, and they believe that the person who had suffered from leprosy for a long time and was living a lonely life in the bush died and was buried but was later on found floating with mats on the back on the water of a certain river. And they went to the place where they had buried this person but didn't get or find any body in the grave. After some weeks they saw a young hippo swimming near the mat in which the dead body was rolled and the dead body was not there. So the Bisa

> people concluded to believe that the people who suffer from leprosy turn themselves into hippo after death and that whoever would eat hippo's meat could suffer from the same horrible disease. We teachers had our share of its meat. We didn't pay attention to their laughter. We are eating the meat very well, and we like it very much. Chief Nabwalya too sent word that he should also be sent some meat, and certainly much of it was sent to him and he enjoyed it.

That more is at issue than fear of leprosy is suggested by the chief's observation that his people eat hippo during famine:

> When there was famine we killed and ate hippo and there is no reason for not eating it now. The Europeans stopped the people from killing hippo and now the people aren't interested in killing and eating it anymore.
>
> Question: What about the connection between hippos and lepers?
>
> Answer: Lies! When there was famine, the people ate hippo. In the dry season they ate fresh meat of hippo, and in the rains they ate the dried skin. It is very thick skin and the people had to soak it and roast and cook it.

A possible explanation for the avoidance of hippo meat by most Valley Bisa is that when the Bisa settled in the Luangwa Valley they had few guns. And with their limited weaponry of bows and arrows, weighted spears, and pits it was necessary for many men to cooperate in order to kill large mammals and certain of the smaller ones. During this time several specialized guilds of hunters existed. There were different guilds of elephant hunters (bakalongwe wansofu, bashimunini,bamutemakwanga, and bafundi), hippo hunters, antbear hunters (baima mitango)

and other more loosely organized groups which cooperated in game drives. All of these organized hunters possessed specialized medicines to enhance their success. Hippos, with their amphibious habits and the limited number of deep wallows during the dry season, were probably easy prey for organized guilds.

When Europeans established their control over the territory, hippo populations were at low levels and undoubtedly some Europeans attempted to arrest hippo hunting by Africans and other Europeans. But generally these individual efforts were not effective. Rather it was the scarcity of hippo which made hippo hunting unprofitable. A big game hunter, Letcher (1911) and Gouldsbury and Sheane (1911) mention hippos were protected in the middle Luangwa; Lane-Poole's (1956) recollection of the Valley in 1918 suggests that encountering any hippo on the Luangwa was worthy of mention. Further, Attwell (1963: 31) mentions a professional hunter's difficulty in securing his allotment of twelve hippos in the 1930's. Although he hunted for several weeks, this hunter secured only four. In 1939 the species was granted complete protection along the Luangwa River north of the Beit Bridge (Attwell,1963).

Labor migrations instituted under European rule drained the ranks of specialized guilds and, when muzzle-loading guns became more available, group hunting was no longer necessary. The census of Nabwalya's area in 1962

showed 55% of adult males away in urban employment, and this percentage probably had been higher in the past. Under these conditions, the individual hunter with his gun and specialized medicines has emerged. Probably with the hippo population under some government protection and their numbers at low levels, it was unprofitable for these individuals to kill hippos. Instead, it was more profitable and feasible to pursue other mammals whose populations at this time were increasing after the rinderpest epidemic. Consequently, there have been several generations of Bisa who have not tasted hippo meat, and hippo has become a prohibited food with sanctions against its consumption the same as other prohibitions (i.e. the possibility of leprosy). The specialized guilds of elephant and antbear hunters also faded out about this time, and their organization is recalled only by a few elder Bisa. Most Bisa no longer eat baboons, antbears, jerboas, and leopards although they did in the past. With these factors in mind, the following comment by a middle-aged village headman is relevant:

> We have enough umunani (meat relish) without having to eat hippo. We fear eating the meat because we might get leprosy. I know our ancestors ate it, but now we have plenty of meat (munani walivula) without hippo and baboons. Baboons are really our resemblance. They do what we do. They pick off lice and crush it in their hands. They scratch and do many things we do.

So if my analysis is correct, the Bisa do not relish hippo flesh for many interrelated reasons, and certainly

not because of the superficial ones which they are most likely to express. More likely, it is a combination of external pressures on their social organization which has resulted in changes in patterns of huntsmanship. This coupled with a rise in populations of other prey mammals, has led to present consumptive patterns. Presently hippo populations are high (Attwell,1963; Ansell, 1965) and damage to riverine gardens by them is apparently on the increase. It will be interesting in the future to see if more Bisa are attracted to the increasing hippo-meat supplies.

Striped mammals (vizemba) form a significant group of mammals prohibited to certain individuals throughout Central Africa. Zebra, bushbuck, kudu, and eland are the large mammals normally considered edible from among this group, which also includes such non-edible species as hyena, wild dog, wild cat, etc. Richards (1939: 62) in her discussion of Bemba food taboos, writes that pregnant women "must avoid the flesh of the bushbuck, 'Because it is mottled. Does she want her child to be striped?'" Also for the Bemba, Moore (1940: 225) says that the bushbuck "is eaten by most people (although) they do so at the risk of becoming spotted like him; and he is taboo to anyone who is subject to rashes or rough places on the skin." Moore (loc. cit.) also mentions that the stomach of the bushbuck is used to cure such sores and blemishes, for its stomach is believed to contain all

the necessary medicines and charms for their cause as well as their cure. Chisongo is a Bemba word not only for bushbuck, but also is the name of a blotchy skin disease believed by them to be caused by eating bushbuck flesh (Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911). For the Kaonde, Melland (1923: 83) writes, "Some will not eat bushbuck for fear of rash, but this is not universal as with the waWemba (Bemba) and other tribes; in fact it is exceptional. Ex-lepers will eat neither pig, nor hippo, nor zebra, nor mudfish; and those suffering from goitre will not eat mudfish either." The Konde believe that the flesh of eland and bushbuck may cause leprosy in some people (Mackenzie, 1925).

This class of mammals features prominently also in food prohibited to chiefs. Among the Ambo, who reside in the Luangwa Valley south of the Valley Bisa, chiefs are prohibited from eating the flesh of zebra, bushbuck, and rhinoceros (Stefaniszyn, 1964).

> The reigning chief had to observe certain prohibitions, and still does. He may not eat zebra or bushbuck as these animals resemble lepers. The spots and stripes are like leprous spots, and the hoofs are like lepers' limbs. It is feared that through contact with them the chief may be affected with the marks of a leper, which would be a great humiliation. (Stefaniszyn, 1964: 66-67).

Richards records the following food taboos for Bemba chiefs:

> Animals with prominent lower teeth are unlucky. They are known as ifinkuli (sing. icinkuli)--the

> name given to children whose lower teeth have come through before their upper, and who used to be destroyed on this account. Such animals include the bush-pig, the warthog, the zebra, and the eland. The bushbuck is also taboo to a chief because it has a mottled skin and makes a choking noise, and is therefore believed to bring danger or leprosy and bronchial troubles. The flesh of the bush-pig is also considered unsuitable since it darts from side to side, and this it is said might disturb the judgments of the chief. (Richards 1939: 62).

Kazembe, the paramount chief among the Lunda on the Luapula River in Zambia, was also prohibited from eating meats:

> Kazembe himself observed some taboos. He never ate any of the larger animals, of which elephant, hippo, and eland were the most important. Nor did he eat beef although formerly he alone had cattle. It is said he did not eat these animals "because they are his fellow-chiefs": they were "chiefs of the bush." Lunda say this was out of respect. No other person failed to eat of these animals when the opportunity arose. I believe that Kazembe XIV maintained the taboo on eating beef and elephant but dropped the others. These taboos were personal, and their breach caused no widespread harm. (Cunnison, 1959: 226).

A reigning chief among the Valley Bisa has his own food prohibitions which may not apply to all members of his clan. The present chief does not eat zebra, as he explains:

> The first Bisa chief was buried in the skin of a zebra. Thus, the zebra has remained a part of our family (<u>bululu muntu wakwe</u>). Since the death and burial of this first chief, other Bisa chiefs have refused to eat it. Other Bena <u>Ngona</u> can eat zebra--only the chief is prohibited.

If zebra is the only meat currently refused by the present Valley Bisa chief, surely there were other meats prohibited

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to him in the past. On the Plateau, Bisa chiefs are said to refuse bushbuck and kudu in addition to zebra. Indeed, abstention from eating the flesh of vizemba animals may sometimes be used as a badge of relationship to Bisa chiefs or membership in their clans. Several Ngona clansmen whom I questioned on their personal food taboos gave as their reason for refusing eland, kudu, bushbuck, or zebra,--"because I am a chief!"

But the question still remains--Why is the flesh of mammals in the vizemba category the one group which consistently is prohibited? Simple explanations of dietary status in terms of taxonomy or the reverse are not explanations. Above, I have shown that dietary prohibitions involving these mammals are much wider in distribution than the Valley Bisa. It should be noted that the kudu is not consistently mentioned in the literature on meat prohibitions. Kudu are not as widespread in their distribution as bushbuck, eland, and zebra and are not very plentiful or conspicuous where they do occur (Ansell, 1960).

> Question: Do animals with white spots or stripes on them signify something different from other animals?
>
> Answer: Mpulupulu (kudu), chimbwete (zebra), chikwiba (bushbuck), and nsefu (eland) were made like this by God (Lesa). . . . Some people fear leprosy and don't eat animals with spots and stripes. God created such animals as evidence (bumboni) and warning not to eat animals of this type. . . . Sometimes many people eat animals with white on them. If a person gets leprosy, we say that the meat is to blame. Others can eat such meat and never suffer.

Question: Does a person's susceptibility to leprosy have anything to do with his blood?

Answer: Some people have weak blood (mulopa wanaka) and others have strong blood (mulopa wakosa). When a person with weak blood eats such an animal, he gets leprosy. A strong-blooded one can eat such meat.

Douglas (1966) advances the opinion that the concept of pollution "is a reaction to protect cherished principles and categories from contradiction" and asserts that which is either ambiguous or contradictory from the standpoint of a society's classificatory theories, is that which is inclined to be labelled as unclean, dirty, or dangerous. Things which fall between these categories, or which combine several categories may also be labelled dangerous. Using these ideas, Douglas then examines the food prohibitions of the Old Testament and those she encountered among the Lele of the Congo.

According to Bisa classificatory schemes, the pelage of most mammals is of one color--either black or red. But the pelage of mammals in the vizemba category combines at least two colors, and their white stripes or spots are prominent. I suggest that both the ambiguous classification of these mammals according to color and the meanings of basic color patterns in other contexts were the reasons leading to their being labelled as "dangerous." With such a label, and because the flesh of these mammals is still considered edible (with the exception of chiefs and spirit-possessed persons), the eating of

their flesh serves as an explanation of the capricious appearance of leprosy when there is apparently no other plausible correlation. Following the quote from Turner which opened this section, "colors are conceived as rivers of power flowing from a common source in God and permeating the whole world of sensory phenomena with their specific qualities. More than this they are thought to tinge the moral and social life of mankind with their peculiar efficacies." (Turner, 1966: 57).

But other studies as well show the importance ascribed to the colors of animals. For instance, Lienhardt (1961) shows the interdependence of perception of color and shades of color in nature and in cattle among the Dinka, and suggests that this correlation is a deliberate attempt on the part of this Sudanese tribe to link cattle with features of both their natural and social environments. Needham (1967), in attempting to decipher the significance of a Nyoro legend, shows the complexity of symbolism and meaning which was attributed to the legend of a hunter's kill of an unusual animal, part of which resembled a colobus monkey (black and white) and the other part a lion (red).

The Bisa say that the fear of leprosy legitimizes individual abstentions from consuming the flesh of striped mammals. Leprosy, for the Bisa, is a dread disease, appearing capriciously. The initial stages of the disease appear as spots, blemishes, or open sores; advanced stages are

recognized by everyone, and leprous individuals are isolated from their kinsmen. They are built huts in the bush and are prohibited from eating with other villagers. For the Bisa, by nature a gregarious and social people, social isolation and rejection are undoubtedly the most feared aspect of the disease. Upon their death, lepers are not buried in the ground but are tied in their sleeping mats, placed in a tree, and left to rot. Stefaniszyn (1964) suggests that the prohibition against burying lepers rests on magical grounds. The body must be willfully rejected; otherwise the disease might reappear among members of the matrilineage.

Leprosy apparently was common in the Luangwa Valley until rather recently. A District Travel Report (KSD 7/6/1-1916) mentions "a considerable amount of leprosy" among the Valley Bisa and the district officer encountered "four cases in one village." The 1920-21 census figures show seven cases of leprosy among the villages ruled by Nabwalya and Kazembe. By 1928 seventeen cases were reported, but in 1934 only two cases remained in the Valley. I heard of only two cases of leprosy among the Valley Bisa in 1966, but I did not confirm these.

Meats of other than striped animals which were refused by individual Bisa were prohibited to them by African doctors after they had experienced prolonged sickness or vomiting. Most adults said that such

sicknesses occurred in their youth and that these types of sickness did not have the same symptoms as leprosy.

Warthog meat is refused by some who show signs of either epilepsy or madness (bulwele buanjili njili). The name of these sicknesses is apparently derived from the Bisa name for warthog (munjili). Hunters told me that warthogs frequently go mad and become "unconscious." When found in this condition, they can be killed easily with an axe or a pole.

In addition to the pied wagtail mentioned in the previous section, several species of birds and small mammals are considered as non-edible by the Valley Bisa. Rats and mice (bakoswe) inhabiting villages and their immediate surroundings are not edible, although the large cane rat (Thryonomys swinderianus) called nsenje and the elephant shrew (Elephantulus brachyrhynchus) are eaten. But there is ambivalence about both of these species, and some Bisa do not eat them. Some cane rats and elephant shrews inhabit abandoned village sites (fibolyia) where they make their burrows under hut ruins. Stillborn children (tupopo) are buried in the sides of hut mounds in abandoned villages. Several older Bisa said that some nsenje which they had seen resembled a dead human fetus and for this reason they refused to eat them. Wild pig (ngulube), likewise associated with abondoned village sites, is refused by some Bisa.

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The black drongo (mutyengu), African kite (pungwa), lilac-breasted roller (chole), and others frequenting villages or fields, although they may be killed and eaten by children, would certainly not be consumed by discriminating adults. These restrictions would probably assume meaning provided we order these species according to their "social distance" from human habitation (see Leach, 1964). Thus, birds and mammals showing close affinities with areas of human habitation, either past or present, are prohibited or restricted as foods.

Distribution and Consumption of Meat

If the flesh of some mammals is rejected, other meats are definitely preferred by most Bisa. Warthog, female impala, and buffalo are called inama sha LuBisa and are especially relished with nsima (porridge) made from the wild seeds of lupunga grass (Panicum sociale). Other Bisa, for whom the zebra is not prohibited, might add that species to the list, for all these mammals are normally quite fat. Animal fat is craved and, for the Bisa fat is symbolic of health. The Bisa say that all other mammals besides these four species which they normally eat, taste cold (kutalala) and must be cooked with salt to make them palatable.

Certain large mammals--eland, lion, and elephant--are identified with the Bisa chieftaincy and, when killed by a Bisa, parts of these mammals must be sent to the chief

as "tribute of allegiance" (cf. Vansina, 1962: 326). The chief's right to receive tribute in the form of game formerly rested essentially on his power to exact it, and failure of a hunter to send appropriate tribute was construed as an act of rebellion. Today tribute in meat is no longer sent the chief by hunters, but if they do kill one of the above mammals, they should notify him. This is how one hunter expressed the change:

> Long ago the animals and land belonged to the chief. There were not many guns, and parts of the animals that were killed had to be brought to the chief. Now many people have guns which they purchase from stores in the towns. Also now we pay for a yearly license to the government so that we pay the government for the animals. Tribute has shifted from the chief to the government. Many people are fearing the game guards--for any meat which winds up at the chief's compound can only be common knowledge. Today we kill many animals secretly.

In the past, if a hunter killed an elephant he had to deliver both tusks and the tail to the chief. The chief retained the option of returning a tusk to the hunter. Tribute of ivory was one of the chief's economic mainstays. The bodies of former chiefs were buried with stores of ivory and even today elephant tusks are placed in the chief's mfuba (spirit huts) as symbolic tribute to his predecessors.

Eland is considered the chief's mammal par excellence. This mammal is prized highly for its fat and large size.

> If one kills an eland, the heart, chest, and back leg should be sent to the chief. They chose

> the eland as tribute because it is a very important mammal and only big hunters kill it. The eland symbolizes greatness, and the chest and heart were sent because these were the first parts with which the eland lay on the ground.

Among the Ambo, Stefaniszyn (1964) records that the right to hunt on a chief's land cost a hunter three eland. Some of this meat, of course, was returned to the hunter, but once such tribute was delivered the hunter had exclusive rights to hunt within a defined territory.

The Ngona chieftaincy is considered to have a special relationship with lions, which are said to be "chief among the animals." Deceased Ngona chiefs use the mediumship of lions to afflict their people. When a lion was killed, there was a special ceremony at the chief's court, and the hunter was "purified" by the chief. The lion skin was kept by the chief and later used as a mat for receiving important headmen. In the past, leopard skins were also used at the chief's court for the same purpose.

Normally a hunter expects to give meat only to his close relatives and to those who helped him carry the meat back to the village. But word of a kill travels quickly, and a hunter often finds by force of circumstance and through persistent begging by those more distantly related or unrelated,that he has to distribute meat to more people than he anticipated. Meat is used by a hunter to reinforce relations among his kinsmen, for meat is the most prized relish of all. But the possession of meat by a successful hunter is paradoxical, for the distribution

of meat often brings social strife in the form of jealousy, expressed hatred of the hunter, and quarrels over the amounts given. Jealousy of hunters by non-hunters and the lack of respect and appreciation shown to hunters is a common theme in Bisa beer-drinking songs.

Chibinda mwantana inama, nao mutepaya alatola.
Nkalowa nama.

Hunter, you begrudge us meat. Don't you think those of us who are not now hunters will some day be blessed with the power of killing animals?

Bakazi banji chibula kuwamya. Kamone chibabula.

No, my wife, don't worry about this lack of appreciation. I shall go and kill you another animal.

Tuatobela nenu mwebapalu banama
Kubapa chiliyase pano
Ee, batina nama.

We eat together with important hunters.
(The hunters) Let's tell them a big story
And they will forever fear animals.

Hunter's Omens and Divinatory Hunts

The individual sightings of a number of small mammals and birds serve as omens for hunters in the bush. These omens are sent by his guardian shade and there are many signs or omens which the Bisa recognize. By being sensitive to and correctly interpreting bad omens, a Bisa hunter believes it is possible for him to foresee dangers and avoid them,whether these forecast situations in the bush or relationships among kinsmen in the village. Good or bad associations of these sightings are usually related to the name or color of the animal or bird.

Good omens are collectively called mipashi (mupashi, singular). For a hunter to encounter a band of mongooses (munsulu) is a good omen, meaning he should kill a mammal or soon come upon a carcass killed previously by a lion. Good fortune is associated with the animal's name, asulula nzila bwino apelika izjuko--which means it makes the path straight and gives luck. Most birds whose plumage is a combination of black, red, and white--such as the ground hornbill (mungomba), helmet shrikes (bulwendo-lwendo), and others--when encountered afield are considered as good omens. Lucebu (a small black and white carnivorous beetle) is also considered a good sign by hunters.

Bad omens are called chibanda or mupamba. Upon sighting one of these, the hunter should usually return to the village immediately. Lukote, a small red weasel, is a bad sign. It is associated with the term wakota--to become old quickly (i.e. the hunter becomes tired and old quickly thus losing his power for killing). For a hunter to see a cobra (kafi) is considered a very bad omen. The cobra is considered a deadly snake which will stand its ground or attack rather than flee. To encounter a quaking praying mantis (mansombwe) means that one will soon experience a death in his family. This mantid is also used as a hunter's vishimba (Table 6) because of its connotation with death. An animal struck by a bullet from the gun of a hunter who has this type of vishimba will tremble and thus be unable to escape.

In the past, divination might be conducted in the form of a hunt (lutembo). When a person died and his survivors were suspicious of witchcraft as the cause of death, they requested the aid of a hunter who was not a member of their clan. They tied white beads (mupashi wesu) on his right arm and sent him into the bush; the sex of the mammal he killed was given special significance. If the hunter killed a female, the witch was suspected to be a member of the deceased's matrilineage. If a male, the witch would be considered among those outside the matrilineage. Witch suspects could then be given the umwavi (poison) test to determine their innocence.

But beyond the above circumstance, the game test was employed to divine guilt in a number of situations. A group, however, would have to decide in advance what the significance of the sex of the mammal killed would be. Formerly, ritual hunts were common among the Valley Bisa but they are rarely, if ever, employed today. In 1967, a headman of a large village experiencing a number of deaths, for which he was implicated, suggested a ritual hunt to determine whether or not the witch was a member of his matrilineage. But the proposition was not accepted by his matrikin.

Magic as Adjunct to Hunting Skills

One of the more esoteric uses of resources is to be found in their employment by the Bisa as magic.

Medicine, a more inadequate term but frequently found in the literature, will be used here as synonymous with magic. Following the suggestion of Evans-Pritchard (1937: 21), I assume magic to have morally neutral attributes which can be manipulated for legitimate or illegitimate purposes. The Bisa differentiate between these uses of medicine as muti or bwanga. Bwanga normally refers to magic of a sinister or evil nature. Muti, a common term for tree or bush, refers to the more legitimate use of magic for protective, assertive, creative or healing purposes (Cory, 1949). My discussion will be concerned mainly with this latter application of magic.

The Bisa regard magical substances as an ultimate source of power such that, given the right ingredients and knowledge, an individual may achieve almost anything through its use. Medicines are considered as essential adjuncts to authority and success in one's endeavors, and the kinds of ingredients prescribed and the doses used are adjusted to both the status and personality of the individual.

The chief is acknowledged to have access to the most powerful medicines. Likewise, clan elders and village headmen are also knowledgeable about many types of medicines. Medicines are important accessories in most rituals although their use is not necessarily confined to them. And among the Bisa, as for many Central African societies, ritual and magic of various kinds play an

important part in maintaining identities between generations and social strata in society. Skills in work, lovemaking, hunting, and fishing are ascribed to the possession of medicines, and Bisa are concerned to acquire medicines commensurate with their achievements.

Magic is commonly composed of two kinds of ingredients (Cory, 1949; Marwick, 1965; Richards, 1939). The first part is selected from parts of trees or shrubs, usually roots or bark. These ingredients usually represent symbolically the animal or person for which the magic is prescribed. But for these initial ingredients to become effective, most medicines in addition require activating agents (vishimba) (Table 6). Incantations or words may be recited in order to initiate the magic or to invoke the help of latent powers within the substances. Prohibitions are prescribed with every medicine, and neglect of these prohibitions is said to account for the failure of medicines.

Simple hunting medicines are usually acquired from one's father or from matrikin who are hunters. More powerful medicines, normally acquired later in one's life, are acquired from other respected hunters outside this group, and for such magic the hunter is expected to pay.

A medicine used by all gun hunters is chilembe. This enables his bullet to cause massive internal bleeding and clotting in his quarry, preventing the animal's escape.

TABLE 6.--Partial list of Bisa vishimba (activating particles) and their use in hunting medicines. These parts listed are mixed with other ingredients to form powerful medicines (see text).

Bisa Name	English or Latin Name	Use and Symbolism
Mansombwe	large, quaking praying mantis	hunting medicine, causes hunter's quarry to shiver and die when wounded. Fighter's medicine (cf. Kasombwe WF Dictionary).
Lunteuteu	small seeds of plants carried far by wind	Luita lyanama--call mammals to hunter
Kambaza	nightjar, any species	mfenzi--renders hunter invisible to his prey
Muanjano	a specific tree or shrub (unidentified)	luito lwanama--mammal caller--name of tree means "to turn back"
Musolo	Pseudolachnostylis maprouneifolia	muti we luito--mammal caller--considered "lucky tree" kusolola--to drive away misfortune
Munga wa buta	Acacia sieberana	luito lyanama--mammal caller--tree considered a lubuto-gives hunter good fortune
Lukungwe	cobra head	chilembe--to kill mammal immediately, as does cobra

TABLE 6.--Continued

Bisa Name	English or Latin Name	Use and Symbolism
Kaponta (slime from)	species of Clarias? mudfish	mfenzi--enables hunter to slip away from wounded and dangerous animals when they charge
Luvunyemba	chameleon	chilembe--mammal becomes black, quickly (dies)
Ikubi	vulture	to help hunter find game
Chilembe	Euphorbia decidua	chilembe--to kill mammal immediately, causes massive blood clots (cf. bulembe-arrow poison)

The nature of massive internal bleeding and rapid death of a mammal struck by poisoned arrows is known to Bisa hunters. Such arrows were poisoned with bulembe, an effective concoction made from certain trees. But when hunters began hunting with muzzle-loading weapons, the fate of a wounded mammal became far less certain, and a mammal believed hit in a vital area could survive for days. It was such uncertainty which led to the importance of vilembe (or chilembe) among gun hunters. Thie medicine strengthens the hunter's blood and causes massive bleeding in his wounded prey. (Note the etymological similarity between bulembe and vilembe. Chilembe is the term also used for large clots of blood found in the pleural and thoracic cavities of slain mammals. Euphorbia decidua, the most powerful vishimba for this type of magic, is also called chilembe).

But it should be mentioned that there are several types of this medicine, depending upon the rank and status of the hunter. Chilembe chikulu (the most powerful) uses the Euphorbia mentioned above, and is employed only by respected, elderly, and proven hunters. Lesser chilembe (chilembe chiachepa) is given to younger hunters, its vishimba is made from other substances. Hunters recognize these gradations, but if they know of more powerful medicines they may not necessarily acquire them. If they do feel compelled to acquire additional medicines, the status, rank, and degree of relationship with the adept is considered

important. A young hunter reported the following when I inquired as to the differences in chilembe magic and questioned him about future medicine.

> There are several kinds of chilembe depending upon the substance (vishimba) used. I only have and know of one and it is not as strong as the one which you have. (I showed him a Euphorbia tuber presented to me by the chief). First one takes the bark of the lupampa tree (unidentified) and dries it. When it is dry, it is ground [and at this time can be mixed with other ingredients such as head of cobra for immediate affect or sugar cane so mammal will taste sweet--my additions]. Next one asks his wife to make two cuts on the wrists and the lupampa substance is mixed in one's blood. Then the hunter must go to the nearest tree and hit it with both hands at the same time. This must be done because if it is not and a fight starts, the hunter whose blood has been strengthened (ukusosya mulopa) can kill that other person. This medicine is very strong and when one strikes another person, the blood will become thickened and the hit area will turn black and swell. The lupampa tree has a red sap in its bark, and this is like the blood of humans and mammals.
>
> Question: As you grow older will you try to get stronger medicines for hunting? (The hunter had only chilembe medicine, mentioned above).
>
> Answer: Yes, I will, when I get older I will find muti to kill animals much quicker than I do now.
>
> Question: What kind of muti will you find?
>
> Answer: Mfinzi. That is the most powerful medicine to hide a big hunter. When a big dangerous animal charges me, it can miss me. (He had mentioned previously that for current protection he was dependent upon the aid of his ancestors).
>
> Question: From whom will you ask this muti?
>
> Answer: I will not ask either clans of my father or mother. I might not give them sufficient meat and they might give me in return weak muti. They feel a mixture of love and jealousy toward me. I

> will ask another hunter who is unrelated to me. He will demand money and for such he will give me good strong medicine. Else I should look upon him as a deceiver.

The function of such medicines in Bisa society is certainly to limit competition within certain status positions and professions and to withhold esoteric knowledge from other parties. Both hunters and fishermen ascribe their success to possession of these medicines,and within these professions medicines establish a hierarchy; only the older men possess knowledge of the most powerful kinds. Magical lore is granted to additional hunters only after they have proved their skill and fearlessness in the bush. Moreover, this normally occurs only late in one's life. I asked two elder hunters why a hunter needed medicines.

> All men want the medicines of hunting because they cannot kill a mammal without going to get the medicine from the old and big hunters.

This statement was correlated by yet a third skilled hunter who had killed many species of mammals which are used to rank hunters:

> Question: Since you are such an important hunter, what do you call hunters of small bucks when they are smarting of their own success?
>
> Answer: I call them baice besu (our children) or tuchibinda tunini (small hunters) or bachibinda bampala (honorific hunters of impala). They don't bother us much because even when they kill a lion, elephant, or eland they must come to a bigger hunter for medicine.

> ". . . .in tribal societies persons play several roles in relation to others in the same environs, so that roles are not differentiated by material conditions and fragmented associations: hence we find here more specific customs of stylized etiquette, more conventions and taboos, and more custom in general, to differentiate and segregate these roles in their various sets of purposive activities. Beyond this, individuals are also required in terms of their membership of groups and relationships to act in multiplex relationships, and though they co-operate in these several sets of purposive activity, they also are brought into competition and struggle through other allegiances. This total situation leads to a compound of moral evaluations on all actions, and the conflict between interwoven allegiances disturbs these evaluations. Breach of relations sets up widespread disturbance. Breach of social relations is associated with what we call natural misfortunes, and natural misfortunes are explained by derelictions from duty. Each alteration in social status or social arrangements in general is regarded as liable to disturb the natural order (even if this is not formulated by the people concerned explicitly). Hence ceremoniousness in social relations becomes involved with mythical beliefs which state that this ceremoniousness can affect the groups or persons concerned in ways that are not open to observation, by influencing their prosperity. Max Gluckman,(1962: 49-50).

Elephant Hunting--Past and Present

In the past, elephant hunting was restricted to exclusive and elite specialized groups each under the leadership of respected elder hunters, who with their appropriate medicines, protected their subordinate staffs. These groups enjoyed a special relationship with the

chiefs on whose lands they hunted. They supplied ivory and elephant tails to the chiefs who in turn reciprocated with gifts of salt, blankets, and calico. In time the chief might reward the leaders of these groups with the rank of headman. Elephant hunters were allowed to keep certain portions of the elephants which they killed and were able to exchange meat for grain and other products. They were exempt from tribute work (umulaza) and enjoyed considerable prestige in the territories within which they operated.

Formerly, several groups of these specialists hunted in the Luangwa Valley. Each group had its own magic, hunting methods, hierarchy, and initiation ceremonies. The leader of each group was usually referred to by the name of the implement they used to kill elephants.

The Bakalongwe wansofu hunted elephants with weighted spears (kalongwe) poisoned with bulembe. When this group spotted a herd of elephants, its leader, Kalongwe, went directly into the herd and was the first to spear one (ukubalula nsofu). The wounded beast was then followed and harried by a group of young initiates. When the elephant took a stand, the older, more experienced hunters, each armed with his weighted spear, lined up at right angles to where the wounded elephant was expected to charge. They speared it as it attacked Kalongwe.

Bashimunini also hunted elephants with weighted spears and poison but used a different technique in their

pursuit. Experienced hunters of this guild climbed large trees located over well-used elephant paths (mumakunko yansofu), while other members herded elephants toward the tree. When an elephant passed underneath, Bashimunini threw his heavy spear aiming to hit the elephant between the shoulder blades.

The Bamutema kwangwa hunted elephant by concealing themselves in the long grass adjacent to elephant paths. When elephants passed, the hunters would take them by surprise and cut their heel tendons with axes which had previously been poisoned with bulembe.

In addition to those methods mentioned above, elephants were also trapped in pits. When muzzle-loading guns became available to chiefs through ivory trading, these were assigned to respected hunters in order to procure additional tusks. Gun-hunters were called bafundi, and they were usually subordinate to Arab traders or chiefs.

The killing of a big and important mammal such as an elephant implies that those who do so possess unusual ritual powers and technical competence. Leaders of these elephant hunting groups were invariably specialists in rituals who possessed knowledge of esoteric magic and its use which they employed to protect their followers. One of their medicines was mfenzi, which reputedly made hunters invisible to their prey and which is still used by Bisa gun-hunters today. But unfortunately, most of their other

initiation rites and medicines have been forgotten as gun-hunters replaced the other specialized guilds. The few written notes on these abandoned guilds are sketchy and, unfortunately, are not based upon firsthand accounts and observations (see Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911; Melland, 1923; Doke, 1931; Macrae, 1964).

Young men were attracted to the ranks of these guilds and were initiated usually upon payment of fees. But for the most part, they were not then expected to take part in the actual killing of elephants and were excluded from knowledge of the medicines until much later in their lives. The type of relationship which existed in these former societies between the adept and his initiates was reflected in their terms of address: the adept was called nyina wa bwanga (mother of magic) and his initiates mwana wa bwanga (child of magic).

Today hunting is undertaken by skilled adepts, who normally act individually and who hunt for the most part near the villages. Occasionally a group of hunters may team up and live temporarily in grass shelters (malala) built in the bush, and on such occasions they are joined by a group of initiates who help cut, dry, and transport meat.

Young initiates attach themselves to individual adepts from whom they learn initial skills and strategy and may procure some magic to begin hunting. Such a young man is said to receive a "call" to be a hunter in the form

of dreams about the shade of a famous hunter in his lineage. He may approach his father, if his father is a hunter, or a hunter on his maternal side, but after some tutoring must prove his skill in the bush. The maturing skill of a new hunter is marked by a ceremony upon the killing of each new species of mammal. These ceremonies are not elaborate--their main element appears to be the bringing together of one's matrilineal kin and the hunter's sponsor (nyina wa bwanga). On these occasions meat and beer are prepared and those assembled praise the hunter for his skill. The day following the ceremony, the hunter takes some of the head meat into the bush and buries it and some of the magic along an animal trail.

Full-time hunters among the Bisa are, for the most part, younger men who have both the time and energy to devote to the chase. These men usually are without other pressing social commitments and obligations. It should be appreciated that given the very limited range of muzzle-loading guns and their functional unreliability, more animals are wounded than are killed, and successful hunting is largely dependent upon time spent in tracking and pursuing game. These young hunters, for the most part, do not possess their own guns,unless they have inherited one from a deceased member of their matrilineage. If another elder hunter resides in the same village, this elder retains custodianship over the weapon which the young hunter borrows.

The hunter distributes meat mainly to his close relatives. These, in time, become dependent upon him for the most prized relish of all--meat. But in its distribution, meat inevitably causes quarrels. If the village is a large one, a hunter who is the leader of a sufficiently numerous following may break away and establish his own village. But his assumption of the role of headmanship will require that he spend more time attending to problems among his kin and in performing other duties. Moreover, most older men are polygynous, and each marriage entails the performance of obligations and duties for each wife. As a consequence, hunting becomes left to younger men who are not so tied with social responsibilities. Yet, older hunters may choose to invest in more powerful medicines which enable game to be secured more quickly by concealing them from game. In the process of securing these medicines,they also maintain their ritual superiority over younger hunters.

Hunters are ranked according to the frequency, numbers, and kinds of mammals which they kill. Chibinda is one of many terms for hunter, but it is mainly used in reference to hunters of small game. Chibinda does not hunt very frequently and restricts his hunting to antelopes and buffalo. Bankambalume is a praiseworthy title for a hunter. These are men who are capable of killing regularly more than one animal per day or several animals within several days. They have demonstrated their skills

and abilities so that their dependents ascribe to them the ability to kill an animal with every shot fired. But there are two classes--Bankambalume banama shinini and Bankambalume wankungulu shanama. The former restricts his hunting to antelopes and buffalo, usually possesses limited magic, and has never killed the most prestigious mammals. The latter has killed dangerous mammals, has been initiated into the higher ranks of hunters and knows the magic for neutralizing the shades of elephant, eland, and lion. He is assigned this superior rank for killing either of these mammals, but he must kill each species if he is to secure the magic for neutralizing them. Other hunters, who have not been previously initiated, must demonstrate their skill by killing one of these animals before they are given the necessary magic.

Elephants apparently have always been plentiful in the Luangwa Valley although they were probably not as "visible" as they are today. Letcher (1911) in September and October 1909 saw forty-nine elephants in Nabwalya's area, and Lane-Poole (1956) mentions that the area along the Munyamadzi was notorious for elephants. Several middle-aged Bisa mentioned that they were in their late teens before they saw their first live elephant and then did not see many near villages. Today,elephants are very common in the Corridor (Table 7) and are frequently visible from the villages.

The Munyamadzi Corridor is gazetted as a First Class Controlled Hunting Area, in which the right to hunt is limited to residents and to a few non-residents (mainly Europeans) who, for this right, must pay a substantial access fee. As residents, Bisa hunters are restricted to most of the smaller antelopes and buffalo. The hunting of trophy mammals, such as elephant, rhino, hippo, zebra, and eland require additional licenses whose price the Bisa usually consider beyond their means. But each year several elephant licenses are allowed to residents, and these are usually purchased by elder headmen.

Protection of crops from marauding elephants is allowed, and five were shot by the Bisa in 1966. A few elephant are also poached by them. The Game Department maintains a staff of Elephant Control Guards in the Corridor whose duty is to protect granaries and fields from elephants. These guards shot 36 elephants in 1966.

Background of Adept and Initiate

It was during the latter part of my stay in the Luangwa Valley that I was impressed with the prestigious and elaborate rituals which surround the killing of an elephant. I made little headway in my inquiries about the nature of these rituals, although several elders assured me that I would be shown the rites upon an elephant being killed. My object was to have a Bisa hunter kill an elephant while I observed his action and the

TABLE 7.--Number of elephants encountered in transects around Chief Nabwalya's village, 1966-67. Hours are those spent accompanying Bisa hunters in the bush, usually in the morning or late afternoon. No noticeable efforts were made either to avoid or to seek out elephants.

Month	Transect Hours	Elephants Seen	Elephants Hour	Average Herd Size[1]
August	26.5	26	0.98	3.3
September	15.0	4	0.27	4.0
October	5.3	2	0.38	2.0
November	17.3	13	0.75	4.3
December	32.5	44	1.35	4.9
January	37.0	15	0.41	7.5
February[2]	38.5	4	0.10	4.0
March[2]	14.5	14	0.97	7.0
April	23.4	17	0.73	2.4
May	41.0	71	1.73	3.9
June	25.8	15	0.58	3.0
July	38.9	53	1.36	4.1

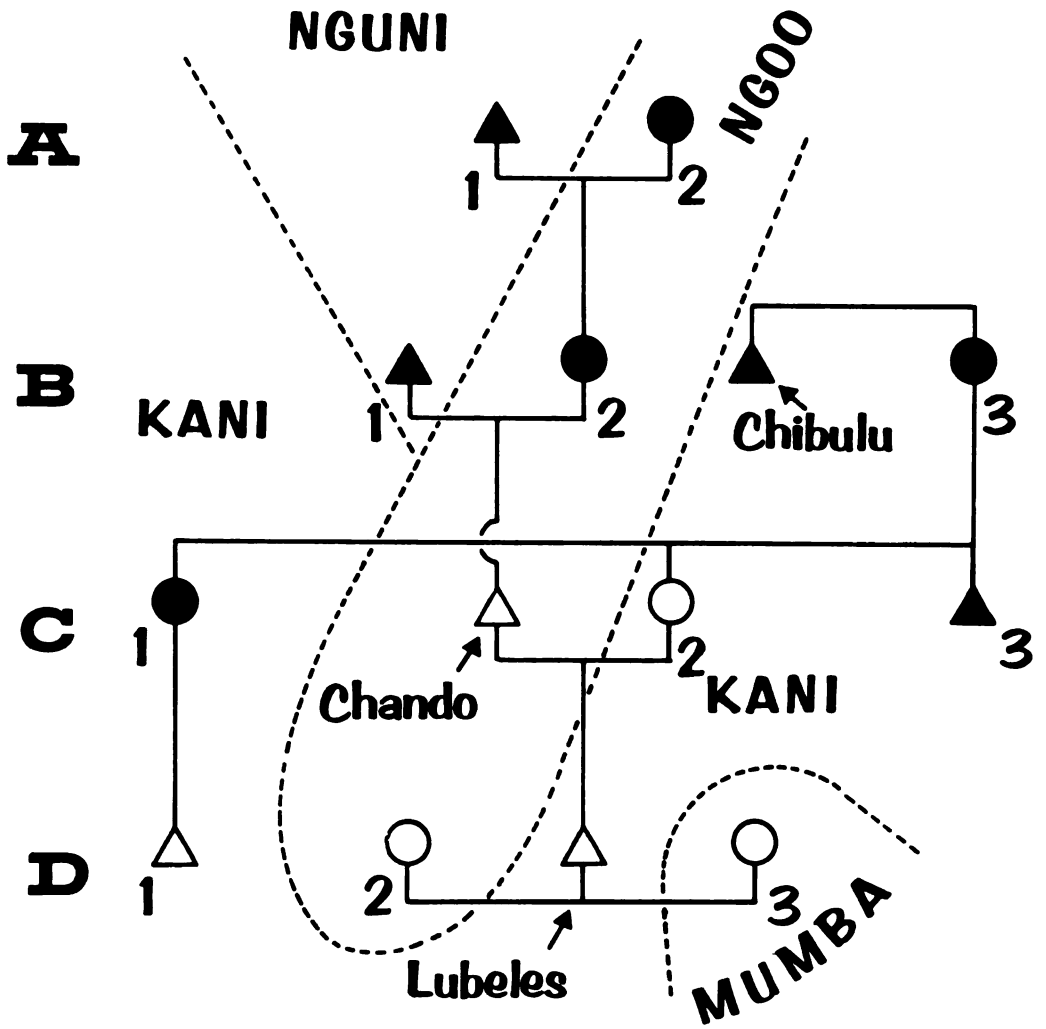
[1]Number of elephants/Number of sightings

[2]Data accumulated by hunter-informants from their own movements

attendant rituals. I chose Lubeles, because he had been an acquaintance for some time and I knew his background. I accompanied him afield and after he initially wounded the elephant, I helped him to kill it. As a consequence, I was taken through the rites, but I have tried not to over-emphasize my presence in the observations which I recorded then.

Lubeles' father, Chando (Figure 2), a senior hunter, 65 years of age, in his youth had been troubled by his grandfather's (A1--Figure 1) spirit which "forced" him to take up hunting. A1 was described as nkalamo yanama (lion among animals) a title reserved for great hunters and for Chando to dream now of either grandparent (A1 or A2) before going hunting was to ensure his success. Chando's father (B1), also a hunter, gave him preliminary instructions in hunting with a bow and arrow. When Chando had proved himself a hunter of small game, he was given medicine for protection while pursuing larger game. In 1921, Chando made his first trip to the Copperbelt to secure employment. Upon returning to his home, he married his first wife and took up residence in his wife's village. In 1931, he returned to his wife's village with a muzzle-loading gun which he had purchased on the Copperbelt. After several years of residence there, he shifted his residence back to his natal village. Frequent journeys to gain employment on the Copperbelt were broken by stays in the Valley. In all, Chando spent some 26 years out of

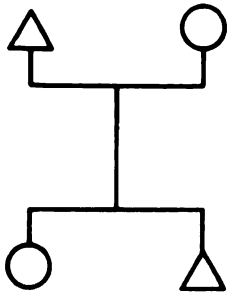
FIGURE 2.--Skeleton genealogy of adept and initiate (see text for details)



LEGEND

NGUNI — clan name

Chibulu — person



marriage

descent

male

female

deceased

the Valley before returning to the Valley permanently in 1946. There he was resident in a large village but spent most of his time hunting. It is said that during this period he frequently killed two large mammals a day. As his hunting prowess increased, he killed both eland and elephant. His father showed him how to ritually treat these kills.

Upon the death of the village headman, Chando, as leader of his minor matrilineage, withdrew and established his own village. At this time he obtained mfenzi medicine (rendering the hunter invisible to game) from another older and respected hunter from another clan. For this medicine, he paid two chickens.

When Chando returned from the Copperbelt in 1946, he taught his son Lubeles how to hunt. Lubeles began hunting in his early teens with a bow and arrow. His guardian presence in the bush was his maternal grandfather, Chibulu, whose spirit Lubeles propitiated before going hunting. His grandfather was a good hunter and village headman who had been placed as a capitao (leader) over the local people by the Europeans when they operated Nabwalya Boma from 1901-1908. The status and position of Chibulu at this time caused jealous feelings among some Bisa who, it was said, cast a spell (ubwanga) and caused him to be killed by an elephant. Chibulu's maternal nephew C3, then became village headman; but when he never

returned from the Copperbelt, the village was absorbed by another village until D1 returned from the Copperbelt to assume its headmanship.

Lubeles in his youth hunted with a bow and arrow and accompanied more experienced hunters afield when they hunted with guns. While he hunted with a bow, Lubeles did not need any medicine, for his arrows were poisoned with bulembe.

He married and took up uxorilocal residence before going to the Copperbelt in 1951. When he returned in 1953, his parallel cousin, D1, possessed a muzzle-loading gun which he passed on to Lubeles since he had not been very successful with it. D1 told Lubeles about the preparation of chilembe medicine. This medicine is believed to strengthen the hunter's blood. Such strength is shot through the gun along with the bullet and as described, is believed to cause massive internal bleeding when the shot hits the animal, lessening its chances of escaping. But D1 was not a hunter, and the tree substance Lubeles was told to mix with his blood was not strong.

For several years Lubeles spent much of his time hunting. He claimed to have killed as many as eight buffalo in one year. He went again to the Copperbelt and returned to the Valley in 1960. At this time, he paid his in-laws a nsomo of five shillings and transferred both his and his first wife's residence back to his natal village. Lubeles continued to hunt but not as fervently

as before. After he married and divorced a second wife, he married a cross cousin in his father's village. As his social responsibilities grew, Lubeles was no longer able to spend so much time hunting and was considering obtaining more powerful hunting medicines.

The Rites

Each observation made during and after the elephant kill is described here with an interpretation given by Chando and other elder men. Under some interpretations, I outline the complementary dualism which is expressed in components of the ritual.

OBSERVATION: July 24, 1967--During the preceding eight days of hunting, Lubeles and I had been unable to secure an elephant. But today as we were walking eastward toward Mupete Lagoon, he told me that he was confident we were going to be successful. Early last evening, he continued, as he, his father Chando, and his mother were sitting around a fire, his father invoked the ancestral spirits with the following words:

> Mwe fibanda (mipashi) bwesu. Ntangeleni pantanzi. Twapapata. Namwe BaChibulu, twapapata. Ntangeleni pantanzi. Pabe lubuto.
>
> You our ancestors, go before us we pray. And you BaChibulu, (mother's mother's brother, a great hunter in the past) we pray go before us. Let there be luck (light).

With these words Chando, Lubeles' father, invoked both Ngoo and Kani ancestors to aid Lubeles the next day. It was a special type of appeal to the ancestors, since

normally it is the hunter alone who requests the aid of his matrilineal ancestors.

INTERPRETATION: The Bisa say that a person does not become a hunter on his own initiative. Basically, he must come from a clan which has a tradition of hunting. It is this affiliation that enables him to acquire the blessings of ancestral huntsmen and to obtain access to clan hunting medicine which will enable him to kill mammals quickly and repeatedly. Failing this prerequisite, they say, he may own a gun and hunt but he will not be a skilled hunter or bachibinda,nor will he be successful in frequently securing game. Lubeles felt himself particularly blessed, since both his mother's and father's clans were those of hunters.

A hunter's ancestors are believed to play an important role in his success. The timing for the above blessing was significant. It is believed that in the early evening ancestral spirits come from the surrounding bush to the edge of the village. From this position they guard their descendants from evil spirits (fibanda) while they sleep. If a hunter plans to hunt the next day, before retiring he propitiates his ancestors, calls upon their names, asks them to go before him on the morrow, and makes a small offering of sorghum flour (bunga). Depending upon the discretion of the ancestral spirits, they may accompany the hunter early the next morning, protect him, and aid him in securing game.

There are a few unstated codes of conduct to which a hunter must ascribe. He must not start quarrels or curse anyone--such action will assure him of ancestral disapproval. Furthermore, before going hunting, hunters must abstain from having sexual intercourse. I was told:

> We don't have intercourse before a hunt because when we are hunting we are helped by the spirits of dead hunters. These spirits are neutral and have no sexual intercourse. When we have sexual intercourse before a hunt, we get out of tune with the spirits who will help us in the bush.

Prohibition on sexual intercourse before an individual goes hunting becomes more meaningful if we understand what is implicit in "getting out of tune" with the spirits. The pattern expressed is the distinction between village and bush--the two disparate worlds within which the hunter must operate. People live in villages; animals and spirits inhabit the bush. The bush is said to be "cold" (yatalala), as are spirits, and is imcompatible or dangerous to anything not in a similar state. A village involved in quarrels and social strife is "hot" (kubangama), as is a person who has had sexual intercourse. But why?

> Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome: enemies in battle, the animals in the bush during hunting and fishing parties. . . . Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore: Keep quiet, be continent! (Junod 1927, Vol. 1: 189).

A hunter must conform to the nature of the bush as expressed in the attributes of the following paradigm:

village	bush
human sphere	spirit sphere
dependent	independent
sexual intercourse	neutral
strife	peace
"hot"	"cold"

OBSERVATION: Killing of a male elephant--July 24, 1967

Lubeles and I saw only one elephant during the day. We crept to within 25 years of it and just as it was beginning to sense our presence Lubeles shot, aiming at the heart. Lubeles ran after the elephant and found it standing. He shot twice more, exhausting his supply of ammunition. He said the elephant fell with each shot--only to rise and walk a little after each round. When I caught up with Lubeles, the elephant was standing about 50 yards away in an opening with its back toward us. I tried to shoot it in the backbone, but only hit twice very near the spine. It went down with the second shot but attempted to rise, whereupon I shot it in the head. The elephant didn't get up again. Lubeles approached to within some 40 yards and threw some dirt at the carcass and shouted. When it failed to move, we knew the elephant was dead and we could leave for the village to tell Chando to prepare medicines for the ritual treatment of our kill.

INTERPRETATION: While we were returning to the village, Lubeles exclaimed that this elephant had been very difficult to kill. He confided that the first mammal of most

species was difficult to kill because one must depend only upon one's ancestors for help. After the vizimba ceremony had been performed and the spirit of the mammal returned to the bush, then the chibanda of that mammal would be expected to call others of the same species for the hunter. His next elephant should be easier to kill.

The carcass of dangerous mammals is not approached by the hunter unless he has the appropriate medicines, for fear that the slain mammal's chibanda will enter his head causing him trouble or, worse yet, return with the hunter to the village and kill his relatives. If it is the first such mammal, this must be done in company with a more experienced hunter. Unless related, such hunters may ask a price for this service, or they may wish a larger share of the meat from the kill. The novice hunter is led back to the slain beast by the older hunter and is shown the esoteric materials for doctoring the kill. When he kills another mammal of that species, he may doctor it himself.

OBSERVATION: Returning to the village

We did not find Chando in his village but were told that he was in another village and that he planned soon to cross the river to cut reeds for a mat. We found him with another village headman, who was sitting under a tree making a mat with a large needle. Lubeles asked for permission to enter the circle (odi) and came in and sat down. After he was settled, his father mentioned that

early that morning he had heard an elephant scream several times and was wondering why--had we been following it? Lubeles, with his head low, said that we had heard an elephant scream also and had gone toward the area from which it had come, but we had not seen it. Perhaps it had smelled us (impepo). Then his father said that later he had heard seven shots and he described the interval between the shots. Only then did Lubeles say that he needed to talk to his father privately. Chando fetched his hat and excused himself from the other headman, saying that he now had other work. While walking back to Chando's village, Lubeles told him that we had killed a very large elephant near Mupete Lagoon. Chando inquired if we had gone close to the dead mammal, but we assured him to the contrary. Lubeles said that he wanted his father to prepare the vizimba ceremony, since this elephant had been very difficult to kill. Chando agreed and then told him about the medicines and roots. He then inquired about the elephant's screaming and wondered if that was the reason why it took us so many shots to kill it. We told him that another elephant was screaming. This being our first elephant we did not want it to get away; as a consequence, we had tried to immobilize it by fracturing its vertebrae. Chando laughed and pointed under his arm and between his eye and ear as being chipingu chia nama--the areas where "life" is found in an elephant. When we

returned to Chando's village, we were greeted with Mwabombeni bankambalume, a respectful greeting reserved only for successful and esteemed hunters.

INTERPRETATION: Hunting matters are reserved for discussion only with hunters. In conversation it is the elder person who leads and the younger who follow with appropriate comments. It should not be overlooked that Chando upon his death would become an important benevolent ancestral spirit as Lubeles' father. A screaming elephant is believed to be under the influence of a dangerous chibanda and is feared for this reason.

OBSERVATION: Collection of medicines

When I returned to the village in the afternoon, Chando had already collected Mwanya(unidentified) roots. He had tied these in leaves from another species of tree and had put them in his shirt pocket. As we were going in the bush, Chando paused at a Musebe (Sclerocarya caffra) tree and showed his son where to take off sections of the inner bark. Initially he took the inner bark from the side where the afternoon sun was shining. Then he went on the shady side of the tree and cut another small piece of inner bark. He put these two in his shirt pocket and we continued to the elephant carcass. As we approached a small anthill about fifty yards from the elephant carcass, Chando told us not to go any further but to wait while he prepared the medicine.

INTERPRETATION: Mwanya root is used because it is very slippery. Chando told me the following: "When the chibanda of the elephant wants to enter a hunter, it will find that the hunter is like a very slippery Mwanya root and it will be unable to enter and possess him." Musebe inner bark is used here because the Bisa notice elephants frequently debark this tree. Again as Chando put it, "The chibanda of an elephant when it wishes to enter and bother a man,will instead enter a musebe tree for that is what it likes." The inner bark of musebe is red, which also is probably significant, but Chando did not allude to this aspect.

Musebe bark is taken from opposite sides of the same tree. Inner bark is taken from the east side because it is here that the morning light first strikes the tree, and early morning is when most hunting occurs. It is when the ancestors, who moved into the village guarding their descendents during the night, leave with the hunter in his search of game. When a person is buried, his head is pointed toward the west. It is in this direction that one's chibanda is believed to go. Inner bark is taken from both sides of the same tree--east and west (good and bad sides)--to neutralize the bad's effects. Another dichotomy also is stressed--light/dark. Light is able to penetrate and neutralize (ukusidika) darkness.

The symbolism is expressed in the paradigm below:

chibanda	mupashi
west	east
mammalian shade	human shade
darkness	lightness
evil possession	avoidance of possession
evil	goodness
red	white
musebe bark	mwanya root

OBSERVATION: Doctoring the kill

Chando took the mwanya roots--large, white, slimy, and about the size of medium carrot roots--and flattened them with the tip of his axe. Some were given to Lubeles along with two pieces of musebe bark taken from each side of the tree. Lubeles put these in his mouth and chewed. Then Chando made the same preparation for me. The musebe bark tasted resinous; the mwanya root soon became a gelatinous, fibrous mass. Chando told me to hold onto Lubeles' belt, and we both closed our eyes. Lubeles held the .375 rifle with which he had shot the animal. Chando then with his eyes open led us to the carcass. He led us over a circuitous route to the elephant, instructing us to beware of holes of past elephant footprints. We went first to the trunk, where we all stooped to the ground. Chando then lifted the trunk, took each of our hands and placed them on it saying, "Uyu nama (or chibanda) ni apa--the animal is here." We were instructed to spit in the trunk. Then we stood and went around to the anus. We stooped again and Chando had us each grip the tail. Holding the tail to guide us to the anus,we each spat in the anus.

Then Chando permitted us to stand up and open our eyes. Lubeles then ran the gun through the elephant's back legs along the belly up to and between the front legs. Then he climbed on top of the elephant and hit its rib cage with the butt of the gun saying, "We nama tuli nenu--you animal, we are with you." I was ordered to do the same. Chando then went around to the tail and tied a knot in one of the hairs. We returned to the village, carrying with us a section of elephant trunk and the tail.

INTERPRETATION: A novice hunter must be led by one more experienced. His eyes are closed--believed to affect the chibanda with a similar disability. The chibanda cannot see the approaching hunter as in the black of night. The medicines are chewed together and in this way they become his personal medicine for protection. First,the trunk is approached and the hunter spits into the nostrils. The chibanda is believed to reside in the head, and to exit and catch the hunter here or at the anus. The chibanda is innocuous to a hunter charged with medicines. The gun is next passed between the elephant's hind legs and moved toward the head. Why? Chando said, "The chibanda might try and follow the hunter. It would look in the gun and see that the gun--not the hunter--had killed it. The legs make the animal move. The gun then passes near the heart of the animal and the part of the animal which touches the ground." Then,the hunter climbs on top of the carcass, bangs the gun down, and repeats a slogan.

The slogan used above does not give much insight into the meaning of this action. Other clan slogans emphasize, "You animal, it is not we who have killed you. It is Lesa. Don't follow us." In other words, it is a command to the chibanda not to follow and cause trouble to the hunter. Knot tying in the tail apparently is traditional. The reason given was so the meat would be tasty and the people who ate it would not get sick.

OBSERVATION: Cutting up elephant--July 25, 1967

Many people were already at the carcass when we arrived from Chando's village at about 8:20 a.m. the next morning. They had not approached the carcass but were seated some distance away. They informed us that they had chased four lions from the carcass when they arrived. We could see the damage. The lions had disemboweled the elephant and had eaten the bottom of the stomach, letting out the cavity juices and leaving parts scattered. They had finished the remaining part of the trunk and had eaten the tongue.

The cutting of the meat went smoothly. The top of the carcass was skinned, and the meat was cut in large chunks. These were piled on sections of skin or on branches. As the head was skinned, the sections of meat were laid in a separate pile. Meat from the temporals and around the ears is referred to as inama shyabwanga (munofwe) and is kept separate for the vizimba ceremony. This meat

was later carried to the village by Chando's wife and daughter. Another pile of meat was laid aside as tribute for the chief.

When the men had removed most of the meat from the carcass, several widows begged knives and continued cutting small pieces from the skeleton. Some men ridiculed them, but they still continued to glean small portions of meat. When cutting ceased, meat was distributed to all present. The distribution of meat went rather smoothly, but it is always a source of conflict. There is never enough to satisfy everybody.

INTERPRETATION: The elephant is one of the large mammals identified with the chief. In the past, both tusks of an elephant killed on a chief's land were delivered to him as tribute. Tribute is no longer given to chiefs. I had borrowed the chief's rifle for Lubeles to use, and Lubeles suggested that it was appropriate to send meat in return.

Widows are the ones who suffer most from lack of meat. These and older women who have no relatives who are hunters are constant beggars around good hunters. Cutting meat is not considered women's work--they normally sit in the background watching. Their work is to carry the meat. The three women cutting were not sure of obtaining meat and they were notorious beggars. Though they were ridiculed, apparently they felt that this was

the only way in which they could secure sufficient meat for themselves and their dependents.

OBSERVATION: Taking out the tusks

Tusk removal was a major task which required four hours of work by two to three men. First the meat had to be removed from the skull. Then the bone surrounding the tusks had to be very carefully axed away, and the tusks--with the pulp tissue inside--were taken away by two men. The women and young men turned their heads in the opposite direction while each tusk was carried away. While the meat was being taken from the skull, Chando left temporarily and went to collect medicine for treating the tusks. For this he required foliage from one of the following trees: musimbite (Combretum imberbe), musambamfwa (unidentified) or musolo (Pseudolachnostylis maprouneifolia). The leaves were chewed and then spit on the pulp tissue before it was taken out of the tusk, and also in the pulp chamber. When the tusks were disengaged from the skull, two men took them away from the rest of the carcass. Here they built a fire and, after having spit on the pulp tissue, they warmed the outside of the tusk with the fire. Then the tusk was tapped until the pulp fell out. After both tusks were depulped, the pulp tissue was burned. No person was permitted to witness this action except the older men.

The meat was distributed and the crowd dispersed. Lubeles took some elephant dung and returned to the spot

where he had first wounded the elephant. He flattened the dung on the ground with his shoe and left the scene. INTERPRETATION: The leaves of any of these three trees can be used for the ritual of removing the pulp tissue from elephant tusks. These trees were each described as cimuti chakosa (strong trees) and capable of neutralizing the weakness inherent in the pulp (nteta). The pulp--white in color--when taken out of the tusk resembles a limp penis, and if doctoring is not performed,it is feared that the hunter (or any male members who are present) will not have sufficient strength for further erections (mwanalume kuti tabuleya wakosa iyoo). I was told that if women see the pulp, their husbands might be similarly afflicted. In some areas,men, when removing the pulp tissue, must wear an apron of these "strong leaves" around their waist. To be without descendents is social death and, formerly, impotent adults were not buried in the ground as were others who had living descendants. For the Bisa to be unable to procreate is the ultimate curse.

In many drinking songs sung by Bisa huntsmen, it is the successful hunter's opposite who is often derided and jeered. A continuously unproductive hunter is called a fomba, but this designation has additional connotations--a society "dropout," a sterile man, a person unsuccessful in all professions and roles who is suspected of resorting to sorcery to obtain success or to harm his accusers, a person dependent upon the productivity of others, etc.

Some attributes of fombas are implied in the following songs:

Fomba, ukutikuleya
Wakolola, ee wakola.

Fomba, you must go now
You have already scraped together more meat than your share.

Munyante chibola
Munyante chibola
Munyante chibola
Atabuka

Step on the impotent man (his penis). . . .
He (it) doesn't rise.

Mwine mulya tukomupoka
Manga tutina kuli chibola
Musolo wimba namaseba
We "mwana wa ngombe"* tukoya

You owner of that house, we shall take our daughter back
Witchcraft we fear from impotent men.
The honey guide sings its denunciation
You "child of an uncareful mother"* we go.

(*Ngombe means cow, woman, navel but undoubtedly this expressed the belief that,if during birth blood from the navel cord falls on a child's genitals, the child becomes impotent).

The symbolic motif expressed in reference to the pulp tissue is in the following paradigm:

hunter	fomba
producer	non-producer
legitimate magic	illegitimate magic
strength	weakness
fertile	sterile
dependents	no dependents
pride	shame

Kusidika chibanda (to neutralize the evil spirit) is what Lubeles called his action of going back to the place where he first wounded the elephant (bulambo) and pressing his foot over its dung. This is, he said, so

that the mammal's chibanda will not follow the hunter, but will remain in the bush. If the elephant had run far from this place, I was told that Lubeles would not have performed this last action.

OBSERVATION: Vizimba ceremony--July 30, 1967

Several days before the ceremony, Chando called Lubeles and asked him where he wished to hold the ceremony. He inquired whether Lubeles wished it held at his first wife's village (inanda ikulu-great house) or in Chando's village (inanda inono--small house,referring to the residence of Lubeles' second wife). Lubeles replied that since he was in residence in his father's village when he killed the elephant, the ceremony should be performed there. Then Chando told his son that he had to be away and that Lubeles must prepare for the ceremony himself.

Lubeles was instructed to take bark from the east side of a musangu tree (Acacia albida). Then he should collect malenje grass (unidentified) from the river banks. He was to divide the musangu bark into two pieces and tie malenje roots around each piece. These were to be placed in the elephant's ears. This meat was not to be salted when cooked in a special container.

Lubeles spent the afternoon of July 30 preparing for the vizimba ceremony. This preparation included buying beer from across the river and collecting the roots and preparing the three poles that supported the pot where the head meat was to be cooked.

When I arrived at Chando's village about 6 p.m., the fire was already lit and some women were cooking nsima on an adjacent fire. The tin can used to cook the head meat had been placed on a log fire supported at the sides by three poles. Lubeles wanted to make sure that I had come with the chief's rifle (the one with which he had killed the elephant) and shells. The women sat on the east side of the fire while the men assembled on the opposite. There were few men in attendance and of these only one old man was a resident of Chando's village. The remainder were from Lubeles' natal village. A space for dancing was left vacant between groups of men and women.

The men led the ceremony by beginning a chant and then by leading the women in a response, which they sang and clapped. Then the hunter and a few others, either women or men, went into the center around the fire and danced. Usually the men acted out hunting scenes--all in the form of dancing. There was the hunter holding the rifle, walking in one direction and pointing it, straining his neck and shading his eyes looking for game, pointing in one direction, kneeling and creeping up on an animal, shooting off the rifle, running out of the circle and collecting a child and bringing him back as a dead animal, and finally dancing over the child's body. Sometimes the gun was placed on the ground and the hunter danced around and jumped over it. A woman held the gun

on one occasion and was teased by the men about "her gun." Intervals between songs were spent in drinking beer. For several of the dances, children were dragged into the circle by the adults and told to mimic adult movements. One scene was acted out by Lubeles and a cousin simulating the stalk of the elephant. The head meat was stirred at intervals, and care was taken that there was always plenty of water in the pot.

Translations of some traditional songs give insights into the world of the Bisa hunter:

Bamuya nenama silabamona
Kansi konkemo

This is a song of intercession to the hunter's ancestors (mipashi). The hunter requests their aid in being able to find mammals and to follow them successfully.

Mfuti yanji nimawenzela
Yenda ne kawele

A song of happiness upon the success of the hunter. He and his gun have been successful in securing game. There will be noise of happiness from the people who return with him to the bush to carry the dead beast back to the village.

Musekela kubamba
Yafwa kale yatwanula menso

A song in which the hunter expresses disappointment in those to whom he gives meat. These recipients seem fond of him only when he has killed a mammal (their eyes light up with happiness upon seeing it).

Balya baleya
Nibamunjili nakuba bambona

A song of misfortune. The hunter has been hunting for some time. He sees game but as he begins to stalk, they see him and run away. Warthog is the animal mentioned,but the name of any species may be substituted.

About 9 p.m. I left with the party returning to Lubeles' natal village. Lubeles told me that after we had left, all remaining members of Chando's village ate nsima and some of the head meat which had been cooked separately (not the medicated portion) without salt. Then the pot which contained the cooked meat was emptied and cold water was placed therein. Everyone washed his hands in this water after eating, and then it was poured in front of the hunter's hut. When everyone had retired to his hut, Lubeles took some cold water and washed both himself and his wife. The medicated meat from the head (inama shyabwanga), some nsima, and the stirring stick were saved for the remaining rite the next morning.

INTERPRETATION: The vizimba ceremony is held as the sun sets. At this time the mipashi (ancestral spirits) are believed to leave the bush for stations around the village from which they protect their sleeping descendants from evil spirits (fibanda) during the night. For this ceremony is essentially one to show appreciation to the ancestral spirits who have helped the hunter secure game by interceding on his behalf before Lesa. At such

ceremonies, there should be no ill-will or feelings of hostility exhibited among kinsmen. Richards (1939: 339) mentions that during the fishing rites among the Bemba, a priest exhorts the people to express their grievances so that the rite might become efficacious. Although no catharsis was mentioned by the Bisa with whom I talked, I suspect that the communal consumption of food and ritual washing symbolized the cleansing of relationships among the hunter's kin.

From the time when Lubeles began hunting elephants on July 16, he had not had sexual intercourse with either of his wives. After the evening ceremony was over and everyone had retired to his hut, Lubeles and his wife both washed themselves with water. By this act Lubeles was re-established as a full participating member of Bisa society (rites of reincorporation).

Chando, Lubeles' father, was absent from the vizimba ceremony, and the absence of a key figure in the previous rituals,may be effective in symbolizing the change from previous relationships. By his absence, Chando enabled Lubeles to pre-empt the role of village headman and provider for his matrikin and in-laws.

In order to prepare the meat from the elephant's head, two strips of bark were taken from the east side of the musangu tree (Acacia albida). The east side is where the rising sun (kuntulo kasuba) first strikes the tree, and as mentioned, this direction is associated

with good spirits (mipashi) and good fortune (lubuto). Fibanda, or evil spirits, are associated with the west side. Malenje grass (unidentified) is tied around each piece of musangu bark; both grass and musangu are relished by elephants. These medicines are placed in the elephant's external auricular orifices, I was told, to prevent the next elephant from being aware of the hunter's approach. No salt is used in preparing the meat for consumption at this ceremony. Salt is used only for purifying ceremonies and is described as hot (kubangama). Ancestral shades are said to be cold (kutalala); one can not purify the purified.

All implements used for cooking the head meat are brought into the village from the bush;but they must also be returned to the bush so that the village does not become contaminated. The green pegs which supported the pot containing the head meat (inama shyabwanga), the firewood, and stirring stick are all particular woods which must be returned to the bush from whence they were gathered.

OBSERVATION: Returning inama shyabwanga (head meat) to the bush

Early the next morning Lubeles and I went out into the surrounding bush and located a fresh elephant trail. Lubeles carried both the stirring stick and the head meat (inama shyabwanga) which had been prepared and cooked the previous evening. The meat was surrounded by nsima. When we found an elephant path, Lubeles dug a shallow

hole and placed the meat and nsima therein. Next he covered it over with dirt, placed his foot atop, and while throwing away the stirring stick said, "We nama shala apa--you animal stay here."

INTERPRETATION: The inama shyabwanga is buried in a place where it readily returns and influences additional elephants to succumb to the hunter. Thus when a hunter dreams continuously (ukuloleshya) about elephants, it is considered a good omen (mupashi). He should readily and easily procure an elephant should he decide to pursue it.

Discussion

As in all rituals, the acts and materials described above are symbolic and expressive; their real meanings, however, may remain obscure to the observer who confines his scrutiny to the elephant. Clues for understanding these rites are to be found in the nature of Bisa society and their perception of the world. The slaughter of an important and prestigious mammal by a maturing huntsman provides the opportunity for Bisa elders to reinforce by ritual the matrix of beliefs and values,--the building blocks of Bisa society. For ritual provides a way and a means of expressing in sensory form and within an idiom comprehensible by a given society its own concepts, attitudes, and values.

Radcliffe-Brown (1922) suggested that one of the functions of ritual was to express and reinforce certain "sentiments" and social values upon which the proper functioning of society depends. In The Andaman Islanders he argues that unless a sufficient number of people in a given society holds and acts upon basic values in the society itself could not endure. He suggests that it is the function of ritual within a society to keep values and "social sentiments" central in the minds of its members. Studies of ritual since those of Radcliffe-Brown have demonstrated that ritual may also symbolize values and notions other than social cohesion and solidarity (cf. Turner, 1957; Middleton and Winter, 1963; Gluckman, 1965).

Forde (1964: 261) suggests that there is more to supernatural beliefs and ritual than mere "symbolic expression of social relations."

> ". . . that supernatural beliefs and the rite with which they are associated are by no means always evoked by certain for a particular social pattern, but may be stimulated by other conditions of the human environment through the values and hazards attached to material resources and techniques, the incidence of disease and other risks to health and life. (Forde 1964: 261).

In sections above I have suggested some of the environmental harshness with which the Bisa must contend. Illness and death from diseases are common, and infant mortality is high. Famines and accidents with wild animals are common. With their limited technology, the

"margin of security" which they can maintain is not much above "subsistence." Methods of storage and preservation of food are few and unreliable. And in all their activities they are exposed to the capriciousness of death and insufficient rainfall. Under such conditions, it is natural and understandable that the Bisa would attempt to control misfortune and fortune by resorting to magic and appeals to their ancestral spirits. Such was the main theoretical theme of Malinowski (1925, republished 1948). But my intended mention of these hazards was mainly that, given the circularity and closed belief systems of most "simple" societies, the frequent occurrence of disasters only reinforces their implicit premises and does not challenge them.

Beliefs and rituals among simpler societies contain strong moral elements which refer to the social relations between members of society. Radcliffe-Brown perceived this in his studies of the Andaman Islanders when he wrote:

> We may perhaps adequately state the Andaman notion by saying that moral law and natural law are not distinguished from one another. The welfare of the society depends upon right actions; wrong actions inevitably lead to evil results. Giving way to anger is a wrong action, as being a cause of social disturbance. In the legends the catastrophes that overwhelmed the ancestors are in many instances represented as being caused by someone giving way to anger. There is a right way and a wrong way to set about making such a thing as a bow. We should explain this by saying that the right way will give a good serviceable weapon, whereas the wrong way will give an inferior

> or useless one. The Andaman Islander tends to look at the matter from a different angle; the right way is right because it is the one that has been followed from time immemorial, and any other way is wrong, is contrary to custom, to law. Law for the Andaman Islander, means that there is an order of the universe, characterized by absolute uniformity; this order was established once for all in the time of the ancestors, and is not to be interfered with, the results of any such interference being evil, ranging from merely minor ills such as disappointment or discomfort to great calamities. The law of compensation is absolute. Any deviation from law or custom will inevitably bring its results, and inversely any evil that befalls must be the result of some lack of observance. (Radcliffe-Brown 1922: 399-400).

As Gluckman (1962) points out in the quote beginning this section, the moral universe of a "simple" society is closely tied to their community of relations. For their beliefs are explicit that failure in kinship duties and obligations is reflected in the disturbance of the natural order, and disasters in the natural world are referred to ruptures in normal relations between relatives and the sexes. Successful huntsmanship emphasizes personal bravery, skill, and spiritual merit. By it, an individual may distinguish himself as an individual and build up a following of these dependent upon him. Hunters, in their own opinion, are fierce (ubukali), tough, brave, and above the normal stream of humans. But society norms try to extinguish the idea of meat belonging to the hunter to distribute as he pleases. For the Bisa maintain that a hunter receives his prowess from benevolent ancestors who act on behalf of all their descendants, and reminders of ancestral and elder power are writ large in the

preceding ritual. The assumption of an important and prestigious role as hunter implies rights, expectations, and obligations to his matrikin.

The consciousness of ancestral dependence begins when a hunter receives his "call" to assume hunting as a profession. It is reinforced at ceremonies commemorating his kill of each new species of game, and his rights and obligations to his matrikin are explicit in rites occurring when a young hunter inherits the position and weapon of a deceased elder. This mesh of ritual and rites ensures that each maturing hunter is accountable to his ancestors, to his elders, and through them to his matrilineal relatives. He is graphically reminded that he holds his status as a sacred trust, on the one hand as successor and perpetrator of an important position, and on the other as a representative of his lineage. Rites of passage express the importance which a society attaches to changes in status among its members, and the smooth working of any social system depends upon everyone's knowing and accepting his proper role and the rights and obligations which this assumption of role demands.

The two participants in the ritual over the elephant carcass did not seem to me to believe that they were making contact with fibanda (evil spirits). Rather, it was implicit that should they fail to perform the rites, or should they perform them incorrectly, they would be punished by their ancestral spirits; and this

would make their community vulnerable to affliction from outside spirits since they had not sustained traditional orderly behavior. For without these acts, younger generations of Bisa hunters would be unable to appreciate and grasp the basic values and beliefs of their society and therefore would be unable to conduct themselves properly. It is the esoteric medicines and ritual which matures and builds hunters into socially acceptable individuals. It is ritual which transforms a small-game hunter into a proven hunter of larger game and impresses him with the duties and obligations and nature of his new state. For it is not just the acquisition and knowledge of medicines, but a change in role which is dramatized.

Turner (reprinted 1967) suggests that the transitional period in rites of passage is important for the edification of neophytes. For it is through the neophyte's submission to an elder that he becomes malleable for reflection upon the nature of his society. As Turner mentions:

> . . . neophytes are withdrawn from their structural positions and consequently from the values, norms, sentiments, and techniques associated with those positions. They are also divested of their previous habits of thought, feeling, and actions. During the liminal period, neophytes are alternately forced and encouraged to think about their society, their cosmos, and the powers that generate and sustain them. Liminality may be partly described as a stage of reflection. In it those ideas, sentiments, and facts that had been hitherto for the neophytes bound up in configurations and accepted unthinkingly are, as it were, resolved into their constituents. These constituents are isolated and made into objects

> of reflection for the neophytes by such processes as componental exaggeration and dissociation by varying concomitants. (Turner 1967: 105).

It may be that in ascribing to the elephant a powerful chibanda--capable of afflicting not just the hunter but also his wife, children, and other members of his village--that the hunter becomes aware of forces operative in both the natural and social worlds and of the powers which sustain him. Beneath this consideration, however, is the deeper ethic that to persist in tribal custom and norms is to live adequately, but to be remiss in one's duties and obligations is to invite disaster.

But it was not just the hunter to whom the rituals have meaning. Members of his village must not quarrel, fight, or curse (i.e. make the village "hot") while the hunter is in the bush. The hunter's wife is especially under restraint while her husband is afield. She must abstain from any suggestive advances from other men, even to the extent of refusing tobacco or other goods from strangers.

By observing the behavior of elephants which they encounter in the bush, hunters are made aware of questionable and illicit situations in the village. Should a hunter encounter elephants copulating or lying down, or should he be charged by an elephant, he must return to the village immediately, for as long as he remains in the bush he is in danger. For, according to the Bisa, "elephants never tell lies."

No organism approaches its environment randomly, and in the case of man there is an additional set of variables--a cultural filter through which components of his environment are perceived. This is the so-called "middle term, a collection of specific objectives and values, a body of knowledge and belief: in other words a cultural pattern" (Forde 1950: 463). In studies of man, it is possible to describe some of the same types of interactional relationships defined for other animals, but with man one is dealing with a far more complicated and complex interaction which is sometimes difficult to evaluate.

The present study is concerned mainly with Bisa perception and utilization of mammalian resources. The Bisa have a sound knowledge of their environment and the hunter knows well the habits and qualities of the mammals which are his quarries. But interposed between and entwined with his empirical knowledge are his concepts of magic, supernatural beliefs and symbols which cannot be readily and easily separated from his empirical efforts. The life of a Bisa hunter and his pursuit of game must be understood in terms of a meaningful continuum in which the interpretation of life in society and the other life around it is perceived to share many characteristics in common. Security of the hunter afield is seen in terms of the nature of social relationships in his village. His medicines are believed not only

to protect him in the bush, but his knowledge of esoteric substances enables him to protect his status in society. The mammals which he hunts possess human attributes. Unless traditional norms are precisely followed these mammalian shades may endanger or harm the hunter and his kin.

The distribution and use of the hunter's proceeds are controlled by the nature of Bisa social organization. Meat itself has high symbolic value and the range of its distribution within a village, or beyond, symbolizes the range of social relationships and the social nexuses between individuals whose focal point is a single hunter. It is not that meat itself is unimportant, but rather that the giving of meat functions as a symbol of recognized kinship ties. Thus to understand the hunter we must understand principles of Bisa social organization and status relationships. For within the traditional system, the use of land and its resources was mediated through the particular characteristics of the Bisa socio-political structure.

Whereas in the past most Bisa aspired to become hunters or traders, labor migrations to the cities has introduced an element of diversification in traditional patterns of attaining status. Today, most men, beginning in their late teens, migrate to the cities for work and return to the Valley at intervals with goods and money which they distribute among kin. Some who elect

to remain in the Valley after a few trips to the city, may establish stores and use their money to invest in stocks of goods for resale. Fewer men may find openings in government jobs such as game guards or court messengers. But most of those returning to the Valley from sojourns in the cities find little of value in traditional pursuits, and young people in particular either seek to withdraw from under the influence of their elders and establish settlements on their own, or quickly return to the cities.

Today there are few Bisa who choose traditional patterns of huntsmanship, and fewer still who seize the opportunity to kill the more prestigious mammals. The tradition of antbear hunting has almost faded from memory, and I knew of only two elderly Bisa who could provide me with information on its ritual. Marauding lions and elephants are usually shot by game guards posted in the corridor by the government. I could not detect any detrimental influences which the few hunters had on population levels of the game mammals which they normally hunted. Whereas in the past a hunter's wide distribution of meat among real and classificatory kin enhanced his prestige, the quantities of game now killed, by game guards on patrol and by Europeans on safari, and its free distribution have cut deeply into the hunter's traditional prestige and status.

It should be understood that my insights into Bisa society have been obtained from only one of many possible avenues. But many of the same values in traditional Valley Bisa society could be documented in other rituals and ceremonies as well whether these be birth, other traditional initiations into adulthood, or burials. But these values are bound to change more rapidly now than in the past with the opening of a school in the chief's village and a dry season track making travel to the towns of Fort Jameson and Mpika more assessible. Such rapid changes among the Valley Bisa will largely be the result of external policies and practices which are undirected and unplanned from the point of view of the local community. These changes will entail shifts in traditional orientations, technological improvements, and new political interests and pressures. And changes will undoubtedly bring "problems" as the Bisa adapt themselves to new interests and pressures. But this much should be expected, for any society's culture must be seen as in a state of flux.

In closing, I ought to forecast the impact which these radical changes in Bisa orientations will have on wild mammal populations in the corridor. If one can draw conclusions from other areas in Zambia and in the world, cultural change will inevitably bring about a radical dislocation in Bisa traditional views toward game and their surroundings. And undoubtedly during this

process certain species of wild mammals may become endangered or appear to suffer inordinately at the hands of the Bisa. It is my concern also that those whose duties are to man the bulwarks of wild populations against their destruction at the hands of man should also remain sensitive to the social pressures and stresses to which Bisa society may also be responding.

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