LUAPULA VALLEY LUUNDA ROYAL PRAISE-POETRY:
FORM, CONTENT AND FUNCTION

BY

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DEDICATION

To my parents Mr. and Mrs. P. Kafimbwa

who have modelled the person in me.
DECLARATION

I, Anthony Chibende Kafimbwa, hereby solemnly do declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has never been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other University.

Signed:...........................................

Date:..................7TH MAY 1994..................
This dissertation of Anthony Chibende Kafimbwa is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in African Literature by the University of Zambia.

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This dissertation discusses the form, content and function of Luapula Valley Luunda Royal poetry. Interest in this kind of research was born out of the knowledge that in earlier studies of Luunda-Kazembe royal poetry, there is an apparent lack of literary analysis of the poems used.

There have been some major studies in this field. The first one is Chiwale's work (1962) which deals with meanings and the historical background of the praise-poetry and praise-names of Eastern Luunda. Chiwale's work has not presented Luunda-Kazembe praise poems as poetry by way of discussing poetic qualities. As a matter of fact he confesses that his "...is not organised or subsidised research, the information is perforce limited and somewhat patchy". (p.1). As I have pointed out above, Chiwale deals with meanings of praise-names and praise-poetry hence the "limited" and "patchy" information.

Secondly Mapoma's works, (1974, 1978, 1980), although literally, do not specifically discuss the praise-poetry of the Luunda of Mwata Kazembe. In the 1974 work, Mapoma deals firstly with the musical practice of "Ing'omba" or musicians, the royal music of most of the Luapula Province traditional chiefs. In addition he shows how musical structure and practice of "Ing'omba" reflect beliefs and are based on the social structure of the Bemba people.
The 1978 work discusses the social functions of music in society and gives general examples drawing from different societies in Luapula Province of which Luunda is one. In his Ph.D thesis Mapoma discusses "The Determinants of Style in the Music of Ing'omba" and once again looks at various royal musicians.

The major objective of my study therefore, is to fill this gap by providing a new insight into the literary aspects of Luunda-Kazembe poetry.

The dissertation is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which discusses inter-alia, the people, the poetic tradition, the kingship and the royal poet. This section is important because it has been considered that a research of this nature demands an examination of the matrix out of which the praise-poet draws his subject matter and style (Moyo, 1978).

The second chapter firstly deals with some general aspects of poetry. Secondly, I have dealt with relevant literature; the analysis and discussion of poetic forms in Luunda-Kazembe poetry.

In the third chapter, effort has been made to consider the content, i.e. major themes and how they relate to the historical tradition, side by side with the socio-political functions of the praise-poems.

The fourth and final chapter examines the implications of my study. In addition to that a few suggestions have been offered for future research in this area.
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This dissertation discusses Luunda-Kazembe royal poems which are a result of many contributions. Therefore, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who assisted me in one way or another in the realisation of this text. In particular, I wish to thank Mr. Chipolobwe Mano who is currently the most outstanding Luunda-Kazembe royal poet, Mwata Kazembe XVIII, Mr. Jasques Chiwale, and Mr. Kasapo Chisakula for his generous contribution.

I am greatly indebted to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Paulino Kafimbwa without whose financial, material and moral support I would not be what I am today. They endured painful and sometimes heart breaking experiences through the years in order to build and shape my personality.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. The People

(i) Locality

The Luunda-Kazembe are spread along the Luapula Valley whose population is estimated to be about 200,000 people. The Luunda capital, Mwansabombwe, one of the biggest rural townships in Zambia, has over 60,000 people (Chinyanta and Chiwale, 1989). This capital lies on the banks of Ng'ona River and is bordered by a big ridge from which there is a beautiful view of the Kabumbu lagoon which joins the Pembe lagoon to form a small lake.

The Luunda country lies west of Kawambwa District. Its boundaries are the Mankele Ridge in the East where it borders with Chishinga country, the Luapula River in the west, the small Kasenga stream in the South across which are the Aushi people, and the Kabukwe stream to the North.

(ii) Origin

The Luunda-Kazembe are a tribe of the Bantu people who came from the North (Sudan) and
settled in today's Republic of Zaire. They set up their Kingdom in Nkalanyi (Luunda-country) from which all the Luunda Chiefdoms rose to rule in many lands in both Zambia and Zaire.

According to Chinyanta and Chiwale (1989) many of the Bantu tribal groups in Northern Zambia came from the Luba Kingdom of Mwata Yamvwa which lay to the north-west of the Luapula River. A number of these settled in the present day Zambia, between the 16th and 17th Centuries. The Bisa and Lala groups came first, followed by the Bemba who under the leadership of Chitimukulu ("the big tree"), made their way pushing the Bisa into the Luangwa Valley, to settle near the Chambeshi River. Chitimukulu III established the present headquarters of the Bemba paramount Chiefs.

The Luunda who came in three groups also broke away from Mwata Yamvwa around 1600 A.D. One group, whose leader was Chinyama, settled in the North-western province of Zambia while Tshikudi's group went to establish the Imbangala Kingdom in today's Republic of Angola. The third and last group to leave is that of Mwata Kazembe in the Luapula Valley.
The reasons for leaving are not known but one hypothesis is that Mwata Yamvwa Muteba was lazy and the only work he could do was to send his army into various lands and "from there they paid homage to him, and brought him tribute" (Chinyanta and Chiwale, 1989:7). He wanted to expand his Kingdom by conquering all neighbouring tribes. The tribes, and supposedly the Luunda-Kazembe Kingdom thus developed.

(iii) **Occupation**

Luundaland has a beautiful landscape which descends from the hills to the meandering Luapula River that demarcates Zaire and Zambia. The Luunda people are traditionally fishermen. It is said that the Luunda country has become rich, productive and famous partly because of the Luapula River. Mwansabombwe, the capital, is a big commercial centre where people are engaged in trading soft goods and hardware, and managing bars and restaurants. Other people have taken to farming on the outskirts of the capital. This new development has moved people away from their traditional occupation.

(iv) **Language**

The linguistic nature of Luunda-Kazembe royal praise poetry is complex in that it is a
combination of not only Luba and Luunda but also Shila and Chishinga. When Makwe Ruweji, granddaughter of Kinaweji Kantanje, the founder of the Luunda Empire, married Chibinda Ilunga, a Luba stray hunter, the Luunda people were "Lubaised". When the Luunda people came to the Luapula Valley they were "Bembaised" as they found the Shila and Chishinga tribesmen in the area they occupy to this day. Today, the language currently spoken along the Luapula Valley is referred to as "cina-Luunda", a name derived from the name of the tribe itself.

Most of the praises are recited in the Luba Language. This shows the origin of the people and the language. But there is the problem of translation. Nobody who attempts to translate what I will term as "Bembaised Luba" (Luba that has borrowed terms and phrases or suffered linguistic influence from Bemba language) will doubt that, as Ulli Beier (1970:11) argues, "Poetry is what is left out in translation". There are simply many problems in making translations especially in poetry characterised by archaic terms and phrases. The Luba
and Bemba languages have different structures and a totally different cultural history and background from that of English. I have therefore found it important not to translate names of some images in order to retain "the poetry" even in the English version. Where this is done, a footnote appears to explain the name(s).

In view of the above, my analysis and discussion of Luunda poetry is not all that can be said about them, i.e. other literary scholars may make more and perhaps different observations.

My major concern is to discuss Luunda-Kazembe royal poetry. The study is based on a corpus of ten poems taken from the many that I collected from the Luapula Valley. I recorded the poems on audio-tapes, transcribed and then translated them into English. I have selected these poems not only on the basis of their translatability, but also due to the various themes they represent. Furthermore, the repertoires have been made in such a way that I have moved through the years examining praise-poems from the 19th Century to date.

The other reason is that my Supervisor and I agreed this was adequate for a study of this
nature. The Praise poems discussed in this dissertation will have served their purpose if they not only stimulate interest and please readers but also bring forth some understanding of the Luunda royal praise-poems.

(v) **Luunda-Kazembe Oral Tradition**

The people of Luunda-Kazembe have a very rich oral tradition. This means they do not only chant royal praises but also practise other forms of oral poetry. Almost all members of Luunda-Kazembe community take part in oral poetry. But there is a remarkable difference between ordinary or less specialised poets and court poets. Court poetry is taken by specialised praise-singers. This topic will receive adequate treatment under Section 'C' of this chapter. Discussed below are some of the important types of oral poetry:

(a) **Elegiac Poetry**

Elegies are poems or songs composed for funerals and memorial rites. According
to Finnegans (1970) elegiac poetry is more private than official, and as such it tends to be performed by non-professionals rather than state officials. Since the songs often involve wailing, sobbing and weeping.

Elegies express the inevitability of death, i.e. people simply accept the fact that they will die! Death therefore is seen as a transition from mortality to immortality. Lastly, it must be appreciated that generally elegies centre on the positive rather than the negative aspects or attributes of an individual. But, although the deceased's great deeds and ancestry are often lauded elegies may also criticize.

(b) Praise-poetry
This type of poetry may be private or official. The official type is often referred to as panegyric poetry. It is formalised. Panegyric poetry is directed publicly to kings, chiefs and notable leaders and is often political.
Private poetry on the other hand, concerns individual or family praises. Family or self-praises lay stress on the significance of personal achievement. Private poetry is often social.

(c) Special purpose poetry
Special purpose poetry pertains to significant communal activities such as hunting, war and initiation ritual. These activities demand the recitation of poetry. Luunda-Kazembe citizens no longer wage tribal wars! Hunting too, is now prohibited by law! But the initiation rituals are still practised. Initiation ceremonies are rites of passage that are usually accompanied by song and dance. Among the Luunda-Kazembe, women especially are secluded from the rest of society and are taught in order to educate and prepare them on how to behave in society as mature adults. This happens during the 'cisungu' or puberty ceremony.

(d) Lyric poetry
Lyric poetry is believed to be the most popular poetry in sub-saharan Africa
(Finnegan 1970). Under lyric poetry, Finnegan lists such types of poetry as hunting songs, military poetry, love songs, religious poetry (hymns, prayers, praises). That is why she says:—

...lyric songs ... are for more informal occasions. Whereas much other poetry depends on a specialist and even esoteric tradition, these involve popular participation. The verbal content of these songs tends to be short (though the actual performance may be lengthy) and is often ephemeral (p. 241).

She further adds that there is a lot of improvisation. Also lyric songs provide wide scope for individual expression. This is where lyric poetry offers social criticism. For instance, women may complain to and or request their husbands to do something for them. This poetry therefore accompanies activities such as pounding cassava, harvesting, shelling maize and grinding millet on grinding stones. Men too, praise themselves or may simply sing to while away the time as they fish.

Finnegan (1970) points out that lyric songs are associated with birth, initiation and puberty, betrothal, beer drinking, marriage, acquiring a new
status, funeral and memorial celebrations.

Finally, I must point out that these types of oral poetry are very distinct from Luunda-Kazembe royal poetry. Whereas most of these forms of poetry are communicated in contemporary, ordinary language, Luunda-Kazembe court poetry is communicated in more esoteric language. Lastly, it is important that from the above discussion on Luunda oral tradition, one may recognise that the categorization of oral poetic forms is arbitrary as (the definitions of) some forms do overlap.

B. The Kingship

Kinaweji Kantanje, who in the 15th Century settled in Nkalanyi, the Luunda capital in Zaire's Shaba Province, was the founder of the Luunda Kingdom. Kinaweji had a son called Nkondi. Nkondi, who succeeded his father, had three sons, Tshikudi, Chinyama and Dyulu. Between Chinyama and Dyulu was Nkondi's only daughter, Makwe Ruweji. Tshikudi and Chinyama were so cruel to their father that they one day beat him up very severely. Ruweji saved him. As a token of appreciation, Nkondi declared at an open gathering or "mutentamo" that Ruweji was the next heir to the throne of Luunda Kingdom. Consequently, following her father's death, Ruweji assumed overall power over the Kingdom.
Then one day there came a stray hunter, Chibinda (marksman) Ilunga, who after introducing himself to Ruweji and the Luunda Chiefs attracted the Queen. They married despite the Queen's brothers' refusal. To add insult to injury, Ruweji gave away her power by surrendering the "Lukano" or royal bracelet to Chibinda. Thenceforth, Ilunga became the ruler of Luunda state.

Seeing Ruweji's unprecedented act of marrying a foreigner who had even assumed total leadership of the empire, Tshikudi and Chinyama protested and broke away. Ruweji remained with her younger brother, Dyulu. Ruweji did not bear Chibinda any child. So she decided to give him another woman, Kamanga Lwaza. Of Chibinda and Kamanga was born Luseng, who succeeded his father. Luseng was succeeded by his son Naweji.

It is a Luunda custom to declaim a succession name, personal eulogy and appellation. And unless one knew a lot about the traditional etiquette of the Luunda Kingdom, one would not succeed to the throne. Naweji pronounced himself as "Mwata Yamvwa" (Lord of the Viper) at his installation. According to Kapaya (n.d.), Chinyanta and Chiwale (1989), Naweji praised himself by this name because he said he would kill all chiefs who did not capitulate to him.
This title has since become the hereditary title of rulers of the defunct Luunda state in Zaire.

Naweji was succeeded by Muteba. Some historical texts say Muteba was Naweji's son. But it is not so because after his younger brother Mutanda Yembe Yembe, Naweji had two sisters, Mwedi Kamina and Kansimbi. It was Kamina who bore Muteba who succeeded his uncle Naweji. Mwata Yamvwa Muteba I, who was lazy and improvident had, however, a burning passion to expand his Kingdom. So he sent out war groups.

Among the groups sent to conquer was one headed by Chinyanta, son of Dyulu, brother to Ruweji. Chinyanta was with Mutanda Yembe Yembe. They subdued Chiefs in the Lualaba area. So tributes were to be taken to Muteba. Yembe Yembe withheld the much needed salt. Chinyanta who was loyal reported him, whereupon Muteba called a "Mutentamo" and reprimanded Yembe Yembe. To avenge himself and cool his temper Yembe Yembe killed Chinyanta and his brother Kasombola and drowned them in a tributary of the Lualaba, Katila.

When Muteba heard of this filthy act he was angered. He therefore sent Chinyanta's son, Kazembe Nganga Bilonda, to go and avenge the death of his father. He conferred upon him the title of "Mwata" and
charged him with an "Impoko" (sword) and "Imbafi" (battle axe) to signify authority. He became Mwata Kazembe I.

But Bilonda did not kill Yembe Yembe as the latter had fled. However, he conquered and ruled many people. When he crossed the Lualaba River, he conquered Chief Mufunga. In a ritual to mark the conquest of such a powerful chief, it was decided that Mufunga's head be hanged beside that of Bilonda. It was after this ritual that Bilonda fell ill and eventually died. He was buried near Lualaba where his father and Kasombola were murdered by Yembe Yembe.

The news of Bilonda's death reached Mwata Yamvwa Mukanzu, the reigning Luba King, successor of Muteba. Mukanzu appointed Kanyembo Mpemba to succeed his elder brother and become Kazembe II. This therefore is the birth of the Luunda Kingdom of Mwata Kazembe of Luapula Valley. Kapaya (n.d:5) states that

It was at the installation of Kanyembo I, the defunct independent Lunda Kingdom of Mwata Kazembe of Luapula Valley in Zambia, which flourished from the 16th to the 18th Century, was born.

Mwata Kazembe II was granted full authority to go and establish an independent Luunda Kingdom of his own to the East of Lualaba River. Mwata Yamvwa
remained to control and consolidate the Luba empire in the west of the Lualaba River in Zaire.

Kanyembo's appointment was unique in that he was formally ordained by Mwata Yamvwa who crowned and conferred upon him the insignia of Luunda Chiefdom which consisted of royal sacred vessels and attire. In addition, the royal regalia, royal drums, and cuttings of the "Miyombo" and "Mutaba" trees were given to him to use and plant in the capital he would establish. Also given was a "Muselo" (Royal Hammock) on which he was to be carried.

Then with his elder brother's son, Ilunga Lukwesa (Mwata Kazembe III), he performed the "Mutomboko" to show his authority and happiness. It is for this reason that Chinyanta and Chiwale (1989:5) point out that

But the Chieftainship of Kazembe of the Luapula was not among those, (who left first) for he was the last one to leave, and moreover, he came with all the renown and finery form of Chieftainship, with many Chiefs in his train, and with all the honours of the Lunda.

It is said that Mwata Kazembe II continued expanding his new independent Kingdom from where his brother had left off until, on 29th July, 1740, he crossed Luapula River at Chief Matanda's Ferry into the present day Republic of Zambia. It is for this reason that the colourful Luunda cultural
ceremony "Umutomboko" is celebrated yearly in the last week of July.

(ii) **Succession**

Succession to the Luunda throne of Mwata Kazembe is patrilineal. On the death of a Mwata, his successor will not necessarily be his own son, but the aristocrats charged with the duty of choosing a new Mwata will consider any senior member of the patrilineage.

(iii) **Titles, Names and Offices**

Many texts show that Luunda society is composed of a set of relationships between established positions which are filled at any one time by a person who is one of the possible successors to it. As such, the same names appear throughout history.

Titles are inherited names which become offices through inheritance. Therefore, offices are not personal names. Personal names are given at birth or are nicknames someone acquires later in life as a result of one's own character.

"Mwata" is not a name as it means "Chief, King" or in some cases "husband". It is also used to signify a person of good character.
Kazembe is not a personal name. It is a title. But it was one of Nganga Bilonda's (who became Kazembe I) personal names. So this name has just become the title of any holder of Mwataship. All Mwatas have their personal names that distinguish them from other holders of the throne of Mwata Kazembe. There are also aristocratic names turned titles which are as old as the Luunda state.

C. The Royal Poet

(i) Recruitment

Recruitment of royal poets is done almost effortlessly. The praiser simply initiates his own son. These praisers are, however, in the Luunda aristocracy. The praisers are chosen from the "Bakalulwa". Kapaya (n.d:19) says

These ... are ... formerly (sic) Chiefs who were assimilated into Luunda household or are members of the Royal household or are members of the Royal family who were given posts by Mwata with special traditional duties assigned to them ... They had different uniforms befitting their offices. Some wear "Mukonzu".*

The attire shows they are professional poets. As a special occasion draws near, a poet is chosen from amongst the "Bakalulwa" to shower praises on the Chief. This is done

* "Mukonzu" means robe
to avoid confusion and embarrassment lest several poets rise at the same time to chant praises.

Currently, however, the most outstanding of all the praise poets is one Mr. Chipolobwe Mano who can best be described as the embodiment of the Luunda-Kazembe royal tradition.

(ii) Training
The poet must have a sound command of the working experience of Luunda traditions. The poet begins the learning of this vital knowledge when young. He is not only taught praises but is told whose praises they were and what they mean. This is useful because later, the young poet will be expected to evaluate the reigning Chief’s qualities and then chant praises befitting both the Chief and the occasion.

Warren and Brooks (1952) are of the opinion that this knowledge helps the potential poet to broaden his vocabulary as he grows older. It gives him the sense of the social subtleties and shading of words to achieve desired goals. He has to become master of every traditional resource in Luundaland for he, later, will have to pass that knowledge to someone else.
This life-related experience offers the young poet a wide range of subjects, and also the capacity to think critically and logically about them. The poet's social experience also trains him to be tactful in grasping the truth about human relationships with which he will have to deal.

Cope (1968) stresses that this social experience promotes creativity, skill, and imagination with which the poet treats his material so that its application seems natural.

(iii) **The Luunda Poet's social status**

It is in the praise poet's traditional and informal school that the novices listen to traditional stories and imbibe the much cherished ancestral wisdom. One thing not taken lightly amongst the Luunda-Kazembe is that since this wisdom is passed on to the reigning praise poet by a much older praiser, it is, in effect, the wisdom of the old the older praiser is imparting.

Because the praise poets have been tutored in the traditions and made wise in all aspects of social experience, they are accorded greatest respect by the entire Luunda community. Because they are natured in the secrets of the tribe, the Luunda royal poets are taken to be among the
Closest to their ancestors. Therefore, in times of difficulties and dire need, they may appeal to the departed to intervene and correct any current social disorder. This means royal poets do not only sing praises for chiefs but also chant other types of oral poetry e.g. elegies.

Whether people wish to criticize social deviants or to show appreciation to someone, they usually go through a royal poet. It is for this reason that Thompson (1974) believes that the poet is the mouth-piece of his society, the outlet for its appreciation as well as for its socio-political protest.

The poets are close enough to their hearers with whom they share their feelings, hopes and afflictions.

According to Mapoma (1978) oral poetry is generally considered to be true by virtue of its mode of presenting which is always in a public performance. He states further that it is because of this concept of the nature of poetry that a praiser is immune from any reprisal as long as he presents his message through poetic form.
In contrast to this, due to changing social values and life patterns, in certain repressive states, poets are often persecuted for criticising their political leadership, despite their having presented their message through such poetic form.

An important aspect of public recognition is to be granted a mandate to comment, praise or ridicule. The argument Mapoma (19/8) advances in favour of musicians holds true even with royal poets in that one of their functions is to criticise anybody who believes in something that is not socially acceptable. Immoral behaviour is, for instance, utterly criticized in the strongest terms. In this way, poets not only uphold the autonomous status of the Mwata, but indeed their own. To conclude this section, I would like to quote Scharge and Aliyu (1967:35) who point out that "these are the extempore praise-singers, the social historians, the social commentators".
CHAPTER TWO

THE POETRY

A. Some general aspects of poetry

As a point of departure in most academic disciplines, scholars debate among themselves definitions of their subjects. In literature however, this is difficult in that there are not always such clear cut definitions. Poetry, itself, for instance, is difficult to define. The Pears Cyclopaedia (1953-54) defines poetry as a rhythmical embodiment of thoughts and fancies. Sarvan and Crehan (1986:1) define poetry as

Verse compositions in which rhythmical, and usually metaphorical language is used to create an aesthetic experience and to make a statement which it would be difficult to paraphrase in prose without loss.

There are many qualities that distinguish poetry from prose in all literatures. Cope (1968:38) suggests the following features:

Poetry has a greater richness and greater concentration; it is more evocative, more memorable. These qualities are achieved by the use of imagery reinforced by repetition in various guises: metre (repeated rhythms), rhyme (repeated final syllables), alliteration (repeated consonant sounds), assonance (repeated vowel sounds),...

Sarvan and Crehan (1986) add that rhythm, rhyme and verbal repetition have an important mnemonic function. By mnemonic is meant that which aids or helps memory.
In the attempts to define poetry, there is a tendency to discuss aspects of poetry rather than poetry itself. The observation that there is a lack of a clear-out definition should not be seen as a deterrent factor here. Rather, it may be observed that, inter alia, poetry, and no doubt literature in general, is a subject that is capable of handling new ideas and theories.

Scholars talk or poetic diction which according to the Pears Cyclopaedia (1953-4) is a choice of special words and phrases to express meaning. It is also the manner or way of composition or style. According to Wilson (1968:120):

Poetry creates voices, by choosing words from a wide variety of places or occupations. It then makes those words work with more power than we find in everyday language.

The matter of word choice (diction) is naturally important for poetry just as the selection of details and the use of imagery are important in determining the texture of description.

Diction is important as it is a means of expressing attitudes. According to Brooks and Warren (1952:335),
Good diction is the choice of the right words. Accurate, effective expression obviously requires the right words — the words which will represent not nearly, not approximately, but precisely and exactly what we want to say.

Apparently, this is a simple rule. The foregoing is but an assertion. The poet must choose the right words to best suit the occasion on which the recitation is made. Brooks and Warren further acknowledge that the criteria for judging "rightness" are not simple but highly complex in the sense that there are normally more than one way to say the same thing.

An oral poet uses special language as a medium of communication. This language may be verbal or gestural. Through the skilled use of language, a poet exerts his force and communicates his ideas and feelings.

What makes language particularly interesting in poetry is that, as Sarvan and Crehan (1986) state, it is defamiliarised and made new. This concept of defamiliarization uses both original and unusual collocations to create a unique context which is the poem itself. Language in poetry foregrounds itself. It draws attention to itself. It therefore goes without saying that in poetry, language is made new in the sense that individual words are made to bear qualities even beyond their bare
dictionary definitions. It is for this reason called "heightened language".

Finnegan (1977:109) also notes that, "it is apparently common for the language of certain genres of poetry to be somewhat removed from that of everyday speech, both in vocabulary and syntax". This is very true of Luunda-Kazembe royal praises as can be seen from the texts themselves.

While this suggests poetic licence, it also raises the issue of the denotative and connotative value of words. Words may explicitly name or describe something. This is the denotative meaning. The same words may suggest other associated feelings or ideas i.e. connotative meaning. With the latter, there is the implication that words are not static. We can see this from text 7 where the Persona says he is Saturday, River-digger, maned Lion, Lukusu fruit, sand, etc, while implicitly he is saying a lot of things (see discussion, text 7). The entire text therefore has an explicit (denotative) as well as an implicit connotative meaning.

A poet uses certain techniques when he comes to describing a feeling or state of mind. He tries to get his audience think in a particular way. He therefore uses words figuratively. What normally happens is that the poet perceives the object he
is contemplating as being in a relationship to some second object, event or person to which he directs attention verbally.

According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1976:62), the objects that the poet visualizes are the outcome of the poet's impulse to perceive unity in diversity or to draw together a number of apparently unrelated experiences or to communicate through their submerged or penumbral statements meanings that are beyond the resources of direct language.

The key words in this section are "relationship" and "unity". These suggest the notion of comparison. Many schools of thought have different views as regards this term. Brooks and Warren (1952), for instance, believe that it simply does not matter on what basis the comparison is established or by what senses or feelings. But there must be some primary action if interpretation is to be established. A comparison, even if it does not carry conventional interpretation, must not be so far fetched that even the listener cannot accept it. But then the comparison must not be too trite or even obvious either. It is for this reason that we recognize that images do differ in depth, profundity or complexity in the connotative value, as well as in their purpose and origin.
Reader and Woods (1987) define the "image" as a picture or impression in the mind which is created by words. The images used in poetry enable us to form mental pictures of what the poet is trying to communicate. But the poet is not without serious intentions when he uses imagery. Images have a purpose, a duty to perform. The images used often derive additional force and vitality from their contextual relation to other images in the poem. I do agree with some schools of thought that note that the term image, when applied to literature, is actually a metaphor.

Metaphors, like similes and personification, are among the most popular poetic figures of speech. All these help us to see pictures in our mind. Even in the ordinary speech and writing that we do, these figures of speech are not subsidiary nor are they external. They are in essence the primary devices by which poets and everybody else say what they want to say. Therefore, these figures of speech must not be seen as a round-about way of communicating an experience or emotion.

There are other structural features in all poetry such as repetition which Finnegnan (1977:102) says can be at a number of levels, from the repetition of syllables to that of whole verses and lengthy passages...the repetition of motifs, ideas or incidents in different words...
Other popular poetic elements are allusions, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration and assonance. Below are brief definitions of the above named terms.

Allusions are indications of something usually without direct mention of it. If the mention is direct, it is more appropriate to call this 'reference'. In Luunda-Kazembe poetry, a common type of allusion is effected by mention of a place, a name, etc.

Rhythm is the result of an alternation in a combination of stress, pitch, silence that accompanies all flow of meaningful sound. Rhyme is a repetition of identical or closely similar sounds arranged at regular intervals. Rhyme renders a poem audibly pleasing. This element is not considered.

The appropriate use of alliteration ornaments and emphasizes an idea in both poetry and prose. Alliteration refers to a succession of similar consonant sounds in a line or group of lines. Assonance refers to a succession of similar vowel sounds in a line or group of lines.

B Analysis and discussion of Luunda-Royal Poetic Forms

In order to demonstrate that Luunda
poetry is "poetry" as is understood by literary scholars worldwide, it is necessary to undertake an analysis of its intrinsic poetic qualities. Finnegan (1977:25) sets the tone for this section by saying in evaluating poetry what we must look for is not one absolute criterion but a range of stylistic and formal attitudes – features like heightened language, metaphorical expression, musical form or accompaniment, structural repetitiveness (like the recurrence of stanzas, lines of refrains), prosodic features like metre, alliteration, even perhaps parallelism.

One major observation in Luunda-Kazembe poetry is that its language is often a combination of not only Luba and Luunda but also Shila and Chishinga. Since the praises are expressed in the medium of Luba language of Mwata Yamvva, they preserve a historical record of both Luunda and the Luba people and events in the language spoken by them prior to their adopting "cina-Luunda" as their normal speech.

From the texts studied, one may appreciate the fact that the language and diction of Luunda-royal poetry is heightened and defamiliarised, i.e. it is not ordinary, every day language. It is the language of the Luunda-Kazembe royal court.
White (1962:i) says this

"...legitimised the aristocracy's identity as different from that of the people upon whom the aristocracy imposed its rule in the Luapula Valley, the texts imply a Luba rather than Luunda speaking ruling class."

Chinyanta and Chiwale (1989) also state that despite the language that the Bemba proper found in the present Bembaland, the Bemba, like their kin the Luunda-Kazembe, still maintain the dignity and pride of their kingship by chanting praise-songs and personal eulogies in either Luba or Lubanized Bemba. The archaic diction makes poetry special and difficult to understand.

From the corpus of ten oral praises, virtually all the texts display heightened language. The language is defamiliarised and made new. Even the present Mwata Kazembe (18) who reigns in a new and modern culture uses Luba to praise himself. (Text 10) White's argument above holds true in this case.

To the young audience who are chiefly uninitiated and ignorant of the royal traditions, the meaning of the text is not easy to grasp. One source I interviewed regrettably said the meaning "... simply passes the youth. They only understand the songs", he said in vernacular. What I think the informant meant was that the youth enjoy the melody and rhythm.
This linguistic difficulty also illustrates metaphoric reference. We can note this in text 3:1-2, 4:1-2; 5:1-2; 6:3; 7:1-3, 5-6; 8:5; 9:1-4,6; and 10:2, 4,5,6. Text 9, which has a number of allusions to events (1), and unknown people (3,6) is very interesting.

Niwe mwana "kamima" akamutamina Nkonde
Fufuta imfula yabufumi iinokele abakulu pa mapala.

Mwana Kasasa, akakanga kabafu,
akakanga kabelu nkala.
Wishingile makata nekusanga pa kwabukila.

Mwishikulu "Sunkutu" kabanda,
Kazembe kanyembo mpalumema.

You're the son of "kamima" (showers) that overcast the weather in the East.
The slow-drizzily rain that soaks the old on their bald heads.

Son of Kasasa, the papyrus mat for the dead.
"kapasa" the papyrus mat for the dead
He who does not sit idle unless he looks for a crossing place.
Grandson of "Sunkutu", the angry lion that roams in the forest.
Kazembe Kanyembo the ruler.
This is a difficult poem especially in modern Zambia where the youth's exposure to this genre of literature has become limited. At present recitations and performances are only done during the Umutomboko, death and installations of new chiefs. In the olden days, during war, recitations accompanied the fighting itself.

With reference to text 9, one may simply indicate that it is rich connotatively. One may think that the praiser is talking about the actual rain (denotative) that really soaks people when he (the praiser) is in fact talking about a successor who was given to rule in the East or Iyanga" (rule=overcast), in readiness for the throne of Mwata. "Pufuta imfula ya bufum ..." or "slow drizzily rain ..." text 9:2, implies humility and patience on the part of the chief. The "soaking" of "the old on their bald heads" implies not only defeating other possible successors but the actual ruling and, of course, the command over them (the old).

The praiser uses a different name of the father of the chief being praised other than "kamima" or "showers" in line 1, firstly, to merely invoke the Chief and secondly, this serves as a praise. Let us also acknowledge the fact that the use of different terms (line 4) to convey exactly the same message as in line 3 shows not only a wide vocabulary
but great mastery of praise poetry as well on
the part of the poet.

The terms employed - akakanga, kabafu, nkala, etc
- are deep terms that are rarely used in ordinary
speech. Text 9:5, as is pointed out later in the
section on content, stresses the chief's innovativeness, creativity, foresight. This is the deep
meaning.

Brooks and Warren (1952) argue that every piece of
writing or verbal discourse is addressed to a more
or less limited audience. But it is not so with
the Luunda royal praises as they are performed
publicly.

But crucial here is the idea of the implied
receiver of the poetry. This would be the chief,
elders, the aristocratic class, traditionally
initiated children, etc. These know the language
as well as the ideology of the poetry.

We have already noted that Luunda royal praises
use archaic terms which, of course, is in conformity
with the poetry of the old Kingship. However, sometime, the poem seems elaborate
because the poet takes into special consideration his
audience and the context of the situation. Take
text 4 for instance:
Mubanga pulula,
Mubanga wauma lubali abena Chishinga bonteke insasu.

Mubanga you shed leaves,
Mubanga which is partially dry so the Chishinga may have twigs for firewood.

The above poem uses relatively easy language. But the implied meaning is not easy to get at. "Mubanga"* means "strong, fearless" and "conqueror".

During the "mutomboko" ceremony, for instance, the poet addresses the Chief with a remarkable degree of dignity. He uses a keystone of ideas and structures in a characteristic formal style. Text 2 expresses this.

You’re the "Shovers" that overcast the weather in the East,
The slow-dripping rain that soaks the old on their bold heads.

Son of Kasasa, the papyrus mat for the dead,
Kasasa, the papyrus mat for the dead.

He who does not sit idle unless he looks for a crossing place.

*Mubanga is a type of a tree scientifically known as "ecklonia angolensis". Among the tribes of Northern Zambia, the twigs of this tree are used for firewood.
Grandson of Sunkutu that roams in the forest, Kazembe Kanyembo the ruler.

Text 9:1-4, displays ambiguity (as it has more than one possible meaning) which is necessary in royal poetry because of the social and political functions this poetry serves. We see that these functions include delicate but often necessary duty of censuring, rebuking, reprimanding, or rousing rulers to anger (lines 5-6) glorifying, entertaining, etc.

Among the Luunda-Kazembe, the Chief is best referred to by his praise-name. All of these names are metaphors. Brooks and Warren (1976) state that the word "metaphor" comes from a Greek verb meaning "to transfer" or "to carry over".

Therefore, in Luunda royal poetry, to create relationship, the most favoured technique is the use of the metaphor. Any discussion of metaphor inevitably involves context. This is unavoidable. Various Mwata Kazembes identify themselves or are identified with various ferocious animals; for example, "Sunkutu" the angry lion, (text 2:1), "the maned lion" (text 7:3), the lion that has not yet stretched its claws" (text 8:5) etc. Other images include such diverse referents as birds (text 7:5), plants, rivers (7:2), hills (7:6), a part of the body etc. The comparisons made in the Luunda-Kazembe royal poetry enrich its quality and effectiveness in that they make us
see new relationships, or old things from a fresh viewpoint.

Kazembe VII glorified himself as "Sunkutu"* of the forest. (Text 2).

Ami Sunkutu Kabanda,
Kalobwe muntabangula bwanga,
Ye kubangula mutwe wabukala.

I am "Sunkutu" of the forest,
He who does not fear to be bewitched,
He who first eats the penis of his prey.

In the above poem, Muonga II was trying to show purposely his courage, cruelty and brutality by comparing himself to a lion which kills savagely and indiscriminately. It is said that "roughness" was the guiding principle under which he ruled his subjects. Given such a situation, when his people later praised him thus, it was not simply to acknowledge his appellation but more significantly to complain about the excesses of the king's cruelty.

From text 2 above, we also note the use of alliteration in the original text. This, however, is lost in the translated work.

* Sunkutu was the name given to a mythical lion that used to kill savagely in Bembaland.
I have also mentioned allusions as one of the major elements of poetry be it oral or written. In text 9:1,3,6, there are allusions to events and unknown people. This serves to document historical facts. Also, it is remarkable to see allusions to witchcraft (text 2:2). Implicitly, the idea of witchcraft and impending death is also suggested in text 6:3; 8:2; 18:4,5. This shows how much these traditional people believe in the idea of witchcraft. There is no doubt that it exists especially to terminate one's reign.

Text 3 which is Kazembe VIII's poem reads:

Nine Chinkonkole wa ntumpu bunga,
Neukonkola inseke sha bunga,
Insala yamu calo cakupansa.

I am "the Rummager " who digs lily bulbs,
The one who rummages through siftings of corn,
The hunger of the invaded country.

There are many metaphors in the above poem: lily bulbs, siftings of corn, and even hunger. The chief says he is the rummager because he simply rummaged about the kingdom for the "Lukano" (metaphorically perhaps the "lily bulbs"), the sign of authority, from the son of Sunkutu (Kazembe VII). There had been violent deaths and revolts of chiefs conquered and incorporated in the Luunda Kingdom.
But of great significance is the last chant, "the hunger of the invaded country". This tells us of the state of confusion in the kingdom.

After Kazembe VI died, the rightful king was to be Ilunga Lukwesa Mpanga who was the first born son of Kazembe IV. But because he was uncircumcised, he was sent to a Luunda aristocrat called Kandale for circumcision in order to fulfill the old Luunda tradition before his installation as King. It was during this time that Muonga Sunkutu, who was not a member of the royal family of the line of Dyulu but a mere aristocrat was appointed by Luunda elders for his respectability and generosity.

But his reign was not peaceful as Ilunga Lukwesa, backed militarily by Tippu Tip, deposed him. Given this state of confusion ("hunger" of the invaded country) one may interpret that the chief comes rummaging about the kingdom (siftings of corn) for lily bulbs which could mean "Mwayaship".

It is interesting to note that Kazembe X's praise poem is from other chiefs. It so happened that in 1890, Kanyembo Ntemena (Kazembe X) noticed a decline in the military power of the Kingdom. Because of the mutual agreement regarding socio-political matters between Bemba and Luunda chiefs, Kazembe X went to seek military help from two Bemba Chiefs. The
first Chief he sought help from was Chisala "Mubanga Chipoya" whose personal eulogy and appellation were as follows:

Mubanga wa mafula,
Mufimbana bantu,
Kalila Ng'wena.

The strong Chipoya,
The one who wears human skins,
The one who sheds crocodile tears.

Bearing in mind the fact that "Mubanga" is a name of a strong tree scientifically known as "afromosia angolensis", one may conclude that the "Mubanga" here seems to function as a metaphor to mean "strong" or "fearless" Chipoya. This eulogy, underlines Chipoya's reputation of cruelty and lust for killing people. As such, "Mubanga" also means conqueror, hard-hearted and perhaps even oppressor.

The second Chief whom Kazembe X sought help from was Chitimukulu Mulando Kapalakasha IV. Kazembe's request for military help was granted and an appellation under which he was to be praised was also given him: Mubanga.

Therefore Bemba praise-singers glorified him as:

Mubanga pulula,
Mubanga wauma lubali abena Chishinga bonteko
insansu.

Mubanga, you shed leaves,
Mubanga that is partially dry so that the
Chishinga may have twigs for firewood.

We may interpret "Mubanga which is partially dry" as meaning that the Luunda-Kazembe Kingdom was partially weak (militarily). This line simply expresses Mubanga Chipoya's weakness before going to solicit for help from Bemba Chiefs. Kazembe X had fled from his country because the Chishinga...he was fighting showed strength. So he fled, sought help, and came back full-fledged, fought and defeated the Chisinga and their allies. So the Chisinga victory becomes a temporary one (partial dryness), and their rejoicing, the unsurping of some of Kazembe's subjects and a portion of land (perhaps "twigs" in line 2) is challenged.

Kazembe XII's poem reads:
Nine "Kamina" umutamina nkonde,*
Nine "fufuta" imfula yabufumi,
Uunokele abakulu pamapala.

I am "the showers" that overcast the weather in the East
I am "the slow" drizzily rain,
Who soaks the old on their bald heads.
The Chief in line 1 is conveying the message that he is the Governor of Iyanga or Chishinga colony which is in the East of mwansabombwe. He also implies the greatness of his being Governor as the Luunda ought to have known. All this is achieved by accurate and precise use of diction and imagery to drive the point home.

In line 2, the Chief praises himself as one who does not panic. Of significance is "slow drizzly rain" which apart from implying patience in the manner of looking at life, together with line 3, one "who soaks the old on their bald heads" also means that because he is Mwata, he fears nobody.

Text 6 is one of the most interesting poems. It reads:

Kabumbu sekela,
Abashikwa abo baisa,
Nine nsamfwé iyaishilo kubola.

The grave s rejoice,
The dead are coming,
I am the Nsamfwé* which sprouts only to rot.

Line 1 sets the mood and attitude of Kazembe Xv's poem. The Chief personifies "graves" that they must rejoice and welcome yet another dead King.

"Nkonde" is the old Bemba word for "East" See appendix text 6.

*Nsamfwé: - a type of mushroom.
must rejoice and welcome yet another dead King.

As his personal eulogy says, Kazembe XV did not live long. Indeed he was "the Nsambwe which sprouts only to rot" easily. He was the Chief who was installed only to die early. He ruled his people from 1952-7. Chiwale (1962:36) narrates that "His death was taken as sudden in spite of the psychological effect of which one might not be wrong to attribute to the causes of his death, as was demonstrated in his personal succession name and eulogy, i.e. "Nsambwe"."

After the death of Mwata "Nsambwe", Chofwe, who was Chief Kanyembo (subordinate to Kazembe), sung the poem below:

Nine Chibelushi uwashinta mu Mulungu.
Chimba milonga uwaimbile umofwe ku minwe.
Nine nkalamo ya masense,
Neo icalo cakulatotela.
Newaba ngo Lukusu uluponya umulima panshi.
Nine musenga uwailikishe impili.

I am "Saturday" which changes into "Sunday".
The river-digger who dug the "Mofwe" with fingers.
I am the maned lion.
I whom the land will be praising.
I am like the Lukusu which fell the bat.
I am the sand that covers the hills.
In line 1 Kanyembo said this because he thought that he was fit to be the next Mwata. Traditionally, if a King's close relative chants his name or appellation verbally or on the "Umondo", especially during the absence of the King, he is said to usurp him.

This praise baffled many Luunda aristocrats and consequently it was decided he was the rightful candidate. Arrangements for Kanyembo's installation began to take shape. Here we see how a poetic chant can have that powerful effect even to influence decision makers.

Kanyembo Chofwe was a direct brother of the late Mwata "Nsamfwe". Both were sons of Kanyembo Ntemena "Mubanga", Kazembe X. The first line fulfills two roles: being direct brothers and that of being the rightful candidate.

Kanyembo Chofwe was supposed to let the post go to other Kings' sons whose lines of succession had not been touched for a long time. However, he was smart enough to chant line 2 to imply that he was digging the Mofwe River (metaphorically the Mwataship) with fingers (by force).

Kanyembo Chofwe further said he was "the maned lion" to demonstrate his readiness to rule bravely.
Salient is the idea of dispelling all fears of having his life shortened. Line 4 also means that Kanyembo was equipped with powers not only to rule but also to resist any sorcerer's attack which might attempt to shorten his life. The metaphor in this chant is a comparison to the "Lukusu" fruit which hangs on a rotten tree branch. It can break up any time a bat tries to perch on it thus causing the bat to fall down. The fallen "Lukusu" fruit however germinates.

This may also mean that the "Lukusu" fruit is Kanyembo himself who perches on the rotten tree branch (Kingship/Mwataship) because he may die any time, and the metaphor "bat" may mean the witch. But of great significance is the germination of the "Lukusu" fruit which may mean the installation of a new Chief after the death of the previous one.

The final chant is subject to many interpretations. The metaphor "sand" may mean the Chief himself whereas the "hills" that are "covered" or beaten could imply his adversaries or possible candidates. This could also mean protection for his subjects. It is for this reason that Mwata "Chofwe" was supported by many aristocrats and that is how preparations for this enthronement began to take shape.
Text 8 reads:
Nine "Mushindikeni",
Uwafwa taishindika,
Chakukosama,
bana ba Luunda bakudimuka.

5 Ntambo wafya mala,
Kadi shadi,
Kadi nyina di,
Ami wabusimwa mwami,

I am the "Escortee", (the one who is escorted)
I am like the dead who does not escort himself,
I am stupid,
The children of the Luunda are the clever ones.

5 The lion that has not bared its claws,
I have no father,
I have no mother,
I am just alone.

Line one literally says "I am the one who is escorted, the dead does not escort himself". This is significant because apart from showing his readiness to be escorted to the grave, Mwata "Mushindikeni" also conveys the message that there is no chance for the Mwata to live long. These same chants also extol the help that Mwata "Mushindikeni" as a leader expected from his people (lines 1 & 2). Lines 3 & 4 show qualities of being a servant of the people rather than their commander, that they are the clever ones. But Mwata
"Mushindikeni" may be said to be ironical. This is because line 5 cautions his subjects not to take Mwata "Mushindikeni" for granted. He says he is the lion that has claws (metaphorically power) and can actually attack. The last three lines qualify the earlier lines in that these discuss the Mwata's loneliness due to the weight of his role and the hard decisions that have to be made.

With regard to text 9, Chiwale's (1962:2) words seem very important and should be taken very seriously by everyone who may misjudge the apparent brevity of this poetry. He expounds that

> It was also the custom to praise the kings, starting with their dead ancestors and predecessors. The praiser would recite the praises one after the other until he finally ended with those of the reigning monarch.

Although the poet who sings text 9 does not end with the praises of Mwata "Mushindikeni", he, the poet, praises him with the eulogies of his ancestors as follows:

> Niwe Mwana "Kamima" akamutamina nkonde,
> Fufuta imfula yabufumi iinokele abakulu pa mapala.
> Mwana kasasa, kakanga kabafu,
> Kakanga kabena nkala.

Wishingile makata nekusanga pa kwabukila.

Mwishikulu "Sunkutu" Kabanda,
Kazembe Kanyembo mpalumema.

You're the son of "kamima"* that overcast the weather in the East,
The slow-drizzily rain that soaks the old on their bald heads.
Son of Kasasa, the papyrus mat for the dead, "Kapasa" the papyrus mat for the dead.

He who does not sit idle, unless he looks for a crossing place.

Looking critically at this poem, one cannot but agree with Cope (1968) who reasons that the composition of a praise-poem is sometimes a matter of the collection of ideas and statements rather than of creation.

Thus a collection is made by borrowing from the praise-poems of other chiefs. Text 9 is a collection of lines from texts 2 and 5 of Muonga 2 and Chinyanta 2 who happen to be the grandfather and father of Kazembe "Mushindikeni" XVII respectively. It is interesting to note that the praises of Muonga 2 and Chinyanta 2 are blended well with each other.

Another striking feature of this poem is the flight of thought and emotion which is expressed by the sudden alteration of metaphorical motifs. For instance, the poem sings of slow-drizzily rain, papyrus mat, crossing place etc. The thoughts and emotions shown are many.

*Kamima - the showers.
Analysing text 10, one realises how the magical and ritualistic power attributed to Luunda royal poetry and customs are taken very seriously.

A tweebo divumo dia bupemba,
Amiyami "Kafumbe" kasemenwa Luvu
Hakulondela mwana wa ziandi.
Iyabambwa yatulika, no lwine nalo,
5 Iyabambwa yatulika, no lwine nalo,
Nkatwa wa cibalo, wakupungilwa kwipika.
Kelwa pwile, kelushe ketulu.
Mbanga ni panshi.

We're of the royal family,
I am "Kafumbe"* that is born to die.
My own father was also Mwata.
When a drum is made, its end is to break up,
5 When a drum is made, its end is to break up.
I am the pumpkin which must be cut before it is cooked.
If it is not cut before it is cooked, it becomes tasteless.
Kazembe Chinyanta's Mwata ship will never end
(another from my line will succeed).

The poem sets forth one significant declaration that Mwata "Kafumbe" is fully entitled to be Mwata Kazembe (line 1). Line 2 tells us the praise-name of the Chief that he is "Kafumbe". We see here, firstly,

*Kafumbe is a small rat hunted by many for its fatty meat. So it does not live long.
the overriding theme of death characteristic of contemporary Luunda Kazembe royal poetry. Secondly, the appellation which is also an acceptance of the inevitable, i.e. the transient nature of the rulers but not the Kingdom is also expressed. The third line qualifies line 1 that even Mwata "Kafumbe's" father was Mwata (Kazembe XIV) who pronounced his inheriting name as "Tafililwa kubaya". This means that he was the rightful successor. His son (Kazembe XVIII) borrows the ideology of his own praise-poem from that of his father. This is because he expresses his position and determination to inherit.

It is also important to learn that in Luunda tradition, the succession name is only spoken at one's public appearance after immersion in the Ng'ona river. When Kazembe XIV, Chinyanta 3, pronounced his name, he was showing his rivals who were competing with him for the throne that he was chosen to be the next ruler not because of anything else but because he was born of the royal blood in the "akamanga". This really is the papyrus-hut in the palace grounds where the Chief's wives give birth. Thus the expressions in text 10:1 & 3 refer to a child born after his father had succeeded to the throne of Kingship, as opposed to those born "kubwala" or outside before the father ascended to the throne.

Lines 4 & 5, a repetition of the same chant, repeated for emphasis' sake, brings us back to the theme of
death. When the drum is made, one expects that its end is to break up, i.e. when a king is installed, the end of his reign is to die. Lines 6 & 7, tell us what could perhaps be best referred to as the ritual of "cleansing" of the Chief to shed "common man's outlook" in Luunda terms. This is done by immersion in the Ng'ona River, the River into which food and beer are poured to pacify ancestral spirits e.g. during the Umutomboko Ceremony held every year in the last week of July. It is important to add that this river is held in high esteem because it is here that Kazembe II was buried under the water in 1760 after ruling the Luunda for sixty years. Line 7 expresses that if this is not done, the Chief's rule will be "stale" or "tasteless" like the metaphorical pumpkin in line 6. The last line supports the first one in that it gives the same idea that Mwata "Kafumbe" is of the royal blood and that the reign of those of the line of "Kafumbe" is endless.

A simile is a direct and explicit form of comparison. Wilson (1986) states that unlike metaphor, which can awaken all sorts of complex associations in our mind, simile, consists of a comparison of a fairly straightforward kind between two things. A simile is introduced by the words "like" or "as" or sometimes both.

In Luunda royal praises, at least from the present corpus of ten poems, we see that this element is rarely used.
In fact, it has only been noted in text 7:5.

Newaba ngo lukusu uluponya umulima panshi.
I am like the "lukusu" which fell the bat.

In this praise, the poet compares himself to the "lukusu" fruit that hangs on the branch. The fruit entices the bat which falls together with the fruit. The fruit however germinates. Perhaps the king was referring to the post of Mwata which "germinates" (succession) when a king dies. When two things are compared in this way, the poet, among other things, enriches the poem's descriptive effect.

There are many examples of animated inanmites in Luunda royal poetry. A personification is a metaphor which suggests that an object or thing is alive and has human qualities. Among the many striking cases of personification are:

Text 1:5-

Mondo wakelwapo (newaba ngo mondo uuceshafye)
Lit: I am like the talking drum which does not sleep.
(I am like the talking drum which is beaten throughout the night).

Text 6:1-

Kabumbu sekela
The graves rejoice.
Text 7:5-

Newaba ngo lukusu uluponya umulima.

I am like the "lukusu" which fell the bat.

(or causes the bat to fall).

Some images used in the poetry have ambivalent meanings. For instance, the lion in most of the poems discussed could explicitly communicate the fact that the chief is courageous or brave (text 7:3): Nine nkalamo ya masense - I am the maned lion.

This tells us the lion is maned but the connotative value is that a maned animal called lion is vicious like the "sunkutu" of text 2:1.

Also when Kazembe XVII chants that he is the lion which has not "bared its claws (text 8:5), he may be saying that he is a humble ruler or "lion", but the same chant may serve as a subtle warning that he has claws (metaphorically power) and can attack (be ruthless).

Luunda Kazambe royal praises make use of many different forms of repetition. We may start with the repetition of words, e.g. lion, showers etc., (texts 2:1, 5:1, 7:3, 8:5). Complete lines may also be repeated (text 10:4 and 5). This serves as a way of showing the importance of a particular idea and also to stress it.
It is interesting to note that text 4 borrows words and ideas from Bemba Chiefs' praises. The whole of text 9 is also a good example of what is called intertextuality. Intertextuality is the borrowing of the actual words from another text, or simply copying the style of a particular writer or text.

Here is a poem which is full of praises from different poems said long before the inception of Mwata Kazembe XVII. Lines 1-4 are from text 5 and are the praises of Mwata Kazembe XII. Line 5 is from Kazembe I Nganga Bilonda's praises. Line 6 is from the praises of Kazembe VII. The purposes of this kind of intertextuality are many. First, it is to record past events and tribal history to show continuity in the modern poetry. Chiwale (1962:1) suggests that "...praises were a 'keeping place' for historical events which happened through time".

Lines are sometimes units of meaning. For example, text 9:5 shows this clearly. But the first two lines constitute an entity by themselves. The next two likewise. The next line, as stated earlier, stands alone. The last two go together. Thus, the various lines of about the same length are combined into groups of two, sometimes even three (texts: 2, 5, 6 etc),
to constitute a stanza (a verse or group of lines forming a division of a given poetic text). From this, it is clear that the basic form of Luunda-Kazembe royal praises is a couplet of chants, the second either repeating (text 10:4-5) or in some way reinforcing or completing the thought started in the first one.

Unlike that of his western counterpart, the Luunda-Kazembe royal poet's poetry does not seem to depend on rhyme. Instead, it depends on a balance of the thought being expressed. That is the major guiding principle. The thought is conveyed by a balance of sentences (in length).

Milimo (1976) says, with regard to Bemba praise poetry, that the tune or rhythm that accompanies this is "thought rhythm" rather than "vowel rhyme". This is accompanied by "thought arrangement" rather than "word arrangement".

Milimo further argues that this feature, compounded by what he calls the "illogical arrangement of stanzas", allows the traditional poet to ramble freely about his chosen field in response to his inspiration, without having to conform to any pre-determined poetic structure.

In the ten poems studied, there are no regular instances
of alliteration and assonance. Where these are seen, they appear to be accidental. Here are a few instances:

Text 1:4  **Shapwite wapwite** (alliteration).
Text 6:2  **abashikwa abo baisa** (assonance)

This is more a case of concordial agreement of prefixes than this poetic element!

Text 9:3  **Kasasa, akakanga kabafu** (consonance)!

Text 9:7  **Kazembe kanyembo** (alliteration - These are names anyway!).

One may simply argue that the above examples are, of course, accidental, i.e. the overriding factor seems to be the full expression of the thought process as regards the ideology of the tribal politics of the Luunda-Kazembe. The praises are also proverbial. Praises are eulogies that often speak of somebody or something with admiration whereas proverbs are sayings of the wise.

Among others texts that display proverbial phrases are texts 6:3, and 10:2.

Having discussed some of the elements of poetry and seeing that Luunda Royal poetry actually uses some of them, one may conclude that Luunda royal praises are good poems. We have discussed inter alia, heightened language, personification, assonance,
alliteration. This in part answers the question of how Luunda Kazembe royal poetry is composed.
CHAPTER THREE

CONTENT: THEMES AND SOCIO-POLITICAL FUNCTIONS.

i. Power - brutality
   - cruelty
   - ruthlessness
   - aggressiveness

ii. Benevolence

iii. Death

iv. Aesthetic nature

v. Cultural media (social experience)

vi. Political nature

Introduction

When dealing with the use of metaphor in the previous chapter, mention was made of the fact that it was unavoidable to deal with the element without touching on content. Some of the observations already made will not be repeated here.

(i) Power

The earlier poetry of the Luunda-Kazembe focused on one major theme, i.e. the theme of power and with it connotatively, the minor themes of brutality, cruelty, ruthlessness and aggressiveness. The Luunda-Kazembe's poetry displayed these qualities signifying their quest to expand their kingdom. Below are examples of how ferocious the chiefs were in the era of Empire building.
Text 1:1-2

Keleka Monzi
Bena Chishinga tukeleka nabo.

The "Frisker" son of Monzi,
I'll gambol even with the Chishinga people.

The Chishinga tribemen are in the East of Luunda-land. Here, the king shows he wants to conquer the Chishinga people with a view to taking part of their land. And this is exactly what happened when Chief Mubanga Pulula conquered the Chishinga. "Pulula" is in fact an ideophone here.

Text 4:1-2

Mubanga Pulula,
Mubanga wauma lubali abena Chishinga bonteko insansu.

Mubanga, you shed leaves,
Mubanga that is partially dry so the Chishinga may have twigs for firewood.

The reciters were also occasionally sarcastic in the way they displayed their cruelty and ruthlessness. For instance, text 2:3 talks of a lion which first eats the penis of its prey. While this may mean what it exactly says, it may implicitly mean a situation where the persona of the poem destroys the centre of the being of society he has conquered in war, i.e. to usurp power and rule the conquered people.
In fact, in Luunda and indeed Bemba poetry, insults are not taken to be rude and offensive remarks as such. They are called "amalumbo" which means praises.

Text 3:1-2 also shows brutality and aggressiveness. The chief praised himself as "... the Rummager who digs lily bulbs, the one who rummages through siftings of corn, the hunger of the invaded country". The talk of invasion is also implicit in text 5 where the chief again refers to the East (Nkonde) where the Chishinga lived.

ii) Benevolence

It is interesting to note that the Luunda-Kazembe poets use ambivalent symbols. The lion in text 2:1 seems to be fearless so he can protect his kingdom. We can also infer that Mwata Kazembe X, text 4, went to Northern Province Chiefs to get military support so that he could come and maintain the Empire that had been built by previous chiefs. From these poems we learn that the chiefs fought to safeguard or protect the interest of their citizens. The Mwatas therefore saw themselves as guardians or even representatives of the spirit world. This perhaps explains why before one becomes Mwata Kazembe one is immersed in the Ng'ona river to "shed common man's appearance".
The poets sometimes do acknowledge the parental role of Kazembe by referring to the striking personality of the chief. For instance, Kazembe XVII is praised that he does not sit idle until he looks for a safe crossing place (text 1:5; 9:6). These praises stress the Kings' creativity and strength. The quest for a fording place is crucial for a riverine people as it is almost part of their ethos.

iii) Death

From the poems below, we will learn that the colonial and post-colonial Kazembe royal poetry focus on the theme of death. The praise poem of Kazembe XV Ng'ombe 1 established this style. The chiefs who talk mainly of death are "unwarlike", the reason being that they have lived in a new era where war is not a common phenomenon, at least in Zambian traditional society. Past notable events (wars) and characters are only alluded to, for instance in text 9.

It is important to note that the theme of death can be looked at from two angles. I am not only talking of physical death but it looks like the Mwatas have realised that they have become titular. They have been stripped of their power and they seem to brood over that loss. No longer are the Mwatas heroic. These powers have been eroded even in the new independent Zambia. The Mwata was previously the political guide for the tribe. But today, people depend on Government to offer them leadership.
Here are the poems that discuss death:

Text 6 (Kazembe XV)
Kabumbu sekela,
Abashikwaabo baisa.
Nine nsamfwe iyaishilo kubola.

The graves rejoice,
The dead are coming.
I am the "nsamfwe" that sprouts only to rot.

Text 8:1-2 (Kazembe XVII)
Nine "Mushindikeni",
Uwafwa taishindika.

I am the one who is escorted,
The dead does not escort himself.

Text 9:3-4
Mwana kasasa, akakanga kabafu,
akakanga kabena nkala.

Son of kasasa, the reed mat for the dead,
Kapasa, the reed mat for the dead.

Text 10:2,4-5
Ami yami "Kafumbe" kasemenwa luvu,
Iyabambwa yatulika nolwine nalo
Iyabambwa yatulika nolwine nalo.
I am "kafumbe" that is born to die
When a wooden drum is made, its end is to break up
When a wooden drum is made, its end is to break up.

iv) Aesthetic Nature
From a very tender age, the Luunda-Kazembe appreciate the family praises. Royal praises become a sort of challenge to them. In the last section of this study, I have made suggestions that will require further study. These oral art forms of poetry are not devoid of aesthetic value. They are poetic texts that accord pleasure, inform and educate those they are intended for. This is very crucial.

To the intended audience, the powerful overflow of words is a source of pleasure. When chanting is done, it is among other things, for the purpose of social cheer and hilarity. The pleasantness of sound, the good quality of words with that rich associated rhythm of the poetry enrich the aesthetic quality of the poetry. Apparently, one of the purposes of the poetry is to offer a means to the proximate end of pleasure.

v) Cultural Media
Malahlele (1986) confesses that she had always associated oral poetry with entertainment only before she discovered that there is a more serious facet to poetry - a cultural media that provides
for the expression of social experience.

This is where Finnegan (1977:44) poses a question for sociologists of literature: just what role does literature play in society? Does it reflect the current (or even old) culture and social order with more or less directness? And if it does, is this reflection selective, or does it cover "the whole" of society? Or does literature go beyond the passive role like "reflection" and play an active part in the working of society?

She continues:

Similarly poems like hymns, secret society songs, or imitation verse can be shown to contribute to the solidarity and self awareness of certain groups and hence, often to a maintainance of the status quo.

Apart from the functionalist writers, the Marxists seem to have a closely related view of literature. The Marxists may be said to be restricted but like functionalists they pro-pound that literature can function as a tool for the ruling class, advancing its ideas and interpretations.

vi) Political Nature

That brings us to the political nature of the poetry. Some points have been discussed under metaphor. But one may argue that the aim of the poetry is to strengthen the position of tribal leaders by
celebrating their deeds and varlour in war (text 1,2), glorifying their ancestors (text 9), or even listing the allies upon whom one might rely in times of dire need (text 4). One may also add that Mwataship is an admired political post and that is perhaps why the colonial and post-colonial poetry focuses on the theme of death.

The Luunda royal poems are eulogies since they contain the high praise of chiefs and aristocrats. The praises are actual assessments of the subjects. Cope (1968) says praise poems are biased towards the subject of their praise. As a result, unfavourable qualities tend to be overlooked. We have seen how texts recited after the coming of Whites shed that praise to slay. This point has been discussed earlier on.

Conclusion

In concluding this Chapter, I would like to point out that Luunda-Kazembe poetry stresses socio-political and cultural change. Therefore, one could say that this poetry has been reflecting socio-cultural political changes, thus fulfilling one of the major roles of literature Finnegan (1977) has identified.

It is also important to note that death has always been there. In the early Luunda-Kazembe poetry, the main preoccupation was Empire building and later on leaders were depended upon as spiritual guides, i.e.
traditional leaders provided leadership and maintained traditional values and mores. But traditional authority of rulers has been undermined. That is why they 'moan' that they have 'died' as their powers have gradually been eroded.

Allow me to point out that Mwata Kazembe is supposed to be referred to as a king because there are many chiefs under him. The colonial Government, I suppose, undermined the traditional paramount chiefs' or kings' powers by calling them mere chiefs to convince everyone that the only-king was the one in England!

To this end I would like to say that although there has been this change in themes in Luunda-Kazembe royal poetry, there has been an element of continuity in the royal tradition. Firstly, in contrast to the language of the common people, Luba-Luunda royal poetry is defamiliarised and heightened. Secondly, the importance of the royal court is still observed. Thirdly, metaphors and other motifs of Luba-Luunda poetry are still alluded to.
CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

This study has answered three main questions: how the poetry is said, what the poetry says and why the poetry says what it says. The study has taught us how the royal poetry has been seen as praise as well as a means of pleasing and propagating, inter alia, communal ethics, socio-historical and political aspects of life.

The Luunda-Kazembe have great respect and appreciation for royal poetry. Therefore, it is considered that Luunda-Kazembe society should function with this institution in its midst to reinforce its wisdom. The Luunda society is one where man and nature are seen as one cosmos and as such most tribal activities have a special place for oral recitations.

In terms of form, a large number of these poems belongs to the common oral heritage of the Luba of Katanga in Zaire, e.g. the language, still imitates the oral traditional forms of text 1. This points out that the passage of time since the coming of the Luunda-Kazembe to Zambia in 1740, change in locality and the intercourse with other tribal groupings have done very little, if any, to change the linguistic nature of the poetry. However, the content and functional aspects of the poetry have changed significantly.

This study has been a quest
for Luunda-Kazembe royal culture as realised in the royal poetry which encompasses not only the heritage of her distant and mysterious past but also the most recent developments in her history. This study has discussed the philosophical, social, historical, cultural and political life of the kingdom. In other words, the view taken is that the poetry does have meaning and social function, that poets and their audiences are social beings who handle their experiences using a social phenomenon: language.

Luunda-Kazembe praises are concise and concentrated and are mostly modelled around the same theme. I have talked of the poetry being subject to change in its thematic characteristics. Many scholars have talked of a 'decline' in Luunda royal poetry as a result of westernisation (e.g. Kapaya, n.d.). It is true to say that the colonial administrators preaching of the superiority of his way of life, "killed" the African spirit in that it led to the abandonment of that which mattered most to traditional customary life. I would not call this a 'decline' per se. Rather, I have called it the changing role of the poetry to suit the new or modern pattern of socio-political and cultural life.

We have learnt a number of things concerning the authors of Luunda royal poetry. These are trained professional poets who also belong to the aristocratic class. The authors recount the lineages of royal clans and glorify Chiefs and noblemen. Praises may also comment-and or condemn
certain actions in society.

Oral literature, unlike written literature, is by nature of the mode of presenting more often than not meant to be public. Mapoma (1978) states that this feature makes oral poets immune to any reprisal as long as they present their message through poetic discourse. However, there have been cases where oral poets, like certain musicians who have been taken to task and even in some cases persecuted for uttering statements understood to be detrimental to the socio-political well-being of their communities.

During the course of my research, I discovered that many formally educated Luundas have a fair knowledge of their traditions. However, it is the royal poets who are the custodians of traditional life for they involve themselves deeply in creating, recreating, assessing and reassessing their view of life and that of the rulers. They are also in a constant battle, consciously striving after literary effect, a concentrated effort to attain richer and more evocative, more emotive and more memorable poetic texts. This is very important. The poets function to recapture the socio-cultural, historical and political life for the benefit of all the present generation.

This study has shown that there are possibilities for future research in the field of Luunda-Kazembe traditional oral art forms.
Such on-going study would lead to greater awareness, understanding and appreciation of the traditional oral art forms of the Zambian people as a whole.

Among other things, one could examine the "Umonto" or "Talking" drum poetry with verbally performed poetry such as that presented in this dissertation. Are they same in pattern and style? If so, how? If not, how different? Is it any person that can play the Umonto? In other words, who are the authors of the "Umonto" Drum poetry? These are some of the various questions that may be addressed.

In the first section of this study, I made mention of the several "oral poetries" that form a rich Luunda-Kazembe poetic tradition. This is another area into which one can make further research, comparing for example, lyrical, elegiac, initiation, individual and family (praise) poetry with the royal poetry. Such a study could be made wider in scope than the one that I have undertaken at this level. We also need to study the relationship between the social and cultural structures of old and new because the old have given birth to the new social and cultural order and organisation. Such literary studies will not only address social changes and or conflicts but they may help to answer other complex problems in society in Luunda-Kazembe society and perhaps even in the nation as a whole.
LUUNDA-KAZEMBE ROYAL POEMS

TEXT 1. (Praises of Mwata Kazembe IV 1805-50, Keleka Kanyembo 2).

Luba Version

Keleka Monzi
Bena Chishinga tukeleka nabo.
Bapemba botutapana.
Shapwite, wapwite makundji ng'anda.

5  Mondo wakelwapo.
Kazembe nutapile abaluba.

English Version

The "Frisker" Son of Monzi
I'll gambol even with the Chishinga tribemen.
Only those we govern revolt against us.
I am the wicked who slay indiscriminately all
I meet in the way.

5  I am like the talking drum that is beaten through
out the night.
Kazembe who killed even the Luba.
Text 2. (praises of Mwata Kazembe VII, 1862-70, Muonga 2).

Luba Version

Ami 'Sunkutu' Kabanda,
Kalobwe muntabangula bwanga,
Ye ukubangula mutwe wabukala.

English Version

I am 'Sunkutu'* of the Forest,
He who does not fear to be bewitched,
He who first eats the penis of its prey.

*Sunkutu - the angry lion.
Text 3. (Praises of Mwata Kazembe VIII, 1870-72, Kafuti 1).

Luba Version

Ami "Chinkonkole" Kapanda mabo,
Bakonkole inseke nsaka yaliyanga.

English Version

I am "the Rummager" who digs lily bulbs,
The one who rummages through sittings of corn,
The hunger of the invaded country.

**Bemba Version**

Mubanga, pulula,

Mubanga wauma lubali abena Chishinga bonte ko
insansu.

**English Version**

Mubanga*, you shed leaves,

Mubanga that's partially dry so the Chishinga -
may have twigs for firewood.

"Mubanga" tree is scientifically known as "afromosia angolensis", mainly used for making bridges and in carpentry. Among Northern and Luapula peoples of Zambia, the branches and twigs of the "Mubanga" tree are used as firewood.
Text 5. (Praises of Mwata Kazembe XII, 1919-35, Chinyanta 2).

Bembaised Luba
Nine "Kamima" umutamina nkonde*
Nine "Fututa" imfula yabufumi,
Unokele abakulu pa mapala.

English Version
I am "The showers" that overcast the weather in the East.
I am the slow-drizzily rain,
Who soaks the old on their bald heads.

*"Nkonde" is the old Cibemba word for "the East" or "Kukabanga". That is where the Nkonde tribesmen who were running from the invading Zulus under Zwangendaba were staying. To point to the East, the Bembas simply said "to the Nkondes".
Text 6. (Praises of Mwata Kazembe XV, 1952-57, Ng’ombe 1).

Bembaised Luba

Kabumbu Sekela,
Abashikwa abo baisa.
Nine Nsamfwe iyaishilo kubola.

English Version

The graves rejoice,
The dead are coming.
I am "the Nsamfwe"* which sprouts only to rot.

*Nsamfwe - a type of mushroom.

Bemba Version 1

Nine Chibelushi uwashinta mu Mulungu.  
Chimba milonga, uwaimbile Mofwe ku minwe.  
Nine "Nkalamo" yamasense,  
Neo icalo cakulatotela.  

5 Newaba ngo lukusu uluponya umuulima panshi  
Nine musenga uwailikishe impili.

English Version

I am "Saturday" which changes into "Sunday".  
The "River-digger" who dug the Mofwe* with fingers.  
I am the maned lion,  
I who the (Luunda) country will be praising.  

5 I am like the Lukusu** which fell the bat.  
I am the sand which covers the hills.

* Mofwe - one of the rivers in Kazembe's kingdom.  
** Lukusu - a fruit that hangs on the branches.

**Luba Version**

Nine "Mushindikeni",
Uwafwa taishindika,
Chakukosama,
abana ba Luunda bakudimuka,
\[5\]
Ntambo wafya mala or Ntambo kefula mala.
Kadi nyina di,
Ami wabusimwa mwami.

**English Version**

I am the "Escortee", (the one who is escorted)
I am like the dead who does not escort himself,
I am stupid,
The children of the Luunda are the clever ones,
\[5\]
The lion that has not bared its claws.

I have no mother
I am just alone.

*Mushindikeni* - Lit: escort him
Text 9. (Praises to honour Mwata Kazembe XVII).

Bembaised Luba
Niwe mwana "Kamima" akamutamina nkonde,
Pututa imfula yabufumi iiholele abakulu
  pmapala.
Mwana Kasasa, akakanga kabatu,
akakanga kabena nkala.

Wishingile makata nekusanga pakwabukila.
Mwishikulu 'Sunktutu' Kabanda,
Kazembe Kanyembo mpalumema.

English Version
You're the "showers" that overcast the weather
in the East,
The slow-drizzily rain that soaks the old on
their bald heads.
Son of Kasasa, the reed mat for the dead,
Kapasa*, the reed mat for the dead.

He who does not sit idle unless he looks for a
crossing place.
Grandson of Sunktutu** that roams in the forest,
Kazembe Kanyembo the ruler.

* Kapasa - local name for reed mat.
**Sunktutu - angry lion.

Luba Version

A tweebo divumo dia bupemba,
Ami yami "Kafumbe" kasemenwa luvu,
Hakulondela mwana wa ziandi.
Iyabambwa yatulika, nolwine nalo,
Iyabambwa yatulika, nolwine nalo.
Nkatwa wa Chibalo, wakungilwa kwipika.
Kelwa pwile, kelusha ketulu.
Mbanga ni panshi.

English Version

We are of the royal family,
I am "Kafumbe" that is born to die,
My own father was also Mwata.
When a wooden drum is made, its end is to break up,
When a wooden drum is made, its end is to break up.
I am the pumpkin which must be cut into pieces before it is cooked.
If it is not cut into pieces before it is cooked, it becomes tasteless.
Kazembe Chinyanta's Mwataship will never end
(another son from my line will succeed.)

*Kafumbe - small rat hunted by many for its fatty meat.
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