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CILENDE: THE MASK DANCE AT THE LUVALE CULTURE FESTIVAL (ANGOLA)¹

ABSTRACT

This article presents new ethnographic and visual material on the dance of the *makixi*, the ancestors manifested in the form of masked dancers, originally found in the circumcision rituals (*mukanda*) practiced by Bantu peoples from the large area of confluence between Angola, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, including the Luvale. Proclaimed Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2005, the main locus of their performance today is the large Luvale ‘culture’ festival, held since the 1950s in Zambia and more recently in Angola. Based on an ethnography of the Angolan version of the festival, researched between 2013 and 2013, the author focuses on the *makixi* dances, which comprise the event’s main attraction, showing the close relationship between the morphology of the masks and the dance styles, helping to narrow the enormous gap opened up by the lapse of almost forty years without any research being carried out in the area due to warfare.

keywords

Masks, Dance, ‘Culture’,
Luvale, Angola.

¹ This article was presented for the first time in 2014, in the form of a scientific paper, as part of the international colloquium “Masls, Saints and Fetishes (Africa-America)” – PPGAS/MN/UFRJ, commented on by Zoe Strother (Yale University).

It is five in the morning, I hear the roar of the motorbike at the door. Muzala arrives right on time and we head off to the cemetery of the old Nyakatolo Queens, located about 20 km from the centre of Cazombo. The sun is rising above the horizon, still obscured by the *cacimbo*, the early morning mist that blankets the land all around. Various villages appear along the way and, as we pass through them, we attract the attention of the few Luvale who have ventured outside their houses to relight the fires from the night before. Finally we catch sight of our destination. A group of men has gathered close to the whitewashed tombs. Muzala asks them whether I can watch in order to document the events. They say yes, so long as I keep a certain distance. After a few minutes a huge uproar stirs the woods surrounding the cemetery. From the trees emerge innumerable masked figures. They leap on top of the tombs, paying homage to them with wild gestures and deep growls. Afterwards they move towards the people standing nearby, provoking a tumult. Many of the masked figures carry weapons or sticks. Their bodies are entirely covered by a second, multicoloured skin. Gradually they form a line and then head off to the village, trailing an ever-growing audience, especially children, in their wake. I have the intuition that they are organized in a predefined order and that some of them share certain features, leading them to form pairs or even peer groups, but, for now, this remains no more than conjecture.

figure 1
Cortege of
makixi opening
the 2012
Traditional
Luvale
International
Festival. Alto
Zambeze
(Angola).
Author's photo.



It is this procession of masked dancers that begins the Traditional Luvale International Festival, an event that I witnessed twice during fieldwork for my doctoral research,² carried out between 2012 and 2013, in the municipality of Alto Zambeze (far east of Angola, Central Africa), where the Luvale live. Held since 2010 with the goal of becoming a festival as famous as the Brazilian carnival, as my interlocutors liked to jest, the Luvale Festival fits into the broader panorama described by Comaroff & Comaroff (2009) in which a widely diffused process of objectifying and commodifying 'culture' can be observed, either as a form of survival and empowerment (2009, 15), or simply as the transmission of a message to the world: "We exist; we are different; we can do something we are proud of; we have something uniquely ours" (2009, 10). But there is more to it. Along with the intense use of 'culture' as propaganda, which has provided a tool to Luvale leaders from Angola in a multifaceted field of disputes over territory, ethnic alterity and sovereignty, there is another central aspect to the Festival: from the viewpoint of its organizers, it is not held with the sole objective to divulge 'culture,' but also to avoid their culture from being forgotten. The *Likumbi Lya Vaka Cinyama*, as the festival is conventionally called in the Luvale language, is the day of 'remembering the culture.'

The simultaneously mnemonic and political nature of the Luvale Festival is explored extensively in my doctoral thesis (Penoni 2015). In this article, however, I shall focus on ethnographic data contained in a specific chapter of the thesis, where I focus exclusively on the great dance of the *makixi* (masked dancers),³ which comprises the festival's main attraction. Called *cilende* in the Luvale language, the great *makixi* originates from the male circumcision rituals (*mukanda*) practiced by the Luvale and other related groups who inhabit the area of confluence between Angola, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It forms the closing event of a traditional *mukanda*, reproduced in condensed form during the festival, attracting the public's attention and interest due to

2 My fieldwork in the east of Angola involved two trips to Alto Zambeze between 2012 and 2013, both times undertaken during the dry season (from May to September), when the region becomes accessible. Supported by funding from CAPES and FAPERJ, and by an institutional partnership with the Angola National Directorate of Museums, the work concentrated on an ethnography of the Traditional Luvale International Festival, which resulted in the thesis "The worst is yet to happen – spectacle, memory and politics among the Luvale of Alto Zambeze (Angola)," presented in June 2015, at PPGAS/MN/UFRJ. I was able to continue the research between 2015 and 2016 during a postdoctorate at Musée du quai Branly Jacques Chirac (MQB) in Paris, France.

3 Among the Luvale, the *makixi* (singular *likixi*) are conceived as ancestors who take the public form of masked dancers. Although traditional to the male circumcision rituals (*mukanda*), they may also appear in enthronement ceremonies for chiefs and other sociopolitical events. There exist more than a hundred types, or sub-types, of *makixi*, which present morphological and behavioural differences, generally associated with their ritual functions (Bastin 1982; 1984, Wele 1993, Jordán 1998; 2006).

its incredibly spectacular nature. Here I present a detailed description and analysis of this event, focusing on the performances of the masked dancers at the 2012 and 2013 editions of the festival. I look to show the intimate relationship between the dance styles and the morphology of the *makixi*, shedding light on an aspect never before discussed in the specialized bibliography that may also be of particular interest to the broader field of the anthropology of dance. First, though, it will be helpful to situate the Luvale and their Traditional Festival ethnographically.

ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The Luvale⁴ are a Bantu-speaking people, located mainly in the municipality of Alto Zambeze (Moxico Province, Angola) and the districts of Chavuma, Zambeze and Kabompo (Northwest Province, Zambia). The population numbers more than a 100,000 inhabitants, today divided by several national borders. The area in which I worked in Angola, in the municipality of Alto Zambeze, was deeply affected by the series of wars that ravaged the country from the 1960s to the start of the twenty-first century.⁵ Over more than forty years of conflicts, the Luvale from the region where progressively forced to seek refuge in other areas, especially in the district of Chavuma, Zambia, where the population grew seven-fold in five decades (Silva 2004, 32). Official repatriation only began in 2003, meaning that the Luvale of Angola just very recently began to return from exile.⁶

It was in this context of rebuilding life in the post-war period that the idea emerged of the Traditional Luvale International Festival, the program of which, as we shall see later, exhibits a potpourri of excerpts from the most important Luvale rituals, many of them no longer practiced in the region. While the Angolan festival is described by my interlocutors as the first such event to be held in Angola, a similar festival has been produced in Zambia since 1950 by Luvale groups settled on the other side of the border. The *Likumbi Lya Mize*, as the Zambian Luvale festival is known,

4 The Luvale call themselves by different names: *valuvale* (singular *kaluvale*), in reference to the *mavale* palm (*Raphia farinifera*), or also *valwena* (singular *kalwena*), when they live close to the Luena River in Angola (Silva 2004:27). In the literature, they are very often included in more encompassing terms like Mawiko, Balovale and Ganguela. On these ethnonyms, see McCulloch (1951), White (1949) and Oppen (1994).

5 Angola went through a long period of warfare, beginning with the wars of national liberation (1960-1975), followed by almost thirty years of civil war.

6 Over the more than four decades of conflicts, along with the mass exodus of the Luvale population of Alto Zambeze to Zambia, there was also a complete disintegration of social life and, concomitantly, of ritual and ceremonial practices in the region. Moreover, although official repatriation began in 2003, the municipality today still presents a scenario of a land emerging from ruins, the gradual return of refugees from Zambia and the slow rebuilding of life and sociocultural practices.

forms part of the hectic calendar of 'traditional ceremonies' that fuels the country's tourism market. Produced in tribute to 'King' Ndungo, the principal Luvale 'Traditional Authority'⁷ in Zambia, the event also comprises the biggest contemporary public arena for the performance of the *makixi*, proclaimed Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

Although, because of the long period of wars, Angola still remains shielded to outside influences involving free circulation of visitors and increased levels of tourism, the impact of the Zambian event on the production of the Luvale Festival in the country is undeniable. Located very close to the frontier with Zambia and able to witness at close hand the impact of *Likumbi Lya Mize*, the organizers of the Angolan festival, today represented by the Traditional Luvale Festival Committee (COFETRAL),⁸ are well aware of the value of 'traditional culture' in the new era of the internationalization of heritage policies. Not coincidentally, the main objective in promoting the festival, as I heard repeated on numerous occasions, is to "preserve the culture," "show that the culture has not been lost."⁹

The performing of 'culture' in play at the Luvale Festival – echoed in the many other indigenous festivals and shows that have multiplied across the world over recent years, converting ritual into spectacular shows of the 'authentic'¹⁰ (DeVienne & Allard 2005, Graham 2005, Barcelos Neto

7 A generic term used in Angola to identify chiefs from the many different autochthonous populations. In Zambia the corresponding term is 'Native Authority.'

8 The Comitê Festival Tradicional Luvale (COFETRAL) was created in 2002, in the city of Luena (the capital of Moxico province) by a group of Luvale 'intellectuals' exiled there due to conflicts that swept Alto Zambeze, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s. Formed basically by Luvale men holding key positions among the administrative cadres of the municipality of Alto Zambeze, the group composing the Committee has been working for more than a decade to create the necessary conditions for producing the festival, with the declared objective of preserving and divulging the 'culture' of the Luvale, as well as strengthening their 'traditional chiefs.'

9 Like most Luvale men aged under forty, my interlocutors from COFETRAL were bilingual. Hence many of the categories and notions associated with the festival were formulated in Portuguese, like the ideas of 'preservar a cultura' (preserving the culture) and 'mostrar a cultura' (showing the culture).

10 These kinds of spectacular events are now more often examined in the anthropological literature from a political and sociological perspective, which, with a few exceptions, fails to recognize in them much more than an instrumental function. This can be explained by the fact that the reflexive processes (Carneiro da Cunha 2009) implicated in them are unlikely to be captured by an analysis informed by the paradigms of acculturation and the invention of tradition, which project a "spectre of inauthenticity" (Jolly 1992) onto autochthonous peoples immersed in post-modern contexts (Fausto 2006). In my doctoral research, I present an alternative perspective by taking seriously the performative genre emergent from the Luvale Festival and showing how this results not in a degenerate copy of traditional rituals, or a mere touristic souvenir, but in something much more complex, "where a new dispositif for the transmission and production of knowledge is allied with political intervention" (Penoni 2015:06).

2006, Fiorini & Ball 2006) – today comprises perhaps the most important strategy for reinserting the Luvale of Angola in regional and national political disputes. Disputes that not only occur at different scales but also in confrontation with different agents, like the Luvale of Zambia, for example, who have grown in strength enormously over the last decades, primarily due to the success and visibility of their own festival, and other related peoples inhabiting the east of Angola, such as the Chokwe. The latter received from the Angolan government the title of ‘national language,’¹¹ while the Luvale language continues to be seen as a variant of Chokwe – a situation unacceptable to the Luvale, who seek to assert themselves as an ‘independent group’ via their own festival (see Penoni 2015).

Held annually in July, the Luvale Festival leads around 3,000 people to a terrain located some distance from the centre of Cazombo (the municipal centre of Alto Zambeze). At this site, which goes by the name of *vambunda* (red earth), an enormous dirt arena is built to hold the festival each year. In the main audience area, in front of which the entire show is performed, are found the sections reserved to government officials and traditional authorities, as well as the special awning of the Nyakatolo Queen, the main Luvale ‘traditional authority’ in Angola (see Figure 2). Each year, in the days preceding the start of the festival, canvas tents and straw thatched cabins are erected around this large festive arena to accommodate, respectively, the ‘cultural groups’¹² from Angola, Zambia and Congo taking part in the festival, and the Luvale contingents arriving from distant villages to commemorate

11 The Angolan government, through its National Institute of Languages and with the support of UNESCO, promoted the systemization of the phonological systems of the six most widespread Bantu languages in the country: Kikongo, Kimbundu, Chokwe, Umbundo, Mbunda and Kwanyama. This was followed by elaboration of projects to implant their alphabets in the public education system – with each alphabet being implemented, obviously, only within the area where the corresponding language is used. By consolidating the alphabets to these six languages, identified as ‘national languages,’ the government effectively established a hierarchy between them and a series of other languages spoken in the country, which, clustered around the former, became identified as their variants. Acquiring ‘national language’ status meant that the ethnic groups concerned not only gained compulsory teaching of their languages in the country’s public schools, but also air time on the national radio and television channels. In fact, the legitimization of the six cited languages caused revolt and incredulity among the other ethnic groups, representing, for them, a label of cultural inferiority, setting precedents for relations of subordination that are both undesirable and unfounded from their own points of view. Such is the case of the Luvale, whose language became identified as a variant of Chokwe.

12 Organized around one or two ritual specialists, the ‘cultural groups’ are responsible for presentation of the elements performed during the festival. Their participation, however, is not limited to the event itself but extends to other festivities organized by the government, such as those related to April 4th (Peace Day), November 11th (Independence Day), November 22nd (Educator Day) and carnival in February. During my period of fieldwork, there were five ‘cultural groups’ up and running in the municipality of Alto Zambeze.

the event. In this large area, a temporary fair is also set up with dozens of stands selling drinks, biscuits, sweets, snacks and regional dishes.

A day before the official opening of the festival, the event takes place that signals the beginning of the festival period. This comprises the first public appearance of the *makixi*, described in the opening paragraph of the article, when they emerge from the royal cemetery located some 20 km from Cazombo, and head off to the town to perform a first public demonstration of their typical dances. The next day, the official opening of the festival is held in the *vambunda* arena. The program of the day is extensive, beginning with the ceremonial entrance of the government authorities, followed by the traditional leaders, and finally the *makixi*. The entrance of the traditional leaders, in particular, involves a complex ceremony that expresses the segmentary structure of the Luvale chiefdom, translated in contemporary Angola by the establishment of the categories *sobeta*, *soba*, *regedor* and queen.¹³ Once inside the arena, Queen Nyakatolo occupies a special area, situated precisely in the middle of the main audience. Meanwhile the *makixi* take up position on the opposite side where a space of honour is reserved to Kayipu,¹⁴ conceived as the king of the *makixi*. The arrangement of the traditional chiefs and the *makixi* in the arena, positioned in front of each other, reveals an identificatory dispositif that recurs throughout the festival's ritualistics, reflecting the construction of the Luvale chiefs through identification with their ancestors (Penoni 2015).

13 Today traditional power in Angola is divided into three main categories recognized by the government: *regedor*, *soba* and *sobeta*. While the *regedor* (ruler, director) is the traditional representative at commune level (Angola's third administrative units after the municipalities), the *soba* is the representative at chiefdom level (today called bairros, neighbourhoods) and the *sobeta* at small settlement level (related to specific family nucleuses). In line with the segmentary structure of Luvale chiefdomship, every *sobeta* is subordinated to a *soba* and both of them to the same *regedor*. The Nyakatolo Queen is the most inclusive title/post among the Luvale. *Sobas*, *sobetas*, *regedores*, 'kings' and 'queens' are included in the broader category of 'traditional authorities.' According to official data from the Administration of Alto Zambeze, in the one municipality alone there exist 464 'traditional authorities,' comprising one queen, 12 *regedores*, 105 *sobas*, 288 *sobetas*, 6 *regedor* assistants and 52 *soba* assistants. Today all Angola's 'traditional authorities,' numbering more than 40,000 people nationwide, receive government subsidies (<http://novojournal.co.ao/Artigo/Default/46209>, 29-04-2014).

14 Associated with the chiefdom, Kayipu appears only in funerary and enthronement ceremonies and in homages to traditional chiefs (Jordán 2006). On rare occasions, he may also appear in *mukanda* rituals organized especially for the children of chiefs (Wele 1993). At the 2012 and 2013 festivals, Kayipu appeared only on the opening day of the festival, heading directly to his private awning, where he remained protected by a group of men who prevented anyone else from approaching. See Figure 12 and further details on this specific *likixi* on page 238.

figure 2
The Nyakatolo
Queen on her
throne during
the Luvale
Festival in
Cazombo.
Alto Zambeze,
2013.



After the entry of the authorities present, a series of actions are executed that mark the event as typically Luvale. Almost all these actions are directed towards the Nyakatolo Queen, who comprises the centre towards which everything converges in the festival. Firstly, a hymn of praise to the ethnic group is chanted by a group of youths and repeated in chorus by the entire audience present. Next an extensive narrative on the origin and succession of Luvale chiefs (*kulifukula*) is recited by a specialized orator. Afterwards a sheep is immolated in the centre of the arena in homage to the Luvale chiefs and their ancestors, represented by the figure of Kayipu. Finally, the diverse authorities present at the festival give speeches on an improvised podium, including the Nyakatolo Queen, the directors of COFETRAL and representatives of the Angolan government.

Once the initial opening block of the festival is concluded, the 'cultural program' can begin. Starting on the first day of the festival and extending for another two or three days, the cultural program basically consists of a sequence of presentations by the diverse 'cultural groups' present at the event. This amounts to the festival's moment of 'entertainment' where a potpourri of excerpts from all kinds of different traditional Luvale rituals and ceremonies are exhibited. Considering this phase of the festival in particular, the Luvale Festival could be defined, similarly to the Xavante spectacle analysed by Laura Graham, as a scripted display of a series of decontextualized excerpts, mostly composed of the more performative and public elements of larger ritual complexes (Graham 2005, 633).

Mukanda is without doubt the ritual most present in the context of the Luvale Festival. Combining all the fragments that relate to this ritual, we could say that it is represented almost in its entirety, albeit in condensed form. The fragments of *mukanda* performed during the festival basically

relate to the initial and final stages of the ritual, precisely the day on which the neophytes are taken into reclusion and the day when they are reintroduced into society. All the actions that make up the reclusion period of the neophytes properly speaking are thus kept hidden from view.¹⁵

The great *makixi* dance, called *cilende*, takes place during the final stage of a *mukanda* ritual, preceding the presentation of the neophytes to the community and their reintegration into social life, as explained in the text presenting the 'Makishi Masquerade' on the UNESCO website.

The Makishi masquerade is performed at the end of the *mukanda*, an initiation ritual for boys between the ages of eight and twelve. [...] The whole village attends the Makishi dance and the audience is entertained with pantomime-like artistry until the graduates re-emerge from the camp and are reintegrated as adult men into their communities and families.

[<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00140>]

In the Luvale Festivals that I accompanied in Alto Zambeze (Angola) in 2012 and 2013, the *cilende* took place on two occasions: 1) on the day before the official opening of the event, soon after the large cortege of the *makixi*, which comprises their first public appearance in the festival context; and 2) as the closure to the festival's 'cultural program,' which begins on the opening day (July 22nd) and lasts for another two or three days.¹⁶ In both cases, the *cilende* constituted a space for the exhibition of the many different *makixi* present at the festival, which, amid an enormous circle of people and in front of a fervent orchestra of drums, display their characteristic dances one after the other.

¹⁵ The term *mukanda* (plural *mikanda*) designates, simultaneously, the male initiation ritual widespread among people inhabiting Alto Zambeze and the encampment itself set up at a spot some distance from the community, out of reach of women and non-initiates, where the neophytes (*tundandji*) are kept in reclusion under the care and protection of specialists for a period that, in the past, could last longer than a year (Jordán 1999; 2006, Turner 2005). Basically, a traditional *mukanda* presents three distinct phases, like a typical rite of passage (Gennep 1960). In the first phase, the neophytes are physically separated from their mothers and symbolically separated from their childhood through circumcision. In the second phase, they emerge from a long period of reclusion, during which they are introduced into the universe of male knowledge. Finally, in the third phase, they are reintegrated into social life. On *mukanda* rituals among peoples of Alto Zambeze, see Gluckman (1949), White (1953), Turner (2005), and among neighbouring peoples like the Holo and Pende, see, respectively, Batulukisi (1998) and Strother (1998). On the role of women in *mukanda* and also on the relation between this ritual and gender tensions among the Luvale, see Cameron (1998a, 1998b).

¹⁶ A detailed description of the entire program of the festival can be found in Penoni (2015).

figure 3
Cilende,
Traditional
Luvale
International
Festival, Alto
Zambeze
(Angola), July
2012. Author's
photo.



THE MAKIXI

As I mentioned earlier, the *makixi* originate from the male circumcision rituals (*mukanda*) and, among the Luvale, are taken to be ancestors manifested in the form of masked dancers. In the Angolan portion of Alto Zambeze, where, according to my interlocutors, *mukanda* is practically never held with the presence of *makixi* any longer, the Luvale Festival has become the main locus for its performance, referring to the *mukanda* of the past.¹⁷

We know from the specialized literature, however, that in traditional *mukanda* (still frequently performed in Zambia), the *makixi* assume a central role, performing specific functions during all stages of the ritual. It is worth emphasizing their role as mediators between the universes inside and outside *mukanda*, that is, between men and women, and initiates and non-initiates, contributing to either augment or assuage tensions between them. Acting in this intermediary zone, they end up delimiting both fields, reinforcing their differences and complementarities. The *makixi* are also the main protectors of the neophytes, introducing them, over their reclusion, to a specialized knowledge, related above all to the spiritual world

¹⁷ The impact of wars and the contemporary dissemination of all variety of churches in Alto Zambeze (in 2013, there existed more than 30 in the municipality, including Catholic, Protestant and Pentecostal) were identified by my Luvale interlocutors as the main reasons for the disappearance of the *mukanda* rituals with a *makixi* presence in the area, especially in densely populated urban centres like Cazombo. According to what I was told in the field, the *mukanda* most frequently held in the municipality are the so-called 'medicinal *mukanda*,' which are limited to the circumcision operation, lasting a much shorter period of time, during which no *makixi* are present.

(Jordán 2006, 21). Although they originate from the circumcision rituals, the *makixi* may also appear in enthronement ceremonies for traditional chiefs, among other sociopolitical events. According to Jordán (1996; 2006) more than one hundred types of *makixi*, or their variations, exist. Some authors have endeavoured to produce classificatory frameworks, defining different categories of *makixi*, generally based on their behaviour and the different roles that they perform in ritual contexts.

Bastin (1982; 1984) identified three basic types among the Chokwe with whom she worked. The first, *mukixi wa mwanangana*, refers specifically to Cikungu – the Chokwe equivalent of Kayipu, taken by the Luvale to be the ‘king’ of the *makixi* – “a powerful royal mask kept only by high-ranking chiefs and performed at enthronements, propitiatory ceremonies, or during times of ominous transition for society as a whole” (Bastin 1982, 81-92). The second, *mukishi a ku mukanda*, alludes to a series of *makixi* that perform specific roles in the *mukanda*. Their masks are traditionally burned at the end of the ritual. “They control the mukanda, keep women away from ceremony, and, when necessary, fetch food prepared by the initiate’s mothers from the village (...). At the end of this rite of passage, the masks are burned with the bush camp.” (Bastin 1984, 41) The third type, *mukishi a kuhangana*, includes masks mainly used for entertainment purposes. The author highlights an important detail: unlike the former group, these masks were neither part of the common domain of specific *mukandas*, or objects owned by traditional chiefs, but the private property of their dancers.

“They are the best-known Chokwe masks, appearing in numerous museum and private collections. Several types have lost their ritual meaning (...). Even in the past, [they] were used mainly for entertainment, although they were still *akishi*, and therefore could not be approached or touched with impunity. Masks of this third type and their costumes are kept by their owners, the only ones authorized to wear or dance them.” (1984, 41)

In his book *Likumbi lya Mize and other Luvale Traditional Ceremonies*, Patrick Wele presents a simpler but very similar schema to Bastin’s. He suggests that just two classes of mask exist: ‘circumcision masks,’ which include the Kayipu masks, and ‘dance masks,’ equivalent to the third category identified by Bastin. Wele’s classification takes into account the fact that, though infrequent in *mukanda* rituals, Kayipu may sometimes appear during the circumcision ceremonies for the sons of traditional Luvale chiefs.

Jordán (2006), for his part, based on *makixi* performances observed at sociopolitical and ritual *mukanda* events held in Zambia, subdivides them into four categories: 'sociable,' 'ambiguous,' 'aggressive' and 'royal.' Although like the previous examples this classification is informed by the differences in behaviour and function evinced by the *makixi* in ritual contexts, it is clearly more complex. In particular, the author presumes that the *mukanda* ritual is not confined solely to what happens in the encampment where the neophytes are kept in reclusion, but also includes other spheres of action and relationship involving many of the artefacts identified by Bastin as entertainment masks or by Wele as dance masks.

In the first category, 'sociable,' Jordán includes all the female *makixi*, which display an enormous variety of types, expressing differences in age, social class, style, moral values, and so on.¹⁸ Also incorporated in this category are a considerable number of male *makixi*, the most prominent of which are those that act as guardians and instructors to the neophytes in the *mukanda*, and others that perform educational and comic roles, parodying Europeans, foreigners and neighbours (2006, 24). In the second category, 'ambiguous,' Jordán includes those *makixi* whose enigmatic presence, behaviour and appearance imply extraordinary supernatural powers. These *makixi*, the author writes, "symbolically embody principles of secrecy guarded by men in relation to their initiation practices" (2006, 25). The third class, in turn, encompasses a series of *makixi* with aggressive behaviour, whose principal ritual function is to protect the *mukanda* neophytes from any kind of outside interference. Although these masks possess supernatural powers just like the former group, their intimidating nature, also expressed in their form – notably they are biggest and most dramatic (2006, 26) – means that they are ranked higher in terms of their power. Usually these aggressive masks carry weapons with which they pursue and threaten women and non-initiates. Moreover, since they are typically made from ephemeral materials and closely linked to the ritual cycles of specific *mukanda*, they are burned after use, recalling Bastin's observation in relation to the *mukishi a ku mukanda*. Finally the last category identified by Jordán, 'royal,' "include a handful of larger-than-life characters – including Chikungu and Kayipu or Kahipu – which are restricted to chiefs' ritual or ceremonial contexts" (2006, 28).

Below I propose an alternative classification to those delineated by these authors. Mine is based exclusively on the '*makixi* dances,' or *cilende*, I was able to observe in the 2012 and 2013 editions of the Angolan Festival, as well as during the Likumbi Lya Mize of 2013 in Zambia.

18 Here it is worth stressing that even the female *makixi* are always worn by men, leaving women the role of accompanying them in the dances (Jordán 2006, 24).

PROPS, DANCES AND THE TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE

Unlike the four categories presented by Bastin (1984), Wele (1993) and Jordán (2006), my own classificatory schema takes as its basic criterion the morphological features of the *makixi* and their connection to particularities of their performance, especially the different dance styles. By abstracting the variations in the *makixi*'s behaviour and function in ritual contexts, I hope to shed light on aspects apparently missing from the schemas proposed by the other authors. These aspects only became significant when I opted to focus on an event where all the *makixi* dance, including those identified by Jordán as 'aggressive,' or by Bastin and Wele as specific to the *mukanda*.¹⁹ It is these differences between dance styles and their resonances in the morphology of the *makixi*, to which I now turn.

As we have seen, the *makixi* are characterized by the use of customized masks and attire. Their masks, today displayed in important museums around the world, may be anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, hybrid or semi-abstract (Jordán 1996). Some types are still carved today in wood. Most though are made from different kinds of resinous material, such as beeswax or pitch, applied to structures made from plant fibres and stems. Their attire usually comprises a kind of woven second skin, traditionally made from plant fibres and more recently from industrial cotton yarn, displaying multi-coloured striped patterns.

It is worth stressing that, among the Luvale, the masks, props and other elements that compose the *makixi* are not recognized as simple objects, but as active parts of the ancestral manifestation. As Jordán (1996; 2006) has shown, it is common for *makixi* sculptors and performers to refer to a mask as the head of a *likixi*, and to its attire as its body. Having been through *mukanda* is the only compulsory requirement for a man to be able to transform into a *likixi*, which takes place through the simple operation of wearing its attire/body and putting on its mask/head, as Jordán explains: "It is clear, then, that a *likishi* performer 'enters' the spirit body to articulate the *likishi*'s persona through the transformation implied in donning the mask and costume" (Jordán 1996, 88).

A series of ornaments characterize a *likixi*. Some of these items are worn by a particular number of them, forming different groups characterized by their common use. These comprise: the *ciwamba* (a belt that widens the dancer's hips), the *jizombo* (a plant fibre skirt), a skirt made from animal hide, and the *fwi-fwi* (a phallic object worn at waist height). These props are directly related to particular dance styles and specific percussive rhythms.

¹⁹ The only exception is Kayipu, the 'king' of the *makixi*, and Kapalu, his 'headman.' Among all the *makixi* present at the Festivals that I witnessed, both in Angola and Zambia, they were the only *makixi* who did not dance in the *cilende*.

figure 4
Ngulu *likixi*
using the
ciwamba
(a hip-widening
belt). Source:
Felix & Jordán
(1998).

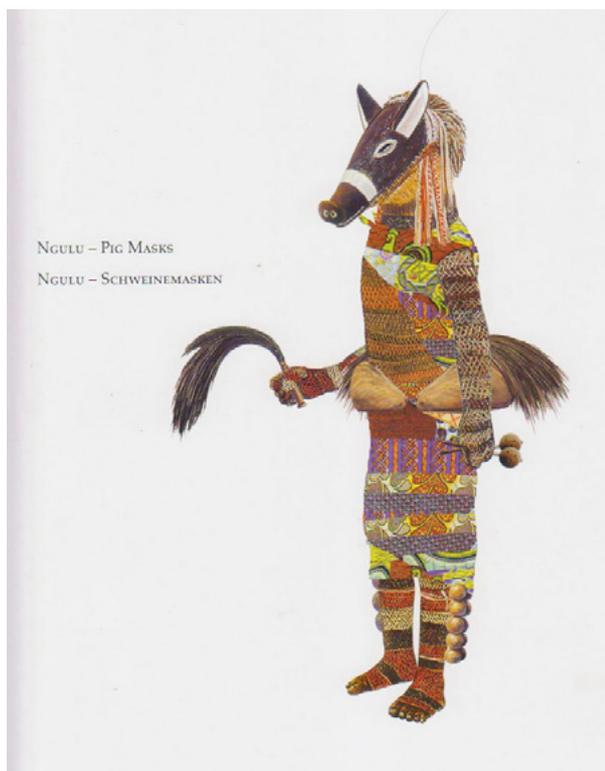


figure 5
Cikuza *Likixi*
using the
jizombo
(plant fibre
skirt). Source:
Felix & Jordán
(1998).



figure 6
Mupala *likixi*
using the
lyilambu
lyakanyama
(animal hide
skirt). Source:
Felix & Jordán
(1998).



figure 7
Cizaluke
likixi using
the *fwi-fwi*
(penis sheath).
Source: Felix
& Jordán
(1998).



In all the *cilende* that I observed, the *makixi* performed in a more or less standardized order, matching the presentation sequence during the parade held on the day before the Festival opening.²⁰ In both cases, the first in line and also the first to dance in the *cilende* were almost always those carrying the *ciwamba* (a belt that widens the dancer's hips) and all the *makixi* who wore this ornament danced the *ciyanda*, without exception.

The *ciyanda* is a dance traditionally taught to the *mwali*²¹ (female puberty ritual) novices during their period of reclusion, making it an identifiably female dance. It involves sideways movements of the hips, executed at a surprising speed to a rhythm tapped by the feet, amplified by the sound of the *gisango* – a rattle tied to the dancer's ankles. This group includes all the female *makixi*, like Mwana Pwevo,²² or Pwo, and most of those identified by Jordán (2006) as 'sociable,' or described as 'dance and entertainment masks' by Bastin (1984) and Wele (1998).

Kapalo Lisambo, perhaps the most renowned Luvale dancer active today, who I talked with during the performance of Likumbi Lya Mize in August 2013, in the Zambeze district of Zambia, explained that: "the *makixi* dance the *ciyanda* to obtain something and take it to the *mukanda*." This remark reinforced what Ninja, another dancer from Lumbala-Kakenge (Angola), had told me about the *ciyanda* a little while earlier, namely that it comprises the 'work dance' of *makixi* dancers: in other words, the dance with which they earned money in public venues. It is coincidence that among the different *makixi* that dance the *ciyanda*, Mwana Pwevo is precisely the most common in diverse sociopolitical events, in addition to the *mukanda* rituals and festivals for enthroning and honouring traditional chiefs, like the Luvale Festival. Indeed, as far as I could tell, even in the latter

20 A complete description of the *makixi* cortege in the context of the Luvale Festival, mentioned in summarized form in this article, can be found in Penoni (2015).

21 The term *mwali* is used by the Luvale to designate simultaneously the female initiation ritual practiced by them and the neophyte from the same ritual. Like *mukanda*, *mwali* is usually described in the anthropological literature as a typical rite of passage, presenting three main phases: a separation phase, marked by the appearance of the first menstrual flow; a reclusion phase, which may last from some weeks to four months (Jordán 1999); and a final phase of reintegration into society, celebrated in a public festival. Unlike the circumcision rituals, though, when the boys are initiated as a group, the *mwali* is taken into reclusion individually. During the period in which she remains hidden, the novice basically learns lessons about menstruation, sex and marriage, although this is also the moment to learn a set of dances traditionally associated with female knowledge, such as *ciyanda*. See the works of Cameron (1998a, 1998b), White (1962) and White, Chinjavata & Mukwato (1958) on *mwali* among the Luvale; Bastin (1986), among the Cokwe; Turner (1968), among the Lunda-Ndembu; and van Koolwijk (1963), among the Ganguela.

22 See Figures 8 and 15, and further details on this *likixi* on pages 234 and 241.

rituals they are the also the *makixi* that appear most often, entertaining the public in smaller circles that form in spaces and at times separate from those allocated to the *cilende*, where they also appear.

figure 8

Mwana Pwo *likixi* dancing *ciyanda* on poles during *cilende*. Luvale International Festival, Alto Zambeze (Angola), July 2012. Author's photo.



Returning to the *cilende*, after the *makixi* who carried the *ciwamba* and danced the *ciyanda*, it was the turn of those who used the *jizombo* and danced the *kuhunga*. Traditionally associated with fertility and taught to the *mukanda* neophytes during their reclusion as soon as their circumcision wounds have healed, the *kuhunga* involves swivelling pelvic movements that make the *jizombo*'s straw hems rise to waist height. This second group includes a series of *makixi* connected by the use of the *jizombo*, mostly belonging to the categories linked to the *mukanda* of Bastin (1984) and Wele (1998) and the 'aggressive' *makixi* identified by Jordán (2006).

Next came those using animal hide skirts (*malambu*) and dancing the *unyanga*. This group also contained *makixi* directly linked to *mukanda* and classified as 'aggressive' by Jordán, although some of them are identified by the latter author as 'ambiguous.' The *unyanga* are characterized by the performance of vigorous swivelling movements with the shoulders, which generally require the dancer to raise his arms in front of himself and clench his fists. Marking a quaternary rhythm with their feet, these *makixi* kick up considerable amounts of dust.

According to my field data, the *unyanga* dance is connected to hunting. Katotola,²³ one of the *makixi* to use an animal hide skirt and dance the

²³ See Figures 9 and 24, and further details about this specific mask on pages 235 and 251.

unyanga, is recognized as the first to appear in a Luvale *mukanda*, responsible for beginning the neophytes' period of reclusion by removing them from their everyday context and taking them to the encampment where the circumcision will take place. Referring to this figure, Kapalo Lizambo told me that Katotola was the one who "hunted the boys in the *quimbo* [village]" in order to take them to the 'forest' where he himself would dance the *unyanga*. Reinforcing the association between this dance and hunting, Lisambo also told me that, in the past, every hunter who arrived home bringing a lot of meat would dance the *unyanga* to express and share the joy that he felt.

figure 9

Cortege of *makixi* entering the town of Cazombo. From left to right, Cikuza, using the *jizombo* (straw skirt), Katotola and Mupala, both *Iyilambu Iyakanyama* (animal hide skirt). Alto Zambeze (Angola), July 2012. Author's photo.



Finally, the Cizaluke *likixi*,²⁴ carrying the *fwi-fwi*, performed the dance of the same name. Cizaluke was the only figure not to appear in the *cilende* in the same order as in the procession. While he would almost always appear among the first in the latter, in the *cilende* he was necessarily the last to perform. This inversion seems to be related to the fact that Cizaluke is the final *makixi* to appear in the Luvale *mukanda*. His characteristic dance, the *fwi-fwi*, executed at the end of the *cilende* marking the conclusion of the ritual, indicates that the operation was successful and that the neophytes are now ready to return home.

In all the *cilende* that I observed, Cizaluke, as well as being the last to appear, would do so in an apothotic manner, carried by a group of men on their shoulders, while he writhed about impetuously, cheered by the spectators.

²⁴ See Figures 10 and 14, and further details about this mask on pages 236 and 240.

After crossing the arena, the group would set him down on the ground so he could continue his performance. As we have seen, he dances the *fwi-fwi* by swivelling his hips to display the phallic object fixed at waist height, shaking it from side to side with the help of his hands. Perhaps due to his extravagant entrance and other mischievous behaviour – like leaving the arena suddenly and reappearing at the top of a nearby tree, dancing on its branches without any protection (something I saw for myself in 2013 during the Likumbi Lya Mize, in Zambia) – Cizaluke was very often defined in the literature as ‘the madman’ (Cameron 1998, Turner 2005).

figure 10
Cizaluke
during *cilende*,
Likumbi Lya
Mize, Zambezi,
Zambia, 2013.
Author’s photo.



As I remarked earlier, with the exception of Cizaluke, the order of the *cilende* witnessed by myself almost always corresponded to the order of the parades on the day before the opening of the Festivals. Ninja, a dancer from Lumbala-Kakenge (Angola), told me that the processional order, which places Cizaluke among the first in line, immediately following those wearing the *ciwamba* like Mwana Pwo, expresses a hierarchy of *makixi*, related to the process of transmitting their dances and the entire body of knowledge associated with each of them. From this view point, the first mask that a *makixi* apprentice wears is Ndondo²⁵ (the idiot), the first in the line. This is followed by Mwana Pwo or any of the others sharing use of the *ciwamba*. Consequently the *ciyanda* is necessarily the first dance for an aspiring *makixi* dancer to learn. Next comes the *fwi-fwi* and finally the *kuhunga* and *unyanga*. According to Ninja, the masks associated with the latter two types of dance cannot be worn by anyone being initiated into the art of the *makixi*: on the contrary, only an experienced dancer can use them.

²⁵ See Figure 11 and 16, and further details on this specific *likixi* on pages 236 and 242.

figure 11
Ndondo *likixi*,
wearing the
ciwamba (hip-
widening prop)
and heading
the opening
cortege of
the Luvale
International
Festival. Alto
Zambeze
(Angola), July
2013. Author's
photo.



Ninja was the only dancer to talk to me about the process of learning the *makixi* dances, hence this data still needs to be confirmed and deepened. However, his account reinforces the idea of the existence of dance groups clearly defined by their shared use of particular props. This classification of the *makixi* on the basis of their choreographic specialities seems to play an important role in the process of transmitting the specific knowledge involved. Below I present a table summarizing the 20 *makixi* common to the 2012 and 2013 editions of the Luvale Festival: here I look to identify the specifications of each, as well as their main morphological features and the names of their particular dances/rhythms. I think that this schematic presentation illustrates even more clearly their organization into classes defined by common dance styles and props.



figure 12

Kayipu in his special awning during *Likumbi Lya Mize*, Zambezi (Zambia), 2013. Author's photo.

1. MAKIXI/WHO DO NOT DANCE DURING *CILENDE*.

1.1 KAYIPU (FIGURE 12)

Description: Traditionally associated with the chiefdom, Kayipu is conceived to be the 'king' of the *makixi*. Appears only in funerary and chief enthronement ceremonies (Jordán 2006), though, on rare occasions, may also occur in *mukanda* rituals organized especially for children of chiefs (Wele 1993). Kayipu is not accessible to the general public. In the context of the Luvale Festival, as we have seen, he appears only on the opening day of the festival, going directly to his private awning, where he remains protected by Kapalu and a group of male assistants who prevent anyone else from approaching. According to Jordán (2006), Kayipu (the mask) must be kept safeguarded only by the main Luvale traditional chiefs – something that I was unable to confirm during my fieldwork apropos the Kayipu utilized during the 2012 and 2013 Festivals.

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, made from resin, which shows eyes, a nose and mouth, and prominent cheeks. From the upper part of the mask emerges an enormous arched head-dress, decorated on the front with white, red and black patterns, and on the rear with feathers. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton, like the majority of other *makixi*. Generally wears a quilt or a blanket as a skirt.



figure 13 1.2 KAPALU (FIGURE 13)

Kapalu. Alto

Zambeze
(Angola), 2013.
Author's photo.

Description: Identified as Kayipu's 'headman,' 'secretary' or 'soldier.' Always standing out from the other *makixi*, Kapalu was responsible for controlling the crowd at the ceremonies and, to achieve this end, behaved in a violent and intimidating fashion, threatening the public with a weapon carried in his hands.

Morphology: Does not use a mask like the majority of other *makixi*, made from wood or resin. Instead, his face is covered with a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton, just like his body. Just two large round eyes and a nose can be seen, stuck onto the fabric. Above the head sprouts a feather headdress. Uses an animal hide skirt and normally carries a weapon, like a staff or a spear.



figure 14 2. *MAKIXI WHO DANCE THE FWI-FWI*

Cizaluke. Alto
Zambeze
(Angola), 2012.
Author's photo.

2.1 CIZALUKE (FIGURES 7, 10 AND 14)

Description: Associated with the *mukanda* ritual complex, assuming a tutelary function: “Chisaluke is the only character to appear in multiples within an initiation camp. Each initiate is supposed to have his own Chisaluke as a tutelary ancestor” (Jordán 2006, 64) Tends to appear in the last weeks of reclusion, performing an important role in training the neophytes for the traditional dances. Popularly taken to be an elder *likixi*, *cizaluke* is also defined in the literature as ‘the crazy one’ (Cameron 1998, Turner 2005).

Morphology: Uses a masks with anthropomorphic features, generally made from resinous materials, although in the past also sculpted in wood. A beard made from fibre or white wool outlines the chin – “a symbol of the authority inherent to the chiefdom” (Turner 2005, 310). Long strips of leopard skin drape from the upper part of the mask, falling over his shoulders. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Frequently uses shorts and wears a *fwi-fwi* – penis sheath – tied around the waist. Although no other *makixi* used and danced with the *fwi-fwi* during the Luvale Festivals that I watched in 2012 and 2013 in Alto Zambeze, some authors suggest that neither the sheath nor the dance are exclusive to Cizaluke.



figure 15 3. MAKIXI/WHO DANCE CIYANDA

Mwana Pwo,

Zambezi,

Zambia, 2013.

Author's photo.

3.1 MWANA PWEVO (FIGURES 8 AND 15)

Description: One of the most popular female *makixi*, identified specifically with an adolescent. Though very common in the *mukanda* ritual complex, where she helps reduce tensions between initiates and non-initiates, and between men and women, it is the *likixi* that most often appears in diverse sociopolitical events, fulfilling the main function of entertainment. Famous for her magical-acrobatic abilities, she frequently presents amazing feats, such as dancing on a mat or a mattress floating in the middle of the Zambeze River, or balancing on a giant mast without any protection.

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, generally carved in wood. Possesses a synthetic fibre wig fixed on top of the mask, which generally mimics a fashionable female hairstyle. Bead and/or metal elements may sometimes form part of the mask's ornamentation. Her body is completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. A stylized piece of fabric maybe used as a skirt or even a dress. Very often makes visible use of a bra. Wears a *ciwamba* – a kind of belt with padding, adorned with strips of cloth, plastic or other materials, which widens the dancer's hips. Rattles tied around the ankles (*gisango*) are also used to emphasize the movements of the dance.



figure 16 3.2 NDONDO (SEE FIGURES 11 AND 16)

Ndondo, Alto

Zambeze
(Angola), 2013.
Author's photo.

Description: Taken as a rude idiot, normally confronts the public with a small knife in order to extract some money from them. People say that the swollen abdomen is due to poisoning provoked by Ndondo's own stubbornness (Wele 1993).

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Possesses a protuberance at waist height, giving the appearance of a swollen belly. Wears the *ciwamba* and the *gisango*.



figure 17 3.3 NGULO (FIGURES 4 AND 17)

Ngulu dancing
ciyanda during
cilende. Alto
Zambeze
(Angola), 2012.
Author's photo.

Description: Though more frequently identified with a domestic pig, some of the variants represent wild pigs. The most acclaimed moment of his performance is when he throws himself to the ground imitating the bestial behaviour of the animal.

Morphology: Uses a mask with zoomorphic features, normally carved from wood. Body completely covered in a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Generally wears shorts rather than a skirt. Wears the *ciwamba* and the *gisango*.



figure 18 3.4 CIKWEKWE (SEE FIGURE 18)

Cikwekwe,
Alto Zambeze
(Angola), 2012.
Author's photo.

Description: Identified with a species of long-beaked bird, “which eats the fruits from trees.”

Morphology: Uses a mask with zoomorphic features, made from resin. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Wears the *ciwamba* and the *gisango*.



figure 19 3.5 KAPIASA (SEE FIGURE 19)

Kapiasa. Alto
Zambeze, 2013.
Author's photo.

Description: Identified as a species of black bird, common in the rainy season. In the 2012 and 2013 Luvale Festivals that I watched in Alto Zambeze, Kapiasa was one of the few *makixi* labelled as “coming from Angola.” Possibly both the attire/body and the mask/head of the *likixi* were the property of an Angolan dancer and were fabricated exclusively in the country.

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, made from resin. Possesses a voluminous, tangled wig of synthetic hair fixed to the mask. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre of cotton. Wears the *ciwamba* and the *gisango*.

4. MAKIXI/WHO DANCE THE KUHUNGA

4.1 MBWANDA (NO PHOTO)

Description: Identified with a rabbit, included by Jordán (2006) among the ‘ambiguous’ *makixi*, since Mbwanda comprises, according to the author, a “trickster spirit with supernatural powers.”

Morphology: Uses a mask with zoo-anthropomorphic features, made from resin, from whose sides emerge two large erect ears, one on each side. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Uses the *jizombo* – a plant fibre skirt also used by neophytes in the circumcision ritual.

4.2 MWENDUMBA (NO PHOTO)

Description: Identified with a lion, aggressive in nature. Differs from other *makixi* also identified with this same animal but which lack the anthropomorphic features that he possesses, having a form similar to the body of the feline instead (Jordán 2006, 69 and 75).

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, made from resin. From the top of the mask emerges an arched headdress, with two parallel wings, one facing in front, the other facing behind. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Uses the *jizombo*.

4.3 KAPAPA (NO PHOTO)

Description: No information.

Morphology: Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from plant fibre or cotton. Uses the *jizombo*.

4.4 CIKESA (NO PHOTO)

Description: No information.

Morphology: Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from plant fibre or cotton. Uses the *jizombo*.



figure 20 4.5 CIKUSA (FIGURES 5, 9 AND 20)

Cikuza. Alto

Zambeze

(Angola), 2013.

Author's photo.

Description: Traditionally associated with fertility, his name refers, in the Chokwe language, to a species of grasshopper, renowned for its procreative potential. Another of his main morphological characteristics depicts the antler of an antelope, a symbol of power and virility (Bastin 1984, 42). Performs an important role in the *mukanda* ritual complex, although it may appear in other sociopolitical events. Aggressive by nature, in *mukanda* Cikuza stands out as one of the main defenders of the neophytes and the encampment where they are hidden. Furthermore, he is responsible for teaching the young men the *kuhunga*, his characteristic dance. Some authors, like White (1949) and Bastin (1984), have included Cikuza among the *makixi* to which are also attributed the *li/hamba* character – that is, an ancestor manifested through sickness, or misfortune, and appeased through specific rituals. According to Bastin, it has been known for a long time that the worship of this *likixi/lihamba* is widely found among the Chokwe outside the context of the *mukanda*, especially among hunters and infertile women. “Small amulets representing him – with his tall headdress in the shape of a ringed horn – are carried by hunters on their rifle butts and by infertile or pregnant women on their belts” (1984, 42).

Morphology: Uses a mask with zoo-anthropomorphic features, made from resin, whose most salient characteristic is the conical, pointed structure, very tall and sometimes slightly curved, that emerges from the top of the mask and represents the antler of an antelope. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Uses the *jizombo* and usually carries a weapon, such as a tree branch or a machete.



figure 21 4.6 KALELWA (FIGURE 21)

The first two in the line are two versions of the Kalelwa *likixi*. Luvale Festival, Alto Zambeze (Angola), 2012.

Figure 21.

Description: Related to the *mukanda* ritual complex. Alongside Cikuza, Kalelwa acts as a protector of the neophytes and the encampment where they are held. In addition, he may also perform a role teaching *kuhunga* to the young men.

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, made from resin. From the top of his head extends a tubular structure capable of supporting two or four lateral arches. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Uses the *jizombo* and usually carries a weapon, such as a tree branch or a machete.



figure 22 5. *MAKIXI/WHO DANCE UNYANGA*

Kalelwa, Utenu
and Cikusa in
the opening
cortege of the
Traditional Luvale
International
Festival. Alto
Zambeze
(Angola), 2012.
Author's photo.

5.1 UTENU (FIGURE 22)

Description: Aggressive discipliner linked to the *mukanda* ritual complex. Because of his ferocity, sometimes his headdress is inscribed with expressions that assert this characteristic, or the name of public figures and organizations known for their aggressive nature (Jordán 1998; 2006).

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, made from resin. From the top of his head extends a headdress in keel form. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Wears an animal hide skirt.



figure 23 5.2 MUPALA (FIGURES 06, 09 AND 23)

Mupala in the opening cortege of the Traditional Luvale International Festival. Alto Zambeze, 2012. Author's photo.

Description: Taken as 'the president' or 'captain' of *mukanda*, he also appears in enthronements and homages to traditional chiefs. Among the *makixi* identified as 'aggressive' by Jordán (2006), Mupala stands out as the most intimidating due to the exaggerated size of his facial features and his headdress, a little smaller than that of Kayipu (the 'king' of the *makixi*).

Morphology: Uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, made from resin, which presents eyes, nose, mouth and prominent cheeks. From the upper part of the mask emerges an enormous arched headdress, decorated at the front with white, red and black patterns, and at the rear with feathers. Body completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Wears an animal hide skirt and usually carries a weapon, such as a tree branch or a machete.



figure 24 5.3 KATOTOLA (FIGURE 9 AND 24)

Katotola in the opening cortege of the Traditional Luvalu International Festival. Alto Zambeze, 2013.

Description: Easily confused with Mupala since he possesses a very similar appearance to the latter, he plays an important role in the *mukanda* of the Luvalu where he is the first *likixi* to appear, responsible for taking the neophytes to the encampment where they will be circumcised. In the field I was frequently told that Katotola is an ancestral head of family or even chief of a lineage.

Morphology: Normally uses a mask with anthropomorphic features, made from resin, which displays eyes, a nose, a mouth and prominent cheeks, and which supports an enormous arched headdress, decorated at the front with white, red and black patterns, like Mupala's headdress, but smaller and without the rear feathers. In the two editions of the Angolan festival that I watched, in 2012 and 2013, the mask used by Katotola was above all 'two-faced.' The body of this *likixi*, like all the others listed here, is completely covered by a mesh knitted from fibre or cotton. Wears an animal hide skirt and usually carries a weapon.

BOX 1

Name	Specification	Morphology	Rhythm/Dance
Kayipu	The 'king' of the <i>makixi</i> . Appears in funeral ceremonies, the enthronement of chiefs and in <i>mukanda</i> organized by the sons of chiefs.	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses an arched headdress, decorated at the front with white, red and black patterns and behind with feathers. Uses a quilt or blanket with a skirt.	-
Kapalu	Kayipu's 'headman.'	Mask made from a meshwork of plant fibre or cotton, like the rest of his body. Wears a feather headdress. Uses an animal hide skirt and carries a weapon.	-
Ndondo (two examples)	The idiot. Has a swollen belly caused by poisoning.	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Protuberance at waist height. Carries the <i>ciwamba</i> and the <i>gisango</i> .	Ciyanda
Mwana Pwevo (two examples)	The adolescent. Known for his magical-acrobatic abilities. Appears in the <i>mukanda</i> and in sociopolitical events with the main function of entertaining.	Anthropomorphic mask made from wood. Possess a hair extension made from synthetic fibre imitating a female hairstyle. Uses a stylized fabric as a skirt or dress. Carries the <i>ciwamba</i> and the <i>gisango</i> .	Ciyanda
Ngulo	The pig.	Zoomorphic mask made from resin. Carries the <i>ciwamba</i> and the <i>gisango</i> .	Ciyanda
Cikwekwe	Species of long-beaked bird, "which eats tree fruits."	Zoomorphic mask made from resin. Carries the <i>ciwamba</i> and the <i>gisango</i> .	Ciyanda
Kapiasa	Species of black bird, Anthropomorphic mask Ciyanda. common during the rainy season.	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Wears a synthetic fibre wig. Carries the <i>ciwamba</i> and the <i>gisango</i> .	Ciyanda
Cizaluke (two examples of this figure performed)	The elder. Has a tutelary function in the <i>mukanda</i> .	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses patches of leopard skin attached to the upper part of the mask. Carries the <i>fwi-fwi</i> .	Fwi-fwi
Mbwanda	The rabbit.	Zoo-anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses two large ears. Uses the <i>jizombo</i> .	Kuhunga

Name	Specification	Morphology	Rhythm/Dance
Mwendumba	The lion.	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses an arched headdress with two parallel flaps, one pointing forwards, the other backwards. Uses the <i>jizombo</i> .	<i>Kuhunga</i>
Kapapa	No information.	<i>Usa o jizombo</i> .	<i>Kuhunga</i>
Cikesa	No information.	<i>Usa o jizombo</i> .	<i>Kuhunga</i>
Cikusa	Species of grasshopper, known for its procreative potential. Acting aggressively, comprises the main protector of the neophytes in the <i>mukanda</i> and responsible for teaching them the <i>kuhunga</i> .	Zoo-anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses a conic and pointed structure above the head. Uses the <i>jizombo</i> and carries a weapon.	<i>Kuhunga</i>
Kalelwa (two examples)	Acts in the <i>mukanda</i> as a protector of both the neophytes and the encampment where they are kept in reclusion. Helps Cikusa teach the <i>kuhunga</i> .	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses a tube-like structure above the head with two or four side arches. Uses the <i>jizombo</i> and carries a weapon.	<i>Kuhunga</i>
Utenu	Aggressive disciplinarian, associated with the <i>mukanda</i> .	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses a headdress in the form of a keel. Wears an animal hide skirt.	<i>Unyanga</i>
Mupala	The 'president' or 'captain' of the <i>mukanda</i> . Also appears in events for enthroning and honouring the traditional chiefs.	Anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses an arched headdress, decorated to the front with white, red and black patterns and to the rear with feathers. Wears an animal hide skirt.	<i>Unyanga</i>
Katotola	Compared to the head of a family or lineage, the first <i>likixi</i> to appear in a Luvale <i>mukanda</i> , responsible for taking the neophytes to the encampment where they will be circumcised.	Two-faced anthropomorphic mask made from resin. Possesses an arched headdress, decorated to the front with white, red and black patterns. Wears an animal hide skirt and carries a weapon.	<i>Unyanga</i>

CONCLUSION

The *makixi* have been amply documented by anthropologists and art historians who worked or have been working in the Upper Zambeze region, especially, in the east of Zambia, such as Marie-Louise Bastin, Elizabeth Cameron and Manuel Jordan, to cite just a few examples. Their dances, however, occupy a subsidiary role in the descriptions and analyses of these authors, guided by a classification of the *makixi* based on the different behaviours and roles that they assume in ritual contexts. But what happens when we examine the *makixi* through an event in which all of them dance?

In this article, I have sought precisely to present an alternative classification to those encountered in the specialized literature, basing my analysis exclusively on the ‘*makixi* dances,’ or *cilende*, observed during my fieldwork in Alto Zambeze, Angola. This classificatory schema sheds light on a relationship, yet to be identified by other authors in the field, between the props used by the *makixi* and their dance styles – and, we could also add, the relationship between the latter and specific percussive rhythms (which still remain to be documented through rhythmic scores).

We have seen that all the *makixi* who wear the *ciwamba* (a belt that widens the dancer’s waist), like Mwana Pwo, Ndondo, or Ngulo, perform a dance marked by lateral and surprisingly rapid movements of the hips, called *ciyanda*. Similarly, all those that wear the *fwi-fwi* (penis sheath), like Cisaluke, perform a homonymous dance with vigorous gyratory movements of the pelvis, displaying their phallic protuberance. Meanwhile those wearing the *jizombo* (straw skirt), like Cikuza and Kalelua, perform the *kuhunga*, a dance that recalls the American twist. And finally all those who wear the *lyilambu lyakanyama* (animal hide skin), like Katotola and Mupala, perform the *unyanga*, based on rotatory movements of the shoulders.

These dance groups, defined by use of the same props, are also arranged in a specific order, observable both in *cilende* and in the *makixi* cortege that precedes the opening of the Luvale Festival. This is, therefore, an order repeated each time the *makixi* appear in the event and that, according to something the most experienced Luvale dancer in Angola told me, corresponds to the sequence in which their dances, and all the knowledge associated with each of them, are transmitted. A kind of mnemotechnics is thus implied in the performance of the *makixi* observed during the Luvale Festival, where the props used by each constitute indices of their characteristic dances, and the order organizing them in each public appearance relates to the hierarchy of transmission of their specific knowledge.

The ethnographic and visual data presented in this article comprise new material on the Luvale living in the municipality of Alto Zambeze, in Angola. Through its exploration, I hope to have helped reduce some of the enormous gap opened up by the almost forty years without research being conducted in the area, a result of the long period of wars that ended only in 2002.

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translation
David Rodgers
received
08.15.2017
accepted
01.18.2018

